

## Local Employment Partnerships

Asda, B & Q, Marks & Spencer, Sainsbury's and Tesco express their wholehearted commitment to working with Jobcentre Plus in England, Wales and Scotland, and with the Employment Service in Northern Ireland, to help long-term benefit claimants back into employment, building on the longstanding activities they have to benefit the communities they serve and make them better places to live and work.

To demonstrate this commitment, Asda, B & Q, Marks & Spencer, Sainsbury's and Tesco agree to encourage their managers to enter into Local Employment Partnerships with Jobcentre Plus offices to support their efforts in getting benefit claimants into work. As part of this Partnership arrangement, managers will be expected to agree, with Jobcentre Plus, a number of specific measures that they will take to help support benefit claimants into work.

These measures should include some or all of the following:

- Offering 2-4 week Work Trials to a given number (determined by the employer) of local benefit claimants;
- Offering a target number of places for New Deal participants wishing to participate in the Subsidized Employment option, or wishing to take up work experience or work placement;
- Working with Jobcentre Plus and the Learning and Skills Council on the design of pre-employment training to ensure that it is relevant to employers' needs, and agree, when hiring, to guarantee interviews or jobs to local benefit claimants who complete this training;
- Encourage their employees to volunteer to provide one-to-one mentoring for long-term benefit claimants to help prepare them for work;
- Review their application processes to ensure that local benefit claimants are not inadvertently excluded by, for example, requirements for qualifications, or overly complicated procedures.

Jobcentre Plus will establish a single point of contact in each district or region to lead on the Local Employment Partnership. The Jobcentre Plus lead contact will work with Asda, B & Q, Marks & Spencer, Sainsbury's and Tesco managers to establish which measures might be appropriate for the area. He/she will also work with the retailers' managers, the Learning and Skills Council, and other relevant partners (where they exist, working through the City Strategy Employment Consortia) to identify sources of funding for pre-employment training that partners considered necessary for meeting the needs of both the retailers and Jobcentre Plus. Similar arrangements will be introduced in Northern Ireland.



Andy Bond (Chief Executive, Asda)



Ian Cheshire (Chief Executive, B&Q)



Stuart Rose (Chief Executive, Marks & Spencer)



Rt Hon John Hutton MP (Secretary of State for Work and Pensions)



Justin King (Chief Executive, Sainsbury's)



Sir Terry Leahy (Chief Executive, Tesco)



Kevin Hawkins (Chief Executive, British Retail Consortium)



Rt Hon. Gordon Brown MP (Chancellor of the Exchequer)