

Strategic Context of Relationship

Newtown Community Resource Centre Ltd (NCRC) is a third sector not for Profit Company that operates Community Resource Centres across the Borough of Stockton. Embedded in local communities, the Centres provide bases for the delivery of services in respect of health, employment, training, childcare and family support. Across all the venues, the number of users pushes the 50,000 + mark each year.

NCRC have a sound track record, management capacity and robust governance and views a multi-site approach as vital to its long-term sustainability, through the utilisation of core staff, shared expertise and focusing of resources.

Following the dissolution of the Clarences Community Partnership in 2007, NCRC took on the management of the Clarences Community Resource Centre (CCRC). With a team of seven core staff based within the CCRC, NCRC have ensured it has been brought back to a level of use providing frontline health, advice, employment and generalist support services that are otherwise not readily available to local community residents.

NCRC is an infrastructure organisation, in that we act as a **Community Anchor** providing a range of services within disadvantaged communities offering:

- A building: a physical space which is community controlled
- A focus for services and activities meeting local need
- A platform for community development, promoting cohesion while respecting diversity
- A means of promoting community led enterprise, generating independent income while having a social, economic and environmental impact

NCRC deliver a range of local authority contracts within target communities focusing on health, employment and young people that includes two contracts to the value of £2.24M for the delivery of the Communities Fund; a three year programme aimed at supporting people living in target communities to find employment or move closer to the labour market. NCRC also have local authority contracts for the delivery of a £128K Connexions led programme targeting young people that are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) and a £60K programme targeting young people at risk of becoming involved in crime.

Following the successful tender and completion of Stockton Borough Councils (SBC) PQQ process NCRC have been delivering the Communities Fund through an innovative 'whole household, intelligence led' approach working with whole families, targeting resources to the most difficult to reach and hardest to help.

NCRC have entered into a strategic partnership with key Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) in Stockton i.e. Tristar, Fabrick, Accent, Endeavour, Places for People and private agencies such as Stockton Flats. To strengthen this relationship we are funding the employment of two Personal Advisors through TRISTAR to lead on targeting tenants in social housing.

NCRC have taken the lead on the development of a five-year plan. This plan outlines wider issues and a series of actions that NCRC have committed to lead upon as part of their efforts to rejuvenate the community.

Vision for the Clarences Farm

NCRC is working with local companies such as Wilton Engineering, SITA, Augean, Calor and NPL to cultivate relationships that can reap benefit for people living within the locality under the banner of Corporate Social Responsibility. This is to identify how they can contribute towards tackling worklessness and encouraging community enterprise, with the aim of providing financial and benefit advice, combating poor health, encouraging waste recycling and environmental actions and strengthening community cohesion.

The aim is not just to develop direct links with employers on an individual basis, but promote cohesion and establish a Centre for Excellence on the Clarences Farm site, delivering work based and vocational training relative to the emerging recycling and energy industries surrounding the community.

Arising from this is a proposal for all three sectors (public, private, and third) across the borough boundaries to contribute to this development funded through income streams driven out from a mixture of employer led Trust Funds, landfill tax, voluntary sector earned income and local authority outsourced employment programmes.

The partnership will embrace a number of major employers and sites within the target areas, two local authorities and leading third sector organisations in a novel arrangement. An understanding that could herald the way forward in shaping a new form of corporate social responsibility in the region; where private sector organisations or consortiums of employers, together with local authorities, nurture robust social enterprises into being and invest in their sustainability through resources, contracts and knowledge transfer.

The Transitional Period Clarences Farm – Centre of Excellence

NCRC recognise the long term potential for developing the site within the Clarences Plan as a Centre for Excellence. Whilst work is underway to bring these plans to fruition NCRC propose to utilise the farm facility to address some of the pressing community issues (refer to sections five and six of the Clarences plan).

NCRC have developed a relationship with Saltholme Nature Reserve, Prior Pursglove College and Askham Bryan Agricultural College with the aim of establishing a programme of vocational training and related educational opportunities that play to the strengths of the partners in the area of environment, animal management, horticulture and equine studies.

Saltholme have agreed in principal the extension of the grazing land/ buffer zone as a means of addressing key issues as follows:

- Alleviating problems with horses and livestock on the allotments through the provision of good quality grazing land
- Providing benefit to the community from the reserve (refer to Section Five of the Clarences plan)
- Assisting in the development of the Allotment Site for horticulture (supported by NCRC through our subcontract arrangement with Billingham Partnership)

- Providing land and facilities required for delivery of Environmental based studies (delivery agreed with Askham Bryan)

NCRC have also subcontracted with Billingham Partnership to employ a Project Manager to lead on the development of agricultural and horticultural based training for Communities Fund clients wishing to re-engage with education, employment, healthy living and life style development utilising the Clarences Allotments as a training base for delivery of services, an agreement which was made following discussions around the integration of the BELP (Billingham Environmental Link Project) within the Clarences Plan.

The BELP programme is complementary to NCRC's Communities Fund, Youth Crime Action (YCAP), NEET and Future Jobs Fund programmes. These will engage with long term unemployed, people in receipt of sickness benefits and young people who are NEET through harnessing the existing interest of workless individuals in the countryside, stock animals and horses through a structured programme of local training.

Utilising Saltholme Nature Reserve, Clarences Community Resource Centre, Clarences Allotments and the Clarences Farm the programme will be delivered supporting the "hardest to reach and hardest to help" to move closer to and be integrated into the formal labour market".

NCRCs partnership with RSL's teamed with our local knowledge and expertise gained through being established within target communities, will provide the mechanism for recruiting 100 eligible students per annum, providing tailored support for small groups to improve skill levels and career prospects through the delivery of bespoke training packages including elements of environmental studies, land based studies, equine training and horticulture.

NCRC have secured resource through the Future Jobs Fund to employ 22 Community Caretakers. It is proposed to deploy eight of these to the Clarences to provide support in addressing issues such as security, maintenance, fly tipping, allotments management and community cohesion. These will be integrated into the existing team of seven staff that we have based within the Clarences Community Resource Centre to assist in the day to day management of the site.

Following our discussions with the BELP NCRC are keen to progress with these proposals integrating the plans outlined within the BELP as part of the overall delivery of the Clarences Plan.