



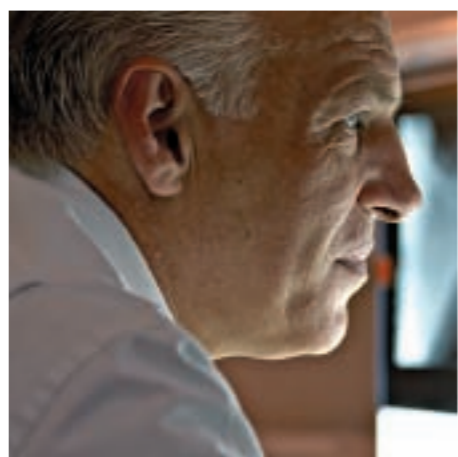
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Local Employment and Training Initiatives



BACKGROUND



Kent Thameside covers the boroughs of Dartford and Gravesham in North Kent. It is one of the principal growth zones for the Thames Gateway. Over the next 20 years the regeneration of the area will create up to 50,000 new jobs.

Kent Thameside Delivery Board (KTDB) is a public/private sector partnership, formally recognised by the Government as the coordinating body for regeneration activities in the Kent Thameside area.

The Vision for Kent Thameside

To create a distinctive and vibrant destination of choice through the development of successful communities which capitalise on the rich heritage of Dartford, Gravesham and the River Thames.

Kent Thameside's Regeneration Framework highlights 'Jobs and Business' as one of its key issues. The framework states: *"Raising skill levels and aspirations will be essential to ensuring that existing residents can benefit from the new job opportunities in the area and providing a ready pool of labour to attract new employers"*.



Two particular priorities for KTDB and its partners are to ensure that:

- Local residents are able to secure quality jobs arising from the redevelopment of the area; and
- A skilled local workforce is developed to contribute to a successful and prosperous economy.

In 2004 a local labour market report, commissioned by local organisations, set out a framework and a 'business plan' for the delivery of a Local Employment Initiative (LEI) in Kent Thameside. KTDB, supported by the Urban Programme, has developed Employ Kent Thameside and Construct Kent Thameside to deliver services that will achieve the twin aims of securing jobs for local people and providing skilled workers for local businesses.

Employ Kent Thameside will realise its aims through a strong delivery partnership between public and private sector organisations and community stakeholders. Employment initiatives will be 'employer led' and tailored to the training and development needs of industry and the local workforce.

DELIVERY OBJECTIVES

Employ Kent Thameside

Employ Kent Thameside builds on the best practice established in developing local employment programmes and draws on local success stories such as the 'Learning Shop' at Bluewater.

The initiative is a multi agency project bringing together key partners to provide employment and training services. Working together under the partnership brand name **Employ Kent Thameside**, partners will utilise existing staff and resources to provide services focused on the new job opportunities in the area.



Employ Kent Thameside will provide a single point of contact for employers and residents, delivering three key types of service:

- **Job brokerage:** 'Job shops', internet and telephone vacancy services.
- **Training brokerage:** Linking employers to existing training provision and commissioning new employer led training programmes.
- **Information, Advice Guidance:** Supporting local residents to take up jobs and training opportunities.

Construct Kent Thameside

The first wave of jobs will be created during the construction phase of the key developments in the area. Developers, construction companies and house builders have all agreed to support local employment objectives. They are providing resources to help deliver services under the partnership name **Construct Kent Thameside**. Construct Kent Thameside will deliver a range of services focused on jobs and employers in the construction industry.



Future Jobs

Over 10,000 new jobs have already come to Kent Thameside, in particular at Bluewater and Crossways Business Park, and it is anticipated that a further 40,000 jobs will be created over the next 20 years.

There are likely to be significant numbers of jobs in the following sectors:

- Business and Financial services
- Public sector jobs
- New manufacturing and construction
- Retail and service industries

Across all sectors there will be employment opportunities ranging from 'junior' and 'entry level' positions through to management and professional occupations. Communication skills, customer service and general 'experience' are generic requirements common to most employment sectors and will be a prerequisite for most jobs. In Kent Thameside, qualifications and technical or professional expertise will be valuable assets for individuals and employers. In some sectors, such as business services and the public sector, more than one third of the jobs will require employees qualified to NVQ level 4, or degree level.

BUSINESS PLAN

Employ Kent Thameside and Construct Kent Thameside have developed a business plan which sets out the key actions and services to be delivered from 2005 onwards. These will set in place the foundations for an exciting partnership project that will deliver services in the area for the next 15 – 20 years.

- A Partnership Management Steering Group will be established in 2005 and will include key delivery partners such as Jobcentre Plus, Local Authorities, Next Step guidance services and training specialists.
- An Employment & Training Charter will be published setting out the aims of Employ Kent Thameside and the commitment of key partners.
- Employ Kent Thameside will commission, produce and distribute labour market and careers materials in order to inform residents and organisations of the future job opportunities.
- Construct Kent Thameside will establish 'on-site' job shops and training facilities at major development sites with the first on site centre established in 2006.
- Employ and Construct Kent Thameside will deliver recruitment and training services offering a single point of contact for job seekers and employers. These services will commence when the first on site centre opens in 2006.
- From 2005 onwards Employ and Construct Kent Thameside will deliver customised training programmes preparing local residents for jobs arising from the regeneration of the area.
- Employ Kent Thameside will develop information advice and guidance services to ensure that local communities are well informed about future career opportunities.

