

Workforce Development Thinking outside the Box

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How could we do it differently?

In the beginning we asked –

- Could Building Services work with a charity to best use their skills in construction?
- What opportunities were there to carry out a building project abroad?
- Would permission be given by the chief executive to allow a group to carry out this type of work?

The start of the big idea 2014!!!

- We selected to work with the charity Classrooms for Malawi based in Lanarkshire
- Permission was given by the Chief executive but we had to include the whole council and he wanted it to be an ongoing project.
- We pulled together a team of volunteers initially from Building Services including apprentices and then from the rest of the council.
- We put together an ambitious build project and started fundraising.

The teams

2015

2 apprentices

15 tradesmen

4 managers

11 others from social
work, education,

business support.

2017

2 managers

2 teachers

2 tradesman

1 engineer

2 social workers

1 sports coach

3 non council employees



The Project 2015

- Build a school for 450 children.
Now has 957 children registered.
- Build a Mary's meal kitchen
- Build a 2 bedroom teachers house
- Build girls and boys toilets

The challenge was do it in two weeks in
A village off the beaten track 1 hour
away from anywhere.



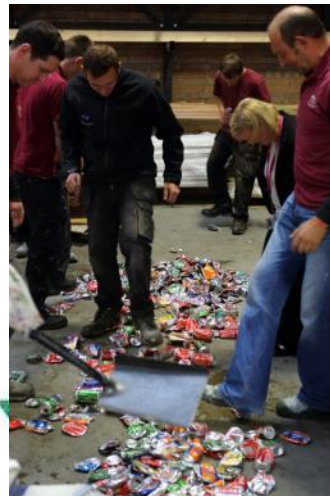
The learning Journey

- Everyone learned basic brickwork skills this was led by the apprentice bricklayer
- Everyone learned how to make a truss this was led by the apprentice joiner
- Each of the builds had a leader (these were tradesmen)



Skills everyone had to learn

- Working as a big team with different skills and abilities
- How to fund raise on a large scale
- Organising events of every kind including a massive charity ball
- Presentation skills
- Increasing your network of influencers
- Organisation of tools, plant, equipment, PPE,
- How to use Just giving and understand gift aid



When we were there in 2015

- Really was middle of no where with temperatures of 42 degrees and no shade
- The realisation that the village had absolutely nothing and what else could we do?
- Joiners researched designs for classroom furniture and commissioned local craftsmen with their design
- Designed a see-saw and swing for the kids and had to show them how to use it.
- Commissioned orphanage to make school uniforms
- Fixed the local wooden bridge so it would be safe for people to cross





What we achieved in 2015



What we achieved in 2017

- Built a nursery and doctors surgery same size as the school.
- Provided solar power to the school and the school house to teach the adults in the evenings.
- Designed and make a children's playground out of old tyres and logs
- Decorated classrooms built in 2015
- Supplied basic medial supplies for medical room.
- Ordered 200 new uniforms from Orphanage.



Why this is life changing and makes a difference.



- The children now eat every day.
- The children now go to school and are learning
- In only 2 years they read, write and speak basic English
- In 2017 the school was the best performing school in Rural Blantyre
- Adults are learning at night in the school now they have solar power.

What the Future Holds

- In May 2018 a small group are going over to teach the women to sew both by hand and machine. A hand up- not a hand out.
- In 2019 – a new team of volunteers will be heading out to build an extension to the school!
- To install solar panels to the new nursery
- To build toilets for the nursery.
- To install a water well for the nursery.

