

Bolton WISE (Working Initiatives leading to Sustainable Employment)

Projects: Foundations 4 Learning and WISE Workways 2

Funding: European Social Fund (Co-financed through the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) Greater Manchester and Jobcentre Plus) under Policy Field 3 – Promotion of Lifelong Learning Activity and Policy Field 1 - Development of Active Labour Market Policies

Good Practice themes demonstrated: Sustainable Development

What does the project do?

As part of their mission to help achieve sustainable communities and social inclusion, Bolton WISE are striving **“to help people get jobs and to keep them”**.

The project is helping to overcome the complex challenges of long-term unemployment and the associated issues of poverty through the use of ‘transitional employment’ (or *Intermediate Labour Market – ILM*) measures, while enhancing local services and the quality of life for communities in which they live.

Operating in both Greater Manchester and Lancashire, the Bolton-based project provides long-term unemployed people with training, work experience and job search support in order to assist them in securing sustainable, long-term employment.

The WISE project develops individuals’ skills using a wide range of activities that are focussed on addressing all of the economic, social and environmental components of sustainable development. Central to the project is helping the long-term unemployed to fulfil their potential by developing skills that are recognised and sought by the business sector.



Bolton WISE has been awarded two European Social Fund grants to support their project activity, one through LSC Greater Manchester and the other through Jobcentre Plus.

The first project is a £200,000 grant from the LSC is called 'Foundations 4 Learning' which is being delivered through their new community-learning centre the Learners Arms (an adapted public house) and numerous **SureStart** venues throughout Bolton.

For the second project a grant of £362,000 has been awarded through Jobcentre Plus to support a comprehensive range of activities, which has helped lots of people to acquire the skills to get back into work

Thanks to the WISE projects the local area has been enhanced in numerous different ways, improving the quality of life for all in the local community.

What singles the project out as being sustainable?

- The use of the environment as a learning resource to provide transferable employment skills (e.g. Construction Skills Certification Scheme site operative card – required on all building sites)
- Aesthetic improvements to the local area through fence repairs, garden clearances (including the removal of rubbish as well as garden makeovers), bridleway and footpath improvements, drainage construction and public access works.
- The refurbishment of the Learners Arms, conserving scarce natural resources by not commissioning a new build and turning one of the area's most challenging pubs – and latterly derelict buildings – into a community learning resource.

Project Beneficiary: Peter Hunt, Supervisor @ WISE

Peter is just one of the many people in the area who have been helped by the support, training and guidance provided by Bolton WISE. Peter, who has been working as a supervisor at WISE for over nine months, believes that the project has greatly improved the quality of his life.

He said: *"As a single parent now being able to provide clothes and toys is great. But the benefits are not just financial, my confidence has increased along with my skills while learning a new trade – I now feel that I can really contribute. Would I want to have changed anything? No I wouldn't!"*

Further Information:

If you want to find out more about Bolton WISE, it's activities or how you could get involved, Bolton Wise is based at: Quest Centre, Brownlow Way in Bolton.
website: www.boltoncommunity.co.uk/boltonwise/

Please contact Steve Bottrill (General Manager) on **01204 393081** for more information