



# Almost a Million Pound Project Supporting Social Enterprise in West Cumbria



Project manager Anne Cartner.

A new organisation is at the forefront of helping social enterprises in West Cumbria - not only to take off, but to stand on their own two feet. The Hub, based at the Oval Centre, Salterbeck Drive, Workington, launched on Friday, and aims to place itself at the centre - literally the hub - of services designed to support and help develop social enterprises in the area.

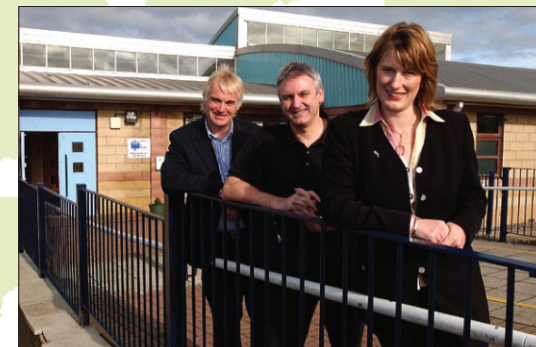
The idea for The Hub was initiated by West Lakes Renaissance, who worked in partnership with Cumbria County Council, The European Community European Regional Development Fund and CMS to make it a reality. But much of the day-to-day running will fall to project manager, Anne Cartner, whose dream it is to strengthen social

enterprises in the area by helping them to develop the skills to stand on their own two feet. "I want them to be sustainable rather than dependant on grants all the time," she said. "I want to encourage them to be business-like in their approach and so create a more balanced business." Gareth Nash of CMS, which manages the project, described what he called the logic of The Hub: "People can come to us with an issue and we can source appropriate

positive effect in West Cumbria.

We'll be leaving a legacy behind of stronger businesses. "We want to enhance what is already there and get everyone to work together - get everyone talking. We will be offering a much fuller service than has been available in the past. Co-ordinated services for these have not been in existence before - and that is where The Hub comes in." Anne explained that a social enterprise is a business which aims to put any profits made back into the community - unlike a conventional business which is driven by a need to maximise profits for the benefit of shareholders. The Co-op movement is a well-known historic example of social enterprise, and Credit Unions, which exist in several towns in the area, are a good example of the theory put into practice locally. So too is the Oval Centre, where the new organisation has chosen to base itself. It is a community facility, primarily for the use of the people of the Salterbeck estate, and includes a cafe, fitness centre and a base for a vast array of leisure and community activities. "We are pleased to support such an excellent centre by having our office base, here," said Anne Cartner. "There is so much going on here, and about 80% of the people who work here live on the estate." Friday's launch was attended by social enterprises The Hub is already working with, representatives from the business and public authority worlds, as well as people who are already out there working with communities.

The Hub is at The Oval Centre, Salterbeck Drive, Workington, and Anne Cartner can be contacted on 07725 246 434



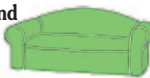
Project manager Anne Cartner(right) with Gareth Nash(left) Cooperative and Mutual Solution Director, and Alan Black(centre) manager of The Oval Centre.

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help," he said. "We can give generic advice which a business may need to help it through a process, and then specialist things may come up, like legal, financing, mentoring." To this end, Friday also saw the formal launch of a programme of services, including business support and advice, specialist consultancy, venture planning and bursaries, feasibility studies fund, mentoring and revenue and capital grants. The project will run over three years, and these will be exciting times for Anne Cartner. "It is really good to offer something which can leave a

The Regeneration Unit of the Council support the creation of the new Social Enterprise Development The Hub as a new initiative to develop and support existing and new Social Enterprise growth within West Cumbria.

www.allerdale.gov.uk

Allerdale Borough Council congratulates the project-team on the launch of the West Cumbria Social Enterprise Hub and wishes the project every success in the future.



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