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Introduction: liC - delivering to meet local needs across Cambridgeshire

Introduction

liC Cambridgeshire is a dynamic and innovative programme that aims to help and support the more disadvantaged people and communities in the county by improving their skills to assist them to get a job or possibly into self-employment. It is a regional programme that is fully funded by the East of England Development Agency.

The aims of the liC programme are to:

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

Background

In 2006-07 some 14 projects were supported which drew down some £1.4million from EEDA in delivering the programme.

EEDA awarded £2.6million for 2007-08 which will continue to support the overall aims of the liC programme. Some 22 projects will be supported in 2007/08 of which around half are continuation projects and half new. Funding has already been allocated to 19 projects. It is planned that by Christmas the remaining projects will be contracted.

The liC investment has influenced other funding partners and over time it is hoped will convince a range of other organizations to shift their priorities to enable investment in appropriately performing areas.

Evidence

The investment programme for 2007/08 was developed through a series of Task and Finish Group workshops where partners assessed needs and identified gaps, and builds on the extensive evidence base which is the foundation for the programme. In 2006 Roger Tym and Partners and the Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion were commissioned to determine the needs of Cambridgeshire in respect of broad social exclusion issues. Their work involved drilling down and mapping eighteen different indicators of deprivation which variously affect a range of communities of interest and place.

The evidence base highlighted that Cambridgeshire is generally successful and prosperous in comparison with other sub-regions in the East of England, but that significant inequalities persist. There are 16 specific areas suffering a raft of multiple deprivation – concentrated variously in Wisbech, Huntingdon and Cambridge itself. In addition the county does have a general north-south divide with some sparsely populated rural areas suffering from very poor access to services.

Inevitably there are also a raft of target communities of interest which experience disadvantage and discrimination where some focussed investment is essential. This includes Travellers & Gypsies, Migrant Workers, wider BME communities; economically inactive adults, those young people not in education, employment or training; disabled people; lone parents and others locked into caring responsibilities amongst others.

Inevitably resources are insufficient to meet all needs and investment has been made to try and maximise impact whilst not shying away from trying to help those farthest away from social inclusion. Partners worked hard to determine solutions which address social exclusion for many sections of society and these initial priorities emerged with the key focus being across Skills, Employment and Enterprise as essential building blocks to enable progress to be made in tackling poverty.

Delivery

The following brief summaries and case studies are an attempt to provide a flavour of what the programme is delivering across Cambridgeshire. They have been broadly grouped into areas around Employment, Enterprise and Skills but it is inevitable that there is much cross over and interdependency and it is recognised that these are in some ways artificial divides.

Contact details are provided to enable any particular interest to be followed through in more detail and it is hoped this may prove very beneficial to future collaborative working.

The project investment is also detailed on the web site of the Greater Cambridge Partnership www.gcp.uk.net where updates will be made quarterly.

The Future 2008/9

Work is already well underway to continue on this work for 2008/9. The draft Annual Delivery Plan is with EEDA awaiting approval and a full copy is on the web site for all to view. Within it some tendering opportunities have been identified around Travellers Skills and Work Limiting Illness. Work on these tenders is current and it is hoped to seek interest in these in December.

To find out more with the potential to get involved contact:

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Project Summaries:

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 five core Romsey Mill programmes give individuals the confidence and capabilities to take a more active role to progress to the workplace and fully participate in their wider community.



liC supported the redevelopment of Romsey Mill, with £315,000 in 2006. Building work was completed January 2007 and provides 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 is supporting the new full-time programme manager with £25,000 revenue in 2007/08 to help the expansion and future sustainability of Romsey Mill's programmes.

Status

Since the start of the project in 2006, over 140 people have been assisted to get a job, over 530 people gained more skills and 68 gained basic skills. This has resulted in 41 people in work, 34 in further education, 26 continuing to build their Skills for Life portfolios, with many others continuing to further their learning and receive support at Romsey Mill.

The mainstreaming of one of Romsey Mill's programmes to become a Children's Centre is almost complete. Antenatal care and child development screening services are already being provided and discussions are at an advanced stage to bring new Jobcentre plus services and parent craft classes to the Romsey Mill Centre.

The establishment of a full range of programmes to engage with hard to reach young people in the North of the City is building, with outreach work continuing under a worker in post since July. A vocational programme is now provided for year 10 and 11 students from Netherhall School with an accredited outcome and an emphasis on positive post 16 progression.

Social inclusion work is being led by the experienced Social Inclusion Programme Co-ordinator focussing on those wards with the highest rates of deprivation. The Young Parents Programme is firmly established. The Transitions Programme offers tailored support to significant numbers of 80 young people at Manor Community College. In 2007/08 Romsey Mill expects to assist a further 134 towards employment and help more than 200 people to improve their skills.

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CASE STUDY Romsey Mill



“If you are from my community you go to Romsey Mill if you need help”

Don't live a life of crime, live a life of rhyme

When Simeon Ferguson talks about his music he can't help but break into a huge grin. His best friend, business partner and fellow DJ, Karl Lewis, smiles beside him as the two young men talk about their new venture: *The Restoration Crew*.

Simeon and Karl (aka Simbad Fresh and KD) grew up in Cambridge. But their home turf, with its crack dealers and high levels of unemployment, could be a million miles away from the university city.

Both young men were brought up by their Mums and money was pretty tight. But music became a passion very early on and by the time they were 14 years old, Sim and Karl were producing, mixing and performing their own music using borrowed equipment. Lack of money meant they had to drop out of college to help support their families and for two years Sim and Karl worked at labouring jobs. For the first time, music had to take a back seat.

‘If it wasn't for Romsey Mill I'd probably be in prison,’ says Karl. ‘Sim definitely would!’

Romsey Mill's Social Inclusion Programme focuses on the individual needs of the young people involved. ‘We don't try to shoehorn people into our projects, we find out what they want to do and try to help,’ explains youth worker Lee Tomkies. ‘Sim and Karl were serious about their music so we've done all we can to support them.’

In 2006 Karl and Simeon decided to start their own business and the Romsey Mill team helped them prepare a business plan and apply for funding. Working with organisations such as Cambridge City Council, The Restoration Crew teaches boys and girls as young as 8 to DJ and MC, mixing tunes and creating raps. ‘Our aim is to help kids to express themselves and boost their self-confidence,’ Sim explains. ‘We teach them performance skills but they're also learning English and maths through the lyrics and music. We want to give them what we never had.’

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 2007/08 liC is investing £250,000 in collaborative vocational centres based in the five areas of greatest socio-economic need and skills shortage in the county.

liC capital investment complements investment from the Learning and Skills Council in five vocational centres spread across 11 school sites as well as leveraging in funding from the County Council and the schools and colleges themselves. The project will enable all 11 schools to provide an increased range of vocational courses to students aged 14-19 from September 2007. In the first year the focus will be on setting up courses and targeting students at risk of becoming NEET, with plans to extend the provision to adult learners in year two.

The collaborative model particularly benefits students in rural areas, enabling schools to offer a broader range of vocational courses than they could individually, and removing the need for students to travel to Cambridge or Peterborough to access provision. The following collaborative vocational centres are supported offering catering, construction and engineering courses at levels one and two.

- Huntingdon - St Peters & Hinchingsbrooke Schools (Catering)
- North East Cambridge: Chesterton & Manor Community Colleges (Construction)
- Ramsey: Abbey College (Engineering)
- Fenland: Neale Wade, Sir Harry Smith & Cromwell Community Colleges, Queen's School Wisbech (Construction)
- East Cambridgeshire: City of Ely & Witchford Community Colleges (Construction)

The Cambridgeshire liC Business Plan 2007-11 has committed £250,000 capital expenditure per year to enhance vocational skills provision in the county, enabling the County Council, Learning and Skills Council and schools to strategically plan their investment.

Status

The project was approved and the schools undertook the refitting and refurbishing of their buildings. Recruitment of new staff has taken place in May 2007 and more than 300 students have been pursuing the new courses since September 2007.

Plans are now in hand to build an application for 2008/9 in timely fashion to enable the further roll out of the programme.

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Skills: St Neots Space for Creativity



The project aims to meet local community needs and fulfil the growth potential for creative industries in the Cambridge sub-region, 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 project will result in the construction of a specialist facility for the nurturing of creative industries comprising a 6,000 sq.ft Enterprise Centre with 13 incubator units of various sizes linked to specialist business support and training facilities.

The centre will provide:

- A central core with incubator workspace to encourage networking and collaboration, with display and marketing opportunities;
- Dedicated and targeted business support and workforce development to meet the specialist needs of the sector and the wider community;
- Highly specified broadband and ICT infrastructure and leading edge technology associated with the industry;
- A dedicated facility for training and community use.

The IiC programme is contributing £300,000 capital to this £1.3 million investment in one of Cambridgeshire's largest towns, where employment opportunities have been hit hard by the recent closure of two large employers.

Status

Work on site commenced on 16 November. The facility is scheduled to open in late summer 2008 and it is expected the project will support 500 learners a year and offer opportunities to new businesses that will result in approximately 40 new jobs over the next five years.

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Skills: Learning Communities

In Cambridgeshire Market towns, low educational attainment and poor basic skills levels, combined with a culture of low aspirations, are limiting opportunities for local people. "Learning Communities" are being established in Ramsey, Waterlees, Chatteris, Littleport and Eynesbury, to foster enthusiasm to participate in learning and improve the skills of local people.



Working with the community through newly established local partnerships, the project is delivering a blend of learning opportunities to unlock talent, raise aspirations and develop skills required by local employers.

In 2006/07 the focus of the Learning Community projects has been to develop local Neighbourhood Learning Partnerships and Learning Champions to lead on the development and marketing of learning activities in Wisbech and Ramsey. For those towns the focus in 07/08 is on embedding the partnerships and the infrastructure of Learning Champions so that they can continue without LiC support. The focus in Chatteris, Littleport and Eynesbury is to begin developing activities, laying the groundwork for greater investment in these towns in 2008/09.

LiC is supporting this project with an investment of £182,600 in 2007/08.

Status

A Learning Communities Manager, Ed Tuijl, started in August to lead on embedding the existing Learning Communities in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, securing their sustainability and ensuring co-ordination between them and other learning initiatives.

Additional Revenue funding has been approved in September. This has meant that around 45 more residents in the areas are now able to work towards forklift licences and employment.

For Ramsey and Waterlees the sustainability plans are drafted and will be agreed in December by their Steering Groups. The roll out in Littleport and Eynesbury started and in Littleport 11 individuals enrolled to Skills for Life classes. Steering groups both set up in Littleport and Eynesbury and the Learning survey is currently being disseminated. The Learning Survey will show what the needs are of the local residents and employers.

A total of 38 additional Learning Champions are being recruited in 07/08 to work in the five identified learning communities. Together with the 34 Learning Champions who started in 06/07 they work in their communities to spread the word about learning and skills opportunities and help local people to access them.

To date, 150 people have been assisted in skills development and another 100 to get a job.

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CASE STUDY Learning Communities

Bryan Harding

Bryan struggles with health issues and has been confirmed as dyslexic. However, from the initial meetings in the summer of 2006 Bryan has progressed his own learning by taking advantage of some of the courses being run in Ramsey. Currently he attends the skills for life course in Ramsey on Friday afternoons and he has been through the First Aid course and gained a new accredited qualification.

Bryan was born in Ramsey and takes a great interest in the community. When the Learning Community was launched, Bryan was one of the first residents to come forward and volunteer. He has completed Learning Champions training and has been active in promoting all the learning opportunities in Ramsey for the community.

The Community Archive Initiative was set up through a contract with the Library Service. With the initial contract due to run out in March 2007, we went into discussion about four months ago to decide the way forward. Bryan, who after his Learning Champion training then had the confidence to take his Community Facilitator training, has now been able to volunteer to carry this initiative forward on behalf of Ramsey. We are therefore now close to achieving the goal of ensuring that the Community Archive sustains after the end of March.

Powerpoint is also a new skill Bryan has learnt. Because of the Community Facilitator training he is now developing a Lesson Plan and Powerpoint presentation to take out to local groups. He has on loan a laptop provided for community use through the EEDA funding and he is using this to tweak his presentation and ensure that he knows how it works.

Having seen the initial presentation whilst in training it was an excellent choice for him. The session itself is very pro-active and the content fascinating.

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 will inevitably provide a range of learning and self-learning locations and platforms which will help both the motivated and disengaged. By adding to the critical mass of mainstream activity it will provide the basis for much sustainable activity in the future.

The initial investment is supporting two distinct elements:

Chatteris 'Learning Centre' is being developed in a redundant part of the Library Building which used to be the Fenland District Council Housing office. This part building is to be 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 will be developed to be delivered at the 'centre' which is critically important as many facilities have been withdrawn from the rapidly growing town in recent years.

A county-wide ICT based 'Learning Portal' is also being invested in which will provide hugely enhanced access to a wider range of learning/information by bringing together in user friendly fashion a range of web based data. The county-wide infrastructure, which includes all libraries and Community Access Points, will have this improved access by April 2008 and in providing this should make the service more attractive and resultant take up should improve.

liC is supporting this project with an investment of £155,415 Capital in 2007/08.

Status

The project commenced in November 2007 and will be completed in March 2008.

Currently the liC team and the Cambridgeshire County Council are looking to develop learning community facilities within the new library in Ramsey. The plan is that the work in Ramsey is planned to commence in January 2008 and be completed in 2008/09.

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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 will 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 already 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.

The deliverers, Cambridge Housing Society, have 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 is supporting this project with £116,000 in 2007/08.

Status

The project started in July 2007 and it is anticipated to continue until June 2009. The target is to support at least 420 customers over the coming two years.

Mid November, 60 new laptops and 42 portable printers and digital cameras will be delivered to the New Horizons scheme.

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CASE STUDY New Horizons

Mrs W has little doubt about the importance of the laptop computer loan scheme. "It sounds very dramatic but it saved my life. I felt so left out and isolated. It's opened up a whole new world for me."

Three years ago Mrs W, a registered general nurse, had an unexpected fourth baby in her forties and then fell prey to post-natal depression. That depression was reinforced by her sense of isolation – she lives rurally on the Cambridgeshire-Norfolk border – and the fact that her three older daughters were going off to university while her husband's work often took him away from home.

She wanted a career change from nursing, but discovered that jobs increasingly demanded some computer skills. Being totally unfamiliar with computers, she feared that any future job she might be able to handle would consist of stacking shelves or cleaning: "I really thought the computer side of things would be beyond me," she said. "I didn't even know how to turn a computer on."

A six-week beginner's course under the Laptop Loan Scheme changed that. Mrs W has now progressed to completing her first Open University module by computer and she can see light at the end of the tunnel. "When the laptop was delivered I thought there was a great science to it that I wouldn't be capable of learning. Now I can perhaps be more ambitious and do health visiting, social work or training."

Skills: Slivers of Time

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



The project group (consisting of all Cambridgeshire local authorities and other interested agencies) is working with Anglia Ruskin's Employment Bureau and delivering 'Slivers of Time' locally.

The project will:

- Support the economically inactive or underemployed – single parents, people with disabilities, migrant workers, young people, those with caring responsibilities, semi retired people
- Encourage enterprise – by reducing staff overheads, voluntary sector human resources support via flexible employment, and local employment for local people
- Address the liC skills agenda by enabling people to study and work according to their lifestyles and needs.

The Slivers of Time project should add value to a whole range of liC projects in particular the Learning Communities project, the New Horizons lap top loan scheme, the Rosmini Centre for migrant workers in Wisbech, those with work-limiting illness and many more. The Project Group is working with the Learning Communities Project to jointly develop cross referral systems and proactively seek links to the 'employment' and 'enterprise' strands of the IIC program.

The project is delivered in three stages. The first stage is to deliver the project in Cambridge City to make the market stable. Cambridge is the area of highest density and level of interest within the County. From January 2008 the second stage will commence which aims to link with the Learning Communities plus locations and the thirds stage about identifying Hot Spots for delivery where success is most likely will commence in April 2008.

liC is supporting this project with £42,500 in 2007/08 and £35,000 in 2008/9. It is anticipated that the project will be sustainable from March 2009.

Status

The project started in October 2007 and recruitment of a Business Development Manager is in hand. Furthermore the project team is busy to engage with employers and potential employees and to finalize legal Terms of Engagement.

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Employment: Travellers Learn & Earn Advocacy Project (LEAP4T)



Drumming Workshop

The Learn and Earn Project for Travellers is an approach to helping Travellers boost their skills and confidence and overcome barriers to entering work. Delivered through an advocacy framework, the project supports members of the Travelling communities to find out about and access the services they need to help them achieve their personal goals and move towards employment.

Over 2007/08 the project is building on the foundations laid in year 1 where the project engaged and gained trust of communities and sowed the seeds of the idea of improving employability. Many of the 130 Travellers the project have worked with have indicated their willingness to register as self employed but are awaiting the outcome of planning applications – many others were homeless and with support of the project have gone into settled housing and are trying to stabilise their lives.

The project works closely with the Traveller Skills Training Project to provide a seamless service.

liC supported the project in 2006/07 with almost £50,000 and allocated another £63,000 for 2007/08.

Status

The second year of investment is increasing the awareness of Traveller culture to influence the way services are delivered to better meet Travellers' needs. To date 130 Travellers have already been assisted to get into employment.

Such is the profile of the project that Ormiston Trust were asked to contribute to a paper about employability issues for Travellers for the Minister of Employment over the autumn. They have also been invited to meet the Minister for Gypsies and Travellers at the Department for Communities and Local Government. This presents an excellent opportunity to influence national policy.

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CASE STUDY LEAP4T

The 'R' family are Scottish Gypsies who have been travelling throughout Scotland and England until the last two years, when they sadly discovered that Mr R senior has a terminal illness. They were on an illegal roadside encampment in a village near Addenbrookes hospital where Mr R is receiving invaluable treatment to help prolong his life. They lived there with their three sons and two daughters in law, one of whom was heavily pregnant. Their youngest son suffers from Autism and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. As a family they were being threatened with eviction from the illegal encampment by Cambridgeshire County Council, but were no longer able to travel as Mr R is too sick, and so had nowhere to go.

They were referred to the Learn and Earn project by the South Cambridgeshire Traveller Liaison Officer, and with their advocates help they:

- Were offered disabled access housing by South Cambridgeshire District Council
- Were aided to furnish their house fully (not having had any furnishings that weren't integral to a caravan!)
- One son has since become employed at a Gym as a boxing coach.
- His wife has since given birth to a beautiful – and healthy! – baby girl, and the three of them have been housed.
- The other son has engaged with a GP for the first time in 7 years, and is being treated for a heart condition which had previously made him too sick to work.
- The same son is now receiving help to get his Driving Licence, as he has ambitions to be a delivery driver.
- His partner has re-entered further education as she has the intention of becoming a PE teacher.
- The youngest son is regularly attending a specialist school in Ely, has obtained a computer from Reboot and is hoping to start a work placement there when he is older.

Comments the family have made are:

- 'I never would have believed there's people like you – people willing to help Travellers. I could have done with you years ago'
- 'He's really settled now, and doing really well'
- 'I can't believe we got so much stuff! I never could have managed that on my own'
- 'I know it sounds silly – but I'd really like to be a PE teacher...'
- 'We just want a home we can call our own'

Skills: Traveller Skills Training Project



NACRO Bus

The Traveller Skills Training Project supports adult Travellers across Cambridgeshire to access training that will enhance their employment opportunities. The project aims to develop awareness of the needs of Traveller learners amongst mainstream providers, ensuring the impact of the project is felt well beyond the period of liC funding. Delivered by experienced members of the County Council's Traveller Team for Education, the project builds on existing relationships with training providers and members of the Travelling communities.

Many Travellers in work have low literacy, numeracy and IT skills, limiting the range of opportunities available to them. Many Traveller women do not work outside the home and their interests lie in gaining skills to bring in income in ways that do not conflict with the Traveller lifestyle. Despite enthusiasm to develop new skills Travellers are often unable or unwilling to access existing training courses for a variety of reasons. Among these are lack of confidence, fear of racism, lack of knowledge of what is available and often low literacy and numeracy. This project works with training providers and Travellers to deliver training tailored to Travellers' needs in appropriate settings whether that be at home, in local community venues or educational establishments.

liC has allocated £63,000 for this project for 2007/08.

Status

The project had a successful first year, exceeding targets in supporting 78 people in skills development despite a late start. 2007/08 is proving very successful with over 60 people gaining skills to date. Importantly things are moving to mainstreaming. Examples are:

- Cambridge Women's Resource Centre is engaging with Traveller learners through Project Development workers
- Contact with Adult & Community Learning managers to look at options for learning champions / mentors within the Traveller community. Three Travellers are interested in this.

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Employment: Engaging Employers II

Providing advice and guidance on issues related to the employment of disabled people, Engaging Employers helps businesses recognise the potential benefits of a more diverse workforce.



Engaging Employers improves job prospects for disabled people who face barriers to obtaining or retaining employment. By developing in-depth relationships with large employers, the programme works to change organisational cultures and in the longer term create an accessible job market for disabled people in the county. Delivered by the Papworth Trust the programme complements existing Papworth programmes and the liC funded Work4You project.

Supplementing this work, a programme of one-to-one consultation meetings with 31 Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) has been delivered to date. The aim of the consultations is to create a disability friendly business culture by offering practical advice and guidance on issues around employing disabled people.

liC is funding this project with £63,627 in 2007/08.

Status

Support into Employment Agreements and programme sustainability plans have been agreed with Cambridgeshire County Council and Cambridge City Council.

In the case of the County Council, the basis of the plan is:

- cascade of Engaging Employers messages via a workshop built into ongoing Recruitment & Selection Training (monthly) and Refresher Training (bi-monthly)
- championship of the Support into Employment agreement by the County Council's Recruitment Team
- incorporation of the Engaging Employers Toolkit into a Manager's Resource pack
- routine and ad-hoc briefings to HR teams, the Disabled Staff Support group etc

For the City Council, the emphasis is on:

- promotion of the Engaging Employers Toolkit via the City Council website and building it into Manager's Induction Training
- championship of the Support into Employment agreement and retention services by the Council's HR team and promotion via routine and ad-hoc briefings
- development and promotion of a case history file

In both instances, ongoing support and advice is available on all issues round the employment of disabled people.

Negotiations are well advanced with Addenbrookes Hospital, East Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service to become Engaging Employers partners. South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire Constabulary are also expected to join the programme. A key element of these negotiations is the identification and development of a programme 'champion' who will facilitate real progress on key issues.

Due to this project 23 job starts have been identified.

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Employment: Work4You



Work 4You is a supported employment programme for people with learning disabilities in Cambridgeshire. It is tailored to individuals and delivered through a partnership between Papworth Trust and Phoenix Employ. Work4You improves training and employment prospects for disabled people falling into the gap between Local Authority and Jobcentre Plus services. Many in this group want to work but have no experience of work and lack self-confidence and skills. The project helps participants develop the skills they need for the workplace, offers ongoing support and guidance and valuable work experience through an eight-week work Job Club followed by support into employment.

The project runs Job Clubs around the county delivering training in workplace skills - including being interviewed, writing a CV, completing applications, confidence building, team working, personal presentation and social skills. Employment Advisers help employers recruit appropriate people by carefully matching skills to jobs and provide on-going support for both employer and employee to help overcome issues that may arise.

Job Club participants also receive support in Basic Skills and information, advice and guidance. After the Job Club programme a suitable work placement is sought to match the interests and skills of the participant. At the end of the programme participants will go into paid work, further work experience or progress to further training and a qualification. Referrals to other services and Benefits Advice are also important.

Experience from year 1 has identified a group of clients with mental health issues needing a lighter touch of support to access the labour market. A complementary new service has been developed for these clients who will be able to access selected components of the project, known as GOALS workshops, dependent on their needs e.g. attending confidence building courses.

liC are funding this project with £115,485 in 2007/08.

Status

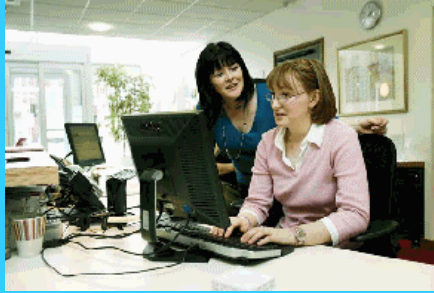
The project commenced in 2006/07 and four job clubs have been run involving 62 participants. Some will receive further support and a further 41 participants are currently involved in Job clubs with another 25 due to attend before the end of March 2008. 32 people are now in further work experience, voluntary or paid work and 19 have gone onto further training. This will increase as the next round of job clubs complete.

An additional employment adviser has been recruited to support job club activities within the Fenland.

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CASE STUDY Work4You



Case history: Charlotte came to Job Club in September 06 and had been wanting to work for a long time. She was becoming “fed up” with more courses and wanted to improve her work skills especially in interviews. She was a very capable and polite young lady but had little confidence in her abilities and this had impacted on her getting work.

Current situation: Charlotte works on the reception desk at the Learning Centre and is an assistant to the reception team. She greets the visitors to the centre showing them which room they are in and the health and safety procedure for the centre. She provides information about the many courses on offer there, and has developed a messaging system for notifying the staff regarding missed telephone calls. She has also been given a project to oversee for the Open Day there, co-ordinating the volunteers and making sure those attending are taken care of. She has not only grown in knowledge in her admin skills but her role with the public has increased her confidence immensely. Charlotte is always polite and welcoming and has become a valued member of the team there.

At Job Club Charlotte showed that while she was shy she did not have any issues around confidence when it came to being supportive to the other members of the Job Club. She always noticed when they needed some help. She never “took over”, but instead supported them to complete the task themselves. In fact Charlotte was a very vital part of the Job Club and it was a pleasure to see her grow in all her skills as the sessions progressed. It was difficult for Charlotte to appreciate her ability at the beginning, but in her interview practice she pushed herself to give her best and Nicky Temple from the Job Centre in Huntingdon attended at this session and was amazed at the way Charlotte came across.

The project worker is in contact with Marks and Spencer and is hoping to place Charlotte there once her work experience is complete at Saxongate. I am sure they will miss her!!

Employment: Retain & Regain

This innovative project is testing the effectiveness of a new specialist service to support people with mild mental health difficulties to get back into work by either retaining their job or undertaking other work options.

In Cambridgeshire around 38% of Incapacity Benefit claimants have mild mental health problems and that proportion is growing. The Retain & Regain project employs six specialist advisers based in GP practices, to support patients with a mental health diagnosis to get back to work if they have a job or to move into work if they are claiming benefits.

The employment advisers are currently covering sixteen GP practices in South Cambridgeshire, Huntingdon, Fenland and Cambridge City. The advisers work with patients referred by the GP, in the practice, helping them to get into work and providing on-going support once they are back in the workplace.

The pilot is overseen by the Mental Health Steering Group for the county and has huge potential to influence local and even national implementation of the Jobcentre Plus "Pathways to Work" programme. Jobcentre Plus are involved with and very supportive of the approach being undertaken.

"Pathways to Work" which will be introduced in Cambridgeshire in April 2008, has the principal aim of reducing the number of people moving on to Incapacity Benefit. So far the evidence around appropriate intervention for claimants with mental health difficulties is limited and this pilot could fill an important gap in the knowledge-base.

liC is funding this project with £144,463 in 2007/08.

Status

The project started in January 2007 and is now fully delivering the Retain/Regain service.

The numbers over the first six months of 2007/08 show that referrals are increasing in all areas. The number of referrals was initially low at most project locations, despite the extensive work which advisers had undertaken in promoting the service through presentations and networking. In response to this slow start, RETAIN/REGAIN has successfully been extended to more locations, thereby enabling the benefits of this unique service to reach a wider pool of eligible clients. The project has expanded significantly and received 10% additional funding in August to fund a new project worker and to engage with more General Practices. The project is now engaged with 16 General Practices.

71 clients have accessed the Retain/Regain service since January 2007. This has resulted almost 40 people who gained employment or are not at risk of losing their job anymore.

Contact

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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 teams of qualified advisers now offer employment and careers advice: **HERE**

Auriol: 01223 242267
Phone: 07918 401974
Eaton and Cambridge Danu: 0431 580 55257
Phone: 07918 401974
Woburn Julia: 0431 400 456757
Phone: 07918 401974
Huntingdon and Ramsey

Jobcentre Plus logo, BEM logo, and Matrix logo.

Employment: Retain/Regain Research

The Retain/Regain scheme is currently the subject of a research study by the Sainsbury Centre Centre for Mental Health, a national charity. Researchers from the Sainsbury Centre, in partnership with Anglia Ruskin University, will be contacting both GPs and people who have used the service to find out whether and how the service makes 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 finding 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.

The research report will therefore be widely disseminated nationally, regionally and locally.

liC allocated £18,000 for this project for 2007/08/09.

Status

The research started in August 2007.

The GP's have been contacted to engage in this research and clients are currently been identified for interviews.

The report will be completed in December 2008.

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Employment: The Rosmini Centre, Wisbech

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
- A development manager / co-ordinator who will manage the facilities and broaden services provided to enable greater integration of multi-agency services
- A range of broadband and ICT facilities



The range of support offered by the project will include:

- Confidential meeting rooms
- 'Welcome Packs' containing general advice and information (as produced by Fenland District Council, Cambridgeshire Constabulary and others)
- Specialist advice on housing, employment opportunities etc
- Access to additional translation services – currently Polish and Portuguese only
- Learning and training opportunities for the whole community including new arrivals
- Links with Further Education providers and employers in Wisbech and surrounding areas
- Development of strong working relationships with Newlink in Peterborough to capture the benefits of their pioneering work

The Rosmini Centre is currently the focus for a range of activities helping the families of migrant workers to access services. Building on the strength of much goodwill and a strong team of volunteers, liC Investment in the Centre will provide more structured support for migrant workers living and working in Wisbech and the rural hinterland. The centre development manager will be critical in enabling better co-ordination of activities to support migrant workers, increased engagement of service providers and employers with the Centre and a higher profile for activities supporting this community.

liC intend to invest a total of £325,000 Capital and £143,735 Revenue in the Rosmini Centre until 2010/11.

Status

Plans and costings have been drawn up, the planning application has been submitted and building regulation consents will be sought, following which tenders will be sought to meet the available budget. VAT issues are being looked into to try and ensure recovery.

Advertisements to determine interest in the post of Development Manager will be made in December with a view to starting as soon as possible in the new year which is when the project should receive full approval through the East of England Development Agency.

Contact

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Employment: Bangladeshi and Pakistani Communities Project



This project aims to improve access mainly for women from Bangladeshi and Pakistani backgrounds to community-based, tailor-made and culturally-sensitive training and confidence building activities.

The project will create opportunities for Bangladeshi and Pakistani community members to achieve their social and economic potential by participating in and developing necessary language skills and employment and income generating skills providing:

- culturally-appropriate environments that will encourage people to participate in learning activities
- supportive personalised development programmes which will enable the participants to gain confidence to pursue mainstream employment, training and business activities.

A key aim of the project is to break down barriers and involve Bangladeshi and Pakistani women in confidence building and language skills development activities. The training takes place in established skills-training settings. Through increased participation, the women can build their knowledge, confidence and skills so that they can benefit from opportunities to secure paid employment or develop their own enterprises.

This is a partnership project between Cambridge City Council and Cambridgeshire Race Equality and Diversity Service (CREDS) of CCC. CREDS will be responsible for the overall management of the project and each partner will be responsible for the delivery of specific programme areas.

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

liC have allocated £30,000 to this project for 2007/8 and are aiming to continue funding to 2010.

Status

The project commenced in September 2007 and the team is currently recruiting a new project worker. Since the start of the project 10 people have already assisted in their skills and for the total project it is expected that at least 300 women will have accessed a wide range of skills training.

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Enterprise: Commissioning Access Programme

The Commissioning Access Programme aims to identify and eradicate the barriers that exist for social enterprises trying to win contracts from statutory agencies.

The project acts as a broker between statutory agencies and social enterprises, engaging with both sides to identify and address barriers, and up-skilling social enterprises to take advantage of tendering opportunities.

This project has two main strands:

- An awareness programme including launch of a website, designed to increase the visibility of social enterprise and voluntary organisations amongst the procurement community
- A training and advice programme designed to assist social enterprises and voluntary organisations in securing contracts.

Delivered by The Social Enterprise People in partnership with Norfolk and Waveney Enterprise Services, these strands are complemented by one-to-one business advice to help with tendering for contracts. General business support is available to social enterprises in Fenland, where the needs of the sector require a wider-ranging and more intensive service.

The project commenced in 2006/07 and feedback from people attending training sessions has been very positive and thirteen new FTE jobs have been created. A website was launched in January 2006 containing a database of key information about the goods and services offered by social enterprises in Cambridgeshire. Also available on the website is a directory of tenders offered by the public sector, for local social enterprises to use to search for new business opportunities.

The key aim in 2007/8 is to secure greater penetration into commissioning networks, by working closely with key officers responsible for providing public services locally, and raising their awareness of the services available from social enterprises. In addition to the continued provision of the training programme, the project is delivering more focussed and targeted training and business advice for social enterprises. This advice is informed by knowledge developed through information disseminated from local, regional and national best practice.

liC is supporting this project with £216,249 in 2007/08.

Status

The total programme of free training courses for social enterprises and other voluntary organisations have been set up for this year and six training sessions have been delivered to date.

In September an additional part-time business advisor (combined with the CREAM project) started to work for the project to provide business advice for social enterprises. The business advice has led to 4 full time and 14 part time jobs at the Woodhouse Farm Enterprise.

A sustainability plan has been compiled to look at options to continue the project after EEDA funding ends.

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CASE STUDY Commissioning Access Programme

The Ferry Project

The Ferry Project is a faith based social enterprise in Wisbech. The primary purpose of the organisation is to provide housing solutions for homeless people in the area. Many of the people helped have drug and alcohol problems and are in need of significant training in life and work skills. The Ferry project provides these skills through work opportunities within their social enterprises which focus on horticulture and furniture recycling.

The Ferry Project already deliver contracts for Luminus Housing Group and Fenland District Council but are currently looking to expand the contracts delivered to provide increased workplace opportunities.

The Ferry Project has been significantly involved with CAP. The CEO, Keith Smith, is on the steering committee and members of staff from The Ferry Project have received 25 hours of training and business advice from CAP and in addition have enlisted on the new website <http://www.thesocialenterprisepeople.co.uk/cap/page.php?id=home>.

The Ferry Project is now better positioned to bid and negotiate for contracts with public agencies. The organisation has further developed its relationship with Luminus and is actively bidding for bulky waste collection contracts amongst other opportunities.

Currently the Ferry Project is developing its submission to secure funding from the Regional Community Asset programme of £750,000.

Young People March

Young People March's aims are to co-ordinate, encourage, support and provide activities for the personal development of young people in March. To build upon the existing provision for young people and extend opportunities by working in partnership with other providers, to encourage effective participation of young people in planning and provision of activities and to ensure equal opportunities for all.

Young People March had been advised in the past by Enterprise Fenland but needed more specific help regarding bidding and winning public sector contracts. The organisation received 30 hours of training and advice as part of CAP and, with support, successfully negotiated a contract with Cambridgeshire County Council.

Enterprise: Social Accounting Pilot

Social Accounting is a process that seeks to measure progress and performance against social, environmental and economic objectives. Critically, by identifying a social return on investment, it can in some cases help to put a monetary value on some of the softer outcomes achieved by organisations such as voluntary and community sector organisations and social enterprises.

Through research of best practice The Social Enterprise People have successfully adapted existing tools and methods to better suit the needs of small, busy social enterprises.

The Social Accounting Pilot is working with organisations, training and supporting them as they undertake the process for the first time. Deliverers have also been raising awareness of social accounting around the region through visits and presentations with small social organisations and local, regional and national funders.

The aim of this project is to establish a centre of social accounting excellence in Cambridgeshire by providing support for social enterprises to measure their real benefits.

In 2006/07 the project worked with BoomBizz, Engaging Employers II, the Learn and Earn Advocacy Project and the Commissioning Access Programme, all liC projects.

The focus in 2007/08 is on further data capturing and analysis for the Engaging Employers II, Learn and Earn Advocacy Project and the Commissioning Access Programme. The aim is to build the capacity of these organisations to apply the social accounting model as well as to help them to understand and prove the impacts they have on their beneficiaries.

Lessons learned from the pilot will be shared on The Social Enterprise People and Greater Cambridge Partnership websites to enable organisations to choose whether to embark upon the social accounting process, using the TSEP process or another self-assessment tool.

liC is supporting this project with £45,280 to March 2008.

Status

This project is undertaking more action research on social accounting systems in order to improve the depth and breadth of knowledge, enhancing The Social Enterprise People's ability to assist organisations.

Promotion of The Social Enterprise People's social accounting services is now underway. Mainstreaming of the pilot is also taking place as The Social Enterprise People begin working with external organisations, including both social enterprises and their funders.

An additional 10% funding has been secured to enable a wider range of case studies to be produced across the Investing in Communities programme. These consistently presented case studies will form an important part of the 'Communications' strategy for the programme which has to influence other partners in order to optimise the impact the investment. The influencing of service delivery is a key aspect of the programme which is intended to bring wider benefits to those who find it difficult to access services.

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CASE STUDY Social Accounting

Case study on LEAP:

LEAP is run by The Cambridgeshire Travellers' Initiative (CTI) which is part of Ormiston Children and Families Trust. The project aims to help Travellers to maximise their skills and improve their work chances. It does this through supporting Travellers to:

- Find out more about employment, their rights and the services available
- Overcome barriers stopping them working
- Boost their skills
- Strengthen their voice

As an LiC-funded project, LEAP was eligible for social accounting services provided by The Social Enterprise People through the Social Accounting Pilot. The LEAP's involvement with the Pilot began in October 2006 with an introductory meeting explaining social accounting and the potential benefits for the project. After discussion with other staff in the CTI, agreement to proceed was reached and a meeting to begin the social accounting process was held in December 2006.

After the second meeting, five of the project's key stakeholders were contacted and three replied outlining the outputs, outcomes and impacts they desired from the LEAP. The information was used as the basis of a data collection plan in which different methods were suggested for gathering the information necessary to assess whether the LEAP was having the impact to which its stakeholders aspired. This data collection plan had to be both highly efficient, with all data collection fitting into normal project delivery in order to be manageable for busy project staff, and appropriate for engaging Travellers, among whom literacy and immediate trust could not be assumed. After submitting the data collection plan, a third meeting was held in January 2007 to discuss the plan and modifications were made to it.

The LEAP began data collection in April 2007, integrating the activity into a new year of project delivery. Data has since been submitted to The Social Enterprise People by the LEAP staff for analysis on a regular basis, with data collection due to complete in November. When data collection is complete a report will be produced by The Social Enterprise People on the findings of the social accounting process.

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. The training courses include:

- Starting your own Social Enterprise
- Bookkeeping
- Forecasting Sales
- Profit and Loss
- Marketing
- Business Taxation
- Public Relations
- Presentation Skills
- 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.

liC is supporting this project with £160,000 revenue in 2007/08 and the intention is to continue support until 2011 with potential to develop linkages with a similar programme in Peterborough.

Status

Since starting in April 2007 215 counselling sessions took place, which have been resulted in 22 jobs created. A total of 41 workshops have been delivered. Targets for 2007/08 are a total of 600 One to One advice Sessions, at least 75 referrals to other partner organisations and a total of 78 workshops delivered.

Partners have been included in three launch events held in June which set out the aims, objectives and activities of the programme with a view to ensuring partnering opportunities are optimised.

The training schedule has been planned for the year, including dates, venues and topics of the workshops.

In September two more business advisors started their job to run counselling sessions.

Contact

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CASE STUDY Cream Project

The Business: Little Kiwi is a new business that produces nappies using highly absorbent, economical material – a welcome relief for parents who struggle to dry the standard towelling nappy for their children. The hand-stitched nappies are currently available on-line in a range of sizes and designs.

The Background: Launched on 14th May 2007 by parents of five, Robert and Catherine Higgins, Little Kiwi is a unique business set up in response to the limited drying capabilities of existing cloth nappies: “I saw a niche in the market” explains Robert, “with the fortnightly emptying of the bins in our area, we couldn’t continue using disposable nappies on our daughter Naomi, so we decided to use cloth ones instead. I came up with an idea for a new design that made drying much quicker and after a lot of testing I patented it as the Kiwi Quick Flip.”

Although the nappy design was ready to be placed in the public domain, Robert didn’t know who to turn to next: “I’d successfully completed the testing and knew it was a viable venture but then I hit a brick wall.” After visiting his local Jobcentre Plus, Robert was pointed in the direction of Enterprise Fenland where he was given guidance by Business Advisor Sergio Aschettino: “Although I had managed to patent the design myself, I wouldn’t have managed to turn it into a business without the support I received from Sergio. He helped us with the accounts, producing a business plan for the bank and setting up BACS. He made us look at the bigger picture and gave us the confidence to think about moving the business forward from being home based, as it is currently, to eventually operating from wholesale premises.”

The Highs & Lows: “Running the business is very time consuming,” explains Robert. “You have to put a lot of work in to get something back. Producing a business plan was hard – Sergio really helped with this and passed it back and forth to us until we got it right. Getting your product out in the public domain is a challenge too. No-one likes new – we had to put a lot of hours into marketing the business and will probably need to for the first year or so.”

The hours and money, however that Robert and Catherine have injected into their business is beginning to pay off: “Already we have been receiving some great feedback and the 100% cotton nappies are really taking off. I had one customer say to me “How can a man have invented something so simple!” It is a straightforward concept that no-one had thought about designing before now. Little Kiwi now holds the patent for 25 years.”

The Future: Robert, who is originally from New Zealand, would eventually like to return to his native land with his wife and five children: “I hope the business will expand so that we can purchase premises and increase production. In time I’d like to open a factory in New Zealand and return there with my family.”

Enterprise: Encouraging Entrepreneurship

The project is delivering a programme which raises the awareness of the multi faceted nature of business and through collaborative efforts will encourage the formation of enterprises. A range of awareness, taster and advisory sessions to disadvantaged groups and individuals will be provided to increase the potential for new business start-ups or self-employment. With a focus on young people it is hoped the following outputs will be achieved by April 2008;

- 140 people attending enterprise awareness sessions
- 28 young people undertaking skills development courses for over 6 hours
- 20 young people undertaking skills of at least 4 hours
- 27 young people assisted to get a job

Collaborative approaches to optimise the benefits will be looked at for linking with other liC interventions.

The project has an allocated a budget of £35,000 for the delivery.

Status

Encouraging Entrepreneurship is being delivered by Prince's Trust having started in September 2007. The first workshops started in October.

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Enterprise: Octavia Hill Birthplace Trust Museum



The Octavia Hill Birthplace Trust Museum is going from strength to strength currently 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 will enable the acquisition of two cottages within the curtilage of the town house and 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 will lever in European Regional Development funding of £250,000 as well as £50,000 from the Trustees themselves. Currently planning consent for change of use is being sought and it is hoped the project can progress apace early in January 2008.

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 to be developed include those with the Rosmini Centre, the 'Boathouse' on the Quayside, Jobcentre Plus locally and CREAM.

Status

This project was approved in October and is proceeding to schedule so far.

Contact

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