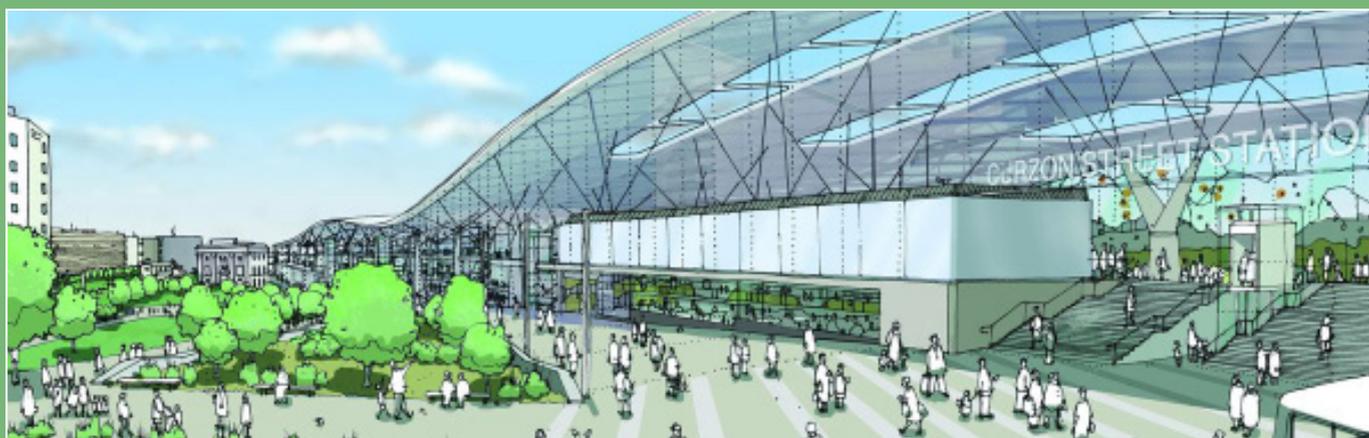


LAMBETH GIRLS' SCHOOL ON THE RIGHT TRACK...

In 2016, the London Borough of Lambeth was successful in a bid to lead a Careers Cluster, as part of the **London Ambitions programme**, in partnership with London Southbank University and Lambeth College. This project aligns with the Future Lambeth strategy in taking a whole school approach to improving the labour market and equipping young people in Lambeth with the skills to succeed. The project has worked with 17 schools so far (including three special schools and one Pupil Referral Unit), linking them up with at least one key employer who offers opportunities such as work experience, shadowing, trips, visits and assemblies, and apprenticeship opportunities. Employers also work with schools to give advice about how to **further embed STEM into the curriculum**.

La Retraite, a girls' school in Lambeth, was interested in engaging more young women studying at the school in STEM subjects and careers, and giving opportunities to experience this sector to those who were interested in STEM professions. **The careers cluster team in Lambeth Council worked with the borough employer engagement team to source the Rail Delivery Group (RDG) as a key employer for the school to work with** – an organisation which provides services and support to enable passenger and freight rail companies including Network Rail and HS2 to deliver a successful railway. Lambeth Council, La Retraite and RDG worked together to draw up a 26 week action plan for engagement, based on the needs of the pupils, schools and employer.

Over the course of 26 weeks, an array of opportunities was offered to girls at La Retraite. **RDG provided pupils with the chance to undertake shadowing at the company**, hear about the different opportunities in STEM professions, and receive advice relating to eligibility criteria and qualifications needed for these types of careers. A couple of students who were particularly interested in STEM were offered week-long work experience opportunities at the company, which received good feedback from the girls. RDG also held a competition for several schools where students were asked to design some marketing material for the railway company. Arts students at La Retraite took part and won the competition, receiving a cheque for the school to spend on new materials. RDG were involved in a parents' evening where they spoke to parents about opportunities in STEM – even translating their presentation into Spanish for the local Spanish-speaking community. Some students have had the **opportunity to be mentored by staff at RDG** and in some cases this relationship is ongoing.



La Retraite girls' school worked with the Rail Delivery Group (RDG), an organisation that provides support for passenger and freight rail companies, including Network Rail and HS2 (above)

Lambeth Council has played a key role in identifying and enabling these kinds of opportunities for local employers and pupils in Lambeth schools. The **cluster team** sources employers to meet schools' requirements. It also plays a key brokering role and supports the schools and employers to create tailored action plans with realistic targets that meet local needs. Throughout the process, the team is on hand to support schools and employers; monitor progress; evaluate activities; and ensure that all parties are accountable. The team holds borough-wide meetings on a termly basis for employers to share information and opportunities with other employers and schools.

As a result of the project, schools are working more closely together and sharing resources and ideas. Many of the employers have ongoing relationships with the schools they have worked with, and are in a better position to reach out to other schools in the area and repeat successful activities elsewhere.

