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Press Release

## **TOPPING OUT CEREMONY FOR NEW SMARTLIFE CENTRE**

**Cambridge MP Julian Huppert marked a milestone in the development of the SmartLIFE Low Carbon Centre at CRC today when he formally topped out the building.**

Watched by guests involved in the project – the result of a partnership between Cambridge Regional College and Cambridgeshire County Council – he carried out the traditional ceremony on the top of the £3 million building.

He said this was a very exciting development for the College. “The SmartLIFE Low Carbon Centre will be a fantastic extension to Cambridge Regional College. It is a very important building and an exciting project,” he told guests.



MP Julian Huppert carries out the formal topping out ceremony, with CRC Principal Anne Constantine and County Councillor Mathew Shuter

The centre for renewable energy is where CRC will focus on 'green' technology qualifications and sustainable construction, teaching the skills needed for the workforce of the future. It is part of The Hive Education and Enterprise Park, which will also include the Future Business Centre and a SmartLIFE technologies expo.

CRC Principal Anne Constantine said the College was very excited about the project, which was a step into the future.

"We are committed to this sustainability project. It will be very important for creating the carbon-ready workforce, and also as an information resource for the community and the working sector," she said.

"This new centre represents a step into the future, bringing innovation in renewable energy systems for our students, the construction industry and the local community. We already have a SmartLIFE Centre at CRC where teach modern methods of construction, and the HIVE Low Carbon Centre will allow us to go even further in teaching the skills to build low carbon homes and install renewable energy systems. We are absolutely delighted that the project is nearing completion."

Cambridgeshire County Council Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Mathew Shuter, said: "SmartLIFE training can prepare our local construction industry to take advantage of business opportunities to come. Demand for new skills is being driven by the requirement for zero carbon homes by 2016 and tighter standards for building regulations.

"In the renewable energy market, this is being accelerated by the Green Deal – where home energy efficiency improvements will be paid for by savings from energy bills. These changes are creating tremendous new business opportunities for local people."

To improve local workforce skills for both new entrants to construction industry and the existing workforce, CRC will offer qualifications in six technology areas: installation of photo-voltaic panels for electricity generation, solar thermal heating for hot water, ground and air source heat pumps for heating, rain water harvesting, advanced gas heating systems, and solid wall insulation.

Modules in low carbon technologies will boost traditional skills training. To reduce the impact of CO<sub>2</sub> locally, homeowners will also be able to learn about sustainable refurbishment and retro-fitting of renewable energy systems to existing properties.

Contracts Director at SmartLIFE's lead contractor Kier Marriott, Sean Yeo, said: "Kier has recently sponsored 25 students from the Cambridge and Peterborough region on the Construction and Built Environment Diploma for an additional two day Innovative Methods of Construction (IMC) training programme run by SmartLIFE. There can be no doubting that our industry needs projects like this."

**- ends -**

### **MEDIA ENQUIRIES**

For more information on CRC, please contact Lynn O'Shea, Communications & PR Manager, on 01223 418773 or email [loshea@camre.ac.uk](mailto:loshea@camre.ac.uk)

### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

Cambridge Regional College is one of the largest providers of full-time further education for 16 to 19 year-olds in the eastern region, with more than 4,000 full-time and 6,000 part-time students. Students come in from a 40-mile radius, covering Cambridge and its surrounding villages, eastern Bedfordshire, northern Essex and western Suffolk. Over 80 per cent of full-time students are aged 16 to 18 years old and come to the College after secondary school; the rest are mature students, studying on a range of Access to Higher Education and vocational programmes.