



ASSOCIATION
OF COLLEGES
CHARITABLE TRUST

Green Skills For The Future Programme

London South East Colleges case study

July 2024



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Introduction

Project

The Association of Colleges (AoC), with funding from JP Morgan and Chase has launched a new programme to provide future generations with the sustainable construction skills they need. The Creating a Greener London – Sustainable Construction Skills programme is aimed at developing innovative, local approaches to the delivery of eco-friendly skills training.

The purpose of the programme is to meet the needs of students, employers, and colleges in delivering green skills training, through the development of practice. It aims to provide insights into how the local ecosystem can support young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Enabling them to access skilled employment while meeting Government objectives around achieving net zero and delivering green skills to meet the demand for green jobs. Two pilot projects, South Thames College Group (STCG) and London South East Colleges (LSEC), are commissioned in the Greater London area to identify, develop, and embed green skills training into existing Level 2 Construction courses to tackle green skills shortages in the homes and buildings sector.

Green skills definition

Green skills are the specific knowledge, abilities and values needed to promote the reduction of negative environmental impact in the workplace.

Project aims and objectives

- To provide participating Level 2 construction students with green and wider employability skills, which supports their progression into Level 3 study (with a focus on Apprenticeships) and ultimately into higher skilled, better paid and more stable employment in the homes and buildings sector.
- To identify the green skills required at Level 2 for successful progression into Level 3 study and green jobs.
- To improve student understanding of the career opportunities and progression routes into green jobs in the homes and building sector.
- To support practitioners to improve their skills and knowledge in a range of green skills.
- To ensure participating students who enter employment at the end of their Level 2 qualification are better prepared to progress to potentially higher skilled, more stable employment.
- To improve local workforce planning across Greater London to deliver vital green skills training in the homes and building sector.

Case study

Each pilot project has produced a case study detailing activities, challenges, successes, and recommendations for successful local collaborative approaches to the delivery of green skills for green jobs. Please see the London South East Colleges case study below.

London South East Colleges

Case study



What was your Green Skills Curriculum offer before the start of this project?

Within LSEC (London Southeast Colleges), we have over nine thousand learners, a fifth of whom are enrolled on STEM courses. We consistently provide education to around 3,500 students on 16-18 study programmes with STEM learners making up just under a third of this number (1100). Construction courses take place at our Bromley and Holly Hill campuses.

The facilities at these campuses enable the college to deliver full and part-time vocational courses in a range of levels, from entry to higher education. We already have an established construction offer based at the College's Holly Hill and Bromley Campuses. The Bromley campus Technology Block houses the STEM provision, which has a developing curriculum in green technologies, including modern methods of construction, micro renewables, energy efficiency EV (Electric Vehicles) automotive and EV charging. Our work to date through the Strategic Development Funding and Multi College Academy programme provides us with a rich evidence base and the infrastructure to develop high quality curriculum to enable learner progression into stable employment in the green construction sector.

Our DAP (developmental action planning) for staff to CPD with each other will be collated to meet the needs for SMEs and students with each campus having an individual Curriculum Manager who supported the individual projects at each college with the projects managed overall by the Project Manager who will ensure that all surveys, employability skills.

Our experience of the project to date

The project has given useful focus to our Level 2 provision, providing a framework to help us: plot in dedicated advice and guidance; monitor our students' responses to and appetite for green opportunities within the curriculum and then as progression routes; and consider how we can enrich the green offer for students through developing partnerships.

We have been able to support practitioners to improve their skills and knowledge in a range of green skills.



As an example of our growth within the green agenda, we facilitated a visit to our Bromley Campus by Robert Halfon. Minister of State for Skills, Apprenticeships and Higher Education, The Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP, met with staff, students, and apprentices yesterday during a visit to London Southeast Colleges' Bromley Campus. The Minister toured the College's Technology block, visiting construction workshops and its newly launched Green Skills Lab. Speaking with apprentices and students studying a range of vocational qualifications, the Minister viewed the college's facilities and heard more about its courses, study programmes and skills provision.

Discussions have taken place with college leaders who talked about the green skills programmes being delivered and the work being done with employers and other colleges across the region to help address skills shortages in the expanding green industries. Funding from the Government's Strategic Development Fund and the Local Skills Improvement Fund has helped put LSEC at the forefront of green skills training. This is helping to support businesses across the region, as well as giving local people excellent career and employment opportunities, both now and in the future.

Also attending the event was Maria Gonella, Managing Partner at Quantum. London's first renewable training facilities for level 2 and level 3 students were installed at colleges across the region last year, thanks to the trailblazers in the Local London Green Skills Local London team. LSEC is one of the first in the country to have students working in these renewable training facilities and learning the green skills we need to see us into the future.

The green skills in construction curriculum improvements

Our curriculum has now been developed and designed specifically for Level 2 cohorts and mapped to Level 3 Apprenticeships and T Level courses to maximise opportunities for student progression for employment into the green construction industry.

Building on existing industry partnerships and the development of an employer pledge card – the college is tying in over fifty key employers to engage with the college in many ways from upskilling and re skilling their staff to engaging in our apprenticeships programmes.

Our main improvement is that we are now growing the provision in the delivery of green skills in Electrical Installation courses, and this includes the delivery of domestic retrofit, Air source heat pumps,

Solar panel installations and further smarter energy saving green technology courses with delivery taking place at our Holly Hill and Bromley campuses. We now have an innovative new training space, designed to equip people with green industry skills, has been officially opened at London Southeast Colleges' Bromley Campus today.

The pioneering facilities house nine Renewable Technology Training Booths, covering three key areas; Air Source Heat Pumps, Solar Thermal, Solar PV, Battery and Electric Vehicle Charging.

Other organisations that have also been helped by this project

New research is highlighting how a lack of knowledge and understanding of the green and digital job sector is seriously preventing people from taking up a wealth of opportunities in the sector.

- Fifty percent of Londoners aged 16-25 want to pursue a green career.
- Fifty-nine percent believe there is a current shortage of green and digital skills.

- Thirty-two percent self-rate their level of green skills as 'low' to 'no'
- Three quarters (76%) believe digital skills will be needed to get a decent job in the future.

The figures from the London Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF), reveal despite half (50%) of Londoners aged between 16-25-years-old admitting they want to pursue a career in the green sector, almost 3 in 10 (29%) have little to no knowledge of what green skills mean.

Furthermore, they felt there were large barriers to entry including not knowing where to begin (42%) and feeling that they would not be able to earn enough in the field (37%), while a third (33%) mistakenly believed there were no job opportunities where they lived. The statistics highlight a serious need for investment in education in London to prepare young adults for green and digital jobs and equip them with the knowledge to pursue those roles. The industry is in dire need of recruitment with more than a quarter (27%) of employers in the capital reporting a green skills shortage.

With many companies struggling to fill vacancies, there remains a lucrative opportunity for young Londoners training to enter this workforce. To combat the issue a new investment of £6.5m from the Government's Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) has been secured by us to lead a group of twenty-three further education, higher education, and skills providers in Northeast and Southeast London.

However, there will still be the need to introduce the local population into the importance of the green agenda especially with the delivery specialist skills gaps in local further education establishments.

We remain involved in a Green Skills focus group with other London colleges to implement a collaborative approach to the embedding of Green Skills into the construction curriculum. Through sharing good practice and by highlighting our progress to date, our aims are to ensure momentum continues with regards to raising green skills awareness across student cohorts in the London area.

This will have an impact on their career pathways and will support the bridging of the green skills gaps in the construction industry. We meet regularly with the South London Partnership's Green Skills Academy to share resources and networking opportunities; this supported good employer attendance during Green Careers Week and Employability Week.

The motivating factors are that relevant training materials will support the supply chain for green skills in the local area and beyond and it is a critical part of our Strategic goals and plans to meet the needs of industry. The construction industry is moving towards this vision and colleges are critical to the supply chain and we uphold a responsible approach to enrich our curriculum.

Using the research, we developed a news story, which was issued to broadcast media across London. We offered spokespeople from both London Southeast Colleges and Newham College to talk about the research, along with a student case study.

The story reached over two million people via thirty-four radio stations across London. This included interviews with Louise Wolsey (and an LSEC student case study) on Greatest Hits radio (clip attached) and a piece on London Live TV, also featuring an interview with Louise.

You can read the full story here, on our updated website: [Half of young Londoners want a "green" career - Local London Green Jobs and Skills Partnership \(locallondongreenskills.com\)](https://locallondongreenskills.com)

As you will see, this website has now been fully updated to reflect our LSIF work. It includes borough maps, which list all our partners and highlight the various projects being conducted.

Please do have a look through and let me know if there were anything you would like to add or include. This website is a crucial resource, through which we can highlight both our partners' individual work and our unique collaborative projects.

In terms of other PR activity, our project lead, Mark O'Reilly and Chief Strategy Officer, Louise Wolsey have developed a thought leadership article for FE Week regarding micro credentials, highlighting some of the work taking place in this area: [Why we're developing micro-credentials – and you should too \(feweek.co.uk\)](https://www.feweek.co.uk/why-we-re-developing-micro-credentials-and-you-should-too).

The project's impact at college level

To date, we are still growing the provision in Green Skills. However, our student survey does show an increase in the students' knowledge of what is meant by the green agenda within the construction industry.

Outcomes from Student Data Taken in June 2024

How well has your course helped you to understand green technology and green skills in in construction trades?

Responses	%
I have learned a lot about green skills and technology on my course	21%
I have learned something about green skills and technology on my course	53%
I have not learned anything about green skills and technology on my course	25%

How much do you know about the following green jobs in the construction industry?

Career	Expert %	Know quite a bit. %	Know the basics. %	Heard but not sure. %	Not heard of this %
Solar Panel Installer	9	7	40	37	6
Heat Pump Installer	8	8	34	40	10
EV Charging Point Installer	9	8	27	38	17
Sustainability Manager	5	11	31	31	21
Retrofit assessor.	7	4	21	25	40
Retrofit Installer	6	3	19	27	45

Good practice and positive outcomes

- There has been CPD provided to improve the skills and knowledge of practitioners, so they're more confident in highlighting green skills and options across a range of skilled trades to students.
- Purchasing and building of dedicated resources to support teaching, learning & assessment in new Green Construction workshops.
- Senior Managers, Curriculum Leads, and staff have worked as a team to understand the aims of the project and plans on how to deliver it which means it has been successfully implemented.
- Involvement of SMEs in the development of courses which makes the courses more relevant to current industry standards.
- Employer-led masterclasses on the relevance of green skills in the current industry which allow employers to interact directly with students and enhance college delivery.
- The curriculum has been broadened to improve students' knowledge and awareness of the overarching Green Skills agenda.
- The colleges have delivered quality career information and guidance which has improved student understanding of the career opportunities and progression routes into green jobs in the homes and building sector.
- The green skills agenda has been introduced from the starting point of the induction process to the end of the academic year. This means that students are introduced to green skills at the start of their college journey.
- Students learning has been scaffolded by embedding green skills into the substantial offers in the various trades (e.g. solar panels, Electrical course, heat pumps-plumbing, on site trades-retrofit).
- The pilots have worked together and with others to collaborate and share good practice. They have improved local workforce planning across Greater London to help deliver vital green skills training.
- There is wider employer engagement and work experience offered at both college pilots as a result of the project.



Thank you to the college pilots, and JP Morgan and Chase for making the programme possible.

For more information on the programme please see our dedicated website

[Creating a Greener London – Sustainable Construction Skills](#)

or alternatively, contact the Project Delivery Lead Phil.Parle@aoc.co.uk

