

# **PRESS RELEASE**

**GOEM/PN6**

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## **Campaign launched to give young people in the East Midlands their “first break”**

A CAMPAIGN encouraging employers across the East Midlands to help young people into work was launched today.

Minister for the East Midlands Phil Hope MP issued a call to action to businesses and other organisations to give the region’s young people their “first break”.

That could be an apprenticeship, a work trial, a voluntary place, a work placement or an internship.

Or, employers could consider bidding for one of the 100,000 jobs available for young people from the Future Jobs Fund or engage in a Local Employment Partnership.

Mr Hope has teamed up with JobCentre Plus, the Learning and Skills Council, the National Apprenticeship Service and The Prince’s Trust for the Backing Young East Midlands campaign.

Backing Young East Midlands will see a programme of activity over the coming weeks and months to bring more employers forward with opportunities for young people.

The Minister launched it this morning at engineering company Slack and Parr, in Kegworth, which has won a string of awards for its work with apprentices.

Mr Hope said: “Backing Young East Midlands is a call to action for organisations in the region to ensure that the fabulous skills and experience of our talented young people do not go to waste.

“We can help young people fulfil their potential by just giving them that first break to show what they can do. These are tough economic times, but we cannot let a generation with so much promise be lost to unemployment.”

The campaign is part of Backing Young Britain, which has been endorsed by hundreds of organisations across the country via its website – [www.hmg.gov.uk/backingyoungbritain](http://www.hmg.gov.uk/backingyoungbritain) .

Karen Foulds, consumer services director for JobCentre Plus East Midlands, said: “We have thousands of employers across the East Midlands now committed to Local Employment Partnerships with Jobcentre Plus to help them recruit the right people.

“These plus a wide range of business incentives, including training and recruitment cash, will give East Midlands jobseekers a chance to prove their workplace potential.

“And initiatives like Work Trials and Future Jobs Fund can be especially beneficial for younger people where a limited work record may be a barrier to getting a first job.”

Karen Woodward, Regional Director for the National Apprenticeship Service, said: “In the current economic climate, we’re all working to a common goal of getting young people in the East Midlands into employment.

“We need more employers in the region to back young Britain by giving aspiring apprentices their first break

“Apprenticeships offer the best of both worlds – giving employers access to a pool of talent that can be shaped to improve performance and providing young people with a great start in their chosen career.”

Mir Juma, The Prince’s Trust East Midlands regional director, said: “Working together to open up opportunities for young people will mean we can help many more into work.

“Young people have been disproportionately affected by the recession so we must act now to stop young people falling out of the system. Only by doing so can we stop the unemployed becoming the unemployable.”

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### Notes for Editors:

- Backing Young East Midlands is part of Backing Young Britain, which is a national campaign, bringing Government, business and other organisations together, to create new opportunities for young people during the recession

- Organisations across the East Midlands can achieve long-term business benefits by committing to one or more of the following:
  1. Providing work experience opportunities
  2. Offering internships for 18 year olds and non graduates
  3. Considering a young person for a job through a work trial
  4. Offering a volunteering place or becoming a volunteer mentor for school and university leavers
  5. Providing apprenticeship opportunities for 16-24 year olds
  6. Bidding for one of the 100,000 jobs for young people from the Future Jobs Fund
  7. Engaging in a Local Employment Partnership

### **Key facts**

- Over 260 organisations, both large and small, have endorsed the campaign via the Backing Young Britain website
- Organisations that have lent their support, across private, public and third sectors, include Asda, Birmingham City Football Club, British Airways, the British Chambers of Commerce, Cadbury, Center Parcs Ltd, Macmillan Cancer Support, Microsoft and Wiltshire Council

### **Contacts**

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