



To achieve your potential in the workplace

# ASPIRE

OPEN YOUR EYES TO YOUR POTENTIAL

## ASPIRE PROJECT

Stirling Council's ASPIRE project, running from November 2009 to March 2011, set out to help sustain employment in the Stirling Council area by offering free training to people who were vulnerable at work.

## AIMS OF THE ASPIRE PROJECT

The aim of the project was to identify people who were disadvantaged in the workplace, to offer them free training to gain skills or qualifications thereby helping to strengthen their employment and potentially to aid progression at work. This means both employees and employers have benefited from the training.

*"The ESOL and dementia training gave me more confidence and knowledge and it improved my language skills. It inspired me to learn more on my own."*



## ASPIRE IN THE CONTEXT OF SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT AGENDA

ASPIRE has promoted lifelong learning, economic development, social justice and overall has tried to ensure that opportunities are open to those who need them - in line with both Scottish Government and Lisbon agendas. The Scottish Government's Skills for Scotland Strategy Update (2010) emphasised the need to develop skills in the workforce and recognised the value of the workplace as an important site where people can develop and best use their skills. Research has shown that locating learning in the workplace can make it more accessible to employees, particularly those who have not had a positive experience of schooling. This is because it draws on familiar practices that can boost employees confidence and so when advice, encouragement and support is provided workplaces can function as "safe" environments that encourage people back into learning.

## ASPIRE TARGET GROUPS

ASPIRE was able to help small to medium sized businesses across all of the Stirling Council area, centrally in Stirling as well as in rural areas such as Balquhider, Killin and Callander. The target groups for ASPIRE were:

- employees wishing to improve their core skills;
- employees with English as a second or other language (ESOL);
- employees encountering ill health, disabilities or mental health problems;
- employees in danger of being left behind in the workplace



*"During difficult and busy times, British Sign Language classes are not the type of training that we would normally be able to prioritise, however because the training is free and delivered on-site, this has allowed myself and two other members of staff to attend the classes."*

ASPIRE was supported by Stirling Council's Adult Learning, Employability and Economic Development Teams. Tutors were provided by the Adult Learning Team, Stirling School of English and other training providers who were contracted for specific types of training and qualifications. Over the course of the project ASPIRE has supported 260 employees in the Stirling area. All the training has been financed 100% by the ASPIRE project.

## TYPES OF TRAINING DELIVERED

ASPIRE has delivered a variety of types of training to suit individual learning needs and work duties. Types of training include

- Core skills (IT, literacy, numeracy)
- ESOL (English as a Second or Other Language Classes)
- NVQs/SVQs
- Level 1/2/3 qualifications
- Non-certificated bespoke training
- Entrepreneurial Business Start Up Workshops

*"The ASPIRE IT training was tailored to our requirements - we were able to work and learn using our own database."*



## EMPLOYEE FEEDBACK

After the training ...

- 92% are performing better at work as a result of training
- 86% have been inspired to look into further training
- 98% reported that the training had a positive impact on their job
- 84% reported that the training had a positive impact on their life
- 88% felt that the training enhanced their employment opportunities
- 73% of employees attending the Business Start-Up

*"I have really enjoyed my time at the training and have benefited a lot from the classes"*



Workshops thought that the benefit to them, as a result of attending the Workshop, was excellent or good

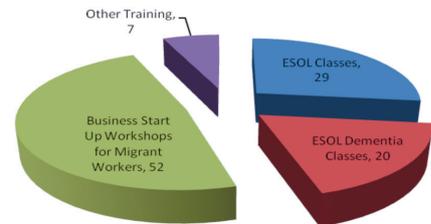
- 100% of employers claimed that the training had a positive impact on their company
- 87% of employers said that employees are performing better at work as a result of training
- 93% of employers stated that the training was carried out without any disruption to their business
- 93% of employers reported that they were inspired to look into further training for employees

## CORE SKILLS TRAINING

Nowadays it is essential to be literate, numerate and have IT skills in order to sustain employment and progress at work. ASPIRE, through the Adult Learning Team, has been able to help with a range of core skills learning across several businesses in the Stirling Council area. This included report writing classes, literacy and numeracy classes, as well as IT classes covering several modules and levels. ASPIRE has been successful in reaching groups of people who would not have sought to improve their core skills without this project.

## ENGLISH AS A SECOND OR OTHER LANGUAGE (ESOL)

ASPIRE recognised that whilst many migrant workers in Scotland are highly qualified and skilled, they are working in low paid jobs requiring little or no education or skills due to their lack of English. During the course of the project ASPIRE offered a variety of training programmes to support migrant workers. See graph below.



## ENTREPRENEURIAL BUSINESS START-UP WORKSHOPS AND ONE-TO-ONE FOLLOW UP SESSIONS FOR MIGRANT WORKERS

ASPIRE contracted Stirling Enterprise Park to provide Entrepreneurial Business Start-Up Workshops for Migrant Workers. The workshops were delivered in Polish, Hungarian and Russian thereby targeting some of the larger former EU accession countries language groups living in the Stirling Council area. The workshops encouraged people with skills and experience from their own countries to start up their own business in Scotland. ASPIRE also delivered one Business Start-Up Workshop in simple English for migrant workers. One-to-one Follow up sessions with a translator, business and IT advisors were offered to all delegates attending the Business Start-Up Workshops.

*"Report writing classes have made me more confident helping my son with homework."*

*"This was a very good presentation. I would like to know more about setting up a business in Scotland, particularly health and safety checks and tax."*

*"Classes have made a significant difference as I can fill out application forms much easier now". I have thoroughly enjoyed my time here and would like to continue."*

*"More confidence in use of computer and trying new tasks. Training was arranged quickly to suit me and was done at my level."*

"The English classes have been very helpful for my work."



## ESOL CLASSES

ASPIRE recognised that many of the migrant workers are unable to attend English classes offered in the community due to working hours and changing shift patterns. ASPIRE found that many employers were willing to accommodate English classes at their workplace at an agreed time when staff could be released. As classes were work-based the ESOL tutors related the classes specifically to learners' jobs, thereby helping migrant workers sustain their employment, and potentially helping them progress at work.

## ESOL DEMENTIA CLASSES

ASPIRE found that many migrant workers working in care homes across the Stirling area lack English communication skills. Communication is essential for all residents in care homes and in particular for those with dementia. ASPIRE set up a unique training partnership contracting dementia trainers from Alzheimer Scotland for one part of the lesson and Stirling Council Adult Learning ESOL tutors for the second part of the class. The dementia trainers focussed on how to communicate with people with dementia and how to deal with challenging behaviour. The ESOL tutors sat in on the dementia training and used the second part of the class to reinforce the dementia training by working on language and vocabulary to help communication with residents. This training has had a triple effect helping employees and employers as well as giving the residents of the care homes the ultimate benefit of receiving better and more personalised care.

## DEMENTIA TRAINING

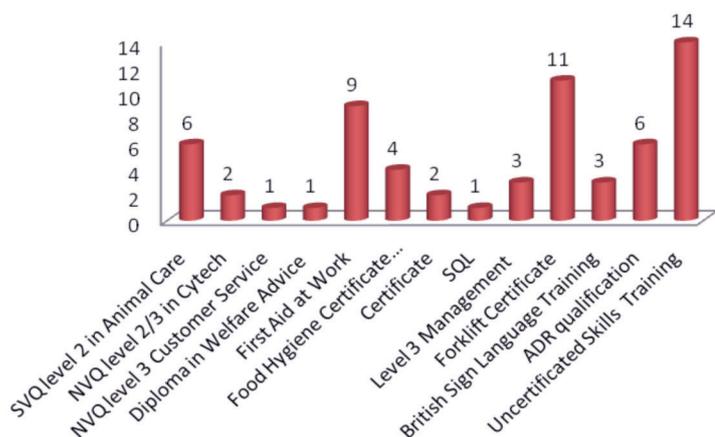
ASPIRE found that care home staff in general are not offered dementia training. ASPIRE, in partnership with Alzheimer Scotland, was able to offer care workers meeting ASPIRE target groups a 10 week block of dementia training to fill this skills gap.



"The English and dementia training helped me to understand residents with dementia, their problems, worries and sometimes challenging behaviour. On a personal level, the training has developed my self-esteem and confidence, giving me satisfaction of reaching new aims."

## QUALIFICATIONS AND FURTHER TRAINING

ASPIRE recognised that many employees were in danger of being left behind in the workplace due to a lack of qualifications and skills. Many of these employees required a specific qualification in order to progress at work. Others were seeking specific skills, and no qualifications were available. In those cases ASPIRE contracted trainers to deliver uncertified skills training to meet their needs. This type of training included time management training, Bosch Garage Equipment training, scissor lift training, website writing/ updating training, web marketing training, Russian, etc. The graph below demonstrates the number of employees who have completed qualifications through the ASPIRE project.



This graph demonstrate the number of employees who have completed qualifications through the ASPIRE project.

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## ASPIRE SURVEY

This survey took place during the course of the ASPIRE project through evaluation forms collected from employees and employers benefiting from the programme. A total of 260 employees received ASPIRE support during this period. Some beneficiaries have benefited from more than one training programme and have been counted as one beneficiary but are shown in each training programme undertaken.

100 employee and employer evaluation forms were returned and in addition 53 evaluation forms were collected from the Entrepreneurial Business Start-Up Workshops for Migrant Workers.

To find out more about the ASPIRE project or to receive copies of this brochure please call **01786 432366** or email [aspire@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:aspire@stirling.gov.uk)



*“Staff really enjoyed the ESOL and Dementia training and have made very positive remarks, especially on how they felt they were listened to. A very positive and happy staff group. Please can we have more?”*

*“The ASPIRE project has been wonderful for our business. A fantastic opportunity to learn and develop skills, which have boosted our business and which otherwise, would have been delayed indefinitely.”*



*“ASPIRE has enabled staff to have a qualification in animal care. Staff are much more confident in their manner and attitude towards customers and the animals in our care. Customers feel more assured about leaving animals in our care. I appreciate the help and funding ASPIRE has given to myself and staff.”*

If you need help or this information supplied in an alternative format please call 0845 277 700.

