



the **coalfields**
regeneration trust

Our impact
over the last
15 years

OUR PURPOSE

There are more than **5.5m people living in the British coalfields**, which represents one-in-eleven of the entire population of Great Britain. Many are facing a **continued struggle** to secure jobs, start businesses, encourage enterprise and maintain a good standard of living. The truth is that over 30 years on from the major mine closure programme of the mid-eighties, **families are still finding it hard.**

The Coalfields Regeneration Trust was established in 1999 to respond to the needs of coalfield communities. We are the **only organisation** dedicated to providing support, along with practical help, for the coalfields and through **collaborations and partnerships** with stakeholders have become a valued resource and lifeline.

We work with communities so that things can change for the better, ensuring that our support can have a real and lasting impact, both **now and in the future.**

We take a structured approach to the delivery of support to the coalfield communities. Placing specific focus on five key themes which are **skills, employment, health and wellbeing, enterprise and building capacity**, we work with some of the most deprived communities in the UK to develop a programme of activities to meet with their individual and complex needs.

SKILLS

We understand that having access to the **right training programmes and courses to develop new skills** is essential to **securing employment**. We collaborate with partners who deliver education and training within coalfield communities to give local people the opportunity to progress and fulfil their potential.

Whatever the reason for wanting to learn, we work with each individual to offer direction that will provide them with a pathway and a progression programme **to meet with their needs and aspirations**.

Whether someone wants to work as a teacher or on a building site,

as a sports coach or as a nursery nurse, we work with our partners to provide the training needed to **turn ambition into reality**. In addition, we ensure that communities have the skills they need to manage their day-to-day lives.

Coalfields National Apprentice Programme



In 2011 we developed the Coalfields National Apprenticeship programme. Acknowledging the skills gap within the communities, the programme was created to give an apprenticeship wage subsidy as an incentive to recruit young people to provide them with the foundations they needed to establish a future career path.

As an example of just one delivery partner, we worked with Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC) over a twelve month period. The programme created 20 apprentice opportunities with 85% of those involved of a vulnerable cohort, 16 were Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET) and six had made a progression from European Social Funding Foundation Learning Provision and were at risk of becoming NEET.



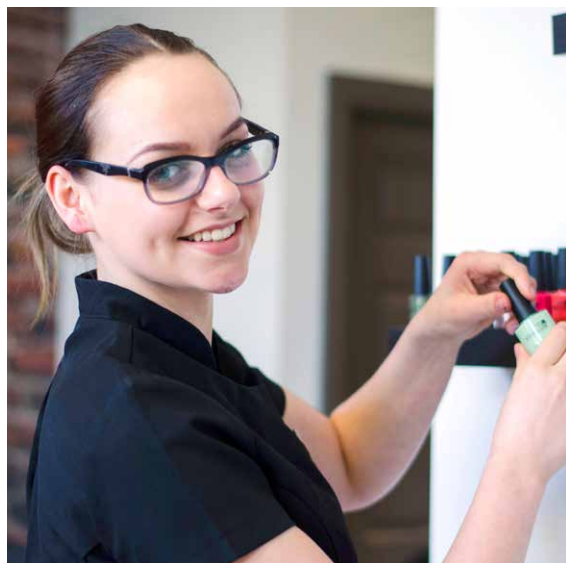
With barriers to overcome many of the young people required **support and guidance from internal and external colleagues** however as a result eight completed the full apprenticeship framework in Youth Work Level 2.

All eight were offered employment with RMBC; three gaining full time employment, two as youth support workers and one working in a caring role for adults. The remaining five from the programme became part-time sessional youth workers.

Working alongside organisations throughout England, we invested **£1.2m** to secure **535** apprentice positions. Taking account of all those involved in the programme, **60%** retained employment, secured other roles or planned to enter into further education.

Young Upstarts

Working with the Youth Association in England we supported a programme for school leavers that would allow them to turn their **aspirations into business ideas.**



The Young Upstart programme recognised a funding gap within the current model meaning that many young entrepreneurs were put off starting a business by the thought of applying for a loan. As an alternative, the programme would offer practical advice and support, while encouraging those interested to draft a business plan.

Going through a process of due-diligence, those start-ups that could justify and rationalise their idea would receive funding to support the launch of their business.

Chief Executive of the Youth Association, Andy Clow said: “From our research we have found that **60% of 18-30 year olds would like to start a business** but only 8% are actually becoming start-ups. 67% of people say that the fear of failure stops them from becoming entrepreneurs while just 28% of young people think they know where to go for information about start-ups.



He adds: “In the last three years, since we launched the programme, we have captured the attention and imagination of 5,000 young people. In the last 12 months alone 2,500 have attended our enterprise workshops and 84 aspiring entrepreneurs have completed the Young Upstarts course, which in turn secures them a qualification that they can use moving forward.”

We now work with the Youth Association and will extend the programme to have even more of an impact. With recommendations that corporate buddies are aligned to those who would benefit from mentoring these young people can get a greater insight into the day-to-day running of a business.

EMPLOYMENT

Unemployment within the coalfield communities has had a **deep and lasting impact** since the major mine closure programme during the mid-eighties. Whilst new opportunities exist, there are still **hundreds of thousands of people out of work** facing barriers to connect them to the nearest jobs.

In a bid to address this we work as a broker to divert any national employment programmes, local job opportunities or apprenticeships and training schemes into the

communities. We have also developed bespoke programmes that tailor support to an individual's circumstances to provide them with the best chance to secure work.

Sports Works



We developed a partnership with WASP Community Club and BRAG in Scotland to deliver a bespoke sports related employability programme for Jobseeker Allowance Claimants between the ages of 16-24.

The 8 week programme, which was repeated five times throughout the year, helped 16 young people from Clackmannanshire to **become motivated and prepared them for the transition from secondary school to the wider world of work** in a familiar and local environment.

The programme taught them to look at what they needed to do to find work and encouraged them to think about their futures. At the same time they were able to take part in a variety of sporting activities including volley ball and soft ball, army team work drills, touch rugby, orienteering, dry slope skiing, swimming, bowls, street dance, self-defence and football.

“

*My personal opinion is that it is a fantastic course **giving younger people the chance and confidence** to go out there and grab what they want in life. I had no idea where I wanted to go and what to do with my life but the course gave me the knowledge and ideas to take away with me. I am now in full time employment and none of it could have been possible without the course.*

Employment Opportunities

Working with families and individuals we provide one to one support for those living within the coalfield communities to help them to find suitable training and employment opportunities.

Providing a free, confidential, no obligation service we aim to develop a realistic personal plan that assists people to **get a job and therefore benefit from a better quality of life.**

Appreciating that people have different and often complex needs, the programme supports with job clubs and training sessions to assist with finding employment, computer literacy, writing a CV, completing application forms, interview skills and applying for training provision. Maintaining an open door policy we welcome anyone who wants to change their future prospects for the better.

Working with trained and experienced staff to ensure that those involved with the initiative **gain tailored support**, the programme is tracked and monitored to make sure that people are securing work placements and full time employment that they can retain over a sustained period.



Family Employment Initiative

- Engaged with 17,719 people
- Secured jobs for 3,602 people
- Arranged training for 4,475 people
- 525 people have completed qualifications
- 137 voluntary positions have been filled
- 25 people have become self employed
- £4,939,067 has been invested



In addition, the programme works with family members to tackle intergenerational problems following those who are long-term unemployed; changing the mind set of individual family members to promote the benefits of volunteering and paid employment.

Those involved in the programme not only benefit from the opportunities that are made available to them but are also motivated to build their confidence and self-esteem

encouraging everyone who takes part to consider group participation in addition to one to one support.

The latest opportunities for positions that become available are promoted and we ensure that strong relationships are built with local employers so that wherever possible jobs are directed into the communities.



Growing Space

Acknowledging that employment is a **continuing challenge for those in the coalfield communities** in Wales we worked alongside South Wales Police and mental health charity Growing Space to fund two pilot schemes that would seek to address the matter.

The Family Employment Initiative (FEI) in Cwmaman near Aberdare and Rassau near Ebbw Vale provided training opportunities including City and Guilds qualifications as part of a programme to landscape neglected local spaces.

Targeting areas that are typically prime locations for anti-social behaviour and drug dealing, the project firstly worked with school children and then their parents to instil a sense of pride back in to the local community.

Bill Upham, Director of Growing Space said: "The CRT Family Employment Initiative is a very effective model which starts with children, and then when we take them out of school their parents come along and we get whole families involved. That level of

family engagement leads on to those who enjoy the experience taking advantage of the training opportunities that the Family Employment Initiative offers."

“

Once you get people with confidence growing who are willing to participate, then they are willing to do some training, maybe take on a work trial and start to recognise that the world of work leads to a better quality of life.





HEALTH & WELLBEING

At the Coalfields Regeneration Trust we work with partners to implement programmes of activity that provide those living in the communities with the opportunity to get involved with sports initiatives, take part in coaching courses and access world class health facilities.

As well as sports related programmes, we also encourage involvement with partner schemes which include anything from **teaching parents how to cook healthy and nutritious meals on**

a budget, to providing support for a community kitchen or shop that will provide good quality food for those living in the most deprived areas.

A healthy community is a strong community and we know that with the right resources we can make a lasting difference to the lives of those living within the coalfields.

Game On Wales

As coalfield communities are some of the most disadvantaged in the country, facing unemployment, ill health and deprivation, young people are often at risk of being **disengaged, living unhealthy lifestyles, underachieving and becoming involved in anti-social behaviour.**

Game On is primarily a community focussed five-a-side football initiative which provides high quality diversionary activities for 13-18 year old young people.

Starting with a weekly programme of engagement in football, the activity leads to personal support, volunteering, training, apprenticeships, further education and jobs.

In just two years of the Big Lottery Funded project more than **1,400 young people have participated** and benefitted from the programme. In order to provide inclusive activities for all young people a concerted effort has also been made to increase engagement with girls as well as boys.

The success of Game On can be measured by the number of locations that are now involved with nine coalfield communities in Wales taking part including Merthyr Tydfil, Neath Port Talbot, Swansea, and three further locations in Rhondda Cynon Taff. In addition three new hubs have started this year in Blaenau Gwent and have been match funded by Blaenau Gwent Youth Service.





As a programme that is delivered throughout Wales, England and Scotland, each of the clubs involved all take part in a regional final. All clubs compete before the winning teams from each country are selected as representatives who then proceed to the International Final.

The International Final provides a further opportunity for those involved in the programme to **meet new people, visit different locations and showcase their talents.**

Last year the tournament took place in Scotland. All teams performed particularly well with Neath Port Talbot group winning the trophy after a nail-biting penalty shoot-out in the final against England.

The programme has been a huge success and thanks to engagement with new volunteers has led to **46 qualifications being achieved in Wales last year.**





HAVING A POSITIVE AND LASTING IMPACT



Employment

- 25,342 people have been supported into work
- 5,375 jobs have been created or safeguarded



Skills & Qualifications

- 1,300,025 people have improved skills and qualifications



Health & Wellbeing

- 225,452 people have participated in activities that have improved health



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Enterprise

- 2,822 social enterprises have been supported



Building Capacity

- 4,628 community facilities have been supported
- 30,134 community activities have been supported
- 70,751 volunteers have been supported

More than 2m people have benefited from support delivered by the Coalfields Regeneration Trust in the last 15 years.

BreathingSpace

BreathingSpace was an ambitious partnership with Rotherham PCT, along with support from Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and the Foundation Trust Hospital. This unique national pilot, which launched in 2008, has resulted in a radical step change in improving the quality of life for people with severe respiratory disease, their families and carers.



BreathingSpace provides a range of services including pulmonary rehabilitation, oxygen assessment, lifestyle and education, smoking cessation support and advice, respite care, hospice care and education for those caring for someone with a respiratory condition.

Reporting figures which show that cases of bronchiectasis and COPD in the area are now **30% lower than the national**

average, this is a real success story for us and an example of how the organisation **directly impacts on the health and wellbeing of the coalfield communities.**

BreathingSpace has featured within national media and has **gained global attention** from countries including China as a measure of best practice in this field of health.



ENTERPRISE

We have supported a number of successful social enterprises over the last 15 years and have seen first-hand the fantastic work that these organisations can deliver.

Whether it is an individual with an idea that they want to make happen or an organisation that already exists but would like to take their social enterprise to the next level, we are here to offer the guidance and support that is required.

Social enterprise can have a massive impact on the local area; perhaps it is a bakery that will provide jobs for those with learning

disabilities or a furniture shop that will upcycle reclaimed wood, there is no limit to the positive impact that these ventures can have.

Asset Transfer

The current climate of austerity measures and continued funding cuts has led to a marked and sustained increase in the demand for support as a result of groups coming together to **protect community services through asset transfer.**



A number of key community services have found that they are at risk including museums, libraries, leisure facilities and community centres. Local people have responded positively, **coming together to create new innovative community ownership models** to sustain activities and protect assets.

The Coalfields Regeneration Trust in Wales is currently working with hot spot

communities in RCT, Neath Port Talbot and Blaenau Gwent as it has become increasingly evident that the mix of funding and development support from the organisation has shown to be **one of the most effective and efficient ways to progress asset transfer.**



Just one such example of the success of this model is the saving of Beddau and Tynant Library. Striking a deal to take community control of the building with a 21 year lease at a peppercorn rent, the community hub was able to remain open and even offer additional services as a result.

Library Group Secretary, Helen Boldero said: “We are ecstatic that all of the hard work of the last ten months has finally paid off and the library’s future is now secure. It

was absolutely vital that we kept the library, which is at the heart of the community, particularly since the local day centre closed.”

With an exciting programme of activities including a mother and toddler group, taster sessions for the over 65’s on art, photography, gardening, quizzes and coffee mornings there is a lot the community now has to look forward to.



Enterprising Communities Programme

The Enterprising Communities Programme (ECP) was developed to stimulate community enterprise in coalfield communities. The ECP has three main objectives:

- Support the development of coalfield organisations to become more enterprising and sustainable.
- Assist with the development and sustainability of community assets such as buildings and land for the wider benefit of the local community.
- Develop a membership of connected coalfield organisations and respond to their needs.





As part of the Enterprising Communities programme, which gives organisations with a social impact access to practical advice and guidance, those involved in the initiative had the opportunity to submit an entry for a competition with one winner receiving £50,000 and 4 further organisations securing £25,000 each.

Following the initial submission, shortlisted candidates were asked to present to an impartial panel of judges, who made recommendations on which organisations would most benefit from the funds available. In addition, **the positive and lasting impact** that each candidate would have on their local communities was considered.

The Lisa Dixon Centre relied on a weather damaged building that was not fit for purpose. As a result of the £50,000 investment made the charity can now extend the range it offers and ensure that the furniture is not damaged while in storage.



Chief Executive, Hayley Hood said:
“Not only does this additional funding mean that we can **invest in our future business and create a more sustainable model** but also that we can extend our services, which in turn means that we can provide more programmes and activities for our service users. This is such great news for us – **it is literally life changing!**”

The five winning organisations are now Champions of the Coalfields Regeneration Trust, showcasing the fantastic work that takes place in the communities and **the lasting impact and legacy that they achieve as a result of the activities they provide.**



The Lisa Dixon Centre secured £50,000 as a result of the awards and used the much-needed funds to build a brand new ‘purpose built’ showroom for its furniture subsidiary, which had doubled in size in just two years.

MOVING FORWARD

At the Coalfields Regeneration Trust **communities are at the heart of everything that we do.** We work with individuals, groups and organisations to build programmes of support that can provide access to funding, advice, guidance and resources.

From grass roots groups that help to build friendships and create stronger support networks, sports initiatives that encourage young people to become a part of a team

or projects designed to raise skills and even help people to find work, **every programme has a positive outcome.**



Working with local people we take their ideas and together we can make them happen; our main objective is to give the coalfield communities the skills, knowledge and resource to help themselves.

Coalfields Community Futures

Since the programme began in 2011 in Scotland we have supported 21 separate areas to prepare five year action plans, strengthen local organisations and take forward projects that have been highlighted as priorities for local communities.



The Community Engagement Team provides expertise, hands-on support and funding to meet with the following objectives:

- Prepare a Community Action Plan. Using a participative process, which involves the whole community, we identify priority projects and actions for the next five years.
- Strengthen Community Organisations. The team offers training and advice on development for existing community organisations and setting up new anchor groups.
- Support Project Implementation. A participatory budget of £20,000 is available to those communities involved in the programme to support 'soon, seen, successful' projects.

Results to date:

- Support for 21 communities with a population of nearly 100,000.
- 44 people have been trained in Community Action Planning and employed as Community Agents.
- Nearly 200 people have been involved in local steering groups.
- 5,380 households have returned community view surveys.
- 4,632 people have attended Coalfields Community Futures open days.
- Over £600,000 has been awarded to 170 projects from the participatory budget fund.

Community Investments

Allocating funds of up to £10,000 we have invested £1.25m into coalfield community organisations in England within the last 18 months. The organisation has supported thousands of people living within the communities.



The Coalfields Community Grant Programme awarded £8,000 to Our Centre, the organisation benefiting local people throughout Kirkby-in-Ashfield and surrounding areas.

Receiving a total of £8,529 the grant was used to contribute towards an additional driver, as well as providing further equipment and specialist training for volunteers who would like to make a positive difference to people living within their local community.





Providing a range of services including both minibus and personal transport, along with social events such as boccia bowls and walking or First Contact, which teaches

people how to remain safe and independent in their own homes, Our Centre works with adults typically over the age of 50 that want to continue to lead an active life.

Management Support, Angie Peppard said: "This grant is a real lifeline for Our Centre. We are so pleased that we can use it to extend our services, making even more of a difference to those who are involved with us. Many elderly people in our area would become

isolated without the support that we are able to give them and this will mean that those who want to get out and about are able to do so. In addition we can offer the necessary training to new volunteers who want to help, which is further good news."



The Coalfields Community Grant programme is also available in Wales and Scotland. Here are case studies which showcase further achievements as a result of our work.

The Gairdoch Project

Partnering with the Gairdoch Initiative, Falkirk Council, Skills and Development Scotland and Oatridge College we established a local area forum. The purpose of the group was to try to re-establish a local parkland as a valuable community amenity, which was in a disused condition and becoming an eyesore.



Working in the Carronshore area in the East of Falkirk the local community had initially called upon the local Council for support however when developing plans it became apparent that within the context of limited resources the most that could be hoped for was an improvement in the health and safety of the area.

As a former coalfields area it came to the attention of the local elected member that the project may be eligible for funding from the

Coalfields Community Grant programme.

It was immediately apparent that local people wanted ownership of this project and that they would be committed to creating a space that they could call their own. It was therefore agreed that a project should be developed focusing on youth unemployment, low skills and the lack of qualifications amongst residents of the former coalfield area, whilst at the same time delivering environmental improvements.



Falkirk Council in working with the local community submitted an application for financial support to help deliver this multi-outcome initiative focusing on **providing 12 Modern Apprenticeship opportunities in Amenity Horticulture** for young people without qualifications who were at risk of long term unemployment, financial and social exclusion.

As a result of this successful grant application the community got a parkland that they could use and be proud of. In addition, thanks to the work that they had been involved with, young people from the area could use their new found skills to give them **greater opportunities for the future.**

THE FUTURE

The Coalfields Regeneration Trust will continue to collaborate with key stakeholders and local partners to support projects and initiatives for the benefit of the coalfield communities.

Building on 15 years of commitment, we will identify the most disadvantaged communities in the country before creating a bespoke package of programmes to meet with the ongoing difficulties they face.

The Coalfields Regeneration Trust, like many other charities, wants to create a sustainable model that will see us become self-financing.

Building affordable homes, safeguarding assets through transfer and developing capacity around social enterprise means we can create a business that will provide funds to support our continued work within the coalfields.

Linking all that we do to **job creation, building skills and connecting communities** means that we can meet with our objectives while becoming a more financially sustainable organisation.

We know that there is more to be done and we will **continue to champion the needs and aspirations of the coalfield communities** throughout the UK but we also acknowledge that we cannot do it alone.

It is only as a result of strategic collaborations with our delivery partners that we are able to enhance the outcomes and continue to **make the real and lasting impact** that will turn the lives around of these communities. Only then will we meet with our target to **bring coalfield communities to the national average for the benefit of the next generation.**

For further details about the Coalfields Regeneration Trust please visit:

www.coalfields-regen.org.uk





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