

BUILDING SITES

SITES Board Members

Chair:
John Beer
Southampton
City Council

Vice Chairs:
David Wrighton
IBEX

Alan Chatfield
Federation of
Small
Businesses

Southampton
City College

Southampton
Solent University

Hampshire &
IOW Learning &
Skills Council

SEEDA

Southampton &
Fareham
Chamber of
Commerce and
Industry

Business
Southampton

Hyde Martlet
Housing
Association

Wheatsheaf
Trust

S.A.F.E

Communities &
Regeneration

City Economy &
Development

Adult Learning &
Skills



Dear All,

As the end of the year approaches SITES partners continue to work on its two key elements of tackling worklessness and engaging employers. Recent activities have seen SITES supporting the recruitment at the new IKEA store in Southampton, facilitating the two day job fayre in September. Over 2,000 people turned up to the event to register their interest in finding employment at the new store and information was distributed on issues such as money advice, transport, debt, childcare and welfare rights. The pre-employment training programme agreed with IKEA supported over 130 people in having a better chance at their interviews.

With the impact of the credit crunch and economic downturn rippling out to Southampton, the number of people registering as unemployed is rising. There are still jobs in the economy. Jobcentre Plus still has employers registering vacancies in the Southampton area, last month this amounted to over 1,300 jobs. This makes your task in getting people back into work even more vital. I would like to thank all the partners of SITES for the work they have contributed to this year, and look forward to the continued success in 2009. John Beer, Executive Director of Communities, Health and Care
Chair of SITES

SITES is a practical demonstration of the collective commitment of public, private and voluntary sector bodies in Southampton to close the gaps in social inclusion and economic performance by raising aspirations, opportunities and levels of participation in local labour.

Our aims are to:

- Reduce unemployment and increase economic activity
- Improve basic and vocational skills
- Reduce poverty and deprivation
- Increase earning potential.

We will endeavour to achieve this by ensuring Southampton employers have an adequate supply of appropriately skilled labour, and for as many Southampton jobs as possible to be filled by local people.

SITES will deliver this by supporting the delivery agents that operate or impact on Southampton, bringing the various partners together to facilitate their operating more effectively and to add value to their work, so that the sum of the parts does provide a 'greater whole'.

It will act as the link between the Southampton Partnership through the Skills and Employability Board, to providers and agencies delivering across Southampton, as well as with employers. It will also link with the Communities and Renewal Partnership in its role of monitoring the implementation of the Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.

Funding Opportunities

Tenders workshop

How to win tenders workshop

Would you like some guidance on successfully applying for funding? Provided by Tendering for Care, this workshop for the voluntary sector will give you help with the preparation of tenders by giving you an understanding of the legislative and practical background within which procurement is currently taking place and the processes which drive the tendering procedures. The workshop takes place on 12th December 2008 at the Voluntary Action Centre, Kingsland Square, 9:30am to 4:30pm. The cost for organisations with an income of less than £15,000 is £25. Between £15,000 and £50,000 it is £50 and for organisations with an income over £50,000 it is £75. The workshop is practical and gives you essential information plus a useful CD to take away with you. If you are interested in attending the workshop please contact Chris Hammond at Southampton voluntary services. Tel: 023 80 228291 or email c.hammond@southamptonvs.org.uk.

ESF Community Grants

New round of Community Grants announced

The new round of Community Grants is now open for applications and will be distributed in December 2008 and the spring and autumn of 2009 and 2010. You can apply for grants of up to £12,000. The South East Region Community Grants programme is funded by the Learning & Skills Council and European Social Fund (ESF) and managed by Surrey Community Action. Applications are invited from voluntary and community groups / third sector organisations based and providing services in Hampshire to support the most disadvantaged individuals not in employment to access further learning opportunities or progress to employment. Priority will be given to groups who work with - lone parents - women - people with health/disability issues - older people (50 years plus) - ethnic minorities and diverse communities. The deadline for the 1st round of applications has passed, the next one is the 22nd April 2009. Further information can also be found here: www.action.hants.org.uk. Check the website regularly for updated information. Or for further info Please contact the Community Grants Office at Community Action Hampshire on **01962 857381** or email communitygrants@action.hants.org.uk.

ESF Funding

ESF Innovation and Transnational Programme

The European Social Fund call for proposals has been announced. It aims to support a small number of strategic, regional projects to develop and deliver new ways of extending employment opportunity and raising workforce skills. An important part of innovation within the programme is learning from other countries so projects should include an element of transnational or inter-regional co-operation with at least one other EU member state. The call for proposals contains six themes and from this Regional ESF committees have selected the themes most appropriate to the priorities of that region. The themes selected for the South East are:

- Active inclusion
- Demographic change
- Skills for climate change

Applications must be received by 4pm on Wednesday 17th December 2008. For more info and guidance please visit: www.esf.gov.uk/innovation_transnationality

Childcare

Childcare

Free Childcare for 50,000 families on low income

The government has announced that low income families will get free childcare making it easier to access training and return to work, as part of a new £75 million programme.

Child care costs of up to £175 a week per child will be paid direct to the childcare provider.

Alongside the free childcare families will receive help from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) on training suitable for them. The programme (delivered by the LSC) will be available in the 67 local authorities, including Hampshire, that have the highest number of eligible families from January 2009. It will then be extended to all other local authorities in September 2009. Minister for Employment and Reform, Stephen Timms, said

“ Better skills lead to better jobs and better incomes and will in the longer term help lift whole families out of poverty.”

The programme will be linked to the integrated employment and skills strategy and will be delivered in close partnership with Jobcentre Plus and other information and advisory services, creating a coordinated approach. A series of events from September 2009 will take place to raise awareness of the scheme and explain further how it will work.

Working parents are a role model to children

Survey reveals working families provide good role model to kids

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has released the results of a survey which suggests that seven out of ten working parents think having a job makes them a positive role model for their children, and gives them a good start in life. 8 out of 10 working mums think the best aspects of being in work are having money to pay the bills and the opportunity to do things as a family.

Almost three quarters of the parents surveyed said that it was easy or easier than they expected to return to work after they had their children. Multi tasking, organisation, time management, problem solving and team working were just some of the skills learnt in bringing up children that parents felt could be transferred to the workplace.

Jobcentre Plus gives the following advice on financial help lone parents could be eligible for if they return to work:

- In Work Credit: This is a tax-free payment of £40 to lone parents (£60 to all parents in London) who have been claiming benefits for a year or more and go back to work for over 16 hours a week. In-work credit is paid for a year on top of other working benefits.
- £250 Job Grant: This is a lump-sum to help during the first weeks of employment. It is available to lone parents who start working for more than 16 hours per week.
- Housing and Council Tax benefit: Lone parents will continue to receive Housing and Council Tax benefits for a month after they start work
- Childcare costs: One of the biggest worries for lone parents returning to work is childcare. Jobcentre Plus can help with childcare costs as long as the parent is using a registered childcare provider and doing something connected with their chosen career, agreed with Jobcentre Plus. Once working, you may qualify for Working Tax Credit. This could enable you to claim up to 80 per cent of your eligible childcare back.

Train to Gain

Train to Gain

An Introduction to Train to Gain...

Train to Gain helps UK businesses, both large and small, succeed by improving competitiveness and profitability through training. Funded by the Learning and Skills Council, Train to Gain gives you access to a Skills Broker who can advise on any Government funding that might be available to you.

The Train to Gain Brokerage provides independent, qualified and impartial advice on training to business across England. Skills Brokers deliver holistic advice and support on skills training – to create flexible, tailored learning solutions to improve business productivity and competitiveness.

An experienced Train to Gain Skills Broker will at no cost and with no obligation from the employer:

- Provide an impartial needs analysis of training required to help achieve business objectives.
- Assess what skills the business will need in the future from the most basic to the most advanced.
- Help with the selection of the most appropriate and suitable training providers and recommend skills training solutions.
- Identify the best way to pay for training and give advice on any funding available – including a possible contribution to wage costs for companies with less than 50 employees, to cover the cost of the time spent in training.

Case study: Southampton City Council refuse collection service 2007.

The waste service is a high profile service within the Council, with a weekly refuse and fortnightly re-cycling collection.

A number of different measures were being undertaken within the Council to improve overall performance at the time. One of the them is to improve, increase and diversify the amount of training delivered.

A significant number of staff volunteered to participate on a basic IT course and others achieved an NVQ Level 2 in Customer Service.

A search also began for training preferably with a nationally recognised qualification which would be more relevant to the needs of the staff and the business.

Through the Waste Management Industry and Advisory Board (WAMITAB) a relevant NVQ and training provider were identified.

A rolling programme of NVQs was started during spring 2007 and by October 2007, the first dozen employees had completed their NVQs.

For many staff, receiving an NVQ certificate was their first ever recognised qualification. One of the achievers, with learning difficulties has been collecting bins for over 20 years and now has a recognised qualification for his work.

Voltrain

Train to Gain continued...

Voltrain - Support for Third Sector organisations

Voltrain is a partnership of high quality training providers and offers training and qualifications for staff and volunteers working in Third Sector organisations. It aims to increase the management and employability skills of staff and volunteers in voluntary organisations.

Under this newly extended initiative, unpaid volunteers and paid management and staff of Third Sector organisations are now eligible to undertake funded qualifications. The programme covers:

- Assessment of organisational and individual training needs
- Level 2 and level 3 qualifications
- Information, advice and guidance
- Developing language, reading, writing and number skills.

Government funding is available to support employees and volunteers, aged 19+, who work in voluntary/community organisations, charities, social enterprises and other not-for-profit organisations.

Qualifications available include: Health & Social care, Children's Care, Learning and Development, Management of Volunteers, Management & Team Leading and Community Development work. This list is not exhaustive and there may be other qualifications added.

Delivery of the courses is flexible and can be achieved through a mixture of group sessions and individual workplace assessment.

To find out more please contact Ian Smith on the details below:

Email: ian.smith@wessexpartnerships.com Tel: 023 9244 9466

Further information can be found by visiting:

<http://www.wessexpartnerships.com/voltrain.asp>

INTERREG Funding

Success again in bidding for INTERREG funding

City Limits and the Regeneration and Renewal Teams at Southampton City Council have been successful in their bid to the new EU INTERREG Transnational fund; the 2 Seas Programme. The total project value is € 2.31million or about £1,942,332.3 at current exchange rates.

The project will run for two years until 2011, and is a partnership of three public authorities; Southampton City Council, Stad Gent and Stad Rotterdam. The cities will work together to: (1) look at the most important factors in social inclusion, with the focus of this project being those excluded from the labour market and job opportunities, (2) bring together professionals who work to combat social exclusion (both directly and indirectly), and, (3) test innovative methods of improving the position of those who suffer from exclusion in our respective areas. The type of activities that will be tested within Activity 3 include; innovative pre-engagement support for workless residents, links to new communities especially economic migrants, and improving access to jobs, developing specialist employment skills training for disabled people in Southampton. Rotterdam intend to focus on young people accessing the labour market, and Ghent will focus on improving access to jobs and services for disabled people.

New Initiatives

**SEEDS
project for
Refugees
and Asylum
seekers**

Can you help the SEEDS project?

The South of England Enabling Displaced Scholars (SEEDS) project is for Assisting Refugee Academics and aims to support refugees & asylum seekers in the South of England who have previously worked as academics, but have had their careers cut short as a result of fleeing their home country.

You may work with refugees and asylum seekers in the Hampshire area and know displaced academics who may be interested and would benefit from help or advice about their career. Please note that the project is funded for a limited time period, so information is needed as soon as possible.

The project aims to locate any “displaced scholars” and empower them to resume their academic career in the UK. Specific activities of the project are:

- Location of displaced scholars.
- Evaluation of the scholar’s academic qualifications.
- Evaluation of the scholar’s relevant work experience.
- Assessment of the support the scholar may need to resume their academic career in the UK.
- Offer a support package to the scholar, based on the assessments carried out and in collaboration with other local universities

This will enable any displaced academics that the project finds to:

- Eliminate any language barriers.
- Find a suitable peer mentor.
- Find suitable work placements.
- Access careers advice.
- Re-establish their career.

If you have any information or would like to know more please contact Fiona Dobbs at University of Chichester, who is the Senior Administrator for the project. Her contact details are:

Telephone: 01243 816423

Email: Fiona.Dobbs@chi.ac.uk

**Child Poverty
Pilots**

Working poverty out of Southampton

Workless parents struggling to make ends meet are set to get a helping hand thanks to a new partnership between Southampton City Council’s Sure Start Children’s Centres and Jobcentre Plus (JCP).

Southampton was selected from over sixty local authorities and will receive £346,000 in pilot funding from the Department for Children, Schools and Families to tackle childhood poverty. The idea is for JCP advisors to be permanently based in three of the Council’s Children’s Centres – in Woolston, Weston and Central Southampton, to give parents advice and support in a trusted environment. There is also some funding to increase volunteering, debt advice and crèches alongside training for Sure Start parents.

The City Council and JCP pilot project will add employment, training and volunteering opportunities to the mix, with the aim of giving parents a clear route out of poverty for them and their family. The partnership with JCP will build on existing work to help parents gain skills and employment. It will boost parents’ confidence, help them write their CV, give them access to information about local jobs and reduce barriers to employment, such as childcare and travel costs.

SITES Achievements

SITES Achievements in 2008

The last 12 months have been a busy time for all involved in SITES. Below we have summarised the achievements we have made working together to tackle worklessness, employment and skills.

- ❖ **SITES provider directory** - 5,000 copies of a simple handbook of providers that deliver information and distributed to public services, providers, and at promotional events.
- ❖ **SITES Online** - Further details of the providers within the directory can now be found on the City Council website. Visit the page here: www.southampton.gov.uk/sites
- ❖ **Local training and employment support** linked to major site developments - The City Council has successfully negotiated with developers to bring employment opportunities linked to these new developments. Most recently with IKEA.
- ❖ **SEAN workshops** - Training courses for staff working on the front line. Courses have included mental health awareness, risk assessment multicultural awareness, building self-esteem and managing challenging clients.
- ❖ **SITES Grant** - A grant of £35,000 was awarded to the Wheatsheaf Trust towards developing employment support activities for priority groups, working in partnership with SCC and other agencies. They will also support and attract employers by providing a one stop shop for their recruitment needs.
- ❖ **Promotion of SITES** at recruitment events and community fayres. Events included SCC recruitment fair, St Mary's Festival, Daisy Dip, Surestart Parents Conference and Southampton Mela.
- ❖ **Learning4All website** - A searchable database of Adult learning courses in Southampton. The website is expected to be live later this month. www.learning4all.org
- ❖ **Successful ESF partnership** bids - Partners across Southampton and Hampshire were successful in delivering programmes: Young People Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET), Adult Provision and Employer Responsiveness.

Contact Details

Have we got your correct contact details? To ensure we have accurate records of your contact details please confirm your details by either sending the slip below to: **Jenny Hunt, Regeneration and Renewal, Southampton City Council, Ground Floor, Southbrook Rise, 4-8 Millbrook Road East, Southampton, SO15 1YG, or call 023 8083 3010. This information will only be used for the purposes of the SITES scheme and will not be released to third parties for promotional activities.**

CONTACT NAME _____

BUSINESS/ORGANISATION NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE NUMBER _____ FAX _____

EMAIL _____