



Alison Scully shows Billy Brookes and Jacob Smith, from Ripplevale School, around the workshop

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Mechanics' drive really

Youngsters can be inspired by car courses

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A place for disadvantaged teenagers to learn about car mechanics has been set up by a retired technician who wants to pass on his skills to future generations.

Carmel Motors Community Project, based in Deal Business Park, is a not-for-profit organisation run by Robbie Scully and his wife, Alison.

Mr Scully, who had a car repair centre in Hampstead, London, from 1977 until last year, started the project in January.

He said: "We've been building it up, finding out about funding and getting it all in place since then."

Bringing his collection of books, left over parts and even his old Carmel Motors sign with him, he created the base in Southwall Road.

He has funded it himself with a little help from new-found friends.

Deal companies including Mike's Electrical Supplies, which provided electrical goods for the unit at cost price, Jack Moor Electrical, which fitted the goods, Fabweld Metalworks and builder James Tritton all pitched in to support the venture.

Peter Hollingworth at PAHollingworth and Co donated two vehicles for the students to work on.

The aim is to give children who might have autism or behavioural difficulties an insight into the mechanical world, get them acquainted with a garage and teach them new skills.

Mr Scully said: "I was 13 when I did my training but I've been going into garages since I was 10. It was all I wanted to do."

"I'd like to help disadvantaged people and give them an opportunity."

"There is hope for them. It's not all about being academic, it's about being hands-on."

"It's to give them one day a week tuition as an incentive to carry on at school."

"Even if they don't become a mechanic, they'll have some skills, general experience and a record of achievement."

The project is aimed at 14 to 18-year-olds, the sessions are three hours long and Mr Scully will work to the pace of each stu-

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dent. Relationships have already been formed with Ripplevale School and Portal House, in St Margaret's, with children visiting on a Friday.

At the end of the course the students are given an introduction to car maintenance certificate.

However, Mr Scully is working to gain a formal accreditation.

Last week, Carmel Motors Community Project was awarded an £800 grant from Deal Town Council, which will pay for two students for a course of six sessions.

Mayor of Deal Cllr Adrian Friend, deputy mayor Cllr Wayne Elliott and Cllr Trevor Bond visited the workshop on Friday to see where the money will be spent.

They observed as one teenager took apart an engine and Mason

Cunningham, 15, finished off a service. Chairman of the finance committee Cllr Trevor Bond said: "We like to try and help as many people in the Deal area as we can. "This was the first time they had ever approached us for a grant."

"It's good to be able to help new people get their ideas off the ground."

"They are putting something back into the local community. It's a good opportunity to support the youth and also to give them a skill."

Cllr Wayne Elliott added: "We consider this a first class opportunity for young people."

One student has already completed a six-week course with Mr Scully and has been accepted onto a mechanics course at a college in Broadstairs.

Mr Scully said: "It's my privilege to be able to do this."

"Hearing students say they would like to continue with it at college makes it all worthwhile."

"If I get one student out of 100 to become a technician, that is enough for me."

Call 01304 365812 or 07941 202053, or email r.scully@gmail.com to find out more. Carmel Motors Community Project is on Facebook.