



# CIPD in Northern England: Regional Insights

# Welcome

to the spring issue of Regional Insights - our quarterly update for northern members.

Firstly, I'd like to share some exciting news with you. I have been appointed as Interim UK Market Director for CIPD, responsible for shaping our wider UK Market strategy by building on the successes we've achieved here in the north and other UK Nations.

I am incredibly proud of the positive impact we've had on the world of work - and working lives - in the north, and our collaborations with HR leaders, employers and the region's combined authorities that have helped us to achieve this.

I look forward to further strengthening the CIPD's impact in the north and the wider UK by expanding our engagement and influence to support more members and organisations, including policy makers and wider communities.

Our northern team are as committed as ever to helping you get the most out of your membership. As part of this, they have planned a varied range of

activities this year, hosted by our growing range of regional networks and forums. Find out more on [page 8](#).

This spring issue also includes the team's latest regional news and successes, along with interviews and commentary with talented northern people professionals.

I hope you enjoy the issue. Please do contact the team if you have ideas to collaborate with us or find out how we can better support your organisation.

**Daphne Doody-Green**  
Interim UK Market  
Director



## Meet the CIPD in Northern England team



**Kayleigh Tobbell**

Engagement Manager

e: [kayleigh.tobbell@cipd.co.uk](mailto:kayleigh.tobbell@cipd.co.uk)

Kayleigh is responsible for building relationships with CIPD members and organisations in northern England. Kayleigh is also responsible for the running of our northern networks and communities, including the CIPD Senior People Professionals Network.



**Louisa Haberstroh**

Senior Employer Solutions Manager

e: [louisa.haberstroh@cipd.co.uk](mailto:louisa.haberstroh@cipd.co.uk)

As part of our wider Employer Solutions team, Louisa is responsible for supporting organisations - across the north of England - to improve and professionalise their HR and Learning and Development (L&D) capability.



**Kim Bailey**

Communications Specialist

e: [kim.bailey@cipd.co.uk](mailto:kim.bailey@cipd.co.uk)

Kim is responsible for the delivery of regional member communications, along with external PR to promote our latest guides, research and campaigns. She also maintains our northern social media channels.

## News around the region



### West Yorkshire's fair work movement

We were delighted to attend the launch of the **West Yorkshire Fair Work Charter**, where more than 40 businesses and organisations were recognised and celebrated for pledging their support for the charter.

The ambitious early adopters include Arla Foods, Bradford City Council, Huddersfield Town Football Club, First Bus, Leeds City Council, Leeds Mind, and West Yorkshire Police.

The Charter is the vision of the county's Mayor, Tracy Brabin and the CIPD has helped to develop it - alongside local employers, trade unions, and the region's political leaders - to support and guide businesses to adopt fair working practices.

**Tracy Brabin, Mayor of West Yorkshire, said:** "Hard work should always be rewarded with fair pay and conditions. I'm incredibly grateful to all the brilliant businesses who've joined us already."



### Members have their say on apprenticeship reform

As a trusted advisor to the government, we sought the views of our members on the government's proposals for replacing the Apprenticeship Levy with a Growth and Skills Levy.

This valuable insight - gathered during a Northern Policy Forum session - will help inform a CIPD policy report with recommendations for the government to reform the apprenticeship levy and help drive business investment in skills.

During the online session, Elaine Roy, Group Learning & Development Manager at British Engines spoke about the organisation's journey to continuously improve its apprenticeships offering to attract and retain young talent.

Catch-up on the session [here](#).



### Northern volunteers unite for 2024 success

Volunteers from the ten CIPD branches in the North of England are joining forces this month at a Northern Branch Development Day - held in York - to learn from each other's successes and share ideas for future regional activities and events.

**Lynn Delaney, Regional Facilitator, CIPD said:** "The committees behind the CIPD branches work so hard to deliver quality activities. This day is a great opportunity for them to celebrate their successes and learn from one another."

These collaborative efforts will lead to many great networking and professional development opportunities for people professionals, at all stages of their career, so do try and get involved in your local CIPD branch."

Find out more about your local CIPD branch and its upcoming activities [here](#).



### Yorkshire's young HR stars

We were proud to celebrate Yorkshire's young HR stars at the Insider's Yorkshire Young Professionals of the Year Awards, 2024 which recognise the region's young talent – across a range of sectors - aged 35 and under.

The winner of the Young HR & Talent Acquisition professional of the Year category – which the CIPD sponsored – went to Annis Livock, HR co-ordinator at packaging manufacturer, Roberts Mart for her work in championing apprenticeship programs and helping to support 13 apprentices at the company. The judging panel said she had achieved an awful lot, still being aged just 23.

Read more about the winners [here](#).



### Supporting northern talent

We are working with senior people professionals and HR leaders at organisations – across various sectors in the north – to explore how we can better support them in their role to overcome challenges and improve their HR capability.

Most recently we've enjoyed meeting with inspiring people professionals at organisations such as Beamish Museum, BT, Gentoo, Oculus HR and Port of Tyne.

**Kayleigh Tobbell, Engagement Manager, CIPD in Northern England** said: "It's always a pleasure to meet people professionals face-to-face to hear about their latest challenges and explore how we can help support them in their role and with their development."

Find out how we can support you and your organisation e: [cipdnorth@cipd.co.uk](mailto:cipdnorth@cipd.co.uk)



### Helping prison leavers gain employment

The CIPD Trust, HMP Styal in Cheshire and the HMP Styal Employment Advisory Board have won funding for an innovative new pilot aimed at supporting women leaving prison into employment.

The pilot will use expert mentors from the people profession (all CIPD members) to support women approaching the end of their sentences to develop confidence, employability skills and vocational skills, working with numerous employment partners in the region.

Find out more about the pilot and the CIPD Trust [here](#) or to get involved as a mentor e: [cipdtrustteam@cipd.co.uk](mailto:cipdtrustteam@cipd.co.uk)

# Volunteer Hotseat: Scott Smith, Co-chair of the CIPD branch in North East of England

CIPD members rate their access to a local CIPD branch in their top three membership benefits.

The CIPD branch in North East of England runs a member-to-member mentoring programme, along with special interest groups for L&OD and ED&I specialisms.

Co-chair, Scott Smith FCIPD of People Spark Solutions tells us more about the branch – including plans for 2024 – and the best career advice he's ever received.

## What do you enjoy most about co-chairing the branch and what are you most proud of?

I am honored and privileged to work with amazing volunteers who really care about the people profession. I am so proud of our work to evolve the branch over recent years with new ways to engage our members and potential members.

My goal as co-chair is to share our great work. We did this at the CIPD Annual Conference and Exhibition (ACE), where we took part in the Careers Hub and at CIPD Council, where we chaired a session about our branch transition.

We are also working more closely with our Tees Valley branch neighbors and colleagues at CIPD in Northern England. I truly believe we are better when we are connected and collaborating.

## Can you tell us about some of the branch's most popular activities?

Our branch is thriving, with many volunteers who have been with us for years. We have listened to our members and have offered more focused events and activities to support the ever-changing world of work.

These activities are proving popular, including our member-to-member mentoring scheme, which runs twice yearly, and our special interest groups for ED&I and L&OD. Our student panel events are also always very popular to showcase career pathways.

## What does the North East branch have planned for 2024?

We are hosting our first Knowledge Exchange event with local academics and practitioners. This will be the first of its kind, sharing current thinking with current practice.

We will also continue to share and collaborate more with our CIPD branch neighbors in Tees Valley and work closely with our colleagues at CIPD in Northern England to create synergies for local events and champion our collective work for creating better work and working lives.



Branch Chairs, Scott Smith FCIPD and Victoria Bullerwell FCIPD.

## What's the best career advice you have ever received?

The best career advice I have ever received was to surround myself with the right people. From early in my career, to the present day, I have always been curious about business and how people behave and perform.

Over the years I have always surrounded myself with people who challenge my thinking, champion my work, and support me when things go well and when things are challenging.

The advice I would give to others starting in their career is to surround yourself with people who are positive and care about their work. Actively seek out mentors too, who can help guide you in your career.



Find out more about the CIPD branch in North East of England [here](#).

# Empowering northern care workers to GROW!

Community Integrated Care was awarded the Best L&D Initiative in the Public/Third Sector Award - for their programme, GROW - at the 2023 CIPD People Management Awards (PMAs).

The organisation is one of the UK's largest health and social care charities - with operations across the North East, North West and Yorkshire and Humber – which exists to enable people with care and support needs to live their best lives possible.

Through a mix of bite-sized learning, virtual sessions, in-person workshops, mentoring and more, GROW recognises the wide range of skills required to provide life-changing support to people with a range of physical, mental and learning disabilities.

In response, the innovative programme provides colleagues with the abilities and confidence they need to empower the people they support to live rich, fulfilling and independent lives.

**Teresa Exelby, Chief Corporate Services & People Officer at Community Integrated Care, said:**



"We were up against some huge names from across a whole host of different sectors, so it is a real honour and achievement for our charity to be recognised.

When we set out to transform our learning culture, we were really determined to capture the many skills a Support Worker needs to transform the lives of the people they support. One of our main goals was to create a learning journey that coaches our colleagues, in a person-centered way, working around their incredibly busy schedules and empowering them to support people to live fulfilling lives.

Since GROW launched, we're proud to share that over 5000 colleagues have participated and over 190,000 pieces of learning have been completed. These numbers and this special award demonstrate the success of GROW, and we're delighted to see the impact it's having in delivering the best lives possible.

I'd like to say a huge congratulations to our Learning and Development team for their outstanding work in bringing GROW to life, and a special thank you to everybody across our organisation who contributed to its creation and delivery."



The L&D team at Community Integrated Care with their award.

The CIPD PMAs celebrate excellence in Human Resources, Organisational Development and Learning and Development – recognising the impact of the people profession on organisations.

Other northern organisations to win accolades at the 2023 CIPD PMA awards include:

- **Best change management initiative** - MAG Airports Group
- **Best equality, diversity and inclusion initiative** - EY
- **Best HR/L&D & OD consultancy** - OMNI Human Resource Management
- **Best HR/L&D & OD supplier** - Havas Red UK
- **Best HR/L&D & OD team of the year - private sector** - Softcat plc
- **Best people analytics initiative** - The University of Salford
- **Best SME people management initiative** - Apadmi
- **Victoria Keith, Michael Kelly outstanding student award** - TMS GLOBAL



Enter the 2024 CIPD People Management Awards [here](#).

# Female NHS workers gain enhanced workplace health support

Recognition and support for women's health issues amongst NHS staff in Greater Manchester has been boosted by a range of recommendations from university researchers.

Education and training, backed by the creation of new policies on women's health, are helping to equip employees at the Northern Care Alliance NHS Foundation Trust (NCA) with the knowledge, confidence, and skills to better support colleagues.

NCA line managers and HR teams are being trained further around menopause, fertility support at work, pregnancy loss and endometriosis, based on recommendations made by Manchester Met researchers.

The research - on women's health in the workplace - was carried out by Manchester Met University on behalf of the NCA. As a result, the organisation - which delivers healthcare to over one million people across Salford, Oldham, Rochdale and Bury - is pioneering support for female staff in the health sector.

**Dr Krystal Wilkinson, lead researcher and reader in Human Resource Management at Manchester Metropolitan University, said:**

"While pregnancy and maternity are written into HR policies in all workplaces, our prior research has shown that support for other women's health issues, and complications of pregnancy such as loss, is patchier.

We were delighted to see that the NCA has committed to a comprehensive Well Women Strategy, acknowledging different issues across the life course, and that they wanted bespoke research to ensure their actions were evidence-based."



She adds: "While staff and line managers at the NCA felt well supported on various issues, we identified areas for improvement in the availability of information for employees and confidence in disclosing issues to line managers. Also, the levels of support available and access to appropriate provisions, such as paid time off and flexibility, needed improvement."

## Enhancing support

Researchers worked with the NCA's Women's Wellbeing Strategy Group, established in 2022 to make a difference to the support the organisation offers to female colleagues and address any areas of concern raised by women.

The group has been developing a wide range of support around menopause, fertility support at



work, pregnancy, baby loss and endometriosis and wanted to work with Manchester Met to better understand how well the NCA is supporting these areas, and where it could make improvements.

NCA staff were surveyed by researchers and actions recommended around awareness raising, support for staff affected by women's health issues, and support for their line managers.

**Sharon Lord, NCA health and wellbeing lead, said:**

"Women represent 78% of our workforce and we know that if our colleagues are healthy and happy there is a direct correlation to improved patient care and safety, business productivity and reduced absenteeism.

"Through our work with Manchester Metropolitan we have already seen a significant increase in the knowledge of the Well Women Strategy Group and our support sessions are well attended. This is translating into colleagues accessing the information and support they need when they need it."

# Rising wages and fair pay: is your organisation doing enough?

In April 2024, almost three million low-paid workers will receive a pay rise of almost 10%, as the national living wage rate rises to £11.44 an hour. The government's statutory minimum rate for all workers aged 23 and over will also be extended to workers aged 21 and 22 for the first time.

**Charles Cotton, Senior Policy Advisor, Performance & Reward at CIPD said:**

"Businesses in some sectors have called the rises unsustainable. But employers can prepare for paying higher salaries by exploring different ways to generate the money needed to pay a larger wage bill."

In response to the rise in the national minimum wage rates in 2023, CIPD research revealed that the most common ways companies in the north managed the increase in wages was to:

- take lower profits or accept higher overheads (31%)
- raise prices (30%)
- improve productivity (16%).

The increase in the national living wage rate comes as employers are also being encouraged to get on board with paying the Real Living Wage. This is a voluntary rate of pay - calculated annually by the Resolution Foundation and overseen by the Living Wage Commission - based on actual living costs. It is applicable to workers aged 18 and over and is more than the new minimum wage rate, at £12 per hour.

Businesses across the north such as Aviva, Everton Football Club, Leeds Trinity University, Northumbrian Water and York Minster are just some of the many organisations that have committed to paying the Real Living Wage.

In 2022, Sunderland became the first city in the North East to be recognised for committing to becoming a Living Wage City. There are now 41 Living Wage employers headquartered in Sunderland, alongside 47 who have branches or district centres in Sunderland.

Major employers based in the city such as the University of Sunderland and Gentoo are Real Living Wage employers, alongside City Council staff. Together this means that over 10,000 people working in the city now receive the Real Living Wage.

**Sam England, Head of HR at Gentoo, said:**

"We are proud to be accredited by the Living Wage Foundation and we are committed to making sure our colleagues have a better working life. With the cost-of-living it's more important than ever to make sure we support our colleagues in this way."



Gentoo pay the Real Living Wage

"In the North East 38% children are growing up in poverty. This is the highest rate of in-work poverty nationwide as many are from working families.

The Real Living Wage is a step forward for organisations to positively impact those numbers. We would encourage all organisations to sign up to become an accredited Real Living Wage employer and help to improve working lives in the North East."

**Faith Lydiard, Programme Manager - North East at the Living Wage Foundation adds:**

"Earning the real Living Wage makes a huge difference to workers, who have told us the difference it makes to their productivity at work, mental health and relationships."



Find out how to become a Real Living Wage employer [here](#).

# The CIPD in Northern England – Networks and Forums 2024

## Northern Policy Forum

The CIPD Northern Policy Forum hosts regular online sessions, where member insight is gathered to help inform our guidance for employers and recommend vital changes to public policy to improve the future world of work.

So if you have a keen interest in policy and want to find out more about the CIPD's policy influencing work with the government, register to get involved in the CIPD Northern Policy Forum [here](#).

Upcoming activities include:

**Wed 20 March - 13:00- 14:00, online - Devolution and evolution in UK skills policy.** Uncover the challenges to devolution and how the UK skills systems are performing and evolving. Register [here](#).



## Senior People Professionals (SPPN) Network

If you're a senior people professional – operating in a role such as Head of HR/L&D, Senior HR Business Partner or Assistant People Director – register to join the Senior People Professionals (SPPN) Network [here](#).

It connects like-minded peers through virtual and face-to-face sessions to discuss key topics and share challenges. Upcoming activities include:

**Wed 13 March – 12.00-17.00, Manchester - Your Wellbeing as a Senior People Professional.** This event, in collaboration with the CIPD Manchester Branch, will include a panel discussion on wellbeing and psychological safety followed by lunch and a facilitated workshop. Register [here](#).

**Tues 30 April - 12:00-13:00, online - Career Planning & Development.** Gain support and advice for your professional development and explore tools and techniques to help you overcome barriers and plan your career. Register [here](#).



## Independent Consultants Network

This network provides a platform for independent consultants, who work in the people profession in the north, to connect, share ideas, challenges, and gain peer-to-peer support. Register to join the network [here](#).



## Good Employment Awards – 2 July 2024

As a proud partner to the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter, we are sponsoring its Good Employment Awards (2 July) which celebrate good employment and specifically good practice in engagement, inclusion and health and wellbeing.

Find out more about the winners of the 2023 awards and how to submit a nomination [here](#).

Nominations close on **29 March**, with the ceremony taking place on **2 July in Manchester**.

