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ANNUAL REPORT

COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE

Welcome to NSCG's Annual Report

Foreword from the Chair

As a Corporation, our guiding principle is to ensure that NSCG is recognised as an outstanding organisation where students and staff thrive, achieve and make a positive contribution to the cultural and economic prosperity of Staffordshire and beyond. This year saw the roll out of the aptly-titled strategic plan “committed to excellence”, and what an excellent year it has been.



Simon Leech
Chair of Governors

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We were proud to achieve a top 5% position in the national achievement rate tables, for learners aged 16-18, and remain the highest performing post-merger college in England. Despite significant investment in our estates, facilities and learning resources, we've maintained outstanding financial health and we are pleased to see healthy, year-on-year growth in learner numbers.

The progress made in the relatively short period since NSCG formed in November 2016 is remarkable and the Corporation is indebted to the ambitious and talented team of staff whose vital contributions have helped us to achieve the fantastic outcomes to date. I am impressed by the progress and excited by the opportunities that lie ahead for the Group. With further government and policy changes likely, I am confident that we are in a very strong position for what are likely to be rapidly changing and increasingly challenging times ahead.






Over the last year, we've celebrated many individual student and staff awards alongside a long list of sporting triumphs. We are led by an experienced and enthusiastic senior team with Karen Dobson at the helm, whose immense contribution to further education in Staffordshire was recognised with the award of an OBE in January this year. My congratulations go to Karen on this fantastic accolade, and also to the whole senior team for their continuous commitment to excellence in all that we do.



Welcome to our world

Newcastle College and Stafford College merged in 2016 to form Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group (NSCG). Today, the Group is a force to be reckoned with; Staffordshire's largest and most successful further education provider, placed in the top 5% of general further education colleges nationally. Our campuses provide a friendly welcome, with first class facilities and a dedicated team of staff who put student success at the heart of everything they do.

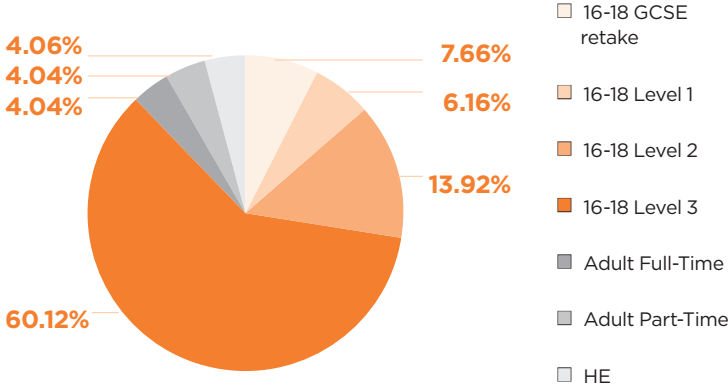
About us

-  High achievement rates; **top 5%** of GFE Colleges for learners aged 16-18
-  **Top performing** post merger college in England
-  **Outstanding** financial health for 20 years
-  **823** staff employed across both campuses
-  **Nationally 2nd =** in the 2018 FE Week Nicdex league table which measures student and employer satisfaction and student destinations

ESFA **Centre for Excellence** in maths

Our Learners

Teaching Delivery



Annually c. **3,300** learners are supported in retaking their GCSE maths & English and functional skills qualifications

Over **10,000** learners on full-time, part-time and apprenticeship programmes


16-18 Learners
4,841


Adult Learners*
2,436


HE Learners
504


Apprentices
2,342

Investing in our future

We've invested over **£77m** in our estate and facilities since 2010, **£13.5M** since 2016.

Following the opening of the state-of-the-art Science and Technology Centre at the Stafford College campus in 2017, further campus developments followed in 2018.

These included:

- A fully-refurbished library area at Stafford College to create a bright, inspiring study zone, jam packed with thousands of books, journals and IT resources.
- Additional classroom spaces in the Riverbank building at the Stafford College campus. This included the addition of a dedicated Mac Suite at the Stafford campus, home to a number of high-spec iMac computers.
- Significant investment in signage and branding, at both the Newcastle College campus and the Palmbourne site. The whole estate is now fully branded as NSCG.
- With the generous support of the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), we have invested in hybrid motor vehicle and plant equipment. The equipment will allow students to prepare for the workplace of the future as hybrid vehicle technology evolves and becomes a more environmentally friendly and accessible choice for consumers.
- Stafford College's Riverbank Restaurant has benefited from investment in decor and soft furnishings to further improve the ambiance and guest experience.

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Celebrating our successes

Whether we are celebrating our 'student of the month', our A Level results, our staff successes or our sporting triumphs, we love to share fantastic achievements from across the group to help inform, inspire and motivate others. The past year has seen many stories of students, apprentices and staff members overcoming barriers and demonstrating true commitment to achieving their goals.

2018 Results

We saw another year of solid results from our Level 3 students. Our A Level pass rate stood at 98% with strong performing subject areas including: further maths, media studies, film studies and photography. Not to be outdone, we also saw our best ever BTEC Extended Diploma results in no less than 26 subject areas, with 81% of students achieving high grades.



Double accolade for College Principal

NSCG Principal Karen Dobson was awarded an OBE for services to further education in the Queens New Year's Honours List 2019. In a double celebration, she also beat stiff competition to make the shortlist of FE Principal of the Year at the TES FE Awards 2019, held at the Grosvenor Hotel, London.



A glittering year for sport

The NSCG ladies volleyball team have a record breaking season; league winners, Knockout Cup Winners, AoC Sport gold medal winners and AoC Sport 'Team of the Year'.

Men's football, men's rugby and the badminton squad also enjoyed competition and league success.



HE Graduation

The second HE graduation ceremony was held at the Newcastle College PAC to celebrate the success of our fantastic higher education students.



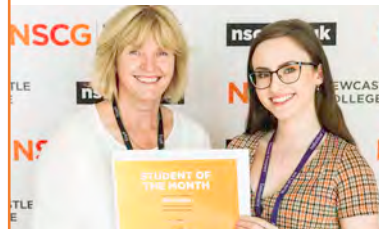
National Award for Computing Student

Matthew Risbey-Ward scoops BTEC IT & Computing Student of the Year Award, presented by Steph McGovern at a glittering London ceremony.



Student of the Month

Every month we hold a formal awards ceremony to recognise and congratulate our "Students of the Month" from all key curriculum areas.



England call up for football stars

Five highly-talented students from the Andy Griffin Football Academy were called up to represent the English Colleges Football Association national team.



Catering Team Recognised at National Finals

Students from Stafford College awarded "Best Kitchen Team" at British Culinary Foundation Finals.



Stafford College Student Recognised for Community Work

Stafford College student, Matthew Goddard won the under 18's Inspiring Individual Award at the Stafford Borough Council Community Awards, for his voluntary work with Stafford Town Football Club.



Preparing our students for a brilliant future



Next Steps Fair

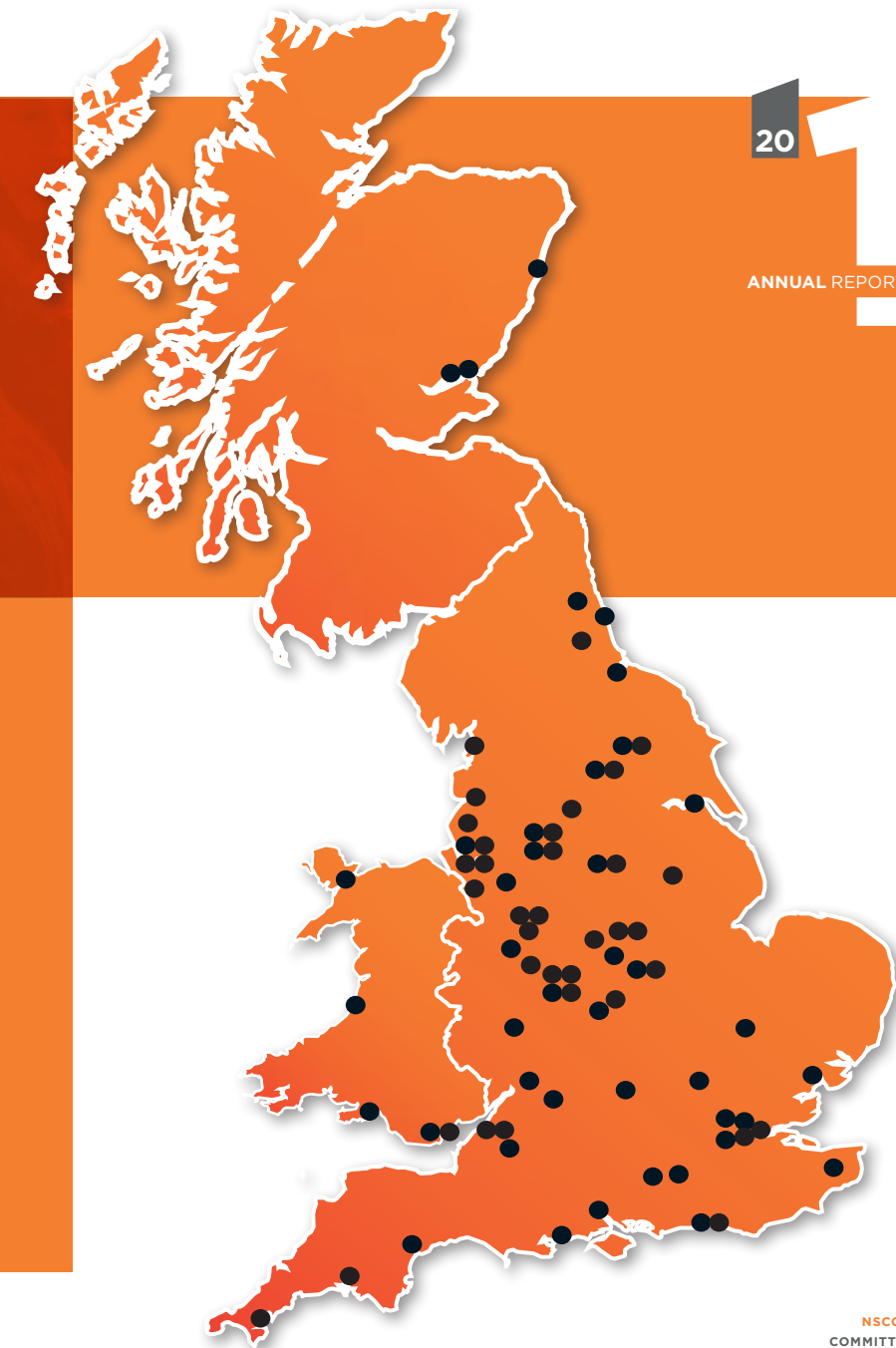
Every year we host a large-scale event, with over 40 universities from across the UK and over 30 regional employers, to help students plan the next steps towards their future career.

Student Progression and Destinations

The progression of full-time students to further and higher learning, apprenticeships or directly into employment is outstanding at 96%. An additional 4% of students are travelling, seeking employment or volunteering.

Progression to Higher Education

Progression from Level 3 to higher education remained healthy, with over 1,192 students progressing to 97 different Higher Education institutions in 2018. This achievement makes NSCG the biggest provider of young people to Higher Education in Staffordshire, second in the West Midlands, and in the top ten nationally.



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At the heart of our local community

We work hand in hand with our local communities. Our students regularly use their new skills to carry out community development work, host events and raise vital funds and awareness for local and national charities.

Fashion Students Support Breast Cancer Project

Fashion students studying on the Level 3 Extended Diploma in Fashion at Stafford College work on a live brief to design and create a clothing collection for breast cancer survivors who have chosen not to have reconstructive surgery. The collection was sold at a charity auction to raise funds for breast cancer charities.



Sustainability Matters

Foundation Diploma in Art & Design students put on a local exhibition titled 'Drowning in Plastic' to highlight the worsening issue of plastic polluting our oceans.



Improving our Town Centre

Our Foundation students get actively involved in many community initiatives, including planting flowers in the Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council flower beds.



#Keepstokesmiling

Level 3 Graphic Design students worked alongside Consultant Orthodontists at the Royal Stoke University Hospital to develop a marketing campaign titled #keepstokesmiling; designed to reduce the consumption of sugary drinks by young people.



Fundraising for Alzheimer's Society

Staff and students participated in a charity football game at the bet365 stadium to raise £745 for Alzheimer's UK, donated in memory of college patron, Gordon Banks OBE.



Supporting Young Minds

Our work-based learning team hosted a wonderful evening for the local business community to raise over £3,700 for the charity "Young Minds", who campaign to raise money to support the mental health of young people.



Community Tea Dance

Performing Arts students regularly host afternoon tea dances for residents of local care facilities.



Remembrance

Every year, students, staff, governors and members of our local community gather to remember our fallen soldiers at a poignant Remembrance Day service.



Christmas

Every Christmas we host a Carol Service for staff, students, parents, governors and members of our community.



Supporting Staffordshire's business needs

We're the region's leading college provider, with more than 2,300 apprentices and success rates over 10% above the national average. Our work-based-learning team works collaboratively with employers throughout Staffordshire and the wider region to foster long-term relationships and support learner development and business growth and prosperity.

- We have strong links with many local employers, meaning we can understand the local economy and skills gaps. This ensures our apprenticeships, training, technologies and facilities are aligned to the development and growth of business and our communities.
- 9 out of 10 NSCG apprentices progress to full-time roles with their employer on completion of their apprenticeship.
- Our national award-winning campaign took to the road aboard a classic American school bus in March to promote the benefits of apprenticeships to hundreds of young people locally.
- Stafford College apprentice, Lee Woodward announced as the 'Best New Entrant' in the bricklaying category at South & City College Birmingham.
- Engineering apprentice, William Edge shortlisted as 'Apprentice of the Year' in the Sentinel Business Awards.
- NSCG Hairdressing students scoop four regional awards at the Association of Hairdressers and Therapists semi-finals in Blackpool.
- Apprentices from Newcastle College and Stafford College celebrating their success at the annual apprenticeship graduation ceremony at the Staffordshire County Showground.



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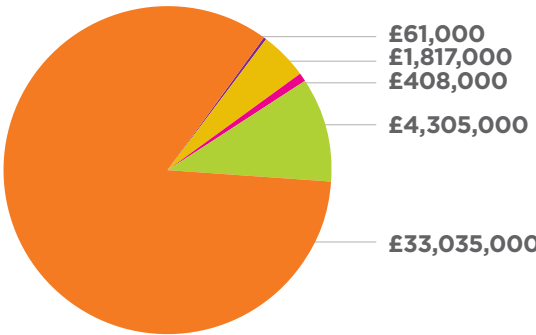


Financial summary

NSCG succeeded in balancing its Income and Expenditure, reporting a **£1,046,000 surplus on continuing activities** respectively for the year, after depreciation of assets.

Income

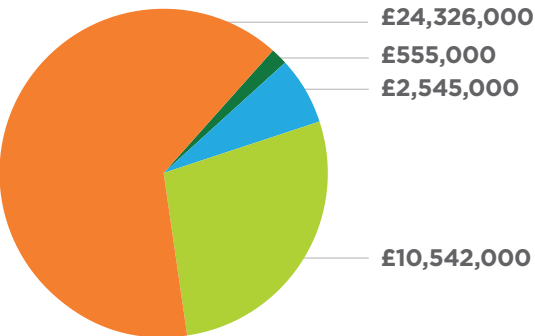
- Funding Council Income
- Tuition Fees and Education
- Contracts
- Grants and Contracts
- Investment Income



Total Income: **£39,374,000**

Expenditure

- Staff Costs
- Other Operating Expenses
- Depreciation & Amortisation
- Interest payable



Total Expenditure: **£37,968,000**
Surplus before other gains **£1,046,000**

In line with established practice in Public Corporations, full sets of audited accounts are available upon request from the Clerk to the Corporation at NSCG, Knutton Lane, Newcastle-under-Lyme, ST5 2GB.

Principal's summary

It continues to be a privilege to be Principal of Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group and to work with a team of governors and colleagues that continually put student experience at the heart of everything they do.

We have a wonderful and diverse college and the 2018 Annual Report serves to highlight just a small selection of outstanding individual achievements as well as the team work and overall student attainment that makes NSCG Staffordshire's leading college.



Karen Dobson OBE
Principal and Chief Executive

In a year where there have been awards and accolades aplenty, I was particularly proud of the 2nd position nationally in the Nicdex league tables and most recently, I was delighted to learn that NSCG had won a Silver award for 'College of the Year' in the BTEC awards.

I believe our success is two-fold. With our "committed to excellence" ethos, we strive for consistently high quality teaching and learning and I am pleased with the output from learning observations, TLAs and learning walks this year, with 92% of lessons deemed to be good to outstanding. We've once again maintained our position as the most successful merged college nationally, placed in the top decile, which is testament to the overall quality of our provision.

In addition, we remain assessed as financially outstanding, and this financial resilience allows us to invest in our estates, facilities and curriculum for the benefit of our students, most of whom enjoy a rounded study programme that includes work experience and work related learning, trips and residential visits, and access to first class facilities and equipment throughout the duration of their course. This investment is set to continue with the exciting, recently announced plans for a brand new £23M skills and innovation hub at the Stafford campus which has a targeted completion date of 2022. An ambitious capital project, but one that will see us consolidate the majority of our Stafford-based provision on to one campus, bringing leading edge facilities and technology which will greatly benefit thousands of future students.

Amongst a year filled with highs, we have also experienced some sadness and I would like to pay tribute publicly to three special people who we sadly lost during this academic year; Sports Centre Patron and footballing legend Gordon Banks OBE, Assistant Principal Val Tomlinson and BTEC Sport student Meg Newton. All from different walks of life but all of whom were fantastic ambassadors for the College, contributing something very special to our college community. Gordon, Val and Meg will all be sadly missed, but very fondly remembered.

Finally, I would like to congratulate our students for their successes and place on record my thanks to employers and other partners, our governors and, of course the staff team at both campuses for their continued support, hard work and commitment.



Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group, Knutton Lane, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire ST5 2GB