

West Kent Partnership Meeting

Kings Hill Conference Centre

10am, Thursday 1 November 2007

AGENDA

1. Minutes/matters arising
2. Sub National Review of Economic Development and Panel Report on SE Plan – Paul Bevan, Chief Executive of South East England Regional Assembly
3. AIF Annual Monitoring Report – Tony Bartlett
 - SO1 – Tony Bartlett
 - SO2 – Bill Fearon (for Wendy Wilton)
 - SO3 – Tony Bartlett
 - SO4 – Mark Raymond/Nazeya Hussain/Robin Hales
 - SO5 – Jon Rosser
 - SO6 – Anne Marie Hannam
 - SO7 – Tony Bartlett
4. WKP Future Focus
5. Co-ordinator's Report
 - 5.1 Leader
 - 5.2 Conference
 - 5.3 Financial Report
 - 5.4 Monitoring Reports
 - 5.4.1 Small Business Ambassadors
 - 5.4.2 Give & Gain
6. AOB
 - Response sent on Housing Green Paper by WK Housing sub-group (attached)
7. Dates of Next meetings - all at 10am
 - 27 November, East Malling Conference Centre – conference
 - Thursday 24 January 2008
 - Thursday 24 April 2008
 - Thursday 17 July, 2008
 - Thursday 16 October, 2008

Item 3 - WEST KENT PARTNERSHIP – AIF MONITORING REPORT	OCTOBER 2007		
Priority for Action	Progress	Successes/barriers/key future actions	Status
Strategic Objective 1	RAISE PROFILE OF WK AS A KEY AREA FOR INVESTMENT		
1.1 Develop and implement communication plan	Action Delivered	Website developed, annual conference engages business	green
1.2 Develop marketing material for West Kent	Action Delivered	Website developed in partnership with WKC students	green
1.3 Partnership Members champion WK and lobby on issues	Sub group chairs/other members co-ordinate WKP response	Status changes to ongoing	Amber
1.4 Raise Tourism offer of West Kent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support Heart of Kent Tourism Strategy 2006-11 Seek closer working relationship with Kent Tourism A 	Leader will help deliver closer working opportunities identified working through H of K representatives	Leader will provide funding to promote rural tourism Closer liaison established - Heart of Kent & Economic group	Green Green
1.5 Promote WK to maximise 2012 opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nominate a WK 2012 contact point Develop a plan with focus on legacy 	WKP co-ord links to Kent 2012 manager & other groups	Plan will be developed from current links and involvement of Economic group	Green Green
1.6 Identify ways to work with local business - raise WK profile	Links to SO3.		green
Strategic Objective 2	MAXIMISE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS TO ENHANCE THEIR SKILLS		
2.1 Support the WK 14-19 Forum in delivery of their activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enterprise education in WK schools and colleges Improved provision of specialist support for children Extending provision of alternative curriculum 	Forum not meeting regularly Range of apprenticeships improved	14-16, 16-18 and 19+ provision all now enhanced	Amber Amber Green
2.2 Develop specific proposals in line with business needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land based activities Logistics Leadership and management 	Timescale to be altered to long in line with WKC rebuild Plans for continuing professional development centre at WKC	CPD centre planned with Business Development resources	Amber Amber Green
2.3 Promote local take up of WK FE/HE training course	Comprehensive prospectuses both Hadlow and WKC	Range of degree level courses available, website planned	green
Strategic Objective 3	SUSTAIN AND STRENGTHEN THE LOCAL ECONOMY		
3.1 Establish group to the voice for WK businesses	Leader LAG to repr rural; website in place to support a group	Options being explored, could link to existing networks	Green
3.2 Maximise enterprise dev, innovation & business growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate supply and demand for workspace Encourage and support social enterprise Ensure adequate support for small businesses Identify shared issues for WK businesses 	Action Delivered BLK is a social enterprise. WKP part funds VAWK post BLK run telephone advice line Issues for landbased and rural identified in Leader bid	Supply and demand study completed by Locate in Kent Advice available from BLK and VAWK WKP At Home with ICT report informing poten Leader projt Workshop planned to id shared issues all WK businesses	Green Green Green Green

Priority for Action	Progress	Successes/barriers/key future actions	Status
3.3 Encourage WK employers adopt sustainable bus & CSR	BLK actively promoting CSR. Two WK projects link to busin	Give & Gain and Small Busin Amba projects still running	Green
3.4 Promote policies that seek the retention of employmt land <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage LA planners to liaise for consistency Enc policies to assist farm diversif and rural develop 	Meeting taken place, action ongoing Planning officers will be available to advise at rural conferenc	Continued communication, Locate in Kent report informs Planning issues central area to address in Leader	Green Green
3.5 Promote partnerships between schools and businesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support Enterprise Education in WK schools Explore development of incubator space at schools 	SBA prog underway and links to Kent Works Under consideration at WKC new campus but space limited	Ongoing TWBC working with CCC at Salomons – linked to health	Green Green
3.6 Encourage public sector to support SME via procurement	WK covered by county wide initiative KP and Big Solutions		Green
3.7 Support the development and econ enhancement of towns	TW undertook fact finding trip to Chichester	Information sharing between WK districts continues	Green
3.8 Support the dev & econ enhancement of small rural towns	Health checks completed/underway in Hawkhurst, Paddock	Wood, West Malling and Edenbridge	Green
3.9 promote and nurture entrepreneurial ventures & start ups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore Enterprise Gateway potential Support entrepreneurship.... 	Core activity for BLK with delivery through WK area team SEEDA redefining strategies – no Enterprise Gateway in WK BLK have ongoing support programmes, also Ent agencies	Ongoing core activity. 121 through enterprise agencies Pre-start support through existing EGs Consider West Kent Business Awards in future years	Red Green
Strategic Objective 4			
IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS, PARTICULARLY IN THE PRIORITY COMMUNITY AREAS			
4.1 Address community regeneration & economic needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> T&M TW Sevenoaks 	Regeneration partnerships in priority communities Com Dev co-ord appointed, TN2 Centre, Sherwood opened Partnerships in Swanley and Edenbridge maintained	Consultation and ongoing reviews and planning Consider plans to improve amenity space at Showfields Forward Plan for Healthy Swanley projects underway	Green
4.2 Seek to secure development of Childrens Centres <ul style="list-style-type: none"> T&M TW Sevenoaks 	Dev of centres at E Malling, also St. Stephens and Longmead Sherwood fully functioning, TW has Pathfinder status Children's Centres locations tbc.	Centres to be operational by mid 2008 Plans for round 2 and round 3 centres Swanley and Sevenoaks South Trusts formed	Green
4.3 Promote the emotional & economic well being of children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> T&M TW Sevenoaks 	Youth agreement adopted, range of projects and mentoring Youth worker supporting TN2 in bid for tea time clubs 8-12 projects now in Sevenoaks, New Ash Green & Swanley	Community based health project to be launched Bid for Detached Play Work using Big Lottery in adv stage Plan new 8-12's for Westerham or West Kingsdown	Green
4.4 Co-ordinate health initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> T&M TW Sevenoaks 	Co-ord health improvement projects accessing Choosing Hlth Choosing Health projects being planned Healthy Swanley and Edenbridge Health partnership	Projects to be launched Projects to be launched Work planned as part of Choosing Health Agenda	Green
4.5 Promote a healthy voluntary sector <ul style="list-style-type: none"> T&M TW Sevenoaks 	Action plan agreed with Volunteer bureaux Successful resident trust in Sherwood Increased volunteers targets met, workshop held for 40 VCS	Projects will become operational Continued work with VAWK/Sev Vol Centre Funding decisions to be made for volunteer agencies	Green

Priority for Action	Progress	Successes/barriers/key future actions	Status
4.6 Help reduce levels of crime and the fear of crime <ul style="list-style-type: none"> T&M TW Sevenoaks 	CDRP leading implementation National Intellig model in Kent 6.1% reduction in crime Apr-Aug 07 11% reduction in crime for April-September 07	CDRP action plan 94% on target	Green
4.7 Work jointly to encourage sustainable lifestyles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> T&M TW Sevenoaks 	Nottingham declaration signed, draft climate strat prepared TW Sustainable Community Plan performing at high level Nottingham Declaration signed	Adopt climate change strategy in Dec 07, implement A plan Community Plan Ps addressing effective delivery of SCP Multi-agency actions agreed and in new SDC SCAP 07-10	Green
Strategic Objective 5	EXPAND ACCESS TO A RANGE OF HOUSING OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO LOCAL RESIDENTS AND WORKERS		
5.1 Develop overarching WK housing strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop sub-reg approach to housing needs older ple Develop WK actions for gypsies and travellers Develop housing solutions for vulnerable young ple Investigate cross boundary choice based letting schm 	Completed – actions on which sub group can lead below Considering developing TW project on WK basis from outset Needs surveys completed at District level Kent supporting people agreed in principle to fund 18 units Will be implemented via Kent wide scheme	Potential to identify further areas for joint working Project to be further developed Co-ordinated response by Kent Las on SE Plan part review Awaiting funding decision to see if can continue beyond 08 On target for implementation 2008	Green Green Green Green
5.2 Seek opportunities for essential worker housing schemes	Report published, pilot scheme completed, developing A plan	Action plan to be adopted and implemented	green
Strategic Objective 6	INCREASE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE IN WEST KENT		
6.1 Lobby for improvements to the A21, A228 & M25 sliproads	Regional Funding Allocation programmed to 2016	Work will continue to identify funding ops for Colts Hill Link	amber
6.2 Develop good working relations with rail franchisee & DfT	South Eastern Railways actively engaging	Duncan Stephenson from Network Rail to next s-g meeting	green
6.3 Provide strategic input into Local Transport Plan	Strategic input from group given, LTP now adopted	Action complete	green
6.4 Develop innovative solutions for rural transport options	Working towards links with Communities in Rural Kent	Sevenoaks hosting second annual transport conference	green
6.5 Investigate development of further Quality Bus P/ships	All districts are, or will be addressing feasibility of QBPs	Continuing liaison with bus companies on quality of service	green
6.6 Address transport issues related to new Pembury hospital	Transport issues being identified at local level	Sub group will keep a watching brief	Green
6.7 Promote transport facilities in Ton/TW transport hub	Schemes identified from Tonbridge Town Centre Study	Progress work identified in Tonbridge Town Centre Study	green
Strategic Objective 7	MAXIMISE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LAND BASED AND OTHER RURAL BUSINESSES		
7.1 Develop task group to explore remit to include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximise opportunities to benefit produced in Kent Promote farm diversif including production biofuels Explore potential for rural bus incubator initiatives Lobby for funding for land-based skills training 	Task group established and meets regularly – has been planning both rural conference and Leader bid	Rural conference November 27 07 Successful Leader bid will deliver on all of SO7 and draw in up to £1.8M of funding to WK.	Green Green Green Green

53 priorities for action, 46 on target for delivery or delivered, 6 amber 3 of which are to extend delivery timeframe and one red

Item 4 - West Kent Partnership – Revisions Discussion Paper

1. Background

- 1.1 At the last meeting of the West Kent Partnership, the results of the recent peer review were discussed. In broad terms, the review found many positive aspects of the work of the Partnership, in particular, its strengths with regard to sub-regional joint working and lobbying powers. In addition, the West Kent Partnership has established a significant presence within Kent and beyond, and this needs to be built on. However, the review found that the WKP has been less well aligned to the community strategy process which is best dealt with at a district level. It was agreed that further consideration would need to be given to the changes required to address the issue.

2. District Level LSPs

- 2.1 Local partnerships are in place at Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells to take forward community planning processes. Tonbridge and Malling has adopted a less formal approach to local engagement. However, given the increasing emphasis being placed by Government on community strategies and their linkages to other processes such as the Kent Agreement, district-level formal LSPs should now be established separately for each district. This would be a matter for an individual district to take forward as the shape and membership of an LSP needs to best reflect individual circumstances within that district. It is suggested that these should be established by April 2008. Their focus will be on taking forward the community planning agenda, linking this role to Vision for Kent and the emerging outcomes in the second Kent Agreement, and dealing with any other significant issues which affect a single district/borough.

3. The West Kent Partnership

- 3.1 It is proposed that the West Kent Partnership should continue to operate as a key sub regional body within the County, primarily focusing on the preparation and implementation of the West Kent Area Investment Framework but also in place to address and lobby for change on any key issue of concern that is common to all three district areas. The West Kent Partnership will therefore continue to play a strategic role in promoting economic regeneration, skills and learning, good health, and dealing with strategic community safety issues, transport improvements and decent affordable homes across the area as a whole. It will continue to engage partners via its adopted AIF sub groups which are not proposed to change as part of this review.

4. Membership Issues

- 4.1 The formation of three district-level LSPs will potentially require some partners to provide a representative to each in addition to WKP

representation. Whilst it will be a matter for partners to decide how, and at what level, their representation on district level LSPs should be made, an appropriate level of seniority will be required at Director level for district partnerships. There is no proposal to alter the existing composition of the West Kent Partnership. If individual partners feel their attendance at meetings continues to be of strategic benefit to their organisation, then it is hoped that they will attend and contribute as previously. However, some partners might, due to resource issues, only feel able to provide representation at district level LSPs. This would be a matter for individual choice.

5. Funding Issues

- 5.1 Currently, funding for the WKP is shared by the three district councils along with a contribution from the County Council towards its economic development role. Its annual budget is £55K. This pays for the post of the Partnership Co-ordinator and overhead costs including marketing. The remainder has been set aside to provide pump-priming financial support to local partners who are developing projects in line with the Partnership's adopted priorities.
- 5.2 It is proposed that this arrangement should continue. The recent sub-national review of economic development indicates that councils might have an enhanced, mandatory role in the future likely to involve the need for formal joint working between districts and the County Council. One of the benefits of the WKP has been the pooling of partner resources to achieve more significant investment and impact. Its future focus should therefore seek to continue to enhance the profile of West Kent as an economic area with County and Government. To achieve this, it seems appropriate that future project funding of the WKP should be more focused on the delivery of AIF objectives, rather than as present, embracing a wider range of outcomes. Instead of a project bidding process, projects worthy of financial support would be generated by sub group work and considered by the Partnership through the sponsorship of the relevant sub-group Chairman.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 Based on the above, it is recommended that:
 - (a) The West Kent Partnership and its associated sub groups should continue to operate but with an emphasis on the implementation of the Area Investment Framework and the need to address other common sub regional issues.
 - (b) WKP funding should be retained at present levels but its distribution limited to AIF-related project work. The WKP Terms of Reference and statement of priorities should be amended on these lines.
 - (c) District Level LSPs should be formed by April 2008 to take forward local community planning work and delivery of LAA at district level.

Item 5.1 – West Kent Leader – Key Themes and indicative actions – Consultation Paper

West Kent Key Themes	West Kent Issue	Leader Interventions	Indicative actions (overall funding share)
<p>Improve competitiveness of West Kent's farming and forestry</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low profitability in much of the sector leading to low levels of reinvestment • Average farm incomes below the regional/national average • Future financial difficulty with the ending of the Single Farm Payment • High number of private sector woodland owners • High number of small farms lack economies of scale • Opportunity to add value to agricultural produce • Perception of poor management practices in West Kent's woodland • Many woodland owners unaware of the benefits of management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modernisation of Agricultural holdings (121) • Improving the economic value of Forests (122) • Adding value to agriculture and forestry products (123) • Co-operation for the development of new products (124) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-farm renewable energy e.g. for heating/power • Small scale environmental management projects (outside scope of ELS) • Lake construction for irrigation • Alternative agriculture: growing bio-energy crops • Investing in facilities to enable machinery sharing • Purchase/hire of machinery to improve woodland habitats/harvesting/in forest processing of wood fuel • Investment in recreational enterprises/environmental interpretation • Woodland co-operatives for development of woodchips for fuel • Processing /packaging • Development of Farmers Markets • Development of new co-operative ventures (25%)

<p>Encourage innovation and diversification in West Kent's land based sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited opportunities for farmers to add significant value in some areas of farming High proportion of tenant farmers and private sector landlords less willing to invest in diversification Ageing farming population may be more resistant to change Local survey of farmers identified need for business information and advice. Business competence is key to successful start-up and ongoing profitability of diversified businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversification into non-agricultural activities (311) <i>Training and information for Micro businesses (331)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of lakes/ponds for fishing, other leisure businesses Farm/environmental interpretation for visitors, including schools On-farm retail developments Development of Bio-fuels for local residents Processing facilities for bio-diesel production Building conversion for alternative workspace <p>(35%)</p>
<p>Promote entrepreneurship in rural West Kent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High levels of rural based businesses in West Kent with a high proportion home-based (50% in some rural areas) These West Kent businesses often address local market needs, have small supply chains and have good survival rates (less dependent on global market fluctuations) This is an area to build on, to provide additional off-farm income and for rural residents generally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the creation and development of micro-businesses (312) Training and information for Micro businesses (331) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of subsidised business advice/mentoring to farmers and rural businesses generally IT support for rural/home-based businesses <p>(7.5%)</p>
<p>Encourage the development of rural tourism related businesses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourism is already an important part of the rural West Kent economy High quality historic and visitor sites are in the rural area (e.g. Chartwell, Sissinghurst, Knole, Ightham Mote, Scotney Castle, Hever Castle, Penshurst Place and picturesque villages) and provide scope for further tourism initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouragement of tourism (313) <i>Training and information for Micro businesses (331)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extension of self catering accommodation Marketing and promotion of specific sites, networks Projects promoting local distinctiveness New on-farm tourism facilities

			(3.75%)
Address pockets of deprivation and encourage vibrant rural communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • low incomes in the West Kent rural area • high proportion of social rented housing relative to rural SE • relatively high level of deprivation regarding access to housing and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic services (321) • Village renewal and development (322) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining post office network/village shops • Development/enhancement of social facilities • Rural housing parish surveys (3.75%)
Ensure best practice in land management and promote sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large area of countryside with landscape designations (AONB, Green Belt, Ancient Woodland, SSSIs, Local Nature Reserves) • farming and woodland management essential for maintaining this precious West Kent asset, including its value for leisure and recreation, tourism and quality of life for rural and urban communities 	<p>Cross cutting theme, relevant to all the above. Farmers and foresters will be made aware of, and encouraged to apply to Natural England and the Forestry Commission for, Environmental Stewardship and Woodland Grant funding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation and upgrading of rural heritage (323) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small scale environmental management projects (outside scope of ELS, etc) (2.5%)

NB excludes an additional 2.5% funding for collaborative schemes with other LEADER areas

Item 5.2



West Kent Partnership
working together to tackle key issues

Conference - Supporting the Rural Economy in West Kent

Tuesday 27 November, 2007
East Malling Conference Centre

Draft Programme

- 9.30 Arrival, registration and coffee
- 10.0 Sarah Ward, Chair – Opening Remarks
- 10.05 Jonathan Shaw, Minister for Marine, Landscape and Rural Affairs
and Minister for the South East
(title tbc)
Introduced by Mark Worrall, Leader, TMBC
- 10.30 Terry Bradfield, RDPE Programme Manager, SEEDA
RDPE programme and how to access funding + focus on Leader
(title to be supplied)
Introduced by Sarah Ward
- 10.55 Case Study: Graham Cuthbert, Palace Farm Hostel at
Doddington
(diversification case study – title to be supplied)
Introduced by Roy Bullock, Leader, TWBC
- 11.20 Case Study: Robert Wicks, Westerham Brewery
(diversification case study – (to include sustainability))
Introduced by Sarah Ward
- 11.45 Poul Christensen, CBE, Deputy Chairman Natural England and
Rural Board Member, SEEDA
(presentation theme to be agreed but around sustainability)
Introduced by Peter Fleming, Leader SDC
- 12.10 Sarah Ward – closing remarks including flagging registering
interest in workshops for future, visiting market place and
involvement in WK Leader
- 12.20 Close, locally produced buffet lunch, networking and
marketplace

- Potential for tour of East Malling Research Institute after lunch
- Each presentation 15 minutes, plus 10 minutes Q&A

Item 5.3

West Kent Partnership - Budget 16-Oct-07

West Kent Partnership - Budget

	Income	Budget
year 07/08		
income received	55000	
plus roll forward from 03/04	36211	
plus roll forward from 04/05	4594	
plus roll forward from 05/06	11615	
less actual overspend 06/07	-21889	
Total available year 07/08	85531	
 committed for 07/08		
Small Business Ambassadors (2nd installment)		5000
VAWK (Apr-Sep 07)		6250
Marketing Voice for Business web/other		3500
		14,750
 Available for 07/08	70,781	
 Overhead		
co-ordinator costs		24300
supplies, services, mobile		700
marketing including conference		10000
 Overhead		35000
 Projects		
Leader bid		10,000
6 months VAWK (Oct 07-Mar 08)		6250
Available for Projects		19,531
 Projection 08/09		
Income	55000	
overhead	35000	
Project spend	20000	
		plus any project c/f from 07/08 and any marketing underspend

SMALL BUSINESS AMBASSADORS

Business and education working in partnership for enterprise and employability – direct access to business people

BACKGROUND

Small Business Ambassadors™ ("SBA") is a programme designed to take the enterprise and entrepreneurial message into schools. It was developed by BIG Solutions Ltd and from 2008 will be managed and delivered by a social enterprise company - Education for Enterprise CIC.

Experienced business owners, trained to work in the classroom, present structured material for the curriculum in years 9-12 (ages 13-16). They inject their passion for business and inspire young people to be more enterprising. The programme has been developed over two years by Roger House and Debasish Sen, who run their own small business and are respectively Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) in Kent and Medway.

Between them, they have a wide range of contacts and positions on education committees in South East England, through which they have a detailed insight into the economic, political and social drivers for Enterprise Education in schools.

A key objective is to make the SBA programme a core part of the new 14-19 Agenda. With funding for enterprise related activities going directly to schools, they will be able to use this funding on our programme.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- The SBA programme has had support from:-
- Department for Education & Skills ("DfES").
- Learning & Skills Council ("LSC").
- SEEDA - South East Economic Development Agency has provided seed funding.
- KCC provided initial seed funding
- E.U. Social Fund, is supporting SBA work in the Urban area of North Kent
- As at September 2007, the programme has been delivered to:-
- over 2000 pupils
- 30 Teachers in CPD sessions
- In 16 Schools across Kent.
- Providing over 3500 learning hours.

- Other achievements include:-

- A growing number of business owners who have signed up as Ambassadors.
- A 'mentoring' group of teachers and education specialists, has ensured this programme is "fit for purpose".
- Feedback groups of young people assisting in project development.
- Additional contributions from universities, colleges and businesses.
- The refinement to a very high standard of classroom material.
- We have developed an initial website which explains the SBA programme to both teachers and schools. It is now ready for serious overhaul as a result of the pace in which we have developed resources and business/enterprise solutions.
www.smallbusinessambassadors.co.uk
-

DEVELOPMENTS

- Developing programmes with the Sector Skills Councils and Further Education colleges.
- Creating detailed programme content, with fresh and innovative material for the latest school curricula.
- Training and accreditation of Ambassadors.
- Detailed "business" partnerships with schools.
- Working with clients to deliver programmes in venues other than schools.
- Working with selected partners to deliver specialised material that adds value to our programme.
- The target is to achieve national roll out through a regional structure, with each region delivering the same programmes, but recruiting Business Ambassadors locally.

UNIQUENESS

- We offer a "total package" of benefits for schools: not just in the curriculum, but promoting an enterprise and business ethos across the whole school.
- Our access to the breadth of business skills is second to none: over 210,000 small businesses nationally via the Federation of Small Businesses alone.
- We can deliver valuable contacts and material to help schools develop the wider partnerships that will be required to deliver the diplomas in the new 14-19 Agenda.
- We provide a number of skills that will become increasingly important for schools, eg. our ability to access external funding through expert bid writers.
- We have been commissioned to prepare material for pilots of BTEC Short Courses Business Modules.

WEST KENT DEVELOPMENTS

Please Note: Items with (*) are commercially sensitive

1. Funding has allowed us to develop in detail offers to the schools in West Kent. We recently trialled our Marketing Masterclass, supporting Kent Works at Brands Hatch. The response from students was more than positive.
2. We have delivered two major CPD (Professional Development) sessions for 20 teachers, (10 hours) taking the opportunity to get input into material and school requirements, all now reflected in our delivery content.
3. We have delivered approximately 900 learning hours to circa 300 students in three schools in West Kent.
4. We are in the process of developing a relationship with Hadlow College and are working with LANTRA (Land based Sector Skills Council) where we have also been invited to become industry champions for them.
5. (*)Two business game packages will soon be available for use on computer for classroom activity. We will be fronting this material in conjunction with Kingston University.
6. (*) We are developing a pilot with BT based on communications.
7. (*) We have an agreement with a Kent based specialist company to work as an Ambassador and to help us develop a job application advisory package, writing Cvs etc. together with inspirational and motivational delivery.
8. (*) We are currently developing opportunities with a major multi-media publisher and in conjunction with the FSB (Federation of Small Businesses) will enable a full tabloid page of 'School Business' news, produced entirely by students twice a year.
9. We are currently working with the Manager of the Local Skills for Productivity Alliance on developing opportunities for engagement in the schools.
10. We now have a pool of 12 Ambassadors specifically for West Kent. Five have been through an initiation process and we are currently refining our "Training" with the help of teacher and schools advisor input.
11. We are currently working on links with schools in the west Kent area as all material is now finalised and the next stage is pure delivery and partnering with the schools
12. As part of this report we are announcing the launch of a major project which we have been developing over the last two months centred around 2012, involving five schools in the area. It will bring together experts from the Small Business Ambassadors who will guide groups of students through the business management leading to the creation of a website designed to highlight and promote the attractions of West Kent to young people visiting the Southeast during the 2012 Olympics.

Each school has its own specialism such as IT, Performing Arts, Creative Arts, Land Based etc. Each will develop a promotional solution utilising their specialism. Students will be guided by teachers and

Ambassadors into creating school teams with individuals taking on specific responsibilities.

These students will then meet their counterparts from the other schools in workshops set up by SBA members to help them prepare the overall project outcome.

The final product is envisaged as a website with material produced by the schools both photographically and with audio-visual streaming. It is also anticipated that copies will be made on CD together with printed material acting as a promoter that will be sent to schools abroad, thereby building up an international perspective and a route for future development.

The launch of the final product will offer an opportunity to bring in a key speaker from the Olympics, the West Kent Partnership and other key County and SE people.

This will hit a minimum of 125 selected, dedicated students working with Ambassadors and link teachers. It will be managed centrally from Hillview School with the help of David Wallace and the support of senior staff. The schools have agreed to part fund the project from their own resources which will extend the value of the WKP funding in reaching the wider number of schools and students.

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West Kent Employee Volunteering Project

6 Monthly Report - October 2007

Background

The “Give and Gain” project exploring the potential for increasing employee volunteering within the Sevenoaks district was piloted by SVDA between September 05 – April 06. During this 8 month project, companies in the area were approached using a number of different methods, from mail shots to personal leads. The general response was disappointing with a feeling that there were not organisations of sufficient size to generate real interest. However, the impression was that there seemed to be goodwill towards the concept of employer supported volunteering (ESV) and a decision was taken to launch a wider project across West Kent with funding from the West Kent Partnership.

A part-time Business Development Manager was recruited and in place from the end of April 2007. Informal soundings were taken from various parties and a short paper produced, “Initial Thoughts”, which outlined 3 different approaches which might be taken.

The first was a “basic” model where there would be limited marketing of the scheme and SVDA would act mainly as a broker between businesses wanting to participate and the voluntary sector willing to run action days. The middle route would be much more active, with a dedicated marketing and promotion campaign, the building of a database and taking responsibility for all aspects of the schemes from sourcing through to the organisation and planning of action days on behalf of all parties. The final option was an ambitious attempt to launch a business led organisation or brand with direct involvement of both the public and voluntary sector aimed at using Corporate Social Responsibility, including ESV, as part of an initiative for social regeneration of the West Kent Community.

In consultation with the West Kent Business Forum sub-group, it was decided to pursue a limited campaign aimed primarily at promoting the concept of ESV, organising a series of action days, and using the resulting publicity to generate further interest. It would still be possible at a later date to consider a more ambitious programme.

One important question to consider is why companies might wish to support volunteering. Public companies will all have some form of CSR policy which is required by their shareholders. This will be filtered down to local level but often leaves little flexibility to deviate from the national structure. There is usually an easily identified contact but they may well be self sufficient and in need of minimal help.

Once you move away from public companies there will be fewer formal policies and any action or involvement may well be as a result of an individual in the organisation having a personal interest in a particular charity. There will be many companies or organisations who feel they are too small to allow employees any time-off or are passively supportive of the voluntary sector but have never made the jump to some form of active involvement. These are the types of organisation that need to be approached and shown that there are benefits for the company, the employees, and the community. By far the majority of

organisations in West Kent employ less than 10 staff and in many cases fewer than 5, so getting larger organisations to take a lead is critical.

Progress to Date

The strategy adopted has been to use personal contacts and introductions to talk to as many organisations as time allows. From these visits, we then seek commitments to participate in action days or other forms of volunteering. It is then possible to get these companies to become champions for the scheme and to use them as actual examples for other organisations to look at. In conjunction with this we have been consolidating our databases of both organisations and contacts.

Action Days - a number of action days have now been successfully run and further interest and commitment have been made. In particular, we have now a number of organisations keen to build longer term relationships for us to help them run their CSR programmes. For example, Tunbridge Wells solicitors, Cripps Harries Hall, have already completed an action day at Care in Edenbridge and are planning another before the year end. They also want to identify individual volunteering opportunities and are prepared to make staff available to undertake selected work on a pro bono basis. A presentation has just been made to some 60 staff outlining what we can offer as a service in facilitating their programme. This initiative will now be used to promote ESV in the area and this will be made easier by the development of a new Gateway in the town next year. It is also pleasing to note that there has been a positive approach from all three Local Authorities to discuss and/or actively promote the scheme amongst their own staff.

Volunteering - although emphasis has been placed on action days, other forms of volunteering are also extremely important. Over 80 personal visits have been made to different organisations and where they feel that they are too small or cannot yet commit to releasing their employees, emphasis has been placed on individual volunteering. Fidelity International is also looking at ways of developing their local involvement and asked us to develop a telephone befriending scheme for the elderly. A pilot scheme is now running and Fidelity have indicated a willingness to both further develop volunteering with their staff and to act as an ambassador for our projects.

Database - a database of organisations has been developed. This will help in the current campaign as it unfolds but will also be a legacy which can be used for other initiatives which require contact with industry and commerce. As the scheme develops the personal contacts will become more accurate and allow for better targeting.

Marketing - it was felt, as a result of the experience of the pilot scheme, that a full marketing campaign at the start of the project would not produce results. But now that we are beginning to see companies participating in various ways, we are beginning to build a programme. A revamped web page has been developed highlighting the opportunities for ESV and this is currently being offered to all of the Volunteer Centres in the area. Personalised letters are being sent to over 150 organisations with new "flyers" for the scheme and publicity sought to highlight the action days already run.

Next Steps

Over the coming months it is planned to consolidate the progress already made. Word of mouth and publicity for real events will certainly generate further interest. For example, we have just run an action day involving 25 BT staff who in a 3 hour

period worked in teams to paint the inside and outside of a building at the Riding School for the Disabled. They approached us as a result of one of their staff hearing about an event we ran at Dorton House where Alno Kitchens, a local company, had designed and created flower beds at the school.

A targeted marketing campaign, due to start shortly, will also generate new leads. It is clearly neither easy nor quick to engage with small businesses who are struggling with all types of different pressures, but where they do participate, the experience is consistently seen as extremely positive for all concerned.

*David Mckee
Business Development Manager
12 October 2007*

West Kent Employee Volunteering Project Plan

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Planned Timeframe</u>	<u>Current status</u>
1. Produce Plan	May 2007	Plan produced end June
2. BDM recruited	30 April 2007	David Mckee appointed end April
3. Marketing Plan Produced	30 June 2007	Marketing plan deferred whilst person visits to both businesses and other interested parties carried out and the emerging views monitored. Materials now are being developed- new ESV web page designed for Volunteer Centres, currently being rolled out. Letter campaign with flyers being launched from mid-October.
4. Source for WK business is identified	31 May 2007	Data- bases established covering all of the major organisations.
5. BDM meets WK forum sub group	31 May 2007	Attended meeting. Three options for way to progress project discussed with decision to progress with "middle" option which involves a dedicated marketing plan, development of active relationship with businesses, and acting as a full broker in managing all parts of the process from guidance, site visits, health and safety advice and ensuring all events go to plan.
6. Contact made with potential participants	30 September 2007	On- going. Personal visits made to nearly 80 businesses.
7. Local Volunteer Centres brought on board	31 August 2007	In place except TW.
8. Menu of appropriate volunteering opportunities produced	30 September 2007	On- going as required. Currently no shortage of opportunities and very positive response from all who have actually had an event run for them.
9. CSR needs of local business explored	31 st December	On- going when discussing general volunteering opportunities. Felt not appropriate for small business. Cripps Harries Hall to provide case study.

10. Local Employees take part in action day	February 2008	Slowly generating momentum. A number of action days now completed and a further 6/8 organisations showing interest. In addition, Fidelity international running pilot tele-befriending scheme for housebound older people. On- going.
11. Pre- retirement courses on volunteering are delivered	30 September 2007	Deterred to later on in project
12. Forum for local businesses interested in CSR set up	29 February 2008	Currently testing interest. Fidelity International prepared to host
13. Formulate continuation strategy	29 February 2008	Under discussion
14. Final report to WK partnership	31 st March 2008	Now planned for end of April 2008.