

CVS FALKIRK AND DISTRICT

Helix Social Enterprise Zone

Progress Report

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Helix Social Enterprise Zone – Progress Report

The following report outlines the progress to date of the Helix Social Enterprise Zone (HSEZ) initiative with specific regard to the development of social enterprise in the Falkirk district. The report will concentrate on three main strands of development:

- Development, support and inception of social enterprise businesses
- Training, events and information session provision
- Forward planning and progress of social enterprise trading activity mapping, and strategy development

As the HSEZ initiative is a collaboration the report will also identify, highlight and evaluate, where possible, outcomes with regard to areas of partnership working.

Throughout this report social enterprises are categorised as:

- **Aspiring** – pre-start/start-up enterprises generating less than 25% of income through trade
- **Emerging** – enterprises generating between 25% and 50% of income through trade
- **Mature** – enterprises generating over 50% of income through trade

Source of categorisation – Glasgow Social Enterprise Network (GSEN)

Social Enterprise Business Development

Falkirk was identified as a 'cold spot' with regard to social enterprise trading activity by a number of national social enterprise support agencies including, Firstport, Senscot and The Social Enterprise Academy. Therefore early engagement with those agencies was essential to any development planning and activities. After a series of consultations with Firstport, a small pot, level 1 funding programme specific to Falkirk was developed. This fund would be available for applications from aspiring social entrepreneurs with a view to providing financial support to test ideas and help with set-up and legal costs. The pot was some £25,000 and it was anticipated that aspiring social entrepreneurs could be supported with awards between £3000 and £5000. The financial support would be augmented by a package of business support.

Firstport Level 1 award winners (Falkirk fund)

Hazel Docherty – Revamp Furniture (CIC)

Matt McGrandles – Forth Valley Social Enterprises (CIC)

Anna Sandland – Forth Valley Enterprises (CIC)

Joseph Meade – The Music Foundry (CIC)

Nathan Brown – Crooked Neck Publications (CIC)

Jennifer Allan – Just Time

Tzaritsa Asante - Pashionista

All of the above aspiring social enterprises were given intensive support from the CVS hosted Helix Social Enterprise Zone Development Officer prior to application, and post award with regard to idea development, business planning, marketing, legal considerations and governance. In addition, most of the above aspiring social enterprises have gone on to become legally incorporated and are trading.

Aspiring Social Enterprises

Not all aspiring social enterprises that applied for level 1 funding were successful, and indeed not all enterprises supported have applied for Firstport funding for a variety of reasons. Other aspiring social enterprises that have received support and are in the process of incorporating or exploring incorporation are:

- [Untitled] Productions
- Corster's Computers
- Stoneywood Community Projects
- Freewheel North (social enterprise trading arm looking to operate out of Falkirk)
- Storehouse Volunteers
- Trendy Tribes
- Andrew Mitchell (social enterprise laundry)
- Jean Bush (SDS social enterprise)
- Alan Muir (community orchard and maker's space)
- Alistair Brown (Urban Green Space)

Emerging Social Enterprises

As the social enterprise sector was not particularly well developed in the Falkirk area prior to the inception of the HSEZ initiative it has been difficult to identify emerging social enterprises operating and trading in the Falkirk area; with some not traditionally viewing their organisations as social enterprises. However, many of the aspiring social enterprises supported at the beginning of the initiative have now been trading at the expected level for an emerging social enterprise for some months including:

- Cloybank Estate
- Forth Valley Enterprises (CIC)
- The Music Foundry (CIC)

- Regener8 (SCIO)
- Bespoke (CIC)

Mature Social Enterprises

There are a number of mature social enterprises operating and trading in the Falkirk area, the majority of which need very little business, funding or financial support from the HSEZ initiative. However, work has been begun to actively engage with those organisations, and to provide a conduit for networking opportunities. A high percentage of those enterprises were working in isolation and very few were aware of the existence and work of others. Mature social enterprises currently operating and trading in the Falkirk area include:

- The Link Group
- Stenhousemuir FC (CIC)
- Paragon Housing Association
- Delta Arts Studios (CIC)
- Scottish Railway Preservation Society
- First 4 Kids

It is important to note that at this stage it is impossible to accurately report on the size, scope and social and economic impact of the social enterprise sector in Falkirk. Work is underway in partnership with Falkirk Council to map social enterprise trading activity in the Falkirk area, and will form the basis of a social enterprise strategy that will be developed by the council.

Social Enterprise Training in Falkirk

As part of the HSEZ initiative a training programme was developed in partnership with various training providers including The Social Enterprise Academy, Firstport, Just Enterprise and Ceis; the following tables outline 2 of the programmes, delivered by the Social Enterprise Academy.

Date	Programme	Delivering body	Number of applications	Number completing
April – May 2013	Developing Your Social Enterprise	Social Enterprise Academy	23	12/16

Learner Reaction Summary

- 85% of learners stated that the programme fully met their expectations
- 85% of learners stated that on completion of the course they felt more confident in being able to set-up and run their social enterprise
- 69% of learners stated that their overall experience was great and 15% stated that their overall experience was excellent

“I can now approach planning and strategic thinking better”

Dragana Whyte, Forth Valley Language Support

Date	Programme	Delivering body	Number of applications	Number completing
April – 2014	Exploring Social Enterprise	Social Enterprise Academy	15	12/15
Learner Reaction Summary				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 90% of learners stated that the programme fully met their expectations ● 80% of learners stated that on completion of the course they felt more confident in being able to set-up and run their social enterprise ● 60% of learners stated that their overall experience was great and 35% stated that their overall experience was excellent <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“The training was excellent and very relevant to my needs”.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Robert Ramsay, Project Manager, Stoneywood Community Projects</p>				

Other Training Programmes

Firstport

Building Your Social Enterprise in a Day 24/10/2013:

- 15 participants completed the programme
- 80% agreed that the topics covered were relevant
- 50% strongly agreed that the training objectives were met
- 60% strongly agreed that the training would be useful for their working practice

Ceis and Just Enterprise

Costing and Pricing Workshop 05/02/2014:

- 16 participants completed the programme
- 81% felt that the workshop fully met their expectations
- 87% felt that the content would be of value to their work and organisations
- 75% felt that the content of the workshop was pitched at the right level for participants

Events and Information Sessions

Crowd Funding information session 27/08/2013:

- 12 attendees
- 75% felt the session would be useful for their work and organisation
- 83% felt that the information was relevant to them
- 71% felt that the session had fully met their expectations

DTAS information session and one-one clinic 21/10/2013:

- 14 attendees
- 71% felt the session would be useful for their work and organisation
- 79% felt the information was relevant to them
- 71% felt that the session had fully met their expectations
- 6 attendees for one-one clinic (half hour slots)
- 67% of attendees felt this session fully met their expectations

Enterprise Ready Fund information session and one-one clinic 15/01/2014:

- 12 attendees
- 92% felt that the session would be useful for their work and organisation
- 92% felt the information was relevant to them
- 6 attendees for one-one clinic (half hour slots)
- 100% of attendees felt this session fully met their expectations

Senscot Legal one-one clinic 19/02/2014:

- 6 attendees
- 100% of attendees felt this session fully met their expectations

Social Enterprise Strategy and Policy Development in Falkirk

The Helix Social Enterprise Development Officer has been working in partnership with Falkirk Council to map the trading activities, size, scope and economic and social impact of social enterprises currently operating and trading in the Falkirk area.

A timeline was developed and work began in November 2013 to try and identify likely individuals, organisations and community groups who were already trading as social enterprises or were potentially trading as social enterprises but who may not identify themselves as such. A list was compiled and work started on the questionnaire design. The following table shows the timeline and the progress of the strategy development.

Activity	Timeline	Progress	Activity Completed
Identification of survey group	Nov 2013	List compiled and agreed	Jan 2014
Design and development of questionnaire	Nov 2013	Design of questionnaire completed and agreed	Jan 2014
Identification of survey pilot group to test questionnaire design (5 respondents)	Jan 2013	Group identified, approached and agreed	Jan 2013
Completion of pilot questionnaires	Feb 2014	Pilot group responses collected and analysed	28 th Feb 2014
Analysing / rewriting questionnaire	March 2014	Analysis and rewrite completed and agreed	19 th March 2014
Full Mapping Exercise	May – July 2014		
Focus Groups / Consultation	Sept – Oct 2014		
Draft strategy to consultation	Jan – March 2015		
Strategy finalised	April 2015		