

## **Cross Keys Homes pass on the Skills Pledge baton to boost workplace learning in the East**

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Affordable housing provider, Cross Keys Homes from Peterborough has passed the Skills Pledge baton onto other local businesses at an event on Tuesday 22 July at the Learning & Skills Council in Cambridge. It was all part of a bid to spread the message that workplace learning can have huge benefits for employees and the success of local business. And it has already had an effect, with another Peterborough business deciding to sign up to the pledge this July.

Cross Keys Homes signed the Skills Pledge last year, a Learning and Skills Council (LSC) initiative which encourages businesses to make a public commitment to workplace learning and skills development for their staff.

At Tuesday's event, they agreed to pass the baton on to other businesses yet to sign up, in a bid to spread the message that staff development and encouraging learning at work can have a huge impact on the success of the business and local economy. Cross Keys Homes also received a certificate in recognition of the investment made to help employees gain new skills and qualifications to do their jobs and meet the needs of local business.

Now one year old, the Skills Pledge was launched in 2007 by the Learning and Skills Council to encourage employers to make a public and voluntary commitment to actively support employees in learning and developing their skills.

Dr Jon Nay, Area Director for the Learning and Skills Council Cambridgeshire thanked the employers for making the Skills Pledge, a public commitment to actively supporting employees in gaining valuable skills. He explained: “The Skills pledge baton is about passing the message on to others on how important it is to make the commitment to training your staff. I challenge other businesses to make the same commitment to their employees, wider business community and supply chain and in doing so help raise skills across the county.”

After signing the Skills Pledge, businesses are offered the services of a Train to Gain skills broker to carry out a skills audit of the company and assess its training needs. Cross Keys Homes took up the offer of this service, and Chief executive, Mick Leggett, said: “We feel that the Train to Gain campaign is a great initiative supporting staff to improve their level of qualification and achieve their goals.

“We are, therefore, pleased to be able to pledge our support and commitment and would also like to thank the unions for their help and support with this initiative.”

Perkins Engines Company Ltd from Peterborough has already decided to take part, signing their Skills Pledge earlier this week on 21 July. An important day for Perkins as Barbara Follett MP officially opened their Learning Centre and was given a tour. Jon Nay presented their certificate and passed on the Skills Pledge baton to Human Resources Director, Stephen Torrans.

The race is now on for other organisations in Peterborough to make this commitment and release the potential within their business as the Skills Pledge baton continues to make its way around the region.

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## **Notes to editors**

### **Learning and Skills Council:**

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

### **The Skills Pledge:**

The Skills Pledge is a voluntary, public commitment by the leadership of a company or organisation to support all its employees to develop their basic skills, including literacy and numeracy, and work towards relevant, valuable qualifications to at least Level 2 (equivalent to 5 good GCSEs). The purpose is to ensure that all staff are skilled, competent and able to make a full contribution to the success of the company/organisation.

The Pledge can be given by the Chief Executive, Chief Operating Officer, owner/manager or other Board member, on behalf of the organisation. It is a corporate commitment covering the whole company/organisation. For those employees who do not already have full Level 2 qualification, the Government will provide funding to help them gain basic literacy and numeracy skills as well as their first full Level 2 qualification.

The Skills Pledge is open to all employers of all sizes in the private, public and voluntary sectors.

To find out more go to [www.traintogain.gov.uk](http://www.traintogain.gov.uk)