

LOCALISE WEST MIDLANDS

Annual Report

1st April 2011 to 31st March 2012



Local economic solutions for sustainability

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Introduction

LWM is a regional not-for-profit think-tank, campaign group and consultancy which aims to promote the social, environmental and economic benefits of local trade, money flows and decision making. We work by researching, supporting and encouraging examples demonstrating the benefits of local sourcing and local money flows and the replication of effective localisation 'pilots' so that they can become mainstream.

Mission Statement

Localise West Midlands is a not-for-profit organisation which exists to promote the environmental, social and economic benefits of:

- Local trading, using local businesses, materials and supply chains
- Linking local needs to local resources
- Development of community and local capacity
- Decentralisation of appropriate democratic and economic power
- Provision of services tailored to meet local needs.

This localisation approach makes economic development and government systems more sensitive to local autonomy, culture, well-being and the responsible use of finite resources, and is growing in popularity with people and organisations all over the world.

Localisation helps build social capital, targets regeneration to meet local needs, maximises local job creation, and reduces transport and CO2 emissions.

To promote this approach across the region LWM will:

- Bring people together with a common interest in localisation
- Provide and publicise information, ideas and examples of good practice
- Facilitate or undertake demonstration projects
- Provide consultancy and other support to groups who are developing localist approaches
- Create supportive networks for localist action
- Challenge the barriers to localisation
- Link with similar projects outside the region and worldwide.

Background

LWM was set up in 2002 by a group of individuals keen to propose solutions as a constructive response to the problems of recent economics.

Our West Midlands focus is intended to make use the region's geographical balance of urban and rural. We also look beyond the region, seeking to catalyse ideas across the UK and to make links with the many organisations all over the world working on a similar agenda. This is our tenth year.

1. Activities 2011-2012

1.1 Projects and Activities

Localise West Midlands Evaluation of West Midlands LEP Proposals: Supporting Local Economic Renewal for Sustainability.

At the very start of the year Localise WM published its review of Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) proposals in accordance with localisation indicators. Previously, responsibility for economic development at a local level was held by Regional Development Agencies but these have now been replaced by 'Local Enterprise Partnerships', the stated purpose of which, is to 'help strengthen local economies' and facilitate 'local economic renewal'¹.

This report was compiled on behalf of Localise West Midlands in April 2011 in order to analyse and evaluate each of the six West Midlands LEP's in terms of support for economic localisation aimed at increasing sustainability and representation of economic diversity within the (Shadow) Boards. It utilised specific indicators of localisation (ranging from support for small scale enterprise to involvement of community and third sector representatives in LEP's) and abstracts of principal quotes from the proposals in order to assess against these indicators. Where possible, distinctions were made between aspirational statements and the practical activity in the proposals that might deliver them. The membership of each LEP (shadow) board was also listed to identify the extent to which economic diversity is involved in the LEPs' proposed or actual governance processes.

The report concluded that no LEP proposal takes full advantage of the opportunities of economic localisation, and that there are specific weaknesses in tackling external causes of small business failure; capitalising on local needs and markets; maximising local human and material resource use; community ownership of assets, enterprise and services. Isolated examples of good practice were found in low carbon supply chain development, harnessing procurement for local suppliers, and recognising the likely impact of energy security and prices on our future economy. However, it was noted that this report is a very early exercise and that many LEPs will go on to address some of the issues raised in this report.

LWM recommended that in order to support strong local economies and sustainable development, all West Midland LEPs should develop better approaches to: identifying the external factors that stop small businesses from thriving; emphasis on economic diversity and local multiplier; investigating the opportunities from local resources, land-based industries, food production; and addressing areas of need/deprivation as well as opportunity. The LEPs should learn from identified best practice within the region on SME-proofing of decisions; recognition of the factors of oil prices and energy security in our future economy; harnessing procurement; and representation and engagement with the voluntary sector. LEPs should develop stronger roles in using and sharing information for local SMEs to take advantage of upcoming markets and opportunities; supply chain linking activities; and measuring the impact of enterprise. The report was distributed widely around the region and fed into discussions in the region on LEP progress, including into Sustainability West Midlands work with LEPs.

From this report we also produced a summary guidance sheet for LEPs and other economic development practitioners on using localisation approaches to strengthen the local economy. This can be found on our website.

¹ 1: DCLG (2010) Local Enterprise Partnerships (Cable-Pickles letter)

Solving Fuel Poverty: Opportunities from Green Deal & Localisation

The Government's Green Deal is an initiative to achieve a step change in the energy efficiency of our existing housing stock. Along with other mechanisms such as Feed-in Tariffs and the Renewable Heat Incentive, it aims to take low-carbon home makeovers into the mainstream. However, Green Deal is more than a golden opportunity to reduce carbon emissions for the fifteen million people now estimated to be living in fuel poverty. New and innovative finance mechanisms such as Feed-In Tariffs and Pay-As-You-Save schemes, which remove the need to pay upfront for measures to improve home energy efficiency, could make the difference between a cold, damp, unhealthy home and a warm, affordable home that enhances quality of life. Yet there is concern that the mechanism of subsidising the green deal through charges on fuel bills could mean that those in fuel poverty will pay a larger proportion of their income to fund the scheme and could be exposed to a 'double whammy' if they then receive a disproportionately smaller amount of the benefits. To address this issue, in September 2011, Localise West Midlands published a report entitled "Using a Green New Deal Approach to Tackling Fuel Poverty". The objective of this research was to find out how fuel poor individuals can benefit from pay-as-you-save and feed-in energy tariff schemes, and was funded by the Scottish Power Energy People Trust.

The Green Deal's 'Golden Rule' states that the energy savings a property makes in a 25-year period must be equal to or in excess of the cost of implementing the changes in the first place. Early models being pioneered by local authorities suggested that the scale of green deal results in economies of scale and that this is driving down the cost of certain measures making the golden rule easier to achieve. However, because the fuel poor usually under-heat their homes, energy measures may create less uncomfortable household conditions but not lower bills, resulting in the "golden rule" of covering loan payments from savings failing under current proposals. As a result, it was recommended by LWM that the Government should require assessment of homes for Green Deal to be based on actual consumption of energy rather than simply modelled consumption: computerised models for assessing homes have been found often highly inaccurate.

The report also identified that there are a large number of different groups of householders and that many of them will require different approaches to involving them in schemes and overcoming barriers to their inclusion. It is clear that some groups and measures are easier and cheaper to address than others. For example, whilst the fuel-poor are not one homogenous group (see the report's appendix 1) they will often require greater support, and thus be more expensive to deliver to, and will often be most effectively accessed by routes that differ from the traditional marketing approaches that tend to be adopted by national organisations. Thus if the approaches, regulations and targets do not effectively prioritise the fuel-poor they will receive less than a proportionate share of funding from schemes subsidised from energy bills while paying disproportionately more of their income to support these schemes.

Finally, there is a need to build trust in Green Deal among the fuel-poor, and overcome the mistrust that many people on low incomes feel towards official initiatives. Frontline staff have to be perceived as working to help them rather than as trying to sell them a product. Where local community groups or local authorities are involved they need have an active role in assessing and improving of the quality of any service they recommend and not just be working for a finders' fee. Green Deal should also engage with other trusted groups such as GPs and advice workers who will be engaging with the fuel poor on the effects of fuel poverty. A range of more complex recommendations can be found in the full report on our website at:

http://localisewestmidlands.org.uk/activities/fuelpoverty_greendead/. The report's recommendations were very widely distributed including presenting them at a number of events around the country on the green deal, and articles in publications including New Start magazine.

Green Deal Opportunities for Social Enterprise

In the spring of 2012, LWM and social enterprise support organisation i-SE worked on a joint project focusing on issues in Birmingham of fuel poverty and low energy efficiency in many of the city's households. Specifically, this project looked at the practicalities and potential benefits of involving social enterprise in the delivery of Green Deal in Birmingham, with organisations involved in different ways depending on their capabilities on this agenda. The work introduced the idea of the organisations acting as 'neighbourhood gateways'. This work was made possible by funding awarded by LEAF (Local Energy Assessment Fund), a national fund managed by the Energy Saving Trust. It was evaluated and the final report written by Chamberlain Forum, a non-profit neighbourhood think-tank based in Birmingham.

It is often stated that 'trust' is essential in the successful delivery of Green Deal and it is often believed (somewhat incorrectly) that 'community groups' are central to gaining this trust. However, not all community groups have the credibility and the advocacy skills to have a difficult conversation with people around energy efficiency. Despite this, this report finds that a wide range and variety of neighbourhood social enterprises (NSO's) and enterprising voluntary organisations (EVO's) have the potential to act as 'neighbourhood gateways' for Green Deal in Birmingham. These 'neighbourhood gateways' occupy a natural intermediary position between potential Green Deal providers on one-hand and community groups on the other, in terms of size, legal structure, business model and motivation.

'Neighbourhood gateways' are able effectively to reach a wide range of households across the city (in terms of tenure, ACORN neighbourhood types and both CESP and non-CESP neighbourhoods), they are highly trusted by households and are typically already engaged in a range of 'difficult' conversations with householders around money, relationships, benefits, employment and housing etc. Furthermore, it was noted that involvement in delivering Green Deal activities does not appear to skew the activities of potential 'neighbourhood gateway' bodies and that to a large extent it can be integrated effectively with their other work. Promisingly, assessments carried out following referrals made by 'neighbourhood gateways' led to a high level of householder motivation to take 'green' action and that about two thirds of households were prepared to undertake small and large scale energy efficiency work on their properties as a result. However, there was variation in the ability of neighbourhood based organisations to translate referrals into completed assessments (to some extent, this reflects their position in relation to CESP areas: it is harder to translate referrals in poorer areas) which suggests that they would benefit from sharing good practice.

It is clear that neighbourhood social enterprises have the potential to play a part in delivering each stage of Green Deal from marketing to retrofitting properties, but that to make a significant impact they need to work together either to provide a 'joined-up' service in given neighbourhoods or to give Green Deal providers a 'joined-up' approach to one aspect of delivering Green Deal, such as marketing. Another interesting observation was that there is significant potential in referral marketing – that is to say in householders promoting energy assessment and Green Deal to each other - arising from the involvement of 'neighbourhood gateways'. Additionally, it is thought that 'home comfort' may be a more important motivator than previous studies have suggested and, in the context of a 25-year financial deal, immediate improvements in home comfort could form an important 'selling point' for Green Deal.

In the reports concluding suggestions, it is highlighted that there is capacity amongst NSE's and EVO's in Birmingham to market Green Deal so that at least 60,000 households in the city take part. This would lead to the creation of the equivalent of 40 sustainable full time jobs in neighbourhood regeneration in the city. Additionally, it is suggested that if NSE's and EVO's acted in partnership, they could ensure the involvement of a significant proportion of the target market for Green Deal in

Birmingham at a competitive price and make a surplus that could be re-invested in further work to benefit their communities. The resulting 'embedding' skills, expertise in communities and the prospect of significant householder-to-householder marketing of Green Deal are further examples of economic and social value added. Finally, involving 'neighbourhood gateways' could produce an additional £1.37 in local economic activity for every £1 of Green Deal investment compared with marketing undertaken directly by Green Deal providers.

Managing environmental change at the rural urban fringe

The rural-urban fringe (RUF), the space where countryside meets town, is amongst society's most valued and pressured places and is illustrated below in Figure 1.

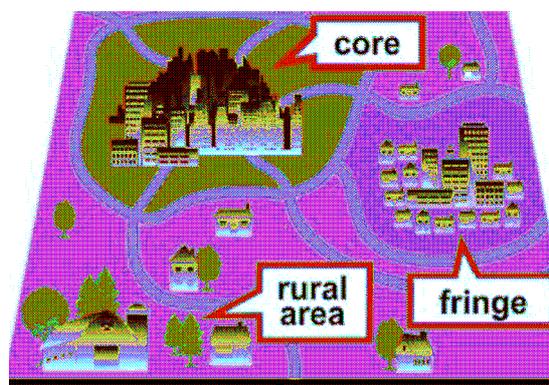


Figure 1: The rural-urban fringe – project diagramme.

However, in policy and decision-making it remains largely forgotten, lacking sufficient understanding and evidence for integrated management. In February 2012, Localise West Midlands concluded a joint, interdisciplinary, project working alongside Birmingham City University (BCU) and various other partners addressing the need for improved management of the rural-urban fringe. The project was funded by the UK Research Councils' Rural Economy and Land Use Programme as part of their environmental change agenda. The research investigated the nature of the RUF, rejecting the common application of urban based expansion models and defining it instead as a multifunctional space where positive changes for society and environment are possible. In fact, the RUF can be considered as an intersection of cultural, economical and environmental functions of the society and as such is the perfect place to generate a healthy connectivity among those functions. The interdisciplinary team of researchers found many aspects that could benefit from a better management of the RUF, such as the potential for more localised food production. This would require addressing the challenges that farmers face in the RUF which emerged from the two case studies in Redditch and North Worcestershire.

The research also found that in order to successfully manage the changes in places of such diversity as the RUF, it is important to break the artificial barriers that divide urban and rural, bridging the work of different bodies and promoting meaningful cross-boundary partnerships between councils. The research has resulted in five policy briefs in video format on the topics: a general introduction to the RUF; the relationships between spatial planning and ecosystem approaches; connectivity within and across the RUF; contrasting values relating to the RUF; and long termism in policymaking for the RUF. These present the RUF as the context for the different challenges that our society is facing: from finding ways to engage community, to managing conflicts arising from the spatial planning process, to reforming local governance; from the need to create a framework able to consider

equally economic, social and environment needs, to finding a better way to determine and pursue what we value as a society.

Another outcome was 'Rufopoly', a board game learning tool emerging from the research and taken up with enthusiasm by government, community groups and decision-makers. Throwing the dice to travel across the RUF-landscaped board, players face relevant dilemmas about planning and decision-making. They are supported by a facilitator who notes down answers and any supporting justification given in discussions. This audit trail of decisions is then used to allow each player to devise their own vision for the RUF set within improved understanding of the impact of their previous decisions. The videos, Rufopoly and other project details can be viewed on the Birmingham City University website: <http://www.bcu.ac.uk/research/-centresof-excellence/centre-for-environment-and-society/projects/relu/overview>. Since the year end we are now part of a new project with Alister Scott and Birmingham City University, commissioned by Defra, to develop and test tools that will help policymakers and practitioners embed ecosystem thinking in their decision-making practices.

Community Land Trust Training Day 19th October 2011 and Digbeth Community Land Trust

Localise West Midlands, in conjunction with The National CLT Network and the National Housing Federation, successfully organised a training day on Community Land Trusts on 19th October 2011 in Birmingham. CLTs are community-driven and controlled organisations that provide land and buildings that meet the needs and aspirations of their communities. They range in size, can be rural or urban, and provide a variety of housing tenures as well as other community facilities, including workspaces, energy generation, community food and farming. CLTs provide an innovative and community-led approach to meeting local housing and other needs for long-term community benefit. The course was targeted at communities wanting to set up a CLT as well as at local authorities, housing associations, developers, enablers and consultants who are working with communities.

Localise West Midlands, in partnership with Accord Housing Association, Birmingham Friends of the Earth and Birmingham Co-operative Housing Services, had long been proposing to build a small 'demonstration' sustainable development in Digbeth, Birmingham, comprising affordable/social housing, green work spaces for environmental organisations and businesses, and wildlife garden, set up in a small-scale Community Land Trust (CLT) model, and linked to neighbouring environmental community building, The Warehouse, in which we are based.

Unfortunately, because of the plans for High Speed 2, for which the terminus is right next to our proposed site, and changes in Birmingham housing policy, it seems highly unlikely that this site will be available to us for a CLT. Nonetheless, we remain keen to see urban community land trusts develop in Birmingham and the Black Country and have developed a model incorporating mutual home ownership principles into the CLT concept which we'd be very keen to see happen. We will therefore be looking for new sites for a CLT both within Birmingham and further afield.

Mainstreaming community economic development for inclusion, diversity and equality

We are very pleased that the Barrow Cadbury Trust are funding us to research the potential for mainstreaming economic localisation and community economic development in order to achieve social inclusion, income equality and local diversity and distinctiveness. This is part of a New Era Economics theme within Barrow Cadbury's Poverty and Inclusion programme. The basic premise is that in a more diverse, localised economy, more people can have more of a stake, which redistributes economic power, reducing disconnection and inequality; but that community economic development solutions tend to be treated as highly marginal. The research proposes to see how the inclusion and equality benefits of localisation approaches can be brought more into the mainstream of economic development.

Localise West Midlands has developed considerable experience in the practice and policy of localisation approaches and community-scale economics over our ten years, with a track record of specific West Midlands-based projects on procurement, local enterprise partnerships, planning, housing, asset transfer and green new deal activity, on which to build the work. We will use stakeholder interviews, focus groups and desk review, to develop analysis of how good localisation practice and community economic development can be integrated into the mainstream economy. The project will run from the project began in April 2012 and will run through until January 2013 involving the following stages:

1. **Literature review** (how localisation approaches can deliver inclusion, diversity and redistribution) and **desk-based case study preparation**
2. **Case study research using interviews and desk research, and analysis:** focussing on organisations, individuals and community members whose contributions to local economy have been successful, or are frustrated; in order to identify barriers and solutions at local and other spatial scales, particularly nationally, and develop ideas for mainstreaming. Proposed case studies include wholesale markets, green deal supply chains, public and consumer food procurement and some of the West Midlands' best regeneration practice.
3. **Workshop and analysis:** testing ideas from stage 2 with a workshop for policy-makers and budget-holders; refine ideas on basis of workshop outcomes.
4. **Reporting and dissemination**

As of August 2012, the literature review component has been completed and is available from the LWM website at: http://localisewestmidlands.org.uk/mainstreaming_ced/. To summarise the main findings, it can be concluded that localised and community economies appear to perform better than centralised on job creation, particularly in disadvantaged and peripheral areas but also on resilience, stability and economic returns to an area, quality of life, security (for employees), civic welfare, civic participation, local economic power, and accessibility of employment opportunities particularly for people who are vulnerable to economic exclusion. The role of social enterprise (a CED tool) in addressing areas and communities of disadvantage was also well documented. Whilst it appears that centralised large-scale approaches can have the advantages of bringing extra resources and powers that will make an immediate difference, they can also contribute to social segregation and inequality. The review was less conclusive on some other issues including the impact of localised and community economies on accessibility of goods and services and on direct income equality impacts. Since the years end we have been working on the case study stage of the project and are now planning a workshop for case study representatives and economic development officers to explore the emerging ideas. The research project concludes in February 2013.

Regional Prosperity and Inflation Project

Although we have not had funding for this project since 2010, we have continued to progress with this project which is led by Andrew Lydon. We are actively applying for further funding to enable us to increase the pace of this project.

Since 2006 we have been publicly arguing that living standards were being squeezed as a result of chronic under-measurement of inflation in the UK four years before Ed Miliband raised the issue of the “the squeezed middle”. We began to press the authorities to start measuring it properly, as well as how it impacts differently from region to region and on different strata of society. At the end of 2010 the Statistics Authority told the Office of National Statistics (ONS) that they must develop an official position on regional inflation indices and undertake a proper consultation on whether to produce indices based on one or more specific household types. However, as of 2012 the ONS has become bogged down in the issue of including owner-occupied housing in the national figures. We have been feeding material into the discussions organised by the Royal Statistical Society on the reform of the inflation indices, which has only been possible because of the research and material we have been generating since 2006. This material will be covered in our next annual report.

We have also continued producing our Alternative Inflation Report (alternative that is, to the one produced by the Bank of England). These reports, which appear on our blog, are regularly accessed through Google, there being few systematic critiques of the bank which is one of the least accountable in the world and otherwise largely deferred to in the British media. During an earlier stage in this project we produced some material for arguing for the Bank of England to become more accountable to the nations and regions of the country. As the Bank of England becomes more clearly responsible for important parts of our current economic failure we hope to look for opportunities to take forward this project as well as take our lobbying on the inflation.

Support for Communities- Low Carbon Economy Programme

Localise West Midlands, working in partnership with Marches Energy Agency (MEA) has been involved in delivering the Community Strand of the West Midlands Low Carbon Economy Programme (LCEP), co-ordinated by Sustainability West Midlands, and led by Improvement and Efficiency West Midlands. The Community Strand has provided tailored advice, guidance and support to a wide range of community-led renewable energy and energy efficiency initiatives across the region. At the beginning of the project, Localise West Midlands conducted a study to evaluate the baseline level of community energy activity around the West Midlands. We have also supported a network of community energy mentors who are available to help promote ideas and to support the development of new community renewable projects. More than thirty community organisations have been assisted through the Community Strand and several of them have successfully implemented projects as a result.

One innovation from the project was the use of a step-by-step process called the Wheel of Fortune, designed to help groups ‘unlock’ projects by tackling them in segments: social, environmental, legal, financial, operational and physical. We assembled the components necessary for success in each segment which are available as a project legacy. We have plans to develop this approach further in the future.

A range of open source resources resulting from this project are available for those wishing to set up a community energy project – visit the Sustainability West Midlands website to browse them.

Reviews of Friends of the Earth's empowerment activity

Following our successful review of Friends of the Earth's inspirational Rights and Justice training day in 2009, Power Up, we were asked to review two further Friends of the Earth activities in winter 2011-12: the London Empowerment Project and the Merthyr Tydfil project, where the organisation supported Welsh communities facing a proposal for a massive incinerator in their area. The evaluations involved interviewing people who had participated in the projects as well as analysing written feedback and hearing from staff and people who had contributed from other organisations, to identify how the projects had delivered against their objectives and make recommendations for Friends of the Earth's future empowerment work. It was a privilege to work with people with such a strong commitment to social justice, understanding of its place within sustainable development, and willingness to question their own approaches thoroughly in the team's efforts to ensure they helped those most in need of help. The reviews have fed into the team's programme development for the current and coming year.

2.2 Promotion, networking, policy and organisational development

The year was an interesting one for spatial planning, following the attempted abolition of regional bodies and strategies and then the review of national planning policy with the aims of making it shorter and simpler and enabling more development. Localise West Midlands contributed to the debate in a number of ways: we joined in with much of the awareness raising and campaigning activity around the proposed changes, including signing up to the NGOs' joint statement on planning and sustainability; producing our own policy statement on localism; speaking at a fringe session organised by Friends of the Earth at the 2011 Libdem conference and at an event on localism in Dudley; publishing a number of blog posts including one for New Start Magazine. Additionally in May 2011 we helped Planners' Network UK to organise a meeting on the NPPF in Birmingham. Jon Stevens also ran a workshop at Chamberlain Forum's Resident University in Birmingham on neighbourhood planning, its potential and its pitfalls. Finally we made our own response to the two NPPF consultations.

During the year we also gave a presentation at a Centre for Local Economic Strategies event on LEPs and local economies, using material from our LEPs evaluation. We also spoke at the Practical Action festival, 'Small Is'. Be Birmingham awarded Localise WM with a "Making Birmingham Green Community Recognition Award", celebrating the work of members of community groups and voluntary organisations who have helped Birmingham achieve its carbon reduction targets, for our work on the community land trust scheme. The award was to all partner organisations involved. Karen Leach and Chris Crean were also recognised in Sustainability West Midlands' 2011 Green Leaders' Awards, following one to our associate Phil Beardmore the previous year.

3. Future work and strategy

Our main priorities for the coming year are:

- to complete and then pursue the findings of our Mainstreaming Community Economic Development project, which has sparked interest in a number of quarters and may lead to further practical and research activity
- to pursue community-orientated approaches to the Green Deal which maximise the benefits to local people, in Birmingham and elsewhere, and which address economic injustice including fuel poverty
- to collaborate as much as possible with the other organisations and individuals nationally and regionally calling for a more sustainable and socially just approach to our economy, in the light of the continued economic recession, growing inequality and increasingly felt resource limits.

We will also continue to seek consultancy opportunities that support our aims.

4. People

Members of LWM's Board

Over the year the following have been Board members of Localise West Midlands and active participants in the organisation:

Hannah Worth (Chair)

Hannah is a co-founder and associate of the Chamberlain Forum, a neighbourhood think-and-do tank based in Birmingham. She first came to LWM as a volunteer after completing a Masters in Global Ethics. She moved on to manage Birmingham Community Empowerment Network, facilitating community networks that aim to involve people more effectively in local decision making.

George Morran (vice chair)

Involved also in the Campaign for the English Regions and the West Midlands Constitutional Convention. Formerly Senior Research Associate at Aston and Warwick University Business Schools, Director of the West Midlands Regional Forum of Local Authorities, the West Midlands Regional Economic Consortium and Assistant Chief Executive of Dudley MBC.

Jackie Milton (Treasurer)

Jackie has run her own accounting practice for the last eight years, with a special interest in community projects and new business start-ups. She is also a Trustee of the Cwm Harry Land Trust and involved in Lightfoot Enterprises CIC (Household Energy Services), and was formerly a Trustee of Fordhall Farm Community Land Initiative.

Chris Crean

Friends of the Earth's Regional Campaigner for the West Midlands. Chris has been involved with Friends of the Earth (FOE) for over twelve years, initially as a campaigner on air pollution and transport in Birmingham and the West Midlands. He also worked for an environmental consultancy on contaminated land and industrial water issues. Chris's responsibilities include developing regional policy, a major strand of which is to develop a solutions approach - one strand of which will be a localisation of the regional economy.

Colin Hines

Founder of the Green New Deal group, author of 'Localization- A Global Manifesto' (Earthscan) and an associate of the International Forum on Globalisation, a San Francisco based alliance of activists, academics and economists developing alternatives to globalisation and free trade. Before that he was the Co-ordinator of Greenpeace International's Economics Unit having worked for the organisation for 10 years.

Andrew Lydon

Andrew Lydon was initially involved in the Labour Party, where he developed his interest in decentralisation and economic development in drafting parts of their Birmingham Council manifesto. Since 1992, when he left Labour, he has been involved in the politics of the regions as a spokesman for the West Midlands New Economics Group and later for Birmingham NHS Concern. Andrew leads the Prosperity and Inflation campaign for LWM.

Jon Morris

(Also LWM associate) Currently housing, planning and regeneration consultant. Former Director of Coventry New Deal for Communities, Chair of Royal Town Planning Institute Housing Panel, Extensive experience in the fields of housing, planning and regeneration, as a practitioner, researcher and lecturer. Jon has also been a member of a number of ministerial advisory groups and an expert witness to the House of Commons Environment Select Committee.

Phil Beardmore

(Also LWM associate). Phil works for LWM and others as an environmental and third sector consultant specialising in thought innovation. He founded the renewable energy co-operative CoRE50, and is a member of the Energy Saving Co-op. His clients include the workers' co-op Energywise, as well as local authorities, utilities, construction companies and social enterprises. In 2010 Phil was voted one of the top 50 Green Leaders in the West Midlands, and was recently elected as the Third Sector Assembly Environment Network Champion and member of Birmingham's Green Commission.

Jon Stevens

(Also LWM associate). Jon has worked in the field of community housing and neighbourhood regeneration for almost 40 years. Initially he trained as an architect and went on to work on community action in various posts over this period including Director of Birmingham Cooperative Housing Services (bchs), Community Development Worker for Birmingham Inner Area Study, Organiser of Community Forum in Birmingham, Senior Urban Renewal Officer for Walsall MBC, Neighbourhood Office Coordinator for Birmingham CC, and Tenant and Association Support Manager for the Housing Corporation.

Paul Cobbing

(Also LWM associate). Paul has worked for the last 30 years on environmental issues, from operational land management to policy development and implementation across climate change and the natural environment. As an environmental consultant based in the West Midlands, recent work has included a Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan for Birmingham and business planning for the National Flood Forum. He has experience of developing and supporting sustainable development, climate change and environmental networks across the West Midlands, and working with them to progress strategic action. He is convenor of the West Midlands section of the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management.

Additional steering group members and associates

The following have been actively involved in LWM's steering group over the year and attend

and contribute to our Board meetings, or act as associates for LWM's consultancy activities – or both.

Barbara Panvel

(Steering group) Barbara has brought together different people, organisations and ideas on localisation during her work in both Mumbai and Birmingham, coordinates information flows on the Fair Deal for UK Farmers campaign, and has been involved in LWM since our earliest discussions.

Philip Davis

(Steering group) Phil represents transport consumers nationally and regionally and has extensive public policy experience, consumer and community engagement. A former trade union officer who specialised in lay advocacy and tribunals, he has more recently been a local authority Leader and a voluntary sector CEO. He is now a non-executive director of a number of public and community bodies and since our year end has become a councillor in Birmingham.

Pat Conaty

(Steering group, associate) Pat Conaty is a Research Associate of the New Economics Foundation. He has produced a number of recent policy reports on local community banking, rural regeneration and community land trusts, micro-credit for small business, and affordable housing finance for low income homeowners with disrepair problems. He was formerly the Development Director of Birmingham Settlement, an inner city voluntary organisation.

Rosemary Coyne

(Steering group, associate) Rosemary is a chartered Landscape Architect with extensive all-sector experience in physical and community regeneration and sustainable development including the water and waste industries and construction. She has technical policy and practice expertise and has contributed to production of draft planning policy on a range of issues for Birmingham City Council and other local authorities, and led consultation exercises on sustainability and climate change issues with individuals, community groups and 'leadership' groups. She has worked across the UK as well as living and working overseas including South America, India and Africa.

Rajeev Prakash

(Steering group and associate) Rajeev has a background in programme and project management – gained through leading multi-agency partnerships and of successfully delivering major regeneration programmes. Rajeev has experience of strategic finance and budget management at the most senior level and he has particular expertise of efficiency and effectiveness reviews, strategy planning and implementation, evaluation and change management. He trained as a town planner, and is a Corporate Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute.

Rosemary Foggitt

(Associate) Rosemary is a qualified solicitor with public and private sector experience. She has conducted a wide range of social policy research in the third and public sectors. Her research experience includes community and small business finance (new economics foundation, Institut für Finanzdienstleistungen), capacity building (London Rebuilding Society), Community Land Trusts (CDS Cooperatives, University of Salford and Housing Corporation). As a member of the LWM team of associates, she worked extensively in the area of sustainable procurement (Be Birmingham – Sustainable Procurement Compact), and subsequently in the Welsh context of food procurement (Powys County Council – community meals service).

Tim Render

(Associate) Tim has significant experience in managing major services and resources as Strategic Finance Director at Nottingham CC and previously as Head of Corporate Finance at Birmingham CC. He also has wide ranging experience in a variety of settings of successfully managing and developing strategies including a Building Schools for the Future programme, community economic regeneration (NDC, SRB, City Challenge), as well as major change projects. He is now active as a non-executive director of a number of public / private partnership companies and as an independent member of a police authority. He is a trustee of several advice and housing charities, and is a governor of a secondary school, an academy and chairs an FE college board.

Rob Weaver

An experienced regeneration & economic development consultant of 10 years standing. Acting Chief Executive of Enterprise Agency and facilitator of multi-Local Authority enterprise bids. He is a high profile commentator on business support policy through blogging, and recent assignments include European funding bids for a Chamber of Commerce and advising a major charity on social media policy.

Chris Williams

(Associate) Chris has a campaigns and tactical background, having worked for Birmingham Friends of the Earth and for strategic and organisational roles in local, regional and national levels of the Green Party. His experience is mostly with voluntary sector campaigning and has key skills in communications, press work, research, organisation and management.

Staff and others

Coordinator

Karen Leach was involved in setting up LWM, and has been employed as LWM Coordinator since October 2002, reporting to the Board on its strategy, activities and systems as well as undertaking projects. She previously created the role of Campaigns Support Worker with Birmingham Friends of the Earth, and within this role developed interests in planning, trade and local food. She is also on Birmingham FOE's Management Committee, responsible for the running of community environmental building The Warehouse in Digbeth.

Others

We have had some excellent volunteer support over the year. Lis Broome and Helen Ryman, experienced in various very relevant fields, both contacted Localise WM to offer their services, working very helpfully on communications and on consultancy development. Helen Ryman has continued to be involved in a steering group capacity since the year end.

We are also grateful to Andrew Jolly of CoSec Ltd for kindly administering our payroll during the year.

Particular thanks are also due to Jamie Stone, who compiled this annual report.

If you are interested in getting involved with the work of LWM, as part of the Board, an associate, or more informally, please contact [Karen Leach](#) to discuss this further.

5. Funding Report

Localise West Midlands gratefully acknowledges financial support for project or core activities during 2011-12 from:

Polden Puckham Charitable Foundation
Barrow Cadbury Trust
Greening the North
Scottish Power Energy People Trust.

We are also grateful for the opportunity to have worked with:

The Community Land Trust Network
Birmingham City University
Sustainability West Midlands
Marches Energy Agency
Friends of the Earth
Birmingham City Council
Planners Network UK

The final accounts for 2011-12 can be found in Part 2 of the LWM annual report.