

# Focus

Birmingham and Solihull

## on the Labour Market

This monthly newsletter provides information and news about labour markets, covering areas such as, employment trends, research and training.

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### Welcome

Welcome to the current edition of **FOCUS**, a monthly newsletter covering labour market information and news for the Birmingham and Solihull area.

This newsletter covers many areas such as labour market news, employment figures, and training. Useful information sources and links are also provided.

### Who is this newsletter for?

This newsletter will be of interest to any adults wanting or giving advice on learning and work.

If you want to find out about the latest news – turn to page 2.

We hope you find it useful and informative

If you would like to receive this newsletter via email please contact [helen.walton@connexions-bs.co.uk](mailto:helen.walton@connexions-bs.co.uk)



## Local news

### **New superstore for Bearwood**

A new Aldi outlet superstore was due to open in Bearwood in February, creating more than 200 jobs. The superstore aims to offer a wider selection of goods from fresh grocery produce to DIY goods.

### **McDonald's Harborne branch closes**

McDonald's branch in Harborne High Street has closed after more than 20 years of trading. This is the only branch in Birmingham to close, of the 25 announced across the UK. Staff have been given jobs at other nearby McDonald's branches.

### **Bewise and QS discount stores set to close**

Bewise and QS discount stores are to close more than 130 stores across the UK, putting around 1,400 jobs across at risk.

Bewise has eight stores in Birmingham and nine in the Black Country.

### **Asda plans for flagship Birmingham store**

Asda has submitted plans to expand a flagship Birmingham store at Great Barr outlet, which could create 230 additional jobs.

The £15 million expansion plans include a new level at the Great Barr entrance, with another application to redesign the entrance lobby and plans for a car deck with 250 extra spaces.

### **Primark targets the Midlands for expansion**

The Midlands have been targeted by Associated British Foods (ABF) in its expansion plans for the Primark chain.

Two new stores have already been planned in Wolverhampton and Birmingham at refitted former Littlewoods sites.

### **Domino's Pizza unveils Birmingham expansion plans**

Domino's Pizza has unveiled plans to increase the number of stores in Birmingham.

## **Developments**

### **Lottery grant awarded to gardening scheme**

A gardening scheme for disadvantaged children in Birmingham, set up by the New Environmental Ventures Ltd initiative, has been awarded a lottery grant through Awards for All Scheme. The gardening scheme aims to get children to spend more time in the garden and to teach children about healthy eating, organic recycling and how to grow their own crops.

Full article available:  
Birmingham Post 24th February  
2006 (webpages)

### **Transformation plans for Sutton Coldfield shopping centre**

A £2.5 million revamp of the Mall Gracechurch is set to transform Sutton Coldfield's town centre. The first phase of the development is due to start but possible future developments and the best course of action to be taken will be determined through an Urban Design Study.

Full details available  
Birmingham Mail 24th February  
2006(webpages).

### **Internet Sales Growth**

According to recent research, the growth in internet sales is rising faster than the growth in retail sales. According to recent analysis over £8 billion of goods were bought online last year.

Some traditional stores are facing increasing competition from online retailers.

### **MFI announces job cuts**

MFI announced almost 1,500 job cuts in a restructuring plan to improve its fortunes.

The plan involves focusing on kitchen and bedroom retailing and abandon selling bathrooms and kitchens. It may mean the closure of 11 stores, and three out of eight home delivery centres.

### **Tesco in the USA**

Tesco is planning to open a new chain of California stores, based on the Tesco Express model.

The UK is said to be dominated by the top five supermarkets and Tesco is Britain's number one supermarket chain. Tesco is said to take £1 in every £8 spent in the UK.

## **Green paper entitled "A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work"**

The Government has recently published the welfare reform green paper entitled "A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work".

The paper seeks to "end the legacy of benefit dependency and deprivation that can damage communities across Britain".

The paper contains major new proposals to help individuals achieve their potential through work.

Full details are available from the Department of Work and Pensions website  
<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/aboutus/welfarereform/>

## Word Puzzle – About the Media Industry

### The Media Industry

Most households in the UK have a TV and most people have a video or DVD, so it's not surprising that many people want to work in the media industry. It may be a competitive and tough industry to get into but the rewards can be huge.

There are hundreds of different jobs in the media for example an animator or acquisition editor, some of which you may never have thought of as a career.

A lot of patience and a huge amount of determination are needed in order to succeed, along with a bit of luck. The ability to communicate and work well with others is important as most jobs in the media industry involve working as part of a team.



There are 15 words associated with working in the media industry hidden in the puzzle below. Can you find them all? One example is highlighted for you.

T	V	C	O	N	M	J	O	T	O	H	P
B	H	I	P	N	C	O	H	F	K	Y	U
N	J	F	F	T	B	U	Y	E	R	I	B
M	U	S	I	C	O	R	I	P	D	A	L
K	L	N	L	H	F	N	B	V	C	F	I
P	O	L	M	A	G	A	Z	I	N	E	S
L	I	Y	F	S	A	L	J	K	E	N	H
E	S	E	G	A	M	I	O	C	W	K	I
V	P	M	N	B	Y	S	U	V	S	F	N
I	C	S	G	K	L	M	M	N	P	J	G
T	Q	A	W	O	P	N	F	C	A	I	L
A	P	L	V	I	D	E	O	Y	P	K	Y
E	O	E	G	D	U	I	N	K	E	A	S
R	E	S	E	A	R	C	H	E	R	S	K
C	P	Y	U	R	O	Q	W	N	J	K	Y

## **Employer's needs**

### **Skills Academy for food and drink manufacturing**

National Skills Academy for food and drink manufacturing: productivity through skills, feeding minds and growing business

The food and drink manufacturing sector is the largest manufacturing sector in the UK, says this prospectus. Turnover in the food and drink sector in the UK is £66 billion per year. The new Skills Academy will enable the development of management skills, a crucial area in the light of a predicted increase in the number of management positions from seven per cent to 14 per cent over the next seven years. In addition, the industry will need to recruit and develop up to 200,000 new skilled entrants into the food and drink manufacturing sector over the next seven years to maintain the current workforce. Read National Skills Academy for food and drink manufacturing: productivity through skills, feeding minds and growing business, Improve, December 2005, at

<http://www.improveltd.co.uk>

Skills and Education Network Newsletter, February 2006

## **Learner's needs**

### **Evaluation of regional plans for the new integrated offender learning and skills service**

This report shows the outcomes of an evaluation of projects that may underpin the new Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS). The study found that many positive learner outcomes were recorded as a result of these projects. For instance, several projects tested new models of vocational provision, which were linked to local labour market needs and offered learners clear progression into employment. Many of those involved felt confident that the new service would offer a cohesive learning journey. The report recommends that partnerships are key to success along with the ability to communicate between organisations and to share good practice. The study was based on testing partial prototype projects to the North East, North West and South West Learning and Skills Council (LSC) regions to prepare for the national OLASS project which will be in place across England by August 2006. Read Evaluation of regional plans for the new integrated offender learning and skills service, Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA), 2006, at <http://www.lsda.org.uk>

Skills and Education Network Newsletter, February 2006

## **Equal Opportunities**

### **Labour market disadvantage amongst disabled people: a longitudinal perspective**

Lack of qualifications, training and experience, financial disincentives, inaccessible transport, and employers' perceptions are all barriers facing disabled people when they try to enter the jobs market. It is not just rates of job entry that are lower among disabled people, but rates of job retention as well. It is 'prime' working-age disabled men who experience the least favourable labour market progression. The report argues that as attention among policy-makers is turning towards disabled people aged 50 years or more in Government initiatives, these findings should sound a note of caution. At least in terms of labour market progression, it is disabled men aged 26 to 49 years and not older disabled men who fair least well. Read Labour market disadvantage amongst disabled people: a longitudinal perspective, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), 2005, at <http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk>

Skills and Education Network Newsletter, February 2006

## **Shaping a fairer future**

This recent report from the Women and Work Commission proposes a wealth of practical ideas on how to close the gender pay and opportunities gap. Full details are available through:

[www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk](http://www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk)

## Labour Market Trends

### Birmingham and Solihull Labour market Information (LMI) resource

It is important to consult labour market information when planning and delivering learning and skills. Predicting future trends helps to prepare people for the world of work. Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council (LSC) have recently commissioned this resource, which collates the latest Labour Market Information (LMI). Please see below for more details

#### Information about the LMI resource

The LSC had commissioned this work originally to meet two purposes:

- 1) To compile LMI information for head-teachers and collegiate co-ordinators
- 2) To develop information resources for careers advisors and young people seeking to enter growth sectors in Birmingham and Solihull

The need of this project emerged from the following:

- 1) The collegiate groups identified a need for LMI information to be more easily accessible on critical labour market issues particularly impacting on the Birmingham and Solihull and where relevant the region, for use primarily to help underpin capital planning process

- 2) The 14 – 19 agenda reform aims to widen vocational options and with the use of LMI, we can identify growth sectors and align planning and delivery of learning and skills to meet local economical needs.

As a nextstep member (including wider members), if you are interested in this resource and would like to receive an electronic version of the resource, please contact **Helen Walton on 0121 248 8071 or email [helen.walton@connexions-bs.co.uk](mailto:helen.walton@connexions-bs.co.uk) or fax 0121 248 8002. Please include your name, telephone number, email, and your organisation's address and postcode.**

## Newsletter sources and miscellaneous items

## Miscellaneous items

Answers : Potatoes; Growing Crops; Nursery; Vegetables; Gloves; Garden Centre; Flowers; Plants; Fertilisers; Trees

## Sources

The following information sources were used to put together this newsletter:

News Headlines from Birmingham City Council – accessed via [www.birmingham.gov.uk](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk)

Skills and Education Network Newsletter February 2006, Learning and Skills Council  
icsolihull.icnetwork.co.uk (in association with Solihull News and Solihull Times)

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/qualifications/news.cfm?page=0&id=101>

Birmingham Post; <http://icbirmingham.icnetwork.co.uk/birminghampost/business>

Birmingham Evening news; <http://icbirmingham.icnetwork.co.uk/mail/news>

The Guardian website; <http://www.guardian.co.uk>

Forward Newspaper, Birmingham City Council <http://www.birmingham.gov.uk>

Intelligence Newsletter February 2006 Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA)

Skills and Education Network Newsletter, February 2006

## Disclaimer

The information contained in this newsletter is collected from different sources and may include opinions or views which do not necessarily reflect those of **nextstep**.

Whilst we hope you find the contents of this newsletter interesting and informative, the contents are for general information purposes only and do not constitute advice. We believe the contents to be true and accurate as at the date of writing. **nextstep** cannot accept responsibility for the accuracy of the sources.

