

## Sector Summary Report Environmental and Land based Sector

### Sector Definition

The Environmental and Land-Based Sector relates to the footprint of Lantra Sector Skills Council and the qualifications are available in the following occupational areas;

- Agricultural livestock & crops
- Animal care
- Animal technology
- Aquaculture
- Environmental conservation
- Equine
- Farriery
- Fencing
- Floristry
- Forestry and timber processing
- Game conservation
- Land-based engineering
- Landscaping
- Productive horticulture
- Veterinary nursing

### Overview of the North East Region

In the North East, the majority of businesses within the sector are micro-businesses, with a large proportion of the workforce being self-employed. Almost 90% of businesses employ fewer than ten people, 50% employ one to nine whilst almost 40% are one man businesses. In the Regional Economic Strategy this sector is classed as an underpinning sector for two regional priority sectors, Food & Drink and Tourism and Hospitality. There are a high percentage of migrant workers employed in seasonal working in the sector on a casual, temporary or part-time basis. It has an ageing workforce with the average age of business owners is 55, it is vital that younger people are encouraged to enter the sector to ensure its survival

		<b>Lantra</b>
		Environmental and land-based industries
<b>EMPLOYERS</b>		
Number of establishments		2,800
Share of all establishments		4.9%
<b>EMPLOYMENT</b>		
Number of employee jobs		10,800
Share of all employee jobs		1.1%
<b>QUALIFICATION LEVELS (INDICATIVE)</b>		
Employees whose highest qualifications are at:	Level 4 and above	0%
	Level 3	11.6%
	Level 2	31.0%
	Below Level 2	50.8%
	No qualifications	6.6%
Proportion of employees without qualifications at Level 2		57.4%
<b>PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT CHANGE</b>		
Projected employment change 2007-2017		-10.5%

(Sector Skills Needs in the NE: Summary Matrix (modified 13 October 2008))

### **Future Skills Key Demand side issues for 2009/10**

From research conducted by the SSCs for their Sector Skills Agreements, the following key issues were identified:

- 1) Agriculture and horticulture diversification is expected to increase.
- 2) Pressure on fossil fuels will lead to an increase in bio-fuel crops and the management of woodland for energy production.
- 3) Environmental Conservation Urban regeneration and an increasing emphasis on the management of green spaces will drive up demand for more rangers and parks staff.
- 4) There are issues relating to literacy, numeracy and communication within the workforce.

### **Sector Qualification Strategies (SQS) and Vocational Qualification Reform (VQR)**

All Sector Skills Councils have recently completed their SQS and Action Plans. Through this process a variety of new and updated qualifications will emerge that are more closely aligned to the needs of employers. It is anticipated that there will be a need for providers to develop capacity and upskill their workforce to deliver new qualifications.

<http://www.lantra.co.uk/stakeholders/sector-qualification-strategy/sqs-action-plan/>

### **Compacts**

A sector compact is a non-contractual agreement between the Department for Innovation Universities and Skills, the Learning and Skills Council and a Sector Skills Council to work collaboratively to drive up demand for skills across England through Train to Gain. The LSC will be working with Lantra to develop their compact in 2009/10. It is anticipated that the flexibilities within the compact will facilitate growth in provision.

### **Economic Developments**

£1.2 million of Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) funds have been commissioned by ONE NE and are managed by Lantra to develop landbased sector skills projects from 2008 to 2010. The RDPE funds will compliment mainstream funding.

### **Analysis of provision - Train to Gain**

Following thorough analysis of provision it has been identified that there are very low levels of delivery in this sector. The SSC has indicated that there is potential market for growth particularly at level 2 and 3. Consideration should be made to the additional Train to Gain level 2 and 3 qualifications lists.

### **WBL Apprenticeships**

Nationally and regionally, the SSCs have indicated that there is a need to increase the uptake of apprenticeships in the sector. The frameworks are currently under review and due to be completed by August 2009. The following frameworks are available for delivery:

- Agricultural Crops & Livestock
- Amenity Horticulture
- Animal Care
- Dry Stone Walling
- Environmental Conservation
- Equine Industry
- AMA Farriery
- FMA Fence Installation
- AMA Farriery
- FMA Fence Installation
- Floristry
- Game keeping and Wildlife Management
- Land-based Service Engineering
- Production Horticulture
- Saddlery
- Trees and Timber
- Veterinary Nursing

There are also opportunities to work more with Local Authorities, National Parks, and National Trust to develop apprenticeships in areas such as Environmental Conservation, Landscaping, Dry Stone Walling and Livestock Farming. The Forestry Commission has identified a need for forest and woodland managers.

#### **Focus Recommendations for 09/10**

- Deliver the new qualifications when available ensuring that the provision continues to adapt and be responsive to sector needs.
- Further develop the provider base across the region in response to needs of employers in the sector.
- Develop new delivery models to allow SMEs to get involved and grow provision in the region.
- Drive up demand from employers within the sector for Train to Gain.
- Support the sector during the economic downturn.