

The Green Team charity has now formed a Community Interest Company - 'The Green Team Works C.I.C,' which is a wholly owned subsidiary of the charity. One of the aims of the C.I.C. is to carry out garden maintenance work at commercial rates for those who do not qualify for the low cost charity service. Profits generated from the C.I.C. will be gifted to the charity, enabling it to become less reliant on external funding and to ensure its longevity within the community.

In addition to The C.I.C., The Green Team has developed and recently launched the 'Journey to Employment' project.

The 'Journey to Employment' is designed to train and prepare individuals for the job market. Individuals will join the organisation either as volunteers or work placement candidates, initially learning basic employability skills such as time keeping, team work and commitment, developing self-esteem and confidence by interaction with not only other team members but with our gardening beneficiaries. The successes that have been achieved over the last 18 months have inspired the charity to expand its offer to volunteers seeking employment.

Following a period of volunteering, individuals will now have the opportunity to apply for short term, paid employment within the C.I.C. These employment packages will not be a 'rite of passage' and each individual will have to prove their commitment and desire to want to move into employment.

The C.I.C. has employed a full time, permanent driver/supervisor. In addition, two full time gardeners have been employed on fixed, three month contracts. During the three months whilst working, the two gardeners will receive intensive employability training incorporating; how to submit a strong job application, interview skills and personal development. The basis of this development is that a major negative appearing on CV's and application forms is the length of time in unemployment. Whilst in their three month employment period, the Gardeners will be expected to apply for jobs and we believe that the magic words 'Currently Employed By' will make a difference in how an application is initially viewed by a prospective employer. The charity has already had successes in moving people back into employment and strongly believes that this process will increase that number.

The charity is very excited by the opportunity to be able to put this package together and is happy to work with other partners/agencies to make it the success that we believe it will be.

The charity is actively pursuing garden/grounds maintenance business for its commercial arm, which will ultimately help to make the charity a predominately self-financed operation.