

Press release : for immediate use – 10 December

Four Corners welcomes European Commissioner



Commissioner Danuta Hübner pictured with photographers Toby Smith and Moira Lovell

Four Corners centre for film & photography welcomed European Commissioner Danuta Hübner on Monday 8th December during her visit to the UK to launch the new European Cohesion Policy package for London.

Danuta Hübner, European Commissioner for regional policy, visited London to launch the new European Cohesion Policy programme for the city. She presented the new £319 million (€ 382 million) package for the capital together with Boris Johnson, Mayor of London, and Tony McNulty, Minister for Employment and Minister for London. As part of her visit to the city, the Commissioner visited two projects in East London which have received EU support for start-up companies.

Speaking ahead of her visit, Commissioner Hübner said: *“Europe’s Cohesion Policy is helping London and other European cities to weather the global economic crisis by providing long-term grant investment for jobs and growth. We are investing in small businesses, in innovation, energy efficiency and the knowledge economy. The*

European Commission has teamed up with the European Investment Bank to provide additional loan capital for urban regeneration through the JESSICA (Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas) initiative and we are also working hard to simplify grant application procedures and to cut red-tape."

The programme for London (see [MEMO/08/55](#)) promotes greater innovation, collaboration and environmental efficiency for London's small and medium enterprises (SMEs). It will help them access new markets and finance. The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) also contributes to challenging equality targets, which are rigorously monitored.

Alongside this, the programme will invest in environmental improvements that will help transform those areas of London with the largest scope for increasing job provision. It will focus on promoting clusters of companies and on projects that help businesses to improve their own environmental performance.

In the morning, Commissioner Hübner visited two East End projects that have received ERDF support: Four Corners film and photography centre in Bethnal Green and the East London Small Business Centre.

The support for Four Corners (121 Roman Road) achieved the following:

- Redeveloped disused premises to create a new centre for film, photography and related media;
- Supported SMEs and freelance workers in the creative and cultural industries sector;
- Facilitated the development of new and existing local businesses, through provision of business support, high quality facilities and start-up 'incubator' units;
- Created pathways to employment in the media industries for local people through specialised training programmes and employability schemes;
- Ran a business development programme for micro businesses and freelance workers in Tower Hamlets, Hackney and Newham.

The East London Business Centre (88-94 Wentworth Street) benefited from ERDF funding for six projects that achieved the following:

- Support for start-up companies and small businesses in Tower Hamlets and Newham;
- Provided one-to-one business counselling sessions;
- Targeted economically excluded groups including black and ethnic minorities and women entrepreneurs;
- Promoted and marketed creative designers by opening up and building on new opportunities created by meeting buyers from home and abroad.

Notes for Editors

London will benefit from £152 million (€ 182 million) from ERDF funding, match funded by £167 million (€ 200 million) of national funding over the seven years from 2007 to 2013. It will also benefit from £371 million (€ 443 million) from the European Social Fund match funded by the same amount of national funding.

The UK will be allocated £8.9 billion (€ 10.6 billion) under the EU Cohesion Policy in 2000-07.

Four Corners is a unique centre for film and photography, supporting over 500 people a year through specialist training and business support. It is recognised for its support for traditionally under-represented groups in East London, and promotes over 20 people into jobs in the film & television industries.

Four Corners is part of the creative industries - London's 3rd largest employment sector and 2nd biggest source of jobs. In the borough of Tower Hamlets over 13% of local jobs are in the creative industries, and the sector is particularly important in East London where new centres for media and design are growing in areas that have experienced long-term economic decline.

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