

# North Eastern Derbyshire Strategic Employment Partnership

## CASE STUDY: M1 Managed Motorways Project

### Background

This case study sets out how an ambitious project delivered real job outcomes for our residents by making sure that a local construction scheme supported local people.

The Partnership consists of representatives from North East Derbyshire District Council, Bolsover District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council, Bolsover Partnership, the Department of Work and Pensions and the Skills Funding Agency. Chesterfield College, Derbyshire County Council and the Derbyshire Education Business Partnership were also involved in this project to provide additional expertise.

The Highways Agency Managed Motorway Project aimed to increase the capacity of the M1 between Junction 28 and 31. The government contract was awarded to Costain who is one of the country's leading engineering firms for major infrastructure projects who through the intervention of NEDSEP, sited their Headquarters at Junction 29a for the duration of this project.

NEDSEP quickly established contact with Costain to see what support could be provided to Costain for the duration of the project.

*Councillor Graham Baxter MBE, Leader of North East Derbyshire District Council*

*"This project was all about providing job opportunities for residents of north eastern Derbyshire, by Costain and through sub-contractors; NEDSEP seized this opportunity to secure interviews for unemployed residents and provided training and support. I am delighted with the outcome for everyone concerned, it's really added value to the investment"*

### Guaranteed Interviews

#### NEDSEP:

- Secured 55 guaranteed interviews for 37 positions directly employed by Costain, including
  - 29 operative positions for work including carriage drainage, barrier removal, safety/pumps operatives and pick up drivers
  - 8 administrative positions, including administrative assistants, document administrators and receptionist.



### Supporting Candidates

Some people had never been interviewed before so to help support candidates through the recruitment process, pre-employment training was specifically developed tailored around Costain's requirements.



Costain's minimum requirement was for all the positions,

candidates must have the relevant Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) cards. From the outset NEDSEP ensured that candidates:

- Already had their CSCS cards and provided accredited training on the importance of following procedures and other skills such as team work.
- Received training for interview skills and had personal feedback from a mock interview prior to the one with Costain.
- Were awarded with a level 1 qualification in Employability Skills on completion of the training.

### Great Feedback

Feedback from candidates showed that they really valued the pre-employment training.

- "Working on the course was a pleasant and enjoyable experience. I have learned a fair amount of information and skills during my time that I would not have otherwise"
- "At first I thought being at College would be like being back at school but the course was brilliant, it was nothing like school! It was nothing like I expected, I really enjoyed learning and I would like to continue with other courses"
- "I learnt a lot, learnt how to do a formal interview which I have never had before, great lecturer"
- "Working in the construction industry I have never had a formal interview before as jobs were easy to walk into. The prospect of an interview made me nervous but the support and preparation has helped me with my confidence and I am aware of key points to sell to the employer. I was nervous before my mock interview with Chesterfield College but they guided me through it and gave me specific feedback that was be a great help"

## Congratulations on your new job

Following the interviews, 5 candidates were successful in obtaining employment in the administrative roles and 20 in the operative roles.

## Apprenticeships

Costain Serco committed to recruiting

- 4 apprentices directly through the Project and;
- 8 apprentices appointed by sub-contractors.

NEDSEP supported them with the provision of these apprentices.

## Schools, College and University benefit too!

*Councillor John Burrows, Leader - Chesterfield Borough Council*

*"It was important to encourage our young people to explore the career options available in the construction and engineering sectors; hopefully by getting them involved in this project we will have stirred some interest so they explore these careers further. This is about preparing young people for the future"*

Things did not just stop there though. NEDSEP wanted local education establishments to benefit from this project as well.

- Eckington School, Bolsover School and Springwell Community School and their primary feeder schools, Chesterfield College and Derby University all benefited from curriculum support events taking place both within establishments and at the headquarters to include work experience placements, site visits and summer placements.
- Costain employees agreed to become STEM ambassadors who are volunteers and role models who work with schools, colleges and universities to inspire and excite young people in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths and encourage them to consider following a career in the STEM subjects.
- An 'Inspire to be Hired' DVD was produced in Derbyshire to help give young people an insight into a 'day in the life' of a range of different business sectors taking part and Costain represented the construction and engineering sectors.



## Overwhelming Success

Ian Kirk, Engineering and Design Manager from Costain said "Myself and colleagues have been seriously impressed with the expertise and support that we have received from the Partnership to help us recruit local people into these jobs. Working in partnership has saved valuable time, resources and costs and the support that we have received has been superb - timely and exactly what we have required. The candidates that the partnership has presented have been of a very high calibre and it has been genuinely difficult to decide which candidates we decided to recruit as a result of this. The project is ongoing and we will continue to use the expertise throughout its duration. I would strongly encourage other employers and developers to access this support that is available within north eastern Derbyshire"



*Councillor Eion Watts, Leader - Bolsover District Council*

*"This is a huge project providing massive investment in the area. We knew we had skilled people available and we wanted to make sure that local people and their families benefited from this scheme, and through our intervention, they have"*

## Support available to major developers/employers

NEDSEP is able to provide flexible support to any developer or major business that is moving into or expanding into the area. If you have new jobs that can be made available to the residents of North Eastern Derbyshire, please do get in touch.

## Contact

Jane Weston, Working Communities Strategic Project Manager, North East Derbyshire District Council

Tel: 01246 217205

Mobile: 07866 681601

E-mail: [jane.weston@ne-derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:jane.weston@ne-derbyshire.gov.uk)

Chesterfield Borough Council's Economic Development Team:

Tel: 01246 345255