

# CORNWALL & ISLES OF SCILLY

Local Skills Improvement Plan

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Federation of  
Small Businesses

This Local Skills Improvement Plan has been approved by the Secretary of State in line with the approval criteria set out in the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022<sup>1</sup>, and in accordance with the LSIP statutory guidance<sup>2</sup>.

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1 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/en/ukpga/2022/21/contents/enacted>

2 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-skills-improvement-plans>

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express our appreciation for the help, support, and input provided by all employers who have contributed to the findings contained in this report and its attached annexes. Without their support we would not have been able to present such detailed and targeted research. Employers provided valuable insight into their real life, current issues. They also told us about their projected future skills needs and the training that will need to be available to businesses in Cornwall and Isles of Scilly to fulfil ambition and economic growth.

Our engagement efforts involved around 450 individuals through a range of meetings, personalised 1-2-1 sessions, interactive focus groups, and surveys. It is through their active participation and collaboration that we have gained such an intricate understanding of the region's skills landscape.

We extend our gratitude to the higher and further education providers and adult learning providers, as well as various private sector providers and sector support organisations across Cornwall and Isles of Scilly. Their contributions and ongoing feedback throughout the development of this report have been instrumental in shaping its outcomes.

We must also recognise the support and guidance provided by the advisory Steering Group, the CloS LEP and Cornwall Council. With regular meetings their advice has been invaluable to our project team and we thank them for their time.

Additionally, we are grateful for the input and advice received from a diverse range of stakeholders representing the public, private, and third sectors, all of whom share a vested interest in skills development and training.

We eagerly anticipate the opportunity to work alongside key partners and stakeholders in implementing the Local Skills Improvement Plan for Cornwall and Isles of Scilly. Together we can make a tangible difference in terms of enhanced skills, well-paid employment opportunities, career progression, and overall business growth and profitability.

We look forward to further collaboration in delivery of the priorities set out in this plan.



**Ann Vandermeulen**

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Federation of Small Businesses

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# INTRODUCTION

Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) has been appointed by the Department for Education (DfE) as the designated Employer Representative Body (ERB) to prepare a Local Skills Improvement Plan (“the LSIP”) for the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly (hereafter referred to as “CloS”) area covered by the CloS Local Enterprise Partnership (CloS LEP).

FSB is a non-profit and non-party political organisation, led by its members, providing small businesses with services including advice, financial expertise, support and a powerful voice in national and regional government across the UK.

LSIPs are a key part of achieving the aims set out in the Skills for Jobs White Paper<sup>3</sup>, which looked to put employers more firmly at the heart of the skills system. Thus, providing an opportunity for employers to express their skills needs and shape provision, and as a conduit for providers to work with employers and others to improve skills provision to better meet identified local needs.

DfE is overseeing and funding the development of LSIPs across the country. Following the DfE’s ‘Statutory Guidance for the Development of a Local Skills Improvement Plan’<sup>4</sup> (October 2022), FSB commissioned market research agency PFA Research Ltd to work with them on employer engagement activities to seek in depth insight from local CloS businesses. This was to ensure that the LSIP is employer led and will have a tailored impact on improving skills delivery and availability in the area.

Informed by the business engagement process and analysis of a wide range of existing research, FSB then sought to convene discussions with training providers and strategic stakeholders to examine the emerging skills needs. From this consultation it was then possible to arrive at a set of actionable priorities to address skills gaps and employer requirements whilst ensuring that the LSIP would fit strategically with economic conditions and future aspirations for the CloS area.

Part one of this report sets the local context, purpose, aims and objectives for the LSIP. Part two provides information on the feedback gathered, and a set of actionable priorities that inform part three, the roadmap for delivery of change and the next steps that ensure the process continues to evolve and tangible improvement is made.

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3 Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://publishing.service.gov.uk))

4 Local skills improvement plans - statutory guidance ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://publishing.service.gov.uk))

# PART 1: PURPOSE AND ENGAGEMENT

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## What the LSIP is seeking to achieve – aims and objectives

The aim of this LSIP report is to identify key priorities and changes needed in the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly (CloS) area to make post-16 technical education or training more responsive and closely aligned to local labour market needs.

This LSIP sets out to create both a process and a plan for making provision more responsive to employers' skills needs. The process of developing the plan has been as important as the LSIP itself. This has been done by creating dialogue, and stronger and more dynamic relationships within the local skills system and by robust evidence gathering, and meaningful exchanges between employers, training providers, and strategic stakeholders, including local enterprise partnerships (LEP's) and local authorities (LA's).

The statutory guidance outlines that LSIPs should:

- set out the key priorities and changes needed in a local area to make post-16 technical education or training more responsive and closely aligned to local labour market needs;
- represent an employer view of the skills most needed to support local economic growth;
- set out actionable priorities to better meet these skills needs, that employers, providers, and stakeholders in a local area can get behind;
- not attempt to cover the entirety of provision within an area but focus on the key changes and priorities;
- focus on a three year period and be reviewed and updated as appropriate during this time;
- avoid making recommendations regarding national skills policy and focus on what can be done locally; and
- describe how skills required in relation to jobs that directly or indirectly support Net Zero targets, adaptation to Climate Change or meet other environmental goals, have been considered.

## Approach to Engagement

Our approach was to be as thorough and inclusive as possible. There was an open-door policy for anyone to speak to us about their skills needs. That offer was publicised widely to businesses of all sizes, stakeholders, providers and partners so that we could gather as much information as possible but make it easy for people to offer input. Details of how the LSIP was progressing was regularly updated on our specific FSB LSIP website and contact details also widely shared. We also attended many partner and stakeholder meetings and briefings, and external events to raise the profile of the LSIP and to test our understanding.

Whilst FSB is the lead ERB for the CloS area LSIP, we needed to follow due diligence and as such formed a steering group of experienced stakeholders, providers, and businesses that met monthly in order to oversee the process.

The Steering Group was made up of Truro and Penwith College, Cornwall College, senior representatives from CloS LEP, Cornwall Council Economic Growth Service, CloS LEP Employment & Skills Board & Supply Group, CLOS Growth & Skills Hub, Cornwall Chamber of Commerce, Isles of Scilly Skills Connectors, DWP / JCP, Falmouth University, and employers.

To keep the steering group to a meaningful size we also sought input from specialists as needed. We had several additional submissions from sectors and stakeholders such as Cornwall Marine Network, Cornwall Manufacturing Group, Critical Minerals, Spaceport, CITB, Celtic Sea, Wildanet, The Careers Hub, Seetec, JCP/ DWP etc. and a wide range of businesses that we sense checked the work with as required.

Formal research processes for the CloS LSIP comprised of a survey of businesses located in the CloS area, conducted by telephone interviews and online self-completion. There were also a number of round table discussions, conducted in-person at venues across Cornwall and online. The primary research activity was supported by PFA Research Ltd., an independent market research company.

The objectives of the engagement activities were as follows:

1. To enable employers, training providers and strategic stakeholders to contribute to the LSIP at a formative stage of the process, in accordance with their respective duties.
2. A gap analysis to review previous research and strategies already available to identify knowledge gaps and what further information may be needed.
3. To deliver inclusive engagement and capture the views of stakeholders from different sectors and geographies.
4. To collect quantitative and qualitative data about the skills challenges and opportunities in the local area and agree actionable priorities to address these.
5. To identify actionable priorities to inform accountability agreements being developed by colleges.
6. To bring together employers, training providers and other stakeholders, developing and nurturing relationships and encouraging collaborative working to deliver the outcomes of the LSIP.

LSIPs differ from previous skills plans by giving employers a clear and strengthened role in shaping the local skills provision. It is recognised that substantial economic change and the skills needs of employers will play out in different ways across the county. The LSIP will shape the future skills and local provision to ensure businesses and people in the area have the skills they need to thrive and progress.

DfE is overseeing and funding the development of LSIPs across the country. Therefore, the methods that we have used reflect the best practise described in the DfEs 'Statutory Guidance for the Development of a Local Skills Improvement Plan' (October 2022). The guidance states that LSIPs will play a key part in achieving the aims set out in the Skills for Jobs White Paper. It is also emphasised in the White Paper that employers must have greater influence at the centre of the skills system and lasting opportunity for meaningful dialogue with all relevant parties should be created. These values have driven our core approach to this report and the resulting actionable priorities.

## Engagement Activities

A detailed summary of the engagement undertaken between 13 December 2022 and 29 March 2023 is available in Annex B. However, through the various means described above and in Annex B, engagement numbers at events were as follows:

Total Attended	Employer	Training Provider	Stakeholder	Students
172	48	62	39	23

There were a further 250 telephone survey replies and 25 online survey replies, making a total of 447 recorded engagements for the CloS LSIP with 323 of those being direct with employers. There were also many other valuable ad hoc discussions at external events and meetings conducted in our usual day-to-day business which served to provide a broad base of engagement and insight.

## Overview of Labour Market and Economy

Across Cornwall and Isles of Scilly (CloS) there is a diverse economy, with a mix of traditional, modern and creative industries. However, there is a huge ambition to not only continue to capitalise on the areas high profile as a tourism destination but also to look to the future as a leader in sustainable energy, green innovation, and high tech such as data, digital and space, tech metals, advanced engineering, manufacturing, innovative marine and construction.

This ambition is clearly demonstrated in a number of strategic documents, from which recommendations have also been cross referenced throughout this report. Particularly relevant is recent work that complements this LSIP research and should be read in conjunction with this report. Notably these are the Local Skills and Labour Market Strategy<sup>5</sup> (November 2021) with themes of inspire, transform, innovate and thrive and the CloS LEP commissioned, LMI Sector Guides<sup>6</sup> (December 2022) that draw together LMI data for ten of Cornwall's biggest sectors, the Good Growth Guide Investment Plan for CloS<sup>7</sup> and both the CloS LEPs Digital Skills Deep Dive and Green Skills Deep Dive.<sup>8</sup>

Further detailed economic statistics for the CloS area can be found in Annex A.

For our Manufacturing, Engineering and Marine sectors there is vast scope for growth. With advanced technologies and a drive towards sustainable energy, CloS is well placed to become a centre for these sectors and a pioneer in innovation and future skills.

Whilst ambition is high, there is a need to build new homes, improve infrastructure and to service new industries. CloS has been victim to years of underinvestment in new infrastructure and there are a vast array of existing structures that need to be made suitable to meet sustainability goals by 2030. From the most recent Labour Market Information (LMI), we can see there are shortages in construction workers, so a broad spectrum of skills, many transferrable across several sectors, are needed to go some way in resolving this.

5 [https://cioslep.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Local-skills-report\\_FINAL-230321.pdf](https://cioslep.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Local-skills-report_FINAL-230321.pdf)

6 <https://www.careershubcios.co.uk/lmi-guides/>

7 <https://ciosgoodgrowth.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Good-Growth-UK-Shared-Prosperity-Fund-Investment-Plan-WEB.pdf>

8 <https://cioslep.com/impact/employment-skills/>



Furthermore, affordable homes and transport for workers are a vital element of economic success. Construction, infrastructure and communications need to be urgently addressed to meet the needs of employees and to meet an ambitious 2030 net zero target. The LSIP should sit amongst a suite of plans that unlock such barriers outside the scope of the LSIP, but that are aligned to the skills agenda to maximise successful implementation.

The healthcare sector faces staff shortages, particularly given the ageing population of the region. The struggle of the visitor economy, retail, and hospitality to fill vacancies is widely reported also. However, the CloS LSIP Steering Group acknowledged that although these two are the largest employment sectors in the CloS area, these staffing issues are largely down to workforce supply rather than the specific skills needed to fulfil future strategic priorities.

The guidance states that an LSIP is not intended to be a comprehensive anthology of all skills gaps in the area. It is recognised that not every sector can be covered by this initial report. Therefore, LSIP areas were asked to focus on a limited number of prominent sectors that would be of most immediate benefit to the area. By reviewing and discussing the economic situation, looking at detailed gap analysis and aligning thoughts on agreed strategies, the CloS LSIP Steering Group therefore decided that the focus should be based, for now, on two clear sector groups that would have a major impact on the agreed strategic plans for the CloS area:

- Manufacturing, Engineering and Marine
- Construction and Retrofit

These two groups would have the most significant impact on the CloS LEP's five key Local Industrial Strategy<sup>9</sup> pillars. However, cross cutting themes such as digital, green, employability skills and business input into the local skills system would go a long way to assist all sectors.

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9 <https://cioslep.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/LEP-industrial-strategy-30.09.22.pdf>

### Labour market needs summary table

This table is a guide to show how the Manufacturing, Engineering and Marine and Construction and Retrofit sectors, that are focused on in this LSIP, sit within the local economy along with related cross cutting themes.

Sector	Advertised core roles	Sector Economic Insight	Cross cutting roles & skills across all sectors
<b>LSIP FOCUS SECTORS</b>			
<b>Manufacturing &amp; Engineering</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Science, engineering, and production technicians n.e.c.</li> <li>• Engineering technicians</li> <li>• Production managers and directors in manufacturing</li> <li>• Mechanical engineers</li> <li>• Welding trades</li> <li>• Sales related occupations n.e.c.</li> <li>• Managers and proprietors in other services n.e.c.</li> <li>• Electronics engineers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employs c. 15,500 people</li> <li>• 90% Full 10% Part time</li> <li>• 60% of this sector expect imminent skills shortage</li> <li>• A lot of self-employed consultants - sector supports more roles than advertised</li> <li>• 11% of the local economy</li> <li>• Av Salary £31k</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication (Top overall skill)</li> <li>• Administrators</li> <li>• Finance roles</li> <li>• Customer contact</li> <li>• Corporate social responsibility</li> <li>• Teamwork / collaboration</li> </ul>
<b>Marine</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carpenters and joiners</li> <li>• Biological scientists</li> <li>• Engineering professional</li> <li>• Project management</li> <li>• Buyers and procurement</li> <li>• Fishing and other elementary agriculture</li> <li>• Boat and ship builders</li> <li>• Beach lifeguard</li> <li>• Commercial Diver</li> <li>• Ecologist</li> <li>• Harbour Master</li> <li>• Marine architect</li> <li>• Marine electrician</li> <li>• Marine surveyor</li> <li>• Watersports instructor</li> <li>• Welder and fabricator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1% of the local economy (set to rise with FLOW)</li> <li>• Worth £46.1bn to UK economy – scope to expand sector</li> <li>• Av Salary £32k (£21k - £50k) (Boat builder £26.5k)</li> <li>• 78% men 22% women (Addressing gender balance 2005 87% were male)</li> <li>• Falmouth is a major hub</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Microsoft Office (Top was Excel)</li> <li>• Sector specific software &amp; basic cyber security</li> <li>• Multitasking</li> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• People management</li> <li>• Time management</li> <li>• Task prioritisation</li> <li>• Building effective relationships</li> <li>• Problem solving</li> <li>• Detail oriented</li> </ul>

Sector	Advertised core roles	Sector Economic Insight	Cross cutting roles & skills across all sectors
<b>LSIP FOCUS SECTORS</b>			
<b>Construction &amp; retrofit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carpenters and joiners</li> <li>• Plumbers, heating &amp; ventilation engineers</li> <li>• Brick layers &amp; masons</li> <li>• Elementary Construction Occupations</li> <li>• Glaziers, window fitters &amp; fabricators</li> <li>• Production managers and directors in construction</li> <li>• Quantity surveyors</li> <li>• Civil engineering</li> <li>• Budgeting</li> <li>• Cleaning</li> <li>• Sales related roles &amp; sales supervisors.</li> <li>• Customer service</li> <li>• AutoCAD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employs c. 33,000 people</li> <li>• 72% Full 18% Part time</li> <li>• Significant number due to retire in next 5 to 10 years</li> <li>• Many SMEs in this sector</li> <li>• 7% of the local economy</li> <li>• Av Salary £32K (£18k to £43k)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning</li> <li>• Organisational skills</li> <li>• SQL</li> <li>• Computer Literacy</li> <li>• Writing skills</li> <li>• Social media</li> <li>• Numeracy</li> <li>• Attitude</li> <li>• Aptitude</li> <li>• Ambition</li> <li>• Record Keeping</li> </ul>
<b>CROSS CUTTING THEME SECTORS</b>			
<b>Digital</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Software Developer/ Engineer</li> <li>• Computer Support Specialist</li> <li>• Web Developer</li> <li>• Network Engineer</li> <li>• IT Project Manager</li> <li>• Data Analyst</li> <li>• Programmer</li> <li>• Software Tester</li> <li>• Information Security</li> <li>• Specialist Network engineer</li> <li>• Project manager/Agile Specialist</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CloS Growth forecast 17.9% by 2026 (fastest in SW)</li> <li>• Almost all jobs need a degree of digital ability</li> <li>• Av Salary £38.7k (£24.6k - £50.8k)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report Writing</li> <li>• Service Improvement</li> <li>• Change Management</li> <li>• Conflict Management</li> <li>• Green &amp; sustainable skills (both experts &amp; general educators across all sectors)</li> <li>• Green &amp; sustainable skills (within employees &amp; business owners across all sectors)</li> </ul>

Sector	Advertised core roles	Sector Economic Insight	Cross cutting roles & skills across all sectors
<b>LSIP FOCUS SECTORS</b>			
<p><b>Green skills &amp; Clean energy</b></p> <p><b>Current Local demand:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electrician</li> <li>• Energy assessor</li> <li>• Engineers (all types)</li> <li>• Researcher</li> <li>• Solar installer</li> <li>• Wind turbine technician</li> <li>• Operations management and supervision</li> <li>• Environmental science</li> <li>• Welders</li> </ul>	<p>Key technical roles linked to MEM &amp; CR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction workers</li> <li>• Data analysts</li> <li>• Grid infrastructure operatives</li> <li>• Fitters for domestic use of renewable technologies</li> <li>• Heat network development manager</li> <li>• Offshore technicians and seamen</li> <li>• Overhead lines people and general grid electric system installers</li> <li>• Roofers</li> <li>• Technicians</li> <li>• Quantity surveyor</li> <li>• Welders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £500m of energy used in Cornwall each year</li> <li>• 40% renewables</li> <li>• FLOW(2026), tech metals, deep geothermal etc. are up and coming industries that we must prepare for now encouraging STEM skills that will take time to come to industry</li> <li>• CloS Net Zero by 2030</li> <li>• More expert support in sustainability needed</li> <li>• Basic sustainability knowledge low e.g. carbon footprint</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creativity, creative thinking and innovation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Data &amp; Space</b></p> <p>The space and data sector include many highly skilled, often unusual roles. Candidates with relevant skills and qualifications often find that they are highly in demand</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities in space and aerospace engineering, computer programming and data analysis to a wide range of associated technical, administrative, business and service roles</li> <li>• Communications Engineering, Teleport Services, R&amp;D and Manufacturing with transferrable skills linked to MEM, DR &amp; Digital Sectors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Cornwall Space Cluster = 157 industry partners with 10 academic and educational institutions and 9 Gvt depts.</li> <li>• CloS in UK bid to win 10% of a £400bn industry</li> <li>• Well paid jobs Av Salary £50k (£37k - £66K)</li> </ul>	

**Above data from:** LMI Sector Briefing Papers on: Engineering & Manufacturing, Marine, Digital, Clean Energy, Construction, Data & Space – published December 2022 and Digital and Green Deep Dive Reports commissioned by CloS LEP, to be found at: <https://www.careershucbios.co.uk/lmi-guides/>

## Employment

According to the Office for National Statistics<sup>10</sup>, as of September 2022, economically active people in CloS stood at 79.6%, which is slightly higher than the national average of 78.4%. The region is home to a mix of businesses, with micro and small businesses accounting for the majority of business population at 98.6%, medium sized business accounting for 1.2% and large businesses 0.2%. CloS is

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/lep/1925185540/printable.aspx>

an area known for entrepreneurial spirit demonstrated by the number of self-employed at 13.9% being higher than the 9.2% national average and equating to some 54,500 people.

There are also elements of ‘under-employment’. That is to say that some parts of the population have higher educational levels than the subregional labour market can accommodate. This could be partly due to the area being popular for retirement and perhaps a contributory factor to the higher than average self-employment rates in the county.

Part of the skills challenge, however, is not having a complexity of large industries offering the range of roles that in turn supports a vast bank of transferable skills and opportunities to supply into a well-balanced local economy. CloS has a high number of vacancies for lower skills and a mis-match of a partly over-educated workforce, qualified in other sectors, to fill them. Hence there is some non-utilisation of skills which could be put to good use by either retraining or redeploying in terms of sharing those skills.

### **Unemployment**

From the same ONS statistics up to September 2022, the level of unemployment in Cornwall and Isles of Scilly was 2.1% which is lower than the national average of 3.7%. Economic inactivity was at 20.4% compared to a UK average of 21.6% with 66,600 people in that bracket in CloS. It is however demonstrated that CloS is an area popular for retirement with 18,300 retired people or 27.6% of the economically inactive population. This is compared to 14.1% in the UK. So, there is great potential to attract skills and knowledge back to the workplace. Consideration should also be given to the other 48,300 economically inactive people, who might have specific needs, that could be supported into work in other creative ways with specialist help or new ways of delivering skills and workplace assistance. We have been working with Seetec, DWP and JCP as part of the LSIP to address this specifically.

### **Economic growth and skills need**

The CloS LEP’s Good Growth and Investment Strategy<sup>11</sup> provides insight into forward thinking plans for the region. Underpinned by their Local Industrial Strategy<sup>12</sup>, there are five key pillars of the future economy of CloS where new, enhanced skills will be needed:

- Clean energy resources – Natural resources such as floating offshore wind (FLOW) & deep geothermal.
- Geo-resources – Building on historic Cornish expertise, capitalising on our natural store of critical minerals for low carbon transition in a sustainable way.
- Data and space – Exploiting our unique digital, physical, and intellectual assets in the region and using data to overcome local and global challenges.
- Visitor economy – Making the CloS area the global leader for low carbon experiences for visitors and residents, maximising links to the environment, heritage and culture.
- Agri-food – Creating a productive and sustainable sector maximising opportunities for land and marine management and food processing/production.

11 <https://ciosgoodgrowth.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Good-Growth-UK-Shared-Prosperity-Fund-Investment-Plan-WEB.pdf>

12 <https://cioslep.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/LEP-industrial-strategy-30.09.22.pdf>

## Strategic priorities

The LSIP Steering Group discussed the priorities of the CloS region and looked at sectors that would most immediately support the aspirations and economic goals of the area. These were:

- Construction, engineering, manufacturing and marine skills shortages, particularly with a view to emerging technologies and the need to build capacity for large scale sustainable projects such as FLOW in the Celtic Sea and attracting other high tech, high value industries. These include industries such as space, tech metals, deep geothermal and maritime businesses and the need to service sustainable infrastructure such as EV. Such technical skills are also needed in the agri-food sector where mechanisation is also prevalent.
- General construction and retrofit skills required for house and infrastructure building.

The LSIP guidance points out that net zero, digital skills and essential and transferable skills should also be themes across the research and strongly featured in the final report. We have therefore included these as cross cutting themes:

- Green skills are particularly important for retrofit and new construction projects in both domestic and commercial settings which are also subject to new requirements in planning law. Also, in all engineering and manufacturing processes and understanding of sustainable energy production. In fact, in every aspect of every business, sustainability must be standard practice and embedded in every role. The CloS LEP commissioned a deep dive report into this topic and we have used this information to support the research.
- A growing demand for digital skills in the region, particularly in the advanced manufacturing and creative and digital sectors with skills such as data and analytics fluency directly hindering growth of existing companies in CloS. Again it is recognised that in practically every employment role, there is an element of digitisation that employees need to be competent at. Similar to green skills, the CloS LEP commissioned a deep dive report into this topic and we have also used this information to support the research.
- Engagement of businesses with the skills system and training providers will be vital to the success of improving skills in the CloS area.

## Performance focus

Alongside the five industry sectors to drive growth, there are four clear areas in the CloS Local Industrial Strategy<sup>13</sup> noted to raise overall performance: people, infrastructure, business environment and ideas. The vision is:

“In 2030 the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly creative and carbon-neutral economy will be realising opportunities for its people, communities and businesses to thrive, benefiting the environment and providing an outstanding quality of life for all.”

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<sup>13</sup> <https://cioslep.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/LEP-industrial-strategy-30.09.22.pdf>

Embedding the right skills will be vital to achieving the vision, against a backdrop of distinctive challenges, including but not limited to the following:

- Rural peripheral geography
- Dispersed population and communities
- A large number of jobs in low-wage sectors
- Areas of deprivation
- Smaller than average working age population
- Low levels of higher qualifications and a skills shortage
- Largest proportion of workforce employed in very small businesses
- Cross-cutting low productivity
- Lack of adequate grid capacity and distribution networks
- Limited RD&I experience
- Neglected infrastructure and under-investment

#### **Headlines from the CloS LSIP engagement:**

(Primary Research Report at: <https://www.fsb.org.uk/cornwall-and-the-isles-of-scilly-lsip.html>)

- Half of businesses surveyed are looking for moderate/sustainable or rapid growth over next three years.
- Over 70% have recruited or tried to recruit over last 12 months, mostly into permanent roles (57%) left vacant or new permanent positions (62%). 39% currently have vacancies, of which 57% of skilled manual/technical positions have been vacant more than 3 months. 17% have apprentices and 30% are considering taking on a first or another apprentice.
- Nearly two thirds (64%) experienced difficulties recruiting, for different reasons including candidates missing necessary skills (51%), lack of work ethic/attitudes (16%) as well as finding enough candidates (48%). 96% of those struggling to recruit say it has had an impact on the business, including an increased workload for other staff (85%), difficulties expanding the business (65%), and difficulties improving productivity (63%).
- In economically challenging times, employers also find it difficult to keep up with wage levels which is also a factor in recruitment and retention of staff - particularly with a much more fluid and open labour market.
- A quarter (24%) say they have training or skills development requirements that their business has been unable to source locally in Cornwall and Isles of Scilly.
- Just 29% say they have a budget for training and skills (57% have not allocated a budget but are still likely to invest in skills).
- Housing, transport and infrastructure also effect the availability of a skilled workforce in a rural and coastal county. With the geography of CloS, a good proportion of what would be considered a travel to work area is the ocean. The further west in the county, the more acute this issue and of course the Isles of Scilly will have all the challenges of being an archipelago. This makes access to training, work experience and skilled staff even more nuanced.

## PART 2: TAKING THE LSIP FORWARD

This section provides a synopsis of the prominent themes and patterns that have arisen from the feedback received. This includes encompassing skills gaps, training needs, barriers and the need for collaboration across the region. This section also outlines a number of actionable priorities to take forward in order to effect change locally.

Overall engagement highlighted two key sector groups and four prominent cross cutting themes in which developing actionable priorities could improve and enhance the regions existing skills provision:

- |   |   |                                  |
|---|---|----------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manufacturing, Engineering and Marine</li> <li>• Construction and Retro-fit</li> </ul>   | } | <p>Focussed LSIP<br/>Sectors</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital Skills</li> <li>• Net Zero</li> <li>• Local Skills System</li> <li>• Socioeconomic Issues, Employability Skills &amp; EDI</li> </ul> | } | <p>Cross cutting<br/>Themes</p>  |

### Manufacturing, Engineering & Marine (MEM)

#### Overview of employer engagement

A majority of small, and some larger businesses make up the Manufacturing, Engineering and Marine sector in Cornwall and Isles of Scilly. They often support many other sectors across the county. These include for example agriculture, construction, and low carbon energy.

The Manufacturing, Engineering and Marine sector is facing a significant skills shortage and employers are finding it challenging to recruit employees with the right skill set. Employees with a range of specialisms are needed in this sector. This is due to variety of businesses and the large number of areas where there are skill shortages. Employers also want to recruit work-ready employees, with good interpersonal skills and those that have a strong work ethic or a businesslike attitude in the workplace. Where roles are unfulfilled, they create an increased workload for other staff and impact on the productivity and growth of businesses in the sector.

Within the region there is **demand for specific technical skills**, including as an example ‘professional engineering, specialist design software (CAD), machine operating skills, welding, glass making and electrical diagnostics’. Employers also have demand for baseline skills such as problem solving, communication skills, and teamwork / building effective relationship skills. Employers also look for individuals who are analytical and creative.

The CloS LEP local market information on manufacturing and engineering also outlines that **skills in automation, robotics and mechatronics are thought to be important in the future** as the sector continues to evolve. Automation and robotics are already common in manufacturing processes but change will be seen within the industry and there is a need for employees to upskill and retrain.

Employers expressed concern **that some elements of training needed had to be sourced from outside the area**. This included ‘textile training’, ‘mechanical, electrical and hydraulic engineering’, ‘food safety level 3’, ‘green skills’, ‘change management’, ‘forklift courses’, ‘engineering degrees’, and ‘electronics training’ and ‘fault finding’. There is also a need to increase provision of Level 3 and above in electrical and manufacturing technology courses.



Employers in the sector also consider **Leadership and Management to be a key area of development** at least within some parts of the workforce, with many in the sector considering this to be a priority development area for their business over the next three years, where external training would be required.

Addressing the skills shortage in this sector requires **collaborative efforts between educational institutions, employers and industry leaders**. Forging closer links between education and industry is key to understanding specific skills needs and communicating where provision is available or could be developed and increasing work placement opportunities. Further investment may be required in equipment and technology, resources, and promoting manufacturing and engineering specific training and pathways. By taking these steps, we can nurture a skilled workforce that meets the evolving demands of the manufacturing and engineering sectors.

### Employer feedback overview and actionable priorities (Manufacturing Engineering and Marine)

MEM Priorities	
Employer Issue	Actionable priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There needs to be a collaborative approach between providers and employers to support employers to offer new or extended work placements for MEM skills in high demand.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop collaborative work between colleges, employers, and other strategic stakeholders to offer new or extended placements for all courses, especially those where placements are not mandatory and to agree process with employers.</li> <li>2. Providers and employers to co-produce a comprehensive guide that explains placements for all vocational and higher-level courses, and what employers can expect in support and to contribute as part of the placements. This should also include the advantages to employers in accessing and developing bespoke skills or similar.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industry to identify new technologies on the horizon in advance of need. e.g. FLOW, Space, Critical minerals etc and convey training need to providers.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Develop a local, higher level STEM strategy to boost HE participation.</li> <li>4. Build on the example of the Cornwall Manufacturers Group Academy for other sectors.</li> <li>5. Develop a specific, new and emerging opportunities Careers IAG with specialist sectors, identifying high value jobs and pathways to inform and inspire.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providers need more hands-on industry experience to teach real world application of course subjects and to keep up to date with fast paced technical advancements.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Providers to commit to a 'Back into Industry' and 'Industry Immersion' days for their technical delivery staff of up to five days per year.</li> <li>7. Develop a collaborative initiative to increase the supply of teachers/trainers in priority occupations and review/improve their training if needed. An area approach could be advantageous. Industry must help feed its own supply of skilled workers through collaboration with colleges and other providers.</li> </ol>

MEM Priorities	
Employer Issue	Actionable priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration with businesses on best practice for “in work” progression. Include, when, where and how as well as what is to be delivered.</li> </ul>	8. Make virtual courses and distance learning available to a wider business audience. 9 . Local DWP to communicate support to CloS businesses for in work progression for those on UC. 10. Increase awareness and support for providing Apprenticeships for those already in work.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Businesses report not being able to find some of the training they need locally.</li> </ul>	11. Further develop the CloS Skills Hub or online skills information portal and promote / communicate existence more widely. 12. Regular updates on the impact of any training not available locally to be monitored to find solutions in collaboration with providers, skills hub, and sector bodies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training is costly in staff, material resource and in time out of the workplace. Virtual training and use of VR is in particular demand in advanced MEM businesses.</li> </ul>	13. Industry and providers to collaborate on existing work in virtual reality training in construction and marine and assess how this could be expanded to other areas.

### Priority Occupations (Manufacturing, Engineering and Marine)

We have used Lightcast to identify a top list of occupations which exhibited the highest growth in 2021 within the region and were also predicted to have the highest numbers of jobs in 2025. **These are our priorities for growth and are listed below, together with possible funding sources.** We expect to further consult employers and discuss these with colleges and other providers as we implement the LSIP. We aim to work in collaboration with providers to determine current supply and what should/ could be done to increase volumes where that is appropriate.

SOC	Priority Occupation	Priority
1121	Production Managers and Directors in Manufacturing Level 6	Yes. Upskilling through Apprenticeships or HE.
5241	Electricians and Electrical Fitters Level 3	Yes. Upskilling through Apprenticeships or T Level.
5223	Metal Working Production and Maintenance Fitters Level 3	Yes. Upskilling through Apprenticeships.
2129	Engineering Professionals Level 6	Yes. Upskilling through Apprenticeships.
2122	Mechanical Engineers Level 6	Yes. Apprenticeships or HE.
3113	Engineering Technicians Level 3	Yes. Apprenticeships or T Level.
5221	Metal Machining Setters and Setter-operators Level 3	Yes. Upskilling through Apprenticeships.
2126	Design and Development Engineers L6	Yes. Apprenticeships or HE.
2123	Electrical Engineers L6	Yes. Apprenticeships.
3119	Science, Engineering and Production Technicians Level 3	Yes. Apprenticeship or T level.
5215	Welders L3	Yes. Apprenticeships.

## Construction and Retro-fit (C&R)

### Overview of employer engagement

Construction is one of the most forward-looking sectors with a **wide range of opportunities and job roles at all levels of education**. Many businesses in this sector are expecting to grow over the next three years with opportunities around house building, social infrastructure, or supporting the growth of the natural environment and biodiversity improvements.

Unfortunately, skills and labour in the workforce remain an issue. There are significant numbers of older skilled workers due to retire and while this will see skilled workers leave the industry, this also presents a significant opportunity for a new generation of specialists to enter the industry, bringing up to date knowledge around net zero building solutions and new regulations.

However, employers seem to be **struggling to recruit those with the necessary skills** due to a lack of suitable candidates. Unfilled roles create an increased workload for other staff and make it difficult for the business to grow and embrace new approaches and improve their productivity.

Within the county there is **demand for specific technical skills**. These include groundwork skills, CAD Drawing, and key skills across the full range of trades. Other forms of baseline skills that are in demand include better team workers, problem solving, customer handling and sales and marketing. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is increasingly important in construction as firms are working in a more sustainable and environmentally conscious way, alongside the increasing need for compliance with new regulation.

Employers outlined that some elements of training and skills development they require have been **unable to be sourced locally**. This includes training for working on roofs and groundworks and specialist training such as 'stone masonry' 'advanced geophysical skills' and 'building windows/doors' and 'stair building'.

While C&R employers didn't generally consider there to be an upskilling requirement in digital skills right now, the CloS LEP 'deep dive' into construction shows that **construction workers of the future will need to be digitally literate** and comfortable with manipulating hi-tech autonomous plant or robotic equipment. However, the 'deep dive' also showed employers recognised the need to **maintain skills in traditional construction trades** that will be necessary to support building maintenance, retrofitting skills and sympathetic, sustainable preservation of older structures. Automation and other drivers will change the way in which the construction industry works and employers can expect to see automation changing both planning and physical onsite tasks.

Feedback from employers did highlight a **perceived low level of understanding of the industry from training providers** with limited understanding of their skills needs and practical challenges in a work setting. It was felt that **working more closely with industry**, and particularly those who have recently left the sector, or are due to retire, would help to better inform providers and give them enhanced insight into the skills and qualities that make for more suitably equipped employees.

## Employer feedback overview and actionable priorities (Construction & Retro-fit)

C&R Priorities	
Employer Issue	Actionable priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skills delivery at business premises where there is the facility (and perhaps use as a hub) that could host visiting tutors would save time and be a green alternative to some students travelling long distances.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop and promote a mechanism for C&amp;R companies to work with Providers to deliver relevant aspects of training at designated specialist facilities across Cornwall &amp; IoS. e.g. Collaborate with CITB, specialist construction skills providers and sector groups to develop a network of businesses with suitable facilities and provide support to ensure they meet necessary standards.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide guided experience days, to give a taste of carpentry, masonry work, plastering and emphasise the need for basic employability skills etc. (can also apply to MEM sector).</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Careers Hub, Providers and Stakeholders including DWP / JCP and others to provide assistance for C&amp;R companies to deliver taster sessions, interview and experience days within suitable facilities.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Courses need to relate to the reality of working on site. Specific employability skills and application of trade skills would make employees productive more quickly.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Actively promote opportunities and incentivise those looking to exit industry, or recent retirees, to be a guest speaker or support tutor.</li> <li>4. Create a registration area in an online skills portal for potential industry experienced tutors and create an ongoing support package to build a bank of contacts.</li> <li>5. Offer “Train the Trainer” courses to maximise ability and confidence to articulate experience and skills.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some current programmes (T levels &amp; apprenticeships) include digital content, but it is not consistent across programmes.</li> <li>Enhance vocational routes into the C&amp;R sector and capitalise on new ways of engaging students.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Explore the Cornwall College Camborne example of an easy-to-follow, modular system based on learners selecting sessions by QR code and agree a digital mandatory unit developing skills for the industry to be consistently delivered to all sector study and Apprenticeship programmes.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Software programmes used in the industry are in courses at L3 and above but their full application is not, which needs to be addressed.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Providers to embed the awareness and practical application of relevant software programmes e.g. AutoCAD and Solidworks into all relevant courses.</li> </ol>

## Priority Occupations (Construction & Retro-fit)

We have used Lightcast to identify a top list of occupations which exhibited the highest growth in 2021 within the region and were also predicted to have the highest numbers of jobs in 2025. **These are our priorities for growth and are listed below, together with possible funding sources.** We expect to further consult employers and discuss these with colleges and other providers as we implement the LSIP. We aim to work in collaboration with providers to determine current supply and what should/could be done to increase volumes where that is appropriate.

SOC	Priority Occupation	Priority
<b>1122</b>	Site Managers and Directors in Construction	Yes. Level 3 Apprenticeships or T Level.
<b>8149</b>	Construction Operatives Level 2	Yes. Short course / Bootcamp.
<b>5314</b>	Plumbers and Heating and Ventilating Engineers Level 3	Yes. Apprenticeships.
<b>5315</b>	Carpenters and Joiners Level 2	Yes. FT 16-19 or Apprenticeships.
<b>2434</b>	Chartered Surveyors Level 6	Yes. Apprenticeships / HE.
<b>2433</b>	Quantity Surveyors Level 6	Yes. Apprenticeships / HE.
<b>5249</b>	Electrical and Electronic Trades Level 3	Yes. Apprenticeships or T Levels.
<b>5312</b>	Bricklayers and Masons Level 3	Yes. Apprenticeships.
<b>5323</b>	Painters and Decorators Level 3	Yes. Apprenticeships or FT 16-19.
<b>8129</b>	Plant and Machine Operatives Level 2	Yes. Short Course.
<b>5313</b>	Roofers, Roof Tilers and Slaters Level 3	Yes. Apprenticeships, FT 16-19.

In addition, Lightcast has also been used to identify key skills requirements from Unique Job Postings in 2022. This indicates plumbing, carpentry, welding, painting, leadership and management and marketing are key skills.

Employer feedback also highlighted additional information and outlined that the following training couldn't be found in Cornwall and Isles of Scilly. It should be noted that provision for these skills may be in place already, and that businesses were simply unaware of local courses. We will consult further with colleges and other providers to map out existing availability, better promote any provision and further grow that provision where there is demand.

- ADR training
- Training for working on rooftops
- Operating machines
- Textiles
- Technical engineering
- Advanced geophysical skills

- Mechanical, electrical, and hydraulic engineering
- Groundworks / plant driver
- Marine engineering
- Forklift truck courses
- Electronics training and fault finding

## Cross sector priorities

### Digital Skills

#### Overview of employer engagement

There is a growing digital sector in Cornwall and employers are finding it challenging to locate individuals with the right digital skills. In today's modern workplace, technology plays a crucial role, and employers are increasingly seeking individuals with both general and specialist digital skills across all sectors.

The **development of skills for a digital economy is a cross-cutting theme** for the LSIP. It spans the need for functional skills, such as for workers who may be in non-digital, manual occupations to be able to engage with digital administrative processes through to advanced applications that are innovating industries like engineering, manufacturing and construction as outlined above.

Employers highlighted there was a **need for basic digital skills** including Microsoft Office, organisational systems and computer literacy which required improving within the workforce. However **advanced digital and IT professional skills were also required** – for example CAD Drawing, SEO training, data analytics, user experience design, and programming.

Within the CloS area there is demand for **specific digital skills particularly when employers are considering significant or future major developments** within their industry or type of business. Employers fed back that changes around digital or related technology would impact them and specialist skills including robotics, virtual reality for visualising design of spaces, software and programming, and increased automation within engineering and manufacturing sectors.

Looking ahead employers felt that the **type of skills they will need from employees in this arena will increase**. This included the ability to digitise certain types of occupations or roles for example business administration through for example stock control, Making Tax Digital, digital marketing, agri-robotics and AI. Cloud computing, robotics, automation, big data, data analytics and AI were all considered priority development areas for businesses in the next year or so.

It is recognised that digital skills are essential to simple business operations and basic online training, right up to development in the most high-tech industries and sophisticated use of virtual reality but data shows there is insufficient digital learning output in the area to cover this.

Addressing the skills shortage and lack of provision in the digital sector requires **collaborative efforts** between educational institutions, employers and industry leaders.

It is worth highlighting the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly (CloS) Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) commissioned and published a Digital Skills Deep Dive in May 2022.<sup>14</sup> The aim of the deep dive was to

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<sup>14</sup> <https://cioslep.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Digital-Skills-CloS-Report-23-05-2022.pdf>

investigate the digital landscape in CloS to inform decisions around CloS Digital Skills Partnership (DSP) Strategy and design of future programmes to build the digital/tech talent pool that Cornwall needs. Our actionable priorities below build on this.

### Employer feedback overview and actionable priorities (Digital)

Digital Priorities	
Employer Issue	Actionable priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need for digital literacy and basic functional computer skills is cross-cutting. Fundamental digital literacy enables people to meet their employer's requirements, such as being able to engage with online training, electronic timesheets, business admin such as online ordering, invoices, work plans, and being competent in online communications etc.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve promotion and communication of the area's existing digital skills offer more widely and work with colleges and Providers, as well as LEP, ERBs and/or similar partners to assess the take-up and effectiveness.</li> <li>2. Resource will need to be dedicated to sourcing necessary specialists to teach these skills. ERBs and universities should consider working in collaboration to support recruitment of these tutors from industry and academia.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a notably low level take up of Digital Apprenticeships and digital learning opportunities in CloS. The long-established sectors engineering, manufacturing, marine and construction sectors have demands for advanced digital skills which are not being met.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. More outreach is needed with a focus on delivering apprenticeships and in work qualifications as per priority occupations listed below.</li> <li>4. In partnership with industry and the DSP (and sector groups), targeted promotion of digital/tech careers to young people via Careers IAG and via DWP, JCP, Seetec etc. with an emphasis on guided pathways to digital careers.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The digital sector is fast paced with new software, coding and other developments happening frequently. Tutors in this field need to be looking further ahead to future requirements to keep pace with industry need so that new employees can be productive at the outset.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Agree and develop content and integrate a digital component into relevant post-16 vocational programmes, including Apprenticeships and AEB vocational courses, where not already present, working with providers and industry. Also review links to HE provision.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Digital/tech roles are varied and not just about software.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. To create a diverse and inclusive digital / tech workforce, run a campaign to raise awareness of the Tech Talent Charter (<a href="https://www.techtalentcharter.co.uk/home">https://www.techtalentcharter.co.uk/home</a>) and to encourage CloS organisations to sign up to the Charter.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a need to have a focus on data to help employers and potential workers understand basic data literacy, the potential benefits from data insights for an organisation, and to understand the opportunity and data skills needed in CloS.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. It is recommended that there is short introduction course or bootcamp developed to aid the understanding of the benefits of data insights to businesses and how this may be implemented.</li> <li>8. Make data readily available to all that need it. Data such as uptake in education settings, code clubs, STEM ambassadors, labour market insights etc. should also be put in one place for stakeholders in the digital skills eco-system to access.</li> </ol>

Digital Priorities	
Employer Issue	Actionable priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Several survey respondents expressed needs for digital management skills needed in the running of their own business.</li> </ul>	9. Map digital business management skills courses amongst providers and raise awareness amongst local businesses to take part. e.g. Making Tax Digital.  10. Establish workplace peer learning programmes and guidance on digital and technology to help employees discuss challenges around digital skills, find digital solutions to problems, and share best practice and experience.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is necessary to have digital skills coming through new entrants to the workforce, but management and leadership also needs to be digitally competent.</li> </ul>	11. Explore provision of short courses on Introduction to AI, automation technologies and future technology and the potential these tools could unlock for SMEs particularly, across priority sectors.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With current low levels of digital skills outputs in the CloS area, digital infrastructure and training needs to be improved across the spectrum.</li> </ul>	12. The Digital Skills Partnership to develop a strategic response to increasing digital skills outputs, inclusion, and transformation and to guide providers on preparing future workers.

### Priority Occupations (Digital)

We have used Lightcast to identify a top list of occupations which are predicted to have the highest numbers of jobs in 2025. These are listed below.

We expect to further consult employers and discuss these with colleges and other providers and the DSP as we implement the LSIP over the coming months. We aim to work in collaboration with providers to determine current supply and what should/could be done to increase volumes where that is appropriate.

SOC	Priority Occupation	Priority
2136	Programmers and Software Development Professionals L3, 4, 6	Yes. Apprenticeships, FT 16-19, T Levels and HE.
2133	IT Specialist Managers Level 4	Yes. Upskilling via Apprenticeships or short course.
2139	Information Technology and Telecommunications Professionals	Yes. Apprenticeships / HE.
3132	IT User Support Technicians level 3	Yes. Apprenticeships, FT 16-19, or T Levels.
3131	IT Operations Technicians L3	Yes. Apprenticeships, FT 16-19, or T Levels.
2135	IT Business Analysts, Architects and Systems Designers L4, L6	Yes. Apprenticeships, Degree Apprenticeships or T Level.
1136	Information Technology and Telecoms Directors	No.
2134	IT Project and Programme Managers L4	Yes. Apprenticeships.
5242	Telecommunications Engineers	No.
5245	IT Engineers Level 4	Yes. Apprenticeships.
2137	Web Design and Development Professionals L3	Yes. Apprenticeships, FT 16-19, HE.



In addition the CloS LEP Digital Skills Deep Dive report identifies **key skill requirements**. This indicates that C#, web development, web languages, programming and coding and data analysis are all priorities. Just as for the occupations we have adopted these as provisional priorities but **will consult further with employers, and work collaboratively with colleges and other providers to develop and grow provision**.

## Green Skills

### Overview of employer engagement

Cornwall and Isles of Scilly aim to be net zero by 2030. Therefore, the skills to operate sustainably need to be embedded in all employed roles and across business understanding and accountability.

The development of skills for Net Zero and the green economy spans the need for businesses to adjust to new legislation, transition to a low carbon economy and changes to technology as a result of the green economy.

Feedback from employers in the region **indicates a limited awareness and understanding of climate literacy**. Reports such as FSBs 'Accelerating Progress'<sup>15</sup> highlight the lack of engagement among many businesses with green growth initiatives.

Where businesses did recognise significant or major developments, they know they will need to train employees for these and be focused on green technology and environmental changes. This includes being able to maintain and repair electric vehicles, battery technology, skills for wind power, and upskilling for greener construction and solar power technology.

The **volume of jobs in the clean energy and renewable sector is expected to grow rapidly** over the next decade or more. It is increasingly crucial for businesses in various industries to recruit individuals with expertise in this sector. Consequently, there is growing demand for employees who possess relevant skills and experience.

To meet these demands, it is necessary to **embed Net Zero and sustainable technology skills within training programmes**, particularly in sectors like construction and manufacturing and engineering.

The CloS LEP commissioned and published a Green Skills Deep Dive in June 2022. The aim of the deep dive<sup>16</sup> was to investigate the green skills landscape in CloS to inform decisions around CloS LEP and Cornwall Council strategy and design of future programmes to build the green talent pool that Cornwall needs. It is important that **collaboration between employers and strategic stakeholders** progresses this and the priorities outlined below.

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.fsb.org.uk/resource-report/accelerating-progress.html>

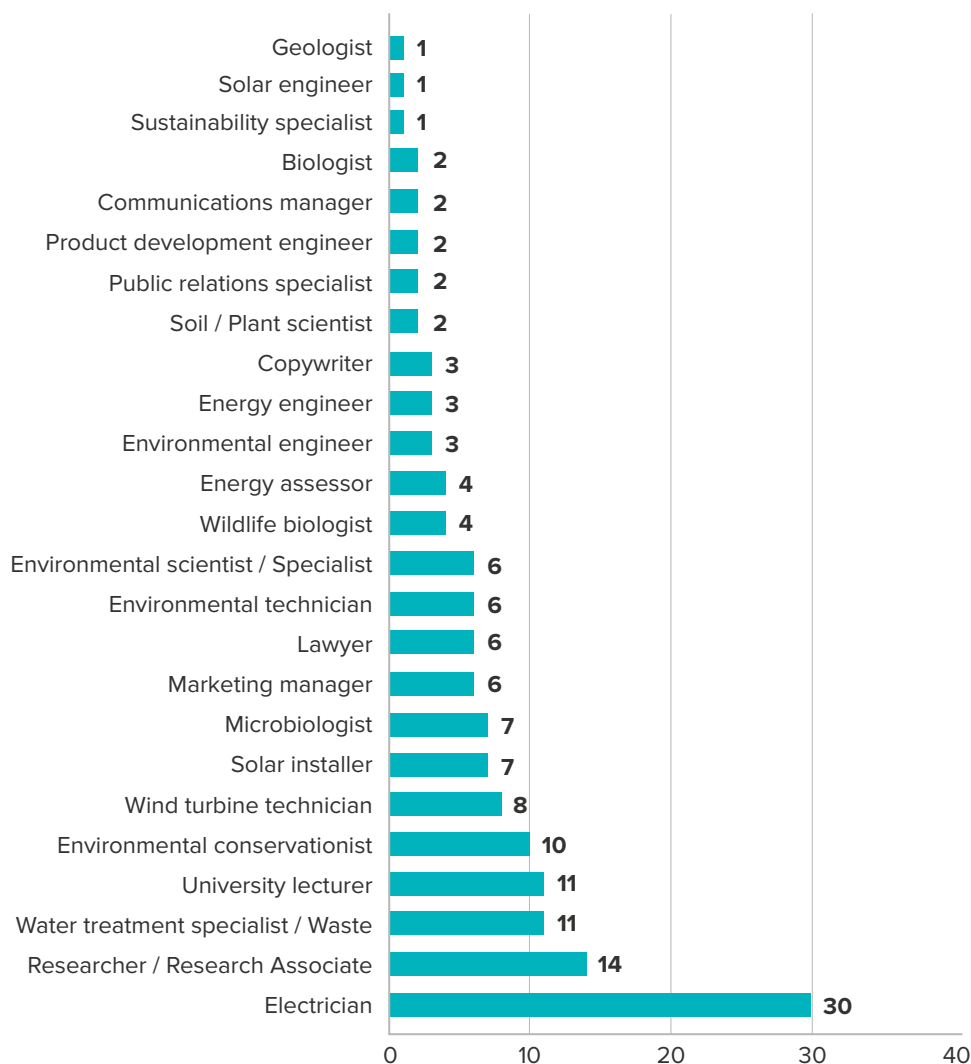
<sup>16</sup> <https://cioslep.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Green-Jobs-and-Skills-DD-Research-P06-Kovia.pdf>

## Employer feedback overview and actionable priorities (Green)

Green Priorities	
Employer Issue	Actionable priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In many cases, businesses need support to be able to make sustainability a priority.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explore an opportunity for green vouchers for businesses to encourage investment in upskilling / reskilling in support to green transition.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Basic climate literacy needs to be improved in both the education system and places of work.</li> <li>With a focus on Cornwall and Isles of Scilly being net zero by 2030 employers need to know what that means and how they can contribute.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Commission research on opportunity for Global Wind Organisation training centre in Cornwall / SW and other equally specialist areas.</li> <li>3. Improve visibility of existing green training provision.</li> <li>4. Develop and implement industry specific 'Achieving net zero' online / workshop-based programmes for staff and managers.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Green jobs need to be more actively promoted and better defined.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. The Careers Hub, Skills Hub, People's Hub and all organisations involved in IAG and employability support, to promote green jobs as an attractive career path. This could be linked with careers advice to schools, FE, HE and those either seeking employment or a career change.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A natural focus for the CloS area is to be a sustainable energy pioneer and a launchpad for expertise in other large scale green concerns. Alongside the geological resources, there is also unique geography. For example, an archipelago like the Isles of Scilly could be centre for expertise in how islands could be protected from the effects of climate change.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Form partnerships with expert sectors and with the Isles of Scilly to scope out future need of high-level green skills and attract the most appropriate tutors, mentors and scientists to the region to impart their knowledge.</li> </ol>

### Priority Occupations (Green)

Employers outlined that priority skills for developing a net zero economy included Solar panel installer, gas fitters, heat pump engineers, electricians, and plumbers. These findings also resonate with that of the Green Skills Deep Dive:



*Labour Insights (Burning Glass Technologies), March 2022*

### Note from the Green Skills Deep Dive

Evidence from job vacancies showed 155 “green job” postings between March 2021-Feb 2022 with a need for a range of occupations beyond traditional environmental and sustainability roles. There was a higher-level skill focus i.e. 70% requiring minimum of Level 3 (of which, 60% required a level 4 or more) and electricians were the most notable occupations needed. Generally, the skills required to fill green jobs were mainly “hard” / specialist skills (57% of all skills required e.g., renewable energy, environmental science). There were, however, also cross-cutting / transferrable skills (43%, e.g., customer service, marketing, recruitment, project and budget management.)

## Local Skills System

### Overview of employer engagement

An effective system for bringing through a skilled workforce, whether introducing new entrants to the workforce, upskilling to support business growth, or re-skilling for people looking for new careers, is essential to a functioning economy.

There are a good variety of options for skills delivery in CloS. There are two excellent college groups in Cornwall; Cornwall College, which has recently been recognised as the top apprenticeship provider in the South West, and Truro and Penwith College, having created their state-of-the-art Future Skills Institute. There are many privately run training providers that provide specialist and bespoke training. CloS is also home to some great university campus's that have superb facilities and higher level course offers from design to manufacturing to tech, AI and augmented reality, film and post production, 3d design etc.

A theme that emerged most frequently in discussions was around **communication and greater collaboration** as businesses need more tailored information on course availability and generally how to engage with training providers. They find the landscape particularly confusing as there is such a plethora of information from many sources being fired at them which becomes "white noise". What they need is a means to filter this and translate skills availability into the roles and needs within their business. Greater awareness of the Skills Hub, more targeted marketing and clearer details of how to engage with FE & HE etc. would benefit both businesses and providers.

Employers generally identified areas of skills that need improving in their current workforce, however **accessing provision of training is a challenge** for many. Barriers included a lack of time for staff training and development particularly for small businesses, with others not able to find suitable courses locally within Cornwall and Isles of Scilly. **Transport is another issue particularly given the rural nature of the region** with another theme highlighted around funding and support for younger people to ensure they are able to get to their workplaces easily and on time.

**Apprenticeships were also a key theme raised by employers** with employers recognising the additional benefits they can bring. Employers were interested in taking on apprentices for the first time particularly in the Manufacturing and Construction sectors and there was an opportunity to capitalise on this and address some of the misconceptions around apprenticeships.

Employers **welcomed any practical training methods** and channels that were being used currently and felt this type of training helps to represent real-world challenges and provides learners with hands on experience. They were keen to see this expanded. Other modes that employers welcomed include live and in a classroom setting, and delivered in real time / virtual training. Online training that is pre-recorded was favoured the least.

Employers' **relationships with local skills providers and colleges in particular is varied**. While many employers have had no real engagement with training providers, those that do have an existing relationship have had positive experiences. Therefore, more outreach into the business community would give providers the opportunity to expand on their good work.

There is an **opportunity for collaboration within the skills system across the region**. By working together, employers, providers and strategic stakeholders can ensure that skills training and education, recruitment, and retention efforts are more effective and efficient.

Collaborative efforts could include sharing best practices, resources, teaching staff and knowledge, as well as coordinating efforts to address skills gaps in priority areas. Collaboration on bidding for funding also presents a huge opportunity.

### Employer feedback overview and actionable priorities (Local Skills System)

Local Skills System Priorities	
Employer Issue	Actionable priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employability skills are paramount. Every employer we spoke to require the 3 A's – Attitude, Aptitude and Aspiration.</li> <li>Small businesses do not have capacity or resource to put inexperienced workers (perhaps entering the workforce for the first time) onto long training programmes without a return on productivity. Employers say they have jobs available for people with the right attitude and functional 'ready for work' skills.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employability skills should be embedded into every course locally. Where this already exists, greater priority needs to be placed on delivery of employability skills and checks put in place to see that every student has a good grounding in how to interact while at work.</li> <li>Explore the development and implementation of a common employability/essential skills framework to define consistent approaches to essential skills. Include consideration to what specific support those with additional needs or disabilities may require.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many businesses need a multi-skilled workforce. A re-imagined course programme that develops the necessary foundation skills (including statutory required qualifications and licensing e.g. CSCS Card) would help to make more of the workforce available more quickly with skills that get them started.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement an essential skills short course programme for employed staff.</li> <li>Include bite sized skill building programmes to support workers and management into being productive quickly and foster a culture of continuous learning. e.g. "Digital Badge" or "Lifelong Learning File" models to build a folio of recognised competencies and transferrable skills.</li> <li>Develop a formal, collaborative mechanism between local businesses and colleges for input into course content and provision of industry placements.</li> <li>Develop a central, independent skills portal that allows all providers (whether academic, private, or industrial) to promote and signpost training opportunities and to match against business' declared training needs whilst continuously monitoring demand.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whilst provider outreach is good with those that they reach, it is a comparatively small number of businesses that have a close relationship with a post-16 training provider which has assessed their needs and sought solutions: less than half of businesses responding to the survey have used or at least spoken with a post-16 technical education provider.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formalise a framework with providers and the Skills Hub to work closely with business organisations and communities to have more targeted outreach to seek businesses that are not as engaged in business support and skills. Increase awareness of the availability of more specialist sources of help. e.g. university links to global employers and large alumni networks.</li> <li>Further develop the Careers Hub and similar services and communicate their existence more widely to increase visibility.</li> </ol>

Local Skills System Priorities	
Employer Issue	Actionable priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stronger bonds are needed with sectors to provide real industry experience and upskilling to college tutors, to ensure course content is always relevant and students leave college with relevant skills that translate into more immediate productivity in the workplace.</li> </ul>	9. Establish formal links with expert sector skills bodies across all sectors identified as strategically significant - Examples: Cornwall Manufacturers Group Academy, Cornwall Marine Network, Critical Minerals & Spaceport outreach - to provide experience for tutors as well as students. 10. Develop a collaborative initiative to increase the supply of teachers/trainers in priority occupations and review/improve their training if needed. 11. Explore possibilities of returners to work from recent retirement to add workplace experience to course content.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transport is a barrier to attaining skills in such a rural and coastal area.</li> </ul>	12. Local Authority to establish a Task and Finish Group to explore innovation in transport to support people to access learning and work in the more remote parts of the region. 13. Assess transport provision with specific focus on under-served areas and identify where this can be improved to remove barriers for students (cost, bus routes, timings).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More apprenticeship funds need to be available for SMEs to increase the number of apprenticeships.</li> </ul>	14. Explore opportunity to develop a CloS wide strategy for an apprenticeship levy transfer.

### Socio-economic Issues, Employability Skills & EDI

The theme of **‘work readiness and soft skills’** emerged as a significant concern during the engagement activities conducted across the region. Participants consistently highlighted the **lack of soft and interpersonal skills as a pressing issue**. There is a prevailing perception that potential candidates, particularly young people, lack these skills, which are highly valued and sought after by employers during the recruitment process.

Employers also reported that when recruiting they **frequently encountered a lack of essential business knowledge, professionalism and employability skills** such as interview preparation and CV writing, among the pool of candidates. Within their existing workforce employers also reported that there is a need for improved communication skills, better numeracy, and personal or social skills. A common theme was deficits around work readiness and behaviours within the current workforce.

Regarding school leavers and students, it was widely felt that many of them are **not adequately prepared for the workforce** due to the lack of early engagement with the world of work. This was also reflected in the discussions for the two priority sectors. This specific theme highlighted unrealistic attitudes towards work and the need for closer links between education and industry to play a greater role in preparing them for their future careers. This could include more work placements and on-the-job training experiences and earlier interventions with careers advice.

**Socio-economic conditions were another theme**. These can significantly influence skills access and attainment within communities. **Challenges such as access to public transport** can hinder people’s

ability to travel to workplaces, training facilities, work experience placements or job interviews. Limited access to digital platforms for training also poses a disadvantage. Local solutions need to be explored in order to overcome these barriers.

Another **theme was around inclusivity and diversity** with employers wanting to see more gender and race equality initiatives, inclusive recruitment and training practices. It was acknowledged that more support is needed to help those who are disadvantaged or from minority backgrounds to access training and employment. For those facing physical barriers to work, disabilities and other additional needs, there may be other challenges if modification to the workplace or working practices are needed. However, all of these issues could more easily be overcome with more widely available guidance, information and tangible help for both employers and individuals.

**Mental health also emerged as a concern** with employers reporting that there seems to be levels of anxiety about the workplace which may stem from the Covid pandemic. Mental health conditions often led to individuals leaving the workplace or impacting on their development and learning. It was suggested that employers should be more socially inclusive and better understand the mental health challenges faced by young people.

### Employer feedback overview and actionable priorities (Cross cutting)

Cross Cutting Theme Priorities	
Employer Issue	Actionable priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create an actionable plan for development of ready-for-work ‘soft’ skills through school and post-16 education.</li> <li>• Employers to offer more work experience opportunities to equip people with the skills specific sectors need.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Development of ready-for-work ‘soft’ skills through school and post-16 education.</li> <li>2. Careers Hub to showcase new career opportunities available and develop collaborative work between colleges and employers to offer new or extended placements for all vocational courses.</li> <li>3. To create better, more resilient business structures develop management and leadership course content (working with business owners and managers) to support healthier, more inclusive, and diverse workforces to meet the ambition on green issues and all aspects of ESG.</li> <li>4. Develop recruitment and retention packs and/or workshops for employers, especially SMEs, to aid broadening candidate search.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All young people need to be aware of, and know how to access CEIAG and associated support.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Explore possibility of establishing a Young Persons Task and Finish Group to explore best practises and support the work plan of the Careers Hub.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase awareness of local career opportunities which will in turn reduce skills shortages.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Develop a dedicated all age portal and resources to enhance and expand tailored online and telephone advice on local skills development, entrepreneurship, self-employment and availability of wider support.</li> <li>7. Develop an LMI Dashboard together with innovative career resources for foundation and priority sectors.</li> </ol>

Cross Cutting Theme Priorities	
Employer Issue	Actionable priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employers need to be able to quickly and easily access high quality, reliable support and information.</li> </ul>	<p>8. Establish a single web-based point of access for simplified training and support information for employers and the self-employed, drawing from good practice elsewhere in the UK (linked to portal above).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners need to progress easily from one learning opportunity to another in their chosen careers.</li> </ul>	<p>9. Adapt good practice to map learning provision and then clearly promote progression pathways to high skilled jobs. Include Higher level apprenticeships, degree apprenticeships and retraining opportunities in LEP priority sectors; Green – Construction – Digital Skills – Culture.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To increase productivity, businesses need good leadership and management skills. Our survey said that this is one of the major areas for development.</li> </ul>	<p>10. Develop leadership and management skills packages for SMEs in particular, and give opportunity to engage in higher performance working practices.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are areas of deprivation in the CloS area and many people who are detached from the labour market for various socio-economic, physical or mental health reasons.</li> </ul>	<p>11. Local Authority to formalise a plan of using its systems to maximise opportunities for the hard to reach in apprenticeships, work and supported employment. Success to be monitored and reviewed.</p>



# PART 3: DELIVERING THE LSIP PRIORITIES

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## Accountability

The Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022, places duties on specific providers of post-16 technical education or training to co-operate with the designated ERB and have regard to these plans, and associated guidance from the Secretary of State, when considering their post-16 technical education or training offer. With respect to this duty, providers should have regard to and contribute to meeting local skills priorities alongside other aspects of their provision. Accountability is evidenced through subsequent Accountability Agreements that set out how providers have engaged with employers and responded to LSIPs.

Certain providers may also have a duty to review how well the education or training provided by their respective institution meets local needs and consider what action their institution might take to better meet those needs. Businesses also need to recognise their part in making the LSIP successful by engaging in the process.

## The Roadmap

The roadmap is based on an employer-provider partnership provision that has gained consensus from employers, providers, and stakeholders. It recognises that additional funding may be necessary for certain actions and highlights that without such funding, progress may be impeded, or certain actions may not be realised. As an example, implementation funding would be necessary to ensure that meaningful collaboration has capacity built in to drive the LSIP recommendations forward.

The roadmap overview is designed to provide a general framework without being overly prescriptive at this stage. The responsibility of creating specific objectives that underpin each actionable priority lies with the ERB and the LSIP Implementation Taskforce at Stage Two of the LSIP process. Furthermore, consideration will be given to leveraging future planned deep dive studies and data that can be gleaned from CloS LEP, Cornwall Council, Sector groups and Skills Hub, to gather progress data effectively.

Regular monitoring of progress with the business community will be managed by asking questions in local surveys and in partnership with other ERBs, utilising their networks and events. It is envisaged that existing employer groups within colleges will also be utilised to enhance this work.

It is recognised that there is a current, wider framework of local skills governance, with groups such as the CloS LEP Employment and Skills Board, where it will be advantageous to maintain this working formula and build further on their experience, to ensure that the LSIP is embedded as part of the overall skills landscape. Where there are changes in local governance or policy this should be considered in succession planning in order to maintain continuity, assistance with project monitoring and retaining already functioning networks that can be galvanized as part of successfully delivering the LSIP.

Actions within the roadmap will drive forward the LSIP to improve productivity and address skills gaps by nurturing local talent, enhance UK and international competitiveness, and foster economic growth. Additionally, the implementation of the actions will strengthen the connection between employers, further education, and providers, and keep employers involved in defining local skills needs.

**Short-term actions:**

1. Establish a dedicated LSIP Implementation Task Force, comprising employers, FE, HE, Independent providers, LEP, LAs, industry bodies and experts, and relevant stakeholders. Create Task and Finish groups with specific assignments.
2. Collaborate as a group to develop targeted interventions and programmes that address the identified actionable priorities of the LSIP and identify possible/relevant funding sources including the LSIF.
3. Initiate a robust marketing and awareness campaign to promote the LSIP and engage stakeholders, including businesses, educational institutions, and individuals seeking skill development opportunities.
4. Implement pilot programmes and initiatives to test the effectiveness of proposed actionable priorities and gather feedback for refinement.
5. Establish performance indicators and monitoring mechanisms to track the progress and impact of the LSIP.

**Medium-term actions:**

1. Scale up successful pilot programmes and initiatives to reach a broader audience and address a wider range of skill shortages and gaps.
2. Strengthen partnerships with employers, industry associations, and educational institutions to ensure alignment between skills provision and industry needs.
3. Enhance collaboration with LAs to integrate the LSIP priorities into local economic development plans and strategies.
4. Invest in the development of collaborative marketing campaigns to support skill development in key occupations.
5. Continuously evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and adjust strategies based on feedback and emerging trends.
6. Explore opportunities for regional and national funding to supplement LSIP initiatives and maximize resources.

**Long-term actions:**

1. Consolidate the progress made in addressing skill shortages and gaps by refining and expanding successful interventions.
2. Evaluate the impact of the LSIP on economic growth indicators, such as increased employment rates, higher productivity, and improved competitiveness.
3. Establish long-term partnerships and collaborations with employers and educational institutions to ensure sustainability of skills development efforts beyond the LSIP timeframe.
4. Publish regular reports and updates on the LSIP's achievements and outcomes to foster transparency and accountability.

5. Identify emerging skills needs and adapt the LSIP priorities to meet evolving economic and industry demands.
6. Develop a framework for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of skills provision in the CloS area, integrating the LSIP as a long-term strategy for skills development.
7. With the greatest volumes of people needed in hospitality and wellbeing sectors in CloS, review the workforce vs. skills issue in accommodation, retail and tourism and in health and social care to monitor any additional support that may be needed in the next review of the LSIP.

# ANNEX CONTENTS

## See separate document for Annexes

- **Annex A** – Local strategic context
- **Annex B** – Information on research methodology and processes  
Employer engagement research - Full report by PFA Research Ltd.

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