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NEWS RELEASE

Celebrating training success

Longtown Market Town Initiative (MTI) has marked the success of 17 individuals on tourism and retail training courses with a presentation today at The Graham Arms in Longtown.

Melvyn Redgers is the chair of the Longtown & District Enterprise Trust and he presented the award plaques and certificates: "Training is one area where smaller businesses can struggle to find exactly what they need at convenient times and locations so supporting courses in this way has proved a useful contribution from the MTI. I am delighted that this first wave of retail and tourism training has gone so well and I congratulate everyone who took part."

Eleven people from four local tourism businesses successfully completed Welcome host training earlier this year and Welcome to Excellence award plaques were also presented to The Graham Arms Hotel, Bailey Mill Accommodation, Home from Home B&B and Low Moorhead Caravan Park.

Helen Sykes leads the MTI team: "There is certainly potential for the growth of tourism in the Longtown area and there are several relatively new businesses that are contributing to this trend. Working together on the Welcome host training has been a useful investment in skills as well as building local networks and providing encouragement for the individual members of staff."

The MTI has also been supporting customer care training for people who are seeking work in the retail sector and six individuals have successfully completed this training recently and were awarded their certificates today.

"There is a shortage of workers in the retail and customer care sectors in and around Carlisle," says Natalie Tilbe who organised this training and is also planning a new course early in July. "Participants have found it a real confidence boost as well as adding something specific to their experience when making job applications. The July course will run in the week of 2 July and it is free and open to anyone in the Longtown MTI area who is currently unemployed or under threat of redundancy - we can even support with childcare if needed."

Please contact Violet Nelson or Natalie Tilbe on 01228 792778 for further information about the July course or check online at www.longtown.org/mti.

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Editor's notes

Longtown Market Town Initiative is a locally managed partnership initiative programme that is expected to run until March 2008. In 2005, it was awarded £1 million by Northwest Regional Development Agency to implement a regeneration programme, focused on helping existing businesses to develop and grow and on enabling individuals in the area to improve their earning potential. The project has now been successful in securing additional ERDF European funding (more than £26k) to assist start up businesses and to enable local micro businesses to expand.

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