



## RELEASE

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### Wheels 2 Work

#### Egremont Regeneration Partnership drive Craig into work

After being unemployed for over twelve months Craig Shutt, 19 of Egremont passed his driving test first time with the help of Egremont Regeneration Partnership and was then offered permanent employment at Maysons Bros.

Craig was offered a position working in Haverigg which meant travelling there and back each day. He contacted the W2W scheme initially for a scooter loan but unfortunately his work location meant a travelling distance in excess of the recommended mileage of the scooter scheme.

Egremont Regeneration Partnership Market Town Initiative funding the 'Wheels 2 Work' project in Craig's area was able to help him achieve his ambition by funding half the cost of professional driving lessons with local driving school, EasyWay in St Bees.

CLlr Elaine Woodburn, Chair of Egremont Regeneration Partnership, said, "Craig is the perfect example of why we wanted to support this project. This project has now resulted in Craig securing long term employment and the regeneration partnership is pleased and proud in playing a small role in helping Craig to achieve this".

The W2W scheme project co-ordinator Julia Mullarkey said, "When I received a phone call from Bill Walker, Craig's driving instructor, I was delighted to hear he had done really well with the first batch of driving lessons and he had already put in for his theory test. When he passed this we funded further driving lessons to enable Craig to get up to test standard and to our delight he passed 1st time"

Within a week of passing his test Craig was offered a permanent local job with Maysons in Egremont and since starting work he has saved had enough money to pay for his half of the lessons, and the cost of the tests.

Delighted by being able to drive and having a job Craig said, "W2W has helped me get my driving licence really quickly and now I'm even about to take my Pass Plus which is a lot easier now I'm employed"

The number of people the Egremont Regeneration Partnership has assisted to get a job in Egremont through the W2W scheme is 5 to date.

W2W are currently looking urgently for more participants for the scooter scheme. Anyone interested should contact W2W Project Officer Julia Mullarkey direct on 07799798278 or through Connexions Cumbria on 01946 695541 and by post to Unit 12, The South Range, Hackthorpe Hall Business Centre, Hackthorpe, CA10 2HX

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### Supporting Information

The 'Wheels to work' project is developed to support young people aged 16-20 within rural communities to access opportunities in employment, education or training by providing individuals their own transport solutions. The project was funded through the Countryside Agency up to March 2006 following which it has continued to support the rural communities of Egremont Market Town Area, with funding from the Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership through Northwest Regional Development Agency.

Wheels to Work provides young people with no practical means of transport access to a loaned scooter to use for transport where there is no practical alternative due their working hours or remoteness. The duration of the loan is six months when entering employment and the length of loan for education and training is commensurate to the length of the course.

## Aims and Objectives:

It enables individuals to compete for job opportunities by equipping them with appropriate skills, developing employability initiatives, encouraging equality of opportunity for learning and addressing barriers to work by improve the physical accessibility of job opportunities through transport initiatives and the choice of employment sites brought forward for development.

W2W enables young people to improve their employability and base skills. It encourages participants to contribute to their community and enables them to extend their social circle and improves self-confidence.

Access to W2W transport can be an incentive for young people to find and stay in employment or training. For those who may only be marginally better off when entering work or training, a scooter can be an immediate tangible benefit.

To improve services for young people and increase their involvement in the work of the partnership .The project worker will interact with people of all ages, including young people, at her base in the Egremont Youth Centre. The project worker will proactively target young people aged 16+ and will encourage and support them into learning and work.

To improve levels of community safety and well being

Social research demonstrates a clear link between Unemployment/worklessness and ill health, poor housing, low aspiration, poor education and under achieving. This project aims to address these issues thus trying to break this cycle of disadvantage and improving, amongst other things, health and well being.

To improve opportunities for industrial and commercial investment Egremont has suffered decline since the demise of manufacturing and mining industries. As a result it suffers high levels of deprivation, unemployment, poor health and social inequalities. This project would encourage people into learning and work including self employment which would promote opportunities for economic investment.

## Objectives:

- Providing a short term transport solution
- To create independence and freedom
- Enabling access to employment, training and education
- To break the cycle of claiming benefits
- Participate in sports & other recreational activities
- The re-engagement of young people in to employment, education and training
- To widen the immediate geographical area of employment
- Work with a wide range of partners from all sectors
- Safer road use and pre driver education programmes delivered to young people
- The acquisition of practical skills i.e. CBT & motorcycle maintenance
- Redress inequalities in access to services

The provision of W2W schemes across the North West complements current government thinking as set out in the recent Green Paper Youth Matters. This paper places a sharp focus on Empowering Young People by offering things to do and places to go, wishes to see young people as citizens making a Contribution to the local community and seeks to support choice through good quality Information, Advice and Guidance. The independence that a young person gains through access to their own transport alongside the support that participants receive from the scheme coordinators suggests that W2W is well placed to deliver on all of these areas.

Young people have limited choices within that context especially young people living in rural communities within the region. Employers are often quite small to medium size enterprises that simply cannot afford to help cover the cost of getting those young people from a rural location to the place of work. The situation is similar for education and training providers. The larger employers often require employees to work shifts and a significant amount of employment in rural areas is in the hospitality and hotel and catering industries, which work irregular hours making the use of public transport difficult at best. Work placements with employers are difficult to attend due to the number and regularity of buses/trains and the added time it adds to a working day plus the extra expense that often is unaffordable for young people.

W2W helps young people address the issues of access in rural areas. It is not the answer for all young people but is a cost effective solution for a significant number of young people. W2W removes in a practical way barriers that can stop young people accessing employment, education and training. There can be benefits for the community and for the local economy. Where young people have developed a negative approach to work, education and training W2W can help turn that view in to a positive one.

Beneficiaries are young people who will because of W2W access employment, stay on in education or take a place in full or part time training through a training agency. Those young people will be:

- Between the age of 16 to 21 years old
- Living in a rural area
- Living where there is no access to an effective public transport link
- Accessing employment, education or training in a rural area
- Accessing opportunities that the public transport system does not
- Disadvantaged Young People
- Not in education, employment or training
- Young people with low (level 1 and below) or no qualifications

Benefits for participants include:

- Low cost transport
- Ability to access education, training and employment opportunities over a wider geographic area
- Personal benefits including increased independence, self esteem and motivation
- Increased mobility
- Improved future career prospects

W2W is already operational in the west coast of Cumbria (32 scooters). Consequently there is a wealth of experience in the area that can be drawn upon to support the project.

Young people are currently involved where there are active schemes in the North West via user groups and forums. Young people will also be involved as potential mentors / buddies for new entrants to W2W and help raise their awareness of road safety issues and give help and advice on a range of other practical issues such as bike security, maintenance how to purchase your own scooter, awareness of weather and road conditions and to act as ambassadors for the W2W initiative.

W2W works with a range of partners who help deliver the bid. They include;  
Egremont Youth Centre - the project is housed in Egremont Youth Centre and Young Cumbria staff, through word of mouth, and postcards advertise the service

Training Providers including Wyndham School, Rathbones, and Lakes College.

Connexions and Jobcentreplus with a service level agreement in place.

Routes to Work- We already work together in other areas. Together we offer a range of support to people on Incapacity Benefit living in Egremont

In Biz- Referrals to these organisations if people are looking to set up new businesses

Our partnership is:-

- Job Centre Plus *RA*
- Cumbria Constabulary *RA/SG*
- Cumbria L.S.C. *FA/SG*
- Cumbria Youth Alliance (representing the voluntary youth sector in Cumbria) *RA*
- Cumbria County Council *FA/SG/RA*
- Cumbria Tourist Board *RA*
- Lakes College *RA*

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## **W2W**

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