

# Vital Regeneration

*Shipshape speaks to Angela McConville, Chief Executive of Vital Regeneration – an award-winning charity that works with young people in some of London’s most disadvantaged neighbourhoods.*



## Learning, employment and enterprise

Vital Regeneration was formed in 2005 as a legacy of a major 1990s regeneration programme working to effect positive change in some of Westminster’s most disadvantaged housing estates. The charity works in the areas of learning, employment and enterprise with young people from primary school age up to 25.

A media training programme offered to young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) has been another particularly successful project, with more than 75% of participants achieving an accreditation and progressing to positive destinations including jobs, volunteering and college. “Some ten per cent of young people in London are classified as NEET,” explains Angela. “They’re excluded from the

Shipleys has helped Vital Regeneration as it has grown, acting as auditors and advisers. In 2005 the charity’s turnover was £0.5m with just eight members of staff. This has grown to £1.5m and more than 25 staff.

“Shipleys are very helpful and provide us with charity intelligence about the charity landscape – they tell us about trends they see happening in their charity portfolio. Simon Robinson, the Shipleys principal who looks after us, is good at suggesting events and awards that we should be going to and is good at networking. He puts us in touch with other relevant clients so that we can work on projects together.”

Like the majority of charities, Vital is facing challenging times as funding becomes harder to obtain. “This particularly applies to corporate funding as companies that have traditionally donated or provided sponsorship are feeling the squeeze,” explains Simon. “All this at a time when charities are facing increased governance and compliance burdens. We try and take some of these burdens away so that Vital can concentrate on what it does best, which is delivery of its projects.”

## “What we’re doing is making a real difference”

“We have a range of innovative programmes and a diverse portfolio of work, primarily in Westminster, but also in Brent and Hammersmith & Fulham,” explains Chief Executive Angela McConville, who led the team that established the charity in 2005.

Projects include an advice and brokerage service for young people seeking access to apprenticeship. “We provide young people with information on the types of apprenticeships available in London. We take a pastoral and holistic approach that takes them through the whole process, from finding the right employer, through to the application, interview and induction process, as well as offering after-care.”

world of education and work and they often have very poor numeracy and literacy levels. Music and events are a hook and through this we help improve their skills and employability.”

## Award-winning work

In 2008 Vital Regeneration was presented a UK Catalyst Award by Gordon Brown for its work with young people on using technology for social improvement.

“What we’re doing is making a real difference,” says Angela. “We benefit from a diverse blend of income – from trusts and foundations, to commissions from local authorities. We also do training and consultancy work.”

Visit [www.vitalregeneration.org](http://www.vitalregeneration.org) for more information.