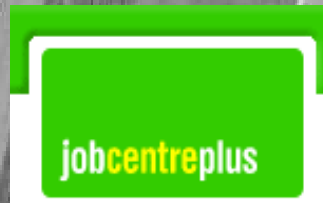


# Marsh Farm OUTREACH

A Feasibility Study  
For The Marsh Farm  
Organisation  
Workshop  
Stages 1 & 2  
Feb 2005 - Jan 2006



# Foreword

“Marsh Farm Community Development Trust will give local people the best possible opportunity to access what jobs are available or are created locally... and will nurture and support the establishment and relocation of business, community enterprise and self employment.

This approach builds an essential local economy, brings the added value of improving the image of the area whilst increasing community services and activities.

It will create employment that is more accessible to those who have been out of work for extended periods of time”

To achieve this the Trust will “include special measures to tackle the barriers and inequalities faced by the most disadvantaged sections of our community”

*Marsh Farm Community Development Trust  
10 year Delivery Plan 2001*

“I also know that we in Britain have a lot to learn from Brazil... which has become an international example of sustainable development and community empowerment. We want to build on these ideas and successes in the future.”

*John Prescott Deputy Prime Minister  
8th March 2006*

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# Marsh Farm Outreach Ltd

Since our formation in 2001 we have been working to develop a new economic approach towards regeneration and renewal – with particular emphasis on employment and enterprise creation for local people in the areas in which we are working.

Marsh Farm Outreach Ltd work to facilitate the development of community self management, participative democracy and community enterprise.

## **The Team**

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This work is dedicated to Melanie Watt-Roy

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# Acknowledgments

Marsh Farm Outreach Ltd wish to acknowledge the help and support we have received from:

**Marsh Farm Community  
Development Trust**

**Luton Borough Council  
Neighbourhood Renewal Team**

**Integra Terra (Panama)**

**IATTERMUND (Brazil)  
(Institute for Technical Support  
to Third World Countries)**

**Strategic Urban Futures**

**New Economics Foundation**

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**Marek Lubelski, Raff Carmen,  
Ivan Labra, Isabel Labra,  
Gavin Andersson,  
Clodomir Santos De Morais,  
Jacinta Branca Correila,  
Damian Tissier  
Gareth Potts**

# Executive Summary

This report contains the results and findings from **parts 1 and 2** of a **3 stage** study into the feasibility of a Marsh Farm Organisation Workshop (OW) to generate jobs and enterprise for local people, with particular focus on engaging the 'hard to reach'.

The entire study including production of this report was undertaken by members of the Marsh Farm Outreach team.

Marsh Farm Outreach Ltd are a grassroots community development team originally formed in 2001 in order to bring about a new, more resident led approach to the regeneration and renewal of our community - and of 'deprived' areas in general.

All of our team members live on or near to the Marsh Farm estate and although we are largely 'unqualified' in the traditional sense we possess a wealth of skills and talents born of our life experiences on Marsh Farm and our years of work within the community.

## Organisation Workshop

This study is looking into the feasibility of delivering the UK's first ever Organisation Workshop (OW) - a Brazilian enterprise and employment generation initiative that has been used successfully for 30 years in the 'developing world' to generate jobs and to

improve the local economy in some of the poorest regions in the world.

In practice, the OW is an 8 - 10 week long 'enterprise nursery' designed to equip dozens of fledgling enterprises with all of the organisational, vocational and entrepreneurial capacities they will need to become fully sustainable enterprises delivering goods and services to Marsh Farm and to the wider market.

This is achieved via an intense period of delivery (by the new enterprises) of real contracts for the duration of the OW, whilst also doing all of the other things a real business needs to do - such as marketing, book keeping, administration etc.

With the on site assistance of mentors in all aspects of running their new businesses the new starters are able to 'learn the ropes' of their operation in the same way that a learner driver learns to drive.

This means - crucially - that any potential jobs created via an OW can be accessed by most or all members of the Marsh Farm working age population as no qualifications or previous experience are required to begin.

The 'OW' has an exciting track record of releasing the entrepreneurial potential of

excluded and hard-to-reach citizens, with remarkable success rates in achieving durable and sustainable enterprise. The study has been commissioned by Marsh Farm Community Development Trust in line with its aim to "create employment that is more accessible to those who have been out of work for extended periods of time"

## Stage 1

One of the first requirements for an OW feasibility check is the existence of a locally based team who are willing and able to act as what is known as a 'Facilitators Enterprise'. In order to take on this role the Marsh Farm Outreach team needed to strengthen our self management capacities, our organisational systems and to develop our contracting and bidding practices.

To this end a programme of 'capacitation' (action learning) was designed by Marsh Farm Outreach Ltd working in partnership with Luton Borough's Neighbourhood Renewal Co-ordinator. The programme brought in help from representatives of two consultancies, 'Strategic Urban Futures' to improve our organisational systems and OW specialists 'Integra Terra' to train the team in OW self management techniques (see appendices). The team had to

design and deliver 2 vital conferences in the space of just 3 weeks, one was a local partners seminar called 'Minding Our Own Businesses' and a 1 day national OW conference held in London called 'Swimming Against the Tide' (appendices) Both events were highly successful and the organisation and delivery experience proved to be an ideal 'learning horse' for our team.

### **Stage 2**

In this stage there were several areas of research needed to establish whether the practical conditions in Luton could support delivery of a Marsh Farm OW. Our research work needed to cover the following :

- a) Meet with key partner agencies to secure their in principle participation in any Marsh Farm OW and define their prospective roles
- b) Carry out an estate wide survey of private and public spend to measure the levels of resources flowing into and out of the estate and to raise local economic awareness
- c) Analyse the economic flows to see how much is spent, on what items and where it is spent
- d) Assess any potential market possibilities for social and community enterprise development on the estate that could arise by 'capturing' some

of the spending identified in the survey data

e) Interview champions of existing Marsh Farm based social and community enterprises to gauge their attitudes towards a pilot Organisation Workshop.

### **The results and findings of stages 1 and 2 form the basis for this report.**

#### **OW Resource Partners**

Following a series of one to one exploratory meetings with representatives of key partner agencies we are very pleased to have developed a firm basis for an exciting partnership to deliver this project.

Key partners so far include:

**Integra Terra (OW specialists)**

**Bedfordshire and Luton Chamber of Commerce**

**Luton Borough Council's Regeneration Team**

**LBC Neighbourhood Renewal Team**

**Rights Luton**

**Job Centre Plus**

**Barnfield College**

**Learning and Skills Council**

**Turning Corners Employment Agency**

**Luton Disability Resource Centre**

**New Economics Foundation**

**The Permaculture Association**

The partners have agreed to work together with Marsh Farm Outreach over the next few months to design a Service Level Agreement outlining the nature and extent of their involvement in any Marsh Farm OW and to establish costing's, availability etc. We are very grateful to all of our partners for their commitment to this project.

#### **Local Economic Survey**

In August 2005 Marsh Farm Outreach carried out the 'Local Economic Survey' a voluntary survey of a random sample of private households in the Marsh Farm Estate. It was primarily a survey of household expenditure on goods and services, and household income. The purpose of the survey was to raise local economic awareness and to provide information on spending patterns to assess market potential for locally based social enterprises.

It also provides invaluable economic data to Marsh Farm Community Development Trust, to other public and commercial organisations and to researchers in universities and independent research institutions. The current report contains tables setting out the findings of the survey with the more detailed information (pie charts, histograms, calculations etc) in the appendices at the

back. The entire exercise was another valuable learning experience for the team and we have recorded the experience in this report.

### Final survey statistics

- We called at all 3229 households in the Marsh Farm NDC area
- Left 992 surveys for completion
- Collected 625 completed surveys
- Received 407 competition entries

### Plugging the Leaks

With all surveys collected the data was entered and analysed using SPSS data analysis software (appendices). The information was then used as the basis for hosting Luton's first 'Plugging the Leaks' local economic workshop. The workshop was delivered by the Marsh Farm Outreach team working with representatives from the New Economics Foundation.

During the workshop resident representatives and key local stakeholders poured water into a 47 gallon barrel with a series of holes - or 'leaks' - cut into the sides. The amount of water poured in is relative to the annual amount of resources the group or organisation invests in Marsh Farm in one year, The leaks demonstrate very visibly the ways and means by which

resources can and do 'leak' out of the local economy.

The workshop was followed by an evenings entertainment and included a series of exhibition tents displaying project initiatives from many of the existing Marsh Farm based social enterprises. Equally, all services on the day and during the evening were provided by local social enterprises.

The Plugging the Leaks event took place inside the Marsh Farm Community Enterprise and Resource Centre. This was a very fitting venue for an event of this kind because it is the largest single community owned enterprise facility in the United Kingdom.

### Potential for job creation

Enterprise and employment generation is the key to long term sustainability of the entire New Deal programme. It is worth noting that if Marsh Farm's NDC were to create 60 sustainable jobs paying approximately £16,000 per year this would add just under £1 million a year to the value of our local economy.

So we wanted to look into the survey findings to see if and where they represented any potential opportunities for job creation. The question we needed to ask was are there areas where money is currently spent on goods and services from outlets not based on the estate which could feasibly be 'captured' via

provision of a locally based social enterprise?

Discovering the true extent to which 'capturable' spends can be turned into sustainable local enterprise and employment requires a more in-depth study than this. Market research, business planning etc needs to be carried out for every potential enterprise which forms part of the work plan intended for stage 3 of this study.

However initial rough estimates have been made at this point and these are listed in tables within the body of this report.

[These initial findings show that there is a possibility for the creation of up to 140 local jobs within a range of social enterprises.](#)

### Conclusions

All aspects of our research during stage 2 of this indicate that a Marsh Farm Organisation Workshop would be a very feasible means of developing sustainable grassroots social enterprise on Marsh Farm.

The OW would provide the support many groups clearly need but have not yet been able to access. The amount of creative ideas and enterprises which sit idle due to lack of effective support clearly demonstrate the urgent need for a different approach.



# Chapter 1 Introduction

# Introduction

## If We Buy Ourselves Some Fish, Then We'll Eat For One Day ... But If We Organise Ourselves and Learn How To Fish - We'll Eat Forever

A report published jointly by the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit and the OPDM in January 2005 has now officially established that the regeneration system is largely failing poor areas – and this is particularly so when it comes to creation of sustainable jobs and enterprise in deprived areas. An extensive body of research, stretching back fifteen or more years, has catalogued a long history of failure of regeneration policy in this field.

Communities living in deprived and disadvantaged areas have seen regeneration programme's come and go and yet make little real difference to the social and economic fabric of their areas. Millions of pounds of public investment have flowed into some of the poorest neighbourhoods in Britain,

only to 'leak' out again. Very little appears to have 'stuck'.

So the challenge in regeneration is one of retention - a local economic issue based upon community ownership of assets and sustainable local enterprise. The question is, how can regeneration funding be used more effectively to generate wealth and prosperity for the local community, to grow the local economy, and to create sustainable income and enterprise opportunities for local people?

The prevailing ethos of regeneration in the UK seems to be stuck in a 'provision culture', which by definition is unable to genuinely 'enable' or 'empower' local communities. If regeneration funding is to make a real and lasting impact it must be directed less at doing things **for** local

communities, instead striving to enable communities to become more self reliant.

Fortunately, in other parts of the world there are various local development models that are proving to be much more successful in achieving community self-sufficiency and long-term sustainability. One such approach, based on principles first established by Clodomir Santos de Morais, is called the 'Organisation Workshop' - or 'OW' for short. The OW has an exciting track record of releasing the entrepreneurial potential of 'excluded' and 'hard-to-reach' citizens, with remarkable success rates in achieving durability and sustainability.

The approach has now been successfully deployed in developing countries across three continents - and in each case it has managed to achieve



Above: Organisation Workshop founder Clodomir Santos De Morais and Jacinta Branca Correila from Amazonia, Brazil Organisation Workshop with James McGinlay (CEO of Marsh Farm CDT), Tony Jules (Capacity Building Manager M Carmen and members of the Marsh Farm community - including Ana Rodriguez our local Sure Start community worke

concrete results regardless of the different social and economic contexts within which it was taking place.

So the challenge is to adapt this unique and wholly innovative way of adult community and individual learning and organisation - known as *Entrepreneurial Literacy* - to a UK 2006 context.

### A Marsh Farm Organisation Workshop?

In 2005 Marsh Farm Outreach were commissioned by the Marsh Farm Community Development Trust to carry out a feasibility study looking at the possibility of delivery in a UK context of an Organisation Workshop' (OW).

Although the OW has been used for more than 30 years in Latin America, Africa and Europe it has yet to be used in a 'post industrial' setting like the UK. This is an exciting prospect which could greatly

help MFCDT with its mission to resolve one of the most intractable problems facing deprived communities throughout this country and beyond - the creation of genuinely sustainable jobs, particularly for the sections of the community who are 'excluded'.

The OW is particularly useful in helping to achieve this objective because unlike classic 'employment training' or 'situated learning' which take place within existing workplaces or colleges, the OW process can lead to the self generation of real, sustainable jobs and enterprise in settings where there were previously none. This is possible because the OW enables much more than an increase in the skills levels of those taking part.

It also facilitates the development of what is known as 'organisational consciousness' and 'entrepreneurial literacy' within the large group taking part. With these newly acquired capacities the participants find themselves becoming effective and efficient at an amazing rate as the workshop progresses.

A crucial part of the design of the OW includes the designing in of contracts for the new enterprises to deliver whilst taking part in the workshop. These are real contracts that are either required for the workshop to take place (food, entertainment, printing etc) or

are identified prior to the workshop as being of community need. All of the technical, vocational, managerial and organisational expertise the new enterprises need to begin delivery of their services is available on site, ready to act as mentors and accreditors whilst delivery of the service takes place.

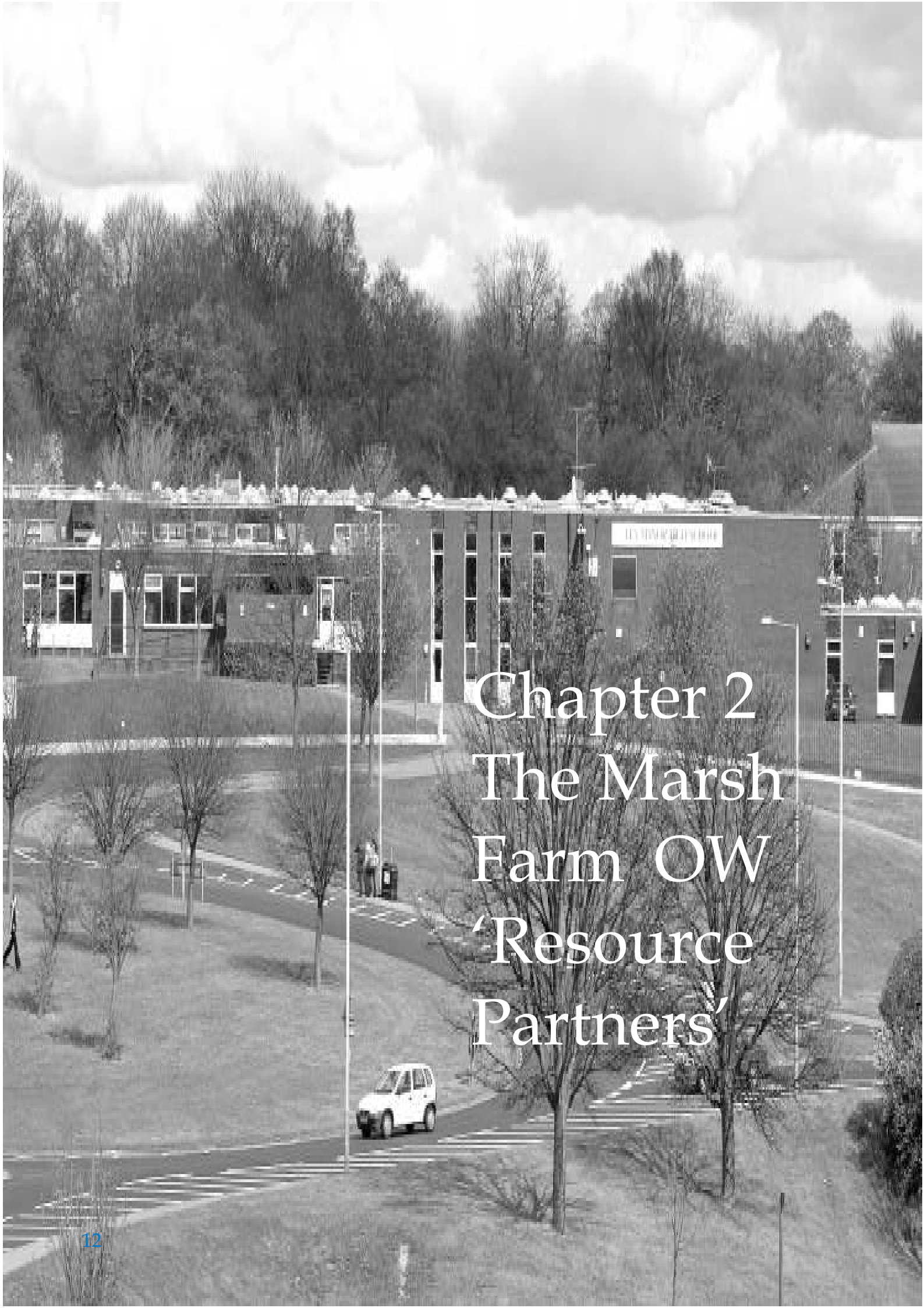
Delivering these contracts whilst also carrying out all of the normal functions a business needs to carry out creates an exciting 'action learning' environment for the enterprises which is maintained for the entire duration of the Organisation Workshop. There is then a period of post OW support for the newly formed enterprises to call upon as and when required to further ensure their sustainability.

This approach means that any jobs created via an OW are accessible to **any** member of the community, quite simply because those who wish to take part need absolutely no previous experience or qualifications in the field they wish to begin working in.

The prospects of delivering the UK's first ever Organisation Workshop are very positive as this report shows. The support from key partners, the available markets and the potential for job creation are all present. We now need to test the feasibility of the enterprises and the interest in working within them locally..



l, discuss the prospects of the UK's first ever IFCDT), Johnny from Grassroots, Dr Raff r and Spanish speaking translator!



# Chapter 2 The Marsh Farm OW 'Resource Partners'

## Facilitators Enterprise Resource Members

Following a series of meetings held with representatives of the partners listed below (including two seminars and a 'Plugging the Leaks' Workshop) Marsh Farm Outreach are very pleased to have developed a firm basis for an exciting partnership to deliver this project.

Marsh Farm Outreach are very grateful for the time, attendance and attention given by all of our key partners and for their support and encouragement with this work generally over the past year. All of the organisations listed here are key partners who will play a vital role in the design and delivery of the Marsh Farm Organisation Workshop and have agreed to work as resource members of the 'Facilitators Enterprise'.



The Chamber Project Management team will help to compile the funding application for the Marsh Farm OW. Also, the Chamber Business Development Team will provide access to the on site and post OW support in business development for the new enterprises.



Barnfield will work with the Facilitators Enterprise to design and cost the OW 'technical pool' and will arrange provision of 'bespoke' training modules to fit the OW format.



JCP will participate in joint promotion of the OW within the job centre and via shared publicity materials. The JCP Outreach worker will also ensure all available benefits are accessible to OW participants, whilst making sure our activities do not breach any Employment or



VAL will assist with access to (also working out the costing's for) all relevant social enterprise support needed for the newly developing enterprises prior to, during and after the OW



Luton Borough Council's Regeneration Department and Social Enterprise team will assist with the design and implementation of the OW, advice on procurement and regulatory matters etc. The Social enterprise team will also help with access to follow up support for new enterprises.



The Learning and Skills Council - Bedfordshire and Luton are happy to assist the Facilitators Enterprise to enable a 'cross organisation' approach to the OW in line with the LSC 'Working Together' strategy.



The Disability Resource Centre will provide support to the OW to ensure access, media and formats are accessible for all. The DRS are invaluable partners as the design needs to ensure That nobody within our community is excluded from taking part in the OW



Turning Corners Employment Agency will play a major role in the promotion of the OW, the recruitment of participants, the accessing of relevant support for participants, post OW support etc. Turning Corners will also play a vital role in the development of trade links with employers and the technical support pool.

### **Luton Borough Council Neighbourhood Renewal Team**

Luton Borough Council Community Development's Neighbourhood Renewal Co-ordinator will continue work as a member of the OW Steering Group and Resource Member of the Facilitator's Enterprise, assisting with communicating to the council the purpose and progress of the OW as a community and neighbourhood based contribution to the development of local public services and community enterprise.

The NRC will continue to work with the Steering Group to align the OW's development with the local and national policy context and Strategic framework, including its potential to inform the development of the local neighbourhood renewal strategy.

### **The New Economics Foundation**

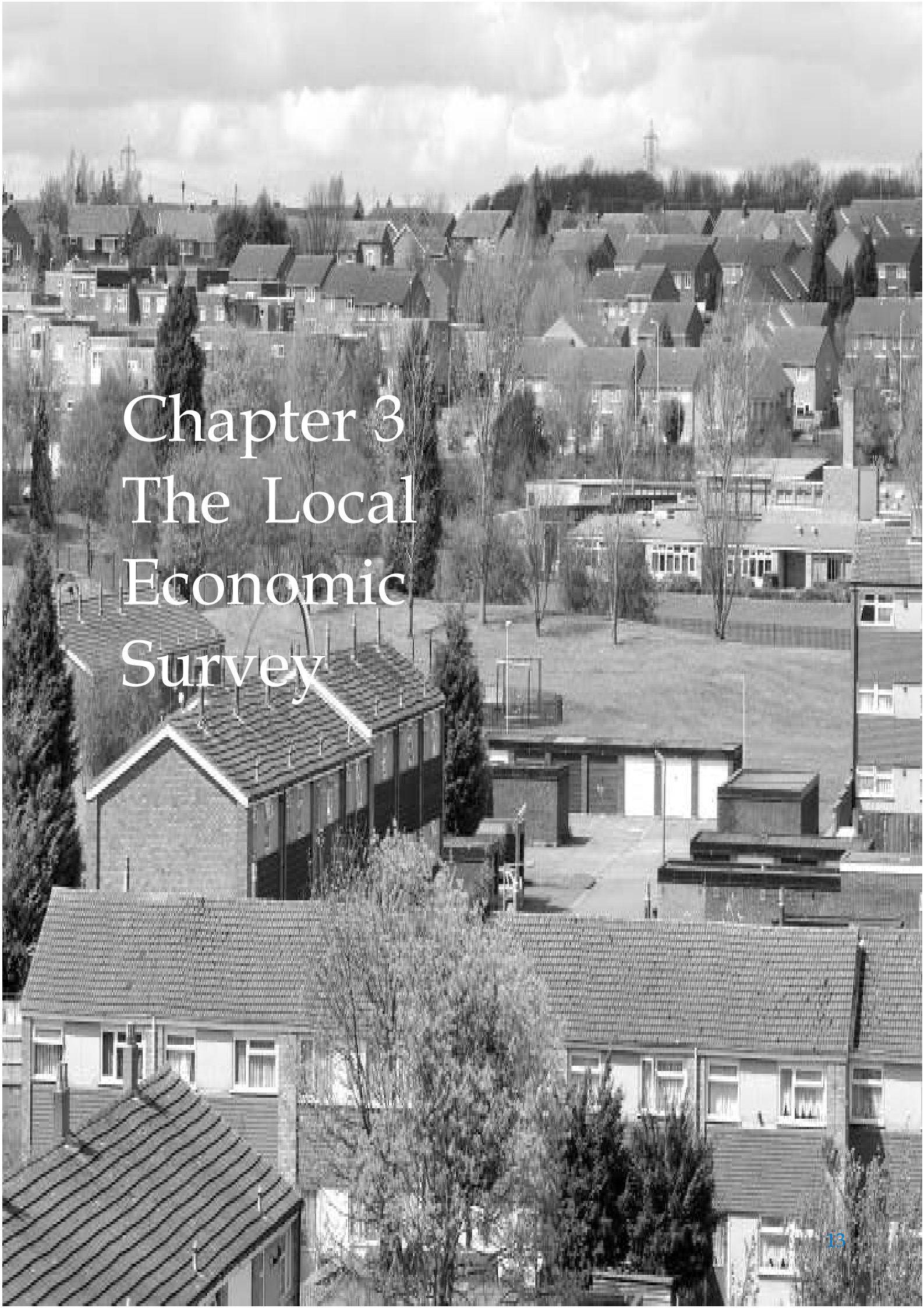
The New Economics Foundation co-hosted the Plugging the Leaks event and have agreed to work with the FE to tackle any procurement and policy barriers that may exist. NEF will also provide access to their valuable network of social enterprise support and expertise.

### **The Permaculture Association**

The Permaculture Association will work with a local Permaculture Community Interest Company to help design ecological literacy into the OW and the developing enterprises. Marsh Farm has been designated as a SPAN (Sustainable Production in Active Neighbourhoods) pilot bringing a large array of project links.

### **University of Luton**

Discussions with the University of Luton are ongoing with a view to the University carrying out independent evaluation of the OW process and outputs. The Evaluation will be carried out in parallel with the research and Development work in phase 3.

An aerial, black and white photograph of a densely packed residential neighborhood. The houses are arranged in a grid-like pattern, with many featuring gabled roofs. There are numerous trees scattered throughout the area, some tall and thin, others shorter and bushier. In the background, a hillside is visible with a church steeple. The overall scene is a typical suburban or urban residential area.

# Chapter 3 The Local Economic Survey

### The Marsh Farm Local Economic Survey - Luton, Bedfordshire, UK

The Local Economic Survey (LES) was a voluntary survey of a random sample of private households in Marsh Farm Estate carried out by Marsh Farm Outreach Ltd.

The LES is primarily a survey of household expenditure on goods and services, and household income. The purpose of the survey was to raise local economic awareness and to provide information on spending patterns to assess market potential for locally based Social and Community Enterprises.

It also provides invaluable economic data to Marsh Farm Community Development Trust, to other public and commercial organisations and to researchers in universities and independent research institutions.

The basic unit of the survey is the household and in 2005, 625 households took part in the LES. The response rate was excellent with 90% agreeing to take part on request.

<b>Contractor:</b>	Marsh Farm Community Development Trust
<b>Size of data collection:</b>	625 households
<b>Method:</b>	Household/Person (Sample) Survey
<b>Status:</b>	Completed
<b>Duration of Survey</b>	July – September 2005
<b>Legislative status:</b>	voluntary
<b>Deposited with data archive:</b>	Yes

#### Summary of data coverage

<b>Persons/entities covered:</b>	Households and Individuals in Marsh Farm
<b>Summary of coverage:</b>	Data Coverage is of household expenditure and income.

#### Evaluation Information

<b>Summary of data collection methodology:</b>	The fieldwork was carried out by Marsh Farm Outreach Ltd using almost identical questionnaires. The householder was asked to fill out the survey in time for a return visit in 1 hr.
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<b>Status of data:</b>	Data published is final.
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#### Developments in the pipeline:

<b>Current year:</b>	The survey data will be analysed to identify the levels of spend on goods and services and to carry out a market analysis based on economic flows – what is spent on the estate and what is spent in places not on the estate.
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**Following year:** The information will be used to inform a wider feasibility study for a wave of social and community enterprise generation on Marsh Farm.

### Operation details

**Target population:** Private households.

**Sampling unit:** Private households.

**Design/selection of sample:** All 3220 Marsh Farm NDC household doors were knocked with a target number of 625 households taking part.

The target figure was broken down and divided equally across the estate with the number from every street dependent on the number of households each street contains.

This means all of the estates streets are represented in the survey so the varying socio-economic factors that seem to exist between streets.

**Restrictions on access/usage:** Micro data is fully anonymised.

**Reference Period:** July to September 2005

**Planned sample size:** 650

**Achieved sample size:** 625

**Numbers co-operating fully:** 625

**Numbers co-operating partially:** 475

**Numbers co-operating fully or partially:** 1100

**Non-contacts/refusals:** 55

The following report on the survey methodology has been included mainly for the benefit of other community based enterprises who may intend to deliver work contracts in their own areas. Marsh Farm Outreach found the use of OW tools to be a liberating experience

### Background

Marsh Farm Outreach Ltd were commissioned by the Marsh Farm Community Development Trust to conduct the Marsh Farm 'Local Economic Survey' (LES) in July 2005

The survey forms part of the broader study which aims to determine the feasibility of an 'Organisation Workshop'.

Carrying out the survey helps to determine the feasibility of an Organisation Workshop in Marsh Farm in three ways:

1. It gives an indication of the potential market for social enterprise on Marsh Farm.
2. It helps to consider the types of enterprise which could be useful and viable
3. It raises local economic awareness and provides a clear insight into the attitudes of local people towards localisation of services

The survey - in line with the research, development and publication of the entire feasibility study - has been carried out by a team of local Marsh Farm residents who

were previously long term unemployed and had no experience in the field.

This was made possible via use of a task focussed learning approach called 'Capacitation' and by making use of OW based self management tools

### Capacitation

'Capacitation' is a means of building local capacity via the delivering of contracts enabling the local team to 'learn from within' whilst delivering an entire task. The OW self management tools help to ensure effective management of the whole process (see appendices).

In this case the Marsh Farm Outreach team were capacitated in the fields of:

- Survey and leaflet production
- Survey distribution and collection techniques
- Interviewing
- Data entry
- Data Analysis
- Work planning
- Time management
- Contracting

*"The research, development and publication of this entire feasibility study has been carried out by a team of local Marsh Farm residents who were previously long term unemployed and had no experience in the field".*

We needed to find out our 'local economic flows', or the levels of private and public

money which passes into - and out of - Marsh Farm in one year

To this end the survey asked residents to think about our current spending patterns - i.e. what we spend, where we spend it and roughly how much we spend on specific goods and services.

### Production of Survey

All aspects of the survey production process were 'home made'. The design, typesetting, printing and compilation were all carried out by local people living here in Marsh Farm. This allowed for a very flexible approach to production including out of hours collection of surveys and production of the required number of surveys 'to order'. The original design of the survey (text, questions and layout) was undertaken by two of our team members using 'Microsoft Publisher'.

A first draft was then circulated to a few local people for comment with regard to ease of reading, relevance of questions etc. Luton University based experts in market research reviewed the survey and provided advice, guidance before completion of the draft survey.

A 'dry run' was carried out amongst random residents in the local shopping centre before the final version was burnt on to a CD. A local resident with suitable home based printing facilities was

commissioned to produce and compile 650 surveys 'to order'.

### Leafletting, surveying

The process of surveying began by agreeing a planned 'methodology' based on a mixture of door to door surveying, local collection and drop off points, leaflets to notify people of the start of the survey and a PR campaign to further raise awareness.

The local drop off points had to be abandoned because the survey period eventually coincided with the school holidays.

### Leafletting

A leaflet was hand delivered to all 3229 households in the Marsh Farm New Deal for Communities area

The number of respondents in terms of survey requests arising from the leaflet drop was very low – only 3 people phoned in for surveys to be delivered.

Although this was initially quite worrying it became apparent later on that the leaflet had clearly helped to raise awareness, because it was referred to by several people when speaking on the doorstep.

### Surveying

To ensure that all streets within the Marsh Farm NDC area were represented in the survey the total number required (650) was split amongst all streets in the NDC

area - the number of surveys according to the number of households in the street

The agreed target number of households in specific streets was allocated to each team member. Team members worked in two's to distribute and collect the required number of surveys from their allocated streets.

The first approach used was based upon a short agreement to call back within 2 days to collect if the person was willing to complete the survey.

In all cases the team reported a very high rate of willingness to take part with over 90% of residents who were at home happy to join in.

On return to collect the surveys however it was a different story altogether. In many cases people were not in, a couple of people felt that the information required was too personal and most had simply forgotten to fill it out so asked that callers come back again. Even on the second call back people had more often than not forgotten or were simply not in again so a short note to remind participants was left at the address.

This did work to a small degree but was taking several hours more than anticipated with limited success (in terms of number of surveys collected in relation to the time put in. The problem was clearly *not* an unwillingness to take part, more that people were

unsurprisingly too otherwise occupied with 'life' to make completion of the survey a priority. A change of strategy was needed.

Following a team meeting it was decided to adapt the approach to something more 'static' which would give people an opportunity to complete the survey whilst the team were in the area.

The first static surveying day took place in the community café in the shopping centre. Although this was very successful in engagement terms (this took place 3 times) and produced a fairly high number of survey returns on each occasion (on average 50) it began to lose its value as the people attending market were mainly 'regulars'. This meant that increasingly most people had already completed the survey in previous weeks.

Another 'static' attempt to engage the community involved the pitching of tents and setting up some children's inflatable's in selected areas on the estate enabling targetting of three streets at a time. Again, this worked and was good fun (the kids loved it!) but it was even more labour intensive in relation to the amount of surveys returned.

The pressure was now firmly on the team because the rate of returns was much lower than hoped for and expected. Taking into account all of the pro's and cons of the

approaches used so far it was decided that the door to door approach would be very productive if only people could be asked to fill out their surveys within 1 hour.

It was also agreed that going out in a large team rather than in pairs would also be much better for team spirit, and the sight of a team wielding clipboards and surveys would make participants even more relaxed and happy to join in.

Approximately 80% of people who said they would complete the survey within 1 hour had done so. 20% had either gone out or – in about 5% of cases – felt that the survey questions were too personal. So returned it.

### Data Collection

This was relatively simple at first when working in pairs but when the more successful team approach was adopted it suddenly became pretty chaotic. Our key mistake was that the whole team were collecting surveys, keeping records of calls made individually and feeding them back. We found it much more productive to elect a team coordinator .

The team coordinator noted the addresses where surveys were dropped off, kept a record of those collected, noted whether the competition had been entered and delivered the completed surveys and competition entries in a log to the data

entry team. After each day an updated survey list would be given to the team coordinator by the data entry team.

### Data Entry and Analysis

This crucial part of the overall task was mainly undertaken by one member of the team using SPSS statistics software.

Using SPSS and entering all the survey data has been a huge learning curve and the team built up valuable experience which can be of good use in work here and elsewhere.

Also, using SPSS demonstrates clearly the value of gathering statistical information and the data will be of value in many areas for true Community Development work.

### Size of the Survey and Data

To find maximise the levels of awareness raising we wanted to conduct a fairly wide survey of the community.

To this end we:

- **Called at every household in the NDC area (3229)**
- **992 surveys taken for completion**
- **625 completed surveys collected**
- **407 competition entries were completed**

The competition asked people to guess the annual amount of resources - public and private - which flow through Marsh Farm in one year. The final figure was just over:

### £90 million a year

Most people had guessed way under the This figure. The winner picked up £500 and 10 runners up picked up £50 each all in the week before Christmas!

As said already the entire stage 2 process was undertaken by a team of local residents without any experience whatsoever in any of the many disciplines this task has required. The findings are not perfect but more than accurate enough to provide an indication of the general size of the local economy and the amounts of money spent on goods and services.

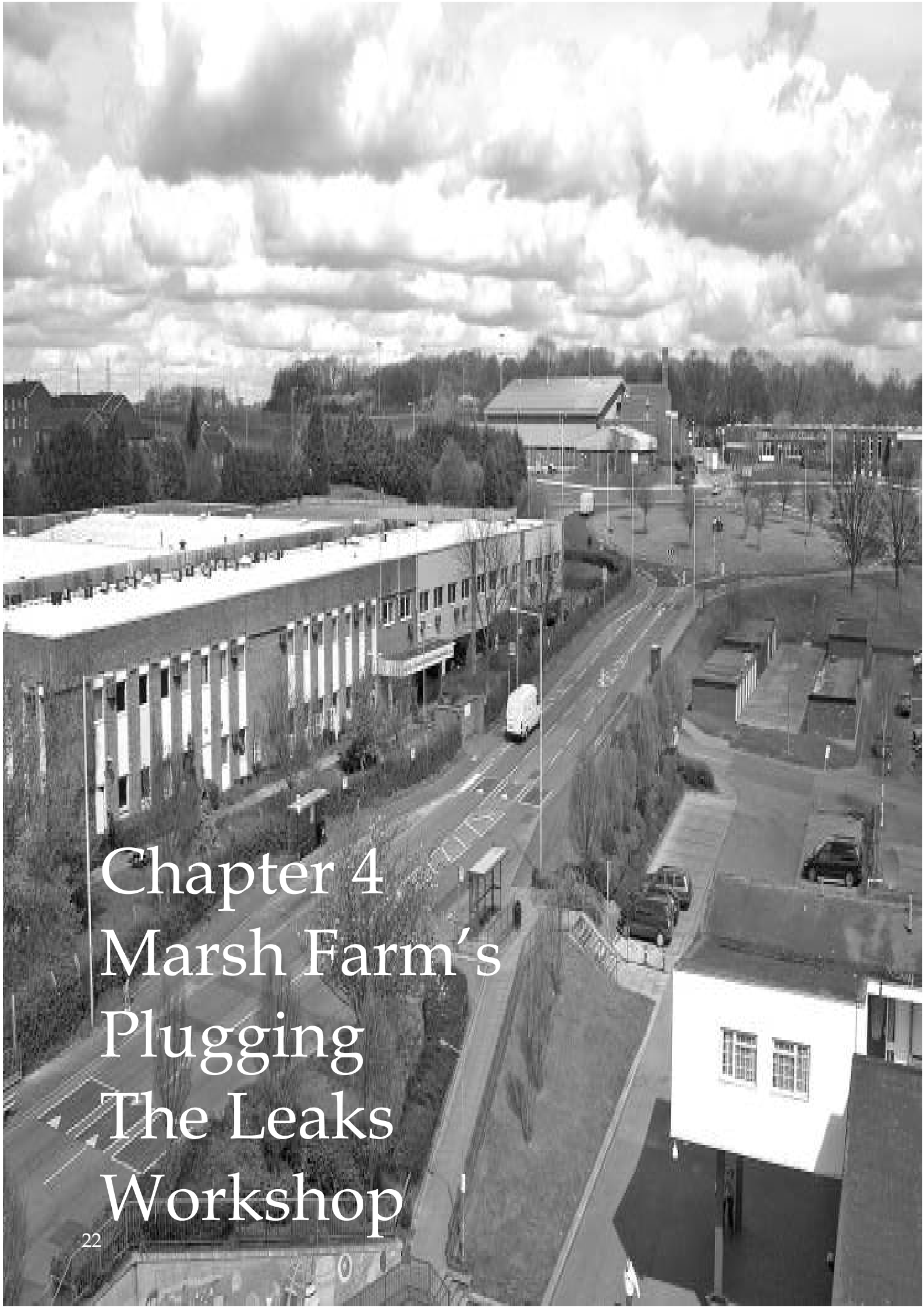
Other major gains have been the 'capacitation' of the Marsh Farm Outreach team, the raising of local economic awareness and the fact that the survey has generated a focus on local provision of services and job creation. The survey also received positive press coverage leading to newspaper articles and an interview on the local BBC 3 Counties radio station

This has been an uplifting and empowering experience we would highly recommend to community groups everywhere!

CHAPTER 3: THE LOCAL ECONOMIC SURVEY

Item	Total amount spent in 1 year by MF residents	Total amount spent not on Marsh Farm
Car Tax and Insurance	£1,307,291	£1,251,077
Petrol	£198,286	£198,286
Car accessories and Maintenance	£517,660	£517,660
Bus Train and Travel	£953,160	£688,182
Pubs and Clubs	£1,541,280	£1,436,473
Gambling including Lottery	£500,240	£378,681
Football and Sports events	£280,800	£267,883
Gymnasiums	£229,840	£225,244
Restaurants	£869,700	£865,352
Cafes	£322,140	£304,755
Holidays and Days away	£999,440	£991,445
Cinema's and Theatres	£391,300	3391,300
Hairdressing and Beauty	£631,800	£610,951
Hobbies	£667,940	£647,902
Food and Home Shopping	£9,439,820	£6,419,078
Take away fast food	£1,264,380	£1,164,494
Cigarettes	£1,694,680	£1,135,436
Alcohol and drugs	£1,209,520	£999,063.52
Clothes	£1,931,319	£1,825,096
Furniture and Household goods	£756,680.60	£733,980.18
Loans and Credit cards	£2,168,088	£2,092,204

Item	Total amount spent in 1 year by MF residents	Total amount spent not on Marsh Farm
Electronic goods and Accessories	£409,890	£400,872.42
Records CD'S DVD'S	£591,299.80	£567,647.80
Pet food and care	£475,618	£439,946.70
D.I.Y.	£458,276	£447,735.65
Children's Toys and games	£586,430	£553,589.92
Gardening	£265,200	£261,752.40
Newspapers and Magazines	£509,347.80	£321,907.80
Mortgages	£5,337,865	£5,209.756
Rent	£4,342.135	£2,713.834
Insurances	££,223.443	£1,178.175
House Maintenance	£466,234	£446,652.74
Building Contractors	£180,944	£180,401
Household Appliance repairs	£207,760	£204,436
Council Tax	£1,885.738	£1,414.303
Electricity	£1,401.959	£628,077
Gas	£1,225.858	£632,542
Water	£1,066.361	£660.077
Telephone Bills	£2,048.220	£1,532.068
Internet Charges	£413,818	£401,404
Health and Life Insurances	£424.450	£420205
Savings and Investment plans	£452,140	£448.070



Chapter 4  
Marsh Farm's  
Plugging  
The Leaks  
Workshop

### Marsh Farm Outreach and the New Economics Foundation Plugging The Leaks Workshop

On November 25<sup>th</sup> 2005 Marsh Farm hosted Luton's first 'Plugging the Leaks' local economic workshop. The event took place inside the Marsh Farm Community Enterprise and Resource Centre, a fitting venue for an event of this kind being the largest single community enterprise facility in the UK.

The event was held to:

1 Celebrate the wealth of local community enterprise and energy - both existing and potential - present on Marsh Farm.

2 Raise local economic awareness on Marsh Farm.

3 Mark the end of the Local economic Survey.

4 Continue the development of key partnerships and mutual understanding of the OW process.

The whole event was serviced by Marsh Farm based community enterprises and also featured a series of exhibition tents for those social enterprise initiatives not required to provide services but wishing to display.

The social enterprise exhibition formed a good back drop to the Plugging The Leaks Workshop. 44 people took part in the PTL workshop itself with 342 coming along to enjoy the evenings entertainment.

During the workshop key stakeholders were to be found pouring water into a 47 gallon barrel with a series of holes - or 'leaks' - cut into the sides.



The water poured in is relative to the annual amount of resources each organisation invests in Marsh Farm in one year, and the leaks demonstrate very visibly the ways and means resources can and do 'leak' out of the local economy

This brilliantly simple concept was conceived by the New Economics Foundation who worked in partnership with Marsh Farm Outreach team to deliver the workshop.

Representatives from Marsh Farm residents groups,

Luton Borough Council, Primary Care Trust, the Chamber of Commerce and other agencies took part in the fun.

Following the leaky barrel exhibition participants separated into small task groups and were asked to list all of the resources coming into the estate, and to think

about how much of these resources currently 'stick' by staying within the local economy. Then, the groups were asked to put forward ideas and suggestions for ways to 'plug' some of the leaks identified.

Finally, votes were taken on the project priorities and the level of interest in each specific potential enterprise. All in all the workshop was a good educational and awareness raising event and was fun and easy to join in with.

In the evening the nature of the exhibition extended to include a feast of music and entertainment provided by a range of Marsh Farm based bands. Brilliant performances were put in by Phi Life Cypher, Lion Heart, Kush Genesis, Tyrone 'Biblical' Gordon, Chloe Simone and the amazing talents of the EMCC youth group made it an evening to remember for all concerned.

## CHAPTER 4 PLUGGING THE LEAKS WORKSHOP

Marsh Farm Outreach would like to record our thanks to the following Marsh Farm based enterprises for the excellent services they provided at the Plugging The Leaks event:

**Warriors Workshop** (Security at the evening event)

**Farmers Café** (Hot Food at the daytime event)

**Fresh** (Hot Food at the evening event)

**Marsh Farm Event Productions** (Sound System, staging, lighting, sound engineering)

**Marsh Farm Fund Raising Group** (tents, inflatables, staging, barriers)



*Local lads do a bit of stewarding and show an interest in the wireless internet project 'Co-ordinet'*



*The Marsh Farm Moto Cross and Off Road Driving Club display their vehicles*



*Marsh Farm residents focus on local economic issues at the Plugging The Leaks Workshop*



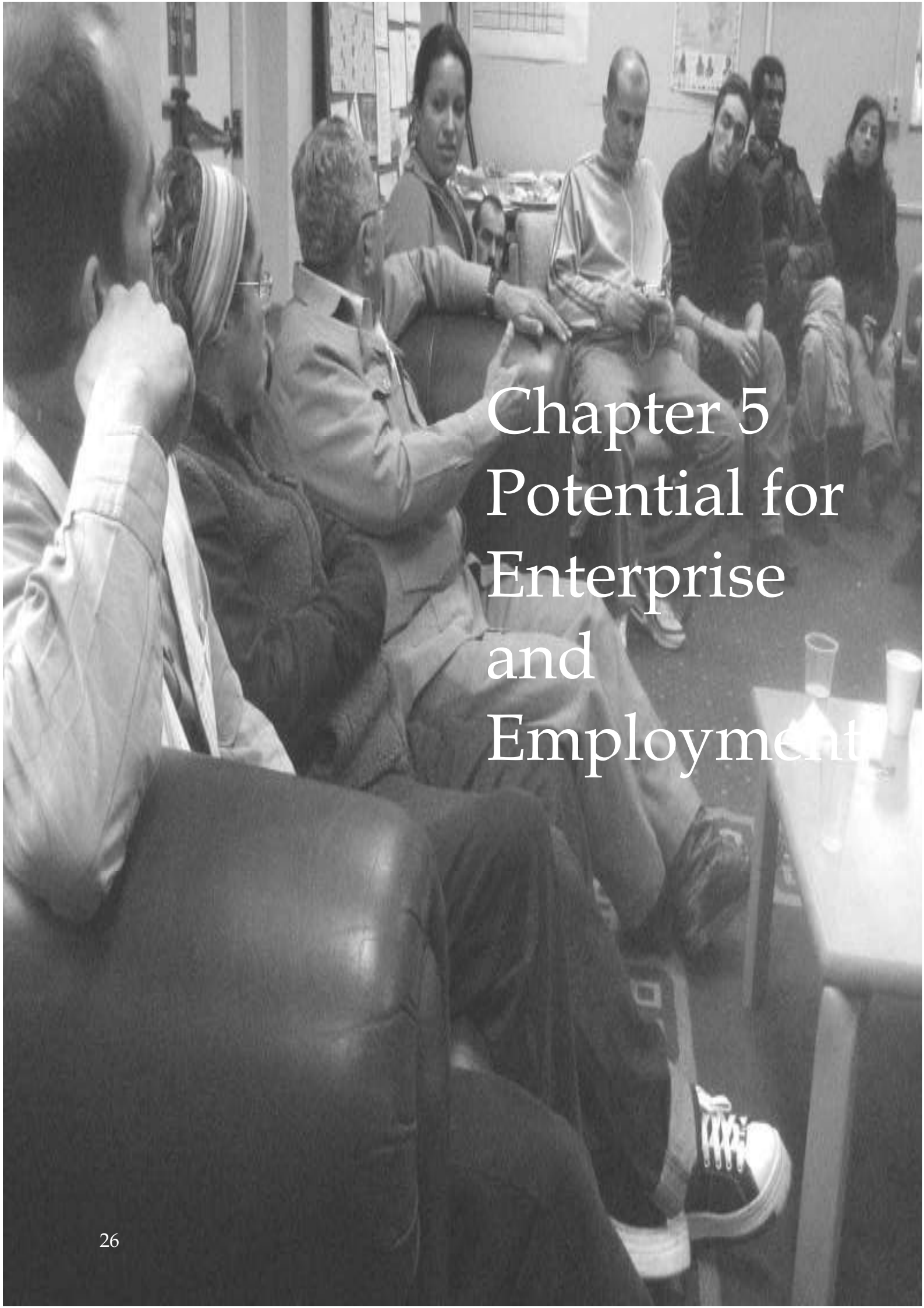
*Ishmael from the Primary Care Trust pours Marsh Farm's Health Service budget into the barrel*



*Marsh Farm 'X Factor' finalists 'Voices With Soul' entertain their neighbours*



*'Kush Genesis' gave a brilliant display on the African Drums in The Cube*



# Chapter 5 Potential for Enterprise and Employment

To find out whether a market exists for new Marsh Farm based social businesses it is necessary to carry out an assessment of what residents spend externally (survey), how much of that spend could realistically be 'brought home' and how many 'new' shoppers could be attracted to the area.

Whilst the average 'economic flows' revealed by the Local Economic Survey show the approximate amounts entering and leaving the local economy, amounts that could feasibly be 'captured' are clearly dependent upon several other important factors. Changes will certainly need to be made in terms of the goods and services on offer to Marsh Farm residents as well as to the general shopping environment in which they would be sold.

It is widely acknowledged that a key plank of Marsh Farm's New Deal for Communities strategy is major improvement of the local shopping centre. Assuming these improvements take place there will be a *major opportunity* for the creation of a network of regenerative social businesses that will locally sell many of the goods/services currently bought externally, saving residents the time and money costs of making trips outside the area.

Although the terrible state of the current shopping facilities (one of the main reasons for not shopping locally) has been

a major problem for local people, it actually increases the opportunity for successful new social enterprise to establish themselves.

This is because a brand new shopping environment will encourage many people who currently shop in places not on the estate to change their shopping habit and begin shopping locally - and the state of the shopping centre means that this is a high number of people. Therefore, the estimated levels of attainable 'spend capture' are high.

There are several other factors which make for an optimistic assessment of the 'capturable' spend levels. Local social enterprises have certain very distinct and useful competitive advantages over conventional private businesses. These advantages include: increased security via local ownership of land and assets, reduced recruitment overheads due to very strong local networks, more ethical trading practices and procurement policies and community focussed benefits arising from any surpluses.

Marketed intelligently but aggressively these are all attributes that will help to sell the products of the enterprises and could, in time, lead to the name 'Marsh Farm' becoming synonymous with value for money, efficiency, fairness and reliability.

Marsh Farm's New Deal for Communities funding provides a golden opportunity for the community. With funding available to develop and assist local employment and enterprise this represents an opportunity that can not be missed.

If businesses can be enabled this will ensure not only that the economic 'Leaks' are 'Plugged' but, if the money saved is also spent locally, there will lead to even more economic activity.

Enterprise and employment generation is the key to long term sustainability of the entire New Deal programme. It is worth noting that if Marsh Farm's NDC were to create 60 sustainable jobs paying approximately £16k per year this would add just under £1 million a year to the value of our local economy.

Discovering the true extent to which 'capturable' spends can be turned into sustainable local enterprise and employment requires a more in-depth study than this. Market research needs to be carried out for every potential enterprise.

However, generalised estimates can and have been made.

The tables on the following pages the levels of spend, estimates of number of potential jobs creatable and comments on how the estimates were arrived at.

## POTENTIAL JOBS ARISING FROM SURVEY DATA

Item	Amount spent annually outside Marsh Farm	Target capture	Potential annual spending capture	Factors affecting potential employment impact assessment	Jobs	Enterprise possibilities
Food & home shopping	£6,419,078	50%	£3,209,539	This figure is an underestimate as provision of a high quality shopping centre with a competitively priced supermarket will lead to the vast majority of residents using the centre whereas currently a vast majority do not	50	A 40,000 ft community supermarket in supply partnership with one of the main players
Take away fast food	£1,164,494	40%	£465,797	This is an area where major inroads could be made as most takeaway food has to be bought off estate. Ethical and responsible food sourcing practices will prove to be a strong competitive advantage here.	12	Fast food takeaway and restaurant in the main shopping centre. Local deliveries can be made by mountain bike saving fuel costs
Cigarettes	£1,135,436	50%	£567,718	Most cigarettes are bought from the supermarket so local capture of this spend will rise accordingly	/	Included in supermarket
Alcohol	£999,064	50%	£499,532	As above	/	Included in supermarket
Clothes	£1,825,096	10%	£182,509	/	3	An enhanced market with more clothes stalls
Furniture household goods	£733,980	30%	£220,194	This estimate is for jobs only, but this project would generate dozens of training spaces too	4	NVQ woodwork training Centre with furniture outlet

## CHAPTER 5: POTENTIAL JOBS ARISING FROM SURVEY DATA

Item	Amount spent annually outside Marsh Farm	Target capture	Potential annual spending capture	Factors affecting potential employment impact assessment	Jobs	Enterprise possibilities
Electronic goods accessories	£400,872	50%	£200,436	Proposals for a bulk purchase centre have been tabled previously and are worth follow up	2	bulk purchase co-op shop
Records cd's dvd's	£567,647	30%	£170,294		2	Develop successful existing market stall into a shop?
Pet food and care	£439,946	0	0		0	
Children's toys and games	£553,589	50%	£276,794		2	Bulk purchase co-op shop
Gardening	£261,752	20%	£52,350	This estimate is only for the gardening and landscaping aspect of the wider community organic farm proposal	12	Gardening centre and providence nursery, community farm, gardening service
Newspapers / magazines	£321,907	0	0		0	Increased local sales for existing business via a much improved centre
Car tax and insurance	£1,251,077	40%	£500,431		2	Minimum opportunity for a broker - but feasibility of insurance co. is interesting

## POTENTIAL JOBS ARISING FROM SURVEY DATA

Item	Amount spent annually outside Marsh Farm	Target capture	Potential annual spending capture	Factors affecting potential employment impact assessment	Jobs	Enterprise possibilities
Petrol	£198,286	0%	0		0	Nothing short term but bio-diesel?
Car maintenance	£517,660	75%	£388,245	MF does not have a low cost garage with qualified mechanics but many cars	5	Local garage MOT centre and training unit
Bus/train/taxi	£688,182	50%	£344,091		0	Local taxi service, minibus, car hire
Pubs and clubs	£1,436,473	20%	£287,295	This is a low target because changing socialising habits is quite difficult.	12	MF social community and conference centre
Football / sports events	£267,883	0%	0		0	/
Gymnasium	£225,244	40%	£90,098	Local martial arts and fitness trainers in several different disciplines have expressed strong interest in a community gym	6	Proposed local gymnasium
Restaurants	£865,352	0%	0		0	
Cafes	£304,755	25%	£76,189		12	Food 4 Thought Farmers Cafe
Holidays, Days away	£991,445	10%		The proposed indoor play park would lead to more people 'days out' at home.	15	Indoor high energy play park
Cinema / Theatres	£391,300	10%	£39,130	This would contribute towards job creation for MF Social centre	/	Theatre/ Cinema within Cube
Hairdressing / beauty	£610,951	10%	£61,096		/	Improved shopping centre would boost existing salon

## CHAPTER 5: POTENTIAL JOBS ARISING FROM SURVEY DATA

Item	Amount spent annually outside Marsh Farm	Target capture	Potential annual spending capture	Factors affecting potential employment impact assessment	Jobs	Enterprise possibilities
Hobbies	£647,902	30%	£194,371		0	
Mortgages	£5,209,756	0%	0		0	Community banking service has vast potential
Rent	£2,713,834	0%	0		0	Local payment of rent increases footfall
Insurances	£1,178,175	40%	£471,270		/	Broker and Insurance Co
House maintenance	£446,652	10%	£44,652		/	Building co-op
Building Contractors	£180,401	50%	£90,201		10	Building co-op
Household appliance service or repairs	£204,436	/	/		/	
Council Tax	£1414303	0%	0		0	Paying locally would increase use of shops
Electricity	£628,077	0%	0		0	As above
Gas	£632,542	0%	0		0	As above
Water	£660,077	0%	0		0	AS above
Phones	£1,532,068	0%	0			Co-ordinet
Internet	£401,404	50%	£200,702		4	Co-ordinet estate based wireless ISP
Health and life insurances	£420,205	40%	£168,082		2	Broker and Insurance Co
Savings and Investments	£448,070	40%	£179,228		/	Broker and Insurance Co

# Chapter 7

## Minding our own Businesses

Take a tour around Marsh Farm's social enterprise projects and you'll be struck by two things. The first thing you'll notice will be the large amount of projects there are in one fairly small estate. Within an hour of beginning the journey you will have visited an ancient monument akin to Stone Henge in historical terms, a farmhouse built in the 1700s, a go kart track with 8 go karts, a fully equipped music recording studio, a peoples launderette, two community cafeterias, a community minibus, dozens of tents and inflatables, a series of off road jeeps and the jewel in the Marsh Farm community enterprise crown - a 120,000 sq ft community owned building sitting directly in the centre of the estate.

If you are amazed by the wealth of local community enterprise and initiative on Marsh Farm you will be even more amazed by the fact that *many of these resources are virtually unused by the community.*

Having been built up over the years by the efforts of local volunteers Marsh Farm's social enterprise projects now stand as monuments themselves - to the unsuitability of the standard capacity building and business development structures which are supposed to turn them into the sustainable, employment generating enterprises they could and should be.

The Organisation Workshop is a tried, tested and very rapid way for all of these enterprises to develop into fully functional enterprises - all at once. By 'designing in' a series of 'community contracts' for the enterprises to deliver within the workshop, the enterprises are driven to learn all aspects of their business in an 'action learning' environment, including a period of intense marketing to gain further contracts for delivery when the OW is finished.

Having carried out a series of discovery meetings during stage 2 with representatives of all of the enterprise initiatives listed below, it is our firm view that dozens of sustainable jobs providing really valuable services could be generated if the appropriate capacity building and business development support was made available to these groups. The lack of suitable and effective support often leads to disaffection and disengagement by key players in the social enterprises. **All** of the volunteers we spoke to were fearful of their efforts being sidelined only to be replaced by 'professional' service providers based outside of the community.

The volunteers who have maintained these initiatives for many years more than deserve the opportunity to put their ideas to the test, and the OW provides the best possible route to potential success.

### Every Moment Counts Child (EMCC)

Are an estate based, street level group who organise dance events, fashion shows etc, encouraging the wealth of local talent in the performing arts which exists to develop. EMCC also provide access to a range of social support services for those taking part. The OW will provide an opportunity for the group to deliver 8 intense weeks of entertainment and specialist youth services.

### Marsh Farm Moto Cross, 4 x 4 and Off Road Club

Set up by local youth as an alternative to boredom and crime, the club now has over 100 members and organises visits to Devil's Pit Off Road Club in Streatley. MFMX are currently trying to attach courses in welding, mechanics, driving lessons, electronics and car bodywork repair.

### MF Community Garage

This is a proposal to set up a fully equipped mechanics garage in the CERC delivering vehicle maintenance and repair services including MOTs to the general public. The garage would be equipped with a spray booth to enable body repairs and all aspects would be used for training.

### Marsh Farm Records

MFR is a community based record company providing Marsh Farm people with the

opportunity for structured training and to pursue a career and/or participate socially in a variety of music related activities. The enterprise has been supported on several occasions by MFCDT but feel they are yet to be developed in a suitable way.

### **Marsh Farm People's Radio**

An internet radio station set up by local people to give local DJ's, MC's a legal platform to show off and develop their skills, to encourage community discussion and to advertise New Deal and other services to the estate. Currently working to build a partnership with Diverse FM and supported by Co-ordinet wireless network would soon generate Marsh Farm wide coverage.

### **The Wednesday Drop In Club**

This is an arts and crafts club which also provides an opportunity for local people to meet, to talk and to take part in activities. Members of the Wednesday Club work together to create quilts, ornaments, paintings and other items.

### **The Marsh Farm Academy of Music and Performing Arts**

A community owned and managed studio built from scratch by volunteers and recently upgraded to a really high standard, the studio has been frustrated by limited support and lease issues.

The OW will provide the studio with an opportunity to develop 3 MF artists in an intense period of work, overseen by technical support from people with years of experience in the industry. This can help the Academy finally unlock the massive musical potential Marsh Farm is clearly blessed with.

### **Co-ordinet**

A locally owned and based Wireless Internet Service Provider. Offering Marsh Farm residents cheap, fast access to broadband, cheap or free telephone calls and a 'community first' principle which invests any profits made back into the estate.

### **MF Mobile Crafts Market**

A group of local artists and crafts people have got together to develop a plan for a co-operative mobile market. The market would set up on Marsh Farm once a month, also selling their works at different pitches throughout the region to provide a permanent income.

Their idea includes a plan to make approximately 20 specially designed, fold away, market stalls for use by 20 estate based traders. These stalls would be purpose built to enable easy delivery (by lorry) to selected pitches around the region - so the market would arrive, set up and take down as one single unit - creating 20 jobs for local people.

### **Community Builders**

A group of local builders have formed The Marsh Farm Community Building Co and are currently registering any Marsh Farm people who have building skills or those who want to learn. By working in partnership with the local college the building company can begin to deliver local contracts with training and capacity building built in to the arrangement.

### **'Darkness to Light' Community Film Company**

Working in partnership with Spectacle Productions (an independent TV and Video company) local people have produced a brilliant anti crack cocaine music video called 'Crack Life'. Local rap artist Life wrote and performed the song whilst all of the acting, set preparation etc was carried out by youth from the estate. The Community Media Project are talking to Films of Record about the possibility of a 3-part BBC TV programme following progress of the Marsh Farm OW.

### **The MF Social, Community & Conference Centre**

This project will provide residents and community groups on Marsh Farm with a much needed purpose built facility to host a wide range of social and community events - weddings, birthday parties, youth events, conferences, meetings, live performances, talent shows, games clubs,

indoor markets, dinner dances, cabarets, bingo nights, theatre, cinema and much more.

The proposed club would be a members only club with automatic membership for all Marsh Farm residents and is an important part of the CERC strategy to develop a centre where Marsh Farm residents can “work, rest and play”.

### **Little Bears**

Little Bears is a fixed-base and outreach crèche service. Its aim is to provide a free childcare service for unemployed people who want to take up training and to provide a fully resourced crèche for users of the CERC. By working in partnership with other childcare providers on the estate Little Bears wants to grow into a self sustaining enterprise. Although not operating to full capacity, the project is a valued asset within the local community and will benefit from long overdue support.

### **Farmers Café**

As with all of these community businesses the café has had to survive till now with seriously limited or no funds and relies completely upon the efforts of local volunteers to keep it going. This has not stopped the café opening continually though, so proving the need for a community café in the CERC. Thanks to the commitment of those volunteers the café has a bright future and with the

right support will create quality jobs and training spaces for local people.

### **Food 4 Thought Café and Residents Rights centre**

This project has a long background of community involvement, also kept afloat for the last 8 years only by the commitment and dedication of local residents. The Cafe has recently been totally refurbished and is now in good condition with a fully equipped kitchen. It will provide jobs and training places for local people.

### **The MF Inflatable Company**

A long established Marsh Farm enterprise, the MF Fund raising group have grown the business steadily over several years expanding the size, type and number of inflatable's as they have gone along. This is one enterprise that has been well used regularly hiring and supplying to both public and private users. Further resourcing and marketing of this enterprise could lead to employment in the hire, supply, installation and manufacture of equipment.

### **Community Transport Company**

Another community business which has been long serving the residents of Marsh Farm, the Community Transport company is another enterprise that will thrive when provided with the proper level of resources and support.

The company has just 1 minibus at the moment with one ‘off the road’ needing repair. Once developed the transport company could work in partnership with MFCDT, MFMX and other partners to provide driving lessons, PSV licence training etc.

### **Marsh Farm Community Printers**

A printing service based on the estate has long been an ambition for the social enterprise sector on Marsh Farm. The proposers of this project have carried out some good market research and are confident of developing a very viable service.

### **Environmental Task Force**

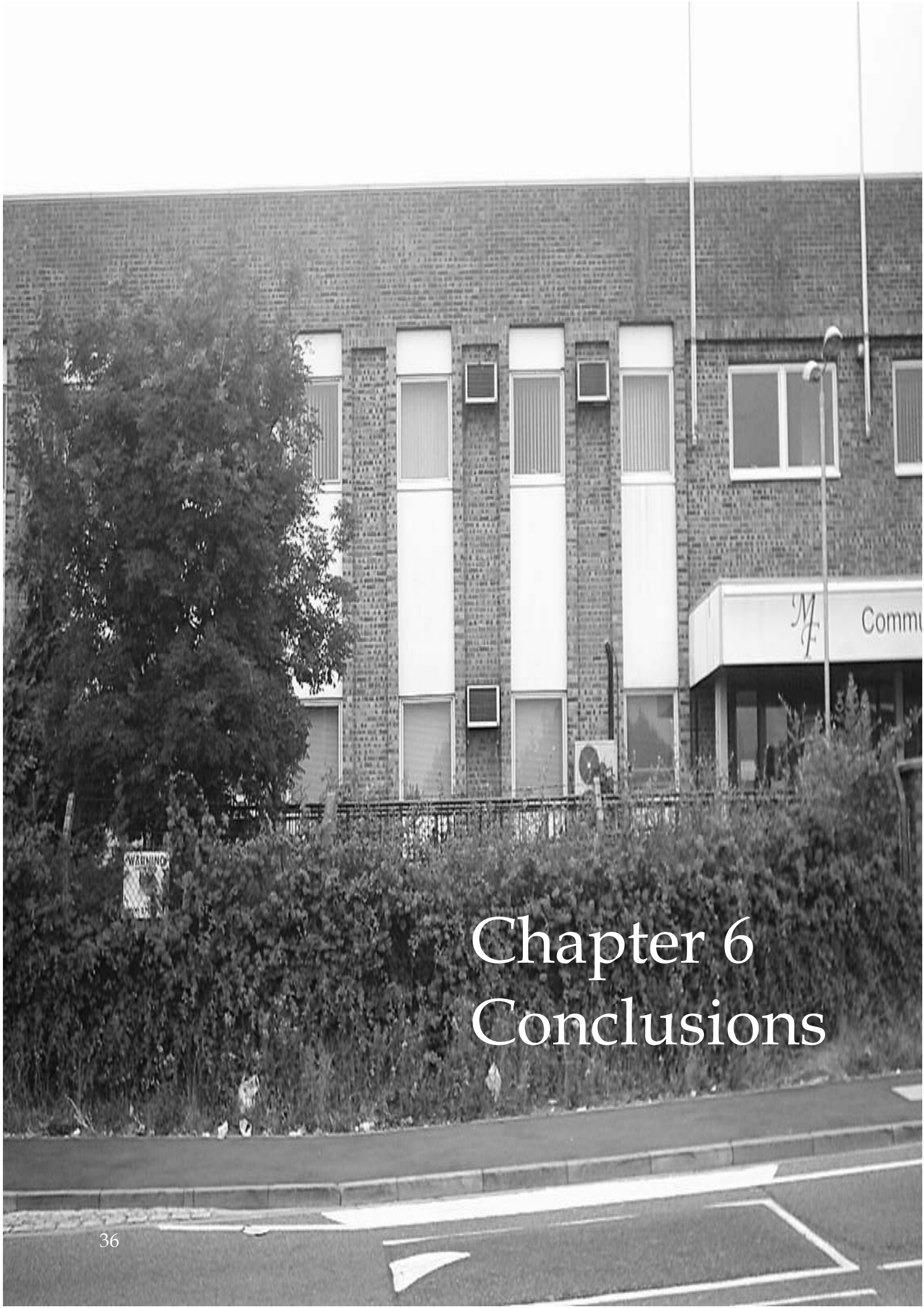
There are proposals to create a locally based team to tend to the environmental aspects on Marsh Farm - street cleaning, refuse, care of green spaces, stairways on flats etc.

### **Marsh Farm Organic Community Farm**

The Marsh Farm Green group are currently in discussions with the owners of the farmland at the north of the estate. The proposal is for a local farm producing organic fruit and vegetables, free range eggs, shared animal schemes etc.

### **Little Farmers Indoor Play Park**

A fully equipped high energy playground including drop slides, net runs etc.



# Chapter 6 Conclusions

On completion of Stage 2 our research shows that there is a major opportunity for MFCDT to facilitate the largest single wave of social enterprise start up and employment generation ever seen in the UK.

All aspects of our research during stage 2 indicate that an OW would be a feasible means of developing grassroots social and community enterprise on Marsh Farm, providing a culturally relevant access route to the kind of support many groups have so far not been able to receive.

Every agency identified as being key partners for a successful OW are very willing to participate and are happy to restructure their means of delivery where this is required by the OW technique.

There is a sizeable market for localised service provision as there are many goods and services currently bought from outlets not based on Marsh Farm that could and should be provided locally. The general attitude towards localisation of services is very favourable, with most people seeing this as a common sense solution. The poor state of the existing provision (or lack of it) provides fertile ground for new enterprises to 'capture' much of the 'external' spend.

Existing community and social enterprise initiatives on the estate are well placed to benefit from the increased

capacity an OW can deliver, having been largely frustrated in their development by the existing 'capacity building' or 'business' support structures.

There are enough of these existing enterprise initiatives to populate a pilot OW which could generate dozens of sustainable, full time employment and training opportunities for some of the 'hardest to reach' local people, although the precise number will require market research to be carried out for every individual enterprise (stage 3). These enterprises will provide the backbone to the OW but as our survey clearly shows there are many other areas to consider for development either within the pilot OW or, if the pilot succeeds, within further OW 'waves'.

The local team which is needed to serve as 'Facilitators Enterprise' to the OW are in place and have developed an excellent working partnership with each other and a firm basis for the building of a productive partnership with the key partners who are crucial to delivery of an OW.

The use of the 'capacitation' learning process and OW self management tools to deliver this work has proved to be highly effective and should be rolled out for use by all local groups and enterprises too. We have found use of these tools to be liberating experience leading to early completion of major tasks and

overall awareness of the entire job by all team members. This leads to shared understanding of all of the management aspects of the enterprise.

The 'learning by doing' approach to business development is a much more 'people friendly' way of developing the 'entrepreneurial literacy' which is essential if any organisation is to be sustainable. Although this stage of the study did not require consultation with the 'target group' (this takes place in stage 3) we did hold preliminary discussions with a few potential 'job seekers' from amongst the 'hardest to reach' members of our community.

These discussions have been very promising as potential participants feel the 'learning by doing' approach to be much less exclusive than the standard approach and are excited by the prospect of delivering real contracts in order to develop and build capacity

Although the findings of our work clearly indicate the feasibility of the OW technique itself there were also some potential barriers to smooth delivery identified throughout stage 2.

These need to be reduced by implementation of some safeguards throughout the next phase and these are listed in the table overleaf.

**Potential barriers to smooth delivery**

**‘Showstoppers’**

This is a term that has been used to describe a situation where key players fail to deliver on their pledges of support and input. This can be caused by a range of factors and is always a danger to projects which require broad partnership working bringing together several agencies, with each playing a key role.

**High Staff Turnover**

Many of the agencies involved in the regeneration processes have such a high level of staff turnover it can present real problems to partnership building, particularly so when the partnership is innovative and ‘outside of the box’. A change of officer followed by lack of an effective ‘hand over’ can lead to wasted investment in time spent acquainting key partners with the OW concept, delivery practices and agreements.

**Lack of effective communication and collaboration between MFCDT and Marsh Farm Outreach**

The special ‘dual function’ nature of the steering group has not been operating effectively leading to several operational and procedural delays and frustrations. The capacity building arm of the steering group has been virtually non existent and the business manager is only part time, so the local team have had no daily ‘point of contact’ to work to. The infrequency of steering group meetings and the formal atmosphere has badly hindered the ‘dual learning’ process leading to a gap in understanding between the steering group and the team on the ground.

**Safeguards**

**Participatory evaluation**

Participatory Evaluation from the outset carried out by Luton University will mean constant contact is kept with all parties involved in delivery of the OW throughout the workshop design process. This should help to maintain consistency and will mean any emerging difficulties are flagged up at an early stage

**A complete file**

Is being kept with a summary of all meetings, agreements etc held with each partner. In the event that this staff turnover problem arises the existence of an accurate log of events which have taken place so far makes any ‘hand over’ to a successor much less problematic. This problem can also be reduced by maintenance of a good relationship and good communications with the individuals currently in post.

**Clear Terms of Reference**

Need to be drawn up for the steering group during stage 3. The special dual role of the group needs to be more explicitly defined, with a clear understanding that the whole approach is a learning curve for all concerned - including members of the steering group. Pre-emption of any ‘process barriers’ is a very important function that should be shared by the steering group. The inclusion of an evaluation team from University of Luton as members of the steering group will help to improve the efficiency and consistency of the group, increasing dual learning and removing tensions at an early stage.