

# **Green skills challenge to be addressed at event this month**

**Sustainabuild takes place this month, an event addressing the challenge of closing the green skills gap in Scotland's built environment.**

At the first Assembly event in Glasgow on 30 January those taking part will explore ways to increase the delivery of green skills for the construction sector to help the country deliver its commitment to net zero.

Around 56% of Scottish organisations have highlighted a worrying shortage of skills generally, and the lack of skilled 'green collar' construction workers is believed to be threatening to derail Scotland's decarbonisation plans according to a recent report by Turner & Townsend.

Minister for Veterans and the Minister for Higher and Further Education, Graeme Dey, who will open the event, said: "To address the green building skills shortage, we must tackle the challenge from all angles to ensure that we harness the opportunities that the just transition to a green economy will unlock. This includes educating and training the future workforce for emerging green roles, attracting a diverse pool of talent to the construction sector, and supporting the re-skilling of labourers as we make the shift to more sustainable industries.

"Equally important is up-skilling existing professionals to meet the evolving demands of Net Zero delivery, in addition to

encouraging and supporting employer investment in skills development and training for their workforce.

“I look forward to opening this important event with industry leaders, fostering collaboration and shared learning in green skills to drive meaningful progress in Scotland and beyond.”

The Sustainabuild event at The Social Hub in Glasgow is delivered in partnership with The Verdancy Group – a provider of sustainability training and environmental consultancy, supporting organisations, educational institutions, and communities in adopting greener practices.

Speakers will include Professor Robert Hairstans, Deputy Head of Research of the School of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment at Edinburgh Napier University – and Founding Director of the Centre for Advanced Timber Technology, Skills Working Group Lead for the Centre for Net Zero High Density Buildings, Greg Steel, Head of Sector, STEM & Sustainable Construction, Borders College, Steven Kiakowski, Director, The Verdancy Group, Jim Johnstone, Head of Communities and Social Impact, Morrison Construction, Nicola Jackson, Net Zero Projects Lead, Robertson Group, Rebecca McLean, Sustainability Director, SWECO UK, Lilian Ho, Senior BIM Manager & Digital Lead, AECOM

Steven Kiakowski said: “Education and green skills are the foundation for delivering a sustainable future. While significant progress has already been made, there is still a substantial challenge ahead in addressing the scale of upskilling and training required to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving industry.

“From embracing emerging technologies to ensuring that individuals and organisations are equipped with the knowledge and skills to deliver on sustainability goals, the journey is far from over. We must build on the foundations laid and accelerate our efforts to provide accessible, high-quality

training that aligns with future industry ambitions and ensures we remain on track to achieve a greener, more sustainable future.”

Matt Colgan, Founder of Sustainabuild said: “Whilst we need to attract and equip a diverse future ‘green ready’ workforce, we don’t have time to wait for them to come through the education system if we are to be Net Zero by 2045. Enhancing skills and retraining our existing workforce can fill the gap but will not happen without significant industry collaboration and government support. For Scotland to continue to be a green building leader, it’s vital that we have the workforce we need to remain at the forefront of this challenge and encourage our industries to thrive.”

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Graeme Dey MSP