



Gedling UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Achievements

April 2022 to March 2025



Funded by
UK Government

Gedling
Borough Council



Foreword

It gives me great pleasure to present this report on what has been achieved in Gedling with the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Gedling was allocated £2.8 million in 2022 and under the three themes of the Programme a range of projects have been delivered.

The Communities and Place Theme has enabled the restoration and improvement of community spaces and has strengthened the social fabric of communities whilst creating the foundations for economic development at the neighbourhood-level.

The Supporting Local Business Theme has enabled us to boost small business productivity, encourage growth and increase job opportunities whilst restoring a sense of local pride.

The People and Skills Theme has enabled us to invest in our people through offering individual's opportunities to gain a brighter future through upskilling and/or gaining employment.

We have used the funding to invest in our town and local centres, in our communities and our local businesses, we have hosted events, assisted our community and voluntary sector partners to host events, created arts and cultural assets such as sculptures and murals and funded improvements to our sports facilities in the borough working in partnership with our sports clubs.

Our community and voluntary sector organisations have worked together to codesign a 'Bricks and Clicks' Customer Relations Management Platform to support the Voluntary Sector in Gedling that can be accessed and operated from Gedling Community Hubs. To enable this to work effectively, we also invested in new ICT equipment for the Community Hubs. We have provided over 40 grants to our community and voluntary sector organisations in the borough through our Strength in Community Project which has funded some vital delivery benefitting our most vulnerable residents.

We have provided direct support to our businesses through grants and business advice as well as re-establishing the Gedling Business



Support Network which has benefitted over 70 businesses in the borough. Over 300 businesses have received business support and advice. With 29 businesses benefitting from Business Grants.

We have provided a range of support for the economically inactive with over 70 people benefitting directly from the Transform Your Future initiative and we have supported around 350 people to engage in job-searching across our programmes. We have provided learning and development opportunities too with Digital Skills, ESOL, HGV Driver and Forklift Truck Driver training all being provided. This has led directly to some of our resident's gaining employment. Over 100 people have been supported to engage in life skills with 56 people gaining qualifications and licences.

Investment has also been made across the borough with funding committed to our urban and parish areas. Specifically, £306,150 was allocated in rural areas with a further £616,705 allocated to borough wide initiatives.

Overall the support from UKSPF has played a crucial role in improving the lives and businesses of our residents and the positive impact this funding has made can be clearly seen in this report.

Cllr John Clarke MBE
Leader of the Council

About Gedling Borough

Gedling, located on the north-eastern edge of Nottingham is a predominantly rural district with a population of 117,700, across 51,551 households. Gedling is statistically typical in many ways with population, health and socio-economic indicators that align broadly with national averages. These averages however mask some stubborn pockets of deprivation and significant socio-economic and health disparities between different areas of the borough, with life expectancy 8.6 years lower for men and 6.7 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Gedling than in the least deprived areas. Like many parts of the UK, Gedling has a growing, ageing population.

Although centred on Arnold, the population of the borough is split across the urban areas of Carlton, Netherfield and Gedling, with significant rural populations in villages including Burton Joyce, Calverton, Lambley, Ravenshead and Woodborough. The Borough covers 46.3sq miles and is bounded by Sherwood Forest to the north and the river Trent to the south.

The area does not sit on major transport routes although the Colwick Loop Road is a major entrance into Nottingham, along with the A60. It has a small number of minor railway stations. Its largest employment area, and indeed one of the most important for wider Nottingham, is Colwick Industrial Estate, home to over 120 businesses. A number of smaller employment areas can be found at Newstead and Calverton.

Education attainment and deprivation levels are average for this area although there are significant pockets of inequalities. Newstead and Netherfield particularly suffer from deprivation levels but there are also pockets around Arnold, with one area featuring in the top 10% most deprived nationally in the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019. Generally speaking, more residents of Gedling Borough achieve level four qualifications than the East Midlands average, which is on a par with UK levels. 18% of the Working Age population of the borough are classed as economically inactive with 70% declaring they do not want a job, this could be due to early retirement or illness, some are likely in education whilst others will be looking after the family / home.

Over 90% of the businesses in the borough are micro businesses employing less than 9 people. Large employers with over 250 employees make up just 0.4% of the businesses in the borough. Regarding Travel to Work, more residents leave the borough than work within it due to the low job density. In terms of gross weekly pay, Gedling residents earn more than the East Midlands as a whole, but less than the national average.

Gedling Borough Council set out its priorities for the borough as detailed below:

Economy

To encourage and support healthy businesses in our town and local centres, improving local skills and employment opportunities, and promoting an economy that attracts visitors throughout the day and supports leisure activity.

Community

To enable a resilient, empowered, connected, inclusive and healthy community.

Place

To enable a safe, attractive, clean and culturally vibrant borough that plays its part to tackle the climate emergency.

The Council

To ensure the council is a healthy place to work, it engages with its customers, has a focus on improvement, is financially sound, and ensures compliance with all relevant legislation.

The UKSPF funding has supported delivery against these priorities

Our ethos is simple; **Serving People, Improving Lives.**

UK Shared Prosperity Fund Programme in Gedling

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), part of the Conservative Government's Levelling Up agenda provided £2.6 billion of funding in the UK with Gedling allocated £2,866,555. This funding succeeded the old EU structural funds such as the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Local Authorities were expected to account for the loss of this funding in their areas when developing their plans.

Gedling is in the final year of the 2022-2025 Programme, approved in December 2022 with a further £900 million allocated to the Shared Prosperity Fund for 2025-26, by the Labour Government. Gedling Borough Council will receive a further £1,172 million.

The primary goal of the original programme was to build pride in place and increase life chances, the new funding is expected to deliver economic growth and increase

living standards.

There are three themes in the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Programme, Communities and Place, Supporting Local Business and People and Skills.

The Investment Plan 2022-25 set out the funding allocated to projects under these themes and the outputs and outcomes that would be achieved, this was then approved by government. This report showcases the successful delivery of these themes throughout the borough of Gedling.



Communities and Place

Introduction

UKSPF funding has been used to make improvements to town and local centres, revitalising the high streets and supporting the success of businesses. The various projects and events have been successful in increasing footfall, improving the appearance and safety of high streets and shopping precincts. They have also contributed to an increased sense of community pride and have offered families more opportunities for engagement and fun in our local centres.

Support for local arts, cultural and creative activities and events has been an important element of UKSPF providing local voluntary groups with funding to deliver their services directly within the community and make a difference to local residents.

Work on developing heritage in the borough included projects such as Arnot Hill Park sculptures and the Arnold Welcome sculpture to help local people to appreciate the history of the area and significant developments, which have shaped the local culture.

Strength in Community Projects such as the Gedling Guide, community grants and virtual CVS model have provided support for the voluntary and community sector. Information for residents on how to reduce the cost of living has also been included in these sources. Our relationships with the third sector have been enhanced through UKSPF initiatives, which they tell us have improved the services they offer and resulted in significant increases in visitor numbers.

Funding for improvements to local sports facilities through UKSPF has helped to improved accessibility for residents and the quality of provision for local teams who are already engaged in sports.



Here are just a few key achievements from some of the projects delivered into the community

80,000 sqm of public realm created or improved

65 sqm of land made wheelchair accessible/step free

69 organisations receiving grants

150 organisations receiving non-financial support

14 neighbourhood improvements

19 facilities supported/created

75 local events or activities supported

18,017 sqm of green or blue space created or improved

13 Tourism, Culture or heritage assets created or improved

48 community-led arts, cultural, heritage and creative programmes as a result of support



Town and Local Centres

Multiple projects have been delivered using UKSPF funding to improve the town centre, Arnold and our local centres. These initiatives have improved the physical appearance of the area and attracted an increase of footfall on the high streets. These activities ranged from a thorough clean-up of land between the shops on Front Street in Arnold and the alleyway to the rear of properties making it not only look better but giving it a safer feel to use as a cut through. To improve footfall in Gedling borough high streets, 15 local organisations received grants to host events or deliver projects in the towns and local centres.

Here are some highlights of the amazing community led activities the high street benefitted from:

Successful Christmas light switch on events were hosted throughout the borough by a variety of community organisations, including Mapperley Churches Together, who organised a Christmas Festival, St. Georges Centre in Netherfield and Carlton Hill Community Action Group who organised a switch on Carlton Hill High Street. These groups invested in equipment to secure the future of this, now, annual event.

From 17th to 22nd February 2025, Positively Empowered Kids ran a High Street Heroes event to bring families and visitors to the high street. They had Superhero Themed activities to boost health and wellness in young people.

Free, healthy refreshments for both adults and children were provided throughout the sessions.

The Arnold litter-picking and planting initiatives to make Arnold greener and cleaner with Sprightly Sustainable has proved a hit with the locals rolling up their sleeves and investing their time into making their high street look and feel cleaner.

All ages have joined in, and this has attracted the attention of the larger national supermarket community teams. They have proposed support after March creating a legacy project to build on.

Some of the UKSPF funding went towards large community events and projects, such as Netherfest and Netherfield Pride, along with community garden projects in Burton Joyce and Carlton Hill and enhancing aesthetic appeal in Ravenshead.

To enhance the fledgling specialist markets and encourage more traders, shoppers and business collaborations, The AMP in Arnold town centre was host to the 'Saturday Summertime Specials'. A special series of free family activities from making vegetable animals, mastering circus skills to have a go dancing, T-shirt printing and cycle fuelled Scalextric of the City of Nottingham. All this was enhanced with a backdrop of music from local entertainers. Arnold loves music and this carried on through to the Saturdays in December 2024 accompanying the four Christmas markets.

To celebrate Nottinghamshire Day on 23rd June 2024, UKSPF funding supported a series of free activities for children, with popular Dice & Balls teaching the art of circus skills, arts and craft activities with the Play Forum, all coordinated by Positively Empowered Kids, promoting healthy mindfulness and positive affirmations within all the activities, supporting the boroughs families to bond over some new, outdoor fun activities.

The AMP held a market sourcing traders from the local area promoting the entrepreneurial businesses that are nestled off the high street.



Case Study: Nottinghamshire Day

Local social enterprise, Positively Empowered Kids were awarded £5,000 to deliver an event on 23 June 2024 on Arnold High Street. They were to hold a marketplace event, which on the day had to be moved indoors, due to the high winds. Some of the funding was used for staffing, including marketing and design, event coordination and project management, alongside other costs of printing, licences and insurance.

“The event consisted of a range of free activities for children and their families. Gedling Play Forum offered Robin Hood themed arts & craft activities and Dice & Balls provided circus skills, vegetable animal making and family face painting activities. Severn Trent water

had a fun toilet game for children, which was popular, the Power of Drums ran inclusive drumming sessions, we had the police youth outreach dressed as Robin Hood, Maid Marion and an ‘Ay up me duck’ Duck, playing music.

We ran a trail around local shops to spot Nottingham Landmarks and collect a prize at the end. We created printed themed self-care techniques, The Robin Hood technique and the Ay up Me Duck technique to gift out with the prizes, again rippling out different ways to manage emotions”

- Jackie Wilson, Positively Empowered Kids

Treasure Trails Maps

These maps invited our residents and visitors to take a stroll through the borough highstreets and two of our parks, bringing feet to the street.

With six different maps to choose from, these were a huge hit with all generations. An active, outdoor activity that re-engaged the community with long lost memories triggered by the treasures to find. A QR code on the map led the user to a certificate download and asked for their review on the activity.



Eagle Square Market has a permanent home and a refresh

As one of the gateways into the high street of Arnold and a key driver to encourage footfall and visitor economy, Arnold's traditional General Market has benefitted from significant improvements on the visual appeal and trading conditions for shoppers and traders. New sets of striped canopies and skirts have been installed to improve kerb appeal along with marine ply tabletops replacing all the damaged ones.

Nearby cycle racks, that were bent and buckled, have been replaced and an external review has been undertaken of the current market by, Nightingale Design & Research Ltd. This review has assessed the current, product and trader mix, with opportunities identified to make savings and streamline operational processes, amongst many recommendations from the review findings.

The council is committed to supporting local entrepreneurs and increasing visitor numbers to ensure the market thrives.

The result of following extensive consultations with traders, local business owners and shoppers' permission has been granted to make Eagle Square the permanent home of the General Market. This aligns with the long-term vision for Arnold Town Centre's Development.

Netherfield Mosaic Mural

A community art project, to create a large mosaic mural in Netherfield has inspired creativity and engaged local residents to learn new skills in their local community.

The mural was designed by local artist, Anna Dixon, who has worked with Netherfield residents to create an art installation that reflects key themes, memories and locations they associate with the area, which has a rich railway heritage.

The completed mosaic has been permanently installed in Jackie Bells Park in Netherfield alongside a new tree.

Further enhancement of this area with replacement railings and bins were added to this project, as part of the initiative to improve the high street area, make it safer and encourage more visitors to the park and local shops.



Carlton Sensory Garden

New sensory elements have been added to The Garden for the Blind in Carlton Hill, as part of a development project supported by UKSPF. This inclusive initiative aims to encourage wider use of the garden by the local community, shoppers, families and other visitors. The sensory garden is especially beneficial for the blind and visually impaired, children and those with sensory needs. Additions to the garden included Sensory planting with a wider variety of scents, colours and textures, New benches to replace damaged outdoor furniture, harmony bells were introduced as auditory elements and tactile rubbing plaques help visitors to engage with the garden.

The old plaque has been replaced with a braille version, to support visually impaired visitors to find out more about their surroundings.



Events and Culture

The Council's UKSPF funded events programme is designed to support positive engagement and co-production with community groups and other partners, enable effective delivery of funding and support national recognition days.

The events and projects promote environmental sustainability, health and wellbeing, inclusivity, heritage and intergenerational themes. The programme also aims to support activities across the borough including in rural areas.

Over £140,000 has been spent in Gedling to deliver a wide range of events, thanks to UKSPF, including the Arnold Summer Fair in Arnot Hill Park, which was attended by around 5000 local residents. Visitors to the Summer Fair in Arnold said, "It's a great way to bring the community together", "Loved the mix of things to do. The kids loved the free t shirt painting. It's not often you go to these things and there's no charge for activities. Brilliant day out", "Great to see everyone coming together and having fun".



A Peace in the Park event at Gedling Country Park attracted around 1200 people on 21 September 2024 to celebrate the International Day of Peace and this event enabled the creation of a Willow sculpture which has been installed outside the café. Funding has also supported community events delivered by the Council's partners around the borough including Carlton Arts Week led by City Arts, Standhill KGV Picnic in the Park and Warren Action Group.

The Arnold Christmas lights switch on attracted over 2000 people and positive responses on social media. Switch on events and Christmas festivities were also held in Carlton Hill, Netherfield and Mapperley Precinct.



Cultural projects have also engaged lots of local people in positive activities too. UKSPF supported the celebration of Chinese New Year on 1 February 2025 in Arnold Town centre, which included a lion dance outside The AMP and free arts & crafts activities delivered by Gedling Play Forum at Arnold Methodist Church. The event attracted over 150 people and involved many of the local Chinese community in Gedling.



Tourism, Culture or Heritage assets and amenities in the borough have been created or improved. Public Art projects which have been delivered included a beautiful new heritage inspired mural for the pavilion at Breck Hill Park and four wooden sculptures have recently been expertly carved and installed in Arnot Hill Park, representing the ancient and industrial history of Arnold, as well as the local connection to the Luddites.



"The Friends of Breck Hill Park would really like to thank you all for your fantastic work on the mural project. The finished work is really brilliant and we are so pleased with it. The whole place feels so much more loved, vibrant and interesting now. We have had lots of positive comments about it, which is great."

- Erika Jones, Friends of Breck Hill Park Committee

A new heritage strategy, with a focus on the visitor economy has been commissioned with Focus and Haley Sharpe Consultants, following a series of public consultations. A Visitor Economy Destination Management Plan is now being developed and will support the Council's new heritage strategy.

Case Study: Carlton Hill Summer Event

Carlton Hill Community Action Group was funded to hold a Summer Event at Carlton Hill Recreation Ground on 16 August 2024, which was attended by up to 900 people. They had 25 stall holders and held Olympic style races, had dance displays and offered local residents the opportunity to try kickboxing and improve their football skills. Sara Davies, Carlton Community Connector said, "It was a wonderful coming together of the local community, including all ages, with a wide range of ethnically diverse communities represented, as well as people with a range of disabilities and health conditions." The attendees feedback was very positive, "It's so lovely seeing the park being used", "Can we have it every year?", "As a single person with not many local friends I really enjoyed walking down with my dog, watching all the fun. It was really well organised and accommodating."

CCTV

UKSPF funding has been specifically allocated to support the council in addressing issues such as shoplifting, drug use, violent crime, fly-tipping, public disorder and antisocial behaviour. The council is committed to preventing and detecting crime, improving safety for residents and businesses across the borough, and CCTV provides reassurance for the community.

New CCTV cameras have been installed across the borough in specific areas such as St Mary's Recreation Ground in Redhill and Calverton shopping precinct, to assist Nottinghamshire Police to assist in investigating a variety of crimes, as well as aiding the council's Community Safety Team.

Equipment in Arnot Hill Park and Netherfield, has been upgraded to improve the image quality from the cameras, which are transmitted to, recorded, and monitored from the council's central CCTV Control Room which is located in a Council and Police shared Partnership Hub, this investment continues to demonstrate the council's commitment to making the borough a safer place to live and work.

In addition, CCTV evidence was used to assist in finding several missing people, and the cameras were used in incidents where enforcement officers reviewed images.

Strength in Community

The Strength in Community Project (£142,800 UKSPF) has delivered three community grant programmes, a Gedling Guide, a Virtual Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Model and community facilities have been supported.

33 local community and voluntary organisations in Gedling have received 'VCS Resilience Grants' to deliver support services. Activities funded include social connection and drop in for disadvantaged groups, crisis support and mental health intervention, strength-based exercise provision for older people, dementia support and social activities.

The Gedling Guide has been distributed through community pick up points and at key local events and 26 VCS groups

Strength in Community Case Study

Empowered Women UK were awarded £5000 through the Gedling UKSPF 'Strength In Community' Grant Fund. They ran art wellbeing workshops for local women at St George's Centre in Netherfield.

"We are having a small art exhibition this evening to showcase and celebrate the artwork done by local women as part of the funded art wellbeing workshops. We are hoping the exhibition (of around 30 paintings) will inspire other local women to join the sessions the tutor will run in Feb and March as well. We are also tying it in with the More In Common work of the Jo Cox Foundation (we're a partner organisation) and doubling it up as our Great Winter Get Together event."

– Sally Olewe-Richards, Chair at Empowered Women UK



Community Grant Case Study

The Ark Advice Centre in Gedling were awarded UKSPF funding through Newark & Sherwood CVS to enable them to transfer from a charitable trust to a CIO and towards staff salary which enables them to run a welfare rights advice service and community provisions. Joel Baldry, Project Manager at the Ark gave this example of the welfare advice and support they offer.

They have been working with a gentleman who has some learning disabilities and lived in a one-bedroom flat with his grandfather, who he is the carer for. The Ark staff initially gave advice around their benefits and spoke to the housing provider about potentially moving the Grandad to suitable accommodation for the Grandad. They helped them complete the relevant housing forms and the Grandad was given his own flat, which has allowed the Grandson and his partner, and their new baby, to enjoy their own home without such severe overcrowding. The move has also meant that the Grandad has had to notify the benefit agencies of his change of circumstances and move to the Universal Credit system which he could not have completed alone, so they have supported with that too. The whole family is in a much better, more stable position following their advice and support.

Joel Baldry said *“It has been a pleasure working with you both, joining in the meetings you have been hosting and supporting people in Gedling. The network you have set up and maintained has been enormously useful for our work and helped us to help more people who are in difficulty. The information that you and the team have been able to get to us about funding opportunities, training offers, and networking events has been excellent and has allowed us to improve our services in many ways. Aside from my work, as a person who lives in Gedling Borough, knowing that there is a team of people striving to make the most of the area I live in and ensure that none of its potential goes untapped, and that it’s vulnerable citizens are cared for is really very encouraging and something I am grateful for, I know that not every borough has such a great service. Thank you”*.



“The UKSPF funding has been a real game-changer for Cornwater Evergreens. It’s allowed us to continue to serve warm, nutritious meals every day and offer a huge variety of engaging activities—everything from gentle exercise sessions to lively music afternoons, art workshops, and even mini zoo visits. Our members look forward to coming along, catching up with friends, and staying active in ways that really spark their interests. For many, Cornwater has become a genuine lifeline—a place where they feel supported, valued, and part of a vibrant community. We’re so grateful for the support that helps keep our older neighbours thriving.”

– Peter Dickson, Chief Executive Officer, Cornwater Evergreens.



The Gedling Guide

Support and connection
in your community

Donate to our local food banks. You can drop off food donations at collection points in local supermarkets

If you have a concern about an adult or child that is an emergency or risk to life, call 999 or for non-emergency call 0300 500 80 80

www.gedling.gov.uk/resident/community/givingforgedling

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Sports Facilities Funding

Significant progress has been made on several sports facility improvement projects in Gedling Borough, supported by funding from UKSPF. These projects aim to enhance access to local sports facilities and provide more opportunities for residents to participate in sporting activities.

Calverton Miners Welfare Football Club:

The new 3G pitch, funded with £100,000 (£663,577 match funding from the Football Foundation), is due to be completed in April 2025 and local sports teams are looking forward to using these new facilities.

Arnold Leisure Centre:

Additional funding has been secured, bringing the total investment for improvements to £35,386.

Conway Park Tennis Courts:

Renovation work began in January 2025, with a total project cost of £152,080. This includes £36,645 from Gedling Borough Council (secured through the UKSPF) and £112,935.17 from the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA). The project will deliver four new courts, accessible booking systems, and organised activities such as free weekly tennis sessions and local leagues.

Lambley Lane Recreation Ground:

New sports changing facilities have been installed, featuring solar panels and enhanced security measures, along with upgrades to essential facilities. These developments will support grassroots football and community programs run by clubs including Mapperley All Stars, who provide football coaching for children and adults. The total cost of the project was £400,000 with UKSPF providing £242,029, the Football Foundation £91,279 and the rest provided by Gedling Borough Council.



UKSPF continues to positively impact sports and leisure in Gedling. The project has already benefited Burton Road Jubilee Park (£22,207) and Carlton Forum Leisure Centre (squash courts transformation into fitness suite £14,406) along with aesthetic improvements and security measures at Nottingham Road Pavilion.

These improvements are part of our ongoing strategy to increase local sports participation and ensure residents have access to high-quality facilities across the borough.



Supporting Local Business

Introduction

East Midlands Chamber of Commerce were commissioned through UKSPF funding to create and deliver a programme of support into the boroughs business community. A wide range of initiatives accompanied this delivery including sustainability and energy grants, 1-1 business advisor surgeries and bespoke retail advisor support. We have seen growth and skills gaps improved across the borough from this activity.

Business support measures to drive employment growth and support for town and local centre retailer has been a priority for UKSPF funding along with the provision of business space to encourage start-ups and micro businesses.

Support for businesses in developing decarbonisation plans and financial support for businesses through grants have been delivered along with a local business forum, offering practical support as well as an opportunity for networking.

What we have delivered

391 businesses receiving non-financial support

391 businesses receiving grants

4 potential entrepreneurs provided assistance to be business ready

2 commercial buildings developed or improved

805 sqm of commercial buildings developed or improved

16 decarbonisation plans developed

14 Jobs created

7 new businesses created

£642,500 of Increased investment

9 enterprises adopting new or improved products or services

The AMP

The AMP, located on the former Arnold Market site, opened in 2022 and has since become home to seven retail units on its ground floor. The first floor has recently been redeveloped to provide modern office space, a meeting room, kitchen and shower facilities for local commercial businesses to rent. £596,000 from UKSPF has enabled 343 sqm of commercial space to be developed and improved.

The enterprise centre has been built sustainably, and minimises its energy usage with solar panels, large windows and a southwest elevation to capture more sunlight. It's an affordable and nurturing business environment for start-ups and established companies, with a vibrant business community and on-site Post Office.



Hill Crest Business Park

An attractive, self-contained industrial estate currently containing 8 industrial business units, which are fully occupied.

Construction of four new industrial units has been funded by UKSPF (£158,263) and once completed in April/May 2025, they will be marketed by Gedling Borough Council and tailored to meet the needs of local small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

The new premises are designed to blend in with neighbouring facilities, fitting seamlessly into the existing site. Sufficient car parking space has been provided for tenants of the new units along with the addition of four disabled access bays and two EV chargers.



Retail Advisors

Ovy Design team, Wendy and Marcus Walker have been funded by £34,000 from UKSPF to engage over 227 businesses. 100 businesses now have action plans and over 50 businesses have attended Retailer workshops so far with 220 attendees requesting the digital content of the workshops.

A series of 14 workshops have been delivered by OvyDesign, including the following topics: Adapt to Today's Economy and Boost Sales, Social Media 101, Branding and Marketing for Retail Success, Design made free and easy using Canva, Social Media Scheduling, Sustainability and Photography.

“ Morning everyone! I was reflecting on yesterday's workshop and, inspired by Liz's advice, I want to take a moment to thank everyone who supported me and my business last year. I realise I hadn't expressed my gratitude to Wendy and Marcus before the end of the year. Not only were they my lucky charm this week (I received an amazing call about a great deal while meeting with them), but their incredible and personalised approach to my business challenges was truly one of the best things that happened for my business last year. Thank you so much for your continued support, for understanding when things don't go so well, and for celebrating my small wins with me. It means the world! ”

- Simona, Exdi Furniture



Small Business Advisor/ Accelerator Programme

Funded by UKSPF (£114,714) the Advisors are working with 18 local businesses on decarbonisation plans and the Sustainability Grants have all been allocated. The Small Business Adviser is providing general business advice to Gedling SMEs regarding business growth, funding and marketing.

The following has been achieved:

141 enterprises have received non-financial support (Small Business Adviser)

75 enterprises have received non-financial support (Decarbonisation)

14 Jobs created

7 new businesses created

16 decarbonisation plans developed

5 businesses have received sustainability grants



Skin Solace case study

Natalee Onyeché set up her plant-based, natural skincare and wellness business in 2020 and today employs four people. She has premises at The AMP in in Arnold as well as a website where she sells her skin and body products. Skin Solace also offers candle and soap-making workshops which are bookable online. Her business has evolved to also include management of a local market, by her premises, which has gone from zero to 25 new traders in recent months.

Natalee has been supported by the Accelerator Project which is delivered by East Midlands Chamber and funded by Gedling Borough Council's share of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

After getting in touch with Council, Natalee heard about the 1-2-1 business support that was available from Accelerator. She has been helped by the Chamber's Head of Business Support Services, Paul Stuart who conducted a business diagnostic.

“Paul supported me to have clarity about what I was doing and why. This brought me back to my original ideas for Skin Solace which were not about retail but more focussed on wholesale. Today I have two new retailers stocking my products and I also create white label bespoke products for other businesses.”

– Natalee Onyeché, Owner



Socials for Creatives case study

Socials For Creatives is a specialised social media marketing agency dedicated to helping heart-led small/ medium business owners enhance their online presence through management, coaching and strategy.

Business owner, Lexie Barker has attended Accelerator workshops on AI, automation, and financial management. Accelerator is funded by Gedling Borough Council's share of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and delivered by East Midlands Chamber.

Lexie has also tapped into one-to-one business support from Chamber Business Adviser, Lisa Baggott who has helped Lexie explore the best

ways to move forward, including through signing up to available courses and exploring funding options. This has led to securing business growth grant funding for coaching on AI and marketing, enabling the business to better leverage technology for growth.

“The support I've received has been phenomenal. Lisa's ongoing support has helped me stay focused and on track. Without guidance from Lisa and her fellow business adviser Alison North, I wouldn't have secured the grant or gained valuable knowledge from the courses and networking events I've attended.”

– Lexie Barker, Owner



Business Grants

Nottinghamshire County Council delivered a grants programme in partnership with the Council's Economic Growth and Regeneration Team for Business Start Ups and Business Growth. The grants have enabled companies to invest in their skills and development (£139,090).

The Gedling Business Network meetings have been a vehicle to promote the grants and support businesses with eligibility, application processes and audit. Over 70 enquiries have been received, and 24 applications approved. Both the East Midlands Chamber Small Business Advisor and Retail Business Advisors have supported businesses with their applications for funding.

“ The UKSPF grant played a crucial role in expanding Vesiculab, enabling the acquisition of advanced IT equipment for graphic design, significantly improving in-house marketing capabilities. Additionally, the grant supported the purchase of cutting-edge production equipment, facilitating both the scaling-up of existing products and accelerating the development of new ones. As a result of these UKSPF-sponsored investments, Vesiculab projects a 50% increase in sales this year and plans to hire two full-time employees at its Bestwood Village location. ”

– Dimitri Aubert, Vesiculab

The following has been achieved:

65 businesses have received non-financial support

24 businesses have been awarded grants

Business grant feedback

“ The UKSPF grant has been instrumental in helping us grow Tri-Dosha. It enabled us to hire our consultant, Louise White, to develop a focused direct sales recruitment strategy, expanding our reach and impact. So far we have recruited 6 Holistic Consultants to help us promote our products and methods across the UK. ”

– Sunita Passi, Tri-Dosha



Sustainability grants

East Midlands Chamber delivered a grants programme for Sustainability Grants. The grants contributed towards the installation of energy efficiency measures. An investment of £50,000 in sustainability grants have been awarded to Gedling businesses over the last 3 years. Local companies such as Blue Stamp Travel have transformed their building's energy efficiency rating and substantially lowered their energy costs through the installation of a solar battery and 2 replacement energy efficient external doors.



Case Study: Blue Stamp Travel

Keeping an eagle eye on costs has become more important than ever following the business's recent relocation to the old bank hall in Daybrook. This 100-year-old building certainly offers real opportunities when it comes to improving energy efficiency. A fully funded energy audit gave the business the evidence needed to successfully apply for a decarbonisation grant from Gedling Borough Council.

“During the original renovations, 22 solar panels were installed with the intention of adding a battery later down the line. A battery has now been installed

and already the property is 100% off-grid with surplus energy being exported to the grid. Financially, this will make a difference from day 1 and the investment will be repaid very quickly. Equally importantly, the environmental impact of creating green energy is very satisfying.

The other area identified for improvements at 'The Old Bank' was replacement doors with better insulation. These have been ordered and will be installed very soon, improving the quality of the workspace as well as providing an environmental benefit, reducing the amount of heating needed.”

- Steve Manderson, Managing Director

Interior Designers, Boyes Design Ltd in Netherfield used the funding to replace outdated gas heaters with an energy-efficient air source heating system. Sam Boyes said, “This upgrade aligns with our commitment to sustainability by reducing reliance on fossil fuels, lowering energy costs, and enhancing the workspace environment for our team and clients.”

Wheldon's Garage Ltd in Carlton Hill received a £10k sustainability grant for a project to enhance service capabilities and sustainability through the installation of solar panels, energy-efficient electric heating, LED lighting, an EV charging point, and a 3-phase consumer unit.

Ash Door Furniture in Colwick used their funding for a project to replace fluorescent lighting and gas-powered heating with LED lighting and infrared heating panels, alongside the purchase of a Kärcher industrial cleaning machine to enhance workplace conditions.

Another sustainability project involved the installation of a 72-panel solar photovoltaic (PV) system on the roof of Ernest Bexon & Co., a longstanding printing business in Arnold.



Accelerator case study: Bexons

Ernest Bexon & Coy (Printers) Ltd, known as Bexons, began trading over 60 years ago. It was created by Ernest Bexon, his son-in-law, Michael Morris and his brother Geoff Morris.

It is a family-run, trade printing business based in Daybrook, Nottingham and has a team of 11 people, producing everything from business cards to B1 format sheets for B2B and B2C customers. One major barrier to growth for Bexons has been rising energy costs. Over the last 5 years, energy prices have doubled for the printing business, significantly impacting its profit margins.

The Accelerator project and Chamber Business Adviser, Lisa Baggott have supported Bexons to combat some of these challenges. Lisa has provided one-to-one advice to Director, Ryan Morris initially starting with a business diagnostic to see where the business was and wanted to be. Bexons took advantage of a fully funded premises energy audit which identified energy efficiency improvements and opportunities to reduce costs.

Lisa also helped Bexons successfully apply for a £10,000 sustainability grant (80% contribution) towards the cost of purchasing and installing solar panels. Ryan estimates that these panels will save the business a massive £3,800 a year!

“This installation produces sustainable, on-site energy, lowering our reliance on grid electricity and reducing annual carbon emissions by over 15%. The project aligns with our broader decarbonisation goals, helping us combat rising energy costs while maintaining a commitment to environmentally responsible practices. “The support we received through the whole process has been superb. We would like to give a special mention to Lisa Baggott who assisted us throughout and was always available if we needed help with any of the grant process.”

- Ryan Morris, Director



Gedling Business Support Network

Small and medium sized businesses (SMEs) have been getting together on a regular basis to attend the Gedling Business Support Network, 100 local businesses have attended at least one meeting since July 2024.

The networking events, delivered by East Midlands Chamber are a popular way for local businesses to connect, share ideas and learn about practical and financial business support, available across Gedling Borough.

Each event has had an inspirational keynote speaker discussing a variety of current topics, including 'Smarter Selling', 'how Artificial Intelligence can be used in business' and 'how to do Champagne Marketing on a Lemonade budget' the benefits of social media. During these sessions, businesses have also heard about the Gedling UKSPF grants and the support available from business advisors.

Feedback has been encouraging, suggesting that many businesses find the networking events beneficial in terms of gaining practical knowledge, building relationships with their peers and creating new opportunities for collaboration.

Following the January event, local business owners met with the organisers to discuss the future of the network, preferred formats for the event and suggested topics they would like covered at future events.

Businesses Feedback

"I found the event very interesting and informative. Keep up the good work!"

"Really good chats. Thought provoking!"

"Nice format this time round with a "main speaker" for a longer period plus other shorter slots."

"Great first event for us! Thank you, please let us know of future events."



People and Skills

Introduction

Investing in people is at the heart of our commitment to creating a stronger, more inclusive local economy. Through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), has focused on empowering residents with the skills and support they need to thrive in the workforce.

Initiatives have provided practical assistance to economically inactive individuals, helping them secure and sustain employment. Gaps in mainstream education have also been addressed and targeted training has been made available to support those facing barriers to career progression.

Recognising the growing importance of digital skills, we have equipped residents with the tools needed to adapt to an evolving job market. By funding programmes tailored to local skills needs, we have ensured that opportunities for growth and development remain accessible to all.

Together, these investments are building a resilient, skilled workforce ready to meet the challenges and opportunities of the future.

- Practical support for economically inactive people assisting them to find and sustain work.
- Support to help people in employment, who are not supported by mainstream provision to address barriers to accessing education and training courses.
- Support to help residents to upskill or learn new digital skills to take advantage of new employment opportunities.
- Funding to support local skills needs.

What we have delivered

123 people supported to access basic skills

105 people supported to engage in life skills

526 people supported to engage in job-searching

Transform your Future

Gedling Borough Council carried out a joint commission with Futures to improve the employability and long-term prospects of economically inactive residents through the 'Transform Your Future' programme (£200,000). To date, the programme has supported just over 100 participants to engage in the Programme, either on a one-to-one or group basis. Within the programme, £53,191 was allocated to Community Grants which is being managed through a Consortium led by Newark and Sherwood Community Voluntary Service, CVS. The following has been achieved:

110 socially excluded people have accessed support

107 people have been supported to engage in job-searching

Start in South Nottinghamshire Platform

The Start portal is a joint partnership between Gedling Borough Council, Broxtowe Borough Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council who make up the South Nottinghamshire area.

This sustainable initiative provides a comprehensive online resource to help local people find employment, training and educational opportunities. Online support includes job searching, CV and cover letter writing alongside virtual work experience programmes from global and local businesses.

Local businesses have been made aware of Start through the Gedling Business Support Network as well as ongoing digital communications and are encouraged to promote vacancies and work experience opportunities on the portal.



HGV Driver Training

The HGV Category C (Class 2) Driving Licence Skills Bootcamp Programme has been a great success of UKSPF, with all 30 places fully enrolled, with 19 passed to date and 17 in work with life changing careers for individuals, families and the wider Gedling and Nottingham economy.

Driving skills are in high demand due to factors such as an ageing workforce and perceptions about earning potential and working conditions. UKSPF funding has enabled the Council to support local residents to access opportunities which might not have otherwise been available to them, to fulfil their career aspirations and provide local employers with trained drivers who are looking for work or to transition into new jobs.

Our highly skilled delivery partners, HGVC, worked to promote the opportunity to Gedling residents and held two open days, with support to engage with local transport and logistics employers, actively looking to employ into this sector.

A collaborative approach has been taken with colleagues in the Department for Work and Pension to feed candidates into the training and engage with the Employers in the Transport and Logistics Sector, adding to the success to bring in key partners and stakeholders.

Forklift Truck Driver Training

Due to the rapid growth in the warehousing and distribution industry, UKSPF has been vital in offering fully funded training opportunities for Gedling residents in accessing FLT driver training. Also delivered by our skilled training partner, HGVC, there was unprecedented demand for this training and following applicant screening, HGVC held open days at the end of 2024 and delivered the course in early 2025 in local warehouse training facilities.

All 38 places were enrolled onto by Gedling residents, with on-going training taking place since the start of 2025. 20 job offers have been secured by successful candidates to date. FLT operators benefit from increased job prospects and career stability. This has also enabled under represented groups such as women to enter the sector.



Case Study: Nick Norman

“ I’ve always wanted to drive lorries ever since I passed my car driving test in 2004 but unfortunately, I was never able to afford it. When I came across the HGVC training, through a friend I applied and was accepted. It was a dream come true that I could finally get my lorry licence. I’m so happy I passed everything first time!

I enjoyed every moment of learning to drive a lorry. I was lucky as I was a coach driver, so I picked it up straight away. I found HGV class 2 training wasn’t much different to driving a coach. If

anything, it’s easier as they’re not as long. It just felt awesome being behind the wheel of a lorry after a 20 year wait.

In September 2024, I started working for a great family-run business called Mobile Services driving a car transporter based at Ellistown, Coalville and I couldn’t be happier.

The impact of getting my new job has been great. I’m earning more money for myself and my family. My ambition now is to get up to the 11-car transporter with this company which is HGV class 1. My company have just confirmed that they are putting me through my class 1 licence, following my probation period, which is fantastic news!

I would highly recommend HGVC to friends and family, which I have already done on a few occasions. It’s the best thing I have done in my driving career. It’s changed mine and my family’s life and I have HGVC to thank for it. ”





Digital Skills Training

The local skills training provider, Inspire Learning were commissioned to offer basic I.T. skills courses aimed at helping residents, particularly the 50+ age group to improve their digital skills. This training was delivered at libraries and community spaces cross the borough, as well as online making it accessible to all.

A wide range of free courses have been made available including MS Office basics, digital skills for wellbeing, Artificial Intelligence, AI image production, online shopping, animation, smartphone usage and internet safety. Over 75 people have been supported to access basic skills to date.

Learner feedback from the Basic Computer Skills course in Arnold, December 2024:

“I am an NHS cleaner, not touched a computer since school. I want to work my way up in the NHS and will do other computer courses after this to build my skills and CV”. Anna.

“My children do everything for me. I want to be able to do for myself. I didn’t know anything at the start, but I am motivated to no longer ask the children.” Jane.

ESOL Skills Training

English for Speakers of Other Language courses, ESOL have also been delivered by Inspire Learning with the support of UKSPF funding, across libraries and community spaces across Gedling Borough and online.

These courses are designed for people who are wanting to learn English as a second language and want to learn some everyday phrases that will help them to communicate with others.

This training has been predominantly aimed at supporting Hong Kong and Ukraine communities to develop their English language skills, but available to all as required.

Some of the sessions had themes such as festive words and topics usually covered included greetings and introductions, shopping, ordering food, and using local facilities.

The following has been achieved to date:

48 people have been supported to access basic skills



Learner case study:

Rhiana Ogundipe attended the Basic Computer Skills course in Netherfield delivered by Inspire, she said “I have taken a photograph of my certificate to show Andy (my community development worker). I want to do more courses now.” Rhiana suffers with high anxiety, had very low IT skills, is dyslexic and has PTSD. Just getting her to attend the course, was a success. She attended all four sessions and has now booked on other Inspire courses. Rhiana sees this as a first possible step to getting a job but rightly continues to prioritise her mental health.

Gedling UK Shared Prosperity Fund Programme

The table below shows the full programme of projects supported in Gedling with the UK Shared Prosperity Funding under the three themes of Communities and Place, Supporting Local Business and People and Skills.

Gedling UK Shared Prosperity Fund Programme	Amount Allocated
Communities and Place	
Town and Local Centres Improvements - physical improvements and events	£318,246
Event and Culture - numerous events and arts and cultural activities funded	£141,800
Strength in Community - community grants, Virtual CVS created, and Gedling Guide funded	£165,831
King George V Park Toilet - changing places toilet built for disabled residents	£62,000
CCTV - new and improvements to existing CCTV cameras	£56,390
Sports Facilities - investment in multiple sports facilities	£510,198
Economic Growth, Visitor Economy and Heritage Strategy Plan - cross theme initiative to produce strategies	£29,974
Arnot Hill Park Improvements - replacement posts and railings	£4,000
Supporting Local Business	
Economic Growth, Visitor Economy and Heritage Strategy Plan - cross theme initiative to produce strategies	£29,974
AMP Enterprise Centre - creating space for small businesses	£596,000
Hill Crest Business Park Expansion - building new business units	£158,263
The Retail Adviser - supporting retail businesses	£34,000
Small Business Adviser - business advice for local businesses	£34,000
Sustainability Grants - direct support for businesses to reduce carbon	£57,500
NCC Small Business Grants Adviser - support for businesses applying for grants	£31,590
Small Business Grants - start up and Growth Grants direct to local businesses	£50,000
Accelerator Programme - support for local businesses to complete energy audits	£80,714
Gedling Business Network - bringing businesses together to share experiences and learn together through topical presentations	£2,000
Steam Data - economic performance data to inform plans and strategies	£4,500
People and Skills	
Transform Your Future - support for the economically inactive	£200,000
START Platform - an online tool with employment, training and educational opportunities provided alongside practical support such as CV creation	£6,017
HGV Driver / Forklift Truck Driver Courses - practical training for local residents	£135,000
Digital Training Courses - delivered both online and in person	£33,987
ESOL - delivered both online and in person	£7,909
Festival of Science and Curiosity - support for activities in the borough	£2,000
Total	£2,751,893
Management & Administration	£114,662
Overall Total	£2,866,555

Closing Statement

This report has set out what can be achieved with external funding, and this has been used to provide a whole range of support for Gedling's communities and neighbourhoods, our town and local centres and our local businesses.

The funding has been invested in sustainable activities that will ensure this funding creates a lasting legacy, whether in building the asset base of local community organisations or helping local businesses to grow, sports facilities have been improved, and business space has been created.

It has been particularly refreshing to hear from the direct beneficiaries how this funding has impacted their lives.

*** Please note all figures are correct at time of going to print**



For more information about the project, contact Kathryn Banning, Economic Growth Officer at kathryn.banning@gedling.gov.uk or 07815 675 906.

