

Case Study: Healthy Communities

DEC! – Deputy First Ministers Visit



(left to right) Steven Stewart, DYW; Ken Brown, Balfour Beatty; Sarah Brown, Perth Academy; John Swinney, Deputy First Minister; DEC! Students; Elaine Finnie, DYW; Johnny Lothian, Perth Academy; Alison Watson, Class of Your Own; Lorna Sherriff, Perth Academy

Perth Transport Futures Project – Phase One
A9/A85 Perth Transport Futures Project

16th March 2018

Balfour Beatty's support of the DEC! programme caught the eye of Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, John Swinney MSP, and he paid the school a visit on the 16th of March to meet the pupils and learn more about the class.

"Thank you for a fascinating visit. Great to see the Perth Academy partnership with Balfour Beatty in action."

John Swinney, MSP, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

The Challenge

Key to addressing the upcoming skills gap in construction is inspiring young people to consider careers in the industry. The Perth Transport Futures Project (PTFP) has been supporting the provision of Design, Engineer, Construct! (DEC!) at Perth Academy as part of its Community Benefits Strategy. 'DEC!' was devised by 'Class of Your Own' and is an accredited learning programme for secondary-school age students which has been expertly developed to create and inspire the next generation of Built Environment professionals.

The Measures

Through a project-based approach, DEC! applies pure academic subjects to the latest construction industry practices. The result is young people with real-world practical experience and employability skills. PTFP has invested £12,000 to fund the course over two years as well as supporting classes with guest lectures and practical activities led by

senior Balfour Beatty staff including Alan Dykes, Ken Brown and Ian Hogg. The course represents a modern and progressive approach to school study, with a firm basis in employability, through a focus on combining multiple skills to achieve a project goal – an experience more representative of life outside of the school walls.

The Outcome

The project has been extremely successful with John Swinney MSP closing out British Science week with a visit to the school to speak with Ken Brown from Balfour Beatty, Johnny Lothian, Sarah Brown and Lorna Sherriff of Perth Academy, and Alison Watson, Managing Director of 'Class of Your Own', about the wider aspirations of the ambitious and innovative programme and the success of the partnership. This was a great opportunity for the industry, the school and, in particular, the students as it reinforced both the support for and importance of their studies in STEM and engineering.

For more information, please contact:
Duncan.gardner@balfourbeatty.com