

Marches Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)

Progress Report – Annex B

June 2025



Marches LSIP

Local Skills Improvement Plan

Marches Education Partnership (MEP)

A Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) is an employer focused plan to better match training provision to local employer skills demands through research, engagement and collaboration.

The following pages are provided to help the reader understand, in more detail, the action and activities that have been carried out or are to be carried out.

THE MARCHES EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP



TERMINOLOGY KEY

2021 Census	National Population Census for England & Wales	LA	Local Authority
BID	Business Improvement District	LSIF	Local Skills Improvement Fund
C&Eco	Careers & Enterprise Company	LSIP	Local Skills Improvement Plan
DfE	Department for Education (UK Government)	Marches	Herefordshire, Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin
DWP	Department for Works & Pensions	MEP	Marches Education Partnership
ERB	Employer Representative Body (Shropshire Chamber)	MLSIP	Marches Local Skills Improvement Plan
FE	Further Education	MSPN	Marches Skills Provider Network
HCA	Hereford College of Arts	NMITE	New Model Institute for Technology and Engineering
HE	Higher Education	NOMIS	Part of the Office for National Statistics
HLNSC	Hereford, Ludlow and North Shropshire College	SAP	Skills Advisory Panel
HTQ	Higher Technical Qualifications	SCG	Shrewsbury Colleges Group
HWGTA	Hereford & Worcester Group Training Association	SLT	Senior Leadership Team
ITP	Independent Training Provider	T level	Technical Levels
ICS	Integrated Care System	UKSPF	UK Shared Prosperity Fund



The Marches Education Partnership regrouped with a revised makeup in October 2023, to work as a collaborative group of public and private training providers to deliver the new courses, facilities and equipment as listed in their successful Local Skills Improvement Fund application. They worked closely with the Marches LSIP to ensure the selected subjects aligned with the Marches LSIP skills priorities. They split the funding into two parts for two separate projects. Doing this meant that they could reach a much wider audience, in a broader range of sectors and skill sets, to maximise the value of the funding. Project 1 related to Manufacturing and Engineering and Project 2 to Green Construction Skills. They also utilised other funding pots and enhanced or refurbished current facilities and equipment, to extend the projects further.

The MEP Partners - Public Sector Training Providers	
Hereford, Ludlow & North Shropshire College (HLNSC) Locations: Hereford, Home Lacy, Ludlow, Oswestry, Walford, Shrewsbury. HLNSC website	 Herefordshire, Ludlow & North Shropshire College
Shrewsbury Colleges Group Locations: Shrewsbury – Multiple sites Shrewsbury Colleges Group website	
Telford College Locations: Telford – Multiple sites Telford College website	
The MEP Partners - Private Sector Training Providers	
Hereford & Worcester Group Training Association (HWGTA) Locations: Hereford & Worcester HWGTA website	 HWGTA
In-Comm Training Locations: Telford & Aldridge In-Comm Training website	
SBC Training Locations: Shrewsbury – Multiple sites SBC Training website	

To see the courses on offer at the various locations please visit the Marches Education Partnership website [Home | Marches Education](#)

Project 1 – Manufacturing and Engineering Skills

7 New or refurbished facilities were created.

33 New courses started with more courses to follow to meet employer’s needs.

742 is the projected number of students that will benefit from the new facilities and equipment, not just those on MEP courses, but a wide variety of courses such as T levels, Apprenticeships and HNC/HTQs.

Examples of the types of courses being offered: (All 6 MEP partners involved in Project 1)

Advanced PLC	Advanced Welding Skills
Assembling and Testing Electronic Circuits	Assembling, Wiring and Testing Electrical Panels Components Mounted in Enclosures
Automation for Maintenance Technicians	Automation, Robotics and Programmable Logic Controllers (PLCs)
Electrical Machines	Electrical Systems and Fault Finding
Electrics for Maintenance Technicians	Electronics for Maintenance Technicians
Fluid Mechanics	Industrial Robot Technology
Industrial Robotics	Introduction to PLC (Programmable Logic Controllers)
Introduction to Robotics	Mechanics for Maintenance Technicians
Monitoring and Fault Diagnosis of Engineering System	Principles of Robots
Production Engineering for Manufacture	Programming of Robots
Robots Process and Functions	Wiring and Testing Electrical Equipment and Circuit

The courses and equipment were selected and honed with the advice of local employers to ensure that what is needed by local employers would be met by the courses and the right equipment.

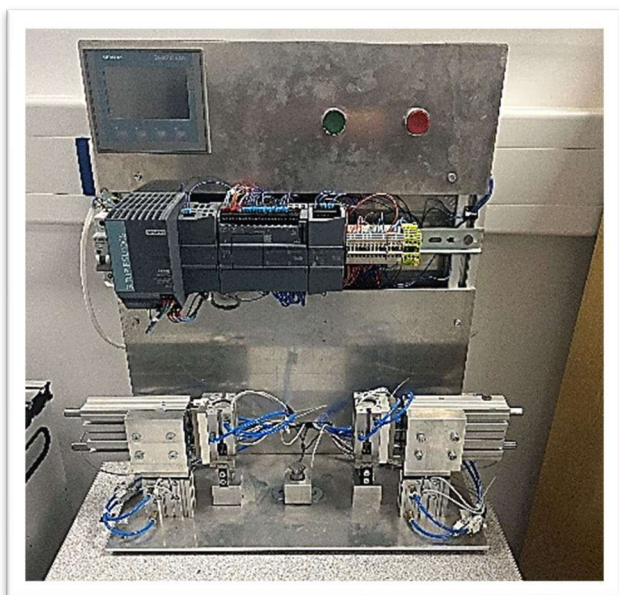
In-Comm Training responded by consulting directly with employers, including Collins Aerospace, HS Marston, Magna Cosma Casting, Autoneum, CEL Sheet Metal, and VA Technology, to co-design both the hardware and course content. These industry discussions revealed a need for flexible, modular training options, realistic, hands-on learning environments, upskilling routes for existing staff and entry-level exposure for new engineers.



Examples of some of the equipment, courses and facilities created, purchased or refurbished.

PLC, Drives and Electronics Bespoke Courses

Shrewsbury Colleges Group. We have three bespoke courses planned for June onwards with four different employers to upskill their existing maintenance staff. We have put two companies in contact with each other as they have a similar need, their geography was close to each other, and they wanted to train relatively low numbers of staff at once. Low numbers, as releasing maintenance engineers is notoriously hard to do. This has made it viable for them and allowed efficiencies/cost effectiveness in delivery costs. Of the three courses, there are three separate delivery models and durations (bespoke to the needs), ranging from off site, one day introductory course in PLC control to another company in Telford that has requested a five-day block on PLC's and first line PLC integration and maintenance. Another Telford company has requested training to upskill staff in automation as a 3-day course being delivered one day a week over three weeks.



Custom Built Automation & PLC Trainer

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Custom built equipment, created through collaboration with employers and built by the **Shrewsbury Colleges Group** engineering teaching staff for student use. The employers were part of SCG's Engineering & Manufacturing Skills Advisory Panel, with particular input from Schneider Electric.

Employer feedback:

"Thank you [Shrewsbury College] for putting this course together [Electrical/Electronics Fault-Finding and Repair course]. We have all found it very useful. It's been years since I've had to take on that much information in one day." Gareth Hughes. Lead Service Engineer at MED Equus. Global supplier of equine veterinary equipment.



LSIF Facilities Launch at **Telford College**, touring the facilities; with Müller UK & Ireland and Denso senior technical staff testing the equipment, which their staff will come to the College to use.

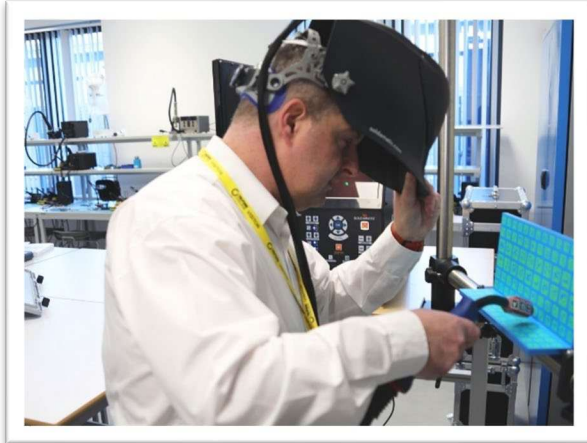
Welding and Fabrication

As part of LSIF and SEA (T Level Special Educational Equipment Allowance) funded projects, **Shrewsbury Colleges Group** have purchased equipment to reflect both current and future regional needs. This has included a Robotic Mig welder, being shared with SBC Training and Telford College. SBC Training have already used this on blocks twice to provide their apprentices with training. Also purchased a Laser Cutter, Spot Welder and 3 Invertor welders for MMA and TIG welding. These purchases were to complement the existing 15 welding bays of MIG and Invertor welders we currently have, alongside manual fabrication and CNC press brakes. This equipment is used on several courses and apprenticeships in our engineering provision, to include, but not exclusive to, Level 2 and 3 Full Time Fabrication and Welding (c.15 students), T Level Full Time (c45 students), Level 3 Fabrication apprentices (c.18 students), Level 3 Engineering Technician apprentices (c.12 students) and Level 1 – 3 evening welding classes (c.30 students) each year.



Shrewsbury Colleges Group. Additional spot and robotic welding equipment and extended building to accommodate.





Employers were able to evaluate and test the equipment during the launch tour event at **Telford College**.

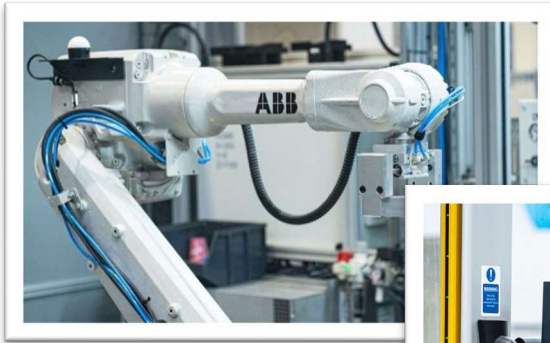
Automation/Robotics Suite

This was a newly created training suite developed to support our existing electronics and mechatronics training suites at **Shrewsbury Colleges Group**. Investment and development of specific specialist training resources have been utilised by various companies and student types, to include, and not limited to, the planned bespoke courses above on PLCs etc, but enabled us to respond to our SAP requirements with the inclusion of Automation in the new HTQ/HNC (c.40 students), new Level 4 Automation and Control Apprenticeship and new Level 4 Lead Maintenance Apprenticeships (c. 8 students from companies including SATH and Wolverhampton NHS), which has seen us enrolling people to these from as far away as Derby and enquiries for the September course, from companies in Hereford (Heineken), due to the limited training options available locally. Also, all Level 3 Mechatronics/Maintenance apprentices (c.15 students) and all Full Time T Level (c45 students), utilise this training per year.



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A CELEBRATION

In simple terms, the Local Skills Improvement Plan finds the local skills shortages and the Local Skills Improvement Fund enables activities that create solutions to counter those shortages.



Celebrating the success of the individual Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIP) across the West Midlands and the benefits the Local Skills Improvement Fund brought to each LSIP area across the West Midlands.



Project 2 – Developing Construction Green Skills including Retrofit

7 New or refurbished facilities were created

33 New courses started with more to follow

739 learners projected to undertake learning in the new facilities/equipment created under LSIF

Examples of the types of courses being offered: (Just the three colleges involved in Project 2)

Building Information Modelling	Construction Management Workshops
Digital Applications for Construction Information	Domestic Heating & Plumbing (Environmental) Apprenticeship
Environmental Technologies	NVQ in Insulation and Building Treatments
Principles of Alternative Energy	Retrofit Award
Supervising in Construction	Upskilling in Offsite Construction

The courses and equipment were selected and honed with the advice of local employers to ensure that what is needed by local employers, would be met by the courses and the right equipment.



Though all three colleges cover the entirety of the Marches, the siting of the **Low Carbon Technology Centre at Holme Lacy, Herefordshire** (part of HLNSC) had a secondary benefit. Holme Lacy campus is mainly focused on land-based studies. Students will be moving into land-based careers at a time when the impact on the environment by the sector is in the spotlight. Creating a need for innovative solutions to fuel use and environmentally friendly diversification, something they will need to have a good grasp of. This centre offers many opportunities to a wide array of learners, not just those directly involved in construction.



Example of best use of existing facilities: A classroom was refurbished in **Telford College’s** construction centre using the LSIF grant money. Prior to the refurbishment it was in poor repair with damaged furniture and floor coverings. The decor was dated, and the main screen was poor quality and was virtually impossible to see in certain light conditions. The LSIF grant allowed us to redecorate the room, replace the floor coverings, install new furniture and fit a high-resolution screen. These changes upgraded the facility and made it suitable for the adult learners while also improving the room for our existing 16-18 students and apprentices.

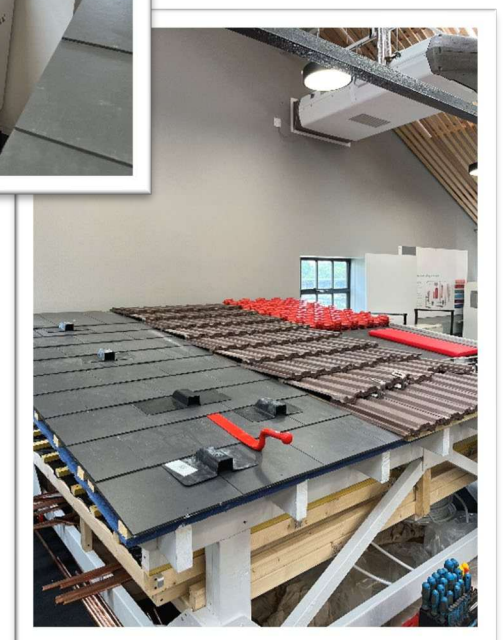
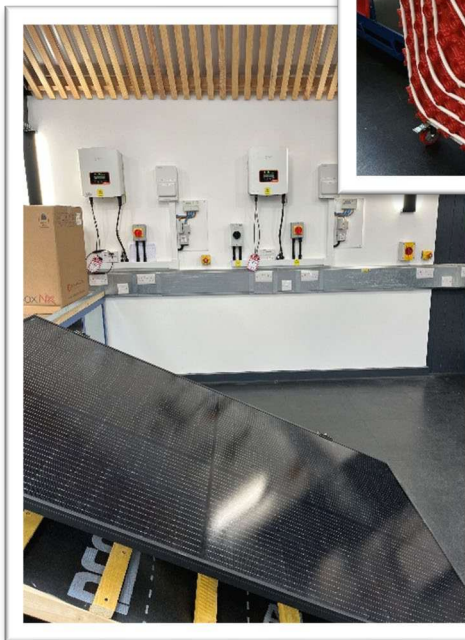
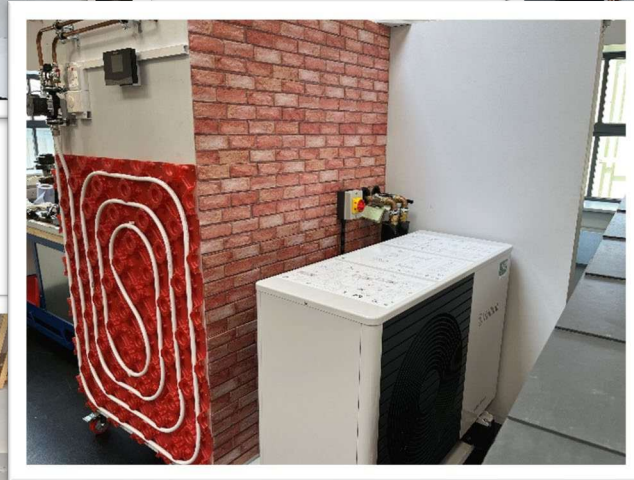
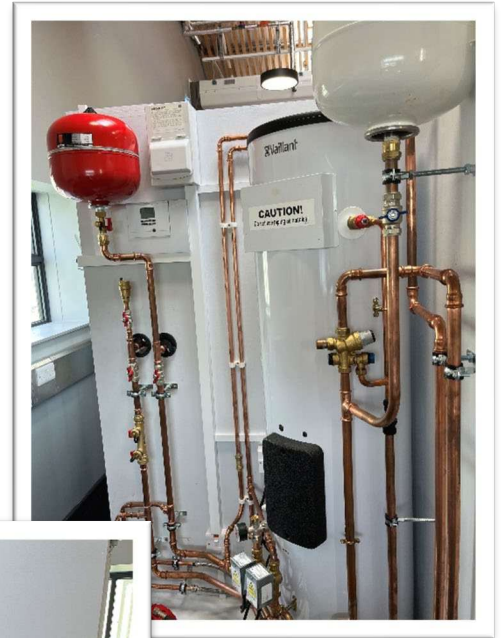
Low Carbon Technology Training Centre (LCTTC) at HLNSC’s Holme Lacy Campus, Hereford.

A cutting-edge training facility dedicated to renewable technology. This state-of-the-art centre is set to make a significant impact in advancing the adoption of sustainable energy solutions in our region. Our primary mission at the LCTTC is to support local businesses, the construction industry, and homeowners by providing comprehensive training for professionals and enthusiasts alike. Our courses are designed to equip individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to install a wide range of green energy solutions.

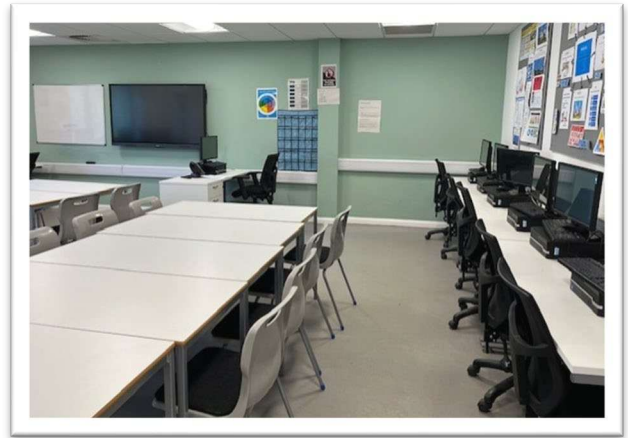


As the world strives for a greener, more sustainable future, it’s clear that a skilled workforce is a necessity. The United Kingdom’s Net Zero target underscores the importance of equipping individuals with the right skill set. To meet this challenge, we are committed to both upskilling our current industry professionals, and revising our curriculum to ensure that aspiring young (and older) tradespeople have access to the latest knowledge and techniques.

Though the funding came from various sources, the Low Carbon Technology Training Centre (LCTTC) clearly meets the needs of the Marches LSIP priorities, to ensure we have the construction professionals with the right green construction skills to meet the targets that will drive more sustainable and less damaging technologies.



Though not as dramatic in looks as the LCTTC, both Shrewsbury Colleges Group and Telford College updated facilities to ensure that they have teaching areas fit for purpose to train the green skills required for our modern construction industry.



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Example of a local company benefiting from the new courses:

A heartfelt thank you to Stuart Raine, Curriculum Director Construction & Trades and Shrewsbury College for all the work you've done with our team on the two completed units. HTQ and MAP units 15 and 24 – The Principles of Alternative Energy and Off-Site Construction.

Kathy Evans, HR Manager, R1 Construction, Shrewsbury.

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Contact information:

Employer Representative Body (ERB) for the Marches Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)

Shropshire Chamber of Commerce

Telford 01952 208200



Funded by
UK Government

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Herefordshire
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Chamber of Commerce