

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission

“Work and Train : Promoting training and inclusion of the disadvantaged groups through work”

Leonardo Da Vinci Partnership Project

Newsletter N° 2



‘The second Good Practice meeting took place in the UK, in Maidstone on 22nd and 23rd May 2014. After a presentation about Social Enterprise in the UK two excellent examples were visited which are detailed in this newsletter.’

Project Rationale

See Page 12

Targets of the Project

See Page 12

Programme

See Page 13

Project Visits

- **Spadework**
‘See Page 2’
- **RBLI**
‘See Page 4’

Partnership Members

- **Scuola Centrale Formazione (IT),**
- **Fédération des Initiatives et Actions Sociales – Action Coordonnée de Formation et d’Insertion ASBL (BE),**
- **Asociación Observatorio de Economía Solidaria (ES),**
- **Hope in the Community Limited (UK),**
- **Médialys (FR),**
- **Agency for Economic Development of Kostinbrod (BU)**

Upcoming Events

Next mobility is Barcelona, Spain

Sept 15th – 19th 2014

Project Visits

In each mobility the host partner is responsible for organizing a programme of 2 – 2½ full days of work (2 nights). This programme should include visits to WISES and other organizations, seminars or workshops which are inspiring to all the partners. These activities should promote the encounter between people (people from the target groups, professionals and visitors) and permit direct knowledge of how projects are being implemented. Best practices as well as challenges and difficulties should be addressed. After the visits, a minimum of ½ a day of debate should be promoted in order to contrast experiences among the partners and reach a collective sense of what has been seen.

Hope in the Community, the host, is a social enterprise established to work with community and faith organisations wishing to engage in actions to address social and economic needs. It provides consultancy services, offering anything from facilitation of a needs assessment through to a full project management service. HITC is active in a number of European projects highlighting good practice amongst local partner organisations. It also assists in the propagation of social enterprise activity – the current project being the, now quite well established, Medway Foodbank.

Project Visit - Spadework

Sowing the Seeds of Opportunities for Adults with Learning Difficulties

Spadework's Mission Statement

Spadework bridges the gap for adults with learning difficulties and other disabilities, from dependence in a supportive environment, to increasing their independence, enabling them to live with dignity and purpose.

We aspire to achieve this through work experience, development of life skills and interaction with the community.



The aim of Spadework is to enable people with learning disabilities (Trainees) to develop their independence and personal skills through being involved in everything they do. The Trainees produce the plants that are sold in the garden centre and the fruit and vegetables served in the café and sold in the farm shop, they help to make cakes, jams and chutneys and serve customers in the café and they also work in the farm shop, they also have woodwork, craft and IT facilities.

The garden centre, farm shop and café are all open each day to the general public, which enables the trainees to interact with the customers, helping to improve their social skills, which in turn can increase their confidence and self-esteem.

Spadework helps adults with special needs towards independence through training, support and work experience. In a few cases that may mean independent living and open employment or alternatively simply greater self-confidence to interact with the community. Each person is different with changing needs and aspirations.

The majority of trainees are referred to Spadework by Social Services via the Care Management system. If trainees have a Care Manager they can talk to them and they can be referred. If someone does not have a Care Manager they can still be accepted.

Many of the trainees are on the Direct Payments Scheme. This is where their welfare benefits are paid directly to the trainee and they can determine how that money is used. Given the benefits of participation many people chose to allocate part of their weekly benefit to go to Spadework – a cost of around £34 per day.

Income to the project is around £800,000 per annum. There are five primary sources of income:

- **DIRECT PAYMENTS SCHEME** - where individual Trainees pay to attend and benefit from the work experience.
- **CHARITABLE TRUSTS** - whom are contacted and asked if they can help financially support some of projects. These could be big projects such as a replacement mini-bus or small ones such as buying additional water butts for our greenhouses.
- **COMMERCIAL SALES** - An increasing percentage of the income comes from commercial sales of the flowers and plants grown on site. The Tastebuds restaurant is enjoying a growing reputation locally and their sales of meals and light refreshments are increasing by the day.
- **THE FRIENDS OF SPADEWORK** - are a group of supporters who run a series of fund raising events; they feel lucky and privileged to have their support.

- **THE GENERAL PUBLIC** - a very valuable source of income comes from donations from the general public. Every gift, no matter how small is greatly welcomed and guaranteed to be put to very good use.



Project Visit - RBLI

Operating as a Social Enterprise, RBLI's manufacturing division has a simple and clear objective; to provide employment for those from the Armed Forces Community or those with disability or health condition in a commercial environment. RBLI are proud to provide individuals with the opportunity to develop their skills and independence.

Royal British Legion Industries have a long history in the signage industry, with a wide range of experience in the design, manufacture and installation of signage to commercial and local authority clients. Their history with Parish, Borough and County Councils has allowed them to develop those skills further, tailoring a signage supply package, dedicated to the requirements of local government, education and the emergency services. In addition, RBLI offer a wide range of corporate signage solutions for bespoke requirements alongside rail and Department of Transport Road Traffic signage.

History:

The Royal British Legion in Aylesford was first established as one of two centres for ex-Service patients in 1925. A settlement of houses and workshops were developed along with a medical centre and amenities, with its headquarters at Preston Hall. This eventually became known as Royal British Legion Industries. Care, housing and employment of ex-service personnel and the disabled have continued and developed in many ways.

Method:

RBLI is an independent charity. Their objectives are twofold; to provide employment and training for people with disabilities, whether from an ex-service background or not and where possible progressing them to open employment. Over two thousand people are supported each year in this way; of whom two thirds have disabilities and a similar proportion have an ex-service link. Their headquarters are housed on 60 acres of land with a modern, well-equipped factory and a number of purpose-built

homes at Aylesford in Kent. They have a second factory at Leatherhead in Surrey and operate in other parts of South East England and throughout the UK. RBLI has 400 staff, around 115 of which have disabilities. In the Social Enterprise itself there are 115 staff, 76 of whom have disabilities.

Service:

Their Aylesford factory is responsible for manufacturing a wide range of signs, as well as producing a number of different pallets. At Leatherhead they conduct a direct mail, digital print and packing service. They aim to offer their customers the opportunity to work with a sound commercial organisation working as part of the Third Sector, thereby helping to fulfil corporate social responsibility objectives which may be set in the context of their businesses. The enthusiastic team has the flexibility to adapt to variable tasks to meet customer needs as well as deliver high quality customer service.

Corporate Signage

Working to requirements, RBLI is able to offer a wide range of corporate signage suitable for buildings, open spaces and external sites. A selection of standardised sizes and designs are available alongside bespoke layouts and notices. Design consultation and proof drawings are supplied for all enquiries, maintaining a consistent corporate identity. A full installation and site survey service is offered for all of their signs if required, alongside guidance on the implementation of any required regulations.

Alongside corporate requirements, RBLI offer a range of other signage services for businesses and local authority bodies. Their experience encompasses the supply of signage and display materials to the health industry, emergency services, sports facilities and education establishments. From neighbourhood watch notices to health and safety legislation, RBLI can supply signage to suit your needs.

They also possess a detailed history of signage supply to both the road and rail networks, with clients including County and Borough Councils, Network Rail and civil contractors.

Other Services

The RBLI manufacturing division provides a range of services beyond the signage sector. Between their sites at Aylesford and Leatherhead they are able to offer an array of fabrication and manufacturing services. For more information on their additional facilities, please contact the manufacturing division on 01622 755937. As well as being recognized for the quality of their products and services, approximately 60% of the manufacturing workforce have disabilities.

Pallets:

RBLI produces a wide range of high quality light weight and heavy duty pallets, particularly for industries that manufacture heavy products such as paper and bricks. They are renowned for their excellent service in addition to high quality and competitive pricing.

RBLI can produce either a small run of handmade pallets, or larger runs on our automatic lines. We also offer repair and recycle options on pallet supply and are always looking to use our skills in new product areas. As well as producing disposable and returnable pallets, new woodworking lines include packing cases, fruit bins, rustic garden planters and display racking.

Fulfilment:

This department provides a packaging, light assembly and fulfilment service to industries looking for a non-automated solution to their specific requirements. Items are manufactured by them, stored in their extensive warehouse and then despatched worldwide to diverse businesses including plumbing, building materials, gift and charity catalogues and toy retailers. Examples include models for in-store display, electrical assemblies and baby strollers.

Packing and direct mail:

In 2002 RBLI took over a new factory at Bradmere House in Leatherhead, Surrey, formally part of Queen Elizabeth's Foundation for the Disabled. The factory, which was about to close, employs many disabled people in direct mail, packing and assembly. RBLI, with the support of Jobcentre Plus, has since refurbished and reequipped the factory to ensure the continued employment and development of disabled people at Leatherhead.

Services include mail packs, with handwork for small runs and machine work for large volumes, data checking and security, personalisation and document matching. Hampers, present wrapping, fund-raising packs, product re-works and assembly are also available.

Digital print:

Between their Aylesford and Leatherhead facilities, RBLI offers a range of print solutions from business cards to banners. Their extensive range of print and finishing equipment allows them to offer a centrally-managed print department including cost-effective simplex and duplex copying, wide format printing and a full finishing service including creasing, folding, stitching and shrink wrap.

Combined with their packing and direct mail services, along with their in-house design team, RBLI offers a one-stop solution for printed marketing requirements. Please contact their sales team on 01622 795937 or email them at signs@rbli.co.uk for more information on their manufacturing services.

The Objectives of the Social Enterprise are:

1. Actively seek to recruit from those with disabilities within our communities. This is done through using key State-sponsored employment programmes such as Work Choice
2. Deploying a range of activities which minimize social/employment-based isolation and integrates practices to develop people's potential within the workplace
3. Build business plans which drive delivery of charitable purpose whilst achieves appropriate financial performance to sustain activity

The target groups of the social enterprise are:

- Wounded, injured and sick serving and ex-service personnel.
- Dependents of veterans in need of care and support.
- Local community people with underlying health conditions limiting their independence.

Employees are recruited and trained through standard selection processes. Once in post they provide full skills and competency based training to induct and nurture employees. Training takes place at start of employment and then regularly as tasks change or roles develop.

Employment programmes such as Work Choice have a contractual duration of 5 years ending in October 2015. Employment is not time-bound by this. Training and Development usually takes place through a mix of work-based learning and dedicated ex-work training in classroom style events. Training delivery is supported through a range of specialist assistance such as 'signers' for those with hearing impairments for example. Training is planned for the individual in a tailored way to ensure skills and knowledge is related to job role and activity type, not just a blanket approach taken.

There is utilisation of a range of Health & Wellbeing initiatives to reduce social isolation and exclusion. They employ a HWB officer to design, plan and deliver a range of activity across RBLI's community. This includes physical and mental activity and is for all age groups from young children through to the elderly. Events include Computer knowledge and application for elderly who need introducing to the positive use of PC applications and web-based technology. They set up and implement walks and talks on a number of topics within the community which act as a catalyst for individuals to meet other like-minded people in a safe and controlled, friendly environment.

'We stand toe to toe against commercial organizations in the market place and expect no advantage on price to be given. Our approach is that we are competitive but have the added strength of bringing social value to our customers. When customers buy from RBLI they are investing in social development, building better lives for our employees and those participating within our charitable work.'



Annex 1 Project Rationale

This project demonstrates a new approach that is required to provide employment and personal development opportunities for those with multiple problems (unemployment, school failure, judiciary problems, drug addiction, poverty, etc). Conventional methodologies, particularly during a time of greater economic and social hardship, are inadequate as being insufficiently flexible or innovative.

The economic crisis has accentuated the exclusion of disadvantaged groups and has enlarged the number who fall into these categories, but at the same time, public resources for inclusion and training programmes are decreasing. For these groups, social integration enterprises represent mostly the sole opportunity to regain active participation into society.

Six mobilities will be organised; a catalogue of “successful models” of integration schemes as well as recommendations and guidelines to animate the political debate at the local, regional and even national level will be the main expected results.

Annex 2 Targets of the Project

The 6 NGOs applying for this project are active in the social enterprises field and inclusion activities. They would now like to take their expertise a step further by reflecting together on how to improve the existing systems to create sustainable financing structures and better operating mechanisms for these enterprises. In fact, while the demand for training and integration programmes increases as numbers of people who are excluded or risk to be excluded from the labour market increases public resources for the training and for inclusion activities continue to decrease. As a consequence, partners aim to enhance innovative approaches in the training closer to the market requirements and standards, even through new forms of Enterprises with strong pedagogical dimensions with the aim of contributing to finance education and training especially for those most exposed to marginalization.

Annex 3 Programme

Day 1: 22nd May

1. Social enterprise in the UK and its role in supporting the harder to help towards employment – presentation/discussion by Karen Byrne, Director, CAP Enterprise
2. Tour of Spadework – a social enterprise working with those with mental disabilities and learning difficulties
3. Tour of RBLI – a social enterprise working with those physically disabled and working to support the wider work of the organisation

Day 2: 23rd May

1. Discussion of the visits the previous day and Steering committee meeting of the project (project's partnership). Planning of the next steps. Review of newsletter. Discussion over content and format of project guide