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*****NEWS RELEASE*****

END OF PHASE THREE OF THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR WORKFORCE PROJECT

In 2004 SkillsActive, the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for Active Leisure and Learning was assigned lead responsibility for the Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce Project across all other SSCs in partnership with the UK Workforce Hub.

SkillsActive led this project in three phases. The final phase was completed in March. Over this three year period the project offered support to SSCs in addressing the skills needs of the UK's voluntary and community workforce, and in becoming a place where the voluntary and community workforce could seek advice. The SSCs that actively participated in the project, have now built their own capacity to support employers in the voluntary and community sector.

In September 2006, the Sector Skills Development Agency together with SkillsActive and the UK workforce hub commissioned consultants (Rock Solid Social Research) to make recommendations on the future working and management arrangements between the SSCs and their VCS partners which would be fit for purpose in terms of meeting the challenges set by the government for the next three years.

Following the consultation report, agreement has now been reached between SSCs, the SSDA and the UK workforce hub that the Leitch review is taken into account, along with the Third Sector review and the emerging Sector Skills Agreements; to inform the future work needed to address the skills needs of the voluntary and community workforce and the best approach. The Sector Skills Development Agency is currently leading on these discussions.

For information on the Voluntary and Community Workforce Project September 2004 – March 2007 visit: www.skillsactive.com/resources/vcs-workforce-project. For any enquiries relating to future work, please email caroline.roberts@ssda.org.uk at the Sector Skills Development Agency.

-ENDS-

For more information on SkillsActive please contact:

Shelly Beresford
Tel: 020 7632 2000
Email: shelly.beresford@skillsactive.com

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. SkillsActive is the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for the sport and fitness, playwork, the outdoors and caravan industries – known as the active leisure and learning sector.

2. SSCs are UK-wide, employer-led organisations that aim to tackle the skills and productivity needs of their sector. Twenty five SSCs make up the Skills for Business Network. The Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA) underpins the network and is responsible for funding, supporting and monitoring the SSCs.
3. SkillsActive's Sector Skills Agreement defines the sector's skills needs and forms an agreement between employers, government and funding partners to shape the workforce for the next ten years. Priorities identified as a result of the SSA process are: improve the quality and range of services; improve recruitment and retention; professionalise and upskill the existing workforce; match supply to demand; redirect funding for training; increase sector investment in our people.
4. SkillsActive is *Shaping Skills for the Future*, through...
 - PEOPLE...
...ensuring all people in the sector are appropriately trained and qualified.
 - PRODUCTIVITY...
...ensuring better performance through the professional development of the sector.
 - PROVISION...
...ensuring the sector has accessible, relevant and funded training across the UK.
 - PROMOTION...
...ensuring the contributions of the sector are recognised at a governmental level.
5. For more information about SkillsActive, please visit our website @ www.skillsactive.com