



Research Summary

Research Project Summary

■ Number 1

Community Enterprise
Gloucestershire

Note: this is a brief summary of a detailed research document. To see the full research, please contact:

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Information contained in this document was correct at the time of the research being completed.



Back from the brink

Development of Intermediate Labour Markets (ILMs) focusing on people with Class A substance abuse histories.

ILMs offer a 'bridge' back to work for those who are a long way from returning to the open labour market. They offer a waged placement with an employment contract, together with training, personal support and job search activities. Placements may be in the public, private or voluntary sector, and many ILMs offer additional community benefit through community-based or environmental work.

When working with people where the work habit and motivation are as much of an issue as lack of skills, the prospect of a wage can be a major incentive to the individual while providing the opportunity to establish a track record for future employers.

ILM projects report consistently high levels of success in moving people onto another job. But this requires investment which must either come from public sector funding or trading income.

Research aims

To look at a range of ILM projects around the country which could be developed locally to provide real work experience to people with class A substance abuse problems.

Who carried it out and when

Research Carried out by Elizabeth Ball on behalf of Gloucestershire Reintegration Service – a partnership between Gloucestershire Probation Area and the Gloucestershire Drug and Alcohol Service, June 2003.

Research method

This included detailed profiling of a local client group, researching a range of projects around the UK which are currently providing real work for this client group, and investigating sources of funding.

Key research findings

Profile of local client group

Out of a sample of 34 clients attending a Substance Misuse Services (SMS) clinic, only three had attended education in the last year; nine had worked in the last year (all were under 30, six were male); 13 had worked in the last one to five years (six were under 25, five had children); six had not worked in more than five years (five were aged between 30 and 40) and five had never worked (three were women, and three aged between 25–30).

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Projects which provide work experience for people with a history of substance abuse, around the country

Kaleidoscope – a centre-based holistic approach working with Class A drugs misusers which successfully enables people to move into mainstream education, employment, self-employment and social enterprise programmes.

Kaleidoscope offers a programme of tasters to help people explore what type of learning interests them, accredited courses include Web Design, Retail and Video Production, written by staff and a Surf Shack training project which leads to a four-week work placement at Simply Works, a web design business.

Aspire – a social enterprise employing people to deliver Fair Trade catalogues.

This Aspire project's initial phase showed 63% moved onto full time work or were still employees – comparing well with 60% in Joseph Rowntree Report 'The Intermediate Labour Market' (ILM). The area and number of orders needed for a local project to have a chance of financial stability have been identified. Catalogue delivery is a good entry/re-entry level to the workforce for the target client group.

NB Aspire has since moved on to embrace a wider range of social enterprise activities.

COPE – City of Plymouth Training and Employment – a local authority-sponsored umbrella for a series of ILM projects funded through ESF which accesses New Deal money if appropriate.

In this initiative, a formal partnership delivers the programme and projects are hosted by the local authority, local college and Ground Work Trust. They include environmental action, town centre hosts, call centre and a computer

recycling scheme. In common with other ILM projects, COPE reports an average 60% of its clients move into employment.

Community Communications – a social enterprise and call centre which provides call centre services to the social economy ie market research, cold calling, mail outs, research, data input, telephone services (message taking, answering services).

Two large contracts underpin the organisation (receiving calls and sending out applications for community and regeneration funds). Other small contracts include researching local markets, calling on behalf of local businesses.

White Goods Recycling

- Gateshead – a large ILM operation recycling white goods. Gateshead employs 29 clients on ILM contracts providing training to NVQ2 in light engineering. Each contract can last 52 weeks – but on average it is 42/44 weeks. Client-employees are mostly aged 18-25 and referred through New Deal – most are 'borderline' in terms of employability, needing confidence and skills to get and sustain full time work.

Technically skilled and experienced supervisors/trainers are needed to deliver NVQ and it is difficult to find people who are both technically competent and willing and able to work with more challenging client groups.

- Remploy (Leeds and Bradford). This was not set up as an ILM project but to provide employment for people with disabilities on reasonable rates of pay. It aims to bring people to a level of competency on basic washing machine repairs in 12 months.

Options

Training

Training projects provide skills training (usually accredited), work experience and support for job search. They tend to provide a small additional income (eg benefits plus) while also meeting additional expenses eg meal, travel, dependant care.

Intermediate Labour Market Organisation (ILM)

ILMs provide employment for between six months and one year and for at least the minimum wage. Because projects pay a wage, the relationship with the 'employee' tends to be different than dealing with 'trainees' (eg when handling attendance, sickness absence, quality of work.) ILMs provide job search support, work experience and a reference/track record based on real work. A skills training element is appropriate to the business – ILM projects are intended to enable an employee to move on. Dilemmas arise when a person gets stuck (eg poor performance or in making the transition to another employer).

Business

Some projects set up businesses with the intention of providing 'permanent' employment

- Community Communications was set up to target communities which had lost jobs and to provide corporate services to social and community businesses
- Remploy uses income from white goods recycling to provide employment for people with disabilities
- Simply Works was set up as a business which offered employment opportunities to graduates from Surf Shack. It has been trading successfully and covering its costs.

Trading

Any enterprise engaging in significant trading to support revenue costs faces the following two competing tasks:

1. Turning sales proposals/ideas into completed contracts/products and satisfied customers
2. Moving people on from treatment, unemployment and dependency to sustainable, healthy lifestyles.

Sources of funding

Education, skills development, on-the-job training components –

Gloucestershire Adult Education, partnerships with colleges and the Learning and Skills Council, European Social Fund.

Employment services (job search, placements and training) – through job brokers and New Deal for People with Disabilities, if appropriate.

Personal support – through Jobcentre Plus progress to work (P2W) scheme, if appropriate.

Wage subsidies for people eligible through New Deal.

ESF (Government Office South West – GOSW) and ESF Co-financing (Employment Service and Learning and Skills Council) –

GOSW option more suitable for small short term project requiring 55% match funding from project sponsors. ESF Co-financing could be for a longer term project where match is not a requirement. Funding for education and training components and for wage subsidy

Inclusion objectives – may be supported through regeneration funding particularly in rural areas or disadvantaged urban communities or clients experiencing exclusion

Feasibility studies (market testing and business development) – for specific projects through Gloucestershire's

Business Advice Grouping

Charitable Trusts and lottery funding

Development opportunities

Project models identified which could be developed in Gloucestershire to provide work experience to people with Class A substance abuse problems:

'Surf Shack'

- IT/web design training, practical work experience on web site development
- Potential partners should include an education provider
- Potential to develop web design 'business' eg like Simply Works (possibly a component of a Community Communications business offering marketing and business services to social community and micro business)

Computer Recycling (based on the COPTE model)

- Training project or potential Intermediate Labour Market Project
- Offer inexpensive computers to people on low incomes
- Potential partners – education provider, Furniture Recycling Project, Neighbourhood Projects

White Goods Recycling

- Training project or a potential ILM
- Potential partner/host – Furniture Recycling Project
- Possible co-operation with a new Remploy project in Bristol

Call centre/office skills/marketing for voluntary sector, social enterprises, small businesses

- Training project or ILM
- Potential partners include education provider, social and community enterprise support agencies

- Potential to explore a business in the Community Communications mode. Possible links to Surf Shack/Simply Works project and Catalogue Delivery projects

Catalogue delivery

- ILM project
- Possible co-operation with other projects requiring transport (eg recycling projects)
- Possible link to a community communications business ie leaflet delivery

Recommendations

Explore support for possible projects with:

Colleges – hosting projects or pilot training programmes from existing funding

Gloucestershire Adult Education – willing to support education and training initiatives for the target client group

Regeneration agencies – Gloucestershire First and local government, urban and rural streams

Public sector – local government, housing associations, NHS

Projects who might be willing to co-operate and host – eg Furniture Recycling, GIS (ref supported employment), Aspire

Explore developing projects under the banner of the Alliance of Communities and Enterprise partnership and programme. ■

Community enterprises are organisations which employ business methods and an entrepreneurial outlook to achieve social and environmental aims.

This can include the delivery of public services and the regeneration of deprived areas. Well-known national examples include 'Co-op' shops, The Big Issue, Café Direct and Jamie Oliver's Fifteen restaurant.

In Gloucestershire, community enterprises employ thousands of people across a wide range of sectors including the arts, childcare, transport, recycling and village halls.

Many more people benefit from volunteering or training with them. Some are charities, some are co-operatives, but all share a different way of working.

Community Enterprise Gloucestershire brings together networks of hundreds of enterprises in the county to exchange information, share good practice, promote new ideas and present their views with a single voice. It is hosted by Co-operative Futures, an agency which provides specialist support to co-operative and community enterprises.



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