



West Lancs Economy Study

West Lancashire is a great place to live and work and the West Lancs Economy Study published recently looks at ways to make it even better. The study covers the whole of the Borough, and has particular focus on Skelmersdale's economic issues and opportunities (as it is the most significant hub of population and economic activity, the area most in need of intervention and where most change is likely to occur).

The report looks at local statistics to provide an Economic Evidence Base. Key points include:

- West Lancs has 110,000 residents (9% of Lancashire's population)
- 62% live in three main urban settlements - 40% in Skelmersdale (41,000)
- It supports 45,000 jobs (7% of Lancashire) and Skelmersdale is a key centre of employment - having 43% of all jobs in the borough
- Key employment sectors are manufacturing, distribution, retail & warehousing, public sector, and a strong agricultural sector which supports over 2,000 jobs

The Economy Study provides a strong evidence base that will help to support the growth of the West Lancashire economy. The Study has also helped with the development of the forthcoming Draft West Lancashire Economic Development Strategy which is out for consultation on the 14th January. This important document sets out eight Strategic Themes with a series of Key Asks and a suite of actions that will drive economic growth across the Borough over the next 10 years.

“ Skelmersdale is a key centre of employment - having 43% of all jobs ”

West Lancashire Borough Council, Lancashire County Council and the Homes and Community Agency jointly commissioned the study. Councillor David Westley, Borough Council Leader and portfolio holder for Regeneration, said: *“The Council recognises we cannot deliver economic growth without working in partnership with a range of organisations and we will welcome views from all the key organisations and businesses operating in West Lancashire on our future Strategy early next year.”*

To learn more about the consultation process and how to get involved, contact the Economic Regeneration Team at West Lancashire Borough Council on 01695 -577177. The West Lancs Economy Study can be downloaded from:

www.onewestlancs.org/board.html

One West Lancs is a new partnership of the local voluntary, public and business sectors which aims to improve the quality of life for everyone in West Lancashire

This One West Lancs quarterly e-newsletter is sent to over 500 people. It is circulated to all One West Lancs Forum members, the One West Lancs Board, our elected representatives as well as members of the wider VCFS community.

If you no longer wish to receive the One West Lancs e-newsletter, please let us know and we will take you off the circulation list.



Police Cadets Scheme



The West Lancashire Volunteer Police Cadet scheme is aimed at young people between the ages of 13-18 years. The scheme, which started in September 2014, gives young people an insight into the police, team building and confidence

building and something positive to put on their CV's.

The Cadets meet at West Lancashire College on Tuesday evenings. There are currently 25 Cadets in total and it is hoped to increase this to 35 by the New Year. The cadets are also expected to contribute 3 hours volunteering a month - in the form of fundraising and community events.

DS Lee Anfield from Skelmersdale Police says: *'Although we are a very new group, we have achieved a great deal already. On 14th October 2014 the Cadets attended Skelmersdale Police Station and had a tour of the building, and a 'custody experience' where they saw what it was like to be locked in a cell. They also met officers from the Operational Support Unit who demonstrated their equipment such as riot helmets, shields, door opening equipment and Armed Response Vehicle officers showed the vast array of weapons and equipment they are trained to use. On 22nd November the group travelled to Mawdesley and enjoyed a day at Rock and River. The group took part in team events, archery, rifle shooting, tower climb, climbing wall and raft building. (photos attached).*

'In the New Year we will be taking part in a Cadet Challenge weekend at Altcar army camp where they will be tested against other Cadet groups on drill, knowledge of the law, orienteering and the obstacle course. There is also a Young Apprentice Challenge, again in competition with other Cadet groups where they have been challenged to turn £50 into a business and generate as much money as possible.'

If you know anyone who may be interested in joining the Police Cadets, please get in touch with Lee on 01695-566081 or Lee.Anfield@lancashire.pnn.police.uk

Dial-a-ride community cars

Philip Walker from Dial-a-Ride writes:

'Volunteer car schemes can fill a vital niche in the West Lancashire's overall transport provision. It's a real win-win service because volunteer car drivers get their driving expenses refunded (partly by the passenger and partly by the scheme organiser - in our case Dial-a-Ride) and the passenger gets a door-to-door chauffeur at a fraction of the cost of a taxi.

'The key, of course, is getting the volunteers. We are currently advertising in Local Life, and would love to hear from anyone who be interested in volunteer driving (high job satisfaction guaranteed!)

Please get in touch with Philip or Debbie at Dial-a-Ride on 01704-893373





'the best thing we have grown is a small community of amazing people'



Organic Veg Club

A new and innovative food growing project was launched this year to get local people pooling resources to grow fruit and vegetables. The new project called Organic Veg Club has been set up by Neil and Jane Hickson, who are looking at ways of producing food that are future proof and rooted in the local community, on their prime agricultural land between Burscough and Rufford.

The Organic Veg Club is being modelled on Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) schemes popular in Europe and the U.S. There are currently about 100 CSAs set up in Britain, but this will be the first in Lancashire. It works by people buying a 'share' in the crop in the form of a weekly fee and/or a small contribution of labour. In return they get a weekly supply of vegetables and fruit.

Neil and Jane Hickson are reflecting on the first year of the Organic Veg club: *'The first growing season was the start of our learning process for growing veg on a large scale. We had some crop failures but a great many more successes. It was a brilliant growing season to get us off to a good start. However, the best thing we have grown is a small community of amazing people which didn't exist before.'*

'We now want to grow this community into a much larger one. We want to give people the opportunity to get out into the country and to show them how organic growing techniques and permaculture can preserve and nurture land for future generations.'

Organic Veg Club is planning to launch a veg box scheme in the Spring and to double its membership next year. If you are interested in finding out more, get in touch with Neil and Jane at lathomfarm@gmail.com or www.facebook.com/organicvegclub. Website: www.organicvegclub.co.uk



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Work is underway to build West Lancashire's Youth Zone. The Skelmersdale-based Youth Zone received £2m as part of a wider Lancashire County Council initiative to upgrade provision for young people, and is being built in the centre of Skelmersdale, next to the library, police station and Nye Bevan Pool. The new-build Youth Zone will open for a minimum of five nights a week and offer a wide range of activities and opportunities for young people to get together in a safe and fun environment.

Lancashire County Council's Cabinet member for children, young people and schools, County Councillor Matthew Tomlinson, said: *'This is excellent news for the young people of Skelmersdale and West Lancashire. Staff from the Young People's Service and young people themselves have put in a great deal of work to make the youth zone a reality. This superb new youth zone will open up top-notch facilities to young people including a multi-purpose hall, internet café, kitchen, space for group work and private sessions, studio and performance workshop areas for arts, music and drama; and an outdoor multi-use games area.'*

For more information, contact Nighat Parveen, Operations Manager, Chorley/South Ribble/West Lancs, Young People's Service Tel: 01257 517240 email: Nighat.Parveen@lancashire.gov.uk

One West Lancs Thematic Groups

To date One West Lancs Thematic Groups have been set up looking at issues in the following areas:

- [Skills, Training and Employment Partnership \(STEP\)](#)
- [Community Safety Partnership](#)
- [Health and Wellbeing Partnership](#)
- [Children and Young People's Board](#)
- [People and Communities](#)
- [Ageing Well Partnership](#)
- [Transport](#)

These links will take you to pages on the One West Lancs website where information on the thematic groups and copies of their action plans, minutes and agendas can be found. Work is underway to set up the Environment thematic group.

www.onewestlancs.org