

May 2012

## A Year Of Successes. So Much More To Come



West Lancashire Council for  
Voluntary Service



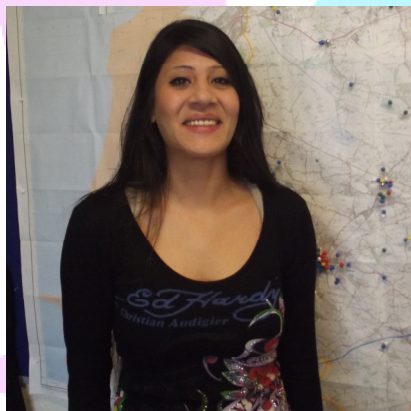
### Lena's Story

"The West Lancashire Challenge has helped me turn my life around. I wasn't in a good position to get employment and had some debt and accommodation issues plus a raft of other problems and didn't know how to access the information and help I needed.

After completing the Challenge Passport and getting advice from the right places and a lot of hard work, I am now in my own flat with a garden. My debt issues are under control and I am studying again and hope to complete my degree next year.

As if all of this wasn't enough, I've also secured a fabulous job as a Learning Support Assistant at West Lancashire College. I love the job and with real career prospects I am now making lots of plans for the future. Faith it and you'll make it".

Lena



### Community Development

Four community hubs have been supported to develop activities, services and events aimed at encouraging residents to use their local community centre as well as recruitment of new volunteers to help run them. The centres helped are Up Holland Library Community Room, Scarisbrick Village Hall, The Fold Centre in Digmoor and St Aidan's Hall in Shirdley Hill

Assistance was also on hand to help the hubs successfully apply for grant funding which will be used to improve the facilities.

In addition, almost £5,000 has been allocated from the West Lancashire Challenge's capital grant fund which will enable 3 of the centres to increase the level and range of services they can provide locally.

## West Lancashire Challenge helps Social Enterprise

As part of the West Lancashire Challenge, the team have been able to assist interested social (not for private profit) enterprises with agreed business admin tasks. One Organisation taking up this offer has been Exsel CIC (West Lancashire Recycling). They asked the Challenge Team if they could create a spreadsheet that gives them the ability to calculate the weight of recycled waste they have saved from going to landfill. Exsel CIC (West Lancashire Recycling) also asked that the spreadsheet be designed to calculate the cumulative weight for certain categories of items e.g. mattresses.

The task has now been successfully completed, with Maureen Fazal of Exsel CIC (West Lancashire Recycling) commenting *"We are delighted with the work undertaken by the Challenge Team, and I would certainly recommend other members of the social enterprise Hub to take advantage of this service."*

The West Lancashire Challenge can give up to three days worth of service that provides social enterprises with the completion of administrative tasks, such as research, creation of spreadsheet, etc.

Any social enterprises interested in this service should contact the Challenge Team by telephone 01695 712645 or email [john.corish@westlancls.gov.uk](mailto:john.corish@westlancls.gov.uk)

### Challenge Events and Activities Year One

#### Health Events

A series of health events held over the past year attracted more than 500 health professionals. Over 300 members of the public have attended workshops, awareness raising sessions and health related events on topics such as mental wellbeing, drugs and alcohol, bowel cancer screening, hidden harm as well as physical exercise.

In total 19 events have been supported by the West Lancashire Challenge, which is well in excess of the original target of 12.

#### Challenge Summer Fair & Launch Event - 9<sup>th</sup> July 2011

Over 100 residents and stakeholders attended the official launch of the West Lancashire Challenge, with strong representation from the voluntary sector and from the Skelmersdale community.

#### Business Network Event - 1<sup>st</sup> December 2011

37 local organisations attended the event at the new college campus and heard a talk on the Challenge project itself and received a presentation on the value of apprenticeships, the latter given by the National Apprenticeship Service. Outcomes from the night included 4 apprenticeship places being offered by employers, 3 employers offering to give work experience talks to college students and 3 employers offering work experience placements for College students.

#### National Apprenticeship Week Event – 7<sup>th</sup> February 2012

Over 100 prospective apprentices attended the event to find out more about the apprenticeship frameworks on offer and 78 registered their interest with the College in becoming an apprentice and receiving updates on relevant vacancies. In addition major employer BAE Systems also attended the event to provide information on their apprenticeship scheme.

### Year 2 - Project Activity

The challenge project is tasked by the West Lancashire Local Strategic Partnership with continuing to make a real difference in our community during 2012-13, by creating a sense of purpose and a culture of aspiration and ambition for West Lancashire residents, focused on access to employment, training and learning, plus promoting public health and wellbeing.

A full programme for Year 2 activity is currently being developed by the project partners.

This Project is funded by the West Lancashire Local Strategic Partnership



For more information on the West Lancashire Challenge please call:

**01695 712645**

Or email: [john.corish@westlancls.gov.uk](mailto:john.corish@westlancls.gov.uk) OR [gillian@wlcvs.org](mailto:gillian@wlcvs.org)