



>LSC

Leading learning and skills

# the magazine

July 2006

The magazine of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for partners and people interested in learning and skills issues in London

Transforming  
Woolwich  
retailers  
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Cover photo: Looking good – Woolwich retailers are using new skills to create stylish, effective visual displays (see article on page 7)

### *the magazine*

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Written and produced by item ([www.item.co.uk](http://www.item.co.uk))

Publication reference: LSC-P-LOR-060002



David Hughes

## Comment

Welcome to the fifth issue of *the magazine*. Through this quarterly newsletter, we hope to provide LSC London Region's partners and stakeholders with a useful overview of LSC-funded activities and strategic developments at local, regional and national levels.

At the time of writing, we are still awaiting the results of the Government's proposals regarding the additional powers and responsibilities for the Mayor of London and the Greater London Assembly. We look forward to the announcement of the results, and to the opportunity of working closely with the Mayor and the Greater London Authority in delivering the skills London needs to continue operating as a world-class city.

Here at the LSC we have been going through a period of significant organisational change. This process is outlined on pages 4 and 5, where we also introduce members of LSC London Region's new senior management team. I firmly believe that our new structure, which includes functional and specialist regional teams supporting and supported by borough-level partnership teams, will enable us to operate in a far more efficient way, to the benefit of learners, employers and training providers across London.

Also included in this issue is a centre-spread feature on the Government's Further Education Reform White Paper. This important document heralds the start of an exciting new era for FE in this country and gives us an excellent opportunity to drive up the quality of provision, right across London. It also stresses that vocational training is no longer to be regarded as the 'poor relation' of traditional academic learning, highlighting instead its critical importance to the economic success of the country. We're 100 per cent in favour of this message, which we've been conveying in our meetings with London's learners and employers for many years.

I hope you will find this issue of *the magazine* an enjoyable and informative read. As ever, your comments will be greatly appreciated.

**David Hughes**  
Regional Director



**EUROPEAN UNION**  
European Social Fund

# Inside Knowledge



A group of learners including Andrew Campbell, far right, with John Bird, Editor-in-Chief of *The Big Issue*, centre

## Students participating in the pan-London Inside Knowledge project celebrated their successes during an event held at City Lit.

The Inside Knowledge project enables previously homeless people and ex-offenders to train for work in the homelessness and care sectors. It is co-financed by the LSC in London through the European Social Fund. To date 182 students have completed classroom training through the project and some have already progressed to paid employment, work placements or volunteering. The project is often promoted to others by the learners who have benefited from it and who have

been trained to deliver presentations and workshops about Inside Knowledge.

One of the learners is Andrew Campbell. His involvement with drugs had led to a custodial sentence and the loss of his job and his home. However, Andrew's future now looks far brighter: having gained a Level 2 certificate in Supporting the Development Needs of Homeless and Vulnerable People, Andrew went on to win the London Region Individual Award as part of Adult Learners' Week.

Following the Inside Knowledge course, Andrew has completed a work placement at an alcohol support project in Camden

and has been shortlisted for a position as a training co-ordinator. He commented: "My views on homeless people have changed. The course helped me understand the difficulties I had when faced with homeless people. I was able to empathise with the situation of the vulnerable person, which I'd never had to do before."

## 14-19 Forum

Representatives from a wide range of organisations involved in the 14-19 education and training sector attended the first ever London 14-19 Forum Conference.

*Making the London 14-19 vision a reality* was organised by LSC London Region on behalf of the Forum. Turnout was very good, with 118 delegates and 29 of London's 33 boroughs represented at the event.

The event encouraged commitment, collaboration and partnership in order to move London's 14-19 strategy forward. Delegates openly shared information, experiences and insights, resulting in many practical proposals being put forward for future consideration by the London 14-19 Forum, which is chaired by the LSC.

For more information, please contact Sean McMahan on 020 8929 3967 (sean.mcmahan@lsc.gov.uk).

## Champion network

A new, employer-led network was launched in April to promote and champion Apprenticeships to business.

The Apprenticeship Ambassadors Network aims to increase the take-up of Apprenticeships by employers of all sizes, by providing advice and support to organisations seeking to establish Apprenticeships, and helping to improve outcomes. The network will also feed back to Government on issues that affect the quality and effectiveness of Apprenticeships.

The new Network's Chair, Sir Roy Gardner, Chief Executive of Centrica Plc and Chairman designate of Compass Group Plc, spoke of the crucial importance of skilled workers to the competitiveness of businesses. He commented: "To me the message is clear: Apprenticeships **do** work, but together we can and must make them more effective. Employers need to be fully committed, and Government and the LSC need to continue to improve quality and encourage completions."

For more details, visit [www.employersforapprentices.gov.uk](http://www.employersforapprentices.gov.uk) or email Anne McCaffrey (anne.mccaffrey@centrica.com).

# Reorganised and

The LSC is undergoing a major national transformation programme that will enable it to deliver post-16 education in a more dynamic, effective and customer-facing way.

The internal transformation programme for the LSC is known as *Theme 7*. It is an essential part of *agenda for change*, which is driving up participation rates and standards to help the further education sector make a significant contribution to the economy at national, regional and local levels.

*Theme 7* is about working smarter. The reorganisation of the LSC will free up much-needed resources for frontline delivery. It will also enable the LSC to develop new, less bureaucratic and more strategic relationships with partners, using expertise and reputation to influence what is happening on the ground. This in turn will result in better quality and more relevant

training for individuals and employers.

London is undergoing a significant transformation under *Theme 7*. As before, there are five local offices: London Central, London North, London South, London East and London West. These are now supported by five regional directorates: Regeneration; Learning, Planning and Performance; Marketing and Communications; Finance and Resources; and Skills.

Another important development is the decision to appoint a local partnership team, headed up by a partnership director, for each of London's 33 boroughs (see

[www.lsclondon.gov.uk](http://www.lsclondon.gov.uk) for details). This senior resource will enable the LSC to engage more effectively with local stakeholders and providers, and to exert greater influence. Using soft data and local intelligence to inform planning decisions about provision will also ensure that the needs of local employers and individuals are met.

London's senior management team is now starting to take shape, and will need to work with the Mayor and the London Development Agency to tackle the capital's many challenges. On this page and opposite, we feature the newly appointed directors – more appointment details will follow in issue 6 of *the magazine*.



Members of London's new senior management team: (front row, left to right) Learning, Planning and Performance Director Doug Norris, Skills Director Philippa Langton, Regional Director David Hughes and Regional Director Regeneration Mary Conneely; (back row, left to right) Area Directors Mike Pettifer, Jill Lowery, Mary Vine-Morris, Clare Arnold and Vic Grimes

# raring to go!

"I have lived in and around London all my life. I've been with the LSC since its inception and have worked in frontline, back-office, regional and local roles. I'm sure that these different perspectives will be a big help to me in my new regional role."



I'll be focusing on three main areas: equality, diversity and learners with learning difficulties and disabilities; quality, health and safety; and planning, performance and research. I'm excited by the challenge of taking on a much broader range of responsibilities, including dealing with a new set of partners and stakeholders, planning, making policy decisions and establishing regional functions from scratch."

**Doug Norris**  
Learning, Planning and Performance Director

"I have a wealth of relevant experience and have covered just about every aspect of the LSC's work at local level, including finance, strategic planning, operations and the interim Executive Director role at LSC London East. So my new job suits me down to the ground."



I'll be working to ensure that we identify the needs of London South in terms of skills, learning and opportunity, and to bring resources in to the area. I also want to develop a local network of high-quality providers who are able to deliver the LSC's priorities consistently.

Finally, I want to be the voice of the LSC 'on the ground'; I plan to be out there, making solid connections with key partners and agencies at sub-regional and borough levels."

**Vic Grimes**  
Area Director London South

"I have a strong commitment to and enthusiasm for education and training, where I've worked for 20 years."



I really do believe in the power of the sector to offer people opportunities, whether it's to improve their life chances, get a better job or learn for pleasure.

London Central is such a fascinating area; I can't imagine a better place to live and work. But pockets of deprivation still sit alongside advantaged and wealthy areas, so one of the main challenges in my new role will be to help restore the balance by giving local people – particularly those from deprived communities – access to skills, jobs and opportunities at the same time as helping employers meet their skill needs."

**Jill Lowery**  
Area Director London Central

"Having worked in London North as Director of Quality and Operations, I feel that my new role will allow me to strengthen the already very good relationships which the LSC has built up with local providers and key strategic players."



My first task will be to manage our transition to the new LSC organisation, ensuring that it's 'business as usual' as far as our outward-facing operations are concerned.

The next is to deliver the *agenda for change* priorities within London North, which will involve the transformation of the learning and skills sector to better meet the needs of local learners and employers."

**Mary Vine-Morris**  
Area Director London North

"Having worked in London East for the LSC and its predecessor for eight years, I understand what a massive, complicated and diverse patch it is, and expect to get up to speed quickly in my new role. People in London East need to see that we're an exemplary organisation, that we understand our environment and that we're making better use of our resources to balance important government priorities with local needs."



There is a huge amount of regeneration funding available at the moment. We need to ensure that our resources are aligned with those of our partners, and are used to fund opportunities that will benefit local communities, learners and employers. To achieve this, our planning has to be robust, turbo-charged and absolutely spot on."

**Mike Pettifer**  
Area Director London East

"I'm highly ambitious for London and its people, and am equally passionate about ensuring that we maximise the talents and potential of Londoners."



To do this, we need to make the most of the Sector Skills Councils and their agreements, so that providers offer learners the skills that employers need. We must also develop a coherent view of what the LSC's role is and work with our key partners to ensure that it's local people who benefit from all the time, energy and money being invested in skills development.

We can't achieve all this on our own; for us to succeed, we'll need the commitment and enthusiasm of people and organisations to work together in a co-ordinated way across the regional skills partnership."

**Philippa Langton**  
Skills Director

## In the driving seat

LSC London North and the European Social Fund are co-financing a project designed to encourage unemployed women to take up employment in the transport sector.

The Women into Minicabs project has been running since the start of 2006. Aimed at unemployed women living in London, it offers free training, including a work placement and support for the duration of the project, along with guaranteed employment opportunities.

Project leader Simcha Silverstein, from delivery partner organisation New Direction, said: "Although we target the transport sector, helping women who wish to find employment as drivers, we also welcome women who are interested in administrative positions within the sector."

The training lasts for 24 weeks, with nine tutored hours each week and the remainder of the time spent gaining practical experience with an employer. It includes a structured driving course and an individual driving assessment, resulting in a Public Carriage Office minicab licence for successful participants.

Twelve women successfully completed the first course. Of these, two have already taken up full-time employment with the Islington-based Pink Ladies organisation, which offers safe and secure transport for women, and one has started up her own business in the private hire field.



Promoting women on boards: (left to right) Jill Lowery, Area Director London Central; Janet Gaymer CBE, Commissioner for Public Appointments for England and Wales; and Dr Yvonne Thompson CBE, Chair of LSC London Central and President of the EFBWBO

## Improving opportunities for women

A ground-breaking pilot training programme is increasing opportunities for women from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds to access public boards.

It is widely agreed that, by having more women from diverse backgrounds on their boards, public organisations are able to better represent and understand the customers they serve. At present, however, women from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds are significantly under-represented.

**Less than 2%** of the 22,000 public appointments offered by the UK's 834 national public bodies are held by women from ethnic minority communities

Devised and developed by LSC London Central, the European Federation of Black Women Business Owners (EFBWBO) and Cranfield School of Management, the new programme aims to equip participants with the skills they will need to be successful in applying for public sector positions at senior and board level.

The course involves creating a tailored training needs analysis and development plan, sessions with a personal coach, formal workshops, a chance to observe a public board meeting and a group review of learning and progress.

Regina Bash-Taqi, Projects Director for Childhood Foundation, is one of 12 programme participants selected from more than 90 women applicants. She commented: "I'm really excited to be part of this programme. I think it is very important for women from my own background to have their voices heard and to represent our community on public boards."

## Increasing leadership potential

Black and Minority Ethnic women from across the south London area are being supported in their professional development through the Transforming Futures initiative.

Transforming Futures is a programme offered to Black and Minority Ethnic women who are employed in small- or medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in south London, with a limited number of places also available to those who are seeking employment.

The programme is based around 'Success for Business', an introductory business course that helps participants develop different management styles and learn new skills to enhance their management career prospects. It is delivered as five one-day

workshops and is scheduled to run until the end of this year in Croydon and Kingston.

On completion of the programme, participants achieve a Level 3 Introductory Certificate in Management. Successful learner 40-year-old Freda McEwen commented: "The staff and college have made studying easy, as we learn in a comfortable and friendly environment."

Co-financed by LSC London South and the European Social Fund, the Transforming Futures programme is accredited by the Chartered Management Institute and delivered by Kinesis Business Solutions.

**For more information, contact Kinesis Business Solutions on 020 8255 2666 (info@kinesis.uk.com).**

# The language of business

More than 50 language specialists from schools across west London attended an event that highlighted the importance of language skills to the continued economic success of the capital.

*Languages in School – Let's talk business* was organised by LSC London West along with two partners: CILT, the National Centre for Languages; and the London West Education Business Partnerships (EBPs), which forge links between schools and employers, and facilitate arrangements for young people to gain work experience.

The event underlined the need to promote language and communication skills actively in the school curriculum, to help prepare young people for the world of work, and highlighted the resources available from CILT to help teachers increase language take-up in schools. It also enabled employers to share best practice in promoting languages in the workplace.

During the event teachers, the EBP representatives and employers from the London West area all demonstrated their



Promoting language skills: (left to right) Jane Collis, Regional Language Network London Manager; David Scott, Hounslow EBP; and Elspeth Yates, LSC London West

commitment to continuing to work in partnership to drive up learning standards.

The key themes from the event are likely to be reinforced in a report to be published by Regional Language Network London.

Commissioned by the LSC, *Talking World Class – The impact of language skills on the London economy* will confirm the need to harness London's wealth of language skills in order to maximise the competitiveness of our region.

## Transforming Woolwich retailers

Following completion of an intensive, fast-track programme, 32 Woolwich retailers have gained customer service qualifications.

The Business and Success programme was funded by LSC London East through the Local Intervention Development Fund and delivered by Vision On Training Ltd. The 32 course participants were all local independent retailers and market traders.

The first part of the programme involved an intensive, eight-week training course. Each week, participants attended an informative, 90-minute workshop. High-impact, one-to-one weekly coaching sessions on site then helped consolidate learning and ensured that it was being applied successfully on the shop floor.

Having achieved their Level 2 Customer Service certificates participants moved on to the second part of the programme:

visual merchandising. This involved a further five-week programme of workshops, on-the-street masterclasses and coaching at work, all designed to help participants achieve maximum visual effect by implementing cutting-edge marketing and brand image management techniques.

Vision On Director Susan Williams commented: "Nearly all the participants on our Business and Success programme are managers and business owners. Some have up to 30 years' retail experience, yet they have all been keen to learn how to improve what they do.

"The training has made a visible difference: outcomes include better use of space, improved stock co-ordination and the introduction of innovative product displays. An added bonus is the development of new relationships within the business community, leading to the sharing of ideas and suppliers, the identification of



A typical stall before the makeover (see front cover for new, improved display)

trends and even cross-selling. It's really transforming the way they operate: I think that's phenomenal!"

For more information about the programme, contact Susan Williams at Vision On ([susan@vision-on.info](mailto:susan@vision-on.info)).

# Once-in-a-generation opportunity

The Government's Further Education Reform White Paper positions the further education sector as the backbone of England's economy and offers a once-in-a-generation opportunity to challenge the traditional stereotype of vocational training being 'second best'.

Published towards the end of March, *Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances* sets out to transform the further education sector into the powerhouse of economic growth and social mobility.

The White Paper's reforms aim to improve the nation's skills base, so that learners can acquire the high-quality skills needed for them to achieve productive, sustainable employment and personal fulfilment, and so that employers have a workforce equipped with the right skills for their business to succeed in today's increasingly competitive environment.

LSC Chief Executive Mark Haysom said: "This White Paper takes on board the principles of the LSC's *agenda for change* and heralds a real shift in the way further education is delivered. It provides a focus for the learning and skills sector, as well as for engagement with learners and employers. It will open up the market and

allow excellent provision to be rewarded and poor provision to be cut out. This is good news for individuals and employers, for communities and the economy."

These comments were echoed by LSC Chairman Chris Banks, who added: "This is also a once-in-a-generation opportunity to challenge the traditional stereotype of vocational training being 'second best', and to demonstrate the economic and social rewards it brings. Vocational learning is critical to the success of individuals, businesses and communities across the country."

The *Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances* document can be viewed online at [www.dfes.gov.uk](http://www.dfes.gov.uk)

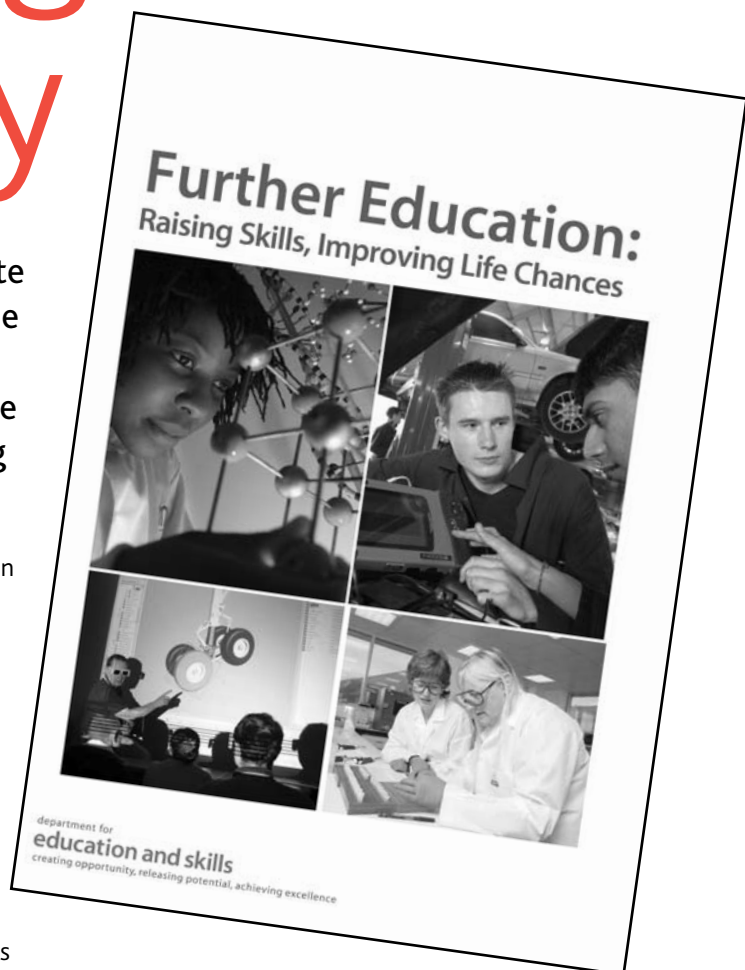
"There has surely never been a better time to be in further education than now. The White Paper places the sector firmly in the spotlight as a crucial player in the nation's future prosperity.

The further education sector has to get even better at providing the skills we need to compete globally at the same time as securing social cohesion and inclusion. The agenda

is clear; the challenges are huge. Our role in the LSC in London is to help develop the strategic vision and the environment in which collaboration and developments can occur.

I am looking forward to an exciting few years of change and progress. "

David Hughes  
Regional Director



**£16 million** has been invested in Level 3 qualifications at London Region's 50 CoVEs (121,000 qualifications)

**78%** of young people in London stay on in full-time education (the national average is 72%)

**8** further education colleges in London have been awarded Beacon status

**12%** more Londoners undertook Skills for Life training last year



## What's on the cards?

**Outlined in the FE White Paper is a series of initiatives that will transform the life chances of young people and dramatically improve the skills of the nation's workforce.**

As the organisation that exists to make England better skilled and more competitive, the LSC will have an important role to play in driving forward the necessary reforms, not least because we are responsible for planning and funding high-quality vocational education and training for everyone.

Detailed below is a summary of how some of the reforms will impact on the LSC.

- Key to developing a world-class workforce will be the transformation of the further education system so that it is more focused on the skills needed for employability. The LSC is working with the sector skills councils and other employer organisations to develop a new standard which will accredit the next generation of Centres of Vocational Excellence.
- The LSC's planning and funding powers will encourage individual further education providers to develop areas of specialism.
- In addition to developing our role as commissioner of learning and skills, ensuring that high-quality provision is achieved across the board, the LSC will be given powers of intervention to tackle failing and mediocre provision within the further education sector.
- The White Paper calls for the further education system to focus more on the needs of learners and employers, to reinforce the 'demand-led' approach to delivering skills.
- New learning accounts are to be trialled by the LSC from autumn 2007 for Level 3 learners.
- The LSC's annual Learner Satisfaction Report will provide regular opportunities for learners to give feedback so that, if needed, providers can take actions to improve. Learners will also be able to have greater influence over key policy, thanks to the creation of a new National Learner Panel.

**“ The White Paper offers a significant opportunity for colleges. There is a veneer of 'we'll get tough on poor performers' about it, but underneath lies a very positive challenge for FE institutions: if you are effective, innovative, responsive and hit targets, you've got a lot going for you.**

**In London, colleges need to think carefully about what an FE sector on a sub-regional basis really means. We need to stop seeing ourselves as 'subjects' of the LSC and what it does. It's about more than the LSC's *agenda for change*; it's down to colleges to embrace the opportunities by working closely with each other on areas like joint curriculum planning and self-regulation. If we collaborate, we will become a more powerful force within the sector. ”**

**Paul Head  
Principal and Chief Executive  
College of North East London**

# In my view: Profit from Learning

Maureen Carter works for Greenwich Council as a learning and development officer. Training people through the Profit from Learning pilot programme, the precursor to Train to Gain (see opposite page), has resulted in benefits all round, as she explains below.



**Q: What attracted you to Profit from Learning?**

Our school cooks do a fantastic job, but often don't get the recognition they deserve. Following the Jamie Oliver *School Dinners* programme on television, we decided to invite staff to take an NVQ Level 2 in Catering, Preparation and Cooking, in partnership with Lewisham College, to 'professionalise' what they do. Another big plus point was the fact that the training was funded by the LSC: I doubt we could have afforded it otherwise.

**Q: So how does the programme work?**

We currently have 30 staff training through Profit from Learning. The NVQ assessor comes to visit them once a fortnight to observe them working

in the school kitchen and gives them feedback on the great job they are doing and how they can improve. They also do two hours' theory work each week, and really look forward to this opportunity to get together and discuss best practice.

the workplace assessment. After the assessor had observed her at work and complimented her on doing a brilliant job (as well as giving her some constructive advice), she was on cloud nine!

**Q: How's it going down with the trainees?**

In most cases, it's going really, really well. Many of the staff have chosen this line of work because it fits in so well with looking after their school-aged children, so they are pleased to be training and in some cases gaining a first qualification. The experience has visibly boosted their morale and their confidence. I remember one lady in particular who had volunteered for the training, but then became terribly nervous and upset at the prospect of

**Q: Has it benefited the organisation?**

Definitely. Morale is up and the schools are delighted that the catering teams are gaining professional qualifications and that the children are getting nutritious, balanced meals. It's great from a recruitment point of view, because it has made the kitchen staff aware of the opportunities for career progression, so we're becoming better at 'growing our own' team. And, of course, the fact that training is available will help us attract the right sort of recruits – this is always a challenge, especially in London!

## Impressive result

The Profit from Learning pilot was successfully used by more than 1,640 employers and 17,600 learners across all sectors in London East.

The results to date are impressive: 92 per cent of the qualifications are a first full Level 2; and 99 per cent of the basic skills qualifications delivered are accredited Skills for Life qualifications.

# Employer-driven service

Train to Gain is a new LSC service offering training and skills advice to employers across England.

The new service is based on the Profit from Learning model (see opposite page). It will be rolled out nationally in August and will have a fundamental role to play in driving up skills levels and plugging skills gaps in businesses right across the country.

It is anticipated that Train to Gain will go down well with employers, because it has been designed with their requirements in mind. The new service offers employers specialist, impartial advice on their current and future business needs, and matches their training requirements with high-quality training providers to ensure that the best fit is achieved every time.

Train to Gain is all about helping employers to improve the productivity and competitiveness of their business by equipping their staff with the right skills to be able to do a good job. With this in mind, the programme allows training to be delivered in ways that suit the employer best.

If you are an employer and are interested in finding out about Train to Gain, please ring 0800 634 0262.



Train to Gain will drive up skills across London

## London network

The LSC has created a new network of skills brokers in London through which employers will be able to access the Train to Gain service from August.

London is a city of contrasts. Although 31 per cent of workers are graduates, 50 per cent have numeracy skills at Level 2 or below, and 25 per cent have literacy skills at Level 1 or below. It's also a city of extremes, with more workless people than any other region and the widest gap between the wages of men and women.

This situation cannot be allowed to continue. That's why, from August, three brokerage organisations will be working flat out to restore London's skills balance: Prevista, Triangle Fusion and the London Brokerage Consortium.

Norman Jennings, Director of Skills Development, Exemplas, commented: "The London Consortium is very happy to have secured one of the contracts for Train to Gain brokerage in the London Region.

"We will work with partners to engage with employers in order to address their training and skills needs, and our brokers will offer impartial advice in identifying solutions to meet those needs. The brokerage service is based upon the belief that employers must address skills needs to ensure they remain competitive in the market place."

Public support will be available to London employers for elements of the training, including first full Level 2 qualifications and Skills for Life (only if this leads to a first full Level 2 qualification).

**"I'm a passionate advocate of Train to Gain because it offers us a chance to tackle these extremes, and a real opportunity for London's employers to work with providers who are absolutely geared up and ready to respond effectively to their skills needs.**

**Once consistently good training is being delivered right across the patch, I'm confident that London's employers will reap the benefits through increases in staff motivation and productivity."**

**Philippa Langton,  
LSC London Region's Skills Director**

More information about Train to Gain can be viewed at [www.traintogain.gov.uk](http://www.traintogain.gov.uk)

# Budding entrepreneurs

**This year's London Enterprise Challenge Final saw 100 budding teenage entrepreneurs battling it out to win a £500 prize for their school.**

Held in May at Canary Wharf's East Wintergardens, the London Enterprise Challenge Final 2006 involved 100 Year 10 students, coming from 20 schools in 13 London boroughs. All had earned their place at the event, having beaten more than 900 students from 180 other London secondary schools in the heats.

The challenge for 2006 was a tough one. Competitors had to use creativity and enterprising business sense to brainstorm innovative fundraising ideas for four UK charitable organisations: Comic Relief, Every Child, Help the Aged and PEACH (Parents for the Early Intervention of Autism in Children).

After working hard for several hours to create a winning fundraising formula, the

team from Beths Grammar, located in Bexley, scooped the top prize. Ryan Arnold, 14, was clearly delighted to have helped win the trophy for his school and said: "This was the first year we attended the event. The competition was really hard but the whole experience was amazing. We're really pleased we won. We think we deserved it!"

**"This was the first year we attended the event. The competition was really hard but the whole experience was amazing."**

**Ryan Arnold,  
Student, Beths Grammar**

Comic Relief's Kate Jones said: "Comic Relief was more than happy to be involved with a competition like the London Enterprise Challenge. We're always looking for interesting and unusual ideas for fundraising and the students have come up

with some really good ideas, some of which we might use for Red Nose Day in 2007."

The Enterprise Challenge competition was organised by the Enterprise Advisor Service, which started in 2004 as a result of a report commissioned by Gordon Brown. Funded by the LSC, this service involves enterprise advisors working with schools to encourage the introduction of practical business examples in the 14-19 curriculum, to help young people gain good, work-based experience and employability skills, and to inspire budding entrepreneurs to maximise their potential.

Lewis Marshall from the Enterprise Advisor Service said: "It has been a real pleasure to run a competition like the one we have organised today. The students have been thoroughly engaged and the ideas they have come up with are fantastic and truly innovative. We hope the charities in attendance will use some of the ideas for future campaigns."



The delighted winners from Beths Grammar proudly display their London Enterprise Challenge trophy, along with their teacher Pascale O'Kelly

# London's challenge for 2012

In April the Prime Minister launched an important report that sets out the action the Government is taking to ensure London builds on its success and rises to the challenge of becoming an exemplary world city, ready for the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012.

*Building on Success: London's Challenge for 2012* is a cross-cutting report that highlights many of the challenges the city faces, ranging from global economic change, to pockets of deprivation and a shortage of affordable housing for first-time buyers.

The report outlines a comprehensive package of measures which the Government will take to support the London Region as it tackles these challenges, including:

- two new partnerships in east and west London that bring together all the relevant local partners to tackle worklessness and get more Londoners into jobs
- a new £35 million skills package from LSC London Region to equip local people with the high-level skills needed by employers and to move more Londoners on to the employment ladder
- extending the successful London Challenge for Schools initiative to the region's primary schools
- having at least 60 new Academies open or in development within the region by 2010
- continuing to drive up school standards, with at least 15 new sixth forms or sixth form centres open or in development by 2008.

The Prime Minister said that the Olympics of 2012, when the eyes of the world will be on the capital city, give London's businesses, local government, communities and people a timetable to work towards. He said: "2012 is not simply a sporting occasion. It is a clear deadline we can set ourselves for our collected efforts to confirm London's position as the greatest city in the world."

These words were echoed by Mayor of London Ken Livingstone, who commented: "The preparations for the Olympic and Paralympic Games give us the chance to harness the full potential of Londoners to make this an even better place to live and work by 2012. I hope all Londoners will make a personal commitment to bring the best out of our city."

Mary Conneely, LSC London Region's Director Regeneration, is well known for her passionate belief that people and employers right across the region should seize the opportunity and turn the LSC's substantial investment in training and skills to their advantage. She said: "The

Games are a catalyst and a driver to ensure we reach into all communities, open up aspirations and link people seeking work to skills development and job opportunities."



Dawit Asres, from Redbridge Institute of Adult Education, discusses post-16 adult learning and neighbourhood learning projects with Prime Minister Tony Blair

# Five minutes with...

## Andy Wilson

Here we speak to Andy Wilson, Principal of Westminster Kingsway College, to gain a frontline perspective on many of the changes taking place within the further education sector.



**Q: What do you think about the FE White Paper?**

As an FE college, we welcome it. One element of the White Paper that works well for London is that strong CoVEs will be able to re-establish themselves by working closely with employers, sector skills councils and Train to Gain brokers.

However, the ability to deliver the reforms will depend on how much funding is available and on the way it's allocated. If the full agenda in the White Paper is to be delivered, more funding has got to be found for adult skills in particular.

**Q: And the focus on employer engagement?**

The FE White Paper clearly puts employer engagement at the forefront of what we do, which is a good thing. But the Government is saying that what employers want is full Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications. I suspect, in many cases, it's what the Government says employers want and the reality is different. However, it's certainly true that these are the qualifications that do most to enhance people's career and life chances.

**Q: The LSC is going through a reorganisation process – how are you finding this?**

It has clearly involved a major upheaval for the LSC, but I do think that the move towards a greater regional approach is the right one. Like other FE colleges, I do have some concerns about working with the borough-based partnership teams – we have sites in Camden and Westminster, and recruit students from across the region – but it's too early to say how this will pan out in practice.

**Q: Is the LSC's local focus important to you?**

I think there is a strong argument for establishing a regional council, rather than the local structures that are there at the moment. I'd really like to find

ways of working directly with our LSC colleagues in the regional structure, as well as at local level.

**Q: How do you feel about alternative funding streams?**

We already get ESF funding, which we hope will continue. What I believe will become more important are the fees we receive directly from employers, and we're already doing innovative work in this area with hospitality employers like Carluccio's. But I see a danger of a widening gap between what it costs for employers to get bespoke training and the fully subsidised training they will receive for a Level 2 outcome. This reduces the flexibility colleges have to respond directly to employer demand – it's something I've been discussing with the LSC.

This run-down area alongside the River Lea will be developed as part of the Olympic site

# Olympic opportunities

**London stands to benefit in so many ways from hosting the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games – the task ahead is to maximise the many opportunities they will create.**

At the end of last year, LSC London Region and the London Development Agency (LDA) jointly commissioned Experian Business Strategies to research the employment and skills implications of hosting the 2012 Games.

## Evidence

Experian Associate Director Tim Sydenham said: "We examined evidence from the last five Olympic and Paralympic Games, and from the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester. This helped us gain a broad picture of the employment and skills implications for the 2012 Games.

"We also investigated six large-scale building and regeneration projects within this country: Heathrow T5, Wembley Stadium, Paddington Basin, Arsenal Emirates Stadium, Greenwich Peninsular, and Bluewater Shopping Centre. Through this research, we were able to identify many good practice examples from associated local labour initiatives."

Throughout the project a steering group led by the LSC and the LDA was instrumental in guiding the direction of the research and ensuring that its focus remained on employment and skills.

## Conclusions

Following the extensive research activity, Experian concluded that hosting the 2012 Games will present five major challenges in the skills and employment arena:

1. getting the facilities built to plan
2. making the Games themselves a triumph
3. showcasing and enhancing the reputation of London
4. creating opportunities for Londoners, including those groups with low labour market participation rates
5. leaving London with a legacy of higher-skilled jobs for better-skilled people.

Tim commented: "Based on the lessons learned from other major projects, our report highlights key policy issues relating to employment and skills in three main areas. Firstly, in construction there needs to be a focus on ensuring that Londoners obtain entry-level qualifications at the earliest possible stage, and that people can also acquire the skills needed for higher-level jobs, especially in management and technical occupations.

"Secondly, when it comes to staging the Games, harnessing the volunteer programme alongside employment initiatives will give Londoners, especially those from hard-to-reach groups, a chance to get involved, with a view to creating sustainable skills and employment in the long term.

**"The report forms the start of an Olympics evidence base. The LSC and its partners will use this base to develop policies and gear funding to meet the challenges of making London ready for the Games and ensuring that the Games act as a catalyst to gaining wider benefits for Londoners."**

**Mary Conneely**  
Regional Director Regeneration

"And thirdly, to capitalise on the anticipated tourism spend resulting from the Games, London needs to invest in customer service skills, both as a lever to help improve the performance of those working in the sector and to showcase the region to the rest of the world as a great place to visit, live and work."

The 2012 Games have an enormous potential to create a fundamental shift in people's aspirations through the desire to contribute to and be part of such a successful and exciting global event. Showcasing our diverse and dynamic city will create positive perceptions of London: this will have a much larger transformational impact than can be identified through formal modelling procedures, meaning that the legacy of the Games will be even greater.

# Take4

## Supporting London's voluntary sector

Along with the European Social Fund (ESF), the LSC co-finances a wide range of voluntary sector projects across the region. Here we find out the difference this support has made to four London organisations.

**Emma Walsh**  
**Qualifications Manager**  
**Homeless Link**

"We are a national membership body for homelessness agencies. Part of our work is to support them in ensuring that homeless people receive quality service.

"The work that's carried out in the homelessness sector is incredibly varied, meaning that existing qualifications, such as the NVQs in Health and Social Care, Housing and Advice and Guidance do not quite fit the needs of its workers. Through the ESF project we have created a new NVQ equivalent that reflects this diversity and acts as a model of good practice which runs alongside people's work, enabling candidates to recognise where they are doing a good job."

**Harvey Tilley**  
**Operations and Performance**  
**Director**  
**Training for Life**

"We are an enterprising charity that enables unemployed people to develop the personal and vocational skills and qualifications they need to get – and keep – a job. Over the past 11 years we have helped nearly 9,000 people aged between 16 and 65, from all groups that face social exclusion.

"The ESF funding has helped us develop and deliver innovative, wide-ranging approaches to learning. For example, our successful Homework Apprenticeship project targets those who face or have faced homelessness and helps them break the no home/no job/no home cycle by linking learning, housing and paid employment through our social enterprises."

**Simon K. Maty**  
**Manager New Partnership For**  
**Unemployed Disabled People**  
**Disability Hackney**

"Established in 1999, we are an umbrella organisation for disabled people. We receive ESF funding, co-financed by the LSC and Jobcentre Plus – over the past year this has enabled us to work with our partners in delivering NVQ/OCN-accredited programmes in Advocacy, Access Auditing and Disability Equality Education to 97 disabled people from across London.

"The programme has empowered participants through increased knowledge and a sense of achievement. As a result, a number of participants have entered employment through work placement and have demonstrated their ability to contribute valuable skills."

**Aleha Begum**  
**Project Co-ordinator**  
**Jagonari Women's Centre**

"Through the ESF funding, we have been able to provide English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) training to 100 Bangladeshi women from east London. We're now five months into a two-year programme.

"ESOL has opened up a world of new opportunities for these women. Before the training they would avoid going out of the house because, with no understanding of the English language, achieving relatively simple tasks like reading labels, using public transport or making a doctor's appointment was just too difficult. Now the women are much more confident and have a new-found sense of independence – it's what they are always talking about!"



Emma Walsh



Harvey Tilley



Simon K. Maty



Aleha Begum