

Low Carbon Environmental Goods and Services: Pioneering Greener Business

Waves. Wind. Sun. Cornwall is a natural leader when it comes to developing renewable energy technologies. Situated among some of the best natural resources in the UK, in a setting that attracts international interest, Cornwall's Low Carbon Environmental Goods and Services (LCEGS) industry is pointing the way to a greener, more sustainable future. Now's the time to make the most of what the region has to offer – with a plan to make Cornwall the natural place to do green business.

Over the next 10 to 15 years we want to help Cornwall's businesses connect, collaborate, incubate and excel with access to the skills development they need, when they need it.

And the journey starts here.

Base Camp

The LCEGS industry attracts a highly skilled, specialist workforce, with about 60% of qualifications held in STEM or sector-relevant subjects. This highly qualified workforce commands high earnings, with mean average pay in the LCEGS industry greater than the fulltime average for Cornwall as a whole. Which adds up to big opportunities for a workforce armed with the right skill set.

However, the UK as a whole is lacking the necessary skills to compete successfully in an increasingly globalised market. The Leitch Review recognised that "low carbon skills" should be at the centre of the overall drive to improve skills. Just as all businesses will need to take part in the transition to a green economy,

all workers need to have skill sets that will enable businesses to achieve their environmental and sustainability goals. In Cornwall, the sector is predicted to expand over the next 1-2 years, with a 19% growth rate, creating 750 new jobs. There are a wide and growing range of LCEGS skills provision options across Cornwall and many providers are currently expanding or investing more in the green business sector. However, there



are challenges to face. Economically, as part of the only Less Developed Region in England. Politically, as a result of indecisive policy development. And environmentally, in the face of a rapidly changing climate. Our research has found that unless more is done to improve skills and promote higher skills development, a number of factors are likely to combine over the next 10 years to produce a substantial skills and employee deficit in Cornwall. This could greatly limit the sector's ability to grow and develop successfully. Which means a short window of opportunity to take action.

Even faced with these obstacles, Cornish businesses in the LCEGS sector have a positive outlook, are optimistic about future growth and are ready to embrace training in the context of future growth and investment. Whether it's reaching out to young people to raise awareness of green careers options, developing hands-on skills and innovation through training, placements and green apprenticeships, or creating Green Centres of Excellence to showcase Cornwall's burgeoning green credentials, the region has ambitious plans, with the potential for creating many more well paid, high quality jobs.

Scanning the Horizon

For a greener future, Cornwall needs to address the gap between business skills need and current skills provision, streamline the process of matching the right training to individuals and business and raise awareness of the opportunities and value that a career in green business offers.

We'll need to focus on improving the skills of the people working Green Business and promoting higher skills development, rather than investment in infrastructure

LCEGS UK: The Facts

- Highly qualified workforce
- 60% qualifications in STEM/specialist subjects
- High earning sector

LCEGS Cornwall: The Facts Projected over next 1-2 yrs:

- 19% growth rate in local workforce
- 750 new jobs

and 'big ticket' building projects. We'll need more skills, from marketing, PR and sales skills and STEM subjects, to funding packages for green apprenticeship programmes. We'll need to work with pioneering

"...Local businesses in the LCEGS sector are very optimistic about their future growth opportunities"

businesses and local schools to attract aspirational young talent to secure the future of the sector.

In both mature and emerging sectors the future development of low

carbon and environmental goods and services depends on access to an ever-deepening pool of talent and innovation - to boost skills and foster collaboration.

Which is where the Green Skills Portal, the Green Skills and Innovation Partnership and Green Centres of Excellence come in.

Breaking New Ground

Connections. Awareness. Support. Our LCEGS industry depends on us being able to encourage and guide businesses on how to grow; through the people they recruit and the skills they have.

To make this happen, there are a number of recommended steps we can take. We should provide a simplified, one-stop access route to learning. We should create a space to inspire, innovate, research and co-create solutions. We should connect businesses with

"Our LCEGS industry, in both mature and emerging sectors, depends on access to an ever-deepening pool of talent and innovation."

local schools to close the gender gap by attracting more young women to the sector and increasing awareness of careers in green business.

We should nurture collaboration by establishing a network of green businesses to mentor and support emerging new businesses. And we should look to establish a central space, which draws all this together and offers a focus for Cornwall's LCEGS sector.

From arranging for specialists to get classes excited about green career options, to clustering businesses together so they can tap into new opportunities, this

work will help everyone discover, explore and value green business.

To get started we should focus on the following areas:

- **Collaboration:** by encouraging businesses to learn from each other, connect and work together to reach higher, The Green Skills Innovation Partnership will build significant skills advantages across the sector and provide a space for positive interaction between industry, education and the public sector.
- **Support:** by providing business to business mentoring for emerging parts of the sector, facilitating placements and developing a green apprenticeship programme, we can help to tap Cornwall's unique resources and strive toward a low carbon future.
- **Skills:** by providing a clearinghouse of skills knowledge, The Green Skills Portal will offer a one-stop shop for information, advice and guidance for green skills, whether it's assessing skills requirements or offering advice on solving skills needs, improved connections and training will help businesses develop and grow through their people.

What's Next?

By addressing the gap between business skills need and current skills provision, streamlining the process of matching the right training to individuals and businesses and raising awareness of the opportunities and value that a career in green business offers, we're pioneering a greener business future and harnessing Cornwall's unique potential to play home to world-leading businesses that can tackle the global threat of climate change.

This is not about complicated technology, overwhelming resources or impenetrable reports. It's about bringing businesses together and helping them reach higher by collaborating, building their skills and sharing their insights.

Find out more about the thinking behind this Skills Action Plan and read the full report by visiting

<http://www.cornwallandislesofscillylep.com/employment-and-skills.html>