



**Skills Support for the Workforce
Local Response Fund**

LRF- Sector Skills GAP Group
Skills Gap Report

Sector: Construction, Engineering & Manufacturing



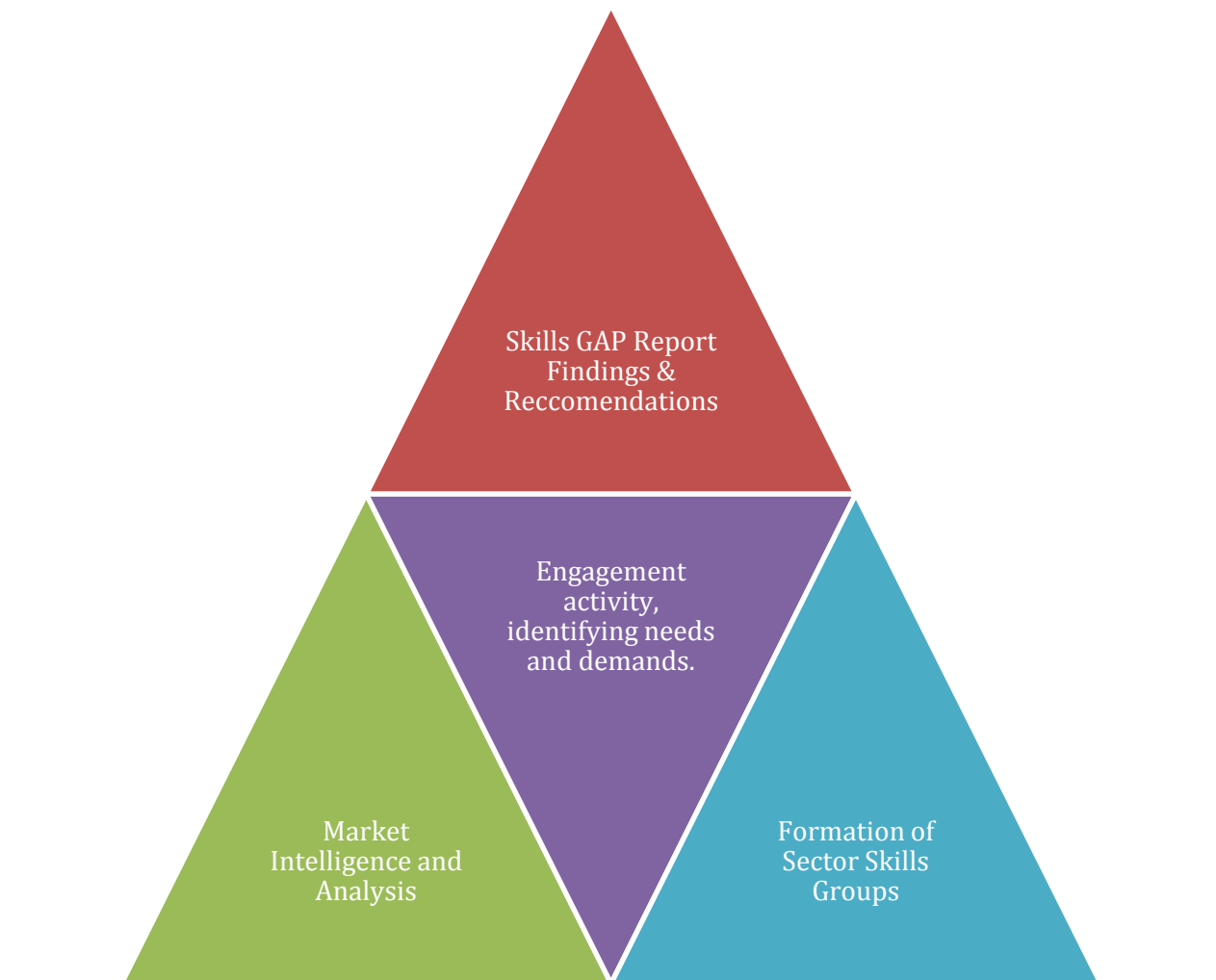
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The Sector Skills GAP Report Model



Background

Hull College has secured a contract for £3.5 million with an additional £1 million to deliver the Skills Support for the Workforce (SSW) and Local Response Fund (LRF). The project is funded by the European Social Fund (ESF). The focus for the funding will be to deliver workplace learning courses across the Humber region to meet individual, employer and regional needs by up skilling the workforce.

The project is being delivered in partnership with Bishop Burton College, East Riding College, Grimsby Institute, North Lindsey College and the Humber EBP as a sector representative to engage with learners and key employment sectors as identified by the Humber Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

The contract started in July 2013 and will run until July 2015. The programme is aimed at supporting employed individuals aged 19 and over in a small medium enterprise (SME). It will enhance their skills and career prospects to reduce the risk of long term unemployment and welfare dependency.

Sources of information

Sources correct at time of writing April 2015

- Working Futures, UKCES, 2012
- Office for National Statistics, 2014
- Humber LEP Lifting the Lid, 2013
- Sources correct at time of writing April 2014
- CITB – Whole Life Consultants
- Regional Economic Intelligence Unit, 2012
- Information gathered through face to face meetings and telephone conversations and attendance at networking events
- Questionnaire sent via EBP database and Chamber of Commerce

Market Intelligence

Following the announcement of City of Culture in Hull this has sparked the go ahead of several contracts for construction/ground works projects across the City giving a financial boost to the sector. Much of this work will continue and ramp up in 2016.

Several Construction companies contacted HCUK due to word of mouth from companies who had previously accessed SSW training to apply for support to help grow their businesses.

Construction is a vital component of the UK economy, not only directly due to its contribution to output and employment, but also strategically in its contribution to the built environment and as part of various initiatives designed to stimulate growth. It also has a critical functional role in meeting the low-carbon agenda either through retro-fitting buildings and ensuring that all new buildings meet energy saving standards.

The recent recession has adversely affected construction employment and performance with the sector experiencing a sharp drop in the total value of contracts. With public spending and low consumer confidence, the recession has presented the sector with a number of challenges. Construction has been one of the most affected sectors in terms of the relative decrease in employment with a decline of around 8 percent resulting from the 2008/09 recession.

The sector rebounded faster than other sectors in the first three quarters of 2010, but there have been contractions in construction output since. While construction is often the sector which helps pull the entire economy out of recession, it is slow in doing so in the present global downturn.

Employment in construction accounted for around 8.5 % of total employment in the UK in 2010 and the sector contributed more than 9% of the economy's output in the same year.

It needs to be borne in mind that the construction sector is not homogeneous but is comprised of a number of sub-sectors which vary across a number of dimensions. The three main sectors of the UK construction industry, as set out in the UK Standard Industrial Classifications 2007 (SIC2007) are:

1. construction of buildings
2. civil engineering
3. specialized construction activities architectural and related

Activity also varies within these broad sub-sectors, from small companies – including sole traders – supplying specialist services to large, multi-national enterprises with responsibility for delivery of large-scale projects.

According to the Office of National Statistics (ONS) estimates for people working within the Construction/Engineering sector in our region for 2012 are:

- Hull 5,800 which is 5.1% of a workforce of 171,600
- East Riding 5,400 which is 5.0% of a workforce of 204,400

- North Lincs 4,700 which is 7.1% of a workforce of 168,400
- North East Lincs 2,700 which is 4.2% of a workforce of 99,900

*Based on the working age of 16-64

The regional percentage for people working in the Construction/Engineering for Yorkshire & Humber is 4.7% and the UK is 4.5%

The total number of companies accessing SSW within Construction, Manufacturing & Engineering are:

- Construction 321
- Manufacturing 56
- Engineering 102

According to the Data Observatory the number of SME business within the sectors in the Humber Sub-Region are as follows:

- Construction 3545 - 9.05% of companies have accessed SSW
- Manufacturing 491 - 20.77% of companies have accessed SSW
- Engineering 590 - 26.77% of companies have accessed SSW

Sector	% of learners undertaking training with specific sectors	Total number of learners accessing SSW training	Number of learners accessing SSW
Construction	26.63%	4548	1211
Manufacturing	10.80%		491
Engineering	8.38%		381

According to the Regional Economic Intelligence Unit report of 2012 the following employees will be needed for the following Transformational Projects.

Project	Local Authority	FTEs - 2020	FTEs - 2026
Humber Renew. Energy Super Cluster AMEP	North Lincs	5,100	5,100

Logistics Park	North Lincs	3,510	3,510
Bridgehead Development Hessle	East Riding	3,000	4,000
Humber Renewable Energy Super Cluster	Hull	2,725	2,725
Bridlington Area Action Plan	East Riding	2,650	2,650
Centre Port Goole	East Riding	2,000	2,500
Greenport Growth RGF	Hull / East Riding	1,330	1,330
Melton Development	East Riding	1,000	2,000
Humber GreenPort Corridor (Port of Grimsby)	NE Lincs	700	700
Humber GreenPort Corridor (Paull site)	East Riding	600	600
RGF, North Lincs	North Lincs	500	500
Existing Europarc	NE Lincs	500	500
New Morrisons Fish processing, Grimsby	NE Lincs	480	480
Grimsby Shopping Centre	NE Lincs	200	200
Ozone Howden	East Riding	180	280
Newport	East Riding	150	300
Border Inspection, Immingham	NE Lincs	130	250
Biofuel production	NE Lincs	70	70
Humber GreenPort Corridor (Staithe Road)	Hull	40	40
BAE Systems site Brough	East Riding	-150*	320
Total		24,715	28,055

*** Net result of job losses linked to closure of manufacturing plant**

Source: Regional Economic Intelligence Unit, 2012

Transformational and Total Impacts by Occupation (ten with largest impacts)

Occupation	Jobs 2011	Jobs 2015	Jobs 2020
Trans projects impact	Core forecast + Trans projects	Trans projects impact	Core forecast + Trans projects

Occupation Total	401,561	11,450	414,060	24,956	430,187
Transport Drivers and Ops	24,780	1,695	27,165	3,676	30,237
Corporate Administrators	49,904	1,546	53,592	3,484	57,196
Admin & Clerical Occupations	29,485	1,221	29,482	2,507	30,020
Elementary: Clerical/Service	33,284	839	33,871	1,808	34,431
Process, Plant & Mach Ops	20,736	843	19,953	1,652	18,535
Bus/Public Serv. Assoc Prof.	18,051	627	18,900	1,337	19,985
Elementary: Trades/Plant/Mach	20,017	570	20,908	1,238	21,606
Skilled Metal/Elec Trades	18,600	439	17,894	1,184	17,492
Science/Tech Professionals	11,883	441	12,838	1,164	13,988
Sales Occupations	23,018	477	23,776	1,003	24,149

Source: Regional Economic Intelligence Unit, 2012

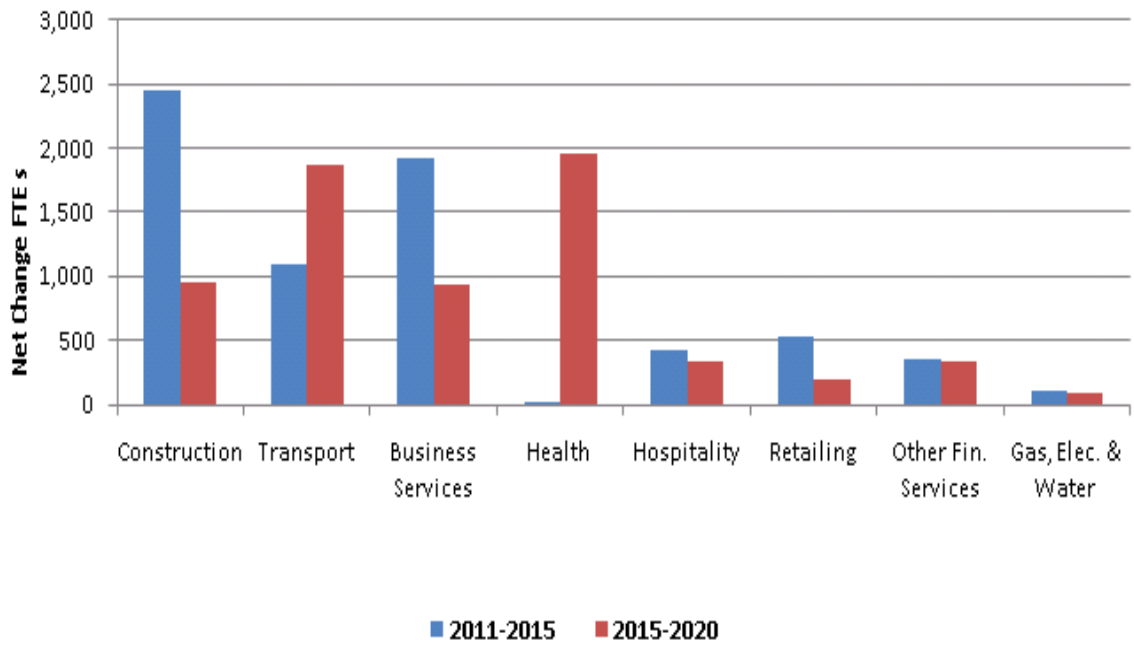
Top 10 Sectors by Absolute Increase in FTE Employment to 2015 and 2020

2011-2015			2011-2020		
1	Construction	2,454	1	Construction	3,409
2	Business Services	1,924	2	Transport	2,967
3	Transport	1,100	3	Business Services	2,865
4	Retailing	525	4	Health	1,961
5	Minerals	426	5	Hotels & Catering	762
6	Hotels & Catering	419	6	Retailing	720
7	Other Fin.& Bus. Services	346	7	Other Fin. & Bus. Services	683
8	Wood & Wood Products	266	8	Gas, Electricity & Water	209
9	Rubber & Plastics	174	9	Minerals	196
10	Gas, Electricity & Water	113	10	Paper, Print. & Publishing	44

Source: Regional Economic Intelligence Unit, 2012

Humber LEP, sectors forecast to grow - by total net FTE change 2011-2020

Source: Regional Economic Intelligence Unit, 2012



SME Skills GAP Groups

Throughout the SSW project links with ECITB and CITB who are the national training organisations for the Construction and Engineering Sectors and the Manufacturing Advisory Service have continued.

All three bodies have close working relationships with the organisations they link with and regularly carry out audits on training within the companies. Agreements were made to work in a joined up way to avoid duplication and to maximize the SSW fund avoiding confusion for the companies. Referrals were made to SSW when training was identified that could not be funded from usual sources.

In addition

- Business Support Officers, Economic Development Officers, and other local authority staff are aware of the fund and are promoting SSW to their existing and start up businesses
- KWL who are a large construction company have sent the SSW information to their supply chain companies (over 100)
- MKM Building supplies are giving information on the fund to their customers

Events attended include:

Meet the Buyer; networking events arranged by Humber Training Group (member of CITB) to promote the SSW fund to Construction/Engineering companies and continue to network with people from the industry.

Consultations were made with businesses and national training organisations at the beginning of the project to assess if there was a need for any further network. It became clear that it would be more beneficial to work in a joined up way to avoid duplication. This has enabled a good working relationships with key organisations within Construction, Engineering & Manufacturing.

The total number of companies accessing SSW within Construction, Manufacturing & Engineering are:

- Construction 321

- Manufacturing 56
- Engineering 102

According to the Data Observatory the number of SME businesses within the sectors in the Humber Sub-Region are as follows:

- Construction 3545 - 9% of companies have accessed SSW
- Manufacturing 1960 - 3% of companies have accessed SSW
- Engineering 590 - 17% of companies have accessed SSW

Sector	% of learners undertaking training with specific sectors	Total number of learners accessing SSW training	Number of learners accessing SSW
Construction	26.63%	4548	1211
Manufacturing	10.80%	4548	491
Engineering	8.38%	4548	381

There are 41 businesses that have been referred to SSW, 25 have taken up training which equates to a 61% conversion rate . A further 70 businesses have been engaged on a one to one and an additional 350 businesses contacted through our Humber wide database.

Humber EBP Work Experience Placement Officers have been promoting SSW to employers that fall within the key priority sectors across the Humber Sub Region whilst visiting businesses to carry out Health & Safety checks.

There are also a substantial number of businesses who have been contacted directly by SSW delivery partners including Local colleges, Birkwood Construction, HOTA, CITB, Integrated Training Solutions the contract managers HCUK.

Findings

The general view from companies contacted is business opportunities are developing and having staff with the right skills is an issue. Businesses have commented that the staff had the right skills when they joined a few years ago, now that technology is moving so quickly they can't keep up. There also seems to be a positive attitude towards gaining future contracts provided they can up skill the workforce. Another area that became apparent with the smaller businesses was having the administration structure in place as they have grown.

Within the Construction, Engineering and Manufacturing sectors the top training needs identified to date include:

- Social Media
- Health & Safety (incl site safety)
- CAD and general IT skills preparing for BIM
- Writing bids and tenders
- Sales & Marketing
- Business toolkit (HR) not currently available

Latest figures from SSW show 497 companies from Construction, Engineering & Manufacturing have undertaken training under SSW, this equates to 7.85% of the businesses in these sectors across the Humber Sub Region.

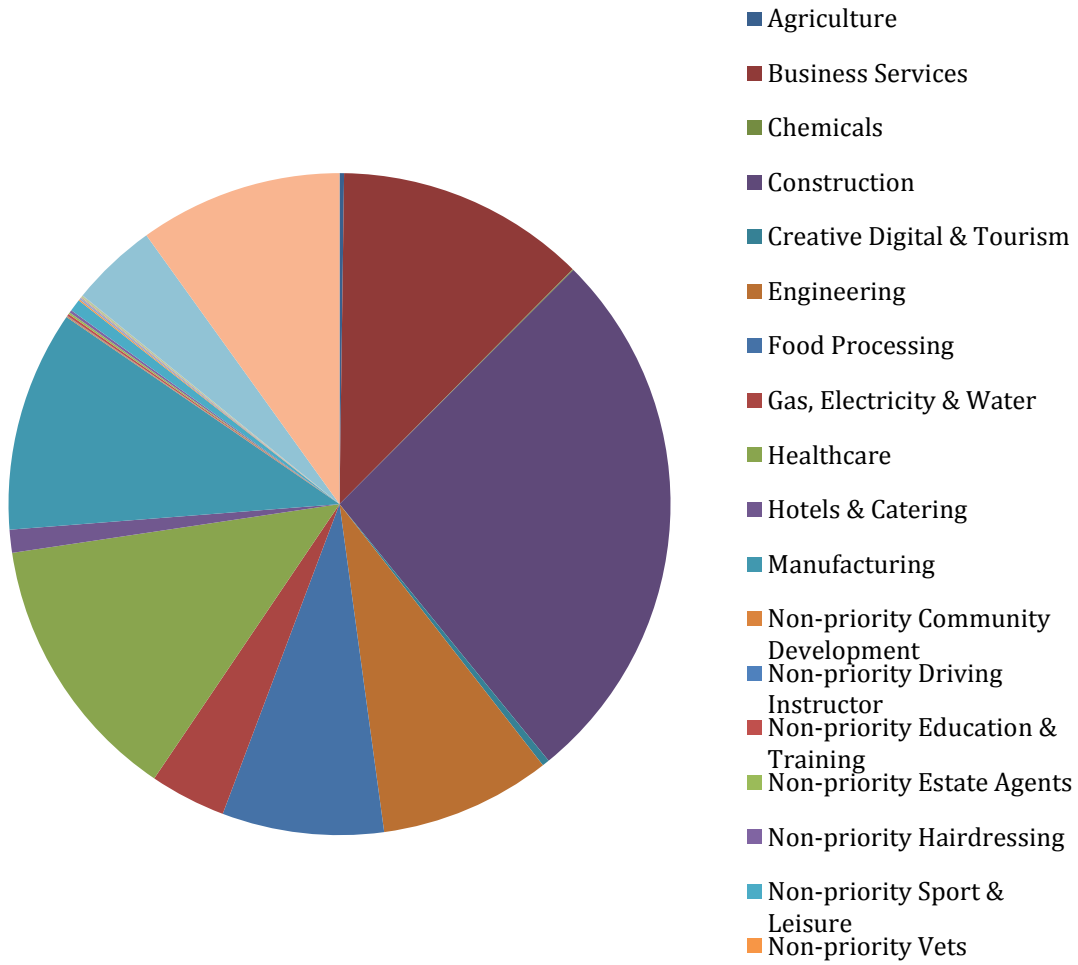
The following training has also been identified as in high demand from companies, other types of training that have proved popular is Demolition; Slinger & Signaler; Dumper; 360 Plant Operative; Managing Safely; IOSH; Occupational work supervision & Counter balance forklift.

<u>Training taken up</u>	<u>Business impact</u>	<u>Individual Impact</u>
H&S welfare, counterbalance	Safer working environment.	New qualifications, improves job prospects and career opportunities
Overhead crane, Demolition, Slinger, Signaler, Dumper, 360, Plant Ops	Safer working environment with more effective workforce.	Increase confidence, safer working, wanted a recognised qualification for career progression
Plant ops,	Better qualified staff	Improve job prospects, enhance career prospects, more confident and productive in job role, wanted a recognised qual.
IOSH	Better H&S knowledge among staff	Reduce accidents in workplace. More hazard and risk aware, now have H&S knowledge to management level
Specialist concrete occupations & Occupational	Allows supervision of staff so employee can progress	Enhances job prospects and opens gateway to other

work supervision	in company. Allows employee to upgrade CSCS card	qualifications.
IOSH & Abrasive wheels	Make the workshop area as safe as possible	Aware of best practice and safe working
Manual handling	Improved long term H&S prospects of the work force and reduced injuries	Aware of best practice and safe working
Food Industry skills, Continuous improvement, Team leading, Management, Food hygiene, HACCP, Business admin	Employees will gain new skills and knowledge to give them increased motivation and morale and career progressions. Company can then move forward with a skilled workforce that will achieve the objectives of the organisation and remain sustainable in todays economy'.	New skills allows career progression into team leading, increased confidence.
Driving Goods vehicles, Logistics operations	Upskill workforce to increase productivity	New skills means workforce can be adapted and take on new roles
IPAF & PASMA	Increased qualifications in company allows company to bid for more work and grow client base	Gained new quals and built confidence, increased job prospects.

Please see attached case studies

% of Delivery for SSW



Skills GAP Report Findings/ Recommendations

The Construction & Engineering companies are reporting difficulties in recruiting skilled workers, sighting pressure from the emerging renewable industries and an up-turn in building projects. In addition to this the renewable companies are paying higher salaries. This is compounded by there being a smaller pool of skilled labour to select from due to an aging workforce.

This has forced companies to look at how they can up skill their existing workforce to meet the skills need of the company.

As mentioned in the Findings section, above, the most frequently requested training of the companies is:

- Social media
- Health & Safety (incl site safety)
- CAD, general IT skills preparing for BIM
- Writing bids and tenders
- Sales & Marketing
- Business toolkit (HR) not currently available

A survey asking for skills gaps information was sent to Construction, Engineering & Manufacturing companies via Chamber of Commerce as well as over 300 companies from our own database. So far only one company has responded.

Training to meet skills needs that were requested frequently that couldn't be fully met by the SSW project include: NEBOSH and the Employers Toolkit (currently under development).

Training deliverers for SSW will be in a better position to answer this question as they hold the training plans for the companies that have been referred.

A number of companies contacted decided not to go ahead with SSW because they would have to be referred to training deliverers who they don't normally use and were concerned about quality of training provided.

Main Causes of Skills Gaps

- Staff are new to the role 62%
- Training only partially complete 58%
- Staff Lack Motivation 41%
- Staff attended training but motivation not improved sufficiently 38%
- Introduction of new working practices 31%
- Staff have not received appropriate training 29%
- Unable to recruit staff with required skills 25%

- Introduction of new technology 20%
- Problems retaining staff 17%

(Identified by UKCES in their UK Employer Survey 2013)

Government will require fully collaborative 3D BIM (with all project and asset information, documentation and data being electronic) as a minimum by 2016. This will put pressure on Construction companies wishing to procure contracts with Government Departments to have higher level IT skills. This is an area that companies will need additional training to up skills staff.

Legacy

- **What new groups/relationships/networks have been set up as a result of your activity through the SSW Project?**
- **What are the top 3 successes that have been achieved within the sector during the SSW Project period (July 2013 – July 2015) this might include case studies, network groups, and events.**
- **What is the measure of the business impact SSW has had on the sector? This will include growth/diversity/development/financial measurement.**
- **Have any new qualifications/curriculum or ways of working been developed for your sector through SSW and what impact has this had?**
- **Through your involvement in the project and knowledge of the sector what recommendations would you make to utilise future funding?**

As a Sector Rep engagement with existing networks found there was no need to establish new ones. The way that the Sector Rep role has been structured doesn't lend itself to have information on training that has been undertaken once a company is referred to SSW. Working closely with CITB & ECITB ensured that SSW funding complimented rather than duplicate support given to their members.

As part of the legacy the following up-skilling of tutors has been funded out of the SSW project. This will enable higher level training to be delivered meeting the needs of industry.

Construction up-skilling – awarded to NL College

Construction is a key enabling sector where there is need for a skilled workforce is required to deliver key projects across the Humber.

These projects, together with an anticipated increase in house building, the Humber UTC, Humberside Airport and a general upturn in the local economy, will generate the need for an increased number of construction personnel in the short to medium term. The CITB report by University of Dundee (2013) suggests that the major projects planned for the Humber will create up to 16,000 construction jobs at their peak.

Given the nature of recruitment in the construction sector with a high number of Small and Medium Size (SME) employers providing labour through sub-contracting with larger companies, historically there has been a lack of resource planning and investment in training.

In a recent FMB (2014) survey a third of SMEs reported problems in recruiting skills employees in trades such as plastering and bricklaying.

In order to meet the current and future needs of construction SMEs there is a need to :

We will identify 5 staff in the Humber region via a mini competition tender. To address this issue we plan to have 5 staff complete a unit within the BTEC Extended Diploma in Built Environment including completing a practical workshop, and further days on a working site, to develop the practical skills of setting out on site.

Develop materials to deliver multiskilling courses for existing trades in:

- 1) Setting out and surveying
- 2) Drainage & Groundwork's
- 3) Brick & Plastering
- 4) Wall and Floor Tiling
- 5) Fitted Interiors
- 6) Site Joinery

Engineering up-skilling – awarded to NL College

Engineering is recognised as the key sector for the Humber Region. The sector is faced with major issues in terms of skills shortages and with the developments planned for the region this will exacerbate the issues.

- North Lincolnshire is already highly dependent on engineering manufacturing - 24% of employment which is likely to grow to 30% with current regional developments
- Major employers (TATA, Philips 66, Centrica, Total Oil Refinery) have highlighted skill shortages.
- LEPs vision - Humber sub-region to become the major European centre for Renewables and Engineering (The Energy Estuary).
- Central to this is the Able UK Marine Energy Park (AMEP).
- AMEP is the largest site within the Humber Renewable Energy Super Cluster Enterprise Zone (HRESC EZ).
- We are working closely with Able UK and potential inward investors as well as local employers such as Tata Steel. Able UK has just sponsored £200,000 in the current North Lindsey College Capital Investment Project.
- AMEC - Regional investment will create 4,200 employment opportunities; however there are substantial skills shortages.

We need to develop a flexible resource base and industry-standard environments for engaging SMEs in staff development across the Humber and to develop more flexible delivery models, utilising a blend of independent learning and workshop delivery accessing industry standard systems specified in collaboration with local employers. Development of SME focussed programmes and associated materials

Mechanical Skills for Operators – 3-day course

- 1) Hydraulics Basic and Advanced – 2 x 2-day courses
- 2) Pneumatics Basic and Advanced – 2 x 2-days courses
- 3) Preventative Maintenance Techniques - 2 day course
- 4) Mechanical alignment course - 1 day course
- 5) Electrical safety - 1 day course
- 6) Programmable logic controllers - 2 day course
- 7) 17th Edition - 1 day course
- 8) Portable appliance testing - 1 day course
- 9) Electrical testing - 1 day course
- 10) Introduction to Process Control - 2-day course
- 11) Process Measurement Techniques (Flow pressure, temperature) - 2-day course
- 12) Engineering Fault Finding Techniques - 2-day course
- 13) Electrical Safety for Mechanical Personnel - 1 day course
- 14) Electrical Foundation Course for Mechanical Staff - 3-day course
- 15) Introduction to Working with High Voltage systems - 1-day course
- 16) Motor Control Systems - 2-day course
- 17) CAD Operators Introduction and Advanced Engineers 1 day and 3 day courses

Welding up-skilling – awarded to AMRC

A survey conducted in 2012 by Ekosgen in the Advanced Manufacturing Sector identified that half of businesses surveyed found it difficult to recruit people into skilled trade occupations. Nearly 40% of businesses employ apprentices with a view to developing them within the business. 75% of Advanced Manufacturing (AM) businesses plan to use external training providers – especially if the training is better tailored to business needs. The Regional Economic Model anticipates 4,000 new, FTE manufacturing jobs by 2020, with a further 7,750 positions created by retirements from an ageing workforce. 41% of businesses expect an increase in numbers employed in skilled trades and nearly half (46%) had experienced difficulties in recruiting specific skills such as engineering fabrication, machining, instrument control, sheet metal manufacture, welding and turner & lathe operators.

Technical/practical skills were identified by over 50% of respondents as increasing in importance, with machinery operators, metallurgical skills, quality control, sheet metal techniques, welding & plating highlighted specifically.

Apprenticeships and industry standard qualifications are currently important to 60% of advanced manufacturing businesses there was a desire to facilitate clear pathways for apprentices (in particular) to progress from level 2 through to level 7 (management) where appropriate. Over 80% of advanced manufacturing businesses will provide formal training over the next three years, almost exclusively using external training providers.

The investment in building towers for off shore wind, coupled with an increasingly buoyant engineering manufacturing market has seen and is likely to continue to see an increasing demand for skills in the Humber

Consultation has taken place with colleges and providers across the Humber to identify specific requirements for welder training and up-skilling of staff in order to offer the right curriculum based on existing industry demand and emerging technology within Advanced Manufacturing.

This project proposes to deliver a train the trainers programme to 10 staff from the Humber region to address any shortfalls we have identified within our curriculum and upcoming technology within Advanced Manufacturing.

Based on consultation with colleges and providers, a variety of training courses will be offered. Welding trainers will then have the option to access one, two or all three modules if they require the full CPD pathway. A regional welding tutors' forum will also be established.

region in:

- High Level Welding
- Magnetic Particle Testing
- Advanced Welding Process Electron Beam / Sub Arc Welding
- Third party Certification

Given the difficulties in travelling to the off shore wind turbines, feedback from tower manufacturers that the SSW Sector Rep for Engineering has received through meetings with Able UK, indicate that the demand for training and certification to EN287/288. They recognise the importance of their supply chain having staff competent to carry out tasks to the correct and high standard required in the industry.

After training and certificating welders against recognised standards there is also a need to train people to test the welds using Non Destructive Testing Techniques.

A number of local engineering companies have already enquired about this type of provision and this proposed training would enhance the knowledge and understanding of managers, improving their capacity to effectively utilise none destructive testing and introduce technicians / operatives to the concept and basic practical techniques of specific none destructive testing procedures.

It is also important for welders to obtain welding certifications that are universally accepted. This will become increasingly important for local manufacturers when working with tower manufacturers and other companies coming into our region

Appendix 1

Training delivered by Grimsby Institute

Case Study – Jackson, Green and Preston Estate Agents offers service with a smile thanks to Skills Support for the Workforce

Local Estate Agents, Jackson, Green and Preston recently engaged staff in a Principles of Customer Service programme, through the Skills Support for the Workforce scheme, which is operated by the Grimsby Institute in partnership with Hull College and aimed at upskilling employees and giving them a focused approach to Customer Service.

Mandy Barley, Jackson, Green & Preston's Practice Manager, said: "We have worked with the Grimsby Institute before and always received a good service. My staff were very impressed with Colette Mason who took the training.

"They said she made the topics interesting and made them think about how to relate to customers and go that extra mile."

The Skills Support for the Workforce scheme offers free training in a wide range of sectors. Mandy now feels that the staff are more confident which has ultimately led to increased to business. Mandy continued:

"The staff who attended seem to feel more confident and therefore can relate to customers much better this leads to the staff getting more job satisfaction."

For more information on for more information on how you can get FREE training through the Skills Support for the Workforce scheme, simply call 0800 012 6656.

Case Study – Haith's Bird Food Specialist Local bird food specialists find out how to Tweet

Local businesses have been taking advantage of a free Social Media course being run at the Grimsby Institute through the Skills Support for the Workforce scheme, a fund operated by Hull College Group and co-financed by the Skills Funding Agency, European Social Fund and Humber Local Enterprise Partnership.

Members of staff from Haith's Bird Food Specialists, based on the Europarc in Grimsby, have been taking part in the course with the aim of upskilling their team and increase their client base using mediums including Facebook, Twitter, Linked In and Google Plus.

The Social Media training course runs for one day a week over four weeks and has been designed to provide an underpinning knowledge of effective usage of social media in raising the profile of an organisation and it's potential for finding new customers with whom to sell and network.

Jenny Cocking, Team Leader at Haith's, said: "Social media is something we've never really looked at before and this is a way of getting the brand out there and making people more aware of what we do. We've never done anything like this before and we've been looking at how to word things on social media and making sure your spellings and grammar are correct."

Chris Smith, a Customer Services Adviser at Haith's, added: "We've also been looking at uploading photographs, running competitions and even looking at uploading customers photos and linking from their pages to help grow our likes and profile. We want to get people talking about Haith's and interacting with more people as a way of getting more sales.

"Every week has been totally different and the tutor has been fantastic. We've really been made to feel welcome at the Institute. It's been well worth the time we've spent doing it and we have gained a lot. We're now looking at doing some more training."

For more information on the wide range free training courses available through the Skills Support for the Workforce, please call the Grimsby Institute on 0800 012 6656, email training@grimsby.ac.uk or visit www.commericaltraining.co.uk

Case Study – Regal Fish

Regal Fish get social media savvy

Local businesses have been taking advantage of a free Social Media course being run at the Grimsby Institute through the Skills Support for the Workforce scheme, a fund operated by Hull College Group and co-financed by the Skills Funding Agency, European Social Fund and Humber Local Enterprise Partnership.

Margaret Money, Marketing Manager from Regal Fish Supplies in Grimsby, decided to enrol for the course because she actively uses Facebook and Twitter but wanted to learn how to get more out of them. Margaret had also joined Google Plus but had never utilised it.

The Social Media training course runs for one day a week over four weeks and has been designed to provide an underpinning knowledge of effective usage of social media in raising the profile of an organisation and it's potential for finding new customers with whom to sell and network.

Margaret said "We find social media important as a business because it helps us to engage with our customers as a way of getting their feedback on new products, finding out what they want to see in terms of service and moving the company forward. We have found a lot of new customers come through this channel so it's also a way of optimising that.

"The amount of information I have gotten from the course has been really good. Although I thought we were using social media to the best of our abilities it's become apparent that a lot of the time we weren't. We put a lot of industry information out there but we need to be engaging with people a lot more, whether that's customers or other businesses.

"This course is really good for people who are looking at becoming more aware of platforms that they haven't been used to using and I'd recommend it to anyone."

For more information on the wide range free training courses available through the Skills Support for the Workforce, please call the Grimsby Institute on 0800

012 6656, email training@grimsby.ac.uk or visit www.commercialtraining.co.uk

Case Study – Thomas Bell Country Store Country store learns all about social media

Local businesses have been taking advantage of a free Social Media course being run at the Grimsby Institute through the Skills Support for the Workforce scheme, a fund operated by Hull College Group and co-financed by the Skills Funding Agency, European Social Fund and Humber Local Enterprise Partnership.

Alice Ladlow and Trudie Hydes, two members of staff from Thomas Bell Country Store in Brigg, recently took part in the course which saw them looking at different aspects of social media including IT communication fundamentals and how to improve productivity using IT.

The Social Media training course runs for one day a week over four weeks and has been designed to provide an underpinning knowledge of effective usage of social media in raising the profile of an organisation and it's potential for finding new customers with whom to sell and network.

Alice, Store Supervisor, said: "We've been studying the Social Media course because we use a lot of social media to promote the brand and products. Thomas Bell does have a Marketing Manager but she likes us to get involved and this has given us a better understanding of how to use it more effectively.

During the first week it was bizarre to get an exercise of going on Facebook and Twitter because it's something you think of doing in your own time. This is looking at doing from a business point of view and in a more professional way to promote your brand.

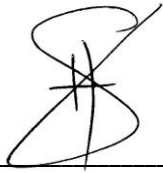
Trudie, the store's Equine Sales Assistant, added: "This has given us a better insight into how to use social media. It's also shown us you don't have to do things in one way – there are lots of different ways of reaching different people."

Alice continued: "We would normally log in to Facebook and Twitter separately but this has shown us that, rather than wasting time, you can use a tool like Buffer or Hootsuite and manage them all from one screen, giving you time to move and better the business in other ways.

"We've both learnt an awful lot. Not just about how to use social media but the benefits of using social media in general and anyone that's interested in using social media for marketing will get a better insight through coming on the course."

For more information on the wide range free training courses available through the Skills Support for the Workforce, please call the Grimsby Institute on 0800 012 6656, email training@grimsby.ac.uk or visit www.commercialtraining.co.uk

Sector Lead signature



Name _____Helen Wilson_____

Position General Manager – Humber EBP

Date _____8th April 2015_____

Hull College Acceptance Signature

Name _____

Position _____

Date _____