

Shaping Future Skills for Sussex & Brighton

Employer Engagement Workshops – LSIP 2026–2029

LAND-BASED SECTOR – 15 JANUARY 2026

What activities we'll be doing today

The workshop will include a mix of:

- **Scene Setting** illustrating where we currently are at
- **Quick interactive questions** to capture views in the room
- **Small group discussions** focused on skills themes
- **Practical activities** looking at:
 - Skills gaps and pressures
 - Routes into jobs and progression
 - What works well and what needs to change
- **Thoughts and Reflections** focused on today's workshop with Jeremy Kerswell, Rachael Williams and Jonathan Searle

Everything you share feeds directly into the LSIP evidence base.

What is the LSIP and why are we here?

The Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) sets out the skills and training priorities for Sussex and Brighton.

It is:

- Employer-led
- Evidence-based
- Focused on skills from **entry level through to higher and professional levels**

Why this matters

- It directly influences local education and training provision
- It shapes investment decisions and funding priorities
- It helps ensure people can access the skills employers actually need

Today is about your voice

- Understanding current and future skills needs
- Identifying what works well – and what doesn't
- Shaping practical, deliverable actions for the next LSIP

How your input will be used

Your insight today will:

- Shape LSIP priorities and recommendations
- Inform discussions with colleges, universities and training providers
- Inform national government (Skills England) and local authorities
- Support better alignment between skills provision and jobs
- Feed into action planning for 2026–2029

What we're doing for LSIP 2.0 (2026–2029)

We are developing the **next Sussex & Brighton LSIP** report and plan to cover **2026–2029**.

This includes:

- Employer surveys and in-depth interviews
- Sector-specific and cross-sector workshops
- Analysis of labour market and workforce data
- Close working with education and training providers

What's different this time

- Stronger focus on **cross-sector skills**
- Skills up to **Level 8**, including higher and professional skills
- Clearer links between skills, jobs and career pathways
- Alignment with devolution and Skills England priorities

A quick guide to the UK Qualifications Framework

RQF Level	Common Name / Stage	Typical Qualifications (Examples)	Broad Equivalence
Entry Level	Entry Level	Entry Level Certificate, Essential Skills, ESOL Entry	Below GCSE
Level 1	Foundation	GCSE grades 1–3 (D–G legacy), Level 1 Award/Certificate/Diploma	GCSE below standard pass
Level 2	Intermediate	GCSE grades 4–9 (A*–C legacy), Functional Skills Level 2, Level 2 Certificate/Diploma	GCSE standard pass
Level 3	Advanced	A Levels, T Levels, BTEC National, Advanced Apprenticeship, Access to HE	A Level
Level 4	Higher	Higher National Certificate (HNC), Level 4 Diploma, Higher Apprenticeship	First year of HE
Level 5	Higher	Higher National Diploma (HND), Foundation Degree, Level 5 Diploma	Second year of HE
Level 6	Degree	Bachelor's Degree, Degree Apprenticeship	Honours degree
Level 7	Postgraduate	Master's Degree, PGCE, Level 7 Diploma	Master's
Level 8	Doctorate	PhD, Doctorate	Doctoral level

Cross-Sector Skills Themes

Alongside sector-specific needs, we are focusing on **four cross-sector skills themes** that cut across every industry in Sussex and Brighton.

These themes will:

- Sit at the heart of the LSIP
- Shape future training, provision and pathways
- Apply across all sectors and occupations

1. Digital & AI Readiness

- Building digital confidence, data literacy and AI capability at every level
- From basic digital skills to advanced and specialist use
- Supporting productivity, efficiency and innovation

2. Green & Sustainability Skills

- Embedding net-zero, energy efficiency and sustainable practice into training
- Practical green skills, not just policy knowledge
- Relevant to everyday roles as well as specialist jobs

3. Innovation & Technical Excellence

- Fostering problem-solving, R&D literacy and advanced technical skills
- Supporting quality, competitiveness and growth
- Encouraging continuous improvement and innovation

4. Access Routes into Employment & Career Pathways

- Ensuring jobs and careers are open to everyone
- Clear entry routes, progression and retraining pathways
- Supporting young people, career changers and those furthest from work

How the LSIP fits with national and local priorities

The Local Skills Improvement Plan sits **at the centre of the skills system**, connecting national priorities with local delivery and employer needs.

National direction

- **UK Industrial Strategy** – sets out priority sectors and the skills needed to drive growth, innovation and productivity
- **Post-16 Education and Skills White Paper** – focuses on work-ready skills, clearer pathways and higher technical and professional skills
- **Skills England** – bringing a more joined-up, data-led approach to skills planning

Local priorities

- **Get Sussex Working Plan** – focused on reducing economic inactivity, supporting people into work and progression
- **Local economic and growth strategies** – reflecting Sussex and Brighton's sector strengths and future opportunities

Where the LSIP fits

- Brings the **employer voice** into this system
- Translates national priorities into **local skills needs**
- Helps education and training providers align provision to **real jobs and workforce demand**

The LSIP acts as the bridge between policy, providers and employers.

Purpose of today's workshop

Today's session is designed to:

- Sense-check the **skills challenges you are facing now and in the future**
- Understand how the cross-sector themes show up in your sector
- Identify gaps, pinch points and opportunities
- Capture practical insight to inform the LSIP

This is not about:

- Designing qualifications
- Talking in policy language

It is about:

- Real workforce needs
- Real jobs
- To enable real solutions

Thank you & let's get started

Thank you for taking the time to contribute.

Your experience and insight are essential to:

- A stronger skills system
- Better workforce pipelines
- Inclusive growth across Sussex and Brighton

Let's get started.

Mentimeter – Warm Up

2023 LSIP and 2025 Deep Dive

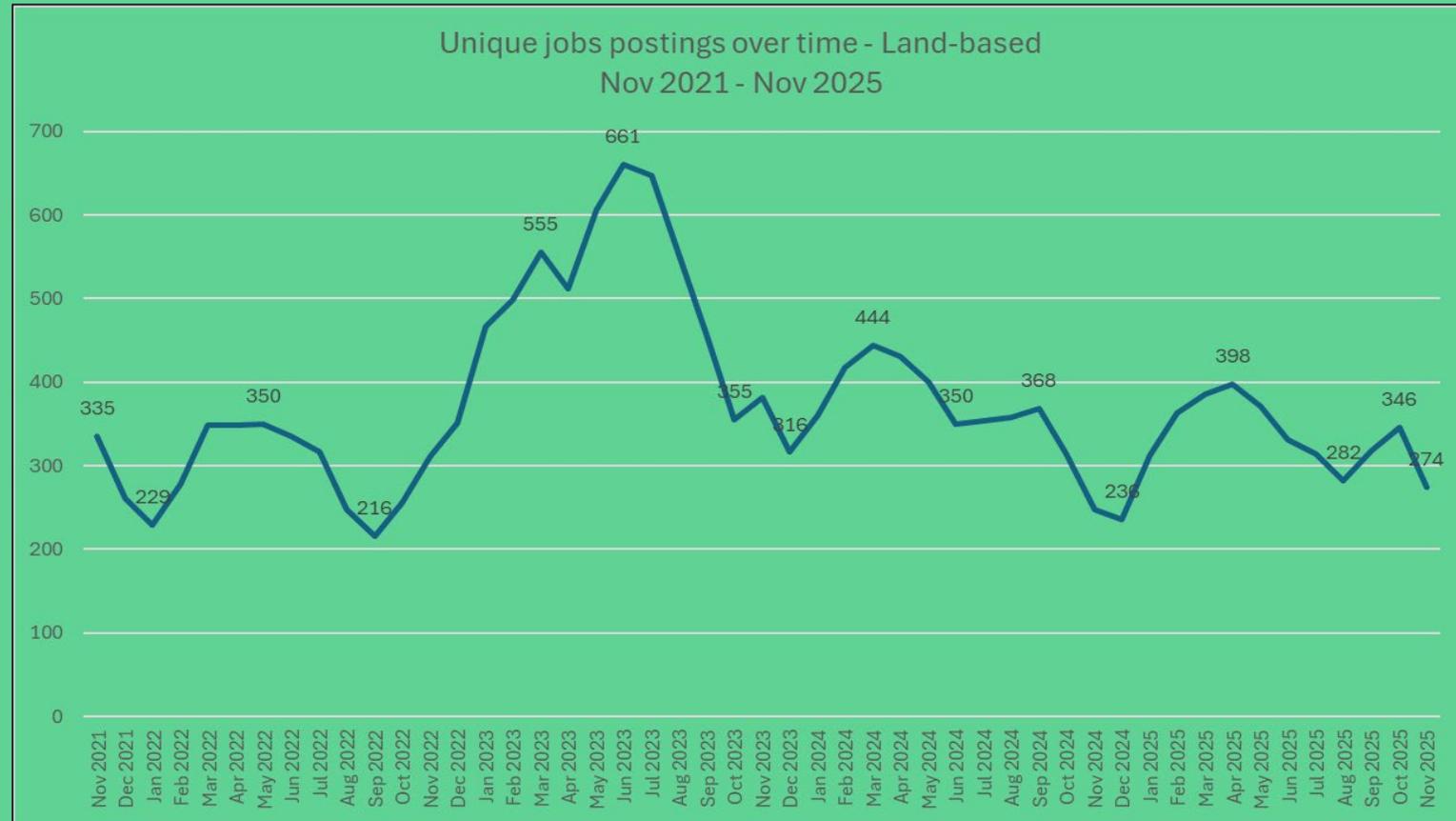
The last LSIP was carried out in 2023 with Deep Dives undertaken for the then 7 key sectors in Sussex.

- 2023 **LSIP** identified 8 priority areas.
- 2025 **Deep Dive** for Land-based reported on progress made, identified gaps, and made recommendations against the 8 priority areas.
- The 2025 **Deep Dive** also highlighted emerging themes, identified gaps in these themes, and made recommendations.

How have things changed in the past year?

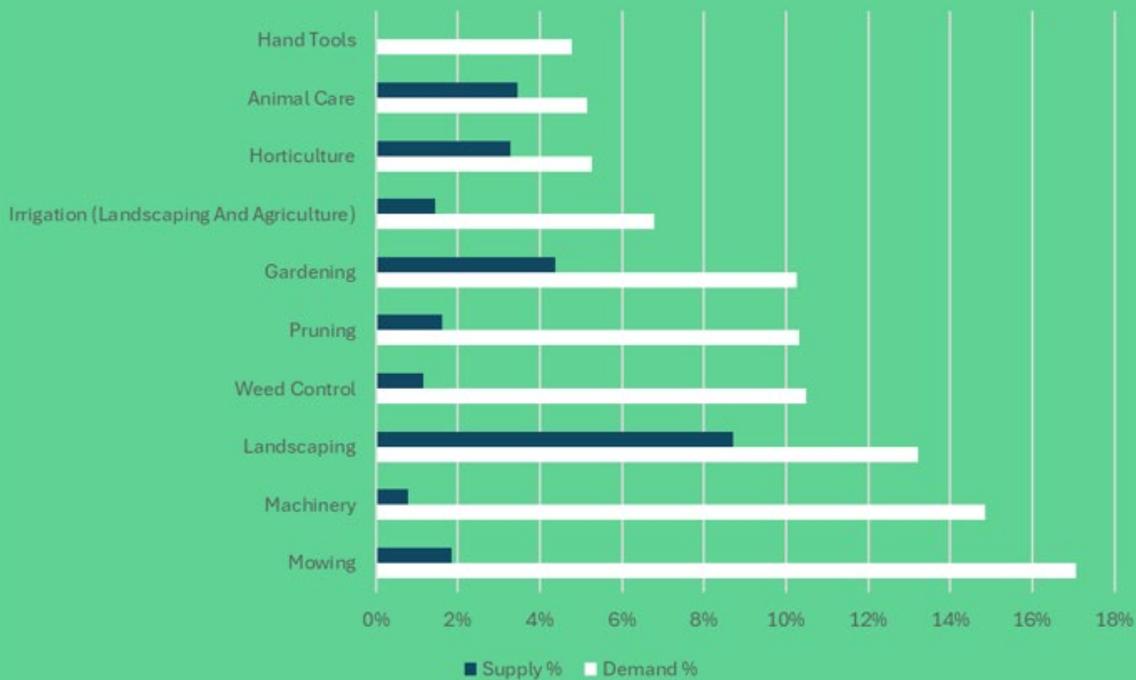
Sector Analysis of Job Postings

Top 10 most advertised occupations	Median Annual Wages
Managers and Proprietors in Agriculture and Horticulture	£35,300
Managers and Proprietors in Forestry, Fishing and Related Services	£31,846
Waste Disposal and Environmental Services Managers	£43,205
Biological Scientists	£38,000
Conservation Professionals	£27,755
Environment Professionals	£36,348
Environmental Health Professionals	£36,673
Farmers	£31,380
Horticultural Trades	£26,425
Gardeners and Landscape Gardeners	£24,916

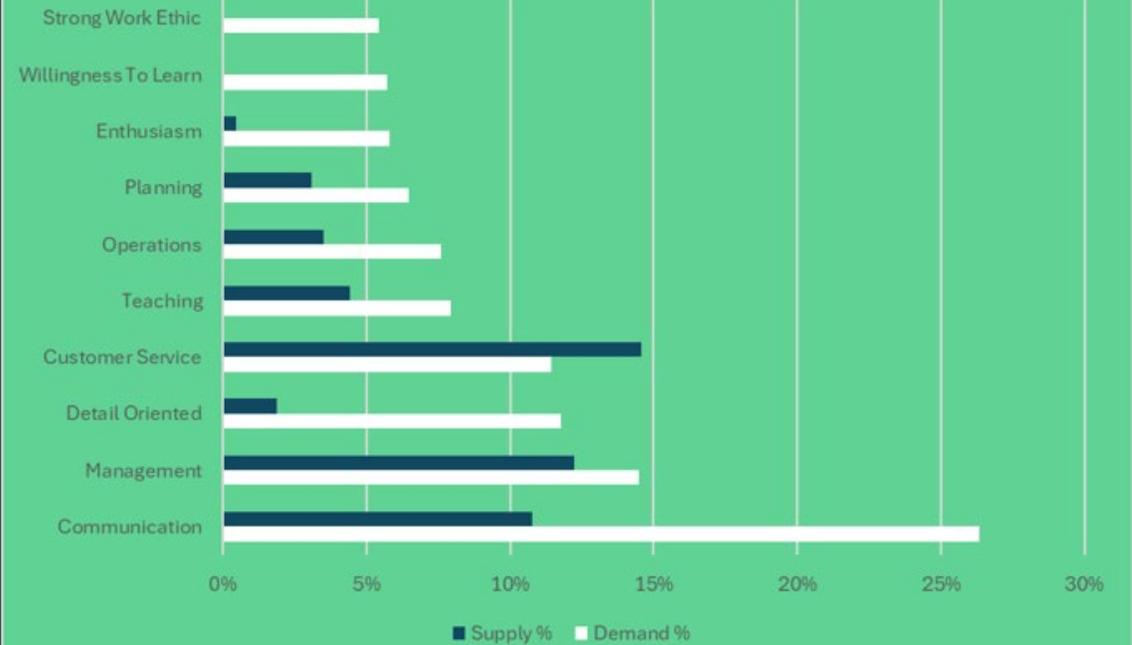


Top Specialised and Common Skills

Land-based - Top Specialised Skills 2025
Demand vs. Supply



Land-based - Top Common Skills 2025
Demand vs. Supply



Discussion Time

Discussion will now happen with the people on your table – you may wish to ensure you are with people in the same industry.

- Instructions will be given for each activity.
- Please capture as much as possible
- There will be time limits.

Activity One – Digital and AI Capability

Understanding the digital skills your teams currently have, and those you will need in the next 3 years.

- Please use 6 blue dots to show where your workforce sits today.
- Then use 6 red dots to show where you expect staff to be in around 3 years' time.

Then please consider the following discussion points as they appear:

- Where are your hardest-to-fill technical roles?
- Which digital skills are most lacking?
- Which technologies will you adopt next?
- Where is training missing locally?

Activity Two – Sustainability Skills

Identifying sustainability opportunities in land-based industries and the skills needed to implement them.

Place:

- one red dot on the hardest-to-recruit sustainability skill.
- One blue dot on where your workforce needs most upskilling.
- One green dot on what you think will grow most in the next 3 years.

Discussion Points:

- What makes sustainability roles so hard to fill?
- Do staff understand sustainability standards?
- Is provider capacity an issue?

Activity Three – Innovation

Identifying innovation trends and understanding associated skills needs over the next 2–3 years.

Individual Thinking Time - Think of **ONE innovation** your business has introduced, improved or is planning to adopt.

This could be a new tool, technology, process, material, way of working or compliance requirement.

Small Group Sharing Time – You each have **ONE minute** to share:

- 1) What is the innovation?**
- 2) What skill or role will it impact most?**

Activity Three – Innovation

Capturing the Innovation

Thinking across everything you've heard:

- What patterns are emerging?
- Which innovations are coming up most?
- Which roles and skills will be most affected?

Capture themes on a flipchart under:

- **Innovation happening**
- **Roles affected**
- **Skills required**
- **Training or workforce gaps**

Activity Four – Technical Excellence

Understanding what stops your organisation from achieving technical excellence and which skills shortages create bottlenecks.

Problem Identification

On the right-hand side please summarise **a problem** you are facing in terms of skills and technical excellence in your industry

Causes Identification

Under each category, brainstorm **potential causes** that may contribute to the problem. Add these as smaller branches stemming from each category branch.

Root Cause

Once identified all the causes, consider which is the main root cause to the problem.

Activity Five – Routes to Roles

Identifying which education and training routes genuinely lead into key Land-based roles, and where gaps or weak pathways exist.

Grab some sticky notes and look at the grid.

Consider a role and route and on the sticky note write either **WORKS / SOMETIMES / DOESN'T WORK**

Then add **1–2 words explaining why** i.e. reliable pipeline, varies by provider, wrong qualification, skills gaps etc

Two quick discussion questions

Q1 — Which routes work best for your hardest-to-fill roles?

Q2 — Which roles have no strong pathways at all?

Whole-room highlight

What's the biggest pathway gap or blockage you see across the sector?

Thoughts and Reflections

Welcome Jeremy Kerswell, Rachael Williams and Jonathon Serle to share their thoughts and reflections from what we have heard this afternoon.

Thank You and Next Steps

Contact us on:



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[Future Skills Sussex](#)