

# 12 baskets



Loads of ways to share  
stuff better and  
help each other  
through the  
recession

***“All of them ate and were filled.  
When they collected the leftover pieces,  
there were 12 baskets.”***

***Luke 9:17***

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# Enough for All: A manifesto

*"There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold."  
Acts 4:35*

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Enough! We've had enough greed and selfishness.  
There is Enough for all!  
Wealth is not just in material things.  
We are wealthier together than we are on our own.  
Let's use what we have. Let's share what we have.  
We have wealth we don't know about yet.  
Sometimes, we increase our wealth by  
giving stuff away and opening our homes.  
Let's not wait for the politicians.  
We can do this ourselves!

*"All of them ate and were filled.  
When they collected the leftover pieces,  
there were 12 baskets."  
Luke 9:17*

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The recession is not just a crisis but also a time for us to explore new ways of doing things. We have had enough of an economic system built on greed and selfishness. There is another way.

There is a growing gap between rich and poor. This is not only immoral, it is bad for all of us, harming our health and happiness. But we can close that gap.

There is ENOUGH FOR ALL. Enough food, enough resources, enough money, enough homes, enough love, enough joy.

But there is only enough if we don't retreat into our shells. We must greet our neighbours, give what we can, and share our ideas, hopes, goods and skills.

Our churches and communities contain a wealth of skills and resources, including many we don't know about yet. We must rediscover and share them.

*"There is enough for everybody's need,  
but not enough for anybody's greed."*

*Mahatma Gandhi*

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# Offering housing and hospitality

*“Above all, love each other deeply,  
because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer  
hospitality to one another without grumbling.”*  
*1 Peter 4:8-9*

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Millions of people are being pushed to breaking point by housing costs. High housing costs are trapping people in bad housing, causing homelessness and wrecking people’s chances in life. Over two million households are spending more than half their income on housing costs. Nearly a quarter of the country’s households (six million) suffer from stress or depression worrying about their housing costs, and four million people admit it’s kept them awake at night. In the last year a quarter of all households have had to reduce their food shopping in order to meet housing costs, and over a third have cut back on family treats.

In the worst circumstances, this can lead to people losing their homes.

*Leanne was estranged from her mum, so she had nowhere else to go. She approached the Connexions service who gave her advice and referred her to Nightstop. Leanne stayed with Wyre Forest Nightstop for three nights, avoiding the possibility of sleeping rough, whilst the scheme coordinator worked with her to arrange more permanent accommodation and helped Leanne speak with her family.*

*Nightstop acted as an advocate for Leanne and accompanied her to interviews with the housing department, and the job centre assisted Leanne in completing forms and helped her to organise furniture. After her stay with Nightstop, Leanne was allocated a flat from a Registered Social Landlord and support was put in place to ensure she was able to sustain the tenancy.*

## Befriending schemes

People supported by community care services, including elderly people and people experiencing mental health problems, are often socially isolated and lonely. Befriending services have been developed by voluntary organisations to provide people in this situation with opportunities for social interaction and a sense of being part of a community. Is there a befriending scheme in your area? Find out through the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation ([www.mandbf.org.uk](http://www.mandbf.org.uk)), and invite the organisation running it to speak at a church event, or encourage members of your church or group to join the scheme and offer their support.

## Community land trusts

A Community land trust (CLT) is a way for the local community to democratically own land. It reduces the impact of rocketing land and property prices, and helps a community to develop sustainably. It's a good way for local residents and businesses to participate in planning and delivering redevelopment of an area. Is there a CLT in your area? Get involved, or invite the people responsible to speak to your group. Or you could explore whether your church or group could set up a CLT as a way of addressing local issues. Find out more about CLTs at [www.communitylandtrust.org.uk](http://www.communitylandtrust.org.uk)

## Housing cooperatives

Housing cooperatives are groups of people who live in and collectively manage their accommodation. Living in a housing cooperative can be a good way to get affordable housing for people on low incomes. Your local council can tell you whether there are any housing cooperatives in your area. If there are, you could invite them to get involved in your Action Week event.

If your church or group is interested in providing affordable housing you may be able to set up a housing cooperative yourself. You can get help and advice from the Confederation of Cooperative Housing UK at [www.cch.coop](http://www.cch.coop)

## Nightstop

Nightstop is the provision of emergency accommodation for single homeless 16–25-year-olds in the homes of approved volunteers. The host offers a bed for the night, meals, an opportunity for the young person to bathe and wash their clothes, and a friendly listening ear.

The approach is intended to keep the young person in a safe and friendly environment whilst allowing agencies time to look at the options available to the young person or even to use mediation services to help them to return to family where this is appropriate. Depaul Nightstop UK helps ensure that minimum standards are met. See [www.depaulnightstopuk.org](http://www.depaulnightstopuk.org) for more information and to find your nearest Nightstop.

## Surplus church property for social housing

One of the biggest causes of poverty, inequality and homelessness in the UK is the enormous shortage of affordable social housing. At the same time, many churches have buildings standing empty and unused. Many churches and projects are beginning to convert unneeded land or buildings into social housing. Housing Justice and Scottish Churches Housing Action have set up a special project, 'Faith in Affordable Housing', to help you do this. To find out more, visit [www.housingjustice.org.uk/FIAH](http://www.housingjustice.org.uk/FIAH)

## Starter packs

People moving out of homelessness often struggle because of a lack of financial resources to provide the basic household items that turn a house into a home. Some churches address this by providing starter packs with items such as cutlery, crockery, pots and pans, kitchen utensils, cleaning materials, personal hygiene items, towels, bedding and bed linen. To find out more about starter packs and organisations providing them, contact the Furniture Re-use Network in England or Wales (see [www.frn.org.uk](http://www.frn.org.uk)), or in Scotland, Scottish Churches Housing Action (see inside front cover).

If there is a starter pack scheme in your area, encourage members of your church or group to donate items for packs. If there isn't a scheme already, could you get involved in setting one up?

## Supported lodgings

Young people with no experience of living independently can flounder if they are put in a council or housing association tenancy – yet often they cannot stay at home, or become homeless.

Supported lodgings offer an alternative: volunteer hosts make a room in their own house available. This may be for a short time to bridge an emergency, or can be an arrangement for up to nine months or so. The hosts provide stability and a launchpad to more settled housing when the young person is ready. The support provided by the host is of a low-level nature, based around household activities such as cleaning and cooking. If the young person needs more intensive support, that can come from other organisations.

There's more information, including links with projects, at [www.communities.gov.uk/youthhomelessness/accommodation/supportedlodgings](http://www.communities.gov.uk/youthhomelessness/accommodation/supportedlodgings)

*“If many little people  
In many little places  
Do many little deeds  
They can change the face of the Earth.”  
African proverb*

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# Money makes the world go round

*"I tell you the truth, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." Matthew 19:23-24*

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In July last year the National Consumer Council claimed that up to five million of the poorest people in the UK have fallen below the radar of policy-makers, and become the country's 'invisible poor.' Many scour cheap supermarkets for cut-price deals, buy damaged goods and hang around market stalls as they close to pick up vegetables discarded by traders.

*Maureen's experience is typical of millions struggling to make ends meet as a result of the big rises in food and fuel bills over the past few months.*

*"Practically everything has gone up. My gas and electricity was £62 a month. It's now £90 a month. Water rates, they've gone up. Bus fares have risen eight times in the last couple of years. With us being on benefits, it's a hard thing to have to fork out for.*

*"I know it sounds awful, but I buy my milk wherever I can get it cheapest. If I've got to walk there, I'll walk. By the time the weekend comes around, if we haven't got it, we go without. I'm trying to get a holiday this year. I want to be able to go to the sea, in a tent with my two grandkids. Is that too much to ask?"*

## Credit unions

Credit unions offer basic banking, lending and savings services which are based in the local community and accessible by people on low incomes. The economic crisis has demonstrated that we badly need this kind of alternative to the big banks!

Many churches host their own credit unions, or act as access points for existing credit unions. Could you explore this possibility? If there is already a credit union in your area, you could invite them to take part in an event or tell your group about their work.

Find out more about credit unions, and identify your nearest credit union, through the Association of British Credit Unions: [www.abcul.org](http://www.abcul.org)

*Alison is a Surestart client with a toddler son. She has recently moved into a council house in north Seacroft, Leeds, from rented furnished accommodation, and is on benefits. As Alison had very little furniture for her new house she needed to buy some essentials, in particular a three-piece suite. Without any savings or access to mainstream credit facilities she couldn't shop around for a bargain or even a second-hand suite, and instead was forced to go to a local store, Brighthouse, to purchase her suite. The cost was £1,500 plus almost another £1,000 for charges, interest and delivery. The repayment was £45 per week.*

*Alison then discovered that the same suite she was buying at Brighthouse for £1,500 was only £600 in the Argos catalogue. With help from a Surestart worker, Leeds City credit union lent Alison the £600 she needed to buy her suite from Argos. She is now paying this back at £6 per week for her loan and is also managing to save £3 a week for herself and £1 a week for her toddler. Her mum has also now joined the credit union, and Alison is paying her back by depositing an extra £2 a week into her mum's account.*

## Ethical banking

UK consumers are turning to ethical banking, savings and investments following the financial crisis of the last 12 months. According to research by Triodos Bank, consumers are more likely to save with an ethical bank and see real potential in investing in the environmental and ethical sectors. This found that more than half of consumers are more likely to choose to save with an ethical bank than a year ago.

- 92 per cent want banks to have principles and proper ethical values. Over half (56%) want their banks to use the money they save to lend to ethical businesses.
- In the aftermath of the banking crisis, nearly half of consumers (49%) now think that ethical banks are a safer bet than mainstream banks.

The Just Housing Saver is an ethical and transparent savings account that enables you to contribute to the work of Housing Justice and provide a healthy return on your money. Open an account today and your savings will support Housing Justice's work, as Triodos Bank donates the equivalent of 0.25% of the average balance of funds held in your account each year to Housing Justice. See [www.triodos.co.uk](http://www.triodos.co.uk)

Other options for ethical banking and finance include the Cooperative Bank ([www.co-operativebank.co.uk](http://www.co-operativebank.co.uk)).

## Equitable utilities

It's hard to imagine that in the 21st Century, people in Britain are dying because they can't afford to heat their homes. But right now, up to three million British households are in fuel poverty and each winter, it's responsible for up to 30,000 premature deaths, making it second only to smoking as a preventable cause of death. Paradoxically, increased competition in the gas and electricity industry has actually increased fuel poverty, by forcing those who needed to budget very carefully by using a prepayment meter – who are less attractive customers to companies – to pay more.



EBICo, founded in 1998 by four Christians, seeks to buck this trend. It is the only UK supplier of gas and electricity to offer an equal tariff to all customers, regardless of payment method or how much they use. But to make the scheme work, EBICo needs customers who pay in a variety of ways. This is challenging, because the company's tariffs are not always the cheapest for customers who can pay by Direct Debit. According to EBICo founder, Phil Levermore, "We need people who are more concerned about issues of social equity than shaving an extra few pounds off their annual gas and electricity bill. We are offering them the opportunity to be directly involved in advancing social equity and protecting those with fewer advantages in life".

Help others fight fuel poverty by saving energy yourself. Visit [www.ebico.co.uk](http://www.ebico.co.uk)

## Local currencies

Several groups across the country have already established their own local currency - including Calderdale, Totnes, Lewes and most recently Brixton. Essentially a local currency is a voucher or token, redeemable for goods or services with local traders and anyone that wants to use it. It is complementary to sterling, and by using it, we can all help support local producers and traders and raise awareness of the importance of shopping locally.

Unlike sterling, local currencies can also be used as a tool to help reconnect and rebuild the once vibrant web of local businesses and traders in the community, by bringing people together.

In Lewes, local traders are running a prize draw whereby each Lewes Pound in circulation is effectively a lottery ticket. Three lucky serial numbers are selected at random once a month and the first person to hand in one of the winning numbers wins a great prize. Some local traders are offering discounts and deals for payment of goods in Lewes Pounds, and paying their own suppliers in Lewes Pounds, who in turn spend them with other Lewes businesses, thus creating a virtuous circle that benefits the town.

Could you get involved in setting up your own local currency? See [www.thelewepound.org](http://www.thelewepound.org).



# Enough Food for All

*"For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; I was naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you visited me; I was in prison and you came to me."*

*Matthew 25:35*

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Food poverty can be defined as the inability to obtain healthy affordable food. This may be because people lack shops in their area or have trouble reaching them. Other factors influencing food access are the availability of a range of healthy goods in local shops, income, transport, fear of crime, knowledge about what constitutes a healthy diet, and the skills to create healthy meals.

Due to this complex mix of factors, people on low incomes have the lowest intakes of fruit and vegetables and are far more likely to suffer from diet-related diseases such as cancer, diabetes, obesity and coronary heart disease. Food poverty can also be about an overabundance of 'junk' food as well as a lack of healthy food.

*"The woman at my local shop thinks I'm mad because I go every day and I buy packets of gingernuts - the own-brand gingernuts - because if I haven't been to my parents I'll eat a full packet of biscuits to fill me up, knowing that it's only gonna cost 38 pence. Rather than trying to have a meal or something like that I'll just eat a full packet of biscuits."*

*John, Stockton-on-Tees*

## Allotments

Allotments can be an excellent way for people on low incomes to save money by growing their own food. Are there allotments in your area? Do members of your church or group have allotments? Are there ways they could share surplus produce, or involve other people in working on their plot? Is there any unused land in your area that could be converted into allotments? Perhaps there is a campaign to do so already, or perhaps you could start one.

## Community composting

Composting green waste is a great way of recycling, and compost can be used to grow food, contributing to other schemes on this list. Community composting schemes offer a way for people who aren't able to compost their waste themselves (for example, people who don't have gardens) to put their waste to good use.

Could you encourage members of your church or group to use a community composting service, or even set one up yourself?

The Community Compost Network has a list of schemes, and a guide to setting up your own service. See [www.communitycompost.org](http://www.communitycompost.org)

## Community cafés

Many churches and community groups set up cafés as a way of offering something to the community around them. Run as a cooperative or a social enterprise, a café can raise funds for other work, and can also become a valuable meeting space for local community groups.

If there is a community café in your area, explore how you can offer it your support. If not, could your church or group help to set one up?

## Foodbanks

A foodbank gives boxes of nutritionally balanced food and support to people experiencing emotional or financial crisis. The Trussell Trust foodbank network is mobilising communities across the UK to meet the needs of their neighbours by setting up a foodbank in their own town.

The network mobilises churches to set up their own foodbanks, empowering them to reach out to their local communities. It provides training, support, an operating manual and access to the foodbank network's shared ideas and experience. In five years the network has launched over 30 foodbanks nationwide. See [www.trusselltrust.org](http://www.trusselltrust.org) for more information.



**FoodCoops.org**  
the home of food co-ops on the web

The main principle behind all community food co-ops is that by pooling their buying power and ordering food in bulk direct from suppliers, a group of people can buy good food at a more affordable price. Small food co-ops or buying groups work by collecting together everyone's orders in advance, whereas other models operate more like other food businesses in that they order the produce from suppliers and then sell it to their customers via stalls, bag or box schemes, mobile stores, shops or other types of outlet.

The main things food co-ops have in common are that they:

- are run by the community for the community
- aim to supply produce at more affordable prices than other outlets
- are run on a not-for-profit basis
- generally rely on the support of volunteers, either in the day-to day running or on the committee

See [www.foodcoops.org](http://www.foodcoops.org) for more information and to find the nearest food co-op to you.

## Windowsill vegetable and herb growing

Growing your own fruit and vegetables is good for the environment, saves money, and is emotionally satisfying. Even if you don't have a garden, you can still use windowboxes or put pots on your windowsills. Can you encourage members of your church or group to get planting? For advice on growing food at home, see [www.foodgloriousfood.org.uk](http://www.foodgloriousfood.org.uk)

## FareShare

FareShare is a national UK charity supporting communities to relieve food poverty. Fareshare provides quality food – surplus 'fit-for-purpose' product from the food and drink industry – to organisations working with disadvantaged people in the community. They also provide training and education in essential life skills and employability training, and promote the message that 'No Good Food Should Be Wasted'.

They have centres in many locations, and are looking for donations and volunteers. See [www.fareshare.org.uk](http://www.fareshare.org.uk) for more information.

## Landshare

This is an online service, which builds links between people who have plots of land and people who would like to grow their own vegetables, or help other people to do so.

If your church or project has some land available that could be used for growing food, why not sign up? You might find some willing volunteers to help you make the most of it. Visit <http://landshare.channel4.com> to find out more.



# Making best use of your assets

*“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*

*Luke 12:34*

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Is your glass half full or half empty? How good are you at reusing or recycling the assets you already have within your community? Even when the global economy has gone into reverse, and cash is tight, many people have access to unused – or underused – assets.

When we hear the word ‘asset’ we tend to think in terms of *physical* assets – buildings, property – and *financial* assets – money, savings and investments. But many of us also have what might be termed ‘personal assets’ – our health, skills, abilities and accumulated wisdom – what the Bible frequently describes as our ‘talents.’ And beyond this, we have access to ‘social assets’ – our friends and neighbours, our social networks (real as well as virtual), and the groups that we belong to – what some grandly describe as ‘social capital.’ Faith communities are fantastic repositories of social capital – but how good are we at mobilising these social assets for the benefit of the wider community?

To find out more about how to build up a better picture of the assets within individual households and the wider community, order the *Sustainable Livelihoods Handbook*, available from Church Action on Poverty for £5, or visit [www.abcdinstitute.org](http://www.abcdinstitute.org)

*Catherine, now in her fifties, lives on her own in rented accommodation. She previously owned a house which she was able to keep after her first marriage ended. But a short disastrous second marriage led to her having to give up the house and move into the rented house she is now in. Her health also deteriorated rapidly to the point where she has been unable to work for the last 15 years.*

*She now has very few possessions and is demoralised by being constantly in debt. Catherine has a strong social network including church links which she relies on for support in a variety of ways.*

## Car clubs

Car clubs and pools allow people to have access to a car when they need one, without all the expense of buying and maintaining their own vehicle. They also help the environment by reducing the number of cars on the road and journeys made.

There may be a local car club in your area already; perhaps they would like the chance to promote themselves through your group or church. Or you could look into creating a car club, or a lift-sharing service, from your church or project.

Find out more, and see a list of existing car clubs, at [www.carclubs.org.uk](http://www.carclubs.org.uk)

## Freecycle, Freegle and other swap schemes

Freecycle and Freegle are services operating in many parts of the world, which allow people to pass on unwanted but useable goods of all kinds, by offering them to other users of the service through email or a website. This reduces waste and allows people on low incomes to save money on furniture and other key items. See [www.freecycle.org.uk](http://www.freecycle.org.uk) or [www.ilovefreegle.org](http://www.ilovefreegle.org) to find out more.

Many areas have their own local swap schemes which operate in a similar way. Could you find out whether there's one in your area?

Your church or project could promote these services, or make use of them to dispose of unwanted equipment and get new stuff!

## Furniture re-use

Furniture re-use organisations operate in many communities, reducing poverty by helping households in need access furniture, white goods and other household items at affordable prices. They also often provide training and work placement opportunities for people who are socially excluded.

If there is a re-use scheme in your area already, why not invite them to take part in an event at your church or project? Could your members get involved, or does your church or group have furniture they don't need? If there isn't a scheme already, could your church or group get involved in setting one up?

Find out more from the Furniture Re-use Network at [www.frn.org.uk](http://www.frn.org.uk)

## LETS and local currencies

LETS (Local Exchange Transfer Systems) and other similar schemes exist in many communities already. They provide a way for people to exchange goods, services and their time using a kind of 'barter' system, rather than money. They can be invaluable for people on low incomes, and help to build community.

If you have a local LETS scheme, invite them to an event, and explore whether your church or group could become part of the system. Find out more about local currencies at [www.letslinkuk.net](http://www.letslinkuk.net)

## Resource pooling

Different groups and individuals in a community will have different skills, equipment and other assets. By creating a resource pool, you could make those assets available to other groups and people locally.

If you run a community assets audit event for Action Week, you could explore what resources groups in your area have to offer, and agree a way of making them generally available, so that all the groups support one another.



# Ethical and simple lifestyles

*“Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication.”*

*Leonardo DaVinci*

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More and more people are now attempting to reduce the impact that their lifestyle and purchases have on the environment and on other people. The Christian tradition also places great value on living simply, without excess and wasteful behaviour. For general information about ethical living, take a look at the *Ethical Consumer* magazine at [www.ethicalconsumer.org](http://www.ethicalconsumer.org)

## Just Church

Church Action on Poverty’s *Just Church* programme includes two modules, ‘Just Money’ and ‘Just Living’, which explore this theme. You can download them free from [www.justchurch.org.uk](http://www.justchurch.org.uk), or order them by calling 0161 236 9321.

## Livesimply

**Livesimply** is a Catholic initiative, grounded in Catholic Social Teaching, which encourages people to find ways of living simply, sustainably and in solidarity with people living in poverty (at home and overseas).

Find out more and get resources at [www.livesimply.org.uk](http://www.livesimply.org.uk).

## Generous

**Generous** is a project set up by the Greenbelt festival, which encourages people to take simple actions for justice in their daily lives. Find out more and sign up at [www.generous.org.uk](http://www.generous.org.uk)

## Transition initiatives

Many towns and villages are setting up transition initiatives as a communal way of responding to dwindling fuel supplies and climate change. The idea is to engage a significant proportion of the people in the community, and look at how the community can increase its resilience, reduce its dependence on fossil fuels, and drastically reduce carbon emissions. If you are based in a transition town, could your church or project become more involved in the initiative? If not, could you explore the idea, or even help to set up a local transition initiative? Visit [www.transitiontowns.org](http://www.transitiontowns.org) to find out more.

## Green Grannies

This is a fun series of videos from Oxfam, where members of the generation who had to 'make do and mend' during the War pass on their ideas for living better and saving money.

Visit [www.oxfam.org.uk/applications/blogs/goodideasvideo](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/applications/blogs/goodideasvideo) to get their advice.

*"It's amazing what a small group of committed people can accomplish to change the world. In fact, it's the only thing that ever has."*

*Margaret Mead*

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## Work and volunteering

*“They will build houses and live in them; they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit. No longer will they build a house only to have another live in it, or plant a vineyard only to have another eat its fruit, for my people will live as long as trees, and my chosen ones will enjoy to the fullest what they have produced.”*  
*Isaiah 65:21–22*

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Among the working-age population, one of the most damaging individual experiences is unemployment. Having been falling for more than a decade, unemployment has been rapidly increasing since the start of the economic crisis – and looks set to reach 3 million before the end of 2009.

As Bishop David Sheppard wrote in the foreword to the churches’ report *Unemployment and the Future of Work* at the end of the last major recession in 1997, “underneath these subjects ... lie despair, waste of God-given talents, contempt, hiding in the eyes from the pain of brothers and sisters.”

*Dave has been unemployed since 1998, and he feels his main problem is boredom. He’s done all the training that the Job Centre offer, and keeps applying for jobs in warehousing but they never get back to him. The training schemes that he has done in workplaces treated him like ‘cheap labour’. He lives with his mum, and feels he should be the main breadwinner, but can’t seem to get a job. He used to go to the snooker club sometimes, but hasn’t been since his stepbrother moved away. To get a better life, he is sure he needs a job.*

## Community Allowance

The Create consortium of organisations is aiming to establish a Community Allowance in the UK benefits system, to enable people to get out of the benefits trap and regenerate their communities. All that is needed is a change to the regulations.

The Community Allowance would allow community organisations to pay unemployed people to do work that strengthens their neighbourhood, without the people losing any benefits as a result (including housing and council tax benefit, and other benefits like free school meals and prescriptions). Participants would be allowed to register on the Community Allowance for a maximum of 52 weeks at a time.

Read about the Community Allowance in more detail at [www.communityallowance.org](http://www.communityallowance.org)

## Employment Resource Centres and Job Clubs

The Salvation Army run a number of Employment Resource Centres. The main focus of these is to help people on their way to employment and inform them of any opportunities that arise which could benefit them. Similarly, the Church Urban Fund is supporting local churches who wish to set up Job Clubs. Many such clubs were established in the last recession, to provide information about jobs and advice on improving skills, changing careers, writing CVs and preparing for interviews. They can be open for just a few hours a week – and many churches in town or city centres are ideal locations to set them up.

Download Church Urban Fund's guide to setting up a job club at <http://bit.ly/jobclubs>.

Groups of unemployed people in the USA have banded together to run 'Laid Off Camps' for a similar purpose. See <http://laidoffcamp.com>

*On a recent Monday evening in the basement of the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Brooklyn Heights, New York, a group of seven local residents gathered to discuss their faith – in the job market.*

*One woman, who had been laid off from a high-powered job at a local hedge fund, sought advice about the benefits of accepting part-*

*time work. Another participant, a man who had worked more than a decade in the technology industry, wondered aloud whether switching fields would be wise.*

*At the front of the room, Conrad Cardinale beamed like a proud father. That's because the group was his idea. Mr. Cardinale was a managing director at Bear Stearns until its collapse in 2008 and, after he was laid off, he set out to expand his professional networks. One strategy included asking his pastor for permission to lead networking sessions at the church. The pastor agreed, and a self-help group was born.*

*"I didn't know what to expect at first... it helps to talk with other people who find themselves in the same situation, you never know when you're going to meet someone who knows someone that might be able to help you land your next job."*

## Green New Deal



The global economy is facing a 'triple crunch': a combination of a credit-fuelled financial crisis, accelerating climate change and the looming peak in oil production. These three overlapping events threaten to develop into a perfect storm, the like of which has not been seen since the Great Depression. To help prevent this from happening, and to lay the foundations of the economic systems of the future, we need a Green New Deal. A Green New Deal would incorporate support for many of the ideas listed here, as well as major reform of the banks and international structures. You might have some interesting discussions in your church or group about all this. You can download helpful resources about the Green New Deal at [www.greennewdealgroup.org](http://www.greennewdealgroup.org)

## Social enterprise

Social enterprises are businesses driven by social and environmental objectives. Many commercial businesses would consider themselves to have social objectives, but social enterprises are distinctive because their social or environmental purpose is central to what they do. Rather than maximising shareholder value, their main aim is to generate profit to further their social and environmental goals.

Well known examples of social enterprises include *The Big Issue*, Jamie Oliver's restaurant Fifteen, and the fairtrade chocolate company Divine Chocolate. According to 2005–07 data from the Annual Survey of Small Business UK, there are approximately 62,000 social enterprises in the UK with a combined turnover of at least £27 billion. Social enterprises account for 5% of all businesses with employees, and contribute £8.4 billion per year to the UK economy. See [www.socialenterprise.org.uk](http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk)

*The Sandwich People is a Salvation Army enterprise run by staff and clients at Swindon's Booth House centre. The centre provides*

*accommodation and support for homeless men and women. Sandwich People delivers to local companies on a daily basis and has many satisfied customers. The bread is supplied fresh each day, and all salads and sandwiches are sold on the day they are made. The project has its own allotment and greenhouse, producing home-grown salad crops in season. Working for The Sandwich People provides individuals with an opportunity to get back into a regular routine, undertake training, socialise and develop work skills.* [www2.salvationarmy.org.uk/sandwichpeople](http://www2.salvationarmy.org.uk/sandwichpeople)



## Time banks and volunteering

Time banks are another new and exciting way for people to come together to help others and help themselves at the same time. Participants 'deposit' their time in the bank by giving practical help and support to others, and are able to 'withdraw' their time when they need someone else to do something for them.

Time banks measure and value all the different kinds of help and skills we can offer each other. In a time bank, everyone becomes both a giver and a receiver. Everyone's time is valued equally: one hour = one time credit. Participants can spend their time credits on the skills and support of other participants when they need a helping hand. See **[www.timebanking.org](http://www.timebanking.org)**

Volunteering is an excellent way of building community and supporting the valuable work of local projects. It recognises that people's time can be a valuable resource, just as much as their money or other assets.

You may already know about organisations in your area which use volunteers. They could use an event at your church or group to promote their work and recruit more volunteers. To find out more about volunteering opportunities in your area, visit **[www.volunteering.org.uk](http://www.volunteering.org.uk)**

Jesuit Volunteer Communities offer young people the chance to spend a year living simply in community, and volunteering in UK cities. Find out more at **[www.jvcbritain.org](http://www.jvcbritain.org)**



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