



The Pacific Institute working in partnership with Coventry City

The Pacific Institute's involvement in Coventry started through a partnership with Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce in 1995. Both the youth programme, Breakthrough and STEPS for use in community were integrated into local provision. The plan was to provide STEPS to help the long term unemployed back to work and to enable some 400 young people attending local Training Providers to benefit from Breakthrough as a way of increasing confidence and self belief.

This initial work led to the provision of Investment in Excellence courses and facilitator training so local capacity to utilise the Institute's expertise began to expand across the region with over twenty facilitators trained. Clear objectives were set with measurable outcomes agreed and effective Quality Assurance procedures put in place. This included visits to Training Providers and other partner organisations by experienced Pacific Institute facilitators, usually while courses were running. These visits were of great value to everyone involved. Further help and support was put in place with the provision of regular Facilitator Development Days where ideas and experiences could be shared. Hearing of STEPS or Breakthrough course participant's accomplishments at these gatherings encouraged everyone!

By the millennium, hundreds of young people and adults had benefited from The Pacific Institute's partnership with Coventry. The well established network of facilitators had expanded in number with over 60 trained by 2006.

In spite of the changes in both funding streams and the over-arching bodies that were responsible for realising local and government agendas, the work continued to flourish. Bodies that have included the Chamber of Commerce, the Chamber Training and Enterprise phase and the LSC.

Coventry Centre for Investment and currently, Coventry City Council Regeneration Services have been the constant in all these changes with many of the original facilitators and supporters within The City Council still working with us. They have grown in experience and are still leading STEPS courses within the regeneration agenda. Quality of provision has always been of paramount importance to both the Institute and the City Council. To that end there have been both facilitator support meetings and individual coaching visits, often when courses were in progress – some 70 in total.

There have been many highlights and stories of transformations – lives improved over the years. No doubt there are many more of which we are not aware. One such high light is the annual Awards Ceremony held to celebrate the presentation of STEPS Certificates to those who have completed the course. At the 2002 event held in St Mary’s Guildhall, The presentation of the certificates by the Lord Mayor of Coventry to the many who came with their families and friends, was an inspiring occasion the recipients will always remember. Every life improved touches others, perhaps in the family, in the community or workplace. Unrealised human potential to grow and achieve success is a collective and individual loss. This Guildhall event and others like it gives the City a wonderful opportunity to show what gains are possible when we invest in effective interventions to break cycles of disadvantage. By 2002 for example, over 450 people from ethnic minorities had been given the opportunity to attend a STEPS course and the total to date exceeds 2000.

Coventry City Council Regeneration Services, under the guidance of Carl Pearson (himself an Investment in Excellence facilitator), continues to promote and expand on the work outlined above to assist them in achieving their aims. The following summary of provision makes this clear. However, it is does not come near to illustrating how those facilitating the STEPS (and latterly Go for It) courses across the City are contributing towards greater happiness and achievement for many.

Note: Prior to 2003, ‘in house’ facilitators had been trained to lead Investment in Excellence courses for Coventry Council colleagues and partners. Latterly, these have been facilitated by those from The Pacific Institute who have enjoyed being closely involved in all that has been achieved by Regeneration Services.

2003	May/June	Investment in Excellence course
2004	Feb/Mar	Investment in Excellence course
	Mar/Apr	Investment in Excellence course
2005	Feb/Mar	Investment in Excellence course
2006	Mar/Apr	Investment in Excellence course
	Sept	Further STEPs Facilitator training for 13 participants
2007	Feb/Mar	Investment in Excellence course
	Mar	Facilitator Forum
	May	Carl Pearson and Colleagues attended Culture and Leadership day in Manchester led by Lou Tice
	Nov/Jan 08	Investment in Excellence course
2008	June	Facilitator Workshop day

	July	Investment in Excellence course for potential Go For It facilitators
	Sept/Oct	Investment in Excellence course for LEGI partners and Council staff involved
	Sept	Facilitator Forum for STEPs facilitators
	Oct	Facilitator Training for Go for It Facilitators
		As a result of this last initiative, 108 students completed Go For It working with 11 facilitators from both the targeted schools and Regeneration services. This was deemed to be a great Success by those taking part and by school staff observing the results. One parent commented on the big improvement in her daughter's attitude towards her and requested that she be asked to 'keep doing it'!
2009	Jan/Feb	Investment in Excellence course for members of the Regeneration Services team.
	April 3 rd	A 'PX2' training day arranged to enable 4 of the Go For IT facilitators from Regeneration Services to make use of this new and very exciting course aimed at the 16 to 19 age group.
	April 28/29	Lou Tice to meet with Coventry Facilitators and to lead a day for Coventry City Council and invited partners in this work

All of the above must add up to a profound change or improvement in many lives. This in turn impacts on groups, families and children as well as organisations. No numbers or statistics can ever carry the same impact as the many individual and personal stories of lives Improved or changed can.

In the last two years Coventry City Council and its partner organisations like CITEE have probably come close to doubling some of the numbers quoted above, yet there is always more to do if we are to change to unacceptable and sad statistics that remind us of that. The Pacific Institute greatly appreciates being a part of this inspirational work here in Coventry.