

London Employer Coalition

Annual Report 2003/04



London Employer Coalition Annual Report 2003/04

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Foreword



Christopher N Banks CBE

Welcome to the London Employer Coalition (LEC) Annual Report 2003/04.

I am writing this shortly after our annual residential, which brings together LEC members and Jobcentre Plus colleagues to reflect and plan for the future. It offers us a unique opportunity to understand the operations, achievements and challenges of Jobcentre Plus. It is the time when we take a robust look at the LEC's activities, generate new ideas, and agree concrete actions for the next 12 months. It is always approached with great enthusiasm and good humour.

This year was particularly special as it marked the 5th Anniversary of the London Employer Coalition. Over that period the Welfare to Work agenda and our own engagement, first with the Employment Service and then with Jobcentre Plus, as well as other partners in business and government, has changed significantly. The initial focus was on young people and our role was primarily advisory. Since then we have moved towards more practical action; raising awareness of Welfare to Work services and helping Jobcentre Plus to engage with specific sectors; identifying and encouraging inclusive recruitment processes and seed-funding new approaches to support a wide range of jobseekers in accessing work. In 2004/05 we will continue this practical work in the transport, construction and public sectors in particular, and work to drive forward planning and delivery processes which join welfare to workforce development services for employers and jobseekers.

The LEC's work with Jobcentre Plus can be complex and challenging – we are employer customers and partners but, as I hope you will see from this report 'our partnership works'; achieving results for jobseekers and employers. And the reasons it works are the openness and willingness of Jobcentre Plus in London and the unstinting time and commitment of our members.

I would like to thank Lesley Strathie, Sheelagh Keyse and Alan Brown as well as the District Managers, Employer Services Directorate and members of the LEC for their fantastic support this year.

I look forward to continuing to work with you.

Christopher N Banks CBE

Chief Executive, Big Thoughts

Chair, London Employer Coalition – part of the National Employment Panel

Foreword



Alan Brown CBE

As the new Director, Jobcentre Plus London, I am delighted to contribute to the London Employer Coalition's annual report for 2003/04.

As predicted by my predecessor, Lesley Strathie, 2003/04 was indeed a challenging but exciting year for Jobcentre Plus in London. From April 03 to February 04 we have placed 113,074 customers into work: 10,697 of these were lone parents and an increasing number were from our 'inactive' customer groups. The roll-out of the new Jobcentre Plus offices continues apace, with a further 26 new offices opening this year. These include our Highgate office, which is the first in London to provide customers with the latest IT support systems to deliver a higher level of service. I am pleased that Chris will formally open this office in April.

As a relative newcomer to London I have been impressed by the level of support the members of the LEC have given my people, employers and jobseekers this year. In particular I would like to thank you for your:

- **Leadership** in generating new recruitment opportunities for Jobcentre Plus customers, e.g. with the Metropolitan Police Service and a number of NHS Trusts;
- **Commitment to sharing your knowledge and skills** with my people. Over 180 Jobcentre Plus staff have engaged with LEC events this year to develop their knowledge of employers' needs;
- **Support to help lone parent and ethnic minority jobseekers** in accessing opportunities, particularly your expertise in the pilot Discovery Weeks in Islington and Work Talk, an innovative work-focused English language programme in Tower Hamlets;
- **Advocacy of Jobcentre Plus in London** through both your own networks and successful events such as your Awards programme.

I know that both Lesley Strathie and Sheelagh Keyse (acting Director for Jobcentre Plus London for a few months) would like me to thank you on their behalf for your support this year. I personally look forward to developing closer working with you in 2004/05.

Alan Brown CBE
Director, Jobcentre Plus, London

Members of the London Employer Coalition



Christopher Banks CBE
Chief Executive
Big Thoughts

'Opening new doors for London's jobseekers and new recruitment channels for London's employers'



Mike Bolsover OBE
HR and Business
Strategy Director
Gerrard



Alan Brown CBE
Director for London
Jobcentre Plus



Roy Charles
Managing Director
ASAS



Anuj Chande
Partner
Grant Thornton



Margaret Edge
Head of Resourcing
Sainsbury's

'Tightening the connection between welfare and workforce development'



Claire Ighodaro
Finance Director
Broadband
BT Group



Val Lowman
Community
Development
Manager
Lend Lease



Paul Jennings
Director
UK Solution Centres
EDS



Ann Macintyre
HR Director
Barts & the London
NHS Trust



Liz Meek
Director
Government Office
for London



Lucy Moore
Director of Workforce
Strategy
NE London Strategic
Health Authority



Ian Robinson
HR Partner
KPMG



Judith Rutherford
Chief Executive
Business Link for London



Cay Stratton CBE
Director
National Employment
Panel

**'Acting as a catalyst for
innovation and excellence in
the design and delivery of
Welfare to Work programmes'**



Ruth Thompson OBE
Group Corporate
Affairs Director
National Grid Transco



Martin Tiplady
HR Director
Metropolitan Police Service



Michael Ward
Formerly
Chief Executive
London Development
Agency



David Warwick
Chief Executive
LB Haringey

Explaining the Role of the LEC

The New Deal Task Force, now the National Employment Panel (NEP), established the London Employer Coalition in 1998. The LEC is one of eleven Coalitions, shown on the map below; there are nine in England, and two in Scotland.

Each year the NEP sets priorities for its Coalitions. The LEC then consults with the Jobcentre Plus Director for London, District Managers and the Employer Services Directorate to develop a business plan that targets action within the NEP priorities towards key employment sectors, jobseekers and geographical areas of London.

In 2003/04 the LEC's priorities were to:

- Support the development and delivery of employer engagement strategies ;
- Support employer-facing Jobcentre Plus staff;
- Help access better jobs for disadvantaged jobseekers;
- Help connect jobseekers with new jobs arising from regeneration and public investment initiatives;
- Help tighten the connection between employer needs and local training provision;
- Promote innovation and success in the design and delivery of Welfare to Work services.



“The London Employer Coalition is a highly respected and influential group whose passion and pioneering approaches in supporting Jobcentre Plus are opening new avenues for London’s jobseekers and new recruitment channels for employers” .
Cay Stratton, Director, National Employment Panel

A member of the LEC champions each initiative, giving direction, expert advice and guidance and helping to build senior level contacts within London’s business community. Depending on the project, many members also engage colleagues within their recruitment, training, diversity and marketing teams.

There is a small secretariat team, supported by Sainsbury’s, Jobcentre Plus and the Association of London Government. The Chair and Directors of the LEC meet at least quarterly with their counterparts from across the UK to share learning and new ideas.

Enhancing Knowledge and Skills

District Programme Quality Managers (DPQMs)

Sector specific training, basic skills or short interview preparation and confidence building courses are an integral part of the Jobcentre Plus offer to jobseekers. It is crucial that this provision meets employers' needs. Training specifications are developed by district teams, often in conjunction with the Field Account Managers. A regional team of contracting specialists then purchases the provision, and DPQMs monitor the quality and performance.

Across London, whilst there are some good quality providers the percentage of jobseekers securing work following training is far lower than in other regions such as the North West and West Midlands. Improving job entry rates from training is a priority for Jobcentre Plus in London. Lynda Russell, District Manager SE London, is championing this work with Lin Wealthy, Head of Contracting in London. A key element of this is to help DPQMs to maintain and develop their knowledge of key sectors, and skills in ascertaining employers' needs.

In support, the LEC first invited DPQMs to attend the Sector Summit described overleaf, and secondly worked with Lin and Lynda to design and sponsor a workshop to help develop further essential communication and project management skills required for such an interactive role.

The immediate feedback from the delegates was highly positive, with over 85% stating that their confidence in using their new skills was above level 5 on a ranking of 1-6.



"The workshop facilitated by the LEC was a key element of our development programme for our DPQM team in London to ensure that the services asked for by district teams meet local customer and employer needs".

Lin Wealthy, Head of Contracting, Jobcentre Plus, London



"It is crucial that both our contract managers and our DPQMs focus on employers' needs in designing and monitoring our training offer to jobseekers. This workshop helped DPQMs to focus on the employer agenda and gave them hints on commercial contract management".

Lynda Russell, District Manager, South East London, Jobcentre Plus

In 2004/05 the Regional Contracting Team and Employer Sales Manager will take forward proposals to plan and commission training on a pan-London basis driven by employers' needs.

Enhancing Knowledge and Skills

Second Sector Summit



Jobseekers' success in securing and retaining work, and employers' satisfaction with the Jobcentre Plus service, depends on an accurate understanding of employers' needs by Field Account Managers, Vacancy Service Managers, District Programme Quality Managers and Personal Advisers.

In June 2002 the LEC held its first Sector Summit, a day in which Jobcentre Plus colleagues from the above groups could each meet and quiz four employers from across 10 different sectors. Feedback from the event was exceptionally good and in June 2003 the LEC agreed to repeat the successful formula. This year 100 people attended and each delegate participated in eight 40-minute briefing and question and answer sessions. The employers attending included:

Boots; BUPA; Cabinet Office; Carillion; Debenhams; King's College Hospital NHS Trust; GWINTO; LB Haringey; LB Hounslow; LB Sutton; Lend Lease; London Underground; Metropolitan Police Service; Morrison; Sainsbury's; South London and Maudsley NHS Trust; Springboard UK; and The Corps.

"The Sector Summit and similar events offer us a special opportunity to talk directly with Jobcentre Plus colleagues from across London about the Metropolitan Police Service and the jobs and benefits we offer, as well as the application process. They have an immediate and positive impact on the referrals we receive"

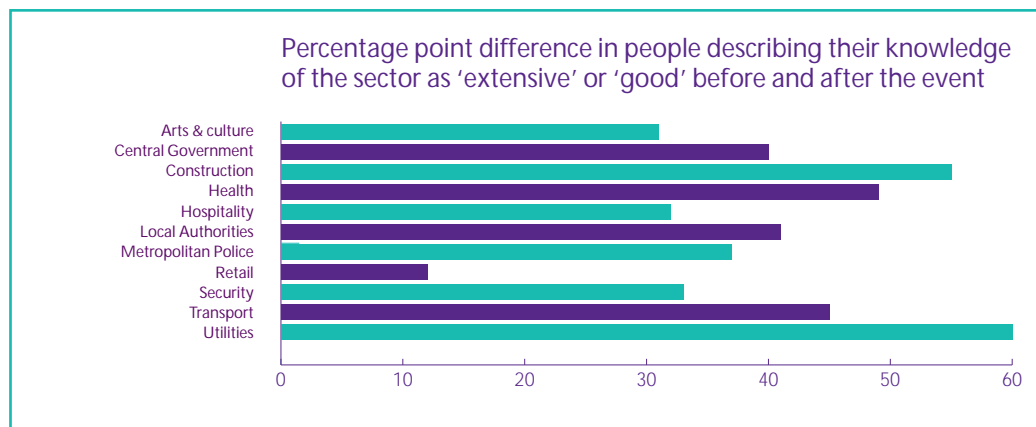
Martin Tiplady, HR Director, Metropolitan Police Service

“ Sainsbury’s was delighted to take part in the Sector Summit again this year. It’s a great way for us to keep up to date with changes in local labour markets across London and to share details of major recruitment campaigns associated with store openings as well as new contract possibilities such as term-time, part-time and variable hour contracts”

Margaret Edge, Head of Resourcing, Sainsbury’s

“ I found today extremely useful. It was a good opportunity to find out what employers think of us and how well some of the work we do is received”

Delegate’s Comment



In 2004/05 Jobcentre Plus Employer Services Directorate in London will take over the planning and management of the Sector Summit with a slightly new angle. The aim will be to focus on sectors in which significant growth is forecast, such as transport, retail and construction.

Opening Doors – Forging New Relationships

Health

The NHS employs 135,000 people in London in over 70 diverse careers. The breadth of these local opportunities and the benefits that they offer in terms of job satisfaction, pensions, increasing flexibility in working hours and training and development are attractive to many Jobcentre Plus customers.

At the start of 2003, LEC members Ann Macintyre and Lucy Moore, together with Tony Hyland, Health Account Manager for Jobcentre Plus, led discussions with HR Directors in NE London about their recruitment partnerships with Jobcentre Plus. The discussions revealed small-scale, effective relationships with individual departments of some Trusts, but that the majority had no current contact.

In December 2003 North East London Strategic Health Authority (NELSHA) and Jobcentre Plus recruited Arjmand Jamil and Andy Dakeyne to complete detailed mapping of existing partnerships and work with Trusts and Jobcentre Plus to develop effective, long-term strategies for each Trust, and joint campaigns where appropriate. One post is sponsored by the LEC and the other by NELSHA.

Examples of existing, successful relationships include:

- Barts and the London NHS Trust partnership with Employment Solutions, a joint venture between LB Tower Hamlets, Jobcentre Plus and Tower Hamlets College; and
- Newham Jobshac, an on-site recruitment service managed by Jobcentre Plus with the full support of the Acute and Primary Care Trust.

“ Our recruitment partnership with Employment Solutions has gone from strength to strength, with high quality candidates now filling vacancies in diagnostic and clinical areas. As they progress up our skills escalator, more opportunities will arise” .

Ann Macintyre, HR Director,
Barts and the London NHS Trust



Andy Dakeyne and Arjmand Jamil

“ We are delighted about the appointment of Arjmand and Andy, and are certain the development of a strategic partnership approach will accelerate essential work to build a real understanding of the Jobcentre Plus service offer amongst HR Managers and enhance Jobcentre Plus knowledge of our business”.

Lucy Moore, Director, NE London Strategic Health Authority

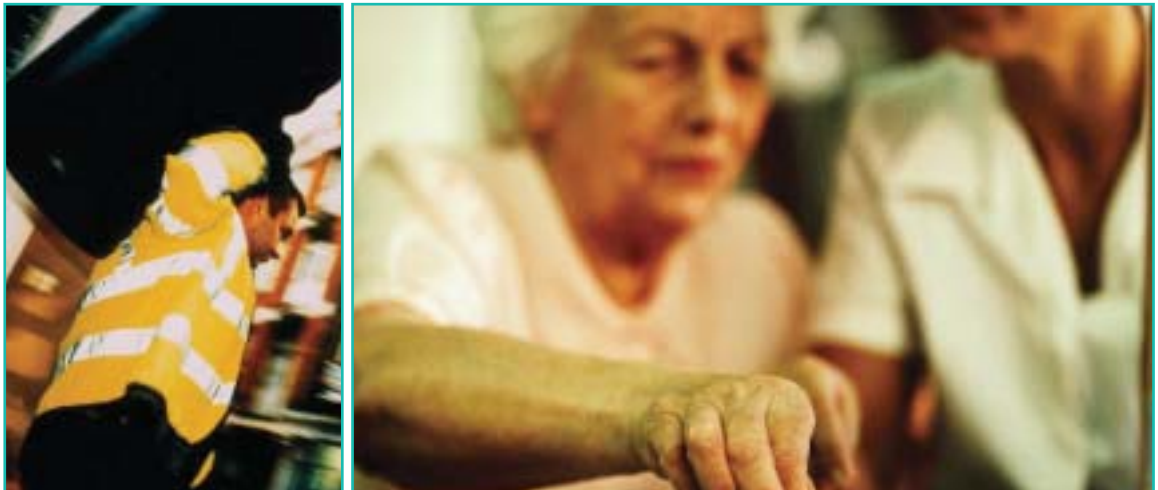
Priorities in 2004/05 include:

- Development of a recruitment plan for each Trust;
- Implementation of joint recruitment campaigns in response to the NHS Service Modernisation agenda;
- Delivery of a programme of learning about the NHS across Jobcentre Plus in NE London; and
- An employer to employer workshop to share good practice in recruitment processes and advance working relationships with Jobcentre Plus.

Opening Doors – Forging New Relationships

Local Authorities

In many London boroughs, the local authority is the largest employer. Together they employ over 200,000 people. They offer an exceptionally wide range of roles in education, housing, social care, leisure, environmental services, finance and administration. Every authority operates its own recruitment model: some are centralised, others devolved to individual departments, which may be no larger than a small business. All London boroughs' vacancies are accessible via the Internet, with many offering downloads of job details and application forms.



London's local authorities have long been strong partners of Jobcentre Plus, with a shared commitment to helping local people access local jobs. In many cases this relationship has focused on jobs created by construction and new retail, leisure or housing developments. Yet despite this strategic partnership and the opportunities that authorities offer, direct recruitment partnerships have been slow to develop.

At the start of 2003, David Warwick, Chief Executive of the London Borough of Haringey, joined the LEC to take forward an agreed priority with Jobcentre Plus to build recruitment relationships with London's local authorities. Salli Reynolds, an HR specialist from the Association of London Government, was recruited to the LEC secretariat to support this and she has worked closely with the newly appointed Jobcentre Plus Government Account Manager, Lorraine Hammond, as well as with Field Account Managers and District Delivery Teams.

Together, this 'virtual team' has forged relationships with 18 authorities over the last 12 months. A range of different service models is being trialled, depending on the authorities' requirements. In Haringey, for example, the initial focus has been on customised pre-employment training for care home vacancies. In Tower Hamlets, services are being delivered through Employment Solutions, an existing joint venture between the local authority local employment team, Tower Hamlets College and Jobcentre Plus. In Hounslow, a Job Fair concept has been tested, with the initial aim simply to raise awareness amongst Jobcentre Plus customers of the roles which the local authority offers. In Newham, the LEC has actively supported a significant recruitment campaign for 33 caretaker opportunities.

“ This year we have established the building blocks of an important new relationship with Jobcentre Plus. We know that there is great talent in Haringey and are keen to encourage and enable local people to apply for jobs with us and to progress. We have learnt an enormous amount. As we expand our partnership we aim to demonstrate to other authorities that working in partnership with Jobcentre Plus enables you to recruit the right local people for your jobs, and to reduce your costs as well”.

David Warwick, Chief Executive, LB Haringey

Other authorities where Jobcentre Plus activity has been instigated and supported include: Barking and Dagenham; Barnet; Brent; Croydon; Enfield; Havering; Hackney; Hillingdon; Hounslow; Islington; Lewisham; Lambeth; Richmond; Sutton; and Waltham Forest.

In 2003/04 the emphasis in these areas has been on building mutual understanding by:

- Developing Jobcentre Plus managers’ and advisers’ knowledge of the business environment, recruitment processes and standards of individual authorities, as well as the benefits which they offer to staff;
- Enhancing HR managers’ understanding of the Jobcentre Plus offer and potential; and
- Identifying previous underlying reasons for difficulties in the recruitment partnership and practical, local and strategic solutions to overcome them.

“ Working with Salli has given me a valuable insight into the local government sector, which has enabled me to engage more effectively with the local authorities across London”.

Lorraine Hammond, Government Account Manager, Jobcentre Plus

Priorities for 2004/05 are to accelerate the pace and expand the number of positive outcomes within existing frameworks and to extend the number of partnerships. The key actions to achieve this are to:

- Share and apply emerging good practice, not only between authorities in London but also with others elsewhere in the country and in other public services;
- Maximise the potential of the Jobcentre Plus and individual authorities’ own web pages in providing jobseekers with information during the recruitment process;
- Improve the process by which local authorities inform Jobcentre Plus about successful appointments.



Salli Reynolds



LB Newham and Jobcentre Plus recruitment team

Opening Doors – Forging New Relationships

Transport



In London 8.3% of people work in transport and communications and 18.6% in distribution, in occupations ranging from bus, train, tube and HGV drivers to station assistants and warehouse and security roles. In a recent survey by the Freight Transport Association in association with Skills for Logistics, 83% of companies described recruitment as 'difficult or getting worse'. In the bus sector vacancy levels are running continually at 1,000 across the capital despite large scale recruitment.

Jobcentre Plus has an on-going recruitment partnership with London Underground, for Station Assistants, and with bus companies such as First Group and Arriva, but there is significant further potential to attract and train people for these roles. Jobcentre Plus also receives notification of a high number of vacancies from haulage firms but, to date, many have been difficult to fill.

In the last quarter of this year the LEC and Jobcentre Plus commissioned research into the recruitment needs of the transport sector in London. The research identified:

- Current and forecast vacancies in the sector;
- The roles available, including job descriptions, salary rates and other benefits;
- The number of jobseekers expressing interest in the transport sector;
- Specialised intermediaries, including training providers; and
- Good practice models of recruitment to the transport sector from other areas.

“London’s residents, commuters, visitors and businesses all rely on our transport system. Meeting the recruitment needs of the sector is therefore vital. This research and the planned action will enable jobseekers across London to access secure jobs and help London and Londoners keep moving”.

Liz Meek, Director, Government Office for London

Priorities for 2004/05 are to:

- Develop together a one-, two- and five-year strategy for a Jobcentre Plus recruitment partnership with the transport operators in London;
- Develop Jobcentre Plus Account Managers’, Vacancy Service Managers’ and Advisers’ knowledge of the sector;
- Pilot delivery of the strategy in the bus sector, with a target of 250 successfully filled vacancies in 12 months.

“The transport sector offers huge potential for Jobcentre Plus customers, with opportunities spread across London. We are keen to continuously improve our service to existing employers and extend this to new firms. The research and support from the London Employer Coalition will help us in achieving this”.

Elaine Barker, London Regional Sales Manager, Employer Services Directorate, Jobcentre Plus



Improving Job Outcomes for Lone Parents

Work Works

The Government has set a target of 70% of lone parents into work by 2010. Currently the figure is 54% nationally and 42% in London.

The Chancellor asked the National Employment Panel to consider actions, particularly by employers, that would help achieve this target. Ben Verwaayen, Chief Executive, BT, took this forward through wide-ranging consultation with employers, Jobcentre Plus and voluntary organisations. The resultant report, *Work Works*, proposed 56 recommendations for action. It suggested a focus in the six metropolitan areas where the largest numbers of lone parents live (London, Glasgow, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool and Leeds/Bradford). The report identified an important role for Employer Coalitions in taking forward the recommendations. Two members of the LEC, Ian Robinson and Lucy Moore, are members of the national Project Board. Two priorities for action in 2003/04 were to pilot in Central London:

- the development of a communication strategy to lone parents and employers;
- the design and implementation of Discovery Weeks.

The communication strategy for lone parents uses specially designed non-Government branded materials and emphasises the lifestyle benefits of work. A video has been produced that diarises the experiences of a number of lone parents returning to work and the views of their children. The first copies are currently being offered to lone parents by New Deal Advisers in Central London District. Jobcentre Plus and the LEC are also working with trusted intermediaries such as Sure Start and One Parent Families, both of whom support and encourage lone parents thinking about returning to work.

The communication strategy for employers is at an early stage, with research underway in London and Glasgow to identify sectors, firms and occupations that currently offer flexible work options or have the potential to do so.

“Work Works offers exciting new approaches to marketing Welfare to Work to both employers and lone parents. Its employer focus is, rightly, on the benefits it offers to business, as well as the value to the individual and to society.”

Claire Ighodaro, Finance Director Broadband, BT Group.

Two pilot Discovery Weeks were designed and run in Islington by One Parent Families together with Working Links. Outreach work, advertising in community centres and on BT telephone boxes were used together with referrals from Jobcentre Plus to encourage lone parents to begin a Discovery Week. The course helped them to 'discover' personal goals and sources of help with childcare and financial planning, as well as employment opportunities and practical ways into work. The Discovery Weeks included presentations and work tasters with employers such as Sainsbury's, the NHS and Metropolitan Police Service. Many of the graduates of Discovery Weeks went on to an adviser meeting with Jobcentre Plus to explore further access to training, employment and childcare options.

"Discovery Weeks offer lone parents a fresh, new way to explore work. They are designed to inspire, encourage and enable people to think about their goals and provide practical support to help achieve the first essential steps. Employers' direct engagement in the Discovery Weeks and offers of flexible work options will open a whole new, dedicated and skilled workforce to them!"

Anne Sullivan, District Manager, Central London, Jobcentre Plus



In 2004/05 our focus will be to:

- Secure practical employer engagement in Discovery Weeks that will run in Lewisham and Haringey;
- Act as champions to support Jobcentre Plus target employers that demonstrate flexible workplace practices or where practical changes to existing policies could meet flexible workplace criteria; and
- Support the further development of the communication strategy across London.

Improving Job Outcomes for Black and Ethnic Minority Jobseekers

Work Talk

In December 2002, the LEC, NEP Minority Ethnic Group and Jobcentre Plus developed a pilot initiative called Work Talk. The aim was to enable a small cohort of jobseekers with English language needs to secure employment through an innovative programme focused on the world of work. The two key elements were the support of two dedicated Jobcentre Plus advisers and a new eight-week English language training course.

The target beneficiaries were customers registered with the two main Jobcentres in Tower Hamlets who had 'basic spoken English', had never worked in the UK but were seeking employment. The objective was to engage 60 jobseekers, of whom 50% would complete the language course and 10 secure work.



Pilgrims (a new Jobcentre Plus provider) delivered the course at a local community centre. The language of work was integral throughout and was enhanced by local employers' presentations and site visits, facilitated by the LEC, including Sainsbury's, Met Police, LB Tower Hamlets and Barts and the London NHS Trust.

The advisers continued their contact with the course participants through daily visits, providing encouragement and helping to resolve any issues that may have prevented attendance, including benefits advice, travel to the centre, feedback to families and referrals to other social service support organisations as well as help in job search. 33 jobseekers started the courses, 28 completed, of which 7 have entered work and 13 have progressed to further skills and technical training.

Independent evaluation by the 'East London Pathfinder Project' rated the attendance and achievement of the participants as excellent. The factors for success included the support of dedicated advisers and the focus on individual's needs, particularly cultural, as well as the emphasis on work and direct engagement with employers.

"As a Work Talk Adviser I was able to work in a highly flexible way. I focused on each of my clients' individual needs to enable them to participate in the course and move to the next stages of their path to work. I am so proud of my clients' achievements!"

Shahid Ullah, Adviser

"I have learnt so much, made new friends and have got a job that I really enjoy!"

Ali Akbar, Course Participant

"This is the first time that Pilgrims has worked with Jobcentre Plus and the London Employer Coalition. Our partnership has generated an approach based specifically on individuals and employers. LEC members' and partners' direct engagement in the course focused everyone towards the final work goal. It enabled participants to learn about the local world of work and, amongst other skills, practice new words and phrases with managers from a range of sectors."

Liz Brewer, Project Manager, Pilgrims

Following evaluation, experience from 'Work Talk' will be used to develop further English language training across London.

Improving Job Outcomes for Black and Ethnic Minority Jobseekers

Fair Cities

In London, Black and ethnic minority residents comprise 25% of the city's population, and over 50% of the population of Brent and Newham. This figure is forecast to rise to 28% in 2011, whilst the white population is expected to decline by nearly 8%. Growth of the city's economy will depend, in large measure, on harnessing the talent and productivity of ethnic minority residents.



Currently, however, while there are significant variations between ethnic minority groups, Black and Asian people are on average at a distinct disadvantage in the labour market when compared to their white counterparts. Ethnic minorities tend to have lower education and skills levels, are more likely to live in deprived areas and often experience discrimination.

In 2003, the National Employment Panel (NEP) decided to identify through research successful employer-led initiatives in the UK, Europe and North America that have measurably increased the employment, retention and progression rates of ethnic minorities, and to consider how this might support existing action or stimulate new action in the UK. The initiative is known as *Fair Cities*.

The research was published in March 2004. It featured 20 case studies and identified five key features that the most successful initiatives have in common. These are:

- Employer leadership and strategic direction;
- Local capacity and infrastructure to mobilise and support employer-led partnerships;
- Responsiveness to employer demand and business needs;
- Customised services that help ethnic minorities succeed in employment;
- Commitment to monitoring and meeting outcomes.

The NEP is currently considering which areas in the UK might be suitable for Fair Cities, based upon the lessons and principles identified in the research. In London, Anuj Chande champions Fair Cities for the Coalition.

“There is a significant opportunity for employers to take a lead role in galvanising partnership action to improve services and results for ethnic minority jobseekers. We need to create plans that are long-term and large-scale and focus on the specific needs of individual employers and jobseekers”.

Anuj Chande, Partner, Grant Thornton

In 2004/05 LEC priorities will be to disseminate and consult widely on the report findings and discuss with employers and voluntary and public sector partners how approaches and programmes identified in the Fair Cities research can add further to existing commitments and action.

Working with Intermediaries

Workplace Co-ordinators

Jobcentre Plus works with a wide range of intermediary bodies and other partners that share their goal to help people most in need to return to the labour market. Many of the most effective intermediaries are small, agile organisations with in-depth relationships with employers in a specific area or sector, and strong links with a local community. The Cross River Partnership Workplace Co-ordinators are an example of such an intermediary, and were winners of LEC Awards in 2001 and 2003.

The 16 Co-ordinators work in the health, hospitality, construction, business service, public and arts and culture sectors. One of the construction Workplace Co-ordinators is hosted by Coalition member Lend Lease, with another planned to work at Battersea Power Station.



“From my experience in working with Jobcentre Plus across the country and engagement with the Cross River Partnership I realised that we shared a common commitment to jobseekers and employers. There was an important role for the LEC in helping both organisations to enhance knowledge of one another’s working methods and to improve practical referral mechanisms”.

Val Lowman, Community Development Manager, Lend Lease

Building on the Sector Summit model, in March 2004 the LEC facilitated a ‘Dialogue Day’ between the Workplace Co-ordinators and Jobcentre Plus colleagues. The purpose was to introduce 30 local Jobcentre Plus advisers and Vacancy Service Managers to the Workplace Co-ordinators and improve knowledge of their employer partners’ needs and the pre-and post employment training and support available, as well as the practical referral mechanisms.

Over 50% of Jobcentre Plus attendees stated that the role of the Workplace Co-ordinators was completely new to them and almost 90% described their knowledge by the end as ‘excellent’ or ‘very good’.

“Workplace Co-ordinators deliver an integrated approach to recruitment and training, meeting the needs of both employers and jobseekers. The ‘Dialogue Day’ has acted as a catalyst for the co-ordination and alignment of services”.

Nadine Collins, Economic & Community Benefit Manager, Cross River Partnership

The level of successful referrals and job outcomes will be monitored carefully throughout 2004/05.

Celebrating Achievement, Innovation and Success

On November 4th the LEC held its Third Annual Awards Ceremony at Gibson Hall, Bishopsgate. Some 270 business leaders, successful jobseekers and Jobcentre Plus colleagues including Board Members, District Managers, Advisers and Employer Account Managers celebrated their achievements in 2003. It was an inspirational evening that sparked new commitments and new ideas for ways of working. Des Browne MP, Minister for Work, and LEC sponsors presented 21 Awards in six categories.

The Winners were:



Ian Lewis with Christopher Banks and Des Browne

Individual Jobseeker sponsored by **Sainsbury's**

Ian Lewis for his dedication and determination to overcome barriers to work and secure his ideal job as a Groundsman and First Aider for Tree Surgeons, IMS. In an audience vote, based on video clips of all our winners, Ian was awarded the overall winner's prize.

"Once again the quality of the entries, and the stories of the people involved which underlie them, highlighted what outstanding results can be achieved when partnerships truly work together with a common goal!"

Mike Bolsover OBE, Director, Gerrard

"Over the last few years EDS have been regular visitors to local Jobcentres across the country, planning and delivering some exciting new IT services. We see first hand the excellent service Jobcentre Plus provides to individuals and firms and it was therefore a great pleasure to sponsor the Jobcentre Plus Award!"

Paul Jennings, Director UK Solution Centres EDS



Large Employer sponsored by



Metropolitan Police Service for the recruitment of over 500 new employees through an active and creative partnership with Jobcentre Plus, engaging locally in open days and pre-employment courses and streamlining recruitment processes to encourage and enable applications from across the community.



Small Employer sponsored by



City Suburban Tree Surgeons for their long-term commitment to working with Groundwork to train and recruit long-term unemployed jobseekers and their unstinting professional and pastoral care.



Team sponsored by



Employment Solutions for their success in combining the talents and resources of all three partners – LB Tower Hamlets, Jobcentre Plus and Tower Hamlets College – and working flexibly to meet employers' needs, facilitating the recruitment of over 1,000 jobseekers each year.



Lifestyle-Friendly Employer sponsored by



ASDA Sutton for breaking down barriers previously preventing local lone parents, people with disabilities and over 50s from applying for and securing positions in its flagship new store.



Jobcentre Plus Individual or Team sponsored by



Marsha Polsen, Vacancy Service Manager, for her systematic approach to re-invigorating and fostering new links between businesses in Peckham, South London and Jobcentre Plus.

Details of the LEC Awards 2004 will be announced in June. Our focus this year will be on partnerships between recruiting employers, Jobcentre Plus, training organisations and jobseekers. There will be special award categories for specific employment sectors.

If you would like to receive details we'd be delighted to hear from you (contact details on back cover).

Looking to the Future

In 2004/05 we will:

- Prioritise our actions in three key sectors: transport, construction and the public sector, specifically local authorities and health. We will work with Jobcentre Plus colleagues to develop strategies to grow current relationships or open doors to new employers. Our work to build Account Managers', Advisers' and Vacancy Service Managers' knowledge will be focused in these sectors also.
- Continue our work with Jobcentre Plus and partners to improve job outcomes for Black and ethnic minority jobseekers and lone parents. We will achieve this through 'Fair Cities' and 'Work Works' respectively, as well as through the research, design and delivery of the sector initiatives.
- Work closely with the National Employment Panel to develop and deliver mentoring and support programmes for Business Managers, whose role in managing local sites is so critical to the effective operations of Jobcentre Plus.
- Build on previous work to help tighten the connection between employers' needs and skills provision by working more closely with London's Learning and Skills Councils in the design and implementation of the sector initiatives, in particular.
- End the year with our Fourth Annual Awards, bringing together London's employers, Jobcentre Plus colleagues, providers and jobseekers to celebrate their success and share innovation and good practice.

