

AINA CASE STUDY

FAIRER, STRONGER AND MORE ACTIVE COMMUNITIES

The Safe Anchor Trust: social inclusion in West Yorkshire



Volunteer effort supports five boats offering trips for disadvantaged sections of the community

The Safe Anchor Trust, established in 1995, is an award winning charity based in Mirfield, West Yorkshire which provides trips on the waterways for special needs groups, those with health and mobility problems and socially disadvantaged groups. It can also offer boat trips for the general public in support of community events.

The charity aims to provide free access to its users, whilst providing a safer environment for young people through education and training as well as reduced crime. No fee is charged, but passengers are invited to make a voluntary contribution to the charity.

The Trust has no employees - their operations are run entirely by volunteer efforts - and this core value means that all charitable donations directly support the service provided. There are currently just over 70 volunteers and the majority have been trained as skippers. They now operate five different boats, each carrying 12 people at a time and one boat is fully accessible to wheelchairs. In 2010 the Trust carried more than 15,000 passengers. In partnership with British Waterways and the Probation Service, the Trust also manages two work boats to facilitate environmental improvement projects on the waterways. Whilst their work is funded by donations and charity fundraising, service level agreements are in place with British Waterways, the Probation Service and West Yorkshire Police.

The Trust has recently-launched the Shelpey Bridge Marina Project as a joint venture with the Duke of Edinburgh awards scheme in Kirklees, having taken on the lease for the marina's café area. With grants and fundraising it has since developed the building to include a large meeting room and conservatory. The Project runs activities for young people aged between 14 and 25 and promotes community service, skills and physical activities such as fishing and canoeing.

The Trust's Twitter messages help to convey some of the fun experienced by everyone involved: "What a great Santa Special and how lucky were we with the weather. Over 600 passengers on the boats over the 2 days of the public event."