



Report to: Policy & Performance Improvement Committee: 25 November 2024
 Director Lead: Matt Lamb, Director - Planning & Growth
 Lead Officer: Neil Cuttall, Business Manager - Economic Growth & Visitor Economy
 Elaine Poon, Town Programme Manager

Report Summary	
Report Title	Newark Towns Fund Update
Purpose of Report	To provide an update on the progress and achievements of Newark Towns Fund projects.
Recommendations	That the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee note and welcome the progress made in the delivery of the various Newark Towns Fund projects.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Members will recall that in November 2019, Newark was selected as one of the 101 towns that would be eligible to apply for an up to £25m Town Fund Grant. In July 2020 the Council submitted a five-year Town Investment Plan on behalf of the Newark Town Board (formed in January 2020) that identified ten priority projects it advocated should be funded by the available grant. The [Town Investment Plan](#) (TIP) was approved in May 2021 and the full award of £25m grant was offered by the Government. The funding has to be committed by 31 March 2026.
- 1.2 The TIP identified priorities by harvesting data, opinion and strategy from a range of sources to develop the following 4 pillars of change for Newark as outlined in the below chart:



- 1.3 It was through these pillars that proposed interventions were assessed in order to select the ten priority projects. The ten priority projects in the Newark TIP were identified as:
1. **Newark Construction College** – offers training, re-training and work experience placements to facilitate Newark residents obtaining jobs in high-demand, stable sectors such as plumbing, bricklaying and gas engineering.
 2. **YMCA Community & Activity Village** – offers leisure facilities, education and training, and access to services such as integrated health care and wellbeing to residents and young people.
 3. **Air & Space Institute (ASI)** – a state-of-the-art educational facility offering further and higher educational pathways in highly paid, future-proofed sectors: aviation engineering, cyber security and pilot studies.
 4. **20 Minute Cycle Town** – a Town-scale trial with Brompton Bikes to provide a cycle hire offer alongside a national brand within the town.
 5. **32 Stodman Street** – repurposing a significant and vacant retail space to create high quality town centre residential homes, ground floor commercial opportunities, and new public realm improvements.
 6. **Newark Cultural Heart** – a proposal to encourage footfall within the town through a combination of town centre events and animation alongside some physical enhancements of Newark Market Place in order to increase feelings of vibrancy and civic pride.
 7. **Castle Gatehouse** – a new Visitor offer for the Town, recreating and reanimating the original entrance to the Castle and unlocking visitor and educational experiences to enhance the cultural offer and drive footfall.
 8. **Relocation of Newark Police Station** (subsequently withdrawn) – proposals to co-locate public services at Castle House and redevelop the existing site for a new residential offer on the edge of the town, close to Newark Northgate rail station.
 9. **Smart Innovation Supply Chain & Logistics Enterprise Zone (SISCLOG)** – working with the University of Lincoln to establish at a key Gateway logistics-led gateway into Newark comprising business space and starter units within a greener setting in order to allow access to better paid jobs into the town. Proposals would also have seen the relocation of Newark Lorry Park to the north of the Town.
 10. **Newark Southern Link Road (SLR)** – a long-standing aspiration to unlock growth and ease congestion, connecting the A1 and A46 to the south of the Town.
- 1.4 The Newark Town Deal signed with Government made clear that it was for the Newark Town Board in collaboration with NSDC to determine how the spend of the £25m grant would be split. Any funding would also need to be subject to Green Book Business case assessments, the Government’s chosen methodology to assess value-for-money and BCR’s (Benefit Cost Ratio’s) – a metric which offers an indication on the ‘fundability’ of

a project using public sector grant. NSDC and Newark Towns Board quickly determined that splitting the Towns Fund grant across 9 of the identified projects would likely see them delivered. This was not the case with the Newark Southern Link Road which had a much larger funding gap. It was determined that NSDC and the Board should explore alternative funding sources to make this happen. NSDC and the Board also identified the need for an Assurance process in order to ensure transparency of decision-making.

- 1.5 For awareness, the Newark Southern Link Road project was subject to a joint NSDC, Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) and Urban & Civic (Master developer) bid in June 2021 under the then-Governments Levelling Up Fund Round (LUF) 1 competitive funding process. The Government confirmed that we had successfully secured the funding in December 2021. For completeness this project is still captured below given that it remains one of the Newark TIP priority projects but was funded from the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) rather than Towns Fund.

2.0 Assurance Process

- 2.1 An Assurance Framework was developed by NSDC and Newark Town Board which introduced a number of steps any Project Sponsor would need to undertake in order to secure the funding as outlined below*. Full details of the Assurance Framework can be found [here](#).

Step 1 – Green Book Business Case Development

The process for completion of the Green Book assesses a range of measures in order to understand the impact of particular proposals. It also offers a Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR). Depending on the size and maturity of the project they would produce an Outline Business Case (OBC), Full Business Case (FBC) or both. All OBC's and FBC's were subject to the steps described here. Project Sponsors were all given access to a relevant Green Book specialist (Hatch consulting) to develop their Business Cases.

Step 2 – Independent Review of submitted Green Book Business Case

The Council is required to perform the role of Accountable Body on behalf of Government for the purposes of administering the Towns Fund grant (and the subsequent LUF grant). In order to support this role, Green Book specialists (Quad) were appointed to work closely with the Council's s151 Officer to independently review any submitted OBC or FBC's. This included producing a critical report which also challenged and/or identified any risks. Any Business Case which failed this assurance test was returned to the Project Sponsor for further clarification.

Step 3 – Approval of Final Green Book Business Case by NSDC via the Council's S151 Officer

Informed by the review at Step 2 the Council's s151 Officer would then come to a determination on whether to recommend supporting release of the Towns Fund grant to Government.

Step 4 – Submission of a Summary Document to Government

If supported by the Council's s151 Officer a Summary Document on the Government's template was produced and submitted for approval.

Step 5 – Grant Funding Agreement with the Project Sponsor

Subject to successful completion of Steps 3 and 4 above grant funding would be made available to Project Sponsors via a Grant Funding Agreement. This effectively tied the outputs to be delivered to the approved Business Case.

Step 6 – Project Adjustment Requests (PAR)

As Members will be aware, capital projects of the scale of some of those in the Towns Fund are such that additional funding changes are required over the lifetime of a project. If a change is required there is a process which is followed with NSDC which re-appraises the impact of any request. A formal PAR is then submitted to Government which, if approved, then allows a variation to any Grant Funding Agreement. As detailed below there have been a range of approved PARs across the Towns Fund projects.

*For awareness the Newark Construction College was not required to follow the above process as it was funded through ‘accelerated funds’, released in advance of confirmation of receipt of the full £25m of Towns Fund.

- 2.2 The Policy & Performance Improvement Committee will be aware from the previous report to Committee (on 26 June 2023) that grant funding spend (specifically the Towns Fund and LUF1) has been subject to an internal audit report which identified ‘reasonable assurance’ in January 2024 after a review in Autumn 2023. The level of assurance is graded from No assurance; limited assurance; reasonable assurance; and substantial assurance. The report provided some suggested improvements that could be undertaken. The assurance process remains the same, with NSDC continuing to perform the role of accountable body. The separation between NSDC in this role as opposed to NSDC as Project Sponsor remain important, as does securing, when required, independent advice. Updates on all projects are detailed below at 3.0.
- 2.3 The Newark Town Board has had a refresh of membership in March 2024. Following Tom Cartledge’s resignation as Chair in April 2024, Penny Taylor MBE (representing Newark Town Centre Partnership and Newark College) and Louise Casey-Simpson (representing Newark and Sherwood CVS) were elected as Co-Chairs on 30 May 2024, with Tony Aspbury (representing Newark Showground) as Vice Chairman.
- 2.4 The Newark Town Board has met on several occasions over the last year to consider principally Towns Fund project updates and the development of proposals for the Newark Long Term Plan for Towns Fund (known now as the ‘We Are Newark Town Investment Plan’), the latest grant funding opportunity potentially available. This fund is subject to separate reports to Cabinet and is pending further guidance from the newly elected Government.

3.0 Funding Update

- 3.1 As of 30 September 2024, a total of £19,099,000 of the £25m Town Fund Grant has been received equating to 76.4%. It is forecast that the full £25m Grant will be contractually committed by 31 March 2026 and spent by 31 March 2027.

3.2 The programme has attracted £27,961,340 in Grant match funding thus far equating to 59.3% matched funds. It is expected that a further match funding will be attracted by the time the full £25 million funding has been fully drawn down for spend. This means that as at November 2024, for every £1 Towns Fund money spent, it is expected to attract at least £1.46 in match funding. The following table shows the total Towns Fund and Match Funding ratio to date, per project, as existing.

Project	Town Fund Grant	Match: Direct Investment
Stodman Street	£3,980,000	£8,900,000
Air & Space Institute	£10,600,000	£5,000,000
Newark Heart	£4,303,737	£600,000 (revenue over 3 years)
Community Activity Village	£2,000,000	£11,200,000
Cycle Town	£200,000	£50,000
Castle	£3,310,000	£2,679,955
SiScLOG	£106,263	£0
Programme Management	£500,000	£0
TOTAL	£25,000,000	£27,961,340
Construction College*	£389,000*	£133,100

* Accelerated project (in addition to the £25m)

4.0 Project Progress

4.1 The following table shows the progress of the projects, including changes to grant profiles following the aforementioned Project Adjustment Request (PAR) approvals:

Project	Key Dates & Milestones	Original Grant Allocation	Revised Grant Allocation
Newark Construction College	Opened in September 2021. Significantly over-subscribed prompting ongoing discussions with Newark college on potential ability to expand.	£389,000	No Change
YMCA Community and Activity Village	Opened in July 2022, with sports pitches and athletics track having been open and available prior to that date. Community Activity Village now supports and engages thousands of children, young people and their families daily in creative, sport, outdoor and experiential activities.	£2,000,000	No Change

Air and Space Institute	Completed in March 2024, with students having been on-boarded in the previous 2 academic years. The first time we have had Further and Higher Education in the Town.	£10,600,000	No Change
20 Minute Cycle Town	Completed on a phased basis by April 2022. Brompton looking to expand provision via Newark Hospital, Middlebeck and individual discussions with local employers as part of their active travel aspirations.	£200,000	No Change
Stodman Street Redevelopment	Demolition completed; contractor appointed for the construction with expected completion in March 2026.	£2,200,000	£3,980,000
Newark Cultural Heart	NSDC took on responsibility for the project following a request from Newark Town Council in February 2023. Events program has continued since, and animation activity has continued since with a commission to enhance Newark Market Place due to be presented to market for a Design & Build contract prior to Christmas 2024. Work on the Market Place expected to start in 2026.	£2,200,000	£4,303,737
Castle Gatehouse	Funding and relevant consents secured with build contractor expected to be appointed by Christmas 2024. Start on site expected spring 2025.	£3,000,000	£3,310,000
Relocation of Newark Police Station	Request to remove from the programme in September 2021 by the Police and Crime Commissioner. Removal agreed on 26 November 2021 by the Newark Town Board.	N/A	N/A
SISCLOG/ Newark Gateway	Report taken to Cabinet on 14th May 2024 which explored interdependencies with relocation of lorry park, the A46 Bypass and cost challenges of delivering a scheme. Project paused by the District Council for the purposes of the Towns Fund programme, with a request that Newark Towns Board reallocate funding to other Towns Fund projects.	£4,400,000	£106,263

Southern Link Road	<p>Levelling Up Fund 1 secured and spending, as detailed to Cabinet on the 4th October 2022.</p> <p>Two contractors now delivering the SLR (at the A46 and A1 ends).</p> <p>The SLR will unlock the remaining homes (taking total to up to 3,150), country parks, open space, local centre and employment land.</p>	<p>£20m LUF1 £7m D2N2 LEP £2.5m NSDC</p>	<p>£20m LUF1 £7m D2N2 LEP £5m NSDC £3m NCC</p>
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5.0 Project Outputs

5.1 The following table shows the outputs of the projects to date. As with Towns Deal projects nationally there are varying degrees of success and legacy with each of the Newark Towns Fund projects. The next section explores not only what contractually is/was required of each project, but the additional outputs achieved by partners beyond the contractual requirement.

Project	Required Output, per Contractual Commitment	Output Achieved to Date (Q2 24/25)	Additionality Achieved
Newark Construction College	<p>Contract and output monitoring until 2026/27:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 142 students - Plumbing Level 1 & 2. • 48 students - Bricklayers Level 1 & 2. • 24 students - Gas Testing. • 12 x Joinery Degrees completed (3 years). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 133 students - Plumbing Level 1 & 2. • 90 students - Bricklayers Level 1 & 2. • 6 students - Gas Testing. • Joinery degree has been written and is going through the validation process with Hull University. 	
YMCA Community and Activity Village	<p>Contract and output monitoring until 2026/27:</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 95 members on discounted concessions.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 136 FTE new jobs by 2024/25, of which 14 directly from Towns Fund grant. • 38 Apprentices by 2024. • 1200 learners by 2024. • 57,400 annual visits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 157 FTE Jobs created (55% re young people) • 15 Apprentices by 2024. • 1273 Learners by 2024. • 38 scholarships. • Visitors to the site in 2023/24 = 208,000. • Visitors to the site in 2024/25 = 158,238. • Total Members = 5432 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The concessions are Students, Corporates, Ages 65+, Adult packages, Youth packages, Adult packages (and Scholarships).
Air and Space Institute	<p>Contract and output monitoring until 2031 but the overall stated 2038/39:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 38 jobs. • 2570 learners. • 370 Level 2 qualifications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 jobs • 1060 learners. • 3 Level 2 qualifications (To achieve level 2 a student would have to complete a full academic year. The first cohort are now studying in the building and numbers at the end of each year will be higher i.e. 20+) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher Education Pathways created with NTU.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,304 Level 3 qualifications. • 632 Level 4-6 qualifications in engineering, aviation, cyber, Contract is for 5 years to March 2027 robotics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 Level 3 qualifications (To achieve level 3 a student would have to complete 2 academic years. The first cohort are now studying in the building and numbers at the end of each year will be higher) • Two Level 4 qualification (24/25). (To achieve level 4 a student would have to complete 2 academic years. The first cohort are now studying in the building and numbers at the end of each year will be higher) 	
20 Minute Cycle Town	<p>Contract and output monitoring until 2027</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500 monthly hires. • 4 Cycle rental docks in town centre locations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2725 cycle hires as of March 24, averaging 227 hires a month. • 4 bike rental docks installed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 additional Cycle rental dock in Middle Beck committed to upon completion of the SLR.
32 Stodman Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 29 new residential units. • Improved public realm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demolition completed. • Construction contractor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved Community engagement, consultation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced linkage and visibility between Stodman and Lombard Street. Redevelopment of brownfield site at key town centre location. 40 new jobs 590sqm of new retail space (2 new retail units). 	<p>appointed and works are underway with completion expected by March 2026.</p>	<p>and involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Archaeological discoveries found during work
Newark Cultural Heart	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved public realm Increased footfall and visitor spend. Improved perceptions of town by residents/businesses/visitors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved Public realm in market place - work anticipated to commence in early 2026. Footfall and event figures can be found at Annex 3. 	
Castle Gatehouse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new access bridge. A new Community hub. Multifunctional space capable of hosting event and exhibitions. A visitor welcome pavilion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning consents achieved. National Heritage Lottery Funding confirmed. Tendering exercise being undertaken with expected commencement early 2025. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation work to protect the building fabric. • A projected increase in visitor numbers to Newark Castle of 21,000 each year. • Up to 100 additional regular volunteers at the Castle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bid to HLF. 	
SISCLOG/ Newark Gateway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hotel and coffee shop development. • 5660 sqm flexible commercial units. • 1460sqm high-tech offices. • Redeveloped Brownfield Land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project paused and has been removed from Towns Fund programme. 	
Southern Link Road (SLR)	<p>Funding Contract from 2022-2025 with output monitoring is for 5 years after opening which is 2031.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6.7km of new cycle ways. • 1.7km of new pedestrian paths. • 5.2km of newly built roads. • 2651 new residential units. • Approx. 700,000m² of new green and blue space created. 	<p>Since inception of the project there have been monthly monitoring meetings to assess progress (meeting 17 having concluded in September 2024). The project is 21 months behind original programme (the date from which the LUF1 application was made) due to a combination of contractor negotiation, poor weather, design changes to accommodate links to the A46 bypass and archaeology.</p> <p>The first phase of the SLR is not open to traffic. The full SLR including the A46 connection will be open by August 2026.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 185,000 m2 of new industrial space created. 	
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6.0 Qualitative Information

6.1 Whilst the above table and published outcomes remain important to monitor, it is critical to remember that the above projects are about people and legacy. Work is ongoing to capture this, and it is an intention to do a longitudinal study over a period of time that extends beyond the delivery timeline of the projects to ensure lasting impact for the local community and the Town Investment Plan. For individual case study references refer to Annex 3.

7.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

7.1 The monitoring and evaluation process plays an important role in delivering each project and provides future learning opportunities about what could be improved for future programmes and what works for the benefit of the existing Towns Fund programme.

7.2 Monitoring data is submitted to MHCLG on a 6-monthly and annual basis for the duration of the Towns Fund projects to track progress, enable learning and manage risk. The monitoring of each project enables engagement with project leads and stakeholders for understanding the project delivery and is a MHCLG obligation.

7.3 The monitoring data comprises financial information and planned expenditures, key outputs, risks and delivery milestones and how these are to be achieved, ensuring funding meets the agreed contractual terms, and understanding how project delivery is operating with each delivery partner.

8.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection; Digital & Cyber Security; Equality & Diversity; Financial; Human Resources; Human Rights; Legal; Safeguarding & Sustainability and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

Financial Implications (FIN24-25/1822)

8.1 The funding presented in this report has been provided jointly with Financial Services, therefore there are no additional financial implications.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Annex 1 – Newark Town Investment Plan

The full document is available [online](#).

Annex 2 – Newark Cultural Heart Footfall Figures and Event Dates

The below table shows the correlation between event dates and town centre footfall.

Event Name	Event Date/s	Footfall no. increase / decrease	Percentage of Average Day
2022			
Platinum Jubilee	2nd - 5th June	255	6%
Newark Book Festival	7th - 10th July	61	1.5%
Town Centre Cycle Races	29th July	1,910	39%
Newark on Sea	6th - 21st August	17	0.5%
Newark Festival	26th - 29th August	148	3.5%
ScareFest	29th - 30th October	-408	-10%
Christmas Lights Switch On	27th November	1,627	57%
Christmas Markets	10th - 11th December	965	23%
2023			
Kings Coronation	6th May	2,428	64%
Neurodiversity Umbrella Installation	May - September	40	1%
Food & Drink Festival/Steampunk	27th - 28th May	673	13%
Newark Book Festival	6th - 9th July	-1,222	-22%
Town Centre Cycle Races	28th July	1,823	29%
Newark on Sea	4th - 13th August	816	14%
Newark Festival	25th - 28th August	1,500	27%
Tour of Britain	6th September	2,177	35
ScareFest	28th - 29th October	1,951	37%
Christmas Light Switch On	26th November	3,462	91%
Steampunk/Christmas Market	9th - 10th December	3,215	61%
2024			
Small Business Showcase	27th April	491	7%
Streets Ahead	16th June	-23	-0.5%
Newark Book Festival	11th - 14th July	1,349	24%
Fish Boy	27th July	328	4%
Newark on Sea	7th - 19th August	119	2%
Cloudscapes in the Castle	11th August	-137	-3%
Newark Festival	24th - 26th August	1,564	30%
Tour of Britain	6th September	1,295	16%
The Brick Show	7th September	-688	-10%
Festival of Creativity	5th - 6th October	1,636	32%

Annex 3 - Individual Case Studies

The following section details case studies from a number of the Towns Fund projects highlighting qualitative impacts and real-life experiences from members of the community benefitting from the projects.

Newark Construction College

Ethan Armstrong, then 17, a Level 2 bricklaying student from the Newark Construction College has been recognised locally at the Rotary Awards, winning the Award of Courage in 2023 due to his hard work and dedication to his studies. Newark College provided him with a new toolkit which helped him throughout his work placement. His confidence has grown with the support of the Construction College and after 18 months of training, Ethan has secured a part-time job with a construction firm on the days he is not at college. The press release about his award could be found [here](#).

YMCA Community & Activity Village

A video showcasing the YMCA's facility can be found [here](#). A video of young children using the facility and climbing wall can be found [here](#) and another video case study of individuals with disabilities participating in health and sports classes can be found [here](#).

An example of additional activity at the YMCA is included below in the graphic tile:



Here for young people
Here for communities
Here for you



@nottspolice

Air and Space Institute

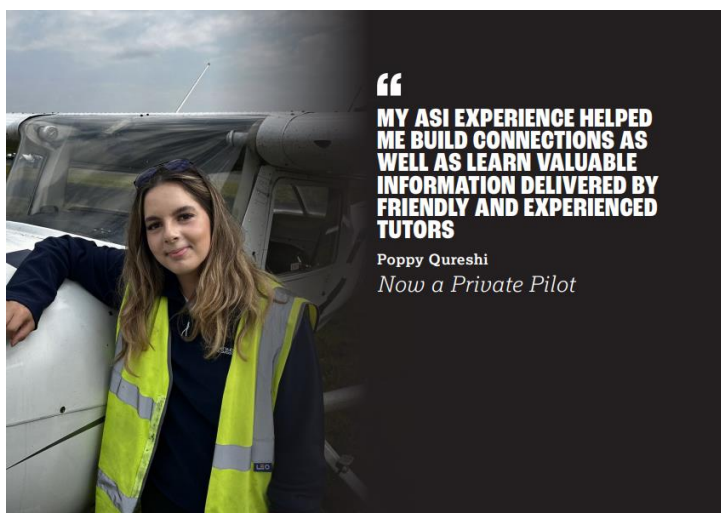
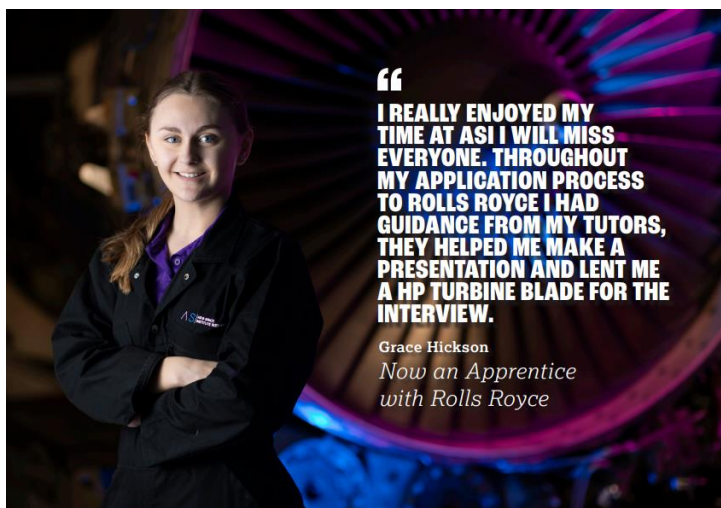
With the confirmation of Towns Fund commitment to the project, Newark College started a temporary training facility for ASI students in existing Newark College campus prior to the new building being constructed. As such, the first cohort of students have now graduated

and have successfully found careers within the aviation industry. Some video case studies of student experiences can be found below.

Video Case Studies:

Emily Evans, Search and Rescue Pilot student graduate – video can be found [here](#). Freddie and Amy, Engineering (Military and Defence) Level 2 students – video can be found [here](#). Kian Deighton, Pilot student graduate succeeded to TUI Cabin Crew member – video can be found [here](#).

Further student case studies and success stories can be found on the [ASI website and within the graphic tiles below:](#)



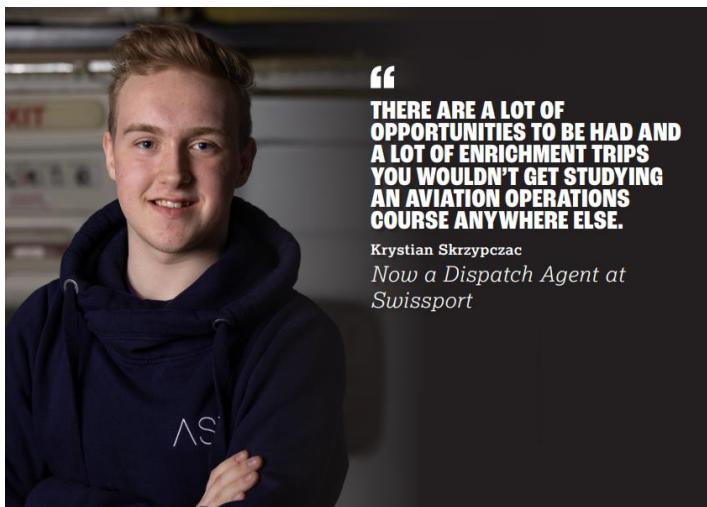


“

DURING MY TRAINING AT TUI, ALL THE PROCEDURES AND AVIATION-RELATED TERMINOLOGY THAT YOU NEED TO KNOW - I HAD PRIOR KNOWLEDGE OF FROM ASI - IT HAS PROVEN USEFUL AND PUT ME THAT STEP AHEAD OF PEOPLE.

OTHER PEOPLE SHOULD JOIN THE ASI COURSE. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN AVIATION - IT IS THE PLACE TO BE! IT IS WHERE YOU'LL START YOUR CAREER OFF.

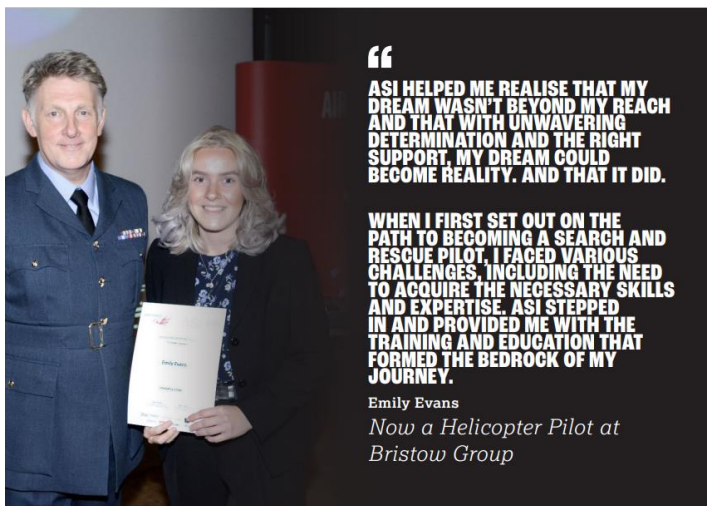
*Kian Deighton
Now at TUI*



“

THERE ARE A LOT OF OPPORTUNITIES TO BE HAD AND A LOT OF ENRICHMENT TRIPS YOU WOULDN'T GET STUDYING AN AVIATION OPERATIONS COURSE ANYWHERE ELSE.

*Krystian Skrzypczak
Now a Dispatch Agent at
Swissport*



“

ASI HELPED ME REALISE THAT MY DREAM WASN'T BEYOND MY REACH AND THAT WITH UNWAVERING DETERMINATION AND THE RIGHT SUPPORT, MY DREAM COULD BECOME REALITY. AND THAT IT DID.

WHEN I FIRST SET OUT ON THE PATH TO BECOMING A SEARCH AND RESCUE PILOT, I FACED VARIOUS CHALLENGES, INCLUDING THE NEED TO ACQUIRE THE NECESSARY SKILLS AND EXPERTISE. ASI STEPPED IN AND PROVIDED ME WITH THE TRAINING AND EDUCATION THAT FORMED THE BEDROCK OF MY JOURNEY.

*Emily Evans
Now a Helicopter Pilot at
Bristow Group*

Newark Cultural Heart

A video case study of Newark town centre business owners and managers engaging with the events programme can be found [here](#).

Newark Castle Gatehouse

A video case study of research volunteers' experience and contribution to the project can be found [here](#).

YMCA CAV Case Studies



Gaining qualifications at the Village

I have completed my NVQ Level 2 in childcare and I am also halfway through completing my level 3 as well. This has been possible because the YMCA are working in partnership with Lincoln College. I have also completed a course recently on manual handling which I use in my everyday practice to allow the children to move around safely and still be able to access our activities comfortably and safely. The YMCA is great place for me to learn both practically and academically.

I love to use the facilities after I finish work. I use the gym and the running track to keep healthy and happy. I also enjoy having a coffee in our YMCA cafe.

Apprenticeship through LC group
Molly Thurlby

Local young people who use our facilities. Please click on link below:

<https://www.dropbox.com/t/quzkkqODTfoUYyON>



Local business using the managed workspace and uses the Village with the family.

The YMCA village has been a game changer for our family across multiple generations. Our children have both attended the nursery and also enjoy the bike track, climbing wall and themed days on a weekend. Their grandparents are fitness class regulars and often to be found in the cafe with friends. Jack, my husband plays football for Newark Town which again brings us all to the village on a weekend. We both utilise the cafe and office space as a change of scenery to work and meet client's mid-week. We are hugely grateful for the wonderful facilities and atmosphere that has been created by the YMCA village team.

Hannah Coe, Coe Media

- Love the community
- Super friendly and great staff
- Variety of activities on offer
- Great café and social spaces
- Lots of opportunities for children to try activities in a safe space
- Convenient to allow me to do activities while my children are being looked after.

Emma Hare, Customer & Yoga Teacher

People meeting at the Village, use the facilities and have become a community of friends



The YMCA is a wonderful place where I've met new people, made friends, and tried out different sports. The welcoming staff create an inclusive atmosphere that make it easy to connect with others and feel at home. It's a community where we are encouraged to get involved, try new sports and I'm even learning Italian! Being involved brings me happiness and joy.

Michelle

Joining the YMCA has been transformative. Part of the success is the creative way that strength & conditioning classes are run which is unlike any gym experience I've had before. The variety of classes also supports the gym sessions with Pilates, yoga and climbing. The staff in every area from cleaning and the café to the coaches are wonderful and really go out of their way to make you feel valued supported and part of something bigger. I've learned so much about my own capabilities and know I can now meet physical challenges in a way I didn't think possible. My physical health and confidence in physical activities has improved dramatically and I now feel future proofed against the coming years.

But it's the social aspect that has also improved my mental health. I've met people who have inspired me to carry on. I've made good friendships and really feel I'm part of something positive. As a group we are supportive of each other's struggles, and we meet up socially outside of the YMCA. We've set up our own Couch25K group and have 4 runners who have completed the programme with a further one about to complete. We've recently started an Italian conversation class, led by one of the YMCA staff. I'm sure there's lots more to come. At a time when older age can be a daunting prospect, the YMCA has opened the door to an alternative narrative which should really become part of a national standard.

Annie Cunningham

Case Study: Climbing

Tommy's Story

When Tommy first attended the YMCA NICAS (National Indoor Climbing Award Schemes) sessions, he was highly introverted and struggled to engage in conversation with his peers. Week by week, he came out of his shell, becoming a more confident climber and getting to know the other attendees. As his belaying and other technical skills advanced, he began teaching others what he'd learned. Tommy returned to us after the summer holidays for his second NICAS term at the Village.

Lily's Story

Lily was nervous about falling from the wall during her first WILD Climber session, so her coaches practised climbing and falling with her to build her confidence. Lily worked hard to reach new heights, and on the last day before the summer holidays, she made it past a challenging section, 2m off the ground, which gave her the confidence to go all the way to the top. Lily is currently our youngest WILD Climber to have made it to the top of our 15.5m wall, managing this incredible feat at the age of 5!

Case Study: Creative Academy

One of the YMCA's newest programmes, Creative Academy, has had an exciting year building a community of young people interested in performing and visual arts.

This year, the YMCA received funding to provide performing arts outreach work in collaboration with local education providers and youth groups in Newark and Sherwood. The YMCA was deeply grateful for the funding received, to provide a premium experience for the young people who attend, most of whom are from low-income backgrounds. 20% of participants live with mental health conditions such as anxiety and depression and 30% live with some form of learning disability.

Case Study: Legends Programme

The YMCA Legends strength and conditioning classes launched in January 2023 and are making a profound impact on the community of individuals aged 55 and over. With three weekly one-hour sessions, this self-funded initiative by the YMCA has become immensely popular, with two sessions per week always oversubscribed.

Most participants, in their mid-60s to 70s, have discovered a new path to fitness, mastering activities like deadlifting, squatting, bench pressing, and pushing sleds. These classes have not only built physical strength but also boosted confidence, enhancing their daily lives. What sets this programme apart is the sense of community it has fostered among the older members. After each invigorating session, they gather at the café, creating opportunities for new relationships and connections.

But it doesn't stop there, some members extend their journey to yoga and ballroom dancing, reinforcing the holistic approach to well-being that the YMCA provides for all ages in the local community.

Case Study: Orchard School

Recently, the YMCA welcomed 20 enthusiastic children from Orchard Special School to a tailored fitness class designed exclusively for them. It was a day of discovery and excitement as they explored equipment rarely available, including the outdoor apparatus, sparking their curiosity.

This experience opened doors for these children, granting them the chance to try new movements and equipment not typically available to them.

The joy and enthusiasm radiated from every child, creating a vibrant atmosphere filled with laughter and shared accomplishments. They left very excited, eager to return for more.

This initiative is a great example of collaborative working with other partners involved in youth development in the community. Together, opportunities can be created for young people that they may not otherwise be able to access.

YMCA Newark & Sherwood Programme Case Studies

Case Study: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Project

This initiative, funded by Newark and Sherwood District Council, aims to empower young people from the traveller community. Each week, families – mostly Mums and Daughters, get together to learn and have fun through the facilities and youth work provision at the YMCA Village.

The first hour is all about sports – a blend of climbing, gym workouts, football, tennis, golf, basketball, and dancing. It's a chance to try out new sports they might not have encountered otherwise. In the second hour, they enjoy studying English together.

On average, eight attendees gather each week, mostly secondary school girls, with several Year 6 students. Parents with younger children are supported through the YMCA Nursery, which kindly offers a space to play for younger siblings, free of charge, while the programme sessions are running.

One of the most memorable moments for many participants was a visit to the Holocaust Centre in Newark, an eye-opening experience that broadened their horizons.

Beyond sports, this journey encompasses more: meal preparation and cooking, enlightening workshops on healthy eating from ABL Health, and drama workshops that kindle their creativity.

The outcomes are heart-warming. These sessions help children integrate into their community, fostering new skills, and nurturing their commitment to attending weekly.

Their feedback tells the story best:

"I made it to the top of the Climbing Wall! I really enjoyed the gym and trying out equipment that I have never used before. I had competitions with my friends to see who could burn the most calories. This made exercising in the gym fun."

"I loved cooking and being able to take it home. It was great to learn new skills. I designed a poster which I had never done before. The Climbing Wall is so cool."

Violet's Story

Violet is a wonderful girl who joined in February 2023 after being encouraged to attend by a friend. She attends a local special-needs school and has developmental delay which affects her fine motor skills, as well as her cognitive processing and attention span.

Violet was well received and supported by the group from the start. She was assigned a buddy – a more senior member of the group – who helped her learn the choreography, while coaching and refining her performance skills. Violet grew in confidence over several months, culminating in a performance in front of a large audience at The High Sheriff of Nottingham's Induction at the Village.

Violet's parents were delighted, seeing their daughter overcome communication, cognitive, and social barriers to build bonds with the young people of the group.

One of the Creative Leaders reflected: "Violet's confidence grew week on week, and her parents were over the moon to see her perform to over two hundred people with a huge smile on her face."

Eleanor's Story

Eleanor had never ventured into the world of Performing Arts, held back by anxiety and tics, a consequence of her Tourette's Syndrome. A diagnosis of Autism and a tumultuous history of attending 14 different schools further compounded her challenges.

But Eleanor's journey took a remarkable turn when she joined our half-term Performing Arts workshops. Here, she found an immediate connection with a fellow participant from our Creative Academy programme, which runs during term time. This bond became the bedrock for Eleanor to develop confidence, social skills, and a newfound sense of self-esteem throughout the week.

As the year unfolded, she continued her journey, stepping into lead roles in several performances. What was most astounding was that her tics remained dormant throughout our sessions. When asked the secret, Eleanor simply replied, "It's because I'm happy here, and my anxiety disappears."

Eleanor has since cultivated a genuine passion for the Performing Arts, selecting Drama for her GCSE exams and auditioning for various school shows. Her experience with the Creative Academy also influenced her choice of work experience, leading her to embrace an Arts-based environment.