

## **ESF Funding Provides the 'Right Step' for Young People**

*NEET young people from across Salford helped back into education or employment through The Right Step*

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Eighteen year old James Parish, from Salford, has been literally climbing his way to success through a new programme running in the area which aims to support young people into employment or further learning through structured outdoor activities. Aimed at young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), the Right Step programme has been developed with funding from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) as part of its 2007-10 European Social Fund (ESF) Co-finance Plan.

James was referred to The Right Step programme through drug support organisation, Lifeline and its Substance Misuse Advice and Referral Team, SMART. After being in trouble with the police and experiencing a breakdown with family relations resulting in him moving out of home, James was struggling to find accommodation and needed guidance, support and motivation to get his life back on track.

James said: "After being referred to The Right Step programme, I was able to speak to someone about what I wanted to achieve and where I wanted to be.

"It was great to be able to get out and about on all the trips they had on offer which were really interesting, and I met lots of new people and a few new friends which was just what I needed."

The funding enabled the creation of a 13 week programme which included outdoor pursuits such as climbing and abseiling to engage learners and instil teamwork, motivation and determination.

During the programme participants study for a Level 1 in numeracy, literacy and ICT and get the opportunity to gain further qualifications in first aid, basic food hygiene, manual handling and drug awareness. As well as achieving qualifications, the programme offers participants a 'taster' in a working environment. The young people are offered appropriate and relevant work experience that fits in with their future ambitions and aspirations.

James is still engaged with YMCA Training on an Entry to Employment (e2e) course and is working towards a Level 2 in numeracy and literacy.

James said: "I would definitely recommend the programme to other young people who are in my position, not only was it great fun, it's given me some valuable qualifications to move on with."

Andrew Fawcett, Economic Development Director for the LSC in the North West, concludes: "ESF funded projects running across the North West are providing people with the chance to improve their skills, opportunities and in some cases turn their lives around.

"The Right Step is a great example of a programme that works to give young people such as James the support and guidance needed to get back on track. Decisions made during younger years can have a huge impact on where people end up in the future, so it's important that young people are supported to make the right choices."

Salford City Council receive funding as part of a £349,000 wider ESF funded programme, Post 16 Preventing and Reducing NEET, and deliver the Right Step project through YMCA Training.

**ENDS**

[The Learning and Skills Council \(LSC\) 2007-2010 ESF Co-finance Plan](#)

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone.

The LSC in the North West has secured £185million of ESF funding for 2007-2010 which is matched with an equivalent amount of Government funding. This overall package of £370million is being used to:

- Up-skill unemployed people so that they can secure sustainable employment.
- Support young people who are not currently in employment, education or training.
- Support employers to up-skill their workforce.

In the North West over 130 colleges and training providers are contracted to deliver projects to achieve those objectives.

#### European Social Fund (ESF)

The European Social Fund is investing in jobs and skills – especially for people at a disadvantage in the labour market.

Over the past seven years from 2000 to 2006, the ESF has helped over four million people in England. In 2007, the EU launched a new round of ESF programmes for the next seven years to 2013.

The new programme will invest £4.6 billion in 2007-2013 of which £2.3billion will come from the ESF and £2.3billion will be national funding.

#### **For further information:**

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

ESF website: [www.esf.gov.uk](http://www.esf.gov.uk)

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