

# *Encouraging news on future of Olympic training facility*

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Olympics Minister Hugh Robertson has written to the UKCG promising to urgently look into the imminent closure of the Beckton Park Olympic Training Facility.

LOCOG, the organising committee for the Olympics, has served notice on the site in favour of using the land as a VIP car park during the games. UKCG had written to the Minister expressing serious concerns over the closure of a site which has trained nearly 1,400 local people in construction related skills since its opening in 2007. The majority of these have been long term unemployed or young people with almost a third finding immediate employment on the Olympic site.

UKCG has proposed a temporary reduction in the size of the site during the Olympics to accommodate the need for parking spaces, before the training centre returns to its full usage after the games.

Stephen Ratcliffe, Director of UKCG said, "The Minister's promise to consider the case of Beckton Park is good news, but we need to move quickly to prevent the closure of this unique training centre. The legacy of training local people for local jobs should not be lost. At a time of rising unemployment, it is vital that we give people the skills they need to meet the expected demand for workers on major construction projects around London. In addition to the Olympics, projects including Crossrail and Thames Tideway will all require skilled people over the coming years"

## **Notes for editors**

- 1) **The UK Contractors Group (UKCG)** represents leading contractors operating in the UK on construction specific issues. Its mission is to represent contractors' interests to government and key clients and to encourage contractors to work together to promote change and best practice, especially on health and safety and environmental issues. UKCG also works closely with the CBI Construction Council to ensure that contractors' interests are properly reflected in the wider business agenda.