



SOCIAL MOBILITY ACTION PLAN



FOREWORD

Earlier this year the World Economic Forum published its Global Social Mobility Index, showing Britain to be below average in a field in which most nations are already generally poor.

Britain was ranked behind Belgium, Slovenia, Ireland, Malta, the Czech Republic and all Scandinavian countries; as well as Germany, France, Japan and Australia. The only G7 countries performing worse in terms of social mobility were the US and Italy.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, this has most likely become worse. As the groups across our country who faced challenges before, are being hit disproportionately by the immediate public health threat, and socioeconomic challenges. So it's now become more important than ever to address inequalities that exist.

As a result they are finding previously untapped sources of talent, building more diverse and innovative teams and, in doing so, increasing their impact on the wider world.

One of the leaders in the pack is Shoosmiths, a firm that has prioritised social mobility internally for a long time.

Shoosmiths have sought to not only recruit a diverse set of employees, but then also create a workplace where that diversity can be maintained, rather than employees being 'moulded' into a firm image. It was striking how many employees felt they were able to be recruited by 'being themselves', but could then also stay 'being themselves' during their

career. This means diversity – of individuals and ideas - flows through the firm.

It also enables the firm to truly reflect the diversity of the communities it impacts upon and represents in our justice system.

As this report demonstrates, Shoosmiths works extensively on driving social mobility, but it has also set itself the challenge of doing more to build on its success. We very much welcome this at the Social Mobility Pledge and have supported the firm in designing an action plan that could take its effectiveness to the next level.

We hope other businesses in the legal sector and more widely can learn from the approaches set out here from forging ties with local schools and colleges to CV blind interviewing and recruitment training.

This is a firm which has a clear sense of its responsibilities in enabling individuals to level up, in spreading opportunities around the UK, and in changing the life trajectories of people in disadvantaged communities.

Hopefully its work will inspire others to think ambitiously about their potential as a business to be a force for good by working to remove the road blocks to social mobility.

RT HON JUSTINE GREENING

Founder of the Social Mobility Pledge
Former Secretary of State for Education, Secretary of State for International Development, Secretary of State for Transport, Minister for Women & Equalities, Economic Secretary to the Treasury

FOREWORD

At Shoosmiths, we believe in three things when it comes to social mobility. That talent can come from anywhere, that you should be able to be yourself at work, and that we can have significantly greater impact if we engage with our clients and our communities.

We are a national law firm with a presence in 13 UK locations and a diverse portfolio of clients. So we recognise that we are well positioned to create opportunity for those who struggle most to make the connection into the 'professional' world. We also recognise that to be famous for our client experience, we need to bring diverse perspectives and practices, which match (and exceed) client expectations.

Social mobility is at the heart of who we are as a firm. We've already made positive steps forward in becoming a more diverse and inclusive employer (examples included in the report), but we want to do more, and we know we can do more; we want to be known for committing to actions, not just words. We signed up to the Social Mobility Pledge as a public commitment to removing the barriers that prevent talented people from navigating the legal profession – by creating more opportunities through partnerships, access, and recruitment.

At Shoosmiths, our commitment doesn't end with getting through the door – it's about thriving once you're in the workplace and becoming a role model to others. Our clients give us great feedback on the way we work and the way we build relationships, with our lack of hierarchy and unpretentious approach regularly commented upon. So, we'll bring this way of working to our social mobility efforts too, by exploring how we can encourage all of our people to be proud of where they came from, and of where they're going.

Working with the Social Mobility Pledge to produce this plan of action has been a useful framing exercise – enabling us to contextualise our efforts and align what we do with the areas of greatest need. The community-based research conducted by the Pledge will be invaluable as we start to deliver on the recommendations.

On a personal note, I'm delighted to be part of the transition from signing the Pledge to launching this Action Plan. I'm looking forward to seeing how the firm can make a real difference to social mobility; recognising and developing talent in all its forms; making life at Shoosmiths more purposeful by better supporting our people and owning our societal responsibilities; and spreading the word that a successful career in the legal profession – and that doesn't just mean by becoming a lawyer – is open to anyone who shows talent, purpose and ambition.



SIMON BOSS

Chief Executive, Shoosmiths

SOCIAL MOBILITY PURPOSE

Shoosmiths is committed to delivering a positive contribution to society and the economy by boosting social mobility.

Shoosmiths' commitment to improving social mobility for both employees and the communities they serve is designed to ensure the business maintains its long-term sustainability by promoting integrity and valuing diversity and an inclusive culture.

Social mobility lies at the heart of Shoosmiths' purpose and has an important role in the wider UK economy that continues to be held back because of an opportunity deficit, stifling talent in communities across the country.

Britain is a hugely socially immobile country. It would take someone born into a poor family¹ in the UK five generations – 150 years – to reach the average national income of £27,000 (1). Within the UK, social mobility is clustered in 'hotspots', where the link between a person's occupation and that of their parents is weak, and 'coldspots', where the link between a person's occupation and that of their parents is strong (2).

While the full effect of the COVID-19 pandemic is yet to be seen, it has likely made many of these pre-existing inequalities worse.

Shoosmiths had naturally developed an internal commitment to social mobility, driven by its commitment to valuing diversity and inclusion. Shoosmiths became active participants in the Social Mobility Pledge campaign to further develop their purpose and ensure that their efforts were formalised and scalable.

We see our Action Plan as giving shape and structure to what has grown organically in local offices over several years.

The Social Mobility Pledge asks signatory organisations to consider three measures, which we have identified as being able to dramatically improve social mobility:

PARTNERSHIP: Pledge companies should partner with schools or colleges to provide coaching through quality careers advice, enrichment experience, and/or mentoring to people from different backgrounds or circumstances.

ACCESS: Pledge companies should provide structured work experience and/or apprenticeship opportunities to people from all backgrounds or circumstances.

RECRUITMENT: Pledge companies should adopt open employee recruitment practices which promote a level field for people from all backgrounds or circumstances.

Our work with Shoosmiths focused on providing solid frameworks and methods for ensuring that their commitments are exceeded in a replicable and scalable manner, and are based on the best practice we have collated through working with over 400 companies across many sectors.

1. A 'poor family' is defined as one in which the earnings of the family place them amongst the bottom 10% of earners.

SOCIAL MOBILITY AND THE LEGAL SECTOR

If Shoosmiths is to deliver on its purpose of delivering a positive contribution to society and the economy by boosting social mobility, it is important to understand the context and challenges the legal sector faces.

Senior judges are in the profession with the highest independent school attendance in the UK. Sixty-five per cent of the UK's senior judges went to an independent school and 71% went to Oxbridge; the figures for the UK as a whole are 7% and less than 1% respectively (5).

While some at the top of the profession are aware of the important need to broadly reflect the country they serve (6), the change is not happening swiftly enough: from 2014 the fall has been just 6%. Change can't be expected to happen overnight, but similar professions² have achieved large falls from lower starting points: in 2014, 20% of university Vice-Chancellors went to an independent school and this is now 16%; for the top ranks of the armed forces the 2014 figure was 62% and it is now 49%.

YEAR	SENIOR JUDGES	TOP RANKS OF THE ARMED FORCES	VICE-CHANCELLORS
2014	71%	62%	20%
2018	65% (-6%)	49% (-13%)	16% (-4%)

Amongst solicitors, the figures tell a more encouraging but still disproportionate tale. Even amongst those companies that have signed up to the Law Society's Diversity and Inclusion Charter, which comprises only a third of legal workforce (7), over 40% of partners and nearly 30% of legal professionals attended a private school (8).

YEAR	PARTNERS	WHOLE PROFESSION
2015	49%	35%
2017	42% (-7%)	28% (-7%)

One reason for this could be a lack of support for trainees coming from different backgrounds progressing through their career. Despite those from lower socio-economic backgrounds tending to be the highest performers in their firms compared to more advantaged colleagues, they receive fewer promotions and are at greater risk of not being retained (9). Diversity and inclusion does not stop at the front door and needs to be a continuing programme.

2. A 'similar profession' is one identified as being a 'public servant' by the Sutton Trust, and includes senior judges, the top tanks of the armed forces, and university Vice-Chancellor.



SOCIAL MOBILITY ACTION PLAN

In mapping Shoosmiths' current social mobility efforts, three core themes emerge:

- ▶ Recognition that talent can come from anywhere
- ▶ An emphasis on being yourself at work
- ▶ A commitment to supporting social mobility among clients and in local communities

The firm's social mobility plan has been developed to provide a structured approach to a social mobility drive that has grown organically across the business in recent years.

It is designed against the context of several overriding challenges identified by the firm as crucial to increasing its social mobility impact.

Firstly, Shoosmiths acknowledges the need to more closely align its efforts to diversify the pipeline of

talent flowing into the firm and the wider sector; and its work to nurture that talent once in a role.

Secondly, the firm aims to create stronger synchronicity between locations in its geographical network in terms of social mobility. An overarching vision is required, which can also be adapted within the cultural diversity context of each location. A core challenge is ensuring it is reaching as far as possible into those areas where social mobility prospects are lowest.

Furthermore, there is recognition of the need to continue meaningfully engaging clients, and others in wider community networks, to combine resources and complement each other's work around social mobility.

Shoosmiths' social mobility plan has been set out under the banners of the aforementioned key themes.



THEME ONE

TALENT CAN COME FROM ANYWHERE

Partnerships are essential in ensuring that this mindset flows throughout the business and into the communities it influences.

Office teams and individual employees are encouraged to forge ties with local schools, colleges, universities and charities. Board members and trustees are also involved. Activities are wide-ranging and include:

- ▶ CV and interview workshops in schools
- ▶ Mentoring programmes
- ▶ Supporting reading skills in schools
- ▶ Presenting at and supporting careers days
- ▶ Enabling law students to experience working alongside solicitors in providing pro bono legal advice
- ▶ An 'e-mentoring' volunteer programme
- ▶ Work experience placements for young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds; in conjunction with a range of partners

Social media and other communication mediums are also important in establishing a healthy and diverse flow of inward talent.

The firm runs targeted Facebook groups to break down social mobility barriers in the legal sector. For example, it hosts a group which advises parents about careers in law to enable them to support their children in making informed decisions.

The firm also posts videos on YouTube and Facebook, presented by its graduate recruitment manager. These offer tips on networking, making a good first impression and the different roles and divisions at Shoosmiths. Interviews with the CEO and discussions on diversity and inclusion in law are also featured.

Careers blogs and vlogs are also part of the firm's content output, providing insights on issues such as finding a route into law, career changing into the sector and apprenticeships.

Other content activities include tailored graduate recruitment blogs and social media posts plus SHOUTBack; a blog celebrating responsible business activities across the firm and in the organisations it works with. Public reporting also includes Corporate Responsibility Reports and United Nations Global Compact Communications on Progress.

Recruitment processes within the firm are also built upon the ethos of 'talent can come from anywhere'. While offering an array of different roles as entry points into law, there are also well-established apprenticeship pathways. Career vacancies and apprenticeship opportunities are advertised online, including on the platforms All About School Leavers and JobCrowd, which enable greater engagement with young people.

Also, hiring managers are offered interviewing and recruitment training workshops and modules, underpinned by social mobility practices. Planned recruitment developments include the introduction of mock tests and enhancements to the firm's applicant tracking system.

Shoosmiths goes to great lengths, meanwhile, to encourage a diverse influx of new talent from graduates and other career starters. Its strategy features:

- ▶ Thriving partnerships with organisations such as Bright Network and Legal Cheek
- ▶ Participation in external surveys and benchmarking such as the Social Mobility Employer Index
- ▶ Transparent and accessible recruitment processes at graduate recruitment level including the removal of unexplained acronyms and industry terms. Also, CV-blind interviewing, a reduction in the minimum A level grade requirement and no minimum degree result requirement
- ▶ Use of an external third-party consultant to score the first stage of training contract applications
- ▶ An assessor training pack being given to all assessors at graduate assessment centres on scoring without bias and encouraging self-awareness of bias generally
- ▶ Insight Evenings held across its UK offices, which include an explanation of the firm's recruitment process
- ▶ A good ratio of visits to both Russell and non-Russell Group universities
- ▶ The location of applicants in terms of which universities they attend being closely monitored, enabling new partnerships to be formed with campuses that have had low application numbers flowing into the firm
- ▶ Sponsorship of non-law advertising spaces on LawCareers.net, to encourage non-law applicants to apply for roles at the firm



THEME TWO BEING YOURSELF AT WORK

Shoosmiths has a well-resourced and coordinated drive to encourage employees to be themselves and embrace diversity. An inclusion working group, as well as a series of employee networks ensure everyone is supported in being themselves in the workplace. These include the Balance, Proud, and Embrace networks.

As well as the Social Mobility Pledge, the firm is committed to a number of other important causes including mental health and wellbeing awareness schemes the Time to Change Pledge, Mental Health and Wellbeing Champions, and My Wellbeing Strategy. Employees also take part in regular mental health and wellbeing surveys. Other measures include:

- ▶ The #inmyshoos social media campaign, which is used for candidate attraction purposes, has also proved useful in encouraging diverse applicants to apply to the firm;
- ▶ A pilot 'reverse mentoring' scheme - pairing partners with junior employees;
- ▶ Supporting Pride, including changing the firm's logo on social media;

- ▶ Sharing content which profiles inspiring role models to new and existing staff;
- ▶ Sharing content including 'day in the life' style blogs for National Apprenticeship Week;
- ▶ Guidance and learning and development support offered by line managers;
- ▶ Consistent and clear messaging about creating an inclusive workplace;
- ▶ The introduction of Rungway, an anonymous Q&A platform enabling staff to put questions to management and colleagues; and
- ▶ The establishment of community investment programme committees and programmes across locations.

THEME THREE OUR CLIENTS, OUR COMMUNITIES

Shoosmiths continually liaises and collaborates with clients to share ideas and initiatives on social mobility

best practice. Articles are also regularly published, for example by the firm's employment team, on social mobility and related topics such as diversity and inclusion. Client events which aim to foster social mobility are also supported.

The firm's community-facing social mobility work is also far reaching and highly impactful. Activities include:

- ▶ Local office charity partnerships;
- ▶ Employee volunteering days, working on community projects;
- ▶ Membership of Business in the Community's East Midlands and West Midlands Advisory Board, offering support and advice to BITC and employers seeking to improve their responsible business performance including participation in school outreach;
- ▶ The establishment of Citizens Advice Bureaus in Edinburgh and Milton Keynes by graduate trainees as part of a 'trainee challenge';
- ▶ Numerous pro bono work initiatives;
- ▶ Ad-hoc charitable donations to social mobility-related charities;

- ▶ A partnership with Scottish Football Association; and
- ▶ Involvement in sector-wide network membership groups to share best practice approaches to social mobility. Examples include the Law Society's diversity and Inclusion regional forums and the UN Global Compact UK Diversity and Inclusion Network.

Other outward reaching measures supporting social mobility include procurement processes which require suppliers to comply with their statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010. Furthermore, as part of the selection process, copies of equal opportunities and diversity policies for each major supplier are sought.

Although not mandated, the firm also specifies an interest in working with suppliers that are owned and run by a high quotient of women and people from ethnic minorities, as well as those driven by social purpose. Shoosmiths often works with small charities, social enterprises, and Community Interest Companies as a means of diversifying its supply chain, while also supporting vital causes.

SOCIAL MOBILITY IN THE COMMUNITY

Shoosmiths operates in 13 locations across the UK (11 offices, and 2 hubs) and in this Action Plan we analyse the challenges those individual communities face. For the purposes of this analysis we have focused on 11 offices.

Research (3) conducted in 323 local authorities in England and Wales shows the top 20% of local authorities are labelled as ‘hotspots’, areas where social mobility is good, and the bottom 20% of local authorities are identified as ‘coldspots’, areas where social mobility is poor.

It is important to note that just because an area is a hotspot based on the standardised rankings, that is not the complete picture. Meon Valley, for instance, is a social mobility hotspot and is very nearly in the top decile of local authorities on average and is the 22nd best authority for schools. However, it is amongst the bottom half of the country when it comes to its early years ranking.

These complexities highlight that social mobility cannot be tackled with a ‘one size fits all approach’. Therefore, a thorough understanding of the challenges those individual communities face is vital.

It is important to note that the COVID-19 pandemic will have had an impact, the full extent yet to be seen, on the level of social mobility and opportunities in these communities.

OVERALL RANKING

OFFICE	LOCAL AUTHORITY	RANKING OUT OF 323 LOCAL AUTHORITIES	CONSTITUENCY	RANKING OUT OF 533 CONSTITUENCIES
Solent	Meon Valley (hotspot)	35	Meon Valley	333
Manchester	Manchester	121	Manchester Central	297
Birmingham	Birmingham	136	Birmingham, Ladywood	253
Milton Keynes	Milton Keynes	146	Milton Keynes North	175
Thames Valley	Reading	217	Reading East	106
Leeds	Leeds	246	Leeds Central	523
Northampton	Northampton (coldspot)	290	South Northamptonshire	153
Nottingham	Nottingham (coldspot)	312	Nottingham South	376

LONDON, EDINBURGH AND BELFAST

The Social Mobility Index is a measure of social mobility across England only. Within England, two local authorities are excluded from the Index: the Isles of Scilly and the City of London. The City of London is where Shoosmiths’ London office is located. In these cases, it is because too few people live in those local authorities for meaningful data to be collected. This limitation of the data can to some extent be mitigated as they are both covered to a degree by the Social Mobility Index by Constituency, itself a separate measure calculated by the House of Commons Library.

One of the key demographics that the Social Mobility Index measures attainment and progression of is those eligible for Free School Meals. This is because there is no agreed definition of deprivation, but Free School Meal eligibility is noted as being a “very good indicator” of socio-economic disadvantage (10). However, in Scotland, there is a universal entitlement for school pupils from Primary School Year 1 (P1) to Primary School Year 3 (P3). It is therefore not possible to track how the ‘most deprived’ people perform, and the Scottish data can only therefore highlight the place based differences in outcomes for all residents.

The Social Mobility Commission has created a ranking of Scottish local authorities, but it is important to note that they can only be ranked against each other as they use different measures; it is not possible to directly compare Shoosmiths Edinburgh with Shoosmiths Northampton, for instance.

It is equally difficult to compare social mobility in Northern Ireland with the rest of the UK, owing again to a devolved government with its own measures and policies – and which has not been operational since 2017. Further, Northern Ireland operates its own statistical agency which complicates the usage of data further.



MEON VALLEY

CONSTITUENCY: MEON VALLEY

EARLY YEARS: 504		SCHOOLS: 283			
Percentage of Nursery providers rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for free school meals achieving a good level of development	Percentage of children eligible for FSM attending a primary school rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for FSM attending a secondary school rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for FSM achieving at least the expected level in reading, writing and maths at the end of Key Stage 2	Average Attainment 8 score for pupils eligible for FSM
89	47	80	100	39	33.63

YOUTH: 377			ADULTHOOD: 15				
Percentage of young people eligible for FSM that are in education, employment or training (positive destination) after completing KS4	Average points score per entry for young people eligible for FSM at age 15 taking A-level or equivalent qualification	Percentage of young people eligible for FSM at age 15 achieving two or more A-Levels or equivalent by the age of 19	Median weekly salary of all employees who live in the local area	Average house prices compared to median annual salary of employees who live in the local area	Percentage of people that live in the local area who are in managerial and professional occupations	Percentage age of jobs that are paid less than the applicable Living Wage Foundation living wage	Percentage age of families with children who own their home
82	29.96	30	561.50	7.88	33	17	77

MEON VALLEY ANALYSIS

Its population is significantly whiter than both the South East region average of 90.7% and the UK average of 87.2%, standing at 97.2%. The next largest ethnicity is Asian (1.2%), where people of Indian (0.4%) and Chinese (0.3%) ethnicity form the majority

Its population also tends to be healthier than the rest of the UK, with 49.8% of the population being in very good health compared to the UK's 47.6%, and 96.2% of its population being in fair, good, or very good health compared to a UK average of 94.4%.

The Parliamentary constituency of Meon Valley is in the bottom half of constituencies for social mobility.

EARLY YEARS

Meon Valley scores particularly poorly at the Early Years life stage. Out of 533 constituencies in England, it ranks in the bottom 30 at 504. Nursery quality, as measured by the percentage of nursery providers rated outstanding or good by Ofsted is at 89% compared to the national average of 93%. Only 47% of free school meal eligible children attain a good level of development, as measured by whether or not they achieve at least the expected level in all aspects of PSE, physical development, communication and language, literacy, and mathematics. The national average is 53%.

SCHOOLS

Meon Valley is located in the bottom half of constituencies for the schools stage, ranking at 283 out of 533. Within this breakdown there are some interesting statistics: while 80% of free school meal eligible children attend a good or outstanding primary school, worse than the national average of 83%, 39% of that same cohort will go on to attain the expected levels in reading, writing, and maths by the end of Key Stage 2. This pattern is reversed in secondary schools: 100% of free school meal eligible children attend a good or outstanding secondary school but will only achieve an Attainment 8 score of 34 compared to the UK average of 39.

YOUTH

Meon Valley slips further down the rankings at the youth stage of the index, being in the bottom three deciles. Only 82% of those eligible for free school meals achieve a positive destination (being in employment, education, or training) after Key Stage 4, and while they do achieve a higher points score at A Level than average, 30 versus 26, only 30% of free school meal eligible pupils achieve will have achieved two or more A Levels by age 19.

ADULTHOOD

Meon Valley is the 15th best constituency for the adulthood indicators of social mobility: it beats the national average on all indicators apart from one, in which it matches it. The median weekly salary is £562 compared to an average of £443, housing is eight times more than annual salary, which is the UK-wide average, more people have a managerial or professional job – 33% compared to 30% - 83% of jobs pay at or above the Real Living Wage compared to just 75% across the UK, and 77% of families own their own home compared to just 65% in the whole country.





MANCHESTER

CONSTITUENCY: MANCHESTER CENTRAL

EARLY YEARS: 357		SCHOOLS: 173			
Percentage of Nursery providers rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for free school meals achieving a good level of development	Percentage of children eligible for FSM attending a primary school rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for FSM attending a secondary school rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for FSM achieving at least the expected level in reading, writing and maths at the end of Key Stage 2	Average Attainment 8 score for pupils eligible for FSM
88	58	92	46	65	36.68

YOUTH: 280			ADULTHOOD: 367				
Percentage of young people eligible for FSM that are in education, employment or training (positive destination) after completing KS4	Average points score per entry for young people eligible for FSM at age 15 taking A-level or equivalent qualification	Percentage of young people eligible for FSM at age 15 achieving two or more A-Levels or equivalent by the age of 19	Median weekly salary of all employees who live in the local area	Average house prices compared to median annual salary of employees who live in the local area	Percentage of people that live in the local area who are in managerial and professional occupations	Percentage age of jobs that are paid less than the applicable Living Wage Foundation living wage	Percentage age of families with children who own their home
87	23.74	39	401.10	5.69	30	15	32

MANCHESTER ANALYSIS

Shoosmiths' Manchester office is located in the Manchester Central constituency. The population is significantly more diverse than both its region and the UK average: 62.6% of Manchester Central's population is white compared to the North West region's 90.2% and the UK's 87.2%. The next largest ethnicity is Asian, where 5.8% of the population are Chinese but the single biggest ethnicity after white British (54.9%) is Black African (8.5%).

The population is healthier in some regards than the rest of the UK, with 50.2% being in very good health compared to the UK's 47.6%, but there is a higher number of people in either bad or very bad health: 6.8% of Manchester Central compared to 5.6% of the UK.

The Manchester office is located in a constituency that is worse than its local authority in terms of social mobility.

Manchester scores relatively well on some areas of the social mobility index: the Manchester office is located within the top third of constituencies for the schools stage and it is particularly impressive that 92% of children eligible for free school meals attend a good or outstanding school. Even within the adulthood life stage, its worst stage, 85% of jobs pay at or more than the Real Living Wage.

EARLY YEARS

Manchester Central is the 357th best constituency for the early years stage, where only 88% of free school meal eligible children attend a good or outstanding nursery but it should be noted that 58% of them attain a good level of development, higher than the national average of 53% - this puts the constituency in the top 100.

SCHOOLS

Manchester Central is within the top third of all constituencies for the schools stage, and it is particularly impressive that 92% of free school meal eligible children attend a primary school rated as good or outstanding, compared to the national average of 83%.

YOUTH

Manchester Central just slips into the bottom half of constituencies for the youth stage indicators of social mobility. 87% of young people eligible for free school meals are in a positive destination after Key Stage 4, just below the national average. The average A Level points total (23.74), compares to 26 nationally, while the proportion of those eligible for free school meals that achieve at least two A Levels by 19 is above average (39% compared to 34% nationally).

ADULTHOOD

The indicators show that adulthood is Manchester Central's worst performing life stage. At 367/533, it is in the bottom third of all constituencies for this stage. Despite there being a higher number of Real Living Wage jobs, 85% compared to a nationwide 75%, the median weekly wage is £401 compared to an average £443. Although housing is more affordable, with house prices six times more than annual salaries compared to the UK average of eight, this fails to translate into home ownership, and only 32% of families own their own home compared to the UK-wide average of 65%, with the majority of people in rented accommodation.



BIRMINGHAM

CONSTITUENCY: BIRMINGHAM, LADYWOOD

EARLY YEARS: 457		SCHOOLS: 226			
Percentage of Nursery providers rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for free school meals achieving a good level of development	Percentage of children eligible for FSM attending a primary school rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for FSM attending a secondary school rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for FSM achieving at least the expected level in reading, writing and maths at the end of Key Stage 2	Average Attainment 8 score for pupils eligible for FSM
72	59	67	37	77	47.12

YOUTH: 49			ADULTHOOD: 445				
Percentage of young people eligible for FSM that are in education, employment or training (positive destination) after completing KS4	Average points score per entry for young people eligible for FSM at age 15 taking A-level or equivalent qualification	Percentage of young people eligible for FSM at age 15 achieving two or more A-Levels or equivalent by the age of 19	Median weekly salary of all employees who live in the local area	Average house prices compared to median annual salary of employees who live in the local area	Percentage of people that live in the local area who are in managerial and professional occupations	Percentage age of jobs that are paid less than the applicable Living Wage Foundation living wage	Percentage age of families with children who own their home
92	26.36	52	378.13	5.35	24	15	35



BIRMINGHAM ANALYSIS

Birmingham Ladywood is a constituency which is much more diverse than both its region and the UK as a whole. While the biggest ethnicity group is Asian, making up 40.5% of the population, the biggest single ethnicity remains white British, which makes up 27.3% of the constituency's population.

The constituency has a slightly higher than average percentage of its population in very good health, 47.7% compared to the West Midlands' 45.1% and the UK's 47.6%, but a higher share of its population is in bad or very bad health: 6.3% against the West Midlands' 6.1% and the UK's 5.6%.

Birmingham Ladywood constituency broadly matches the social mobility prospects of the Birmingham local authority area, placing it in the top 48% of constituencies and top 43% of local authority areas.

EARLY YEARS

In Birmingham Ladywood 59% of free school meal eligible children attain a good level of development compared to the UK average of 53%, however only 72% of those same pupils attend a good or outstanding nursery against the UK average of 93%.



SCHOOLS

Birmingham Ladywood is a fairly average performer at the schools stage, ranked as the 226th constituency. Its indicators are worse at a primary school level, where fewer free school meal eligible pupils attend a good or outstanding primary school than the UK average (67% compared to 83%) but by secondary school the indicators have improved: 77% of free school meal eligible pupils attend a good or outstanding school versus 72% nationwide and the Attainment 8 scores are 47 compared to a national 39.

YOUTH

Birmingham Ladywood is amongst the top 10% of constituencies for the youth stage indicators of social mobility. 92% of young people eligible for free school meals are in a positive destination after Key Stage 4, they are on par for the average A Level points at 26, and many more of those eligible for free school meals achieve at least two A Levels by 19 – 52% in the constituency compared to 34% nationally.

ADULTHOOD

Despite being in the top 10% at the youth stage indicators, Birmingham Ladywood slips down to find itself in the bottom 90 of all 533 English constituencies for the adulthood life indicators. Residents in this part of Birmingham are £65 a week worse off than the average UK worker, there are fewer managerial or other professional positions (24% compared to an average of 30%) and only 35% of the population in Birmingham Ladywood are home-owners compared to an average of 65%.

MILTON KEYNES

CONSTITUENCY: MILTON KEYNES NORTH

EARLY YEARS: 336		SCHOOLS: 214			
Percentage of Nursery providers rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for free school meals achieving a good level of development	Percentage of children eligible for FSM attending a primary school rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for FSM attending a secondary school rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for FSM achieving at least the expected level in reading, writing and maths at the end of Key Stage 2	Average Attainment 8 score for pupils eligible for FSM
88	58	93	47	37	39.03

YOUTH: 153			ADULTHOOD: 125				
Percentage of young people eligible for FSM that are in education, employment or training (positive destination) after completing KS4	Average points score per entry for young people eligible for FSM at age 15 taking A-level or equivalent qualification	Percentage of young people eligible for FSM at age 15 achieving two or more A-Levels or equivalent by the age of 19	Median weekly salary of all employees who live in the local area	Average house prices compared to median annual salary of employees who live in the local area	Percentage of people that live in the local area who are in managerial and professional occupations	Percentage age of jobs that are paid less than the applicable Living Wage Foundation living wage	Percentage age of families with children who own their home
88	28.34	38	478.67	7.65	29	13	61

MILTON KEYNES ANALYSIS

Milton Keynes North is a more diverse than average constituency. 80% of its population is white, which makes it 10% more diverse than the South East region it is located in and 7.2% more diverse than the UK average. After white British, the next largest ethnicity is black African.

Healthwise, 96% of the population is in fair, good, or very good health and only 4% is in bad or very bad health, beating the regional 4.4% and the national 5.6%.

The Milton Keynes North constituency performs better for social mobility than the Milton Keynes local authority area: it ranks at 175/533, placing it in the top third of constituencies, but at 146/323, placing it just amongst the top 46% of local authorities.

EARLY YEARS

Milton Keynes North is in the bottom half of all constituencies for the early years indicators of the social mobility index. Fewer nurseries are ranked as outstanding or good than the national average, at 88% compared to 93%, but despite this a higher share of free school meal eligible pupils achieve a good level of development, 58% vs 53%.

SCHOOLS

Milton Keynes North is in the top 40% of constituencies when it comes to the school stage indicators of social mobility. It is in the top 100 for the quality of its primary schools, which is reflected in attainment levels that are 8% higher than the UK average, and although only 37% of free school meal eligible pupils attend a good or outstanding secondary school compared to a national average of 72%, those pupils still attain the average Attainment 8 score of 39.



YOUTH

Milton Keynes North is amongst the top 30% of constituencies when it comes to the youth stage indicators. It matches the national average of 88% of free school meal eligible young people achieving a positive destination after Key Stage 4. Those continuing to Key Stage 5 achieve higher A Level entry points than average, at 28 compared to 26, and a higher percentage achieve two or more A Levels by age 19, 38% vs 34%.

ADULTHOOD

Milton Keynes scores particularly highly for the adulthood stage of the social mobility index. In particular, with 87% of jobs paying at or exceeding the Real Living Wage, it scores in the top 3% of constituencies.



READING

CONSTITUENCY: READING EAST

EARLY YEARS: 226		SCHOOLS: 152			
Percentage of Nursery providers rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for free school meals achieving a good level of development	Percentage of children eligible for FSM attending a primary school rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for FSM attending a secondary school rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for FSM achieving at least the expected level in reading, writing and maths at the end of Key Stage 2	Average Attainment 8 score for pupils eligible for FSM
92	56	81	41	82	41.53

YOUTH: 218			ADULTHOOD: 37				
Percentage of young people eligible for FSM that are in education, employment or training (positive destination) after completing KS4	Average points score per entry for young people eligible for FSM at age 15 taking A-level or equivalent qualification	Percentage of young people eligible for FSM at age 15 achieving two or more A-Levels or equivalent by the age of 19	Median weekly salary of all employees who live in the local area	Average house prices compared to median annual salary of employees who live in the local area	Percentage of people that live in the local area who are in managerial and professional occupations	Percentage age of jobs that are paid less than the applicable Living Wage Foundation living wage	Percentage age of families with children who own their home
93	23.63	30	504.00	9.17	43	16	67

READING ANALYSIS

Reading scored quite highly in adulthood indicators on the social mobility index, and is within the top 20% of constituencies for median weekly salary. The youth stage is particularly poor for Reading. Compared to the UK average of 88% of free school meal eligible young people not being in a positive destination after completion of KS4, 93% of that same cohort, if in the Reading East constituency, will end up not in a positive destination.

EARLY YEARS

Reading is ranked 226 out of 533 for its early years stage indicators. Ninety-two per cent of nurseries are rated as good or outstanding and 56% of free school meal eligible pupils achieve a good level of development by the end of the early years foundation stage; the UK average figures are 93% and 53% respectively.

SCHOOLS

Reading is ranked 213 out of 533 for its school stage indicators. While there are slightly more free school meal eligible pupils attending good or outstanding primary schools than in the UK as a whole, 85% compared to the UK's 83%, this fails to materialise into better than average attainment where the constituency only matches the UK average 39%. This is worsened at the secondary level: 98% of free school meal eligible pupils attend a good or outstanding school compared to the UK's 72%, but the Attainment 8 scores of those pupils are worse than average; 35 compared to the UK's 39.

YOUTH

Reading is ranked 218 out of 533 for its youth stage indicators as a whole, with more free school meal eligible pupils moving on to a positive destination after Key Stage 4 than the UK average (93% versus 88%). But only 30% of free school meal eligible pupils attain two or more A Levels by age 19 compared to 34% nationally. The average A Level points attained by those eligible for free school meals is also below the national average, at 23.63 compared to 26.

ADULTHOOD

Reading is comfortably in the top 10% of constituencies for its adulthood indicators, ranking 37 out of 533. Average earnings are almost £60 a week higher than the UK average, while there are more managerial and professional jobs in the area (43% compared to the UK's 30%). Despite this, home ownership levels are only slightly above the UK average (67% versus 65%).



LEEDS

CONSTITUENCY: LEEDS CENTRAL

EARLY YEARS: 358		SCHOOLS: 524			
Percentage of Nursery providers rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for free school meals achieving a good level of development	Percentage of children eligible for FSM attending a primary school rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for FSM attending a secondary school rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for FSM achieving at least the expected level in reading, writing and maths at the end of Key Stage 2	Average Attainment 8 score for pupils eligible for FSM
96	45	85	29	27	30.05

YOUTH: 491			ADULTHOOD: 455				
Percentage of young people eligible for FSM that are in education, employment or training (positive destination) after completing KS4	Average points score per entry for young people eligible for FSM at age 15 taking A-level or equivalent qualification	Percentage of young people eligible for FSM at age 15 achieving two or more A-Levels or equivalent by the age of 19	Median weekly salary of all employees who live in the local area	Average house prices compared to median annual salary of employees who live in the local area	Percentage of people that live in the local area who are in managerial and professional occupations	Percentage age of jobs that are paid less than the applicable Living Wage Foundation living wage	Percentage age of families with children who own their home
84	23.42	25	377.93	4.45	19	14	38



LEEDS ANALYSIS

Leeds Central is the worst Parliamentary constituency in which Shoosmiths operates an office and scores poorly across the board for the overall life stage rankings. There is some good news: housing is comparatively affordable and 86% of jobs pay at or above the Real Living Wage, compared to a national average of just 75%.

EARLY YEARS

Leeds Central is ranked in the bottom half of constituencies in terms of early years indicators (358/533). While 96% of nurseries are rated as good or outstanding – above the national average of 93% - 45% of free school meal eligible pupils achieve a good level of development by the end of the early years foundation stage, compared to 53% nationally.



SCHOOLS

Leeds Central is the ninth worst Parliamentary constituency for the school stage of the social mobility index. Although 85% of free school meal eligible children attend a good or outstanding primary school, higher than the average of 83%, only 27% of free school meal eligible children will find themselves in a good or outstanding school compared to the average of 72%.

YOUTH

Leeds Central is ranked 491 out of 533 for its youth stage indicators as a whole, with 84% of free school meal eligible pupils moving on to a positive destination after Key Stage 4, compared to the UK average of 88%. Only 25% of free school meal eligible pupils attain two or more A Levels by age 19, significantly lower than the 34% national rate. The average A Level points attained by those eligible for free school meals is also below the national average, at 23.42 compared to 26.

ADULTHOOD

Leeds Central is in the bottom 15% of constituencies for its adulthood indicators, ranking 455 out of 533. Average earnings are more than £65 a week lower than the UK average, while there are less managerial and professional jobs in the area (19% compared to the UK's 30%). Home ownership levels are considerably lower than the national average only slightly above the UK average (67% versus 65%).

NORTHAMPTON

CONSTITUENCY: SOUTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

EARLY YEARS: 244		SCHOOLS: 401			
Percentage of Nursery providers rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for free school meals achieving a good level of development	Percentage of children eligible for FSM attending a primary school rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for FSM attending a secondary school rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for FSM achieving at least the expected level in reading, writing and maths at the end of Key Stage 2	Average Attainment 8 score for pupils eligible for FSM
94	52	83	31	71	33.69

YOUTH: 133			ADULTHOOD: 36				
Percentage of young people eligible for FSM that are in education, employment or training (positive destination) after completing KS4	Average points score per entry for young people eligible for FSM at age 15 taking A-level or equivalent qualification	Percentage of young people eligible for FSM at age 15 achieving two or more A-Levels or equivalent by the age of 19	Median weekly salary of all employees who live in the local area	Average house prices compared to median annual salary of employees who live in the local area	Percentage of people that live in the local area who are in managerial and professional occupations	Percentage age of jobs that are paid less than the applicable Living Wage Foundation living wage	Percentage age of families with children who own their home
92	25.20	36	489.40	7.87	35	18	80



NORTHAMPTON ANALYSIS

South Northamptonshire has very strong results for the adulthood stage of the social mobility index, where it is well within the top decile for constituencies. House prices relative to salaries are at the UK average of 8%, but home ownership is higher than the UK average of 65%, at 80%. The worst area for Northampton is the schools stage, where it is in the bottom quarter of all constituencies.

EARLY YEARS

South Northamptonshire is ranked 244 out of 533 for its early years stage indicators. Ninety-four per cent of nurseries are rated as good or outstanding and 52% of free school meal eligible pupils achieve a good level of development by the end of the early years foundation stage; the UK average figures are 93% and 53% respectively.

SCHOOLS

South Northamptonshire is in the bottom 25% of constituencies for the school stage of the social mobility index. Although 83% of free school meal eligible children attend a good or outstanding primary school, on a par with the national average, attainment falls below the average at 33, compared to 39.

YOUTH

South Northamptonshire is in the top 150 constituencies for youth indicators, with 92% of free school meal eligible pupils moving on to a positive destination after Key Stage 4, compared to the UK average of 88%. 36% of free school meal eligible pupils attain two or more A Levels by 19, again above the national average (34%). The average A Level points attained by those eligible for free school meals almost matches the national average (25 versus 26).

ADULTHOOD

South Northamptonshire is in the top 10% of constituencies for its adulthood indicators, ranking 36 out of 533. Average earnings are around £45 a week higher than the UK average, while there are more managerial and professional jobs in the area (35% compared to the UK's average of 30%). Home ownership levels are well above the national average (80% versus 65%).





NOTTINGHAM

CONSTITUENCY: NOTTINGHAM SOUTH

EARLY YEARS: 471		SCHOOLS: 246			
Percentage of Nursery providers rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for free school meals achieving a good level of development	Percentage of children eligible for FSM attending a primary school rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for FSM attending a secondary school rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for FSM achieving at least the expected level in reading, writing and maths at the end of Key Stage 2	Average Attainment 8 score for pupils eligible for FSM
86	56	68	45	79	40.58

YOUTH: 242			ADULTHOOD: 395				
Percentage of young people eligible for FSM that are in education, employment or training (positive destination) after completing KS4	Average points score per entry for young people eligible for FSM at age 15 taking A-level or equivalent qualification	Percentage of young people eligible for FSM at age 15 achieving two or more A-Levels or equivalent by the age of 19	Median weekly salary of all employees who live in the local area	Average house prices compared to median annual salary of employees who live in the local area	Percentage of people that live in the local area who are in managerial and professional occupations	Percentage age of jobs that are paid less than the applicable Living Wage Foundation living wage	Percentage age of families with children who own their home
96	24.27	34	359.07	5.55	29	26	57

NOTTINGHAM ANALYSIS

Nottingham South has some interesting results in its social mobility index scores. Despite having a worse nursery system, the percentage of free school meal eligible pupils achieving a good level of development is above average, a trend that continues throughout education. However, at the adulthood level, we see that in the area in which Shoosmiths is located, there are worse than average weekly earnings, fewer Real Living Wage jobs, fewer managerial roles, and, despite more affordable housing, less home ownership.

EARLY YEARS

Nottingham South is ranked 471 out of 533 for its early years stage indicators. Eighty-six per cent of nurseries are rated as good or outstanding and 56% of free school meal eligible pupils achieve a good level of development by the end of the early years foundation stage; the UK average figures are 93% and 53% respectively.

SCHOOLS

While Nottingham South is in the top half of Parliamentary constituencies for the school stage of the social mobility index, only 68% of free school meal eligible children attend

a good or outstanding primary school, compared the average of 83%. This drops to 45% at secondary school level. However, Attainment 8 scores of those pupils are slightly better than average at 41 compared to the UK's 39.

YOUTH

Nottingham South is ranked 242 out of 533 for its youth stage indicators as a whole, with more free school meal eligible pupils moving on to a positive destination after Key Stage 4 than the UK average (96% versus 88%). The proportion of free school meal eligible pupils attaining two or more A Levels by age 19 compared matches the national average of 34% nationally, but average points score per entry is lower – 24 compared to 26.

ADULTHOOD

Nottingham South is ranked 395 out of 533 for adulthood indicators. Average earnings are £86 a week lower than the UK average, while the level of managerial and professional jobs in the area is marginally below the UK average of 30%. Home ownership levels are notably lower than average, at 57% compared to 65%.

LONDON

CONSTITUENCY: HAVERING

EARLY YEARS		SCHOOLS			
Percentage of Nursery providers rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for free school meals achieving a good level of development	Percentage of children eligible for FSM attending a primary school rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for FSM attending a secondary school rated outstanding or good by Ofsted	Percentage of children eligible for FSM achieving at least the expected level in reading, writing and maths at the end of Key Stage 2	Average Attainment 8 score for pupils eligible for FSM
90.6	52.35	75.84	49.26	47.93	38.60

YOUTH			ADULTHOOD				
Percentage of young people eligible for FSM that are in education, employment or training (positive destination) after completing KS4	Average points score per entry for young people eligible for FSM at age 15 taking A-level or equivalent qualification	Percentage of young people eligible for FSM at age 15 achieving two or more A-Levels or equivalent by the age of 19	Median weekly salary of all employees who live in the local area	Average house prices compared to median annual salary of employees who live in the local area	Percentage of people that live in the local area who are in managerial and professional occupations	Percentage age of jobs that are paid less than the applicable Living Wage Foundation living wage	Percentage age of families with children who own their home
85.00	25.51	32.68	514.60	8.82	28.03	28.63	68.24

UK							
88	26	34	443	8	30	25	63

LONDON ANALYSIS

While looking at the overall data, constituencies in London are ranked highly – 56 of the 73 constituencies are in the top ranked 20%. The overall rankings are not the be all and end all of an area’s social mobility story, and in London this remains the case: in adulthood, only eight of the 73 constituencies are in the highest ranked 20%. Shoosmiths’ efforts should always be focused on the communities that need the most help in boosting social mobility. Therefore, in London, we recommend aiming Shoosmiths’ resources at Havering, the worst borough in London for social mobility.

EARLY YEARS

The Borough of Havering is slightly worse than the UK average when it comes to the early years rankings. Whereas 93% of nursery providers in the UK are ranked as good or outstanding, in Havering that figure is 90.6%. This slightly below average figure continues into the ‘good level of development’ measure, where only 52.35% of those eligible for Free School Meals attain a good level of development compared to 53% nationwide.

CHILDHOOD

Havering has a mixed story when it comes to social mobility at the childhood stage. While fewer FSM children attend a good or outstanding primary school than the national average (75.84% vs 83%), more FSM children attend a good or outstanding secondary school (49.26% vs 39%). The impact of fewer FSM children attending a good or outstanding school is clear: only 47.93% of them achieve the expected level in reading, writing and maths compared to the national average of 72%. Fortunately, the Attainment 8 score of that cohort is not far behind the national average, at 38.60 compared to an average of 39.

YOUTH

Havering is worse than average for the youth stage indicators, where it ranks below the national average on every measure – though not by much. Only 85% of young people end up in a ‘positive destination’ after KS4 compared to 88% nationwide, the average points score per entry is 25.51 compared to 26 nationwide, and only 32.68% of young people eligible for FSM at 15 achieve two or more A Levels compared to 34 nationwide.

ADULTHOOD

The adulthood stage indicators for Havering have some interesting results, especially when considering that London typically falls far behind on this measure. The average salary is higher than the UK average, at £514.6 a week compared to £443. House prices, which are usually above the UK average by a significant amount, are only 8.82 times higher than the UK average of 8. For comparison, house prices in the Cities of London & Westminster constituency are 22 times higher than the average wage. A higher number of families own their home, 68.24% vs 63% nationwide. A lower than average number of people are employed in managerial and professional occupations, and 28.63% of jobs pay less than the Real Living Wage, which is more than the UK average of 25%.



SHOOSMITHS EDINBURGH

EARLY YEARS: PERCENTAGE ACHIEVING EXPECTED LEVELS			SCHOOLS: PERCENTAGE ACHIEVING EXPECTED LEVELS					
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LOCAL AUTHORITY

P1 Reading (81)	P1 Writing (78)	P1 Numeracy (84)	P7 Reading (72)	P7 Writing (65)	P7 Numeracy (68)	S3 Reading (86)	S3 Writing (84)	S3 Numeracy (86)
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CITY OF EDINBURGH

82.5	80.2	86.8	76.2	68.6	72.7	85.8	84.8	86.7
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EARLY YEARS: PARTICIPATION, HIGHER EDUCATION DESTINATION, SCQF 5 OUTCOME			WORKING LIVES: WAGES, HOUSE PRICES, JOBS, VOLUNTARY LIVING WAGE			
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LOCAL AUTHORITY

% 16-19 year olds participating (three-year average)	% of school leavers achieving 1+ awards at SCQF 5 or better~	% of school leavers going on to higher education	Median weekly salary of employees who live in the local area	Average house prices compared with median annual salary	% of people who live in the local area who are in managerial and professional occupations	% of jobs that are paid less than the applicable Living Wage Foundation living wage
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CITY OF EDINBURGH

89.5	85.1	36.5	£457.80	7.9	40.1	14.4
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EDINBURGH ANALYSIS

Edinburgh is the overall seventh ranked local authority area in Scotland, out of a total of 32. Although it scores highly on many life stages, it scores particularly poorly at the youth stage.

EARLY YEARS

Edinburgh is ranked 9th out of 32 for its Early Years indicators. A greater number of early years pupils in Edinburgh achieve the expected levels in reading, writing, and numeracy than in Scotland as a whole: Edinburgh's figures are 82.5%, 80.2%, and 86.8% compared to the Scottish average of 81%, 78%, and 84%.

SCHOOLS

Edinburgh is ranked 11th out of 32 for its School indicators. Pupils in Edinburgh outperform the overall Scottish rankings in all but one area, which is S3 Reading, although the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in Edinburgh is just 0.2% behind the Scottish average at 85.8% compared to a nationwide 86%.

YOUTH

Edinburgh is ranked 20th out of 32 for its Youth indicators, making it the tenth worst. The Social Mobility Commission has also noted that while the percentage of young people not participating has declined in most of Scotland in the period 2014-17, it is not true in Edinburgh, where the percentage of pupils not participating has actually increased between 2016-17 (11).

ADULTHOOD

Edinburgh is the top ranked local authority in Scotland for its working lives indicators. People in Edinburgh are much more likely to be in a professional or managerial position, with this accounting for 40.1% of the population, and it also has the fewest low paid jobs, with just 14.4% of jobs paying less than the Real Living Wage. To some extent, this is offset by the higher cost of a house, a data point that remains high across cities, where Edinburgh ranks as the second most expensive place to own a home compared to salary, just after Aberdeenshire.



BELFAST

MEDIAN WEEKLY SALARY	AVERAGE HOUSE PRICES COMPARED WITH MEDIAN ANNUAL SALARY	PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE WITH MANAGERIAL AND PROFESSIONAL OCCUPATIONS	PERCENTAGE OF JOBS THAT ARE PAID LESS THAN THE APPLICABLE LIVING WAGE FOUNDATION LIVING WAGE
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NI/BELFAST

£501 (12)	4.9 (13)	26.3% (14)	23% (15)
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UK AVERAGE

£443 (but not comparable as the NI data includes only full time employees and the English data contains full time and part time)	8 (but not comparable as the NI data includes the annualised salary data of full time employees only and the English data contains full time and part time)	30%	25%
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Not being included in any Social Mobility Index and data collection being subject to a different statistical agency presents a challenge for examining how best to improve social mobility in the Belfast area. Many measures are not directly comparable due to differences in the exact data that is collected.

The two pieces of data that are directly comparable show that the area has fewer people in managerial and professional occupations, and there are slightly more jobs which pay at least the Real Living Wage.

The UK government's Social Mobility Barometer 2018 report also revealed that people in the UK feel there is an urgent need to ensure people can improve their social mobility. When questioned on whether social mobility is a postcode lottery, respondents in Northern Ireland ranked joint first in believing that it is (16).

EARLY YEARS

LOCAL AUTHORITY	PERCENTAGE OF NURSERY PROVIDERS RATED OUTSTANDING OR GOOD BY OFSTED, RANKING	PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN ELIGIBLE FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS ACHIEVING A GOOD LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT RANKING	OVERALL STAGE RANKING
Meon Valley	91.07, 178	51.04, 119	129
Manchester	85.53, 314	51.45, 110	276
Birmingham	84.13, 320	51.94, 97	296
Milton Keynes	87.49, 302	54.48, 54	186
Sheffield	89.13, 276	50.13, 140	213
Reading	88.76, 283	53.21, 71	165
Leeds	94.03, 18	42.41, 285	209
Northampton	91.00, 190	49.53, 150	162
Nottingham	86.72, 308	46.65, 218	304
UK AVERAGE	91.19	49.10	

SCHOOL

LOCAL AUTHORITY	PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN ELIGIBLE FOR FSM ATTENDING A PRIMARY SCHOOL RATED OUTSTANDING OR GOOD BY OFSTED, RANKING	PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN ELIGIBLE FOR FSM ATTENDING A SECONDARY SCHOOL RATED OUTSTANDING OR GOOD BY OFSTED, RANKING	PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN ELIGIBLE FOR FSM ACHIEVING AT LEAST THE EXPECTED LEVEL IN READING, WRITING AND MATHS AT THE END OF KEY STAGE 2, RANKING	AVERAGE ATTAINMENT 8 SCORE FOR PUPILS ELIGIBLE FOR FSM, RANKING	OVERALL STAGE RANKING
Meon Valley	91.96, 61	100, 1	40.63, 50	42.80, 35	22
Manchester	91.82, 64	66.99, 212	42.32, 35	40.40, 73	48
Birmingham	75.85, 258	67.37, 211	35.63, 109	42.90, 33	123
Milton Keynes	79.83, 233	70.65, 186	37.72, 83	36.00, 226	185
Sheffield	69.82, 292	73.47, 166	32.05, 173	36.50, 203	254
Reading	71.36, 285	28.56, 316	33.33, 144	35.30, 256	303
Leeds	89.46, 95	64.89, 220	26.26, 279	35.60, 246	234
Northampton	66.55, 299	52.89, 266	30.43, 212	36.70, 199	293
Nottingham	76.01, 255	76.92, 150	37.05, 90	37.50, 159	172
UK AVERAGE	83.58	72.57	33.27	38.04	

YOUTH

LOCAL AUTHORITY	PERCENTAGE OF YOUNG PEOPLE ELIGIBLE FOR FSM THAT ARE IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING (POSITIVE DESTINATION) AFTER COMPLETING KS4, RANKING	AVERAGE POINTS SCORE PER ENTRY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE ELIGIBLE FOR FSM AT AGE 15 TAKING A-LEVEL OR EQUIVALENT QUALIFICATION, RANKING	PERCENTAGE OF YOUNG PEOPLE ELIGIBLE FOR FSM AT AGE 15 ACHIEVING TWO OR MORE A-LEVELS OR EQUIVALENT BY THE AGE OF 19, RANKING	PERCENTAGE OF YOUNG PEOPLE ELIGIBLE FOR FSM AT AGE 15 ENTERING HIGHER EDUCATION BY THE AGE OF 19, RANKING	PERCENTAGE OF YOUNG PEOPLE ELIGIBLE FOR FSM AT AGE 15 ENTERING HIGHER EDUCATION AT A 'SELECTIVE' UNIVERSITY BY THE AGE OF 19, RANKING	OVERALL STAGE RANKING
Meon Valley	90.00, 55	30.23, 62	26.59, 236	12.67, 248	3.00, 116	129
Manchester	86.00, 161	28.34, 165	39.22, 56	26.67, 37	4.67, 62	64
Birmingham	89.00, 71	28.90, 129	45.52, 28	31.00, 28	6.00, 34	28
Milton Keynes	85.00, 191	26.05, 278	36.31, 74	21.67, 53	3.67, 77	140
Reading	86.00, 161	27.14, 234	31.89, 138	13.33, 229	5.00, 60	158
Leeds	82.00, 273	26.43, 262	26.68, 233	15.00, 157	2.33, 230	281
Northampton	83.00, 251	25.63, 292	27.91, 209	16.00, 135	2.67, 192	271
Nottingham	76.00, 322	27.88, 194	27.42, 218	15.33, 147	2.00, 269	308
UK AVERAGE	86.42	28.38	32.27	19.96	3.60	

ADULTHOOD

LOCAL AUTHORITY	MEDIAN WEEKLY SALARY OF ALL EMPLOYEES WHO LIVE IN THE LOCAL AREA, RANKING	AVERAGE HOUSE PRICES COMPARED TO MEDIAN ANNUAL SALARY OF EMPLOYEES WHO LIVE IN THE LOCAL AREA, RANKING	PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE THAT LIVE IN THE LOCAL AREA, WHO ARE IN MANAGERIAL AND PROFESSIONAL OCCUPATIONS, RANKING	PERCENTAGE OF JOBS THAT ARE PAID LESS THAN THE APPLICABLE LIVING WAGE FOUNDATION LIVING WAGE, RANKING	PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN WHO OWN THEIR HOME, RANKING	OVERALL STAGE RANKING
Meon Valley	480.30, 75	8.04, 191	28.80, 178	17.51, 43	74.54, 17	36
Manchester	385.23, 247	5.74, 70	30.43, 154	17.05, 39	38.60, 311	218
Birmingham	400.57, 209	5.64, 67	27.33, 207	22.77, 119	53.14, 275	186
Milton Keynes	459.27, 99	7.81, 183	30.20, 158	14.43, 19	54.21, 268	100
Reading	472.83, 83	8.13, 193	38.07, 41	15.87, 27	51.33, 286	68
Leeds	423.50, 144	5.78, 72	29.73, 164	19.27, 63	59.45, 227	108
Northampton	408.50, 182	6.42, 110	26.70, 221	27.96, 219	59.02, 232	227
Nottingham	349.30, 308	4.99, 26	24.10, 259	23.22, 130	43.50, 305	287
UK AVERAGE	433.61	7.92	30.42	24.98	61.90	



BUILDING ON STRONG FOUNDATIONS

Recognising that more can be done to tackle social immobility is the first step to doing so

Partnering with the Social Mobility Pledge in order to assist the goal of creating a coalition of the willing and building a pool of collaborative best practice schemes must be recognised as a big step. The larger that pool of knowledge grows, the quicker and more effective our efforts to solve the issue will be.

Shoosmiths does not start from a 'zero position'. As a signatory of the Social Mobility Pledge, they have already committed to partnering with local schools and colleges, providing structured work experience or apprenticeships, and have adopted open employee recruitment practices. They already understand that talent can come from anywhere, and so make efforts to ensure their workforce culture is inclusive and contributes to their community.

CASE STUDY ONE

MARIE MANN, TRAINEE SOLICITOR IN NOTTINGHAM

I grew up in a council house in a small coal-mining town in Derbyshire, the third daughter of a jack of all trades father who dabbled with running his own fruit and vegetable business and driving HGVs, and a US-born stay at home mom. By the time I was born, the business was no more and my dad drove the HGVs only sporadically due to a disability affecting his right arm.

My state school was average. It produced a lower than national average rate of students going on to higher education. I wasn't pressured by my school or parents to get the best grades. I did okay, but, in hindsight, I probably could have done better. Nonetheless, college and university was always my plan as I aspired to be a lawyer or an illustrator.

Being part of the first generation of my family to attend university, I had little guidance on what to consider when choosing where to study law. I had no idea what a 'redbrick' university meant and simply followed in the footsteps of my older sister who attended Nottingham Trent.

After graduating from university with a 2:1 in 2007, I joined Shoosmiths as a PA in the commercial property department. It was a temporary contract, but I impressed, and they took me on permanently.

In 2009, my first daughter was born and two years later she was followed by my second. Their arrival was the most amazing thing. I came back to work part-time after both. Career progression was not my objective then: my focus was on my family. However, as they grew older I outgrew my role in document support and wanted more of a challenge. In 2013, I was successful in obtaining a paralegal role in the commercial property department covering a maternity leave vacancy. Determined to make this

role my own, I did exactly that and I was offered a permanent paralegal position.

I spent the next two years gaining further experience, growing in confidence and seeking out opportunities to provide paralegal support across the wider firm. During my time as a paralegal, I was managed by a new partner to the firm. He brought a fresh perspective and it didn't take long before he became a great mentor to me and gave me the confidence to again strive for more.

Having my mentor's belief gave me that push, and in 2015 I began doing the LPC part time. I initially funded the LPC myself. Whilst I had originally said I would not do that, and still found it financially difficult, I decided to take control of my career progression and stopped waiting for a training contract and funding to fall into my lap. Nine months later I secured a training contract at Shoosmiths.

My journey to qualifying as a solicitor has taken longer than most, with a slight diversion on the way to start a family. When I qualify, I will have been at Shoosmiths for 13 years. Do I wish I had come through via more conventional means? Perhaps, in some ways. But then I wouldn't have the skill set that I have as a result of all my experience and I wouldn't be the person I am today.

Tackling barriers to social mobility needs to start at an early age. The legal industry is so competitive. For some firms, if you haven't attended a redbrick university, you're not getting in. I hadn't realised that when I aspired to be a lawyer at school. For me, getting where I am is a result of working extremely hard and having the support of those around me, along with a mentor who really helped give me the guidance I needed.

CASE STUDY TWO

JULIE PEEL, ASSOCIATE, BIRMINGHAM

I was born in Liverpool but spent most of my early childhood living on an estate in Scotland. The family moved to Morecambe Bay in Lancashire when I was 10 years old because the power station that my dad worked at was being shut down.

I went to a comprehensive school in Morecambe where I gained good O Level results but there was very little in the way of encouraging students to aspire to higher education. I left school at 16 to take a job in Natwest. My teachers were horrified that I was leaving but at the time I did not know what I wanted to do and did not see the point of going to university. The lure of a full-time job and a salary seemed much more attractive and all my friends had left education at age 16. At the time, working in a bank was seen as a 'job for life' and my parents were happy with my decision. Nobody in my family had ever gone on to higher education so it wasn't something that was discussed or encouraged.

After leaving school I did an A Level at night school, but I was then encouraged by my supervisor in the bank to study for my banking exams – so I stopped studying for A Levels and instead combined full time work with studying for my Associateship of the Chartered Institute of Bankers. I was accepted onto a management development programme at the bank and progressed to the highest clerical grade. The next step was a managerial role, however banking had changed rapidly in the nine years that I had been at Natwest. I had come to regret my decision to leave school at 16 and to not go to university.

I applied for voluntary redundancy to help fund myself through university and was accepted by Nottingham University to study law as a mature student. The biggest challenge for me in going to university when I was 25 years old was that I had left school nine years earlier. Giving up a salary and my own home to live on a grant and live in student accommodation with five other people all much younger than me was quite a culture shock. I also felt that I couldn't really have the same carefree attitude that the younger students had to university life because I was funding my studies myself and had more to lose if I failed.

It was also a shock when I was applying for training contracts as I repeatedly received rejection letters without even being interviewed. I had thought that, as a mature student with nine years' banking experience, I would be someone that firms would want to recruit. This was not the case. I had one interview where the interviewers, both male partners in a well-known firm, mocked my background during the interview process and made jokes at my expense. This was quite demoralising and nearly made me give up on trying to secure a training contract.

My breakthrough came when I spoke to an HR Manager from Edwards Geldards at an open day at university. I got on well with her and she invited me to undertake a week's work experience with the firm in the summer. This led to me subsequently being offered a training contract.

I qualified in 2001 and since then have been assisting clients with resolving disputes both pre-litigation and post-litigation. I joined Shoosmiths in 2009 and am now an Associate within the Litigation Services team in Birmingham.

To me, social mobility is the ability to do whatever you want to do in life regardless of your own personal background.

I believe the biggest barriers to social mobility are the personal prejudices of decision makers and the lack of role models in a person's life who will encourage them to be ambitious and not to let their background hold them back and to be confident in their own abilities.

The advice I would give to a school leaver is to believe in yourself and seek the advice of people who have achieved what you want to do and get as much information as you can before making any life changing decisions. Don't let other people put doubts in your mind that you are not good enough to achieve what you want to achieve.



CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Shoosmiths has established itself as a business that gets “the people bit” right - it has worked hard to break down the barriers that hold back talent and invest in the success of its employees.

Shoosmiths’ social mobility strategy combines a recognition that talent can come from anywhere with a strong emphasis on the importance of being yourself at work. This is backed up by a continual effort to support social mobility externally as well as within its network of offices. A thorough and well-coordinated approach has been established - and is always being developed - which attacks social mobility barriers from all angles.

The first step of Shoosmiths’ Action Plan is to consider how it can build on this internal success by engaging all its employees in a staff survey and staff working group to identify their priorities and the next set of internal challenges. This organic approach will help build on the strong foundations Shoosmiths has already developed when it comes to creating a socially mobile workforce.

This Action Plan contains recommendations around which we hope Shoosmiths will engage its employees, centred on the Social Mobility Pledge’s core three themes; partnership, access, and recruitment.

PARTNERSHIP: Shoosmiths should engage its employees on how they can develop clear impact reporting of their community partnerships and how closing social mobility gaps can be benchmarked and progress shared amongst all employees.

ACCESS: Shoosmiths should consider how they can further target access opportunities to identified underrepresented groups, increase their length and breadth and implement progression tracking and development targets for those involved in outreach access programmes.

RECRUITMENT: Shoosmiths should consider from employees’ lived experiences how they can expand their university recruitment network, increase recruitment of school leavers, and potentially further enhance the opportunities for returnees.

By committing to employee-led development of these next internal steps, Shoosmiths will be demonstrating social mobility is strongest in organisations that are willing to challenge themselves, ask difficult questions and to understand why, despite goodwill, the opportunity gap still exists across their sector.

Working with employees in this way, to develop ways for a business to go above and beyond to further break down internal and external social mobility barriers, drives motivation and engagement amongst employees, because they are able to feel part of a wider purpose.

That purpose is the foundation of positive engagement - it’s the core ingredient that makes a truly engaged culture.

That is why Shoosmiths has gone even further in this Action Plan, building on its internal success in working to boost social mobility by putting its impact on the community it serves on an equal footing.

This plan demonstrates Shoosmiths’ commitment to deliver on their purpose, making a positive impact on the economy and wider society by working to boost social mobility amongst its own employees, in the communities in which it operates and with its clients and supply chain.

This Action Plan sets out clear and practical considerations that over the coming months Shoosmiths will be undertaking to deliver on its purpose of boosting social mobility.

As a former Secretary of State for Education, Rt Hon Justine Greening has been clear that the considerations outlined in this plan are challenging. They represent a powerful and pioneering move from traditional corporate social responsibility to being a truly purpose-led business - putting a commitment to delivering a positive contribution to society and the economy by boosting social mobility at the very heart of all Shoosmiths does.

NEXT STEPS

ACTION 1

Shoosmiths will consider how it can further boost social mobility right across its offices by engaging all employees through a staff survey and employee working group to identify their priorities and the next set of internal challenges to consider.

ACTION 2

Shoosmiths will consider how it can potentially develop ways to support boosting social mobility around its Manchester office (and all offices) by supporting staff with improved financial advice or assistance with housing costs, especially for new starters, or those who are entering the workforce for the first time.

ACTION 3

Shoosmiths will consider how it can potentially develop ways to support boosting social mobility in Meon Valley, especially amongst early years children eligible for FSM (Free School Meal) who are not achieving a good level of development at the end of Early Years Foundation Stage.

ACTION 4

Shoosmiths will consider how it can potentially develop ways to support boosting social mobility amongst adults in Birmingham especially through progression into managerial and professional roles.

ACTION 5

Shoosmiths will consider how it can boost social mobility in Milton Keynes by supporting secondary school pupils in their development, especially those eligible for FSM who are attending schools rated as ‘requiring improvement’ or ‘inadequate’.

ACTION 6

Shoosmiths will consider how it can potentially develop ways to boost social mobility in Reading by improving positive destinations for 16 year old school leavers, especially those who have been eligible for FSM.

ACTION 7

Shoosmiths will consider how it can potentially develop ways to boost social mobility in Leeds by providing support for pupils in secondary school especially those who have been eligible for FSM.

ACTION 8

Shoosmiths will consider how it can potentially develop ways to boost social mobility in Northampton by supporting children who do not achieve at least the expected level in reading, writing, and maths by the end of Key Stage 2.

ACTION 9

Shoosmiths will consider how it can boost social mobility in Nottingham by potentially developing ways to offer access routes or support for school leavers to increase their likelihood of reaching a positive destination after Key Stage 4.

ACTION 10

Shoosmiths will consider ways to promote social mobility in London coldspots (the example used in this report is Havering), particularly amongst FSM eligible children who have not achieved a good level of reading, writings, or maths by the end of Key Stage 2.

ACTION 11

Shoosmiths will consider how it can potentially develop ways to boost social mobility in Edinburgh, especially amongst young people, and will liaise with local schemes/ initiatives to identify the best way to do this.

ACTION 12

Shoosmiths will consider how it can potentially develop ways to support boosting social mobility amongst adults in Belfast, especially through progression into managerial and professional roles.

ACTION 13

As Shoosmiths builds on its presence in Glasgow and Sheffield (the firm’s ‘hub’ locations), opportunities to improve social mobility in those communities will also be considered.

ACTION 14

Shoosmiths will continue to work with the Social Mobility Pledge in order to learn and share best practice, and champion the goal of allowing people from all backgrounds to attain their goals.

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