

Four reasons we should all learn about Green Careers (+ some top job hunting tips!)



Joe Simms, Louise Krupski, Bilvalyn Asamoah all talking at the Green Careers Day at Goldsmiths.

Councillor Louise Krupski, Deputy Mayor of Lewisham and responsible for the Environment, Transport and Climate Action in the Borough, offers this top tip to the schools who are attending a Green Careers' Event at Goldsmiths. She urges everyone to find out the real truth about what is going on with the environment. She says, 'There's a backlash at the moment against climate activism, but let's be in no doubt, we face a climate emergency, and one way of addressing it is by getting as many young people as we can involved in green careers.'

Her belief in the importance of green careers is echoed by other people on the panel, who include the new Young Mayor of Lewisham, [Bilvilyn Asamoah, 13](#), Joe Simms from [RAFT](#), a social enterprise which retro-fits housing so it's environmentally friendly, and performance poet and youth advocate Laila Sumpton. The panel is the culmination of a day where pupils and teachers at schools local to Goldsmiths, academics, museums, business people, and local government workers have come together to explore and learn about what green careers involve. There are a number of lessons we all learned throughout the day. Here's my summing up of them.

Many careers now have a green element

Marta Martinez, the Head of Business Decarbonisation at West London Business, where she manages the [Green Business Action programme](#), gave an engaging keynote speech about the work she does with small businesses to decarbonise their work. She pointed out that there are many careers now that had to have a green element. She cited as a great example, a small fashion business, who sourced materials from the leading fashion brands so that their 'cast-offs' didn't go to waste. She pointed out that every business needs to consider how they use their energy efficiently, how they might cut the environmental impact of their supply chain, how they might encourage their employees to travel to and from work sustainability.

Other speakers during the day amplified upon this point. [Carole Destre](#), the [Climate & Ecological Coordinator at Horniman Museum and Gardens](#), spoke powerfully about the work she does so that museum considers how its energy use might be decarbonised to save the environment and costs, which can amount to hundreds of thousands of pounds a year. She emphasized the importance of collaboration, saying: 'I cannot achieve anything by myself in my role and the goals are only achievable if every one else in their respective position plays ball and puts in place the changes needed. At every level. So as Marta said every career could be green, the light green, pending on the choices we make.'

Joe Simms at RAFT enumerated the [skills shortage](#) that there is in the construction industry because not enough people are qualified to 'retro-fit' housing with more energy efficient heating systems and insulation.

Laila Sumpton pointed out that everyone in the arts and culture sector has to consider the climate emergency in the work they do in some way or other because it's such a burning issue on many levels: politically, culturally, financially and, of course, environmentally.

Green careers are a positive way forward

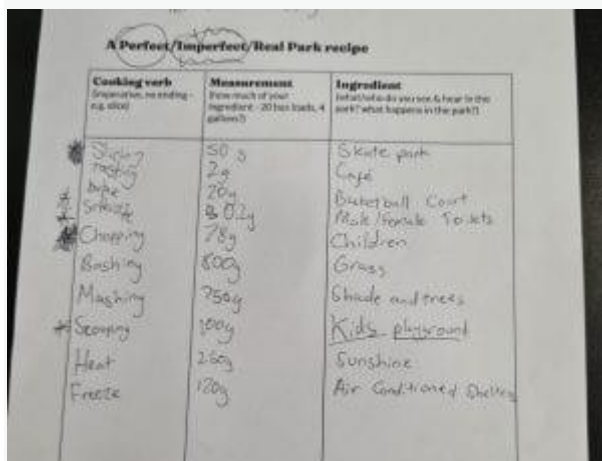
What was fascinating about the day was the way in which the day was a really positive experience. Everyone came together to share their expertise and problem-solve. As Marta had pointed out, one of the problems about the climate debate is that it [causes a great deal of anxiety](#) amongst people, and this switches them off actually doing anything. But at this Green Careers Day, there were a lot of solutions which involve helping young people understand the opportunities that there are to problem-solve. Laila asked everyone to think about what activism involves and how they might get involved in changing the world for the better, even on a small level.

The Young Mayor Bilvalyn also spoke very eloquently about the need for young people to do the so-called 'small' things right: to pick up litter, to avoid getting into

fighters, to be kind to other people and themselves. In such a way, she outlined the values and aims of working with a green mindset: ultimately it's about being kind to yourself and the environment.

All our homes, places of work and outdoor spaces need a green re-think

Laila Sumpton lead an interactive workshop about the [Parklife Project I have been the principal investigator of for the last three years](#). We have learnt during this project that getting young people to use creative methods to research their local parks has been particularly effective. We've encouraged them to write poems, draw pictures, take photographs and make films about their local parks in order to learn more about them, and consider how they might be improved. Laila asked one workshop group from Forest Hill school, 13-14 year olds, to write 'recipe' poems about the park. Here's is one of the poems written on the grid Laila devised for the session:



A Perfect/Imperfect/Real Park recipe

Cooking verb <small>(Separation, no ending, e.g. stir)</small>	Measurement <small>(How much of your ingredient, 20 has to be 4 grams?)</small>	Ingredient <small>(What do you see & hear in the park? what happens in the park?)</small>
Stirring	50g	Skate park
Tracing	2g	Cafe
Bope	20g	Basketball Court
Stirring	100g	Public Toilets
Chopping	75g	Children
Bashing	500g	Grass
Mashing	750g	Shade and trees
Seeping	100g	Kids playground
Heat	200g	Sunshine
Freeze	120g	Air Conditioned Shelters

As you can see the poem advocates for there to be more activities in the park, such as basketball, a skate park, a café, shade and trees, a kid's playground, and air conditioned shelters. The aim here was to get young people creatively devising their own visions of how a new future might work, re-envisioning their local green spaces.

Tania Jennings, the Net Zero Carbon Manager at Lewisham, helpfully noted that 'green means clean', and listed this key issues that we as a society must address:

- Electric heating, not gas boilers
- Locally grown food, not global agriculture
- Natural fibre insulation, not petroleum-based
- Renewable energy, not coal and oil
- Electric cars & active travel, not petrol cars
- Circular Economy, not single use & trash

All of this means re-thinking where we live, work and play. Green careers will play a major role in reshaping how we live, work and play in lots of different ways.

Green careers are a growth area

Tania Jennings pointed out that over one in ten Londoners will work in the green sector in 2050, listing these jobs as being needed:

- Electrical Vehicle Technician –Maintains & Manages EV Parts & Charging Stations
- Renewable Energy Installer –Installs and maintains Solar PV, Wind, and Wave technology
- Environmental Engineer –Developing Efficient & Cost Saving Renewable Technologies
- Waste Worker –Keeping Our Communities Clean & Safe from Harmful Waste
- Urban Planner –Designing Better Spaces for our Towns/Cities
- Landscape Artist –Installing Green Walls to Buildings to Help Improve Air Quality
- Conservation Officer –Preserves & Cares for Natural Habitats
- Greywater Engineer –Designs Water recycling systems for buildings, including homes
- Retrofit Coordinator –Manages Retrofit projects from Assessment to completion
- Sustainable Fashion Designer –Uses recycled and locally produced fabrics
- Sustainable Delivery –Uses Cargo Bikes or Electric Vehicles to deliver materials
- Sustainable Farming –Includes urban farming, reducing the embodied carbon in food growth

Throughout the day, we learnt about how all of our major work sectors, from the arts/culture, education to business and construction all will need to embrace a green mindset, with many jobs involving people considering how to reduce our carbon footprint in sustainable, creative and exciting ways.

Dr Francis Gilbert, [Head of Mas in Educational Studies, MA Creative Writing and Education, Academic Co-Director of the Connected Curriculum and Principal Investigator on the Parklife Project](#), Goldsmiths University.

Huge thanks to the participating schools (Forest Hill and Christ the King), Victoria Willis, Schools Climate Network Co-ordinator at Lewisham, Megan Bastable of the Widening Participation Team at Goldsmiths, and Eleanor Hamblen, Schools' Learning Officer, for organising and running this day so well.

APPENDIX

Elena Draganova, Employment and Training Advisor at Lewisham Council, ran a successful CV writing workshop on the Green Careers Day, offering this advice.

Top tips & links for getting ahead in the jobs market

Job Searching:

Student Work: [Save the Student](#) – Guides and resources specifically for students looking for part-time or summer jobs.

E4S (e4s.co.uk) – Connects students with employers in various sectors.

Caterer.com – For those interested in hospitality careers.

Milkround (milkround.com) – Focuses on graduate jobs and internships.

Indeed (uk.indeed.com) – General job search engine with a wide range of opportunities.

Crafting a Great CV:

Free CV Builders:

Canva ([Free CV Maker: Create professional CVs online – Canva](#)) – Easy-to-use platform with creative templates.

Reed (reed.co.uk/cvbuilder) – Build a professional CV with expert guidance.

CV-Library (cv-library.co.uk/free-cv-builder) – Streamline the CV creation process.

CV Writing Video Tutorial: [YouTube](#) – A helpful video guide to walk them through writing a strong CV.

Job Profile Exploration:

Prospects (prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles) – Explore different career paths and learn about specific job roles.

Bonus Resource:

Barclays Life Skills (barclayslifeskills.com/) – Free online programme offering resources on employability and financial education.

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