



# Essex Skills Pledge Club



Leading learning and skills

## Autumn 2008

### What is it?

Following the successful launch of the Skills Pledge in July 2007 more than 60 Essex organisations have taken the pledge. The uptake of training and apprenticeships has also risen steeply in the last year and is predicted to more than double throughout Essex in the next twelve months. In line with this we aim to treble the number of Skills Pledge members during the year. The prime vehicle of achieving this will be the creation of the Skills Pledge Club. We are currently recruiting a number of 'Founder Members' who will act as officers and drivers to recruit more members.

### Why should you want to be a member?

The anticipated benefits of this club will be:

- Early briefing on changes of eligibility or new products
- The opportunity to share 'best practice' with market leaders
- The influencing of policy making at Regional and national level
- High profile, LSC funded marketing opportunities
- The opportunity to show public commitment to continuous employee and skills improvement

### Who qualifies for membership?

You must have already signed the Skills Pledge and you must have demonstrated your willingness to 'Pass the Baton' by either introducing three other organisations that have consequently signed the Pledge or by booking 100+ of your staff onto approved courses.

### What does this commit me to?

In addition to the above we would expect members to continue to demonstrate

support by providing regular updates on the progress of their action plans, supplying case studies and attendance at meetings and events.

### How much will it cost?

There will be no charge for membership of the club itself though there may be

charges for some of the events and 'merchandising'. For example, would you like an original 'baton' or a 'plate' for your boardroom? Or copies of photographs and mail shots for your own communications? Then we could arrange them for you



At a recent skills pledge event Janice Logie passes the baton to local employers

## Case Study: Kent Blaxill reaps benefits from signing the Skills Pledge

Signing the Skills Pledge in November last year has helped Kent Blaxill to identify its training needs and has reinforced the company's commitment to training.

Kent Blaxill, a leading Builders Merchant in East Anglia, has been supplying building materials to the trade and public since 1836. The company now has 11 branches across East Anglia and employs 240 members of staff. As the company grew staff development became a key priority for Kent Blaxill. Signing the Skills Pledge provided the company with the opportunity to publicly show its commitment to workforce training and to expand upon the employee training already in place.

As a result of signing the Skills Pledge Kent Blaxill was given access to the expertise of a skills broker to help facilitate the company's pledge of commitment

David Plowman, HR Manager at Kent Blaxill, said: "Staff benefit from a greater sense of worth if they are properly trained and feel that they are adding value to the company they work for."

The use of workshops to make the learners feel part of a group and identify mentors helps the company at appraisals to identify employees ready for career progression. Learners also have the advantage of one to one sessions with tutors for support.

The Skills Pledge is a "quick win", providing a clear way to codify and communicate what you are already doing



David Plowman signs the Skills Pledge for Kent Blaxill

### *The Skills Pledge Commitment*

On behalf of ....., I, as Chief Executive/Chief Operating Officer [or other board member], make a commitment that we shall:

- actively encourage and support our employees to gain the skills and qualifications that will support their future employability and meet the needs of our business/organisation;
- actively encourage and support our employees to acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills, and with Government support work towards their first Level 2 qualification in an area that is relevant to our business/organisation;
- demonstrably raise our employees' skills and competencies to improve company/organisation performance through investing in economically valuable training and development.

For further information contact the **Learning and Skills Council**, Redwing House, Hedgerows Business Park, Colchester Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 5PB  
Tel: 0845 019 4179 or visit