

Marks & Spencer

M&S in the Community A Cheshire Oaks Case Study



Forewords

Every M&S store has a direct impact on the people that live and work in the surrounding area. We know that everyone in the vicinity is a potential customer (or perhaps a future employee), so our aim is to build stores that benefit the wider community. By engaging with them at each stage of our journey, we can understand their needs and initiate activities that will have a positive impact, whether that's working with schools, providing employment opportunities or fundraising for local charities.

Cheshire Oaks is a great example of how this kind of community engagement works in real life. In its building and design, we went beyond creating one of the largest sustainable stores in the world, to make M&S a part of the economic and social fabric of the surrounding neighbourhoods.

In this guide you can read about Cheshire Oaks, get tips from other case studies and find practical solutions and information on how to get started in community engagement. We hope it brings the principles to life and shows how activities like this can be within the remit of not just M&S but the whole supply base.

Richard Gillies
Director, Plan A & Sustainable Business
Marks and Spencer



**BUSINESS
IN THE
COMMUNITY**

A few words from
Stephen Howard,
Chief Executive,
Business in the
Community



BCSC
SHAPING RETAIL PROPERTY

A few words from
Marcus Kilby,
President,
British Council of
Shopping Centres



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Director, Plan A & Sustainable Business
Marks and Spencer



“Today, business needs to demonstrate strong, effective and responsible leadership and a duty to show it can be a positive force for good through wealth generation and responsible action. As a responsible retailer, Marks and Spencer understands that supporting the communities that it operates in is critical to how sustainability delivers wider benefits to society.

The Cheshire Oaks case study brings this to life as a great example of what can be done at the local level. As Business in the Community's Responsible Business of the Year 2012, Marks and Spencer has shown that it understands the need to demonstrate responsible leadership and commit to UK communities.”

Stephen Howard,
Chief Executive,
Business in the Community

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“Retail provides significant benefits to local communities, employing nearly 7 million people in both retail and retail property. Good community engagement is becoming increasingly important, with shopping centres seen as the hub for communities. Marks and Spencer has a long and well known history of improving the local areas in which they operate and have worked with shopping centres to enhance community-based projects. BCSC is therefore proud to be supporting Marks and Spencer in their revised Community Engagement Guide, which shows not just why you should engage but the varied and interesting ways you can capture people's imagination.”

Marcus Kilby

Marcus Kilby,
President,
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Introduction

Marks and Spencer aims to create stores that benefit the wider communities around us by actively supporting educational, environmental, social and economic activities.

Community matters because the areas surrounding our stores are where our staff and customers live and work. The issues that affect them affect us.

Each store is different, each community is different, so this guide is less a prescriptive 'how to' than it is principles, guiding questions and practical suggestions to help you create your own projects and activities.

Whether you are a contractor, store manager or Plan A Champion, this guide uses real life examples, inspiring individuals and case studies to identify actions that individual managers and teams can take to engage with the communities around our stores.

This guide shows how getting involved with the community is relevant at each stage of the customer journey – from planning and design to completion, handover and beyond.

It shows how community engagement is valuable and how it is a two way process that both enables commercial success and creates environmental, social and economic benefits.

The case studies at each stage in the journey tell us a remarkably consistent 'story'. What often starts as giving or sharing information, becomes about personal and direct relationships, often face to face. Our interviewees all talked about community engagement as listening, acting and sharing – of skills, knowledge, time and assets. The use of social media provides new ways to inform, but also a much more direct way for the community to feedback and to do so publicly.



Who's the community?

Community engagement activity can involve talking to some or all of:

- Local councils – elected officials (councillors) and officers
- Local charities/voluntary organisations
- Schools and Colleges
- Local residents
- Transport providers
- Local press
- Town Centre Managers/ Partnerships
- Jobcentre Plus/local recruitment agencies
- Community action groups
- Other local businesses/retailers

Plan A and Cheshire Oaks

Plan A launched in 2007 setting out 100 commitments to achieve by 2012. It has now been extended to 180 commitments to achieve by 2015 with the ultimate goal of becoming the world's most...



[READ MORE](#) >



Making it count:

How to measure what difference you are making >



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Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following for their contribution to this guide: Chris Newsome, Rex Littlewood and Izy Hodgkinson of Simons Group Ltd; Sophie Brooks, Louise Cassidy, Ed Dixon, Shena Holland, Chris Kang, Andrea MacGregor-Barbour and Alexis Steadman of Marks and Spencer.

Thank you also to Business in the Community and British Council of Shopping Centres for their support and contributions.

The guide was written by Stephanie Hagan of Business in the Community.

Designed by SCS Marketing.

Image Credits

All images courtesy of Marks and Spencer and Simons Group Ltd.

For more information on Cheshire Oaks please contact:

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Izy Hodgkinson, Simons Group, izey_hodgkinson@simongroup.com, 01522 505239, www.simongroup.com

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- Local co
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- Schools

- Transp

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Partnerships

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How to measure what difference you are making



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Community matters because the areas surrounding our stores are where our stores are located and how they affect the community.

It shows how community engagement is valuable and how it is a key part of our business strategy.

Each store is supported by a local community group that provides prescriptive suggestions for how we can support the local area.

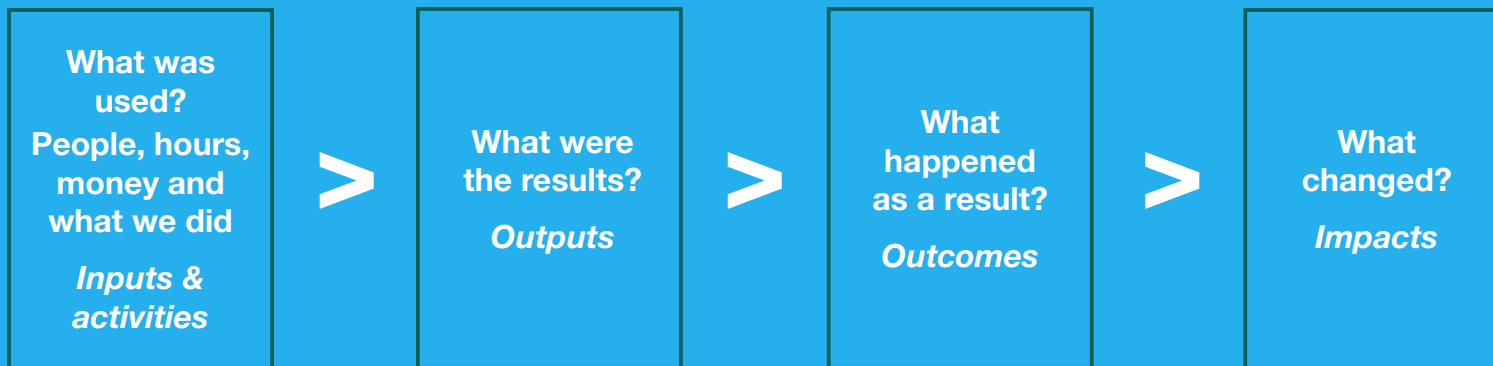
Consistent communication comes about through regular meetings all of which are shared – of course, this provides new opportunities for the community to

Whether you are a local resident or a business, this guide uses real examples to help you identify practical ways to engage with the community.

Making it count: How do you know what you are doing is making a difference?

Measuring what difference you are making, and not just talking about what you are doing, gives you the information to prove value to others but also to improve what you do.

Use the following questions to help you think about how you might track, record and report your impact.



To help you capture your impacts you may find it useful to use the 'Footprint Template' CLOSE X



- Local community groups (council)
- Schools
- Transport
- Town Centre Managers/ Partnerships
- Community action groups

- JobCentre Plus/local recruitment agencies
- Other local businesses/retailers



How to measure what difference you are making



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Plan A and Cheshire Oaks

Plan A launched in 2007 setting out 100 commitments to achieve by 2012. It has now been extended to 180 commitments to achieve by 2015 with the ultimate goal of becoming the world's most sustainable major retailer. Opening a third learning store, the largest sustainable retail store in the world, at Cheshire Oaks in 2012, fulfils one of these commitments. Opened on Wednesday 29th August 2012, M&S Cheshire Oaks is our biggest, greenest store. It's designed to be the most carbon efficient, premier M&S store to date. Sustainability was considered in every aspect of the design and build from water and waste to the materials used and biodiversity in the surrounding area and it achieved a BREEAM 'excellent' rating.

Community engagement was integral to the planning and build process, which delivered significant investment in local infrastructure, business for local firms and brought employment opportunities to the area. Our Marks & Start programme and a pre-employment training initiative helped disadvantaged groups into the workplace and supporting the community continues as part of the store's day to day operation led by a dedicated Plan A Champion.

Whilst Cheshire Oaks is unique in size and scale, as the third learning store in the M&S portfolio, one purpose it should serve is to help us learn; to inspire us and show us what can be achieved and what we might do differently. It also shows clearly how the customer journey starts long before the doors open and how getting the community involved helped deliver not only some of the scheme's sustainable features but also good relationships.

See '**The Customer Journey**' for a more detailed case study.



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The Customer Journey

Planning



engaging the community in scheme design and generating support during the planning process

Procurement



making the most of opportunities to deliver economic benefits to local people and firms

Construction



delivering practical community projects and educational initiatives to deliver benefits both to community and construction teams through good relationships

Handover



handing over community relationships, recruiting local labour and attracting customers

In Use



playing an active role in the areas surrounding our stores and involving our people to benefit the wider community

In Practice - Community engagement at Cheshire Oaks:

Planning



Procurement



Construction



Handover



In Use



[READ THE FULL CASE STUDY](#)



The Customer Journey

Planning

Community Engagement:

Public consultation events working with local community consultants

Multiple meetings with key groups (including objectors) e.g. neighbouring councils and local action groups

Informing via leaflets, meetings, address cards, newsletters

Results:

- Majority of residents supporting the scheme
- A Section 106 agreement committing to £5m traffic improvements, local employment from disadvantaged groups, and £1m town centre improvements

“We would have had a much rougher ride without the M&S community engagement at Cheshire Oaks. Being able to demonstrate those efforts to speak to the community and change the scheme where it could be accommodated was a crucial part of the planning process.”

Chris Newsome, Development Director, Simons Group

Procurement

Community Engagement:

Local procurement and local employment policy obligations within Section 106 agreement. Policies drafted by developer and reviewed by Council before use

Policy used through both direct and subcontract labour agencies with support from Council

Results:

- 50% of construction spend in NW and 12.5% in local area
- 11 companies within 25 mile radius & 33 in NW region awarded packages of works
- 70% of temporary positions to local staff
- Supported 4 subcontractors through FSC certification

Construction

Community Engagement:

A dedicated Environmental Champion

Communication via social media; presentations; newsletters; signage; and face to face

Art competition with 11 schools, 140+ entries and 1000 public votes

Guided tours (over 100 hours)

Sharing of materials, time & skills with schools and colleges including: building biodiversity stacks & bird boxes; tree planting; donation of timber pallets and other waste materials; year long Design Competition for 40 BTEC students

Results:

- Considerate Constructors Scheme score of 38/40
- 1000+ people reached per week on Facebook in 18 months
- 40 students given direct experience of construction site and many going on to study construction at HND/BSc level
- No incidents of graffiti or vandalism
- 16 complaints received

Handover

Community Engagement:

Travel plan (Plan A Champion) for staff and customer access: liaising with council to get bus timetables amended and bus link from rail station to Cheshire Oaks

Local recruitment:

a) to meet planning agreement: met through pre-employment training initiative with local college and Marks & Start work placements in local stores
b) targeted attraction campaign

Unique press strategy - based on sustainability features and strong community stories

Results:

- 79 staff recruited from target groups – exceeding planning agreement target. 33 staff via Marks & Start placements
- 63% of staff live <10 miles from store and 1 in 4 in CH65 postcode
- Community engagement a major feature of local press stories

In Use

Community Engagement:

Dedicated Plan A Champion supported by partners in each business unit

Community engagement includes:

- Liaising with council and transport providers; attending six weekly Retail Park meetings
- Supporting colleagues in fundraising and volunteering and supporting nine local charities
- Working with schools and colleges e.g. forthcoming art exhibition in store
- Running tours for groups on request (approx one per week)

Results:

- 100s of people reached through store tours
- Facebook page accessed regularly by 400 of 550 employees
- Established relationship with nine local charities and two schools

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The Role of Community Engagement in Planning

Community engagement plays a twofold role during the planning process. It helps build and generate the community support needed to gain planning approval, and provides a practical way for the wider community to influence the scheme and in doing so accommodate areas of specific concern – whether this is around accessibility, traffic management or design. This guide updates and complements the Marks and Spencer Sustainable Construction Community Engagement Guide [available here](#).

Who does it?

Normally led by a developer / lead designer with input from M&S property team and locally engaged consultants as needed. How much and what will depend on the size and scale of the store and complexity of planning application. Cheshire Oaks was unusually complex and large and represents one end of the scale, but getting the wider community on board at the start - from residents to officials - is beneficial for any size or format store.

Getting it right can result in:

- fewer objections within the planning process and potentially active advocacy from the community in support of the scheme at planning hearings.
- improvements to design e.g. enhancing access, improving safety.
- goodwill and early support and interest from potential future employees and customers.

Doing it in practice:

Inform >



Listen >



Act >



Making it count: Find out how to measure what difference you are making >

Did you know?

Consultation with Sheffield Council led to design changes to the Ecclesall Road store that included using reclaimed bricks, integrating it more closely into the street by bringing it forward to the road and repositioning the cafe. This helped smooth the planning process and deliver a stronger scheme that worked with surrounding buildings and with sustainability as a key principle.

Pen Portrait:

Chris Newsome, Development Director, Simons Group



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The Role of the Development Director:

Chris Newsome, Development Director, Simons Group

Chris was the development/planning project lead for the Simons Group, the developer and construction contractor for Cheshire Oaks. Following the granting of initial council support and three public consultation events, Chris worked with John Handy and Sacha Berendji of M&S's Property Team during a challenging and extended planning process that included referral to the Secretary of State for final approval. One of the most important aspects of Chris' role was engaging local residents; and in particular with one local action group that included many opponents. Evening meetings were held with the group 5-6 times over a 9 month period allowing them to listen to concerns and act if possible. As a result specific concerns were addressed including design changes to improve walking access and a footbridge to improve safety. At the final planning hearing, the success of this approach was proved with a local resident coming forward to support the scheme. Ordinary resident support was cited within the Inspector's Report as one factor in granting permission, as it contrasted with the professionals representing objections related to commercial interests from town centre shopping owners and neighbouring councils.



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Doing it in practice:

Inform

- Hold well publicised public consultation meetings; be prepared as attendance can range from 50 to 900.
- Use leaflet drops, adverts, exhibitions and social media pages to inform residents about the design proposals using visuals where possible.
- Keep in touch with supporters by handing out address cards.

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Doing it in practice:

Listen

- Hold direct meetings (at the right time of day including evenings) with local action groups and residents groups particularly where there is opposition. On large schemes this might need multiple meetings over several months.
- Meet not only with the local council but neighbouring councils and other commercial interests where relevant.
- Get the right people in front of the community at consultations and meetings to build credibility that action will be taken and issues will be addressed. This means senior people with decision making accountability from both the developer and Marks and Spencer.

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Doing it in practice:

Act

- Act on concerns where you can, explain where you can't. At early stages, changes can be accommodated that would be difficult to make further down the line.
- The Section 106 agreement can be used to build in concrete commitments and benefits. Use Marks and Spencer's track record to build credibility that the scheme will deliver. E.g. The Marks & Start programme demonstrates not only a commitment to employing from disadvantaged groups but shows Marks and Spencer has the internal expertise to deliver on local employment targets from these groups.

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Making it count:

Information you may be asked or want to report is likely to include a description or statement of:

- Who was involved, how much was spent (time / money) and what happened?
- Who benefited, how many and in what way?
- What was the outcome and difference made?

To be able to report this, you need to ensure you have some system of collecting information and some idea of what you are trying to achieve so you collect the right information.

Possible measures to consider include:

- Description of activities taken to publicise / discuss the application
- Number of people reached / attending events
- Description of people / organisations liaised with e.g. council, transport providers
- Positive outcomes including commitments agreed in Section 106 agreement



To help you capture your impacts you may find it useful to use the 'Footprint Template'

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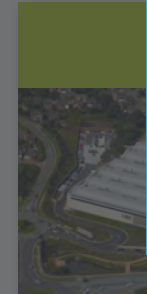
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Procurement and Community Engagement

Buying power through the procurement process is one of the most powerful ways that developments can bring economic benefit to local communities. These benefits are normally delivered through local procurement and local employment but may extend to skills and training through apprenticeships and links with local colleges. In practice it is often one of the most challenging to deliver. In many cases, the impetus will come from either the client or increasingly local authorities where local procurement / employment requirements are imposed through Section 106 agreements. This guide updates and complements the Marks and Spencer Sustainable Construction Community Engagement Guide [available here](#).

Who does it?

Lead role played by Main Contractors. Others involved in delivering can include: sub contractors, local agencies, local council.

Getting it right can result in:

- Builds valuable good will through local employment and local procurement within the community and with potential future customers.
- Supports a healthy local economy needed for commercial success.
- Reinforces good relationships with the council and other local agencies who can particularly support recruitment.

Doing it in practice:

As noted above, delivering economic benefits through local recruitment and procurement can be challenging, and incurs costs – both time and financial. The solutions below will not be possible all the time, or on all sites, but each site should consider what it can do to make the biggest difference to the local area at the procurement stage.

Make it viable >



Make it happen >



Making it count: Find out how to measure what difference you are making >

Did you know?

As a result of running Meet the Buyer events for the Building Schools for the Future projects in Blackburn and Bolton, Balfour Beatty is committed to using at least 60% local labour on their BSF sites.

Whilst not all sites Simons Group works on have the impetus of a client like Marks and Spencer or the planning obligations of Cheshire Oaks, as part of its own sustainability agenda it is seeking to implement similar activities on other events for example holding Meet the Buyer events on the Bargoed (Morrisons) scheme.

Pen Portrait:

Rex Littlewood, Project Director, Simons Group



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Pen Portrait:

Rex Littlewood, Project Director, Simons Group

As Project Director for the Cheshire Oaks scheme, Rex took over responsibility for the project once planning permission was secured. To deliver both the sustainability requirements of the scheme as well as the procurement and employment obligations within the planning agreement, Rex established a small team comprising the Simons Group Sustainability Champion and a site Environmental Champion (Ed Dixon – see **Construction**) reporting directly to him. This enabled these issues to be focused on outside of day to day construction management. A community engagement strategy was developed to deliver not only the planning obligations but to continue to build relationships with the local community, schools and colleges. This included drafting policies for local procurement and employment and working closely with the council, as well as local subcontractors and recruitment agencies to implement them.

Did you know?

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Doing it in practice:

Make it viable

- Start planning for local procurement as early as possible – allow enough time to set up events and for local companies to register interest before tendering.
- Design work packages to sizes suitable for local companies.
- Support upskilling of local supply chain in certification and accreditation schemes (e.g. HSQE, ISO14001, SSS, FSC) where viable e.g. see if an SME can adopt your policy for a year whilst they adopt and implement their own. Contact local authorities and business support organisations to see if there are existing schemes you can contribute to. Run sessions to explain policies or requirements instead of sending out questionnaires.

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- Reinforces good relationships with the council and other local agencies who can particularly support recruitment.

Doing it in practice:

Make it happen

- Advertise sub contracting opportunities locally / work with the council to put forward potential sub contractors.
- Run Meet the Buyer events.
- Incorporate local labour requirements in sub-contractor contracts - it may be both viable and attractive for some suppliers to recruit locally regardless of Head Office location.
- Create local labour policies that can be used by sub contractors or local recruitment agencies.

CLOSE X

Did you know?

As a result of running Meet the Buyer events for the Building Schools for the Future projects in Blackburn and Bolton, Balfour Beatty is committed to using at least 60% local labour on their BSF sites.

Whilst not all sites Simons Group works on have the impetus of a client like Marks and Spencer or the planning obligations of Cheshire Oaks, as part of its own sustainability agenda it is seeking to implement similar activities on other events for example holding Meet the Buyer events on the Bargoed (Morrisons) scheme.

Pen Portrait:

Rex Littlewood, Project
Director, Simons Group



READ MORE >



Procurement and Community Engagement

Buying power through the procurement process is one of the most powerful ways that developments can bring economic benefit to local communities. These benefits are normally delivered through local procurement and local employment but may extend to skills and training through apprenticeships and links with local colleges. In practice it is often one of the most challenging to deliver. In many cases, the impetus will come from either the client or increasingly agreements. Engagement

Did you know?

As a result of running Meet the Buyer events for the Building

Making it count:

Information you may be asked or want to report is likely to include a description or statement of:

- Who was involved, how much was spent (time / money) and what happened.
- Who benefited, how many and in what way?
- What was the outcome and difference made?

To be able to report this, you need to ensure you have some system of collecting information and some idea of what you are trying to achieve so you collect the right information.

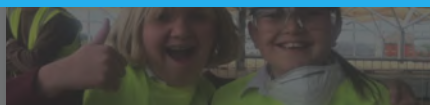
Possible measures to consider include:

- Number of local businesses opportunities were advertised to
- Number of local businesses tendering
- Number / value / % of work packages awarded to businesses in local / regional area
- Number of employees from local area



To help you capture your impacts you may find it useful to use the 'Footprint Template'

CLOSE X



READ MORE >



Making it count: Find out how to measure what difference you are making



Construction

The build is often the first and most visible impression residents and customers have of a store. Playing an active role in the community is critical to making the right impression and creating a positive trading environment. But it can also reap benefits for the contractor over and above a good Considerate Constructors Scheme score. Sub-contractors can also support community engagement, although their ability and willingness to get involved may vary. This guide updates and complements the Marks and Spencer Sustainable Construction Community Engagement Guide [available here](#).

Getting it right can result in:

- Higher scores with the Considerate Constructors Scheme.
- Fewer complaints from residents.
- Delivering tangible educational opportunities for school children or college students giving them hands on experience they are unable to get in the classroom or via a talk or presentation alone.
- Promotion of the sustainability agenda to a wider community including young people.

Doing it in practice:

Supporting the community and getting them involved need not always involve money and is often about sharing time, knowledge or surplus materials. But you may need to allocate some money to support activities, for example to pay for supplies for volunteering days. It works best when you have a clear idea about what you want to do and why you want to do it. This will make it much easier to approach schools, community organisations or colleges and explain what you would like them to get involved with.

Did you know?

Children were provided with front row views of the Ecclesall Road site in Sheffield thanks to a viewing platform created by Wates.

Video: The local community



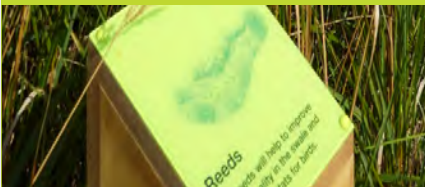
Pen Portrait:

Ed Dixon, Environmental Champion Cheshire Oaks, Simons Group



[READ MORE >](#)

Sharing information >



Skills and training >



Make the most of assets >



Making it count: Find out how to measure what difference you are making >



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Pen Portrait:

Ed Dixon, Environmental Champion Cheshire Oaks, Simons Group (now Property Plan A Project Manager, Marks and Spencer)

As Environmental Champion, Ed's role at Cheshire Oaks was focused completely on the delivery of the sustainability agenda and was separate from the construction team, reporting into head office and the Sustainability Champion. Delivering the community engagement plan formed a significant part of Ed's role. This included establishing, monitoring and maintaining social media pages and twitter feeds; approaching local schools to give talks but also get them involved in practical projects around recycling and biodiversity; finding ways to distribute surplus materials to the community; running guided tours for special interest groups; and establishing a partnership with a local college for 40 BTEC students over a year. In the latter stages it also included working with the incoming store team and handing over not only a building but relationships with people, schools and other local organisations.



CLOSE X

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Making it count: Find out how to measure what difference you are making



READ MORE



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Doing it in practice:

Sharing information – using all the platforms you can

- **Talking:** face to face, at the site gate, on the phone, in the shop across the road; return phone calls; employ site managers who are personable and approachable.
- **Written materials:** newsletters, leaflets, signage and notices.
- **Using technology:** set up a live website on construction progress; set up facebook and twitter accounts which can also be used to share information about activities and is also a good way to collect feedback to use for reporting (information which is often hard to get otherwise).
- **Host site visits** or create a safe viewing platform/area that can be used by children/schools.

CLOSE X

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Video: The local community



Pen Portrait:

Ed Dixon, Environmental
Champion Cheshire Oaks,
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- Promotion of the sustainability agenda to a wider community including young people.

Doing it in practice:

Support skills and training

- Provide apprenticeships and training opportunities. Consider setting up partnerships with local training / further education providers.
- Host educational site visits or construction skills days at schools / colleges.
- Volunteering by both construction management and construction teams in local schools and community groups.

CLOSE X

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Doing it in practice:

Make the most of assets and promote sustainability

- **Donate** surplus materials to community groups or offer it to the wider community through platforms like recipro, gumtree and freecycle – cable drums make good furniture, timber pallets can become tree houses, sheds and much more. View the [Site Waste Management Plan](#).
- **Site hoardings can be used to:** communicate progress or Plan A messages; display art (e.g. via competitions); and as advertising space for local charities.
- **Run Community Days both on and off-site:** for example, explore opportunities to work with schools on environmental / biodiversity initiatives related to the site. Most activities can be undertaken as long as you do a sensible risk assessment.

CLOSE X

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READ MORE >



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Sub-contractors may vary. The Engagement

Getting it

- Higher scores
- Fewer complaints
- Delivering a better experience
- Promoting

Doing it

Supporting the time, knowledge to pay for something you want to explain what

Making it count:

Information you may be asked or want to report is likely to include a description or statement of:

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- What was the outcome and difference made?

To be able to report this, you need to ensure you have some system of collecting information and some idea of what you are trying to achieve so you collect the right information.

Depending on what you do, you might consider reporting on:

- Number of volunteer hours / value of volunteer hours
- Number of activities / community days / projects completed / children or students benefitting
- Number of apprenticeships / training hours provided and any target audiences that might have benefited (e.g. NEETs, long-term unemployed)
- Value / volume of any donations – both in cash and materials
- Considerate Constructors score
- Number of people reached e.g. no of Twitter followers, website page views, leaflets distributed, site visitors



To help you capture your impacts you may find it useful to use the 'Footprint Template'

CLOSE X

Did you know?

Children were provided

of site in a viewing Waters.

Community

tal aks,



Making it count: Find out how to measure what difference you are making >

READ MORE >



Handover

It is not only a building which is handed over when construction ends but also the relationships that have formed and been built from the very start of the planning process whether these are good or not. Planning for opening needs to consider how both staff and customers will access the store, who will be employed and how the opening itself will be handled. Community engagement activities at this stage are likely to be focused on achieving specific objectives e.g. influencing rail or bus companies to amend timetables; recruiting employees; and ultimately attracting customers. Past community engagement can also provide good stories to promote to local press around opening.

Who is involved?

M&S HR Business Partners / local recruitment co-ordinators; incoming store team; local PR teams; the main contractor may also have some involvement.

Doing it in practice:

Identify and clarify who you need to talk to and why. Do you have any obligations to meet around employment from particular groups? Answering these questions will help you plan the community engagement you need to undertake.

Recruit local labour for retail positions >



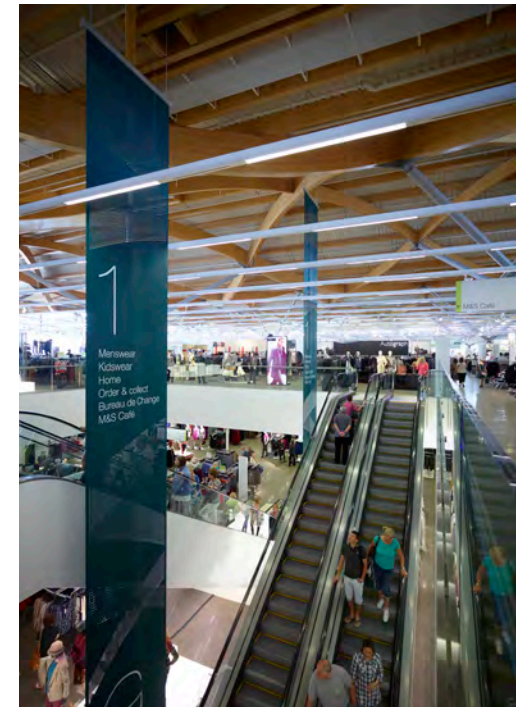
Communicate to customers / community >



Community outreach by incoming store team >



Making it count: Find out how to measure what difference you are making >



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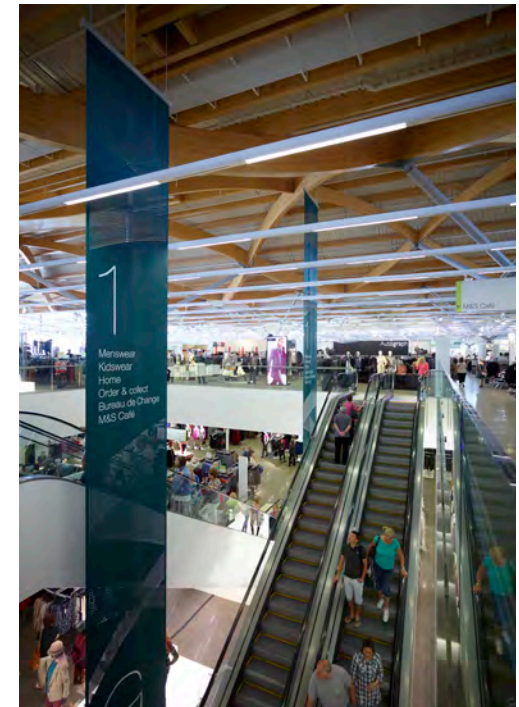
Recruit local labour for retail positions and run a targeted attraction campaign

- Place a series of adverts in the local press.
- Create a pack of posters, leaflets, postcards that can be distributed in other locations e.g. libraries, leisure centres, community centres (Jobcentre Plus can help you identify suitable locations).

For new store openings

- Run a training session for Jobcentre Plus advisors to explain recruitment needs in detail.
- Think about running a careers event/jobs fair open to all in a local community centre, college or children's centre and advertise through local press.
- Can you use Marks & Start placements in local stores to create a bank of job ready accredited employees? See [Marks & Start](#) for more information on how to run the programme.
- Do you need to talk to local public transport providers about improving access, particularly early in the morning and late at night, to allow staff to get to work? This could involve meeting with council officers, the council transport committee and directly with providers. For example at Cheshire Oaks, bus timetables were changed and a new bus service from Ellesmere Port rail station to Cheshire Oaks provided.

CLOSE X



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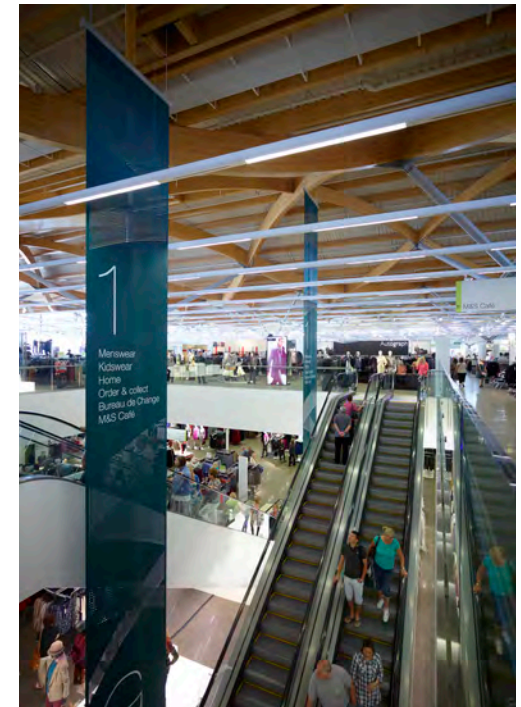
Doing it in practice:

Identify and clarify who you need to talk to and why? Do you have any obligations to meet around employment from particular groups? Answering these questions will help you plan the community engagement you need to undertake.

Communicate to customers /community

- **Advertise through local press, radio and site hoardings** – what story do you have to tell? Past community engagement can give you good stories that can be featured and promoted e.g. your relationship with local schools, local recruitment initiatives etc.
- **Invite key community contacts to visit the store on opening day:** – include key contacts from the council, other local agencies, community groups and schools that have been involved during construction.
- **Think about how you can engage customers once they are in the store:** Can you use signage and QR codes to direct people to useful further information or the M&S Stories website?

CLOSE X



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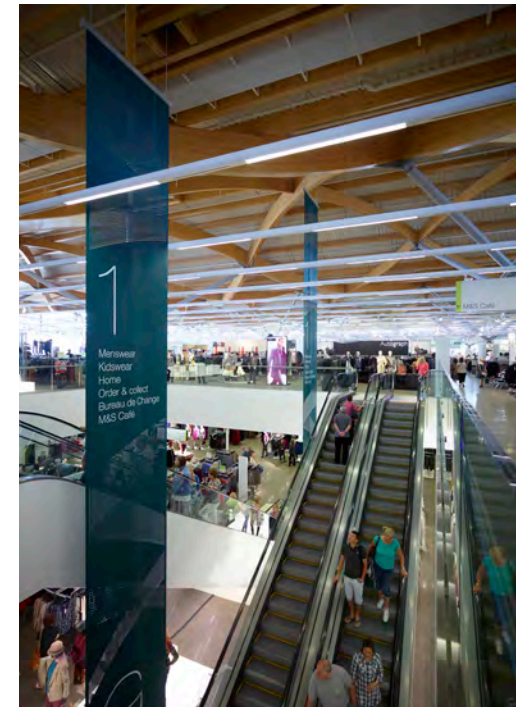
Doing it in practice:

Identify and clarify who you need to talk to and why? Do you have any obligations to meet around employment from particular groups? Answering these questions will help you plan the community engagement you need to undertake.

Community outreach by incoming store team

- The earlier you can consider future community engagement the easier it will be to implement.
- Start building links with key players in the community by attending relevant meetings e.g. of the town centre partnership and meeting with key individuals e.g. at the council, volunteer centre etc.
- See the [In Use Getting Started](#) pages for more information on how to find out about the issues in your local area and how you might get involved.

CLOSE X



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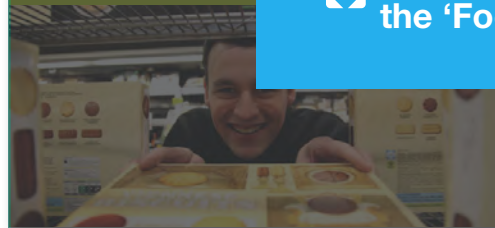
Who is involved

M&S HR Business contractor may also

Doing it in practice

Identify and clarify from particular groups to undertake.

Recruit labour for positions



Making it count:

Information you may be asked or want to report is likely to include a description or statement of:

- Who was involved, how much was spent (time / money) and what happened.
- Who benefited, how many and in what way?
- What was the outcome and difference made?

Depending on what you do, you might consider reporting on:

- Number of local people employed from particular target groups
- Number / value of local press coverage; positive quotes and comments from individuals / groups
- Positive outcomes e.g. improving transport access



To help you capture your impacts you may find it useful to use the 'Footprint Template'

CLOSE X



Making it count: Find out how to measure what difference you are making



In Use: Getting Started

Local causes and community issues are becoming ever more important to our customers and employees. Our work in the community has clear benefits; enhancing our customer brand and increasing employees' pride in working for M&S. This guide gives you all the information you need to stay in touch with the community, support them and reap the benefits that Plan A and community involvement can bring. Over the following sections it will help you **Get Started**, **Take Action** and **Celebrate Success**.

Playing an active role in the community is increasingly important as the issues affecting high streets and town centres have become more high profile. There is greater focus than ever on what businesses do to be part of the community and this is particularly important if you are a high street or town centre store. Here are simple ways to engage with the community and find out WHAT you might support. Take Action provides more guidance on HOW M&S can support the community.

The easiest way to get started is to get to know your community – who the key players are, what are the issues facing residents and businesses and who is doing what.

Download:
one page
summary of
how M&S
contributes
to your local
community



Get to know your
local community



Who's who and how
can I find them?



Are you in Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales?

The Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly and Northern Ireland Assembly all have an additional layer of representation in their own Parliaments or Assemblies. To find your representatives see:
[Scottish Parliament](#) | [Welsh Assembly](#) | [Northern Ireland Assembly](#)



In Use: Getting Started

Get to know your local community

1. Attend meetings:

Store managers will need to attend some local meetings e.g. town centre partnership meetings. Use the **Taking Action** information on the next page as a basis for how you can practically support local initiatives.

2. Take the time to talk to key individuals:

This could be someone from the council, your local MP, a headteacher, a Volunteer Centre or Business in the Community regional office. They will be valuable sources of intelligence.

Ask them:

- What are the most pressing issues facing residents, agencies and businesses in the area?
- What are the trends – are things getting better or worse?
- Who else is working on these issues, who are the main organisations in any sector who are trying to tackle these issues?



CLOSE X



In Use: Getting Started

Who's who and how can I find them?

MPs: Ambassadors for their community and usually know it well. M&S is not party political so you should not express corporate support for any one political party but having a relationship with your MP can be helpful. Find out who your local MP is at www.parliament.uk. If you have questions about what is appropriate contact Government Affairs.

Local council / local authority: Responsible for day to day services. The business / economic development department or town centre management team will be most interested in how the store is performing and employment / charitable initiatives. They may also manage forums (e.g see TCPs) that promote the area. They will have community plans outlining the issues and priorities in the community. Find your local council website at www.direct.gov.uk.

Town Centre Partnership (TCP): TCPs bring together local businesses and representatives from the council. Whilst activity varies, if there is a TCP in your area, make contact or follow up any approaches made to you as it is a good way to make contacts and bring your expertise to improving the area or resolving issues. Many request a voluntary contribution which many stores agree to – this is a local decision to discuss with the HoR or RFOM. Ask the local council or use an internet search engine to find out about town centre partnerships in your area.

Business Improvement Districts (BIDs): Similar to town centre management, but if a BID is approved in an area contributions towards

it are mandatory not voluntary. M&S supports the BID mechanism as it allows businesses to have a say on what the money is used for. M&S is also supportive of managers getting involved in a BID proposal but we will judge each BID on its own merit. www.britishbids.info.

Local Enterprise Partnerships: Introduced in 2010, there are 39 LEPs across England. They are designed as partnerships between local authorities and businesses to agree priorities for investment e.g. roads, buildings, facilities, infrastructure. LEPs aim to encourage growth in their area. If your store is in a LEP, make contact to see if there is a role M&S can play. As some focus on specific sectors or aim to help SMEs it is best to decide locally if the LEP is the right forum to get involved with. www.lepnetwork.org.uk.

Schools: Working with young people and schools is a common type of support provided. The council website will provide a list of schools in the area. Contact can initially be made via school offices and the main contact at least in the beginning may well be with the head teacher. Some areas have dedicated Education Business Partnerships (EBPs) that help match businesses and schools. A search engine is the best way to find out if there is one in your area.

Volunteer Centre/CSV office: These will have lists of local charities that provide volunteering opportunities in your area. Find your local centre or office at: www.volunteering.org.uk / www.csv.org.uk.

CLOSE X



In Use: Taking Action

Successful community engagement needs everyone to play their role. Specifically:

Store Managers: to take accountability for all community activity; to drive it and ensure relevant information is communicated down to all; to go to relevant local meetings and get involved in local partnerships that promote the area (e.g. town centre partnerships / BIDs); to make it known that getting involved is valued. [See 'The Store Manager' Pen Portrait.](#)

Plan A Champion: to help set up relationships on the ground, co-ordinate events and ensure information is shared. Use this guide to help find and build relationships with key local contacts and local organisations. [See the 'Plan A Champion' Pen Portrait.](#)

Section Managers / Commercial Managers: to play a key role in sharing information to teams particularly about national corporate events; to lead by example. Use this guide to help you understand what you and your teams can and can't do.

All employees: to get involved, bring ideas for fundraising or volunteering forward.

What can I do?

1. Support local and national charities by fundraising or giving time through volunteering

2. Support skills & employment: Marks & Start and supporting young people

Fundraising

Supporting national and local causes through raising funds by selling products or by staff getting involved in events and activities.



Volunteering

Using our skills and time to support communities by giving each member of staff one paid day a year to volunteer for a cause or organisation of their choice.



Marks & Start

Our national employability programme helping people facing barriers to employment into work.



Young People

Using our knowledge and skills to help young people develop the skills they need to gain employment and inspire them into retail as a career.



In Use: Taking Action

Successful community engagement needs everyone to play their role. Specifically:

Pen Portrait: The Store Manager

Mandy Hartley, Store Manager for the Boston Store, challenged Pauline Kerman, the Plan A Champion, to get 100% of employees using their volunteering day. Volunteering became a monthly topic at meetings and all employees were asked how and where they would like to get involved, and matched with local charities or store activities. Planning ahead and good communication were key to ensuring that work in-store could continue, whilst those who hadn't volunteered before were encouraged to do so in pairs or as a team. Activities employees got involved in ranged from taking part in national corporate events like the Macmillan Coffee Morning and 5 Peaks Challenge to spending a day helping at a range of local charities. All 66 employees used their volunteer day thanks to the support and encouragement of both Mandy and Pauline.



Pen Portrait: The Plan A Champion

Shena Holland's role as the dedicated Plan A Champion at Cheshire Oaks is wide and varied and encompasses the majority of activities undertaken by Plan A Champions across the country. Her week will involve anything from running tours of the store to meeting with local bus / rail providers or attending council meetings. As a store, Cheshire Oaks has decided to only support local charities and one of Shena's first roles was to identify a group of nine local charities to support and allocate each business unit their own local charity. She also plays a key role in supporting the Marks & Start programme as well as store-based fundraising and volunteering; helping individuals and teams generate ideas, supporting them to deliver and promoting their achievements. This is done through internal meetings but also the well-used employee Facebook page. As someone who spends most of her time talking to people, she sees the role of Plan A Champion primarily as one of education and communication.



[CLOSE X](#)



In Use: Taking Action

Fundraising

Working with our corporate charities:









- By selling products (Cause Related Marketing) that include a royalty which is donated to the charity or by selling small products such as pins where the entire price goes to the charity.
How: Instructions are sent via Retail Communications at the relevant time of year.
- By taking part in a Corporate Fundraising Event such as the 5 Peaks Challenge or Bike 400 where employees from all over the business have the opportunity to raise money for one of our corporate partners. See also [Volunteering](#). **How:** Information sent via Retail Communications at the relevant time of year.

Supporting local charities and causes:

- By raising funds for local charities and selecting one or more local charity partners to support. This is a great way to involve people both in choosing a local store charity and get your team involved with the local community. See also [Volunteering](#). **How:** Detailed guidelines on setting up your local charity are [available here](#).
- By making small charitable donations to local charities or community groups. To help you manage requests from local organisations asking for help there is a small budget allocated via SCMS (Store Cash Management System). This enables stores to support local causes with small donations each year.
[Find more information here.](#)

Calendar of
Events 2013 >

Did you know?

M&S employees help to raise approx £700,000 each year for local charities

Matching Funds:

If a team of 5 or more employees fundraises for a registered charity, M&S will match the funds raised up to £3,000 per store/office/BU per year

Find out more >

Find out why we do this... >

CLOSE X



In Use: Taking Action

Fundraising

Working with...

Shelter

- By selling products...
- How:** Instru...
- By taking part...

Volunteering

Supporting local...

- By raising funds...
- By making...

Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
Plan A: Pride of M&S Award Nominations (29 April – 24 May) 	Charity Challenge (6–28) Bike 24 (21–22) 				Plan A: Pride of M&S Awards 				Annual Weightloss Challenge Campaign
Big Beach Clean Up (22–28) 	Fashion Targets Breast Cancer 		Big Butterfly Count 		Macmillan Worlds Biggest Coffee Morning 	Breast Cancer Awareness Month 	Poppy Appeal 		Woodland Trust Christmas Card recycling
World Autism Awareness Day (2nd)	World Fairtrade Day (11th)	World Environment Day (5th)	Disability Awareness Day (26th)	Intl Youth Day (12th)	Intl Day of Peace (21st)	Make a Difference Day (26th)	National Stress Awareness Day (8th)	World Volunteer Day (5th)	CLOSE X

ar of 2013 >

know?

employees raise approx each year charities

g Funds:

5 or more fundraises for charity, M&S the funds £3,000 per /BU per year >

why we >

CLOSE X



In Use: Taking Action

Fundraising

Working with our corporate charities:

Shelter

- By selling products and small products
- How:** Instructions
- By taking part from all over the
- Volunteering.**

Supporting local

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- By making small charitable donations to local charities or community groups. To help you manage requests from local organisations asking for help there is a small budget allocated via SCMS (Store Cash Management System). This enables stores to support local causes with small donations each year. Find more information here.

Why do we do this?

- Increases motivation, morale and pride in M&S as an employer.
- Builds our customers perception that M&S is active in the local community and taking responsibility as well as doing the right thing.
- Builds relationships and improves communication between stores and the community.
- Develops and hones skills such as team work, communication and self-confidence.
- And because it helps our charities meet their goals and support the needs of their users, clients and the wider community.

CLOSE X

Calendar of Events 2013 >

Did you know?

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more >

Find out why we do this... >

CLOSE X



In Use: Taking Action

Volunteering - your day to make a difference



M&S offers every employee one paid day a year to volunteer at a charity or organisation of their choice. We believe we can all give something back to the communities we live in and want to give everyone a day to make a difference to a cause that is important to them. Local Volunteering Week is one week in quarter 4 when all stores and offices are encouraged to volunteer in their community on one day that week.

Employees can volunteer to support:

- A national corporate fundraising event (see [Fundraising](#)) or national opportunity advertised on [Plan A Website](#).
- A local charity. This could be your chosen local charity (see [Fundraising](#)) or another local organisation.
- A charity of their own choice, deciding themselves on the support they will provide, which is then agreed with their line manager.

Tips on making it work

- Appoint a volunteering champion/s (consider one per department) – make it someone's job!
- Volunteer in teams of two or more and help drive team building and bring together staff from the same department who may work different shifts.
- Build on your relationship with your chosen local charity (see [Fundraising](#)) to find ways to support them with volunteers.
- Talk to the local volunteer centre or CSV office to identify local charities and set up a store / regional database of opportunities and display for all staff to see.
- Encourage and promote participation in one of the four annual volunteering activities (See [Calendar](#)).
- Tell us about it – [record your volunteer day here](#) and send your stories and photos to employee.engagement@marksandspencer.com

Did you know?

M&S offers every employee one paid day a year to volunteer at a charity or organisation of their choice

Download the full **Volunteering Policy**



Find out why we do this...



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In Use: Taking Action

Volunteer













Charity Volunteering
Plan A: DOING THE RIGHT THING

Employees can

- A national charity
- A local charity
- A charity of their line manager's choice

Tips on making

- Appoint a volunteer champion
- Volunteer in your own department
- Build on your existing volunteers.
- Talk to the local authority for opportunities
- Encourage your staff
- Tell us about your ideas at employee.engagement@marksandspencer.com

Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
<div style="border: 1px solid #00a0c0; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: white; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>Plan A: Pride of M&S Award Nominations (29 April – 24 May)</p>  </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #00a0c0; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: #e0f7fa; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>Big Beach Clean Up (22 – 28)</p>  </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #00a0c0; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: #e0f7fa;"> <p>World Autism Awareness Day (2nd)</p> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid #00a0c0; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: white; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>Charity Challenge (6 – 28)</p>  </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #00a0c0; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: white; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>Bike 24 (21 – 22)</p>  </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #00a0c0; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: #e0f7fa; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>Fashion Targets Breast Cancer</p>  </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #00a0c0; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: #e0f7fa;"> <p>World Fairtrade Day (11th)</p> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid #00a0c0; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: white; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>World Environment Day (5th)</p> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid #00a0c0; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: #e0f7fa; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>Big Butterfly Count</p>  </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #00a0c0; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: #e0f7fa;"> <p>Disability Awareness Day (26th)</p> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid #00a0c0; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: #e0f7fa; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>Intl Youth Day (12th)</p> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid #00a0c0; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: white; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>Plan A: Pride of M&S Awards</p>  </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #00a0c0; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: #e0f7fa; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>Macmillan Worlds Biggest Coffee Morning</p>  </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #00a0c0; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: #e0f7fa;"> <p>Intl Day of Peace (21st)</p> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid #00a0c0; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: #e0f7fa; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>Breast Cancer Awareness Month</p>  </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #00a0c0; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: #e0f7fa;"> <p>Make a Difference Day (26th)</p> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid #00a0c0; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: #e0f7fa; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>Poppy Appeal</p>  </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #00a0c0; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: #e0f7fa;"> <p>National Stress Awareness Day (8th)</p> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid #00a0c0; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: #e0f7fa; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>World Volunteer Day (5th)</p> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid #00a0c0; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: white; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>Annual Weightloss Challenge Campaign</p>  </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #00a0c0; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: #e0f7fa; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>Woodland Trust Christmas Card recycling</p>  </div>

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In Use: Taking Action

Volunteering - your day to make a difference



Employees can volunteer at:

- A national corporation
- A local charity.
- A charity of their choice or their line manager's choice.

Tips on making it work:

- Appoint a volunteer coordinator.
- Volunteer in teams from the same department where possible.
- Build on your relationships with local charities and volunteers.
- Talk to the local community about volunteering opportunities and display for all staff to see.
- Encourage and promote participation on one of the 4 annual volunteering activities (see Calendar).
- Tell us about it – record your volunteer day here and send your stories and photos to employee.engagement@marksandspencer.com

M&S offers every employee one paid day a year to volunteer at a charity or organisation of their choice. We believe we can all give something back to the communities we live in and want to give everyone a day to make a difference to a cause that is important to them.

Why do we do this?

- Increases motivation, morale and pride in M&S as an employer.
- Builds our customers perception that M&S is active in the local community and taking responsibility as well as doing the right thing.
- Builds relationships and improves communication between stores and the community.
- Develops and hones skills such as team work, communication and self-confidence.
- Creates positive PR value for the business from local media.
- And because it helps our charities meet their goals and support the needs of their users, clients and the wider community.

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Did you know?

M&S offers every employee one paid day a year to volunteer at a charity or organisation of their choice.

Download the Charity Volunteering guide



Find out why we do this...



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In Use: Taking Action

Marks & Start

Marks & Start is our employability programme. It helps people facing barriers to employment into work. It started in 2004 and now supports over 1,000 people a year. It provides work experience placements in our stores and offices.

We work with four programme partners:



[Click here for the contact details of our four Marks & Start partners.](#)

Why do we do this?

Benefits to M&S:

- Increase employee engagement, motivation and pride in M&S and develops employee skills through 'buddying' and coaching.
- Attracts a diverse pool of individuals to the business and creates a bank of job-ready, experienced candidates.
- Creates positive local press coverage.
- Builds stronger relationships with local communities, opinion formers and government.

Benefits to participants:

- Breaks down barriers they face and provides stepping stones back to work.
- Provides insight into work and increases prospects of long-term work.
- Develops skills and improves confidence and self esteem whilst helping to overcome fears they may have about working.
- Improves CVs and provides opportunity for a reference on request.

“It has changed my life, I thought I would never get a job, that no one would employ me, Marks & Start has turned my life around.”

Dan Sim, Marks & Start participant, now employed full time in Widnes store

“As a store manager I have found the Marks & Start programme invaluable to me in that it's given me the opportunity to employ valuable members of my store team who I might not have necessarily identified through a structured recruitment process.”

Paul Ogundare, Store Manager, Chancery Lane

CLOSE X



In Use: Taking Action

Marks & Start

Marks & Start is our employability programme. It helps people facing barriers to employment into work. It started in 2004 and now supports...

We work with four...



Click here for the...

Why do we do this...

Benefits to M&S:

- Increase employability and coaching.
- Attracts a diverse range of people.
- Creates positive work environments.
- Builds stronger relationships.

Benefits to participants:

- Breaks down barriers to employment.
- Provides insight into work and increases prospects of long-term work.
- Develops skills and improves confidence and self esteem whilst helping to overcome fears they may have about working.
- Improves CVs and provides opportunity for a reference on request.

Marks & Start Partner Contacts

Business in the Community/BAOH:

Ben Hilton ben.hilton@bitc.org.uk www.bitc.org.uk

Prince's Trust:

Cathryn Langdon cathryn.langdon@princes-trust.org.uk www.princes-trust.org.uk

Remploy:

Carolyn Meredith carolyn.meredith@remploy.co.uk www.remploy.co.uk

Gingerbread:

Rachel Menezes rachel.menezes@gingerbread.org.uk www.gingerbread.org.uk

For information on how to run the programme see full guidelines at [Plan A>My Plan A>Marks & Start](#).

Full information on how to apply is at www.marksandspencer.com/careers and click on Marks & Start.

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“It has changed my life, I thought I would never get a job, that I would employ Marks & Start has changed my life around.”

... Marks & Start ... ant, now employed in Widnes store

... a store manager found the Marks & Start programme able to me in ... s given me the opportunity to employ the members of the store team ... might not have easily identified ... h a structured recruitment process.”

Paul Ogundare, Store Manager, Chancery Lane

CLOSE X



In Use: Taking Action

Young People

We believe we have a role to play in inspiring younger generations into retail as a career as well as giving them the experience necessary to obtain employment. We do this by:

1. Offering work experience placements:

- We offer 3,000 work experience placements each year.

Get involved:

Build relationships with your local schools and for full details see [People Guide](#)> [Recruitment](#)> [Retail](#)> [School Work Experience](#). See [Get Started](#) for information on contacting schools.

2. Promoting careers in retail, fashion and food industries:

- Retail Ambassador Programme: speaking in schools about retail as a career (ambassadors receive training and are added to the ambassador database so they can be matched with local event requests and put in touch with schools).
- Mentoring a young person.
- [Online food resources](#): inspiring young people to follow a career in the food industry.
- Fashion Retail Academy: fashion students spend time with buyers and merchandisers.

Get involved:

Become a Retail Ambassador or mentor: email employee.engagement@marksandspencer.com for information. Promote online resources to schools you have a relationship with.

3. Providing resources for use in schools:

- [School of Fish](#): online resources for primary children and teachers to learn about protecting fish.

“As a Retail Ambassador I use my experience to help young people understand the reality of retail including the careers that are available. I am proud to be inspiring the talent of the future to consider retail as an attractive and viable career option.”

Suzanne Burnett,
HRBP, M&S

Find out why we
do this... [>](#)

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In Use: Taking Action

Young People

We believe we have a role to play in inspiring younger generations into retail as a career as well as giving them the experience necessary to obtain employment. We do this by:

1. Offering work experience placements:

- We offer 3,000 work experience placements each year.

Get involved:

Build relationships with schools and colleges (via our Work Experience website).

2. Promoting careers:

- Retail Ambassadors are added to the curriculum (via our website with schools).
- Mentoring a young person (via our website with schools).
- Online food resources (via our website with schools).
- Fashion Retail resources (via our website with schools).

Get involved:

Become a Retail Ambassador or mentor: email employee.engagement@marksandspencer.com for information. Promote online resources to schools you have a relationship with.

3. Providing resources for use in schools:

- School of Fish: online resources for primary children and teachers to learn about protecting fish.

“As a Retail Ambassador I use my experience to help young people understand the reality of retail, including the challenges that are involved. I am proud to be inspiring the next generation of the future to see retail as an achievable and viable career option.”
 Burnett,
 &S

Why do we do this?

- Drives employee engagement as many have children and already have relationships with local schools / colleges.
- Builds our relationships with local communities.
- Source of potential future talent.
- Provides young people with ideas, skills and aspirations for their future employment.

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Find out why we do this... [>](#)

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In Use: Celebrating Success

Apply for the Plan A: Pride of M&S Awards

Each year the Plan A: Pride of M&S awards recognise and celebrate the commitment and dedication of our people through the business. If you think a colleague deserves this special recognition we would love to hear from you. The application period opens in May each year and details are available via MSW and the Plan A website.

Tell Others

Communicate to employees, customers, suppliers and others what you are doing:

- Generate publicity through local and regional press.
- Tell your stories through store notice boards, newsletters, websites, social media channels.
- Enter awards.

“ The Gingerbread programme with Marks and Spencer has afforded me the opportunity to get back to work after years of unemployment and I immediately felt like part of the team in my first two weeks. I wish something like this had come along years ago.”

Lynn Fosbrook, Marks & Start participant

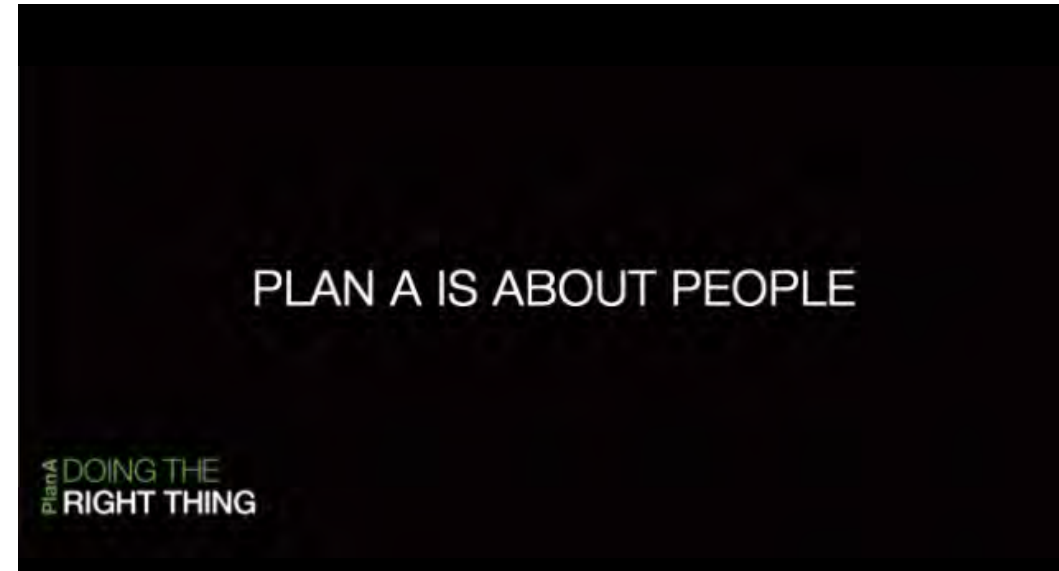
“ It's fantastic to know that we have got something right! My recruitment team take real pride in their work especially with the Marks & Start programme.”

Rona Hulbert, Store Manager, Glasgow Argyle Street



Making it count:

How to measure what difference you are making



PLAN A AWARDS PHOTOS



VIEW MORE



Any questions? See some useful contacts...



Get in touch with one of our PR contacts...



In Use: Celebrating Success

Apply for the Plan A Volunteer Awards

Each year the Plan A Volunteer awards recognise and celebrate the commitment and dedication of our people through the business. If you think a colleague deserves this special recognition we would love to hear from you. The awards are available via

Tell Others

Communicate what you are doing:

- Generate content
- Tell your story on social media
- Enter awards

Making it count:

To be able to successfully communicate what we do, we need to be able to tell our stories in an impactful way. Remember that you will want to collect both numerical information and anecdotes / quotes.

Measures you should be able to collect and talk about:

- Number of volunteer days / % of staff taking up their volunteer day
- Amount fundraised by event / for specific organisation
- Number of local organisations supported

Measures you could consider but which are harder to collect:

- Number of people supported as a result of your activities / fundraising
- What have the funds raised been used for?
- Number of people employed through Marks & Start and positive quotes / anecdotes
- Improvements in employee engagement / benefits to employees are a result of community engagement e.g. improved communication skills (reported by them or by their managers), improved motivation / commitment to M&S; reduction in turnover rates amongst staff involved in community activities

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Making it count:

How to measure what difference you are making



Any questions? See some useful contacts...



Get in touch with one of our PR contacts...



In Use: Celebrating Success

Plan A: Pride of M&S Awards Photos



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In Use: Celebrating Success

Apply for the Plan A Volunteer Awards

Each year the Plan A Volunteer awards recognise and celebrate the commitment and dedication of our people through the business. If you think a colleague deserves this special award, please nominate them from you. The application period of 2023 is now open and is available via MSW and the Plan A website.

Tell Others

Communicate to employees, customers and the community what you are doing:

- Generate publicity through local media
- Tell your stories through store newsletters and social media channels
- Enter awards

“The Gingerbread programme afforded me the opportunity to go on a placement for two weeks. I wish something like this was available for all. Lynn Fosbrook, Marks & Start participant”

“It's fantastic to know that we can be part of the Marks & Start programme.” Rona Hulbert, Store Manager, Glasgow

Any Questions? Useful contacts:

General enquiries:	Sophie Brooks sophie.brooks@marksandspencer.com 0208 718 3489
Charity partner enquiries:	Alexis Steadman alexis.steadman@marksandspencer.com 0208 718 2382 Jacquie Leonard jacquie.leonard@marksandspencer.com 0208 718 4920
PR enquiries:	Chris Kang Christopher.kang@marksandspencer.com 0208 718 1967
Matching Funds:	mandsapplications@cafonline.org
Government Affairs:	Antonia Newman antonia.newman@marksandspencer.com

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VIEW MORE >



Making it count:

How to measure what difference you are making >

Any questions? See some useful contacts... >

Get in touch with one of our PR contacts... >



In Use: Celebrating Success

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