

**Evaluation of the Transforming your
Space Programme**

May 2005 Report to the Big Lottery Fund

**Appendix to First Year Report
The Case Studies**

SQW

economic development consultants

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Appendix to First Year Report

The Case Studies

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May 2005

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England

Case Study: Blackpool Council

Introduction

1. The TYS programme is co-ordinated by Blackpool Council’s Community Development Team and managed from the Economic Development Team. The application for funding was forwarded to the Community Development Team to ensure that any bid encapsulated projects that would directly benefit the community.
2. Through the Blackpool Challenge Partnership (at that stage pre-LSP) six projects were proposed to the Partnership’s Board. The Board, consisting of 9 private, 9 public and 9 community members, approved four of these projects.
3. The four were, the Solarium, St Johns, Stanley Park and TAB Community Centre and Sports Facility
4. For each of the four approved:
 - a “vision” already existed, through the Challenge Partnership’s work, and each was regarded as a “flagship” regeneration project for the area and the community;
 - they had already (again through the Challenge Partnership) identified a number of potential partners and other streams of funding; and
 - they provided a good fit between the national TYS programme priorities and those of the local Challenge Partnership.
5. The following table identifies the level of funding received by each project

| Levels of funding received | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| Solarium | | St Johns | | Stanley Park | |
| Source | £ | Source | £ | Source | £ |
| TYS | 175,000 | TYS | 125,000 | TYS | 100,000 |
| Blackpool Council (Cap) | 350,000 | Blackpool Council (Cap) | 20,000 | Blackpool Council (Cap) | 40,000 |
| Blackpool Council (Rev) | 250,000 | St John's | 20,000 | | |
| ERDF Contact Action Plan ² | 483,000 | Lloyds Bank | 10,000 | | |
| ERDF Objective 2 Priority 1 Funding | 195,000 | Blackburn Diocese | 155,000 | | |
| Blackpool Challenge Partnership | 200,000 | Blackpool Challenge Partnership | 200,000 | | |
| Energy Savings Trust | 132,000 | PCT | 48,000 | | |
| Lancashire Tourism Partnership | 200,000 | ODPM (Homeless Centre) | 275,000 | | |
| SEED ³ | 49,000 | HLF | 360,000 | | |
| SITA ⁴ | 150,000 | English Heritage | 104,000 | | |
| Total | 2,000,000 | Total | 1,300,000 | Total | 140,000 |

¹ Active England fund

² Obtained through Lancashire University

³ Obtained through Blackpool Environmental Action Team (BEAT)

⁴ Landfill Tax

6. Despite the number of different funders and the significant amount of other funds the TYS funding was seen to be “fundamental”. The TYS funding appeared to be the catalyst in levering in and securing other funding sources. The TYS funds provided assurance to funders and monies against which other funding could be matched.

Project activities

7. All four of the projects are not only different in cost but they differ also in scope and activities. This case study will assess the activities of all four projects with a particular focus on two, Solaris and the TAB Community Centre and Sports Facility.

Stanley Park

8. Stanley Park is the town’s largest open green space. The TYS money is being used to refurbish a derelict building into a multi-purpose visitor centre at the park’s main arrival point. The centre will comprise a main exhibition area, a meeting room, a kitchen and a shop.
9. The project will not only provide a visitor centre and shop for the benefit of anyone using the park but it will provide a permanent base for the Friends of Stanley Park community group as well as offering meeting facilities for other community groups.
10. The project has recently obtained planning approval and hopes to have contractors on site in January 2005 and then open to the public in April 2005.
11. The project meshes very well with the £3.8 million grant from HLF, obtained by Blackpool Council in order to undertake a major redevelopment of the Park itself. This work will also start next year.
12. When the project is completed the centre will be maintained and operated by the Friends of Stanley Park and the Council’s Parks Department

St Johns

13. St Johns is a large landmark church in the centre of the town. However, it no longer has the size of congregation to warrant the size of the building. As a result parts of the main worship area are being converted. There are two major developments taking place. One section is being developed into a homeless day/night shelter and the other into open access community meeting facilities.
14. The TYS money has primarily facilitated the development of the meeting facilities, however it has also played a critical role in levering in other funding streams.
15. The community meeting facilities are expected to be available from Spring 2005 and are to be managed and maintained by the St John’s Charity.

Solaris

16. The transformation of a derelict seafront solarium into a multi purpose “zero energy” building incorporating Lancaster University’s Sub-Regional Environment Centre, exhibition facilities, meeting rooms, business space and a café.
17. The building has been built using a number of sustainability principles, including waste minimisation and energy self sufficiency through solar photovoltaic tiles and wind turbines. Both of which generate more electricity for the building than it will use. Rainwater from the roof is also collected and used to flush the toilets!
18. The project therefore links closely with the Blackpool Environmental Action Team (BEAT) and fits well with the Agenda 21 ethos.
19. There are also very close links to Lancashire University whose involvement in the project’s development was key. They were looking to set up a sub-regional environmental centre in the area but required match funding, therefore when the TYS money became available this provided the impetus for the Environmental Centre to be realised.
20. As well as benefiting the environment the building is of benefit to the local community, schools, colleges and businesses. It provides:
 - office space for business start-ups (as a result of the ERDF Objective 2 Funding);
 - open use meeting rooms, with preferential rates for community and voluntary groups;
 - a café, again open to all, and particularly popular with the elderly; and
 - exhibition space, one large space (at the front of the building) which displays education material for both adults and children and other spaces (throughout the building) which displays professional artwork or work by school children.
21. The TYS funding directly contributed to the construction, the fitting out costs of the building and the innovative energy demonstration features. The money was also key in leveraging in other funding sources.
22. The project formally opened in November 2004 and has a full-time centre manager who is employed by Blackpool Council
23. The beneficiaries of this project to date have been extremely varied and from all parts of the community. In November 2004 the project was visited by a total of 4,820 people. Of which 750 used the centre’s grounds, 644 attended meetings and 3,426 visited the exhibitions or the café. On top of this, two businesses start-ups have located in the centre as has a Lancashire University unit and members of the town’s Environmental Action Team.

TAB Community Centre and Sports Facility

24. The development of a “Health Village” located in the Talbot and Brunswick wards comprising a community centre, a sports facility, a sure start and PCT centre⁵, and two open spaces (one play and one quiet). The Health Village is being constructed in two of Blackpool’s most deprived wards and in an area of densely populated housing.
25. The Health Village comprises a number of different funders and seeks to target a number of different aspects of a number of different problems. Each element of the Village aims to target different parts of the community and expects different beneficiaries. However, despite this, throughout the whole village there are clear inter-linkages between each individual element both physically and in terms of users.
26. The overall aim of the project is to improve health and well-being of the local community as well as drawing together different groups within the community.
27. The TYS funding is providing the sports facility, the open spaces and the community centre. It was also, like the other projects, the catalyst in bringing in other funding, notably from Sport England.
28. The village is being constructed, in three phases, in an area of densely population housing (95 houses per hectare). Therefore the first step was for the Council to assemble the site. This required the acquisition of a number of houses and small businesses - an extremely time consuming process.
29. During the process of assembling the site development work could begin on Phase 1, the Sure Start/PCT centre. Work which is due to be completed in January 2005.
30. The site assembly stage is now also completed so work will begin shortly on Phase 2, construction of the sports facility and open spaces. This Phase is due to finish in Autumn 2005.
31. Phase 3 still requires £1.2m of funding to be obtained, although there was no sense that there would be a problem obtaining this, and the whole project is expected to be complete by September 2006.
32. The project is currently being managed by the Council but is being driven by the local community association

Community Engagement

33. The community have been engaged in a variety of different ways and at a variety of different levels:
 - the community was involved strategically, through the nine members on the Challenge Partnership Board, in the original decision of which projects to fund;

⁵ £1.8m funding secured through Sure Start (£1m), NOF Neighbourhood Nursery Fund (£149,000) and the PCT (£650,000)

- the community is also, and has been, involved in the development of each individual project, directly influencing the design of activities (notably the TAB Community centre and Sports Facility);
 - the community are also involved in the day to day delivery of individual projects (Stanley Park and St John's); and
 - the community have been engaged by the project (Solaris).
34. It is clear that each project has engaged the community in a different way and at different stages:

Stanley Park

35. The development of the visitor centre at Stanley Park is intended specifically for the community. It has already fully engaged the local community group, Friends of Stanley Park. This group have had an input in what should be in the Centre and will also directly benefit from a permanent office/meeting space.
36. The aim of the Centre, when it opens, will be to engage the wider community who use the park as well as offering meeting space for other community groups

St Johns

37. The development of both elements of St Johns have involved and engaged the local community through the St John's Charity. They are also specifically for and will benefit the local community, particularly the open access meeting space (for which the TYS money is specifically contributing to).

Solaris

38. One of the key aims for the Solaris centre is to provide a platform to develop community activities. The centre itself is designed with the community in mind. There is an open to all café, meeting rooms with discounted rates for community groups, open space (which were used a lot during the summer for football) and exhibitions, displaying art work from local artists.
39. Extensive consultation undertaken by BEAT, the Area Forum and Save our Solarium group confirmed that the project is based on community needs.
40. In terms of evidence of engagement visitor numbers are extremely high (4,820 visitors⁶ were recorded in November), the meeting rooms are heavily booked and the café is very popular. The opportunity to promote local artwork has also received a massive response.
41. The Centre is continually looking to improve its service to the community and uses customer satisfaction survey's to gauge opinion on what it is doing and to identify ways in which it could change.

⁶ This includes walking in the grounds, using meeting rooms, visiting exhibitions and using the café

TAB Community Centre and Sports Facility

42. Again, this project is entirely focused on the community and for the benefit of the local community. The aim of the Health Village as a whole is to improve the health and wellbeing of the local community. Although the project is in its early development stages, lots of different community groups are already engaged and the Talbot and Brunswick Community Association are driving the project forward.
43. A variety of community groups have all had a direct say in what should be included in the village, for instance local mums requested “a Mediterranean style garden” as part of one of the open spaces, whilst local young people have requested “swings, slides and roundabouts” as part of the adventure play area.
44. A full consultation took place with 84 young people on the 15th November 2004 seeking to find out what they would most like in the Multi Use Games Area (sports facility), the open green space and the adventure play areas. The consultation, including a presentation from the lead architect, proved very successful and it is hoped that young people will continue to assist the design team in the decision making process.
45. The village is clearly being built with the community as the priority: the aspiration is that through its creation a number of community groups will be brought together creating a much more cohesive community.

Outputs and Impacts

46. The following table summarises the project’s outcomes to date. As three of the projects are still in the development phase the full extent of their outcomes are not yet realised. The fourth project has only been in operation for a matter of months. All the projects have the potential to impact significantly upon the economy, society, health and the environment, only time will tell whether these impacts emerge.
47. The only unexpected outcome to date has been the popularity of the art exhibitions at the Solaris centre and the impact that this has had on engaging local artists in the work of the centre.
48. A number of these outcomes would not have been achieved without the TYS funding. This is primarily because of the importance of the TYS money in leveraging in other funding sources and providing the “kick start” to the projects development. The TYS money has meant that all of the projects have engaged the community and will seek to continue to engage them.

| Table 1: Outcomes of project to date | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| | Activity undertaken | Description of benefits | Evidence of outcome |
| St John's | | | |
| Social | Community Engagement | The community has been involved in the development of the project | The project has fully involved the St John's Charity |
| Stanley Park | | | |
| Social | Community Engagement | Through the Friends of Stanley Park the community have been involved in the project's development | The Friends of Stanley Park are fully engaged |
| Solaris | | | |
| Social | Community Engagement | The centre is used by a number of the community and by various community groups. The café and open space have proved extremely productive in engaging various groups in the community. The art exhibitions have also engaged local artists who wish to display their work | The numbers using the centre since it has opened have progressively risen |
| Economic | Business support | The centre has space for business start-ups to locate in | Three of the four spaces have been filled by business start-ups |
| | Job creation | New jobs created for people to work in the centre | The centre employs a number of staff in the reception and café as well as a full time manager |
| Environmental | Redevelopment of a derelict building | The development of an unused building | A derelict seafront building has been transformed into a smart new centre |
| | Creation of a Zero Energy building | The building is designed using principles of sustainability including waste minimisation and energy efficiency | The building creates more energy than it uses and is therefore able to sell energy back to the National Grid |
| | Creation of green space | Enhancement of green space making it more attractive for community use | 4 acres of green space is now available for community use for a variety of different purposes (walking dogs, football) |

| Table 1: Outcomes of project to date | | | |
|---|----------------------------|--|--|
| | Activity undertaken | Description of benefits | Evidence of outcome |
| TAB Community Centre and Sports Facility | | | |
| Social | Community Engagement | The community is fully involved in project development and driving the project forward | A number of different community groups have been engaged and are working together |
| Economic | House demolition | A previously run down area of housing and small businesses have been bought and demolished | As a result of expectation of what the Health Village will bring to the area house prices in the local area have been rising |

Future and Sustainability

49. The projects are primarily capital based which in itself creates a degree of permanence, but they also each address a very specific need and serve a clear purpose, a need and purpose that will exist beyond the lifetime of the TYS funding.
50. Each of the projects already have a clear means of sustainability. Stanley Park will be operated by the Friends of Stanley Park community group and the centre will be maintained by the Council’s Park services. St Johns will be managed and operated by St John’s Charity (a registered charity). Solaris has a number of revenue sources that means it can sustain itself. The Sports Facility and Community Centre form an integral part of the Health Village and will continue to be supported by a number of community groups, local schools, Sport England and the Council
51. For each of the projects there appears to be a real commitment to achieving and maintaining success, but it is too early to tell how this will work out.

Overview

52. It is fair to say that whilst the projects relied heavily on other funding sources and that they could not have progressed on TYS funding alone, the TYS money was key in leveraging in other funding sources and in providing the impetus needed for the projects to start.
53. The key positive lesson learned from this process have been:
 - There was a real need for each of the projects
 - The importance of involving the community from the start
 - The flexibility of the funding allowed projects that had been “on the shelf” to move forward and it allowed other funding sources to be pulled in

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Solaris

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Case Study: Pendle Borough Council

Introduction

1. The TYS programme is co-ordinated by the Council’s Employment and Community Initiatives Team within the Regeneration Unit. Because of staff changes there is no knowledge of how the original bid came about!
2. In the original bid there were three projects, the Canal Corridor- Small Grants Project, Pendle Productive Landscapes and West Craven Community Owned Resource Centre each receiving £144,135 of TYS money.
3. However, the West Craven Community Resource Centre was looking unlikely to deliver so the TYS funding was withdrawn and re-profiled between the other two projects.
4. The Canal Corridor small projects fund was set up as a “bolt on” to the already existing SRB 6 funded Canal Corridor Strategic Framework, a key priority for the LSP. This framework had been produced to highlight examples of environmental works that would be beneficial to the area. The TYS money together with some money allocated from the SRB (£90,000) allowed local residents/community groups to bid for small grants (between £100- £15,000) to carry out environmental works that would improve areas within the Canal Corridor.
5. The additional TYS funding, that came about from the West Craven Centre, was given to this project to allow bids from outside the SRB wards.
6. Pendle Productive Landscapes is managed by the Lancashire Wildlife Trust and was set up to look at derelict land in the borough and to turn these sites into areas of benefit to the local community. The rationale for the project was to originally improve the community’s access to fresh food i.e. the derelict sites would be turned into community gardens. However, over time this rationale broadened in scope to providing areas of benefit for the local community.

Project activities

The Canal Corridor Small Projects Fund

7. The Canal Corridor stakeholder group (consisting of representatives from Pendle Borough Council, British Waterways, Pendle Partnership, Pendle Community Network and the Canal Corridor Forum) agreed that the bids would be for projects that would enhance community ownership of the environment, demonstrate community participation and involvement, promote innovation and social inclusion and encourage capacity building and partnership working.
8. This stakeholder group meets on the last Thursday of every month to appraise new expressions of interest and applications for grants. The process is that groups submit an EOI

for the grant. If the EOI is approved the group then works with the stakeholder group to develop a full application. This process is aimed at building the capacity of community groups to apply for funding.

9. To date 13 projects have been approved ranging from £1,276 to the full £15,000. Projects approved include a tool shed, nature reserves, restoration of a bandstand, an inclusive playground and sensory garden, allotments and canal side improvements.
10. Each project is lead by a local community or voluntary group such as Friends of Victoria Park, Pendle Environmental Network, Hodge House Allotment Society, Brierfield Action in the Community, and Norfolk Street Area residents, whilst the overall co-ordination is undertaken by a full time Canal Corridor Development Co-ordinator employed by Pendle Borough Council. Each project has a slightly different set of specific objectives but shares broader objectives of community engagement, environmental improvement and capacity building.
11. The target beneficiaries for the TYS project overall are members of the community, with the focus primarily on those residents in Brierfield, Whitefield and Bradley wards but because many of the projects are seeking to improve the environment then there is an indirect benefit for all Pendle residents.

Pendle Productive Landscapes

12. Pendle Productive Landscapes is still in the early stages of development. The first phase of the project has been to undertake an audit of land in the borough. This has been a two stage process. The first stage was a simple audit of land, establishing which sites fell under the projects criteria and who owned these sites. The second stage was a consultation with the local community offering them the chance to suggest sites where they felt that work was needed.
13. A number of potential sites have been identified. These sites have been prioritised and work on the ground is about to start. One of the key criteria in prioritisation has been ownership of the site. Council owned sites have been given a higher priority because it is far easier for work to begin on these. Work has begun on a woodland site and various “tidy-ups” have taken place.
14. The project is managed by Lancashire Wildlife Trust, which employs a member of staff specifically to run this project. This clearly links into their wider agenda and strategy. Office space for the project is shared with Groundwork so there are some informal and formal linkages developing as a result (they have used the TYS money as a match funder). The links back into the Council seemed to be more on an informal basis rather than through formal reporting.
15. The target beneficiaries are again broadly the local community however each specific project will target a differing group within the community.

Community Engagement

16. For both of the projects engagement of the local community is key.

The Canal Corridor Small Projects Fund

17. The community owns the individual projects so are therefore directly engaged and influencing activities as a result. The fact that 13 projects have already been developed reflects the high levels of engagement that have resulted.
18. As the project is attached to the SRB 6 funding and the LSP it has been able to benefit from the community engagement work that they had already undertaken. There have however been some problems with getting the “word” out to a broader group of the population

Pendle Productive Landscapes

19. To date the community has been engaged through the consultation event to identify areas of need and also through the “tidy ups” where members of the local community have participated.
20. To some extent the community influenced the direction of the project through the consultation but the biggest constraint on their thinking was the practical matter of who owned the land. If the Council owned the land then work could progress, relatively easily, if it didn’t then the task was much more complex

Outputs and Impacts

21. With regard to outputs, the Canal Corridor Projects Fund monitors projects according to the SRB 6 output targets whilst Pendle Productive have not developed formal outputs as yet. The development of formal outputs should in turn aid the reporting relationship between the Council and the project.
22. It is important to note that for both of the projects each sub-project will have a differing set of outcomes. The table below summarises the broad outcomes for the projects.

| Table 1: Outcomes of project to date | | | |
|---|----------------------------|---|--|
| | Activity undertaken | Description of benefits | Evidence of outcome |
| The Canal Corridor Small Projects Fund | | | |
| Social | Community Engagement | The community have been engaged through the application process | 13 projects have been developed and are being run by the community |
| | Area improvements | The improvement of the local area creates a “feel good” environment for the local community | Work has been undertaken on a number of run-down areas |
| | Capacity building | Through the application process community capacity particularly to apply for funding has been developed | The Stakeholder group actively seeks to help the community groups complete their application forms |
| Environmental | Environmental Improvements | Lots of areas around the canal have been physically and visibly improved | Work has begun on a number of sites around the canal |
| Health | Healthy walks project | Development of four short walks along the canal | Project currently under development |
| Pendle Productive Landscapes | | | |
| Social | Community Engagement | The community have been engaged through a community consultation event and tidy-up events | The good attendance at the community consultation event |
| Environmental | Environmental Improvements | The tidy-up events have removed a large amount of litter and rubbish from various sites | The success of the tidy-up events |

23. Some of the outputs for the canal corridor project could have been achieved without the TYS funding because they would have received funding from the SRB scheme. What the TYS funding has done is, first, it has allowed the outputs to happen on a larger scale (ie more projects can be developed) and on a wider scale (ie projects can be developed outside of the SRB wards).
24. Pendle Productive Landscapes is at a too early stage in its development to comment upon the impact of the TYS funding.

Future and Sustainability

25. There is likely to be a need for both projects after the TYS lifetime because there will always be a need for “smaller level” environmental improvements of the kind that both projects seek to achieve. However, as yet there is no formal evidence for supporting the continuation of these project mechanisms.

26. The legacy of both projects should be evident environmental improvements to local areas coupled with subsequent improvements in health. The capacity and cohesion of the local community should also have been developed
27. As yet there are no future funding sources identified, although through the NWDA the Pendle Partnership has been awarded a substantial amount of money (“hundreds of thousands of pounds”) for three or four large projects focusing on the Canal Corridor. These larger projects will have the potential to make a significant impact on the canal side. The Canal Corridor Stakeholder Group expected to be looking for exciting and innovative ideas for projects during January 2005.
28. In terms of maintaining outputs of existing projects each of the Canal Corridor projects is led by a community group, and the responsibility for upkeep has been taken primarily by that organisation.

Overview

29. The Canal Corridor project would have gone ahead but to a much lesser extent and it would have been limited to the SRB wards. The Pendle Productive Landscapes projects would probably not have gone ahead without the TYS money, although as it is in its early stages it is hard to tell.
30. Despite being the early stages for both the projects it is clear that the TYS funding has been key in “joining up the dots” between various regeneration initiatives and community groups operating in the area.
31. The key lesson learned – as seen at this stage - have been:
 - The importance of “traditional” community work. Seeking to engage the community through their ideas for what needs to happen in the area and then enabling them to “own” the project
 - The importance of consultation both in terms of raising awareness and in establishing the areas of focus
 - The importance of capacity building enabling the community to help themselves
32. The few problems that have arisen have been more a result of process rather than with the projects themselves. The main problems however have been:
 - The lack of consistency of staff both within the BLF and within Pendle Borough Council
 - The slightly cumbersome “form filling” that is required, most notable the financial documentation
 - Communicating that there is funding available for the local community

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Case Study: Peterborough

Introduction

1. Peterborough City Council (PCC) was granted a total of £325,637 in Fairshare TYS funding. The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) played an important role in the selection of the areas of the City to benefit from TYS funding. It was decided that funding should be focussed on areas of need, and also those which had received less regeneration support recently.
2. After discussion between PCC and the LSP it was decided that the funding should be split between three projects, namely:
 - The Paston Fairshare Project
 - The Embankment Project
 - The Bluebell Meadows/Welland Recreational Ground project
3. Peterborough City Council's Community Regeneration Department is leading the management and delivery of the three TYS Fairshare projects, working closely with community groups and residents.

Project Activities

The Paston Fairshare Project

4. The Paston Fairshare Project was chosen as it is in an area which lacks play/leisure facilities for young people and it will improve, and increase activity on, an underused piece of open space in a residential area. The project will provide a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA), a bike track with obstacles, a basic (low level) skate area, a new path and landscaping with trees and shrubs. At the time of the evaluation visit, the MUGA and cycle track were under construction and it is hoped the project will be officially opened in February (half term). The project is aimed at young people, children and families though it is recognised that the site should benefit the wider community. As a result, there is a further option to develop a 'quiet area' for elderly residents of nearby sheltered housing schemes and also a plan to retain an area for dog walking. The total budget for this project is £121,000 which includes £79,000 from TYS, £16,000 from the Community Regeneration Fund, £15,000 from Peterborough Environmental City Trust and £11,625 for skate equipment from SRB funding.
5. The rationale behind the project was that Paston area has recently lost a number of play facilities (which no longer met health and safety standards) and there was a feeling amongst members of the community that more activities were needed to keep children active and out of trouble. The field on which the play areas will be built was previously only being used by dog walkers and by children for games of football in the summer. The idea of building a

purpose built play area was therefore explored at some initial meetings with Paston Action Group.

The Embankment Project

6. This project was chosen specifically as it was seen as a project which benefits the people of Peterborough generally rather than a single community or a specific beneficiary group. The project aims to improve access to, and the attractiveness of, the embankment area alongside the river Nene, making it easier and safer to reach the riverside area. The project will provide a gateway to the Lido (outdoor swimming pool), the newly refurbished Key Theatre and the riverside, with the aim of giving the site a presence within the City, as it is currently perceived as being hidden away.
7. The project is designed to link with the wider masterplan for the City centre, which may include a pedestrian bridge over the river. The project has been designed to be completed at the same time as improvements are being made to the Key Theatre (a £1.5m refit to include improved disabled access and the construction of a new café) thus minimising disruption and providing a major 'facelift' for the embankment area. The total amount of TYS funding is £165,000 and will be used to provide the following:
 - an entrance feature to the embankment in the form of a sculpture (£10,000),
 - an external paved and landscaped café area (£18,000)
 - a new pedestrian route around the embankment including new pathways to the Key Theatre (£49,583)
 - upgrading of the riverside path and improved seating (£38,000)
 - the first phase of a recreational play area to be linked to the new footpath access. (£50,000)
8. Peterborough City Council have contributed a further £47,000 in match funding.

The Bluebell Meadows/Welland Recreational Ground project

9. The object of the project is to improve recreational facilities for children and teenagers in two locations. The TYS funding of £80,000 has funded the development of a Multi Use Games Area and access paths at the Bluebell Meadows site. At 'Welland Rec', a mini skate park has been constructed and the existing play area improved, with new equipment added. The aim of this is to provide a skating area for younger children and teenagers in line with PCC's policy regarding skate parks. There was a concern that the park should serve its local community rather than to attract skaters from elsewhere, as often happens with larger facilities. The Welland Rec facility was officially opened in 2004 with a display from a group of local skaters.

Community engagement

10. Considerable effort has been made to ensure that communities have been engaged at all stages of the three projects. Consultations with beneficiary groups and local residents have led to valuable lessons being learned and significant changes being made to the design and delivery of the projects. For example, the decision to split the Bluebell Meadows project between two locations was the result of listening to the views of young people, whilst homeowners in the Patson area were involved in the design process to minimise any adverse impact on their homes. There has been limited community engagement in the Embankment project, mainly because the site does not sit within a defined community and there is not a defined user group for this project.

Community engagement in the Paston Fairshare Project

11. Whilst Peterborough City Council is leading the project, the community was heavily involved in identifying the priorities and the design of the play area. Paston Action Group, Peterborough Environment City Trust (PECT), Peterborough Association for Detached Youth Work, Nene Housing Society, the Open Door Centre and local residents were all involved in the consultation process which commenced with an event at Honeyhill Primary School. This event gave young people the opportunity to draw pictures and build models of what they would like to see in the play area, as well as enabling residents to give their views and raise any concerns. This was followed by a number of other community meetings and public displays concerning the project. The consultation events were generally regarded as a success by those interviewed, although they did acknowledge that there were difficulties in managing expectations of young people, which have now been overcome.
12. The consultation process identified some concerns of local residents. The site is bounded on one side by council housing and on the other by privately owned housing. Residents who owned nearby property were concerned about the impact of the play area on housing values as well as damage and disturbance to their property. The project management team and Paston Action Group took these issues into account when designing the play areas, and ensured that the access path leads people away from the housing. Landscaping will also be used to encourage children away from the neighbouring properties. The community was consulted to find a name for the park which will now be called Unity Park.
13. The project has been designed in consultation with Paston Farm Playcentre which backs onto the field. The Playcentre has successfully bid for lottery funding for an adventure play area and will also be able to make use of the new MUGA and play areas built as part of the TYS project.

Community engagement in the embankment project

14. The location made consultation difficult as the site is not within a defined community, nor does it have an easily identifiable group of users, though efforts have been made to consult with boat users. Students of Kings School, Peterborough are currently designing an

Embankment entrance feature in conjunction with a local artist. A selection of these designs will then be exhibited at six locations to gauge the opinions of the general public.

Community engagement in the Bluebell Meadows/Welland Rec Project

15. An initial meeting with local people highlighted the need to improve an area of recreational land located between a housing estate and a main road (Bluebell Meadows). Prior to the project this area had grass football pitches but no play equipment. The site represents a large area of open space, however this was underutilised and lacking in facilities for young people. There was also a perception that the area was not safe as a serious assault occurred there some years ago. At the initial consultation stage local young people suggested that the community would be better served by using the TYS funding to improve two sites, thus Welland Rec was also included in the project.
16. Peterborough Association of Detached Youth Workers (PADY) has set up a youth group for this project and has also been consulting and working with local residents. This included a survey of what young people wanted to see provided or improved in the area. Residents with properties adjoining Welland Rec were consulted throughout the project; indeed one of the project team visited all residents near to Welland Rec to inform them about the project. This was partly because there was some concern amongst elderly residents that increased activity on the Rec would lead to disturbance and vandalism of nearby properties. However consultations with residents have suggested that they now view the project as a positive addition to the community and enjoy seeing children using the park. Considerable effort was made to ensure that residents benefit from the project and local children were involved in planting a garden area at the official opening of the park (with the incentive of a free burger!).
17. During the evaluation visit, I met with a group of residents who had been involved throughout the project at both sites and they appear to have taken a keen interest in this project and are also exploring opportunities for further improvements to the sites. A local councillor has also been fully engaged in the project which, alongside the involvement of residents, should contribute to the long term sustainability of the project.
18. Some problems have been identified with the Multi Use Games Area, such as the height of the fencing and drainage, and PCC are working with the local community to consider these improvements.

Outputs and impacts

19. Of the three projects, only Bluebell Meadows/Welland Rec has been completed and is in use. As a result it is hard to draw clear conclusions about the outputs and outcomes of these projects. At Bluebell Meadows/Welland Rec both sites seem well used and residents seem broadly pleased with the facilities.
20. The process of community engagement at Paston and Bluebell Meadows/Welland Rec appears to have had a very positive impact on those involved. At Paston the project design

team (including Paston Action Group, PCC staff, Paston Farm Playcentre and local councillors) reported that they has learnt a great deal about designing and managing such a project, especially in terms of community consultation. The capacity-building benefits of this TYS project should not be underestimated as participation in the project appears to have given members of the community the skill, experience and confidence to assist in the delivery of similar projects in the future.

Table 1: Outcomes of project to date

| | <i>Activity undertaken</i> | <i>Description of benefits</i> | <i>Evidence of outcome</i> |
|----------------------|--|--|--|
| Social | Community Consultation events in Paston | Ensuring that the community are fully informed about the proposals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people contributing to the design of the play areas • Reducing opposition of local home owners |
| | Involvement of Paston Action Group in designing and managing the project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving skills of members of the project design group. • Developing the capacity of community leaders to bid for, manage and deliver community projects | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anecdotal evidence of increased belief and confidence amongst participants. • One consultee suggested that "community spirit" is returning to the area. |
| | Bluebell Meadows: Establishment of youth group | Young people having an input into the design and location of the scheme at an early stage | The decision to build facilities in two locations instead of one. |
| Economic | Encouraging increased public use of the embankment area | Increased throughflow of people generating economic activity along the riverside | None yet. |
| Environmental | Redevelopment of the embankment | Creation of new habitats | None yet |
| | Environmental improvements to the Paston site | Creation of new habitats | Landscaping is not yet complete |
| Health | Provision of children's play areas/skate parks | Improved fitness and health of young people. | None yet and hard to measure |

Paston Fairshare Project

21. The main outputs are the construction of the play area and associated landscaping. As the play area is not yet in use it is not possible to determine the full impacts on beneficiary groups and the wider community. However, during the meeting with residents and members of Paston Action Group a number of indirect benefits of the programme were already being identified. First, all of the interviewees agreed that participation in the project has helped to return a sense of spirit to the community. Members of the Paston Action Group also felt much more confident that they could deliver similar projects in the future, as this was by far the biggest project in which they had been involved. One of the key lessons that the PAG feel they have learnt is to consult; not to assume what the community want, but to ask them. PAG members

also reported that they had learnt a lot about practical issues of implementing such a project such as health and safety regulations. Some participants feel that the project may have positive impacts on anti-social behaviour in the area.

22. The linkage to the Paston Farm Playcentre was identified as an important additional benefit as the TYS project adds to the resources available to the Playcentre (especially during school hours) whilst the community can also benefit from both assets.

The Embankment

23. When considered in the context of the wider masterplan for Peterborough this project very small, however, the improvements to the Embankment are seen as ‘starting the ball rolling’ in terms of the rejuvenation of the City centre. It is hoped that there will be economic benefits for the immediate area, bringing more people to the riverside to the café, the Lido (outdoor swimming pool) and Key Theatre. In the medium to long term it is hoped that increased public access to the riverside will encourage opportunities for new business developments of the riverside. At the stage it is not possible to measure such outputs.

Bluebell Meadows and Welland Rec

24. Meetings with local residents suggest that the play areas are well used, and regarded as an asset to the local community. During the site visit to Bluebell Meadows the Multi Use Games Area was being used and the project team are in the process of undertaking a survey of users to evaluate the benefits of the new facilities. Residents have reported that fewer children are now playing in the street and that incidents of vandalism have reduced.
25. In addition to the direct benefits of the new facilities, it seems that the residents involved in the project have learnt a great deal about project development and management, especially in terms of the consultation process. Unfortunately none of the young people who have been involved in the project were available on the day of my visit in order for me to determine how they have benefited from their involvement.
26. The residents and PCC team appear to have developed a strong relationship, indeed residents were very positive about PCC’s involvement. Several of the residents’ group stressed the importance of communication between the local authority and the community. For example, local parents were keen to have a raised grass bank where they could watch their children play away from the play area. However, the maintenance costs of mowing a bank rather than a flat field would mean that this would not be economically viable. Whilst residents have found this frustrating, the PCC had explained the need to minimise on-going costs so that the community understood the reasons behind the decision.

Future and sustainability

27. The long term sustainability of the projects appears to have been taken into account both in the design and delivery plans of the projects. The Paston Action Group is keen to measure the

impacts of the project and recognise the importance of project monitoring. They are keen to see the play area expand and, subject to funding, would like to see a second and possibly a third phase on the site. This could include an area for older people as well as a nature area. The sustainability of the Embankment Project should be secured as it will form part of a wider master plan for the city centre.

Overview

28. The activities at Paston and Bluebell Meadows/Welland Rec would not have happened at this time without TYS funding and there is no indication that these projects have displaced funding from elsewhere. Improvements to the embankment may have happened without TYS funding as the new masterplan for the City will result in extensive improvements to the whole city centre area. However, it is doubtful the Embankment would have been an immediate priority, and it may have been some years before the area was improved. The nature of the embankment area is such that there is limited community ownership of the project.

Interviewees

Mandy Dewdney, Community Regeneration Team Leader/Project Manager

Les Fletcher, Property Surveyor, PCC

Simon Bothwell, Recreation and Landscape Manager, PCC

Charles Clay, Landscape Architect, PCC

Paston Fairshare Project Design Group including

- Paston Action Group and
- Paston residents (various)
- Cllr John Bleakney
- Paston Farm Play Centre

Bluebell Meadows Residents Association (Various)

Jacqui (PCC)

Case Study: Sandwell

Introduction

1. Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council is the lead organisation responsible for a portfolio of 14 TYS projects, working closely with the Sandwell Partnership. A Steering Group has been established consisting of Sandwell MBC staff and members of the Sandwell Partnership to ensure that the portfolio of projects will complement both the Sandwell Community Plan and Neighbourhood Strategy. Sandwell has been awarded a total of £1,945,783, of which £1,811,185 has been allocated to 14 projects and a further £166,953 allocated for the management and development of the programme in Sandwell.
2. Total match funding of approximately £700,000 has been secured across the portfolio of projects (including both capital and revenue funding)

The selection process

3. Initially a strategic bid was submitted to NOF which was approved. The Steering Group was then requested to submit a detailed portfolio of individual projects. Given the size of Sandwell's Fairshare allocation and the number of proposed projects, considerable thought was given to the selection process. A two-stage process was developed:

Stage 1

- At the time of the application, Sandwell MBC had recently established 'Town Teams' which have with close links with local community groups and individuals within each of the six Sandwell towns. The Town Teams had undertaken research into the priorities of the communities in each town and drew upon this research, and local knowledge, to draw up a list of possible projects for each town area.

Stage 2

- The Steering Group then selected the final portfolio of projects from those submitted by each of the six Town Teams. The aim was to select projects which fitted closely with the objectives of the Sandwell Partnership, reflected a locally identified need and which provided a 'good spread' of projects across the Borough.
4. This selection process illustrates that Steering Group has ensured that the selected projects address community needs and that they complement existing local strategies and priorities. Projects were chosen which exhibit a good fit with Sandwell Partnership's strategy and the action plans developed at individual town level.

Management

5. The day-to-day management of the portfolio of projects is the responsibility of two project managers, Jackie Bell and Rob Marlow. Both posts are funded by TYS for the duration of the

TYS funding. Consultations with members of the steering group and managers of individual projects suggest both have played a key role in the success of the programme to date, forming an important link between individual projects, the Big Lottery Fund and the Steering Group. They have helped to simplify the administration for project managers and ensured that the views of local communities have been considered and incorporated into projects.

6. An independent consultant has been commissioned to undertake an evaluation of each project.

Project activities

7. The full portfolio of projects covers a wide range of activities. For the purposes of this case study two of the fourteen projects were considered in detail; Salop Drive Market Garden and Children's Play facilities at Forge Lane/Mousesweet Brook.

Growing Opportunities: Salop Drive Market Garden

8. This project aims to build upon the work of a voluntary organisation, Ideal for All Ltd, who has converted a largely overgrown and little used area of allotments into a market garden. Whilst some allotments have been retained, the majority of the site is now used as a market garden which produces fresh fruit and vegetables for over 100 local elderly people. "Ideal for All" provide opportunities for vulnerable members of the community (such as those with physical and mental disabilities) to work in the gardens alongside local volunteers. Bags of high quality organic produce are then sold to elderly people at a reduced price. A project manager and an assistant have been employed to run the scheme.

TYS funding

9. TYS funding is being used to improve access to the gardens including providing a tarmac road and paths and associated curbing and drainage. TYS is also paying for the design and construction of a wildlife garden, a communal garden and an additional raised planting bed. The toilets have also been fitted to the mains sewerage system which will significantly reduce running costs on the site. In total, the project has been allocated £124,233.00 There no match funding for this project in terms of capital, though the broader Ideal for All project has generated significant revenue support for its activities (£52,750) from a range of sources.
10. The objective of the TYS project is to improve access to the site, especially for the disabled and elderly, and therefore increase the number of people who can benefit from working on site. The improvements also enable the site to be opened to the wider community and enable local people to enjoy new garden areas. The gardens will also provide space for community events in the summer and may also be an educational resource for local school children.
11. The project is managed by, Grainne Siggins from "Ideal for All", assisted by a site manager David Straker and a project assistant. To date, the drive, pathways and car park have been resurfaced, and the designs for the gardens are being finalised. The raised bed will also be completed in early spring.

Children's Play facilities at Forge Lane/Mousesweet Brook

12. The main objective is to provide play area for children between the ages of 8 and 14. There was an existing play area at Mousesweet Brook, however the equipment was basic and old, and the site was hidden away from the main housing area. This encouraged anti-social behaviour and made the site unattractive to younger children and parents. The project is managed by Jamie Whitehouse of Environment Direct (Department responsible for environment within SMBC) in conjunction with the housing team and Rowley Regis Town Team. The total project budget is £100,000. There is no match funding for this project in terms of capital, however the Community Liaison team work to maintain the site as part of another TYS project (Rowley Regis Nature Reserves Project).
13. Initially the issue of improving the play area was raised by a community group, the Friends of Mousesweet Brook, who organised a petition highlighting the need for local children to have a decent playground. Whilst the local need was recognised, Cradley Heath generally has good provision of play areas and thus is not a priority for SMBC. However, the petition arrived at a time when Fairshare funding became available, thus the Rowley Regis Town Team saw the opportunity to deliver a project which under other circumstances would not have been possible. The project addresses a number of priorities identified by the local community such as community safety, anti-social behaviour and improvements to the local environment. It also complements another TYS project to clean up and improve access to the adjoining Mousesweet Brook Nature Reserve (one of three reserves in Rowley Regis to be improved through TYS)
14. The timing of the TYS was fortuitous as there is currently programme of refurbishment underway in local council properties, thus the local area will be given a real boost through a number of linked activities (property improvements, play area renewal, nature reserve management etc).
15. The TYS funding has enabled the installation of new play equipment, safety surfaces and landscaping. The removal of a large grass bank has helped to open out the site and ensure that the site is visible from the housing area, which should help reduce vandalism and make the area feel safer. It also increases privacy for local residents as people were previously easily able look into upper floor windows. Whilst the target beneficiaries are the local children it can be realistically expected that the whole community will benefit from the project, either directly or indirectly.
16. There have been no significant delays with the project and the play area with work commencing in September and completed by the end of November. The park was officially opened on 11 January 2005. The project team have been impressed by the flexibility of the TSY funding and found the application process "refreshingly simple". Timescales for the submission of project applications was regarded as realistic and the team feels that they have been "trusted to get on with things" which, in their experience, is not always the case with external funding!

Community Engagement

Growing Opportunities: Salop Drive Market Garden

17. Both existing user groups and the wider community have been consulted on the development of the communal and wildlife gardens. A questionnaire was developed for completion at an open consultation event held on 16th June 2004. Some users were also taken to other wildlife and communal gardens in order to get design ideas for the new gardens at Salop Drive. A planning event was then held, led by the landscape designer who was commissioned to develop the plans. As a result a series of sketch plans were produced which were then presented to local residents, Ideal for All staff, gardening groups and allotment holders. Volunteers who deliver the vegetable bags have also used their contacts with elderly residents in the nearby sheltered housing to gauge interest in the communal gardens.
18. The site has also been checked with a wheelchair user and a visually impaired volunteer to identify the key changes required improve access around the site.
19. Extensive efforts have been made to consult with a wide range of user groups and potential users.
20. There have been no real difficulties in implementing the project. Fitting the work in with growing seasons has proved a challenge but generally disruption has been minimised. Managing access to the gardens will be an issue that must be considered carefully given that there are often vulnerable people on site. The management team are considering establishing a “Friends of the Garden” though more thought needs to be given as to how this would work in practice.



Children's Play facilities at Forge Lane/Mousesweet Brook

21. The initial project idea was generated by the community, who submitted a petition to SMBC concerning the lack of provision for children in the local area. Once the concept of the project was approved a number of consultation events were held (in April and May 2004). In

particular, the project team visited three local schools to consult children on the design of the area and the choice of equipment. Previous experience of such consultations had made the team aware of the risk of raising expectations for equipment which exceeds the available budget. As a result, a series of choices and options were presented to the children. The cost of equipment and the available budget were also introduced at the consultation stage to illustrate why choices had to be made. It was hoped that this would also discourage vandalism as it highlights the cost of repair and replacement to the children. In addition, a community day was organised which included a litter pick.

Outputs and Impacts

Growing Opportunities: Salop Drive Market Garden - Key outputs

22. During the evaluation visit, the main outcomes and outputs of the project were considered in a meeting with key project staff. A consultation event was also held with beneficiaries (allotment holders and those who work or assist on the market garden project) to discuss the current and expected benefits of the project, and their aspirations for the future.
23. The key outcomes of the Salop Drive TYS project can be divided into direct outcomes (resulting directly from TYS expenditure) and indirect outcomes (where TYS funding has assisted the continuation and extension of activities through the “Ideal for All” project). The direct outcomes would not have happened without the TYS funded project whilst the indirect benefits may have happened, however the TYS funding appears to have increased the extent and scope of these outcomes.
24. The direct outcomes include improved access to the site, especially for the disabled and elderly. Beneficiaries reported that the site is already much safer for them to get around and are looking forward to the completion of the work. It is hoped that this will lead to wider participation in the garden activities though this is only likely to be evident once the weather improves. The project team are currently in discussions with a local school about using the site for educational purposes and improved access would increase opportunities for this.
25. The garden areas have not been constructed therefore there is no evidence of outcomes at this stage. However, the beneficiaries interviewed were very positive that the gardens will widen community participation and enjoyment of the whole site. In particular, it is hoped that they will provide an quiet area that local elderly people, especially those currently housebound, can visit in the summer. Project staff also stressed the financial significance of the mains connection of the toilet block, as the cost of servicing the tank was a significant resource item and this can now be used elsewhere.
26. The beneficiary group reported a wide range of benefits of participating in the wider “Ideal for All” project and in using the existing garden areas. These are indirect benefits of TYS funding and include:
 - Improved fitness of volunteers

- Availability of fresh, organic produce at an affordable price (or free if they grow it themselves)
 - Availability of new types of fruit and vegetables which they had not tried before (there was also a positive reaction to the recipe sheets included in the bags of produce with ideas for preparation and cooking)
 - The opportunity to get out of the house (identified as particularly important by a number of retired men who had worked in active jobs so wanted to keep physically active once they retired)
 - The opportunity to meet new people and make new friends
 - The opportunity for disabled and elderly members of the community to socialise and be active
 - A chance to help other members of the community.
27. The group were very supportive of the TYS project and are very keen to open the site to the wider community, including young people. The original allotment holders commented on the “transformation” that had occurred at the site, as previously there were just four allotments at the top of the site with the rest being described by one consultee as “a wilderness”!
28. In addition to the benefits identified by the consultation group, there appears to be a great level of integration and mutual support between those working on the project through Ideal for All’s programme (including disabled and vulnerable members of the community) and other volunteers/allotment holders.



Provision of Children's Play facilities at Forge Lane/Mousesweet Brook

29. Outputs and outcomes were considered during a meeting with Jackie Bell and the project delivery team, as well as a representative of the Friends of Mousesweet Brook community group.
30. The key output from the project is the provision of a new and safer play area. It is hoped that this will contribute, in the longer term to health benefits for children as well as reducing anti-social behaviour.
31. The landscaping of the site, both to improve vision into the site and block vehicular access, may also contribute to reducing anti-social behaviour. There has been no damage or graffiti at the site since it was open to the public in November, which contrasts with the problems which that occurred in the old play area.
32. The adjoining Nature Reserve Project will help to improve the environment in and around the play area; a kingfisher has already been spotted near to the playground for the first time. The proximity of the reserve also presents an environmental education opportunity for local children and a Young Rangers group has been established as part of the Rowley Regis Nature Reserves Project.
33. A summary of the outcomes of each project can be found in table 1

| Table 1: Outcomes of project to date | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| | Activity undertaken | Description of benefits | Evidence of outcome |
| Salop Drive | | | |
| Social | Resurfacing access road, paths and car park (direct) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved access for disabled and elderly users • Less risk of accidents | Comments from beneficiaries |
| | Provision of a new raised bed | Increased opportunities /access for disabled and elderly to participate. | Comments from beneficiaries/meeting with project team |
| | Construction of communal and wildlife gardens (direct) | Provision of an important 'social space' for the community, especially local elderly people. | No evidence yet |
| | General garden activities (indirect) | Participants reported that the gardening activities enable them to make new friends and gets them out of the house. | Comments from beneficiaries |
| Economic | Connection of toilets to mains sewer (direct) | Significant reduction in revenue costs for the site | Meeting with project team |
| | Provision of high quality organic produce for local people at less than market value (indirect) | Cost savings for local people (especially the elderly and vulnerable) | Comments from beneficiaries/meeting with project team |

| Table 1: Outcomes of project to date | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Activity undertaken | Description of benefits | Evidence of outcome |
| Environmental | Construction of wildlife garden (direct) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve local biodiversity • Improve environmental education both for children and adults. • Reducing isolation amongst vulnerable members of the community | No evidence yet as the garden has not been built. |
| | Construction of communal garden (direct) | Creation of a new “semi-public” open space. | No evidence yet as the garden has not been built. |
| Health | Delivery of provisions to local elderly people (indirect) | Improved diet and contribution to the “5 a day” target for those eating the produce | Comments from beneficiaries/meeting with project team |
| | Providing opportunities for local people to garden | Improved fitness and health benefits for participants | Comments from beneficiaries |
| Mousesweet Brook | | | |
| | Activity undertaken | Description of benefits | Evidence of outcome |
| Social | Provision of new play equipment | Better facilities for children and families | Hard to say, as the playground has not been open for long. |
| | Landscaping, including the removal of the large bank and barriers to vehicular access | Reduced anti-social behaviour and vandalism | No damage to the play area to date. The impact will become more evident over time. |
| | Consultation and selection of play equipment by local children | Appropriate equipment selected Increased ownership for users | Little evidence yet, but indicators will include levels of use and levels of vandalism |
| Economic | | | |
| Environmental | Physical improvements to the site/landscaping | A more attractive area for people to live | None yet. Evidence could be gained through consultations with residents. |
| | Links to ‘nature Reserve’ project | Increased wildlife in the vicinity | Kingfishers have already been seen in the area The Young Rangers /Community Liaison team group and put up bird boxes |
| Health | Provision of play equipment | Health benefits for children | No evidence likely |

Future and Sustainability

34. In recognition of NOF's aspiration to "create lasting improvements to the physical environment and to the quality of life of future generations", the SMBC and Sandwell Partnership selected projects that are forward looking and demonstrate long term sustainability. Each of the project delivery agencies has entered into a legally binding contract with SMBC and has agreed to both maintain and insure their project for a 20 year period.

Overview

The portfolio of projects

35. Overall, a portfolio of projects has been chosen that reflects the priorities and needs of local communities, Sandwell MBC and the Sandwell Partnership (LSP). The selection process played a vital role in ensuring this by making use of existing structures, research and know-how, rather than "reinventing the wheel". Community consultation appears to have played a central role at an early stage in the projects which has also helped to increase ownership of projects by local communities, which may aid sustainability. The two management posts funded by TYS have played a vital role in coordinating the portfolio and simplifying procedures for the managers of individual projects, and also provided a link between The Big Lottery Fund/NOF and those working on the ground.
36. It is also worth noting that Sandwell has included a significant revenue element through a Community Liaison Team. The team is comprised of a team leader and two previously long-term unemployed young people employed as project workers. The project workers are "graduates" of the government-funded Step-up programme for the long-term unemployed and are contracted to SMBC until 2007, by which time it is hoped they will find mainstream employment. The project workers already seemed to have gained a great deal in terms of their personal development, confidence and skills; by working across a number of TYS projects they will help to ensure the long term sustainability of projects. An additional project worker is set to join the team in early 2005.

Key lessons learned

37. Making use of existing knowledge and structures to embed TYS projects in existing strategies/approaches
38. Consulting the local community and user groups early so that they can make a real contribution to the design and implementation of projects
39. Given the large amount of funding, delivering a balanced portfolio of projects which benefit all sections of the community and across Sandwell.

Contact Details

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Liz Mabley - Sandwell Partnership

Tony Costello - Sandwell MBC

Grainne Siggins - Project Manager “Ideal for All”

David Straker - Site Manager, “Ideal for All”

Mark Gibbs - Sandwell MBC

Steve West - Environment Direct

Jamie Whitehouse - Environment Direct/Project Manager Mousesweet Brook

John Furness - Area Housing Manager, Sandwell Homes

Ian Clark - Friends of Mousesweet Brook

Cherie O’Sullivan - Community Liaison Officer

Case Study: Stockton-on-Tees

Introduction

1. This case study is part of SQW's three-year evaluation of the Transform Your Space (TYS) programme, funded by the New Opportunities Fund (now part of the Big Lottery Fund). It was based on a visit to Stockton-on-Tees on 8 December 2004, discussions with the local managers, visits to the sites where projects were being delivered, and subsequent telephone conversations with three representatives from the local communities targeted for assistance.
2. The lead organisation for the project, and designer of the bid, is Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (STBC). Responsibility for the TYS project falls to the Regeneration Directorate, and specifically to Mike Bowron, Principal Development Officer and head of the Delivery Team. John Angus was appointed as Community Renewal Officer in July 2003, and has taken operational control of TYS project development, community involvement and delivery. Under a forthcoming reorganisation within the local authority, the number of directorates will be reduced to three: TYS will fall within 'Development and Neighbourhood Services', following the merger of 'Regeneration and Economic Development with Services Stockton'.
3. The individual project elements were designed internally within the Local Authority. Overall priorities had already been determined by the Council – taking into account the results of local consultation – and a physical masterplan was also in place for each of the four areas to which TYS funding was directed.
4. The rationale for the form taken by the TYS intervention was fourfold.
 - First, fit with overall local strategy. It was decided from the outset that available Lottery monies would be concentrated on four priority areas, Newtown, Parkfield, Hardwick, and Portrack and Tilery - the most deprived parts of the Borough.
 - By concentrating on a small number of the poorer areas in the Borough (in terms of environment as well as income), the spending was expected to achieve more visible impact.
 - Also, TYS could be set alongside other funding, particularly from SRB, NRF and ERDF sources; this enabled the delivery of agreed priorities for environmental works, which boosted the credibility of the Council, while in some cases, significant and visible value was added to other capital projects in these areas.
 - Finally, STBC believed that a good rapport with local residents had already been achieved, but that TYS would provide a means of building on this – and improving alignment of expectations - in what were seen as critical parts of the Borough.
5. TYS has brought a significant financial resource – about £1m; to make the most of this, it was recognised from the outset that dedicated time would be needed for project management and

organisation. The capital expenditure budget for disbursements is £850,000. An additional £94,580 was granted towards management and development costs; £54,225 of this has been used to pay for the Community Renewal Officer’s post, the remainder of this post is funded through Stockton Council’s own resources.

Project activities

6. The underlying objective is to improve the environment for local people, through an approach which involves them and which will enable their needs to be met, efficiently and in a sustainable way.
7. The key elements of YYS in Stockton are as follows.

| Area and theme | Location, character of area | Key project elements, at outset | Summary of progress to date |
|--|--|---|--|
| Newtown 'Places for People' | Immediately to north of town centre; medium/high density, with mixed housing types | Support for external elements of the conversion of a former school to Newtown Resource Centre Alleygates to improve security and reduce tipping; traffic calming Improvements to Primrose Hill Park; community garden, garden equipment, fencing etc Football pitch | Most of these projects have been delivered. The Resource Centre opened recently, and this large space is already being used by several groups/activities; YYS contribution to hard-paved, landscaped areas and security has proved an important element in a well-received project |
| Parkfield: 'Who cares? We do?' | Medium density mixed housing with some newer social infill; immediately south west of town centre | Improvement to sports pitches, school recreation grounds, 'Riggies Rec' Alleygates; new street lighting and security measures Planting, shrubbery removal | Substantial progress on a range of fairly small-scale projects. |
| Hardwick: 'Improving community spaces' | Northern edge of town; primarily social housing with gardens (Housing Pathfinder area); low density layout; close to University Hospital | Contribution to extension of Hardwick Community Centre Outdoor play facility Sculpture, entrance features for Dene, new footpath | Delay to major Community Centre project owing to rethinking following proposals for some stock demolitions under Housing Pathfinder. Some progress on design, initial stages of other features |
| Portrack & Tilery: 'Changes for the future' | Primarily social housing – medium-low density; separate estates each side of STBC sports centre/ outdoor pitches; c1-2 miles east of the town centre | Skateboard park Play area Shrubbery removal, CCTV, traffic calming | Skateboard facility provided, but redefined as portable facility, with some transfer from capital to revenue |

8. YYS was seen as an important opportunity to bring forward environmental elements of larger projects, and to realise small-scale physical changes that local people had brought forward. The content was not seen as radical, but YYS funding was an important factor in enabling these works to proceed. The detailed design of projects was kept in-house by the local

authority; this allowed low-maintenance principles to be incorporated in new schemes. Reference back to technical departments within the Council was also used to improve implementation: residents' requests to remove trees and shrubbery for security reasons were in some cases dealt with by reducing the density of foliage rather than its removal.

9. From the perspective of STBC, TYS funding had two key aspects – complementarity and flexibility. Funding through TYS provided the means to increase the quality of external appearance, while much European funding was primarily for buildings and development, and Neighbourhood Renewal Fund covered specific initiatives, such as recycling, which had already been included in local action plans.
10. STBC found that TYS could be used more flexibly: if major changes were proposed to other externally-funded programmes, the situation would be reviewed and allocations changed or reduced, but Lottery Fund advisers recognised that some change in circumstances was inevitable and that achieving best value could require some shift in focus and content during project delivery.
 - This was particularly relevant where the project was linked to a larger redevelopment scheme, such as the Hardwick Community Centre. Changes in the proposals for the local area meant a rethinking of this major scheme, which inevitably impacted on the TYS element.
 - Similarly, the rethinking of the skateboard facility at Portrack & Tilery, which led to its redesign in the form of a portable resource (based at the local sports centre but to be taken out for use across a wider area) was accepted, although it involved some shift from capital to revenue.
 - TYS was also more flexible in that allocations were not as tied to individual years; if there was slippage, this could be planned for and accommodated.

11. The cost of key elements, and progress to date in delivery is summarised below.

| | Total budget (£) | Cost of key elements | Spend to date/expectation |
|----------------------------------|------------------|--|---|
| Newtown | £247,500 | Resource Centre Alleygates Primrose Hill Park garden improvements Information Boards Security Fencing (now Wrensfield Community Centre field) Traffic Calming Community Garden Football pitch and club (£) | £125,000 £5,635 £10,000 £0 £5,203 £10,000 £0 £0 £5,000 |
| Parkfield | £225,000 | Riggies Rec Mill Lane playing field Planter removal Street Lighting School Grounds Traffic Calming Alleygates Shrubbery Removal (£) | £20,000 (originally £5,000) £0 (£10,000 spent on Riggies Rec) £5,000 £0 £0 £0 £0 (£5,000 spent on Riggies Rec) £12,623 |
| Hardwick | £215,000 | Community Centre Outdoor play facility Sculpture, footpath, features | £0 £0 £0 (budget recently reviewed - still expected to be spent in the area) |
| Portrack & Tilery | £162,500 | Skateboard park Play area Environmental improvements CCTV security project | £37,000 £27,700 £0 (£5,200 on play area) £20,000 |

12. The role of the Community Renewal Officer, also provided through TYS, was to significantly enhance the involvement of the community. This is discussed further in the next section.

Community engagement

13. Stockton-on-Tees Council has a well-established system of neighbourhood area forums, which gather representatives of local interests and organisations with the relevant ward area politicians. The work to engage the community on TYS-funded projects, which is seen as integral to the approach, takes place within this context, through the activities of the Community Renewal Officer (CRO).
14. The Area Forums represent a ‘high-level’ mechanism for consultation; they necessarily deal with a wider range of issues, while the role of the CRO has been to focus on the specifics of the TYS projects in the four local areas. The post-holder was well-positioned to do this; prior to taking up this position, he spent three years with the ‘umbrella’ organisation, Stockton Residents and Community Groups Association; he therefore knew many of the key individuals and was familiar with local issues.
15. From the perspective of the Council, the approach at neighbourhood level and below is to understand and then try to balance the different interests; also, encouraging parties with a very specific – and in some cases unrealisable – local agenda to take a wider view. The approach

taken under TYS has been to gather the parties with specific interests together in a group, and to hold these meetings on ‘neutral’ ground in the STBC offices. An agenda, with clear parameters, is put forward at the outset: people are then free – and encouraged – to express their own opinions and to exchange views on project priorities, form and design. This is seen as more effective in building understanding and consensus on the way forward, compared to the earlier responsive approach, in which officers went out to meet interest-groups separately, and then sought to balance conflicting interests.

16. The approach appears to have been accepted as valid by key members of the community in the four areas: the comment reported by STBC was that the Council was now recognised as listening. Feedback subsequently obtained from community representatives supported this; the change in recent years towards what was seen as a more genuinely participatory approach by the Local Authority was welcomed, although some consultees also noted that this shift has been driven from Government, and there was some experience of different agencies jostling to claim outputs. TYS was credited as having played a part in encouraging this change of attitude by the Council.
17. Overall, the perception from the community side was that real progress was being made, based on increased involvement, but that there was still a long way to go in demonstrating this and building long-term trust. In terms of final outcomes, it was recognised that environmental improvements – however needed and however much consulted on – would be wasted if residents’ behaviour does not change. It was also noted that funders should be aware that if spending was to be effective, projects could only happen when communities were ready for them; valid concepts sometimes needed to be held back until other factors had been addressed.
18. The bringing forward of some projects, and their success to date, can be attributed, in whole or part, to TYS funding. In Newtown (St John’s)
 - the Community Information project, which takes the form of robust metal boards designed with the active involvement of local young people, was a response to a priority identified by the community; the Partnership Manager believed this would not have happened without TYS
 - Although the Tool Library already existed, it would probably have been taken out of use without the renewal of equipment (in line with expressed local wishes) made possible by TYS, which has also funded efforts to promote the membership-based scheme, with a brochure recently produced that will be distributed in part through the relevant housing agency
 - While the Junior Football/Sports Club initiative was already underway, TYS funding enabled it to build momentum quickly, and to engage children who were for the most part unlikely to have been interested in, or interesting to, a more formal club. The initiative has started to achieve results; the need for better facilities can now be shown to be backed by demand, and proposals are being put forward to attract further investment, first in improving pitch drainage, then for the provision of changing rooms.

19. The process of engaging communities requires a balance to be struck; local people with energy and skills will not maintain their efforts unless they believe that they are having some effect, while the local authority (and other funders) needs to achieve consistency and balance, and learn from on-going experience. This may involve some managing of expectations, as part of a process of effective communication.
 - For example, the focus from community groups in some areas is on the creation of defensible space. But the aspirations for improvements such as alleygates could not be met everywhere in the short term. There are examples of real success in areas such as Parkfield, where some residents are highly delighted with the improved security that has resulted; but in other neighbourhoods, the experience has been more mixed, with some reports to the effect that while that some problems were alleviated, others were not.
20. From the perspective of STBC, there were well-established channels through which the communities' aspirations could be expressed, and responses orchestrated, but also concerns regarding the realism of some of these aspirations. The more pro-active approach made possible with TYS funding allowed for clearer communication of the Council's priorities and constraints, and we believe that this has provided the basis for building understanding and hence for a better-informed dialogue. STBC is now proceeding with an application for Beacon Council status, based on community involvement.

Outputs and impacts

21. As with many such projects, it is relatively easy to point to 'process' benefits achieved through the involvement of local community groups. It is also possible to point to some 'outputs' in the sense of completed physical interventions. But it is much harder definitively to allocate outcomes – that is, to separate out the results of interventions which in many cases were linked with other, larger projects, in terms of improved objective conditions – health, environment - for local people, and their accessing new activities and enjoying different types of beneficial activities.
22. The summary below represents a provisional early statement of benefits from the TYS-funded activities. This should be revisited, as other projects are completed, drawing where possible on monitoring information on satisfaction and usage by particular groups.

| Outcomes of project to date | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| | Activity undertaken | Description of benefits | Evidence of outcome |
| Social | Direct and sustained contact between CRO and community groups in the 4 priority areas | Deeper understanding within STBC of aspirations of community; more informed position by community groups on resources available/ potentially available | Community recognition that the Council's approach has changed for the better; willingness from communities to engage in dialogue, even where limited prospect of funding the desired improvements |
| | New and better designed security features put in place, to protect residents in deprived areas, and safeguard community facilities | Increased sense of safety, encouraging residents to engage in social activities and recreation | Anecdotally, satisfaction reported with some changes, but early to assess this as provision still being made |
| Economic | Minor spend effect from increased use of pitches etc | Direct – negligible; Indirect – increased activity, channelled away from anti-social behaviour may increase potential for labour market engagement | None to date |
| Environmental | Improvements to environment, new/ more usable leisure provision planned and now being delivered in all 4 areas | Perception of living in an improved area, contributing to sense of well-being; direct use/ enjoyment of new pathways, features | Recognition of improved environment and local facilities (to date, from community leaders) |
| Health | New facilities provided in areas with low level of involvement in sports, leisure activities | Expected to lead to more use, improved take-up: potential health benefits (physical and mental) from wider involvement | Evidence of increased use, but too early to show impact on health |

Future and sustainability

23. The way in which TYS is being delivered is part of a shift towards building ownership and responsibility at the community level. This is seen as essential if the physical improvements are not to be reversed by anti-social behaviour, and for good value-for-money to be obtained. TYS has been a valued part of a continuum of effort that was already in train, and which the Council expects to sustain in the future. The Community Resource Officer is seen as an important part of this: the way in which he has worked to engage local residents on a limited number of projects is seen as providing useful evidence of the benefits of an officer-intensive approach to local regeneration in priority areas.
24. In physical design terms, sustainability is, as far as possible, built into the TYS projects through 'low-maintenance proofing' each of the schemes.
25. At this stage, with another two years to go, the way in which this work will be built on in the future is not yet clear. But efforts are being made to ensure this happens: STBC has dedicated

officers scanning for funding opportunities, both the process and the products which have been made possible through TYS are in line with the Council's thinking and direction, and there is no sign that overall priorities will change.

Overview

26. We conclude that TYS enabled desired improvements to be made earlier and probably on a larger scale and to a higher standard than would otherwise have been possible. With the partial exception of the portable skateboard park, the content of the schemes were not innovative, but they were what the communities wanted to see.
27. Where changes have been made to the original concepts, or there have been delays in delivery, decisions appear to have been made for specific reasons which have the support of the local communities. While there has been some change to the spending profile, STBC believes that the available resource will be used for the intended purpose within the allotted funding period.
28. The consultations with both the Local Authority and community leaders led us to conclude that TYS-funded initiatives were playing a significant part in increasing interest in a better local environment. There is an apparently widely-shared belief that the targeted areas, objectively the most deprived and environmentally-degraded in Stockton, are now becoming better places to live, and that this is based on a collaborative process, involving local communities and underpinned by a change of approach by the Local Authority.
29. The question of whether, over time, TYS-funded projects will be seen as delivering value-for-money will ultimately depend on whether the disaffected parts of the local population can be re-engaged in worthwhile activities, and turned away from anti-social behaviour. These wider factors can only be influenced at the margin by TYS-funded schemes, but the improvements do have a part to play, potentially increasing confidence within the communities, encouraging engagement in community planning and demonstrating the possibilities of engaging in formal and informal recreation. While in practice these will be difficult it not impossible to separate out, TYS-funded initiatives could have indirect benefits in helping reduce the disparities in health as well as income, in addition to the direct gains from living in an improved environment.

Consultees

John Angus - STBC Community Renewal Officer

Mike Bowron – STBC Principal Development Officer, Regeneration, and Head of 'Delivery Team'

Vera Walker – Victoria Estates Action Group, Portrack and Tilery

Alex Bain – Chair of Parkfield Residents Association and Parkfield Neighbourhood Management

Dawn Campbell – Partnership Manager, St John's Community Partnership (Newtown)

Case Study: Swindon

Introduction

1. Swindon received a TYS allocation of £256,535. A decision was made to target the funding at deprived parts of the borough. The local authority then sought to promote TYS funding in these areas as part of an open call for projects. This included contacting elected Members and council officers attending Neighbourhood Safety Team (NeST) meetings and other local community meetings, in order to promote the TYS programme and encourage expressions of interest for funding from within the local community. In some cases there were already project ideas in place and TYS provided an opportunity to make an application to fund to these. Council officers were encouraged to support local groups in submitting expressions of interest.
2. A total of fifteen expressions of interest were received, via a range of sources, e.g. Neighbourhood Safety Team, Parks and East Walcott Neighbourhood Renewal Board and the community development team. These covered a wide range of different types of activity. They then had to prioritise the projects that would form Swindon's portfolio of projects to be submitted to NOF for final approval. The expressions of interest were scored by local Councillors and council officers. Once the outline portfolio was agreed by NOF, projects proposers were asked to develop a full and budgeted project proposal.
3. The TYS funding in Swindon has been packaged into two umbrella projects based around Parks and East Walcott Wards, and Broad Green. Within the two areas there are a number of projects operating. Our case study visit covered projects being delivered in both areas.
4. Each project has a council officer assigned to it to act an overall project manager. The managers meet on a monthly basis to update on project progress, flag-up any issues arising, and discuss any early outcomes. In addition, there are ongoing local evaluation plans for each of the projects.

Projects Activities

Broadgreen Centre Projects

5. The Broadgreen Centre is a community hall that is owned and managed by the local authority. It is located close to the town centre and in the area of Swindon with the highest BME population. The centre is used by a wide range of local community groups and space can also be hired by the general public. There is also dedicated space at the centre for young people with activities being delivered by youth workers. Other services running from the site include the Neighbourhood Safety Team (part of the Crime and Disorder Partnership) and a breakfast

service for local street sleepers. There are activities being delivered on-site throughout the day.

6. A year before TYS funding was announced in Swindon, one of the community development team worked with a consultant to undertake consultation with local residents in the Broad Street area. This involved a door-to-door survey of local residents, with the purpose of understanding local residents' views of the local area. This research highlighted a number of key issues of concern in the local area including, including lack of play facilities and the general dilapidation of the local environment. There was a general sense that people did not feel good about the area they lived in, and that they needed be empowered to play a greater role in the development of community assets.
7. In response to these issues, a number of project ideas were worked up that focused on the development of green space at the back of the centre. The projects selected for inclusion in the portfolio of projects for TYS funding in the Broadgreen Centre were as follows:
 - A children's play area
 - A Rose Garden
 - A Youth Shelter – a covered structure where young people can meet.
8. There have been some delays to the start of activity at Broadgreen centre because of land issues, with the council needing to re-designate the field as a play area to ensure it is maintained alongside the councils other playgrounds. At the time of the case study visit the equipment for installation had been chosen, and the contractors were awaited to complete the works. The play area, rose garden and youth shelter were due to be formally opened in mid February 2005.

Buckhurst Field Initiative

9. Buckhurst Field is a large green open space in the centre of a deprived social housing estate about 2 miles from the city centre. It contained few facilities apart from a dilapidated playground, and a popular community centre on the edge of the site. A significant issue for the local area has been drug dealing in community spaces and there has been a real push to reclaim public spaces for community use. There is a 'Buckhurst Sub Group' which forms part of the wider Renewal Board which focuses on neighbourhood renewal in the local area. As part of this, local people had already been involved in drawing up a vision for the field in conjunction with Groundwork. This work led to the proposals for a number of activities to be part funded under TYS:
 - A hardcourt (for football and basketball etc)
 - A new play area
 - Community Orchard
 - A green gym
 - Storage facilities for sports equipment etc.

- Skate Park
10. The Buckhurst Group has a strong membership and has been particularly active in seeking funding from a range of sources to ensure that activity goes ahead. This has been supported by the local authority's Agenda 21 officer. The group has been successful in securing funding from SWRDA, and £90k from the ODPM's Living Spaces Fund.
 11. The hardball court has now been completed as has the green gym. At the time of our visit, work on the installation of the playground was about to commence. There are some delays anticipated for the installation of the skate park. There is shortfall in funding for them to develop the skate park as the Group would like, and a grant application has been made to SWRDA to try and raise the additional necessary funding.
 12. There had to be some amendments to the community orchard plan as there were concerns that a high density of trees could provide a cover for anti-social behaviour. Instead, occupiers of properties facing onto on section of the Field were asked if they would like to have a fruit tree planted. This will provide a pleasant but open area for people to sit or walk around. Problems were also encountered with the sports equipment storage facility which was broken into and became a focus for anti-social behaviour. The storage facility has since been removed and no further problems have been encountered.

Community Engagement

Broadgreen Centre Projects

13. There had been wide ranging consultation on priorities for the area even before the announcement of TYS funding. The projects that were proposed for funding were linked to the findings of this consultation. Youth Workers and Development Workers also consulted with local groups that used the centre, e.g. the Asian Women's Group and the Youth Group, about ideas for projects.
14. During the period of developing full proposals, additional consultation was held at Broadgreen Community Centre. This included a community safety roadshow event at the centre where plans were displayed for the design and layout of the projects. The Council produced large colour laminated pictures of different types of play equipment and local people were able to vote on which one they liked best. Having a visual aid was a practical way for residents to see what the equipment might look like. The posters and plans were also presented to the various groups that use the centre to get feedback.
15. The consultation process was very useful as it gave local people an opportunity to influence the design of the projects, e.g. young people wanted the youth shelter to be covered but to have a fairly open structure so that people could not hide in there, and that street sleepers would not sleep in it. It was very easy to enthuse young people about the project. The main problem has been the time it has taken to get project underway. TYS funding was announced at the end of 2002, and the installation is taking place in early 2005. As a result many of the

young people that were involved in choosing the project and design, are no longer involved with the youth group at the Centre because they have outgrown it.

16. The Rose Garden project has had less community involvement than was originally anticipated. This main aim of this particular project is to provide residents – particularly older members of the community – with a garden and seating. There were plans to develop a Friends Group to take ownership of the project, however, a member of key member of staff was on leave for a long period of time and this has not yet got off the ground. This is recognised as a key area for development and plans are in place to promote the development of a Friends Group in spring when the weather starts to improve.
17. There were some concerns within the community that the play equipment, shelter and garden might be vandalised. Community engagement has been an important factor in overcoming these concerns. By giving local residents the opportunity to choose projects and influence their design it is hoped that they will have a stake in the projects, which in turn will reduce the likelihood of equipment being vandalised or damaged, e.g. young people have developed a sense of ownership for the planned youth shelter. There was also some debate about whether to enclose the new facilities as part of the community centre building, or to have open access at all times, because of local issues such as street drinking and rough sleeping. It was agreed that the children’s playground should have defined opening times, linked to those of the community centre, and that there should be open access to the youth shelter and rose garden.

Buckhurst Field Initiative

18. In recent years there has been significant community activity related to Buckhurst Field. There has been a core group of – mainly older - committed residents that have championed the Buckhurst Field projects, and ensure momentum is maintained. There has been significant consultation activity over the last two years, including activity with Groundwork to develop the vision for the field, and a number of events where local residents have been invited to view proposals for the projects, prioritise activity, and make comments on the plans. Additionally, specific consultation activity has taken place around each of the elements of the project, e.g. there was consultation with local primary school children about the types of equipment they would like to see installed in the playground. Local people also visited play equipment fairs and manufacturers to develop designs and costings for the different proposals.
19. The core group of residents has taken steps to ensure that local young people are involved in the development of projects. They have had most success in doing this around the skate park proposals. A number of residents - including young people – have visited skate parks elsewhere.

Outputs and Impacts

Broadgreen Centre Projects

20. At this stage it is difficult to fully assess the impact of the Broadgreen Centre projects, as the new facilities are not up-and-running. However, it is hoped that the Broadgreen Centre will become a focal point for local people, providing safe accessible facilities for all ages. The facilities should also encourage different user groups to mix using Broadgreen Centre to mix, e.g. young people and older residents. When the new facilities are open their usage will be monitored by staff.

Buckhurst Field Initiative

21. At the time of the visit the hardcourt play area had been open for a little over a month. Usage of the hardcourt has already been very high, and was evident even on a cold and wet day when we visited. The Community Wardens reported high usage of the facility at all times, from local college students at lunchtime, to children after school, and families and children at weekends. They also noted a marked reduction in young people playing football in the street.

Future and Sustainability

Broadgreen Centre Projects

22. The local authority has committed to maintaining the new facilities at Broadgreen Centre. The Parks and Amenities department will conduct regular visits to the site to ensure it is clean, safe and that through risk assessments have been undertaken. The Centre's caretakers will also monitor the facilities on a daily basis. In addition, it is hoped that a Friends Group can be established to take a lead on maintaining and developing the rose garden.

Buckhurst Field Initiative

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Contact Details

Gillian Morris – Swindon Borough Council (lead officer; overview of all projects)

Sarah Hayes – Swindon Borough Council (Broadgreen Centre project), Youth Development

Michele Matthews - Swindon Borough Council (Broadgreen Centre project), Community Development

Lyn Forrester – Swindon Borough Council (Buckhurst Field Initiative), LA 21 officer

Case Study: Waltham Forest

Introduction

1. The London Borough of Waltham Forest was awarded £620,000 funding from the Big Lottery Fund's Transforming Your Space programme. As part of the project development process the Council set up an internal steering group to allocate funding. In order to gather ideas for projects, the local authority wrote to active community groups in the borough to advertise the availability of funding. A seminar was then held where groups were invited to find out more about the funding and how it could be spent.
2. Following this event, organisations – including the Council – were invited to submit proposals for projects. Approximately, 60 project proposals were received, requesting in excess of £5m funding. There was some overlap between projects, e.g. a number of proposals for equipment for parks and playground equipment. As a result, a decision was made to try and amalgamate some of the project ideas, e.g. grouping parks and playground proposals under a 'Friends Group' project. Decisions on funding were made by the office-led steering group, and a decision was made to focus resources on the most deprived parts of the borough.
3. One of the projects selected by the group was the restoration of the Cricket Pavilion at Leyton. This stood out because it was an impressive building that could be brought back into community usage.

Projects Activities

Friends Group Project

4. The local authority's Green Spaces Group undertook a Best Value review shortly before the TYS monies became available. One of the issues that were raised through the review was the limited involvement of local people in the delivery of services. As a result the Council was starting to undertake activity to encourage local people to establish Friends Groups across the whole borough. The TYS funding was seen as an opportunity to promote Friends Groups across the borough, but also to provide specific pots of funding for groups in deprived areas to deliver projects and activities, e.g. installation of new playground equipment.
5. The Green Space Group put together a proposal to get a number of Friends Groups up-and-running in the borough. They put forward proposals for two Friends Groups projects. The first was to support the development of 4 groups linked open spaces, and the second was to support the development of 3 groups linked to playgrounds in the borough. The two projects are closely related and have subsequently been amalgamated into one. Total TYS funding for Friends Group activity amounts to £390,000.

6. Some of the TYS funding is used employ Hornbeam (a local environmental group) and BTCV to act as facilitators for the Friends Groups and to support those with access to TYS project funding in identifying the improvements they want to make to the open spaces and playgrounds. The facilitation support on offer is wide, and groups can get access to support with volunteering, fundraising, setting up bank accounts, and other professional services. To date they have managed to set up and constitute 9 Friends Group across the borough, with a further 3 about to come on-line. The eventual aim is to have 26 Friends Groups covering green spaces and playground by 2006.
7. Funding to seven Friends Groups in deprived areas will be available over a three-year period. A Local Agenda 21 officer has recently joined the Green Spaces team and acts as a contact point for all the Friends Groups. TYS funding accounts for approximately one-quarter of the council's total budget for the development of Friends Groups, and is being used specifically to provide facilitation support for all groups, and to provide project funding for the 7 groups they are setting up in the areas identified as being most deprived.

Youth Hub at the Pavilion

8. This project is based at the former site of the Essex County Cricket ground which opened in 1855. The site transferred to the ownership of the council in the 1950s when Essex County Cricket club re-located to a new site. The site passed into the ownership of the London Borough of Waltham Forest with a covenant that it must be maintained for 'the enjoyment and recreation of the youth of East London and West Essex'. The site is overseen and managed by the Youth and Community Service and is currently used to deliver a range of youth activities, and to house staff and projects.
9. There are a number of buildings on the site including; a Pavilion, Sports Hall, Boxing Gym, Arts Block, and portacabins. There is also a large field on the site and tennis courts. The focus of this project has been the development of the cricket pavilion which has been empty and unused for a number of years. The upstairs of the pavilion has been shut for over 20 years because of health and safety reasons, and the downstairs part of the building was closed in the last five years because of poor repair and lack of disabled access.
10. The pavilion is an extremely attractive building that is much loved by the local community. There has been strong lobbying over a number of years by local people to bring the building back into community use. Whilst numerous plans and proposals have been put forward, sufficient funding has never been available to undertake the renovation of the pavilion and the wider site. The current head of Youth and Communities Services identified TYS as source of potential funding to begin the renovation of the building, and turn part of it into Youth Hub, from which the Council could deliver youth activities.
11. Transforming Your Space funding (£120,768) is being used to refurbish and re-open the downstairs of the cricket pavilion, including a new kitchen, toilets and disabled access. The council is providing additional funding to replace the roof, install a new clock on the tower, and provide floodlighting.

Community Engagement

Friends Groups

12. A decision was made to facilitate the development of Friends Groups in the most deprived areas first. It has been harder than anticipated to get groups up-and-running and to develop project ideas. The Friends Groups were promoted through local press and council publications. Residents were also asked whether they would like to get involved in a Friends Group as part of the council's "Parklife – Have Your Say" questionnaire. Attendance at Friends Groups meetings varies from 4-12 people. There is still a bias towards middle class local residents participating – even in deprived areas – as there are pockets of gentrification even in the poorest parts of the borough. However, as people see things starting to happen, interest spreads and more people are becoming involved. Once play equipment etc. is installed in playgrounds it will encourage more users, who in turn can be encouraged to participate in Friends Groups.
13. There is a strong sense that the availability of project funding for the groups operating in the designated deprived area, has acted as a catalyst to get people involved. Friends Groups are also acknowledged on park signage. One of the biggest challenges has been convincing people that are able to take control and can make decisions about the types of projects they would like to deliver.

Youth Hub at the Pavilion

14. There has been long standing community interest in the renovation of the pavilion in order to bring it back into community usage. As part of the development process the Council hired a community-development consultant to work with the local community and other stakeholders to look at how the whole building and the wider-site might be developed. The Council adopted this approach as it was felt important to have an independent third-party working with local people, as there was some hostility towards the Council on this issue as they were felt in some quarters to have prevented the building from being brought back into community use before now. The consultant was also able to provide specialist skills in working with different stakeholder groups to develop a common vision and strategy that would meet everyone's needs. A wide range of community events were held in order to consult with stakeholders, including a Lashings Cricket event, user group meetings and a Youth Day. Consultation meetings were also held with the Neighbourhood Forum, Sure Start, Forest Homes (part of London and Quadrant who manage part of the local authorities housing stock), the adult education service and other council services. In addition, a local survey was also undertaken.
15. It was deemed important to develop a long-term strategy for the pavilion and the wider site, so that local people could clearly understand what activity was planned and when it was likely to happen. There were no particular problems in agreeing a vision with the community. The only issue that was contentious concerned the provision of bar facilities on the site. The council did not feel this was practical because of the high numbers of young people using the

site, and because of the resources required to run a bar on-site. In addition there is a small bar in an existing building on the wider pavilion site.

16. The project appears to have sparked real interest in the local community and the site manager reports a steady flow of residents coming to the site to see how work is progressing. Those involved with the project believe that renovation of the building is helping to improve relationships between the council and local residents, who after many years are seeing the building restored to its former glory.

Outputs and Impacts

Friends Groups

17. There have been some delays in getting Friends Groups established, and in the seven groups with TYS funding, getting the project ideas worked up. The groups with project funding are reported to have taken real ownership of funding, wanting to ensure that proposals are properly worked up, evidence of need is proven, and that money is spent appropriately. Groups are also encouraged to develop realistic but ambitious proposals, that might require them to seek additional funding in order to develop the project as they want it, rather than just accepting the allocation they have and working up project proposals to fit that budget. Indeed, one project has been successful in raising £25,000 themselves for project activity. A further two groups have made applications for NRF funding to enhance their projects.
18. In all cases groups have been required to consult on their proposals within their local community, to ensure they are endorsed more widely, e.g. holding public meetings. Again this activity can take some time. One of the playground Friends Groups has now been up-and-running for some time and they developed plans for new playground equipment which has now been installed. A flurry of TYS funded project activity is expected in the next 12 months, as many of the seven groups are now well underway with their proposals.
19. The flexibility of TYS funding is providing the Council with the opportunity to give local residents a real say in how money is spent, and early signs suggest it is encouraging strong community ownership of playgrounds and green spaces. One local group had a problem with 'drinkers' staying in local hostels using the local park because it intimidated other potential users. They have been pro-active in dealing with this and have visited local hostels to ask them for help in tackling this issue. There also is strong political commitment for the development of Friends Groups, with a number of local councillors sitting on Friends Groups. As a result, playgrounds and green spaces are higher up the political agenda and are receiving more attention.
20. It is still relatively early days for the project, particularly in relation to TYS funding being used for projects in the seven playgrounds and open spaces. However, much activity has got underway, e.g. clean-up days to remove litter and graffiti from parks, and bulb planting. There are a lot of volunteering schemes around in the borough and the groups have been able to access volunteers to help them with this type of activity.

21. There is evidence of some early impacts of activity in some parks, e.g. Stoneydown Park has seen a decrease in vandalism and litter being dropped. If this were to be replicated across parks and open spaces in the borough it may have long-term implications for council maintenance budgets, i.e. they decrease.

Youth Hub at the Pavilion

22. The TYS funding has had a significant impact in being able to lever in additional funding, from the council and elsewhere. In the past there had been a reluctance to begin the renovation of the building and the wider site without a full package of funding in place. However, the approach taken by the current head of Youth and Communities Services – to take a piecemeal approach to the renovation – has proved successful. The initial TYS funding to renovate part of the building has levered in additional funding and support, and the long-awaited renovation is becoming a reality.
23. The project has experienced some delays. These related to difficulties in getting contractors on-site during the summer, and major delays in the delivery of lifts to allow for disabled access from street level up to the front of the pavilion site, which is raised.
24. Part of the pavilion site – an IT suite funded through the education department – has already opened. The remainder of the downstairs of the pavilion site which consists of a large room, kitchen and toilet facilities is due for completion in early 2005, with an official opening planned for February. This event will be used to undertake further consultation with local people.
25. It is anticipated that community usage of the pavilion building once it opens in February will be very high, in addition to the youth activities that will be delivered from the site. There are a number of clubs which use the existing site around the pavilion that are keen to make use of the refurbished pavilion, local sports clubs in particular will now have access to better facilities.

Future and Sustainability

Friends Groups

26. This is a new way of working for the Council and the perception is that it will have longer term implications. It is believed that the work with Friends Groups and the consultation activity that is taking place, provides local people with a genuine say in the way that services are being delivered in their area and encourages a sense of pride and ownership in the area where they live. In turn, the perception within the Green Space Group is that local people are starting to build trust in the Council and are willing to work with council officers more closely.
27. The Council has made a commitment to maintain all new equipment that is installed in playgrounds and green spaces. There are plans to link the Friends Group activity with the

borough's Young People, and Health Strategies, which may provide opportunities to draw down further funding for activity.

28. The Council currently undertakes regular surveys of the borough's playgrounds and green spaces. In the long term they would like to facilitate Friends Groups to lead on this activity.

Youth Hub at the Pavilion

29. The next stage of the works will be the renovation of the upstairs of the pavilion which consists of a number of small rooms and a large balcony. However, funding has not yet been secured for this. There are plans to re-establish an officer steering to look at how funding can be raised to complete the renovation of the remainder of the building.
30. The existing pavilion site (including the surrounding buildings and grounds) generates an income of approximately £50,000 per annum. It is anticipated that funding for the long term maintenance and running of the refurbished pavilion will in part be generated by renting the building out for community usage, e.g. it would make a particularly good venue for wedding receptions during the summer months. However, this money will not be ring-fenced for maintenance and running costs and thus sustainability may be an issue in the long term.
31. There are plans to make further improvements to other parts of the site, e.g. the cricket ground, so that it can be used by county level cricket teams on an occasional basis.

Overview

Friends Groups

32. It is likely that the Council would have provided funding in the long term for some of the activities that have been made possible because of TYS monies, e.g. playground equipment. However, this would have taken much longer to happen and would have been focused on the borough's main parks and open spaces. TYS funding has allowed for the development of smaller green spaces and playgrounds in the borough.
33. With hindsight the project spend would have been profiled differently, with more project spend in years 2 and 3, allowing for longer lead-in and project development time for the seven groups.
34. The Green Spaces group within the council is passionate about the development of Friends Groups across the borough, and a large amount of officer time has been dedicated to supporting groups. The council has also provided additional 'match funding' resources, e.g. the installation of playground equipment.
35. The project is showing some early signs of successful outcomes, e.g. growing sense of community ownership of green spaces, and it will be interesting to follow-up progress in future years of the evaluation.

Youth Hub at the Pavilion

36. The TYS funding model allowed them to get outline approval for the project. Whilst some community consultation activity had already got underway, the outline approval gave them the confidence to undertake further consultation and audits/assessments of the pavilion and surrounding site. The project has captured local interest and been successful in leveraging additional funding.

Key Contacts

Overview: Jeremy Chandler - Jeremy.Chandler@lbwf.gov.uk

Youth Hub: Sue Hargreaves - Sue.Hargreaves@lbwf.gov.uk or 020 8509 6020

Friends Groups: Fred Dyer – Fred.Dyer@lbwf.gov.uk or 020 8496 2599

Northern Ireland

Case Study: Bog Meadows, West Belfast

Introduction

1. Bog Meadows is a 50 acre wetland reserve located in urban West Belfast and located close to the Falls Road and sandwiched between Milltown Cemetery and the M1 motorway. The Bog Meadows Project started in the 1980s with the formation of the Friends of Bog Meadows and had already received funding from the Peace and Reconciliation Fund to carry about basic remedial work, assisted by the active involvement of the local population.
2. This project proposal was led by the local branch of the Ulster Wildlife Trust (UWT). The Ulster Wildlife Trust is an independent conservation charity, affiliated to the network of 47 Wildlife Trusts across the United Kingdom. The application to TYS was made by the Bog Meadows Building Partnership consisting of the UWT, Ulster Wildlife Trust in West Belfast (local branch) and St Galls G.A.C. (a Gallic football team occupying an adjacent site). The proposal included a request for funding to assist with the provision of a new dual purpose two-storey building which would:
 - serve as reserve visitor centre with offices for the local UWT staff, teaching/training facilities, a base for the Reserve Officer and part-time guides, toilets and storage.
 - provide shower, toilet and changing facilities for the use of St Galls members.
3. The Project Manager, Annie O’Kane, works for the Ulster Wildlife Trust and wrote the original proposal. Annie also runs the Trust’s People and Wildlife Programme which is designed to maximise involvement of the local population with the Trust’s 25 sites throughout Ulster.
4. The local UWT branch first became aware of the TYS Programme through the NICVA Newsletter (Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action). Annie found the application guidelines clear and was already familiar with the overall aims of the Big Lottery, she took the lead in writing the proposal with comments from the other partners. She found the format required sensible, though there was a little too much cross-referencing required. It was also difficult to keep to 20 pages given the amount of information required. TYS staff (James and Kerri) were very helpful and approachable throughout this process.
5. The site forms part of the floodplain of the (now heavily culverted) River Blackstaff. The site was under threat in the 80s when the original size of over 1000 acres had already been reduced to 50 acres. It was recognised as a unique urban wildlife environment, for example it was the last place in NI to have an authenticated recording of the call of a corncrake. When the area was threatened with development Terry Goldsmith and Aidan Crean with the strong support of the local community (in particular the St James Forum) formed the Friends of Bog Meadows to fight the development. They were successful in generating widespread local, regional and national publicity (including two visits from David Bellamy). In 1998/99 they

were successful in winning £200k from the Peace and Reconciliation Fund (EC). This provided basic remedial action; paths, fences, bridges etc. but not the associated visitor facilities, including toilets.

6. Much negotiation was then required with local landlords to establish ownership of the whole site. The next phase was to acquire the land. Frances Devlin had agreed to give some land to the project but his firm went into liquidation before this could be accomplished. The Environment and Heritage Service has leased an area of land for the building to UWT for a peppercorn rent for 125 years.
7. Funding from TYS was awarded in August last year (£199,957). Of this £75,000 will go towards the new facilities and the remainder will fund the salary and equipment of the Reserve Officer for three years. Activity only effectively started at the beginning of 2004.

Project activities

8. The project is now funding a full time Reserve Officer who in turn organises over 25 volunteers, plus three or four groups who are regular users – local schools, community groups and charities. UWT are also now working on developing formal training courses – validated by Open College Network or similar organisations.
9. The funding applied in the TYS application was to cover:
 - cost of full time Reserve Officer to be employed by UWT
 - cost of dedicated van for the Bog Meadows.
 - cost of new visitor facility (£250-350k in total) to be made up as follows;
 - £17k landfill tax
 - 40% from St Galls to cover first floor changing rooms, showers and toilets (hoping to raise at least some from Sports Council but can mortgage etc)
 - initial application for £55k to Belfast Regeneration Office (now 18 months ago going through economic appraisal), expect to increase the application due to under estimation of the cost.
10. The scheme complements local Neighbourhood Renewal Projects as well as the aims of the West Belfast Strategic Partnership though no formal links exist with them.
11. There were some initial delays to the project caused by complications involved in the purchase of the land. The handling of reporting and timing for projects with several different funding sources also always causes problems. The original schedule may have been over ambitious underestimating the problems of land purchase, obtaining planning permission obtaining tenders, etc. As previously mentioned there has also been a delay waiting for a decision on funding from the Belfast Regeneration Office. There may also be some

underlying political difficulties given the location of the site in West Belfast and the need to retain parity in funding distribution.

12. All those interviewed who had dealt with NOF emphasised that the Fund was very helpful throughout the process and always accessible when needed. There has not been any formal evaluation so far though the requirement to provide an annual report is both expected and accepted. Details are not available at present due to delays caused by the transfer of NOF management responsibility from London to NI but details will be released shortly. There have been no formal links with other TYS projects since the launch of the programme but further opportunities for this would be welcomed.

Community Engagement

13. Throughout this process there was continued close consultation with local community groups who were (and still are) very supportive of the Partnership's activities. One example of this is the St James Forum. The Director of the Forum, Sheila McVeigh, is particularly enthusiastic about the need to preserve and improve the reserve. She has a great deal of useful historic material relating to the site including a video depicting the changes in the Bog Meadows as the seasons progress. She emphasises that the area has formed a focal point for the local community for generations and performs an important educational and therapeutic role as the "green lungs" of an otherwise very densely populated urban environment.
14. One interesting synergy is evolving between the project and the Reconnect Group. Reconnect is an organisation which teaches horticulture, administration and essential skills to people with a range of mental and/ or physical special needs. As a group they are keen to conduct more work related to conservation and they have considerable land available around their new offices. Reconnect regularly provide help with conservation activities in Bog Meadows and in return the clients are provided with some training which they can then use on their own land. In this way the benefits of the Bog Meadows project are moving out of the immediate catchment area. Annie has plans to extend this type of activity to other similar groups across Ulster as well as to try to introduce the concept to other UWT sites.
15. In total around 34 clients have participated in the scheme so far, a typical group would consist of 10-14 people. The scheme has many advantages for the clients of Reconnect apart from the training itself:
 - it encourages clients to change their routine and get out of the offices which many are normally reluctant to do – they can be "a little schoolish"
 - apart from the training they have the opportunity to meet with others in mixed ability groups
 - the current clients are mainly Protestant so it is unusual for them to visit a Catholic area.
16. The proposed developments at Bog Meadows would encourage further development of these schemes by providing toilets, shelter, a lunch venue and training facilities. Other special needs

groups and schools are also actively involved with the conservation of the area and may also benefit from any more formal training which is set up in the future.

17. The wider community is also involved in development. Examples of this are the St James Forum mentioned previously and an Advisory Committee to the local UWT chaired by Terry Goldsmith. Both of these organisations are involved in the development of the management plan and strategy.

Outputs and Impacts

18. The main beneficiaries at the moment are the local community through exercise, play, dog walking and use as a general meeting area. The wider community are also increasingly involved through visits by special needs groups, schools and wildlife interest groups, particularly ornithologists. This wider area usage is bound to increase when the visitor centre is completed. There has also been considerable national and international interest as the area has gained a reputation of being an example of good practice in urban wildlife reserve management.
19. Interviews with local people illustrated the fact that Bog Meadows has always played an important role as a focal point of the area. Local interest in the area dropped off during the Troubles but recently is now growing rapidly again – the environment in general is receiving more consideration and people have less pressing problems. Much of the initial local involvement in the area was issue driven (threat of development) – but it is now primarily conservation driven.
20. The social impacts have been high. The benefits identified through the interviews were:
 - focal point of the community allowing space for relaxation/ regeneration, particularly in times of ill health/ personal problems
 - basic exercise, dog walking etc
 - play; ditch jumping/ frog collection
 - communing with nature/bird watching
 - separated men can take their children there in the absence of other suitable accommodation
 - there are also two Faile (Irish Festivals) each year
21. There have been some *economic impacts* which are more difficult to quantify. People living adjacent to the area have ceased to use it as a dumping ground and anti-social behaviour has been reduced. General improvements to the “feel” of the area has meant that properties are being developed to higher standards and prices have increased.
22. The environmental *impacts* of the development have been mentioned above in terms of maintaining the local heritage of the area. This has been monitored recently by the Reserve

Officer keeping details of user numbers. Recently usage has seemed to be increasing (up to 5,000 during April 2004).

23. The level of biodiversity is high, particularly for birds. Biodiversity is monitored by the Reserve Officer, other UWT staff and volunteers. This evidence is substantiated by recordings taken from the permanent hide on the site and the regular netting of birds.
24. The *health impacts* are both physical and mental in nature. Expected physical benefits are mainly in terms of increased exercise leading to better physical condition. The benefits of green space on mental health and well being in such an area cannot be underestimated when so many have suffered recent personal suffering and loss.
25. In summary the developments so far (Table 1) have already contributed to a general redefinition of the area. In the future there are plans to link the reserve with a Protestant Community on the other side of the M1 and the reserve could play a part in building bridges between the two communities. Success so far has been recognised by the project receiving a UNESCO UK Man and the Biosphere Award, and a Brighter Belfast Award.

| Table 1: Outcomes of project to date | | | |
|---|---|--|------------------------------------|
| | <i>Activity undertaken</i> | <i>Description of benefits</i> | <i>Evidence of outcome</i> |
| Social | Reserve Officer Engaged | Increased interaction with local community Organisation of volunteer work force | Increased usage |
| Economic | General conservation work | Feel good factor in the area | Properties being better maintained |
| Environmental | General conservation work Biodiversity monitoring | Good level of biodiversity | Good level of biodiversity |
| Health | Teaching and training of community groups and schools | Improved physical and mental health of users | Increased usage |

26. More detailed statistics on usage and benefits will be gathered when the visitor centre is completed which will facilitate interaction with the public. The following is a summary of the main beneficiaries of the project at the moment:

Direct beneficiaries

27. Local users are currently the main direct beneficiaries and their views on the development could be gathered through surveys and questionnaires distributed by the Reserve Officer and/or local volunteers. The views of the Reserve Officer and volunteers could be collected

via interviews or a seminar held at the visitor centre. Direct beneficiaries from outside the area (special needs groups, schools, bird watchers, festival goers etc) are growing in number. The new visitor centre will make it much easier to capture the views of these users (visiting groups are already asked to fill out a standard questionnaire).

Indirect beneficiaries

28. Non-users in the local area would be more difficult to track but could be canvassed through local community groups, who might also be prepared to make a second video plotting the changes caused by the project (they have already made one of the current situation). Other UWT sites might benefit from the sharing of the training concept, this could be tracked through the project manager.

Future and Sustainability

29. The local UWT office will be located in the new building and so funding will have to be found for running costs and general maintenance. Following the cessation of TYS funding it is hoped that the running costs of the office and the salary of the Reserve Officer will be covered from overheads on other UWT projects.

Overview

30. The activity would not have happened at this time in the absence of TYS funding and the project has not displaced funding from elsewhere as far as can be seen. In fact it has been successful in attracting funding from other sources, in particular St Galls. The paragraphs below list the three most positive and negative lessons from this project, all of these elements could occur elsewhere.

Positive lessons

- strong involvement of the local community from the start of the project
- leverage of funding from St Galls (common interest in development)
- involvement of experts with ability to publicise and lobby.

Negative lessons

- easy to underestimate time taken for decision making (land purchase, planning etc)
- planning and timing of projects with multiple funding sources always difficult
- may have underestimated the capital costs and time taken for the full project cycle.

Consultees:

Annie O’Kane - Project Manager, Ulster Wildlife Trust

Ross Towers - Warden, Ulster Wildlife Trust

Patrick Davey - Volunteer Guide

Terry Goldsmith - Founder Friends of Bog Meadows

Sarah Loe - Reconnect,

Sheila McVeigh - St James Forum, Community Group

Case Study: Burnside and District Community Group Village Enhancement Project – Burnside, Newtonabbey

Introduction

1. This project was the result of a successful joint bid by the Burnside and District Community Group (BDCG) and the Newtonabbey Borough Council (NBC). The project aimed to develop an area of semi-derelict land in the centre of the village of Burnside into a central recreational area for the village including a play area for primary school age children, a games area for older users and a paved area with mains power for community events.
2. The BDGC was established six years ago to try and attract public funding to the area. It was a response to the fact that locals felt they were not receiving their share of grants compared to allocations to the urban areas of Belfast, 15 miles away. Burnside is a mainly Protestant community of around 1,000 inhabitants located in a rural area which is socially and economically disadvantaged.
3. The NBC has been very supportive of rural development projects in the area through its Ruralink initiative. It has recently just completed the installation of a river walk through Burnside at a cost of around £50k. This walk will link the park development with other riverside areas and nature walks.
4. The need for a central communal area for the village was a major reason for establishing BDCG and since its formation it has worked closely with NBC to improve the environment of the village. Throughout this process there has been a high level of local community involvement. The BDGC has very strong links to the local community and organises many events such as trips for local pensioners, Christmas dinners, kids parties etc. In all, 23 residents have served as members on the BDGC since its inception.
5. The site for the development is part of the Kilburn Estate which is owned by the Housing Executive and is located in the centre of the village. The Executive would not cede the land to the BDGC but agreed to turn it over to the NBC.
6. The village has changed considerably since the formation of the BDGC, in particular there has been an increasing number of new residents who have moved to the village from Belfast and other urban areas.
7. The BDGC is well networked with other community groups through organisations such as the Community Relations Council and NICVA (Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action). The Group is constantly on the look out for potential sources of funding. They came across TYS using the “Grantfinder” website but it was also advertised elsewhere, e.g. in the local papers.

8. The NBC had committed £120k to the project before the proposal was submitted. The NOF awarded the full amount requested in June 2003, which comprised £75k towards capital costs and £43k towards revenue costs giving a total project cost of £238k.

Project activities

9. The building phase of the project has been completed and the development was officially opened in November 2004. The tendering process was supervised by the NBC but design of the sites was carried out in close consultation with BCDG. The completed project comprises the following improvements:
 - new play area for primary school ages
 - enclosed ball game area for football, hockey etc.
 - an outdoor communal meeting area with mains power suitable for; village fetes, carol singing, meeting point for treasure hunts , nature walks etc.
 - walkways and landscaping of adjacent areas.
10. The main barriers have been the slowness of the decision making processes by both the Housing Executive (land ownership) and the NBC (granting of planning permission). These delays were exacerbated by the fact that the civil servants also went on strike over the crucial period.
11. The reporting procedures are quite confusing for a voluntary organisation such as the BDCG and they would have welcomed some hands-on training in this area. An electronic template would also be helpful in providing guidance of the form and content of required submissions such as progress reports.

Community Engagement

12. A great deal of local consultation on preferences for different facilities was undertaken (prior to the proposal being submitted) through community group meetings and consultation in schools requesting feedback on the types of facilities preferred. The BDCG were also awarded £1,500 from the Big Lottery which funded a community audit, they were assisted in this by a student from Ulster University. The one and a half page questionnaire was sent to 600 residents and a 46% response rate was achieved. They were aware of another similar survey which achieved a 90% success rate by collecting questionnaires in person. However in a village such as Burnside this could be very time consuming due to the hospitality of the local residents (who would want to discuss matters in more detail!).

Outputs and Impacts

13. It is too soon to attempt to quantify the effects of the project on the local community. However, the park was being well used on a very dark, cold and wet night on the day of the interviews.
14. The social *impacts* are likely to be significant in that the development will provide a focal point where both children and their parents can meet on a regular and informal basis. It may well have the effect of improving social cohesion in the area by preventing young couples moving out of the village in search of better facilities for young children. The site will also be used by the local primary school and play groups as a central facility which again will increase social interaction.
15. There are likely to be *economic impacts* arising from the new development. Properties adjacent to the development will benefit from improved aspects which should have beneficial impact on property prices. The village in general has been made a more desirable location for families with young children who wish to move into the area. If the facilities encourage more locals to stay in the area this could have economic benefits in terms of enabling younger parents to work whilst family members look after their children.
16. The *environmental impacts* are direct, in that a large central area of the village has been transformed. The links with the riverside walk should encourage more interest in the surrounding wildlife which will help to preserve woodland areas and increased biodiversity.
17. The health impacts, are immediate in terms of encouraging local children and teenagers to exercise more and get away from their TVs/ computer games.
18. The outcomes of the projects are summarised in Table 1 below

| Table 1: Outcomes of project to date | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| | Activity undertaken | Description of benefits | Evidence of outcome |
| Social | Play and games areas constructed | Will encourage social interaction | Heavy usage even in bad weather |
| Economic | Play and games areas constructed | Improvements to the image of the village, helping to retain young couples | See photos |
| Environmental | Play and games areas constructed | Improved general aspect of the centre of the village | See photos |
| Health | Play and games areas constructed | Will encourage more exercise | Heavy usage even in bad weather |

Direct beneficiaries

19. Local users are currently the main direct beneficiaries and their views on the development will be gathered through the community survey/ audit which is planned for next year. The BDCG are happy to provide the Big Lottery with the results of this survey.

Indirect beneficiaries

20. The BDGC and NBC have both benefited in terms of forming a synergistic relationship that has benefited both partners. The longer term benefits of this co-operation could be gauged by interviews with the main partners.

Future and Sustainability

21. The NBC has accepted long term responsibility for the site (minimum of 20 years) in the short term they will be assisted by the local community in further improvements such as planting and maintenance work.
22. There are plans to raise money for further improvements such as more swings, a bicycle rack and possibly more lighting.

Overview

23. The activity would not have happened at this time in the absence of TYS funding and the project has not displaced funding from elsewhere as far as can be seen. It has also established a useful working partnership between the BDCG and NBC which will continue in future projects.

Positive lessons

- strong partnership between BDCG and NDC which has realised benefits to both parties
- the project has benefited the village by increasing community spirit through focusing on a joint project
- decision making within the partnership was achieved quickly and smoothly.

Negative lessons

- decision making outside the partnership was often slow introducing delays into the project
- some of the reporting procedures to the TYS fund appeared complicated to BDGC, and more guidance would be desirable
- projects such as this involve a lot of stress and time commitments for the voluntary groups involved.

Interviewees:

Elizabeth Bell, Chair - The Burnside and District Community Group (BDCG)

Heather Robinson - Deputy Chair, The Burnside and District Community Group

Denis O'Donnell - Development Officer, Newtonabbey Borough Council (NBC)

Case Study: The Northern Ireland Community Wood Warden Scheme (NICWWS) – all Northern Ireland

Introduction

1. The Community Wood Warden scheme is a partnership between the Woodland Trust and Conservation Volunteers Northern Ireland (CVNI). The aim is to encourage individuals to become environmental champions for woodland.
2. The Woodland Trust is a conservation charity that aims to protect and enhance native and broadleaved trees throughout the UK. The Woodland Trust has 52 sites across Northern Ireland and would like to see individuals and communities taking on a greater ownership of their local woodland. This scheme seeks to promote this by training and supporting a network of voluntary Wood Wardens across the Province. Their involvement could vary in particular situations and could simply involve monitoring the wood's condition every month and reporting back to a Woodland Trust Woodland Officer. Ideally however, the Community Wood Wardens will go one step further and help organise events and more proactive conservation involving the local community.
3. Conservation Volunteers Northern Ireland will provide all of the training and support required to sustain the Community Wood Wardens in their role. CVNI is a charitable organisation working with and organising volunteers on projects which improve the Province's environment by harnessing the efforts of volunteers and the local community. These activities prioritise improvements areas in adjacent to disadvantaged communities.
4. The project manager is Brian Poots of the Woodland Trust. Brian and Gregor Fulton have in the past had responsibility for the management of all the Trust's NI sites. The concept presented in the proposal was to provide local points of contacts with close links with the local community both to improve the management of the sites and at the same time to increase the involvement of the local community. Brian became aware of TYS through the NOF website. He was already familiar with the aims and objectives the NOF through his previous work both with the Woodlands Trust and Conservation Volunteers NI (he worked for them prior to joining the Woodland Trust).
5. The project fits in well with other Province-wide initiatives. At the local level, the Trust has been involved with individual LSPs e.g. in applying for grants to provide trees. However the experience has been that at this level an extra layer of administration is involved which make the benefits of such collaboration debatable.
6. The Trust applied for five years' funding. The grant was successful, but according to the rules of TYS they were only eligible for three years funding. This meant that an original application for £193k was reduced to £111k. In addition, the Trust is committed to

committing a further £100k in kind. The award was made in August 2003 and project activity started in earnest in early 2004.

7. The original proposal also involved the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) which had agreed to supply a person on secondment to manage the project. This would have relieved Brian from the day to day management of the project allowing him to spend time on other aspects of his role including fund raising. In fact, after the decision was made NIHE decided that they were unable to provide the manager.

Project activities

8. The basic concept for the project existed prior to the application. Brian Poots had worked for CVNI prior to joining the Woodland Trust and had realised that many of the skills of the two organisations complemented each other. In essence the Trust had expertise in Woodlands acquisition and management but did not have access to the manpower necessary adequately to maintain these in the long term. On the other hand CVNI had access to the manpower and the resources to train volunteers in the necessary skills. Brian then set about trying to find a funding source to realise the concept.
9. He found the grant application transparent and reasonably user-friendly, though the timescale was fairly tight. The proposal was written by Brian in a month with some input from the other partners. The timescale for the production of the proposal was reduced due to the requirement of the Trust and CVNI that staff wishing to apply for external funding have to go through a checking procedure prior to submission. He found the TYS managers very helpful and approachable.
10. The project has made good progress to date with over 40 applicants for 9 posts of Woodland Wardens. Entry into the scheme could be categorised on three levels:
 - the basic level is simply to keep an eye on the wooded area and fill out a monthly report detailing any actual or potential problems
 - more proactive wardens would report and also perform a certain amount of maintenance and repair
 - as well as reporting, maintaining and repairing the area, the most active participants would make efforts to involve the wider community and would be encouraged and supported to undertake formal training to help them perform their role more effectively.
11. It is in the nature of the project that the lead in time would be long as information concerning the project has to be disseminated to local communities across the Province. Presentations have been given to local groups to raise awareness about the existence of the project and its aims and several Wardens have been selected. The project has also been delayed in its initial stages by the failure of NIHE to supply a full time secondee as outlined in the initial proposal.
12. Day to day management of the wardens when appointed will mainly be by e-mail and phone, but regular visits will also be made to all the sites.

13. The partnership between the Trust and CVNI has worked extremely well so far and could well form the basis for further applications to capitalise on the synergy between the two organisations.
14. Brian keeps NOF regularly updated on the progress of the project and ongoing dissemination activities by a regular Newsletter and evaluation reports, press clippings etc. There has been no formal reporting requirement from NOF so far.

Community Engagement

15. Community involvement at the proposal stage was predominantly through the connections of the Trust and CVNI who both work with community groups on a regular basis. Several (6/7) community groups were contacted prior to the submission of the proposal and their views incorporated into the final version. Since the grant was awarded a major part of the early project activity has consisted of project managers organising local community group meetings to advertise the aims of the project and canvas volunteers to participate as Woodland Wardens.
16. The project team also produces regular newsletters and evaluation reports containing details of dissemination events with press cuttings etc. Where Wardens have already been appointed there is evidence of an increased interest and appreciation of the benefits of woodland among the local communities. The wardens also organise local communities in national events such as seed gathering and tree planting. Feedback on the success of these events is obtained by handing out feedback forms to participants.

Outputs and Impacts

17. It is too soon to attempt to quantify the effects of the project in the diverse local communities involved. Indeed it is in the nature of the project that quantification of the benefits will be difficult given that many of the targets are “soft” – educational benefits, increased involvement of the local community etc.
18. The project has not enjoyed direct links with other TYS projects since the initial launch though the managers agreed that further contact could prove useful. However, the project has benefited from both partners’ experience with other programmes with similar aims such as the Green Gym programme and the Willows for Shade programme.
19. The *social impacts* are likely to be significant in the long term but will vary from site to site. In general terms the existence of a dedicated warden who regularly monitors the site will improve the general appearance of the site which should encourage increased usage and communal activity in the area. If the warden is enthusiastic and able to engage the wider community then a wide range of possibilities become possible.

20. There are likely to be **economic impacts** arising from some of these sites. Any urban green space which improves through time in terms of aesthetics, amenity value and biodiversity will have beneficial knock-on effects in the surrounding area. These are likely to manifest themselves in terms of local residents making more effort to maintain and enhance the condition of their properties which in time benefits the whole area, though such benefits are notoriously difficult to quantify.
21. Potential **environmental impacts** centre around the benefits of a regular presence in the area which will reduce degradation of the environment due to anti-social behaviour (even if this only entails regular litter collection). The fact that an area is regularly monitored could lead to the prevention of more long term environmental degradation. In one area alone a recently appointed warden has already alerted the Trust to a mould which seems to be attacking resident oak trees. The warden has also made emergency repairs to a fence caused by a car accident.
22. The **health impacts**, both physical and mental, resulting from well maintained urban green spaces are well documented elsewhere. It is too early in this project to attempt to quantify specific benefits resulting from the project. However it is fair to assume that if the project is only partially successful in improving up to 50 urban green spaces and increasing the engagement of the local communities, the health benefits to some individuals and families in these disadvantaged communities could be very significant. Many of these areas could also provide a venue for other health related activities such as the Green Gym Project.
23. The outcomes of the projects are summarised in Table 1 below.

| Table 1: Outcomes of project to date | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| | Activity undertaken | Description of benefits | Evidence of outcome |
| Social | Wardens appointed – training underway | Reduction of anti-social behaviour Encouraging more community events | Successful events already held at various sites |
| Economic | Wardens appointed – training underway | Monitoring of effectiveness of contractor's operations on site Improvements to surrounding properties | One contractor contract terminated due to underperformance reported by the warden |
| Environmental | Wardens appointed – training underway | Better maintenance of sites | Reduction of dumping and damage at some sites |
| Health | Wardens appointed – training underway | Increased usage leading to health benefits | Too soon to quantify |

Direct beneficiaries

24. Local users are currently the main direct beneficiaries and their views on the development could be gathered through surveys and questionnaires distributed by the Woodland Warden and/or local volunteers.
25. The views of the Woodland Wardens could be collected via seminars and group meetings which would also have the advantage of disseminating good practice amongst the wardens.

Indirect beneficiaries

26. Non-users in the local area would be more difficult to track but could be canvassed through local community groups.

Future and Sustainability

27. The original proposal requested funding for five years but the TYS funding was limited to three. This should allow sufficient time to establish all the Wardens and provide some basic training. However there will be a need for continued support after that time manage the wardens, organise replacements, provide additional support and training etc.

Overview

28. The activity would not have happened at this time in the absence of TYS funding and the project has not displaced funding from elsewhere as far as can be seen. It has also established a useful working partnership between the Trust and the CVNI which could be pursued further in future projects.

Positive lessons

- strong complementarity of the two lead organisations leading to effective use of resources
- the project has provided flexible funding which is important when dealing with such a large number of diverse sites
- increased exposure to outdoor activities for a wide range of disadvantaged groups with tangible social and health benefits.

Negative lessons

- some problems were experienced in achieving significant attendance at the dissemination events. Some research in each area prior to the event may help to tailor each event to maximise participation
- this is a new approach and so teething problems could be expected. More interaction with other similar programmes may prove beneficial e.g. Tree Wardens Scheme (English Tree Council), UWT Guardians Scheme

- the failure of the NIHE to participate reduced the effectiveness of the project by significantly reducing the manpower available for management.

Interviewees:

Brian Poots - Project Manager, The Woodland Trust

Gregor Fulton - The Woodland Trust

Ian Humphreys - Operations Manager, Conservation Volunteers Northern Ireland

Norman Bryce - Community Projects Officer, Conservation Volunteers Northern Ireland

Dean Weir - Community Wood Warden, Corcrain Wood, Portadown

Scotland

Case Study: Beardmore Park

Introduction

1. Kelvin Clyde Greenspace was launched in April 2002 under the umbrella of the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Greenspace Trust. The project aims to enhance the quality of life of Glasgow's residents by helping local communities learn about, improve and enjoy the open spaces in and around their area.
2. Glasgow has a real need for safe outdoor recreational spaces. The existence of environmentally friendly, safe open spaces helps improve the area in which people live, work and visit and has both health and lifestyle benefits. Greenspaces provide a sample of the countryside in parts of the city's most derelict or built up areas.
3. Kelvin Clyde Greenspace (KCG) aims to help improve the environmental and recreational value of open spaces in Glasgow by working with communities to create nature conservation areas and safe access routes, improving play and recreation areas for all ages, providing environmental education for all, promoting healthier lifestyles through healthy eating and increased activity, exploiting opportunities for environmental improvement, and encouraging visitors and inward investment into the area. Issues of disadvantage and social inclusion, leading to training and employment opportunities are also included in the scope of KCG's targets.
4. In 2002, KCG was approached by the Eden Project to see if the group would be interested in developing a vacant plot of land in the East End of Glasgow in the heart of Parkhead. Eden is a Landfill Tax funded initiative investigating derelict plots of land to assess suitability for building or development. 10% of Glasgow city consists of vacant land and much of this area is riddled with old mine shafts and tunnelling, so cannot be built upon safely though there is potential for greenspace provision.
5. The East End of Glasgow is currently commencing on a major programme of regeneration which will include significant new house building, the construction of the National Indoor Sports Arena, a new M74/M8 link road and associated greenspace enhancements. In the immediate Parkhead area, a multi million pound Townspace Heritage Initiative, co-funded by Heritage Lottery, will help transform the historic fabric of Parkhead Cross. This will be complemented by the Beardmore Park project.

Project Objectives

6. The main objectives of the Beardmore Park project are to provide a greenspace for residents to enjoy, play facilities for children, and a managed area for teenagers. The proposed layout

aims to provide ‘a flexible community space’ with all abilities access throughout offering a wide range of uses⁷.

7. However, at the heart of the initiative is the desire to encourage communities to get involved, to take ownership of their neighbourhood, and to find ways to work together to achieve mutual goals. Education and environmental awareness are also key goals for KCG.

Funding

8. The total project costs are in the region of £850,000. Funding assistance was sourced as follows:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|
| • TYS | 150,000 |
| • Kelvin & Clyde Greenspace Trust | £10,000 |
| • Glasgow City Council | £375,000 |
| • Eden Project | £25,000 |
| • Greenspace Scotland | £25,000 |
| • Landfill tax | £100,000 |
| • Communities Scotland | £50,000 |
| • Sustainable Environments Grant | £65,000 |
| • The Robertson Trust | £50,000 |

9. There has also been a substantial amount of ‘in kind’ contribution from various groups, including test bore holes for mine shafts carried out free of charge by Eden.
10. The funding package was collated and sourced by a member of the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Greenspace Trust which has since ceased to operate. However, it is not thought that there were any difficulties associated with the application for TYS funding.
11. TYS funding was approved at Christmas 2003. All other funding sources have also been finalised, except for the Robertson Trust monies which are due in shortly.

Project Activities

12. The project is being managed primarily by KCG, which is directly answerable to the city council, and until recently they were also accountable to Glasgow & Clyde Greenspace. However, the success of the project is dependant upon a significant amount of partnership working. Key project partners involved to date include the Glasgow City Council, Glasgow & Clyde Valley Greenspace Trust, Scottish Natural Heritage, Parkhead and Shettleton Housing Associations, Playbusters (children’s playgroup), and the Parkhead Youth Project.

⁷ KCG ‘Beardmore Park’ Information leaflet

Progress

| Table 1: Progress against objectives | | |
|---|--|---|
| Planned activity | Progress to date | Comment |
| Funding approved | Completed | Awaiting notification of £50,000 from Robertson Trust |
| Community consultation | Surveys to 300+ households surrounding area. Public meetings held. Various strategy and community groups consulted | |
| Schools Involvement | Children involved in design stage, taking photos of site, making architects models, park name competition | Completed. Name 'Beardmore Park' chosen by a youngster as old factory |
| Schools Involvement | Plans to get different local schools planting different park sections | Planned |
| Wider community involvement | Open day attended by 130 people – plans explained – input requested. Local Housing Associations, playgroups and pensioners groups involved | |
| Wider community involvement | Events programme will be designed to ensure follow-up post-construction phase and to encourage sustainable community engagement | Planned |
| Training & Development | Intermediate Labour Market activity will be included in the project to encourage young people into work experience | Planned |

Community Engagement

13. The community has been consulted fully through a number of meetings, surveys, open days, and groups. Local Housing Associations, playgroups, and pensioners interest groups have all had a significant input into this project.
14. Schools have been invited to get involved in the project at various stages of development. The children were taken to the park area during the design stage and were introduced to the concepts of pollution, environmental issues, and safety. They worked with a landscaping expert to take photographs and make architects models of the play areas they would like in the park. Additionally, there are plans to give individual schools an area to plant with bulbs and trees so that the children can begin to understand some bio-diversity matters, as well as take ownership of the park and hopefully encourage them to respect the area in the future.
15. One of the most important aspects of this project is the plan to create an intermediate labour market for young people who are currently out of work. There was a two-stage tender approach for the technical build of the park to include both the professional landscaping and the training elements.

16. Land Engineering were the successful bidders for the work and they are now working with the East End Partnership looking at ways of incorporating an SVQ Level 1 & 2 qualification into the project. The plan is that 8 young unemployed local people will be given the opportunity to work on a six month build contract. It is hoped that this will provide vital work experience and a qualification, as well as preparing young people for work.
17. The only objections lodged to the proposal were concerned about vandalism of the site. However, this is seen as a risk that has to be taken in order to attempt to make a difference.

Outputs and Impacts

18. The project is not simply about creating a green space, it is also concerned with forging a sense of community and to demonstrate what can be achieved through partnership working, a shared vision, and local input. The project should empower the community to understand that they can make a difference and that they have choices to make regarding their local neighbourhood. Inspiring a change in environment, behaviours and attitudes is part and parcel of this initiative.
19. Scottish Enterprise donated an old industrial steel hammer which was once used by the Beardmore Forge (the original ironworks which once occupied the site). It is intended that this crane sized relic of a by-gone age will be erected at the front of the gateway to the park, as a reminder of the area's industrial heritage.

Additionality

20. It is considered that there is substantial additionality as TYS forms the bulk of the funding package. EDRF was applied for, but was refused as there are no long term employment opportunities as a direct output of the project. At the very least, the project would not have gone ahead in its present format and would have been limited to a 'grass and trees' project without the community involvement, landscaping, and play area construction that has been included as a result of TYS assistance.

Summary of Key Outcomes

| Table 2: Outcomes of project to date | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| | Activity undertaken | Description of benefits | Evidence of outcome |
| Social | Open Day | Encouraged community to come and find out about the plans and proposals | Photographs |
| | Community Survey Questionnaires | Listen to the residents, understand what they want, assess need and demand, encourage them to take ownership and pride in their environment | Questionnaires being returned with suggestions section completed |
| | Naming competition | Enthuse local people and stir up some interest in the park by giving them the opportunity to select a name for the area | Beardmore Park chosen by a young girl as it is the name of the former iron forge which once presided over the site |
| Health | No specific health focused activities to date, but an indirect benefit of getting people to spend more time outdoors | N/A | N/A |
| Economic | None to date | N/A | N/A |
| Environmental | School children being brought out to see the site | Educating the very young to appreciate and understand environmental issues. Hopefully they will also take some of their new knowledge home to their parents | Photographs, children's' models of the garden |
| | Land use survey carried out by Eden | Geo-survey to assess location of old mine shafts/ shelves etc beneath the surface | Survey results |

Future and Sustainability

21. The process of development is seen as being key to the long term sustainability of this project. The community have been involved and engaged in the whole process from planning through to the design, building and (hopefully) long term use and maintenance of the area. Fostering a local sense of ownership of the park will deter vandalism.

22. The intermediate labour market aspect of the project will help to get young local people into work and give them the necessary training for them to gain a qualification and build the confidence and knowledge to enable them to move into real employment.
23. Monitoring and evaluation of the project is being done in a number of informal and formal means and will be continued post-project. Meeting Minutes and photographs are available for tracking progress. Interim reports are also being made to key funding partners and the Area Partnership on an ad hoc basis.
24. A Learning Evaluation and Planning Programme will be used to monitor the early stages of consultation and adapted for longer term evaluation. Local people are helping to monitor the perceived success and progress of the project via questionnaires and surveys being conducted throughout the area.
25. Although this project is relatively small, it forms part of the major regeneration initiative for the East End of Glasgow. The impacts and outputs it produces will be contained to a specific community, but they are part of a greater whole which is needed to improve the environment, economy, health and social welfare of the wider area.
26. The City Council have the responsibility to ensure that the park is maintained and kept safe and clean in the long term. However, KCG is already developing plans to link into the educational and environmental projects, to ensure that this is a sustainable and long term attempt to encourage neighbourhood renewal and not just a one off.

Overview

27. KCG believes that there are a number of lessons that can be learnt here by other community project groups. Pulling all the funding streams together is the trickiest part of the whole process and the biggest challenge, especially for community groups with little experience or knowledge of funding sources and the system.
28. Having a clear vision of what you are aiming to achieve, listening to the wider community and what they want, setting realistic timescales and keeping the community informed about progress, and above all perseverance are key components of a successful communities project. It is important to keep the impetus going and convince local people that something is happening behind the scenes, even if the visible results are yet to be seen.

Consultee

Chris Wood-Gee – Glasgow & Clyde Valley Greenspace Trust, Project Manager

Case Study: Moray Mountain Biking Project

Introduction

1. Mountain biking has rapidly expanded in popularity over recent years, and there has been increasing demand in Moray for a good, local facility. In 2001, the Forestry Commission (FC) recognised the growing problem of young riders using unsuitable areas of forest trails to carve out their own mountain bike routes and jumps. These unmanaged trails posed a serious problem in terms of hazards to other users, long term damage to the trails, and potential unsafe conditions for the young people.
2. The FC realised that they needed to manage the issue both strategically and operationally. They acknowledged that the area for which they are responsible (stretching from Culbin in the west to Keith in the east, and from the Moray coast down to Grantown-on-Spey and the borders of the Cairngorm National Park) is large enough to accommodate different types of leisure pursuits.

Funding

3. The Forestry Commission have a designated central Funding Advisor whose role is to source and select the most appropriate form of funding. Approximately £110,000 funding was sought in total.
4. For the purposes of this project the following funding was secured:
 - Moray Council £5,000
 - Forestry Commission £18,000 (+ £5,000 'in-kind')
 - Moray Badenoch & Strathspey Enterprise £14,500
 - Baxters Foundation £10,000
 - Moray Action For Communities £5,000
 - Fresh Futures/ TYS £47,000
 - Moray Mountain Biking Club £5,000
5. As far as the application for Fresh Futures/ TYS assistance is concerned, it was felt that the advice received from the advisor, Kirsteen Robb had been very helpful and positive throughout. The one slight criticism was that Kirsteen could perhaps have been more realistic and discussed the possibility that the application may be deferred with the applicants in advance in order to prepare the community for the risk of refusal.

6. The application forms were perceived to be relatively straight forward to complete compared to other sources. Kirsteen checked over any drafts produced by Philip prior to submission. One feedback comment was that the electronic Word version of the form only allowed a finite number of words so a supplementary document had to be added on the second application to enable a full discourse of the project aims and objectives.
7. An initial application to TYS was deferred. There were no obvious reasons given other than the fact that the scheme had received a large number of applications and this project had not been as good as some of the others on this occasion. The application was resubmitted with a few minor amendments and was successful on a second attempt.
8. Nobody from any of the funding streams has yet been out to visit the project site, though this has been discussed.
9. The Forestry Commission agreed up-front that rather than make quarterly claims for the grants they would claim once per annum to minimise administration costs and resources. However, interim reports are being forwarded to the funding bodies at regular intervals to keep them updated on project progress and allow for monitoring opportunities.

Project Activities

Objectives

10. The overall objective of the FC is to ‘protect and expand Scotland's forests and woodlands and increase their value to society and the environment’.⁸ In line with the Scottish Executive aims of opening up the national forests for all ages and abilities to enjoy to the full, the FC began to examine the demand for better bike trails, and suitable sites for the development of this sporting activity.
11. The FC were keen to involve the community from the start of the initiative and to ensure that it was demand led. There would be little point investing time and resources into developing trails which did not meet the high stipulations of a challenging bike trail in the eyes of the young people who would be using it. Therefore, a questionnaire was issued and distributed via local bike and outdoor pursuits shops to establish initial interest prior to a public meeting.
12. In addition to community action objectives, there were also social implications in terms of getting young people off the streets and interested in a well managed activity whilst maintaining the enjoyment and safety of the trails for the general public. There were also some indirect health benefits associated with this project, though these were not the initial aims of the FC in developing the initiative.

Activities

13. The first "challenging" mountainbike trail in the national forest at Fochabers, called the Fochabers Freeride Project, was built in 2001 by volunteers with shovels and wheelbarrows

⁸ <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland>

and minimal cash. However, the Moray Mountain Bike Club (MMBC) was established in 2002, and with it evidence of the demand for a project on a larger scale than had previously been attempted. Working together, the FC and MMBC decided to put together funding applications to a variety of sources for a fairly small package.

14. The FC works to encourage new faces to join the group of regular volunteers. The MMBC also helps out through their members contributing to the trail build days and organising events.
15. The young people make most of the decisions about the type of ramps, jumps, gulleys, etc that they would like to include on the trails. However, since the early days, a number of the original jumps have proved unsustainable and have eroded; all trails are now constructed in line with the International Mountain Bike Guidelines to ensure that they are both safe and sustainable. Additionally, the FC insists that any jumps must be made clear and a ‘chicken run’ provided as an escape for younger and less experienced bikers in each case.

Progress

| Table 1: Progress against objectives | | |
|---|--|---|
| Planned activity | Progress to date | Comment |
| Assess demand and need for a bike trail | Questionnaire and public meeting held 2001 | |
| Engage community | Open days and events. Work with Outfit and other Social Inclusion projects | |
| Apply for funding | £110,000 approved | |
| Target young people | Address schools, leaflets and flyers in bike shops and youth centres. School visits. | |
| Plan trails | All trails in the 3 forest areas now planned and available on map | Copy of most recent interim ‘report’ and map update to be forwarded |
| Marketing | Temporary flyers printed. Map of final routes agreed. Website being updated. Promotion through MMBC website. | |
| Build trails | Well ahead on tree felling and excavator construction of new routes. Well attended trail build days | Hope to complete initial excavator work by April 2005 |
| Partnership working | Liaison with local transport operators to agree method of encouraging young people to travel by ‘bus to trails | |
| Source flexible and reliable bike hire provider | Achieved. | |
| Consider economic and tourism potential spin-offs | Yet to be addressed | |

Community Engagement

16. This project is perceived to be a community led initiative. Whilst the stimulus for activity came from the Forestry Commission recognising a problem and identifying a possible solution, the actual activity and the direction that the project has taken has come from involving the youngsters and the MMBC.
17. In 2001 a public meeting was held by the FC following the distribution and collation of a questionnaire which had been issued to all local bike shops in the area. Over 50 young people attended the workshop and told the FC what they wanted from a mountain bike trail. The Forest District Manager went out with the children to see where they currently rode their bikes, and to experience the kind of amateur jumps they had set up for themselves. It was clear from the start that there was a need for some management of this activity in order to balance the interests of the children and the general walking public.
18. Trail building days are held for 9 months of the year and there are usually around 12 young people (mainly boys) who turn up to volunteer. The community involvement is cyclical in nature. The project commenced in 2001 and since then most of the original participants have matured and moved onto other things. The FC provide tools and transport, fell any trees that need moving, and advise on safety issues. The young people pitch in to help do the manual work that the diggers cannot do.
19. However, the FC is proactive in encouraging new young people to get engaged in the initiative. They work with schools and have a number of temporary flyers and leaflets advertising the events and trail building days. Additionally, the Moray Mountain Biking Club attracts mainly those in the 20-30 age group. ‘Try It’ open days are held throughout the year to encourage young people, club members and interested parents and other individuals to come along and give it a go. These are suitable for a range of abilities, including people who may not have ridden a bike for years. There are plans to create trails for all levels of ability, so that newcomers to the sport can get started on easy trails and build up to the more challenging tracks if they so desire.

Outputs and Impacts

20. One of the key partners in this project is Outfit Moray. This organisation works with Moray Council to help children at risk, for example young carers, by providing activities and events to encourage them to interact socially. Outfit provides trained bike leaders to take around 8 groups out each year with these children. The bikes are provided by the FC through their contracted local bike shop and the expertise and care is provided free from Outfit.
21. A local bike hire firm is contracted to loan and deliver the bikes and safety equipment to wherever the site is on a particular day. The hirer was selected as offering the best deal and the most flexible service to the FC.

22. The project fits neatly with the Youth Work Initiatives and Social Inclusion Partnership for Youth which is a key focus for Moray. Other special events are held by the Local Community Networks in line with social inclusion targets for less advantaged children, for example Buckie Young Carers.
23. One of the problems for young people is transport and the FC are working with Stagecoach, the operator of the A96 Inverness to Aberdeen ‘bus route, to try to come up with a solution which will make public transport more accessible for young people with their bikes.
24. A possible phase 2 could involve the development of other sites. The FC is also working with other user groups such as equestrians to improve the forestry trails for other outdoor pursuits in addition to regular walkers. There is also lots of tourism potential, as demonstrated by the Welsh mountain biking projects. However, this initiative is primarily aimed at community involvement, though the FC will consider the tourism angle once the trails are all up and running.

Additionality

25. Additionality is deemed to be substantial. In the absence of the Fresh Futures/TYS funding the project would not have gone ahead. Although the FC was committed to working with the young people and the bike club it does not have the resources to pledge to this project.
26. FC also spoke to the Sports Lottery Fund about assistance. However, the response was that although the Fund would assist with the purchase of capital equipment such as the bikes, they would not assist with the infrastructure and build. This is of little help to the project as they do not have the resources to maintain the bikes if they bought them.
27. There is no displacement; additional work has been created for the bike shop which supplies the equipment on site.

Summary of Key Outcomes

| Table 2: Outcomes of project to date | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| | Activity undertaken | Description of benefits | Evidence of outcome |
| Social | FC officers working out in the field with the volunteers | Better understanding by community of what FC do and how they operate | Children asking questions and showing an interest |
| | ‘Try It’ open days | Encouraging and enthusing local people | Well attended open days with a wide age range. About 50 attendees on average. |
| | Balancing forest user interests | Allowing traditional uses of forest trails to proceed unhindered by newer but just as valid recreational pursuits. | Fewer complaints about children causing dangers to walkers and equestrians |

| Table 2: Outcomes of project to date | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| | Activity undertaken | Description of benefits | Evidence of outcome |
| | Practical construction work by children | Educate them in health and safety issues, bio-diversity, encourage an interest in nature, respect for other forest users | Approximately 12 children per building day turn out to help construct the tracks and jumps. Learning curve evident and older children help teach and educate newer recruits |
| Health | Promoting outdoor pursuits to all ages and abilities | Encouraging more people to use outdoor space and to benefit from mental and physical impacts of doing so. | Photos, taster day attendance |
| Economic | Equipment and bike hire | Supporting a local bike business | Reliable and flexible provider |
| Environmental | Management of bike trails | Safety and sustainability at top of agenda. | Forest Planning Process |
| | Planning of trails | Capercaillie and other wildlife habitats avoided | Liaison with RSPB |

Future and Sustainability

28. There is a four strong management team comprising of 2 Forestry Commission workers and 2 MMBC volunteers. A club member is currently working on updating the website for the MMBC www.moraymbc.tk/
29. Once the project is complete, the FC will retain an interest in looking after the management of the sites, maintenance, and course safety. The MMBC will oversee the participant side of the events – looking after the management of riders, personal safety, training, and club events etc.
30. All the routes are carefully planned to ensure that there are no adverse environmental impacts. Trails are mapped according to the Forest Planning process and consultation is held with a wide number of stakeholders and partners as a matter of course. No construction is done in capercaillie breeding areas during the breeding season and the RSPB are involved in agreeing plans for any sites that pass known capercaillie locations. This project provides a way of managing the bike trails and the associated environmental impacts.
31. There is an intention to conduct some kind of counting exercise after the project to assess numbers using the trails and walks. The baseline car park counter data is flimsy, and based on different thresholds, so of little use for assessing increased usage.

Overview

32. It is felt that the trail building process has been an invaluable community and social activity which has not only brought the locals residents into closer contact with each other, but has also provided an outlet of activity for children living in what is essentially a very remote area

for a teenager. Additionally, it is believed that the community as a whole is better educated in what the Forestry Commission's role is, the work that they do, and how they can help to make a difference to local rural life.

33. The indirect health benefits of getting more people out into the fresh air doing some exercise is also seen to be a vital project contribution to local residents, as is the value for money of the whole project. Much of the work is voluntary or 'in kind' and because it is being done by the young people it is less likely that they will deface, destroy or vandalise their own hard work and efforts.
34. In retrospect, the only things that the FC might do differently if it ran a similar project again would be to frontload the machinery work during the first year of the project and then progress to the hands on design and creation. Additionally, the FC would get more expertise involved to advise on safety and sustainability in building bike trails. However, at the start of the original project, the quick results were part of the attraction for the volunteers and sustainability was not an issue.
35. Questions to include in any future evaluation of the case study may include:
 - How has the wider, non-biking community been engaged in the project or spin-offs of the initiative?
 - How many bikers are using the trails on a regular basis?
 - What are the tourism implications of the project and how are these being exploited?
 - Have any attempts been made to link the project up with National Park initiatives on the border of the Moray Badenoch Strathspey area?
 - What success has been had with engaging the transport organisations in providing a more adequate mode of transport for people taking their bikes with them?
 - Are there any moves being made to link the cycle tracks in with other routes such as the National Cycle Network?

Consultee

Philip Whitfield – Manager, Forestry Commission Scotland

Case Study: North Ayr Community Gardens

Introduction

1. The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) is an international volunteering organisation which operates in the gap between global environmental needs and local capacity to make a difference. The BTCV Strategic Plan 2004-2008 highlights a change in ethos and approach for the organisation. ‘Inspiring People, Improving Places’ focuses on how people and environments will benefit from BTCV’s activities. Connecting people with place, enhancing life skills, and building healthy and sustainable communities are key aims for the 4 year strategy. This new direction indicates an attempt to broaden the scope of BTCV’s work and to engage a wider cross section of the community in the natural environment and bio-diversity.
2. The North Ayr project is an example of a project which entwines all the different strands of BTCV’s work, including health, inclusion & diversity and life skills. The idea came about during talks between the South Ayrshire Council and BTCV concerning building sustainable communities and the pursuit of social inclusion policy. The Council had a problem with tenant gardens being overgrown, untidy, and causing structural damage and visual pollution in North Ayr.

Objectives

3. The Community Gardens Steering Committee for the North Ayr Community Gardens Initiative was established to encourage residents to volunteer, within a programme of environmental improvements. The project aims were to address council and community raised health and safety concerns about unsafe gardens and open space, sharps risks, and other hazards.
4. The project will also further the aims of the Scottish Executive’s bio-diversity and health agendas.
5. The committee consists of a partnership between:
 - BTCV, James Brown Avenue
 - Westoaks and Lochside Tenants Association
 - South Ayrshire Council Housing and Sustainable Development
 - North Ayr Social Inclusion Partnership.
6. Local street committees are also feeding into the work of the project and helping to develop ideas and encourage involvement.

7. On another level, it is hoped that this project will encourage local pride in property and a sense of ownership of open spaces. At the same time, it provides BTCV with the opportunity to educate communities in environmental awareness and encourage community spirit by proactively encouraging individuals and associations to work together to improve their local environment.
8. There are numerous social, environmental and community benefits which can potentially be teased out during the course of this project and many ideas as to how the plans might be extended and lead to the creation of new spin-off initiatives. As the facilitator, BTCV is independent of the council and other agencies, and the Trust has the advantage of being able to engage and bond with individuals within the community without being viewed as ‘the establishment’.

Activities

9. Funding has been secured and an office property has been donated by the Housing Department. A 2 year contract post has been created for a Project Manager. Fionnadh Ratchford was appointed to this role and has proved to be very dynamic and enthusiastic. Under her direction, the project has started to take form in just 4 months since the funding package was approved. This post is managed by BTCV.
10. A number of gardens have been referred to the project by the Housing Department. Fionnadh has also identified a number of other possibilities for furthering the aims of the funding bodies and BTCV.
11. Through practical involvement the volunteers will learn about the importance of biodiversity and its relevance to disadvantaged urban areas. This will involve improving gardens and open spaces, planting native species, understanding why this is necessary to attract insects and birds, develop vegetable plots, and encourage healthier eating habits.
12. The project is only 4 months old at present, but has made considerable headway. A number of taster events have been held to inform residents about the work of BTCV and their partners and to illustrate the kind of activities that are taking place and how people can get involved. These events have included bulb planting, making willow boats and other practical activities.
13. BTCV is working with schools in the local area, a biodiversity desk calendar has been issued to all pupils, and a community food recipe book has been produced and circulated locally. A leaflet is also being distributed which highlights the security benefits of a well-managed garden in terms of deterring potential intruders, and avoiding giving them the cover and means of breaking and entering.

Progress

| Table 1: Progress against objectives | |
|---|---|
| Planned activity | Progress to date |
| Funding Allocation | Applied for and approved for 2 years |
| Project Manager recruited | Achieved |
| Office premises | 'Donated' by council |
| Promotional material produced | Leaflets, desk calendars, recipe books printed |
| Open days held | Good attendance and interest from all ages of society |

Funding

14. The original project was intended to span a 3 year period at a cost of around £170,000. However, BTCV was only awarded a 2 year funding offer from TYS so the project costs are now approximately £120,000 over 2 years. The initial grant was deferred and whilst the project was deemed to be 'good' it was not successful on the first application.
15. Funding of £70,000 over 2 years was approved by TYS. Additional funds were sourced from South Ayrshire Council with an initial grant of £5,000, the Social Inclusion Partnership, and a Scottish Natural Heritage Business Grant of £5,000 over 2 yrs.

Wider picture

16. This project fits with the Council's Housing Department and Community Development Unit strategy and aims. North Ayr is one of the 20% most deprived places in Scotland and has a population of around 8000. The area suffers from high unemployment, low income, poor health and general underachievement. The Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) was launched in 1996 to lead a regeneration project to address social, economic and environmental issues in the North Ayr neighbourhood. The work of this project helps the council and SIP to address some of the core problems faced by the locality.
17. On a national level, the project will help to further Local Agenda 21 Strategy for Sustainable Development. It also contributes to the health, social inclusion and biodiversity agendas.
18. Additionally, BTCV have now been offered a funded post for a numeracy and literacy officer through the Community Learning Partnership in Ayr. The officer would work alongside the project Manager to educate people through practical hands on training and development. This also ties in neatly with the development of the BTCV Life Skills strand.

19. Ties have also developed with the Auchincruive Scottish Agricultural College (SAC), where the project is currently based. Some of the students are doing early analysis of the outputs and impacts of the gardens initiative and it is hoped that they will be involved in some more practical elements as the project progresses.

Project Management

20. The overall project is managed by BTCV and administrated on a day-to-day basis by Fionnadh Ratchford. There are good relationships between BTCV and the Council officers and enthusiasm and buy-in from the Council. The local Street Committees also help to feed into planned activities and help organise events.
21. There is a programme of physical targets which are updated on a monthly basis. There are also a number of qualitative outputs in the form of videos and photos recording project progress to date. The project also received some extra BTCV income to celebrate ‘Positive Images’ which illustrates the diversity of people and communities.
22. Consideration is already being given to exit strategy from the project for 18 months time and work is being undertaken to ensure that the project is sustainable.
23. There was a need to relocate to larger office premises at the SAC in order to accommodate the new numeracy and literacy officer plus the team of volunteer co-ordinators who work alongside the Project Manager.

Community Engagement

24. Local Street Committees have been contributing to the overall impact that the project is making on the neighbourhood. They have been acting as a means of communicating the aims of the project to other residents as well as helping out with volunteers for various events.
25. Open day ‘taster’ events have allowed people of all ages and abilities to ‘come and have a go’ at environmentally based challenges, games, and activities. Local schools have also been drafted in to assist and there is a strong educational aspect to the whole project.
26. Volunteers have been actively encouraged to participate – whether the tenants of the council owned houses requiring garden maintenance, or individuals keen to lend a hand to the open spaces projects. Home owners are being educated in environmental, health and security issues as part and parcel of the initiative.

Impact

Additionality

27. Additionality is full as the project needed the £70,000 contribution from TYS in order to proceed. The other funding would not have been approved without the TYS contribution.

Benefits

| Table 2: Outcomes of project to date | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| | Activity undertaken | Description of benefits | Evidence of outcome |
| Social | Community events eg 'Taster' days | Improve community spirit | Better networking and communications within neighbourhood |
| | Community events eg 'Taster' days | Health implications of getting people out in the fresh air participating in a physical activity | Photos and video documentation |
| | Garden projects | Social Inclusion – engaging less advantaged households in a new project | Housing Department records |
| | Recipe Books | Encourage healthy eating and physical activity of gardening | Booklets |
| Economic | Recipe Books | Sales profits fed back into project? | Potential |
| | Community Supported Agriculture | Sales of vegetables to local residents? | Potential |
| Environmental | Replanting open spaces and garden areas | Biodiversity – encourage more native species and increase numbers of birds and insects | Insect and plant counts |
| | Gardens and space cleaned up | Reduced risks of burglary and theft. Less sharps and hazards risks to residents. Safer environment for children. | Number of people assisted |

Conclusions

28. BTCV sees this project as a pilot scheme which, if successful in the medium term, may be rolled out across South Ayrshire and beyond. The initiative is seen as central to the ethos and overarching strategy of BTCV and also in line with the new priorities which indicate the change in direction in business terms for the organisation.
29. The co-ordinators believe that other projects looking to use TYS to benefit communities should be aware that the community has to be engaged and involved from day one. There is a

lot of local knowledge and commitment out there and agencies should take care not to patronise or condescend residents. There is also a need to be aware of inherent rivalries at local levels, whether internal to the community or directed at key agencies such as the council. BTCV has found that adopting a facilitator role is crucial to pushing through a successful project. The ability to be professional with partner organisations, whilst also being able to communicate on a different level and being seen as approachable by other stakeholders within the community is vital.

30. South Ayrshire Council is very pleased with progress to date and will continue to support and work with BTCV in the longer term. At the stage, key needs are perceived to be trying to at least retain the physical office and personnel presence in situ once BTCV have exited the project as lead co-ordinators. There is also talk of a possible second phase which will look at improving access, developing a play area, and planting an urban forest). BTCV sees the next challenge as finding a way of unlocking the Scottish Executive social agenda budgets.

Consultees

Russell Hampton - BTCV – Director, Stirling

Fionnadh Ratchford – BTCV – Project Manager, Ayr

Case Study: Smarter Salsburgh

Introduction

1. The Smarter Salsburgh group was established in 2001 following the development of a Community Action Plan for the Salsburgh Community Council area to try to combat some of the problems faced by the village. Their main aim was to implement the aims set out in the action plan and to use it as a tool to attract funding for identified projects.
2. The plan was the result of four months of canvassing community opinion in the Salsburgh area in order to establish the hopes and fears of residents and what they would like to see happening in the area. The plan prioritised courses of action to make Salsburgh a better and more sustainable place to live. It became a key tool in promoting the work of the committee and enabling agencies, stakeholders and potential funding bodies to understand fully the aims of the community.⁹
3. The group applied to TYS for funding in 2003 to create a scenic walkway on a well-known local nature site, Salsburgh Moss.

Objectives

4. Salsburgh village is sited halfway between Glasgow and Edinburgh on the M8 route. The Moss is a raised peat bog and is considered by locals and environmentalists to be one of the village's major assets. Improved access to it would give villagers, local schools and groups the opportunity to enjoy the countryside, improve their levels of fitness through increased use of the paths, and learn about this internationally rare habitat on their doorstep.
5. The Moss has been mismanaged over the previous few years and substantial remedial work is needed to raise the water table in order to increase bio-diversity. The existing path has been eroded by quad bikes and a significant amount of damage has been done to walls, ditches, flora and fauna.
6. The SS group hopes to install 4 steel kissing gates at the entrances to the route to deter bikers. There will also be a shrub plantation, picnic area and signage. As well as upgrading the 1km footpath, work will include seating, signage, planting and wildlife interpretation. A survey of the moss and monitoring systems will be undertaken by an ecological officer.

⁹ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/17108/7477>

Activities

7. Work on this project only commenced 3 weeks ago. At the time of interview, the land engineering mechanical diggers were on site preparing the pathway. Table 1 details developments to date:

Progress

| Table 1: Progress against objectives | | |
|---|---|--|
| Planned activity | Progress to date | Comment |
| Local fundraising activities | Open day held in summer plus ceilidhs and quiz nights | Promoted more community involvement and provided an educational learning opportunity for youngsters |
| Funding application | Secured | Slightly smaller scale than originally planned |
| Local opinions survey | Completed | 12 most affected households in closest proximity to the path surveyed for potential objections to construction phase |
| Planning and landscaping | Completed | |
| Technical digging and preparation | Commenced November 2004 | |
| Creation of picnic areas, benches, and access gates | Planned for early 2005 | |
| Survey of ecological and bio-diversity improvements and usage | Planned | In association with the Countryside Rangers and the Conservation Green Unit of the Council |

Funding

8. The original application for funding of £49,919 in January 2003 was deferred because of sustainability issues, lack of evidence of local ownership, and the risk of vandalism. Additionally, the Council could not commit to supporting the future maintenance of the project.
9. The second application of £42,769 in April 2004 was submitted accompanied by a letter of support from the Council which pledged a higher degree of future support. They also provided written evidence of the high level of community buy-in for the project, and included letters of support from MSPs and local councillors. The second submission was successful.
10. The following funding was secured for this project:
- TYS £42,769
 - SNH Lanarkshire £14,000
 - Forward Scotland SCINE¹⁰ £1,500
 - Forward Scotland Small Grant for Survey Work £1000

¹⁰ SCINE – Sustainable Communities In Natural Environment

11. Originally, the Smarter Salsburgh Group applied for £25,000 from SNH – this was amount reduced and approved by SNH at £14,000, though the money has not yet been accepted/ spent by the committee. They also applied for funding from North Lanarkshire Forward, but were unsuccessful

Wider picture

12. The Land Reform Act will eventually designate the new route a ‘core path’ once the Act becomes law. This may mean that North Lanarkshire Council will be responsible for the long term maintenance of the route depending on money being made available for access.
13. The ultimate aim is to construct a circular route around the entire circumference of the village. There will be some private land rights to address in order to achieve this aim, but it is hoped that new legislation will help to put this will put community access rights on a more secure footing.
14. The Smarter Salsburgh group have also co-ordinated a number of other community projects over the last 3 years including creating a public garden on derelict land as the first phase of a community action plan to improve the environment of a village affected by traffic from two quarries. They competed in Urban Britain in Bloom and worked with the local school to clear an area of scrubland and create a tarmac cycle path. The Salsburgh Moss project is an extension of the work that has proceeded it and will help to improve the environmental sustainability and aesthetic environment of the area.

Project Management

15. The Smarter Salsburgh Committee is composed of a Secretary, the main forum and 4 sub-committees. There are 20 members in al,l though membership is open to all local residents of the Salsburgh area
16. The Committee has been central to the project since the inception of the concept. However, they are keen to emphasise that the project impetus came initially from Alexi James of Forward Scotland. He dedicated 8 months of assistance and support to the community and guided the committee through much of the ground work, grant applications process, and partnership working. They have also been supported by Steve McHenry, Access Officer from the North Lanarkshire Council, and Kirsteen Robb of Fresh Futures/TYS.
17. Monitoring of the construction stage of the project will be led by the Council. They have contracted the site supervision in addition to employing a landscape architect and providing an Access Officer who regularly visits the site (every couple of days) to check on progress.
18. The Countryside Rangers also have a dedicated officer allocated to the village’s pathways and s/he will regularly monitor the route once the project is complete. Additionally, the

Conservation Green Unit of the Council will provide an ecologist who will retain an interest in the unique characteristics of this raised bog.

19. The Committee acknowledges that partnership working is very important in gaining support for their ideas and being able to produce real visible results. They see useful links being built up with the Paths For All Partnership and Central Scotland Forest Trust, as well as the established partnerships with the Council, North Lanarkshire Forward, Countryside Rangers and Strathclyde Police Force.

Community Engagement

20. Community meetings identified the need to improve the local environment. Projects such as the community garden and the pathway are obvious and measurable projects which residents can observe, contribute to, and see visible results.
21. Residents living near the footpath were surveyed and given the opportunity to voice their opinions. There were no objections made to the proposed development of the pathway or the banning of the use of trail bikes in the area.
22. Plans to develop 62 new executive style houses on the outskirts of Salsburgh indicate a shift in demographics for the area. As the commuter belt extends it is anticipated that more young, white collar families will move into the area. Many of these people will expect to be able to access off-road footpaths and recreational areas with young children in prams. The pathway renovations will vastly improve access for pushchairs, prams, wheelchairs and less mobile residents.

Impact

Additionality

23. Additionality is fully satisfied. There would have been no project without the TYS funding being approved as it was this leverage that enabled Scottish Natural Heritage assistance.

Benefits

| Table 2: Outcomes of project to date | | | |
|---|--|---|-----------------------------|
| | Activity undertaken | Description of benefits | Evidence of outcome |
| Social | Community meetings held. Committee supported by a community support officer funded by North Lanarkshire Forward | Wider community support and increased community spirit | Verbal |
| | Open day held in summer where a bio-diversity officer gave environmental demonstrations to local residents | People learning how they can make a difference in their community | Verbal |
| Economic | Establishing partnerships with funding bodies | More public money coming into the community | Funding and officer support |
| Environmental | Providing a temporary new site for trail and quad bikes (North Lanarkshire Council and Strathclyde police project) | Removes users from village; improves safety for other path users; prevents erosion of soil and improves bio-diversity | In progress |

Conclusions

24. This project is still only in the early stages of development and the impacts have yet to be seen. However, the project forms part of the overall action plan for the area and is just one of a larger parcel of initiatives and actions designed to improve the overall aspect and environment of Salsburgh. To date, these projects have been considered successful and have been welcomed by local residents.
25. There is substantial interest in this project from the environmental agencies as it revolves around the raised moss bog. There are many interesting bio-diversity issues and environmental considerations that may arise from addressing some of the problems currently being faced.
26. Plans for future developments include adult computer classes, a Smarter Salsburgh logo design competition for children, partnership working with youth teams, stewardship of progress on existing projects, and more community participation events.
27. Questions to consider in any future assessment of this project may include:
 - Has the development deterred the quad and trail bikers from using the path, and how can the Smarter Salsburgh group encourage more local outdoors activity without alienating specific groups?
 - What is being done to evaluate the increased use of the path by other residents?

- What type of ecological survey is being undertaken – how will the results dictate future developments of the area?
- What progress has been made in the aim to develop a circular path around the village – how are private landowners being persuaded to co-operate?
- Is the area being effectively maintained by the Council and what longer term plans are in place to continue maintenance post-Council responsibility. Has vandalism been reduced by including children and youngsters in decision making?
- How can the community be encouraged to become more actively involved in the work of the Smarter Salsburgh group – how will incoming families be targeted as potential new members – huge potential for ‘in kind’ contribution to projects by using local voluntary labour to do less technical work?

Consultees

Smarter Salsburgh Committee Group – **John Ellis** (Community Committee Member)
– **Steve McHenry** (North Lanarkshire Council
Access Officer)

Wales

Case Study – Community Ranger, Caerphilly

Description of the project

1. The project consists of a four year full time Community Ranger reporting to and managed by Caerphilly County Borough Council. The project also has a smaller package of capital works, the most significant being an adaptation of a building to provide an office for the Ranger. The Ranger covers 4 villages in an ex-mining community. The Ranger is relatively new in post, but has been highly active already getting a number of projects up and running.

History of the project and its development

2. The project is lead by Caerphilly Council. The Council and the relevant partnership (North Sirhowy Valley Community Partnership – NSVP) devised a process to identify and secure a single project to put forward to the Lottery. This was as follows:
 - Officer(s) attended a Lottery event regarding TYS
 - Through the NSVP, the Council invited agencies to put forward project ideas – both outside the Council but also to different internal Council departments. six expressions of interest/project applications were received.
 - The NSVP executive (officer group below the board) devised a sustainability scoring system and criteria to judge the 6 proposals.
 - The proposals were openly discussed at the Partnership as part of agreeing the preferred bid using the scoring system. All the sponsors of the bidders were represented on the Partnership.
3. The process was competitive, and appeared an effective way to decide a preferred project.

Rationale to the agreed project

4. The agreed project- a Community Ranger- is one opportunity that has arisen from a much larger programme and strategy for environmental and aesthetic improvements for the Valley – the North Sirhowy Valley Design Study. The study, commissioned by Caerphilly County Borough Council, the Welsh Development Agency and the European Commission, aims to use environmental improvements to attract inward investment. The Valley has much potential for tourism – being both attractive and less scarred than many other Valleys elsewhere – but it still suffers the negative visual impact of previous mining uses. The Community Ranger as part of the strategy aims to be a shorter term action that can be implemented and also to show to local people that ‘something is happening’.

Funding and financial information

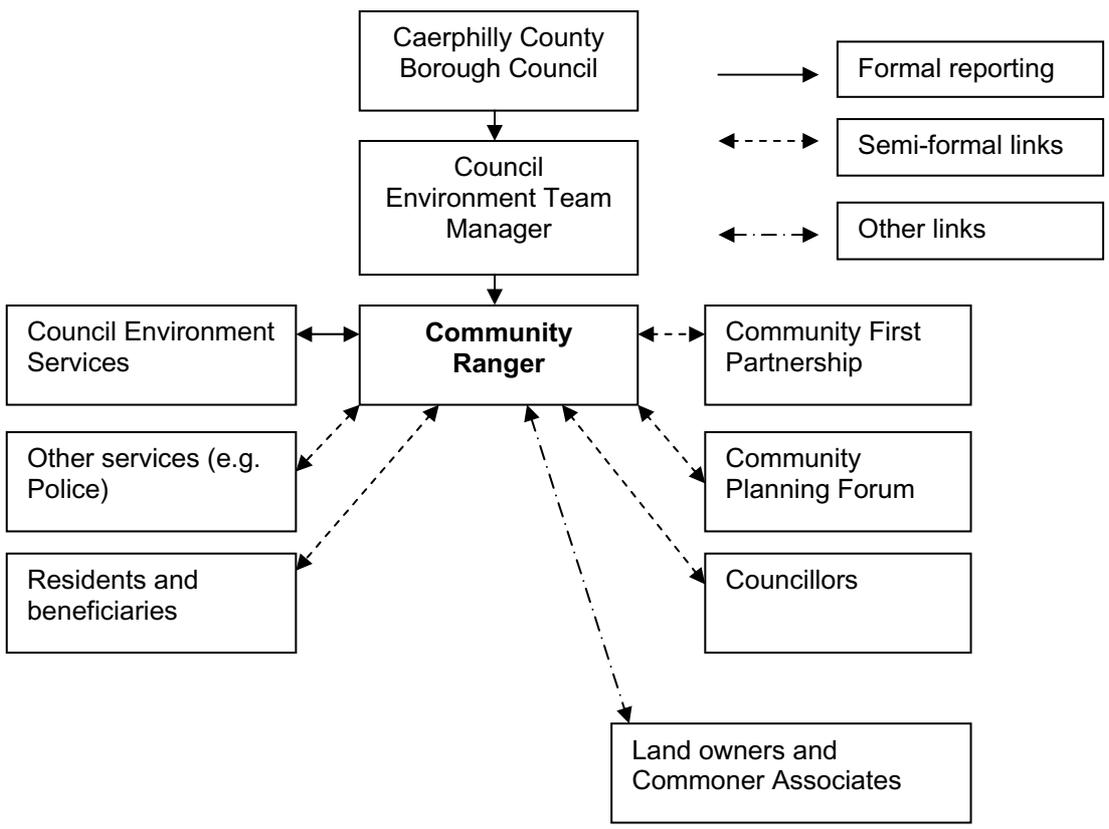
5. The overall strategy is estimated to cost £11m. In terms of short term funding secured over the period in question, contributions are as follows (approximately):

- EU Village project 230K and EU Colliery site 182k
- WDA Colliery site 350k
- Local Regeneration Framework 200k (WDA/LA)

Project structure

6. The project is managed by the Environment Team at Caerphilly Borough Council. The Ranger is similar to a ‘park ranger’ whose remit extends to urban town/village areas as well as park activities. He also reports semi-formally to a number of community and partnership structures in the area. For example, he provides monthly reports to the (local) Partnership. The groups feedback local issues and problems to which the Ranger responds directly.

Community Ranger - management and operational structure



Community engagement

7. The Community Ranger appears heavily involved with the community through attendance at various meetings and his proactive approach to engaging individual community leaders and other public services (e.g. police). Generally his work also benefits both young people (directly and through schools) and other people (through community structures). The job description and project was designed on the basis of a wider community consultation undertaken for the regeneration strategy for the Valley (*the North Sirhowy Valley Design Study*). While the area appears rural, the local community includes different urban/rural groups:
 - Ex-mining communities – whose outlooks is perhaps more urban in character
 - Farmers and land owners

Agreed outputs and impacts

8. The original outputs and impacts were as follows.

Outputs

- Work with the local community
- Landscaping and environmental works
- Improve gateways to the village and strengthen local distinctiveness
- Create appropriate facilities for local people (e.g. small picnic area)

Outcomes

- Raise the quality of life of local communities
 - Build capacity
 - Improve access to nearby employment sites
 - Raise the skills level of the community
 - Improve and manage the local environment
 - Reduce anti-social behaviour
 - Reduce barriers between urban dwellers and the rural environment
 - Benefit local bio-diversity
9. A map of outputs and outcomes achieved is provided below.

Legacy of the project

10. The Ranger’s manager and local councillors are pleased with the appointment of the Community Ranger and feel his post will be mainstreamed at the end of the period. The project is seen as having produced a form of council environmental services that is far superior from that provided elsewhere by the Council.

Overview

11. The project in its current form would not have gone ahead without TYS funding. Other larger grant funds are mostly capital not revenue. The Council would not have normally funded such a post due to limited resources.
12. It is likely that the post displaces some council services. The Community Ranger is responding to maintenance problems in the area. Some of these problems could have been dealt with by existing Council services – although the work would not be carried out at the speed or level of quality delivered by the Ranger. For example, activities such as replacing fences can be undertaken using traditional local techniques – whereas mainstream services would have deployed standardised fence replacement. This use of local techniques to manage the local environment is believed to contribute to an enhanced sense of place. This helps achieve the overarching strategic aims of the project, and, indirectly, encourage tourism.

Table 1: Outcomes of project to date

| <i>Type of activity</i> | <i>Activity undertaken</i> | <i>Description of benefits</i> | <i>Evidence of outcome</i> | <i>Beneficiaries</i> |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| Social Skills levels Barriers between urban and rural dwellers | Providing local younger people with activities and training, e.g. hedge coppicing, Junior Ranger Club, attending schools, organising meetings etc | There are a range of potential benefits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Increased diversionary activity for youths ➢ Improve local distinctiveness – through hedge coppicing etc ➢ Potential to integrate urban and rural dwellers ➢ Potential for skills development that can lead to employment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ It may be too early yet to identify wider outcomes. But the direct element of these activities may be noticed by some local people | Direct beneficiaries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Young people Indirect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Local residents ➢ Community leaders ➢ Farmers |
| Community capacity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Attendance at community meetings and liaison with the Police ➢ Joint patrols | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Direct response to local community problems and priorities (e.g. vandalism) ➢ Improved and increased local policing. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ New capacity enabling the police to respond to community needs ➢ Community leaders reported positively of the arrangements | Indirect beneficiaries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Local residents ➢ Community leaders |
| Economic | Full economic benefits await the roll out of the whole £11m programme | This is the ‘match’ element to the funding package overall (EU and WDA etc) | To early yet | |

Table 1: Outcomes of project to date

| Type of activity | Activity undertaken | Description of benefits | Evidence of outcome | Beneficiaries |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| Environmental Bio diversity | Direct improvements and customised adaptations to public and private paths and access routes. In some circumstances these were to discourage access (e.g. to cars) whilst in others to improve access (to walkers) | The problem of noisy off road vehicles is a particular gripe in the local community. The shape of the Valley ensures vehicles can be heard for miles - this undermines quality of life. The activity is not illegal as a result the police cannot act | Apparently reduced fly tipping of abandoned cars, and reduced use of noisy off road vehicles There has been improved quality of life through reduced noise. Too early to identify any bio-diversity impacts | All residents |
| Health | Improvements to paths to promote walking and access | Promoting of healthy living-type activities – especially in ex mining areas which can have high levels of ill health | Reported to be increased walking amongst the older community | Beneficiaries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ex miners with ill health ➤ Elderly people ➤ All people |

Consultees

Philip Griffiths - (project manager)

Geoff Edwards - Senior Accountant

Mary Hughes - Chair of the Partnership

Alan Williams - Local Councillor

Dave Harry - Clerk to the Community Council

Case Study: North Grangetown Community Environmental Action Project, Cardiff

Introduction

1. The project relates to the improvement of the urban residential environment in North Grangetown through redesigning an existing area of ‘Green Space’ and a new Community Environmental worker post. Cardiff Council are leading and managing the project, in partnership with the Health Authority through the local Healthy Living Programme (Big Lottery funded).
2. The project was developed through the local Community Partnership as follows. The Community Partnership tasked its operational group - the Community Planning and Implementation Group - to consider projects to put forward to application stage. A sub-group was set up for this purpose that included the Council, Environment Agency, Police, Coalition for Disabled, Health services, probation and voluntary sector. A number of projects were put forward as follows:
 - Environment Agency project – fly tipping in the fringes of the city
 - Health Authority – community health
 - Community Safety Zones
 - A project to rejuvenate a particular ‘Green Space’ in a residential area
3. The appraisal considered need, quality and sustainability. In practice two of the submitted applications were merged into one project – community health and Green Space. The Council was to lead the project, but would work with the Health Board to write the bid.

Project activities and background

4. The project’s focus is a 1,200 sq m patch of ‘Green Space’ in the inner-city residential area of North Grangetown, Cardiff. The central theme of the project is to improve the Green Space to benefit the local area. The patch is surrounded closely by housing on one side and a residential road on three others.
5. North Grangetown was confirmed by Cardiff County Council as a Renewal Area in September 2003, following a Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment by consultants RDHS. The consultants report identified North Grangetown as suffering from a shortage of green spaces and trees, therefore this site is especially valuable in improving the environmental quality of the area.

6. A community consultation in 2004 identified the types of uses that the community would like to see for the selected green area. The most popular option was a community garden. Work is still at the design stage for improvements to the Green Space.
7. A Community Environmental worker has been appointed and has been in place for some time. The worker's role and activities are targeted primarily upon the Green Space project and supporting this through related community development activities. The worker is jointly managed by the Council and through the Healthy Living Programme.
8. The target beneficiaries of the project are the local community.
9. At present, the Green Space project is still in the design stage, while the new Community Environmental Worker post is now filled and actively working in the community.
10. The project benefits from strategic linkages to wider environmental improvements to the area funded through the Renewal Area status of North Grangetown.

Community engagement

11. There has been a high degree of community engagement throughout the project. In particular, there has been much consultation regarding the future use of the Green Space. A planning event was held, whereby plans and ideas for the Green Space were presented to the community so that local people were both aware of the potential changes and could genuinely input their views. Local primary schools were involved. There was a publicity drive to ensure the widest participation.
12. The results of the consultation were formalised into discussion documents and submitted to Ward Members. Priorities were identified. Examples of views and priorities from the community included:
 - provision of seating should be avoided as it encourages unwanted gatherings
 - mixed views about whether the area should be fenced or not
 - Improved maintenance to the Green Space is required.
13. There were different views from the community about how the space should be used. There is not necessarily an easy compromise; some feel that it should be for young people, while others feel this will attract disorder.
14. An evidence base of community engagement and its results was produced and documented which will provide valuable assistance to future design plans for the Green Space.
15. The project overall links to local community structures. These include the Butetown and Grangetown Forum and the North Grangetown Residents Association. The area has a high ethnic minority population, circa 20%.

Outputs and impacts

16. At present the project has yet to re-develop the Green Space, although its community consultation is significantly advanced, see table 1.1. Meanwhile, the Community Environmental worker post is filled and related initiatives are underway. Imminent future plans include the appoint of a local artist to work together with the community to create innovative design ideas for the rejuvenation of the area.

Additionality

17. The Green Space activity, in broad concept, may have gone ahead in some form through the Renewal Area funding that the area has secured. However, the impact of YYS has been to speed the process up, provide the opportunity for additional ‘community art’ and to support deeper community consultation, so generating a better quality Green Space.
18. The consultation process identified concerns about general maintenance to the Green Space area. This is the responsibility of mainstream services, but it may be difficult to solve these issues through a time-limited project.
19. In summary, the Green Space project is a challenging and so ambitious project; it will require a quality and clever design; there will need to be a compromise regarding the preferred use, as views from the community can vary; decisions need to be made regarding longer term maintenance.

Table 1: Outcomes of project to date

| <i>Aims and objectives</i> | <i>Activity undertaken</i> | <i>Description of benefits</i> | <i>Evidence of outcome</i> |
|---|--|---|---|
| To rejuvenate the disused space and the immediate area to transform it into a community asset | Monthly meetings/community focus groups to discuss wider environmental improvement programme ideas Publicity drive and consultation | Facilities for local people/potential youth diversionary activities | Initial consultation is complete and has made progress towards the design Stage. There will be continued consultation in the design stage Evidence of substantial awareness raising and community engagement activities Hard documentation has been generated to collate and record community views |
| Consultation programme to raise awareness of their environment and galvanise local people to get involved | Pooling of ideas from Council and NHS Appointment of Community Environmental Development Worker Community Environmental Worker involved in a wide range of health-related and community development activities | Improved health and healthier lifestyles | |

Future and sustainability

Green Space project:

20. Any improvement in the Green Space or facilities associated with it will require additional council maintenance services during and after the lifetime of the project to ensure that they are kept to an acceptable standard. The project may in effect draw in additional mainstream services for this purpose. If this did not happen the Green Space could fall (again) into disrepair which would risk the Lottery's investment. Currently no future sources of funding have been identified. The project is hoping to establish a 'friends of' group from interested local residents to support the sustainability of the project.

Community Environmental Worker:

21. The benefits of the Community Environmental Worker will be to deliver a specific focus on the Green Space and to increase community capacity and pride in the local environment; e.g. by supporting the work of the North Grangetown Residents Association, encouraging people to join in on the Green Space project and helping to establish the 'friends of' group and as a result increase the sustainability of the Green Space project.

Early lessons learned

22. It is difficult to monitor environmental projects. Monitoring systems need to be devised for projects that aim to increase usage of public space, healthy living lifestyles or improve urban environments.

Consultees

Don Davidson - Group Leader, Neighbourhood Planning

Angela Davis - (West), Neighbourhood Planning

Sian Biddyr - Butetown & Grangetown Healthy Living Programme Manager

Ruth Lovell - Environmental Project Officer (the Community Environmental Worker)

Case Study: Woodlands for Communities, Flintshire

Introduction and background

1. The project involves the delivery of ‘Forest School’ activities in the Flintshire area.
2. ‘Forest School’ is a programme of ‘woodland-based’ activities for young people; it has some similarities to the scouts – but a focus on woodland areas. The premise is that students not achieving their potential may benefit from being given experience of working and socialising in areas of woodland. Its roots are international and it has a strong footing in Wales –there are Forest Schools in other areas. Skills imparted to children include personal survival skills and learning how to work as a team.
3. In Flintshire, Forest School-type activities have already been developed via the Forestry Commission, Sure Start and ESF funded projects (Compact Plus). This has resulted in a programme of ‘off curriculum’ social, practical, creative and educational activities for young people based in nearby woodlands. The focus of the Lottery bid is to continue, consolidate and expand these activities further and accredit them more formally. This project is led by Flintshire County Council.
4. The process by which the project secured Lottery funding was straightforward. NOF invited the LSP to propose a project. NOF visited the area to give a presentation on the scheme. The LSP steering group was invited to submit a project to the LSP. The LSP approved the project, but highlighted the need for links to social inclusion, local business involvement, wider regional involvement, young people in deprived areas and the environment.

Project activities

5. The project involves a series of visits to forests by local children, ideally as a coherent two-year-plus programme. There are a number of activities and related benefits:
 - General awareness of the woodlands through play, tracking, and observing plants and their habitats
 - Using tools – either to develop skills or to raise self esteem
 - Transition projects to help vulnerable children to make the move from primary to secondary school
 - Children not achieving their potential at school becoming teachers of younger pupils to improve their self confidence

- Older Children (14-16 years) not achieving their potential at school practising team work, problem solving and social skills
 - Targeting pupils that have dropped out of mainstream schools
 - Services to children with special needs requiring specialist LEA/Youth Service input
 - Training staff in mainstream services to act as Forest School teachers.
6. The project also funds a Forest School Leader. The Leader manages the day to day delivery of the programme. Other managerial aspects of the project include risk assessments; attracting private and public sponsorship; encouraging participation of local community groups. Also, with a view to a sustainable on-going service, the commissioning of Plas Derw (a facility to provide a base for Forest School) and accreditation of forest school activities. The overall programme is managed to comply with legal requirements and to build strong relationships with schools and other community groups.

Community engagement

7. The project directly engages the local community through working with children from local schools, youth clubs and community groups. Parents are frequently involved in the programme through attending the woodland activities with their children. Efforts are made to target more deprived areas/children through working with certain groups (e.g. Youth Services, Sure Start).
8. The project aim is to link the community with the nearest woodland, both public and privately owned, seeking to widen the involvement of local people with the enjoyment and sustainability of woodlands.

Outputs and impacts

9. The project is achieving outputs and activities are being successfully monitored. However, it is reported that the creation of a Trust for Plas Derw (see section on Future sustainability below) has created some difficulties in optimising outputs and spend. In addition, since the bid application was made, heightened public attention regarding out of school activities for children, and the administration burden associated with this, has created additional complications (e.g more detailed risk assessments).

Table 1: Outcomes of project

| Objective | Activity undertaken | Description of benefits | Evidence of outcomes |
|--|--|--|---|
| To increase the number and quality of activities presently provided by improving Forest School organisation and structure | Employ full time Forest School Leader Identify new groups and link them to woodland | Increased number and quality of activities | Leader in post Additional Forest School visits identified by monitoring |
| To offer Forest opportunities for families from deprived areas | School visits, links to Sure Start, play groups Training several Sure Start and Youth Service staff/teachers as Forest School Leaders | Dissemination of the techniques amongst mainstream services Values instilled in children include: self esteem, tactile anger management, relationship skills, stimulation | Training Youth Service staff member as a Forest School teacher (verified with Departmental manager) Uptake of service by mainstream services suggests confidence in these outcomes |
| To develop new projects with the local timber industry | Establish links with the industry, secure sponsorship etc | Access to some new areas of woodland | Some success in securing private sector sponsorship |
| WOCH to become the North Wales centre for accreditation for Forest School OCN | Liaise with NWOCH to fulfil criteria necessary for accreditation, prepare syllabus | To formalise the techniques used, improve and maintain standards, accredit young people | The scheme is developing |
| To work with Countryside Services to develop and manage areas of woodland all over the County to link people to their nearest Woodland | Identify sympathetic private woodland owner | Wider access to woodland | Some progress made |
| To provide access and manage the building of Plas Derw | Improvements to park entry areas. Other types of works | All weather facilities Cater for children of all abilities Improved facilities | |

10. More widely, Forest Schools appear to have been successful at engaging private land owners for the purposes of gaining access to new woodland and securing private sector sponsorship.
11. Other public service agencies (Youth Service, Sure Start and schools) use the project as a provision for certain ‘deprived’ children with particular needs. This suggests that the project is of significant quality/professionalism to justify such confidence. The project’s staff are checked by the police and project ideas and content are subject to risk assessments. There are plans for formal accreditation.

Additionality

12. The project builds on existing activities, which already combine several different strands of funding. Thus, it is difficult to identify whether benefits and outcomes are due to the TYS lottery funding, or the continued legacy of previous funding for the project.

13. It is likely that the project would still achieve many outputs without TYS funding. This is in part because there are existing local stakeholders who have a strong vision for the project, and who would be capable of bidding for and putting together funding from a number of agencies.
14. Without TYS funding, the project would still have gone ahead, but perhaps more slowly. The stakeholders also report that the medium term stability of the TYS funding (3 to 4 years) has been beneficial in securing additional match funding from other sources and that the project would have been more fragmented without this funding.

Future sustainability

15. Currently the project is trying to develop a long term plan for sustainability through the development of a Trust. This will be supported by its success in securing private sector sponsorship and the provision of professional services to local mainstream services.
16. The additional work to set up and agree the Trust may distract attention from meeting shorter term targets, but result in something tangible and sustainable into the future.

Lessons learned

17. Overall, lessons learned from the case study are as follows:
 - Projects that happen quickly and meet all their objectives may not necessarily be the most sustainable. Here wider aims for the longer term sustainability of the project conflict in part with achieving shorter term targets.
 - Projects that involve putting together funding from many different sources face a pressure to draw down funding from one source and limit expenditure via other sources (to maintain long term expenditure consistency). This can add to further delays from the point of view of one funder.
 - It may be that projects that involve complex issues like the development of a Trust could benefit from more involvement, perhaps of a more technical nature, from external funding agencies. Here the issues are more complex and cannot easily be verified through outputs monitoring.
 - Projects aimed at the participation of children, and working to fixed expenditure schedules, can be difficult to deliver due to the complex rules (for well-recognised reasons) relating to employment in this field.

Consultees

Sarah Partington – Forest Education Coordinator for Flintshire

Sue Williams – Forestry Commission Forest Education Initiative Coordinator for North Wales

Sheila Scott – Finance Officer

Richard Spain – LSP representative

Trevor Payne – Head of Inclusion Service and Fel Murray – Additional Needs Coordinator (behaviour)

Ruth Warhurst (Forest School Leader) was ill and unable to attend the meetings.

Case Study – Space 4 YOUth, Wrexham

Introduction

1. The project consists of developing diversionary ‘play ground’ facilities for older youths to play and meet. It is delivered in two geographical areas, one urban and one rural, as follows:
 - Provision of an ‘adventure playground’ type facilities in the deprived Caia estate in Wrexham (13,000 residents).
 - Provision of a youth shelter and basket ball net in the rural village of Chirk
2. The project also involves staff employed to select and engage youths in design and construction of these activities.
3. The priorities for the project were identified through existing local knowledge regarding youth ‘delinquency’ and crime in these areas. The bid was put together jointly between Wrexham Council and the Community First Partnership for Caia.

Project activities

4. The project is managed overall by Wrexham Council, although the management of the Caia element is ‘arms length’. The local Partnership undertakes financial reporting and a wide range of higher level management activities. The role of Wrexham Council is to advise on the availability, specification, costing, purchase and installation of the equipment. Wrexham Council also plans to maintain the sites and projects in future through regular cleaning and repairs.
5. The Caia element to the project has strong links to the Community First Partnership, which is well established. The Chirk village element has little existing community capacity.
6. The main objectives of the activities are to reduce instances of juvenile nuisance and so to avoid the need for ‘ASBOs’ (antisocial behaviour orders). The target beneficiaries are local youths that are considered to be particularly likely to progress from delinquency to crime and prison. These beneficiaries are to be identified by mainstream services through the Youth Offending Team.
7. The project is a little behind schedule. Currently it is still in its early stages of development – no youth facilities have yet to be built, although posts have been filled (revenue spend). Delays relate to community consultation (see below). But there has also been difficulty in appointing people to work with difficult beneficiaries in more rural or isolated areas. There is a relatively small potential pool of recruits compared to major urban areas.

Community Engagement

8. The Caia Estate has been previously subjected to consultation through existing local regeneration activities. The project was thus able to utilise existing community infrastructure and awareness of community priorities. In contrast, new consultation activities were undertaken in Chirk where there was little precedent of capacity building and consultation. This involved posters, a programme of meetings and designing leaflets.
9. An innovative approach to consultation is being used on the Caia estate. Young people are not only asked about the diversionary activities they would like to see, but selected residents are then asked to design and build the facilities themselves. There is a particular focus on those known to be at most risk of causing nuisance and crime. Levels of vandalism are reported to be lower for facilities constructed in this way.
10. A difficulty has been the counter views on what facilities should be provided for young people in the area; youths and adults have different priorities. A particular issue is that some adults appear to have strongly negative views about any form of projects for youths (as it may attract youths and associated ‘disorder’). For example, the council receives complaints about youths ‘using’ facilities such as skating in the skate park. Project staff have also speculated that this may relate to local cultural values about the role and place of children per se; in addition to concerns about disorder.
11. The area has a range of ethnic groups. Asylum seekers have historically been placed in the Caia estate and the area has also attracted migrant workers from Eastern Europe and Portugal.

Outputs and Impacts

12. The early stages in formulating the project and its objectives resulted in discussion amongst stakeholders to identify whether the project’s overarching objective was to (1) increase the quality of life for others in the estate or (2) to improve the opportunities for a target group of around 50 resident youths who were projected to be progressing towards more serious nuisance and crime. It was agreed that objective (2) was the priority and the former (point 1) is secondary. The following analysis of activities and outcomes reflects this balance of emphasis.
13. Table 1 was assembled through analysis of comments and interviews during the case study. As the project has yet to be fully implemented, there is no impact so far.

| Table 1: Outcomes of project to date | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| Priority objective | Activity undertaken | Forecast benefits/ outcomes | Potential sources of evidence of outcome |
| Target 50 youths at risk of prison and crime (main priority) Reduce instances of juvenile nuisance | Identification of target beneficiaries most at risk from the Youth Offending Team | Reduced levels of ASBOs | Reduced re-offending rates. |
| | Diversions activities through both designing, building and using facilities | Reduced levels of crime and prison amongst beneficiaries | Reduced levels of crime and prison amongst beneficiaries. |
| | | Reduced levels of crime and vandalism | Reduced reported levels of crime and vandalism |
| | Project workers to work with target beneficiaries | Local community feels that juvenile nuisance has reduced | Reduced reported levels of juvenile nuisance |
| Secure future funding | Seek additional match funding to match the TYS funds | Additional public sector funding to target communities | |

14. The project has strong links to mainstream services through the Youth Offending Team (YOT). This will allow the project to track direct beneficiaries. When youths are identified by the Youth Offending Team for participation they will still be subject to the records and tracking of the YOT.
15. Further links to mainstream services are via other departments of Wrexham Council. The project can use Council complaints/vandalism records to provide monitoring data to show if there has been an impact on antisocial behaviour.
16. The project will be additional in terms of new expenditure, although there will be no changes to existing mainstream services. Although the projects are innovative, some similar projects already exist on the Caia estate; in effect, a working model is being expanded. If the local authorities were to increase expenditure to cover these activities then they could be achieved without TYS support.

Future and Sustainability

17. The project's 'core' activity of working with youths at serious risk of crime and prison may require a wider and more strategic commitment of other public services to generate full sustainability. While there are likely to be shorter-term benefits in terms of youth diversionary activities, at present, it is not clear if the project alone is significant enough to dissuade youths from paths that lead to prison and crime. The 'lead' may need to come from a wider framework of support services.
18. However, in terms of the physical maintenance of the new facilities, Wrexham Council has committed to maintain these as public services, thus there is a good level of sustainability in this respect.

Other sustainability considerations

19. Shorter term project based work is perhaps more appropriate here than in other areas. Managing and planning services in the Caia estate is made more difficult by the changing age profile for youths in the area. Youth age-groups are unevenly profiled; this means that large populations of youths of the same age, and gaps in other age groups. This results in significant peaks and troughs in demand for educational services and changes in the types of diversionary activities needed. There may be heightened levels of delinquency in some years, purely for demographic reasons.

Lessons learned

20. Community consultation does not necessarily produce consensual results – where there are different age groups views can be very different. Vocal individuals can bias the overall results.
21. Community engagement can be more than just community groups and consultation but beneficiary participation – for example, with people involved in design and building of facilities. It is reported that this can reduce incidence of vandalism through instilling local ownership.
22. Projects that genuinely try to get to the hardest-to-reach and make real life-changing impacts are more difficult to achieve (for example, finding staff willing to work in isolated areas, achieving outcomes etc).

Consultees

Emma Rathbone - Youth Offending Service

Janet Growcott - Lead Officer for Community Safety

Llinos Jehu - Business Development Manager for the Environment Department

(Janet and Llinos wrote the TYS bid)

David Andrews - Manager for Environment and Maintenance