

South West College joins elite global network of high performance buildings

Erne Campus has become one of the first buildings globally to join an elite network of high performance buildings recognised by the UN

BELFAST, UNITED KINGDOM, November 4, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Following the official opening of the world's largest Passive House Premium rated building in September, South West College's Erne Campus in Enniskillen has today (Wednesday 3rd November) become one of the first buildings across the globe to join an elite network of high performance buildings recognised by the UN Economic Commission for Europe.

Representatives from the College led by Dr Barry McCarron joined UNECE Executive Secretary, Olga Algayerova and Michael Matheson MSP, Scottish Government Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport at the Construction Scotland Innovation Centre (CSIC) in Glasgow to sign a Memorandum of Understanding further underlining South West College's commitment to sustainability and renewable technologies.

The built environment and construction sector is central in the fight against climate change with buildings consuming as much as 70% of the electricity generated globally and accounting for approx. 40% of CO2 emissions. High Performance buildings including the Erne Campus are designed and constructed to have a low impact on their natural environment and to use minimal amounts of energy for heating, cooling, lighting and ventilation.

The framework supporting the UNECE Centres of Excellence initiative for High Performance buildings focuses on three key pillars, reducing energy consumption, increasing the carbon stored in the buildings and a greater use of building materials that are low in embodied carbon.



Pictured at the launch of the UNECE High Performance Centres of Excellence (l-r) Dr Barry McCarron, Acting Head of Business Development, South West College, Scott Foster, Director of the Sustainable Energy Division, UNECE, Donal Monaghan, Sustainability M

Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Europe said:

'Buildings and the built environment must be the highest priority for action by communities and countries to deliver not only the Paris Agreement but also the whole 2030 agenda. Buildings are critical across all the sustainable development goals. The goals go beyond decarbonisation though decarbonisation is the most urgent as the climate crisis is existential. In fact when we succeed with this initiative we will have made a major step in breaking the historic link between development and carbon emissions.'

Dr Barry McCarron, Acting Head of Business Development at South West College reflected upon the sustainability work undertaken by the college in recent years and added:

"The announcement of the Erne Campus as the first building in Northern Ireland to join this global network is a significant show of faith from the international community in the work that has been undertaken by the College over the past ten years.

Membership of this network will offer untold opportunities for the College and our industry partners to collaborate with and learn from some of the most innovative organisations from across the globe and with the opening of the Erne Campus we are firmly in a position to take a lead on the work that will be undertaken by the group."

Dr McCarron continued, saying South West College wants to ensure that new and existing buildings meet the highest possible environmental standards and will ultimately help reverse some of the impacts of climate change.

South West College will host a workshop as part of the COP26 programme of events on Thursday 11th November at 9:30am. The panel discussion will focus on the role that buildings can play in the fight against climate change and the event will be streamed live at <https://youtu.be/8Ohm1EgifvE>

Watch this short video featuring Dr Barry McCarron talking about the Erne Campus development and the significance of COP26 <https://youtube.com/watch?v-PTJsw8-nvoU>

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Pictured at the launch of the UNECE High Performance Centres of Excellence (l-r) Dr Barry McCarron, Acting Head of Business Development, South West College, Scott Foster, Director of the Sustainable Energy Division, UNECE, Donal Monaghan, Sustainability Marketing Officer, South West College, Carol Viney, Head of Faculty and Campus Manager, South West College and Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary UN Economic Commission for Europe.

Notes to editor:☐☐

South West College is a further education college located in the west of Northern Ireland. The College is physically represented at campuses in Cookstown, Dungannon, Enniskillen and Omagh. The College employs over 500 full time and part time staff servicing some 14,000 enrolments with a turnover of £40m and makes a major contribution to the local and regional economy.☐☐

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