

Stepping Up in Sustainability 2011-12

Lewisham College case study



Title of project	Eco-Skills for Trainers, Mentors and Learners	
Lead partner organisation name and address	Trade Union Studies Centre Lewisham College	
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1. Aims of the project	<p>Developing the 'green agenda' is a key area for trade unions to be working with employers and communities to develop partnerships to maximise the use of resources, training and job opportunities.</p> <p>There are few people in these organisations who can explain the pros and cons of environmental sustainability to others and training was essential in order to make this happen. There is a particular need to focus on literacy and jargon associated with the green agenda. There are large numbers of construction sites and housing refurbishments around South East London, with significant waste of resources (through travelling) employing workers from outside London to carry out retro fitting and energy efficiency measures (loft insulation etc.) There are also 2000 empty properties in Lewisham Borough. Finding ways to obtain these voids would provide excellent opportunities for 'hands on' training for the unemployed, those entering the job market, those requiring completion of construction NVQs and for those requiring up skilling in green materials and systems.</p> <p>The main aims of the project were to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and deliver a training the trainers/mentors learning package (3 -5 day course) on carbon free and environmental sustainability including awareness raising, environmental literacy (jargon and technical terms) speaking in public, presentation skills, use of ICT for social networking and identification of useful resources, project planning skills to support young people, adults, green reps, vulnerable workers and employers to promote and establish workplace and community projects around the green agenda. 2. Develop and deliver a new unit on carbon free and environmental sustainability (3 – 5 day course) to sit alongside existing employability training modules to improve job prospects as there is little or no main stream training in this area. There will also be information and guidance on 	

	<p>training and career and progression routes in carbon free and environmental sustainability industries.</p> <p>3. To support a cohort of participants (6 people) to attend training on 'Understanding Sustainable Refurbishment' so that attendees are fully equipped for today's renovation market and beyond and be able to cascade these to others.</p> <p>The benefits of working together and how the different partnerships worked could be rolled out in the College, to the local boroughs and workplaces and to job creation and training organisations utilising those who had been trained as Discussion Leaders/ambassadors.</p>
<p>2. Situation: Identify the situation or issue that faced you</p>	<p>We really wanted to get to grass roots people in work, unemployed and on housing estates. Innovative recruitment methods had to be tried. Not only did we have to provide the training but we knew we could not start people off and then abandon them. We had to involve them in developing a range of progression routes from basic to graduate levels.</p> <p>The project had direct course recruitment opportunities through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trade Union Studies Centre which had access to Union Learning Reps to promote the courses in workplaces • A Green Skills Partnership for London (GSPL) group made up of employers, unions, local authorities, Jobcentreplus and training providers. • A local café and community space 'Come the Revolution' near to the College which provided an excellent recruitment area for community participants • Wilmott Dixon, a housing refurbishment employer, who partnered the Environmental Awareness course on a local housing estate.
<p>3. Task: Define the outcomes you needed to achieve</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To recruit participants from the project partners from existing staff or those new to employment or just entering it from one of each of the following: a construction site, a local council, white goods refurbishment, retro-fitting, an employability scheme for the unemployed, an employability scheme for apprentices, a community group. The project aimed to train one cohort as trainers/mentors (12 participants) and a minimum of 2 groups of general learners (total 24) . • To develop trainers/mentors, stakeholder staff and those entering the job market to have the environmental literacy, knowledge and confidence to promote the issues and set up

	<p>or engage with carbon free and environmental sustainability workplace or community projects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To establish at least 3 workplace or community projects in new industries (retro-fitting) those with hard to reach workers (construction), those entering the job market and vulnerable workers, a local council, an employability scheme for the unemployed and for apprentices. <p>This would test the practicalities of :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the learning materials for different groups from different backgrounds and ability levels; • engaging local people with their own development around environmental sustainability; • what the partner organisations needed to do to support any local initiatives that grew out of the project.
<p>4. Actions that you took in order to achieve your plan, and your approach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made contact with employers, trade unions and community organisations through individual union learning reps, community activists (from local cafe ‘Come the Revolution’) and links with construction and companies involved in a the Green Skills Partnership for London (GSPL) (Wilmott Dixon, Lendlease and local Councils) • Made courses vibrant, active and local utilising visits to community gardens, photography, informal learning in the cafe, knowledge of community activists about aspects of the green agenda in their presentations e.g. fitting solar panels to cars, converting old fridges to wormeries and barbeques, café/pub quiz, setting up a community garden, working co-operatively. • Linked with College construction department to show how rain water harvesting and solar panels can be set up • Established a progression pathway diagram arising out of the needs of participants to ensure each was able to take their next step. This covered 6 areas – entrepreneurship and co-operative working, environmental, health and safety, tools and trades, teaching and education. Later gardening was added as this is an important development area for environmental sustainability i.e. opportunities to grow own food, develop energy projects, bring communities together in collective working • Set up follow up events and meetings to encourage participants to become involved in local projects arising out of their networking e.g. February 14th ‘We Love Co-

	<p>operatives' meeting where 40 people attended and the vision and values identified for a co-operative to be set up</p>
<p>5. Results that you obtained</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials have been developed for both types of courses and tested with community groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a trainers/mentors learning package on carbon free and environmental sustainability providing skills to support young people, adults, green reps and vulnerable workers to establish workplace projects around the green agenda. ○ an employability skills unit on green issues for those entering the job market. • 3 trainers/mentors courses were held training 40 people as Discussion Leaders around the green agenda. One course was held in partnership with Willmot Dixon on a local housing estate and 4 people progressed onto the Discussion Leaders course. • 10 participants are progressing to start a Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) course. • 4 have shadowed College tutors on further environmental courses with apprentices and community groups. • 2 people attended the Parity Projects 5 day course on retro-fitting • Follow up days have been held to progress ideas that came out of the courses 'We Love Co-operatives', PTLLS information day, How To Set Up a Co-operative. An energy Co-operative group has met and is applying for funding. As a result of these 3 main priorities have been identified and community sub-groups created: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop training and skills progression routes for those participating in the initial Discussion Leader courses • Set up a co-operative to utilise local trades and skills in empty properties and as a local service to the community and small businesses • Set up a community garden group • The lead partners of the Project have put in a bid to Jobcentreplus for a full time Project Worker and more local training courses around the green agenda including loft and cavity wall insulation, solar panelling and further

environmental awareness courses

- The local cafe and community activists have been shortlisted for an energy funding bid
- A web site has been created to blog all the developments of the Project and enable course participants and others to add their comments and experiences.
<http://ecoskills.blogspot.com>
- College tutors and course participants met with Lewisham Council Sustainable Energy Manager to identify possibility of obtaining unused homes for retro-fitting using local labour. Partners to be found and bids to be written.
- A workshop on environment sustainability was held at the TUC Unionlearn Conference (November 2012) and a new quiz – ‘Green Bingo’ tried out as a learning activity. This was very well received and will be used in many workplaces by reps who attended.
- A Powerpoint summary of the Project and achievements has been disseminated to:
 - A national construction union learning reps conference in Derby to promote the model (28 March 2012)
 - The EAUC annual conference in York (29 March 2012)
 - Unionlearn London Region ULR Network conference at the TUC (30 March 2012)
- Meetings have been held with other London Councils and construction employers to replicate the model

6. What made the project a success? What were the key ingredients?

- Partnership – employers, trade unions, community groups, Councils, providers working together
- Hearing what local people want, valuing their voice and using their suggestions for progression pathways both accredited, formal and informal and ensuring that every person achieved their next step
- Committed and creative tutors who can be flexible and deal with challenging participants – rebellious, outspoken, some with mental health issues, some who are graduates some long term unemployed and with low self esteem, some with high level practical skills but no qualifications
- Mix of people on courses – community, union unemployed and workers, different ages and abilities
- Utilising local places as learning areas, gardens, parks, cafes, rivers, community buildings on housing estate

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Leader presentations on a wide range of environmental issue stimulated interest and motivation and have been delivered at other events 		
7. Any resources or tools produced by the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning materials have been developed for 2 types of courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a trainers/mentors learning package on carbon free and environmental sustainability providing skills to support young people, adults, green reps and vulnerable workers to establish community or workplace projects around the green agenda. ○ an employability skills unit on green issues for those entering the job market. • A web site has been created to blog all the developments of the Project and enable course participants and others to add their comments and experiences. http://ecoskills.blogspot.com • Powerpoint presentation about the project with video clips and photographs • Progression route diagram to show next steps that are possible for each participant 		
8. Total costs of the project	LSIS funding	Match funding	Total funding
	£7405	£14800	£22205

 <p>LEWISHAM COLLEGE</p>	<p>Funded by LSIS through the Stepping Up in Sustainability Fund</p>	
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