

27th November 2008



Press Release

For immediate release

Through the pearly gates of enterprise

The East London Small Business Centre (ELSBC), the UK's longest established enterprise agency celebrated its pearl (30th) anniversary this week (26th November 2008).

To celebrate 30 years of helping people in deprived communities in east London to set up and develop their businesses, ELSBC, hosted an evening reception at the historic Christ Church, Spitalfields, with an evening programme which traced the Centre's past three decades.

The keynote speech was given by f the Rt.Hon. Stephen Timms, Financial Secretary to the Treasury and local MP for East Ham. Tim Heath, ELSBC's Chief Executive and Pauline Barnett, deputy Chief Executive hosted a night of entrepreneurial extravaganza, including a miniature fashion show from the ethically creative *Junky Styling*.

The Centre has helped more than 10,000 new and existing businesses in east London and provided financial support in access of £10 million and has a strong and long established relationship with the communities it serves.

The Minister emphasised the ELSBC's track record of helping small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) through two previous recessions, and emphasised the Government's commitment to help small businesses during the present economic downturn.

He said: "By supporting small businesses in east London, the East London Small Business Centre is playing an important role in making sure the residents take full advantage of new opportunities arising from the 2012 Olympics."

ELSBC covers five east London boroughs which have a total of 42,000 unemployed residents and suffer from the highest levels of social deprivation in the UK. It is estimated that 1 in 12 people will be unemployed in the UK by 2010, and this downturn will lead to more people turning into self employment.

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East London Small Business celebrates 30 years of enterprise support

“We must not allow short term unemployment to develop into long term worklessness and the survival of SME’s in east London is crucial.” added Mr Timms.

Established in 1978, ELSBC’s ethos as a not for profit organisation, dedicated to the residents of east London has not changed. Even during this economic downturn, its free services continue to be as sought after as ever – with over 5,000 would-be entrepreneurs contacting the centre each year.

Tim Heath said: “With the current gloomy predictions about future redundancies, we want to ensure that people explore and pursue enterprise as a alternative and worthy route to employment. With the long history of our Centre, and dedication to enterprise and east London, this event highlighted our past and future contribution to the economic well being of east London, while giving us a chance to thank all our supporters and congratulate our clients for their tenacity.”

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Editor’s Note:

1. East London Small Business Centre, ELSBC, actively supports small businesses in east London. Established in 1978, ELSBC has helped over 8000 people realise their dream of running their own business. ELSBC is a not for profit organisation and is supported by major UK and international Companies; Local Authorities; National & European funded programmes and organisations who are committed to helping create jobs and increase prosperity in east London.

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