

Employability
Community
Environment
Enterprise
Education



Leeds Ahead

unlocking the city's potential

ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE 2007:

- **£709,610 INVESTMENT BY BUSINESS IN COMMUNITIES**
- **18477 HOURS OF EXPERTISE DONATED BY BUSINESS**
- **21854 INDIVIDUAL RESIDENTS SUPPORTED**
- **220 BUSINESSES ENGAGED**
- **858 SEPARATE PROJECTS UNDERTAKEN**
- **237 COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND SCHOOLS SUPPORTED**





THE LAST 12 MONTHS HAVE NOT BEEN EASY FOR ANYONE AND FOR THIS REASON I AM PARTICULARLY PROUD OF THE COLLECTIVE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE MANY PARTNERS, BUSINESSES AND EMPLOYERS THAT HAVE WORKED TOGETHER THROUGH LEEDS AHEAD.

Their enthusiasm has been phenomenal and thanks are due to all who have helped extend the reach of our work, bringing long-term transformational change to communities.

At the height of the recession, many may have doubted the willingness, or the ability, of businesses to continue corporate engagement programmes. Recession is traditionally a time for introspection when non-essential spending is curtailed. Over the last year, however, our membership has grown considerably, with businesses combining closely together multiplying the impact they have on communities.

Over the last 3 years, members have invested over 18,000 hours supporting projects across the city. Not only has this provided significant free expert resource, it also provided a sizeable training opportunity to the Leeds workforce. Structured employee volunteering is also attractive to the public sector with the government now actively encouraging them and we are currently developing a structured offer aimed specifically at this workforce.

We are finding that members are increasingly prepared to take the lead, bringing ideas to us that we then help to implement. This has put Leeds Ahead at the forefront of innovation nationally. In December last year, Leeds was awarded a coveted Green Flag by the Audit Commission in its first Comprehensive Area Assessment of local

authorities across the country. Green Flags acknowledge unique and innovative practice and ours was the only one awarded in the country for business engagement in local communities. As a result, we have hosted many visits including the Director General of the CBI, the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Department for Local Government and Communities.

Many of our members are bringing their community programmes in line with HR objectives and reaping the benefits of low-cost high-impact staff development opportunities. One example is our group mentoring project which involved female staff pairing up with disengaged 12-year old girls in inner-city schools. Staff met with the young people every half term to help influence and motivate them towards achievement and careers and away from choices they might otherwise make. This popular project provided female staff the opportunity to lead others, supporting diversity policies and celebrating the contribution women make to business.

We are also proud of our members' responses to the challenge of placing unemployed young people in work for 6 months. By creating opportunities to work in corporate CSR teams, we found an innovative way to bring young people into private sector jobs. Success has been high

with many young people finding permanent work during placements. We intend to build on this over the next couple of years when our local economy will face the challenge of redeploying public sector workers to the private sector.

For too long CSR has been regarded as a non-essential reporting obligation to be discharged as cheaply or conveniently as possible. It is time for a fundamental rethink. Like other cities, Leeds faces enormous challenges over the next few years. Whether we emerge strongly or poorly will depend on the strength of the collective action taken now. Pooling resources from the different sectors and developing more meaningful longer-lasting partnerships will be essential to bridging the impending public funding gap.

With that challenge, I reserve a thank you to our Board, our sponsors, our members and community partners and, of course, our team whose unfailing enthusiasm and effort make all this work possible. Some of our work is featured here and I hope you agree that it represents a fabulous collection of projects.

Stephanie Burras
Chief Executive

Employability

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A FOOT IN THE (GREEN) DOOR

Companies embrace CSR funding for new employees

Before the Future Jobs Fund, I found the whole job search process very difficult. I was applying for jobs but didn't have enough experience to get an interview. Now I have an opportunity to gain experience in a field that really interests me.

COMPANIES INVOLVED:

- PREMIER FARNELL
- YORKSHIRE BANK
- KODAK
- HEWLETT TRAINING
- FEATURE MEDIA

The Future Jobs Fund provides opportunities for 18-24 year olds who have been out of work for 6 months to prevent them becoming long-term unemployed. This is being managed by the creation of around 150,000 new jobs by March 2011. The jobs must be 'green' or have a community benefit, and the fund provides a full wage subsidy to an employer based on a 25 hour working week for 6 months at minimum wage.

Whilst most of the jobs are being created within the public and voluntary sectors, Leeds Ahead are working with the private sector to create jobs to help resource their corporate social responsibility function. To date, 9 such roles have been created thanks

to Premier Farnell, Yorkshire Bank, Kodak, Hewlett Training and Feature Media.

Steven Webb, Company Secretary and General Counsel for Premier Farnell plc said 'The number of people aged 18 – 24 who are claiming Jobseekers Allowance is decreasing but it is still higher than it was two years ago. We believe that it is imperative that responsible businesses take action to create opportunities for young people and working with the Future Jobs Fund has given us the chance to offer a young person access to training and development, as well as a guaranteed income. The Fund offers employers a paid role to support their community work, and in return the Company invests time and experience in developing that young person, making them better able to find a job after the programme.'

Alan Cooper, Managing Director of Hewlett Construction says "Our work with Leeds Ahead to support this initiative is a great way of working within the community and supporting the economic regeneration of the city. By offering young people paid work we hope to improve their working opportunities. Working with us gives them the chance to

develop skills in the workplace and get a real feel for the job. It will put them in a stronger position to find future work."

Peter Balderstone currently has a role via the Future Jobs Fund with Leeds Ahead, and sees this as a great opportunity to gain experience in a sector that interests him. "Before the Future Jobs Fund, I found the whole job search process very difficult. I was applying for jobs, and didn't have enough experience to even get an interview. But how can you get experience unless someone is willing to give you a chance? Now I have an opportunity to gain experience in a field that really interests me, and I'm learning what's expected of me in a professional place of work."



TELL ME WHY YOU'D LIKE THIS JOB...

An unfamiliar surrounding challenges preconceptions

ADDLESHAW GODDARD, HMP LEEDS

As part of their 'Big Week Out', six volunteers from Addleshaw Goddard supported HMP Leeds' Job Club during June 2009. The Job Club supports prisoners in the lead up to their release.

Each of the 6 volunteers spent a day in the Job Club, working with a small group of prisoners looking at the types of jobs they were interested in, the application process, creating CV's and how to answer some of the trickier interview questions enabling them to talk openly with potential employers about their criminal record.

The sessions helped the inmates recognise the skills they have, and how these skills will help them in the workplace. The valuable support from the volunteers helped raise the inmates' confidence and self-esteem, and showed them that some people are willing to give them a second chance.

Although the volunteers were working in a very unfamiliar environment and had preconceptions about the people they would be working with, all the volunteers found it to be a very satisfying and rewarding experience. "My mind set has changed lots since my visit and I have learnt that I can help others and share my experiences with them. I was quite nervous but realised how much more confident I was and how good I felt after my session."



WHETTING THE APPETITE FOR VOLUNTEERING

Partnerships deliver sustainable change

Aire Action 2009 won the Leeds Community and City Pride Award 2009 for Business and Community Partnership Project of the Year

COMPANIES INVOLVED:

- BARCLAYS
- AIRE ACTION LEEDS
- THWAITE MILLS
- BTCV

Aire Action Leeds is a river management partnership between Leeds City Council, Environment Agency, British Waterways and Yorkshire Water. The partnership aims to 'Create better waterways for wildlife and people, now and in the future'.

The 2009 volunteer action week built on the success of the 2008 Aire Action, and is a fantastic example of partnership working to improve the Leeds waterfront environment for both people and wildlife. One of the volunteers said, "The activities I have been involved with will make the areas visited by schools and public much more enjoyable. Hopefully, I have benefitted the wildlife too".

As well as helping to pay for materials used, Barclays worked with staff and volunteers from BTCV to support a range of activities at the grounds of Thwaite Mills Industrial

Museum in South Leeds. Tasks carried out by the volunteers during the week included cutting back vegetation and overhanging trees along the canal, creating new fencing and painting buildings on the site. All this work contributed to improving the area, and making it more accessible for visitors from both the local community and other areas of Leeds.

A longer term Stewardship initiative is being developed to work in partnership to maintain and sustainably improve the waterways for long term benefit. Part of this project is to continue to enable volunteers from the corporate sector and local communities to actively improve and benefit from their local waterway environment.

And in recognition of the work contributed by all partners, and the lasting improvements to the site, Aire Action 2009 won the Leeds Community and City Pride Award 2009 for Business and Community Partnership Project of the Year.



RAKING HAY WHILST THE SUN SHINES

Environmental teamwork delivers for nature

LOGISTIK, YORKSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST

In October 2009 Logistik supported the Kirkstall Nature Reserve as part of their 'Second Nature' sustainability programme. The Reserve is a 25 acre conservation area bounded by the River Aire and the Leeds and Liverpool Canal.

13 VOLUNTEERS
DONATING 91 HOURS

A team of 13 green-fingered volunteers joined Don Vine from the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust to hay rake the reserve for the day, which involved cutting back the meadow and helping get the grass ready to turn into hay. Shelley Riley from Leeds Ahead comments, "Volunteers make a real difference to projects like this, and the work they do can help these projects remain sustainable. Logistik's support will have a huge impact on the wildlife reserve itself and the members of the local community who use it."

Whilst there was a predominant environmental message for the project, the day also provided a great team building opportunity for staff to work together to complete the job in hand. Logistik used the day to introduce new employees to the wider team and as a means to communicate new internal messages.

TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE

Mentors help develop and support new business growth

COMPANIES INVOLVED:

- HEALTH FOR ALL
- EVERSHEDES
- LATCH (LEEDS ACTION TO CREATE HOMES)
- YORKSHIRE BANK

Business mentoring is an excellent way for managers of third sector organisations to learn skills which will help them take a more commercial approach to the way they deliver services as well as being a great personal development opportunity for both the mentor and mentee.

Health for All is a Community Health Development Organisation working in partnership with South Leeds Primary Care Trust, Leeds City Council, Voluntary Organisations and local community groups. After recognising that they needed support with their marketing strategy we introduced Health for All to the Marketing Director at Eversheds, brokering a mentoring partnership which both parties have found personally and professionally rewarding. Pat McGeever comments that “the support

Gareth is providing is enabling us to be more effective in this area. Continued support will enable the production of a marketing plan, allowing senior managers to devote more time to marketing and networking”. Gareth also finds the match to be very beneficial; “The whole experience has been incredibly fulfilling. I am certainly more motivated as a consequence.”

As well as supporting managers, business volunteers can also make a great positive and valuable contribution to third sector organisations by sitting on the management committee. Duncan Clark of Yorkshire Bank has been sitting on the board of LATCH (Leeds Action to Create Homes) since November 2009. “I think my involvement has already had a positive impact on the organisation. There are not many people on the management committee with a financial background and I think the LATCH Project Coordinator has found my support and advice, between and during the recent meetings, valuable. From a personal point of view, my self-confidence has increased, as well as my awareness in terms of building relationships with people in a short space of time and in helping to influence decisions”. James Hartley, Project

Coordinator for LATCH sees the value that business volunteers can bring to boards and committees. “The organisation now has a management committee member with extensive knowledge and experience of financial management and planning. The input from Duncan has moved us closer to attaining our strategic objectives and he has also contributed to ensuring sound financial management.”



PLEASE MISS, WHAT WILL I DO?

500 school children quiz business volunteers on their careers

BEACHCROFT, BLACKS, EVERSHEDES, GORDONS, HAMMONDS, IRWIN MITCHELL, LEEDS LEGAL, PINSSENT MASONS, SHULMANS, WATSON BURTON

October saw the launch of Leeds Ahead's Education and Enterprise week in conjunction with Leeds Legal. The week provided more than 100 lawyers the opportunity to volunteer in a range of school-based activities in some of the city's most deprived communities. Focused on primary schools, activities were aimed at raising children's aspirations, encouraging over 500 children that took part to take an interest in their future career ambitions, and all in a fun and engaging manner.

100 VOLUNTEERS FROM 10 FIRMS DONATED 600 HOURS TALKING TO OVER 500 SCHOOL CHILDREN

It wasn't just the children that benefitted as the volunteers taking part had the opportunity to develop their skills as well as learning new ones. Communication was top of the agenda as many of the lawyers, used to getting their arguments across to adults, commented how difficult they found it to get their point across to a group of young critics.

Employability Community Environment Enterprise Education

CORPORATES COACH CAREERS CONFIDENCE

Combating teen pregnancy in Leeds

Leeds Ahead's members are supplying mentors to 6 groups in 4 schools with around 55 students taking part.

COMPANIES INVOLVED:

- AIRE VALLEY HOMES
- EAST NORTH EAST HOMES
- HOMES AND COMMUNITIES AGENCY
- LOGISTIK
- PINSENT MASONS
- PREMIER FARNELL
- WEST NORTH WEST HOMES

Leeds has one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates in the country. To help combat this, Leeds Ahead has developed a unique mentoring programme to provide youngsters with positive role models. Through pairing up groups of hand picked students with business volunteers, the programme aims to raise aspirations and open participants' eyes to different lifestyles and the career choices that are available. It also provides a challenging opportunity for the 6 businesses involved as they work with the teachers in their assigned school

to deliver the most beneficial sessions. Sometimes these take place at school but sessions are seen to have greatest affect in their place of work.

Primarily focused on one to one mentoring, the 2 hour and half-day sessions have shown increasing improvements in the students' achievements and commitment to their education. The sessions focus on the benefits of working, explaining that it's not just about making money but about self esteem, social life with colleagues and new challenges.

One of the mentors involved this year found the experience very rewarding, reporting that "Over the 18 months they really have come out of their shell. A lot of the sessions are spent discussing their futures, possible career paths and the important choices they will make along the way."

OVER 3000 VOLUNTEER HOURS DONATED WITH A LEVERAGE OF OVER £100,000. 7500 CHILDREN BENEFITTED





APPROACH THE BAA

Solicitors down on the farm

COMPANIES INVOLVED:

- PINSENT MASONS
- BAM
- HERD FARM ACTIVITY CENTRE

Herd Farm Activity Centre provides activity sessions, educational courses and residentials for schools across the city. Their aim is to build confidence, and instil a 'can do' attitude by running a number of outdoor activities ranging from archery to high ropes.

For many children, this is the first time they have stayed away from home, and as a method of increasing their confidence, they are responsible for their own chores during their stay.

As with many organisations, there is limited resource to maintain and improve the premises, so a business offering a team of volunteers for a day can allow organisations to re-allocate budgets towards delivering core activities. In one such case, Pinsent Masons provided manpower for a day to

work on a disabled path to improve access at the centre. John Bosworth, Project Manager said "We are now able to offer facilities that were previously inaccessible to disabled visitors. This will benefit roughly 120 people per week and the support provided by the volunteers is greatly appreciated".

Pinsent Masons also used this day as a networking opportunity and invited their client BAM along who not only participated in the day, but also kindly donated materials to the project. Stacy Collins from Pinsent Masons comments "It was a fantastic team building opportunity. It was also splendid to work with BAM and to learn about the community. Really enjoyed it."

**120 PEOPLE
PER WEEK
WILL BENEFIT
FROM
THE TIME
DONATED**

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THERE ISN'T A JOB I CAN'T DO!

Careers advice and life skills explored

I have learnt to value the skills and life experience I have. I have learnt that there isn't a job I can't do.

COMPANIES INVOLVED:

- 4FAMILIES
- YORKSHIRE BANK
- OHS LTD

In April, 3 volunteers from Yorkshire Bank and OHS Ltd came together to support customers of 4Families, an organisation providing intensive support to hard-to-reach families living in some of the most deprived communities in Leeds. Their aim is to support the adults in the families into employment by making them job ready.

The volunteers spent a day working with 6 of 4Families' clients looking at recruitment, applying for jobs, writing a good CV and what employers are looking for. The volunteers found the day to be an excellent opportunity to develop their listening, confidence building, motivation and coaching skills.

One of attendees the volunteers worked with commented "I have learnt to value the skills and life experience I have. I have learnt that there isn't a job I can't do."

**HOURS
DONATED: 21**

A BLOOMIN' GOOD JOB

South Leeds gets ready for the judges

HCA, BEESTON IN BLOOM

As part of their programme to support residents in South Leeds, HCA sent a team of 15 volunteers to support Beeston in Bloom, a community organisation working towards brightening the environment of inner-city South Leeds.

Working on the Millenium Garden at Cross Flatts Park, the team pruned, planted, cleared and tidied, leaving the garden in such good shape that Beeston in Bloom were able to focus their efforts on other projects ready for the Yorkshire In Bloom competition in July.

As well as an excellent team building opportunity in an unusual location, the time donated can be used by the community group in future grant and bid applications.

**15 VOLUNTEERS,
105 HOURS**

LEEDS AHEAD DELIVER A CONSISTENTLY HIGH STANDARD OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMMES, BEING RESPONSIVE AND SUPPORTIVE IN THE ADVICE THAT IS GIVEN AND REALLY TAKING THE TIME TO UNDERSTAND THE OBJECTIVES OF THE FIRMS PROGRAMME.

Marcus Jamieson-Pond
National CSR Manager
Addleshaw Goddard

GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY IS HUGELY REWARDING. I AM CERTAINLY MORE MOTIVATED AS A CONSEQUENCE.

Gareth Osborne
Marketing Manager at Eversheds

WE WOULD NOT UNDER ESTIMATE THE IMPORTANCE OF GETTING OUT OF THE OFFICE FROM TIME TO TIME AND THE VALUE OF SEEING THINGS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE.

John Clark
Chief Executive at Aire Valley Homes

VOLUNTEERING HELPED ME TO IDENTIFY WITH THE DIVERSITY OF SKILLS AND NEEDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING IN OUR COMMUNITIES AND TO DEMONSTRATE OUR COMPANY ETHOS AND VALUES.

Claire Warren
Chief Executive at West North West Homes

OUR PATRONS



OUR SPONSORS



OUR SUPPORTERS



OUR FUNDERS



OUR MEMBERS

4Site Security Services
570 Media Ltd
Acclaimed Security
Addleshaw Goddard
Aire Valley Homes Leeds
Amanda Walker
Arena Group
Auditel
Baby's Needs
Baker Tilly
Barclays Corporate
Binary Vision
Biskit Marketing and Design
Brella Telecom
Buro Happold
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C3 - 3 Dimensional Computing
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Eversheds

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Health for All
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International Personal Finance
Inward Revenue Consulting
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Pace plc
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paschali
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Pearsons
Pinsent Masons
Polo PR Partnership
Prego
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Pure Cleaning Solutions Ltd
Reach Further Ltd
Red FM
re'new
Rob Bowden Graphic Design
Root
Royal Armouries
Rugby Football League
Sales Cake
Scapegoat Marketing Limited
Silent Cities
SLK people
Sound Travels
SRVG Development and
Training Service
Taste By Design
The Box Stop
The Camberwell Project
The Catalyst Centres
The Renewable Energy Expert
CIC
Underwood Training
Vanity Recruitment
We Give Student Discount
Limited
West North West Homes Ltd
West Yorkshire Playhouse
West Yorkshire Police
Westward Care Limited
Wrigleys Solicitors
Yorkshire Bank
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