



Press Release: January 2017

Social Enterprise Kent helping to Build Better Opportunities in the South East.

Social Enterprise Kent (SEK) has just been awarded £483,000 to help people who are 45 years and older get jobs in Kent, Medway and East Sussex.

The 'Lots More to Offer' project will run over 3 years and is part of the Building Better Opportunities programme, which is funded by the Big Lottery Fund and European Social Fund.

SEK is working in partnership with Sussex Community Development Association, Action with Communities Rural Kent and Swale Community and Voluntary Services. The project will provide intensive ongoing support to 150 older people within Kent, Medway and East Sussex, helping to reduce unemployment levels, and stimulate the local economy with social enterprises and micro businesses.

The project will introduce a website and 'app' specifically targeted at older people looking for work. It also includes an employer engagement package for people wanting to recruit older workers.

SEK CEO, Claudia Sykes, says, "The landscape of our workforce is changing. By 2022 the number of people in the workforce aged 50 to State Pension age will have risen to 13.8 million and the number aged 16-49 will have reduced by 700,000. In the last 3 years, SEK has supported 743 people to either stay in work or to gain meaningful employment. We are delighted to be working with the Big Lottery Fund and European Social Fund to help as many people as possible with employment in these difficult times."

SEK is building on its very successful Ageless Thanet project, which is one of 14 projects nationally, all funded through the Big Lottery Fund's 'Ageing Better' programme. In 2015, SEK successfully secured £3 million over 5 years to reduce social isolation and loneliness, improve mental and physical health in older people and make Thanet a great place to grow older.

Social Enterprise Kent is also proud to be a delivery partner for another Building Better Opportunities programme, helping people with Long Term Health Conditions gain employment.

For more information on the Lots More to Offer programme please visit the website: www.sekgroup.org.uk.

To register your interest in either being a participant on the programme or being an employer who recruits older people please contact Natalie Ross on **01227 469 972**, or email n.ross@sekgroup.org.uk.



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Notes to the Editors

- Social Enterprise Kent (SEK) is the lead organisation for Lots More to Offer. They are a Community Interest Company (CIC), registered with, and regulated by, the CIC Regulator. This means that all of their operational activities are guided by a commitment to maximise positive social impact for their target market – local people, communities and businesses. SEK has been in operation for over 30 years, with the overarching vision of “Improving Lives, Supporting Communities”.
- The Big Lottery Fund is the largest funder of community activity in the UK. It puts people in the lead to improve their lives and communities, often through small, local projects.
- It is responsible for giving out 40% of the money raised by National Lottery players for good causes. Every year it invests over £650 million and awards around 12,000 grants across the UK for health, education, environment and charitable purposes.
- Since June 2004 it has awarded over £8 billion to projects that change the lives of millions of people.
- The Lots More to Offer project has received £483,000 of funding from the Big Lottery Fund and the European Social Fund as part of the 2014-2020 European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme in England. The Department for Work and Pensions is the Managing Authority for the England European Social Fund programme. Established by the European Union, the European Social Fund helps local areas stimulate their economic development by investing in projects which will support skills development, employment and job creation, social inclusion and local community regenerations

For more information visit www.gov.uk/european-growth-funding