

CELEBRATIONS ARE JUST THE JOB

10:30 - 08 June 2007

A charity which has helped 12,000 unemployed people and former offenders find work is inviting them back to help their 25th birthday.

Apex was launched with just four employees in 1982, but since then has grown into a major organisation with 80 members of staff helping people into work across Leicestershire.

The charity has gone from being run from a small office in Millstone Lane, Leicester, to becoming a four-floor centre in Charles Street, with computer suite, classroom space and career advice offices.

Now Apex staff want the people it has helped with education, skills training for jobs and advice to join them in celebrating 25 years of its work.

People who have attended, or still connected with courses being run by Apex, are invited to one of three parties at the charity's Charles Street base on Thursday, June 28.

Haley Graham, 33, of Eyres Monsell, Leicester, who started visiting the centre when she became unemployed, said: "I've had my life improved a lot by coming here, as I asked to do some computer courses when I was made redundant in January this year.

"I did the courses and have been working as a volunteer receptionist here, too, which I'm hoping will lead to a permanent job soon.

"I know lots of people who've been helped."

Unemployed Nasim Aboo-baker, 31, of Uppingham Road, Humberstone, Leicester, said: "I've been able to go on courses for single parents where I've learned literacy and numeracy skills during the three years I've been coming here.

"I've also been doing a course to help me become a school classroom assistant."

Ann Height, Apex chief executive, said: "I am absolutely thrilled to be celebrating this achievement in reaching our 25th anniversary.

"Apex started with a very small team and working with disadvantaged groups in the Leicester area. We have now become one of the East Midlands' biggest organisations working across the community with those seeking to gain training and employment to bring a better life for themselves and their families."

Apex began by helping former offenders resettle after leaving custody, but in 1990 the charity started helping others such as the long-term unemployed, disabled people and single parents.

The parties will include musical entertainment, food and drink, as well as a talk about the first 25 years of Apex.

Apex would be pleased to hear from any former client interested in attending the party and the charity can be contacted on 0116 261 6504.

Leicester Mercury