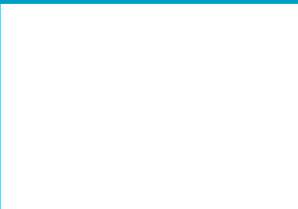
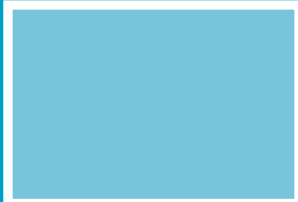


PROSPECTS

An overview of the Prospects Foundation's Social Enterprise Development Programme



Brief background to our Social Enterprise Programme

In 2007, The Prospects Foundation, Hyndburn's environmental charity, was successful in a funding bid to the Big Lottery's Fair Share fund. The aim of the programme was to work with local people, primarily from the Hyndburn 'Fair Share' wards of Barnfield, Central, Church, Peel & Springhill, to identify, develop and eventually set up environmentally-themed social enterprises. The programme ran from February 2008 until November 2011. However, the work continues....

How we did it

At the start of the programme the Social Enterprise Officer met with 45 Hyndburn based community groups and organisations to try and identify possible environmentally-themed social enterprise ideas. From this consultation process a total of 16 fledgling ideas were identified. Each of these ideas was then assessed for 'robustness' by a panel of experts from the voluntary, charity and social enterprise sector in east Lancashire. Eight of the strongest ideas were progressed to the next phase of development.



A visit to a food growing enterprise in Manchester

Again, after a period of development with the group concerned the eight were assessed again and the final four were selected for development to a stage where they could be set up as social enterprises. Once the final four ideas had been selected, volunteers from each idea took part in a range of training courses relevant to their own idea. This was also complemented by a 10-week ITEC Certificate in Business Management.

Who was involved



Learning beekeeping

What we wanted to do was to try and involve as many local people as possible in the idea generation process and then in the setting up phase. Over the lifetime of the programme we had 99 individuals involved in identifying and developing the ideas.

The total figure was split between 43 men and 56 women. 41 lived in the Fair Share wards with another 52 living in other Hyndburn wards and just 6 people from outside of the borough. Of the people involved a large number helped on more than one idea. In total, 87 people were involved in identifying and developing the final enterprises selected for development.

Training

Another key aim of the programme was to offer training to volunteers so that they would develop new skills that would help them gain employment and build self-esteem and confidence. Over the lifetime of the programme 169 people took part in courses relating to the 16 ideas generated & general business skills.

What ideas came forward?

In total there were 16 potential social enterprises identified during the community consultation exercise. These included an Asian ladies sewing business, a bicycle recycling scheme, using accelerated composters, creating biodiesel from waste vegetable oil, an ethical retail shop, a woodland management enterprise, installing a 'community benefit' wind turbine, setting up a mobile fruit & vegetable van, a reusable nappy scheme, a micro-hydro scheme, setting up a solar photovoltaics & water heating installation company, a home improvement service, local food growing, using rock dust from Whinney Hill landfill as a soil improver, a wood recycling scheme and finally, providing support for an existing social enterprise Hyndburn Used Furniture Store.



Learning how to build a hive



Rocket composter
at Offshoots
Permaculture site in
Burnley



'Herbie', a mobile
fruit and veg van in
Manchester



A wind turbine
'Open Day' in
Haslingden



'Torr's Hydro' - An
Archimedes screw
hydro scheme in
Derbyshire

The final ideas selected for development

Well, in fact there were five. In May 2010 the final four ideas selected for development were the One Planet Shop, a community benefit wind turbine, Woody and Local Food Production. In addition, it was agreed that the officer should continue to provide further support for Hyndburn Used Furniture Store (HUFS), an existing social enterprise going through changes.



54 Abbey Street, Accrington, BB5 1EE www.oneplanet.coop

One Planet was the first enterprise set up under the programme. A development group started work on the idea in mid 2009. The group wanted to establish a 'community-owned' ethical retail shop in Accrington where people could go to purchase environmentally friendly, local, ethical, Fairtrade, sustainable and innovative products



Grand opening of One Planet on Thu 21st Oct 2010



Inside the shop

A key feature identified early on was that of the 'co-operative' model. This came through from visits to similar shops in the North West and it fitted with the groups' idea of how they wanted to run the business.

With the help and support of a co-op advisor, One Planet was set up in May 2010 as an Industrial and Provident Society for the Benefit of the Community (a type of co-op).

Soon afterwards, in June, a community share issue was launched and by mid August the £15,000 required to open the shop had been raised. The shop, at 54 Abbey Street, Accrington, opened on 21st October 2010 and is run by a board of directors made up of volunteers from the local community. The shop has a part-time shop manager and is supported by a group of dedicated volunteers.

The co-op now has 112 members and is continuing to develop its product ranges. Any surplus the shop makes can only be used to reinvest in the business, pay a dividend on member shares or be donated to local Hyndburn charities.



Olympic flame being carried past One Planet by Colin Cooper who is also a member of the co-op



Woody (Hyndburn) CIC

'Woody' is another type of social enterprise called a 'Community Interest Company'. Woody was incorporated with the Financial Services Authority in March 2012.

Woody was set up by a group of local volunteers who have a passion for woodlands and want to help manage & expand them in Hyndburn. The group saw the opportunity to set up a community benefit company that could, amongst other things, help to manage local woodlands and make products from the timber.



Volunteers on a chainsaw training course



Looking in through the feet of the charcoal kiln during Woody's first 'burn' in Accrington

Woody aims to provide a number of benefits to Hyndburn. Firstly, actively managing woodlands for the benefit of the habitat helps to increase biodiversity. Secondly, making products from the woodland thinnings helps stimulate demand in sustainable woodland products in Hyndburn. Thirdly, Woody is keen to provide training and workshops in woodland crafts for local people. Finally, Woody wants to help increase woodland cover in the borough.

Another key factor in woodland management is that the individuals need to be fully trained as it can be a dangerous operation. Through the programme's training budget volunteers were able to get industry accredited NPTC & LANTRA chainsaw training. This enables Woody to increase its capacity whilst also allowing volunteers to add valuable skills to their CVs.

Woody is now looking to establish a permanent base for the operation whilst also looking for new volunteers. Anyone interested in Woody should contact Prospects for more details.



Thinning a woodland compartment at Jackhouse Nature Reserve in Oswaldtwistle

Windy - a 'Community Benefit' Wind Turbine

Windy is still under development due to the very large sums of money needed to install a wind turbine, i.e. in excess of £1,000,000. A group of local residents has been established and is working towards a scheme to install a 500kW wind turbine on a site in Hyndburn. The intention is to set up an Industrial and Provident



A 500kW PowerWind turbine

Society that will raise part of the funding through a community share offer. The rest is expected to be being financed by loans from ethical institutions.

In order to provide a benefit to the local community the intention is that part of the profits from the turbine will be used to set up a funding pot that local groups can apply to. At present this is expected to be channelled through the new 'Windfall' fund from the Oswaldtwistle Moors wind farm.

Local Food Production

The intention for local food is to set up an enterprise that will be able to grow food in Hyndburn that would then be sold to local residents at a competitive price. However, this model is proving difficult to make work financially, particularly due to the seasonality of any income, the variable English climate and the costs associated with such a labour intensive industry. However, the idea is still being actively pursued.

Hyndburn Hives



Hyndburn bees!

An offshoot of the local food idea has been the 'Hyndburn Hives' initiative. In conjunction with Hyndburn Borough Council a group of 25 volunteers are now training to become beekeepers. The intention is to set up a network of eight hives in council owned parks throughout Hyndburn.

Fifteen volunteers have already taken part in a 2-day basic beekeeping course and have also learnt how to build hives. Over the coming years, swarms collected by the council will be used to create new hives. To keep the group sustainable, honey from the hives will be sold through the One Planet shop to fund new hives and equipment.



Volunteers learn about beekeeping

hufs

Although not strictly a new start up, the Social Enterprise programme was able to help this existing charity and social enterprise. HUFs collects donated furniture and white goods from across Hyndburn and then distributes them, at a low cost, to people in need. We were able to provide some administrative support whilst the charity was going through changes as well as funding a new business plan for the business to use for funding applications.



Volunteers PAT testing washing machines

In addition we were also able to fund training in Portable Appliance Testing (PAT Testing) and Business Management for volunteers working for the charity. Finally, we were also successful in a funding bid to 'Awards for All' to overhaul the charity's IT system.



Legacy

So what has been the legacy from the Social Enterprise programme? Well, the most visual and tangible benefit to Hyndburn has been the creation & development of new social enterprises and the support given to an existing one. If the programme had not taken place these enterprises would not have been created/supported.

Also, over the lifetime of the programme at least 99 people were involved in the process with 87 still involved with the new and developing enterprises. These volunteers have gained new skills, certificates, qualifications and confidence through the training programme and a number have since gone on to gain employment or have set up new businesses of their own in Hyndburn. We are also aware of a number of fledgling and new enterprises in Hyndburn, and wider afield, that were inspired by our new enterprises.



Also, by ensuring that these enterprises provide a benefit within Hyndburn the enterprises are helping to keep money in the local economy. And, finally, we believe that the programme has helped raise awareness of the benefits that social enterprises can bring to the community.



The PROSPECTS Foundation is an environmental charity, established by Hyndburn people in 1998, to help improve the quality of life for all Hyndburn communities and contribute local-level solutions to wider environmental problems. We achieve this through a supported network of groups and by working in innovative ways with a diverse range of organisations and partners for environmental, social and economic benefits.

Our Five Themes of Sustainability

We focus on projects that meet our 'Five Themes of Sustainability'. These themes take account of both the local and global environment, and contribute to the mitigation of climate change.

Biodiversity – Protecting and enhancing local wildlife and plant life

Energy – Home and community energy efficiency and use of renewables

Sustainable Transport – Encouraging cycling, walking and public transport

Waste and Recycling – Reducing, reusing and recycling our waste

Local Food – Growing more local, organic, healthy food, grown by the community for the community.

If you would like to find out more about our Social Enterprise Programme or get involved in any of the enterprises please contact Prospects below:

The Prospects Foundation, c/o 20 Cannon Street, Accrington, Lancashire, BB5 1NJ

Tel: 01254-380675

www.prospectsfoundation.org.uk

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