



» **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 reduce poverty particularly for social housing tenants

SERVICES

- Affordable re-used furniture for social housing tenants
- Training, volunteer opportunities and employment for local residents

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

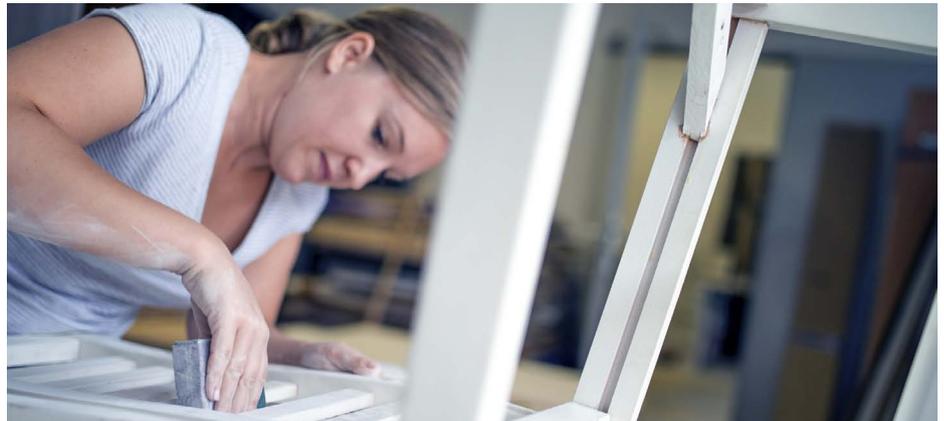
Feasibility study, partner engagement and business planning

ESTABLISHED

1994

www.affinitysutton.com

Affinity Sutton



Affinity Sutton is one of the largest independent providers of affordable housing in England with over 100,000 residents living in 57,000 properties across 122 local authorities from Newcastle-upon-Tyne to Plymouth.

Within their Alum Rock residential community, Affinity Sutton has a void workshop that they wish to utilise for the benefit of residents, local community, and the wider social housing tenants across the Birmingham area.

A group of interested stakeholders were brought together to explore the potential for establishing Birmingham Reuse and Social Housing (BRASH) - an initiative focusing on furniture reuse and recycling, and uniquely, engaging with a number of social housing providers as part of their voids process.

Development in Social Enterprise (DISE) and Social Enterprise West Midlands were appointed to refresh an earlier feasibility study exploring these options and work with interested parties to progress the idea which aimed to provide affordable furnishing options for vulnerable and financially excluded individuals... »

“The feasibility study and business plan have enabled the right conversations with the right people to take place.”

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» ...and families moving into social housing, create training and employment opportunities locally, and reduce void clearance costs for social housing providers.

The study was informed by visits to existing reuse and recycling enterprises to uncover the challenges, success factors and gather organisational and logistical knowledge.

Wider consultation served to quantify the demand for the proposed service. Housing providers identified their current arrangements for recycling of goods, number of voids properties managed, purchase of furniture starter packs and interest in the partnership opportunity.

Findings were presented to the BRASH stakeholder group which enabled an open dialogue as to the best way forward in terms of achieving stated objectives, financial viability, partnership development, appropriate service model and likely route to market.

An 'Information to Market' document was also issued to those who had participated in the consultation research, inviting expressions of interest for the proposed service which led to new conversations with a wide range of commercial and social enterprise partners.

This approach taken by DISE and SEWM has enabled the "right conversations with the right people" to take place and Affinity Sutton are now in discussions with a range of Birmingham wide organisations to carry BRASH forward.

The final development plan showed that by year three BRASH would create nine full time jobs with void service delivery savings of around £27,000 in year one and £83,000 per annum in subsequent years. An estimated 900 families would benefit from low cost furniture solutions by year three. Furthermore, partner housing organisations could reduce void furniture to landfill by 30% over three years. ■



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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YOUR SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

0121 667 6810

info@disecic.org

🐦 @Development_SE

www.disecic.org