



» **FAST FORWARD**
YOUR SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

CASE STUDY

WORKING WITH
DEVELOPMENT IN
SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

Business Support
Sustainability
Consultancy
Social Value
Asset Transfer

KEY FACTS

MISSION

To enable the local community to thrive and reach their full potential in life

SERVICES

Benefits and money advice; employment support and training; housing advice; food bank; crisis fund; local health initiatives; advocacy; reuse social enterprise; other services responding to local need.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Develop the business case for community asset transfer of Castle Vale Library from local authority control

ESTABLISHED

1994

LEGAL STRUCTURE

Registered Charity and Company Limited by Guarantee

www.cvtra.org.uk

Castle Vale Tenants & Residents Alliance



Castle Vale Tenants and Residents Alliance (CVTRA) is a resident-led, not-for-profit organisation providing advice and support to around 30,000 residents each year in some of the most excluded communities in East Birmingham.

CVTRA approached Development in Social Enterprise with an exciting opportunity to develop the business case for community asset transfer of Castle Vale Library from local authority control - a first for Birmingham.

"It's no secret that library services everywhere are under pressure as local authorities try to make savings in the face of budget cuts. Birmingham is no exception and in early 2014 we could foresee the closure of our own Castle Vale Library at Spitfire House, where we are co-located.

"In areas like Castle Vale, libraries are an essential amenity so we started to have honest conversations with the council to find a solution. Although we had no experience whatsoever of running a library, we put forward the idea of bringing it into community ownership - a win-win situation for all parties. »



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» "Our mindset was 'It's never been done before but there's always a first' and that's how the council and other partners felt too. It was the start of an incredible campaign for which we gained widespread support and encouragement from residents, senior politicians, officers, local community groups and funders."

CVTRA proceeded to successfully submit a grant application to the Social Investment Business and secured the funds needed to work up the business case for the asset transfer proposal.

"The business plan was necessary to demonstrate our ability to take on the library and transform it into a viable community enterprise. Having worked with Development in Social Enterprise previously we had complete trust in their expertise and skills to guide us through this complex process and develop a solid business case which would stand up to due diligence.

"DISE began by undertaking detailed stakeholder consultation to help us arrive

at a shared vision for the library which involved facilitating workshops, analysing community and market research and using the findings to write the business and financial plan, working very closely with us every step of the way.

"It was a highly collaborative process which gave us a business plan that passed in-depth scrutiny by the Council. We particularly valued the after care support from DISE as they continued to attend critical meetings long after they were contracted to do so. This level of commitment from consultants is rare to find."

The good news came in September 2014, within just six months of the initial discussions to protect the service. "The people of Castle Vale deserve a good library service and we are going to turn it into the best library in Birmingham."

The new 'Tyburn Community Library' will develop into a vibrant community centre and incorporate a community café, clubs, groups and the hire of facilities. ■



Development in Social Enterprise CIC
We provide bespoke business support and consultancy services for social enterprises, charities, voluntary organisations and start-ups.

Our mission is simple.
Do Good Business and Create Social Value

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