

10 November 2008

Over 100 employees at South Essex Homes are boosting their skills through free training at work

More than 40 employees at South Essex Homes have already been given the chance to improve their skills and careers by taking part in free training through Train to Gain, and a further 75 members of staff will be taking courses in the near future.

The Southend-on-Sea based housing organisation, which is responsible for the management and maintenance of Southend-on-Sea's council housing, decided to take advantage of Train to Gain after being advised they were eligible to receive funding for appropriate training. Train to Gain is a service offered by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to help employers identify training needs and find the best solution.

Forty-two members of staff have already completed NVQ Level 2 qualifications in Customer Service or Team Leading, and in some cases staff have been able to do both courses.

Human Resources manager at South Essex Homes, Christine Ranson, said that they wanted to offer the chance to gain qualifications to as many staff as possible: "A further 75 staff from across the company will be taking Level 2 and Level 3 NVQs in the near future, enabling those staff who have already taken part to continue to higher level qualifications and giving others who haven't yet been involved the chance to begin training."

She continued: "A dozen team members will be taking the Housing NVQ Level 2, which is good as this will not only develop their skills, but as an organisation will make us more resident focused. We're also in discussions with our training provider, TheLightBulb Ltd, about offering our caretaking staff a Cleaning NVQ as we're trying to offer appropriate training to anyone across the company who would want it or benefit from it. By offering NVQ training to employees you're investing in them and their future. Our team is our biggest asset and should be treated as such."

Lesley Jones, Managing Director of TheLightBulb, said that this kind of training across the company brings benefits not only to the individuals but also the business as a whole and its customers.

“Employees taking part in the courses have support from other employees which motivates them and having a large cohort also helps to keep momentum going. The training provides employees with the specific skills they need and means the whole team are talking the same language.”

Train to Gain is designed to help businesses get the training they need to succeed and to increase the skills of the country through workplace training. A Train to Gain Skills Broker will review a business, carry out a free skills analysis worth £500 and suggest a range of training solutions tailored to the employees. The broker will also recommend a training provider or a college which can deliver the training package. The Skills Broker is able to explain all the funding options available to a business, provide support at every step and review how the training is progressing for the business and the employees.

For more information on Train to Gain, visit www.traintogain.gov.uk or call 0800 387326.

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For all media enquiries, please contact Lucy Clegg or Dawn Humphreys at Tribe on 01603 417722 or email lucy@tribepr.com or dawn@tribepr.com.

Notes to editors

Images

South Essex Homes 1: Clive Bennett, Hazel Atkins, Julie Chipperfield, Steve Gallacher, Carole Blythe, Nadine Gould, Clive Digby, George Avery, Nicky Weaver and Allan Abraham

South Essex Homes 2: Carole Blythe (Re-housing department)

Train to Gain

1. Train to Gain was launched nationally in September 2006 with the vision that by 2010, young people and adults in England will have the knowledge and skills that match the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce.
2. It is currently being rolled out across the East of England, including Bedfordshire & Luton, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk.
3. The service is administered by The Learning and Skills Council and delivered by The East of England Brokerage Consortium and The Consultancy Home Counties Ltd.