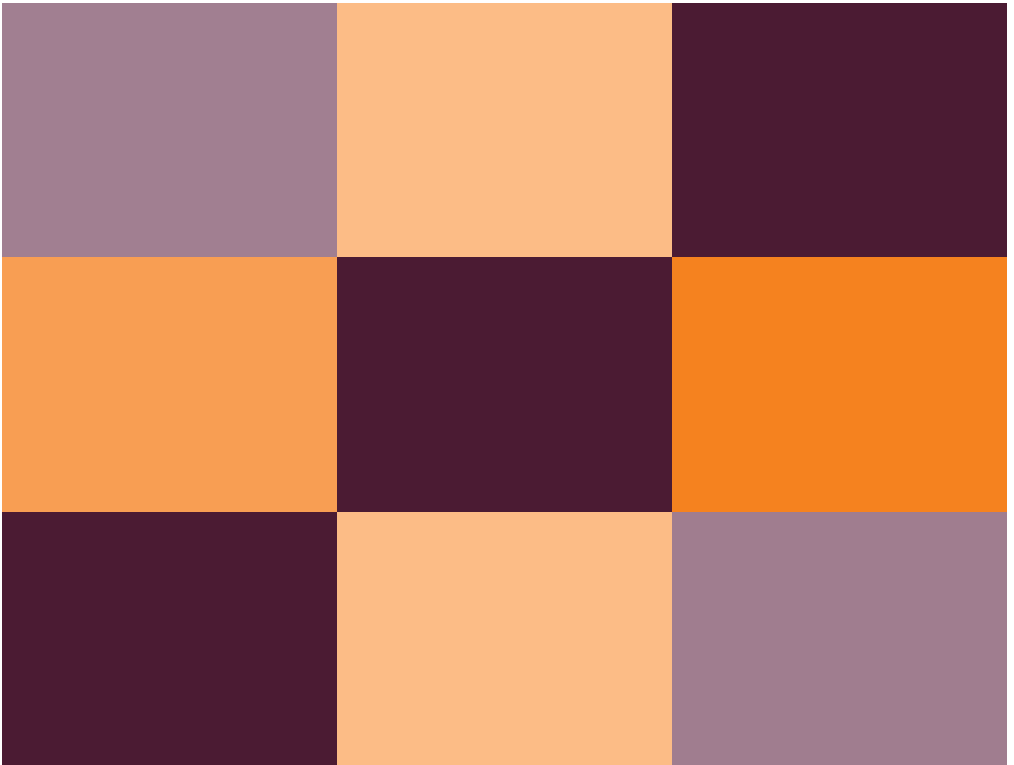


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## Case studies

# Making a difference in the **third sector**



# Unlock your potential



Apprenticeships are not just for business.

As these case studies show, third sector organisations are using them to achieve important objectives, from engaging with hard-to-reach groups to attracting new volunteers.



# Improving health in deprived communities

**Keighley Voluntary Services** in West Yorkshire used an Apprenticeships scheme to make a real difference in health awareness in some of the area's most deprived communities.

The project united seven local third sector groups involved in health and well-being, including the primary care trust.

With money from the European and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, they recruited 12 apprentices from local communities through special recruitment fairs held at community venues as well as advertising in libraries and Jobcentre Plus.

The apprentices selected were placed with the seven partner organisations, and helped them to deliver health-related activities and services.

But their contribution went well beyond day-to-day work and has brought lasting improvements in health awareness and access to services for local people.

### Driving behaviour change

Because they were rooted in the communities they served, the apprentices were well placed to

understand what works. They were able to support new groups and activities that helped to increase health awareness and to change behaviour in a sustainable way.

For example, local community centres have an increased awareness of their role in promoting health and are more able to do so as a result of the scheme.

### Engaging hard-to-reach groups

The apprentices represented a cross-section of the local community and were able to engage hard-to-reach communities. Access to Keighley Voluntary Services among the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities has improved since the scheme began.

The apprentices helped to highlight prevailing health inequalities and empower local people to improve their own health.



“We have been able to prove that by using Apprenticeships we can work at grass-roots level in communities and engage with groups that have been more difficult to reach in the past.”

Keighley Voluntary Services



# Empowering staff and volunteers

**Wakefield Positive Futures Sports Project**, which uses sport to divert young people away from crime and anti-social behaviour, found Apprenticeships an ideal way to motivate and develop committed local volunteers.

Positive Futures depends on involving people from the local community who know the local young people and the pressures they are under. The most active members had already become involved beyond their volunteer roles and were helping to run the project, but there was no structure to help them pursue this work as a career.

So when the project was approached by a recognised training provider for community sports organisations to pilot a new Apprenticeships scheme in Wakefield, it jumped at the chance.


### Supporting sustainable communities

Positive Futures provides the work experience, while the training provider offers the volunteers the chance to gain recognised qualifications including NVQ Level 2 for Leadership in Sport and a variety of Level 1 and Level 2 sports coaching qualifications.

Not only does this improve their skills and career options but it also helps to retain them in their community and inspire them towards greater achievements. For example, some of the apprentices are interested in running their own activities, schemes or clubs in the future.


### Savings that can be ploughed back

The Apprenticeships scheme means that Positive Futures no longer needs to employ professional coaches for its sessions with service users, saving almost £5,000 a year. For the apprentices, taking over this coaching role adds to their sense of involvement and increases their effort and commitment.



“There is nothing better than seeing someone progress from being an apprentice into full-time work, knowing that your organisation has played a part in their achievement in life.”

Gareth Hamlet, Wakefield sports co-ordinator



# Attracting young people to volunteering

**Voluntary Action Coventry (VAC)** provides support, including training, information and resources for third sector organisations as well as offering some voluntary services itself. To carry out this work effectively, it has to understand the needs of all sections of the city's population, including young people.

That's where Apprenticeships have proved so useful. Employing apprentices of school-leaving age has helped VAC to tailor its service to ensure that it meets the needs of young people and also to promote volunteering to this age group in a user-friendly way.

Because VAC touches a wide spectrum of organisations, from health to homelessness and from charities to social enterprises, the apprentices also gain an excellent introduction to life and work in the third sector. VAC's two current Apprenticeships illustrate this win-win relationship.

### Reaching out in the community

Darren Butler, aged 20, was taken on as a client services apprentice in August 2008, working towards an NVQ Level 2 in Business Administration. Since then

he has helped with every aspect of the organisation, from reception and post duties to marketing.

He has helped VAC target its services and develop resources that are attractive to younger people. His latest project is a shop unit in Coventry city centre which will provide access to all VAC's public-facing services. Darren has had an input into every aspect of the development, from signs and opening times to assembling flat-pack furniture. In this way, he has gained hands-on experience of launching a new service, while VAC has improved its service to local people.

### Ambassador for volunteering

Stephen McGeachan joined VAC in December 2008, working towards an NVQ Level 2 in Customer Service. Stephen is part of the 'Vinolved' team, which supports V's national framework for youth action.

Focusing exclusively on clients between 16 and 25 years of age, he promotes volunteering at public events and supports activities to engage young people. Like Darren, he provides a positive role model for other potential young volunteers.

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It's in  
our hands.**

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