

## Birmingham Energy Savers in Partnership

### April 2013: Jobless Obtain Work with City Partnership's Help

In December 2012, Carillion was chosen by Birmingham City Council as a partner on the 'Birmingham Energy Savers' (BES) scheme. This is an eight year programme to improve the energy efficiency of up to 60,000 households across the city, together with schools and other non-domestic Council properties.

A partnership between BES and the City Council has helped a number of unemployed people back into work. Courtesy of pre-employment training delivered by Birmingham Adult Education Service (BAES), 22 city residents have gone onto full-time work on the BES programme.

BAES designed and delivered an intensive three-day programme to help recruit staff for the new BES contact centre based in Smallbrook Queensway, where the successful candidates are now among the BES colleagues handling close to 9,000 calls from Birmingham residents who are keen to take advantage of the Green Deal and make their homes more energy efficient by booking a free energy assessment.

*Tyseley-based Lewis Rowlands commented:*

*"The pre-employment training helped me re-hone my interview skills. The trainers were excellent. I genuinely enjoy my job and feel glad to be part of something bigger than myself – helping the UK reduce its carbon emissions. It is a great thing to wake up to do."*

*Tyseley-based Lewis Rowlands*

*"I found it hard to get a job after taking seven years out to have my children," said Safiyyah Bibi of Small Heath. "I lost my confidence and my CV needed updating. The training really helped me to focus and I'm now a customer services advisor and enjoying life as a confident working mum!"*

*"We are delighted to see that our work has played a part in helping local residents to secure sustainable work with BES,"*

**Hafsha Dadabhai-Shaikh**, Head of Family Learning & Employment Projects at BAES

*“Many years of developing successful employment programmes have helped us to understand the challenges and barriers faced by both unemployed clients and employers. In working closely with BES, we were able to identify their specific requirements for this very important city wide project I am really proud to know that our collaboration with BES and the city council’s Employment Access Team is having a positive impact”.*

The new employees received a further boost from another bespoke course delivered by **Birmingham Metropolitan College (BMET)**. The Green Deal Advisor Level 2 course ensured that a blend of technical knowledge and customer service skills was achieved during the full-time, fortnight-long course.

“The BES staff were exceptionally well motivated and achieved excellent results,” added Adrian Morris, a Faculty Director at BMET. “We are delighted to be working to support the BES programme, which provides exciting opportunities for young people and adults to engage in new technologies that will lead them into employment within the city. BMET is looking forward to helping companies and homeowners to realise the full potential of BES through its highly skilled and motivated workforce and supply chain.”

BES’ Employment & Training Manager Kat Crockford said: “BES is all about investing in the people of Birmingham and it is so good to be able to do so in partnership within the city. I would like to congratulate every one of our new recruits on coming through the course and getting back into work. We look forward to creating many more employment and training opportunities.”

BES has now taken on 47 new employees from across the region, 37 of whom were unemployed or in jobs at risk. BES aims to create up to 360 jobs as a part of its programme and is actively working with jobseekers and local organisations to identify opportunities.

BES is the first example of a Local Authority delivering the Government’s Green Deal, through which the cost of carrying energy efficient measures will be recovered in installments via the occupants’/ owners’ energy suppliers. BES aims to help 60,000 city homes plus schools, businesses and organisations reduce their energy bills and carbon emissions by supporting a range of energy efficient building adaptations.

For more information about Birmingham Energy Savers, please visit:

<http://www.energysaverspartnerships.co.uk/birmingham>