

# DOVER BIG LOCAL Year 3 Plan Review



October 2018

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## What have you done against what was in your plan?

### Local Economy

#### Co-Innovation

Since April 2018, Dover Big Local has been in conversation with the Leader of Dover District Council, Cllr Keith Morris about utilising a retail space, previously a Co-Operative and Peacocks shop, for community use. Dover District Council has purchased the premises with the view to redevelopment. It is clear that this will entail a delay of at least 12 months, with Council officers estimating that the timescale is more likely to be 18 – 24 months.

Cllr Morris has a wealth of experience working with civil society and is keen to demonstrate a partnership with the Council that showcases an impact on local people. Cllr Morris has mobilised officers from across the Council to work collaboratively with Dover Big Local, and with Red Zebra to ensure the best possible conditions for success.

DBL has consulted with local residents and businesses via online surveys plus discussions with residents, Pop Up Business school participants and Dover Town Team about the most appropriate use of this space, and has designed the following delivery model for Co-Innovation:

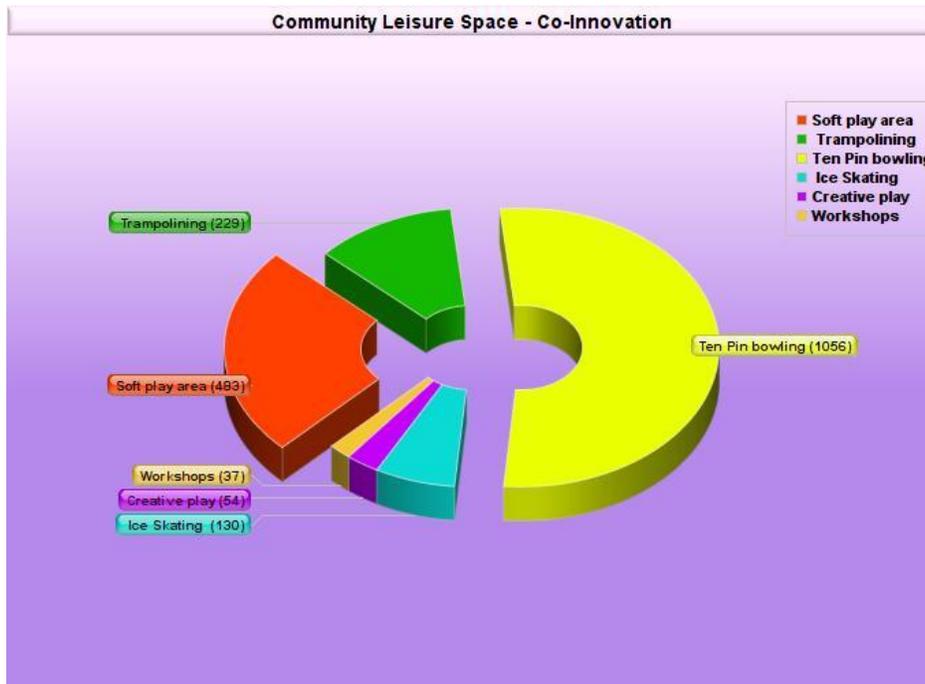
- Affordable start-up and makers spaces (we have received 17 expressions of interest to date, and have an expected capacity of 25/30 businesses/makers)
- Co-working (approximately 10-15 users on a regular basis)
- Meeting and training rooms (available for tenants, businesses and community groups)
- Leisure activities (affordable activities for local residents)

Perhaps most importantly we see it as an exciting way to support micro and small businesses to get started through offering cost effective working spaces and a fantastic support package of training, coaching and mentoring.

What we have done:

- Signed a lease with DDC
- Have a management agreement in place between RZ and DBL
- Applied for Change of Use and Advertising consent
- Worked with a local interior designer
- Commissioned local artists to create relevant art work
- Refurbished the space, using local tradespeople wherever possible
- Research into leisure activity, with soft play and bowling being the most popular options.

We carried out an online survey to ask local residents what they would like to see in the 'community space'; we received 2,099 responses and the results are shown below.



### Destination Dover

Destination Dover was initiated by DBL in 2016. It brings together a broad partnership of the community with public and private organisations to support the growth of Dover’s visitor economy. Destination Dover is a management organisation, and during the past year has focussed on development, communication and placemaking. During 2018 Destination Dover has applied for external funding to support Dover’s visitor economy.

*Please see more detailed information in the additional report provided.*

### UnLtd

DBL is an UnLtd partner, and has worked with UnLtd to develop an approach to supporting emerging social entrepreneurs.

### Pop Up Business School

For the second year DBL co-financed the successful Pop Up Business School course, this time with Dover Town Council. Forty seven people attended consistently over the week in July and the reviews were all positive.) We have subsequently developed a fortnightly business support

group and have offered participants opportunities to take up opportunities at our new business incubation centre, Co-Innovation.

*Please see more detailed information in the additional report provided.*

#### **DBL JobClub**

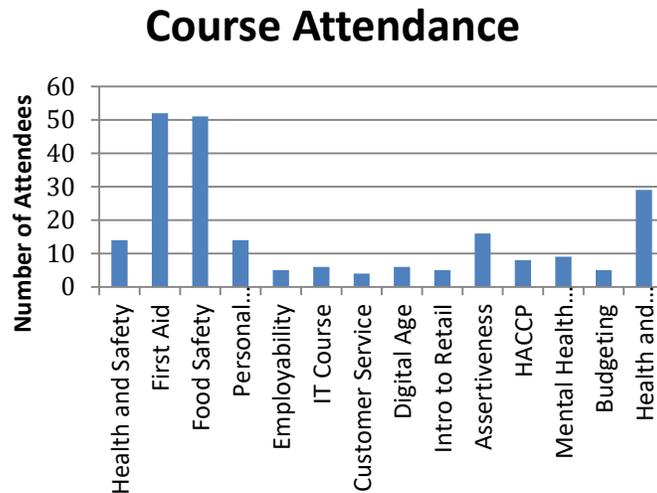
The Job Club, now in its third year, proves to be a much needed resource in Dover. Hosted by DBL and run by Southern Housing and Town and Country housing associations every Tuesday, the Job Club has had approximately 500 'visits' from local residents from January 2018 to date (the period covered by reports from Southern Housing). At least seventeen of these have secured employment, with a further eleven having had job interviews. Fourteen have attended training courses and seven are now volunteering as a first step into getting into work. Many of the referrals are from the Job Centre and involve intensive one-to-one guidance.

*Please see more detailed information in the additional report provided.*

## Training

We have extended our training offer over the past year, adapting to meet identified need, particularly in relation to employability but also to health and wellbeing. We have worked with our regular training providers to create bespoke training for our community partners. For example, Emmaus in Dover required training for coping strategies for addiction for their clients.

During this year, 224 people have attended our courses. The following chart shows the number of participants on our courses during the year:



Some courses have been held multiple times, due to demand, with Food Safety (eight courses) and First Aid (six courses) being the most popular.

## Partnerships

We have continued to build and strengthen our partnerships and enjoy excellent working relationships with many local organisations. DBL has over 60 partners with whom it currently works, and these include Folkestone MIND, the One You Service, the Roma in the Lead project, Southern Housing, Town and Country Housing, DWP, Dover Town Council, Dover District Council, Kent Wildlife Trust and The Beacon Church



Partners support the delivery of a number of local initiatives, for example **Future Foundry** runs a successful, monthly Repair Café, we collaborate with **Folkestone MIND** to provide a Wellbeing Hub in the centre of Dover and Kent County Council’s health trainers, the **One You Service**, offer bespoke advice and support around varied issues such as healthy eating on a budget. DBL works closely with Red Zebra’s **Roma in the Lead** project, supporting the Dover Roma development officer to engage with local Roma families and to empower them to access mainstream opportunities and to be more involved in the local community. DBL continues to provide a free community space for a number of small local groups and organisations.

The **Repair Café** is a collaboration between Future Foundry, DBL and Transition Dover. It prioritises recycling and energy saving, providing people with opportunities to use their skills and to share these with others. People tell us that they often throw away broken items because repair costs are too expensive. At the Repair Café people learn that they don't have to throw things away; there are alternatives.

DBL created bi-monthly network forums for the benefit of groups, organisations and services to share information and to develop effective partnerships. We regularly have over 20 organisations represented at each forum.

### **Environment & Green Spaces**

DBL has helped fund several projects supporting community involvement in the local environment. **Our Finest Dour** is an exciting project to restore and maintain the River Dour, as well as training local residents to become 'river rangers'. DBL supported the River Dour Festival.

On a smaller scale, a grant to the **Prospect Corner Community Allotment** enabled more local residents to get involved in growing their own produce and linked with local schools. We also helped raise awareness of the Land Trust's Fort Burgoyne, by giving a Community Chest grant towards Fort Bygone, a **Dover Youth Theatre** production that was held there.

DBL has continued to liaise with the Land Trust in respect of Fort Burgoyne, offering ideas for regeneration and community use and introducing partners such Shared Assets. DBL is keen to see a partnership with Dover District Council, Dover Town Council and the community to initiate a community housing scheme.

### **Health & Wellbeing**

DBL grant funded the **Dover Soul and Body** project, which enabled ten local residents, regardless of their fitness level, to have access to a ten week private introduction to their fitness and wellbeing course, held at Channel Crossfit, a local CIC. This developed into a partnership with Porchlight, who funded a local chef to come into the Hub to show participants how to eat a healthy meal after each session.

We funded **Dover Take Off**, helping them to set up a base in Dover. Take Off is a peer led mental health organisation that provides groups, support and activities for people with mental health problems, run by people who have or had mental health issues themselves.

Our Community Chest funding gave a small amount of money to the **DBL Stitching Group**, which meets weekly in the Hub. The group has gone from strength to strength and is not just about crafting; it provides those who attend with an opportunity to make new friends, learn new skills and provides friendly support.

**Mental Health support:** DBL has developed a successful partnership with Folkestone MIND, enabling us to collaborate on a new Wellbeing base. This hub focuses on Health and Wellbeing

courses, counselling and various activities to support resident's mental health, in response to local need and supported by local data.

Our relationship with the **One You Service** (Kent County Council Public Health) continues to grow and we have set up a diabetes support group as well as an Invisible Illness group. Alongside this we run 'Healthy Eating on a budget' sessions particularly for those with limited income, older people and those living alone.

DBL has initiated a weekly advice clinic in partnership with Porchlight's '**Live Well**' service (Kent County Council's community mental health service) in response to need that was identified through our job club and other support groups. We felt that we should address welfare issues such as health, housing and debt in tandem with employment support so that individuals could take greatest advantage of the opportunities in the town.

## Communications



During the past year DBL has improved awareness of its activities through relationships, face-to-face meetings, community activities and its online presence. DBL now has a volunteer who writes a regular blog, making better use of social media to inform its followers of local activities and issues of local interest. DBL produces quarterly bulletins that are circulated electronically. Our Facebook group now has 1,103 members.

## Community Involvement

DBL has provided school holiday activities for families. We have found skilled volunteers to facilitate workshops, discos and outdoor nature activities. We held a successful summer holiday 'kids' club' – somewhere free for families to go but also to give parents, grandparents and carers a break. We also have knitting groups, art workshops, jewellery workshops, bike repair and maintenance sessions and a range of other activities.

Our annual **Urban Fete**, held in Pencester Gardens has grown to become a major event on the Dover calendar. The original aim was to raise awareness of local services, clubs and organisations in Dover but it has become a wonderful day of music, food and fun activities for all ages, attracting around 600 visitors. The 2018 Urban Fete is on 22<sup>nd</sup> September.



## Arts and Culture

DBL's **Art31** is a group of visual and performing artists and poets. It continues to meet every couple of months, to discuss and plan for projects, update members on events, whilst also existing as a platform for members to share individual interests and ideas. Having made use of The Hub to hold exhibitions and events for several years, the group are excited that The Co-Innovation space will include a new gallery for work to be exhibited and performed, potentially

offering more interaction and interface with the public. The group is currently planning its 6<sup>th</sup> annual Big Draw, having become an established event in Dover's October half term week; the Big Draw is the world's largest drawing festival and aims to unite people in celebrating the power of drawing. We look forward to attracting new members to our ever growing network of creative practitioners, helping to add to Dover's arts and cultural offer.

**Future Foundry** has developed a creative space in the heart of Dover; the first creative hub in Kent. A number of young creative Dovorians are able to utilise a 3D printer, laser cutter and other specialist equipment as well as a variety of training and support opportunities.

During this period, DBL part-funded the **Threads** Kent Residency/Critique project, which enabled local artists to work and show their art to local residents. We also funded the **Dover smART** Project's Creative Central Pop-UK; using a tuk tuk to take art and other projects out and about, engaging local residents and providing a focus for employability courses, with course participants designing and running their own micro social enterprises.

We also contributed towards the annual **Dover Together Multicultural Festival** held in the summer. This event gave local residents an opportunity to come together, watching performances, trying out activities and food from a wide range of cultures.

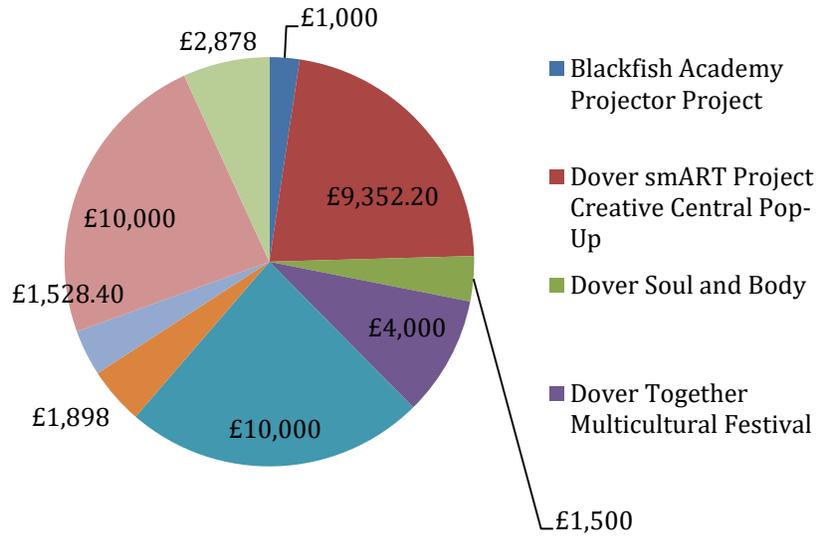
On a smaller scale, DBL part-funded the **Blackfish Academy's** new projector, enabling them to improve their shows and give residents who attend them a better experience. Blackfish provides local children and adults with the opportunity to take part in a wide range of theatrical productions.

### **Grant awards/community chest**

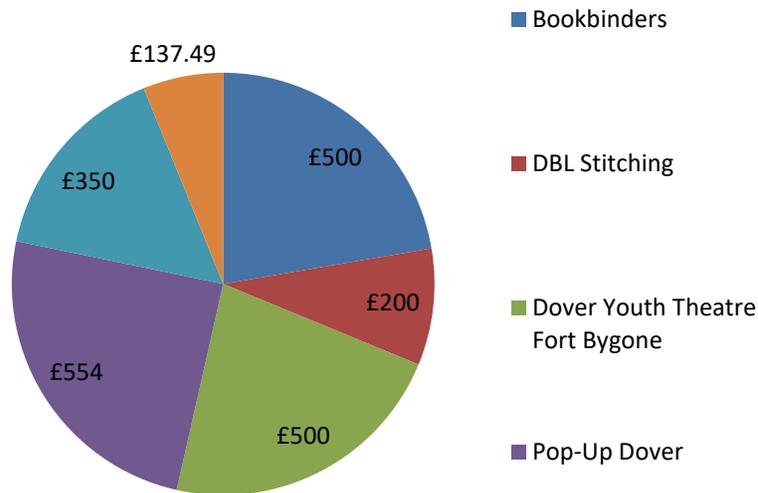
Since October 2017, DBL has awarded 15 grants. Nine of these were Large Grants, ranging from £1,000 to Blackfish Academy for a new projector, to £10,000 to both the mental health charity Take Off towards Dover premises and the Our Finest Dour environmental project. The total amount of money given as Large Grants was £42,157.

The Bookbinders project was run by the KM Charity Team. This initiative, setting up informal reading groups for vulnerable adults who struggle with literacy, had 44 participants, broken down as follows: 20 elders (aged 80+), 4 From East Kent College (aged 17-20) and 20 from Porchlight (aged 16-50). DBL received a KM Partnership Award for supporting this project.

The chart below shows the allocation of during this period:



There were six Community Chest grants during this period, totaling £2,341. These grants of under £500 (with one exception) were given as follows:



*A report from the DBL Stitching group is attached*

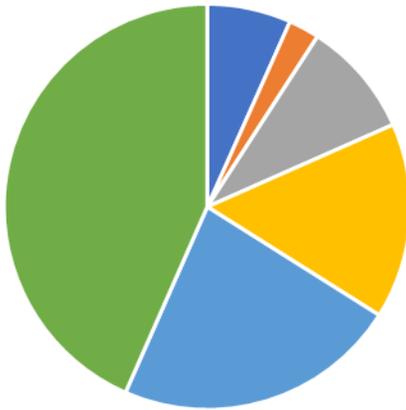
## What money have you spent?

The table below shows total expenditure:

Dover Big Local Year 3 - Expenditure to 30th September 2018								
	Arts and Culture	Communications	Environment and Green Spaces	Health and Wellbeing	Local Economy	Support costs	TOTAL	% of total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
<b>Budget</b>	<b>23,000</b>	<b>16,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>32,500</b>	<b>40,500</b>	<b>69,000</b>	<b>201,000</b>	
% of total	11%	8%	10%	16%	20%	34%	100%	
<b>Expenditure</b>								
Grants Paid	9,142	337	12,662	21,352	20,000		63,494	36%
Training & meeting costs	70	268				12,769	13,106	7%
Project delivery costs	600	1,533		61	25,953	2,310	30,457	17%
Equipment					19,180	1,629	20,809	12%
Salary costs						41,344	41,344	23%
Marketing and advertising costs		379				60	439	0%
Staff & volunteer expenses						795	795	0%
Premises costs					256	5,166	5,422	3%
Office costs					24	1,175	1,199	1%
Overhead costs					718	781	1,499	1%
Staff & volunteer training						116	116	0%
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>9,812</b>	<b>2,517</b>	<b>12,662</b>	<b>21,413</b>	<b>66,131</b>	<b>66,145</b>	<b>178,680</b>	
<b>% of total expenditure</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>100%</b>	
<b>Balance remaining</b>	<b>13,188</b>	<b>13,483</b>	<b>7,338</b>	<b>11,087</b>	<b>- 25,631</b>	<b>2,855</b>	<b>22,320</b>	

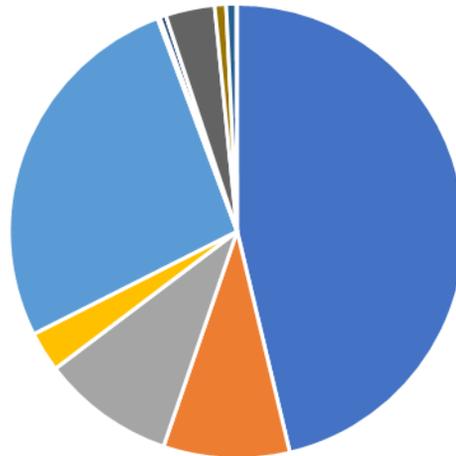
The charts below depict expenditure by theme and by type.

Expenditure by theme



- Arts and Culture
- Communications
- Environment and Green Spaces
- Health and Wellbeing
- Local Economy
- Support costs

Expenditure by type



- Grants Paid
- Training & meeting costs
- Project delivery costs
- Equipment
- Salary costs
- Marketing and advertising costs
- Staff & volunteer expenses
- Expenses
- Premises costs
- Office costs
- Overhead costs
- Staff & volunteer training

## What impact have you had?

DBL has begun to have a real impact on the town in the past year. This has been our most successful year to date in terms of engagement and partnership work. There is a greater understanding of Big Local and the potential it has to change communities. As we have engaged more residents and stakeholders, so we have gained trust.

The **DBL Hub** has become a valued resource for many in the community. It is open to all, but particularly to the vulnerable and most disadvantaged in our area. As Local Authority cuts impact further on society and funding is withdrawn from the third sector, so DBL has been able to fill some gaps. This past year has seen the Hub grow into a space for a Job Club, welfare advice and signposting facility as well as a space for health and wellbeing activities such as knitting groups, dance, coffee mornings, basic cooking sessions etc. During the past year, over 1,250 people have used the Hub.

- The DBL Job Club has had at least 500 'visits', supporting participants into employment, volunteering or training
- Welfare advisers have seen over 200 people; key issues have been housing and benefits

We have established bi-monthly **network meetings** with stakeholders to improve communication, develop partnerships and avoid duplication. Dover had a very disparate and disconnected service provision. This year has seen small charities and community groups working more cohesively on priority areas such as mental health, isolation, events and training.

DBL's **School Uniform Buy or Swap** initiative was started by our Hub worker in response to families telling us that they are unable to afford the new school uniform; it also supports our aspiration to re-use and re-cycle goods whenever possible. School Uniform Buy or Swap has become a very successful service with around 4 or 5 visits a day to the hub to buy, donate or swap. All our proceeds go to a local charity or community group.

The **Hot Shop** (Help our Town) received a small amount of funding from DBL, conceived and run by a local resident, the Hot Shop sells unwanted and second hand items and a percentage of proceeds are donated to local groups.

### Breaking down barriers

Integration has been a priority this year as Dover has a larger than average Roma community. Through partnership with the Roma in the Lead project and the One You Service we have contributed to the integration of different ethnic families, who enjoy cooking sessions together, other family activities and discos. DBL funded a multicultural festival this year, which was a great success.

### Being active in the community

DBL has set out to expand its team of resident facilitators and volunteers and this year has seen a step change in active participation. Most of our volunteers have gained skills and confidence.

## Partnership Building

DBL continues to build new relationships and to strengthen existing ones. Its approach is to facilitate and empower local organisations to better understand and meet local needs, working together to reduce duplication and to address gaps. DBL works with care homes, housing associations, Dover District Council, Dover Town Council, health bodies, occupational therapists, employment services, environmental groups, colleges, Kent Police, local councilors, community wardens, Transition Dover, Fairtrade, DWP, Folkestone MIND, DWP, Dover Society, Children's Centres, Samphire, Migrant Help, Families United, Princes Trust, Footprints, Porchlight, Shaw Trust, Speak Up, Take Off, Future Foundry, White Cliffs, Kent Wildlife Trust, Destination Dover, allotment societies etc.

DBL is particularly pleased with its partnership with Dover District Council and Dover Town Council; it is now involved in major decisions and collaborating on a range of initiatives, including Co-Innovation, plans for a new skate park, consultations and dementia awareness.

## Nathan's story

*"I have been volunteering at the Dover Big Local since May. It has helped a lot. I had always struggled with people – interacting with them, being around others, and this has helped me to cope, to actually interact with others. I used to avoid phone calls, now it doesn't bother me if I have to ring people, or if the phone answers, I can do it.*

*I have met a lot of people through the DBL, and it's satisfying to help them with their needs. We get a variety of people here, and they all have different needs, so it's often a challenge to give them the help they need, but it's an enjoyable one.*

*I also help out with the job club on Tuesdays, and that has shown me how people do struggle with looking for work, computer skills, applying for jobs, and it's nice to be able to help them"*

## Mark's story

Mark is 49 and has been unemployed since September 2017. Mark left education at 16 to start a YTS scheme in woodwork. Mark left the scheme prior to its completion and went onto train in the building trade. From there, Mark undertook a variety of casual labouring jobs until he went to Australia to travel and work. On his return, Mark became seriously ill and underwent major surgery in 2001. Mark recovered well and decided to study a horticultural course at Hadlow College, completing at level 3. Mark has spent some time caring for his parents who had become unwell.



Mark was referred to the Dover Job Club by his Work Coach to get support with getting online and making job applications. Mark secured a seasonal position as a grounds man at Connaught Park between March and September 2017. Mark appreciated the specialist help he had been receiving and became a regular attendee of the Dover Job Club again. Mark sought further support from the Job Club in finding suitable employment and to improve his IT skills. Mark received one to one support from both Sarah and Rachel to devise personal statements for job application forms, tailor his CV and produce covering letters and was offered a job interview at Bettespark as an Apprentice grounds man. Mark was informed that he was one of the four candidates selected for the interview. At the Job Club, Mark was offered a one to one mock interview and felt this helped him greatly in his interview. Unfortunately Mark was not offered the position but was informed via feedback from the employer that another candidate had more practical experiences but that he had interviewed very well. Mark was not deterred by this and continued to attend the Dover Job Club weekly. Mark applied for a seasonal position with Folkestone Council through HRGO recruitment agency and was successful in being offered a full time post as a grounds man starting Easter 2018. Congratulations Mark!

### Comments from Mark

*"This is the best job club I have ever attended. We need more job clubs like the Dover Job Club. Rachel and Sarah are very competent professionals who are approachable, patient, polite and helpful. The atmosphere in the job club is friendly and informal. The location of the job club is excellent and accessible. The extended hours are great. My confidence has grown, thanks to Rachel and Sarah and also to Nick from 'We are Digital' who has also helped me with IT skills. Thank you"*

## Training

This year we have expanded our training offer, with 224 people attending free courses on personal development and employability.

## What have you learnt?

### Inclusion

Over the past year we have been successful in responding to the needs of poorest and most disadvantaged in our community. Working in partnership with partners, including local authorities, the Job Centre, NHS, charities etc we facilitated the provision of local services to fill gaps in provision resulting from funding cuts. We have provided a Job Club, a welfare advice service, employment training and effective sign-posting to relevant services.



However, we have listened to residents and recognise that we need to widen our support to those already in work who are struggling, as well as the wider community in general. According to the Institute for Fiscal studies, 57% of people in poverty live in households with at least one economically active person. Many Dovorians rely on insecure employment; zero hours contracts, casual work and low pay. DBL has been exploring refocussing its activity to offer relevant training and to develop a programme of support for entrepreneurs and emerging businesses.

DBL has also been exploring structures to encourage more diverse involvement in its decision making processes. The year 4 plan will include new fora to facilitate this. We recognise that expanding ways in which residents can be actively involved will allow DBL to be even more representative of our community. We continue to seek effective ways to involve young people and are exploring ways to collaborate with local schools and youth groups.

### Community involvement

DBL's activities have been predominantly delivered in and around our community hub, and have acted as a catalyst to active community involvement. The hub is easily accessible with a friendly environment and continues to attract a wide range of people. During this period, DBL has collaborated with Folkestone MIND to set up a 'second' hub that acts as a Wellbeing centre. DBL's business incubation and leisure centre, Co-Innovation will provide opportunities to engage with even more residents. We are exploring the development of a business forum to support co-working, peer support and mentoring.



We want to widen our approach to ensure we reach as many residents as possible and believe that the creation of a new structure will broaden the appeal of DBL to a more diverse section of the Dover demographic.

DBL's activities and events are very well supported and attended and we have the skills to organise these effectively. However, we struggle with the in-house staff and volunteer capacity, and together with requests from local groups for support for their events have taken the step this year to recruit a part-time events coordinator. In addition to leading on DBL's events, Kay is available to support other local activity.

## Communications

We have worked hard this year to communicate more widely and have used social media, network meetings, mail outs etc, to good effect. However, we are mindful that are communications could be still improved and are considering undertaking a PR review to inform our communications strategy for the coming year; we need to become better at publicizing our successes.

## Responsiveness

We have learnt that it is important to respond quickly to the changing priorities of local people and to take advantage of opportunities as they arise. The foundation of effective collaboration and strong partnerships puts DBL in a better position to influence local developments in Dover, such as the new shopping centre and the western docks expansion, as well as addressing issues around the changing face of the High Street.

We review roles constantly in response to the needs of the town. For instance our Co-Innovation start up business unit will require another set of skills to develop it's potential. Our partnerships will grow and change to meet this new challenge.

## Volunteers

We have worked successfully with a range of volunteers over the past year but at times this has been sporadic and unplanned. We have learnt that for both parties to work together more effectively we will need to conduct a skills audit and develop a more sustainable working relationship.

## Community Chest

We would like to see more community chest applications for truly resident-led activity and intend to re-launch the programme in a different format that enables residents and groups to access money as simply as possible, involving more local people in the decision-making process. Often a small amount of money will have a large impact within a local community, as shown by the DBL Stitching group. We are keen to initiate more resident-led initiatives, such as the stitching group, and gardening is currently a popular option.

## How have you progressed on your vision and priorities?

During this year DBL has continued to grow, increasing awareness and local involvement. The DBL hub has become a focal point for people to seek information, support and also to discuss their thoughts about Dover.

DBL's focus on the local economy is increasingly dominant, with regeneration starting to impact on the town, alongside increasing numbers of empty shops in the High Street as developments such as St James and the Western Docks and Marina grow. Through its ongoing support for Destination Dover and the new Co-Innovation initiative, DBL is working in partnership to strengthen the local economy and to provide opportunities for local people.

Destination Dover continues to develop Dover as a 'destination' and as a gateway to Europe. This past year has seen key stakeholders start to coordinate their tourism offer. We now have more markets (farmers market, vintage market, student makers market and a regular market) and more town centre events (Town team family days, family fun days in the park).

## Do you need to refresh your vision and priorities?

No; over the past three years DBL has focused on ensuring that the most vulnerable are supported. Through partnership working there is now a much more comprehensive and responsive offer in Dover. DBL will now turn its focus on supporting those suffering 'in work poverty', whilst continuing to provide its community spaces and to create more ways for local people to be involved alongside a renewed emphasis on locally led social activity.

## How does your progress relate to the achievement of the Big Local outcomes?

All DBL's activities and funding decisions are firmly rooted in the outcomes specified in the DBL Plan, and based on Local Trust's stated outcomes.

All projects and activities are only approved for funding if they meet one or more of DBL's outcomes our progress is directly related to them all.

## Do you need a new or revised plan, or will you carry on with your existing plan?

DBL is in the process of reviewing and revising its current plan to incorporate:

- A renewed focus on local economy, business incubation and supporting entrepreneurs;
- Building and developing the DBL structure to include the widest range of residents and to involve them in decision making;
- A focus on people's assets, abilities and interests;
- Continuation of successful activities, events and partnership working.

## How do you know this is what your community wants?

We are continuously communicating with local people, through face-to-face conversations, Facebook surveys, feedback forms in the hub and at events, network meetings and visits to community groups and organisations.