

# **Sustainabuild Assembly highlights need for new green workforce**

**Construction leaders in Scotland have called for urgent industry-wide collaboration to find solutions to Scotland's 'green skills' gap.**

Gathering at Sustainabuild Assembly, a networking event focused on driving sustainability within the built environment and construction sector, leaders issued a rallying cry for the industry to work together at every level to ensure Scotland's workforce is green skills ready.

Higher and Further Education Minister Graeme Dey said: "Scotland is already leading the way in delivering a green jobs revolution. Our colleges and universities are playing a pivotal role in developing a world-class skills system and Government-funded initiatives, such as the Energy Skills Partnership (ESP) and BE-ST, are actively supporting education institutions in meeting industry's need for high-quality, lifelong and green jobs.

"While we recognise that Scotland is on a good trajectory, it is clear that more needs to be done to accelerate the just transition to net zero. As part of this, it is crucial that businesses can foster strong relationships with the education system to ensure that Scotland has the workforce it needs for a future green economy.

“It was welcome to engage with industry leaders on this at the first Sustainabuild Assembly event. The genuine enthusiasm and expertise I saw makes me hopeful that, collectively, we can successfully address the challenges in the built environment sector and prepare Scotland for the future.”

Steven Kiakowski, Director of The Verdancy Group, a company that provides sustainability training and environmental guidance said: “Collaboration between industry, education, and the third sector is vital to closing the green skills gap. By working together to develop and deliver impactful training and upskilling programmes, we can drive innovation, ensure job readiness, and empower communities to support the shift towards a low-carbon, sustainable economy.”

Matt Colgan, Director of Sustainabuild said: “So much brilliant work is being done, but sadly there is still so much that is stopping the country meeting the skills required to deliver greener buildings, homes and infrastructure. Firstly, we have an aging workforce in construction and building, and with this is a lack of understanding of modern methods of construction, which naturally lends itself to being more sustainable. Therefore, training and upskilling the existing work force is absolutely essential.

“Secondly, we must promote the benefits of a career in building to our younger generations – especially those who are less keen to pursue an academic route. As one of our speakers said, a career in building doesn’t need to look like wearing a yellow vest and rolling about in the mud, in fact many successful highly paid directors of construction companies started their career as an apprentice.

“Young people today are much more likely to get a higher salary by looking at a career in the built environment – and those with green skills will be even more in demand. This is a message that really needs to hit home.”



MSP Graeme Dey and Matt Colgan at Sustainabuild

