



Jobs and Skills Charter for Grand Central Birmingham

Birmingham City Council, John Lewis and Network Rail have signed a Jobs and Skills Charter today which will help local people access more than 1,000 new jobs created by the development of the new Grand Central Birmingham shopping centre and Birmingham New Street station.

The Charter sets out how the organisations will ensure Birmingham's diverse community, including young unemployed people, have access to the opportunities being created by the development in the city centre which will be anchored by a 250,000 sq ft John Lewis store due to open in Autumn 2014, providing three-quarters of the 1,000 jobs available.

Working with local colleges and universities, training providers as well as specialist agencies including Jobcentre Plus, the Skills Funding Agency and National Apprenticeship Service to ensure skills, training and access are a top priority is the key commitment within the Charter. The overall aim is to support the growth of Birmingham as a world class destination, offering a quality experience at Grand Central and New Street station that delights customers, residents and visitors.

Sir Albert Bore, Leader of Birmingham City Council said "This is another illustration of our commitment to helping local people into work. I am delighted that John Lewis and Network Rail have signed up to working with us to provide an opportunity for our priority groups to access the new jobs which are arising out of this investment."

Andy Street, Managing Director of John Lewis said "Our aim as an employer is to reflect the community in which we serve and I am delighted to sign this Charter, which underlines our commitment to providing local jobs for local people. We want to ensure that the opportunities created by the new Grand Central development are accessible to all and benefit Birmingham and we look forward to welcoming new Partners into our business."

Dyan Crowther, Network Rail Route Managing Director added: “The redevelopment of Birmingham New Street will transform the experience for the thousands of passengers who use the station every day and allow it to handle the ever increasing numbers of people who want to use the railways.”

“This investment in our transport infrastructure will also give John Lewis and Grand Central the opportunity to offer exciting new retail opportunities in the heart of the city, helping to stimulate regeneration and create one thousand new jobs. We’re delighted to be working alongside Birmingham City Council and John Lewis to open up those opportunities to the local community..”

Notes to Editors

The redevelopment of Birmingham New Street station and the Pallasades Shopping Centre into Grand Central Birmingham is backed by Birmingham City Council, Network Rail, the Department for Transport, Centro and Advantage West Midlands.

Network Rail is delivering the project alongside its delivery partner Mace. New Street station and the Pallasades Shopping Centre will remain open throughout the redevelopment.

Upon completion, the redevelopment of New Street station and the Pallasades Shopping Centre will deliver:

Space to accommodate passenger growth: the new concourse will be three and a half times bigger than at present and will be enclosed by a giant atrium which will flood the station concourse and shopping centre with natural light.

Better access for all: over 30 new escalators and 15 new public lifts will make it much easier to travel between the platforms and the concourse above.

Cutting edge design: a stunning new station façade will create a new landmark building in the heart of Birmingham.

A revitalised city centre: the new Grand Central Birmingham anchored by the John Lewis department store will offer new retail brands alongside quality places to eat and drink, cementing Birmingham’s reputation as one of the UK’s top retail destinations.

Regeneration and economic growth: new pedestrian links will open up the city centre, stimulating regeneration and creating new jobs. Network Rail has also been working with its delivery partner Mace and Birmingham City Council to open up job opportunities and apprenticeships to the local workforce during construction.

The John Lewis Partnership - The John Lewis Partnership operates 39 John Lewis shops across the UK (30 department stores and nine John Lewis at home), johnlewis.com and 287 Waitrose supermarkets. The business has an annual turnover of nearly £8.7bn. It is the UK's largest example of worker co-ownership where all 81,000 staff are Partners in the business.

John Lewis - John Lewis, 'Britain's favourite electricals retailer 2012'* and 'Best Multichannel Retailer 2012' **, typically stocks more than 350,000 separate lines in its department stores. The website stocks over 200,000 products focused on the best of fashion, beauty, home and giftware and electrical items including online exclusives. johnlewis.com is consistently ranked one of the top online shopping destinations in the UK (www.johnlewis.com). John Lewis Insurance offers a range of comprehensive insurance products - home, car, wedding and event, travel and pet insurance and life cover - delivering the usual values of expertise, trust and customer service expected from the John Lewis brand.

* Verdict Consumer Satisfaction Index, April 2012

** Ecommerce Awards for Excellence 2011

You can follow John Lewis on the following social media channels:

www.johnlewis.com/twitter

www.johnlewis.com/facebook

www.johnlewis.com/youtube

Birmingham City Council

The Council's Employment Access Team has successfully worked with a range of employers to support Birmingham residents into employment. Recent examples include:

- An Employment Charter and Jobs Pledge signed with Network Rail and its contractors for the construction phase of the development. To date 153 jobs, apprentices and graduate placements have been filled by Birmingham residents.
- Service Birmingham has signed an Employment Charter to deliver a rolling programme of recruitment campaigns. 12 campaigns have been completed to date, with 187 Birmingham residents successfully securing employment.

- The Library of Birmingham set a target of 250 jobs, 25 of which to be apprenticeships, through the Employment Access Partnership approach. To date, 267 Birmingham residents have been recruited and 83 of these are apprenticeships