



North Eastern Universities  
Purchasing Consortium



# 2023 / 24 ANNUAL REPORT

NORTH EASTERN UNIVERISTIES PURCHASING CONSORTIUM

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## OUR VISION

*"In partnership with members, deliver collaborative procurement support to enhance academic excellence, creativity and a sustainable business model."*

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# A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Iain Garfield,  
Director of Estates and Facilities, Newcastle University

## Chair's Introduction

A pivotal year of transformation and opportunity.

This year, we bid a bittersweet farewell to our esteemed CEO, Frank Rowell, after 13 years of leadership. Frank's steadfast commitment and groundbreaking contributions have not only propelled NEUPC forward but have also enriched the broader higher education procurement community. His legacy continues to inspire us as we build on the strong foundation he helped create.

Equally significant, we are delighted to welcome Rebecca Baxter as our new Managing Director. With her wealth of experience, fresh insights, and passion for innovation, Rebecca is poised to guide NEUPC into a new era of agility and excellence, particularly as we navigate the evolving procurement landscape.

Throughout 2024, our collective commitment to delivering value has shone through—from

realising measurable savings for our member institutions to launching initiatives that push the boundaries of traditional procurement. Notably, our teams have been diligently preparing for the impending changes to the Procurement Act 2023, set to take effect in early 2025.

These regulatory updates have spurred proactive planning and strategy adaptations, ensuring that our frameworks remain robust and compliant as we move forward.

As you explore this report, you will witness the strength of our community and the innovative strategies that position us as a leader in the field. Together, we are building a resilient, collaborative, and forward-thinking procurement community ready to embrace the future.

Warm regards,  
Iain Garfield  
Chairperson, NEUPC

# CATEGORY HIGHLIGHTS

This year our category groups have continued their efforts in awarding high-quality agreements suited to the needs of the HE and public sector, alongside providing forums for collaboration and discussion. During 2022/23, the following category group total spend was recorded.

CATEGORY GROUPS	TOTAL SPEND
Audio Visual	£20,783,010
Catering	£20,031,126
Estates	£16,114,928
Furniture	£13,284,552
IT & Telecoms	£84,977,747
Libraries	£25,298,313
Office Supplies	£4,756,897
Postal	£831,855
Soft FM	£8,125,833
STEMed and Laboratories	£36,788,545
Travel	£33,630,057

Our diverse spend not only illustrates the breadth of our procurement activities but also highlights the significant impact our frameworks have on delivering cost savings and operational efficiencies across key areas.

# FRAMEWORK AGREEMENTS

Financial Year	Total Agreement Value (£)	Member Rebate (£)	Change in Total Agreements (£)	Change in Member Rebate (£)
21/22	£710.6k	£201.5k	N/A	N/A
22/23	£518.8k	£217.6k	-£191.8k	£16.1k
23/24	£884k	£323k	£365.2k	£105.4k





# SUMMARY OF FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT PERFORMANCE

**Over the past three years, NEUPC's framework agreements have demonstrated significant financial impact:**

- Total Agreements Value: After a dip in 2022/23, we saw a robust recovery in 2023/24, with an increase of **£365.2k** compared to the previous year.
- Member Rebates: These have grown consistently year on year, with a notable **£105.4k** increase in 2023/24, reflecting the rising financial returns for our members.

These figures underscore NEUPC's dedication to maximising member value through high-value agreements and growing rebates, reinforcing our role as a not-for-profit organisation focused on delivering tangible benefits.

## **Subscriptions:**

NEUPC returned **£60k** to members from their subscriptions, representing an impressive **26.4%** of total fees. This commitment ensures that any surplus, after covering operating costs, is returned directly to members. Consequently, members not only benefit from our frameworks but also receive tangible financial returns, emphasising our dedication to delivering maximum value and cost savings.



# FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENTS AND STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

## Awarded Frameworks

Each figure represents the total potential spend across the full framework term.

Framework Category	Projected Spend (Total Agreement Value)
Fire Safety Equipment, Fire Alarms, Suppression Systems & Services	£12M
Couriers	£14M
Signs and Signage	£8M
Asbestos Consultancy	£12M
Asbestos Removal	£27M
Floor Covering Supply, Fit & Maintenance	£30M
Audio Visual (AV) System Design/Consultancy, Supplies, Installation & Maintenance	£300M



## Audio Visual Tender £300m – £450m

A significant highlight this year has been the successful launch of one of our largest tenders in the Audio-Visual category, with a potential value of up to £450 million in member spend. This tender has been refined through extensive member feedback, market research, and involvement, offering both regional and national solutions tailored to NEUPC, LUPC, SUPC, and APUC members.

The framework offers a well-balanced mix of both smaller and larger companies, ensuring a diverse selection that caters to all our members' needs. With comprehensive coverage across various requirements, it provides the flexibility necessary to meet the unique demands of each member.

## Soft FM and Sustainability: Innovative Re-tendering and Strategic Partnerships

We have advanced our commitment to operational excellence and sustainability through innovative re-tendering efforts, such as restructuring window cleaning services for NEUPC and NWUPC and introducing a cycling courier option within our revamped Couriers framework. Additionally, our collaboration with the Crescent Purchasing Consortium (CPC) led to the successful launch of the Fire Safety Equipment, Fire Alarms, Suppression Systems, and Associated Services, expanding our service offerings and improving accessibility.

Key benefits identified at the point of award include a combined marketing approach between CPC and NEUPC, an expanded supplier base through a revised lotting structure, a comprehensive service lot to cover all member needs (excluding risk assessments and training), and a strong focus on sustainability. These efforts ensure that members have access to more specialised, sustainable, and efficient solutions, supporting their long-term goals.



# STRENGTHENING EXISTING PORTFOLIOS

- Furniture Management: Continued steady oversight with consistent spending as we progress into the third year of our agreement.
- Asbestos Frameworks: The groundbreaking launch of both Asbestos Consultancy and the nation's first national Asbestos Removal initiative has showcased the power of collaborative procurement.
- Lab (Life Science) Enhancement: The strategic integration of the recently concluded Antibodies framework (originally managed by SUPC) into our national Lab framework has led to more competitive supplier pricing and streamlined services.

## Framework Re-tendering Success in 2023/24

*"Re-tendering seven frameworks in one period was a huge achievement, broadening the scope of services and increasing opportunities for collaboration across sectors. This ensures our frameworks continue to evolve to meet our members' needs."*

*- Lorraine Whelan, Head of Operational Procurement*

## Expanding Opportunities & Flexibility

- The expanded scope of these frameworks now offers greater flexibility and a wider range of solutions, allowing us to better support members and stakeholders.
- Strengthened partnerships and new collaboration opportunities enhance the value of our framework offerings.



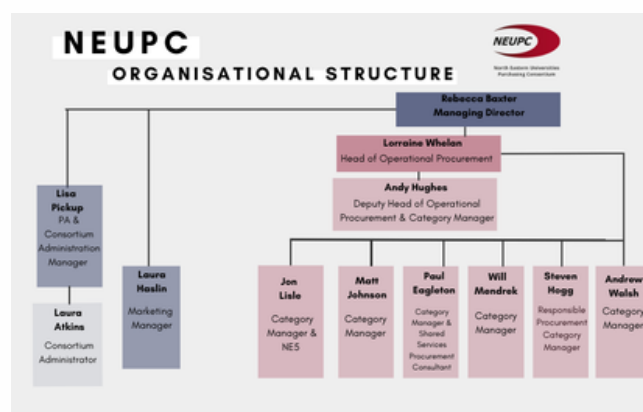
## Team Growth & Resilience

- At the start of the period, we welcomed two new staff members, stabilising our team after the absence of two contract managers for six months.
- Despite this challenge, the team successfully delivered all seven tenders, demonstrating both resilience and the impact of our new recruits in maintaining operational momentum.

*"The team's dedication and adaptability during this period were outstanding. Their commitment ensured we delivered these tenders successfully, despite the challenges we faced."*

– *Andy Hughes,*

*Deputy Head of Operational Procurement*



## Our Commitment to Sustainable & Ethical Procurement

At NEUPC, we are dedicated to promoting sustainable and ethical procurement practices, ensuring that our supply chain operates with integrity, responsibility, and transparency.

- **Prompt Payment Terms** – We support our suppliers by maintaining fair and timely payment practices, fostering a resilient and sustainable supply chain.
- **Net Positive Commitment** – Suppliers are encouraged to sign up to the Net Positive initiative upon their appointment to the framework, reinforcing our collective responsibility for positive social and environmental impact.
- **Modern Slavery Policy** – While not a statutory requirement for us, we voluntarily uphold a modern slavery policy, reflecting our firm stance against exploitation and unethical labor practices.
- **Ethical Training & Standards** – All NEUPC staff complete ethical CIPS training, ensuring procurement decisions align with best practices and industry ethics.

Our commitment to these principles underpins our approach to procurement, ensuring that we continue to drive positive change across our frameworks and supply chain.

# CIPS TRAINING: A STRATEGIC TRANSITION

We are pleased to announce the strategic transition of our CIPS training programs to the East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce. This move reaffirms our commitment to providing exceptional procurement education and supporting the career advancement of our members.

As a CIPS study centre of excellence, the East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce has enriched the training experience by integrating innovative resources into the course fees. These enhancements include CIPS-guided learning hours and supplementary reading materials accessible via QR codes, streamlining the learning process and removing the need for separate e-learning module purchases.

The CIPS programme has long been a cornerstone of professional development within our community, enabling many NEUPC members to make significant strides in their procurement careers. This transition ensures that members will continue to benefit from high-quality training and support.

Under the new arrangement, preferential rates have been established for both distance and virtual learning across various qualification levels. Although these rates exclude CIPS membership fees, study guides, and exam fees, the East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce will provide study guides and coordinate exam bookings at cost, in accordance with current CIPS pricing. Please note that CIPS membership remains a prerequisite for enrolling in any CIPS qualification, with memberships available online.

This handover marks a pivotal milestone in our ongoing efforts to enhance professional development in the procurement sector, ensuring that NEUPC members continue to receive the top-tier training and support necessary to advance their careers.

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# LOOKING AHEAD: OUR VISION FOR THE 2024/25 FINANCIAL YEAR

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Our proactive approach is fuelling a robust procurement pipeline that is poised to deliver further value and operational efficiency. Upcoming initiatives include:

- **Building Refurbishment Framework.**
- **National Education Printer Agreement (NEPA3)**
- **National Lifts Framework**
- **Removals & Relocations**
- **Telecoms and Data Cabling**
- **Construction Project Management and Conservation Professional Services**
- **Engineering Equipment and Services**
- **Conservation Works**

These forthcoming contracts underscore our dedication to expanding our portfolio, streamlining supplier engagement, and ensuring our frameworks continue to deliver competitive pricing, quality outcomes, and enhanced service delivery for our members.



# OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Throughout 2023/24, NEUPC has significantly enhanced operational efficiency and strategically expanded its procurement portfolio, reinforcing our leadership in procurement innovation. Our targeted initiatives and collaborative efforts have not only broadened our offerings but also positioned us strongly in a dynamic market.

On the financial front, our robust performance reflects our commitment to sound fiscal management and strategic planning. As we adapt to evolving market opportunities and upcoming regulatory changes, these results underscore our ongoing dedication to delivering exceptional value and unwavering support to our member institutions.

	2024	2023
Turnover	£1,435,804	£1,109,937
Administrative expenses	£1,108,537	£934,609
<b>Operating surplus</b>	<b>£327,267</b>	<b>£175,328</b>
Interest receivable	£17,723	£9,543
Surplus on ordinary activities before taxation	£344,990	£184,871
Tax on surplus on ordinary activities	£86,230	£39,495
Surplus for the Financial Year	£258,760	£145,376



## BALANCE SHEET AS AT JULY 2024

	2024	2023
<b>Fixed assets</b>		
Tangible assets	£8,178	£10,125
<b>Current assets</b>		
Debtors	£864,927	£791,576
Cash in bank	£932,258	£686,536
Creditors - Amounts falling due within one year	£269,043	£211,920
Net Current assets	£1,528,142	£1,266,192
<b>Total assets less liabilities</b>	<b>£1,536,320</b>	<b>£1,276,317</b>
Provision for liabilities - deferred taxation	£1,916	£673
Capital and Reserves	£1,534,404	£1,275,644

These robust financial results not only reflect our prudent management and operational success but also reinforce our capacity to invest in future initiatives and drive continued innovation.



# LOOKING AHEAD: A MESSAGE FROM REBECCA

I am excited to welcome you to the next phase of our journey—a phase defined by optimism, collaboration, and a steadfast commitment to being there for our members every step of the way. At NEUPC, we understand the challenges you face in your day-to-day roles, and we provide unwavering support to help you navigate them successfully.

Reflecting on our recent successes, our enhanced frameworks and robust financial performance are a testament to the strength of our strategic vision and the hard work of our team. Our proactive planning throughout 2024 has prepared us for the impending changes to the Procurement Act 2023, set to take effect in early 2025. These updates not only represent a shift in the regulatory landscape but also offer us an opportunity to further refine our services and deliver even greater value to you.

Looking forward, our focus remains on building an environment where every member feels empowered and valued. With initiatives like the upcoming six-year Building Refurbishment Framework and plans for the National Education Printer Agreement, National Lifts, and Construction Project Management, we are committed to supporting your needs, streamlining processes, and ensuring that you have the resources required to excel.

Together, through transparent communication, sustainable practices, and unwavering dedication, we will continue to forge a path toward a brighter future for our procurement community. Thank you for your ongoing support and trust. I am confident that, together, we will build a resilient, innovative, and inclusive community that stands ready to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

With warm regards,

Rebecca Baxter  
Managing Director  
NEUPC



# NEUPC FULL MEMBERS

- Bishop Grosseteste University
- Durham University
- Leeds Art University
- Leeds Beckett University
- Leeds Trinity University
- Loughborough University
- Newcastle University
- Northumbria University
- Nottingham Trent University
- Sheffield Hallam University
- Teesside University
- University of Birmingham
- University of Bradford
- University of Derby
- University of Huddersfield
- University of Hull
- University of Leeds
- University of Leicester
- University of Lincoln
- University of Sheffield
- University of Sunderland
- University of York
- York St John University

## NEUPC BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2023/2024

**Iain Garfield - Chair**

Director of Estates and Facilities

Newcastle University

**Rebecca Baxter**

Managing Director

NEUPC

**Paul Revell**

Head of Commercial Strategy

York St John University

**Angela Beswick**Associate Director of Information  
Services

University of Bradford

**Frank Rowell**

CEO

NEUPC- Resigned 29/11/24

**Jeremy Hartley**

Chief Finance Officer

University of Hull

**Rebecca Askew**

Director of Procurement

Durham University

**J K Trotter**

Director of Procurement and Projects

University of Leicester - Resigned

21/11/2024

**Ryan Keyworth**

Chief Finance Officer

Sheffield Hallam University

**Tim Brannon**

Director of Procurement

University of Leeds

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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