

Stepping Up in Sustainability 2011-12

South Thames College case study



Title of project	Community Engagement on Green Skills	
Lead partner organisation name and address	South Thames College and The Greener Jobs Alliance Wandsworth High St London SW18 2PP	
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1. Aims of the project	<p>The overall aim was to illustrate how an FE College and a trade union can promote the development of green jobs and skills. Many institutions in the FHE sector acknowledge the need for community engagement. There are few examples of where this has been applied to Education for Sustainable Development in a partnership between trades unions, employers and community organisations. The specific aims were to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Liaise with local employers who would be influential in promoting low carbon training.2) Liaise with local community organisations working on sustainable development in the 2 London boroughs where South Thames College has a campus – Merton and Wandsworth.3) Initiate opportunities for STC students to experience work with local organisations that would be involved in delivering green deal work.4) Produce training materials, including a video, that could be used on a range of ESD courses and meetings.5) Develop the networking capacity of a community low carbon zone in Wandsworth.6) Offer a practical demonstration of community trade unionism, illustrating how a UCU branch can link environmental action with the future job prospects of staff and students.	

<p>2. Situation: Identify the situation or issue that faced you</p>	<p>South Thames College has a history of environmental partnership working with the University and College Union. This had previously been the subject of a sustainability case study for the EAUC that initiated a '3 C's strategy' of campus, curriculum and community. It was felt that the 'community' element needed to be strengthened to provide the necessary conditions to take advantage of policies like the Government's Green Deal being introduced in Autumn 2012.</p> <p>The college is faced with the dilemma that the demand for low carbon training is not as strong as it should be to justify significant investment in curriculum development. Working with local employers and communities can help to address this in order that the supply and demand conditions for ESD training are more favourable.</p> <p>Students on courses run by the Construction School would benefit from offering practical experience of how their courses relate to future job prospects. This illustrates the benefits of employability from obtaining a qualification that can be used to access jobs in the growing low carbon economy.</p> <p>The Greener Jobs Alliance was set up by the UCU to influence national skills policy but also to develop demonstrator projects in local areas. By working together with the college they felt they could attract a large coalition of organisations who would promote ESD in SW London. The College and GJA had already run low carbon events in Merton and Wandsworth in 2011 and so had started to develop a range of contacts relevant to this project.</p>
<p>3. Task: Define the outcomes you needed to achieve</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To develop student awareness by providing work experience opportunities with local employers for students in energy assessment, energy efficiency and renewable energy. 2) To develop community awareness by supporting the creation of a low carbon zone where some of the work experience activities could be conducted. 3) To develop a communication strategy that would support activities for the duration of the project but that would also increase the networking opportunities offered by community web sites, yahoo groups, and sustainability platforms. 4) To develop ESD materials on environmental literacy for community use. 5) To establish a sustainability network for local schools in the low carbon zone.

4. Actions that you took in order to achieve your plan, and your approach	<p>1) A South Thames College Low Carbon Communities group was set up to develop and monitor a project plan. This had representatives from the college, community groups and trades unions.</p> <p>2) Two community activists were appointed to develop the work of the Furzedown Low Carbon Zone and school links.</p> <p>3) Appointment of a young film maker to record key developments and produce a video resource.</p> <p>4) Extensive networking through on-line media via Project Dirt and the Furzedown Community Network web site and Yahoo Group.</p>
5. Results that you obtained	<p>1) Four Level 2 students in Heating and Ventilation and Level 3 students in Electrical Installation worked with local employers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~ Climate Energy conducted a home energy visit illustrating the range of measures that can be introduced at no cost to reduce energy bills ~ JoJu Solar to install a pv system on a private household in the low carbon zone. ~ The National Trust Greenerliving Centre was used to highlight a range of environmental measures. <p>2) Public meetings in Merton and Wandsworth attended by approx 100 people to learn more about the project.</p> <p>3) The strengthening of the Furzedown Low Carbon Zone. Two public meetings took place with over 50 local residents. A network site on Project Dirt was set up. £1,750 was raised for a community sustainability project through the solar buying club that was set up.</p> <p>4. Established a sustainability project with schools in Furzedown and set up a network site on Project Dirt to support it.</p> <p>5) Production of a 7 minute video on community engagement that can be used for training and meetings. This has been extensively distributed around sector networks and received very positive feedback.</p> <p>6) Training one tutor from the Construction School on a 5 day course with Parity Projects to deliver a short course programme on energy efficiency measures.</p> <p>7) 30 Construction School students attended the dissemination event in Wandsworth.</p> <p>8) Resources have been placed on the Project Dirt site including a 'Dropbox'. These include the community tender documents</p>

	<p>negotiated with Southern Solar and JoJu which generated community funding.</p> <p>9) A platform of profile, knowledge and relationships has been produced that will continue into the next stage of the work.</p>		
6. What made the project a success? What were the key ingredients?	<p>1) Partnership - Developing a network that consisted of Sustainable Merton, London Sustainability Exchange, Project Dirt, Battersea and Wandsworth TUC, Transition Town Tooting, Wandsworth Environment Forum, Wandsworth Friends of the Earth, Parity Projects, Southern Solar, Climate Energy, Merton and Wandsworth Councils, National Trust Greenerliving Centre, Greener Jobs Alliance, UCU and the College.</p> <p>2) Providing capacity – The co-ordination and profile were made possible by the large numbers of hours worked by the GJA ,FLCZ, Sustainable Merton and Transition Town Tooting co-ordinators.</p> <p>3) Building on a firm foundation – A short term project on an issue like community engagement can only succeed if substantial preparatory work has been carried out.</p>		
7. Any resources or tools produced by the project	<p>1) A 7 minute video on YouTube and the UCU website 'Community approaches to the Green Deal' http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VNRx6tNFG8U</p> <p>2) Project Dirt platforms for the: ~ Furzedown Low Carbon Zone http://projectdirt.com/group/furzedown-low-carbon-zone</p> <p>~ Furzedown Sister Schools for Sustainability http://projectdirt.com/groups/group/show?groupUrl=furzedown-sister-schools-sharing-information-skill&xg_source=msg_invite_group</p> <p>3) Furzedown Community Network has a website with an FLCZ link http://www.furzedown.net/lowcarbon.htm</p>		
8. Total costs of the project	LSIS funding	Match funding	Total funding
	£7,500	£12,000	£19,500



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