

MOIRA REPLAN CENTRE (NEW DEAL – ENVIRONMENT TASK FORCE)

Project Report for David Soanes – SDDC

The NEW DEAL Environment Task Force continues to offer places to long-term unemployed young people from the Swadlincote jobcentre catchment area. The aim of the scheme is to prepare beneficiaries for permanent employment through a 26-week period of training, jobsearch and personal development. The training provided by ETF is not necessarily relevant to an eventual job outcome, but the placement period of 26 weeks allows time for beneficiaries to adjust to a routine of regular attendance and good timekeeping.

Young people who are on the scheme are encouraged to develop other skills such as ICT, use of the Internet for jobsearch and participation in problem solving. The latter can be either in a practical situation whilst working on site, or is a means of assessing basic skills through classroom simulations. Staff at the Moira Replan centre are looking at ways of developing Basic Skills support for placements through the use of Learndirect and other ICT related teaching materials.

The number of referrals from Employment Service remains at a fairly constant level with around 7 placements from the Swadlincote office on a continuous rolling programme. In recent months we have started to take older referrals under the NEW DEAL 25+ option. Moira Replan also contracts to deliver NEW DEAL ETF in North West Leicestershire to both age groups.

In South Derbyshire the main contractors for NEW DEAL are the CVS for voluntary sector referrals and Fern Training & Development for ETF referrals. In the 25+ sector the CVS are the main contractors. Moira Replan acts as a sub-contractor to both of these organisations.

Most of the on-site training has been completed at Rosliston Forestry Centre, with new gardens, water features and a seated barbecue area being the main constructions during 2001. These features were completed in time for the Rosliston Open Gardens weekend. The trainees have also undertaken work for Forest Enterprises at the Rosliston site. A small number of private gardens were tidied under the gardening scheme run in conjunction with the CVS, but concerns around security for elderly people and occasional behavioural problems with trainees have limited the scope of this scheme.

During the last financial year the scheme had a total of 62 referrals, approximately half of which were from South Derbyshire, of these 22 failed to complete the 26 week programme for various reasons. Of the 40 who completed the scheme 11 moved into employment (approx. 25%), this is the national average for NEW DEAL ETF. From September 2001 the percentage of referrals expected to gain employment is being increased to over 45% as part of the new contracts. The only way this is being achieved is through the use of Intermediate Labour Market schemes that provide employment for up to 12 months for post NEW DEAL trainees. The Wise Group, for example, have reported success rates of up to 47% in pilot schemes for ILM's.