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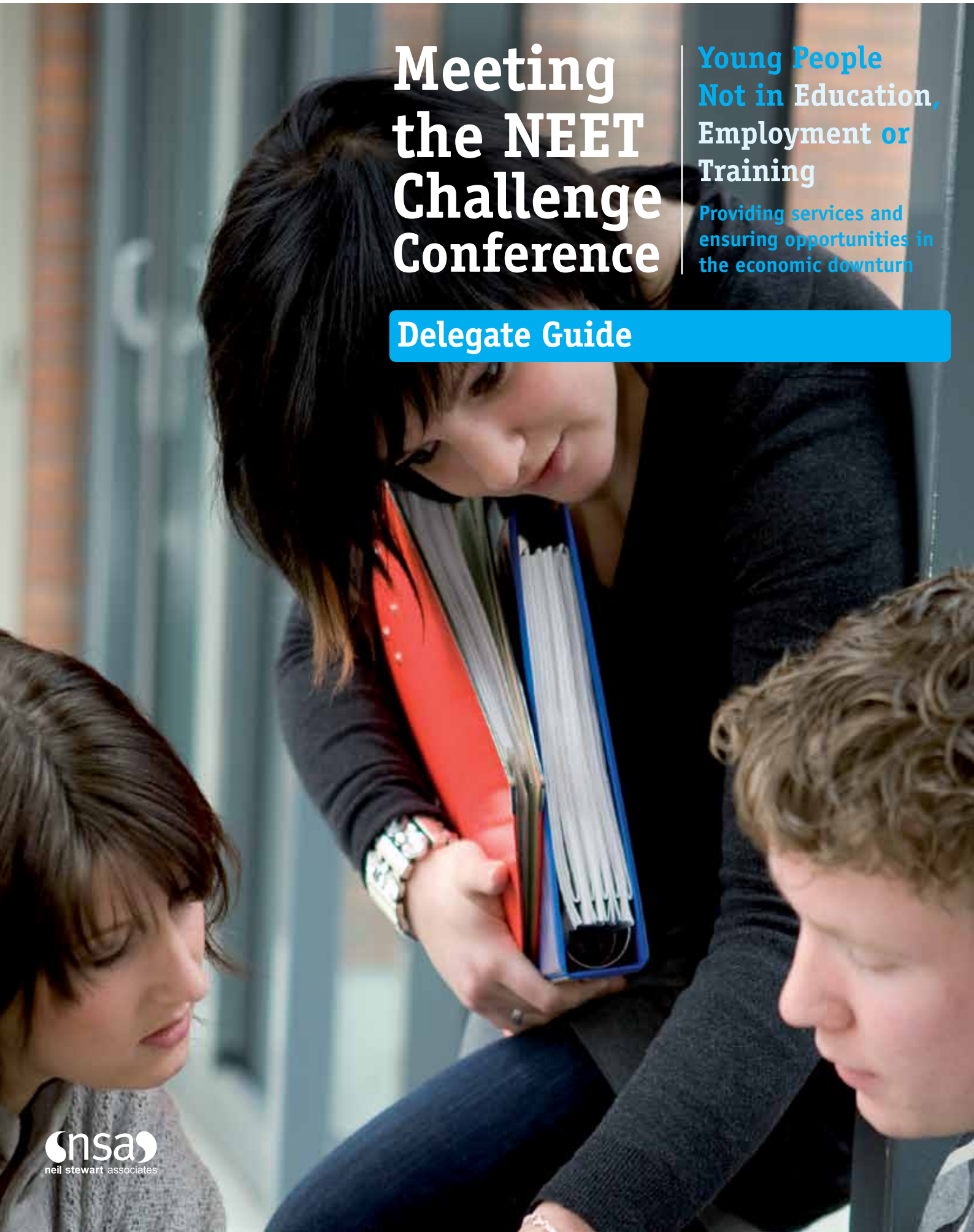
Meeting the NEET Challenge Conference

Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training

Providing services and ensuring opportunities in the economic downturn

Delegate Guide



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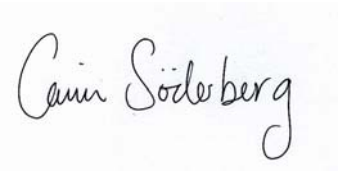
Foreword

Dear Delegate

I would like to welcome you to the Meeting the NEET Challenge Conference. The main focus of discussion today will be around the changes to commissioning and funding for education and training for young people.

The government has proposed to take forward significant reforms to post-16 education. The school leaving age will rise to 17 from 2013 and 18 from 2015 and with the current financial climate this will likely lead to an increase in youth unemployment and a higher demand for education, putting more pressure on colleges. Next year local authorities will take over responsibility for commissioning and funding all education for young people resulting in changes for all those working in the sector.

We are very pleased to be able to present so many high profile speakers today and hope that you will find this an inspiring and positive day.



Carin Soderberg
Research and Development Manager
Neil Stewart Associates

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Agenda

(subject to change)

09:00 Registration and refreshments

SESSION ONE: SETTING THE SCENE - NATIONAL POLICY

10:00 **Introduction by conference chair**
John O'Leary, Editor, Policy Review Magazine

10:10 **New role of local authorities: responsibility for commissioning and funding education and training**
John Freeman CBE, Director, Raising Expectations Action Programme (REACT),
Local Government Association (LGA)

10:30 **Preparing colleges for an increase in learners, as well as those not willing to learn**
John Stone, Chief Executive, Learning and Skills Network (LSN)

10:50 **Long-term effects on young people, business and society in a recession**
Elizabeth Fells, Head of Group, Public Services Reform, CBI

11:10 Questions and discussion

11:30 Refreshments and networking

SESSION TWO: ENSURING SERVICE PROVISION THROUGH THE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN

12:00 **KEYNOTE ADDRESS: apprenticeships, skills, children and learning**
John Hayes MP, Shadow Minister for Innovation and Skills

12:15 **Panel discussion: engaging young people to learn in the economic downturn**
Paul Greenhalgh, Corporate Director, Children and Learning, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Andrew Simmons OBE, Head, Youth Connexions, Hertfordshire County Council

13:00 Buffet lunch, networking and exhibition

SESSION THREE: LOOKING FORWARD - PROVIDING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

14:00 **Moving towards outcomes-based commissioning for young people: challenges and opportunities**
Denise Burke, Head, Youth and Childcare, London Development Agency (LDA)

14:20 **Increasing participation: understanding young people who do not participate in education or training**
Dr Tom Benton, Deputy Head, Statistics Research and Analysis Group,
National Foundation for Education Research (NFER)

14:40 **Meeting government targets: increasing apprenticeship places**
Benita Holmes, Business Development Director, Learner Services, National Apprenticeship Service (NAS)

15:00 Questions and discussion

SESSION FOUR: BEST PRACTICE STREAMS

15:30 Delegates should choose to attend either seminar A or seminar B. Refreshments will be served in the seminar rooms.

A **Reducing the number of NEETs: DCSF focused policies - ROOM: EUSTON SUITE**
Oliver Newton, Policy Manager, NEETs, Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF)

B **Changing behaviour: working with the hardest to reach NEETs - ROOM: COUNCIL CHAMBER**
Michelle Bellamy, Contracts and Liaison Manager, A4e Ltd

16:30 Close of conference

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Speaker Biographies

(biographies are shown in alphabetical order by surname)

Michelle Bellamy
Contracts and Liaison Manager
A4e Ltd

Michelle Bellamy has worked in the field of social regeneration for ten years for both the public and private sectors, including local authorities and the Connexions Service. Michelle currently works for the Education and Enterprise Division of A4e – an international business delivering services for individuals, organisations and governments with a vision of directly improving people's lives.

Michelle manages a number of initiatives for young people aged 16 – 19 years who are NEET or at risk of NEET. These innovative programmes involve direct engagement of the clients, personal / social development, employability skills and IAG (information, advice and guidance), to support NEETs into further learning and sustainable employment. A4e also engages with 14 – 16 year olds who are NEET or at risk of NEET via multi-functional vocational training centres across the UK - working with local authorities, schools, pupil referral units and parents to provide pathways for their young people to succeed.

Dr Tom Benton
Deputy Head, Statistics Research and Analysis Group
National Foundation for Education Research (NFER)

Dr Tom Benton is Deputy Head of the Statistics Research and Analysis Group at the National Foundation for Education Research (NFER) where he has worked since 2001. He has been closely involved with a number of large-scale national and international surveys of young people including the Youth Cohort Study, the PISA study, the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) and the nine-year Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study (for the DCSF), where he pioneered the use of latent variable modelling at NFER to explore the effect of a range of influences on the attitudes and experiences of young people at school. He has also worked on numerous evaluations of government initiatives aimed at increasing participation in education and training post-16.

Denise Burke
Head, Youth and Childcare
London Development Agency (LDA)

Denise is Head of Youth and Childcare at the London Development Agency (LDA) where she delivers the Mayor's Childcare Strategy for London and is developing the LDA's Youth Programme. She successfully designed and implemented the Childcare Affordability Programme (CAP) in 2005, to make childcare in London more affordable and flexible for lower income families. CAP has now been given the status of one of the Child Poverty pilots, CAP 09. Denise is also working on an innovative capital project to build an intergenerational centre in London providing services for the whole community, linking the Mayor of London's Older People's and Childcare strategies. In addition she is on government's Generations Together working group.

Denise is Chair of BBC Children in Need for London and South East Region and a Director of Capacity, a public interest body committed to improving the lives of children and their families. She is also Chair of Governors at her local school and is on the management committee of a children's centre in Shepherds Bush.

Elizabeth Fells
Head of Group, Public Services Reform
CBI

Elizabeth commenced at the CBI as Head of Group, Public Services Reform, in December 2008. She is responsible for issues related to the delivery of public services in the areas of education and children, welfare to work and home affairs, as well as public private partnerships and the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). Prior to joining the CBI Elizabeth worked at the Australian Treasury as an Economic Analyst, and as an Adviser for the Western Australian government in the Cabinet Office and the Treasurer's Office.

John Freeman CBE
Director, Raising Expectations Action Programme (REACT)
Local Government Association (LGA)

Since December 2008, John has been leading the sector-led support programme for the transfer of responsibility of 16-19 education – a total of more than £7bn - from the LSC to local authorities in April 2010. The transfer was proposed in the White Paper 'Raising Expectations' and the support programme is the Raising Expectations Action Programme – the React Programme. Prior to that, John worked in Dudley as Director of Education and Lifelong Learning from 2001 to 2005 and Director of Children's Services from 2005 to 2008. John was inaugural Joint President of the Association of Directors of Children's Services in 2007/08.

John Freeman's background is as a Science Teacher in Birmingham, Hertfordshire and ILEA, where he became an Advisory Teacher. He then moved back to Birmingham as Science Adviser in 1987, and became Director of TVEI in 1988 working on 14-19 vocational education and training. In 1993 he became Head of Education Development for Tim Brighouse. In 1996 he became Deputy Director of Education in Somerset, responsible for school effectiveness, resources, planning, and policy development. John was appointed a CBE in the 2009 New Year's Honours List, for services to local government.

Paul Greenhalgh
Corporate Director, Children and Learning
Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Paul Greenhalgh is the Corporate Director for Children and Learning with Southend-on-Sea Borough Council. He represents the Association of Directors of Children's Services on the Youth Workforce Reform Programme Board and is the Lead DCS for the implementation of the Machinery of Government Changes for 16-19 year-olds in the Eastern region. He has a background in school improvement, special educational needs and vocational education and is Author of the award-winning book, 'Emotional Growth and Learning'.

John Hayes MP
Shadow Minister for Innovation and Skills

John was born in 1958 and married Susan Hopwell, who he has two sons with, in July 1997. He was educated at Colfe's Grammar School and University of Nottingham, where he graduated with a BA Hons Politics and a PGCE in History/English.

John was elected as Member of Parliament for South Holland and The Deepings in 1997, following twelve years as a Conservative Councillor in Nottinghamshire.

Following his election he was appointed Secretary of the Agriculture Select Committee and Vice-Chairman of the Conservative Backbench Education Committee before becoming a Vice-Chairman of the Conservative Party until July 2000. Since then John has been appointed an Opposition Whip, Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Shadow Minister for Local and Devolved Government, with particular responsibility for Housing and Planning and Shadow Minister for Transport. Since December 2007, he has served as the Shadow Minister for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education, and has developed a reputation for assiduously progressing the skills and widening participation agenda. John is also the Chairman of the all party group on disability and Secretary of the all party group on brain injury.

Benita Holmes
Business Development Director, Learner Services
National Apprenticeship Service (NAS)

Benita began her career with the Department of Employment at the Manpower Services Commission. She continued to work for the Department of Employment until the Training and Enterprise Councils were established. She played a key role in setting up the North Derbyshire TEC and then continued her Project Management role with Southern Derbyshire Chamber of Commerce, Training and Enterprise.

Whilst at the TEC she also undertook a range of secondments, most notably as Corporate Manager for an urban regeneration company, established to administer £37.5m of public funds to regenerate an inner city area in Derby with a large development site. During this time she also studied part time for her Masters in Business Administration (MBA) at Derby University.

Having joined the LSC at its inception she was the Senior Policy Manager for the Apprenticeship programme, responsible for developing and implementing national strategies and policies to support delivery of the programme through the regional offices. This included the introduction of the Adult Apprenticeship programme and Higher Apprenticeships.

She is now the Business Development Director for Leaner Services for the National Apprenticeship Service, leading on the development and implementation of national learner engagement strategies to support delivery of the Apprenticeship programme.

Oliver Newton
Policy Manager, NEETs
Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF)

Oliver Newton works at the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) as the Policy Manager with responsibility for the government's target to reduce the proportion of young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) by two percentage points by 2010. As part of this role, Oliver spends a lot of time talking to front line professionals in Local Authorities, Connexions services and voluntary sector organisations. He has worked in the DCSF and its predecessor for the past four years in a variety of different roles, including on the Academies programme and from June 2007 as part of the Transition Team that created the new Department.

John O'Leary
Editor
Policy Review Magazine

John O'Leary is the Editor of Policy Review Magazine and previously edited The Times Higher Education Supplement from 2002 until 2007. Before that, he was the Education Editor of The Times for nine years, having joined the paper in 1990 as Higher Education Correspondent. A graduate of Sheffield University, he began his career on the Evening Chronicle, in Newcastle upon Tyne, and worked on the THES throughout the 1980s, latterly as Deputy Editor.

He edits The Times Good University Guide, which has been published annually since 1993, and the Guide to the World's Top Universities, first published in 2006. He was a member of the government inquiry into primary school tests in 1999 and has been a member of the Board of British/Irish Encounter since 2005. He now advises a number of universities and national organisations in the education field, as well as writing regularly for The Times and a variety of magazines and journals.

Andrew Simmons OBE
Head, Youth Connexions
Hertfordshire County Council

Andrew is Head of Youth Connexions; Hertfordshire's integrated youth support service. He was formerly Chief Executive of Hertfordshire Connexions since its inception in 2001. He took up his current role following the merger of Connexions with the County Council's Youth Service in April 2008.

Hertfordshire has seen significant reductions in the number of young people who are NEET and in both 2006 and 2007 had the second lowest NEET rate in the country - 4.2% in 2006 and 3.9% in 2007 - falling from a 2002 baseline of 5.9%.

More recently, the economic downturn has led to an increase in these numbers although it remains one of the LAs areas with the lowest NEET rates.

Andrew is joint Chair of the National Connexions Network and has contributed to thinking on NEET policy at national level. Hertfordshire participated in the success Budget Holding Lead Professional pilot (focussing on NEETs) and is also one of the LAs piloting the Apprenticeship Pathfinder Project.

Before moving to Hertfordshire, Andrew worked for DfES and Government Office, East of England on TEC / LSC, youth training and early Connexions policy development. He worked as interim Director of Learning at Norfolk and Waveney TEC and earlier in his career worked as a Staff Trainer and Area Manager within the Employment Service.

Outside of work Andrew has worked as a Volunteer Youth Worker for the past twelve years, running youth football teams in the village near Cambridge where he lives. He still coaches football and is now Chairman of the football club. Andrew was awarded an OBE for services to young people in the 2007 New Years Honours list.

John Stone
Chief Executive
Learning and Skills Network (LSN)

John Stone is currently Chief Executive of the Learning and Skills Network, an independent company set up in 2006 as a successor to a series of government agencies operating in post-compulsory education and training. It currently employs over 200 staff at its offices in London and Belfast.

At LSN John leads an organisation which supports excellence in Learning and Skills. It does this through delivering quality improvement and staff development programmes that support specific government initiatives, through research, training and consultancy; and by supplying services directly to schools, colleges and training organisations.

He is a Governor at the London City Lit and member of the Scottish Further Education Unit, London Higher Skills and JISC Services Boards. He currently chairs the BECTA e-Maturity Framework Design Authority and was a member of the Higher Education Funding Council Committee of Enquiry in the Changing Learner Experience.

Prior to this appointment John was Principal of Ealing, Hammersmith and West London College. He was also Vice-Chairman of the Joint Information Systems Committee, Chair of the Association of Colleges London Region, a board observer at the London Development Agency and a board member of West London Business, Regenesis and the Southall Regeneration Partnership.

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