

Skills for a Net Zero, Resilient and Sustainable Scotland

Skills are at the heart of a successful just transition to net zero and climate resilience. Fuel Change is an organisation designed to engage the next generation workforce to drive a positive transition to net zero. This session, led by Professor Dave Reay and staff and participants of Fuel Change, discuss what upskilling for climate action involves.

This workshop was facilitated by:

- **Professor Dave Reay**, Director of the Edinburgh Climate Change Institute
- **Gavin Tweedie**, Director of Community at Fuel Change
- **Andrew Barnes**, Industry Partnerships Lead at Fuel Change
- **Keith Masson**, Head of Net Zero Transition at Highlands & Islands Enterprise

Fuel Change:

- [Fuel Change](#) aims to engage the disengaged and mobilise mass action across Scotland to reduce the skills shortage and build capacity for the jobs needed in the transition to Net Zero.
- They collaborate with Scottish enterprises, educational institutions, businesses and local authorities.
- They engage young people in climate and sustainability issues while developing new skillsets through practical learning experiences.
- The Fuel Change National Challenge is a 16-week programme which allows participants aged 16-25 to take on real-world climate challenges set by a business, collaborate on a solution and present it.
- SMEs, who otherwise don't have the bandwidth or skills to prepare for climate change mitigation and adaptation, benefit from participants.



Key Messages:

- Learning in schools and universities must be applicable to future jobs.
- Upskilling can help address existing inequalities inherited from deindustrialisation.
- 'Green skills' can get pigeonholed into technical renewable energy skills, but they also encompass people, planning and problem-solving skills.
- Earlier intervention with students is key to influence their career path to grow the green workforce of the future, especially with young women.
- A place-based approach is needed for successful and sustainable action.

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Wider Group Discussion and Next Steps:

- A key role of local authorities should be to support, run and signpost to green skills programmes, however, this responsibility must not exclusively fall on them. Businesses are also needed to contribute as part of their social value by investing in the Scottish workforce and supporting initiatives, as well as using their influence through procurement.
- In the future, agriculture and land use will be key areas, which must receive more focus regarding skills transitioning.
- Opportunities exist to get involved as a mentor or join the Fuel Change programme for educational institutions. Fuel Change is planning to create a health-focused challenge in the future.
- Public sector practitioners should participate in upcoming consultations on Just Transition Plans to ensure upskilling is at the heart of discussions.

Resources signposted:

- [North East and Moray Just Transition Plans](#)
- [Energy Skills Partnership](#)
- [Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan 2020-2025](#)
- [A Net Zero Workforce](#), Climate Change Committee report (May 2023)



To view the breakout session, click [here](#)