

BRISTOL ZOO GARDENS GO APE FOR TRAINING!

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Today (June 20) Bristol Zoo became the latest South West based company to pledge its commitment to train all its employees to NVQ Level 2 standard, in the same week that the Skills Pledge celebrates its first anniversary.

The Skills Pledge, which was launched in June 2007 and is led by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), is a public, voluntary commitment by an organisation to train all employees to Level 2 standard (5 GCSEs grade A-C). Since its launch 322 companies in the South West have now made the Skills Pledge enabling thousands of employees across the South West to access training.

The range of training that will be undertaken at the Zoo includes IT, Retail, Customer Service and Management Development to boost the skills levels of all Zoo employees.

Malcolm Gillespie, Regional Director for LSC South West, said: "We are delighted that Bristol Zoo Gardens has made the Skills Pledge, a public commitment to training and investing in the future of their staff. The Skills Pledge has already attracted great support in the South West and employers are benefiting from accessing the Train to Gain service through making the Skills Pledge. To celebrate its first anniversary we would very much like to encourage others businesses to follow in their footsteps."

Dr Jo Gipps, Director of Bristol Zoo, said: "We have around 180 full time staff at Bristol Zoo Gardens, and more than 250 volunteers, all of whom play a crucial part in delivering a great experience for our visitors. We are proud to have made the

Skills Pledge confirming our commitment to developing all those who work at Bristol Zoo.”

Sue Gregory, the Zoo’s Head of Human Resources, said: “Bristol Zoo Gardens is pleased to be involved in this scheme and to making a commitment to the future development of our employees’ skills and knowledge.”

Vicky Holford, Train to Gain Skills Advisor, said: “Train to Gain is a valuable resource for organisations that need to access funding and support to develop their workforce.”

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Note to Editors:

Learning and Skills Council:

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. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England’s young people and adults to world class standards. Our 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. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers. For more information visit: www.lsc.gov.uk/southwest

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