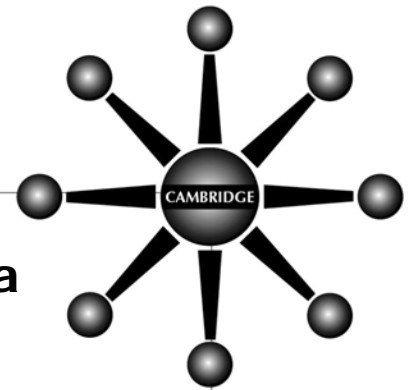


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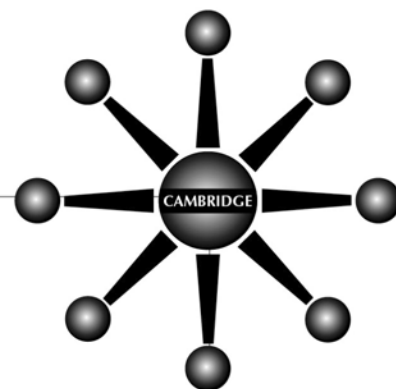
GCP to boost skills and prospects via Romsey Mill expansion

- The Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) is supporting the expansion of a vital service that is helping marginalised young people to gain new skills, improve their work prospects and to develop a more positive view of themselves and their future.
- As part of its Investing in Communities programme, the GCP is playing a key role in a local partnership of public sector, private and voluntary groups that is funding the £750,000 redevelopment of Romsey Mill, Cambridge.
- When completed at the end of January 2007, the refurbishment will include a 50% expansion of community facilities in the heart of the city's Mill Road area. New facilities will include meeting, workshop and training rooms, offices, a sports hall, recording studio, creative arts room and spacious community hall plus crèche.
- The GCP is funding a new post of full-time programme manager as part of a three-year investment. The plans are based on an integrated approach to remodelling the role of Romsey Mill within the community to carefully link skills programmes with local needs.
- The programme manager will assist Romsey Mill staff and volunteers to engage with hard-to-reach young people that may have struggled with school, work and education; had difficult family backgrounds; or may be lone parents. By nurturing key life and vocational skills in areas such as literacy, the five core Romsey Mill programmes give individuals the confidence and capabilities to take a more active role in the workplace and their wider community.



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- The new facilities and extra funding will allow more people to benefit from the services. In the past year the programme has helped over 250 people to develop new skills and, in many cases, to assist them with finding employment. The expansion programme aims to more than double the numbers of people gaining new skills that lead to work. Furthermore, there are plans to broaden the range of activities, offer new pathways to mainstream learning and extend the services to other parts of the city and beyond.
- Phillippa Ashcroft, project manager of Romsey Mill said, "From the local community to County level we have had tremendous support for our work. We are immensely grateful to those organisations, including the GCP, that have made this possible. The expanded Romsey Mill is going to be a fantastic resource for the local community and beyond."
- Mike Carter, Investing in Communities Manager at the GCP said, "This redevelopment is an ambitious programme that is going exceptionally well. The Romsey Mill team are doing an excellent job and we look forward to taking full advantage of the improved facilities and services. The expansion opens up exciting opportunities to help improve the lives and chances of many more hard-to-reach young people and their families locally."

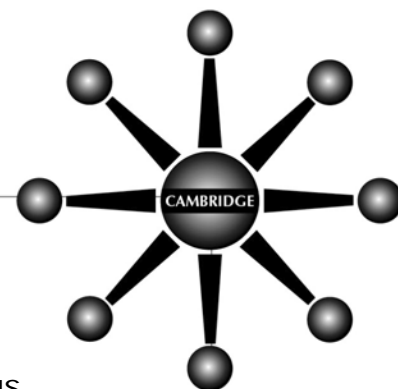
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Notes to Editor

- The Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) is the Sub-Regional Economic Partnership covering a 25-mile radius around Cambridge. The sub-region includes Huntingdon, Ely, Newmarket, Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill, Royston and Stansted. It has a population of 635,000 people, 3500 businesses and an annual economy worth over £12 billion.
- The partnership brings together senior representatives from the public sector, business and community as a cohesive driving force with a unique mandate to meet the goals of the sub-regional economic strategy. The common vision is to advance the interests of Greater Cambridge and enable the realisation of its potential as a world-class, thriving economic area. GCP projects aim to create a balanced framework for structural, economic, social, environmental and cultural development of Greater Cambridge.
- The GCP manages the Investing in Communities (IiC) programme throughout the Greater Cambridge sub-region. IiC brings together the public, private and voluntary sectors within local partnerships to create new opportunities for disadvantaged individuals and the socially excluded to help them achieve their potential. The GCP supports projects that enable engagement with hard-to-reach people and help them to develop the social, practical and work skills they need to achieve their potential as citizens that can take an active role in the local community and workplace.

For more information: www.gcp.uk.net

