Summary

Community Cohesion
We have developed the Very Philosophical brand - using the Philosophy for Communities technique in order to bring people from different ethnic backgrounds together.

Tackling Worklessness
Its in Your Hands is an initiative developed in Oldham and being utilised across the group to encourage residents to understand what work based training is available. STEP 1 Salford specialises in tackling long term unemployment through our contractors offering real training in action followed by placements.

Future Jobs Fund
We have created 26 jobs under the future jobs fund in Oldham and Preston-creating a new projects of Community Researchers teaching local people skills in digital media so they can join this growing industry and capture the
thoughts of communities using blogs, video, audio and new media.

Digital Inclusion
Community Reporters, Working in partnership with People Voice Media we are able to increase digital inclusion in our communities in Salford, Handforth, Preston and Accrington. Teaching local people filming skills and how to upload information to a website so they can showcase their films.

What did you set out to achieve?

In 2009 Contour outlined its Community Investment project to deliver change within the Communities of the north west where Contour holds a significant presence. We aim to deliver this in the following ways.

Tackling Worklessness
1. An Apprenticeships scheme as part of the Contour Housing Group structure. The project would develop Administration and Trades apprentices-taken on in expectation of them completing a 3 year apprenticeship programme with the Group. However, for the trades apprentices, it may be that we take on an apprentices who is partway through his programme and we would commit to them completing the three year programme with the group.

2. Expand Salford Training and Employment Programme (STEP1). Develop STEP1 beyond construction based success areas to explore Social Media and ICT skills and Environmental skills.

3. Develop a Future Jobs Fund creative project. Utilise the opportunity of Future Jobs to deliver a new project that Contour would be unable to do without this funding stream.

4. Develop training days which became -It's in your hands. Develop practical training to demonstrate the possibilities of trade work with Contour Communities.

5. Explore how Contour could offer Social Enterprise support. Contour Housing Group committed to supporting the development of social enterprises across the NW region. Contour recognised that the benefits of supporting and working with the 3rd sector impacts upon the communities and residents of local areas. Communities benefit from the services of 3rd sector organisations and that they contribute to the infrastructure of great places to live.

Develop Digital Inclusion
To develop skills in our Communities to engage people with digital technologies and open up the possibilities socially and as a possible career using Community Reporting.
### How were these aims and objectives met?

1. **An Apprenticeships scheme**
   - The five administration apprentices have completed NVQ2 in Business Administration and are now completing a relevant Level 3 qualification in the specialist areas in which they have gained a full year placement.

2. **Expand Salford Training and Employment Programme - two training courses developed:**
   - **GROW Broughton** is community based environmental activity within Higher Broughton. The course is accredited and volunteers will get an Open College Network Level One Unit in Community Development.
   - **Connect Broughton** met a need within the Eastern European Community and the Orthodox Jewish Community for structured training in IT and Media.

3. **Develop a Future Jobs Fund**
   - Under the Groundwork/NHF bid, Contour Housing Group has employed 28 people in Oldham and Preston for 6 months in trainee positions with direct community benefit.
   - Community Researchers in Preston learning skills in New Media making videos, blogs and audio packages to help champion community issues back to Contour and local agencies.
   - Environmental Improvement workers in Oldham improving our communities by erecting fencing, painting and clearing areas.

4. **Develop training days**
   - It's in your hands programme developed in Oldham and Bury to deliver hands on events in the heart of the community to allow people to have a taster of local jobs by taking part.

5. **Contour Social Enterprise support**
   - Contour currently chairs the regional, National Housing Federations, Social Enterprise Practitioners meetings, in partnership with Social Enterprise North West.

Ambition plus project developed to showcase social enterprises to residents and support their ideas.

6. **Community Reporters**
• Development of Community Reporting in Huncoat, Accrington to develop local people digital skills teaching them video editing, web publishing and blogging to allow them to have a social media centre an old shop in the heart of the community in Huncoat.

What challenges did the project face, and what lessons were learned?

The Contour Community Investment programme faced a number of key challenges. The scale and ambition of the project was one of the largest challenges. Each element of the project presented its own issues.

STEP1 faced the challenge of how to find out what kind of worklessness project was needed. It identified the need to engage with the community in scoping the issues and restrictions which have contributed to the current, ongoing and historic factors which have led to the areas current position. We recognised the need to gain the opinions of the local community in order to determine what services may offer the community the best opportunities in the future.

We developed a partnership with Peoples Voice Media, a local social enterprise based in Salford that specialise in delivering media based training and community engagement projects across Greater Manchester. Talk Broughton was a innovative and unique community reporting and research project.

The STEP1 programme faced a challenge in terms of the cultural barriers, the Orthodox Jewish Community had many cultural barriers in terms of using the internet, the desire to learn new things had to balance against their core instructions that the internet was a negative thing. We learnt by listening to the group of women we could develop a fantastic innovative product of a Kosher Internet guide.

The Future Jobs Fund presented a number of challenges in terms of ensuring local recruitment to get jobs to people in our communities and that by working with connections in the community we could maximise these opportunities.

How was the success of the project measured?

The project was measured in terms of the numbers of people engaged within the programme and its impact on those people. There was evaluation of the work as it went through each stage. The measurement of social impacts proved harder to measure and especially to quantify.

1. Apprenticeships scheme
• The trades apprentices complete the qualifications in NVQ for their specific trade, partnering with Accrington and Rossendale college or Burnley College. The administration apprentices have complete and NVQ2 in a stage by stage approach in Business Administration in partnership with
Skills Solutions Manchester are now completing a relevant Level 3 qualification in the specialist areas in which they have gained a full year placement.

2. Expand Salford Training and Employment Programme (STEP1)
   - The STEP programme measured the success via the number of people engaged and projects.

3. Future Jobs Fund creative project
   - Measurement of the number of people recruited and in which roles, measurement of personal case studies and evaluation of their experiences of the project.

4. Develop training days which became -It's in your hands
   - Number of people attending and individual evaluation of their feeling on the project it's usefulness to their career development.

5. Social Enterprise support
   - The objective from Social Enterprise Group is to increase the knowledge of services, provided by social enterprises, to Housing associations and to widen the accessibility of existing procurement streams of work to community based and often local provisions and support services.

6. Community Reporters
   - Measurement of individual journeys via case studies, measurement of involvement and evaluation of communities perceptions on digital technologies.

What were the key positive outcomes?

1. An apprenticeships scheme as part of the Contour Housing Group structure. The success of the current group has meant we have Board approval to take on five new business apprentices in September 2010 for a one year programme.

2. Expand Salford Training and Employment Programme (STEP1) - recruited 22 people and outputs delivered:
   - Training sessions
   - 1 interactive site tour, with opportunity to speak to residents about their experiences
   - 22 portfolios
   - Completion of 22 OCN accreditations
   - 2 environmental improvement projects completed in Salford.

Connect Broughton sessions delivered measured; outputs:
   - 24 Sessions
- 7 learner diaries started
- Enrolment of 12 out of 13 participants on to ECDL course
- 1 “Kosher Guide to Media Production” produced
- 1 Slide show of photos of Higher Broughton taken.

3. Future Jobs Fund creative project:
- 28 People recruited
- 7 Case studies completed
- No drop outs (to date)
- All leavers moving into full time work or education

4. Training days for ‘It's in your hands’:
Over 100 people from all over Hollinwood attended, with hands-on help and advice from Manchester College, Jackson Lloyd, Emmanuel Whittaker and other social landlords Regenda and First Choice Homes in Oldham.

5. Social Enterprise support:
Contour is working with The National Housing Federation to actively promote and engage with the 3rd sector plus provide informed information and feedback to the NHF and its members

6. Community Researchers:
A core group of community reporters formed in Huncoat in Accrington who were developing a self sustaining model from a unused Contour owned shop at the heart of the estate.

How did the project demonstrate positive practice in equality and diversity?

The project developed E&D across the programme. The apprentices were recruited in an open and inclusive way to ensure that all members of the community could apply and we have a diverse group made of up different elements from multicultural Manchester.

The STEP1 project actively worked with a closed community and developed a programme which suited diverse mixture of people of all ages from across Higher Broughton were involved in the project including the Orthodox Jewish Community and Eastern European Community, as well as the White British Salfordians.

The Future jobs fund recruited a range of local people from all different backgrounds and had a real success story with one of Community Researchers, who was also deaf.

What elements of the project could be replicated by others?
The whole project probably contained too broad range of elements for replication. However the elements of the programme could be replicated, to
which end Contour is developing the programme to allow each element to be taken to new areas and projects developed.

The STEP1 projects has provided a strong employment and training programme and places Contour Housing Group in strong position in which to develop this theme in order to maximise the local possibilities for residents and ensure Contour communities can grow in a sustained manner.

The digital inclusion programme of Community Reporting could be replicated with the support of a partner such as People Voice Media in other communities to provide digital skills to connect communities and provide new work options for communities which are often socially isolated.

How does this project fit with your organisational environmental action strategy/action plan?

Apprenticeships are a key government target and a positive contribution from Contour to get local people into local jobs.

STEP1 is tied into the government priorities around tackling worklessness, the programme is developing local labour skills through the development of new skills and is directly linked into the Salford Working Neighbourhood Team.

The Future Jobs fund was a government programme and Contour is a large north west partner in its delivery. By employing local people from Contour communities we are able to create an economic stimulus whilst tackling local issues through local projects.

‘It's in your hands’ is tackling worklessness in Contour communities and young people with hopes of a career in the construction industry were given a leg up the job ladder with first-hand experience of building work.

Contour currently chairs the regional, National Housing Federations, Social Enterprise Practitioners meetings, in partnership with Social Enterprise North West. The audience of North West based Housing Associations find practical means to engage with 3rd sector organisations.

Community Reporting is tackling worklessness by developing skills in a new and growing area of digital media - one of the few areas growing during this recession. The community reporting tackles digital exclusion giving people the skills, equipment and confidence to get online and not just read, but interact and create content.

How have you involved residents in developing this project/initiative?

1. An apprenticeships scheme
   - Trades apprentices complete the qualification for their specific trade, partnering with Accrington and Rossendale college or Burnley College.
NVQ2 in Business Administration in partnership with Skills Solutions Manchester.

2. Expand Salford Training and Employment Programme
   - Grow Broughton was delivered in partnership with Groundwork in Salford to bring environmental skills and community support knowledge to the programme.
   - Connect Broughton was delivered in partnership with People Voice Media and Great Places Housing Group to ensure digital technical skills could be brought on to the community and the other housing providers supported one another.

3. Develop a Future Jobs Fund
   - Under the Groundwork/NHF bid, Contour Housing Group has employed 28 people in Oldham in partnership with Jackson Lloyd to train and deliver Environmental improvement.
   - In Preston we again worked with People Voice Media following the successes and benefit from the Salford project.

4. Develop training days
   - ‘It's in your hands’ developed in Oldham and Bury to deliver hands on events in the heart of the community with a number of local agencies, Manchester College, Jackson Lloyd, Emmanuel Whittaker and other social landlords.

5. Contour Social Enterprise support
   - Working in partnership with Social Enterprise North West, a regional social enterprise support network, is co-chair of the meeting providing a delivery partner. Specifically, SENW provides direct access to social enterprises across the North West and knowledge about the sector, its services and the future opportunities for working together.

6. Community Reporters
   - This project was delivered with people voice media as part of a joint bid to NIACE to deliver community digital inclusion and skills development.