

Project Delivery – February 2009

Summary

Investing in Communities Cambridgeshire

Investing in Communities Cambridgeshire is a programme from the East of England Development Agency in association with Cambridgeshire County Council and the Greater Cambridge Partnership



Contents

Introduction	3
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Project Summaries:

Projects	Lead Organisation	
Intervention Skills		
Romsey Mill	Romsey Mill Trust	5
New Horizons lap top loan scheme	Cambridge Housing Society	7
Vocational Skills Centres	Cambridgeshire County Council	9
St Neots Space for Creativity	Huntingdonshire District Council	10
Learning Communities	CP Learning Trust	11
Learning Communities Infrastructure	Cambridgeshire County Council	13
Sandalwood Farm Young People	College of West Anglia	15
Intervention Employment		
Slivers of Time	Anglia Ruskin University	16
Retain / Regain Research	Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health	18
Rosmini Centre, Wisbech	Rosmini Centre Trust	19
Bangladeshi community project	Cambridgeshire County Council	21
Vocational Rehabilitation Centre	Papworth Trust	23
Intervention Enterprise		
CREAM project	NWES	25
Octavia Hill	Octavia Hill Birthplace Museum	27
Enterprise Workspace in March	NWES	28

Investing in Communities – meeting local needs across Cambridgeshire

Introduction

liC Cambridgeshire supports disadvantaged people and communities across the county to improve their confidence and skills to assist them to get a job or possibly work for themselves. This sub-regional programme is built on wide partnership support with around half the funding coming from the East of England Development Agency (EEDA).

The programme:

1. Supports young people in transition from school, economically inactive adults and adults without qualifications into further education, employment or training
2. Addresses barriers to employment, skills and enterprise for black and minority ethnic communities and those with a work limiting illness
3. Encourages enterprise through work with disadvantaged groups in the more deprived communities.

Background

EEDA awarded £2.6million in supporting 22 projects which made up the 2007/8 programme. For 2008/9 the support is around £1.5 million and 9 projects are being supported of which 8 are continuation projects. The programme should continue until 2010/11 with potentially another £2.5 million of EEDA support being made available.

The liC investment influences other funding partners and encourages a range of organisations to shift priorities to enable investment in appropriately areas. The programme is integrated with the Cambridgeshire Local Area Agreement reporting outcomes.

Evidence

Investment for 2008/9 has been based on partners assessed needs and identified gaps, building on the extensive evidence base provided by Roger Tym and Partners and the Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion in 2006. This evidenced the varying needs of Cambridgeshire communities of interest and place relating to mapping eighteen different indicators of multiple deprivation.

Evidence shows Cambridgeshire is generally successful and prosperous in comparison with other sub-regions in the East of England, but that significant inequalities persist. 16 specific areas suffer a raft of multiple deprivation – concentrated variously in Wisbech, Huntingdon and Cambridge alongside a general north-south divide with some sparsely populated rural areas suffering very poor access to services.

Additionally a raft of target communities of interest experience disadvantage and discrimination where some focused investment is essential. This includes Travelers & Gypsies, Migrant Workers, BME communities; economically inactive adults, young people not in education, employment or training; disabled people and those with work-limiting illness; lone parents and others locked into caring responsibilities amongst others.

Resources are insufficient to meet all needs and investment has been prioritized to try and maximise impact. Partners worked hard to determine solutions which address social exclusion for many and priorities emerged with the key focus being around Skills, Employment and Enterprise as essential building blocks to enable progress to be made to secure an independent financial future.

Delivery

The following summaries and case studies provide a flavour of what the programme is delivering across Cambridgeshire. Whilst broadly grouped into areas around Employment, Enterprise and Skills there is much cross over and interdependency and it is recognised that these are artificial divides.

The project investment is detailed on the web site of the Greater Cambridge Partnership Hwww.gcp.uk.net where updates are made quarterly.

2008/10

EEDA have delegated delivery of the programme to Cambridgeshire County Council in line with the increased delegation from regional development agencies to local authorities identified in the governments Sub National Review. The Greater Cambridge Partnership has been sub-contracted to be the managing delivery agent.

Some commitments continue in 2009/10 and 11 new project investments that address the social exclusion agenda have been identified for the programme in 2009/10. Those ideas are based on the workshop held on 7 July 2008 where all liC stakeholders were invited and on any other ideas submitted by stakeholders in August 2008. All the new project interventions have been assessed against the evidence need in the county.

The liC team has submitted the EEDA Investment Template in November detailing what liC Cambridgeshire will achieve in 2009/10. This plan has already been approved by Cambridgeshire County Council. It is hoped that on 26th February 2009 the Investment Template will be confirmed by the EEDA Board. The liC team is already working with the potential new project leads on their applications and is developing a tender specification.

To find out more contact:

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Skills: Romsey Mill

Romsey Mill engages with hard-to-reach young people that have struggled with school, work and education, had difficult backgrounds or may be young parents. By nurturing key life and vocational skills in areas such as literacy and IT the Romsey Mill programmes give individuals the confidence and capabilities to participate in the community and progress to the workplace.

liC supported the redevelopment of Romsey Mill in 2006/7, with £315,000 capital and building work was completed January 2007 providing 50% more space for community facilities in the city's Mill Road area. New facilities include meeting, workshop and training rooms, offices, a sports hall, recording studio, creative arts room and spacious community hall plus crèche.

liC supported the project with £27,500 in 2007/8 and is providing a further £20,000 in 2008/9 to help develop the future sustainability of Romsey Mill's programmes.

Status

The redevelopment of Romsey Mill has increased the capacity; the number of distinctive projects developed with hard to reach young people by the Social Inclusion Programme increased from 16 in 2006/7 to 21 in 2007/8 (an increase of over 30%).

Romsey Mill have negotiated a three-year Service Level Agreement with Cambridge City Council, ensuring that their Economic Policy Grant will contribute to the embedded learning activities provided by the Social Inclusion Programme and the Young Parents Programme.

Romsey Mill's work with under 5's and their families now has Children's Centre status. Their Young Parents programme Co-ordinator is now working one day a week across the county sharing good practice around working with teenage parents. Antenatal care and child development screening services are part of the service offer. Discussions are underway to bring parent craft classes and JobCentre Plus services to the Centre.

TRomsey Mill has been asked by Cambridgeshire County Council to pilot 'eStart' – an auditable data collection system which links outcomes to the procurement process - for 3 months. The objective is to ensure appropriate data is collected which can feed into a range of audit processes, not least the Local Area Agreement so impacts of investment made can be fully recorded.

In recognition of Romsey Mill's innovative work with young parents in Cambridge, they won an award together with £10,000 from the Centre of Social Justice at a ceremony in London on 16 July 2008.

Thousands of runners took part in the Chariots of Fire Race on 21 September 2008, with Romsey Mill as one of the two charities to benefit.

The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education featured Romsey Mill's Young Parents Programme amongst examples of successful approaches in their Raising Aspirations guidance.

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CASE STUDY Romsey Mill

Rob's story

Rob* was depressed and isolated when he joined the vocational course, and had a very negative view of life. He felt he had no-one to talk to who understood him. His family, who spoke no English, could not help him negotiate the education system.

He got to know and trust our worker and, through the course, looked into practical issues like bank accounts, personal issues like relationships, and mind-broadening issues such as world affairs. He started to develop social and work-related skills. With support from the worker, he found out about opportunities and applied to Cambridge Regional College (CRC) to study for a BTEC National Diploma.

On being offered a place at CRC Rob realised he could follow his dream of being a software designer. Life began to seem a little less bleak. He began to develop friendships and is now able to confront life more positively, knowing he is not alone.

** client's name has been changed to protect privacy*

Skills: New Horizons lap top loan scheme

The New Horizons project is using ICT as a way of engaging hard to reach groups, helping people to transform their life chances by providing a free loan lap top with home tuition and advice on training and work.

Services are tailored to the customer, so that they are universally accessible and combine opportunities for personal development – learning and skills – with digital inclusion. This style of provision enables the project to reach people who would otherwise miss out because of transport, caring responsibilities or self-exclusion. The project is getting referrals from all over Cambridgeshire – from Wisbech to Littleport, St. Neots to Cambourne.

Clients are able to access an integrated package of:

- Access to ICT equipment and the internet – both by borrowing a laptop computer, printer and digital camera and by offering people the chance to buy low cost ICT equipment
- Face to face home tuition and phone support – to get the best out of ICT and provision of opportunities to gain qualifications
- Referrals into advice on learning and work – helping identify what they want to do and options for achieving goals, plus support and mentoring along the journey
- Referral into home tuition in literacy and numeracy.

Cambridge Housing Society successfully road-tested the New Horizons approach with their own tenants in the county achieving impressive outcomes. By working with other social housing providers, partners and other LiC projects, the project is being extended to reach a much wider audience.

LiC supported this project with revenue of £116,000 in 2007/8, allocated another £90,067 for 2008/9 and intends to support this project with £24,216 in 2009/10.

Status

The project started in July 2007 and is planned to continue until June 2009. To date over 200 people have used the service improving their employability along the way. A quarter of these people were lone parents, 40% were disabled, over 50% said they lived in a rural area and almost 40% had no previous qualifications.

In response to a recommendation of the LiC programme evaluation report in April 2008, the project amended its after-care service to ensure that clients were better supported with their next steps into employment through referral into appropriate services for job search assistance, skills support or qualification courses. This is reflected in the encouraging outcomes for clients 6 months after they had finished the course: 18% had started work (full or part-time), 18% had started a course at college or entered full-time education and 26% were now doing voluntary work. Since receiving support more than half of the beneficiaries had bought their own computer with the other half using computers and internet services in public libraries.

Work is still in train to diversify income streams to develop its sustainability.

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CASE STUDY New Horizons

Charley* lives in Chatteris with a background in drugs and alcohol work. Charley had been out of work for almost 4 months. He expressed frustration that he had not found a job and did not have a CV. Charley had tried to access the computers at his local library, but found that he did not have enough IT knowledge to move forward with his job searches. Charley needed 1:1 tuition in order to learn how to use the Internet and Word and to help him find and apply for work. He was also very keen to get some IT skills to help with employability. Charley had asked for help in compiling his CV but the advice he was given was difficult for him to follow, because of his lack of IT skills. An IAG worker from Cambridge Housing Society helped him to complete a CV prior to the start of the course and discussed how to ask for feedback from unsuccessful job applications.

The Project Worker showed him how to use Word, and how he could edit his CV to create different versions, to increase the impact for each application he was submitting. Charley did not have his own computer at home, so borrowing a laptop for 6 weeks whilst completing the course meant that he could practice his skills between weekly tuition sessions and develop his competency.

Charley reviewed his focus for applications and sent out tailored CVs using the skills that he learned. He was also able to print out the different CVs immediately, using the printer loaned to him. He got three interviews in quick succession and has now accepted a post as a senior youth worker for a church. His new employer has sent him on a two day course of power-point, DTP and media software training, prior to his appointment.

** Client's name has been changed to protect privacy.*

Skills: Vocational Skills Centres

Increased access to high quality vocational provision is a top priority for Cambridgeshire's secondary schools and a crucial ingredient in countywide strategies to reduce the number of young people who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).

In 2007/8 LiC invested £250,000 and is investing another £250,000 in 2008/9 in collaborative vocational centres based in the five areas of greatest socio-economic need and skills shortage in the county. The Capital investment has complemented investment from the Learning and Skills Council in the vocational centres across 22 school sites as well as leveraging in funding from the County Council and the schools and colleges themselves. This investment is resulting in providing more choice for young people to pursue vocational skills at a far quicker rate than would have previously been possible.

The project has enabled schools to provide an increased range of vocational courses since September 2007 with another eleven vocational course opportunities from September 2008 in areas of Construction, Creative and Media, Engineering, Hairdressing, Hospitality, Information Technology, Land Based and Environment, Society, Health and Development and Manufacturing. The focus has been to establish courses providing greater options thereby reducing numbers of students at risk of becoming NEET, but also in making new facilities available to adult learners.

The investment benefits students in rural areas, enabling schools to offer a broader range of vocational courses and reducing the need for students to travel.

Vocational centres have been supported in offering courses at level one and two all part of the 14-19 Strategy for Cambridgeshire.

The LiC investment aims to commit £250,000 for 2009/10 to enhance vocational skills provision in the county, enabling the County Council, Learning and Skills Council and schools to strategically plan their investment.

Status

About 350 students are now following level 1 and 2 courses at the five new centres that were developed and completed in 2007/08.

The project for 2008/9 was approved in July 2008 and the schools are now working hard to get the vocational skills centres completely refurbished and refitted. Most schools will open their courses in April. Some 360 students per annum are expected to benefit.

Investments for 2008/9 include aspects which address the needs of economically inactive adults as a development of the first phase of investment.

A 14-19 transport group has been established this autumn to help to improve the transport issues for people living in rural areas.

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Skills: St Neots Space for Creativity (Creative Exchange)



The investment meets local community needs and fulfils the growth potential for creative industries in the county, enabling the economic growth and regeneration needed to support the town and district. It involves the development of a centre in the market town of St Neots, as a satellite to support the continued development of creative industries linked to other facilities around the region.

The new centre has close links with Longsands College and Huntingdonshire Regional College and forms part of a wider strategy to attract, retain and promote creative businesses. The **Creativexchange** will foster the exchange of creative ideas and assist the fledging businesses to turn their ideas into business. Creative industries offer the potential to be a major factor for sustained economic growth in Huntingdonshire.

The four storey building has a striking design. The ground floor is home to the reception area, networking space and meeting room. The first floor is an open plan shared studio space with hot desks. The second and third floor houses individual work spaces. The 'green' roof provides views over Priory Park and allows tenants thinking space for their creative activities.

The LIC programme contributed £330,000 capital in 2007/8 to this £2 million investment in one of Cambridgeshire's largest towns, where employment opportunities had been hit hard by the recent closure of two large employers.

Status

The building had a successful opening in November and three tenants have now moved in. Huntingdonshire District Council appointed NWES to run the new centre and they are responsible for the marketing, lettings and will provide business support to the involved businesses.

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Skills: Learning Communities

In some communities low educational attainment and poor basic skills levels, combined with a culture of low aspirations, limit opportunities for local people. Working in partnership with local communities, "Learning Communities" are being established to unlock talent by fostering enthusiasm for learning, raising aspirations, and developing skills required by local employers. The project brings together all parts of the community with the wider partnerships to achieve this – it strives to link residents, schools and other providers, employers and other key community members with local support agencies and provider networks.

The key feature of Learning Communities is that they delegate responsibility to as near neighbourhood level as possible – the Neighbourhood Learning Partnerships (NLP). They will enable community leadership to be developed, involving citizens in decision-making, and real issues they face to be addressed. Above all the NLP will champion learning at a 'grass roots' level, through local individuals and organizations that potential learners will know and trust.

liC contributed almost £340,000 to Learning Communities over 2006/8 and is investing another £160,000 in 2008/9 with the intention to commit £330,000 in the following two financial years.

Status

The project started in 2006/7 to develop Learning Communities in Waterlees and Ramsey. Both have a very successful NLP and steering group and Ramsey is now fully sustainable and both have managed to secure funding through the Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities programme. In Ramsey this funds a co-ordinator for local engagement and in Waterlees additional development skills and confidence courses. Waterlees is extended to cover the wards of Kirkgate, Peckover and Clarkson in 2008/9 and is expected to be sustainable by the end of this financial year.

In 2007/8 Littleport and Eynesbury Learning Communities were in their inaugural year. Steering Groups have been set up in both communities; learning champions have been recruited and are working alongside organisations such as CRC and HRC to support Skills for Life delivery in those wards. Both Eynesbury and Littleport have skills for Life courses running in the ward that were not available previously. All learning communities have action plans for each area. Littleport will be sustainable by the end of 2008/9 and Eynesbury will be extended in 2009/10 to cover Eaton Socon.

Learning community in Chatteris has started now their Learning Centre has been completed and is planned to receive continued support in 2008/09/10.

The rollout of a learning community to Oxmoor started in early December 2008.

LSC funded the support of an independent consultant to determine the impact of the Learning Communities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and to recommend areas for improvement. The review reported in July 2008 and main conclusion was that Learning Communities work really well, especially the capacity building aspects. The report can be found on the GCP website.



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CASE STUDY Learning Communities

From the Learning Communities' project worker:

I met Carla at an event at the Oasis where I was promoting a Free course in English and Maths. Carla explained that she had no qualifications as she left school early as she was pregnant and would be interested in joining a class. She explained that she was married with two young children. She had always worked part-time in care homes and had been offered the opportunity to do an NVQ. But she had turned this down as she did not want to work in care in the long term although she did not know what she wanted to do.

I invited her to a skills check session which I had booked at the Oasis during the following week. Carla was a bit unsure but said she would come along. Having completed her English skills check she was surprised to come out at Level 2 in English and Level 1 in Maths. Once I explained about the National Test she was keen to have a go and she was also keen to join a class to improve her Maths. As it happens I had a class running and knew there was a space so I arranged for her to join the following week. She left clutching some sample papers and would ring me once she tried them. I received a phone call the next day from an excited Carla who had got 35 out of 40 write, so a date was set to do the real thing. At the same time an appointment was made with Nextsteps to try and identify what sort of work she would be interested in. Having met with them she decided that perhaps office work was what she wanted to do. I referred to the Library Service and she has now started studying for an ITQ.

Carla took the English Level 2 and passed; this was a great boost to her confidence. At the end of the term she took Maths Level 2, she found it hard and convinced herself that she would not pass – she was wrong, she did. When I rang her with the result I made her day! Carla said “Less than three months ago I had no qualifications, in a dead job and did not know where I was going. I’ve now got two good qualifications and am working towards a third. I feel more confident about looking and applying for other jobs. Thank you.

Skills: Learning Communities Plus Infrastructure

The Learning Communities Plus Infrastructure investment strands are all about building the physical infrastructure to underpin the 'softer'

Learning Communities activities which focus on people and their needs as individuals. This infrastructure provides a range of learning environments and platforms which helps both the motivated and disengaged. By adding to the critical mass of mainstream activity it provides the basis for sustainable activity.

Investment has supported three elements:

- Chatteris 'Learning Centre' has been developed in a redundant part of the Library Building which has been remodelled, refurbished and equipped with a range of ICT to provide a secure learning environment with ready access to broadband and learning materials. A range of learning opportunities are now delivered at the 'centre' which is proving very popular as many facilities have been withdrawn from this rapidly growing town in recent years.
- An internet 'Learning Portal' provides easy access to relevant information about learning, courses and community organisations. This enhances access to a wider range of learning/information by bringing together in user-friendly fashion a range of web based data. Being web based this means that it is accessible to all including the county-wide infrastructure of libraries and Community Access Points.
- Learning Centres will be developed at Wisbech and Ramsey libraries. The projects will contribute to the setting up of a Learning Centre in the enlarged Wisbech and new Ramsey library and will provide tutor supported courses giving access to a wide range of skills development and qualifications. The buildings will also provide community space for groups to meet and will be a progression route for people who have taking part in all the Rosmini Centre, Octavia Hill, Waterlees and Ramsey Learning Community project.

LiC supported the project with capital investment of £155,415 in 2007/8 for the Chatteris Learning Centre and Learning Portal and intend to support £275,000 for the Learning Centres at Wisbech and Ramsey Libraries as part of a £3 million investment.

Status

Chatteris Learning Centre has a full programme of events running from flower arranging to computer courses. We are starting 2009 with some new things on offer - 'My First Home' a Reminiscence Session with the Cambridgeshire Community Archives Network, 'Its Good to be Green' Speaker Layna Warren, Environmental Services Officer and 'Being a Blue Badge Guide' Speaker, Ernie Hall. The room really has provided a good mix for the public to get involved in.

www.cambridgeshire.net is live, and further enhancements are being carried out to improve the user sign up functionality and process. As take up has been limited, work is continuing to encourage volunteers to use the site. A dedicated development worker has been engaged to help bring on board volunteers to use the site and evaluate the potential for volunteers to take on management of some community sites.

The project team is drafting the application form for investment at Wisbech and Ramsey Library starting in 2009/10. The new buildings will open to the public in 2010.

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CASE STUDY Chatteris Learning Centre

Melissa Mason is 29 and lives in Chatteris. She has been a childminder since 2007, looking after her own and a number of other children. Before becoming a mother, Melissa was involved in 'Community Care' work with adults with learning difficulties.

Since taking her GCSE's, Melissa had always wanted to re-take her maths and English as she wanted to improve the grades, for a number of reasons, including the hope that one day she would be able to work in a school as a teaching assistant in the future, and ultimately becoming a teacher.

Recognising maths as one of her weaker subjects, Melissa tackled this subject first. She started with 'Brush Up Numeracy1' and has a National Test booked. Working through practise papers has helped her prepare and she feels that her knowledge and understanding has improved greatly, even in areas such as fractions and percentages which were her weakest areas., and she is also using the new techniques she has learnt in real life scenarios, such as in her childminding role.

Melissa really enjoys the sessions at Chatteris library. The Vermuyden Room is a good place to study as it is tucked away, allowing learners to concentrate, there are enough computers for studying and is not very noisy. She has also got to know local people better through the course.

After completing her maths course, Melissa will go on to study English. She is enthusiastic about continuing after the immediate goals are reached, but for now is content to focus on one subject at a time, aiming for Level2 in both subjects, equivalent to GCSE A-C grade.

Skills: Sandalwood Farm Young People

An outcome of the workshops held in July 2007 to determine future priorities for the programme was the identification of a need to invest in infrastructure to support those young people in Fenland not in education, employment or training. Currently Sandalwood Farm – a working farm based in Murrow, Fenland - is delivering an alternative curriculum to a range of 'excluded' and nearly excluded young people from four colleges across Fenland. The curriculum offer is around sport, some land based activity and a modest amount of animal care.

The project was further developed with the support of the College of West Anglia and the Learning and Skills Council and embedded alternative curriculum provision in partnership with Sandalwood Farm. The funding has enabled two large buildings to be erected on the site - a log cabin to provide 'classroom' space in comfort and a larger 'coverall' building which provides opportunities for outdoor activities but with some protection from the weather.

These new teaching facilities and the potential doubling (and more) in the number of disengaged young people able to access the provision not only provides more course options but also represents a real alternative range of learning opportunities. The project is supported by the Fenland 14-19 Partnership and responds to a number of strategic drivers relating to vocational employability skills and deprivation.

The Programme that is offered at the new facility involves:

1. An Intensive induction/assessment period
2. Skills development with high emphasis on Basic Skills
3. Work placement.

LiC invested £65,000 to this investment in 2007/8. An additional £50,000 was injected from the LSC and £15,000 from the Fenland Partnership.

Status

The coverall building is nearly finished but a new contractor is needed. The centre is still being used every day, twice a day, for 5 days per week and the progress is good. All students are from the target groups. The students are using the log cabin and this is going well.

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Employment: Slivers of Time

'Slivers of Time' is a web based recruitment project providing a database of people, their skills and their availability for flexible working. The project enables employers to meet short-term demands by employing temporary staff quickly and efficiently. It also enables job-seekers to sell their time by the hour at times suitable to them.

The project group consists of all Cambridgeshire local authorities and other interested agencies working with Anglia Ruskin's Employment Bureau to deliver 'Slivers of Time'.

The project:

- Supports the economically inactive or unemployed – including single parents, people with disabilities, migrant workers, young people, those with caring responsibilities and semi retired people - anyone who is looking for work but doesn't want the traditional "nine-to-five" routine..
- Encourages enterprise by offering flexible and cost-effective recruitment, particularly for small businesses and voluntary and community sector as well as larger employers.
- Helps to address the county's skills deficits by enabling people to study and work according to their lifestyles and needs.

Slivers of Time is collaborating with other LiC projects - Learning Communities, New Horizons laptop loans, Rosmini Centre for migrant workers in Wisbech – and other employability projects. Taking a collaborative approach, Slivers of Time links to the 'employment' and 'enterprise' strands of the programme.

LiC supported this project with £42,500 in 2007/8 and committed £32,601 in 2008/9.

Status

The Business Development Manager and team are very active in developing the system and information about this new approach to securing part time work and employees.

Initially Slivers of Time has focused on Cambridge City and the city's immediate catchment area in South Cambs to create a viable and stable market. Feedback from employing organisations has been good and levels of repeat business are high. Employers have used Slivers of Time to access a variety of work, including stuffing envelopes, office work, delivering publicity material, telephone marketing and PR work.

The launch of Slivers of Time in Fenland was on 28 October 2008 in conjunction with NWES and Fenland District Council. In Fenland, Slivers of Time is focusing on supporting small business growth in the district, and the first bookings have already been processed. Slivers will begin working in East Cambs and Huntingdonshire in Spring 2009.

The online website is getting better known and employers and employees are now registering and transactions are gradually building in volume. Slivers of Time aims to be fully sustainable by August 2009.

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CASE STUDY Slivers of Time

Cambridgeshire people are famous for creativity and innovation. Windrush Gear is a typically pioneering young company, producing unique headgear for cyclists, skiers, yachters and other outdoor activities. Windrush's headgear keeps your ears warm and blocks out the sound of the wind, but also enables you to clearly hear traffic, or the voices of your fellow boat crew members.

So we were excited when Windrush approached us to help promote their product. Slivers-of-Time has a press and PR specialist who was able to work on a press campaign with Windrush's Managing Director Paul Goodwin. Paul says "We talked through what we wanted with the Slivers of Time worker who was able to supplement our ideas with his own suggestions based on his experience in PR. The worker delivered a well-written press release and developed a comprehensive list of contacts for us to send the release to, all in line with the agreed budget."

A couple of months later and the investment is starting to reap its rewards. Windrush has been featured in the Cambridge News and Paul has been interviewed on Radio Cambridgeshire's popular breakfast show. Perhaps more importantly, the press release has provoked considerable interest amongst the specialist magazines that Paul wanted to reach, and to date at least 6 have asked for samples of the product for them to review in upcoming issues.

Paul is pleased with the results, and confirms "We have had a number of sales and contacts resulting from this work and would recommend Slivers of Time as a way of completing your projects."

Employment: Retain/Regain Research

The Retain/Regain scheme that was delivered from December 2006 and supported by liC until March 2008 is the subject of a research study by the Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health, a national charity. Researchers from the Sainsbury Centre, in partnership with Anglia Ruskin University, are contacting both GPs and people who have used the service to find out to what degree the service has made a difference.

There is considerable research regarding effective interventions to place and support for people with established mental health problems in the workplace, but little evidence regarding the most effective methods in primary care for working with people with common mental health problems, particularly in relation to work related interventions.

The findings of this research will be relevant to the development and delivery of job retention and replacement models in primary (and possibly secondary care) setting and the roll out of the JobCentre Plus Pathways to Work programme. Furthermore findings will also be relevant to support the development of the proposal for 'Fit to Work' services, as outlined in Dame Carol Black's recent review of the health of the working age population, should Government decide to take these forward. The research report will therefore be widely disseminated nationally, regionally and locally.

liC funded £18,000 for this project in 2007/8 and total project costs are £65,000.

Status

The research started in August 2007. All GP's and clients were interviewed between December 2007 and April 2008 and the project team is now analysing the data from this and the routine data collected by the Richmond Fellowship. A key aim of the research is to increase the evidence base in this field and therefore the research team will be submitting articles on the research to peer review journals during 2009/10. After this a full report will be available.

The successes of the retain/regain project has been recognised by the Department of Health, who will continue to fund a development of the project for at least another two years.

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RETAIN/REGAIN
Stay well - Stay working

Are you feeling stressed, depressed or experiencing any other mental health issue?

- Worried about losing your job?
- Thinking about returning to work or training?
- Struggling at work?
- Need a change in career?

Contact your local RETAIN/REGAIN Advisor for confidential free support and advice.

Our team of qualified advisors now offer employment and careers advice HERE

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Employment: The Rosmini Centre, Wisbech

The Rosmini Centre is the focus for a range of activities helping the families of migrant workers to access services, training and work. Building on the strength of much goodwill and a strong team of volunteers, investment in the Centre is providing more structured support for migrant workers living and working in Wisbech and the rural hinterland and promoting cohesion with the established communities in addition to promoting local services.

The investment in the Rosmini Centre will provide a refurbished hall and private rooms where the migrant worker and local communities can meet and learn. This will include a range of broadband and IT facilities. A development manager has been appointed to manage the facilities and broaden services provided to enable greater integration of multi-agency services.

The focus for the initiative is around community cohesion with the emphasis on ensuring the development is a community 'development resource' for both the local people and those newly arrived in the area. This is already working well with the unity of faith, a generally common bond but it is important to stress the centre will be open to all faiths. A cohesion event was held in December in partnership with Fire & Rescue which gave all local statutory and voluntary organisations the opportunity to network. Feedback from the organisations who took part was very positive and the centre plans to hold two similar events in 2009 both of which will be open to the local community.

LiC is funding this project in 2008/9 with £290,000 capital investment and intend to fund £137,735 revenue in the Rosmini Centre until March 2011. This helped to secure the support of the Learning and Skills Council with £35,000 Local Initiative Development funding between December and July 2008 and as well £20,000 from the Lankelly Foundation and investment from Fenland Links.

Status

Building work started at the end of June and the centre is temporarily offering their services from the Parish House and Victoria Lodge in Wisbech. The Manager, Anita Grodkiewicz, has been in post since April and has achieved all required EEDA targets for the project despite the building works proving disruptive and impacting on delivery.

Four focus groups met in April and May and two open day consultations took place in June to get views on what potential users, migrant workers and people from the local community, would like to see developed and offered in the centre once opened. As a result four plans are drafted to deliver programmes around: health, leisure, education and arts.

The impacts being achieved are seen as extremely good and worthwhile and since April over 1500 enquiries have been handled.

The Rosmini Centre has increased their number of volunteers since the start of the project to 35 and partnership working with other voluntary and statutory organisations will enable the centre to provide a wide range of events in 2009 including entry in the Young Pavement Artist of the Year Award which offers a national prize of a Family trip to Canada to see the grey whale migration..

The new centre will be open from April 2009 with the official opening on 1 July 2009.

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CASE STUDY Rosmini Centre

Mrs. T along with her husband and two children came to the Centre in May 2008 looking for English Classes. Mr. T was working as a mechanic and Mrs T was a full time housewife. The whole family enrolled on a Family Learning course and took part in several family activities organised by the centre. With encouragement and support from staff and volunteers at the Centre Mrs. T is now employed full-time by Cambridgeshire County Council as a Parent Support Advisor. She remains an active volunteer at the Centre and also sits on the Centre Management Group.



Employment: Bangladeshi and Pakistani Communities Project

Seventy-five percent of Bangladeshi and Pakistani women face significant exclusion from employment because their English is not fluent and this reduces their chances in education, training and community activities. The project aims to improve their English as well as social development through learning. This will help to give the women more confidence as well as improving their chances of employment.

This is a partnership project between Cambridge City Council and Cambridgeshire Race Equality and Diversity Service (CREDS) of Cambridgeshire County Council. CREDS is responsible for the overall management of the project.

The project is building on previous activity, which has improved access to a range of services for Bangladeshi women living in Cambridge.

liC invested £30,000 to this project in 2007/8 and committed another £68,027 for 2008/9. The aim is to expand this project by including investment on Afro-Caribbean men from 2009/10 onwards by intending to invest another £192,000 in total for 2009/11.

Status

The project co-ordinator is working with mainstream learning providers to develop strategies and support networks that would support Asian women in making a successful transition from their courses to mainstream education and training. Both Cambridge and Huntingdon Regional Colleges are now adapting their provision to address the needs of Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities.

The project started to deliver their services in Cambridge and this has now extended to Huntingdon and St. Ives for English and Citizenship classes. Demand is huge and feedback from the learners is very positive.

On 26 October the Bangladeshi and Pakistani Project held a combined Eid celebration with the graduation of several of its students at Cambridge Regional College. Certificates were presented to 25 students who had passed ESOL courses, followed by a traditional buffet prepared by some of the students and enjoyed by all.

The first people who followed the skills classes have now moved on to mainstream courses at Cambridge Regional College and some have found employment or a volunteering place.

Six women are now following a 'how to start up my own child minding business' in conjunction with the liC funded CREAM project and Business Link East. This is going well and they are working hard to open their businesses soon.

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CASE STUDY Bangladeshi and Pakistani Communities Project

Shaleha has been in England for about 10 years, and has been attending the Bangladeshi and Pakistani Communities Project's English classes for Bangladeshi women in Cambridge for 2 years. Because the women in the class are all from similar cultural backgrounds, the teachers are able to take into account specific cultural issues which might not be addressed in mainstream provision, and this sensitivity is important for Shaleha and the other women to feel able to take their first steps into engaging with English language and culture.

Before she began attending the classes, Shaleha had not had any formal English tuition, and, like many of the women who attend the class, rarely left her house, and had seen little of Cambridge. Shaleha wanted to learn English so that she could speak to her neighbours, help her children with their homework, and pass her citizenship exam. The classes have improved her English abilities in several areas: "I speak more clearly, and speaking, reading, writing has given me confidence". She has now passed her English Level 2, and says that learning English through the class has also given her "more confidence," and that her English has made her more able to engage socially and with public services: she can now talk to "neighbours, doctor, my child's school teacher, and my friends." She says that she hopes the class continues to receive its funding, and would recommend it to her friends, because "the English class is very good, very important the English language. It's very important to learn English to live in this country."

Employment: Vocational Rehabilitation Project

People can acquire a disability through road accidents, workplace injuries or illnesses such as strokes. The sudden nature of acquired disability can often mean that individuals suffer from a range of psychological effects as well as having to cope with their physical injuries. The loss of employment, financial problems, the implications for an individual's family and home life, all impact on a person's ability to manage their new situation. As a result individuals can find themselves long-term unemployed, with deteriorating mental health and increasingly distanced from the labour market.

By creating individually-tailored programmes to help build individuals confidence and self-esteem the Papworth Trust Vocational Rehabilitation Programme has been successful at improving the independence and employability of individuals and enabling them to return to employment, their community and family life.

Recognising the changing situation and in order to address the unmet need, the Papworth Trust has begun the work required to develop their facilities and increase the resources within their Vocational Rehabilitation Programme. This includes the improvement and expansion of the current residential facilities (residential and social accommodation); service delivery facilities and increase of the service delivery team across a range of professions.

Papworth plan to increase the capacity over the next three years in order to provide twice as many people with an individualised, high quality Programme of support, from 39 people a year to 120 annually by 2009/10.

liC match funded the work required to increase and update the Papworth Rehabilitation programme with £83,000 in 2007/08 – the total budget for this is £420,000.

The Papworth Trust is a charity which exists to ensure disabled people have equality, choice and independence. It is not part of the Papworth Hospitals NHS Trust.

Status

The project commenced on 20 February 2008 and most stages of the expansion have now been finished.

Contact

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CASE STUDY Vocational Rehabilitation Project

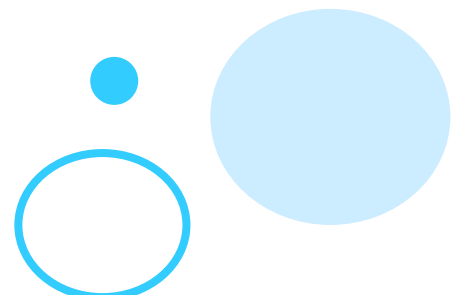
Clare was a cook before damaging her hand at work, resulting in a condition called Complex Regional Pain Syndrome, which is difficult to diagnose and treat. She says "It took a lot of courage to admit that I was going to need help if I were to return to work after 3 years".

Clare chose the residential option for her Papworth Vocational Rehabilitation programme which helped her regain some of her independence and meet others in a similar situation. She says "I must admit I found it very difficult when I first started the programme and initially wondered why I was doing all these different therapies such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy, independent living, counselling and work placements, but in hindsight I needed them all to address all of my problems."

Clare was disappointed when it became apparent she would find it hard to return to her original career but, Papworth helped her look at other options and encouraged her to think about additional training, an HND in Hospitality, Travel and Tourism Management. It felt like a big step but as her confidence grew it became a very good way of staying in the same industry but with a different focus. Clare is now studying for a BA Hons.

Papworth engaged with numerous local employers to find a suitable volunteering placement for Clare, to help build her skills and her confidence. The Marriott Hotel in Peterborough was perfect, and Papworth supported both Clare and the employer to ensure a successful opportunity, in fact it was so successful Clare was offered a permanent position with the hotel.

Clare says "Papworth taught me so much about myself, helped me come to terms with my accident and gave me the focus and drive to re-train. Even I am surprised by my achievements!"



Enterprise: CREAM project

The CREAM (Cambridgeshire Rural, Enterprise Advice & Mentoring) project aims to provide disadvantaged communities within Cambridgeshire with the best business support available and to help build an enterprise culture with individuals and community groups seeking to develop commercial and social enterprises.

The project offers business advice to people from targeted-priority areas across Cambridgeshire who are thinking about starting a new business. The project provides free and impartial advice to help their businesses venture succeed and will work with partnering organisations in order to deliver the most appropriate package of support.

A range of pre-start, start-up and personal skills training will be provided to arm the clients with the knowledge they need to pursue their business venture. They will be signposted to partner organisations so that they have access to a vast range of support services. A flavour of the training courses provided:

- Starting your own Social Enterprise
- Bookkeeping
- Forecasting Sales
- Motivation and Leadership

One to One counselling and workshops are delivered in locations that are easily accessible to the clients in Wisbech, Huntingdon, March, Cambridge and other locations.

The project complements mainstream support and is working in partnership with Business Link East and Prince's Trust.

liC invested £160,000 revenue in 2007/8 and is funding another £110,000 revenue for 2008/9 with the intention to continue support until 2011.

Status

Since starting in April 2007 more than 520 people have received advice and training about starting up their own business resulting in 53 business start ups. CREAM has raised the number of counselling sessions held with clients to a consistently high level month on month and many clients are undergoing training.

The project is working closely with other liC investments and other partners, such as the Bangladeshi and Pakistani Community by helping setting up child minding businesses, a similar scheme for migrant workers, having events at the learning communities and to run the Creativexchange building in St. Neots. Referrals to Business Link East are getting stronger.

NWES is now delivering the 'New Deal' contract across Cambridgeshire and improving partnership working with JobCentrePlus. All clients who need support to start up their own business are now directly referred to NWES who then decides the best way to support the client – through the 'New Deal' programme or CREAM.

Contact

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CASE STUDY CREAM Project

Local couple Peter Bell and Sheila Dibley have recently launched their new business, Marshland Trailers, hiring and servicing all kinds of trailers.

Having moved to the Wisbech area in 2006, the couple decided to set up the business because they saw a demand locally for the services they now offer. They have invested over £40,000 in equipment and trailers to ensure they can offer a reliable, top class service.

“Our horseboxes have proved extremely popular but we also hire car transporters, flatbed trailers, general purpose and livestock trailers, explained Peter (46). “Our customers appreciate that a trailer is often easier and more convenient than hiring a van and we hire by the day, week or month”. We’ve sometimes hired horseboxes to owners who don’t have their own trailer but want to ride up on the coast or in Thetford forest.

The couple moved here from Bedfordshire where Peter worked for 12 years maintaining plant and trailers for an international company working in the utilities sector.

They have also taken advantage of free business advice and training through the Cambridge Rural Enterprise Advice and Mentoring (CREAM) programme offered by local enterprise agency NWES and funded by EEDA and Cambridgeshire County Council.

Peter added, “Being able to meet with our Business Advisor, Paul Gardner, has been really useful as we’ve been able to discuss all kinds of issues as we started the business. I’d say to anyone looking to set up their business to take advantage of the free advice and free training that they offer.”

His partner Sheila handles all the administration and bookings. Sheila has worked for many years in retail so is used to providing excellent levels of customer care.

She adds “It has been hard work getting the business going but our customers like the flexibility and quality of the trailers we hire. Peter’s experience also means that our servicing side is going well.

Enterprise: Octavia Hill Birthplace Trust Museum

The Octavia Hill Birthplace Trust Museum is going from strength to strength with on site building works already enabling the trebling of this historic set of buildings, once the home of John Hill and his daughter Octavia. The museum is situated on the edge of the historic core of Wisbech, on the south brink of the River Nene with a view to the famous North Brink and Peckover House.

The investment afforded by the Investing in Communities programme of £200,000 capital in 2007/8 has enabled the acquisition of two cottages within the curtilage of the town house which will create a unified historic block which will create a raft of opportunities. These include the creation of 3 units to be let to start up and social enterprises with ethics befitting those of the founder of the National Trust as well as the development of social housing. In addition, over the three years following the building works the Trust are aiming to provide 75 volunteering places aimed at building the confidence of people and to help them improve their employment prospects.

The investment levered in European Regional Development funding of £250,000 and £50,000 from the Trust.

A key benefit of this investment has been to encourage the Octavia Hill Birthplace Trust Museum to be more community focussed. By developing linkages with other growing Investing in Communities initiatives there are huge potential synergies which will be developed to the greater benefit of many. Key linkages include those with the Rosmini Centre, the 'Boathouse' on the Quayside, Jobcentre Plus locally and CREAM.

Status

The opening of the renovated museum in March 2008 has led to many new visitors and the community is very involved in the whole project, resulting in new volunteers. The museum is proving to be a wonderful community asset for Wisbech and surrounding areas.

The refurbishment and conversion work is now completed and the marketing for the three business units started.

The first people started their work experience places at the museum last summer.

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Enterprise Workspace in March

New incubator units will be built over the coming year in March. The scheme will provide the much needed workspace for businesses and social enterprises in a rural area of deprivation. It will provide 10 units offering easy in / easy out tenancies and will support a social enterprise through a bursary scheme and on site support in the form of advice and training to help the businesses in becoming more sustainable and help them to grow.

This investment will complement that of HOPE social enterprises in Foundry Way, March which are nearing completion as well as other public sector owned units in Wisbech -at The Boathouse and Chatteris -in The South Fens Business Centre. All of these differing units afford different business and employment opportunities which remain important to invest in despite the recession.

liC is part funding this workspace with £300,000 capital in 2008/09 and intention to support another £150,000 capital in 2009/10 in order to complete this building. The building will be match funded by NWES' own resources and ongoing revenue commitments will be met by them.

The aim is that liC will part fund phase 1 of this building, with 10 units and NWES will commence building phases 2 & 3 by providing a further 1425 m² of units the years after.

Status

This project was tendered from February to May 2008 with NWES as the successful bidder after they presented their case in July. The project started in January 2009, building work commenced early February 2009 and should be completed by autumn 2009.

The building work will start in January 2009 and should be completed by autumn 2009.

Contact

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