



case study

equal opportunities



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The Objective One Partnership
for Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly

VOCATIONAL TRAINING SCHEME

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the project

Short course vocational training delivered at local venues aimed at improving business and technical skills required by those working in land based industries in Cornwall.

The Programme has invested £1.3 million from the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) in the project which has a total cost of £3.48 million.



The agricultural sector is experiencing significant change through revisions to the Common Agricultural Policy. VTS aims to help businesses adapt to and profit from these changes. It provides short courses, to develop expertise and skills in technical and business related activities. It supports and facilitates technical and business development groups of land based businesses through a structured development programme.

measures of equal opportunities adopted

To enable equality of access to opportunities, including all levels of training and sustainable employment, for people who are disadvantaged in the economy, including by virtue of age, ethnicity, rural isolation etc:

The practicalities of training provision have a very strong influence on equality of access to training opportunities, particularly for those in rural isolation such as farmers. Training events need to fit around the farming calendar, for example no training activity is held in August and most training is concentrated in the winter period. Providing funding so that farmers can buy in relief workers has been one very positive way of helping them attend training events. VTS provides up to 75% of costs of temporary assistance (relief workers) and/or childcare through its Locum Service.

To enable equality of access to opportunities for all women, including to all levels of training and sustainable employment:

Duchy College is seeking to increase female participation in training activity. One very simple and productive step has been that of addressing marketing material about training opportunities jointly to 'Mr and Mrs' at the agricultural business. This has led to much higher numbers of women booking training, both for themselves and for other business members.

To enable equality of access to opportunities for people with disabilities, including all levels of training and sustainable employment:

Duchy College use a range of premises across Cornwall for training, both on and off the farm. All off farm venues have full physical accessibility for people with disabilities (important for people with temporary as well as permanent disabilities e.g. a farmer with a broken leg). On farm venues have a risk assessment undertaken so that the extent of accessibility is understood. People booking on training courses are asked whether they have any special needs including dietary needs and if any specific support is needed e.g. information in Braille or literacy support, this will be provided.



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benefits of equal opportunities

VTS is responsive to local training needs, developing and delivering a rolling programme of training courses. During 2004 it delivered approximately 4000 training days across 480 training events in Cornwall. Equality of access is a challenge, with such a diverse training programme, but important. It ensures all people working in land based industries can develop skills and knowledge to help their business grow and adapt to change.

Agriculture is traditionally a male dominated profession. However women in agriculture are often proactive in business management and developing new enterprises. It therefore made sound business sense for Duchy College to target vocational training opportunities at both men and women in the agricultural sector. Its targeted marketing campaign has increased the number of women booking training places (for themselves and others) from 10-20% to about 50% and has helped Duchy College achieve an average of 29% female participation across all its training days in Cornwall.

Practical organisation of training courses in relation to the venues used and support provided has contributed to the quality of the VTS. People value the consideration given to their needs and this helps to encourage participation in training. The Locum Service and the timing of courses are particularly important in helping to achieve participation in training. The Locum Service also ensures no loss of income to the farm through lost working time.

lessons learnt

Project Manager, Cameron Tonkin, says:

"Incorporating equal opportunities has had an important qualitative impact on VTS as people feel they are being taken care of and their needs are being addressed. This all helps to encourage people into training, to help their farm business develop. We still want to do more and we are always looking for more ways to involve women in VTS."

Jane Tripp, who attended a four day course entitled 'Foot trimming saves both time and money' in anticipation of moving into management of a calf unit, said:

"It was very useful, the new foot trimming skills mean I could improve the health and well being of animals at any time if it is required. The course provided the skills

I needed and was organised in a way that made it easy for me to attend."

Jane used the locum service fund to employ relief help when she was not on the farm.

For more information about how you can incorporate equal opportunities into your project please contact the Objective One Partnership Office on 01872 241379 or email objectiveone@cornwall.gov.uk.