

Meaningful Learning Experiences

Strategic Commitment	✓	Part of a careers initiative across Greater Manchester
Curriculum Provision	✓	Applying GIS skills as part of year 9 Geography
Employer Partnerships	✓	Corporate employer with head office in Manchester
Reflective Young People	✓	Incorporating group work and peer assessment
Informed Career Choices	✓	Revealing that GIS is used in professional job roles

Year 9 Geography students use real GIS data to propose the best location for a Co-op store

The Geography team at Alder Community High School in Hyde were keen to bring year 9 learning to life: *'There is often the idea that the skills we learn in Geography are useless as we have new technology these days. However, if we had somebody from within a sector come in which used these skills every single day then this would put an extra purpose behind needing to know these skills. For example, somebody who worked in GIS for flood prevention, or located new stores for big companies. They are using their knowledge of the physical geography of an area using GIS and maps as well as linking in other aspects of Geography such as population and hazards etc, bringing those links between topics to life.'*

The head office for the Co-operative Group is based in Manchester and the Modelling & GIS Manager from Coop Property agreed to provide data and screen shots from their GIS system, challenging students to use the information and prepare a proposal about the best potential location for a new store, with students' work recorded in a project work book.

Working in groups, students presented and justified their recommendation for a new store location to two managers from Coop Property who visited the school, providing group-by-group feedback and encouragement. At the same time, students provided peer assessment of other groups, commenting on their presentations, Powerpoint slides, use of data and a positive overall comment.

Discussion between teachers and Co-op guests resulted in agreement about planning a school visit to the head office, which is one of the world's most environmentally sustainable office buildings.

Benefits for the Students

- *'This is an actual project about putting a shop somewhere, so it's a bit more important than our normal work.'*
- *'It's good to have expert knowledge on our presentations ... It gives me another job idea.'*
- *'I felt I was immersed in the situation because I was doing, step-by-step, is what they do to pick a potential new site location.'*
- Involving employers in other subjects would *'... inform you more about jobs you could go into after school, instead of thinking 'I don't know what I want to be.'"*

Benefits for the School

- 'GIS is a topic that we don't really touch on because we don't have the technology, but this has worked really well as a way to introduce it.'
- 'They are much more engaged and really love that it's a real-life scenario and they're using the local area. They know those sites.'
- 'I think it's really valuable. Being able to make those links between employers and careers and just see how your subject is used.'

Benefits for the Employer

- The project contributed to the company's purpose of 'Championing a better way of doing business for you and your communities'.
- As well as using GIS information, students had to take account of Co-op's corporate ethos and how that might affect decisions about store location.
- The Co-op encourages and supports staff volunteering and this project allowed a contribution that utilised professional skills and promoted the range of job roles.



Students used real GIS data provided by Co-op Property as the basis for making choices about the right location for a new store. Each group received feedback from guest managers who visited the school, with students also providing peer assessment.

