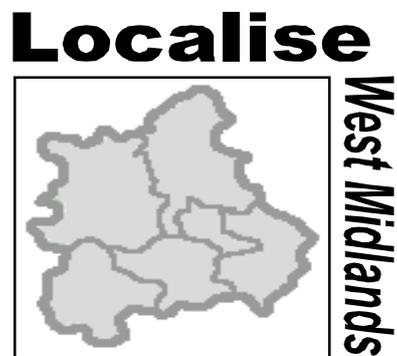


Localise West Midlands

Annual Report

January 2006- March 2007



Local economic solutions for sustainability

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Introduction

This is the annual report of Localise West Midlands, a regional not-for-profit think-tank, campaign group and consultancy which aims to promote 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.

This is a 15 month Annual Report as LWM decided at an Extraordinary General Meeting in January to change its financial year to the traditional April to March pattern.

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 who were keen to propose solutions, as a positive response to what is currently going wrong in economics.

Our West Midlands focus is intended to make use of the region's geographical balance of urban and rural; and also to encourage democratic accountability and a people-centred approach amongst regional bodies.

We also look beyond the region, seeking to catalyse ideas across the UK and links with organisations all over the world working on a similar agenda.

Activities – January 2006 to March 2007

This has been our busiest year since our beginnings in 2002. We have delivered five specific projects, three of which were commissioned by public sector bodies; we have also engaged in the revision of various regional and local policies, and have participated in the promotion of localisation ideas across the region and beyond.

1. Strategy and Internal developments

Incorporation in progress

LWM has begun the process to become a company limited by guarantee. We will have an asset lock and be a not-for-profit organisation, but retain the power to pay those who are Board members for project work. This is because those who came together to form LWM in the first place tend to also be those with the expertise on localisation issues in the region, and this means we can build a strong partnership of associates who are committed first and foremost to the aims of the organisation.

Strategy and funding

Following 2005's review of LWM's strategy, including a re-orientation of funding efforts around a consultancy model, 2006-7 has been a successful year for LWM. We feel we have delivered much of what we saw as important in our review process, despite few fundraising successes; the consultancy model has been successful in gaining us several carefully chosen pieces of work and has also resourced some of our core work, in the absence of appropriate charitable sources of funding.

We have gained new members and retained our existing members and staff. We have managed to bring many of the skills of our members into our consultancy work as members have additionally become associates. Where we have not yet achieved as much as we hoped (such as on the mapping) there are clear reasons and a strategy for taking the work forward.

Another recommendation from the review was that policy statements could be produced on issues such as food, devolution, and local finance. Two of these have been produced so far: one on political decentralisation; and an over-arching LWM strategy paper, setting out in more detail our rationale and objectives. These are available on our website.

Our consultancy proposals have been developing. The aim is to support local people and businesses to develop and build communities and local economies in areas of need; maximising the amount of regeneration funding that stays in the area it is intended to help, by minimising leakage. It will also build on existing strengths and character and enhance diversity; and importantly, targets, outputs and directions would be determined from the start by local people rather than parachuted in by project commitments.

Supporters' meeting

In July 06 LWM held a supporters' meeting at the Warehouse Café in Birmingham FOE's community building where our offices are based. At this meeting, we discussed LWM's general purpose and objectives; a potential supporter subscription structure, particularly if we were unsuccessful in various then current funding bids; our conference plans; and our consultancy service. It was a positive meeting with some new projects brought to LWM's attention and much interest shown in LWM's work.

Since the supporters' meeting, we have been offering a supporter subscription for those interested in our work, for a minimum of £10 in order to cover the costs of communications. In the future, we hope to offer those signing up as supporters other opportunities related to our work, either as individuals or organisations, such as access to information or research on localisation activities in different sectors. This may also include the opportunity to become voting members of LWM as a company limited by guarantee. A subscription form is attached for those not already supporters.

We are also always happy to consider new members of our management committee, particularly with experience in organisational management and fundraising; and new associates to undertake some of the work we are now increasingly being offered. If you might be interested in working with us in any of these ways, there are some options given on our subscription form.

2. Projects and consultancy work

Sustainable Procurement in Birmingham

When Birmingham Strategic Partnership identified partners' procurement as an area where sustainability could be implemented more strongly, LWM spotted an opportunity to offer their expertise in localisation to support the BSP in producing an action plan for sustainable procurement. After submitting a bid LWM was awarded funding to create a project to help direct Birmingham's public spending to promote social, environmental and economic benefits through the procurement process.

LWM believed strongly that the action plan should be based on the ideas, knowledge, experiences and recommendations of the people who are directly involved in procurement as a purchasers and sellers as well as the researchers and policy makers. When creating the research methodology to collect this information LWM saw the potential to use a process that would in itself serve the overall aim of the project. By using one-to-one interviews, questionnaires, discussions, detailed case studies and workshops the research process created opportunities for individuals involved or interested in procurement to link up, network and share their ideas, experiences and expertise as well as feed into the action plan and report that was finally submitted to the BSP.

Key achievements of the project so far:

- Produced a set of recommendations to improve sustainable procurement across Birmingham
- Raised awareness of sustainable procurement and the UK Government's National Action Plan
- Linked together staff within and across BSP partners who are undertaking work that is relevant to each other
- Brought staff across the BSP together in workshops
- Set up an e-group of practitioners
- Provided guidance on sources of information and training.

We concluded that meeting organisational sustainability objectives through procurement – for example by ensuring a greater local multiplier effect in deprived areas, or by decreasing the carbon footprint of a product – is normal, beneficial, and supported by national and local policies; and that the BSP is uniquely placed to progress inter-agency

working on sustainable procurement, and there is considerable potential for this amongst partners.

However there was a need for greater comprehensive commitment to sustainable procurement throughout organisations, the development of indicators to evaluate the social, economic and environmental benefits of sustainable procurement, and a prioritisation of whole-life and whole-system costing and the achievement of wider organisational objectives over short term 'efficiency' savings.

We recommended the following for the BSP and its partners:

1. BSP should develop a Sustainable Procurement Core Policy or compact, which should at least require commitments to minimise carbon emissions and promote equal opportunities from all suppliers.
2. Individual organisations should develop their own sustainable procurement policies linked to their core aims as additions to the BSP core policy.
3. Each partner should identify a sustainable procurement champion and the BSP should identify a champion on its Board
4. Each organisation should build appropriate organisational capacity using a combination of policy development, targets and training, budgeting approaches management systems and tools and support to enthusiasts. They should use tools such as the National Action Plan Flexible Framework and a 'gateway' model to help them decide what aspects of sustainability should be built into a particular contract.
5. Develop greater awareness of sustainable procurement practices and tools and link together the enthusiastic practitioners across Birmingham.
6. Develop a capacity to identify existing and future market weaknesses in suppliers for the public sector in Birmingham and to link to economic and business development activities.

We hope to continue assisting the BSP in delivering some of these objectives.

Decentralised Energy Scoping Study

One of Greenpeace's buzz-phrases of 2006 has been "decentralised energy". Their campaigns' materials on the subject point out that because we generate electricity in large power stations far from our cities, almost two-thirds of primary energy inputs to the system are wasted – partly from the wires that transmit the electricity around the country, but mostly in the form of waste heat from the power stations themselves. This would be more than enough to meet the entire space and water heating needs of every building in the country. This centralised system currently in favour is also what persuades central government that a new generation of nuclear power is necessary.

Decentralised energy (DE) can reverse this approach, saving huge losses in transmission and high CO2 emissions and providing a way to avoid the perceived need for new nuclear. DE is energy generated - and preferably owned - close to the point of use, and systems involve both local electricity generation (often from renewable sources) and distribution of waste heat, using technologies like Combined Heat and Power, solar panels, ground source energy and others.

In the summer of 2006 LWM, as the first step in a process to create a feasibility study into decentralised energy for Birmingham, approached Greenpeace for funding to undertake a preparatory scoping study. LWM were successful in their bid and with the assistance of Birmingham Sustainable Energy Partnership and Hestia Services Ltd, and from some excellent work already carried out by the City Council's urban design team, LWM has completed and published a new study titled "*Decentralised Energy for Birmingham*", which has received coverage in the Birmingham Post and specialist press.

The study concludes that Birmingham could play a highly significant and leading role in shaping strategy and policy in the area of decentralised energy generation. As the first non-capital city to commission a study of this kind, the report states that the widespread adoption of decentralised energy technology is the only way that Birmingham is likely to stay on track to meet the government's target of a 60% reduction in carbon emissions by 2050.

A further section of the report recommends that the feasibility study also examines community ownership models for DE systems in order to maximise the potential social and educational benefits. The feasibility of locally issued bonds as a funding mechanism requires further investigation, as does the potential for community-scale off-grid systems that avoid 'use of systems' charges from network operators and energy suppliers. Local efficient circulation of energy could be matched by local, efficient circulation of the investment.

The report received some very important and positive responses from the City Council and other players. Support of this kind is essential if a full feasibility study is to have an impact on policy and strategy in Birmingham.

The scoping study ascertained that available data could support projections for the impact decentralised energy could make on the City by 2025, paving the way to comprehensive take-up of the technologies. Whilst much work is already ongoing on decentralised energy in the city, a feasibility study would create a comprehensive way of bringing other work together and effecting a more evidence-based way of targeting further efforts and investments. Thanks to the scoping study, the full feasibility study is now within the work programme for the Environment sub-partnership of the Birmingham Strategic Partnership (BEP); but its delivery is largely dependent on the success of another BEP proposal, for a Birmingham climate change agency.

Prosperity Indicators

You may have seen the page on our website that outlines our 'Regional Prosperity & Inflation Framework': <http://www.localisewestmidlands.org.uk/RPI.htm>. It proposes that inflation should be registered on the basis of the different impacts on different household types and in different parts of England. We have proposed a very simple spectrum of household types, families, pensioners and key workers. Even if figures were only assembled for Central England, Northern England and the South, it would ensure that inflation was addressed systematically for all. This is something that most opinion studies show the public do not believe is happening. There has been a collapse in confidence in the current official inflation statistics, and large-scale opinion polls show people think the cost of living in this country has been a problem that official politics has failed to register.

We have three articles about our proposals published on the Perspectives Page of the Birmingham Post in recent months and links to these and other coverage can be found on our website. Each one sets out our opposition to the official story that we in the UK are about twice as prosperous as we were in 1970. If we have become so much better

off, why does it usually take two incomes to run a household that could have been run on one income in the sixties and seventies? We used one of the Post articles to detail how these inflation and prosperity calculations are done differently in the US, France and Germany, from where we borrowed our proposed benchmarking practices.

As we go to print the Office of National Statistics is opening a regional office in central Birmingham. It will be the eyes and ears of the ONS in this region. They have been informed that we would like an early meeting with them to go through our concerns and our proposals with them. A Bill currently going through the final stages of its Parliamentary passage will give the ONS strategic independence. At that point the ONS should be able to take on board statistical reforms, based on their merits, rather than for the convenience of our political masters.

We are planning a campaign to publicise our Framework proposal. We have presented our proposals by the ONS and the Bank of England. We have begun lobbying the regional bodies that represent the community stakeholder interests in the government's West Midlands Regional Assembly. We have also discussed the idea with some MPs. Our hope is that with backing in the region, it would be easier to press our hopes on or make our case to the ONS and the national politicians. These regional bodies are still in existence and are still supposed to have an authoritative voice both here and with Whitehall.

However, to do this in the systematic way that will be necessary to push through change will require a properly organised and funded campaign. Our initial work was funded by the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust. They have told us that they would consider a fully worked-up proposal for funding such a campaign at their Board meeting in June.

We have a detailed Powerpoint presentation explaining how the official calculations have been flawed. If you would be interested in LWM presenting this to you or your organisation, do get in touch with us.

Farming & Food Team wholesaler and producer group mapping

In March 2007 LWM completed the first part of a wholesaler mapping study for Advantage West Midlands' and the Government Office's Farming and Food Team. This study aimed to identify wholesalers in the region who are capable of and interested in supplying the region's public sector with locally sourced fruit and vegetables.

The study involved surveying 99 wholesalers and producer groups with related wholesale business in Birmingham and the surrounding Shire Counties and asking them about their interest and ability to supply the public sector with locally produced goods.

In the main, wholesalers and producer groups responded positively, understanding that there could be a market opportunity from taking the time to respond.

We were able to collect useful data on which wholesalers it is worth contacting regarding public contracts, and which it is not, and to identify a significant number of wholesalers who are interested in sourcing locally for the region's public sector. This stage of the work covered the West Midlands conurbation and Shropshire.

The survey also turned up some interesting issues regarding wholesalers' interest and ability to source locally for public sector contracts:

- 20 of the 38 wholesalers surveyed at Birmingham Wholesale Market were interested in the potential for sourcing local food for the public sector, but no particular effort is made to connect local producers with the Markets and the local produce supply is consequently insufficient. There is clearly an opportunity and need to do this, in order to use the wholesale markets as a hub for local food to supply the local public sector.
- Significant numbers of wholesalers are discouraged by bureaucracy involved in tendering for public sector contracts
- Significant numbers say consistency of supply is a problem when sourcing locally.
- Some commented that this sort of initiative was too late, as many producers have already gone out of business.

The study fits into a wider initiative of the Food and Farming Team, which aims to create and develop linkages between local food growers, wholesalers and public sector purchasing bodies: a parallel piece of work by Heart of England Fine Foods is collating information on public sector fresh food contracts in the region. The work also complements LWM's regional mapping work, researching and promoting local supply chains in the West Midlands.

Evaluation of Sandwell Advice and Money Link

Pat Conaty and Jon Morris undertook an evaluation of the Sandwell Advice and Money Link project on behalf of the Greets Green New Deal for Communities. The joint community banking project consisted of a credit union and a community development financial institution (CDFI). The evaluation identified a major underperformance problem of the CDFI. By comparison the Six Towns Credit Union was developing well. However although the CDFI had failed to meet its targets over two years it had considerably improved its performance during the last 6 months following the appointment of a new manager. As well as identifying that the targets that were originally set were unrealistically high, we were able to recommend a number of changes to the structure and operation of the project which have been implemented. The two parts of the projects have now been merged, a new accountable body has been agreed and the work of the project has continued and been strengthened. Problems in securing revenue funding for the CDFI has led to the manager shifting to work now for the credit union. New opportunities to reactivate the CDFI with new funding support are being considered by the project Directors.

3. Promotion and networking

LWM members attended an informal meeting of 'localists' in Stroud in September, organised by LWM member Pat Conaty. It was very general in purpose, simply an opportunity to share existing ideas and see what new ones might emerge. Organisations represented, as well as LWM, were Stroud Commonwealth, the New Economics Foundation and some community banking organisations; and Land For People.

There was interest from many participants in getting involved with the 'practitioner' version of LWM's conference and also in nef's social enterprise incubator concept; there was also recognition of the importance of engaging with RDAs and that rather than creating a formal localisation network for the sake of it, that we should ensure we keep in touch on opportunities to change policy and on any matters of mutual interest.

LWM members also attended other events over the year such as the first and second in an ESRC seminar series, Sheffield; and the West Midlands Regional Assembly annual conference with the theme of climate change.

We have also held meetings with contacts at the Regional Assembly, Government Office, Advantage West Midlands, Regional Action West Midlands and Sustainability West Midlands, the latter two of which we have also joined as a member organisation.

LWM members visited Bishops Castle, Shropshire, to hear more about the work of the Wasteless Society, which amongst other projects is involved in carbon reduction programmes with local homes and a bio-diesel outlet where the fuel is produced on a local farm from recycled vegetable oil from local schools. LWM has ongoing links with the Wasteless Society.

LWM have given or participated in some talks or workshops for external organisations over the year, including presentations to Stratford Friends of the Earth, Birmingham Organic Gardeners and the Sustainable Housing Partnership, and participation in FOE's planning and Freedom of Information Empowerment event, Power Up.

4. Regional Policy Work

LWM continues to participate in the West Midlands Regional Sustainability Forum, the network of sustainability-focused groups working on regional policy which has seats on the Regional Assembly and other regional bodies.

Regional Economic Strategy

LWM responded to the policy options consultation on the review of the Regional Economic Strategy in February 2007. In this response, we proposed a rephrasing of the RES vision more in accordance with the UK's sustainable development strategy; outlined the need to target strategic support into economic activity that achieves public benefit over and above contribution to GDP; (eg shared economic prosperity, quality of life, reduced environmental footprint, and a safeguarded future); the importance of recognising the benefits of small-scale business and of the local multiplier effect; and the need for a range of indicators that better reflects public benefit.

We have also, representing the West Midlands Regional Sustainability Forum, been involved in the reference group for the strategic environmental assessment on the RES.

Regional Spatial Strategy

LWM made detailed responses to Phases 1 and 2 of the review of the Regional Spatial Strategy and spoke at the Examination in Public for Phase 1.

In Phase 1 – the Black Country – we focused particularly on: the need for the strategy to take into account the character of the Black Country as a network of small centres, rather than attempting to force the centres to conform to a few strategic and then smaller centre roles; the importance of ensuring a clause in the RSS to prevent land assembly at the expense of local diversity, character and small scale business; and the need to strengthen the reducing the need to travel policy.

In Phase 2, we emphasised the need to expand the policy on reducing the need to travel from simply personal transport to freight, and to have stronger targets and indicators for this policy; the importance of policies to protect against the insensitive, 'blank slate' use of land assembly, and to recognise the value of fragmented land ownership and usages in protecting smaller-scale development, and the need for climate change and environmental limits to be recognised and acted upon throughout policies.

LWM also joined participated in the reference group for the strategic environmental assessment of the new European funds operation programme at the request of staff at the Government Office.

Sustainable Communities Bill

It has been an interesting year for the Sustainable Communities Bill – which proposes a mechanism to make national government much more responsive to local needs. The Bill gives councils greater rights to allocate money currently spent by central government. Locally, it was the subject of a Birmingham Council motion in support, which was passed in June. Nationally the Bill was successful in being picked in the private members' bill ballot, and had a second reading in January with 175 – 17 in support. There was also a rally on 26th March.

Currently:

- The Bill is currently in parliament in the committee stage.
- It is expected to have its report stage (final commons stage) by Mid-May.
- With Government Support, it will be made law by the Summer.

LWM has long supported the aims of the bill, is a member of the Bill campaign, Local Works, and will continue to support the campaign in the crucial next few months.

Eastside

Karen Leach has continued to chair the Eastside Sustainability Advisory Group, a collection of sustainability-focused interest groups with roles in advising the area's sustainability advisors and in independent scrutiny of developments in the regeneration area known as Eastside, Birmingham. The group was active in opposing a Compulsory Purchase Order to permit 'comprehensive regeneration' in part of Eastside.

The plots subject to the CPO were both homes and businesses that add to the existing, locally valued character and economy of the area and there was strong local opposition to their loss. ESAG took the stance that including at least some of the existing businesses, residents and human connections within a regeneration area is likely to achieve a more inclusive and sustainable result, and generally reflects the best in current planning philosophy.

In particular, one such plot was the home for the last 40 years of a gentleman named Fred Grove. The house is locally listed and in a conservation area and there were no plans to demolish it. Happily, this particular battle was won and Fred can remain in his home, but other plots such as Rosa's Café, the last Italian-run business in what is still called the Italian Quarter, have been lost. The Public Inquiry outcome itself is still awaited.

In the last few months more sustainability criteria have been in evidence in Eastside developments, and the Council seems to be taking more seriously the opportunities to embed sustainability criteria in planning guidance.

5. Future work

Mapping Localisation in the West Midlands

Over the past year LWM intended to prioritise an exercise to research localised economic activity in the West Midlands region, in order to gain a clear picture of how localisation works and could work in the region, build networks, and identify recommendations for the future to create change. This would have focused on current localisation activity in energy, food, retail, local finance, housing, and regeneration initiatives; and lead to events, good practice guides for local and regional authorities and businesses, etc, with a focus on practical recommendations for mainstreaming good practice.

Despite our wish to prioritise this work and the completion of small sections of the research, LWM did not secure funding or time to dedicate to this project during the year. Various funding bids to support the work were unsuccessful, and we were required to focus our efforts on setting up our first consultancy projects.

We are hoping to be able to prioritise it more in 2007, possibly with new resources including potential University and Regional Development Agency input into the project.

As outlined in previous sections, further work on decentralised energy and on sustainable procurement may be forthcoming.

LWM may also have the opportunity to participate in a Community Land Trust demonstration project as part of a national series of pilots supported by the Housing Corporation. A community land trust forms a way of locking the 'asset' of the land value of a development into a trust for charitable (eg social, environmental) purposes, which also takes this land value out of the price of housing on the site, thus making the housing affordable. The trust can then be used to direct beneficial land uses and activities on the site.

We are still keen that we have a region-wide focus rather than concentrating on the conurbation so will actively seek projects in the shires. Another advantage of the mapping project is that it would expand our knowledge of the region and reflect the full range of rural and urban localisation activities that already exists.

LWM also plans to hold conferences on localisation during the coming year. We originally conceived the idea of a conference for decision-makers and opinion-formers to discuss localisation both in economics and governance. Since then, many responses (both at the supporters' meeting and elsewhere) have also favoured a rather different conference idea, to discuss and teach good localisation practice – a conference for communities, small businesses, activists and so on. We would like to hold both of these conferences, as they have rather different audiences and objectives.

Members of LWM's Management Committee

Over the year the following have been Management Committee members of Localise West Midlands:

Pat Conaty (Chair)

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, micro-credit for small business, and affordable housing finance for low income homeowners with disrepair problems. He lives and works in Birmingham and was formerly the Development Director of Birmingham Settlement, an inner city voluntary organisation.

Chris Crean (Secretary)

Friends of the Earth's Regional Campaigns Coordinator for the West Midlands. Chris has been involved with Friends of the Earth (FOE) for over ten 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.

Malcolm Currie

Trained as a systematic geographer (Bristol), Malcolm was a full time teacher in Liverpool; and has also been involved in youth work, community development, and adult education in Birmingham. He has launched various community newspapers and festivals; edits the LETS newsletter; and is presently developing 'bottom-up' projects in community cohesion, such as the application of digital technology; 'local foods: global recipes'; and integration via performing arts and music.

Colin Hines

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.

Sam Hunter

Sam joined the group in summer 2006, volunteering and attending meetings and subsequently working on the BSP procurement project. He recently completed a degree in economic and social history at the University of Birmingham.

Karen Leach

Karen has been LWM's Coordinator since October 2002. Previously she worked as Campaigns and Project Worker, and Local Food and Trade campaigner, for Birmingham Friends of the Earth. In that capacity she was involved in setting up LWM. She is also a member of Birmingham Friends of the Earth Ltd's management committee, which runs the Warehouse community building where LWM are based.

Amy Longrigg

Amy Longrigg is a Development Worker for Woodgate Valley Urban Farm. Before moving to Birmingham last February Amy worked for the New Economics Foundation (nef), in their local economies team for two years. Key projects of the team were Plugging the Leaks and Local Alchemy which focused on developing tools for people to use to understand their local economy and get involved in decision-making. She volunteered for LWM over the summer and has since undertaken some of the BSP project work.

Andrew Lydon (Treasurer)

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 latterly for Birmingham NHS Concern.

Stuart Masters

Stuart is an active member of Birmingham Green Party and has worked in the social housing sector for nearly 20 years. Currently he is the Chief Executive of WATMOS Community Homes, a tenant-controlled housing association in Walsall. He is committed to supporting the local control and management of housing and regeneration in the West Midlands. He acts as secretary and co-ordinator of the housing network group Stand Up for Community Controlled Housing (SUCH) and sits on the Board of Druids Heath Tenant Management Co-operative.

Audrey Miller

Audrey has been involved in educational work across the region. Now retired, she is an active campaigner on environmental development and asylum/refugee issues. She has served as a trustee of national and local charities, is currently Co-Chair of Jubilee Debt Campaign and sees localisation as an important global concept.

George Morran

Currently Director of the West Midlands Convention, immediate past Chair and currently Secretary of the Campaign for the English Regions, Research Associate Aston Business School and freelance Regional Governance Consultant. Previously, Director of the West Midlands Regional Forum of Local Authorities, Regional Economic Consortium and Assistant Chief Executive of Dudley MBC.

Jon Morris

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.

Barbara Panvel

Barbara has brought together different people, organisations and ideas on localisation during her work in both Mumbai and Birmingham, and has been involved in LWM since our earliest discussions.

Michael Whithouse

Michael is a chartered accountant with a degree in rural land management, based in Shropshire. He is actively involved in various organisations including the Fordhall Community Land Initiative, the Wasteless Society, the Institute of Organic Training and Advice, and the Shropshire Hills AONB advisory board. He is currently contributing to the management and delivery of a research project for Natural England.

Hannah Worth

Hannah manages the Birmingham Community Empowerment Network, facilitating community networks that aim to involve people more effectively in local decision making. She previously volunteered for Localise West Midlands for a few months after completing a Masters in Global Ethics.

Of these, Karen Leach, Pat Conaty, Amy Longrigg, Andrew Lydon, George Morran, Hannah Worth, Michael Whithouse and Jon Morris have applied to Companies House to be LWM Ltd's first directors, with Chris Crean as the Company Secretary. Hannah Worth and George Morran have been asked to co-chair the new company, to be finalised at the Company's first meeting. We hope the others listed above will remain involved more informally as our steering group.

Staff

Karen Leach has continued as Coordinator and sole paid staff member of Localise West Midlands. Amy Longrigg was also employed one day a week during February and March 07.

We are also grateful for short-term assistance from Amanda Baker during a busy period towards the end of two of our projects in March.

Supporters

In addition to the above, Aldo Mussi, Mark Jackson, Angela Blair, Paul di Mambro and Rob Pilling joined Localise West Midlands' supporters network.

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.

Financial Report

Localise West Midlands gratefully acknowledges financial support during 2006 from:

Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust – work on prosperity indicators
Greenpeace Environmental Trust – Decentralised Energy Study

Localise West Midlands Annual Accounts

Income and Expenditure Account

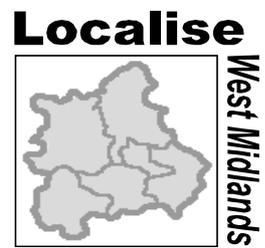
Period: 1st January 2006-31st March 2007

	1/1/06- 31/3/07 £	1/1/05- 31/12/05 £
<u>Income</u>		
Honoraria	2687.12	2,702.66
Grants	58000.00	20,000.00
Fees	12378.75	1,500.00
Supporter donations	55.00	
Total Income	73120.87	24,202.66
<u>Expenditure</u>		
Wages inc tax	20678.87	18,867.38
Rent	849.23	514.92
Phone/internet	527.04	310.50
Stationery	358.21	78.29
Travel/meetings	1117.63	551.72
Associates' Fees	47808.90	0.00
Miscellaneous	2575.33	4,578.38
Total Expenditure	73915.21	24,901.19
Balance of expenditure over income	-794.34	-698.53

Localise West Midlands

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2007

<u>Assets</u>	31/3/07	31/12/05
	£	£
<u>Current Assets</u>		
Bank Balance	32434.95	16627.16
Debtors	-	-
	32434.95	16627.16
<u>Less Current Liabilities</u>		
Creditors	16602.13	
Net Assets	<u>15832.82</u>	<u>16627.16</u>
<u>Reserves</u>		
Brought forward	16627.16	17325.69
Less Net loss for the period	<u>794.34</u>	<u>698.53</u>
Carried forward	<u>15832.82</u>	<u>16627.16</u>



Local economic solutions for sustainability

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