

Enterprise, Skills and Education Vision

What work will we be doing in 2025? What skills will we need and how will we ensure that our young people have the education that they will require to live without fossil fuels and to cope with the challenges that we will face as a community?



There will be no shortage of work in 2025! We will need to make much more use of local resources to meet local needs and most people will be employed locally in a wide range of skilled tasks. Many more people will be employed, in growing, processing and distributing food. A large number of people will be employed by a major programme of refurbishment of our housing stock and there will be plenty of opportunities in installation and maintenance of renewable energy systems.

Local health care services, local entertainment and arts activities will provide much employment. Skills in facilitation and running participatory meetings will be crucial for local governance and to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to contribute their ideas and creativity. The provision of flexible workspace, shared office facilities, starter units and workshops will be crucial to enable the setting up the range of enterprises that

will be needed. Many of these enterprises will be based on reuse, repair and recycling. Alternative models of social enterprise, community ownership, cooperatives and social firms will become commonplace. Local financial institutions and a local currency will be required to facilitate the development of a revitalised and vibrant local economy.

There will be many opportunities for lifelong learning and practical skills training. Schools will be focussed on giving young people opportunities to develop a strong sense of connection to our locality and an understanding of nature's cycles, of our common humanity and of global equity. There will be an emphasis on learning through doing and on learning practical skills which develop 'hand, head and heart'. Education will encourage critical thinking skills, adaptability and teamwork. Skills in group working, facilitation and conflict resolution will be highly valued.

Some Enterprise & Skills Challenges (and notes towards solutions)

1. More than 50% of people in employment travel out of the Dunbar area to work, mostly to Edinburgh. At the same time, a significant number also travel into the area, particularly school teachers and other council staff, health professionals and workers at Lafarge and Torness. Time spent commuting contributes to stress, particularly for families juggling childcare and can contribute to a disconnection from the local area. Our debt based economy seems to force us to keep running faster in order to stand still while email and mobile communications make it difficult to 'switch off'. Most people would like to be able to work more locally but feel that there are currently few local employment options. Local people possess a wide range of skills and many would like to be able to start their own businesses. However, there is a general lack of an entrepreneurial culture and many actual and perceived obstacles to starting a business, including policies and regulations as well as access to finance, suitable and affordable premises, land and other resources.

Creating a vibrant low carbon economy which makes much greater use of local resources to meet local needs will be a joint endeavour that will require everybody's creativity and energy. We will need to find ways to unleash and harness this creativity and to develop a culture of 'social entrepreneurship' which values social and environmental goals as highly as financial profitability. How can we put in place a supportive infrastructure which enables people to work together to develop ideas and to access the skills, support, finance and other resources that they need to start the range of

new enterprises that will be needed? Provision of affordable and flexible work space will be essential, from office accommodation with shared facilities to starter workshop units. We will need to find ways to mobilise local financial resources to invest in new local businesses and to explore alternative enterprise models such as cooperatives and community interest companies. We will need to move away from our debt based money system and to establish local currencies and time bank systems which allow local exchange of goods and services as required.

2. Our globalised economy is very dependent on the availability of cheap fossil fuels. Almost nothing that is consumed in the area is produced here from local resources. Much work is sedentary, based in artificial office environments, working at a computer screen and disconnected from our natural surroundings. Most work is invisible. Young people have very little exposure to people working and little concept of what it is that most people do to earn a living. In schools, there is an emphasis on acquiring knowledge rather than on learning skills, academic learning is valued higher than practical craft skills. Education is not set up to prepare young people with skills that will be required in the relocalised economy that will be forced upon us by the peaking of global oil supplies. Education currently does little to instill a sense of connection with, or reverence, for nature and children gain little understanding of how we can live in harmony with nature's cycles.

A relocalised economy will provide a multitude of opportunities for skilled and satisfying local work, meeting local needs from local resources as far as possible. In particular, many more people will need to become involved with food growing, processing and distribution. Skills in organic growing, soil and water management, composting, animal husbandry, management of pasture and orchards etc. will be in high demand. New opportunities in food processing, from dairies to flour milling, butchery, juice pressing and food preservation will open up. Others will be employed in running local markets and distribution systems, linking networks of local growers with local consumers. There will scope for developing local textile production and for processing local wool, which will become much more valuable. Woodlands will be managed to be much more productive and will supply local sawmills, some will be managed as coppice. Waste timber and

sawdust will provide a local supply of wood pellets and wood chip. Many jobs will be created in refurbishment of our existing housing stock to drastically reduce our energy consumption and in meeting many other local needs. We will need to ensure that suitable skills training and apprenticeship programmes are established so that we have the skills needed locally, that there are opportunities for skill sharing and for older people to pass on their skills to the younger generation. The emphasis of education will need to change so that young people are better prepared and have the skills, knowledge and personal resilience that they will need to adapt to a rapidly changing world. Building on the existing 'forest schools' initiative, education will need to make much more use of the outdoors, developing practical skills whilst instilling a connection with nature, an awareness of the source of raw materials and of our dependence on a healthy, bio-diverse environment.

Enterprise, Skills and Education Action Plan

