

# New Wortley Taskforce

New Wortley Community Association is long established in the New Wortley area, with a Community Centre which is owned and managed by local residents. They have a full timetable of activities which include a Job Club, Urban Walking, Youth group, Fitness groups, Lunch Club and ESOL Classes. The centre is situated in an area of high deprivation with range of issues including poor health, addiction and housing issues. The Centre currently generates about 75% of income from socially enterprising activity such as room hire, a community café and an affordable laundrette and is looking to increase this.



**NEW WORTLEY**  
community centre



The staff could see two needs in the area which needed addressing. There are a large number of vulnerable single men living in the nearby high rise flats. These men are isolated and at high risk of suicide; many have issues including addiction, mental health problems, rent arrears and a general lack of engagement. At the same time, local elderly people and vulnerable families find it hard to keep on top of gardening, disposal of heavy objects and other general DIY jobs.

The Community Association realised that many of the vulnerable men had the skills to carry out these jobs as part of a social enterprise. Staff felt that the men would benefit from constructive, positive activity as this would give them a chance to interact with others and make use of skills, building confidence and wellbeing. These services could be provided to local people at affordable rates, benefitting them and also generating income for the community centre.

A Kickstart grant of £2,000 was awarded to pilot the Taskforce scheme and to test market viability. Fifteen vulnerable men were recruited and participation has built their ability to move their lives in a positive direction. Volunteers have seen improved self-esteem, reduced isolation, new skills and the chance to discuss issues surrounding mental health and addiction. The group activities also improve interpersonal skills and help to build valuable social networks which enable people to support themselves and each other.



The project also benefitted local residents and has resulted in a cleaner environment through the removal of litter and clearing of unkempt areas. The group are looking to bring some currently derelict green space back into use.

As a result of the successful pilot, which found the idea to be viable, the Community Association is now launching the service as a full social enterprise which will provide valuable income for the Community Centre.

