

LSC celebrates helping 32,000 learners across Hertfordshire and the East of England develop skills

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£32 million of investment from the European Social Fund (ESF) has helped more than 32,000 in Hertfordshire and the East of England into work, learning or to develop their skills in their existing jobs, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) Hertfordshire announced at a recent celebratory event.

The event held at Shendish Manor celebrated the success of the six-year European Social Funding (ESF) programme, which has invested £32 million of ESF monies across three programmes which all promote employment opportunities for all. The funding has supported 186 projects with co-financing money and has helped more than 32 thousand learners in Hertfordshire and the East of England.

To mark the success of the funding programme, LSC Hertfordshire celebrated with a 'fun day' and presentations event at Shendish Manor, Apsley, near Hemel Hempstead on Tuesday 5 February 2008. Guest speaker, Tessa Sanderson gave an after dinner speech followed by local training provider presentations with beneficiaries from the projects. Guests included learners, employers and project providers who have benefited from the funding programme. Designed to recognise the hard work and achievements of all those involved in the funded projects, fun activities were available for all attendees to take part in, including a.

Magician, Various Giant Games, Caricaturist, 2 x 40" Plasma Nintendo Wii games, Bucking Bronco, Surf Simulator, Air Hockey, Clay Pigeon Shooting, Climbing Wall, and Henna Artist.

Tamsyn Hammond, ESF Contracts Manager for LSC Hertfordshire, said: "ESF helps people who need additional support to enter work by helping break down barriers and develop their potential by training people who lack basic skills and qualifications.

"This fun day event celebrates the achievements of the projects providers and learners. It recognises their hard work as well as raise the profile of the ESF co-financing and the impact it has had on the people and employers in Hertfordshire and the East of England."

The current ESF programme is drawing to a close, but the Learning and Skills Council is working with other key agencies in the East of England region to plan for the next round of funding that will cover the period 2008 - 2010. The focus of the new programme will continue to be helping people get the local skills they need to enter work, as well as improving the skills needed by local employers. Co-financing organisations including the Learning and Skills Council will be issuing invitations to tender later this year.

For information on ESF projects in Hertfordshire call Tamsyn Hammond on 01234 420032 or e-mail tamsyn.hammond@lsc.gov.uk or Samantha Collier 01727 733558 or e-mail Samantha.collier@lsc.gov.uk.

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Notes to Editor:

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ESF funded projects:

On Your Marks

The 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games are a unique opportunity not just for London but also for the East of England and the rest of the UK. The project was split into three Measure's:

- **Measure 3.1 – Translation and Language Skills for migrant workers via ESOL training, and Recruitment, Basic and Vocation Skills in Construction and Logistics**
- **Measure 4.2 – Construction Project**
- **Measure 5.1 – Opportunities for Women**

Regional

There is a shortage of qualified Skills for Life teachers in the region (as there is in the UK as a whole) and in order to reach the numbers needing Skills for Life training there needs to be enough qualified teachers available to ensure delivery.

Activities within this measure included:

- raising the awareness of Skills for Life
- recruiting and training new teachers of literacy, numeracy and ESOL
- up-skilling vocational teaching staff and training existing Skills for Life teachers to the new level 2,3 and 4 qualifications
- delivery of Skills for Life teacher training to Skills for Life tutors, vocational teaching staff and teaching/support assistants involved in adult learning.

Skills for Life teaching and training skills should be provided to the teachers and tutors who are most likely, and are most empowered, to use them. These teachers and tutors will be those who are in regular contact with significant numbers of individuals who are likely to require Skills for Life improvement and encouragement.

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Target groups/sectors:

- Low skilled paid and volunteer staff (especially those facing barriers such as childcare provision and rurality) in the Voluntary Community Service (VCS)
- To assist lower-skilled employed and economically inactive adults, including women returners to work, to improve their Skills for Life and vocational skills by offering qualifications to level 2 or equivalent in childcare
- Employees in the childcare sector and economically inactive adults with low skills
- Those in, or considering, childcare occupations serving the needs of the 0-4 and 5-9 age groups as a priority
- Employees in the construction sector and economically inactive adults with low skills
- Develop flexible and responsive learning programmes for unemployed/employed adults with low skills (below level 2) in the construction sector
- Allow low-skilled adults, returners to work and older workers to gain a qualification and a progression route into employment in the construction sector
- Deliver bite-size, entry level and level 1 training in the construction sector, including IAG
- Promote non-traditional gender learning where possible.

Please note that a number of the ESF contracts were across the East of England too hence the reference is not just Hertfordshire.

LSC

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for planning and funding high-quality vocational 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 by 2010, young people and adults in England have the knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. Established in 2001, we work nationally, regionally and locally from a network of offices across the country.

ESF

The European Social Fund (ESF) is one of four Structural Funds designed to strengthen economic and social cohesion in the European Union. www.esf.gov.uk

ESF's main purpose is to support the annual UK Employment Action Plan, which sets out how UK policies and initiatives take account of the Employment Guidelines established within the European Employment Strategy. ESF is channeled through three Structural Fund [Objectives](#) and the [EQUAL](#) Community Initiative.

The current programmes run from 2000 to 2006. ESF will provide about £4.5 billion in Great Britain (£3.5 billion in England) in this period.

The European Social Fund aims to:

- help unemployed and inactive people enter work
- provide opportunities for people at a disadvantage in the labour market
- promote lifelong learning
- develop the skills of employed people
- improve women's participation in the labour market