

# 13 Moretonhampstead Development Trust

## What it Does

The Development Trust is based in a small Parish in Devon, providing a range of projects and activities with a focus on the social and economic regeneration of the local area. The Trust is responsible for helping the Parish Council deliver part of the area's Community Plan, through a range of partnerships and community-based activity.

The organisation works in partnership with a range of statutory and non-statutory agencies in the area, developing and delivering a range of short and longer term projects.

Examples of work undertaken to date, by the Development Trust include establishing a computer learning centre at the local library and providing a range of basic, and advanced, computer training courses for local people. The organisation was instrumental in delivering the Dartmoor Flight project, which worked with local communities to produce murals, sculptures and other arts-based regeneration schemes for the local area.

The Development Trust has been instrumental in establishing a number of projects, which have developed into separate stand-alone organisations. Its work around young people and children has resulted in the establishment of a Moretonhampstead Association for Youth, delivering a range of youth service provision and childcare facilities around the Parish, in response to local community needs.

## How it Came About

The Development Trust was established in 1995, to address the economic decline in the Parish. This was the result of a number of major employers relocating from the area. The Development Trust formed a Partnership Committee, bringing together a range of statutory, and later non-statutory agencies, to provide a forum for discussion and a vehicle to undertake projects to help reverse the economic and social decline of the Parish.

Employing a Development Manager in 1996, the Trust set out to develop a number of projects to bring local communities together, along with business, the local tourist board and statutory agencies.

## Governance Structure

The Trust is governed by a Board of Trustees, who are the only members of the Development Trust. As a Public Trust, the organisation has no obligation to involve or consult anyone outside its small member-base of Trustees.

However, the Trust has established a Partnership Committee which acts as an advisory body to the Board, providing recommendations, guidance and information to help inform the work of the Trust. The Partnership Committee comprises a number of regional, county and local statutory and non-statutory bodies. Appropriate bodies, having an interest in the Parish, are able to request membership of the Partnership Committee, although generally organisations are invited to attend specific meetings.

The Board of Trustees are appointed from the local population of the Parish, via word-of-mouth or recommendation from existing Trustees, in common with most other Trusts. Trustees serve on the Board for a term of four years, after which they can be

## Facts & Figures

- Organisational Type – Public Trust
- Legal Form – Public Trust
- Date Established – 1995
- Location – Moretonhampstead, Devon
- Number of Members – Eight members
- Number of Workers – Two part-time employees
- Turnover – £53,927 for year ending February 2003



The Development Trust has successfully delivered a number of projects helping to meet the needs of the local community, including IT training.

re-appointed. Trustees meet on average every month, and there are joint Trustee/Partnership Committee meetings twice per year.

### Participatory Practice

The Development Trust has developed a number of vehicles for actively involving the community in the Parish, all of which build on the networks and resources available in the Partnership Committee to ensure local people are fully informed and involved in decisions made at a local level. The nature of the Development Trust's work, unlike that of many other Public Trusts, requires an active level of community participation.

All Trustee meetings and Partnership Committee meetings are open to the general public of the Parish area, who are able to raise issues and ask questions relating to decisions being made at these meetings. Although these public meetings may only attract few local people, they are important in demonstrating the transparency and openness of the decision-making process.

In addition, the Development Trust uses a variety of local partnerships to consult, involve and gauge opinion on local issues, prior to project work. The Development Trust has been involved in developing and conducting local Parish Appraisals, to help inform and evaluate provision in the area, and focus its work on key community priorities. Similarly, the use of surveys and

questionnaires, undertaken in conjunction with the local Parish Council, ensure the Development Trust seeks views and opinions from local people prior to establishing and confirming areas of work.

At a project-level, the Development Trust ensures the local community are involved in helping to design, plan and evaluate work. In undertaking the arts-based regeneration projects, the Development Trust delivered a number of Planning for Real events to help local communities design and create the local art work, with artists.

### Stakeholder Engagement

The Development Trust, in establishing the Partnership Committee has recognised a number of stakeholder groups to which it is accountable, and which help to inform decisions of the Trust.

### Measures of Success

The Development Trust has been influential in a number of local success stories, including Village of the Year. In addition, the local community learning centre initiative has been awarded the Library Association Computer Initiative Award.

### Key to Success

The Development Trust states, as with many community-based initiatives, the key to its success has been the drive, commitment and enthusiasm of volunteers, staff, the Trustees and the local people.