

## Building a Future in Construction for Ex-offenders

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Kensington and Chelsea College (KCC) is opening a brand new centre to provide training in construction skills to young people, adults and ex-offenders. The Transition Skills Centre will make a real difference to the lives of some of the most disadvantaged young people in London.

For two days a week, the centre will open its doors to ex-offenders on the Skillsweb project, who will learn new skills in construction. For the rest of the week, the centre will provide training in Construction and the Built environment for 14-16 year olds from schools in West London. The Centre will also offer NVQs, Apprenticeships and Intermediate construction awards for all ages to those working or planning to work in the industry.

Prisoners, who are eligible for release on a temporary license, as well as ex-offenders returning to London after serving their prison sentence elsewhere, will be able to learn new skills in construction making them more employable. Mentors at the centre will help learners take up local long-term job opportunities. Many of the 600 employers on the Park Royal estate have already recruited ex-offenders and found them to be loyal, productive members of staff.

The Transition Skills Centre will be opened by Learning and Skills (LSC) Regional Director David Hughes, on Thursday 29 November 2007, who says:

“This Centre will help people make the move from prison into proper, sustainable jobs. We know that with building booming in London, more and more employers are looking for skilled staff. At the same time we also know that getting a job can help stop re-offending; so I am really pleased to be able to support this project.

“The Centre is a good example of what colleges in London are doing to help people get into work. It will also deliver new skills to young people which are going to be crucial to the London economy over the next few years. We want more employers to work with colleges in this way, helping local people get local jobs.”

Mike Jutsum, KCC Chief Executive explains:

“We can make a difference to people’s lives by raising skill levels and supporting learners to become more employable, more confident and better empowered to improve their future. We are building a workforce to meet the challenging shortages of skills in the construction industry in the UK.”

-ENDS-

### **Notes to Editors**

#### **Learning and Skills Council (LSC)**

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. It is responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. It has a single goal: to improve the skills of England’s young people and adults to world class standards. Its 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. It works nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

[www.lsc.gov.uk/london](http://www.lsc.gov.uk/london)

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**Kensington and Chelsea College (KCC)**

Kensington and Chelsea College runs a huge range of vocational and academic courses in five main centres operating from and within the community in and around the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, a dispersed, collaborative, entrepreneurial provider in partnership with the third sector, major employers and small business. The college's population boasts a diverse range of cultures and ages offering flexible, full-time and part-time programmes of study in a supportive environment helping students on their way to their chosen career.

[www.kcc.ac.uk](http://www.kcc.ac.uk)

**Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS)**

The Learning and Skills Council took responsibility across England for offender learning and skills in July 2006, and are now responsible for planning funding and delivering the new service across all nine LSC regions in England. Kensington and Chelsea College is the lead OLASS provider in West London.

The £14 million regional investment in OLASS across London includes a wide range of provision, covering, basic, key and vocational skills in custody and the community and also includes funds to provide Additional Learning Support.

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