

Talking Shop

East Lancashire

'Engaging the business community in regeneration through arts based approaches.'

Talking Shop celebrates the independent shops and shopkeepers of East Lancashire, an endangered species at a time of widespread regeneration and renewal.

Projects were commissioned by one of Arts Council England's regularly funded organisations, Mid Pennine Arts, to create a portrait of shops and shopping.

A number of renowned photographers took to the streets in each area of East Lancashire where the projects were taking place to document the lives of the shopkeepers to highlight the social and economic impact of small businesses on their community and celebrate the important part those shops have played as part of their community over the years.

Talking Shop, Blackburn Road, Accrington. Photo: Louise Brookes and Brian Percival.



'Talking Shop demonstrates how effective the creative arts can be at engaging with people and communities and at documenting wider social and economic issues.'

Nick Hunt, Director Mid Pennine Arts

'Talking Shop was used in Accrington as a means of engaging with the retail sector of an area being affected by demolition as part of the housing market renewal process. Using artists in this innovative way gave the shopkeepers a voice and enabled the local authority to document the economic effects of housing market renewal.'

Vladimir Pejcinovic, Business Development Officer, Hyndburn Borough Council

'...local shopkeepers are the hub of our communities. Engaging with them provides a highly effective means of reaching wider, diverse local communities, which is vital to the success of Elevate's work.'

Claire Tymon, Creative Community Engagement Officer, Elevate

The Talking Shop project began in Pendle during 2005 under the name Shopkeepers with a grant for £4,100 from Arts Council England, North West. Since then the project has expanded to include areas of Burnley, Oswaldtwistle and Blackburn Road, Accrington.

Rossendale Leisure Trust Arts Development Officer has expanded the Talking Shop project into Rossendale.



Shopkeepers, Pendle

Photo: Gavin Parry

The project, funded by the Local Children's Network Fund is under development to engage with 10 primary schools in the Rossendale Valley focussing on the rural village shops.

This project will be led by two artists using creative writing, illustration and photography to capture stories and images of the shops from young people's perspectives. The project, running during June and July 2007, will culminate in a booklet and travelling exhibition in September 2007.

www.midpenninearts.org.uk

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