

**The Tesco Job Guarantee Programme:  
An Assessment**



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**A report prepared for:**

**Leeds Employer Coalition**

**By:**

**Fiona Walton  
Chris Hill  
Professor Mike Campbell**

**POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE  
LEEDS METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY  
BRONTE HALL  
LEEDS LS6 3QS**

**TEL: (00) 44 (0)113 283 1747**

**FAX: (00) 44 (0)113 283 1748**

**WEBSITE: [WWW.LMU.AC.UK/LBS/PRI](http://WWW.LMU.AC.UK/LBS/PRI)**



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## Contents

Executive Summary.....	i
<b>1 Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 Policy context .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3 The Job Guarantee Programme.....</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1 <i>The Job Guarantee Programme</i> .....	7
3.2 <i>How the programme was implemented</i> .....	8
3.3 <i>Programme outcomes</i> .....	11
<b>4 Interviews with stakeholders .....</b>	<b>13</b>
4.1 <i>Introduction</i> .....	14
4.2 <i>How the programme was implemented</i> .....	14
4.3 <i>Perceived benefits of the programme</i> .....	18
4.3.1 <i>Benefits for Tesco</i> .....	18
4.3.2 <i>Benefits for Seacroft</i> .....	19
4.4 <i>Critical Success Factors</i> .....	19
4.5 <i>Replicating the Job Guarantee Programme</i> .....	21
<b>5 Survey of programme participants .....</b>	<b>25</b>
5.1 <i>Introduction</i> .....	26
5.2 <i>Methodology</i> .....	26
5.3 <i>The Respondents</i> .....	26
5.4 <i>Respondents' circumstances prior to Tesco programme</i> .....	28
5.5 <i>Finding out about the Tesco programme</i> .....	29
5.6 <i>Experience of the programme</i> .....	30
5.7 <i>Current situation</i> .....	35
5.7.1 <i>In employment</i> .....	36

5.8	<i>Shopping at Tesco</i> .....	38
5.9	<i>Conclusions</i> .....	38
<b>6</b>	<b>Conclusions</b> .....	<b>41</b>
6.1	<i>Introduction</i> .....	41
6.2	<i>Replicating success: Essential elements of the programme</i> .....	41
6.3	<i>Scope for change</i> .....	44
6.4	<i>Potential problems with replicability</i> .....	44
6.5	<i>Conclusion</i> .....	45
	<b>References</b> .....	<b>47</b>
	<b>Annex A</b> .....	<b>49</b>
	<b>Annex B</b> .....	<b>53</b>
	<b>Annex C</b> .....	<b>57</b>



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Introduction**

The Policy Research Institute at Leeds Metropolitan University was commissioned by Leeds Employer Coalition to undertake an assessment of the Tesco Job Guarantee Programme. One key element of the research was to identify the potential for replicating the Job Guarantee Programme in other sectors and localities.

The research included a review of relevant documents and data; face-to-face interviews with key stakeholders; and a telephone survey of programme participants.

### **Interviews with stakeholders**

The key findings from the stakeholder interviews are as follows:

- The voluntary and informal nature of the partnership, with mutual benefit for all, was identified as the key to its success.
- A flexible funding regime contributed to the inclusiveness of the programme, enabling the non-New Deal eligible unemployed to participate.
- The willingness and ability to adapt 'normal' recruitment procedures was fundamental in enabling the unemployed to obtain jobs.
- Participants' concerns about the 'benefits trap', particularly in relation to part-time working, need to be addressed at an early stage.
- Training procedures need to comply with benefit restrictions.
- Weekly presentations to the group by participants involved in the pre-training were important in building confidence.
- The flexibility and commitment of the employer is critical to the successful implementation of the programme.
- Full recruitment to the new store, a dedicated and loyal workforce, low staff turnover and positive public relations were just some of the ways in which Tesco benefited from the programme.
- It is difficult to measure the benefits that the programme has brought more widely to Seacroft, but a number of interviewees indicated that the area had changed since the store opened.
- The key 'critical success factor' is the job guarantee itself.

- Few fundamental changes would be needed to replicate the Seacroft experience elsewhere. However, there are a number of potential barriers to this happening that would need to be addressed.

### **Survey of programme participants**

The key findings from the telephone survey of programme participants are as follows:

- More than three quarters of participants were either registered unemployed, on a New Deal programme or economically inactive prior to the Tesco programme.
- The Job Centre and word of mouth were the key sources of information about the programme.
- More than 90 per cent of participants stated that the job guarantee was either important or very important in their decision to go on the programme.
- Of the 10 'modules' on the training programme, five were considered to have been very useful or useful by more than 80 per cent of respondents, with a further three having been very useful or useful for between 70 and 80 per cent of respondents.
- Only one respondent did not achieve any formal qualification as a result of the programme.
- The large majority of respondents stated that the programme had been helpful or very helpful in enhancing their employability and their skills.
- Respondents who received childcare support and transport felt that these interventions were very important in enabling them to participate in the programme.
- More than 90 per cent of respondents are still in employment, 85 per cent with Tesco.
- The large majority of respondents are employed in jobs that offer paid holidays, sick pay, a pension scheme, Trade Union presence and training.
- More than 85 per cent of those who remain in employment consider their job security and their job satisfaction to be good or very good.
- One quarter of respondents that shop at the Tesco store believe that it is unlikely or very unlikely that they would have done so had they not been on the programme.

## Conclusions

The research identified a number of 'essential elements' that contributed to the success of the programme and which, therefore, provide a useful starting point for other organisations wishing to replicate the programme. These include:

- A job guarantee;
- Shared understanding, commitment and objectives in a public-private partnership;
- Extensive marketing and publicity;
- A funding mix that opened the programme to all of the unemployed and inactive;
- Support for individuals to help to overcome barriers to work;
- Adaptation of normal recruitment procedures in order to enable the unemployed and inactive to 'compete' in the labour market;
- The development of trust and understanding between the employer(s) and the contracted training provider;
- A training programme that builds the confidence and commitment of the participants in addition to developing general employability and job-specific skills;
- The flexibility and commitment of the employer(s);
- Sustainable, quality jobs.

Overall, the research concluded that the TESCO Job Guarantee Programme was an outstanding success as judged by the key stakeholders involved, the employer and the individuals recruited to the programme. It shows that a company committed to a supported route into employment can produce results that are of benefit to all parties.



## 1 INTRODUCTION

The Policy Research Institute at Leeds Metropolitan University was commissioned by Leeds Employer Coalition to undertake an assessment of the Tesco Job Guarantee Programme. The aim of the research was to answer the following key research questions:

- What are the main reasons for the success of the programme?
- How replicable is the programme?
- How far was the programme effective for those who entered the training programme?
- To what extent was the programme effective for Tesco?
- To what extent is the programme effective in local economic development terms?

The methodology adopted in order to answer these questions involved three stages. These were:

- Collection of relevant documents, data and materials;
- Face-to-face interviews with key stakeholders including representatives of Tesco, the Employment Service, Leeds City Council and the East Leeds Family Learning Centre (ELFLC);
- A telephone survey of programme participants.

This report presents the findings from the assessment. The report is structured in the following way.

- Section 2 provides a summary of the current policy context, focusing on initiatives aimed at tackling labour market exclusion;
- In section 3 a brief, descriptive, outline of the Job Guarantee Programme is presented, highlighting the key stages of the programme;
- Section 4 provides an overview of the issues identified during the stakeholder interviews;
- Section 5 presents the findings of the survey of participants;

- Finally, in section 6, the conclusions of the assessment are presented, with a particular focus on the 'essential elements' of the programme that need to be present in order for such an initiative to be replicated elsewhere.

## 2 POLICY CONTEXT

The Tesco Job Guarantee Programme sought to ensure that local unemployed people were able to access new jobs that were created by the opening of a new Tesco store in Seacroft. This makes the programme relatively unusual in economic development terms, mainly because the linkages between new job creation and the 'trickling down' of those jobs to the local community is usually very weak (Campbell et al 1998, Campbell 2001). This section of the report briefly reviews this issue and the way in which the Job Guarantee Programme seeks to 'connect' the unemployed to job opportunity.

### ***Labour Market Exclusion***

The problem arises, in particular, for the long-term unemployed and those with little work experience as they become 'locked out' from local employment opportunities. Evidence for this can be seen in the fact that long-term unemployment does not decline any faster in areas of high jobs growth than it does in areas of low jobs growth (Campbell, 2001), as the long-term unemployed tend not to be able to access new opportunities that are created. This is a function both of the demand and supply sides of the labour market. First, in terms of the character of the evolving labour market, where demand for low level skills and the skills set that unemployed people possess is declining, and where a high proportion of new jobs are in occupations in which the long-term unemployed have not previously worked. Second, in the existence of a number of barriers to even low skilled employment opportunities including childcare responsibilities; transport, and, thus, the physical access to the new opportunities; the benefits 'trap'; problems with numeracy and literacy; and a general lack of 'employability' skills.

The need to strengthen the links between job creation and access to employment in the local community has been a matter of some debate for policy makers in recent years, with HM Treasury (2000) acknowledging that *'there is a case for further measures targeted specifically at helping people in the most deprived areas to take advantage of the employment opportunities that are available'*.

### ***Current Policy Responses***

New Deal is the Government's flagship programme in the 'Welfare to Work' agenda. A 'family' of policies, New Deal includes provision for, amongst others, young people (18-

24), adults (25+), disabled people, and lone parents. Following a 'Gateway' period that includes careers guidance, help with job search and assistance with personal problems, New Deal clients move onto one of five options: six months subsidised employment; six months voluntary sector work placement; six months environmental task force; up to twelve months full time education or training; or self-employment.

Alongside New Deal, Employment Zones have been established in areas of very high unemployment, with a particular focus on long-term unemployed adults (of either 12 or 18 months duration rather than the 24 months duration stipulated in New Deal). This provides a more customised approach than New Deal, with the creation of a 'personal action plan' using funds from a 'personal job account'. More recently, Job Action Teams have also been developed to focus on improving labour market access for the economically inactive.

In many areas the basic New Deal programme has been modified or enhanced, usually with the use of additional funding from the Single Regeneration Budget or the European Social Fund, enabling a more flexible approach to labour market re-integration. Many of the Intermediate Labour Market schemes have been developed using this combination of funding. Intermediate Labour Market programmes differ from New Deal in providing waged employment in a real, albeit, temporary, job (significantly this is usually of one years duration, rather than the six months offered through New Deal) working in additional economic activities (thereby reducing displacement) which usually have a wider benefit to the local community. In many ways, the Job Guarantee Programme builds upon the ideas established through New Deal and Intermediate Labour Market Programmes to develop an initiative that re-integrates the unemployed back into the full labour market by building the final 'bridge' between the unemployed and job opportunity.

### ***The Job Guarantee Programme***

Seacroft is a prime example of one of the deprived areas referred to in the Treasury report. One of the largest housing estates in Europe, it has high rates of successive generation unemployment, a sizeable single parent population, a lack of accessible transport and is amongst the top 10 per cent most deprived wards in the UK. In addition, prior to the development of the Seacroft Green Shopping Centre, it had poor quality shopping and community facilities.



The decision of Tesco to locate in the Seacroft area and the negotiation of the 'Job Guarantee' component can be seen to address two of the fundamental issues associated with labour market exclusion, namely:

- the lack of jobs in deprived communities;
- the barriers that prevent the excluded from 'reconnecting' to labour market opportunities (Campbell and Meadows, 2001).

In addition, it builds upon some of the areas of best practice that have been identified in relation to local responses to long-term unemployment (Campbell and Meadows, 2001). These include:

- the need for a sense of ownership and influence amongst the local community, which encourages participation and generates commitment;
- the provision of training that is focused on the immediate requirements of local employers;
- projects that include a mix of skills development, guidance and job placement;
- schemes that actively improve job readiness and access to available vacancies;
- programmes that take into account local labour market circumstances;
- involving employers in the programme and developing strong links in this respect;
- working with employers who are willing to change their standard recruitment procedures.

Therefore, the Job Guarantee Programme can be seen as one example of how the Welfare to Work concept can be customised to meet local need and to strengthen the links between local economic development and labour market integration.



### **3 THE JOB GUARANTEE PROGRAMME**

This section provides a brief, descriptive, overview of how the Job Guarantee Programme was structured and implemented in Seacroft, identifying the sequence of events and the different stages of the process. Issues relating to this process, as identified by stakeholders, are discussed in section 4. Here, we also provide a summary of the key outcomes from the programme.

#### **3.1 The Job Guarantee Programme**

In November 2000 a new Tesco store opened in Seacroft. Of 351 employees, 147 had been recruited through an enhanced training and employment programme – the Job Guarantee Programme. The Programme, funded through New Deal, the Single Regeneration Budget and the European Social Fund, gave local unemployed people the opportunity to undergo a period of basic skills, interview, pre-vocational and retail training with the guarantee that if they completed the training, with satisfactory attendance and achievement, they would secure a job at the new store.

The Programme was developed through the Seacroft Green Partnership, which included Tesco, Leeds City Council, East Leeds Family Learning Centre, the Employment Service, Usdaw, Asda St James and Quarmby Construction Company Limited. Key objectives of the partnership were to address structural issues that prevent local people accessing work and to ensure that a significant proportion of the workforce in the new Seacroft Green Shopping Centre were drawn from the local community. Specifically, the partnership aimed to design and develop a training course to prepare local unemployed people for full employment in the retail sector.

The programme has yielded a number of awards for partner agencies including the Local Government Chronicle's Innovation of the Year and Public / Private Sector Partnership of the Year in 2002 and the Financial Times' Business in the Community Award for Innovation in 2001. Since implementing the Job Guarantee Programme in Seacroft, Tesco have rolled the programme out. A similar recruitment process has been implemented in stores in Durham and Glasgow and a further nine regeneration partnerships have been established.

### 3.2 How the programme was implemented

The Job Guarantee Programme was implemented in Seacroft through a series of stages. These are identified below.

- **Partnership discussions** began in 1998; the 'Magna Charter' partnership agreement (see Figure 3.1 below) was signed in July 1999.
- A **promotional programme** was launched, undertaken by a public relations company and funded through Tesco. This included attractively produced newsletters ('Seacroft Partnership News') delivered to households in Seacroft; community meetings; and targeting of the unemployed through direct mailing from the Leeds City Council database.
- In early 2000, the ELFLC held **assessment interviews** with potential job seekers to assess what support individuals may need to reach the standard required by Tesco; at the same time Tesco held a series of **open days** at which individuals were able to take away application forms. The application forms were simplified from the normal procedure – they did not ask about skills and experience, just personal details and the type of work that they were looking for.
- Programme participants could choose between up to 16 weeks of **basic skills pre training or just interview training** – 50 attended the pre training and a further 100 attended the interview training. Basic skills training had to conform to the 16 hour maximum working time regulation.

**Figure 3.1: The Seacroft Partnership  
Magna Charter**

**Strategic Aims**

To inform local people that they have a special relationship with the Seacroft Green Shopping Centre, that it is there to provide not only a customer service but the means to meet their employment aspirations.

To recruit a significant proportion of the workforce for the Seacroft green Shopping Centre from an area within a two mile radius.

To address structural issues (eg transport, childcare) that could potentially inhibit people from using the Seacroft Green Shopping Centre as an employment base and for shopping.

To contribute to the creation of a 'winning culture' in an area characterised by high unemployment and low educational achievement.

To identify routes of funding that could be used to support the work of the partnership.

To disseminate the lessons learned from the partnership, nationally and locally.

**Objectives**

Identify as a partnership, key areas for development and make links with other relevant strategies eg East Leeds Integrated Transport Strategy and SPACE, a leading crime prevention scheme with young people which is based at East Leeds Family Learning Centre.

Establish a marketing strategy through which quality information about the development is made available in the local area.

Demonstrate to the local community that this initiative is different because there are employers committed to recruiting from the local area.

Target potential employees through the use of the City Council's database.

Provide information particularly to unemployed people and local residents, so that they can make informed decisions about the employment opportunities that are being created in Seacroft.

Use the interest in the development to begin to assess the potential demand for jobs and the barriers that could prevent access to employment eg training / childcare.

Identify and design learning programmes that are customised for employment opportunities in the Seacroft Green Shopping Centre.

Design a training course to prepare some local unemployed people for full employment in the retail sector. Upon completion of this course, attendees will be issued with a certificate which will guarantee them access to a job.

To identify and develop opportunities by which the retailers of Seacroft Green can develop their presence within the community.

To contribute to the creation of a new employment strategy for Seacroft.

**Source: The Seacroft Partnership**

- **Interviews** with members of Tesco’s Human Resources department were held in July 2000. The interview procedure was adapted from Tesco’s normal ‘Select the Best’ process to a ‘First Impressions’ interview. The focus in a ‘First Impressions’ interview is on appearance, body language and personal attributes, rather than on work experience and skills, as is the case under ‘Select the Best’. Key differences between the two procedures are shown in Table 3.1. Under the ‘First Impressions’ process only six applicants were rejected.

**Table 3.1: Select the Best and First Impressions – subject areas for interviews**

Select the best	First impressions
Task completion	What are you interested in doing?
Initiative	Expectations of working at Tesco
Communication	What do you do well?
Interpersonal skills	Dislikes
Confidence and self control	What do you enjoy?
Quality standards	
Customer service	

*Source: Tesco*

- Everyone who was successful at interview then began a **10 week work related training course** at the ELFC. The course, which was largely based on Tesco’s pre-existing retail training but delivered by ELFLC, covered customer care, health and safety, retail, food safety etc. All who participated had the guarantee that if they successfully completed the course they would be given the job that they had been assigned at interview. ‘Successful completion’ was largely reliant upon a weekly report given by ELFLC to the Tesco Personnel Officer, with attitude and attendance of individuals on the programme being the key factors taken into account. In total, 151 individuals completed the training course; 147 of these took up employment with Tesco.
- Alongside the training course, participants were given additional support to help them to overcome specific barriers to employment. These included the provision of transport to enable them to get to the training and to Tesco; and childcare provision for those who required it. The childcare was fully funded through the City Council’s training department and included a summer play scheme located close to the ELFLC as well as after school care. Most of this was organised within existing provision, and supported by existing local family networks.

### 3.3 Programme outcomes

Table 3.2 shows the breakdown of individuals who obtained employment at Seacroft Tesco when it opened in November 2000. Overall, those who came through the Job Guarantee Programme (or 'partnership staff' as Tesco refer to them) constituted 42 per cent of the workforce when the store first opened. Of these, just under 40 per cent were on one of the New Deal programmes. The majority of partnership staff were recruited to multi-skilled jobs as general assistants, where customer service is the key skill requirement. The lowest starting salary was £4.30 per hour (for trolley collectors), with the average wage being around £4.60 per hour. This compares favourably with the national minimum wage which, at that time, was £3.70 for adult workers.

**Table 3.2: Tesco Recruitment**

Individuals	Number
Total employees	351
Total of which were unemployed	243
Total long-term claimants	48
<i>Of all employees, total of which were 'partnership staff'</i>	<i>147</i>
Of all 'partnership staff', total of which were:	
New Deal 18-24	6
New Deal 25+	9
New Deal 50+	8
New Deal Lone Parents	35

*Source: Employment Service*

In the first nine months of employment, only 10 partnership employees left Tesco. Of these, two moved to alternative employment, three began management training at Asda, two left for family reasons and the destinations of the remaining two is unknown.





## 4 INTERVIEWS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

### Key findings:

- The voluntary and informal nature of the partnership, with mutual benefit for all, was identified as the key to its success. (see page 14)
- A flexible funding regime contributed to the inclusiveness of the programme, enabling the non-New Deal eligible unemployed to participate. (page 15)
- The willingness and ability to adapt ‘normal’ recruitment procedures was fundamental in enabling the unemployed to obtain jobs. (page 15)
- Participants’ concerns about the ‘benefits trap’, particularly in relation to part-time working, need to be addressed at an early stage. (page 16)
- Training procedures need to comply with benefit restrictions. (page 16)
- Weekly presentations to the group by participants involved in the pre-training were important in building confidence. (page 16)
- The flexibility and commitment of the employer is critical to the successful implementation of the programme. (page 17)
- Full recruitment to the new store, a dedicated and loyal workforce, low staff turnover and positive public relations were just some of the ways in which Tesco benefited from the programme. (page 18)
- It is difficult to measure the benefits that the programme has brought more widely to Seacroft, but a number of interviewees indicated that the area had changed since the store opened. (page 19)
- The key ‘critical success factor’ is the job guarantee itself. (page 19)
- Few fundamental changes would be needed to replicate the Seacroft experience elsewhere. However, there are a number of potential barriers to this happening that would need to be addressed. (page 21)

## 4.1 Introduction

In-depth face-to-face interviews were held with representatives of all of the key organisations who were involved in the Job Guarantee Programme including Tesco, the ELFC, Leeds City Council Training Department and the Employment Service (see Annex A for a list of interviewees and Annex B for the discussion guide used in the interviews). In total, 14 people were interviewed and their views obtained on the process, outcomes, critical success factors and potential replicability of the Job Guarantee Programme. Below we outline the key issues identified by interviewees.

## 4.2 How the programme was implemented

A descriptive summary of how the Job Guarantee Programme was implemented is presented in section 3. Here we focus on interviewees' perceptions of how well the process worked and the key factors contributing to successful implementation. The issues covered include: developing the partnership; funding; the recruitment process; the training process; post-appointment support; and the flexibility and commitment of the employer.

- **Developing the partnership**

Contrary to some perceptions, the inclusion of the Job Guarantee was not a condition of planning permission for the building of the new Tesco store. Rather, the Job Guarantee Programme evolved as a result of negotiations between Tesco, Leeds City Council and George Mudie, MP for Seacroft. One representative of Tesco stressed the importance of George Mudie in the negotiations indicating that it was his concern that the Seacroft residents might not benefit from the wealth that was being generated through the creation of up to 500 new jobs that helped to stimulate and focus the initial discussions.

A number of interviewees indicated that the success of the partnership largely related to the fact that it was 'voluntary' and 'informal', based on a 'moral' rather than a 'legal' contract. Overall, it was suggested that *'The glue that made it stick was that everyone thought that it was 'a good thing to do''* and that although the partnership was *'powered by self interest'* and all partners contributed to the programme for different reasons, they all wanted the same outcomes.

In addition, the combination of skills brought from the public and community sectors, coupled with private sector project management skills, was identified as being important in facilitating the partnership process.

- **Funding**

The flexibility of the funding regime, which combined monies from SRB, New Deal and ESF, was considered to be an important component contributing to the implementation of the programme. This combination of funding removed issues of eligibility (ie those not eligible for New Deal could be funded through SRB or ESF) and enabled individuals to participate in the programme from day one of unemployment. Interviewees suggested that this flexibility may not be so readily available in the future because the TEC's customised training budget and occupational training budget are no longer available.

- **The recruitment and interview process**

The willingness and ability to adapt normal recruitment procedures, from Tesco's 'Select the Best' to the 'First Impressions' route, enabled disadvantaged individuals to compete in the labour market. The focus with the 'First Impressions' interview was on appearance, body language and personal attributes (ie seeking to identify the *potential* within individuals) rather than on work experience, skills and qualifications (see Table 3.1 in the previous section). Had the normal procedures been implemented, it is widely acknowledged that the individuals who subsequently went through the partnership route would have been competing against individuals who were much better qualified. Only six people failed the 'First Impressions' interview, a figure that reflects the approach of the recruitment process which was always to presume in favour of the interviewee.

One potential problem identified with altering the recruitment process is that this may contravene equal opportunities policies. This was something that Tesco had to '*get round*'. They did this by working on the basis that equal opportunities can '*cut both ways*' and that local people should, therefore, have an equal opportunity to apply for the jobs that are available.

There was a significant decline in the interest of potential participants in the programme between the initial open day and the completion of application forms (this was quantified in relation to Tesco's experience in Scotland – 710 individuals attended the open day,

but only 205 completed application forms were received). This 'drop out' was largely viewed as resulting from two issues:

- A lack of real interest in jobs in the retail sector (particularly amongst males);
- The desire to obtain full-time employment (only 30 per cent of jobs at Seacroft were full-time).

Concerns regarding the financial impact of part-time working were particularly apparent amongst some participants. As a result, when Tesco implement the programme in other partnership stores they now have someone from the Benefits Agency present at the initial open day who can advise individuals on the minimum number of hours that they need to work in order for them to be better off financially. In addition, Tesco do not offer less than 16 hour per week jobs to partnership staff because of the 16 hour rule.

- **The training process**

A number of interviewees raised issues around the contracting of training and the need to conform to benefit rules. In terms of contracting, the process operated smoothly in Seacroft because the ELFLC already held the contract with the TEC for the supply of the appropriate training courses. One interviewee (a training provider) indicated that problems could arise if the preferred training provider does not hold the contract for all of the components of training that are required. The training also had to conform to the rules for training allowance under Work Based Learning for Adults. It was noted that Tesco were very flexible in reducing the time that they demanded for work related training in order to comply with these restrictions.

Specific aspects of the training programme were regarded as of particular importance in contributing to participants' development. These included:

- The basic skills pre-training that, it was noted, led to '*a great difference in people's self confidence. The change was amazing*'. In addition, there was a '*tremendous team identity amongst the 50 basic skills trainees*'.
- The weekly five minute presentation that participants had to make to the group was crucial in building the confidence of individuals.

- The weekly interview with the Tesco personnel officer was important in demonstrating both that the company was taking an interest and that basic standards needed to be maintained.

- **Post-appointment support and monitoring**

There have been plans for continued contact between partnership staff / Tesco and ELFLC but it is unclear to what extent these have been implemented. Work is being done, however, to ensure that all Tesco employees at Seacroft (not just partnership staff) receive basic skills training from ELFLC in the future, as Tesco acknowledge that this is a very important component of their employees skills set. Tesco also have a bronze, silver and gold training structure in place that enables continuous development of staff. In addition, support is available from the Employment Service for Partnership staff should they require it.

All new staff at Tesco stores participate in two interviews to assess progress within their first three months of employment. Partnership staff at Seacroft have been involved in two additional interviews to assess the extent to which they felt their experience at ELFLC had been useful. Following a favourable assessment by all staff (which is reinforced by the findings from our survey, presented in section 5), Tesco have implemented very few changes to the programme in other partnership store areas.

- **Flexibility and commitment of the employer**

There was a consensus amongst all interviewees that the flexibility and commitment demonstrated by Tesco was critical in the implementation of the programme. Key examples of this include:

- The initial commitment from one individual to take the idea to the Tesco board and request support for the programme;
- The regular attendance of Tesco representatives, including personnel and senior management, at ELFLC whilst the training was ongoing, which stressed the importance that the company gave to the project.
- The willingness of the company to restructure its intended workforce from 500 to 351 jobs in order to suit the hours of work required by the client group (ie so that they did not have to work less than 16 hours as this would impact on their benefit position).

- Altering the wages from a monthly to a weekly payments system to ensure that staff were not without money for a lengthy period of time.

Overall, it was viewed that *'Tesco were always willing to tackle a problem'*.

### **4.3 Perceived benefits of the programme**

The Job Guarantee Programme clearly brought considerable benefits in a variety of areas. To a large extent, interviewees viewed the programme as a 'win-win' process with benefits accrued by all of those that were involved. The benefits to partnership employees are most clearly articulated by the findings of the survey presented in section 5. Here, we focus on the benefits to Tesco themselves and, more widely, any perceived benefits in the Seacroft area.

#### **4.3.1 Benefits for Tesco**

The commitment of Tesco to the Job Guarantee Programme has been acknowledged as a critical contributory factor to the success of the programme. Interviewees were able to identify a range of benefits that Tesco had gained in return for that commitment. These included:

- Full recruitment to the Seacroft store ie all available jobs were filled, either with partnership staff or through open recruitment;
- A dedicated, highly trained and motivated staff who are aware of the Tesco ethos;
- Low staff turnover – the annual retention rate of staff at Seacroft is 89 per cent compared to a national average in Tesco stores of 63 per cent;
- The store is part of the community;
- Positive public relations and significant publicity that resulted in an increase in the number of individuals submitting open applications;
- Local 'ownership' of the store.

The overall view from a member of Tesco staff was that *'it's taken people a bit longer to get there, but the job guarantee system produces a dedicated workforce.'*

In addition, the results from our survey suggest that Tesco have gained a number of customers who would not necessarily have used the store had it not been for the partnership programme.

#### **4.3.2 Benefits for Seacroft**

Only a small number of interviewees were able to identify any impact of the programme on Seacroft more widely. However, representatives of Tesco indicated that they feel that Seacroft has changed in the time that they have been working there and they are seeking ways of quantifying that change in terms of the impact on unemployment, investment and training. Anecdotal evidence suggests that one local shop keeper had made substantial investment in his store in order to compete with Tesco and this is seen as a positive outcome. Tesco also indicated that there has been no evidence that there has been any increase in shop closures as a result of the opening of their store. Rather, other shops in the Seacroft Green Shopping Centre have benefited from the increased footfall that has resulted from the Tesco presence.

The strongest endorsement for the programme, in terms of its benefits for the Seacroft area, came from a long-term resident of the area:

*Ten years ago, South Seacroft was horrendous.... This is the best thing that's happened in years... the place now looks thriving and there is a positive atmosphere about.*

#### **4.4 Critical Success Factors**

When asked to identify the critical success factors associated with the programme, the overwhelming response was that the job guarantee itself is vital. In particular, the contrast between the impact of a job guarantee and an interview guarantee was identified by a representative of the Employment Service. The Tesco experience in Durham is one example of this. Whereas 600 individuals responded to the Tesco Job Guarantee Programme, only six people had previously signed up for a retail course that guaranteed a job interview. Another interviewee indicated that there is '*great scepticism*'

generally around work based learning experience and that the job guarantee element helps to overcome this.

A range of other critical success factors were identified by interviewees. These included:

- Employers need to know and be sympathetic to the background of the staff – *'tolerance is needed'*;
- Employers need to be clear to the contracted provider (in this case ELFLC) about their skill requirements;
- Employer commitment at all levels is required including:
  - Staff to support the scheme;
  - High level public relations;
  - Management backing;
  - Promoting the programme in the community.
- Private sector project management skills;
- Personal support for programme participants is needed, eg benefits advice, confidence building etc;
- There needs to be a focus on client satisfaction. In particular, don't expect that the client deserves less (in terms of quality) just because they are unemployed;
- Employers need to meet potential applicants rather than just see the tag 'the unemployed';
- Achieving a 'connection' within the community and establishing the confidence of the client group that you are working with;
- There needs to be a clear lead from the top ie from the employer;
- Training needs to be held close to where people live. Once training is complete, individuals will be more willing to travel to a job.

It was, however, acknowledged by one interviewee, that the partnership approach *'may not be universally applicable'*. In particular, it was felt that the type of community in which you are working is important and that developing such an approach in a wider, more diverse area than Seacroft, involving more partners, could be more problematic.



#### **4.5 Replicating the Job Guarantee Programme**

One of the key issues that the research aimed to address is the extent to which the Job Guarantee Programme could be replicated elsewhere and any factors that need to be borne in mind in relation to this. This issue will be explored in more detail in the final section. Here, we present the views of interviewees in relation to the potential transferability of the programme.

The general feeling of interviewees was that there are few fundamental changes that would need to be made to the Tesco model in order to role the programme out elsewhere. The overall success of the programme and the positive views expressed by stakeholders and partnership staff alike provides evidence to support this. One small change identified by one interviewee was the need for the centralisation of administration and monitoring information (ie the collection of programme related data and statistics).

Tesco indicated that there are four core components of the programme that they implement in all partnership areas. These are:

- Training;
- Transport;
- Childcare;
- The job guarantee.

They then build upon these core components according to the specific needs of the local area. For example, they have recently been working in a locality where unemployment stands at just one per cent. In an area such as this, the target client group are likely to be particularly disadvantaged and this needs to be taken into account in the way that the programme is constructed and implemented.

The sustainability of the job guarantee was raised as an issue by one interviewee and it was noted that there is a potential challenge in keeping employers involved after the initial major recruitment. The problems of running a rolling job guarantee programme for Tesco were identified because the store would not be able to wait for suitably skilled applicants to fill any vacancies arising. As a result, some applicants may need to

participate in the programme and then wait until there is a suitable vacancy available. In Seacroft, however, the ELFLC continues to run a retail course and Tesco have now agreed to contact the Centre first when any subsequent vacancies arise in order to see if they have any suitable applicants.

Another interviewee suggested that a minimum of 50 participants is necessary to make another job guarantee programme viable. The fact that staff turnover in the Seacroft store is relatively low (largely as a result of the recruitment process that was implemented) means that the current demand for new staff is not high enough to start another programme.

More general points relating to the potential for other employers to target the unemployed in recruitment processes were also made. In particular, one of the training providers indicated that:

- Large employers could dedicate 10 per cent of their vacancies to the long-term unemployed;
- Employers need to look at recruitment practices that exclude the unemployed including, for example, complex application forms and the request for two references.

Programmes similar to the Tesco Job Guarantee have been undertaken by other employers in Leeds. For example, Elite Forwarders, a freight company, worked with the West Leeds Family Learning Centre to recruit 71 per cent of their new workforce from those on Welfare to Work. Other programmes have been less successful. In one example, an interviewee suggested that this was because the employer did not demonstrate the necessary commitment or flexibility for the programme to be successful.

Other models for a job guarantee programme were suggested that include:

- Training by sectors
- Training by an employer over a wider area (eg for all of the Co-ops in Leeds)
- The pooling of resources by a number of employers (potentially in the same sector, probably located on the same site eg the White Rose Centre).

There was, however, a concern that if more than one employer is involved, this dilutes the publicity and profile for the company, which can have a negative impact on company commitment.



## 5 SURVEY OF PROGRAMME PARTICIPANTS

### Key findings:

- More than three quarters of participants were either registered unemployed, on a New Deal programme or economically inactive prior to the Tesco programme. (see page 28)
- The Job Centre and word of mouth were the key sources of information about the programme. (page 29)
- More than 90 per cent of participants stated that the job guarantee was either important or very important in their decision to go on the programme. (page 30)
- Of the 10 'modules' on the training programme, five were considered to have been very useful or useful by more than 80 per cent of respondents, with a further three having been very useful or useful for between 70 and 80 per cent of respondents. (page 31)
- Only one respondent did not achieve any formal qualification as a result of the programme. (page 32)
- The large majority of respondents stated that the programme had been helpful or very helpful in enhancing their employability and their skills. (page 33)
- Respondents who received childcare support and transport felt that these interventions were very important in enabling them to participate in the programme. (page 34)
- More than 90 per cent of respondents are still in employment, 85 per cent with Tesco. (page 35)
- The large majority of respondents are employed in jobs that offer paid holidays, sick pay, a pension scheme, Trade Union presence and training. (page 36)
- More than 85 per cent of those who remain in employment consider their job security and their job satisfaction to be good or very good. (page 37)
- One quarter of respondents that shop at the Tesco store believe that it is unlikely or very unlikely that they would have done so had they not been on the programme. (page 38)

## 5.1 Introduction

In addition to obtaining information from the key stakeholders, the assessment of the programme also included a telephone survey with those who had participated in the programme (see Annex C for questionnaire). The aims of the telephone survey were to identify participants' perceptions of how well the programme worked, what the most useful aspects of the programme had been and what benefits individuals had gained from their participation.

## 5.2 Methodology

The ELFLC sent out letters to 155 individuals who had participated in the Tesco programme informing them that research into the programme was taking place and asking if they would be willing to take part in the research. Individuals who did not wish to participate were asked to return a form in a reply paid envelope stating that they did not wish to be contacted. 17 individuals returned the form.

Of the remaining 138 contacts, 51 interviews were successfully completed. This represents a high response rate given that 64 of the contacts either did not have telephone numbers or had supplied incorrect telephone numbers. Attempts were made to contact these individuals through phone disc and directory enquiries but these were largely unsuccessful.

Data from the interviews was input and analysed using SPSS for windows. The findings from the 51 interviews are presented below.

## 5.3 The Respondents

The characteristics of the 51 respondents are shown in Table 5.1.

The key characteristics of the respondents can be summarised as follows:

- A slightly higher proportion are female than male;
- More than half are aged over 35;
- Respondents are predominantly white;

- The large majority left full-time education before they were 18. Reflecting this, only one quarter of respondents hold a qualification at NVQ level 2 or above. More than one third do not hold any NVQ equivalent qualifications;
- Approximately 10 per cent are single parents;
- A small minority have difficulties with reading or writing or with speaking English;
- One fifth have a long-term health problem or disability that affects the kind of work that they do.

**Table 5.1: Characteristics of respondents**

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
<b>Gender:</b>	
Male	47.1
Female	52.9
<b>Age:</b>	
16-18	5.9
19-34	33.3
35-59	54.9
60+	5.9
<b>Ethnic origin:</b>	
White	92.2
Pakistani	5.9
<b>Age when left full-time education:</b>	
15-17	82.4
18-18	13.7
20-23	3.9
<b>Highest qualification:</b>	
None	36.0
NVQ level 1 or equivalent	40.0
NVQ level 2 or equivalent	14.0
NVQ level 3 or equivalent	10.0
<b>Have dependent children:</b>	
Yes	35.3
No	64.7
<b>Single parent:</b>	
Yes	11.8
No	88.2
<b>Difficulties with reading or writing:</b>	
Yes	7.8
No	92.2
<b>Difficulties speaking English:</b>	
Yes	2.0
No	98.0
<b>Health problem or disability:</b>	
Yes	20.0
No	80.0

#### 5.4 Respondents' circumstances prior to Tesco programme

Prior to their participation on the Tesco programme, just over half of respondents were registered unemployed and were claiming Job Seekers Allowance (see Table 5.2). One fifth were out of work but were not registered unemployed. Female respondents and those who are now employed on a part-time rather than a full-time basis were more likely to be economically inactive prior to the programme than other respondents. Only six per cent were involved in New Deal.

**Table 5.2: Circumstances prior to Tesco programme**

Circumstance	% of respondents
In a paid job	7.8
On a New Deal Programme	5.9
Registered unemployed and claiming JSA	52.9
Out of work but not registered unemployed	19.6
In full-time education	3.9
On sickness or invalidity benefit	2.0
Other	7.8

Of those who were out of work prior to the programme (whether registered unemployed or not), more than half had been continuously out of work for more than one year. A further third had been continuously out of work for more than three months.

Respondents were asked to indicate which, from a list of responses, were the key barriers to them accessing work prior to the Tesco programme. The results are shown in Table 5.3. The key barrier, identified by almost one quarter of respondents, was childcare responsibilities. This was predominantly an issue for females, single parents and those who are now employed on a part-time basis. Health problems and age were also barriers identified by a significant proportion of respondents. A number of respondents identified 'other' barriers, these included lack of confidence, that there were no jobs of interest available and that they didn't know what they wanted to do.



**Table 5.3: Barriers to work**

<b>Barriers</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
Childcare responsibilities	23.5
Health problems	13.7
Age (both too young (ie still at school / college) or too old)	13.7
No jobs available	7.8
Other caring responsibilities	3.9
Lack of appropriate qualifications	3.9
Transport problems	3.9
Didn't want to work	3.9
Lack of work experience	2.0
Low wages of jobs on offer	2.0
Other	19.7
Nothing	17.6

## 5.5 Finding out about the Tesco programme

The key source of information about the Tesco programme was the Job Centre (see Table 5.4). Almost half of respondents first found out about the programme from there. Word of mouth and the ELFLC were also important sources of information.

**Table 5.4: Sources of information about the Tesco programme**

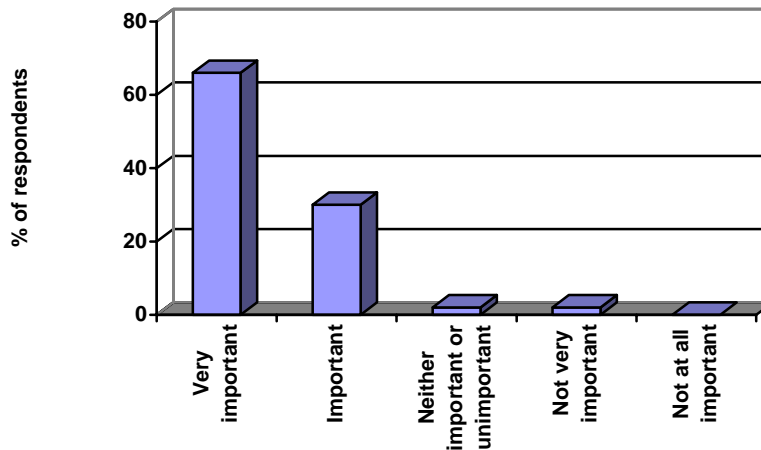
<b>Source</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
Job Centre	47.1
Friends or relatives	23.5
East Leeds Family Learning Centre	19.6
Advertisement or poster	9.8
Employment Service Adviser	3.9
Open day	2.0
Other	7.8

The majority of respondents indicated that they were able to obtain enough information about the programme. There were, however, 14 per cent of respondents who stated that this was not the case. In general, these respondents suggested that they would have liked more specific information about the jobs that would be available, with one respondent indicating that they felt that their past experience was not taken into account and that they, therefore, did not know how much 'unnecessary training' they would have to undertake.

The job guarantee aspect of the Tesco programme is often identified as the key factor that distinguishes this labour market intervention from other programmes such as Intermediate Labour Markets and New Deal. Respondents were asked to indicate how important they felt that the job guarantee was in their decision to apply for the programme. The results are shown in Figure 5.1.

Two thirds of respondents stated that the job guarantee was very important in their decision to go on the programme, with a further 30 per cent stating that it was important. The job guarantee appears to have been particularly important to lone parents, those who are now employed on a part-time basis and those who do not hold any NVQ equivalent qualifications.

**Figure 5.1: Importance of 'Job Guarantee'**



## 5.6 Experience of the programme

In order to obtain a place on the Tesco programme, the majority of respondents had either attended an open day and / or undergone a one-to-one assessment or interview. More than 10 per cent stated that they had undergone a Basic Skills assessment. It's possible that more respondents underwent this assessment, as part of their one-to-one interview, but were not aware that a Basic Skills assessment was taking place at the time.

**Table 5.5: Access to the programme**

	<b>% of respondents</b>
Attended an open day	49.0
Underwent a one-to-one assessment / interview	47.1
Underwent a basic skills assessment	13.7
Underwent an interview with a New Deal Advisor	3.9
Underwent an interview with an Employment Access Caseworker (ES)	3.9
Underwent a pre-start interview with Employment Services	5.9
Other	11.8

The training programme was divided into a number of different ‘modules’, as identified in Table 5.6. The extent to which respondents felt that each module was of use in terms of helping to improve skills and to prepare them for a job at Tesco is also shown in the table.

Overall, the majority of respondents stated that each of the modules was either useful or very useful. The following modules were considered to have been ‘very useful’ by more than half of respondents:

- Customer care
- Visit to another store
- Team building / problem solving
- Presentation / communication skills
- Food safety

Only a small proportion of respondents stated that any of the modules were either not very or not at all useful.

**Table 5.6: Extent to which different aspects of the training programme were useful**

Part of the programme	% of respondents					
	Very useful	Useful	Neither useful or not	Not very useful	Not at all useful	Not applicable
Customer care	64.7	21.6	9.8	0.0	2.0	2.0
Visit to another store	54.9	29.4	5.9	2.0	2.0	5.9
Food safety	52.9	31.4	2.0	3.9	2.0	7.8
First Aid	49.0	27.5	7.8	2.0	3.9	9.8
Health & safety / manual handling	45.1	35.3	9.8	5.9	3.9	0.0
Basic Skills	41.2	29.4	7.8	2.0	5.9	3.9
How to keep your job	23.5	31.4	9.8	7.8	7.8	9.8
Team building / problem solving	54.9	31.4	2.0	2.0	5.9	3.9
Assertiveness and anger management	31.4	29.4	11.8	2.0	5.9	13.7
Time management and prioritising	29.4	41.2	5.9	3.9	7.8	9.8

A small number of respondents stated that they felt that the training did not cover everything that they needed. It was suggested that it would have been useful to meet people from other departments and that the training should have been more specific to the job that they were going to be doing.

The training course offered participants the opportunity to obtain a number of formal qualifications. These are shown in Table 5.7. The qualifications most commonly achieved by respondents were Manual Handling, Health and Safety, First Aid and Food Hygiene. A significant proportion also achieved a CLAIT and / or IBT2 qualifications. The majority of those that had obtained an 'other' qualification had done so in customer care. Only one person suggested that they did not achieve any formal qualifications.

**Table 5.7: Qualifications gained**

Qualifications	% of respondents
Manual Handling	94.1
Health & Safety	92.2
First Aid	80.4
Food Hygiene	70.6
CLAIT (Computer Literacy & Information Technology)	39.2
IBT2 (Integrated Business Technology)	15.7
Other	21.6

The Tesco training programme has the potential to improve the employability of participants in a variety of ways. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which the programme had been helpful to them in developing their skills, improving their confidence and enhancing their performance in the labour market more generally. The results are shown in Table 5.8.

Overall, it is clear that respondents perceive the programme to have been of benefit to them in relation to their overall employability as well as in preparing them for a job with Tesco. More than half of respondents stated that the programme had been very helpful in:

- Enabling them to gain new skills
- Preparing them for their job with Tesco
- Increasing their confidence
- Providing them with the skills and experience to appeal to other employers.

**Table 5.8: Extent to which the training programme was helpful**

	% of respondents					
	Very helpful	Helpful	Neither helpful or unhelpful	Not very helpful	Not at all helpful	Not applicable
Enabling you to gain new skills	60.8	25.5	5.9	5.9	2.0	0.0
Preparing you for your job with Tesco	56.9	27.5	9.8	2.0	3.9	0.0
Increasing your confidence	54.9	33.3	2.0	2.0	5.9	2.0
Providing you with the skills and experience to appeal to different employers	52.9	33.3	2.0	3.9	5.9	0.0
Preparing you for work more generally	49.0	31.4	7.8	5.9	5.9	0.0
Encouraging you to undertake further education and training	43.1	29.4	13.7	3.9	7.8	2.0

The training programme offered additional support to participants which, potentially, can help to alleviate some of the barriers to employment. Table 5.9 shows the proportion of respondents that received that additional support and the extent to which they felt that that support was important in enabling them to participate in the programme.

More than half of respondents received advice on benefits and ‘other’ financial support (most frequently a £10 top-up on their benefits). Just under half also received personal support and help with transport to training. Just under one fifth of respondents received help with childcare. More than three quarters of those who received help with transport and / or help with childcare considered this support to be ‘very important’ in enabling them to participate in the programme whilst the large majority of those receiving other types of support including financial and personal support considered these to be either very important or important in enabling them to participate.

**Table 5.9: Extent to which additional support offered with the training programme was important**

	% of respondents					
	Received	If received, how important it was in enabling participation on the programme				
		Very important	Important	Neither important nor not important	Not very important	Not at all important
Benefits advice on back to work benefits	66.7	55.9	23.5	2.9	5.9	8.8
Other financial support	60.8	48.4	22.6	6.5	12.9	9.7
Personal support from an Employment Access Caseworker (ES)	49.0	48.0	36.0	8.0	4.0	4.0
Transport	41.2	76.2	14.3	9.5	0.0	0.0
Childcare (vouchers or provision)	17.6	88.9	11.1	0.0	0.0	0.0

Almost all (94 per cent) of respondents completed the training programme and all but one was offered, and accepted, a job with Tesco. The one person that was not offered a job had failed the health and safety part of the course. Respondents were largely employed in the following occupations (coded to Standard Occupational Groups (SOC codes) 2000):

- Sales (45%)
- Elementary administration and service occupations (39%)
- Customer service occupations (6%)
- Elementary trades, plant and storage occupations (4%)

The majority identified their jobs as being either general assistants, check out operators or shelf stackers.

All of the respondents were asked to indicate what they felt were the most useful and least useful aspects of the programme. Overall, the most useful aspects included: meeting people; gaining confidence; receiving training; updating skills; learning about customer care; and being guaranteed a job at the end of the training. Specific comments included the following:

*Getting confidence back and dealing with problems*

*Training got me ready for work as I had been out of work for so long*

*Tesco's staff were always being supportive and helpful*

*I got more confidence dealing with people*

*Meeting lots of people, gained a lot of confidence*

*The incentive of a job at the end*

Fewer than half of respondents identified an aspect of the programme that they felt was 'least useful'. Of those that did, the most common comment was that certain aspects of the training, particularly the computer course, were not relevant for the jobs that individuals are now doing.

## **5.7 Current situation**

In any assessment of a training programme it is important to consider if the benefits that are initially apparent appear to be sustainable in the longer term. The results from the survey indicate that the Tesco programme has provided longer term benefits for the participants. Of those who obtained work with Tesco following the training programme:

- 67% remain in the same job with Tesco;
- 18% are in a different job with Tesco;
- 6% are in a different job with a different company;
- 8% are no longer in employment.

Although not directly comparable, this can be seen as producing a favourable outcome when considered against New Deal, from which approximately 40 per cent in Leeds and nationally leave into sustained (ie of longer than 13 weeks duration) unsubsidised jobs.

### **5.7.1 In employment**

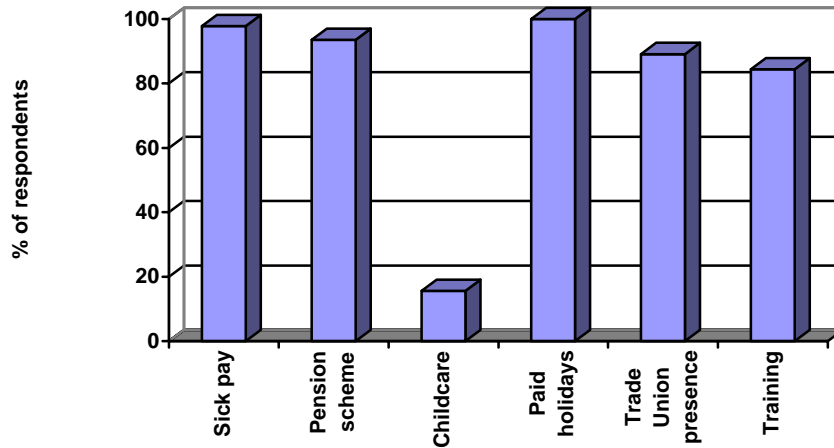
Of those who remain in employment, whether with Tesco or elsewhere, 57 per cent of interviewees are employed on a full-time basis (more than 30 hours per week), 33 per cent are employed part-time (16-30 hours per week) and 11 per cent are employed for less than 16 hours per week. All of those who are in employment indicated that they have a permanent contract.

In addition to issues concerning the sustainability of employment following training programmes, there is often concern around the quality of the jobs that are accessed. One indicator of quality relates to the type of benefits that are available in a particular job. Respondents were asked which, of a range of benefits, were offered by their current employment. The results are shown in Figure 5.2.

Overall, a large majority of those who remain in employment stated that their job offers: sick pay; a pension scheme; paid holidays; a Trade Union presence; and training. A minority indicated that childcare facilities were available to them.



**Figure 5.2: Benefits offered in current job**



Other issues around the quality of the job accessed by respondents including prospects for promotion and job satisfaction were also explored (see Table 5.10). Overall, the results are very positive, with at least three quarters of respondents indicating that: prospects for promotion; job security; job satisfaction; and the flexibility of working hours; are either good or very good.

**Table 5.10: Perceptions of quality of current job**

	% of respondents					
	Very good	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor	Not applicable
Job security	58.7	37.0	2.2	2.2	0.0	0.0
Job satisfaction	56.5	30.4	6.5	6.5	0.0	0.0
Flexibility of working hours	45.7	32.6	13.0	4.3	4.3	0.0
Prospects for promotion	39.1	39.1	10.9	2.2	4.3	4.3

Of those who are still working for Tesco but in a different job, two had achieved a promotion, whilst others gave the following reasons for the change:

*I wasn't really happy. The previous job was too mundane*

*I was bored being on the tills*

*Just fancied doing something different.*

Three people had left Tesco and are now employed elsewhere. One is a security engineer installing alarms and cameras; one is a ward house keeper working in a hospital; and one is working as a building surveyor. All three went straight to their new job from working at Tesco, one of them within the first month of working at Tesco, whilst the other two worked at the supermarket for more than six months. Only one of these respondents considered the skills that they had obtained whilst working at Tesco to be important in helping them to get their new job whilst none of them felt that the experience that they had obtained at Tesco was important in helping them find subsequent employment.

Of those who had worked at Tesco but are no longer in employment, two left as a result of ill health and one left because '*I didn't like the management*'.

## **5.8 Shopping at Tesco**

In considering some of the potential benefits to an employer of undertaking such a job guarantee scheme, we sought to establish to what extent being on the programme had encouraged respondents to shop at Tesco.

Overall, 90 per cent of respondents stated that they shop at the Tesco store, with 70 per cent of these indicating that they do either all or most of their shopping there. Approximately one quarter of respondents who shop at the store stated that it is unlikely or very unlikely that they would have shopped at the store if they had not been on the programme.

## **5.9 Conclusions**

The large majority of participants were very positive about their experiences of the Tesco programme. The majority had moved from unemployment (whether registered or economically inactive) to employment; had gained at least one formal qualification; perceived that they had enhanced their skills and employability; were working in jobs that offered a range of benefits including sick pay, paid holidays and pensions; and feel that they have good or very good job security and job satisfaction.

In addition, it is clear that specific interventions aimed at overcoming barriers to work, including childcare, transport and personal advice and support were felt to be important in facilitating the outcomes outlined above by those who received them.



## **6 CONCLUSIONS**

### **6.1 Introduction**

The research with stakeholders and programme participants suggests that the Job Guarantee Programme developed by the Seacroft Partnership has been a considerable success. A large number of those who were formerly unemployed developed new skills and obtained sustainable employment; Tesco recruited a loyal and committed workforce; and Seacroft received new investment and new facilities.

There is clearly potential for the job guarantee model to be rolled out to other companies, sectors and localities. From the research, we are able to identify the 'essential elements' that contributed to the successful implementation of the programme in Seacroft. These are outlined below and provide a key starting point for any partnership aiming to replicate the programme. In addition, we also identify a small number of changes that, it has been suggested, would benefit the programme; and we highlight some of the potential problems that could be encountered in replicating the programme elsewhere.

### **6.2 Replicating success: Essential elements of the programme**

The following have been identified as the key elements that contributed to the success of the Job Guarantee Programme:

- **A Job Guarantee**

There was a general agreement amongst stakeholders that the key element of the programme was the job guarantee itself, and it is clear from the survey results that this was very important in motivating individuals to participate in the programme. Whilst the job guarantee is, perhaps, the most innovative component of the programme and is the key factor that differentiates this from other welfare to work / New Deal / Intermediate Labour Market initiatives, the success of the Seacroft Partnership resulted from the coming together of a number of important elements. These are summarised below.

- **Shared understanding, commitment and objectives in a public-private partnership**

The Seacroft partnership is a prime example of a successful public-private partnership. Interviewees stressed that the informality of the partnership was its strength; that it was unbureaucratic and that it existed only to bolster commitment. All of the partners were involved for a reason and all were set to benefit from the success of the programme, but the development of high levels of trust and co-operation between public and private sector partners remains a significant achievement upon which the programme was able to build.

- **Extensive marketing and publicity for the programme**

Potential applicants were made well aware of the opportunities that the programme presented through a series of promotional events including community meetings and open days. In addition, the unemployed were specifically targeted through the Employment Service and the Leeds City Council database. The promotional activity also brought significant publicity and prestige to the programme.

- **A funding mix that opened the programme to all of the unemployed**

The use of the money from ESF, SRB, New Deal and the TEC's customised training budget meant that eligibility rules for the programme could be relaxed, enabling all of the unemployed, not just those that were New Deal eligible, to participate. However, there may be some problems associated with using this combination of funding in the future. Never-the-less, other sources of funding, apart from New Deal, are available. These include, for example, the Regional Development Agency's Single Pot, funding associated with Job Action Teams and funding for New Deal for Communities areas.

- **Support for individuals to help overcome barriers to work**

A range of support mechanisms were provided that enabled unemployed individuals to overcome specific barriers to work. Alongside the training and skills development, these included personal and benefits advice, childcare, and transport to training. The majority of respondents to the survey who were in receipt of this support considered it to have been important in enabling them to participate in the programme.

- **Adaptation of recruitment procedures**

The adaptation of normal recruitment procedures, from 'Select the Best' to 'First Impressions', was essential in enabling the unemployed to 'compete' for jobs. Throughout recruitment, the presumption was in favour of the candidate unless they showed a negative attitude or presented themselves poorly. The provision of the job guarantee was also a critical component of these recruitment procedures.

- **The contracting of the training**

In Seacroft, contracting of the training appears to have been a relatively smooth procedure, partly because the ELFLC was already contracted to provide TEC training programmes. However, the success of the programme was also dependent upon the development of a close relationship and understanding between Tesco and ELFLC. Fundamental to this was that Tesco clearly articulated what they required from the training and that ELFLC were able to deliver this.

- **The content of the training**

The important element relating to the content of the training was not so much the subject areas covered (although clearly these are significant in terms of developing both general employability skills and specific retail / 'Tesco' skills) but the methods employed that helped to build both confidence and commitment amongst participants. In particular, the weekly presentations that participants had to give were regarded as very useful in helping to build confidence and the regular contact with Tesco personnel was useful in building commitment and maintaining standards.

- **The flexibility and commitment of the employer**

Throughout the stakeholder interviews it became clear that the willingness and ability of Tesco to be flexible in relation to recruitment, employment and the structure of the workforce was a critical component of the programme. This flexibility was achieved because there was commitment to the programme at the highest level and throughout the Tesco staff. It was suggested that similar initiatives have failed because other companies have not taken the positive approach that was clearly adopted at Tesco.

- **Sustainable, quality jobs**

The survey results suggest that the high levels of job security and satisfaction being achieved by participants are likely to have contributed to the ultimate success of the programme, particularly in relation to the sustainability of employment that many respondents have achieved. As such, the quality of the job on offer at the end of the programme and the conditions of employment (pensions, holidays, training etc) must also be of a high standard in order for the positive outcomes to be maintained.

### **6.3 Scope for change**

Such was the success of the Seacroft experience, very few changes would be required to make the programme more effective or to enable it to be adapted out to other localities and sectors. Greater centralisation of administrative and monitoring information was the only area that interviewees suggested for improvement. There have, however, been two changes made by Tesco as they introduce the programme in other areas. These are:

- That the Open Days have been pushed right to the beginning of the process, so that would-be applicants can judge whether the work is right for them.
- A 'Dignity at Work' element has been introduced into the work related training to cover inter-personal relationships at work, resolution of grievances etc. This was thought necessary to deal with the 'walking off the job' solution that some of those who had been out of work a long time adopted when things went wrong. This was, however, only a small problem in Seacroft.

### **6.4 Potential problems with replicability**

In sections 6.2 and 6.3 above we have outlined the areas on which other partnerships would need to focus if they were to try to replicate the Seacroft experience. However, there are a factors that mitigate against such arrangements being as successful as the Tesco scheme. These are summarised below.



- In many cases, company recruitment levels would not be high enough to warrant 'their own' course. The training would have to be shared with other firms in the sector. This may lower the profile and commitment of the company and the attractiveness of the training to the unemployed. There is also the question of 'who gets which' trainee. The dynamic pushes the structure towards a generalised guarantee system rather than one of a job guarantee with a particular employer.
- Recruitment procedures and well established equal opportunity policies (that can often have the perverse effect of ruling out job guarantees) are difficult to alter, particularly in the public sector.
- Employers are more likely to respond to this type of targeted recruitment when the labour market is tight and attracting suitable potential employees is difficult. Under different conditions, they may revert to wanting the 'best' candidates rather than prioritising partnership recruits.
- Employer irritation with being approached from numerous sources about employment related matters (for vacancies and work placements particularly) affects their willingness to engage with public sector training agencies.

## **6.5 Conclusion**

The TESCO Job Guarantee Programme is an outstanding success as judged by the key stakeholders involved, the employer and the individuals recruited to the programme. It shows that a company committed to a supported route into employment can produce results that are of benefit to all parties.

To generalise the experience in the New Deal context, it revealed the importance of ES, in partnership with a credible training agency, forming permanent links with local employers. As subsequent experience in Leeds has shown with successful employer led call centre training, once employers can see mutual advantage there is a good chance they will make the commitment and changes required to implement job guarantee schemes. It is hoped that the results of this assessment and the conclusions reached

will assist other localities, employers and partnerships in the development of effective job guarantee programmes.

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**ANNEX A**

**Stakeholder interviewees**



The following stakeholders were interviewed:

Russell Baldwin – Manager, East Leeds Family Learning Centre

Anne Brennan – Business Manager, Seacroft Job Centre

Cheryl Clarke – Personnel Manager, Tesco

Bernadette Clayton – Leeds Employer Coalition (seconded from Employment Service)

Mike Davison – Manager of out of town Job Centres and New Deal for Lone Parents Initiative, Employment Service

Sean Edgely – Corporate Affairs, Tesco

Tony Grant – Leeds Employer Coalition

Julie Haigh – Leeds City Council Childcare Coordinator

Richard Maitland – Customised Training Manager, East Leeds Family Learning Centre

Chris Peat – Leeds City Council Training Department

Richard Petrie – Corporate Affairs, Tesco

Pam Pressley – Seconded to Partnership Project, Seacroft Job Centre

Sue Scott – Process Manager for Recruitment, Tesco

Martin Venning – Corporate Affairs, Tesco

Alice Winter – Deputy Centre Manager, East Leeds Family Learning Centre





## **ANNEX B**

### **Stakeholder interviews – discussion schedule**



## **TESCO – Stakeholder interviews**

**Interviewee:**  
**Organisation:**

### **Background information**

Can you tell me what your role has been in the programme and what contribution your organisation has made?

### **Process**

How did you become involved in the programme? Was the process straightforward? If not why not?

How has the relationship with the partners developed? Is it a mature local partnership? Were any relationships initiated by the TESCO project? Are these relations sustainable?

What publicity and marketing was undertaken? How effective was this (both for the residents' participation and for promotion of the project among the policy community)? What worked well and what has not?

How was the programme funded? Has it been adequately resourced? If not, where have the gaps been? Is it sustainable in the future?

What was the recruitment and training process? Who was eligible for the programme? What was the selection criteria? How was the screening carried out? Were many 'applicants' unsuccessful in gaining access to the programme? Why? Do you feel that the programme was successful in targeting the most disadvantaged?

What support (additional to the training) was provided for participants eg financial, childcare, transport etc? Is there any continuing support now that participants have accessed jobs?

Are there any process arrangements that you would implement differently if you were to run the programme again?

### **Outcomes**

What benefits has the programme brought for your organisation?

Would you (TESCO) have employed the participants without this programme? Why / why not?

How did the recruitment and training programme differ from what TESCO would normally provide? (eg did the training programme at ELFLC include components that TESCO would not normally include?)

What impact, if any, do you think that the recruitment of local people has had on the performance of the shop? Have there been any problems (eg shoplifting)?

What benefits has the programme brought for participants? (including employment, skills, lifelong learning and career progression issues)

What sort of positions were participants in the programme recruited to (ie job titles)? Is there any potential for promotion? Have any been promoted / have any left?

Has there been any noticeable difference between the capacity / performance of those recruited through the programme to do the job and those who were recruited more openly? (Both positive and negative)

Could the store have been fully staffed from those who completed the programme or were a mix of recruits required?

What steps have been taken to ensure that local people continue to gain access to employment opportunities in TESCO (both locally and further afield)?

What benefits has the programme brought for local people more generally?

What benefits has the programme brought, more widely, for Seacroft and regeneration in the local area?

What is necessary to ensure that the benefits of the programme are sustained in the longer term, for the participants, for TESCO and for the local area?

### **General overview**

What have been the strengths and weaknesses of the programme? What has worked well and what has not?

What are the key problems that have been encountered and how could these be overcome if the programme was to be replicated in the future? ie what main changes would you make?

What are the critical success factors for a programme of this type?

Do you feel that this programme could be replicated in other localities and other sectors? What would be the main barriers to this happening? Do you know of examples where it is being replicated?

How useful are programmes of this sort as a tool for regeneration?

## **ANNEX C**

### **Telephone survey of programme participants - questionnaire**

