

Case Study

Chopsticks North Yorkshire Service Costs Analysis



Chopsticks North Yorkshire is a small industrial and provident society based in Northallerton. It originated in 1995 when a group of adults with learning disabilities and their support worker started chopping and selling firewood for the benefit of their mental and physical health and to generate income. The Cranfield Trust originally supported the charity with a Service Costs Analysis in 2003 and a Business Plan the following year, but since that time Chopsticks has grown considerably and now runs a centre providing work activities for people with mental health problems and a home and garden maintenance service which helps promote the independence of older people.

Chopsticks therefore asked for further help from the Trust in determining real costs for its different services, in order to work effectively on the Local Authority contracts it had won.

Jeremy Walford, the Cranfield Trust volunteer, stated:

“Chopsticks had clear objectives for the project. From my point of view as a volunteer, they were keen to meet those objectives and we worked very much as a team during the project. This had the additional benefit of ensuring that they were equipped at the end of the project to implement what was needed. As a volunteer I felt that I had made a meaningful contribution to help achieve a financially secure future for a charity that really makes a difference to peoples' lives. It was a pleasure to work with them.”

Christopher Marlowe, the Development Officer at Chopsticks was also impressed with the way the project progressed:

"In the six years since the Cranfield Trust last provided consultancy to Chopsticks the charity has grown significantly and moved to purpose-built new premises with comprehensive disabled facilities. While appreciating how costs had grown, accurately allocating those expenses to various cost centres was something of which we had limited experience. The provision by the Trust of a consultant who analysed the charity's cost structure and at the same time provided tuition and a template to be followed in the future was an immense help.

Chopsticks now has a much improved understanding of its cost structure, and in particular its relationship to different activities and contracts. We look forward to continuing to provide a growing range of services to people locally with learning disabilities and are indebted to the Cranfield Trust for its assistance with financial management. This will significantly benefit the charity as it looks to secure recovery of its true costs to underpin that growth in service provision."

