



REPORT

JULY 2025

EAST MIDLANDS INVESTMENT ZONE - GREEN SKILLS HUB

FINAL REPORT: FINAL FINDINGS, HUB OPTIONS, BUSINESS CASE AND DELIVERY MODEL

BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

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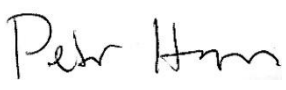
Appendix A: Bolsover and East Midlands Economic, Labour and Education Evidence

Appendix B: Derbyshire County Council Observatory: 2025 Area Profile Data for Bolsover District and Shirebrook

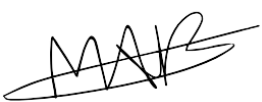
Appendix C: Rider Levett Bucknall Bolsover Green Economy Labour Market Workforce Strength Assessment (2024)

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DOCUMENT HISTORY

Revision	Date Created/Issued	Reviewed By	Brief Summary of Change
0.1	04/07/2025	Mike Bentham	Internal RLB QA prior to issue to BDC
1	08/07/2025	Mike Bentham	Finalisation of changes following QA

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Bolsover District Council (BDC) is leading work with Rider Levett Bucknall (RLB) and a range of partners to develop the business case, delivery model and plan of action for a physical skills and business support hub, and local and regional coordination offer in Shirebrook.

This hub will focus on green jobs, green skills and the Green Economy covering roles that help communities mitigate or adapt to climate change. The Green Economy ties into multiple economic sectors and has seen significant growth in recent years. The Green Economy:

- is already 4x the size of UK manufacturing sector as of 2021¹
- grew at 3x the rate of the rest of the UK economy in 2024²

BDC's work to date has developed green skills concepts and practical pilot activity for the district and the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) region, a region which faces a range of challenges but with workforce strengths and a proud mining, manufacturing and industrial heritage. This work has led to the present physical Green Skills Hub project which is located in Shirebrook at a new build facility and forms part of EMCCA's East Midlands Investment Zone (EMIZ) initiative.

In addition to developing green skills onsite provision with colleges, universities, employers and other key regional stakeholders for this skills and business centre, the district is developing plans for a regional green skills and green business coordination support offer.

Combining onsite provision in an area with no post-16 provision options with a coordination service offer could provide a scalable model for making green skills thrive in the region.

RLB with BDC have developed potential activities at the Green Skills Hub for:

- local business support.
- careers engagement.
- education provision for 14- to 16-year-olds, 16- to 25-year-olds, and across a number of levels.
- flexible short courses for adults 25 years+.
- matching and supporting work experience opportunities.
- identifying course and funding opportunities; and
- identifying local business skills, workforce and pipeline opportunities and supporting access.

This report is the **Combined Final Report** which provides detailed **Business Case** information and a **Delivery Model**, ca. **34 pages**, with further appendices collecting the latest economic and attainment data for the district and summaries of partner proposals with costs. It follows an earlier **Education Provision and Employer Needs Analysis (Interim Findings)** and separate **Delivery Options Report** delivered by RLB.

¹ [UK's green economy nearly four times larger than manufacturing sector, says report | Green economy | The Guardian](#)

² [Britain's net zero economy is booming, CBI says | Green economy | The Guardian](#)

2.0 PROJECT OVERVIEW

Bolsover District Council (BDC) has been awarded significant capital and pre-development funding to develop a Green Skills Hub ('the Hub'). This physical skills and business support hub will be based in Shirebrook at Portland Drive in Bolsover and will focus on key sectors including but not limited to construction and retrofit building skills.

The Hub will facilitate collaboration with a wide range of local education providers, employers and communities to realise district-level and Derbyshire/Nottinghamshire-wide Green Economy, attainment and employment ambitions—an offer that fits the needs of young people, workers and businesses in Bolsover and the EMCCA region, brings real opportunities and benefits to them and maximises their potential to lead in the new Green Economy.

2.1 PROJECT OUTLINE AND OUTPUTS

BDC has secured capital funding for the physical new build of the planned hub through UK Regeneration Funding (ca. £2,000,000) and recently secured crucial programme pre-development funding from EMCCA to develop the programme for the Green Skills Hub (ca. £250,000).

PROJECT LOCATION

- Address: Portland Drive, Shirebrook, NG20 8TY
- Planned Site Size: 0.55 hectares, 9,000 m² building planned at RIBA 2/3 currently



Figure 1 - Site location of Green Skills Hub in Shirebrook, Bolsover

EMCCA EMIZ PRE-DEVELOPMENT FUNDING

This pre-development funding is awarded as part of the EMCCA's East Midlands Innovation Zone (EMIZ) funding stream, which leverages the devolved powers of the new combined authority, including a devolved adult education budget, to push forward green economic development.

BDC's bid has been successful and pre-development activity is being delivered between February and June 2025 to develop the delivery model, business case and initial programme for the Hub.

The aim of the pre-development activity is to make major steps towards launching the Hub, as well as creating a scalable model for how places like Bolsover can bring in capacity from across their region to link green opportunities to local communities on a long-term basis.

KEY PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of this pre-development scope of works for the Green Skills Hub are to:

- Develop the business case, delivery model, initial plan and funding needs for the Hub.
- Identify the formal hub partners and support them to develop their hub delivery plans/options; and
- Collect partner's building and space needs for the capital project (associated with their potential physical utilisation of the building).

2.2 EMIZ EMCCA FUNDING

Bolsover's current project is part of the East Midlands Investment Zone (EMIZ), an EMCCA-wide programme to deliver sectoral and economic growth, with a focus on green economic growth. With a total funding package of £160mn announced in October 2024, this funding will be spread across a 10-year delivery programme (from April 2024). It is important to note that £80mn of the £160mn total, is allocated for the first 5 years of delivery.

This summer (2025), EMCCA will undergo a thorough review of delivery progress to date, in order to confirm allocation of the remaining £80mn of funding. Therefore, securing of funding from April 2029 is dependent on the proven success and value of delivery over the next 5 years.

In responding to the EMIZ funding call, BDC has positioned itself as a partner in delivering EMIZ ambitions, leveraging leadership on green skills development to be included in a range of "sprint" development projects. The opportunity to demonstrate innovative ways to address inclusive growth and attainment challenges in places like Bolsover while delivering key regional aims is exciting.

RLB has supported BDC in an EOI (Expression of Interest) request to support the council with further development funding to work with EMCCA and partners to finalise the plans. RLB also recommends that discussions with EMCCA to clarify the capital and revenue funding possibilities are undertaken soon, which would allow more detailed specification and funding needs.

RLB does not recommend that BDC narrows down delivery partners at this "sprint" stage but rather works this summer (2025) to confirm a refined combined proposal.

It is important to note that BDC is making a substantial capital investment of ca.£2,000,000 of its own regeneration funding to support EMIZ aims for the region, which provides significant opportunities for all partners as well as EMCCA as a whole, but need to discuss with EMCCA to understand the funding for further development post-Sprint stage, for remaining capital needs, and for revenue programmes following construction of the Hub.

2.3 CURRENT POSITION

As part of the current pre-development project, BDC invited various partners to work with BDC and RLB to develop plans for the Hub, including:

- Higher/Further Education providers:
 - RNN Group (North Notts College)
 - Vision West Notts College
 - Chesterfield College
 - University of Derby
 - Nottingham Trent University
- Private education providers:
 - Elmhurst Energy
 - NAPIT
- Direct Education Business Partnership (DEBP)
- Bolsover Communities and Voluntary Service (BCVS)
- East Midlands Chamber of Commerce (EMC)

Importantly, RLB worked with partners to develop delivery concepts for the Hub itself, but also for a green skills and green business support coordination offer that would meet key BDC goals, for example, revenue-funded support to assure uptake of provision and sustainability of the Hub, address transport issues in the region, provide tailored support for those at risk of being NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) or underemployed in the region, careers engagement and coordination of local offers to increase attainment, as well as SME (Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) and business engagement in EMIZ sectors and upskilling.

BDC and RLB concluded early on in discussions for the Hub that inviting education provider partners to develop Hub programmes with BDC was preferable to setting up a new entity to avoid duplicating regional provision but also to assure quality and more efficient development.

One of the risks identified at the outset of the project was the fact that asking providers to split provision and commit to develop an offer in a new location is a significant commitment. However, through the project, education provider partners have all put forward viable plans and made serious offers to deliver onsite at Shirebrook, which is a significant win for Bolsover.

As all partners have put forward considered plans, including proposals to bring in their own funding for parts of delivery or to manage all or part of the building, BDC will have the task of working with partners to narrow down these options.

As mentioned above, RLB recommends that these options are not narrowed down until they are further developed following clarification of the capital and revenue funding position from EMCCA.

In the interim, RLB has modelled a provisional activity plan and site layout based on review of proposals submitted and evidence RLB reviewed of successful skills centres/hubs across the UK.

For the physical building itself, it may be preferable to commence development soon based on current designs, pending clarification of a few issues like floor loads, etc., to create the shell of the building, as the additional fit outs and training equipment etc. will not require planning permission or significantly impact the current design. That said, clarity on funding position from EMCCA, plus extra development funding, would allow BDC to clarify those needs rapidly with partners and develop efficient phased design and fit out plans.

The RLB Sustainability team have introduced BDC colleagues to Diane McKinley, a Senior Associate at RLB who specialises in education building specification, and who also is experienced in developing construction further education curriculum and managing education capital development planning. As the project develops, there is flexible support that can be provided if desired to support BDC to translate the partner delivery programmes once further refined into a single specification and development plan for the building, ideally by autumn 2024.

2.3.1 RECENT POLICY AND FUNDING DEVELOPMENTS

Recent policy and funding developments provide support for the business case of the Hub:

- **UK Government made key announcements in June's [Spending Review](#):**
 - Confirmed Warm Homes Retrofit spending will go ahead, including £59 million across the Midlands over three years, a major opportunity for retrofit supply chain development and skills investments
 - Confirmed commitments for new home building, which will include over 52,000 new homes for EMCCA
 - £2billion investment for EMCCA transport improvements
- **UK Government launched [Skills England](#):**
 - Confirmed focus and investment in skills as a major theme, including focus on trades and the IS-8, which includes advanced manufacturing, clean energy, and several other sectors
 - Skills capital funding of £200 million in addition to £375 million already announced
 - Growth and Skills levy and simplification of skills system in England
 - Lifelong learning entitlement announcement
 - £1.2 billion p.a. additional skills funding by 2028
 - £100 million engineering package
 - Confirmed local business innovation investment including a £500 million fund
 - See EMCCA's response to the IS: [The East Midlands is ready to capitalise on Government's Modern Industrial Strategy - East Midlands Combined County Authority](#)
- **UK Government launched [Skills England](#):**
 - New needs assessment and evidence base for skills across sectors

- Will help manage or provide evidence for qualifications like T Levels
- Will provide opportunities to work directly with local partners to mobilise skills solutions

▪ **Additional items:**

- RLB and BDC have worked with Elmhurst Energy to agree that their Warm Homes Skills Fund submission includes the Shirebrook Hub in phase 2 of their funding request, which if successful will be a boost for EMCCA retrofit ambitions as well as support the Hub's activity.
- RLB and BDC have received positive assessment in a National Retrofit Hub review of the recent Retrofit Skills Pilot case study review and are working to engage with the Midlands Net Zero Hub to determine if further funding is available for the Hub following the pilot.
- Vision West Notts College and Derby College are leading a bid to create a Centre of Excellence for Construction skills that could incorporate the Shirebrook Hub as part of its offer to position the region as a leader in this skills area.
- There is still a need to further engage employer partners for the Hub, which will be more effective if done in parallel with the selection process for the lead delivery partner and trades/sectors selected for the Hub.

EMIZ and previous green skills efforts provide momentum for BDC and EMCCA to take advantage of this increased investment. This is significant as the current public funding scenario is mixed, with funding being cut for some important initiatives, therefore it may be beneficial to assure that BDC keeps momentum with its partners for securing funding from these new sources as they progress.

3.0 DETAILED BUSINESS CASE

3.1 PROBLEM DEFINITION AND STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

Within the Interim Findings Paper (Education Provision & Employer Needs Analysis) from April 2025, RLB set out evidence for the Hub from an education provision and employer demand perspective. Building on this, RLB has confirmed the latest Office of National Statistics (ONS) and Derbyshire County Council Observatory Data for Attainment, Deprivation and other issues in Bolsover and Shirebrook.

In the Interim Findings Paper and previous work, RLB laid out the likely demand for green built environment skills and roles for the region and Bolsover, reviewed local education provision and the need for additional resource to help businesses, educators and learners navigate local offerings, as well as evidence of the rapid growth of green industries.

In **Appendix A** and **Appendix B**, RLB build on the earlier evidence to demonstrate additional challenges faced by the district, which we believe shows that funding course placements is not enough to raise attainment. Instead, we have proposed additional resources to support learners and businesses engage and remain engaged in the Hub's activity. These are described in the Delivery Model below (sections **3.5 to 3.8**).

Bolsover District, and Shirebrook and Pleasley in particular, where the Hub is located, face some of the largest challenges of any districts in England. According to ONS and statistics collected and analysed by the Derbyshire County Council Observatory in 2025, Bolsover District has:

- the highest rates of deprivation, children in poverty and free school meal eligibility of any place in Derbyshire (with Shirebrook and Pleasley the highest rates of any single ward);
- the highest fuel poverty rate in Derbyshire, with Elmtun and Creswell the wards with the highest fuel poverty of any district in Derbyshire; and
- the highest percentage of adults with no degree, and adults with no qualifications in Derbyshire - Shirebrook being the ward with the highest rate.
- In Bolsover, the number of people qualifying as NEETs (those Not in Employment, Education or Training) has jumped in one year from 60 in 2023/24 to 234 in 2024/25, a 4x increase. Whether this is an unusual jump or a change in how these are counted, it highlights the urgency of action on priority groups like NEETs and for those at risk of becoming NEETs.

The data points collected by the Derbyshire Observatory are found in **Appendix B**, while the ONS labour and income statistics are analysed by RLB are in **Appendix A**. This evidence shows action is needed to support:

- **Pathways for younger people:** 16 – 25-year-olds having lower attainment, higher rates of unemployment than the rest of the UK, whereas older workers in Bolsover are more in line with national averages on employment rates.

- **Underemployment in adults:** Income data and qualifications data shows that adults in Bolsover are more likely to be underemployed, paid less than counterparts in the rest of Britain and held back by a lack of qualifications and certifications.
- **Elevated NEETs and people at risk:** NEETs and being at risk of being NEETs is a serious issue in the district, with the highest rate in Derbyshire.

3.2 STRATEGIC CASE AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

Before outlining the Hub's value proposition, we outline the key findings that underpinned this work:

- **The green and low carbon economy is not going away.** Though it is hard to define, and like digital skills cuts across sectors, the Green Economy is growing faster than the rest of the UK economy and is a key growth and job creation opportunity.
- **Traditional trades are key to green growth**, especially in the built environment. They are not getting replaced and are one of the biggest enablers of net zero.
- **Green Skills provision must be tailored to Bolsover's needs and challenges.**
- There is a strong case for the Hub to **focus on green construction and the built environment**.
- BDC would like the Hub to be an important part of regional (EMCCA region) **system-level change**.
- The Hub should house **multiple trades in the same place** to give workers the opportunity to broaden their career pathways and improve delivery outcomes for holistic understanding of buildings.
- **SMEs, especially in building trades, need tailored support** and incentives to invest in skills.

3.2.1 THE CASE FOR GREEN SKILLS

WHAT ARE GREEN SKILLS, GREEN JOBS, AND THE GREEN ECONOMY?

Green Skills, Green Jobs, and the Green Economy are the skills, roles and economic activity that support protecting our environment and the communities that depend on it, including activity to combat and adapt to climate change and achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions.

WHY IS THE GREEN ECONOMY IMPORTANT?

The Green Economy covers multiple economic sectors, making it difficult to track, however an overall picture is emerging. RLB's analysis on Green Skills for Bolsover/East Midlands³ from 2024 highlighted the latest evidence on the Green Economy, showing that green roles, once properly tracked, are:

- growing faster than the rest of the UK economy;
- set for growth to 2050 and beyond;

³ *Bolsover Combined Analysis Report – Bolsover Green Skills Research – April 2024*

- a key element of inclusive economic growth plans, as well as local regional and national economic competitiveness.

Skills and workers are already lacking in some key sectors of the Green Economy.

CONCLUSIONS FROM GREEN SKILLS RESEARCH

RLB's previous work has made the following recommendations:

- Green skills and jobs should be a key focus of EMCCA and the Bolsover district, especially construction, engineering and manufacturing, logistics/transport, as well as enabling roles, especially teachers and trainers.
- A green skills service offer could offer support to businesses based on how impacted they are by net zero - core, enabling, and peripheral activity would each be supported by different skills approaches, ranging from awareness training to dedicated new qualifications.
- Employer engagement and incentivisation as well as resourced, revenue-funded coordination/collaboration are the two key elements of success for green skills provision and physical training centres that work well in case studies and engagement evidence.
- RLB recommended the development of a physical skills hub and green skills service offer, providing a purpose statement and related Theory of Change/development plan.

See below section 3.2.4, the recommended Theory of Change based on the evidence reviewed, showing the importance of resourced coordination, intelligence and business needs assessment, marketing and careers, employer engagement, and other topics.

3.2.2 MAKING GREEN SKILLS WORK FOR PLACES LIKE BOLSOVER

Bolsover and the EMCCA region are not unique in developing a green skills approach, in fact regions across the UK are racing to set up training provision and skills offers in these areas. But the region is emblematic of the challenges posed by the last energy transition, from coal to natural gas, which communities across the UK, from Wales to Scotland, are still grappling with.

Bolsover has longstanding attainment, transport, employment and other challenges, and like many other areas of the UK, its economy has simply never fully recovered from the closing of coal mining and the subsequent shrinking of manufacturing capacity.

The framing theme of green skills work thus has been - places like Bolsover should be at the front of the queue, not the back, in consideration of economic development, and stakeholders need to work together to show the business case for this.

Our approach to these issues should take advantage of the region's many workforce strengths, in areas like manufacturing and construction, while figuring out how to make green skills provision work in an area with:

- Transport issues.
- Attainment issues and higher number of NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training).

- Lack of local post-16 provision; and
- Many SMEs and small traders who don't have the resource or incentives to engage in upskilling.

One of the conclusions from RLB's previous investigations is that funding courses is not enough - resourced coordination of providers, funders, employers and learners, with extensive support at each stage, is going to be essential to address these challenges and assure that communities in places like Bolsover and the EMCCA region can benefit from the green transition.

Furthermore, while it will take a lot of investment to reach net zero, every pound invested wisely with support to local communities to benefit from increased opportunities, means stakeholders can benefit from opportunities provided by this. Net zero is an urgent challenge, as is climate adaptation, but investment in this area that is set for significant growth can provide opportunities for community members to become leaders in a key growth area for the global economy.

For places like Bolsover, net zero and the green transition for the global economy means many things, but one key element is the transition away from fossil fuels towards electrification of our economy via renewable sources, especially away from natural gas heating and electricity.

3.2.3 BENEFITS OF GREEN BUILT ENVIRONMENT FOCUS

There is significant overlap between new build and retrofit in some trades. RLB through discussions with BDC and other project partners have identified the overlap between the two in terms of trade offerings, which could aid decision-making to allow BDC the flexibility to link the Hub to regional spend on both new homes and retrofit.

Firstly, green skills cover multiple economic sectors and depend on all kinds of roles, but achieving net zero will depend heavily on our ability invest in trades, especially in built environment disciplines. It's important to make people aware that green economic development is about investing in decent jobs for everyone and upskilling existing workers where needed - it is not about replacing these jobs. RLB's work showed that green skills and roles in most cases aren't replacing traditional trades and professions but will depend on the pipeline of new workers in sectors like plumbing, electricians, construction, engineering and other disciplines

The work highlighted how construction is a key priority area and strength area for the EMCCA region, with 39% of emissions linked in some ways to buildings⁴, and with 29 million homes needing low carbon retrofit by 2050 in order for us to meet UK net zero commitments⁵. The report also highlighted the key areas of manufacturing, transport and logistics as well as enabling roles, especially the need for focus on teachers and training, engineering, green skills in professional and business roles, and the public sector.

⁴ [Embodied Carbon - World Green Building Council](#)

⁵ [Retrofitting homes for net zero](#)

RLB and BDC also developed a needs assessment and analysis of the retrofit workforce needs⁶, assessing the 12 or more disciplines and trades that are involved in each building retrofit and helping understand what the job demand would be for each trade for each home delivered. We demonstrated that delivery across the East Midlands would require 11,000 workers per year if aligned to net zero, with Bolsover needing 200 workers per year.

This method showed the notional impact on demand for each individual role in retrofit, from cost managers to scaffolding. It provided the evidence for focus on traditional trades, where a lot of focus to date has been on the official retrofit assessor and coordination roles. Crucially, most of these disciplines are directly relevant for new build construction equally to retrofit.

3.2.4 NEED FOR SYSTEM LEVEL APPROACH

RLB with BDC have mapped the present Green Skills Hub proposal against the target areas of EMIZ, covering several aspects of the Sustainable and Green Construction theme. BDC with other partners' support, are hopeful to develop programmes that complement other EMIZ efforts and have strong links to EMCCA-wide initiatives, for example the EMIZ Strand B Green Construction strategy led by Nottingham Trent University (NTU).

⁶ *Bolsover and East Midlands Green Skills Retrofit Skills Analysis and Roadmap – February 2024*

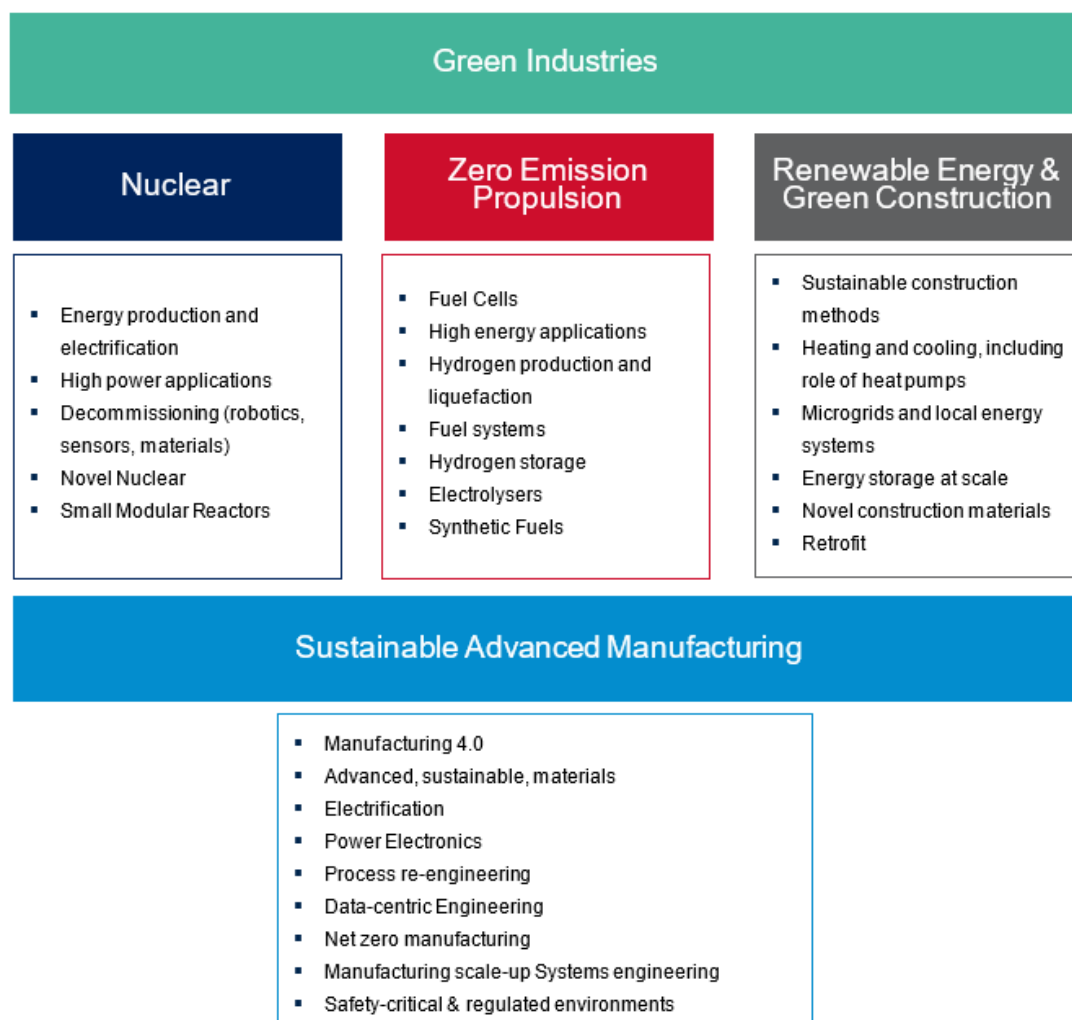


Figure 2 - EMCCA, Summary of EMIZ Green Industries and Advanced Manufacturing sectors and disciplines

We have assessed regional offers and worked to design complementary provision that does not clash or recreate offers that are available close by, but fills gaps in provision, including in Bench Trade built environment workshops as well as building insulation training, two areas identified as gaps in recent engagement with partners as well as reflected in recent collaborative research between BDC, RLB and Nottingham Trent University through the DESNZ Regional Retrofit Skills Pilot.

In summary, there are some clear themes around flexibility in training provision, complementing existing provision in the region, and a joint-up collaborative approach between education partners, but one that requires a **centralised Green Skills Coordinator role based out of the Hub**, which we will develop further but propose may sit best at an EMCCA-wide level. This will complement local tailored support we propose to make local provision work in deprived areas like Shirebrook.

MCS FOUNDATION LOCAL AREA RETROFIT ACCELERATOR (LARA)

BDC is leading an effort with Derbyshire County Council and Nottinghamshire County Council and the MCS Foundation to develop a regional strategy for EMCCA retrofit improvement.

This strategy has further progressed and developed a set of goals for a regional retrofit action plan. BDC is working to map its plans to this regional strategy, including Goal 4: to ensure we have the right capacity and capabilities for high quality retrofit delivery.

- RLB has confirmed through engagement that there may be pilot or other funding available to deliver the strategy.
- RLB is working with BDC to map the current Green Skills Hub project to the goals of the MCS to help unlock additional funding.

The Hub in Shirebrook has been earmarked as the regional Retrofit Skills Hub in the MCS LARA action plan for the EMCCA region, which is highly positive. Launching the Green Skills Hub at Shirebrook could provide a significant boost to the LARA strategy delivery and there is also potential for pilot funding from MCS Foundation which is being explored.

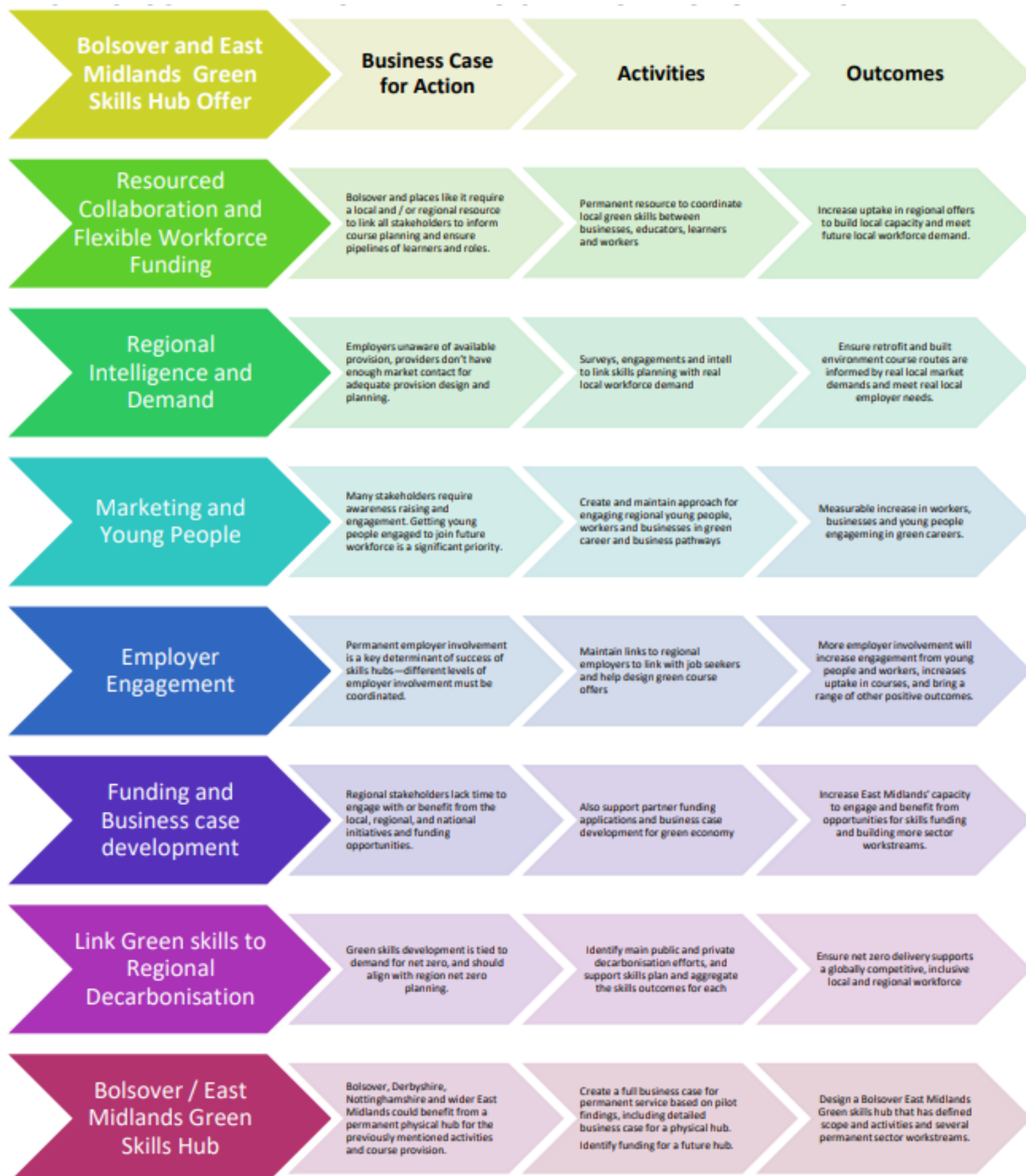
BDC'S WIDER AMBITIONS ON GREEN SKILLS

Finally, the Green Skills Hub at Shirebrook is a component of Bolsover's wider vision for supporting a region wide Green Skills offer in partnership with local authorities, EMCCA, employers, providers and communities.

These themes, activities and outcomes are described in this reports' sections below, and BDC aims for the Hub to contribute to several of these, as well as to feed into the development of EMCCA's broader plans.

The image below visualises the Theory of Change from BDC and RLB's Green Skills Analysis Report for Bolsover and the East Midlands from 2024⁷:

⁷ *Bolsover Combined Analysis Report – Bolsover Green Skills Research – April 2024*



3.2.5 HOLISTIC BUILT ENVIRONMENT TRAINING AND IMPROVING OUTCOMES

One of the main identified needs in discussions to date is helping SMEs and workers develop a more holistic understanding of new build construction processes and retrofit - giving trades people more exposure to the management processes like retrofit assessment, but also giving coordinators and assessors more exposure to the technical delivery of trades. This is needed to improve the outcomes and quality of delivery, but it also encourages businesses to be more flexible in expanding their service offer and skills. For this reason, we have proposed ensuring that multiple new build and retrofit trades train together in the same large, open space where possible to give people a wider view of different career paths in the built environment. This will also improve delivery by helping learners understand how their profession fits with others, building their knowledge of design, building physics, construction management. They would also have the opportunity to engage directly with a range of employers from across relevant industries.

3.2.6 MAKING SKILLS OFFERS WORK FOR SMES AND ENGAGING LOCAL BUSINESS IN LOCAL DELIVERY

SMEs are repeatedly noting the difficulty in engaging in skills investments, particularly in supporting work experience or apprenticeships. One task from all engaged project partners, especially led by the East Midlands Chamber (EMC), will be to identify employer incentives and barriers to skills engagement, and work those into the Hub's business case, covering:

- Incentives for SMEs and businesses;
- Navigating local provision offer for businesses and learners;
- Tailored support;
- Venue for engagement.

PROCUREMENT ACCESS AND PIPELINE OF WORK

Initial investigations have shown that demonstrating a real pipeline for employers is the central to approach incentivizing employers to participate.

Reconvening the Local Authority Retrofit Forum for collective market engagement with SMEs is one activity the Hub could coordinate.

Another is to take the best practice in procurement social value and planning condition efforts, like Chesterfield Council's approach to planning condition skills support, which can be adopted more widely – this is something the Hub could focus on to incentivize more businesses to work with the Hub and its partners on skills.

Finally, the Warm Homes Fund coordinated by the Midlands Net Zero Hub will deliver £144 million across 60 authorities over 3 years, the biggest investment in retrofit we have identified to date. This provides the most significant opportunity yet for Hub to play a role in coordinating skills elements of

market engagement and even supporting local SMEs to genuinely benefit from this investment - navigating skills investments like Trustmark, PAS 2035, and/or MCS certifications.

Below is a summary of the Warm Homes Fund:

▪ **Warm Homes: Local Grant:**

- National funding available - £500mn across 3 years
- 48 Local Authorities within the consortia (25 projects)
- Midlands Net Zero Hub awarded £69mn
- Target to deliver ~4,000 homes

▪ **Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund:**

- National funding available - £1.2bn across 3 years
- 30 consortium members
- Midlands Net Zero Hub awarded £75.8mn (£157mn with co-funding)
- Target to deliver ~8,700 homes

PIPELINE FROM WARM HOMES FUND AND DEMAND IMPACT ASSESSMENT VS RETROFIT LABOUR DEMAND

RLB has analysed the Warm Homes Spend and estimated over 5,000 jobs in retrofit will be created with this investment, across the following disciplines. This is a powerful example of the increase in demand for direct job demand (not gross value added or indirect job impact) that we might see from the Warm Homes spend:

Table 1 - Retrofit Relevant Occupations vs jobs demand

Retrofit Relevant Occupations from SIC Codes 41, 42, 43 and others	3-year job demand	Per year demand forecast
Construction Project Managers	169	56
Construction trades supervisors	422	141
Wood trades and interior fit-out	84	28
Building envelope specialists	21	7
Plasterers	42	14
Roofers	338	113
Glaziers	338	113

Specialist building operators	1,013	338
Scaffolders	971	324
Electrical trades	1,013	338
Plumbing and HVAC	169	56
Other construction professionals and technical staff	169	56
Architects	63	21
Surveyors	84	28
Admin, Contingency	528	176
TOTAL	5,426	1,809

Further work with the Midlands Net Zero Hub will allow RLB to drill down into the EMCCA and Bolsover region for demand information that will support the Hub's business case. Much of this labour will come from outside the EMCCA and Midlands region unless there is an EMCCA-wide effort to support the required SME engagement and upskilling. BDC hopes this hub will be a key part of this effort.

As noted above, the overlap between retrofit of existing buildings and building new ones is significant in terms of trades, so the Hub will not only support the Warm Homes ambitions but also the mayor's recent announcement of building 52,000 new homes in the EMCCA region⁸.

INCENTIVES FOR SMES TO WORK WITH LEARNERS

Another issue that we have investigated with partners is barriers to SMEs engaging with learners. For example, BDC has been working with RLB, DEBP and education partners like Vision West Notts College to develop a pilot for retrofit-focussed work experience opportunities for local college students, with the aim of:

- Making it easier for retrofit employers, especially SMEs, to engage in work experience by rotating placements between retrofit employers for shorter periods of time, supported throughout by BDC as the retrofit client and lead work experience sponsor.

⁸ EMCCA, May, 2025, [One region, one voice: Mayor Claire Ward launches the region's vision for UKREiF - East Midlands Combined County Authority](#)

- Developing a domestic retrofit focused work experience pathway for students, especially new Building Services T-Levels students in local colleges like Vision West Notts College, Chesterfield College and North Notts College (RNN Group).

This work has been made possible by funding from the Midlands Net Zero Hub and DESNZ as part of the East Midlands Regional Retrofit Skills Pilot project which was led by BDC in 2024.

3.3 PROPOSED ACTIVITIES, REPORTABLE OUTPUTS AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

Based on findings from RLB's work and the proposals from partners to achieve EMIZ and BDC ambitions, the following illustrative activities are proposed and considered along with their reportable outputs and the link to EMCCA's Inclusive Growth framework which is in development.

While some providers have provided initial output numbers (e.g., no. of learners per year) in **Appendix D**, these will be aggregated once confirmed with partners and EMCCA into agreed target outputs. These activities and others are subject to confirmation and change in a refined combined plan which BDC hopes to develop after the current EMIZ 'sprint stage.

Table 2 - Summary of outcomes, reportable outputs, and required resource for the Hub's proposed activities

Activity	Category	Delivery Partner	Delivery Phase	Inclusive Growth Outcome Supported	Reportable Outputs	Resource to deliver
Locally based support for those at risk of being NEETs or local priority cohorts	Green Skills Hub Support	Hub staff	Phase 1 (from late 2026/early 2027)	Better matching the supply of people from the skills system to the needs of employers Reducing the inequalities within our region that distort too many people's social mobility Having a healthier, more work-ready population	# engaged # of target starts # of target group completions # support actions delivered Reduction in # NEETs	Hub cohort support staff, EMCCA funding

Activity	Category	Delivery Partner	Delivery Phase	Inclusive Growth Outcome Supported	Reportable Outputs	Resource to deliver
Secondary school engagement and 14-16 NVQ taster courses, careers officer and teacher training	Green Skills Hub Support	Hub staff or pilot of EMCCA wide resource	Phase 1 (from late 2026/early 2027)	Better matching the supply of people from the skills system to the needs of employers	# engaged on site # courses taken up # employer / career sessions	Green Careers Engagement Coordinator
Support SMEs to navigate local training offer or access local pipeline opportunities	Green Skills Hub Support	Hub staff or pilot of EMCCA-wide resource, sessions held at hub	Phase 1 or 2 (2027 or 2028)	Growing our economy faster Increasing the pace of our economy's journey to Net Zero Building the new homes our residents need in the right places and to the right standards	# SMEs engaged # SMEs accessing local pipeline # SME CPD, certifications or procurements # SMEs engaged with EMCCA Warm Homes delivery or new homes procurement	Employer Support Coordinator, or University of Derby Staff (Climate Business Support HE is funding)

Activity	Category	Delivery Partner	Delivery Phase	Inclusive Growth Outcome Supported	Reportable Outputs	Resource to deliver
14-16 Lvl 1 and 2 provision	Core Provision	College/FE	Phase 1 (from late 2026/early 2027)	Increasing the pace of our economy's journey to Net Zero Better matching the supply of people from the skills system to the needs of employers Creating more, better paid job opportunities	# of placements started # of placements completed	College
16 – 25 yr old Lvl 2 and 3 provision		College/FE	Phase 1 (from late 2026/early 2027)	Increasing the pace of our economy's journey to Net Zero Better matching the supply of people from the skills system to the needs of employers Creating more, better paid job opportunities	# of placements started # of placements completed	College
Adult Education Short Course Certification		Elmhurst, NAPIT private providers, and/or HE partners	Phase 1 (from late 2026/early 2027)	Better matching the supply of people from the skills system to the needs of employers Creating more, better paid job opportunities Increasing the pace of our economy's journey to Net Zero	# of certification delivered # of pre-requisites for local procurement attained	NAPIT, Elmhurst and HE partners

Activity	Category	Delivery Partner	Delivery Phase	Inclusive Growth Outcome Supported	Reportable Outputs	Resource to deliver
CPD and Taster sessions and courses for Lvl 3 and 4 courses in region, adults and secondary		NTU	Phase 2 (late 2027 or early 2028)	Better matching the supply of people from the skills system to the needs of employers Reducing the inequalities within our region that distort too many people's social mobility	# of CPD hours delivered # of courses referred or enrolled	HE and FE Partners, Green Careers Coordinator
HE Research and support for improving built environment outcomes		NTU, UoD, Elmhurst		Growing our economy faster Increasing the pace of our economy's journey to Net Zero	# of tech solutions adopted # of certification pursued £ of local pipeline work won # of procurements supported	Employer Support Coordinator or NTU
<i>Please note, these and other activities are to be confirmed</i>						

3.4 BUSINESS CASE OPTIONS

3.4.1 BOLSOVER GREEN SKILLS HUB VALUE PROPOSITION VS. “DO NOTHING” OPTION FOR THE SHIREBROOK HUB

BDC and RLB are proposing an innovative skills centre that fills gaps in regional built environment provision, which will form an important component of the EMIZ strategy, EMCCA Inclusive Growth Plans (Commission), as well as the MCS Foundation Funded EMCCA Local Area Retrofit Strategy. It will also form an essential part of the district’s ambitions to improve attainment and outcomes for communities in the district, including Shirebrook, one of the most deprived areas in Derbyshire.

Having secured Regeneration Funding and EMIZ funding from EMCCA to develop BDC’s plans off the back of several years of development on green skills provision with a range of partners, BDC is committed to leveraging its investment of ca. £2 million in capital funding to support EMIZ goals.

In line with the risks considered in this paper, BDC does have the option to build the shell and lease this to a business instead of embarking on the Green Skills Hub idea.

While BDC is developing these plans with some uncertainty about funding for full development, fit out and revenue, the benefits of assuring that one of the most deprived regions in EMCCA is an important part of EMCCA’s innovation plans, outweighs the potentially lower risk or lower effort option to simply lease the shell of the building to a company for business purposes. This “do nothing” or “business as usual” option will not support BDC in its ambitions to improve attainment in the region or bring the benefits of green economic growth to the community in the form of skills and career opportunities.

Further options appraisal for business case decisions may be required at the next stage against a refined combined partner activity proposal.

3.5 DELIVERY MODEL

3.5.1 FINDINGS

FOCUS ON GREEN BUILT ENVIRONMENT: NEW BUILDS AND RETROFIT

BDC and RLB are proposing a physical skills hub that focuses on green built environment skills, which are not only skills required to achieve net zero, but they are also in areas where there are already separate workforce shortages and high demand, and offer strong, well paid career pathways.

Most partners agree the physical hub should focus on the green built environment initially, through multiple trades and disciplines that support low carbon building retrofit, from plumbing, insulation, electricians, bench trades, building management, surveying, design, etc., which also overlap significantly with trades for new builds. However, the concept and space can be upscaled to engage local people in other EMIZ target sectors, and partners have already proposed additional offerings that could be coordinated from the Hub but delivered at different locations, as outlined in **Appendix D**.

Given the level of investment forthcoming in Midlands and EMCCA region for new homes and retrofit (see section **2.3.1**), there is significant opportunity to leverage the spending for local job creation and

business skills investment, including SME engagement. The timing of the Hub creation as these built environment investments are coming on-line is a great opportunity and reflected by most of the plans.

FURTHER EDUCATION (FE) COLLEGE WILL BE LEAD PARTNER FOR COLLABORATIVE HUB

There are many options to consider, but there is a strong argument to have a further education college as a lead partner, and perhaps to take on management of the building, for the following reasons:

- FE has a stronger remit in target areas like 14- to 16-year-olds, 16- to 25- year-olds and adults;
- FE has more ability to generate their own funding streams and develop sustainable programmes;
- FE has experience managing security and safeguarding rules for young people in building management, a responsibility other partners may not be able to take responsibility for; and
- There is a high demand for the FE provision in this area, with no current post-16 provision based in the Bolsover District

This said, it is highly beneficial to have strong partnerships and some onsite delivery with universities and open university pathways to local residents. At the same time, private providers like Elmhurst Energy and NAPIT can deliver flexible short courses to adults and businesses against leading certifications in ways that complement other provision very well. All of these partners working together can share this large space, managed by a lead FE partner or partners, with a range of activities that meet identified needs, but also help keep the Hub sustainable and vibrant.

REVENUE FUNDED HUB SUPPORT OFFER FOR PRIORITY GROUPS AND ENGAGE SMES

Bolsover District has highest percentage of adults 16 to 64 without Qualification of any kind in all of Derbyshire, and evidence of underemployment and lower pay than the average for Derbyshire or Great Britain as a whole. Adult education short certifications as well as taster courses for flexible adult learning from partners like NTU can help address this problem.

At the same time, the number of Universal Benefit claimants under 25, the number of NEETs, and the number of people under 25 who are under-qualified in Bolsover and Shirebrook in particular is the highest in Derbyshire, or near the highest. The provision led by FE colleges targeting 14- to 16- year-olds as well as provision for 16- to 25-year-olds in a District with no post-16 provision will fill a major gap. The fact that it will be supported by dedicated support resource to get people engaged and work to retain them through to qualifications will provide a model that Chesterfield College is already piloting at their Staveley site, and BDC hope to demonstrate and upscale this at Shirebrook.

MEETING REGIONAL PROVISION NEEDS AND MINIMISING FIT OUT COSTS

The Hub's current building design is an empty warehouse divided into two halves, roughly 451 m² each side, and eight metres high. There are capital needs for further fit out, equipment and other transport facilitation requests including minibuses.

However, there is significant classroom capacity already at FE colleges. The education provider partners have focussed on the potential provided by open space and eight metre high ceilings that could provide opportunities for meeting provision needs that cannot be met elsewhere, either with

unique training equipment or allowing for flexible use of space, for example at the BE-ST Centre in Scotland (**Figure 4**[Error! Reference source not found.](#)) or the Energy House in Salford (**Figure 3**), which creates a model home in a warehouse where many different trade disciplines can build their skills in a real environment:



Figure 3 - Energy House, University of Salford. [The new-build 'homes' where energy scientists play God with the weather The Guardian](#)



Figure 4 - BE-ST National Retrofit Centre. [National Retrofit Centre - BE-ST](#)

In **Appendix D**, RLB provide a further review and summary options for the physical building and Hub based on proposals received by partners during the sprint phase. Once BDC and RLB have clarity on funding scenarios from EMCCA, these options will be refined with input of partners and assessed more formally, as well as matched with specifications. Summaries of partner proposals in **Appendix D** include descriptions, course offerings and activities, and building need and equipment information.

Some, not all partners provided estimated cost breakdowns associated with suggest building layout and equipment, and pre-development (pore-commencement) costs.

3.6 DELIVERY MODEL PLAN AND TIMELINE

RLB has developed a proposed timeline for the EMIZ Green Skills Hub Delivery Plan (**Figure 5**), divided into Strategic Development, Construction and Handover, then following the Hub's launch end 2026/early 2027, Phase 1 and Phase 2 in 2028.

The plan covers the strategic planning, delivery of the physical building and fit out, as well as education provision and Hub operation. This plan may be subject to refinement and will have regard to EMCCA reporting responsibilities and project outputs as agreed with EMCCA.

Phase 3 will be confirmed post-hub launch in agreement with EMCCA to plan for the post-EMIZ period.

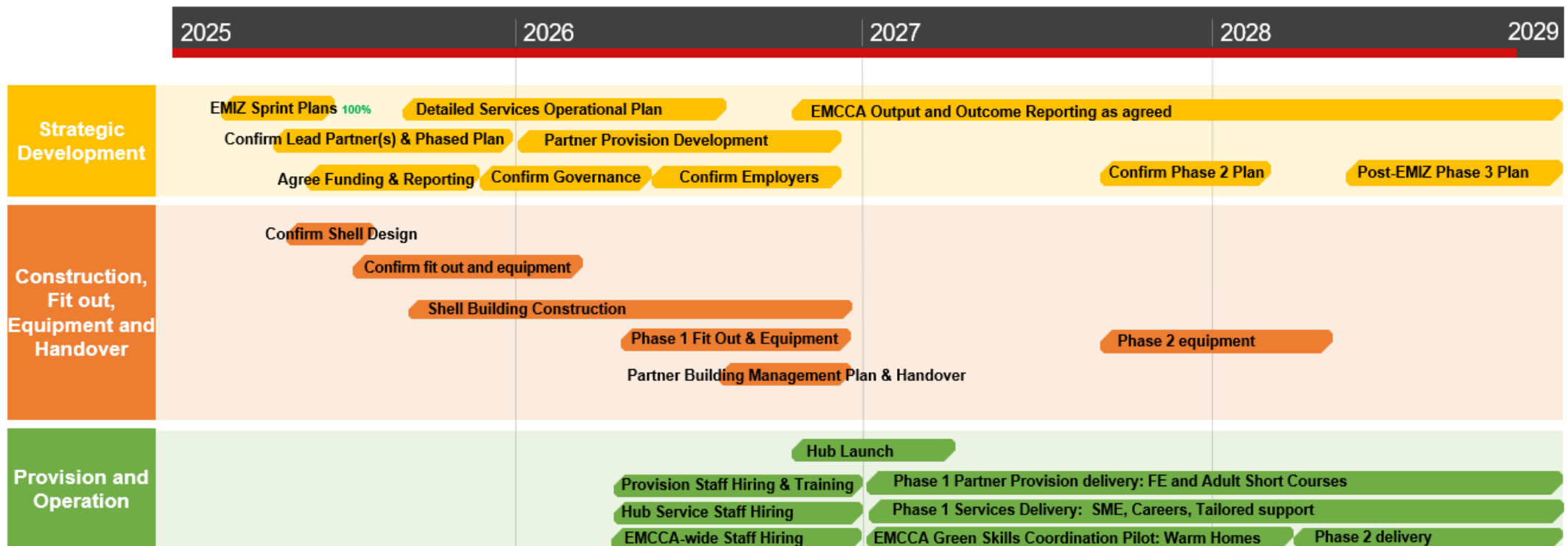


Figure 5 - Proposed Green Skills Hub Delivery Timeline

3.7 DELIVERY MODEL ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Figure 6 below shows a proposed structure of the Hub’s operational model. The core provision delivery will be led by FE college partner or partners, who will also manage the building. They will also launch (as part of Phase 1) from 2027, short certification courses for adults as well as the Green Skills Hub Service Offer support. Higher Education activity and employer involvement will increase in Phase 2 from 2028, if not before.

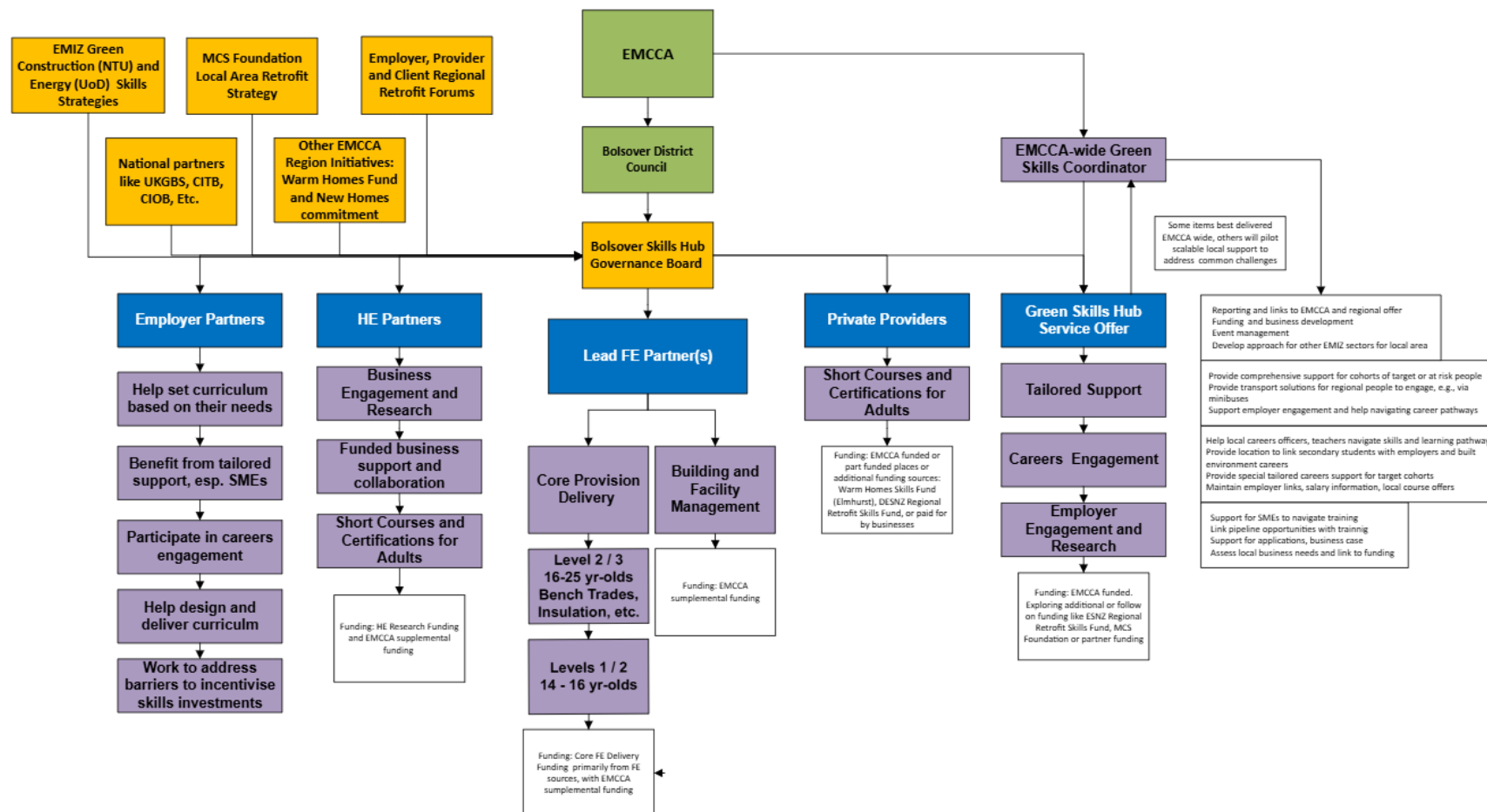
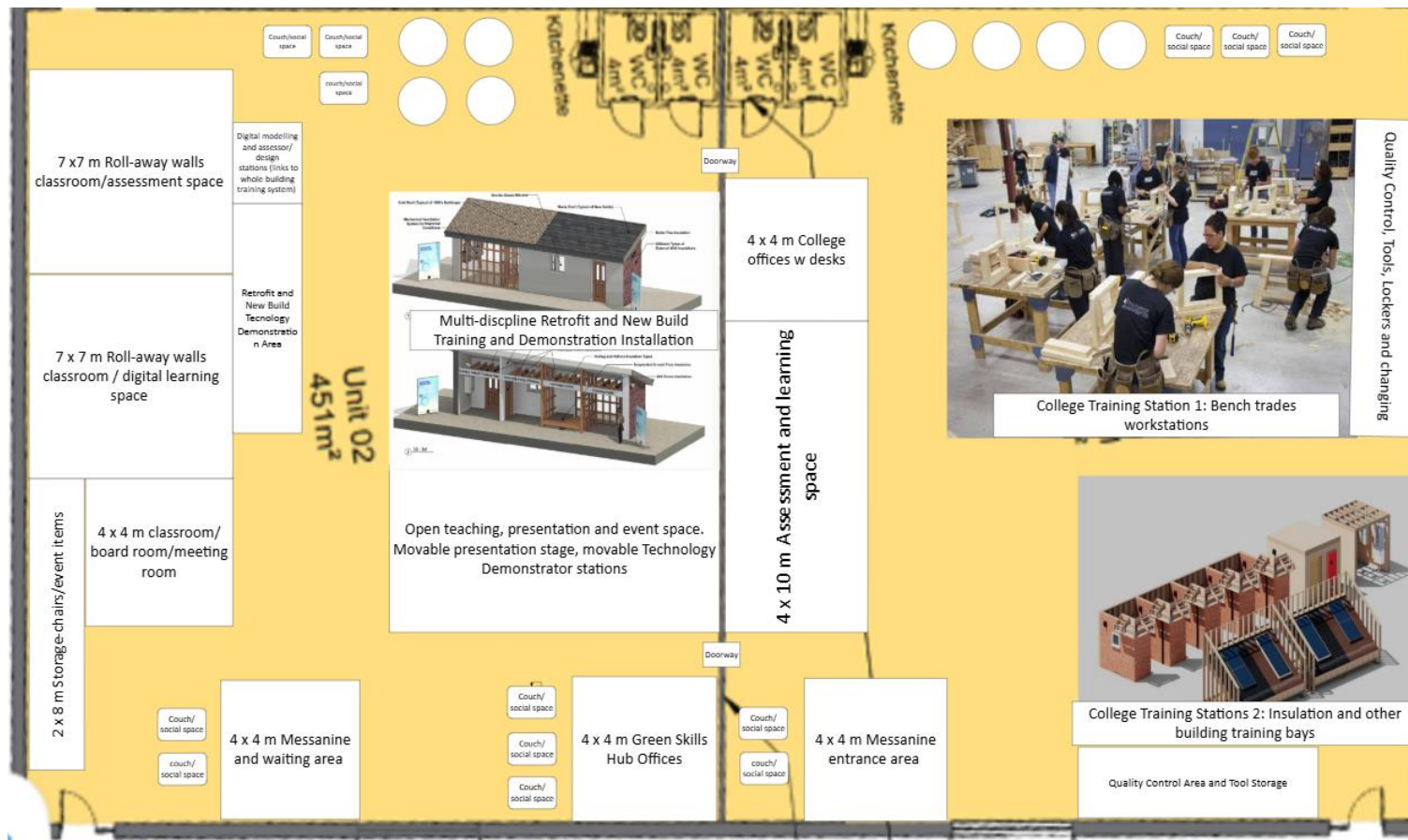


Figure 6 - Proposed Operational Model for the Green Skills

3.8 DELIVERY MODEL HUB PROVISION CONCEPT

RLB has amalgamated the key elements of all partners' proposals to suggest an illustrative concept of joint delivery between FE, HE and private partners on the site, with workshop trade training on one side led by colleges, with innovative class, event and technology demonstration space on the other. This multiuse space could have a range of shared uses, from careers engagement to adult education training, SME support services and far beyond.



3.9 PRELIMINARY RISK ASSESSMENT

Table 3 - Preliminary risk assessment - Green Skills Hub delivery and operation

Risk	Description	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation
Need to confirm and further develop plan	BDC EMIZ partners have put forward credible plans to for sustainable delivery, but further development is needed			More development funding has been requested to allow plan to be pulled through to operation and handover.
Delay in building specification or construction	Partners need to discuss what funding is available to be able to understand what specification is possible. Delays could delay launch of the Hub.			Have highlighted need for clarity of funding to be able to confirm plans and finalise specifications and plan fit out. Partners have identified building needs so this can be specified quickly on confirmation. Requested and also identifying funding for ongoing development.
Inadequate fit out funding	BDC has put forward significant resources to dedicate the building to EMIZ regional strategy and covered the main capital costs of £2million. However, if there is no fit out or equipment funding, the building cannot reach its potential as a skills centre.			Open plan and minimal fit out are a strength of the plans—all partners want to leverage open space. But sustainable provision requires fit out investment and equipment for training beyond the £2million that BDC has leveraged itself for the building shell.
Inadequate revenue and support funding	BDC has well established challenges in education engagement, mobility. Additionally, construction SME market it also difficult to sustain engagement with. Without revenue resource to			While partners, especially FE partners, can develop and secure their own funding for core provision, to make the Hub work in a place like Bolsover, our evidence and engagement has shown that tailored local support as well as engagement with EMCCA-wide coordination is

Risk	Description	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation
	complement the core provision and get people through the door and keep them engaged, the centre is at risk of being unsustainable due to the high rate of local deprivation, lack of attainment, poor transport links and other challenges.			required to keep stakeholders engaged sustainably.
Regional engagement and links	Getting learners and especially businesses to engage with the Hub will depend in part with the level of integration with the rest of EMIZ and other EMCCA regional efforts, like leveraging upcoming EMCCA retrofit and new homes spend to incentivise SMEs to engage.			All partners have focused on deliverability and filling gaps in current provision for sustainable offer at the Hub. We will request revenue funded support to engage locally get and keep learners engaged in programmes. Support for example includes suggestions for minibus and other transport support.
Employer engagement	Our findings show training centres are only sustainable with employer engagement. Building trades are dominated by SMEs which need incentives to engage.			Business engagement resource is one of the key requests of EMCCA to assure sustainability of the centre. We are also working to secure larger and smaller employer commitments prior to construction.
Learner Engagement	Engaging and retaining learner engagement, whether young people or adults, is a challenge in locations like Shirebrook.			Dedicated resource to complement FE led provision and to provide tailored support, including transport support, to target groups is key to BDC's proposal.

3.10 COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Table 4 - Estimated cost ranges for further development of the Green Skills Hub

Item	Type	Est. Cost Range	Proposed Funding Source
Further Development work to confirm detailed solution	Development	Minimum £107,000	EMCCA as per EMIZ EOI request from BDC. BDC exploring additional for short term solution.
Fit out – classrooms, furniture, mezzanines, offices, lighting, screens and IT, event stage, roll-away classrooms, etc.	Capital	£500,000 to £1,000,000+	EMCCA as per EMIZ application
Training Equipment – work benches, building training bays, technology demonstration stations, multi-discipline building training asset	Capital	£200,000 to £750,000	EMCCA as per EMIZ application, will seek donations of equipment from partners
Transport – two 12 to 16 seat minibuses	Capital	2 new electric minibuses £120,000 (£60k each) OR 2 used minibuses £50,000 (ca £25,000 each)	EMCCA as per EMIZ application
Service support officers – Employer, Careers, and Tailored Support Officer (at risk of NEETs and priority groups)	Operational	Ca. £180,000 p.a. for ca. 3 roles	EMCCA as per EMIZ application, will also query Midlands Net Zero Hub and MCS Foundation for part
College Hub Manager and Tutors	Operational	TBC	TBC
EMCCA -wide Green Skills Coordinator	EMCCA (outside hub)	£60,000 p.a.	EMCCA or MCS Foundation
Climate Business Support	Operational	Ca. £60,000 p.a.	University of Derby
Utilities	Operational	£10,000 to £15,000 p.a.	EMCCA as per EMIZ application
Insurance	Operational	£2000 to £5000 p.a.	EMCCA as per EMIZ application
Maintenance and grounds maintenance	Operational	£5,000 to £10,000 p.a.	EMCCA as per EMIZ application

Most of BDC's partners as part of their individual Hub Engagement Plans provided some cost information, but these are only approximate estimates until the final mix of partners and Phase 1 activities is confirmed.

RLB has made a high-level estimate of operational and capital costs (**Table 4** above). These costs are illustrative only but can be confirmed and aggregated through further discussions with EMCCA colleagues and confirmation from partners.

3.11 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The development of the business case reflects input from a range of partners, including analysis and input from key partners on the topic of business engagement, community engagement and inclusion, and careers and engagement with young people. RLB also engaged with Nottingham College to understand the parameters for a potential EMCCA-wide coordination offer that would work with the Hub at Shirebrook and related facilities to help coordinate with businesses and each other to increase uptake with existing offers in the region. This input is summarised below and has informed the business case.

3.11.1 BUSINESS SUPPORT APPROACH

RLB's research into skills offers by local authorities and physical skills centres found that employer involvement was the key to success. The East Midlands Chamber (EMC) is led the initial investigation of employer partners for the Hub, but also the identification of incentives for different employers to participate.

In addition to skills, business support services could be a key activity of the Hub - this could introduce SMEs to main contractors, help them navigate procurement frameworks or retrofit standards, help them understand the business case for new technology adoption or training investment, among other services.

The Retrofit Employer Forum convened by the EMC will also be linked to the delivery of the Hub and can be explored as an EMCCA-wide lever for engaging the retrofit market and education providers with local authorities ahead of Warm Homes funding launch.

BDC with RLB's support, will work with partners like EMC to secure official employer partnerships for the Hub following confirmation of the mix of trades and disciplines that will occupy the site.

3.11.2 BCVS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Bolsover Communities and Voluntary Service (BCVS) has led on community consultation discussions about the Hub. While finding broad support for a green skills hub, they have refined their responses and evidence into a range of asks and proposals for the Hub that require further development with all partners:

- In addition to green skills, formal and technical qualifications, there is a need to incorporate provision of soft skills, numeracy, literacy, life skills and basic IT or data management skills, especially if there is a focus on NEETs or other target groups. This would also be useful for older learners who have missed out on these elements.
- Having access for local businesses and charities to meet and facilitate shared provision would be welcomed to support marginalised groups.
- Proposals for "joined up" offers leveraging the Hub as key component for multiple interventions and support for NEETS or those with long term conditions.

- Suggestion that the Green Skills Coordinator resources support activity beyond construction and beyond the physical hub, including work with the local Wildlife Trust on forestry training, areas like repair and landscape/horticulture. Finding a way to incorporate the voluntary sector would also bring significant benefits.

BCVS has also put forward a proposal for electric minibuses to be an important part of the Hub, which would allow transport support for cohorts of people and increase the uptake and accessibility of training to people with transportation or attainment challenges, an example of the tailored, local support that the Hub could offer to better engage target groups in positive career pathways and skills training.

3.11.3 CAREERS ENGAGEMENT AND DEBP SECONDARY SKILLS STRATEGY

Direct Education Business Partnership (DEBP), a careers development-based charity, is led the development of a careers approach for the Hub, that builds upon previous work led by RLB and DEBP - developing green skills materials for careers professionals and teachers. DEBP's intention is to create sector specific careers materials and engage employers to co-deliver engagement sessions for young people and help people understand career paths and related education routes locally, including onsite at Shirebrook.

This careers approach is important to engage employers within Bolsover and regional communities. It will also be a part of the strategy for working with employers to find solutions and messages that support those furthest away from work or education.

One of the major opportunities of the Hub is to increase attainment in Bolsover and the region with a proactive approach to careers coordination, engagement with businesses, and targeting pre-16-year-olds, teachers and careers offers to help them navigate regional green skills offers, understand green careers, work with employers, and get a head start on their career pathways.

DEBP has developed a strategy for the Hub, identifying evidence for a gap in provision and support for 14- to 16-year-olds, and reviewing programs like Fusion Learning and Raising Aspirations, methods of engaging cohorts of these groups with tailored support and careers/employer opportunities. They have made the following suggestions for the Hub and coordination offer based on their analysis and strategy⁹:

⁹ DEBP, *The Green Skills Hub & Secondary Education: Securing a Talent Pipeline*, 2025, EMIZ report for BDC.

Key requests. A Green Skills Hub that enhances secondary education and is aspirational and motivational for a range of learners:

- *High-quality Alternative Provision (AP) offer to motivate and re-engage learners with their educational journey.*
- *Taster activities for post-16 pathways exploration – broaden learner understanding around green careers at FE and HE.*
- *Curriculum offer of a L2 equivalent vocational programme of study.*
- *Engagement strategy that commences in the development and build phase, including careers fayres, careers materials, CPD events for educators, and parent/carer engagement events.*
- *Opportunities for young people to connect with employers associated with the Hub (hub and spoke model) to better understand 'green' careers.*

3.11.4 EMCCA-LEVEL GREEN SKILLS COORDINATION

Partners at Nottingham College have focused on the coordination offer rather than physical delivery at the Hub. They have developed a review of regional initiatives and made suggestions for Hub and wider coordination governance and approach. Included in this is a refinement of target areas that would benefit from local coordination, signposting, support for funding applications, joint employer engagement, and higher ambition and support for target groups to engage as part of a regional green skills offer:

COORDINATING LOCAL PROVISION

Local economic strategies and plans, along with primary research carried out by local partners, identify the need for the following areas of curriculum development from entry levels to higher technical skills in specific areas related to EMIZ priority topics:

- Climate literacy integration embedding green awareness across all existing programmes.
- Basic insulation installation.
- Solar panel installation.
- Environmental awareness covering waste management fundamentals.
- Building Information Modelling (BIM) for green construction.
- Heat pump installation and maintenance.
- Wind turbine technician training.
- Retrofit training (PAS 2035 certification) for retrofit assessor and coordinator pathways.
- Energy efficiency technician training.
- Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) incorporating offsite manufacturing and assembly.
- Battery manufacturing technician skills.
- Green project management with sustainability focus.
- Fuel cell technology fundamentals.
- Hydrogen production and safety training.

- Electric vehicle charging point installation and maintenance.
- Circular economy principles covering recycling and remanufacturing; and
- Carbon auditing and emissions calculation.

3.11.5 GOVERNANCE, DECISION-MAKING, AND PARTNER CONFIRMATION

BDC has established an initial governance project team that oversees the optioneering and partner confirmation, following the sprint period. Once funding and partners are confirmed, this will be transitioned to a multi-partner governance board for the Hub, including the lead FE college partner(s), as well as industry and employer representatives and other partners.

Currently the BDC project oversight team includes BDC's:

- Climate Change Officer;
- Deputy CEO;
- Head of Economic Development;
- Head of Planning; and
- Programme and Major Projects Manager.

The RLB team currently reports into this group. The project is sponsored by Chris Fridlington, Director, at BDC, and Richard Winter, BDC's Climate Change Officer.

As all partners have put forward viable plans for the building and expressed interest in committing to lead or co-lead the Hub, the final selection of governance board and Terms of Reference will be on hold until these are confirmed.

The current group will oversee optioneering and the progression of the Hub Delivery Plan and Timeline noted above (section **3.6**).

4.0 RLB RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS

RLB and BDC have received detailed options, including operational information, building and equipment needs, proposed course offerings, and estimated costs and outputs. These are summarised for each partner in **Appendix D** below. RLB has the following recommendations for BDC and EMCCA on next steps against the EMIZ Hub Delivery Plan, which is to refine the offer and commence construction:

- Plans have progressed with viable plans provided by most partners. This means that the Hub has progressed through a milestone and is a positive sign for viability given the level of partner interest, but this does mean **BDC will need to narrow down options and select a lead partners**.
- The EMIZ Sprint has achieved its goals and is fully on track, but there is more work to be done to refine the delivery plans, match to a single building specification, and develop into delivery plans - including the elements that are new, e.g., tailored support for NEETs. RLB and BDC have submitted an EOI request for further funding.
- BDC should not select the lead delivery partners before clarity on future funding is realised. The refinement of plans based on when funding is clarified will not be a long exercise. However, **RLB recommends discussing with EMCCA at the earliest opportunity** to understand the timeline for clarity on capital and revenue funding.
- When requesting further developing funding and investment in the capital and revenue follow-on funding, BDC should point out the significant investment of its own regeneration funding that is being leveraged to support EMIZ ambitions and shared local attainment goals as part of its business case.
- New builds as well as retrofit have significant upcoming investment from recent policy announcements, and the Shirebrook Hub is formally earmarked in the MCS Foundation EMCCA retrofit strategy as the regional Retrofit Skill Hub, which opens opportunities for BDC. Thus, while MMC plans are promising, there needs to be at least some provision that supports retrofit trades. Fortunately, there is significant overlap in new build and retrofit disciplines.

APPENDIX A:
BOLSOVER AND EAST MIDLANDS ECONOMIC, LABOUR AND EDUCATION
EVIDENCE

ONS DATA AND ANALYSIS

Source: ONS, Qualification attainment, Bolsover, East Midlands and Great Britain, Jan 2024 to Dec 2024, source, ONS Annual Population Survey [Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics](#)

The tables below have been compiled by RLB based on the latest ONS Data for attainment and income for Bolsover. The information compares Bolsover's performance with the rest of the East Midlands and also with Great Britain as a whole. Where there is a significant difference, we have calculated the percentage difference from Great Britain and suggested where that points to an area of higher need of investment for Bolsover.

Qualifications (Jan 2024-Dec 2024)				
	Bolsover (numbers)	Bolsover (%)	East Midlands (%)	Great Britain (%)
RQF4 and above	15,100	30.0 (-17%)	42.2	47.6
RQF3 and above	26,700	53.1 (-14%)	65.4	67.9
RQF2 and above	41,700	83.0	85.4	86.7
RQF1 and above	42,200	83.9 (-5%)	88.9	89.1
Other qualifications	Not available	Not available	4.7	4.2
No qualifications	Not available	Not available	6.4	6.7

Source: ONS annual population survey

Sample size too small for reliable estimate (see definitions)

! Estimate is not available since sample size is disclosive (see definitions)

Notes: For an explanation of the qualification levels see the definitions section.

Numbers and % are for those of aged 16-64

% is a proportion of resident population of area aged 16-64

For RFQ3 and 4, Bolsover is a full 14% and 17% below the population of GB, respectively. This shows a general attainment challenge in the district.

Earnings by place of residence (2024)			
	Bolsover (pounds)	East Midlands (pounds)	Great Britain (pounds)
Gross weekly pay			
Full-time workers	627.7 (-15%)	684.1	729.8
Male full-time workers	666.5 (-15%)	736.9	777.5
Female full-time workers	534.1 (-23%)	613.2	673.2

Earnings by place of residence (2024)			
Hourly pay - excluding overtime			
Full-time workers	15.27 (-20%)	17.28	18.73
Male full-time workers	15.97 (-19%)	18.03	19.37
Female full-time workers	14.11 (-23%)	16.18	17.92
Source: ONS annual survey of hours and earnings - resident analysis			
Notes: Median earnings in pounds for employees living in the area.			

Bolsover's earnings per resident and hourly pay rates are significantly lower than for the rest of the East Midlands and GB as a whole. While some costs like housing are relatively lower in Bolsover than GB as a whole, this is a strong indication of underemployment among adults in the district.

Claimant count by age - not seasonally adjusted (May 2025)					
	Bolsover (level)	Bolsover (%)	East Midlands (%)	Great Britain (%)	
Aged 16+	1,570	3.1	3.7	4.1	
Aged 16 to 17	5	0.3	0.2	0.2	
Aged 18 to 24	360	6.4	5.1	5.5	
Aged 18 to 21	235	8.2	5.4	5.9	
Aged 25 to 49	875	3.5	4.2	4.7	
Aged 50+	330	1.9	2.6	3.1	
Source: ONS Claimant count by sex and age					
Note: % is number of claimants as a proportion of resident population of the same age					

The rate of claiming Universal Benefit claims in Bolsover is below the national average for people aged 25 to 49, but the rate of younger claimants in Bolsover District is significantly higher than the average for the wider East Midlands or Great Britain as a whole.

UK Business Counts (2024)				
	Bolsover (numbers)	Bolsover (%)	East Midlands (numbers)	East Midlands (%)
Enterprises				
	Bolsover	%	East Midlands	%
Micro (0 to 9)	1,940	86.6	161,910	88.9

UK Business Counts (2024)				
Small (10 to 49)	225	10.0	16,365	9.0
Medium (50 to 249)	60	2.7	2,980	1.6
Large (250+)	15	0.7	780	0.4
Total	2,240	-	182,030	-
Local Units				
Micro (0 to 9)	2,185	81.5	177,530	83.8
Small (10 to 49)	375	14.0	27,470	13.0
Medium (50 to 249)	105	3.9	5,875	2.8
Large (250+)	15	0.6	870	0.4
Total	2,680	-	211,750	-
Source: Inter Departmental Business Register (ONS)				
Note: % is as a proportion of total (enterprises or local units)				

As with most of Great Britain, microbusinesses make up a large proportion of the total number of businesses in Bolsover and East Midlands.

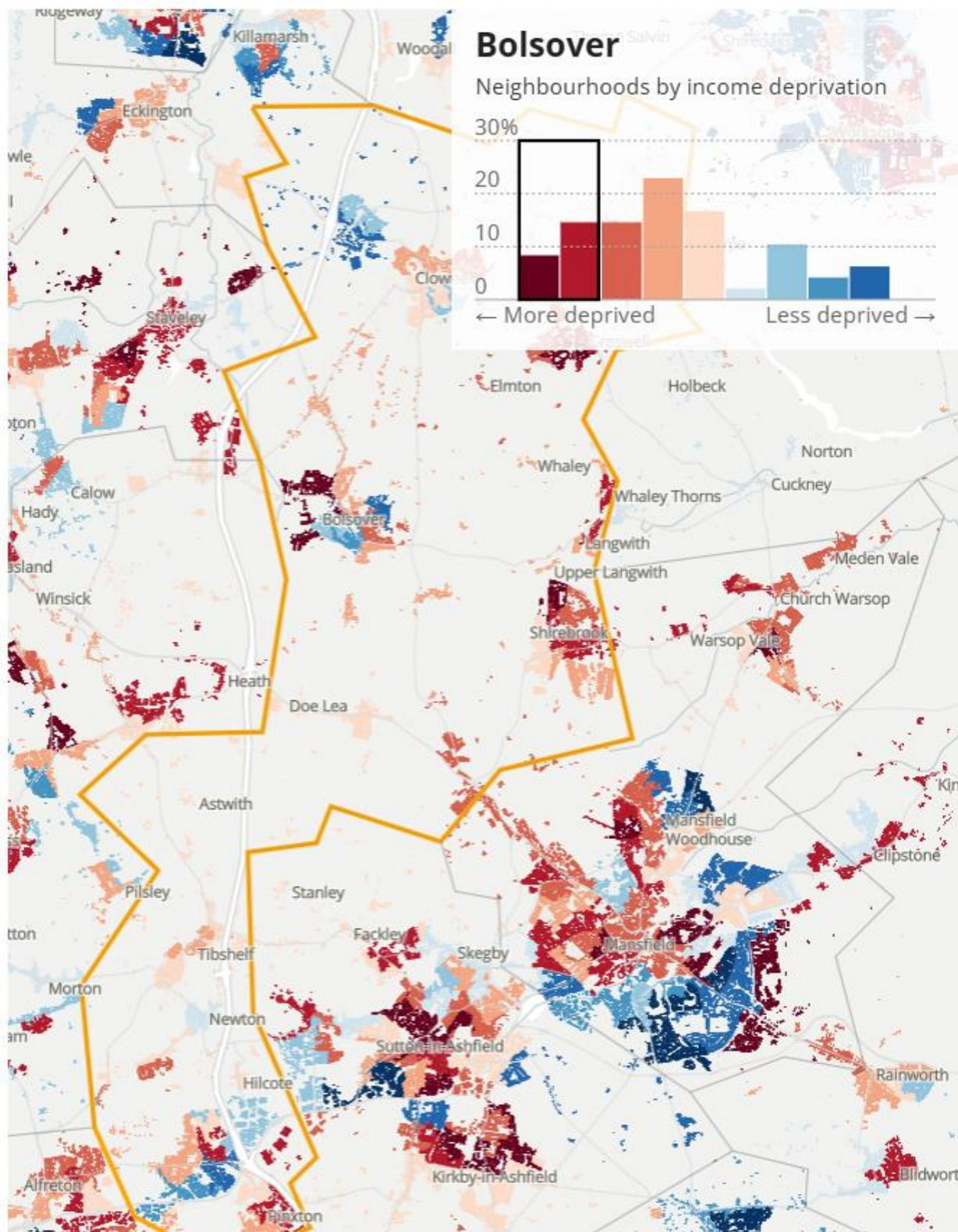


Figure 7 - ONC Income Deprivation, Bolsover and Shirebrook. Source: [Exploring local income deprivation](#)

APPENDIX B:
DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL OBSERVATORY: 2025 AREA PROFILE DATA FOR
BOLSOVER DISTRICT AND SHIREBROOK

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL OBSERVATORY, BOLSOVER AREA PROFILE 2025

Source:

Derbyshire

Derbyshire Observatory

[Welcome to the Derbyshire Observatory - Derbyshire Observatory](#)

[Microsoft Power BI](#)

[Area Profiles - Derbyshire Observatory](#) Bolsover District and Shirebrook & Pleasley Area Profiles, 2025

This section reviews 2025 evidence on Bolsover and Derbyshire from the Derbyshire County Council Observatory, which manages data for all the districts in the county. The information provides further context for the challenges that Bolsover needs to address to ensure its communities benefit, rather than fall behind, from shifts like the greening of our economy.

On NEETs, the data shows a significant increase in one year in the number of NEETs in Bolsover, which should be explored in relation to the plan of the Shirebrook Hub.

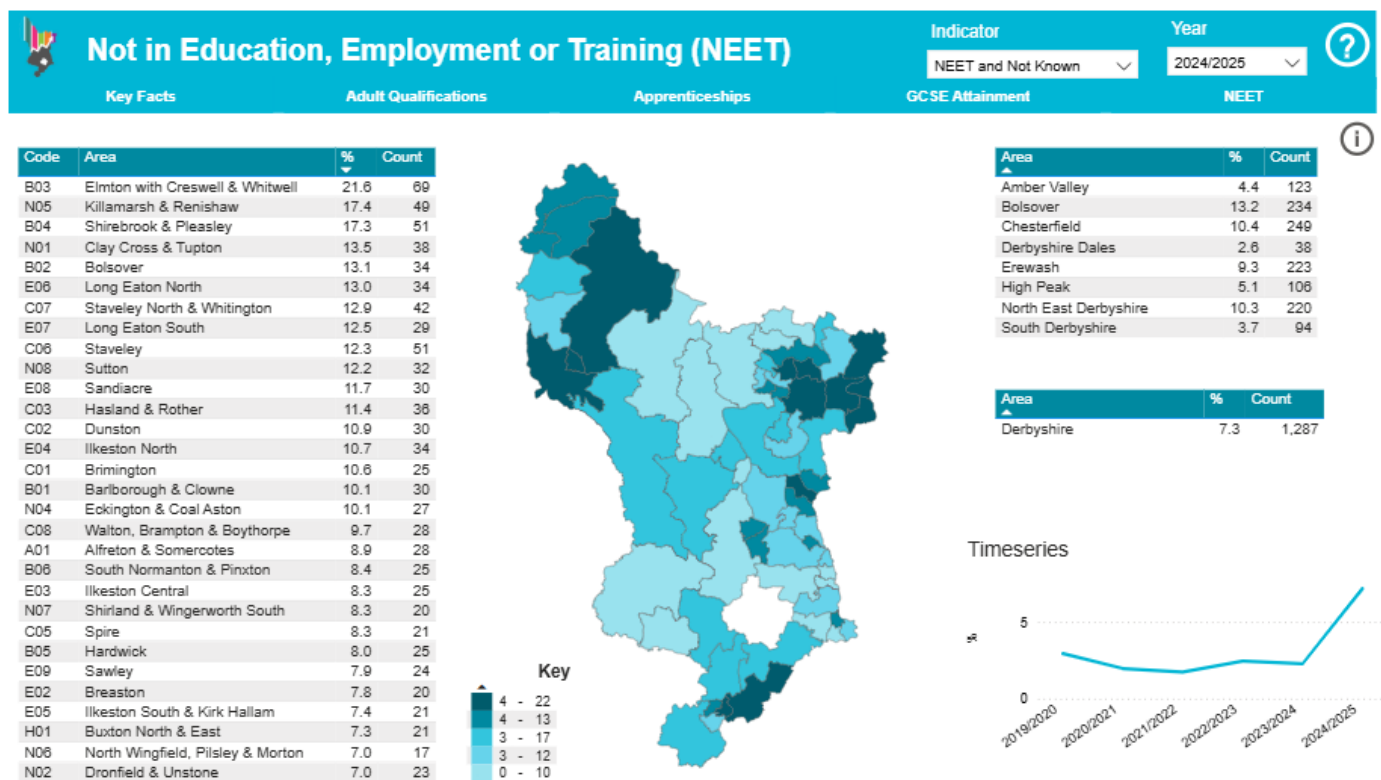


Figure 8 - Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) [NEET Derbyshire Microsoft Power BI](#)

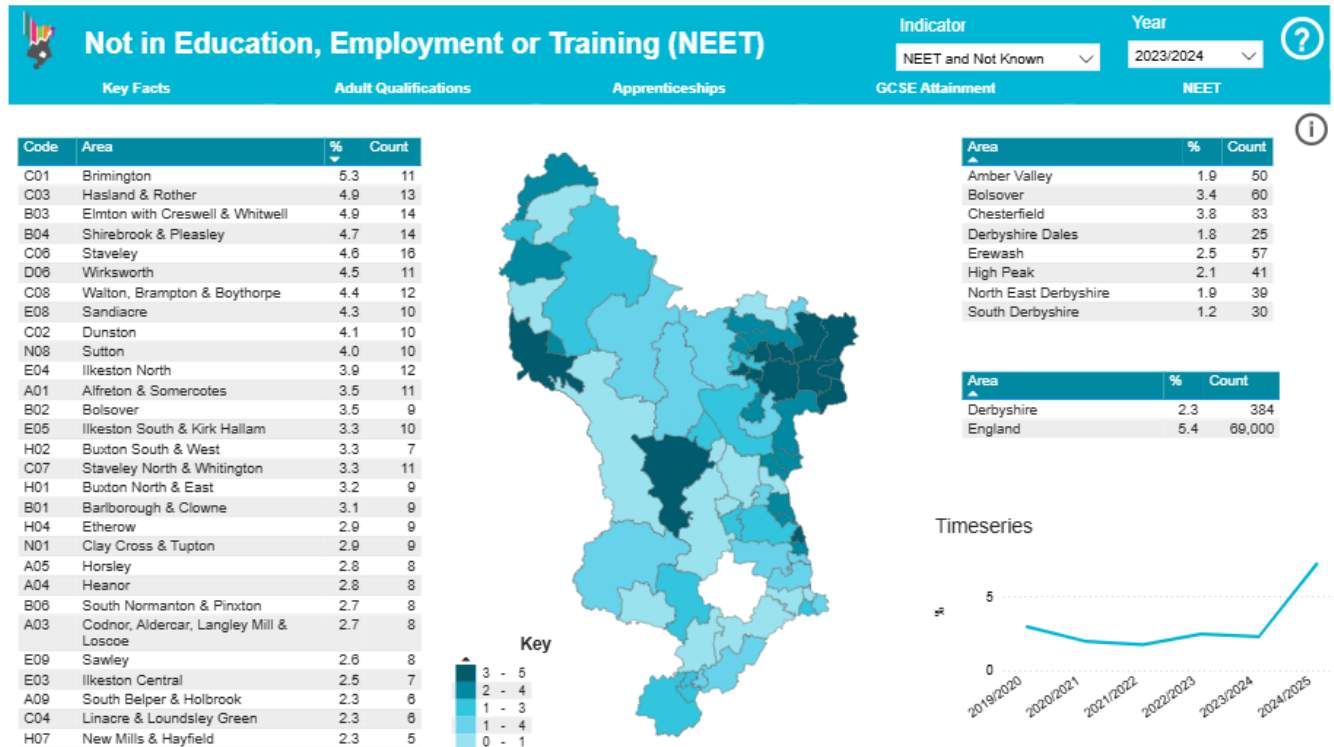


Figure 9 - Derbyshire County Council Observatory Adult Qualifications, 2024. [Microsoft Power BI](#)

Percentage of adults 16 to 64 with no qualifications is by far the highest in Derbyshire at 12.5%, and this has risen each year since at least 2022. This is double England-wide rate of 6.4%.

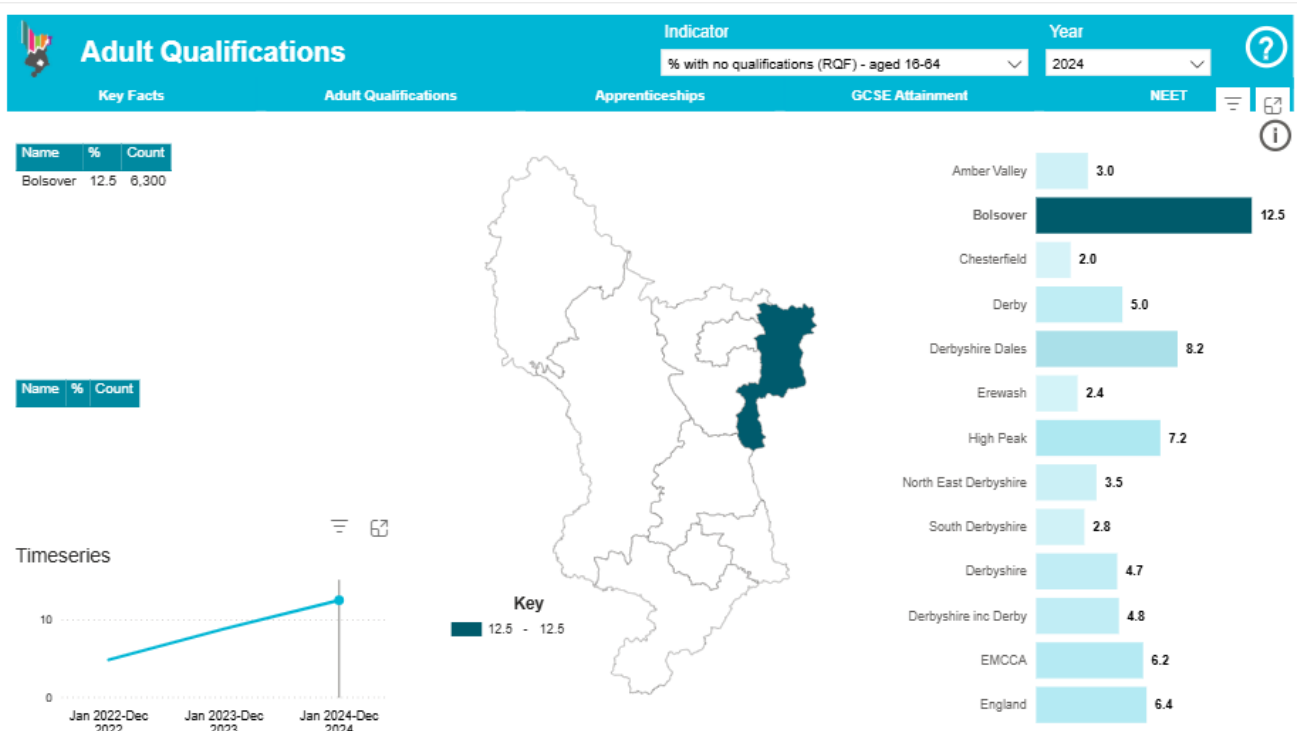


Figure 10 - Percentage of adults with no qualifications per district

Bolsover District, and Shirebrook and Pleasley in particular, face some of the largest challenges of any districts in England. According to ONS and other statistics collected and analysed by the Derbyshire County Council Observatory in 2025, **Bolsover District**:

- has the highest rates of deprivation, children in poverty and free school meal eligibility of any place in Derbyshire;
- has the highest fuel poverty rate in Derbyshire, with Elmtun and Creswell the wards with the highest fuel poverty in Derbyshire;
- has the highest percentage of adults with no degree, adults with no qualifications

Shirebrook and Pleasley have the:

- highest deprivation and children in poverty rate of any ward in Derbyshire;
- fourth highest rate of youth unemployment;
- lowest rate of adults with a degree and the highest rate of adults with no qualifications;
- lowest life expectancy for men in Derbyshire;

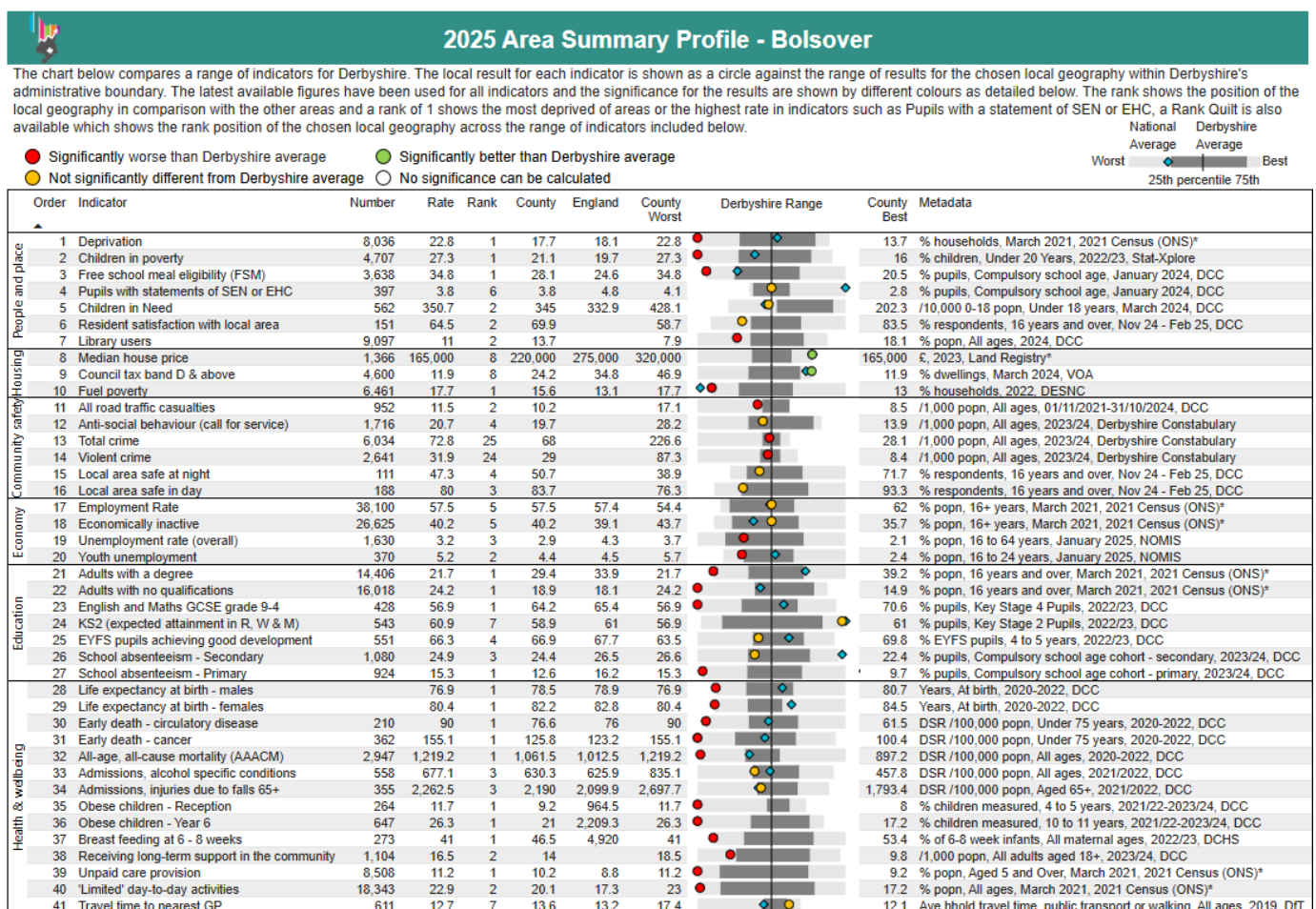


Figure 11 - Bolsover District 2025 Area Summary Profile. Source: [Area Profile Tool 2023 0.02.xlsm](#)

2025 Area Summary Profile - Shirebrook & Pleasley

The chart below compares a range of indicators for Derbyshire. The local result for each indicator is shown as a circle against the range of results for the chosen local geography within Derbyshire's administrative boundary. The latest available figures have been used for all indicators and the significance for the results are shown by different colours as detailed below. The rank shows the position of the local geography in comparison with the other areas and a rank of 1 shows the most deprived of areas or the highest rate in indicators such as Pupils with a statement of SEN or EHC, a Rank Quilt is also available which shows the rank position of the chosen local geography across the range of indicators included below.

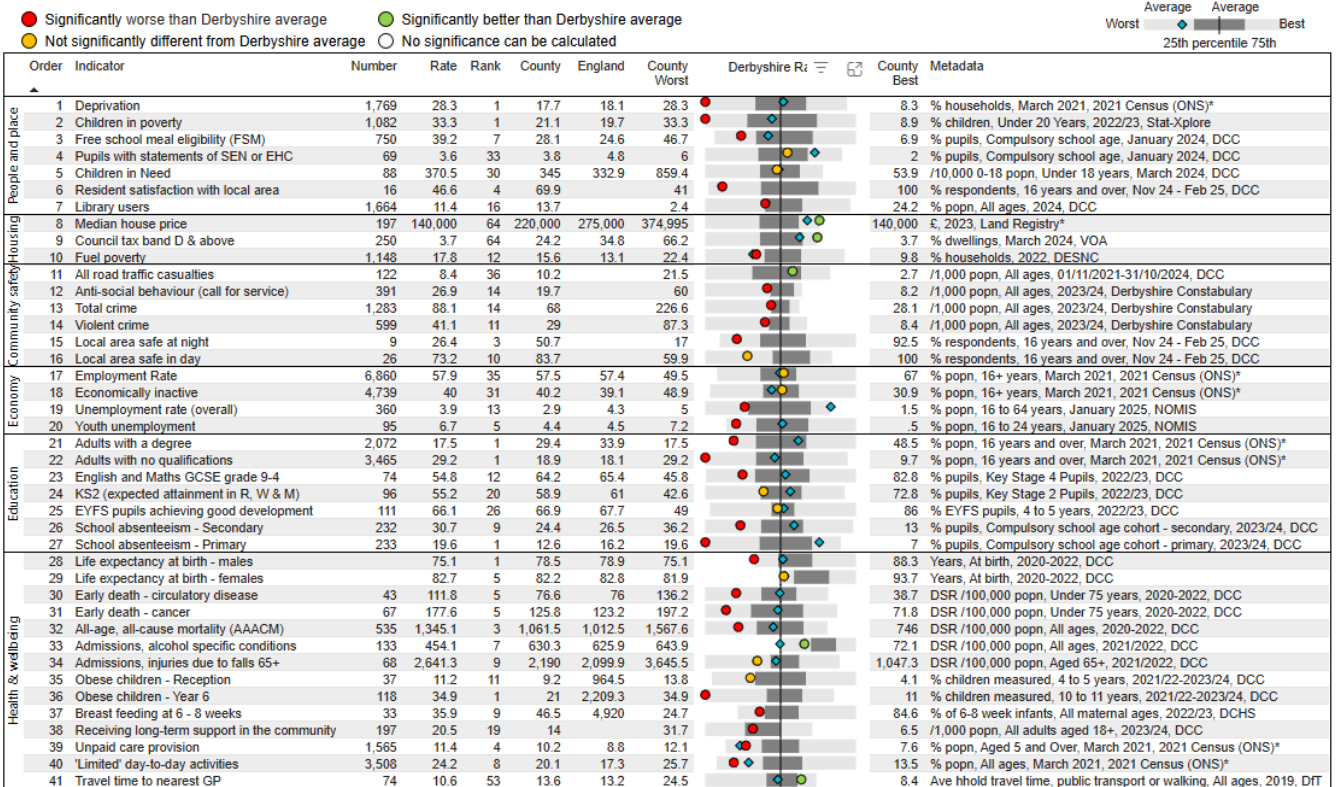


Figure 12 - Shirebrook & Pleasley 2025 Area Summary Profile. Source: [Area Profile Tool 2023 0.02.xlsm](#)

APPENDIX C:
RIDER LEVETT BUCKNALL BOLSOVER GREEN ECONOMY LABOUR MARKET
WORKFORCE STRENGTH ASSESSMENT (2024)

RIDER LEVETT BUCKNALL LABOUR MARKET AND SKILLS DATA (2024)

Source: RLB 2024 Analysis Labour Green Employment Sectors Workforce Strength Analysis

Below for reference is the labour market analysis of 2021 census data comparing the workforce strength relative to population of each employment sub-sector, comparing Bolsover with England as a whole.

RLB also coded each of the 88 sector codes by whether they were Core, Enabling or adversely impacted by the net zero and green transition, in line with the “Core, Enabling and Peripheral” categories established in 2023 Climate Change Committee report on a Net Zero Workforce ([A Net Zero workforce - Climate Change Committee](#))

Data source: [ONS](#)

Green Economy Sector Key	Colour
CORE Green Economic Subsector	
ENABLING Green Economic Subsector	
AT RISK CORE Green Sub-sector - most at risk of job loss during transition	

Employment Subsector Analysis: Bolsover Workforce Strength	England & Wales Sector Workforce 2021	England & Wales Total Workforce	Bolsover Sector Workforce	Bolsover Total Workforce	Bolsover to England/ Wales Workforce Strength Ratio	Advantage, Competitive or Disadvantage
05 Mining of coal and lignite	1,960	31,823,878	19	42,173	7.3 : 1	Advantage
08 Other mining and quarrying	11,852	31,823,878	60	42,173	3.8 : 1	Advantage
24 Manufacture of basic metals	65,933	31,823,878	242	42,173	2.7 : 1	Advantage
23 Manufacture of other non-metallic mineral products	46,876	31,823,878	160	42,173	2.5 : 1	Advantage
25 Manufacture of fabricated metal products, except machinery and equipment	143,887	31,823,878	429	42,173	2.2 : 1	Advantage
27 Manufacture of electrical equipment	42,984	31,823,878	126	42,173	2.2 : 1	Advantage
30 Manufacture of other transport equipment	110,192	31,823,878	306	42,173	2.1 : 1	Advantage
52 Warehousing and support activities for transportation	288,557	31,823,878	751	42,173	1.9 : 1	Advantage
37 Sewerage	12,392	31,823,878	32	42,173	1.9 : 1	Advantage
38 Waste collection, treatment and disposal activities; materials recovery	109,172	31,823,878	280	42,173	1.9 : 1	Advantage
20 Manufacture of chemicals and chemical products	62,939	31,823,878	143	42,173	1.7 : 1	Advantage
45 Wholesale and retail trade and repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	438,866	31,823,878	982	42,173	1.6 : 1	Advantage

32 Other Manufacturing	293,740	31,823,878	639	42,173	1.6 : 1	Advantage
19 Manufacture of coke and refined petroleum products	11,403	31,823,878	23	42,173	1.5 : 1	Advantage
33 Repair and installation of machinery and equipment	44,641	31,823,878	85	42,173	1.4 : 1	Advantage
07 Mining of metal ores	529	31,823,878	1	42,173	1.4 : 1	Advantage
49 Land transport and transport via pipelines	697,122	31,823,878	1,105	42,173	1.2 : 1	Competitive
41 Construction of buildings; 42 Civil engineering; 43 Specialised construction activities	2,406,237	31,823,878	3,712	42,173	1.1 : 1	Competitive
29 Manufacture of motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers	190,319	31,823,878	287	42,173	1.1 : 1	Competitive
17 Manufacture of paper and paper products	25,831	31,823,878	36	42,173	1.0 : 1	Competitive
36 Water collection, treatment and supply	76,631	31,823,878	105	42,173	1.0 : 1	Competitive
84 Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	1,646,592	31,823,878	2,137	42,173	0.9 : 1	Competitive
35 Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	161,610	31,823,878	205	42,173	0.9 : 1	Competitive
82 Office administrative, office support and other business support activities	208,523	31,823,878	262	42,173	0.9 : 1	Competitive
81 Services to buildings and landscape activities	707,730	31,823,878	849	42,173	0.9 : 1	Competitive
09 Mining support service activities	2,566	31,823,878	3	42,173	0.8 : 1	Competitive
02 Forestry and logging	7,326	31,823,878	8	42,173	0.8 : 1	Disadvantage
85 Education	2,732,861	31,823,878	2,931	42,173	0.8 : 1	Disadvantage
78 Employment activities	190,313	31,823,878	196	42,173	0.7 : 1	Disadvantage
03 Fishing and aquaculture	5,987	31,823,878	6	42,173	0.7 : 1	Disadvantage
71 Architectural and engineering activities; technical testing and analysis	371,574	31,823,878	348	42,173	0.7 : 1	Disadvantage
01 Crop and animal production, hunting and related service activities	223,731	31,823,878	195	42,173	0.6 : 1	Disadvantage
68 Real estate activities	430,487	31,823,878	304	42,173	0.5 : 1	Disadvantage
74 Other professional, scientific and technical activities	165,748	31,823,878	114	42,173	0.5 : 1	Disadvantage
69 Legal and accounting activities	609,511	31,823,878	403	42,173	0.5 : 1	Disadvantage
66 Activities auxiliary to financial services and insurance activities	296,860	31,823,878	189	42,173	0.4 : 1	Disadvantage
70 Activities of head offices; management consultancy activities	249,243	31,823,878	138	42,173	0.4 : 1	Disadvantage
39 Remediation activities and other waste management services	5,515	31,823,878	3	42,173	0.4 : 1	Disadvantage
51 Air transport	59,340	31,823,878	32	42,173	0.4 : 1	Disadvantage
65 Insurance, reinsurance and pension funding, except compulsory social security	266,491	31,823,878	135	42,173	0.3 : 1	Disadvantage
06 Extraction of crude petroleum and natural gas	25,785	31,823,878	13	42,173	0.3 : 1	Disadvantage
50 Water transport	27,947	31,823,878	14	42,173	0.3 : 1	Disadvantage
64 Financial service activities, except insurance and pension funding	483,410	31,823,878	231	42,173	0.3 : 1	Disadvantage
72 Scientific research and development	131,907	31,823,878	41	42,173	0.2 : 1	Disadvantage

Challenges of Bolsover Green Economy	Opportunities for Bolsover Green Economy	Source
17% of the workforce are ‘underemployed’, with a lack of quality job opportunities cited as the primary barrier to employment. 27% are overqualified for their job.	There is a strong appetite for learning, with 68% of survey respondents indicating they would like to undertake training and learning in the next two years.	Bolsover Skills Audit¹⁰
Residents experience uncertainty around what skills are relevant to their current or future job	63% of survey respondents had received training from their employer, indicating the willingness of businesses to offer training	
The survey suggests that people in lower-skilled and lower-paid occupations receive significantly less in-work training.	High uptake of digital technologies (mobile devices, email and internet)	
Behind other authorities on retrofit funding, levelling up and other capacity-building	Skilled workforce and employment levels in some critical net zero sectors, including manufacturing and construction	RLB analysis of ONS and BEIS data
Lower than-average vacancies and workforce participation	Younger than average workforce compared to the rest of England	ONS Census Data 2021
Post-16 education delivery within the district and lack of transport for training and work	Alignment of net zero and key agendas—fuel poverty, business competitiveness, upskilling and employability	Sept 17, 2023, BDC Roundtable
Perception of lack of aspiration—need to raise internal and external perception of opportunities within the district and region by building stronger real links.	Great existing engagement channels with businesses and a solid economic sector mix, including a large number of SMEs	Stakeholder Interview

¹⁰ Richard Crisp and Elizabeth Sanderson, *Bolsover Skills Audit*, Sheffield Hallam University, 2022 [Bolsover Skills Audit | Sheffield Hallam University](#)

Like other UK regions, it has never recovered from poorly planned previous energy and economic transitions, mainly the transition from coal to gas, in parallel with the decline of manufacturing.	Well-placed between several regional hubs of economic activity, high vacancies in surrounding areas	Sept 17, 2023, BDC Roundtable
Some new build housing and economic schemes in the DCC region in the future without net zero systems, missing local green job opportunities.	Bolsover has a unique potential for cost-effective district heating linked to its mining heritage across the district.	Stakeholder Interview

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