



Issue #30 September 2026

Welcome to the September 2026 edition of the ESG newsletter, which will provide you with a roundup of activities, events and progress across our ESG agenda. This month's focus and theme is around **People**.

Welcome Our New Management Trainees

We're delighted to welcome our newest cohort of Management Trainees who joined Higgins this month: Sakirat Fadairo, Jake Brooks, Daniel Wentworth, Tom Collins, Max Handley, Shaun Dennis and Dan Watson. They have begun their first rotations across the business and started their Level 4 Construction Site Supervisor Apprenticeship at the University of Westminster. We look forward to supporting them as they develop their skills and progress through the programme.



***Left to right:** Jake Brooks, Daniel Watson, Tom Collins, Max Handley, Shaun Dennis, Daniel Wentworth and Sakirat Fadairo.*

Make a Difference with Your Volunteering Day

Looking to give back? Explore a range of volunteering opportunities through Higgins WhatImpact portal and book your place today.

- ✓ Find your preferred event - [HERE](#)
- ✓ Get Line Manager approval
- ✓ Log your volunteering day via My Higgins
- ✓ Share photos and feedback on WhatImpact so we can celebrate the difference you're making in our communities



Higgins Volunteering Round Up

We are proud to report that for the month of September 2026, we were able to support in the following initiatives.

[Local London Student Site Visit](#) | [Saxon Wharf](#) - It was great to recently welcome students from [Local London](#) to our Saxon Wharf development in Greenwich; our team volunteered a total of *15 hours*. The students toured the site, met our team and asked questions about construction and the range of career opportunities available across the industry. It was particularly rewarding to be joined by a student who took part in our Work Experience Programme this summer and to see first-hand how much his confidence has grown since being around our site team. We're delighted to be working in partnership with Local London, supporting residents to access skills and employability opportunities and progress into good jobs

[Hackney Green Futures Careers Fair](#) | [Buckland Street](#) - We recently attended a Jobs, Skills & Sustainable Careers event at Teesside University London, showcasing career opportunities in construction, including our Management Trainee Programme, apprenticeships, and work experience placements; volunteering a total of *16 hours*. As part of our commitment to the Buckland Street development in Hackney, we also delivered two interactive bridge-building workshops, helping participants develop key skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, communication, and creativity while exploring careers in construction and engineering. Events like these help make construction careers more accessible and inspire the next generation to consider opportunities in the built environment. 🎓

[Annual L&Q, Minds Matter FC Charity Football Match](#) - At the end of last month, Team Higgins joined colleagues from across the industry for the [L&Q](#) annual seven-a-side football tournament, raising vital funds for [Minds Matter FC](#), a football team made up of current and former L&Q residents with mental health needs. Held at Chobham Academy in Stratford, the team battled their way through to the final, finishing as

runners-up. 🏆 Funds raised will help Minds Matter FC cover the cost of new kits, travel to matches, league registrations, pitch fees and equipment. Congratulations to everyone who took part and helped raise money for such an important cause. 🌍



Higgins Pillar of the Month



Leading the way towards a sustainable planet and lasting legacy



COLLABORATIVE

Higgins commitment to our **People**

Diversity, equity & inclusion

Promote diversity, equity and inclusivity starting with our recruitment processes, welfare and promotion and our overall organisational culture.

Establish a DEI working group to help monitor our progress and drive applicable initiatives across our practice including our demographic representation, pay gap reports, etc.

Health, wellbeing & safety

Place importance on the health and wellbeing of our people and roll out associated supplementary benefits and packages for all staff.

Create a network of health and wellbeing champions to encourage local team activities and investments.

Skills for the future

Run a comprehensive series of training and development programmes tailored for staff from early career entry through to senior leadership.

Invest in targeted sponsorship, mentoring and development programmes for our people and talents.



Environmental Social Governance (ESG) Update





RESPECTFUL



COMMITTED

[Click on the image to view our ESG Policy Document](#)

We Invest in People - Silver Accreditation



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE®
We invest in people Silver

We're pleased to have achieved We Invest in People - Silver Accreditation from Investors in People.

The accreditation recognises our Group's work to support our people, strengthen engagement, and create a workplace culture where employees can develop and build their careers.

From apprenticeships and training to career development and wellbeing, investing in our people is an important part of how we continue to grow as a business.

Thank you to everyone in our team who contributes to this accreditation. This is a strong recognition of the progress we're making as a business and our continued focus on our people.

Supply Chain Sustainability School (UK) Summit 2026

Last week, our Director of Compliance, Julie Brooks CMIOSH MISEP CEnv, joined the panel at the [Supply Chain Sustainability School \(UK\) Summit 2026](#).

Following the keynote from Lilly Gallafent, COO at Cast Consultancy, on the Building Safety Act, the panel explored how everyone across the industry has a role to play in raising standards, strengthening culture and leadership, and creating opportunities to improve sustainability while delivering safer, better-quality buildings.

Julie was joined on the panel by:

- Lilly Gallafent, COO, Cast Consultancy
- Elaine Billington MBE, Chief People Officer, National Highways
- Mark Worrall, CEO, BBi Services

A valuable discussion bringing together perspectives from across the built environment and wider infrastructure sectors.



We are proud to have achieved the **Essex Working Well Level 1 Accreditation** and to have **two in-house Workplace Health Champions**. This Essex County Council backed programme supports organisations in developing and maintaining effective workplace health and wellbeing strategies, demonstrating our continued commitment to employee wellbeing

provides a framework for organisations to promote positive workplace health and wellbeing and demonstrates the steps Higgins is taking to create a healthier and more supportive working environment.

What's next?

This is just the beginning. We'll shortly be starting work towards achieving **Essex Working Well Level 2 Accreditation**, building on the work already completed and continuing to develop our approach to workplace health and wellbeing.

A big thank you goes to **Karen Kendall and Julie Brooks** for organising the Staff Health Survey and to **Isabelle Doherty and Kareem Martin** for collating the evidence required and completing the relevant training to become our **Higgins Workplace Health Champions**. 🍌

We look forward to seeing the positive impact of their work as we continue to make employee health and wellbeing a key priority across Higgins.

Find out more about Essex Working Well Accreditation: [Essex Working Well – Accreditation Programme](#)



Monthly Wellbeing Sessions - W/C 21 September 🧘

Working Well is part of the Essex Wellbeing Service which provides free workplace health and wellbeing support to all Essex workplaces, which with our head office being in Loughton also gives Higgins employees access. 📍🥑🍏 Find here the latest sessions that you can get involved in 🙌

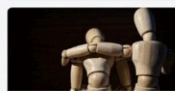
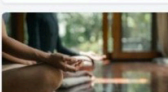
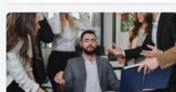
Weekly Update: [Click HERE](#)

Password: UpdateEww

All training, guest speaker sessions, webinars and the Thursday Drop in Mindfulness with Tansey are now all booked through our LMS:

- <https://signup.essexworkingwell.co.uk>
- Organisation name: Higgins Partnership
Organisation code: WE33
- Watch the sign-up tutorial video (*once you have logged into the LMS for the first time if you can't see the courses, please press "select" and then "clear filters" and the courses will be visible.*)
- Members Area (to download factsheets, campaign resources etc:
www.members.essexworkingwell.co.uk
Username: workingwell
Password: Working_Well2026!

🌟 **Training, guest speaker sessions and webinars – booked via the LMS**

 Healing Hand Massage with Steve Woodford 📅 Online (MS Teams) 📅 Mon 7 September 2026 🕒 12:00 - 14:00	 Know your bones 📅 Online (MS Teams) 📅 Tue 8 September 2026 🕒 10:00 - 11:00	 VBA Advisor Drop-in 📅 Online (MS Teams) 📅 Tue 8 September 2026 🕒 12:00 - 12:30	 Connect to Work webinar with Clive Booth 📅 Online (MS Teams) 📅 Thu 10 September 2026 🕒 10:00 - 11:00
 Let's Talk Pensions by Money Advice Service 📅 Online (MS Teams) 📅 Thu 17 September 2026 🕒 14:00 - 15:00	 Visualisation Journey 📅 Online (MS Teams) 📅 Mon 21 September 2026 🕒 13:30 - 14:30	 Suicide Prevention for Managers 📅 Online (MS Teams) 📅 Tue 22 September 2026 🕒 10:00 - 12:00	 Pre-retirement planning 📅 Online (MS Teams) 📅 Tue 29 September 2026 🕒 10:00 - 11:00
 Empty Nest Syndrome - What is it? 📅 Online (MS Teams) 📅 Wed 30 September 2026 🕒 11:00 - 12:00	 Book Club 📅 Online (MS Teams) 📅 Thu 1 October 2026 🕒 13:30 - 14:30	 Mindful Menopause 📅 Online (MS Teams) 📅 Thu 8 October 2026 🕒 10:00 - 11:00	 Mindful Menopause 📅 Online (MS Teams) 📅 Thu 15 October 2026 🕒 10:00 - 11:00

Essex Working Well – Booking System

Log in using the details below to access free training and events

<https://essexworkingwell.co.uk/category/whats-on-at-essex-working-well/>

Booking System

Company name: Higgins Partnerships

Company code: WE33

Don't forget, after you have registered on the platform, please use this link for instant access:

<https://booking.essexworkingwell.co.uk/>

Members Area

Username: workingwell

Password: Working_well2026!

Also included:

- **Big Team Challenge** – We've reached the halfway mark, but it's not too late to sign up and retrospectively log your steps - [sign up here](#)
- **Pre-Retirement Survey** – [your chance to have your say](#)
- **Workplace Health Champion eLearning**
- **Active employer of the Year Award** – nomination closing date Wed 30th September
- **Macmillan Worlds Biggest Coffee Morning** – 25th Sept
- **Autism Reality Experience Roadshow** – Fri 23rd October – Harwich
- **Zero Suicide Alliance Autism Resources**
- **October Campaigns**

Stop Smoking Drop In

04 November 2026, 10am – 2pm, Canteen

We are working in partnership with Essex Working Well, as part of our Workplace Accreditation, and are thrilled to be able to offer free Stop Smoking Support for staff.

On 4th November 2026, the Stop Smoking Team will be attending to offer FREE stop smoking support and advice to staff.

Essex Working Well are proud to support the national Swap to Stop programme.

- **What is it?** - encourages smokers to switch to vaping, a less harmful alternative, by providing a free 4 week Vape Starter Kit and support
- **Why is it happening?** - The programme is part of a broader effort to reduce smoking rates in the UK and create a smoke-free generation
- **How it works** - You receive a free Vape kit and personalised support from an NHS Stop Smoking Support team
- **The Benefits** - Research suggests that vaping is significantly less harmful than smoking, and provides a structured approach to become smoke free
- **Eligibility** - Its open to all adults (over 18) who are registered with an Essex GP

Following a conversation with a colleague on the day, you will be asked to consent to join the 4-week programme and set a Quit date. You'll be given your Free Vape Starter Kit and will then consent to one of the following Swap to Stop options:

- Weekly 1:1 telephone support for 4 weeks, with the option to receive a further 4 weeks Stop Smoking support which could include NRT or oral products.
 - No 1:1 support and a call after 4 weeks to discuss your progress and the option to receive a further 4 weeks 1:1 stop smoking support, which could include NRT or oral products or Alan Carr's Easy Way (CBT) programme.
-



Shout is a free, 24/7 ([Texted 85258](#)) support service for anyone struggling with their mental health. Text anytime, anywhere to connect with a trained volunteer who can help you move from crisis to calm and find the right next steps. Provides instant support – you can have a conversation at any time, at school, at home, on the bus, anywhere. This service is for everyone, but for younger people especially; texting is a trusted and familiar form of communication and using text rather than apps makes it simple and accessible for everyone with a phone. Click [HERE](#) for more info

There is always hope

The UK's largest mental health support directory. Whether you want to find a service to help you feel better or you want to support someone who is struggling, click [HERE](#) to get access to the right support.



Suicide & Co

Supporting those bereaved by suicide. A community which helps navigate life after suicide.

Suicide&Co is a national charity providing specialist support for anyone bereaved by suicide. We know that navigating suicide loss can be hard and isolating. We're here to change that.

- **On-demand workplace support videos**
New resources for HR teams, managers, and organisations to better support employees dealing with grief and bereavement. Watch video [HERE](#).
- **Media Marathon 2026**
A London half-marathon event that raised **over £50,000**, funding counselling sessions for people affected by suicide loss.
- **36k Challenge (Sept 2026)**
A fundraising challenge encouraging participants to complete 36km to support those affected by suicide bereavement. [Sign up here](#).
- **Monthly Donor Programme**
A new initiative encouraging regular donations (from £5/month) to help sustain support services and outreach year-round. [Donate Now](#).

Learn more about Suicide&Co [HERE](#).



Suicide&co

Sign Up to StepUp!

It's a fun social app to track steps with colleagues/friends and a great way to get you moving about away from your desk. Helping you keep healthy and active while at work.

Tap the link [HERE](https://join.thestepupapp.com/EBuzOS) & copy and paste the link into the app to join the group:

<https://join.thestepupapp.com/EBuzOS>



September Awareness

The Art of Communication 🗣️

Communication is at the heart of everything we do. Whether we're collaborating with colleagues or working through challenges together, the way we communicate can have a significant impact on those around us.

Each of us experiences different pressures, both inside and outside of work. Stress, personal circumstances, workload, and wellbeing can all influence how someone feels and responds on any given day. By taking a moment to understand where others may be coming from, we can create more positive interactions, strengthen relationships, and foster a more supportive environment.

Communication is more than simply exchanging information; it is about building understanding, trust, and connection. Together, we can make small changes that have a lasting positive impact on others.

As always, please also circulate to your subcontractors so they can access the links provided within the campaign.

What is compassion?

Compassion is the emotional and behavioural process of noticing if someone is going through a hard time, whether you notice that in yourself or others. A person who is feeling compassion will want to alleviate the other persons struggles.

Empathy vs compassion:

Empathy is the ability to understand and share the emotions of others, while compassion goes a step further by including the desire and action to alleviate that suffering. Empathy is a feeling-based connection (feeling with someone), whereas compassion is action- oriented (acting for someone).

Key ways to act with compassion:

- **Pause and notice** - Encourage awareness of other's situations. Think about what someone might be carrying today that you can't see
- **Check in meaningfully** - Promote genuine conversations, an example could be as simple as asking someone the following: "how are things going for you this week?"
- **Listen Better** - Focus on active listening. This means not interrupting, and to reflect back what you have heard
- **Communicate with care** - Tone, clarity, and kindness in messages. This can be done by re-reading messages before sending and how might it be received

Summary:

- Check in with each other, not just on work, but on well-being
- Communicate with empathy, clarity, and respect
- Create space for honest conversation

Outcomes of compassion:

- **Mental and emotional well-being:** Practicing compassion reduces stress, anxiety and depression, while enhancing self-esteem and creating a sense of belonging. It fosters positive

emotions and life satisfaction, often creating a "helper's high"

- **Strengthened relationships:** It builds trust, empathy, and social connectedness, promoting healthier relationships and reducing feelings of loneliness
- **Improved physical health:** Compassionate behaviour is associated with lower blood pressure, improved health outcomes, and increased longevity
- **Professional and social impact:** In workplaces, it enhances employee engagement, improves teamwork, and reduces job-related stress. In communities, it encourages supportive environments
- **Positive ripple effect:** Acts of kindness are contagious, prompting further acts of compassion in others

Psychological and physiological drivers:

- **Brain benefits:** Compassion stimulates brain areas linked to pleasure and social connection
- **Stress reduction:** It lowers cortisol levels and calms the nervous system

Helpful links:



mindful

healthy mind, healthy life

verywellmind

Cultural Awareness Campaigns



Share your input

If there are any cultural awareness items that you would like us to promote, we would be happy to raise awareness of these. If you have any suggestions, please contact: CSR@Higginspartnerships.co.uk.

October 2026 | Celebrations:

UK & Global Cultural Celebrations 🌍

October 01 | International Day of Older Persons – Honors the contributions of older people globally 🤝

October 01-07 | Anaphylaxis Awareness Week, Highlights the severity of severe allergic reactions and how to respond in an emergency 💉

October 05 | World Meningitis Day – Raises global awareness about the symptoms, prevention, and vaccination options for meningitis 🧠

October 05-11 | Back Care Awareness Week – Coordinated by BackCare, this week addresses prevention and management techniques for chronic back and neck pain 🦴

October 05-11 | Dyslexia Awareness Week (UK) – Promotes neurodiversity education at school and work 🧠

October 09-15 | Baby Loss Awareness Week – Offers a supportive space for bereaved parents to share their stories and raises awareness of pregnancy and baby loss 🧡

October 10 | World Mental Health Day – A major global initiative to reduce the stigma surrounding mental illnesses and improve access to mental healthcare 🧡

October 10-17 | National Hate Crime Awareness Week – Combats prejudice and discrimination 🕯️

October 11 | National Coming Out Day – Supports LGBTQ+ visibility and personal expression 🏳️‍🌈

October 11-18 | Bone and Joint Week – Focuses on musculoskeletal conditions like arthritis and osteoporosis 🦴

October 12 | World Arthritis Day – Educates the public on the challenges faced by individuals living with chronic rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases 🧡

October 12 | Indigenous Peoples' Day – Recognizes Native American history and culture 🌿

October 16 | World Food Day – Addresses global food security and sustainable eating 🍽️

October 18 | World Menopause Awareness Day – Breaks down stigmas and provides workplace and lifestyle support tools for women navigating menopause 🌸

October 29 | World Stroke Day – Emphasizes the critical nature of identifying stroke signs early and the importance of immediate medical intervention 🧡

Health & Awareness Campaigns ❤️

Breast Cancer Awareness Month | An international campaign backed by major charities to increase screening awareness and fund life-saving research 🧡

Stoptober | The NHS Stoptober campaign urges the nation's smokers to commit to a 28-day smoke-free challenge, backed by evidence that quitting for a month makes you five times more likely to stop for good 🚭

National Cholesterol Month | Organized by HEART UK, this initiative educates the public on the hidden dangers of high cholesterol and promotes heart-healthy habits ❤️

Sober October | Encourages people to abstain from alcohol for the month to improve their personal wellness and raise funds for cancer support charities 🚫

ADHD Awareness Month | Promotes reliable education and resources to dispel myths surrounding attention deficit hyperactivity disorder 🧡

Month-Long Cultural and Social Campaigns

Black History Month (UK) | Celebrates the history, achievements, and contributions of Black people and African-Caribbean communities 🌍

Global Diversity Awareness Month | Promotes understanding and appreciation of different cultures, ethnicities, and backgrounds 🤝

LGBT History Month (US/Global) | Highlights the history of the gay rights movement and prominent LGBTQ+ figures 🏳️‍🌈

National Disability Employment Awareness Month | Focuses on inclusive work practices and disability inclusion ♿

Higgins Values Awards ★



Nomination Process

Nominations for the next quarter have started and must be received by the deadline of the 20 October 2026 to be considered.

Please do submit your nominations via The Hub, more information can be found [HERE](#).

More information about our awards nominations process can be found [HERE](#).



RESPECTFUL



COLLABORATIVE



COMMITTED



RESPONSIBLE

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