

# Skills for net zero in Lancashire: Lancashire Skills Advisory Panel

8<sup>th</sup> September 2021

# About the Work Foundation

Areas of focus:

- Skills
- Net zero
- Remote and hybrid working
- Insecurity
- Wellbeing

Post-pandemic hybrid working poses new challenges to diversity and inclusion

Posted on 10 June 2021 by Heather Taylor, Rebecca Florisson and Liz Spratt

WORK **wf**  
FOUNDATION

Newcastle University Business School

## HYBRID AND REMOTE WORKING IN THE NORTH OF ENGLAND: Impact and future prospects

Heather Taylor, Laurence Vigneau, Rebecca Florisson, Muhammad Khan



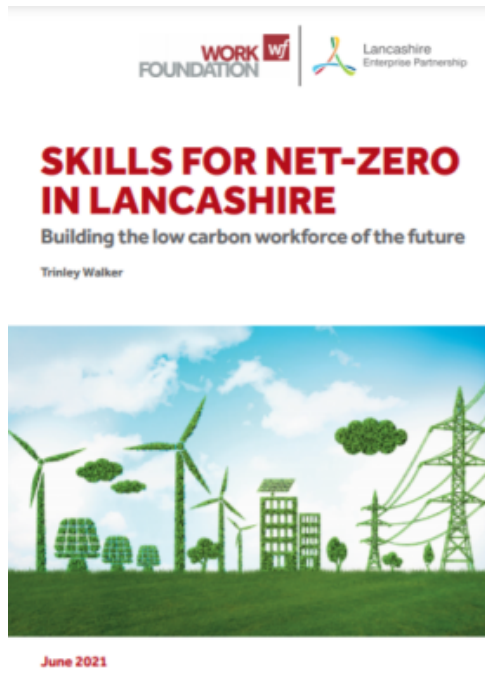
## Social care:

a guide to attracting and retaining a thriving workforce

Share this story



# Background & Context



- Engagement with Lancashire LEP
- Net zero of increasing strategic importance nationally and in the North West
- Method:
  - Survey (53 businesses)
  - Interviews (10 businesses)
  - Engagement with Energy & Low Carbon sector panel

# Key findings: Recruitment is challenging, and this is constraining growth

## Skills gaps

- 25 of 53 (47%) businesses have found it difficult to recruit staff with the skills they need
- 32% of the sample are finding specialist skills hard to recruit for (e.g. software development, digital technology)
- Skilled trades also challenging (e.g. electricians, bricklayers)

## Impacts

- 19 of 25 businesses experiencing skills gaps said that this led to increased staff workloads
- 11 of 25 reported this delayed in development of new products and services
- 10 of 25 reported skills gaps increased their operating costs

## Key findings: Low carbon employers are prioritising internal training

- 75% of survey respondents pay for external training to ensure their staff have the required skills
- 81% of businesses surveyed are delivering training in-house
- 65% of businesses who run their own training do so to fill gaps not covered by external provision

# Recommendations

- **Sector bodies and Employer Representative Bodies** should survey their members on their skills needs, and use this insight to identify appropriate routes to engaging employers within the skills system.
- Low carbon and energy sector should offer roles with **good terms and conditions** and inclusive clear career pathways to increase the appeal of low carbon jobs and attract under-represented groups.

# Recommendations

- Employers should create **entry level opportunities** within the low carbon sector as stepping stones to apprenticeships and to attract younger workers, linking to local **Careers Hubs**.
- To support this, the Department for Work and Pensions should ensure that **job centres and employment support providers** are positioned to work closely with low carbon businesses in their area to encourage take-up of entry level opportunities.
- Workers in high carbon sectors should be **supported to retrain for roles within the low carbon sector**.

# Impacts

- This research has informed the LEP's new sector plan
- It has supported two successful funding bids for the LEP
  - Local Skills Improvement Plan Trailblazer
  - Strategic Development Fund pilot
- Unlocked new opportunities for policy influencing with DWP, and facilitated new joint research with Lancaster University.