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The Northamptonshire Observatory Newsletter



Observatory Partners:

Northamptonshire County Council

Northamptonshire Partnership

Northamptonshire Borough & District Councils

Northamptonshire Learning & Skills Council

Northamptonshire Chamber

University College, Northampton

Northamptonshire Police

Northamptonshire Police Authority

Northamptonshire Primary Care Trusts

Northamptonshire Fire Service

Council for the Voluntary Sector

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In this issue

International award win	1
Statistical corner	1
NILES launches	2
New Executive Board	2
Website	2

International award win

Partners involved in the Northamptonshire Observatory project are celebrating after winning an International Information Industry Award.

The awards, described as 'the Oscars of the information world' recognise the achievements of information teams, information, knowledge and content management projects, vendors and individual information professionals. The observatory won its award for the category 'Innovation in Content Management'.

The short listed entries were judged by an international team of information experts and the observatory beat prestigious competition such as the Discovery Network Europe, the Independent News Multimedia Archive and the Department of Constitutional Affairs.

Judges of the award stated that they were "impressed by this innovative project developed by a partnership of major public sector agencies. It created an easy to use, flexible observatory portal which brought disparate sources into a coherent whole and showed



Clare Hart From the award sponsor, Factiva, Martin Hammond, Deputy Chief Executive KBC & Observatory Chair, Pat Toulmin, Observatory Development Manager, Jez Goodman, Head of Economic Development NCC and Lynne Moses from tlb at the awards ceremony with Loyd Grossman.

clear evidence of increasing take up."

The ceremony took place on 1st December and awards were presented by TV personality and board member of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, Loyd Grossman.

Pat Toulmin, Observatory Development Manager said:

"We are delighted to gain this international recognition for our website. We would like to thank our partners for their support and tlb (formerly Keywave) of Wellingborough for their hard work in creating the website."

Statistical corner

Use of the Observatory website continues to rise. In November 2004 a record 989 documents and spreadsheets were downloaded. The draft NILES report knocked the ELMA off the download top spot for the first time, with over 300 downloads.

43,639 pages were viewed in January 2005 and the bandwidth requirement was over 1 GB for the first time. A record number of 6,158 visits were made this month.

Even Christmas Day saw some use, with 104 visitors, who amongst other things downloaded 26 separate items and viewed 80 news pages!



NILES is launched in Brussels

Iain Derrick, Director, East Midlands European Office with Marjatta Oksanen, Jez Goodman, Haydn Rees, Graham Irvine and Pat Toulmin

Getting NILES together has been hard work, and it is good to see it well-received by colleagues, but now the real work begins as we try to implement this strategy. That's where the Observatory will perform a vital function.

NILES launches

The Northamptonshire Observatory took part in the launches of the Northamptonshire Integrated Local Employment Strategy (NILES) at the end of December. Funded by the European Union's Article 6 scheme, NILES is an innovative strategy that looks to provide robust responses to the challenges that the Northamptonshire Labour Market will face in the future. Its structure is based upon that of the European Employment Strategy, which has three goals:

- To achieve full employment
- To improve quality and productivity at work
- To encourage social cohesion and an inclusive labour market

The Observatory is one of the innovative measures part funded by this project.

The NILES is now complete and is available on the Observatory website (as are the supporting studies also published that day). Taking place at the Northampton Marriott Hotel, over 80 key stakeholders attended: they now face the challenge of for turning the strategy into a reality. Speakers included Stephanie Berry from Somerset County Council, which also received Article 6 funds and it was interesting to hear about their project and its similarities to NILES.

Andy Clarke of the Northamptonshire Partnership also spoke on the day, connecting the NILES to the Sub-Regional Economic Strategy (SRES) which was also launched in draft form that day. Jim Coleman from EDAW addressed the issues that emerged. Observatory Manager Pat Toulmin gave

an on-line demonstration of the versatility of the Observatory website.

The East Midlands European Office in Brussels was the venue for a launch to attract attention to the European Commission audience. Well attended by representatives from all over the European Union, the launch received coverage in the EU Reporter newspaper. Marjatta Oksanen from the European Commission's Directorate of Employment and Social Affairs was impressed and praised both the strategy and its partnership with the Observatory.

NILES Manager Haydn Rees said "Getting NILES together has been hard work, and it is good to see it well-received by colleagues, but now the real work begins as we try to implement this strategy. Getting people aware of it will be crucial. That's where the Observatory will perform a vital function".

Other News

New Executive Board

A new joint executive board for the Northamptonshire Observatory and the ComPass unit has been formed. The board exists to set policy and direction for the work of both the units.

The following organisations are represented on the board:

The LSC, Northamptonshire Fire Service, Northamptonshire County Council, the district and borough councils, Northamptonshire Police, the Police Authority, the Primary Care Trusts, the

Northamptonshire Partnership, Council for the Voluntary Sector, Northampton and the Northamptonshire Chamber.

People, people, people...

This is a request for you to be a part of the Observatory and to contribute.

We know that there are many people out there in the county who work with data and statistics or who have expertise in economic development, community development or sustainability.

We are currently developing our People Directory and would like to include details of as many local stakeholders as possible. Please send us your details—photos definitely not compulsory!

Projects, projects, projects..

We would also like to receive details of any relevant research projects that you are undertaking, especially around the Milton Keynes South Midlands study and the growth agenda.

Logon to the Observatory website to see how both the People Directory and the Projects section work.



EUROPEAN UNION
European Social Fund
Article 6 Innovative Measures