



Embargoed until 00:01hrs Thursday 18th February 2010.

SOUTHGATE BATH CREATES NEW JOBS

Local unemployed people are being helped into jobs thanks to a partnership between SouthGate Bath and West at Work.

So far, 72 per cent of people who have been employed at SouthGate through the West at Work scheme were previously unemployed.

More than 200 people have been helped to find work thanks to the partnership which offers support for both retailers seeking staff and individuals looking for work. Of those previously unemployed, 80 per cent are aged between 16 and 25.

One effective means of recruiting new staff for the retailers and service support teams at SouthGate Bath is the Bath Jobs and Training bus. The bus tours priority neighbourhoods in and around Bath offering information about work and learning opportunities such as short and longer term training, help with CV writing and interview tips.

A range of West at Work agencies (including Jobcentre Plus, Connexions and the Council) staff the bus offering a coordinated service for local people aimed at providing training and employment advice and support.

James Hencher, 25, from Twerton, is just one of many people who have enjoyed a positive experience from the West at Work and Bath Jobs and Training bus service. James, who had been unemployed for eight months, was recruited by Republic and has worked with the company since the end of October.

He said: %Jobcentre Plus contacted me and sent me an application form. I filled this out and was sent to the bus when it was parked outside the Pump Rooms. I had an in-depth conversation with an advisor, who was really helpful and gave me lots of great advice about what to do in an interview and how to impress. This was really useful, because I was quite nervous about it as I had not had a formal interview for about eight years. Two days later I was back at the bus for an interview with Republic.+

He added: %It all happened so quickly. I completed the application form on the Friday and on the Monday I had a call from Republic asking me to come to an interview on the Thursday . it all took less than a week. I'm really happy and I couldn't have asked for a better job . I've been promoted since I've been here. My advice to anyone looking for a job in SouthGate is to use this service . it's really helpful.+

Craig Bain, manager at Republic in SouthGate Bath, commented: %The West at Work scheme has been a huge help to us in recruiting bright, trained members of staff who are an asset to the store. This has been reflected in the hugely positive response we have had from shoppers in Bath and the overall performance of the store, which is excellent.+

The partnership is already setting in motion a campaign to recruit for Phases Two and Three of the SouthGate Bath development, including taking the Bath Jobs and Training bus to a number of locations in and around the city. More information is available by logging on to the jobs page at www.southgatebath.com.

Simon Pullen, general manager at SouthGate Bath, said: %It is essential to both our retailers and their customers that there is a reliable, quality source of trained individuals for retailers to employ. Our partnership with West at Work is successfully addressing this need with the added benefit that it is putting a very high percentage of people back into the workplace. It is just one of many ways in which we are contributing positively to the economy of Bath and its surrounding area.+

West at Work, Director, David Draycott, said: "We are delighted the partnership is working well in Bath and that we are helping unemployed people into work whilst supporting businesses with their recruitment and training needs. The bus is a great example of how a number of agencies can coordinate their services to benefit both employers and jobseekers."

Ends

15th February 2010.

Notes to Editor

West at Work offers employment and training support specifically developed to meet local needs. Partners involved in this project in Bath include Bath and North East Somerset Council, Jobcentre Plus, Connexions, the Local Learning Partnership, the Learning and Skills Council and the South West Regional Development Agency.

Visit www.westatwork.co.uk

SouthGate Bath is a £360 million retail-led, mixed-use development including 417,000 sq ft of retail, leisure and living space. SouthGate Bath is not an enclosed shopping centre of the past but a tribute to modern design and urban planning. Its retail, residential and leisure areas are linked by classic Georgian-style open streets, with public spaces, including a large central square, designed to hold community, arts and entertainment events. This open streetscape will connect the 56 prime retail units anchored by a 125,000 sq ft Debenhams department store, 99 apartments and eight leisure areas. There will also be 860 new underground parking spaces.

SouthGate Bath opens in phases. Phase One opened on 4th November 2009, Phase Two will open in May 2010 and Phase Three in September 2010.

For details of the bus timetable visit www.southgatebath.com