

"I gained a lot personally through working with yourself and the Bury EST team – above all it's given me an understanding of how diversity in the workplace makes a business more successful and my role much more rewarding. What I will always remember the Bury EST team for is their total dedication and commitment to improving others lives. Keep up the good work.



**Rebecca Owen, HR Manager - Village Leisure Hotels.**

"The project team are extremely supportive and do excellent work integrating diversity into the workplace. More awareness of this project is needed to overcome the barriers to employment some people face. Well Done."



**Ingrid Hitchon, Managing Director – Molygran Ltd.**

"Bury EST has helped us locally in Bury to focus on the internal diversity of our own support staff. We have helped various sections of the community of Bury back into employment over the last few years due to our sense of civic duty."



**Stephen Mason, Divisional Personnel Officer - Greater Manchester Police.**

"The Employers Forum on Diversity expands an employers' point of view on diversity. It has quashed any pre-conceived ideas we may have had on employing someone from a disadvantaged background, which is a positive thing."



**Graham Parry, General Manager - Cormar Carpets.**

## Embracing Diversity

The Embracing Diversity project in Bury has established an Employer Forum. This Forum now has a membership of over 40 local employers which meet on a quarterly basis to share best practice in the recruitment and retention of a diverse workforce.



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## Working with Employers

# Employer Forum on Diversity:

**Establishing** the employer forum was an essential part of the Embracing Diversity project and it has provided the opportunity for employers to meet and, through shared learning and open debate, influence change in their organisations. The Forum has identified the recruitment barriers faced by disadvantaged people and addressed them through discussion and workshops on best practice. This engagement has led to the development of relationships built on trust that offer support to the employer. This in turn has resulted in participating employers being prepared to work towards the introduction of fair and flexible practices in recruitment, selection and retention.

**Membership** includes a selection of employers from the public and private sectors representing service, retail, leisure, transport, education and manufacturing industries in the Bury and central Manchester areas.

**Quarterly meetings** have been popular with the majority of members. Together with employers, we decided that breakfast meetings with a maximum length of 2 hours would minimize the time commitment for employers and personnel managers. The meetings are arranged in a local hotel setting with good access and ample free car parking. Refreshments and snacks are offered to members and guests. Reports and minutes are mailed to members and guests and also posted on the Embracing Diversity website.

**Partnership working** has been a key factor and the forum has gained representation from the Chamber of Commerce, Business Link, Trades Union Congress, Manchester Metropolitan University, the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas), Bury Metropolitan Borough Council, The Children's Information Service, PACE (People Add the Competitive Edge - a Human Resource managers group) and Jobcentre Plus. Membership is monitored closely and controlled to include a majority of employers and an acceptable level of employment and business agency support.

**Diversity and Equality** management is now high on the agenda for all organisations and their workforces are increasingly being recognised as their most valued asset. Attracting and retaining a diverse workforce that accurately matches that of the community has been shown to improve business performance, fulfil social and moral responsibilities and reduce the possibility of discrimination and litigation.

**Themed meetings** have seen discussions on age, race, gender, disability, care leavers, drug and alcohol, ex-offenders and job retention. Representatives from national and local government commissions and agencies have attended meetings and provided talks and discussions around these subjects.

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## Factsheet 06 ◀

# Embracing Diversity

is a project working to support disadvantaged people into employment and achieve greater diversity in our workplaces to reflect the communities in which we live.

If you are an employer or potential client who would like further details about what we could do for you please contact us.

Bury Employment Support & Training

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