



COMPASS | UK & I  
GROUP

# Essential Career Path Guarantee

COMPASS GROUP UK AND IRELAND



Social Mobility  
PLEDGE



# Forewords

**Rt Hon Justine Greening**

Founder of the Social Mobility Pledge &  
Former Secretary of State for Education

My first job at PwC didn't require many skills – it mainly consisted of photocopying and making tea and coffee for a much more experienced audit team. But I was learning on the job, seeing how they dealt with clients, working as part of a team and, over time, starting to do some of the most basic parts of the audit work. And through that I learnt a huge amount. When I moved up a rung I could manage those working for me in my team because I knew exactly what the job was they were doing – I'd done it myself. Each stage of climbing the ladder helped me prepare to take the next step up.

The key point was that although on the face of it my first job at PwC might have seemed initially unskilled, that would have missed the point of what I was learning and what it represented. Because that job was the first rung on my career ladder – a pathway to development and taking on more challenging, intellectually interesting, better paid roles.

The reality is that we all start somewhere, and most of us probably start with relatively unskilled work, but the difference is whether those jobs can lead to progression or not. The difference is whether that role and experience builds up skills or not. If it can, then you have a career, if it can't, then it's a dead-end job. Whether employers create those pathways and chance for progression is the difference between the two. No-one should have to accept a job with a dead end.

Another reality is that, anyhow, where we start our working life, can often be more of a reflection of where we started in life, or our background and circumstance, not of our potential or our future prospects. But that shouldn't affect anyone's chance to progress in a career, if that's what they want. Dead-end jobs are a reflection of how far we still have to go in levelling up Britain. The country will

**Through this approach, Compass is reframing how 'low-skilled' work is perceived, and is finding the pathways and progression that eradicate dead-end jobs.**



only succeed when the path ahead is open to everyone and when everyone has the same opportunities to succeed.

The essential workers that are keeping Britain going during the coronavirus crisis prove that they are the backbone of Britain. But for them we wouldn't have our hospitals functioning, the day-to-day utilities we rely on maintained, our transport system still running, and a service provided in so many other areas of life we take for granted. Whilst many people are able to stay safe and work from home, their roles see them out on the frontline. So their career paths are absolutely crucial.

That's what Compass Group UK and Ireland can show how to deliver – essential worker careers,

often including providing careers for people who were not necessarily looking for one, and who initially had little confidence to pursue one. But once they were on the Compass career pathway they were able to get the support they needed to think about moving up and managing their career going forwards. Through this approach, Compass is reframing how 'low-skilled' work is perceived, and is finding the pathways and progression that eradicate dead-end jobs.

What it proves is that there are no unskilled jobs, only companies that haven't worked out how to deliver career paths for their employees. There should be no dead-end jobs for essential worker careers. In a post-COVID Britain, that must become the new norm.

# Forewords

## Donna Catley

We believe deeply that everyone must have the opportunity to develop and progress – regardless of where they grew up or what their parents did. I'm passionate about this because it is personal.

Having grown up on a council estate in Birmingham, I come from a family of frontline workers – cleaners, dinner ladies, chefs, porters. The very people who power our company every day and have quite literally kept our country going through the pandemic.

We have always been incredibly proud of our colleagues at Compass and it has been glorious to see their dedication and hard work recognised throughout this crisis.

Compass Group UK and Ireland and the hospitality industry as a whole are uniquely positioned to affect positive change for our colleagues and communities. We don't have the educational barriers of other industries and as the UK's largest food and support services company, we have scale and geographic breadth to offer thousands of opportunities across our country.

We offer the precious "First Rung" on the ladder – the first job that enables a colleague to gain confidence and skills – as well as the chance to progress through our ranks. Every day across thousands of sites we see people whose career has grown with us and our business. Every job is an opportunity to develop skills and confidence – there is no dead-end job.

The launch of our "Essential Worker Career Paths" later in 2021 will enable our frontline colleagues to see more clearly how they can "get on" in our organisation and how we can support them. Our continued focus on "Leadership in Action" to help managers engage and support their teams is designed to underpin this. The power of someone turning to you and saying "I believe in you" can be transformational.



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As a Living Wage Recognised Service Provider, we have taken a strong advocacy position on pay in partnership with clients. The benefits of colleague engagement and retention are clear for many. Finally, and importantly – later in 2021 we will become one of the first companies to begin measuring social mobility in our workforce. This will allow us to see if we are making a real difference – and making a real difference is all this is about.

We can redefine the debate on social mobility, beyond the focus on gaining places at top universities and city jobs – important but unattainable for many – and we can offer the chance for tens of thousands of people to take a few rungs on the career ladder. The positive impact of this is vast – on colleagues, their families and our communities. It is good for our colleagues and good for our business. This is the opportunity we have at Compass Group UK and Ireland.

It may not feel like it now, but the future is bright and full of opportunity.



# The Opportunity Gap

## 1/ THE UK'S SOCIAL MOBILITY PROBLEM

Social mobility is typically measured as the difference between a person's occupation or income and that of their parents. When there is a weak link, there is a high level of inequality, while a strong connection suggests a low level of social mobility.

Social mobility levels in the UK have been stagnant for years. This means that those born into deprivation are statistically likely to remain in those circumstances throughout their lives.

**A Broken Social Elevator? How to Promote Social Mobility** reports that, given current levels of inequality and intergenerational earnings mobility, it could take at least five generations or 150 years for the child of a poor family to reach the average income, across OECD ( Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) countries. One in three children with a low earning father will also have low earnings, while, for most of the other two-thirds, upward mobility is limited to the neighbouring earnings group.

Unsurprisingly, this is not uniform across the globe as social mobility has different rates in different countries. It can take just two to three generations to reach that average income in the Nordic countries but nine or more in some emerging economies.

Globalisation and the Fourth Industrial Revolution have successfully helped to reduce extreme poverty and eradicate famine.

While celebrating that success, however, it cannot be denied that the flipside is that they have also deepened inequalities by transferring low-skilled jobs in high-productivity sectors in high-income economies to lower-income counterparts.

The OECD's report also highlighted that, whereas many people born to low-educated parents between 1955 and 1975 enjoyed income mobility, this has stagnated for those born after 1975.

Over the four-year period looked at by the report, about 60 per cent of people remained trapped in the lowest 20 per cent income bracket, while 70 per cent remained at the top.

At the same time, one in seven middle-class households, and one in five people living closer to lower incomes, fell into the bottom 20 per cent.

This is borne out by the Social Mobility Pledge's own research<sup>1</sup> which reveals that, in the UK, young people are finding it harder to progress in the workplace than their parents or grandparents did.

Its study of 2,000 people revealed that most UK workers believe breaking through the 'class-ceiling' is harder for young people now than it was for earlier generations. A majority (60 per cent) of workers aged 35 to 64 believe economically disadvantaged people in the generation below them have a harder time advancing their careers than those one generation older.

The poll also asked thousands of workers aged between 18 and 64 to score how easy it is to get on in life, regardless of background, in the UK.



With one being 'very hard' and 10 being 'very easy', an average score of five was registered, although a quarter of those polled rated it 'hard' or 'very hard'.

Getting on as a disadvantaged young person, is either 'difficult' or 'very difficult', according to the majority (54 per cent) of respondents, rising to 62 per cent in London.

Only 44 per cent of respondents said progressing in life regardless of background is easier in the UK than elsewhere in the world.

While all sectors have been affected by COVID, the hospitality and foodservice sector, have been particularly badly hit. It is crucial for us all that businesses in the sector adapt and

consider new ways of working to make sure that opportunities are directed at those who need them most. It is also crucial in the context of social mobility as there are huge numbers affected, many of them essential workers supporting some of our most vital institutions.

The Social Mobility Pledge was set up to highlight and address these issues in the UK and, in doing so, to level up opportunity and build a fairer society. It encourages organisations to be a force for good by putting social mobility at the heart of their purpose. By sharing their own innovative practice with other businesses and universities, they are not only demonstrating their own commitment but creating a powerful shift towards purpose-led organisations.



### 2/ **IMPACT OF CORONAVIRUS**

The Office for Budget Responsibility's COVID Reference Scenario predicts that the UK economy will contract by 35 per cent, with unemployment potentially peaking at 10 million.

But, just like the issue of social mobility, the impact of the coronavirus pandemic is varied across the UK. While the 35 per cent national average figure is high in itself, it is the case that some areas – predominantly in the North West and Midlands – will see their economic growth reduce by almost 50 per cent. Only one of the twenty hardest hit areas is in the South East or London.

In addition to the significant diversity of geographic impact estimated by the Centre for Progressive Policy, the Resolution Foundation points to previous data suggesting that there is likely to be a large impact on those leaving full-time education and graduating into an economy in the midst of turmoil.

In the 2008 recession, the unemployment rate across the whole population rose from 5.2 per cent in 2007 to 8.5 per cent in 2011; for those with GCSE equivalent qualifications the unemployment figures were 22 per cent in 2007 and 32 per cent in 2011.

Large numbers of young people are now in the job market having had their career pathways significantly disrupted. One in three young people under 25 are employed in the three sectors most affected by the pandemic – travel, hospitality and retail. It has the potential to leave a long-term legacy of unemployment and will certainly impact those from disadvantaged backgrounds and on low incomes the most.

Coronavirus has shone a spotlight on the inequality that already exists and data suggests that it will have a varied and profound impact across locations, ages and education levels. It is clear that the businesses which do best as we recover from the crisis will be those that have stepped up to the mark in recent months for their employees, customers and communities. We need them now to lead the way in delivering solutions and sharing innovation.



### 3/ OPPORTUNITY GAP

The impact of coronavirus across locations, ages and education levels also has an impact for social mobility in the UK.

Our research shows that eight of 14 measures used to calculate social mobility will be impacted. We have used existing place-based social mobility analysis together with the predicted impact of coronavirus to examine the size of a community's 'Opportunity Gap'.

From our analysis we believe there are 16 areas in England at risk of a 'double opportunity hit': already amongst the worst areas for social mobility, they are going to be particularly badly affected by coronavirus. Those in the top 20 per cent, with the largest opportunity gap are referred to as COVID Opportunity coldspots. Some of these, including North Warwickshire, Rutland and Tamworth, are areas which border Birmingham where one of Compass's HQs is located. The Social Mobility Index data for

England, Scotland and Wales is not comparable, and no data is available for Northern Ireland, so no calculation can be made for opportunity gaps in areas outside England where Compass also operates.

The approach demonstrated by Compass in this report shows that people's lives and their job prospects can be improved with targeted development underpinned by a culture of inclusion and support. It has shown that it understands that the effective development of its people pays dividends with employees who enjoy real job satisfaction and are happy to remain within the company.

This report shows how Compass has successfully addressed social mobility issues. It contains insights into the innovations which have worked well and which have had a positive outcome on its employees as well as the community. It features case studies which illustrate the impact that its approach has had on individuals and analysis focusing on the communities in which it operates.

The Opportunity Action Plan considers how Compass might work in the wider Midlands area to extend this innovative practice to an area which will be significantly impacted by COVID. It also suggests possible next steps and recommendations for further action.

# Essential career path innovations

Compass Group UK and Ireland is the country's leading food and support services provider, operating in some 6,000 locations in the UK and Ireland.

It employs tens of thousands of people across the country and its parent company, Compass Group PLC is a FTSE 100 company.

In the UK, Compass works behind the scenes at sports and leisure events, within schools, colleges and universities, hospitals and care homes. It also works extensively within the private sector, providing food to client offices and boardrooms, as well as workplaces as diverse as oil rigs and military bases. Compass also provides food services to a wide variety of public attractions up and down the country, from the Imperial War Museum to Chelsea Football Club, Twickenham Stadium, Edgbaston and The All England Lawn Tennis Club.

Having amassed 75 years of food expertise, Compass has developed a business built around expertise in both business and culinary excellence, underpinned by a commitment to supporting social mobility.

## Essential career path innovations

Compass occupies a near-unique position in the hospitality sector. Due to its size and



presence within a wide range of industries, the opportunities for employees are endless.

The nature of its working environments and the scale of its operations and varying working patterns allow it to provide employment opportunities for people from all backgrounds, many of whom are in disadvantaged circumstances.

Uniquely positioned to affect change in the lives of its employees, Compass places less focus on traditional qualifications and more emphasis on progression through its ranks as a way of creating a diverse workforce with a wider variety of skills. Coupled with an expansive approach to learning and progression, this results in a workforce unhindered by the usual barriers to social mobility. This is summed up by belief that it is a business that "has no assets except its people" and by the three commitments, 'Respect', 'Growth' and 'Teamwork' which



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were identified after it asked its colleagues what was important to them.

The company has ambitions to end dead-end jobs – to reframe what jobs look like and what they offer. It sees every job – big or small, permanent or temporary – has an opportunity for someone to learn, acquire new skills and place a foot on the first rung of a career ladder. In this way – it has redefined what social mobility can mean. Beyond the focus on gaining places at top universities and jobs – important but unattainable for many – Compass offers the chance for tens of thousands of people to take a few rungs on the ladder. To start as a Kitchen Porter but progress to a Chef; to begin as a

Cleaner but become a Manager. In this way, they affect the lives of many, and their impact is vast.

**They have set out their ambitions for social inclusion and to end dead-end jobs by aiming to:**

- Create a workforce which represents the rich diversity of the customers and clients that it serves, as well as society as a whole
- Enable everyone in the business to feel able to be themselves at work
- Ensure everyone in the business has an equal opportunity to progress their career
- Widen access to career opportunities that encompass all in society

They deliver their ambitions in several ways – investing in apprentices; offering career pathways; reaching out to socially and economically disadvantaged – all underpinned by a culture that is uniquely inclusive and supportive.



#### Investing in apprentices:

With over 300 apprentices studying across a range of hospitality and management functions, the business offers the opportunity to gain skills and qualifications up to degree level. In many ways, the apprentice programme is the lifeblood of the organisation and in the last three years over 1,000 have graduated through the programme and kickstarted their careers. Whilst apprenticeships are often associated with 16 – 24-year-olds, Compass has a successful track record of also supporting colleagues of all ages who are looking for a career change or to realise life-long dreams. A great example of this is Sophie who, having worked as a beautician, started the Chef apprenticeship she dreamt of. The Compass apprentice programme supported her in making her dream a reality, and today she can be found cooking up a storm.

#### Offering career pathways:

Compass has put a lot of effort into helping its colleagues progress through the ranks from entry level to senior management. Designed to support each step of the way, they offer colleagues without traditional qualifications the same chances to level up as those with them. TheirTalent Programmes provide targeted development for colleagues who have the potential to move to the next job level. These range from frontline supervisors through to senior managers and 1500 people have participated in this suite of programmes in the

last three years. Additionally, their wider learning curriculum covers a vast range of subjects and is freely available to all colleagues; in 2019 over 125,000 learning interventions were delivered both online and face-to-face. Parity of opportunity is achieved by providing Compass colleagues with access to all vacant jobs which are posted internally first and a philosophy of “hire the smile, train the skill” means Compass will develop you if you have the right positive attitude.

#### Reaching out:

Compass aims to alleviate poverty by supporting disadvantaged and underprivileged people into sustainable employment within hospitality, leisure and tourism. It helps realise these ambitions by closely partnering with charities and government bodies. It has a long-standing partnership with Springboard, a leading hospitality charity, which helps people who face barriers to work, achieve their potential by investing in them and supporting them into employment. Compass is an active contributor and offers a number of pre-employability programmes which help people develop the skills and confidence needed to enter the employment market. Many of those who participate in the programmes go on to join Compass or other hospitality employers as a result.

As part of the Springboard Partnership, Compass became an official signatory of the Care Leavers Covenant in association with Spectra First which aims to support young people leaving care into

employment. Again, the approach is through developing employability of these individuals and supporting their first steps into work.

Compass also supports those areas of society where people may struggle to re-enter employment. These include the Armed Forces Covenant, which sees Compass source suitable roles for ex-military personnel.

To support the continued progression of women, Compass was the first company to partner with the parenting website Mumsnet to help women re-engage with their career aspirations when they return to work after maternity leave or a career break.

To help it target those in secondary education meanwhile, Compass is also working with the food and grocery industry charity, IGD. As part of the charity's 'Feeding Britain's Future Programme, Compass has helped to educate Year 9 and Year 12 students through a series of workshops. Future efforts will be focused on underprivileged areas of the country as part of the shared Compass /



IGD social mobility aims which have seen 15,000 children benefit from workshops since 2015.

### Culture:

Beyond the programmes and pathways, it is personal for many at Compass. Many in the Executive Team have family roots in front-line jobs, and many at Director and Manager level started on the bottom rung of the ladder. These humble roots have instilled passion to "pay back" to others. This is formalised through the investment Compass is making to train 3,000 managers in how to develop and engage their teams through their programme "Leadership in Action".

**When the organisation has carried out research among its employees to see if their commitment to creating an inclusive culture was working, they heard how powerfully this permeates to the frontline. The research revealed that:**

- 83 per cent of employees said they can "be themselves" at work
- 73 per cent agree that people's differences are accepted and valued
- 75 per cent said that they work as part of a positive and caring team
- Feedback from BAME colleagues was consistently higher across each of these three areas. The business benefit to Compass is clear – they enjoy an industry leading level of employee retention at 75 per cent vs a more usual 50 per cent.



# How did Compass show up during the COVID crisis?



The impact of the COVID crisis to Compass Group is clear. As a hospitality, foodservice and retail business it has been “forever changed” to quote the Group CEO Dominic Blakemore. Revenues have plummeted; the share-price dropped by 50% and thousands of outlets across the UK were closed overnight resulting in up to 18,000 employees on furlough during the pandemic peak.

Despite these commercial challenges, Compass reinvented itself throughout the crisis. Establishing itself as a key worker business, working closely with Government, they diverted thousands of employees into Healthcare to

equip hospitals with the cleaners, porters, patient caterers needed to support them. They stepped in to support the Nightingale Hospitals and testing centres across the country – feeding, cleaning and looking after others. The people we all celebrated in our weekly clapping – they were Compass people – the hidden heroes of our society that kept us going.

Recognising the extraordinary efforts of frontline workers in Healthcare, Compass were one of the first companies to offer a pay premium – subsequently extended to a permanent salary uplift. They delivered thousands of food-boxes to frontline workers; charities and those in need;



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made 7,000 welfare calls to their employees isolating, ill or on furlough – following up on their wellbeing and offering additional support where needed. They led an industry wide mental health awareness campaign in partnership with leading hospitality charity Hospitality Action and finally, they established support to aid medical, financial and wellbeing across their large workforce. The reframing of the value and importance of key workers such as cleaners and porters provides a huge opportunity for Compass to recognise and invest in the unsung heroes that made such a difference during the crisis.

# Case Studies

## Kathleen Davie

The reason behind Kathleen starting this journey was wanting a job to fit around her home life and children. She wanted to still be able to perform her 'Mum' duties. She had worked in a café for five years, so already had a love of the food industry and it's never ending options.

Kathleen started working for Chartwells, the education catering arm at Compass, at a local secondary school – perfect hours to fit around being a Mum. She began by washing-up and cleaning but wanted to do more and be busy both physically and mentally, so over the years, worked on every section within the kitchen and started to develop and because of this experience was able to cover different roles if required.

Kathleen's Unit Manager could see she was keen to progress further and enjoyed mentoring young chefs, he took time to show her how to cook dishes and teach her new techniques. It was after a conversation with her Area Manager about other training opportunities when her journey really began, and she embarked on an apprenticeship.

The same Area Manager also encouraged her to enter Nestlé Professional Toque d'Or,

a hugely prestigious cooking competition. She reached the semi-finals stage after her video entry and then after a live cooking demo she was selected, as one of six, to reach the four-day Grand Final. While Kathleen didn't win, she received a Special Award from The Royal Society of Public Health for achieving the highest scores in food safety from the judges during the competition.





### Nathan Racey

Nathan's chef career began when he was spotted by Mark Reynolds, executive head chef at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium for Levy UK, the sports, arena and events catering division of Compass at a FutureChef, youth competition run by hospitality charity Springboard. Mark immediately offered Nathan an apprenticeship as a Commis Chef.

Nathan worked as a member of a team of 15 chefs, which increased to 235 on match days. He was involved in preparing players' meals at the training ground in collaboration with the club's nutritionist, as well as working in the stadium's prestigious H Club, where membership costs £60,000 a year, and the chairman's suite.

Nathan has not only learned technical skills but being on an apprenticeship has meant he has grown in confidence as a person and a team player, displaying leadership and creativity. Working in the fast-paced environment of stadia catering – especially one as big and diverse as Tottenham – can be tough, but Nathan has taken it in his stride, excelled and matured.



Nathan has already passed his Level 2 Commis Chef with a distinction and is now working towards gaining his Level 3. He has also seen successes outside of his apprenticeship, winning the prestigious Trainee Chef of the Year at last year's Cateys (think The Oscars of the hospitality world!) and coming second at Compass Apprentice Chef of the Year.



### Natasha Smith

As far back as Natasha could remember, food was always her passion. In secondary school she was a member of a business enterprise, where she baked and sold cupcakes to raise money for charities. She continued to make cupcakes and celebration cakes after she left school, going on to supply a local bakery.

Natasha joined Compass in 2016, first working in the HR department, but her love of cooking took her back into the kitchen in 2019 when she started her Commis Chef apprenticeship. Being an apprentice is invaluable for Natasha because she wanted the flexibility of being able to study at college, as well as on-the-job training. She spent a year working in the kitchens at the O2, where she ran her own section – making desserts for the whole of the catering operation.

In her short time as an apprentice, Natasha has won Bronze in an impressive debut at the Compass Chef of the Year 2019 competition, was a finalist at the SOMO Awards in the Rising Star category and is shortlisted in the Retail, Hospitality and Tourism category of The BAME Apprentice of the Year Award 2020.

Since COVID Natasha has moved into a new role at a primary school, where she is experiencing another sector, working to school meals



guidelines with different budgets and numbers to that of the O2.

This was only possible because of the breadth of business that comes from working for the UK's largest foodservice company, Compass. Being able to work across a number of sectors, some of which have been playing a critical role throughout the pandemic, has provided redeployment opportunities to Compass apprentices and key workers.

**Working for a progressive company like Compass, the opportunities were there, and ... Shaun found that he could add value in a management role.**



### Shaun Fitzgibbon

Shaun had always been ambitious and hardworking, having started working weekends in kitchens aged 12. He dreamt of being a chef and started catering college at 16 passing his City & Guilds in hospitality and catering. Little did he know that 35 years later he would be one of the top 200 leaders in Compass Group UK and Ireland, rising through the ranks of management in just 16 years.

After a 15-year stint cheffing, five of those with Compass, Shaun embarked on a career the other side of the pass, taking his first job as Food Services Manager in 2004. He impressed so much, he was made General Manager, responsible for the catering operation at a blue-chip investment bank a year later.

Shaun could never see himself being anything other than a chef, but working for a progressive company like Compass, the opportunities were there, and he grabbed them with both hands. It wasn't until the opportunity opened up for him, that he found that he could add value

in a management role. Compass helped Shaun with the necessary training he needed moving up the management ladder and he's been incredibly lucky with the supportive people around him at work over the years.

Shaun continued to shine and in 2007 became Operations Performance Manager, and then took on the responsibility for mobilisations and projects across Restaurant Associates, being rewarded with the role of Head of Operations shortly afterwards. Slowly working his way up the ladder, moving into an Account Director role, and then back to multi-operations, Shaun was promoted to Operations Director and part of the RA Leadership Team in 2015. The next four years saw Shaun excel in leadership, inspire his team, and work closely with clients gaining trust and respect from all. This led to the natural progression and well-deserved accolade of heading up the Restaurant Associates part of RA Group, being named RA Business Director in early 2019.



# Kings College

## Rafia Iram

Rafia began her career with King's College Hospital, working for Compass, over two years ago, starting as Customer Service Assistant. She quickly progressed to Retail Administrator and then into her current role of People & Payroll Administrator, in which she is working towards a Level 3 Accounting qualification within the Apprenticeship Finance Academy.

During her two years she has felt immensely supported by her managers, who have helped her push boundaries and introduce the apprenticeship programme she is on. Her Finance Manager has helped put her learnings from the course into practice and answered any questions along the way.

Rafia is learning new things every day, splitting her time between the Payroll and HR fields of work, learning and studying side-by-side, which is exactly what she was looking for. Because of her positive experience, Rafia wants to work towards an Assistant Accountant role at Compass in the future.



### Jolita Moonsam

Lithuanian born Jolita joined Compass as a Hospitality Assistant at King's College Hospital in 2001. Although unable to speak much English, she was able to show herself to be dedicated and good at decision making, progressing onto a managerial training course within the business, and the title of Catering Supervisor.

Now a competent English speaker and applying her drive and determination, she has progressed to the role of Compliance & Service Centre Manager and oversees a help centre that receives 15,000-17,000 calls a month.

As part of the company's succession planning, she is also about to take up a new health and safety role two days a week. Jolita hopes to continue progressing her career and is discussing the possibility of completing a Facilities Management Apprenticeship.

While wider studies show that many individuals from diverse and underprivileged backgrounds feel held back by factors such as their life experiences and local accents and dialects, with the right training and support, Compass has been able to provide long term career opportunities.

# Insight & Assessment

As the first large organisation in the hospitality sector to sign up to the Social Mobility Pledge, Compass demonstrated that it was serious in its commitment to social mobility as an organisation which sees people as not only being at the heart of its business, but as its business.

With 6,000 locations and a workforce of tens of thousands of people, Compass is in a unique position to influence social mobility. Its presence in such a variety of business sectors and locations gives people a wider career choice at entry level. Many of these are essential worker roles and they are fundamental in supporting many of our important institutions. They played a crucial part during the coronavirus crisis, especially in hospitals, in supporting the vital infrastructure needed to keep the country running in the face of the challenges that this global pandemic presented.

It has established an approach which has the potential to develop its employees at every level so they can all aspire to careers that suit them. We have called this approach the Compass Career Pathway. It enables employees at every stage of their career to have the opportunity to develop, dependent on their aspirations and own individual circumstances. It empowers them to climb the ladder, at their own pace, offering even low-skilled workers a rewarding career and providing a workplace where loyalty and retention provide a stable base for business. It allows the social mobility ethos to flourish in a sector where there is a relatively easy access to entry-level jobs.

Many of Compass's essential workers are migrants who want to integrate into the communities they have moved into. They can do this more easily when they also feel part of their workplace community, so communication is key for

businesses to facilitate this. Compass employees felt that they had a stake in the wider community when their work at Kings College Hospital in London, for example, meant that they could give something back when the hospital played a vital role in dealing with the terrorist incidents at Westminster, London Bridge and the fire at Grenfell Tower.

Compass has been able to reframe low skilled jobs so that there is a defined pathway of progression, managed by more senior employees in the company who have often followed similar routes themselves. Their outreach work to support those leaving military service and the care system are of particular note as is their ground-breaking work with Mumsnet to support maternity leavers and their programmes dedicated to supporting young people in the most disadvantaged circumstances.

The benefits of this model of working to both Compass and its employees are immense. At Compass, there is no such thing as a dead-end job because it is a business that understands how to prevent that outcome. Many people join Compass with limited aspirations, in part-time and casual roles as well as permanent jobs, but they are nurtured as individuals and encouraged to explore ways they might be able to progress. As a result, employees can see a clear road map so that if they join as a Cleaner in Birmingham, for example, they can see how they could also progress to become a Manager of a team. Once they are working, they acquire incremental confidence which allows

them to consider how they might progress if they choose to. It enables social mobility, and the sense that they can be in charge of their own careers means that they can have real job satisfaction which in turn delivers great service to their clients and consumers.

Compass can deliver a new gold standard of innovation which other companies can look to. In a post-COVID world, there are going to be huge challenges for employers, but particularly for those in the hospitality sector. Their very genuine interest in people's stories and how they have grown during their time at Compass means that they can play an active role in ensuring that every employee is given the opportunity to work in an inclusive and stimulating environment which also provides individual and personal development. It is a model which should be promoted and adopted by other companies and sectors to use as a blueprint for the progression of the millions of frontline, key workers who have supported us as a country and as a community.



# Recommendation

## Essential Career Path Guarantee

The Social Mobility Pledge is working with over 500 businesses and universities to ensure that, no matter where they are born or what their start in life, everyone has access to opportunities. It is encouraging them to adopt a purpose-led approach, with determined leadership and a strategic approach to achieve that for the long-term.

In this Action Plan, Compass has already demonstrated its success at ensuring that there is a pathway of progression and development for every employee who are often frontline, essential workers. Working with the Social Mobility Pledge, it should formalise its approach into an "Essential Career Path Guarantee" as part of its commitment to the national recovery following coronavirus. This should build on its innovative practice of developing each and every employee, regardless of level of entry or employment contract type, with clear and informative pathways of progression. The campaign would focus on recommendations in three areas:



### Impact

Compass has shown a thorough and deliberate approach to providing opportunities for the individuals that work there and for the communities in which it operates.

The Social Mobility Pledge has provided an overview and analysis of the key characteristics of life outcomes across some of the key areas around the location of one of its main offices and which we have identified as being in the top 20 per cent of COVID Opportunity Gaps, particularly in the East Midlands where four of the top social mobility coldspots are located, as shown in the Data Analysis section. It should consider where the opportunity gaps are in those areas to inform future community engagement.

### This could include:

- Further targeting its outreach efforts to increase its impact on social mobility coldspots
- Developing a system of consistent measurement across the organisation to quantify employees' progression and using the Social Mobility Commission core question on parental occupations, initially focusing on salary and education
- Forming strategic partnerships, including with the Midlands Engine, to encourage investment to the area and to scale up innovation across a wider region.



### Advocacy

Given the unique role that Compass has as a major employer in the hospitality sector, it can play an important part in contributing to the Levelling Up agenda in that sector and in Parliament, highlighting the impact of this campaign and helping determine and shape the agenda and Government policy.

Its ambition to introduce a new measurement approach would set Compass out as a leader in the field of social inclusion. As a major employer of lower paid workers, it should also consider how it might address the issue of the Living Wage. As a business which interfaces with many companies and businesses, it can lead the way in opening up a dialogue on pay with clients, not only to highlight the issue but also to deliver the indirect benefits to their business with a more engaged and positive workforce. Becoming a Living Wage Recognised Service Provider would be a powerful step forward.

**Compass has recognised that it can use its scale as a force for good, boosting opportunity for those who face the biggest barriers to social mobility.**



### Leadership

Compass is already demonstrating its leadership in its outstanding approach to employee development. Given its reach as the UK's leading food and support services provider with 50,000 employees across the country as well as thousands of clients and customers, it is well placed to continue to show why its approach should become the standard for other companies offering essential careers and entry level jobs. With its advocacy for guaranteed pathways of development for all employees, the introduction of an evidence based method of measuring that progression and the championing of the Living Wage, Compass has recognised that it can use its scale as a force for good, boosting opportunity for those who face the biggest barriers to social mobility.

# Data Analysis

## Part A - Social Mobility

In this section of the Opportunity Action Plan we analyse the challenges individual communities face in terms of social mobility and the impact of COVID-19. The combined and interlinking impact of those two elements enable us to create a community's "Opportunity Gap". For the purposes of this analysis we have focused on Birmingham Northfield where Compass has one of its headquarters.





**These complexities highlight that social mobility cannot be tackled with a 'one size fits all approach'.**

**Introduction**

Social Mobility research conducted in 323 local authorities in England and Wales shows the top 20 per cent of local authorities are labelled as 'hotspots', areas where social mobility is good, and the bottom 20 per cent of local authorities are identified as 'coldspots', areas where social mobility is poor.

It is important to note that just because an area is designated a hot or coldspot based on the current rankings, that is not the complete

picture. An area which is a social mobility hotspot for most indices can also mask sharp decline in social mobility at different life stages such as early years.

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 and we assess social mobility below through those life stages.

**Overall Ranking**

Office	Constituency	Ranking/533 constituencies
Birmingham	Birmingham Northfield	506

Life Stage  
National  
Rank/533

## Birmingham Northfield

Northfield

Early Years

445

Percentage of Nursery providers rated outstanding or good by Ofsted **90**

Percentage of children eligible for free school meals achieving a good level of development **50**

Schools

463

Percentage of children eligible for FSM attending a primary school rated outstanding or good by Ofsted **57**

Percentage of children eligible for FSM achieving at least the expected level in reading, writing and maths at the end of Key Stage 2 **36**

Percentage of children eligible for FSM attending a secondary school rated outstanding or good by Ofsted **84**

Average Attainment 8 score for pupils eligible for FSM **37**

Youth

358

Percentage of young people eligible for FSM that are not in education, employment or training (positive destination) after completing KS4 **88**

Average points score per entry for young people eligible for FSM at age 15 taking A-level or equivalent qualification **24**

Percentage of young people eligible for FSM at age 15 achieving two or more A-Levels or equivalent by the age of 19 **30**

Adulthood

486

Median weekly salary of all employees who live in the local area **411**

Average house prices compared to median annual salary of employees who live in the local area **5**

Percentage of people that live in the local area who are in managerial and professional occupations **26**

Percentage of jobs that are paid less than the applicable Living Wage Foundation living wage **40**

Percentage of families with children who own their home **57**

## Birmingham, Northfield Analysis

Birmingham, Northfield is located close to one of Compass's headquarters. Northfield ranks poorly and ranks at 506/533. The area is a social mobility coldspot.

### Early Years

Birmingham Northfield ranks at 445 out of 533 for the early years life stage. Ninety per cent of nurseries are ranked good or outstanding, slightly worse than the national average of 93 per cent, and 50 per cent of free school meal eligible children achieve a good level of development, lower than the 53 per cent national average.

### School

At 463/533, Birmingham Northfield continues to score poorly at the school stage. Only 57 per cent of FSM eligible children are in a good or outstanding primary school, much lower than the average of 83 per cent and the eighth worst area in England for this measure. Just 36 per cent of children eligible for free schools achieve the expected level in reading, writing, and maths by the end of KS2. Despite a relatively strong availability of good or outstanding secondary schools (84 per cent of FSM children in Northfield attend such a school compared to 72 per cent nationally), the average attainment eight score is lower in Northfield at 37 than it is across England, where it is 39.

### Youth

At the youth stage, Northfield rises to become the 358th constituency. Eight-eight per cent of FSM eligible young people achieve a positive destination after KS4, which matches the national average, but fewer FSM eligible young people will have two or more 'A' Levels



or equivalent by 19 (30 per cent in Northfield compared to 34 per cent nationally), and those that do attain those qualifications will have a lower average points score, at 24 in Northfield compared to 26 nationally.

### Adulthood

Northfield scores most poorly at the adulthood life stage, where it is ranked 486/533. Its worst ranking in any life stage is found here, where with 40 per cent of jobs paying less than the real living wage, it is the sixth worst area in England. Average earnings are consequently lower at £411 weekly compared to £443 nationally, and despite houses being affordable in Birmingham (they are just 5 times the average salary), only 56 per cent of families own their home compared to 65 per cent nationally. Twenty-six per cent of jobs are managerial and professional, slightly lower than the 30 per cent across-England average.

# Data Analysis

## Part B - Covid-19 Impact

As well as considering the social mobility baseline for a community, our analysis also reflects the developing impact of Coronavirus on opportunity. The Office for Budget Responsibility's Covid Reference Scenario predicts that the economy of the United Kingdom will contract by 35 per cent, with unemployment potentially peaking at 10 million.



But just like the issue of social immobility, the impact of the coronavirus pandemic is varied across the UK. While the 35 per cent national average figure is high in itself, it is the case that some areas – predominantly in the North West and Midlands – will see their economic growth reduce by almost 50 per cent. Only one of the 20 hardest hit areas are in the South East or London.

In addition to the significant diversity of geographic impact estimated by the Centre for Progressive Policy, the Resolution Foundation point to previous data suggesting that there is likely to be a large impact on those leaving full time education and graduating into an economy in the midst of turmoil. In the 2008 Recession, the unemployment rate across the whole population rose from 5.2 per cent in 2007 to 8.5 per cent in 2011; for those with GCSE equivalent qualifications the unemployment figures were 22 per cent in 2007 and 32 per cent in 2011.

An exacerbating factor for those leaving full time education without a degree is the varied impact of the virus on different sectors of the economy. While sectors such as financial sectors will emerge from the coronavirus pandemic relatively unscathed, with a contraction of just -5 per cent, sectors like retail and hospitality, which have a higher proportion of workers who haven't completed higher education, will contract by -50 per cent and -85 per cent respectively.

The health impacts for the coronavirus pandemic show that it is more likely to kill people from

black and minority ethnic backgrounds, but the economic impacts are disproportionately hitting BAME communities as well: polling done by BMG for the Independent has also shown that people from black and minority ethnic households are almost twice as likely as white Britons to report that they have lost income or jobs. Lord Woolley, the Chair of the Race Disparity Unit, has pointed out that while “the virus itself doesn't discriminate, the system does, and that has left BAME communities extremely vulnerable both on health and economic ground”.

So the data suggests a varied and profound impact across locations, ages, education levels, and ethnicity. This has a worrying impact for social mobility in the UK, as we predict that eight out of fourteen measures used to calculate social mobility will be impacted. We have combined existing place based social mobility analysis with the predicted impact of coronavirus to estimate the size of a communities developing “Opportunity Gap” and ranked these throughout England.

From our analysis we believe that there are sixteen areas in England at risk of a ‘double opportunity hit’: already amongst the worst areas for social mobility, they are going to be particularly badly hit by coronavirus. These areas are Babergh, Bolsover, Broxtowe, Cannock Chase, Corby, Crawley, East Cambridgeshire, East Northamptonshire, Erewash, Melton, North Warwickshire, Norwich, Rutland, South Derbyshire, Tamworth and Wellingborough.

Local Authority	Opportunity Gap	Ranking
<b>Corby</b>	318	1
<b>South Derbyshire</b>	310	2
<b>Wellingborough</b>	308	3
<b>Melton</b>	306	4
<b>North Warwickshire</b>	296	5
<b>Birmingham</b>	125.5	210

Our analysis shows that Birmingham is the 210th most impacted area in England, out of 310. Although some areas of Birmingham, such as Northfield, are coldspots, the overall area is not, and its economy will shrink in line with the rest of the UK's – both at 35 per cent. Consequently, our analysis shows that Birmingham is not as high risk as some areas for a much worsened opportunity gap.

## Birmingham's Economy

Sector	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
GVA (£m)	640	1025	238	1579	2153	2536	2823	1395	3957	2260	1750	2440	978	2963	1219
GVA (&)	2.3	3.7	0.9	5.6	7.7	9.1	10.1	5.0	14.2	8.1	6.3	8.7	3.5	10.6	4.4
Decline (%)	-85	-40	-17	-70	-90	-5	+50	-45	-55	-40	-20	-20	-35	-50	-60

## Birmingham's Largest Sectors

Sector	Manufacturing	Wholesale and retail	Human health	Financial and insurance	Real Estate
GVA (£m)	3957	2963	2823	2536	2440

## Biggest Impacted Sectors

Sector	Education	Accommodation and food	Construction	Other services	Manufacturing
Predicted Decline	-90%	-85%	-70%	-60%	-55%

### Sector Key

1 Accommodation and food services 2 Administrative and support services 3 Agriculture, mining, electricity, gas, water, and waste 4 Construction 5 Education 6 Financial and insurance activities 7 Human health and social work activities 8 Information and communication 9 Manufacturing 10 Professional, scientific, and technical activities 11 Public administration and defence 12 Real estate activities 13 Transportation and storage 14 Wholesale and retail (including repair of motor vehicles) 15 Other.

The top five sectors in Birmingham’s economy are manufacturing, wholesale and retail, human health, financial and insurance, and real estate. By far the largest of these, manufacturing, is also in the worst impacted sectors. Birmingham is somewhat buffered from taking a larger hit to its economy by having a large human health and social work sector, a sector that will grow by 50 per cent due to the coronavirus pandemic, and a large financial sector, which is the least impacted sector, declining by just 5 per cent.



**some areas – predominantly in the North West and Midlands – will see their economic growth reduce by almost 50 per cent .**





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