



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Charity Extends Employment Programme for Hard to Reach Young People in UK**

Employment charity Tomorrow's People is extending 'Working It Out,' a programme incorporating community challenges, to help hard-to-reach young people into work, education or training.

The programme has been running in Glasgow since 2004 and is now launching in Brighton, Liverpool and Plymouth to help socially-excluded young people aged 16-24 overcome personal, social and economic barriers.

While thousands of youngsters leave school and move on to college, university or jobs, there are many who leave with no skills or qualifications, no personal goals and little hope of employment. In January 2007 the Office of National Statistics recorded 1.23 million 16-24 year olds' not in education, employment or training and a Home Office Study in 2002 estimated the financial cost to society was in the region of £16 billion.

The centrepiece of the Working IT Out programme is a community challenge which enables participants to put something back into their local community. Small groups of young people take part in specific challenges over a 16 week period, supported by a Tomorrow's People leader and co-coordinator. Projects include renovating community venues for local residents and cleaning up and revitalising public areas. Members of the group learn to work as a team, organise plans of action and experience a structured working environment – often for the first time.

The individuals on the programme also receive structured, one-to-one practical support with personal and social development. Focus is also put into the aftercare element of the programme, to ensure that when young people move onto employment or training, success continues over the long term.

Analysis of Working It Out in Glasgow between May 2004 – April 2006 showed that 46% of programme completers secured a job and, of those from year one, 56% were still in a job 12 months later. 43% of programme completers entered training or further education.

Brian Gibson, Tomorrow's People National Manager, Young People's Services, said: "Through Working It Out we have transformed the lives of many disadvantaged young people. Some of these people are likely to have very troubled histories, suffering from physical mistreatment, drug or alcohol abuse, low basic skills or mild learning disabilities."

Working It Out began as a pilot project, run by Tomorrow's People in Tower Hamlets in 2003. 43% of the participants had a criminal conviction, only 21% had any educational qualification, and 43% reported that they had used drugs more than 11 times a month.

The project in Tower Hamlets, was evaluated by the independent think-tank nef (the new economics foundation), to measure the social return on investment.

- nef found that for every £1 invested in Working it Out, the return to society was trebled to £3.
- This social return on investment came from reduced welfare costs, increased tax take and reduced costs for the criminal justice system.

Funding for Working It Out has been provided by a range of organisations, region to region, including Barclays, the European Social Fund, Glasgow City Council, FARE (Family Action in Rogerfield and Easterhouse), EQUIP, The Laidlaw Youth Project and v, the new youth volunteering charity.

Brian Gibson adds: "The Working It Out programme is currently available in four major cities and there is a lot more we can achieve if we can secure further funding. The programme is able to secure pound for pound matched funding until 2009 for any private sector investment it attracts across the UK. We are actively seeking corporate partners looking to double the effect of their investment by funding Working It Out in areas of deprivation across the UK."

Anyone requiring further information about Working It Out should visit [www.tomorrows-people.co.uk](http://www.tomorrows-people.co.uk) or contact Brian Gibson, Tomorrow's People National Manager, Young People's Services at [bgibson@tomorrows-people.co.uk](mailto:bgibson@tomorrows-people.co.uk) or call 0141 445 8995.

**-Ends-**

**Case studies of young people supported by the Working It Out programme are available from the Media Relations Manager, Tomorrow's People**

## **Notes to Editors**

### **Tomorrow's People**

- Tomorrow's People is a national charity with a 23- year track record of success in helping people out of long-term unemployment, homelessness, welfare dependence including incapacity benefits, and into jobs and self-sufficiency. It has helped change the lives of more than 400, 000 people across the UK who had been resigned to long-term, even life-long, unemployment, since it was established in 1984.

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