

# Working Plymouth Scrutiny Panel

9<sup>th</sup> December 2015



## The 1000 Club

Established in 2012, the 1000 Club is a network of local businesses that are committed to supporting people into careers in the city.

The Club aims to provide:

- Independent advice and guidance for businesses in relation to their specific recruitment and training needs
- Individuals with a consolidated list of the various routes to employment and the agencies that can assist
- Young people with information regarding all the employment information, advice and guidance available to them
- A brokerage service to support schools with development young people's employability skills, in particular in relation to the Employability Passport

The 1000 Club also disseminates the latest information on incentives and support available and provides a route to promote vacancies. This is a free service and members can be sure that the advice they are given is completely independent.

## Current situation

To date 1,550 businesses have signed up to be members of the 1000 Club, committing to support people into careers by providing work experience and job opportunities. This represents 20% of the total business stock in Plymouth. The number of businesses signing up and opportunities recorded; however, has begun to plateau over recent months. This plateau is likely to be the result of several contributory factors: a significant drop in the number of people claiming benefits in the city; a change in priorities of the partners that comprise the 1000 Club Task and Finish Group resulting in them not feeding the most up to date figures through to the 1000 Club Coordinator; and expansion of the range of other activities and initiatives supported through the 1000 Club. To increase membership further the 1000 Club has begun to engage with business sectors that have not previously been engaged, specifically the businesses within the two Business Improvement District areas. Initial analysis has identified that there are roughly 800 businesses between the two BID areas that are not members. The 1000 Club will also work directly with partners to re-prioritise the 1000 Club activity to ensure they update the Coordinator on a regular basis. Increasing the membership of the 1000 Club will re-invigorate the status of the 1000 Club as a city wide priority.

The table below outlines the number of members that have signed up to the 1000 Club and also the number of people who have been supported into the different opportunities by the 1000 Club and its partners to date;

Fig.1 Breakdown of the number of businesses and people who have received support

<b>Members</b>	<b>1550</b>
Jobs	821
Apprenticeships	924
Graduate Internships	381
Work Experience Placements	874
Student Work Experience	3194
<b>Total opportunities</b>	<b>6194</b>

Fig.2 Sector breakdown of members of the 1000 Club

<b>Sector</b>	<b>No. of Business Members</b>
Business Services	194
Construction and Housing	105
Creative Industries	80
Education and Training	161
Leisure, Tourism and Hospitality	152
Manufacturing and Advanced Engineering	78
Marine and Maritime	10
Medical and Healthcare	93
Retail	181
Transport	6
Other	33
Better Together	186
Green Network	274

Fig. 3 Breakdown of number opportunities supported via the 1000 Club since its start in 2012

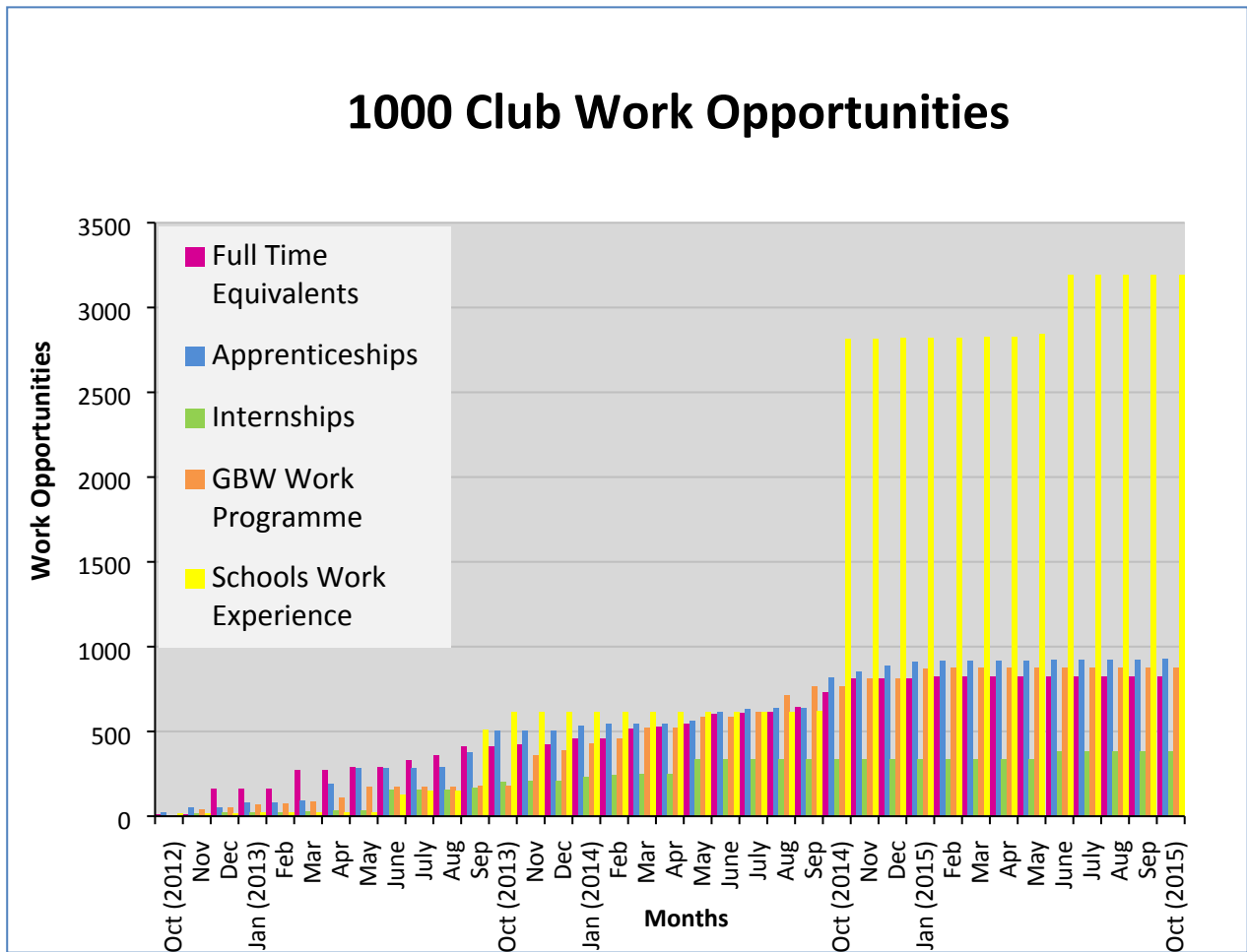
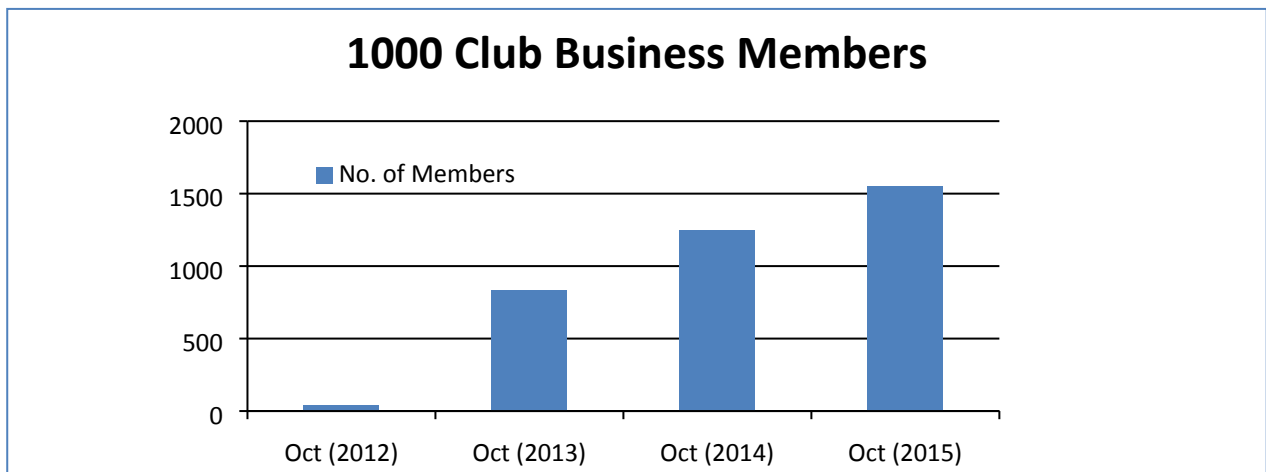


Fig.4 The number of businesses that have signed up to the 1000 Club since its launch in 2012



**Widened the target age**

The 1000 Club was launched in 2012 to tackle the level of youth unemployment within the city. At the outset of the 1000 Club the number of 18-24 year olds claiming Jobseekers Allowance represented 33% of the total claimant population in the city. The latest statistics indicate that this figure now stands at just 20.81% and that Plymouth is outperforming the national average when measuring the relative reduction in youth unemployment.

Through partnership working it was identified that there was a gap in specific provision for supporting older people back into the workplace. The decision was taken, in September 2015, to widen the age remit of the 1000 Club. This enabled the existing model and partnership to provide support to older people as well as young people. The 1000 Club has made a number of amendments to its website creating a single hub of information and signposting that people are able to access. Specific information for ex-military personnel, people with long term health issues or disabilities, and people over 50 years old has been added to the website. This essentially allows any business to become a 1000 Club member as long as they are supporting someone to develop their employability.

### **Building Plymouth**

A major skills gap in the construction industry has been identified and the Building Plymouth campaign was developed to help address this. The 1000 Club was a vital partner at the outset of the Building Plymouth campaign, helping to identify construction companies that might engage with it. The 1000 Club used its network to engage with and secure the buy in for the Building Plymouth campaign. Utilising its newsletter, the 1000 Club requested all of the construction companies which are members to support the initiative. The 1000 Club now has 105 members across the construction and housing sectors.

### **Employability Passport**

The Employability Passport is an initiative which encourages school aged young people to develop their employability skills by taking part in a range of business and employment skills related activities. The Passport allows the young people to make a record of their activities to create a portfolio of their achievements. To operate effectively the Passport needs the buy in of the business sector. The 1000 Club used its network to encourage businesses to get involved and support the Passport, for example some businesses have been working with schools to offer mock interviews to young people. At present the 1000 Club coordinator is creating a digital platform (which will sit on the 1000 Club website) to simplify and speed up the process of businesses and schools engaging with each other. Schools will be able to outline what activities they are looking for businesses to get involved in and businesses will be able to commit to that specific activity. The 1000 Club has supported the Passport further by helping to organise its launch to increase awareness of it across the city. As a result of this City College Plymouth are looking to roll out a similar model for their FE students, and Plymouth University is considering an HE model as well.

### **National Apprenticeship Week 2016**

The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) was in charge of coordinating the National Apprenticeship Week (NAW) since its conception. The amount of funding available for NAS in the city has been reduced which has reduced their capacity to coordinate NAW 2016 in Plymouth. NAW shines a spotlight on apprenticeships and raises their profile in the city. The 1000 Club partners identified that there is a significant risk that the impact of NAW 2016 may be lost if the activities that are taking place are not coordinated. The 1000 Club, working in partnership with the Plymouth Apprentice Network, has been asked to provide this coordination role. The 1000 Club is currently compiling a list of activities that are taking place across the week and will communicate these via press coverage and on the 1000 Club website closer to the time. In addition, the 1000 Club is developing a range of posters that will raise awareness of NAW, signposting people towards the information available. By raising awareness of apprenticeships in

the city we will help to encourage more people to consider the career options that are available to them, with the aim of reducing the number of people claiming Jobseekers Allowance in the future.

### **Early Years sector**

In Plymouth we currently have 105 early years' education providers in the private, voluntary and independent sector, plus 48 funded childminders, 100 non funded childminders, 20 nursery classes, and 2 nursery schools. All three and four year olds in England and eligible 2 year olds are entitled to up to 570 hours of free early education or childcare a year. This can either be taken as 15 hours each week for 38 weeks of the year or 12 hours a week for 47.50 weeks a year. The Childcare Bill, announced in the Queen's Speech, increases this entitlement to 30 hours a week for working parents. This change is due to come into effect from September 2017, but some working parents in other local authorities will be entitled to the additional hours when pilots begin in September 2016. This increase in hours will have an impact on the number of staff needed to deliver this service, especially as many providers are already reporting to the Early Years Service how difficult it is to recruit qualified, experienced staff. The 1000 Club, in partnership with Plymouth City Council and Jobcentre Plus, are working with providers to identify the challenges being experienced by members in securing qualified staff, and the increase in demand will put further pressure on local providers.

### **The future of the 1000 Club**

The 1000 Club was established in 2012 with PCC funding, and has since secured a range of different income. The Club is currently identifying external funding to enable its continuation beyond March 2016 and several potential sources are being explored. The goal is for the 1000 Club to become a self-funding entity, while maintaining its current linkages with the City Council and other partners. The 1000 Club has established a valuable network of business and working relationships with partners that have sustained the support of unemployed people in Plymouth.