

Twenty Years and Counting

Lesley works as a Customer Adviser for Marks & Spencer Sunderland. Lesley, who accessed Azure's Workstep programme through retention in September 2004, is celebrating her twenty years of service with her employer this year.



Anne presenting Lesley with her certificate

Lesley started working within Marks & Spencer's food hall in July 1986 but her role has broadened over the years.

Lesley now works across various sections of the store including, menswear, homeware and health & beauty. Her duties include customer service, stock replenishment and visual merchandising.

To mark her special achievement, Lesley was awarded with a bonus by her employer and presented with a certificate by her Line Manager Anne,

who also achieved twenty years service earlier this year. Anne and Lesley have only been working together since May, but they have already established an excellent working relationship and are delighted to be sharing their twenty year celebrations together.

In fact Lesley gets on well with all her colleagues and she really enjoys working for Marks & Spencer. She said, 'The job gives me something to aim for and helps me to be more independent.' Lesley has already put her bonus to good use, redecorating her bedroom and also treating her family to a meal at a local restaurant.

Contact us

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Azure Employment Services

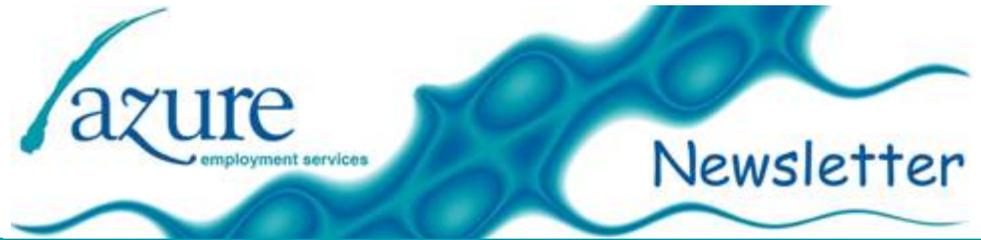
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Azure Makes the Grade

Issue 5
October 2006

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Azure is celebrating after earning the approval of the government's Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI). The ALI recently inspected the Charity's Workstep provision and the results have just been officially released this month.



Azure was awarded a grade 2 for leadership and management, equality of opportunity and delivery of the Workstep programme. A grade 2 is considered to be good by ALI standards.

The inspection involved 4 inspectors spending a week within the organisation. The inspectors carried out interviews and observations with Azure staff and also with clients and employers accessing the Workstep programme.

Azure Employment Services would like to thank everyone who took part in the inspection process and for helping to make it so successful.

A complete copy of Azure's inspection report can be downloaded from www.ali.gov.uk



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Race for Life

Cancer Research UK's Race for Life is the biggest women-only fundraising event in the UK with races taking place all over the country. Over 3000 women came together on Sunday 21 May 2006 at Saltwell Park to walk, jog and run the 5km course through Gateshead. Race for Life is sponsored by Tesco and so it was not surprising that the staff of Tesco South Shields were keen to take part in the annual event as usual.

Suzanne and
Supervisor
Joanne Scurfield
pictured with the
Shields Gazette
newspaper article



Suzanne, who accesses Azure's Workstep programme, has been working as a General Assistant at the branch for three years now and each year she has taken part in the Race for Life. Altogether, 65 women from the store turned out on the red hot day in May and stuck together to take on the 5km course dressed as Cheerleaders.

This year the race was even more personal for the Tesco team as a colleague has recently been diagnosed with breast cancer and is currently receiving treatment. Not surprisingly, Suzanne took every opportunity to gather sponsorship for the event and managed to gain support from the Employment Services department when attending a training course at Azure.

In total the Tesco team raised £2,464 for Cancer Research UK and also gained some valuable publicity for the event with a full page article in the Shields Gazette and a follow up story due out soon.



Day Trip to Belsay Hall



Leslie, Gemma, Kelly, David, Samantha, Peter, Jimmy and Mark at Belsay Hall, Castle and Gardens.

This September a group of seven trainees accessing Azure's e2 horticultural training programme spent a day at Belsay Hall, Castle and Gardens. Advisers Richie and Toni, and Horticultural Trainer Jimmy, hoped the day would help the trainees to relate their training experiences to an actual garden, rich in plants.

Best Practice in Poland

Training and Development Manager Carol Robson recently represented Azure at a transnational conference in Poland. The event was held in Gdansk by the RC Foundation on Wednesday 23rd of August.



Carol was one of five representatives from the UK to deliver a workshop at the conference. Carol's presentation outlined the success of Azure's Horticulture and Basic Skills Course and was designed to share good practice with other organisations and charities from around the world.