



Community Enterprise
forsuccess

BULLETIN

Celebrating Your Success

Case studies and entrepreneur profiles celebrating the type and range of work supported by the Community Enterprise for Success programme in Solihull



Community Enterprise for Success is a programme to help voluntary organisations and community groups in Solihull who are looking to grow and develop. Part funded by ERDF and Solihull Council | <http://communityenterprise-solihull.org>



EUROPEAN UNION
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Development Fund 2007-13

Celebrating Your Success



Welcome to our celebration of the success of Solihull's Community Enterprise for Success (CEFS) programme, a three year (Jan 2012-Mar 2015) ERDF and Solihull Council funded package of business development support for voluntary and community sector organisations.

The case studies captured in this booklet give you a glimpse into the programme and the benefits it has brought to Solihull's Community and Social Enterprise Sector. We hope you enjoy reading them, as we have enjoyed compiling them.

"You can count the number of social enterprises (a business that trades to generate profit and then ploughs the profit back into its social aim) in Solihull on one hand," that's what we were told when we first started work on the CEFS programme back in January 2012. At that time there were four organisations in the borough identifying themselves as social enterprises, five if you include Development in Social Enterprise CIC.

There are now more than 30 organisations in Solihull who consider themselves to be social enterprises and many of them are gaining significant

regional and national recognition, winning prestigious awards as well as new business. Many are extending their services into neighbouring areas bringing further resources and employment opportunities into Solihull to benefit our communities.

Our evaluation survey (which received a 20% response rate) noted that respondents' turnovers had increased by a staggering £398,000. If the same growth is true of all of the organisations who benefited this would amount to nearly £2m in increased income. Likewise the survey noted an increase in staff of 22 and six volunteers, again if the same levels are true across the programme this amounts to 110 new jobs and 30 volunteer opportunities created.

In addition, more than 100 voluntary and community organisations have benefited from other support (training, seminars, masterclasses, networking, brokerage and online resources) offered through the programme, helping them become more enterprising (earning more income and relying less on grants).

We've been privileged to share our expertise and work with some brilliant social entrepreneurs and enterprises in Solihull over the past three years helping them to achieve their goals. These case studies show the diversity, vibrancy and resilience of the sector and long may they continue to grow and provide valuable services for people like you and me.

Dave Lane, Development in Social Enterprise | www.disecic.org

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Community Enterprise for Success is funded by



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Signpost Inclusion

For children and young people with additional needs



Community Enterprise for Success assisted Signpost Inclusion with business development, financial planning and marketing support.

Signpost Inclusion was set up as a community interest company in 2011 to provide support, training and resources to families and professionals caring for children and young people with learning difficulties and additional needs.

"We are the first to admit that we needed help to become more business savvy in order to sustain our organisation and continue delivering services that many Solihull families rely on. Running a business is not something that comes naturally to us, so the Community Enterprise for Success programme was spot on for our needs," says Tony Ibbotson,

Project Lead at Signpost Inclusion.

"Initially we had a meeting with a social enterprise business adviser who really took the time to get to know us and understand our strengths before pin-pointing where we needed help. There wasn't a ready-made plan, it was all bespoke support, designed to meet our specific requirements.

"We started by working together on business development and financial forecasts so that we could see the bigger picture and lay the foundations for a different way of working to achieve our social purpose – setting a mindset shift in motion. Each meeting gave us renewed enthusiasm and energy.

"After business planning, we were mentored by a marketing specialist who worked with us to identify the key customers for each of our services. This made us realise we were trying to spread ourselves too thinly – we really needed to focus on our core support."

The past year has been a steep learning curve but things are starting to click into place, says Tony: "The financial planning is coming to fruition and we're embracing change with greater confidence; we're definitely more business focused. We also have a much better understanding of marketing and have found ourselves doing more market research – asking for customer input before we submit proposals and funding applications."

"We've launched a new website, started holding our own fundraising events for a more diverse revenue mix, and improved our database resulting in more targeted email communications. A good by-product of the support has been the connections we've made with the social enterprise community

which has been great for meeting like-minded people and raising our profile."

"Signpost Inclusion is in a much stronger position as a result of the help we've received. We've been successful with six funding bids, notably winning four years worth of funding from Children in Need to support families through adventure activities and working with Awards for All on their pilot scheme to trial a new way of funding. This funding has enabled us to work with hundreds of families, supporting them to improve confidence, communication skills and wellbeing plus increasing social opportunities for children and young people with additional needs, also benefiting their siblings and parents."

“Thanks for your support at the beginning of this process, we may not be where we are today without your help.”

Tony Ibbotson, Signpost Inclusion

Key facts

Mission: To benefit the lives of children and young people with additional needs.

Services: Parent to parent support groups and drop in sessions, Early Support training and capacity building, resource library with books and sensory resources, signposting to relevant services.

Established: 2011

Legal structure: Community Interest Company

Business challenge: To become more business focused without negatively impacting on service users.

i <http://signpostinclusion.org.uk>

Gro-Organic CIC

Making spaces green and transforming food culture by inspiring everyone to 'Have a Gro'



Community Enterprise for Success assisted Gro-Organic CIC with Legal Structures and Company Formation, Business and Financial Planning, Personal Mentoring and Identifying Outcomes.

When father and daughter team, Steve and Sarah Gill, began realising their dream of helping local people to live healthy and sustainable lifestyles, both were unaware that their venture was a social enterprise in the making.

"From the outset our aim was to support people of all ages and abilities to understand where their food comes from and what healthy living is. In addition, we wanted to support our community by helping them transform under-utilised areas of land into vibrant food growing or communal gardens. Our food education programme - 'Wellies2Bellies' - provides dynamic food growing experiences which enhance land and provide community benefits,"

says Sarah. "We knew that our legal structure didn't reflect the social purpose of our business and needed advice on what we should do," she explains.

Steve and Sarah were able to access support under the Community Enterprise for Success programme delivered by local business advice experts. "What we really valued was the time taken by our adviser to understand what we do inside out, asking challenging questions about our future ambitions and helping us to focus our ideas into three work streams - Schools, NEETs and Community Work," adds Steve.

Our adviser recommended that Gro-Organic change its structure from a Company Ltd by Shares to a Community Interest Company, a common legal form

for social enterprises. This would reflect the social purpose of the business and open up finance and funding opportunities as well as networks to make important connections with VCS organisations, corporates, schools and health bodies.

"We'd both had careers in the private sector so we knew about business, marketing and sales, but were new to the VCS. Mentoring helped us to understand the sector locally and be in the right place at the right time. For example, Gro-Organic pitched at a Dragon's Den style competition for Solihull community enterprises, which produced three really good contacts for us," says Steve.

Steve and Sarah were advised on

business planning, financial forecasts and assisted to identify the impacts and outcomes of their work - knowledge and skills that have resulted in Gro-Organic securing over £90,000 of funding for community work.

"Gro-Organic has come so far this year. We've met our financial targets, gained valuable contacts and business partners, taken on our first employee, and have a pool of 15 fully trained and CRB checked volunteers. We owe a great deal to the business support we've received which has not only developed our skills and confidence, but given Gro-Organic a great springboard for the future."

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Sarah Gill, Gro-Organic CIC

Key facts

Mission: Through the provision of food, reach disadvantaged and vulnerable communities, help reduce disengagement and encourage individuals to make a positive contribution to their local community.

Services: Regeneration and land reclamation; Support and guidance in food growing; Design and construction of outdoor classrooms; Raised garden beds; Landscaping and ground works; Voluntary opportunities and group working; Community space initiatives; Development of personal and horticulture skills.

Established: 2011

Legal structure: Community Interest Company

Business challenge: Adopting an appropriate legal structure, business planning and financial forecasting.

i www.gro-organic.co.uk

A moment with

Neil Roberts, Three Trees

Our 'A moment with' feature is all about getting to know local entrepreneurs who are helping to develop North Solihull. Say hello to Reverend Neil Roberts.

Where did you grow up?

To my shame, Weston-super-Mare. I moved to Chelmsley Wood about 20 years ago to work in the Baptist Church. I was drawn by the sense of community and commitment to their area that they had. I've found it to be a great place to live and work, with lots of potential.

What was your first job?

My first proper job was making cakes at a Hales Trent factory in Clevedon. I recommend everyone bakes their own cakes. My first Saturday job as a teenager was in a joke shop, strangely similar to my current work.

What drives you to make a difference?

I suppose it's a sense of justice and that the world can be a better place. I think a belief that people are important and valuable underlies that.



© Seven Star Photography

"My first Saturday job as a teenager was in a joke shop, strangely similar to my current work."

What is the most valuable lesson you have learnt so far?

Keep going and don't accept the status quo, even if that means you upset one or two people. A lot of projects come and go, and there are also a few people resistant to change, often to protect their own interests. But working together with others, sticking with it and being determined, will get you there in the end.

What's been your biggest achievement?

Keeping (most of) my hair for this long! Serious answer - the strength and unity that is here is our biggest achievement, helping people believe in themselves and surprising themselves

with what they can do together.

What are your goals for the year ahead?

I'm still trying to learn the banjo, I'd also like to get the community centre refurbishment completed and it filling up with even more community life and activity.

Who do you admire most?

Crikey, these are serious questions. I'm not big on hero worship, my heroes are the people around here who get on with stuff, many of them in the face of great personal difficulties. They don't get any recognition yet they make huge differences to the lives of others. I won't name them here, but I could give you a list.

What is your motto in life?

This is where I get all spiritual on you, 'Act justly. Love constantly. Walk humbly with God.'

How would you describe yourself in 5 words?

I wouldn't.

About Three Trees

- Three Trees is the new name for The Baptist Church Centre in Chelmsley Wood
- The Centre is undergoing a major refurbishment and now has a bright and welcoming new entrance, community cafe, meeting rooms, new toilets and landscaped gardens.
- Three Trees is attracting interest from local groups, start-ups and the new cafe 'Olive Branch Kitchen' is a community business! Open Mon-Fri, 8am - 3pm.

Next time you're in Chelmsley Wood, pop into Three Trees, have a drink or bite to eat in the cafe, and say hello to Neil.



Three Trees
The Baptist Church Centre
Heddingham grove
Chelmsley Wood
B37 7TP

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cwbc.office@blueyonder.co.uk
www.threetreescentre.org.uk

Renewal Christian Centre

A family church at the heart of the community

Having secured planning permission to develop a new multi-purpose sports and leisure complex adjacent to its existing site on Lode Lane, the Renewal Christian Centre has been carefully planning the conversion of the industrial unit acquired for the new facility.

David Russell, Elder and Trustee at the Renewal Christian Centre is heavily involved in the project: "Whilst preliminary work had been done by Church 'working groups' to look at potential users, funding options and project management, it became clear that a more comprehensive market research exercise was required.

"The opportunity for some assistance and advice was made available through the Community Enterprise for Success programme. A business adviser made a short presentation to our Trustee Board which included outlining the potential benefits of adopting a social enterprise approach for future sustainability and subsequently joined our market research sub-group, offering his independent view and expertise.

"We were advised on consultation and survey work and assisted with the drafting of questionnaires which were used during extensive research carried out amongst local schools, residential estates, housing association tenants, youth groups, parent and toddler groups and Renewal partners.

"Under the programme we were able to access support to analyse the survey data and a feasibility exercise was

undertaken for an indoor skate park. It was an excellent piece of work which utilised existing case studies and highlighted the range of issues surrounding viability, including identifying potential alternatives."

The market research has helped David and his colleagues identify key areas for further testing and analysis:

- Pool, table tennis and traditional indoor sports
- Fitness, Gym and Dance facilities/ activities
- 5 a side football
- Skate park
- Lode Health pupils taking part in activities.

"We finished the market research study by holding a conference of all the working groups along with the Trustees, which was supported by our adviser - dealing very comprehensively with questions, providing summary papers and guiding on next steps.

"Moving forward, the research will add significant value to funding applications for the Renewal Activity Centre, evidencing need and providing information for the Trustees to make investment decisions.

"The work has helped the Trustees to more clearly define the use of the new facility, the importance of the link to our Family Centre and inform strategic decisions concerning the viability of the indoor skate park and other matters."



“Moving forward, the research will add significant value to funding applications for the Renewal Activity Centre, evidencing need and providing information for the Trustees to make investment decisions.”

David Russell, Elder and Trustee, Renewal Christian Centre

Key facts

Mission: Renewal Christian Centre is a Church in the heart of the nation, reaching our community and our world.

Services: The Renewal Christian Centre is home to a Free Methodist Church, Renewal Family Centre, Wilsdon's Coffee Shop, Renewal Conference Centre, Helping Hands food bank, a wide range of sports and leisure activities and many other community services welcoming a congregation of 2,000 people each week. The Renewal Activity Centre is under development.

Established: 1972

Legal structure: Registered Charity and Company Ltd by Guarantee

Business challenge: Undertake detailed market research for the Renewal Activity Centre and feasibility analysis for an indoor skate park.

i www.renewalcc.com

Fit4Freedom CIC

Road to recovery: improved health and wellbeing
for socially marginalised groups



Coming from a background of substance misuse, **Chloe Grenfell** set up **Fit4Freedom CIC** as a way of helping others change their lives through physical exercise and pursuing healthy and positive lifestyles.

"Discovering fitness was the turning point for me and after volunteering for SIAS (Solihull Integrated Addiction Services), the idea for Fit4Freedom started to develop. I wanted to reach out to vulnerable people - those in drug and alcohol recovery and other excluded groups such as ex-offenders, people with mental health problems, women in refuge, and people living with HIV/AIDS."

Chloe had qualified as a fitness instructor and was already running classes for SIAS when she was

introduced to the Community Enterprise for Success (CEFS) programme.

"My business adviser got the idea straightaway. I had been hitting brick walls so it was great to have someone who believed that Fit4Freedom could work and was willing to help me make it happen. We sat down together and sketched the beginnings of a business plan and he guided me through the company registration process. He made everything manageable, doable and less intimidating."

CEFS soon identified a partnership opportunity with Adullam Homes Housing Association, a specialist housing provider for vulnerable and excluded people.

"Adullam Homes had vacant studio space at their flagship site Rowans Court in Birmingham - it was the break I had

been waiting for. My adviser brokered the opportunity for me to go and meet with the Head of Funding, Bob Candlin, and discuss ideas for developing the space as a community gym to promote more active and healthy lifestyles.

"I knew nothing about business and financial projections so CEFS helped me write the proposal and negotiate a good deal on the space."

A successful bid to Awards for All enabled Adullam Homes to purchase the gym equipment, which it provided to Fit4Freedom on lease for one year with an option to extend. In addition to classes and instruction for residents, Chloe is also in the process of developing a six week programme which will be marketed to local DAATs (Drug and Alcohol Action Teams), key workers, community nurses, social workers,

GPs, rehab and aftercare clinics.

"By showing the relationship between fitness and recovery the plan is that agencies will refer to the programme and offer clients alternative and complementary choices which ultimately result in better outcomes for service users. The sessions will promote positive rather than destructive relationships by associating with healthier people, building a new social circle; all these small changes add up. I'm really pleased to have secured my first contract with Summer Hill Terrace aftercare team.

"In the long term the plan is that anyone who has gone through the process can be trained and come on board as a volunteer, gain a qualification and continue to move forward with their lives. Adullam Homes can even see franchise and replication possibilities for the gym."

“My business adviser got the idea straightaway. I had been hitting brick walls so it was great to have someone who believed that Fit4Freedom could work and was willing to help me make it happen.”

Chloe Grenfell, Fit4Freedom CIC

Key facts

Mission: To introduce the benefits of fitness and healthy lifestyle to socially marginalised groups, helping them to improve their self-esteem and support on-going recovery.

Services:

- Fitness instruction and classes for Adullam Homes residents
- Six week fitness and healthy lifestyle programme
- Affordable gym and classes open to the community / groups

Established: 2013

Legal structure: Community Interest Company

Business challenge: Converting the business idea into a trading social enterprise

i chloe_anon@hotmail.com

Transform West Midlands

Transforming properties, transforming lives

With youth unemployment at a record high, the findings of 'I AM ONE IN A MILLION', a study* documenting the experiences of unemployed young people from across the country, was the catalyst for a new property development social enterprise, Transform West Midlands.

"Young people are having a tough time right now, paying for mistakes not of their making and it's not fair. I wanted to do something real to address this situation in our community," says Reverend Stephen Willey.

"The bottom line is young people need jobs. The Methodist District Synod had set up a solidarity fund of £2,000 for youth employment projects which was largely unused. We discussed using the funds to develop a business that could create jobs and give young people a sense of value."

Stephen hit upon an idea to refurbish and sell properties in areas of urban deprivation, a venture that would be run primarily by young people previously under-employed or unemployed and overseen by experienced professionals. Unsure of whether the concept could work, Stephen was introduced to Dave Lane, a business adviser for the Community Enterprise for Success (CEFS) programme.

"Dave was very encouraging and gave me the confidence to move forward with the idea and bring together a steering group of likeminded organisations - Wates Construction, New World Solar,



Community Enterprise for Success assisted Transform West Midlands with Legal Structures, Company Formation and Business Planning.

SUSTAiN and Jericho Foundation - who shared my enthusiasm for the project."

In 2012, CEFS helped Transform West Midlands to register as a Community Interest Company with an asset lock on all profits, which can be reinvested into the company or used to enhance communities of benefit. The asset lock was seen as integral to the business model – both in terms of improving local housing stock (using green technologies where practicable) and adding value to communities by creating work for young adults at a critical time in their development so they can establish themselves as confident and resourceful members of society.

The social enterprise is now in the process of raising investment of £100k to purchase and refurbish its first property for sale. "We've secured around £55,000 so far and are hoping to find the rest to start trading very soon," says Stephen.

Apprenticeships, training opportunities and management positions will all be created for and by young people. "So far we have employed one young person to support the start-up phase and currently have another seconded from New World Solar, Jack Clemson 25, for one day a week." Jack has been working on the business plan with help from the CEFS programme.

"It's been an empowering experience and a great opportunity to try out new things and put some of the theory

into practice. I feel it's important that businesses conduct themselves in a way that benefits the community and that's what's inspired me to get involved with Transform West Midlands," says Jack.

"It's about getting momentum, people are busy and the support from CEFS has helped us to be realistic and put the foundations in place for a strong business. From the beginning there was a 'can-do' attitude which has helped us to keep the dream alive," adds Stephen.

Community Enterprise for Success has helped us to be realistic and put the foundations in place for a strong business. From the beginning there was a 'can-do' attitude which has helped us to keep the dream alive."

Reverend Stephen Willey, Transform West Midlands

*I AM ONE IN A MILLION was undertaken by Church Urban Fund and Frontier Youth Trust on behalf of Churches Together for England (March 2012)
<http://www.cuf.org.uk/research/one-in-a-million>

Key facts

Mission: To transform unwanted and derelict properties to create community wealth and employment for those who are disadvantaged

Services:

- Improve local properties and community spaces
- Develop local young people's skills
- Create employment opportunities for young people
- Invest in community assets
- Widen access to local housing

Established: 2012

Legal structure: Community Interest Company

Business challenge: To translate the vision for Transform West Midlands into a viable business model.

i parvin@transformwm.org.uk

A moment with...

Paul Webb, WBC Fit Club CIC



Paul Webb (left) putting celebrity chef Glynn Purnell through his paces

Did you know there is a boxing gym in the basement of Robbins Butchers in Chelmsley Wood Shopping Centre? Neither did we until we started working with professional boxing instructor Paul Webb, founder of WBC Fit Club CIC.

Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Cotteridge, Birmingham. I had no computers or gadgets to keep me indoors, so I enjoyed a very fun and energetic childhood. I believe active children do better at school - one of the reasons I started WBC Fit Club.

What was your first job?

My first job was as an apprentice mechanic. I loved cars and boxing as

a young lad and joined Birmingham City Amateur Boxing Club. I was always interested in the training side. Later on in life I was granted a licence as a professional boxing coach and eventually set up WBC Fight Club for adults, and more recently, WBC Fit Club CIC for kids.

What drives you to make a difference?

I want to show everyone how easy it is to improve their health and general fitness by making small changes. Also, to offer an opportunity to teach others, so that when they leave the gym they can help friends and family be active and introduce the sport to a wider audience.

What is the most valuable lesson you have learnt so far?

To be able to help others is a blessing. A gift in life.

What's been your biggest achievement?

Turning my passion for boxing into a career has had a massive impact on my life and on the people around me.

What are your goals for the year ahead?

To reach out to more people with my boxing programme. Whether it be to support other community groups or grow my current classes into other areas. I want to show everyone what a positive difference my growing team can make.

Who do you admire most?

I admire everyone who takes time to help others. I also admire the



Progression: Children celebrate successful boxing gradings

"Turning my passion for boxing into a career has had a massive impact on my life and on the people around me."

courage of our emergency services.

What is your motto in life?

'Fight For Perfection' - why accept anything less?

How would you describe yourself in 5 words?

Honest, Grounded, Determined
Yet Humble... or Addicted To
New York Cheesecake!



About WBC Fit Club

- WBC Fit Club CIC was established to promote active lifestyles amongst children aged 6-14 years. Children learn non contact boxing techniques whilst improving fitness
- The Club supports the local community - particularly working with children who have learning difficulties
- It aims to encourage young people to take up the sport of boxing which, in turn, will keep them fit, active, and help curb anti-social behaviour
- As a result of children attending classes, parents regularly speak of improved concentration and behaviour at school and at home. Some parents join family classes.

For more information about WBC Fit Club visit www.wbcfightclub.co.uk

Wizzleworld Dramatics CIC

Magical adventures of self-discovery for 3-8 year olds

When Kelly Birch and Kerry Duffy trained together as primary school teachers they both felt disheartened by the opportunities provided by the curriculum to help children reach their full potential. Now they have returned to the classroom as Wizzleworld Dramatics.

"We left teaching and simultaneously embarked on different career paths which enabled each of us to pursue our interest in psychology of mind and behaviour." Kelly went on to become a police constable and Kerry began a new career in mental health. "Our work with disadvantaged groups led us time and time again to confirm our belief that in order to be an effective, emotionally intelligent adult, it is necessary to develop appropriate life skills in childhood. For many reasons, some parents struggle to provide the environment, opportunities and interactions that their children need to flourish. As educators, we are also aware of the opportunities and barriers presented by the classroom, curriculum, time constraints and resources to address such issues and nurture the development of life skills." Two years ago, Kelly and Kerry started to write their own specialist story-drama programmes for children aged 3-8 years (nursery, reception, years 1, 2 and 3) within educational and community settings. "Our programmes take children on a magical adventure of self discovery with our wise and friendly wizard, Mr

Wizzle, and the antics of his many friends from around the world. Throughout, children are presented with moral, social



and emotional dilemmas as they take on the role of different characters, developing essential life skills through creative expression," say Kelly and Kerry.

The sessions serve to raise self-esteem, lower inhibitions, enhance the child's sense of self, social values and understanding of others around them. Teachers and parents report improved relationships between children as a result of greater empathy and sense of teamwork.

Eager to make Wizzleworld Dramatics their full time work, Kelly and Kerry were introduced to Solihull Council's Community Enterprise for Success programme to formalise the venture and seek advice on marketing. "With the help of our business advisers we were able to register Wizzleworld Dramatics as a community interest company and work on our pricing strategy which enabled us to feel confident about the viability of our business." Kelly and Kerry also received help to develop a marketing plan and attended social media training



Mr Wizzle meets a new friend at Valley Infant School

to promote their services. "Whenever we've needed help on the business side of things, the support is always available which is reassuring and has helped us to move forward considerably."

Kelly and Kerry have recently delivered a pilot programme for Valley Infant School and have produced a DVD showcasing

their activities. Looking ahead, they hope to deliver exciting, lively and interactive Wizzleworld sessions for schools and community groups and see their unique approach to developing the confidence and wellbeing of children, including those with special educational needs, be widely embraced across Solihull.

Key facts

Mission: To develop children's confidence and wellbeing through creative expression, movement and drama through the magic of story

Services:

- Specialist story-drama personal development programmes for children aged 3 – 8 (for small groups or whole classes of children)
- Between 1-6 sessions; each lasting 45-60 minutes set in different environments, e.g. the jungle, under the sea
- Sessions meet Early Years Curriculum and National Curriculum

Established: Incorporated 2013 (trading since 2012)

Legal structure: Community Interest Company

Business challenge: To develop trading activity into a viable enterprise

i www.wizzleworld-dramatics.co.uk

Olive Branch Kitchen CIC

Community café bringing people together



Time for a brew: Janine Dutton and Michelle Gilks, Olive Branch Kitchen CIC

Husband and wife team Richard and Janine Dutton were looking to create a soft play area at their local church when the opportunity to run a community café was suggested to them. As both were trained chefs, it was an offer they couldn't refuse.

Since opening in May 2013, Olive Branch Kitchen has established itself as a firm favourite among regular groups and visitors to Three Trees (the Baptist Church Centre in Chelmsley Wood), where it now opens for breakfast and lunch five days a week.

Background

Janine left cheffing in 2005 to work in

sales and Richard works as a chef lecturer at University College Birmingham. "It was daunting to begin with as although we have lots of experience in the kitchen, neither of us had run a business before," say Richard and Janine.

Making it happen

We were introduced to the Community Enterprise for Success programme for advice on our business plan and registering Olive Branch Kitchen as a community interest company. "Our adviser made the whole experience less scary and helped us do all the paperwork, pointing us in the right direction every step of the way."

Promising start

Initially, the cafe opened two days per week, but quickly jumped to five days thanks to the quality of the food and support of local residents. "We've had a lot of business from construction workers for the new Chelmund's Cross Village Centre which is due to complete very soon. The development should bring in more customers and enable us to expand and take on more staff."

Kitting out the kitchen

The launch of Kick Start business grants by North Solihull Partnership and Solihull Council was the ideal opportunity for Richard and Janine to upgrade their kitchen facilities which they couldn't afford to replace. As a start-up accessing support from a CEFS business adviser, they were eligible for a Kick Start grant of up to £2,000 which they secured. The money was used to purchase a new dishwasher, fridge, freezer, fryer,

mixer and other kitchen essentials.

"It's like having a brand new kitchen! Having this equipment makes life so much easier and means we can now concentrate on other aspects of the business like increasing our catering bookings, changing menus and introducing more vegetarian and vegan options."

"It's a great feeling to be running a business in the community where we live and to be so well supported by the church, local people and the business initiatives."

Two years on and Olive Branch Kitchen is continuing to grow and now employs four staff, all from the local area.

“Our adviser made the whole experience less scary and helped us do all the paperwork, pointing us in the right direction every step of the way.”

Richard and Janine, Olive Branch Kitchen CIC

Key facts

Mission: To provide good honest home cooking and a welcoming place for the community

Services:

- Community cafe open 5 days a week 8am-3pm at Three Trees
- External catering service for business and social events
- Make and Taste cooking sessions

Established: 2013

Legal structure: Community Interest Company

Business challenge: To develop and launch a viable community enterprise

i email Janine Dutton: macdutton_2@yahoo.co.uk

DIAL Solihull

Disability and Information Advice Line



Alice Singleton with Andrew Holvey, service user and volunteer at DIAL

Alice Singleton, Chief Executive of DIAL Solihull, joined the user-led disability advice charity five years ago and quickly discovered that a comprehensive review of governance, services, systems and policies was needed if the organisation was to become 'commissioning ready' and meet the growing needs of disabled people and their carers in the borough.

It was shortly after the new board of trustees completed a full service review that DIAL identified the need for external help to implement some of the changes necessary to position the organisation for key contracts. After mixed success in sourcing support,

Alice came across the Community Enterprise for Success programme.

"Knowing the support offer was designed for organisations like ours, and right on our doorstep, immediately gave me a sense of reassurance," says Alice.

DIAL was able to access a menu of business support services delivered by professional business advisers who understand the challenges and demands faced by many frontline VCS organisations whose services are under increasing pressure during these austere times.

"Over a period of six months we attended a series of practical workshops which were very relevant and timely

for our needs. The first session on business planning helped me to recognise my strengths and equipped me to work with one of my trustees on drafting DIAL's business plan - without feeling out of my depth!"

The flexibility of the programme also enabled Alice and her team to access tailored support to review and update a wide range of policies from working with volunteers to IT. "We had help to prepare and issue a new fit for purpose employee handbook, which will accommodate our needs as we start to grow and extend our services in the future.

"The full cost recovery session was a real eye opener as it guided us through the process of calculating the true cost of

our services, rather than using a 'finger in the air' approach when writing bids. The session on partnership working made us realise that although we're a small charity, we have specialist knowledge and expertise which is of great value to others.

"Tasters on social media and social impact have confirmed that we must make better use of these tools, and the networking opportunities afforded by the programme have been an unexpected bonus. We're certainly better prepared for commissioning and have no hesitation in recommending the support to other charities and VCOs in Solihull."

“The full cost recovery session was a real eye opener as it guided us through the process of calculating the true cost of our services, rather than using a finger in the air approach when writing bids.”

Key facts

Mission: To help and support disabled people and carers in Solihull, so that they can stay active members of the community.

Services: DIAL offers free, impartial and confidential information and advice for disabled people and their carers. Each year the charity handles 4,000 enquiries and helps clients claim over £1.2M in benefits that they were entitled to but had not claimed.

Business challenge: To become commissioning ready

Established: 1986

Legal structure: Registered charity

i www.dialsolihull.org.uk

A moment with...

Charles Rapson Midlands School for Social Entrepreneurs

Charles is no stranger to many BULLETiN readers. Enjoy!

Where did you grow up?

I grew up in the wilds of the Scottish Highlands in a tiny fishing village called Helmsdale. Blink on the road to John O'Groats and you've missed it. It is a wonderful and beautiful place with barely 600 inhabitants, no jobs, 2 churches and 5 pubs. It is the location where the Highland Clearances and Britain's biggest gold rush took place. And no, I'm definitely not in favour of Scottish independence and I don't own a kilt.

What was your first job?

My first job was working for my father's business serving petrol and delivering overdue invoices to fishermen and farmers. The latter took guts and taught me how to run but also the importance of correct invoicing, cash flow and customer relations. I've forgotten how to run but not the other stuff.

What drives you to make a difference?

I have a short fuse and get angry when I see injustice and discrimination. I've learnt that it's no use moaning



Grizzly Bear or Big Ted?

and saying 'something should be done about this'. The best thing is to do something yourself.

What is the most valuable lesson you have learnt so far?

Sitting. I often just sit and think. What I mean is pause to think things through properly. It's better to be late and right than early and wrong. I don't always follow that advice. I've also learnt I'm not so clever. Others have good ideas too. So I try to listen. So sometimes I sit and think and listen but I admit that sometimes I'm just sitting.

What's been your biggest achievement?

I've been lucky I've had a few good moments. I have glass trophies that I won in my days in industry for various things which my wife keeps putting in the garage and I keep getting out. But my most satisfying achievement has probably

been turning Waterloo Woodwork around into Colebridge Enterprises and creating paid jobs – especially for the five people with learning disabilities employed.

What are your goals for the year ahead?

Finding additional funding or income for my job as head of the School for Social Entrepreneurs in the Midlands which was launched in 2013 with support from Solihull Council.

Who do you admire most?

My two kids. They have qualities, intelligence and wisdom I wish I had at their age. I wish I had them now. My son recently built the new website for the Royal Albert Hall and my

daughter acts as a personal assistant and support worker for young people with learning disabilities. They are both amazing and keep me grounded.

What is your motto in life?

'There are no such thing as problems. There are only opportunities waiting for solutions.'

How would you describe yourself in 5 words?

Tenacious, belligerent, difficult, creative and fat. I had two nicknames when I worked for Rover Group. Grizzly Bear by people who got on my wrong side. Big Ted by those who knew me better and knew I was just a big softie.

Two hats are better than one

As well as running the Midlands School for Social Entrepreneurs, I am still very much involved with Colebridge Enterprises as a board member.

The two roles complement each other. I learn things from students, witnesses and experts at SSE that I can apply at Colebridge Enterprises. I have experience from Colebridge Enterprises that I can share with them. It's like going on a training programme and getting paid for it.

Having two hats gets me through doors and connected with people I otherwise might not meet. I think one adds credibility to the other and credibility is important.

- Colebridge Enterprises has created 12 jobs in less than two years since we diversified and we have increased the trading income about 8-fold in that time.
- The School for Social Entrepreneurs is getting fantastic results with its current cohort and attracting massive interest from all over the region. We had more students apply to SSE in the Midlands than to any other school outside London and we are the new kids on the block. The calibre and potential of students coming through is mind blowing.

i For more information visit Midlands SSE: www.the-sse.org/schools/29/midlands and Colebridge Enterprises: <http://colent.org>

Solihull Moors FC

Moor opportunities through football



With an average attendance of 200 supporters per game, Solihull Moors FC, a Conference North club, started to map out its future direction 18 months ago, knowing something had to change if it was to survive and grow.

The answer lay in the community says Mike Turl, club volunteer and community sponsor: "We could see huge potential for Solihull Moors to make a difference to areas where there is high deprivation, unemployment, crime and physical inactivity, using football to promote diversity and respect for others."

This set in motion what has now become 'Community Moors', the community arm of Solihull Moors FC, taking forward sport and education

programmes with schools and local groups across the borough.

Over the past year the Solihull Moors youth development initiative has seen 27 teams (boys and girls) join the club, securing their own sustainability and achieving good results in leagues across the Midlands. Match attendance has also increased by 100%.

The Community Enterprise for Success programme assisted the club to establish Community Moors as a community interest company (CIC) to formalise and expand its social inclusion work in an open and transparent way. Solihull Moors FC was also converted to a CIC which means that the club and all its assets are 100% owned and managed



North Solihull children take part in Community Moors Soccer Camp

“The new model places Solihull Moors in a much stronger position to reduce disadvantage experienced by many children and young people.”

Mike Turl, Hardyman Group, community programme sponsor

for community benefit. “It was extremely useful to have an expert in these matters guiding us through the process of restructuring the club to meet our commercial and social aims,” says Mike.

“The new model places Solihull Moors in a much stronger position to reduce disadvantage experienced by many children and young people.” In areas such as Chelmsley Wood and Smith’s Wood where the club

currently delivers a weekly outreach programme, police have reported lower levels of anti-social behaviour.

Director of Football, Marcus Bignot says: “We want to work with other community partners from local authorities, businesses, schools and fellow clubs, to help deliver for everyone living in the borough, more opportunities through football.”

Key facts

Mission: To develop as a commercially viable community football club

Services:

- Semi professional football club (North Conference)
- 27 youth teams
- Sport and education programmes
- Conferencing and private functions

Established: Formed in 2007, as a result of Solihull Borough and Moor Green clubs merging. Restructured in 2014.

Legal structure: Community Interest Company

Business challenge: To restructure Solihull Moors FC and secure its assets for community benefit

i www.solihullmoorsfc.co.uk

A moment with...

Stacey Smith Inspire Health & Mind CIC

We've been in touch with Stacey since the beginning of the CEFS programme in 2012 and it's great to see how her health and wellbeing social enterprise has blossomed.

Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Solihull near Edmdon Park and it's still one of my favourite places to go to and relax. I have lots of fond memories of the area.

What was your first job?

My first job in this field of work was at an organisation called Cascade, which back then was the drug service for young people based in Chelmsley Wood. I started as a volunteer delivering drug education in schools and won a couple of awards to start my own project. This opportunity enabled me to train young people as volunteers taking them into primary schools to deliver age appropriate drug education sessions.

Fast forward a few years, my career developed in drug education, then treatment and then as a trainer for the Birmingham Drug and Alcohol Action Team, training social workers and criminal justice staff across the city. In 2010 I decided to take the leap and set up Inspire and commit to supporting the



Stacey is an expert in Emotional Freedom Technique and uses her skills to support others create a better life. Whether your focus is weight loss, addictions, or confidence she can help you tap your way to success.

emotional wellbeing of people affected by addictions and mental health issues.

What drives you to make a difference?

Some people don't get dealt a fair hand in life for various reasons and I think we should all make an effort to give them a help up. Seeing the difference in the people that I work with drives me to keep making a difference. I love seeing their transition from being at their lowest points to feeling happier, healthier, more confident and fulfilling their potential.

What is the most valuable lesson you have learnt so far?

To keep going and never give up. Whatever happens you have to trust and believe that all will be well.

That's the same for me in business and the message I give to my clients. If they can keep that one little glimmer of hope, then they can achieve more than they ever thought possible.

What's been your biggest achievement?

The biggest day to day achievement is helping others to achieve. Whilst at Cascade, back in 2000 I went to Kosovo which was just after the war had ended. The impact of war and the trauma suffered by civilians had led to a spiralling drugs problem and we were the first drug service to go out there. We trained young people as peer educators. It was quite an adventure for me personally as I had never been abroad before - first time on a plane and being transported by a UN jeep across the Macedonia/Kosovo border on arrival was certainly an experience!

I have received awards for my work over the years and trained thousands of staff so that they better understand

how to support vulnerable people in the community. I have been blessed to have had the opportunity to meet and help some amazingly strong people who have been through so much to overcome challenges in their lives.

What are your goals for the year ahead?

My goals are to continue to reach out to people in the community, increase our capacity to offer more opportunities and look at sustainable income sources. At the moment I tend to hot desk around different organisations which I really enjoy - Three Trees, Changes UK, and SUSTAiN - anywhere I can get a comfy chair and a cuppa! Ideally I'd like to find some premises that I can call home.

Who do you admire most?

Women plural. My Mom and my Nan. Corny as it sounds I know my ability to talk and connect with people comes from them. Never walk around Solihull Town Centre with us. It takes too long, we chat to everyone!

What is your motto in life?

"All is well" - I say that a lot. It reassures me. I have a lot to be grateful for.

How would you describe yourself in 5 words?

I had to cheat at this question and ask my Twitter followers what they thought. This is what they came back with (more than five) - Dedicated, Passionate, Thoughtful, Friendly, Inspiring, and Socially Responsible.

Inspire Health & Mind

Inspire Health and Mind CIC offer services in the community to improve health and wellbeing:

- Emotional Freedom Technique (1:1s and groups)
- Personal Development courses, workshops and training
- Time to Shine women's development course

i Contact Stacey on 0121 296 0765.

Visit www.inspirehealthandmind.co.uk

follow @InspireHandM @StaceInspire

Solihull Indoor Bowls Club

All year round bowling and social facilities



Solihull Indoor Bowls Club opened in 1996 with funding from Sport England and offers all year round bowls courtesy of eight indoor rinks and five outdoor greens for the warmer months.

At its peak the club had around 850 members but in recent years it has struggled to recruit members and encourage people to take up the sport.

"We're the only indoor bowls club in Solihull but many people don't know about us," says Tom Pepper, Chair of SIBC. "Bowls is suitable for all ages and abilities and the club environment is friendly and welcoming, offering our members and non members the chance to socialise as well as keep active."

The fall in membership has placed pressure on the club's finances and raising awareness of the facilities, which include a large function room catering for up to 120 guests, has been a priority for the committee for some time says Tom.

"We set up a marketing group to look at

how we can better promote our services. In the past six months we have refreshed our website, doing our best to get found on the search engines, produced a new leaflet and introduced a club newsletter.

"We're not marketing experts so when the offer of some professional advice was made available from the Community Enterprise for Success (CEFS) programme we were very grateful."

Building on the work already done by the club, CEFS helped Tom and his colleagues to better understand marketing opportunities by looking at the appetite for bowls in their catchment area, alongside a detailed analysis of competitors offering similar venue hire facilities in the locality.

CEFS produced a marketing report which was presented to the committee:

"The report was exceptional - tailored to bowls and our specific challenges - very detailed and helpful. It contained a great number of statistics about our local area and fresh ideas

for our sub-group to explore.

"The input has been practical and enlightening and we have already agreed to follow many of the suggestions put forward such as using social media which we had previously been dubious about.

"The report will be used as a solid basis for our future marketing efforts and we are very grateful to both CEFS and to Solihull Council for their support."

The CEFS programme is also looking at how the club can encourage people to take up bowls and sources of funding to upgrade the facilities.

"Many people regard bowls as an older person's pastime but it is a sport the whole family can enjoy including those with disabilities.

"We hope more local businesses and voluntary organisations will consider



Spacious function room for social and business events

our facilities for their next event or away day - we can offer a great package of room hire, ample free car parking, onsite catering from our chef, and of course, a game of bowls!"

Key facts

Mission: To provide excellent bowling and club facilities for the benefit of all members and our guests

Services:

- Indoor and Outdoor Bowls
- Function room hire with licensed bar - weddings, parties, and business events
- Social events and activities - slimming clubs, dinner and dance, competitions
- Bowls and Buffet events - business events, social clubs
- Commercial kitchen hire
- Coaching and trial membership for beginners

Established: 1996

Legal structure: Charity and Company Limited by Guarantee

Business challenge: To increase income generation for financial sustainability

i Solihull Indoor Bowls Club, Brick Kiln Lane, Hillfield, Solihull, B91 3LE

Tel: 0121 709 2233

www.solihullindoorbowlsclub.co.uk

A moment with...

Wesley Thomas Aspired Education CIC

DJ and social entrepreneur Wesley Thomas gives us an insight to the events and people who have shaped his life and inspired him to help others.

Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Kingshurst close to Chelmsley Wood. I spent most of my childhood and parts of my adult life in the area.

What was your first job?

Wow, my first ever job was helping the milkman collect money for the milk he delivered at the age of 14. I was paid £12 for two evenings a week, I felt rich!

My first job in the social sector was when I was 17, winning a Housing Scholarship with a company called Midland Area, now merged as Midland Heart.

I originally went to train with them to complete my Business Admin NVQ Level 2 and ended up spending eight golden years with them. I learnt a lot about how business operates in a social environment, how to communicate with people on all levels and the social barriers around certain communities. This really helped me to find myself in the professional world and it gave me a chance to understand what I enjoyed.



"You truly can become whatever you want to be in life by having the right vision, attitude and gratitude."

Once I'd completed the scholarship, I was offered a Trainee Surveyors role.

What drives you to make a difference?

Even though I loved my childhood, the people and my surroundings, I still grew up with lots of disadvantages. I came from a single parent household but was lucky in the fact that I had a rough idea of where I wanted to go, the drive to get there, and a touch of being in the right place at the right time. Not everyone is as lucky. I believe I was blessed with a lot to give and a drive and passion to show young people that you truly can become whatever you want to be in life by having the right vision, attitude and gratitude.

What is the most valuable lesson you have learnt so far?

I think I'd have to go with 'Not to follow the crowd'. There is a lot of

peer pressure in today's world, but it's important to be you, believe in yourself and don't let anyone hold you back even if you have to do it by yourself.

What's been your biggest achievement?

Tricky question as I feel I've done a lot in my short life, but I guess helping to create a National DJ Competition alongside Access To Music has to be right up there. The competition ran all over the UK and I project managed the Birmingham heats. The final was held in London at the Ministry Of Sound. Starting the Aspired brand in 2010 from a university grant comes pretty close too.

What are your goals for the year ahead?

This year I really want to be as innovative as I can, the biggest aim is to create unique projects but still trying to make a real social impact. We've recently joined

Aspired Education CIC

Aspired Education CIC specialise in creative arts as an engagement tool to build confidence, enhance creative skills and employability for young people.

Services include:

Djing / Dance (all styles) /
Stencil Art / School works /
1 on 1 sessions / Summer
camps / Youth club sessions

i www.aspirededucation.co.uk
Twitter: @Djaygravity
Instagram: Aspirededucation

forces with a few smaller organisations working towards the same goals as us. I want to create employment opportunities in the Solihull area and look at ways in which I can keep the business sustainable by exploring new revenue streams.

Who do you admire most?

I really look up to my grandad, he came over from Jamaica at the age of 21, set up shop in a struggle so his next generation didn't have to. He's been around in the hard times and always showed me how to be a gent so I respect him massively. While growing up I had a role model outside of my family circle too in the shape of Managing Director Olu who hired me for my Housing Scholarship. He always made me think about my decisions and my future.

What is your motto in life?

Not to live life in my comfort zone.
I'm always trying to put myself in environments I've never been before so I can learn and grow from them.

With work and everything else I can become a workaholic so I try to do different things when I get the opportunity. Last year I flew a plane for the first time! Nothing ever grows in the comfort zone.

How would you describe yourself in 5 words?

I'd probably go with laid back, witty, ambitious, headstrong, and occasionally Mr-Know-it-All as my girlfriend would say.

Hope Psychological Services CIC

Measuring mental health recovery



Nathan Laxton, Director at Hope Psychological Services, reflects on his experience of the Social Value Action Learning Programme delivered by Community Enterprise for Success to assist ten VCSE organisations complete their first impact measurement exercise.

"We were a relatively new social enterprise at the time of joining the action learning group and saw it as a timely opportunity for a few reasons. As a Community Interest Company (CIC) we are required to report on our social impact so we hoped that an impact study would help us to meet that legal obligation, but also, for our own benefit, we wanted to know that we were achieving what we were set up to do. There was a commercial motivation too - at the back of our minds, if we are to expand our services in the future, we will need to tender for contracts. Evidencing social value to procurement teams is important, so participating in programme

was about preparing for the future."

"There were group meetings every couple of months with other organisations also going through the process and bits of homework in between. To begin with, it was daunting looking at the proxy databases which would have informed a Social Return on Investment exercise which several members were initially exploring. To gain focus whilst trawling through the sea of data out there was a challenge, but once we had decided to concentrate on client journeys and distanced travelled, things became more manageable and we were able to make good progress.

"Going through the process with other organisations was very useful. Firstly in terms of having regular meetings to see what other members were doing, bouncing ideas off one another, but also for the access to expertise from knowledgeable practitioners which was great. With their guidance,

we were able to apply what we had learnt to a small scale study of our clients who had accessed Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) over the past 12 months to deal with issues such as depression and anxiety.

"It's still early days, but the findings so far have confirmed that we are having the desired effect on mental health recovery for our clients. We're having a much greater impact than we predicted in terms of work and social confidence. CBT has enabled them to remain within employment which generates huge cost savings across a range of public services and we've also seen some clients - more severe cases - feel more able to engage with others again and venture out of their homes. The range of progression has been quite dramatic.

"We now have the tools and systems in place to get a direct measure of how we are doing in terms of our vision and CIC status. Our client forms routinely gather data at key milestones

and by doing this year on year we will build a strong evidence base of client outcomes which will support bids and help us to enhance our services.

"I've learnt that it's not just about trying to measure the financial value of your work although the next logical step would be for us to attempt a social return on investment so that we can quantify the financial returns and savings generated by our interventions alongside the softer outcomes.

"My advice to organisations thinking about measuring their own impact is to join a group. It's invaluable to work with others as you navigate and make sense of all the jargon whilst being supported by experts. It's definitely worth doing but you have to invest and commit to the process, and don't get discouraged by the technical work involved, start off small like we did and you'll find it's not as scary as you think."

Key facts

Mission: Restore the person: develop the potential

Services: Hope Psychological Services CIC offers individual and group counselling/therapy as well as CPD training to therapists, mental health workers, health and social care staff as well as pastoral / community / family support workers and mentors.

Established: 2013

Legal structure: Community Interest Company

Business challenge: Going through the process of measuring social impact for the first time

i www.psychologicalservices.org.uk



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