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Dorset Local Skills Improvement Plan Updated Employer Skills Priorities – 3rd Issue

March 31, 2025



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Shaping the Skills Landscape for the Future

“There are increasing numbers of inspirational examples of how consistent commitment to training can sustain and grow a business and its people...

All businesses should be maximising the benefits of English-funded post-16 technical education, training, and employment support to secure the workforce they need.”

Ian Girling
Chief Executive, Dorset Chamber

LSIP Progress Report August 2024

[View report >>](#)

“We have long recognised the importance of cultivating a skilled, knowledgeable and fulfilled workforce, believing that investing in training and professional development is the foundation of our growth and success.”

Greendale Construction

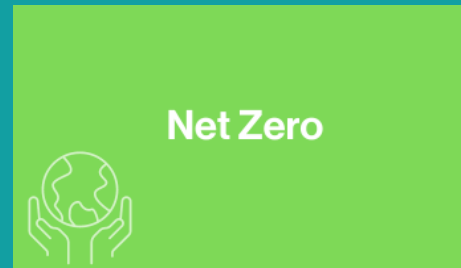
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Dorset Local Skills Improvement Plan

Sectors | Routes | Pathways

Five priority sectors:



Two cross-cutting themes:



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Updated Employer Skills Priorities – 3rd Issue

- The Priorities have evolved from the Priorities and Reports published in March 2023, Summer 2023, March 2024 and Summer 2024.
- Year 3 Priorities have emerged from updated employer data, and analysis of the local labour market, skills data, sector specific data, feedback from education and training providers' and partners' contributions. They are focused on developing **Capability, Capacity** and **Collaboration** in the local skills system
- They are intended to inform our partners who are working to develop a post-16 technical education system that meets the needs of employers. By employers, education and training providers working together, we will address the current and future workplace skills requirements and ensure increased productivity in the fast-changing economic landscape in Dorset.



Updated Evidence Base 2024-2025

1. Employer Research

2. Labour Market Information (LMI)

Dec 2024



Agriculture Agritech

LMI Sector Insights (Dorset LEP)

Dec 2024



Advanced Manufacturing

LMI Sector Insights (Dorset LEP)

Dec 2024



Construction

LMI Sector Insights (Dorset LEP)

Dec 2024



Digital Tech and Creative

LMI Sector Insights (Dorset LEP)

Dec 2024



Healthcare

Labour Market & Skills Info (Dorset LEP)

Dec 2024



Female Workforce LMI

Dec 2024



Green Jobs

LMI Sector Insights (Dorset LEP)

Jan 2025



Green Skills

Survey Findings

[View Research, Reports and Evidence here >>](#)



Cross-Cutting Skills Needs

Several cross-cutting needs have been articulated across all sectors which remain a priority:



Leadership and Management skills at all levels.

Digital. All sectors continue to experience digital skills gaps at all levels. Generic IT and office systems e.g. spreadsheets, data protection. Sector specific coding and AI skills.

Labour Demand/Shortages. An aging population, high housing costs, limited public transport, older workers and high economic inactivity are placing a greater importance on the need for more inclusive recruitment and retention practices such as diversity, inclusion and induction programmes and mentoring.

Training Offer is hard to find and understand.

Work Readiness. At all ages, development of confidence is important for those new to, or returning to work alongside other employability skills such as communication and customer handling.

Net Zero. Specifically, skills and preparedness to meet 2050 Net Zero targets - is a significant issue, most businesses have yet to put in place plans or resources to meet this need. Awareness raising across all businesses and embedding carbon reduction within the curriculum remains a priority.





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Health and Social Care

Health and Social Care: Identified Skills Needs

Specialist Skills

- Dementia focused care incl. adapting to setting and patients
- Learning Disabilities incl. Oliver McGowan training (with and without dementia)
- End of life care incl. for those with LD
- Patient centred care
- Personal care
- Nursing
- Mental health support
- Midwifery
- Physical therapy
- Elder Care
- Rehabilitation
- Manual therapy
- Auditing*
- Medical administration*
- Meal planning and preparation*

Transferable Skills

- Effective communication skills – patients and colleagues
- Emotional intelligence, empathy
- Leadership and management skills including team leader
- ESOL
- Teamwork
- Motivated
- Resilience
- Digital and IT skills (excel, word, email, record management, medical technology, assisted living technology)
- Older workers confidence
- Equality and diversity training to be included in ESOL training*

Jobs in Demand

- Healthcare support workers
- Registered nurses
- Mental health practitioners
- Physiotherapists
- Occupational therapists
- General practitioners
- Speech and language therapists
- Disability assessors
- Optometrists
- Advanced practitioners and practitioners
- Podiatry
- Operating department practitioners
- Paramedic

Health and Social Care: Delivery and Development

Employer delivery preferences

- Applied learning – using real world equipment and examples valued
- Mode: blended approach preferred; flexible short modular courses

Areas for development

- Attract and retain young people and more diverse workforce to the sector for a career
- Develop work experience opportunities and placements especially for under 18s and those with EHCPs
- Learners need support with job applications
- Importance of values in attracting new entrants to sector
- Support SME's to prepare for Net Zero transition*

Training barriers

- Capacity of organisation eg staff / facilities
- Lack of employer training budgets
- Poor learner attendance due to staff shortages and ratio requirements
- Poor understanding of how to find quality providers and courses available





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Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering

Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering: Identified Skills Needs

Specialist Skills	Transferable Skills	Jobs in Demand
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engineers (mechanical, electrical, maintenance, design, systems)• Production operatives• Assemblers• Software design engineering skills (L4-7) to support increased automation• Digital design skills including CAD, UX design skills• Fundamental engineering skills• Machine shop skills• Trade skills e.g carpentry, plumbing, welding, electricians• Composite skills• Location dependent skills• Continuous Improvement Process*	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project management• Communication skills• Detail oriented• Teamwork• Management and leadership (industry specific)• Customer service• Problem solving• Passion - curiosity and understanding of materials required for engineers• Motivation, work ethic• Digital skills – excel, outlook, word• Maths• English language*	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Production operatives• Vehicle technicians• Carpenters• Machine operators• Assemblers• Design engineers• Maintenance engineers (and technicians*)• Systems engineers• Engineers: electrical, mechanical and electronic• Field service engineers• Gas engineers• Welders / fabricators• Mechanical design engineers*

* Added March 2025

Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering: Delivery and Development

Employer delivery preferences

- Applied learning – using real world examples to teach, integrating project-based approach, up to date industry experience
- Mode: short modular courses, evening and weekend options in demand

Areas for development

- Skill flexibility to support vacancy level in workforce (production operatives and technicians)
- Replacement demand of aging workforce
- Workforce diversity
- Poor image and understanding of manufacturing and its career pathways

Training barriers

- Vacancies effecting ability to source work experience and placements
- Tutor recruitment is challenging
- Rural businesses find it harder to access training
- Hybrid working is challenging for learners
- Learner demand is exceeding employer demand for apprenticeships

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Construction

Construction: Identified Skills Needs

Specialist Skills	Transferable Skills	Jobs in Demand
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joinery and carpentry• Project management incl. those with retrofit process understanding• Plumbing• Electrician• Painting• Forklift truck• Technical drawing incl. AutoCAD and engineering drawings• Modern methods of construction - specify, design, project manage and evaluate MMC methods• Changing building environments e.g. energy assessors, insulation installers, retrofit, heat pump installers, understanding renewable materials• Fundamental skills and trades e.g use of hand tools• Understanding of new materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Digital Skills• Numeracy*• Leadership and management• Communication skills• Detail oriented• Customer service• Problem solving• English Language• Planning• Sales• Willingness to learn and work outside• Marketing (and social media*)• Team work*	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Production operatives• Quantity surveyors• Labourers• Carpenters• Machine operators• Electricians• Groundworkers• Assemblers• Forklift drivers• Site managers• Surveyors• Design Engineers*• Painter / Decorators*

* Added March 2025

Construction: Delivery and Development

Employer delivery preferences

- Apprenticeships, although this can be challenging for small businesses
- Hands-on, on-site experience
- Tutors to have up to date industry knowledge of methods, equipment and products

Areas for development

- Slightly higher demand for construction jobs in Christchurch, demonstrated in *Lightcast** data. Jobs posted 3:1 rather than 2:1 in rest of Dorset LSIP area
- Promote gender equality in all careers

Training barriers

- Poor understanding of construction careers available – by teachers, young people, parents & potential employees
- General labour shortages mean short of time to release staff to train or to take time to train staff in-house
- Limited provision options for spending levy

*Refer to Construction LMI sector insights (Dorset LEP) data slide 12





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Digital Tech and Creative

Digital Tech and Creative: Identified Skills Needs

Specialist Skills

- Programming and software development skills – formal qualifications preferred (javascript, SQL, C#, Python, C++)
- Upskilling need for programmers to use AI and automation
- Social media and digital marketing
- Digital design, photo editing, video production and editing
- Copy writing, web content writing
- Data management, analysis and visualisation
- Agile methodology

Transferable Skills

- Project management
- Teamwork – e.g able to code as part of a team
- Leadership skills
- Communication skills
- Customer support
- Passion for sector and curiosity for learning
- Problem solving and critical thinking skills (especially for programmers, software developers and technicians)
- Business skills – finance, tax, social media and marketing
- CRM
- Resilience
- Broad digital skills – excel, outlook, word
- Detail oriented*

Jobs in Demand

- Software engineers
- Software developers
- IT support engineers
- .NET developers
- Network engineers
- Full stack engineers
- Security engineers
- Service desk engineers
- DevOps engineers
- PHP developers
- Photographers*
- Interpreters / Translators*
- Composer*
- Graphic Design*
- Laminators*
- UI / UX designers*

* Added March 2025

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Digital Tech and Creative: Delivery and Development

Employer delivery preferences

- Applied learning – using real world examples to teach, integrating a project-based approach
- Mode: industry qualifications are attractive in short modular courses to keep up with the rate of change

Areas for development

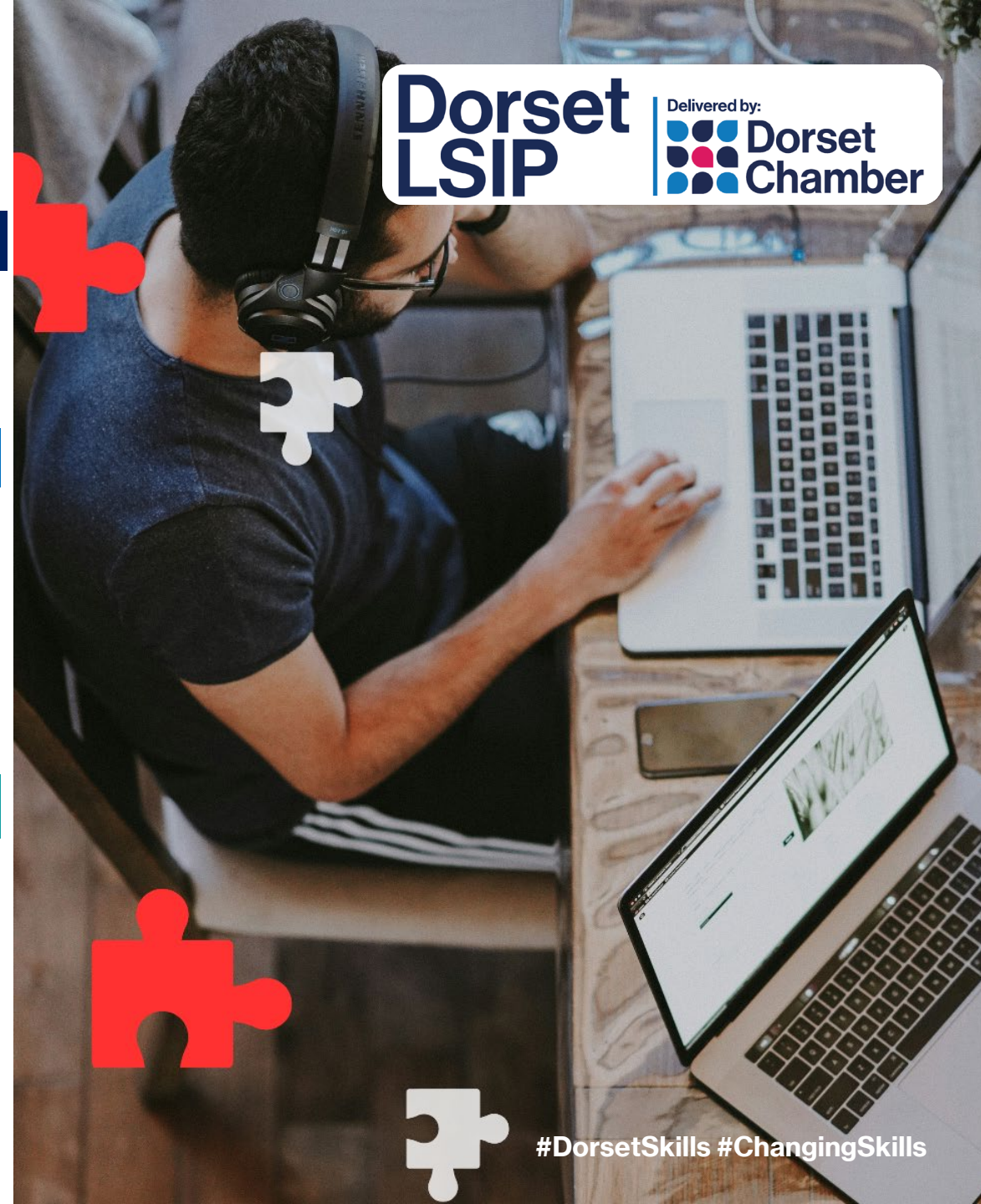
- Short courses to develop entrepreneurship and business skills for micro businesses*
- Identify models of work experience that work for micro businesses working with local networks*
- Build local creative sector evidence
- Improve diversity in the sector
- Expand opportunities for teachers and learners to learn more about sector*

Training barriers

- Sector and careers are not well understood
- Sourcing employer placements and working in collaboration with employers is challenging as a high proportion of local employers are micro businesses and freelancers
- Employers have a poor understanding of how to navigate the skills system to access training
- Micro and smaller businesses often don't have a training budget

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Agriculture, Agri-tech and Aquaculture

Agriculture, Agri-Tech and Aquaculture: Identified Skills Needs

Specialist Skills

- Mowing, weed control and pruning*
- Animal husbandry and care: e.g. monitoring animal welfare, nutrition, administering animal care, surgery* and trimming*
- Modern technology and computerised machinery: operate and maintain
- Boat skills*
- Sustainable food production (Net Zero): understanding and use of more efficient arable management skills and farming methods and techniques to increase yield percentages from farms.
- Business planning skills
- Chainsaw handling
- Tractor / telehandler drivers
- Environmental policy and legislation, risk assessments*
- Irrigation (landscaping and agriculture)*
- Landscaping

Transferable Skills

- English language
- Maths for business management, animal care and to analyse data from computerised equipment
- Leadership and management
- Communication
- Customer service
- Self-motivation, resilient
- Detail oriented
- Team-work
- Digital IT skills needed to run business
- Operations*
- Sales*

Jobs in Demand

- Veterinary surgeons
- Grounds maintenance operatives and workers
- Gardeners
- Registered veterinary technicians
- Veterinary nurses
- Veterinary assistants*
- Landscapers
- Dump truck operators
- Drivers
- Farm workers
- Dog groomers*
- Greenskeepers*

* Added March 2025

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Agriculture, Agri-Tech and Aquaculture: Delivery and Development

Employer delivery preferences

- Short technical upskilling courses for existing workforce at times to suit sector
- Practical on-site training alongside college learning
- Up to date farming technology and equipment
- Apprenticeships

Areas for development

- Understand specific skills sector needs within the STEM specialism
- Poor perception of industry, Employer links into schools and education to encourage young people to enter the sector
- Encourage flexible work experiences for learners and teaching staff with funded support for SEND students*
- Further understanding of net zero skills implications and diversification opportunities

Training barriers

- Poor sector careers understanding – by teachers, young people, parents & potential employees
- Lack of apprenticeships, small businesses need support to take up
- Small and micro businesses find it hard to prioritise non-statutory training
- Recruitment of teaching staff

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Net Zero



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Net Zero: Identified Skills Needs

Specialist Skills

- Domestic retrofit, renewable heat, EV manufacturing and infrastructure
- Engineers
- Environmental health and safety
- Auditing
- Risk analysis
- Project management
- Net Zero planning including measuring carbon footprint
- Waste management*
- Data analysis*

Knowledge required by all sectors

- Awareness raising
- Carbon literacy
- Measuring carbon footprint

* Added March 2025

Transferable Skills

- Communications
- Management
- Planning
- Operations
- Customer Service*
- Influencing skills
- Enthusiasm
- Innovation

Transferable Occupations/Knowledge

- High level science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) skills e.g. environmental scientists and engineers
- L2 and L3 technical qualifications to decarbonise existing industry and assets e.g. retrofit installers

Jobs in Demand

- Low carbon/net zero/retrofit advisors, assessors and coordinators
- Installers of insulation, heating, renewable energy and building management solutions

Net Zero: Delivery and Development

Employer delivery preferences

- Funded training is important; without incentives or changes to regulations businesses describe being unlikely to change *

Areas for development

- Develop employer understanding of available products in supply chain
- Support to balance gender inequality in STEM subjects and occupations
- Employers unaware of grants and funding available

Training barriers

- Poor sector understanding – by teachers, young people, parents & potential employees
- Employer concerns about cost implications
- Lack of understanding about how to plan transition to net zero

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Through increased Capability, Capacity and Collaboration, success looks like:

- More businesses engaged in the funded Post 16 training and education system supporting local growth plans
- More learners on relevant technical education courses
- More skills in sectors that are growing and changing
- More suitable and flexible training opportunities
- Higher productivity and staff retention across Dorset

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