



## PRESS RELEASE

---

11<sup>th</sup> September 2007

### **Local companies urged to help 'Build the West of England'**

A free business event will take place in Bath on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> September aimed at encouraging local construction companies to take advantage of the £5 billion of investment that will pour into new developments across the West of England over the next 20 years.

Rapid and high profile development demands a local workforce with the right training and skills to operate on large scale projects - such as SouthGate and Western Riverside in Bath and Cabot Circus in Bristol.

The *Building the West of England* event will target small to medium sized construction companies and aims to encourage them to consider the opportunities that rapid new investment will bring along with the skills and training their workforce need to help win contracts on such developments.

The event has been organised by West at Work. This is a partnership project aimed at developing and supporting the economy by making sure that local people have the appropriate skills and opportunities to meet employers' needs, both now and in the future.

Ensuring that workers hold Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) cards and other industry specific skills cards is one example of how local firms can boost their chances of gaining work at some of the large development sites. CSCS is an industry requirement at large developments so having a 'carded' workforce can be central to securing contracts.

Sir Robert McAlpine is the main contractor at Bath's SouthGate development and their Project Director, Ian Feast, will be speaking at the event. He said: "Accessing high quality local construction companies will be integral to the success of the numerous new developments that are planned across the West of England over the next few years. However these small to medium sized businesses need to be aware of the training and skills requirements that are necessary to secure work."

He added: "Great opportunities will be available and we want to make sure that local firms are able to take advantage of them and that they can provide a skilled local workforce to draw from."

Main speakers at the event also include Mel Clinton, Interim Head of Economic Development at Bath and North East Somerset Council, and John Kenyon, Interim Deputy Principal Bath College.

*more*





## PRESS RELEASE

---

*Continued*

In addition the event will host a variety of exhibitors from major contractors including HBG Construction and Pearce. Specialists from Bath and North East Somerset Council, Business Link, local colleges and ConstructionSkills will also be available to give advice about a variety of issues - such as meeting the contracting criteria, workforce training, improving business performance and accessing the supply chain.

West at Work Director, David Draycott said: "It is important that local people benefit and are able to take up training and employment opportunities that new developments bring. In turn, employers coming into the area want a readily available and appropriately skilled local workforce. By coming along to the event on 19 September construction companies can find out about the opportunities on offer and how they can get involved and secure future work."

*Building the West of England* will take place on Wednesday 19 September at The Forum, Forum Buildings, St James's Parade, Bath from 7am-10.45am. Breakfast will be provided. **To book a place or find out more information contact [events@businesswest.co.uk](mailto:events@businesswest.co.uk) or ring 01275 373 373 and ask for the events department.**

West at Work is a partnership between the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), the South West of England Regional Development Agency (South West RDA), Jobcentre Plus, Business West, Connexions, Bath and North East Somerset Council, Bristol City Council, North Somerset Council and South Gloucestershire Council.

For more information about West at Work visit [www.westatwork.co.uk](http://www.westatwork.co.uk)

ENDS

For more information please contact Jane Samuel on 07789 705867 or at [jane.samuel@lsc.gov.uk](mailto:jane.samuel@lsc.gov.uk)

