

# Commsworld and SmartSTEMs

Inspiring our young people  
about a future in STEM



**COMMSWORLD**

[commsworld.com](http://commsworld.com)

In January 2022 Commsworld was awarded a £150m contract with North Lanarkshire Council to transform digital connectivity across the region, a key element within this contract was the additional benefits it would bring to the community and its citizens with a focus on supporting young people into a career in STEM.

## Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, developing an environment that empowers young minds to explore science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) is crucial. Commsworld, recognises the significance of developing and nurturing the next generation and so do SmartSTEMs; a charity dedicated to inspiring, engaging and challenging young people to think differently about STEM.

Together we're making a positive impact in North Lanarkshire's community, we're rolling out transformative initiatives, harnessing our young minds and bringing STEM to life with our workshops and events highlighting that STEM is for everyone regardless of gender, race, background or location.

## The Vision

Through our ongoing partnership, Commsworld and SmartSTEMs support digital education initiatives with a series of events and interactive workshops for 10-14 year olds featuring passionate and inspiring speakers designed to engage and open minds.

What started out initially as a partnership based on a financial commitment for SmartSTEMs to help them deliver and grow their workshops has evolved into something more meaningful. We are fully aligned with SmartSTEMs and their mission, not just a faceless brand behind the work but fully immersing ourselves in the experience of educating and promoting all that STEM can offer.

## We've seen great success...

### Engaging Events

In the first year we delivered 20 individual school workshops reaching 1,450 young people in North Lanarkshire along with 2 hub events, one for primary and one for secondary pupils. Across the two days we had 400 pupils from 11 secondary and 12 primary schools.

SmartSTEMs develop and create events designed to capture the imagination of young minds. Through hands-on workshops, interactive demonstrations and presentations from STEM businesses pupils are invited to explore a wide range of STEM disciplines they may otherwise not have had access to. Not only do these events provide an insight into future possibilities but they provide invaluable networking opportunities, connecting students with industry professionals who share their knowledge, expertise and guidance.

These events also strengthen connections between industry and education, promoting equal access to the ladder of opportunity for everyone and focus on the skills required for the world of work such as problem solving, teamwork and communication, whilst highlighting the many pathways into careers.

**Bruce Strang, Chief Operating Officer at Commsworld, said:** *"We are absolutely delighted to be partnering with SmartSTEMs to deliver these exciting opportunities for pupils right across North Lanarkshire, as part of our community support programme.*

*"Commsworld's mission is to inspire young people to become active participants in STEM education, and find out all about the fantastic careers that are out there. Together with SmartSTEMs, we want children across North Lanarkshire to learn about and understand the skillsets that they need to not only secure but also flourish in these professions.*

*"I myself am an example of someone who learned early on in life the value of a STEM education. I very much want today's schoolkids to become tomorrow's STEM experts."*

**St Serf's Primary School tweeted:** *Well done @stserfs6 Digital Leaders attending @SmartSTEMs @Commsworld event at @NCLanarkshire They used their skills in STEM workshops and real-life challenges. Wonderful ambassadors for our school, excellent manners, maturity and enthusiasm displayed all day. @Commsworld Our learners really enjoyed the hands on experience in your workshop today.*



## Awareness of digital career and pathways

Commsworld employees from varied departments throughout the business joined a campaign launched by SmartSTEMs titled #MyJob#MyJourney to share an insight into what their job entails and the pathway that got them there. Whether that was further education, apprenticeships or another means along with

sharing their hobbies / interests and who or what inspired them and to also show that within STEM industries there are many different types of job roles available.

These videos are used to raise awareness of the opportunities available and feature in the individual school visits as well online.

At our May Hub event North Lanarkshire Council cited that one of the highlights of the event was the Commsworld workshop, which provided an immersive and hands-on experience for young participants. Pupils were given a map of their school and its surrounding area, assuming the responsibility of planning the fibre roll-out. And, to make the activity feel as authentic as possible, they were provided with personal protective equipment (PPE).



**Gerard McLaughlin, Chief Officer, Children and Families, North Lanarkshire Council, said:** *"It's important that our pupils are aware of the many exciting career opportunities that STEM subjects can provide.*

*"The events that Commsworld and SmartSTEMs have delivered to our school pupils have been a great success and provided all those who attended with an engaging and exciting insight into the world of science and technology."*

The workshop also gave students the opportunity to learn how to splice fibre and see the spectacular moment when it lit up, enabling them to understand how the process works.

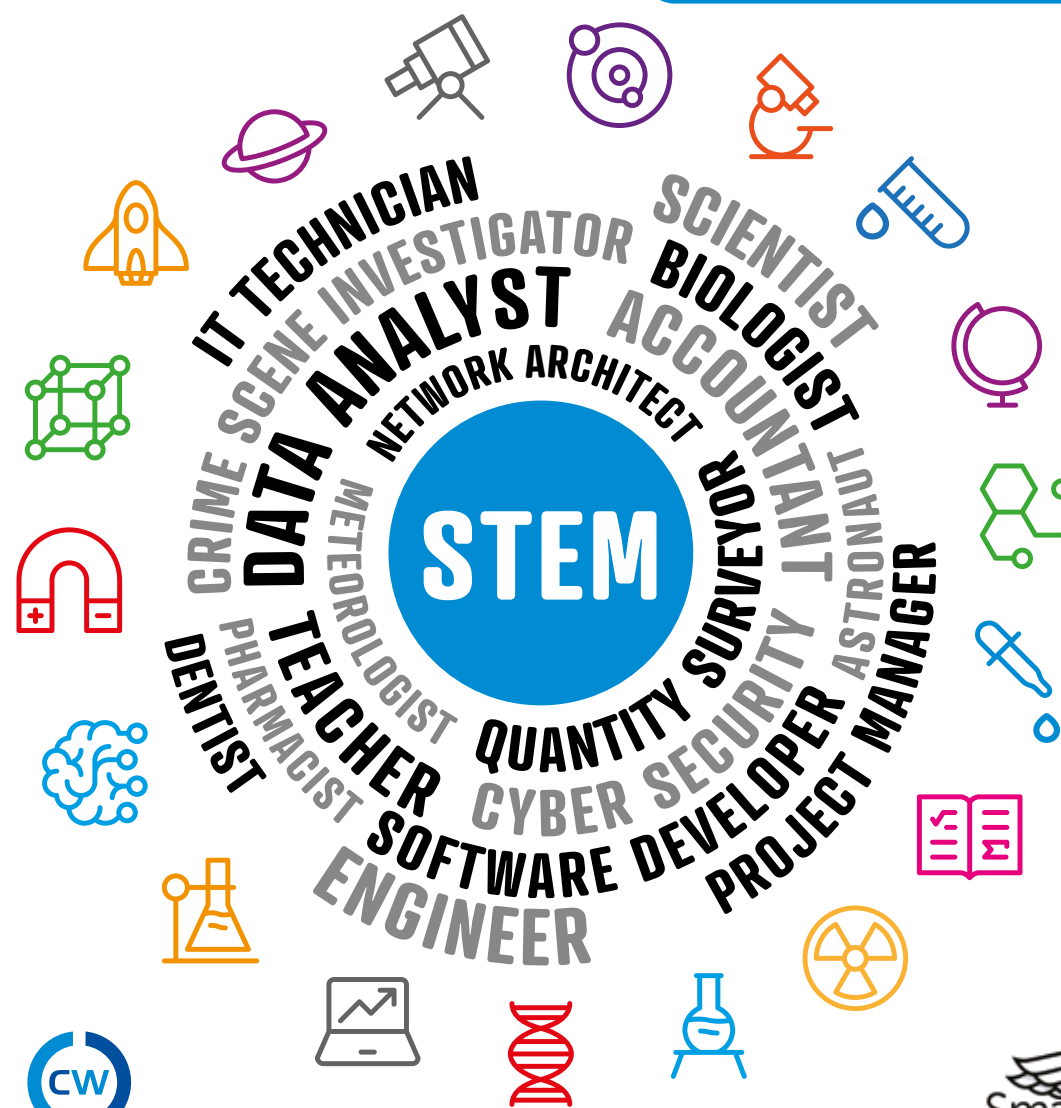
Five of the schools that completed our workshops also received the North Lanarkshire Enterprise School Award, which celebrates enterprise activity in schools which our workshops helped them achieve.

## Lasting Impact

Through our collective efforts, the partnership between Commsworld and SmartSTEMs is inspiring and empowering students and sparking a shift in the mindset towards STEM, it has also shown the importance of early engagement in STEM and raising awareness of the scope of opportunities available.

What's more the Commsworld employees that get involved from the videos to the workshops to speaking at the hub events get really excited about these initiatives, we believe in what we're promoting and have a genuine commitment to doing it well; being able to give back to the community like this improves employee morale and work satisfaction.

This is just the beginning for the partnership between Commsworld and SmartSTEMs, through our shared vision and dedication we look forward to inspiring many more young individuals.



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