

Conclusion and recommendations

Looking back over the last 12 months it is clear that some significant success has been achieved.

The work that the Partnership has been involved in has been varied and broad reaching.

The Partnership has organised and delivered 7 Business Network events. In total nearly 200 businesses and organisations took the opportunity to attend, enabling us to make direct contact with nearly 450 individuals and involve them in the Partnership.

The 186 delegates who attended the five themed events had the opportunity to get advice from key business support agencies and consider key activities that affect business such as lean manufacturing, environmental issues and funding availability.

The Development of the Partnership website provides access to support from agencies such as The LSC, Yorkshire Forward, Business Link West Yorkshire, Invest In Bradford and the Manufacturing Advice Service as well as local education and training provision, funding and business support, Industry Cluster and Sector Brokers and Local and Regional Strategic Partners.

Through the website we have been able to publicise the work of the Partnership

to a broader audience, with 2500 visiting the site in the period January to March 2005.

Enterprise is seen as key to the economy and The Partnership was able to support this with funding aimed at new businesses starts and at helping to establish a moped lease scheme for young people called wheels2work

enabling young people to access jobs and training who would otherwise be unable to do due to the availability of public transport.

Finally all of the work and the projects delivered through the Partnership has begun to put in place the infrastructure to deliver a successful geographic brokerage and economic regeneration in Airedale

The launch of the masterplan with its broad economic focus has given us the opportunity in Airedale to focus on what is required to develop the key clusters theme such as workforce development, business support, increased motivation

The project has achieved the following outcomes

- 6 People into Jobs
- 72 Learning Opportunities
- 30 New Business Start-ups
- 10 Business Network events
- 1 Website Established
- 3 Community Centres connected to Broadband
- 2 Networks Established
- Bingley Connection Established

and innovation, skills and training requirement and access to information.

Learning from the experience of the brokerage activity of last year it is essential to build on the initial successes of the business network events.

From the feedback gained we are reviewing the format of the events to ensure we get more interaction with delegates so that there is more opportunity for them to discuss issues together. Therefore with a future programme of events there will be a more varied content of delivery to include a mixture of speakers, presentations, open and guided forums.

Acknowledgements

Robert Brough Network & Brokerage Coordinator CBMDC/Airedale Partnership
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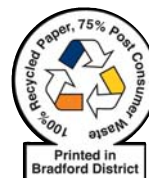
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Airedale Partnership Brokerage Report



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An introduction to the Airedale Partnership Brokerage

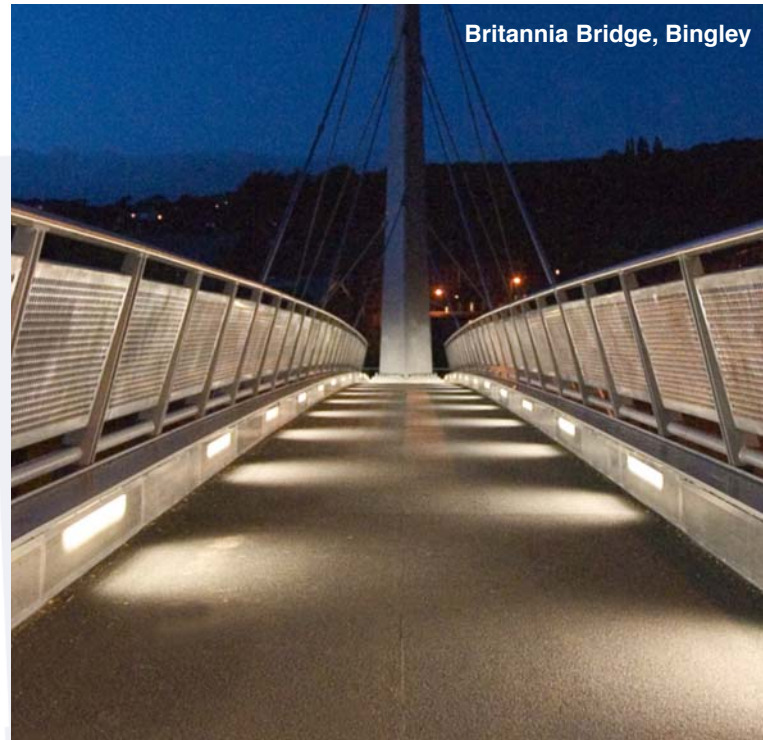
The need to develop a business network/brokerage for Airedale was originally identified from research by consultants Evaluation Research Strategies in 2002 and 2003 which looked at employment skills and training issues in Airedale.

It was also considered a priority by Yorkshire Forward and the Learning and Skills Council for West Yorkshire (LSCWY) in the development of their skills strategy.

Airedale was also identified in a strategic context in the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Economic Strategy (RES), the West Yorkshire Action Plan and Bradford Metropolitan District Council's Regeneration Strategy. Airedale was seen as a location for key companies and clusters, for investment opportunities and employments sites and also as having an attractive environment with urban centres and recent road and public transport investment.

When the Urban Regeneration Company for Bradford city centre (now Bradford Centre Regeneration) was established, Bradford Council's Executive asked for additional proposals that met the needs of the wider district, including urban centres and areas of brownfield and industrial development.

After a major consultation between June and November 2002 the Airedale Partnership was set up, with a shadow board being formed in December 2002. Now fully constituted, the Board has



eight members. Fifty per cent of the members are private sector representatives, with the remaining members representing Bradford Vision, The Learning Partnership and Bradford Council.

The Partnership aims to bring about the economic regeneration of Airedale by:

- Bringing key employment sites into use
- Stimulating the growth and development of key clusters such as Advanced Manufacturing and Digital
- Promoting connectivity
- Supporting the renaissance of the urban centres
- Ensuring appropriate skills development and connecting local people to economic opportunities
- Developing initiatives for the rural economy
- Developing cross-boundary initiatives with Leeds and Craven as a corridor for investment

To help to achieve some of these aims and to establish a stronger partnership approach to economic regeneration in Airedale, funding was sought from Yorkshire Forward, through the LSCWY, to establish geographical brokerage and business network activity in Airedale.

This would be managed by the Airedale Partnership to deliver skills and training projects, job outcomes and business network events.

Projects Overview

Bradford's 2020 Vision identified Airedale as one of the keys to economic regeneration of the district.

The Airedale Partnership was established to act as a catalyst for the development of key employment sites, to lead the renaissance of the town centres and to co-

ordinate business support, training and jobs match.

It would also develop cross-boundary initiatives with Leeds and Craven for the joint promotion and development of the Aire corridor as a focus for the growth of knowledge-rich industries, particularly in the

digital and advanced manufacturing clusters.

The brokerage project was developed in response to the recommendations of the Employment, Skills and Training Surveys undertaken by Evaluation Research and Strategies (ERS) and funded through Sub Regional Action

Plan 1 funding (SRAP1).

The project aimed to undertake a range of actions to address the skills and training needs of businesses identified by the research and connect local communities to economic activity and employment opportunities.

Website Statistics

www.airedalepartnership.org

The Airedale Partnership website is essential to the establishment of the business network. It aims to:

- Act as a single access point for businesses and other organisations to link into other beneficial and associated sites via the info links pages
- Publicise up-to-date news and progress of the work of the Airedale Partnership
- Enable organisations to publicise events
- Enable direct feedback on its work and activities to be received by the Partnership
- Help develop a strong partnership approach to economic regeneration in Airedale



The website has been set up as a key aspect of the work of the brokerage/network.

To help to monitor and evaluate the website's effectiveness monthly website statistics are sent to the webpage manager.

We look at a number of factors, such as the average number of visitors per day as a guide to the number of who are people accessing the site.

The number of hits per day gives us an indication of how many pages or files each visitor is looking at.

The knowledge that it can take about four minutes to download one megabyte of information has proved to be invaluable in relation to the size of documents available on the site for the public and businesses to download.

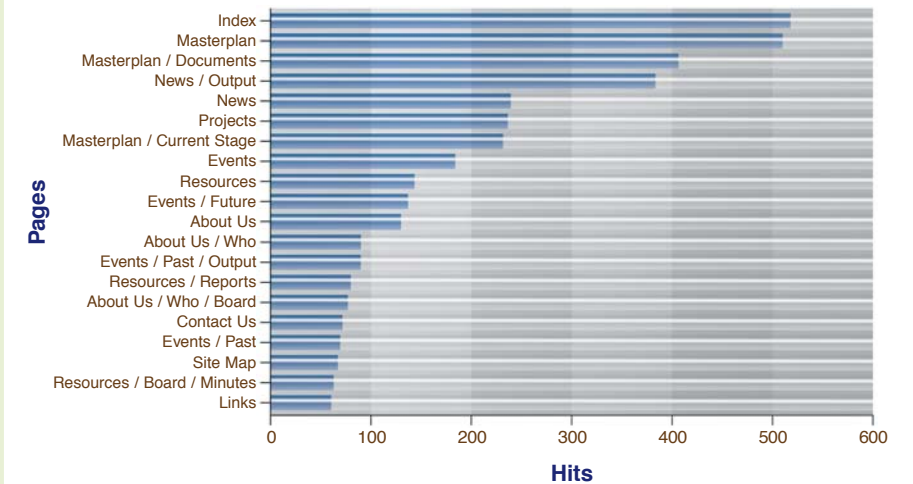
The statistics show that many people have abandoned attempts to download documents because of the time it was taking. For example, in March there were 362 hits on specific resources but nearly 80% - were abandoned or failed.

The 'Most requested resources' information is useful to show what visitors to the site are using it for, such as most visited page, graphic files to download. (see figure 5)

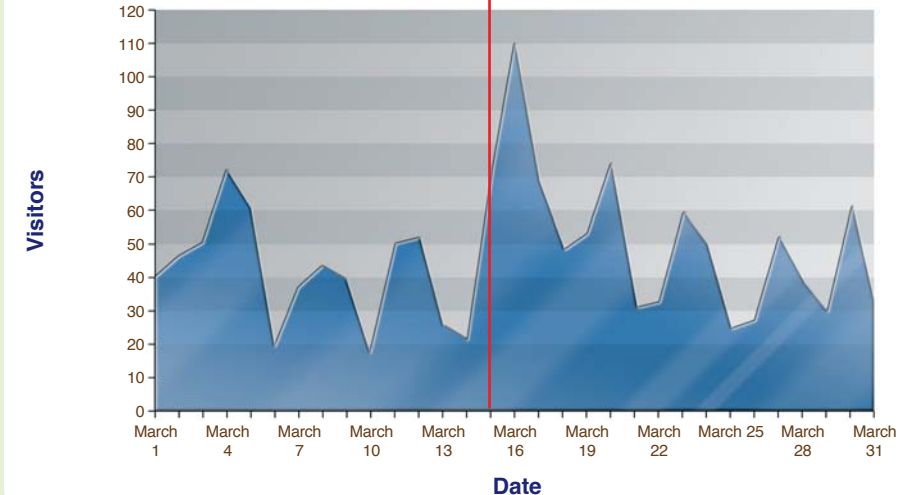
Checking the least requested page gives an indication as to whether people are using the site the way in which we hoped.

For example, our events page is used very little. This is clearly an area we need to develop as it is important in introducing the network to a wider audience and publicising our events. To overcome this and better promote what the site has to offer we can signpost and link the events page and others

Most requested pages in March



Visitors per day in March



from the homepage.

The statistics also showed that many people were exiting the site via the news page, indicating that because there was no up-to-date news at that time and all previous news items have been archived. The archive section

needs to be signposted and linked from both the homepage and the news page.

The single access page information can also be used to promote other areas of the website where you have information that you would like people to see.



The Wrose community centre, Shipley

Construction Network

Keighley College has been involved in the development of a Construction Network to work within the construction industry to connect communities to economic activity, to develop better connections to local construction companies, to improve education, learning and skills acquisition and improve the skills of existing employees and encourage new business start-ups.

The Construction Network has so far encouraged over 30 companies to join, they include wholesalers/retailers as well as companies providing services across the range of skills including plumbers, electricians and plasterers. The network held a launch conference in December 2004 and has since held several meetings and delivered training for 30 employees as well as establishing contacts with the Bradford Construction Network and giving

local employers access to a wide range of support services.

Davric Construction

Management Training – The effectiveness of the trainer was excellent, some topics were perceived to be more relevant than others including motivating and managing people, teamwork, planning, Health & Safety and stress management. Working to budgets, communications and understanding customers was less relevant. There was some perception that management training was only for men in suits!

Woollers Construction

Management Training – The staff found the people side of things beneficial including Health & Safety, budgets were less relevant and they felt that some of the general training was aimed at big companies although they thought it could be tailored.



Construction network Session

Staying Connected

Funding was given to enable the Bolton Woods, Windhill and Wrose community centres in the Shipley area to continue to be connected to broadband to enable and encourage the take-up of training amongst local residents.

Fifty two learners have so far benefited and continue to take accredited qualifications. A further 77 learners have enrolled on often substantial learning programmes as 'informal learners' without accreditation but with an individual learning plan.

Wrose Centre

At the Wrose Centre there are specific crèche facilities which have been supported by the Partnership that have been extend to cover three sessions per week to and now support a regular group of women. The group are all interested in gaining computer skills to either find employment or further training or education.

Bolton Woods Centre

Alketa, Ajtene who live in Bolton Woods have been attending Wrose and Windhill Centres whilst Bolton Woods is refurbished, have completed Computer Literacy and Information Technology (CLAIT) qualifications and have almost finished their European Computer Driving License (ECDL) qualification as well as improving their language skills.

Frances, Robyn and Becky are all progressing towards achieving their CLAIT qualifications.

Comments about the crèche:

'Callum and Lowrie go to Happy Tots, If it wasn't for the crèche... I hope it never closes... it's like a lifeline. If you didn't have it we'd be struggling 'cos there isn't any one else to help.'

At the Windhill Centre

Kerry and Joanne are taking their CLAIT Plus and have enrolled on GCSE Maths Course, both obtained part-time jobs and had to stop, however Joanne has re-enrolled to finish CLAIT Plus.

Kathryn and Shelley are using the IT facilities to support the work they are doing to complete their portfolios for Social Care NVQ's

Business network

One of the aims of the Airedale Partnership Brokerage was to establish a business network. It would support businesses in the area and link them to services across the district through a website and network events.

Seven events have been held in the last year. As well as those launching the work of the Airedale Partnership and the Airedale Masterplan and Strategy drawn up by consultants Arup, there were also five individually-themed events aimed at local businesses.

Three events were organised in partnership with the Airedale and Bradford Manufacturing Alliance and were particularly aimed at manufacturing companies.

Green and/or environmental issues facing businesses

This event was held at the Bradford and Bingley Sports Club. Its purpose was to inform manufacturers in Airedale and Bradford about current environment-related issues which may affect their businesses, including waste management, legislation, grants and energy.

Speakers included representatives from Urban Mines, Business Link West Yorkshire and the Carbon Trust

Business funding

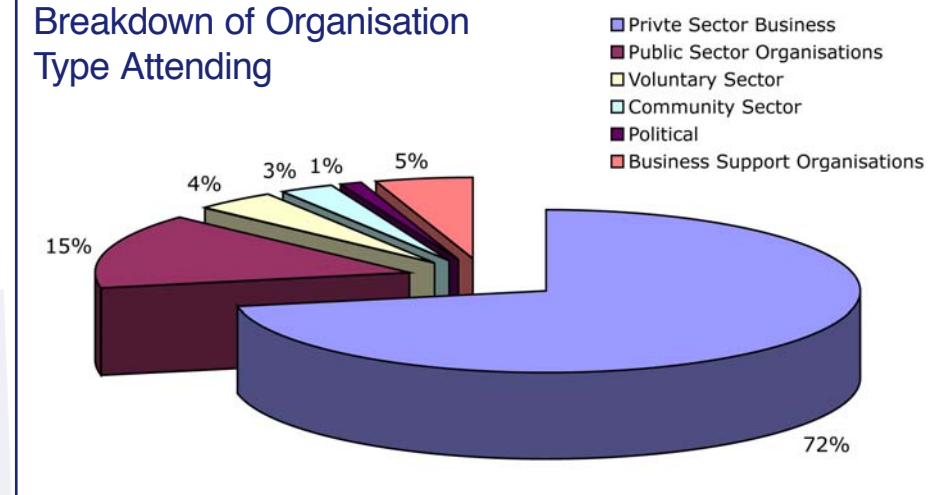
This event looked at the availability of funding to support businesses and was held at Bradford City FC.

Guest speakers included representatives from Business Link West Yorkshire, Urban Mines, Invest In Bradford, Sustainability (UK) Ltd and the Manufacturing Advisory Service.

How to make 'leaner' businesses

'Lean' was developed as a result of research work carried out in the automotive sector, heavily influenced by Japanese best practice. It involves the identification and elimination of waste from a company's manufacturing processes and

Breakdown of Organisation Type Attending



other functions.

Guest speaker was Professor David Little of the West Yorkshire Manufacturing Excellence Club.

Two other events dealt with the following subjects:

What is the impact of 'digital' technology

This event was held at the Bankfield Hotel, Bingley, and looked at the impact digital technology is having on companies in the media, digital and creative sectors.

Guest speakers came from Yorkshire Forward, Hallmark Cards, New Technology Institute, Arup and bmedi@.

Connectivity

An event held to promote e-learning and communications connectivity and to launch the Connecting Airedale Survey in Airedale with speakers from Palmedia and Reid IT Services, British Telecom, the Airedale & Wharfedale Broadband project.

Attendance

Overall more than 450 people have attended the Business Network events. The two Airedale Partnership launch events attracted 283 people while the five other events attracted 186 people, an average attendance of 37.2 people.



They represented 192 different organisations and of those organisations 37% attended two or more events. Breakdown of sectors as follows:

- Private sector businesses - 72%
- Public Sector organisations – 14.5%
- Business Support agencies – 5%
- Voluntary sector – 4%
- Community Sector – 2.5%
- Political Parties – 1%

Feedback

Network event evaluation forms were issued at five of the events, each asking four questions about the quality of the event, the capability of the speakers, the benefits gained and the quality of the venue.

Below is a summary of the feedback received.

Both positive and negative comments were received from attendees at the events for example:

- "Too specialist to be of benefit to my business"
- "Need more involvement and interaction from attendees"
- "Thanks for an excellent and informative seminar"
- "Good ideas, input and comments from Hallmark"

Summary of evaluations of Business Network events to 28 February 2005

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
The overall quality of the event was	0%	11%	42%	47%
The capability of speakers was	0%	10%	39%	51%
The benefits gained from attending	2%	35%	41%	22%
Quality of the venue	0%	8%	63%	29%



Bingley Connection

Airedale Partnership Projects

Over the last twelve months the Airedale Partnership has been involved in delivering a number of interventions aimed at promoting connectivity, supporting skills development, developing initiatives for the rural economy, supporting the renaissance of urban centres and establishing its brokerage activity in Airedale:

This has included establishing the post of **Brokerage and Network Coordinator** to develop opportunities for businesses in Airedale to be linked with Yorkshire Forward and LSC's Cluster Broker activities and to link them to the availability of business support services through the establishment of a programme of business network events. The Airedale Partnership has held seven

network events over the last year including one consultation event and the launch of the Airedale Masterplan and strategy and five themed events aimed primarily at businesses.

The events have dealt with topics such as the promotion of environmental issues facing businesses, funding sources to help support and promote business growth, how to develop a leaner approach to business development as well as looking at ICT connectivity and e-learning and the development and impact of digital, creative and media sectors in the Airedale. The events also gave the opportunity to promote the services of a number of business support agencies in the area.

Connectivity Feasibility

The appointment of consultants Palmedia and Reid IT Services to undertake an ICT Connectivity Feasibility Study to map the geographical spread of broadband connectivity in Airedale and to identify viable solutions to connect those businesses and communities not able to take up broadband.

The report which was publicly launched at the connectivity event in December 2004 recommended a unified vision and strategy and a single body promoting e-learning in the district, greater use of local facilities, mobile units and schools as venues for the delivery of e-learning, the use of blended learning, minimal support networks and wireless e-learning gateways, many of the recommendations and ideas have been incorporated into the Airedale Masterplan.

Bingley Connection

The establishment of the Bingley Connection a local learning outlet for Shipley College in Bingley to further develop the 'learning line' concept along the Airedale rail route.

The Bingley Connection was opened to the public in July and officially opened in December 2004. The Connection has been well received in Bingley not only as an attractive addition to the main street but as an attractive venue restored and furnished to a very high specification.

It has enabled Shipley College to begin to design and deliver courses locally for businesses and to support the development of the Centre of Vocational Excellence in Care.

Positive feedback by users of the Bingley Connection:

- 'Excellent value for money'
- 'Great tutors and excellent facilities'
- 'The training received has been very, very useful and it now means that we can now offer our clients a fully functional web site'

With the opening of the Bingley Connection the future is now set for the further expansion of training and workforce development in Bingley.

Wheels2work

Wheels2work is a moped loan scheme managed by Bingley Voluntary Action. It has provided an affordable and accessible transport option for young people aged 16 to 25 for whom no other form of transport is available in order to access jobs and training.

For just £3.50 per week plus cost of fuel and oil Wheels2work so far has enabled five

Shipley College ICT Apprentices

The provision of 10 places for 'Apprentices' in ICT at Shipley College to take up ICT training to support and improve the capacity of local community centres and to gain employment.

This project had recruited 10 apprentices to undertake training towards completing a 22 hour programme leading to an NVQ in Installing and supporting or Using IT, plus achieving Key Skills and Wider Key Skills and work experience.

Achievements so far

- Four learners have passed Key Skills Level 2 Communications
- Six learners have achieved CLAIT Plus module BBC Webwise and the Learndirect Surf Direct programme

- One learner has achieved Key Skills Application of Number Level 2
- Arrangements have been made to complete the First Aid at Work module.

Placements include

- Shipley College ILT Services Dept
- Sure Start, Shipley
- St Joseph's College
- Windhill Community Centre
- Baildon Area Play Association
- Bradford Council

What the learners say

Craig 29 yrs old
NVQ Installing and Supporting IT
Job History: Factory work
Aim: initially to complete ECDL

'Having been on the course only 3 months my self esteem and confidence have improved, studying is now more enjoyable. I am doing the work for me

rather than being forced to do it, I feel the course is a change of direction a chance to do something I want to. It has also enabled me to do Maths and English again, I feel as though I am moving my life forward instead of watching it go by'.

Nicola 27 yrs old
NVQ Installing and Supporting IT
Job History: Several 'dead-end' jobs between having children, voluntary work and training courses.
Aim: To take a new opportunity to gain employment

'I had planned on staying at home with my youngest until starting nursery, but this opportunity came up and with all the support it seemed too good to miss. My confidence has improved as I have completed my maths and communications exams at level 2. I am on placement at Shipley College and hope to stay there until December. At last I feel my life is turning around... None of this would have been possible without financial support, it has done my self esteem a power of good because I am working to support my family'

Start-up case study

Vincent – attended the agency on a one to one basis to consider the possibility of starting his own business in mobile catering. We were able to assist with his enquiries and ensure that he had considered the legal as well as health and hygiene issues. His business plan was improved and his pricing policy revised. He has established a pitch and is turning over £400 per week.

Start-up case study

Carol – attended the business plan course during March this year wishing to explore the possibility of setting up as a self employed trainer. The course was completed and Carol started her business. Unfortunately she was taken ill suddenly and spent a month in hospital. This did result in a slow down in the business but Carol is now on the road to recovery and the business is starting to progress again. Currently her turnover is at an average of £500 per month but is expected to increase over time.

Start-up case study

Stuart – is training to become a full time opera singer. After leaving university he tried to obtain sponsorship, but was unable to do so. As he was signing on for Job Seekers Allowance we assisted in the preparation of a business plan. The business plan was to teach and examine English to non- English speakers. Stuart now spends a lot of his time away from home, his turnover for the first 2 months of business was £7000. He is still undergoing his training to become an opera singer, but the need to find a sponsor is no longer a priority.

Funding has been provided to support and encourage new business start-ups in Airedale through the Airedale Enterprise Services.

This has enabled 30 more new businesses start in the area from sales, retail, training and catering to opera singing.

now he is happily an independent traveller and His mother has a well earned lie-in.

A 16 year old male living in Denholme is now working as an apprentice in Oakworth, again facing similar problems with public travel and his mother now unable to continue taking him to work was facing the prospect of losing his apprenticeship. Now with the help of Wheels2Work he can continue his work and also undertake shift work.

A 16 year old female (pictured right) joined the scheme in September 2004 to enable her to get from her home in Denholme to her work in Bingley as a trainee conveyancer.



young people access jobs and training locations that would otherwise be available to them.

A 22 year old male living in Denholme starts work at 6.00am at a bakery which is approximately 5 miles away. The first bus does not arrive until 6.30am so he has been dependant on his mother driving him to work. After seeing the advert for the project in The T&A he contacted John and