Homeless Link

INCLUSIVE insight

A fair deal

Exploring fairness in social enterprises working with people experiencing homelessness

Insights for best practice guide

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Acknowledgements

About this guide and how to use it

This guide has been produced as part of the 'A fair deal' research, which explored how social enterprises working with people experiencing homelessness can work in a fair and non-exploitative way. The aim of this guide is to share good practice and learning from the project in a practical and accessible way with people working in social enterprise. Although the examples and guidance in this guide relate to enterprises working with people experiencing homelessness, we hope that this guide will also have relevance to enterprises working with other disadvantaged groups.

The guide opens with a summary of where tensions around fairness can emerge and principles for guiding fairness in enterprise when involving people experiencing homelessness. Through the course of the guide, we will explore how these principles can be put into action, pointing to steps that some organisations have taken to ensure that the work they do is fair. Along the way we will ask some questions relating to your practice for you to reflect on. As we highlight in the research, many of the tensions that can emerge need to be managed on an ongoing basis rather than being something that can be 'fixed'.

The research highlighted that organisations engaged in social enterprise and charitable trading are diverse in terms of structure, size, products and services, and the way people experiencing homelessness engage with them. For this reason, the approaches we point to in this guide will work well for some organisations and may work less well for others. We will use the term 'participants' to refer to people with experience of homelessness who engage in volunteering, paid work or training. We know this language is not perfect, but due to the variety of ways in which people experiencing homelessness engage in social enterprise activities and relationships with organisations, this term was agreed to be the best fit for this project.

At the end of the guide is a set of case studies of participating enterprises highlighting good practice within those enterprises. These are referenced through the guide.

We are aware that this is not the first research to explore how people experiencing homelessness can be involved in organisations – and no doubt it will not be the last. There were also many issues, challenges and concerns that arose through the research that overlapped with the subject matter or sat just outside it. There is a wealth of useful guidance and materials to support organisations in this work and we point to some of these resources in this guide.

Background

This guide was produced as part of a wider research project exploring the question: how do we ensure service users are treated fairly and transparently where they are supporting the trading activities of a charity, social enterprise or community organisation? The project was delivered by Inclusive Insight on behalf of Homeless Link as part of the Enterprise Development Alumni Programme. The research was shaped by a set of research objectives and questions that were formed by Homeless Link with the input of an advisory group of experts working in social enterprise within the homeless sector and beyond.

Homeless Link

Homeless Link is the national membership charity for frontline homelessness services. The organisation works to improve services through research, guidance and learning, and campaigns for policy change that will ensure everyone has a place to call home and the support they need to keep it.

Enterprise Development Programme

Launched in September 2018, the Enterprise Development Programme is a five-year, £40 million programme funded by Access – The Foundation for Social Investment, managed by a coalition of partners. Homeless Link has been a partner since this time and over the course of the programme has supported social enterprises with feasibility and development grants in addition to action learning sets, bespoke learning programmes and peer networking opportunities.

Inclusive Insight

Inclusive Insight works with organisations to gather insight, improve policy and practice, and embed the participation of people affected by homelessness in strategy, decision making and service design. Inclusive Insight is passionate about the power of participation and believes that people and communities need to be in the lead to create meaningful change. At the heart of our work is putting people with lived experience of homelessness at the core of creating solutions to homelessness. The organisation offers a range of services including designing and delivering social research and evaluation, supporting coproduction and service user participation, and training or facilitation.

A fair deal research

The overall aim of the research was to set out recommendations for best practice in social enterprise models that provide opportunities to service users through training, volunteering or employment. The research findings can be summarised as follows:

1. **Social enterprise is increasingly being used as a tool to address homelessness and wider inequality in society particularly those offering work-based programmes.** Social enterprise can work as a catalyst for supporting people on their journeys away from homelessness by developing connectedness, providing activities that give structure, creating pathways out of homelessness and supporting access to employment. Social enterprises are able to achieve the above outcomes by offering participants an alternative engagement offer to traditional support work. This is due to the types of activities participants engage in, how these facilitate the creation of honest, open relationships, and the potential to work in a more holistic way due to freedom from statutory funding sources. Contextual factors, including austerity, increased cost of living, welfare benefits and Covid-19, have all impacted on how enterprises operate and support participants on their journeys away from homelessness.

2. **Social enterprises are likely to face tensions around fairness, which needs to be acknowledged and managed.** These tensions are focused on four areas:

   a. Remuneration and defining working conditions: This includes whether in paid or unpaid roles, how rates of pay are set, ensuring people feel valued through wider opportunities and the risk of indebtedness to the enterprise.

   b. Transitions into, within, and onward from enterprise, including in recruitment and induction processes, when participants move between roles in an organisation, and factors preventing participants moving on to other opportunities: Clarity in roles, expectations and offer to participants is key in preventing unfairness emerging.

   c. The way participants are supported to engage in enterprise and to progress is an area that can cause challenges and resentments. Setting levels of support and how it is delivered should closely align and compliment the business model and the way that participants engage. Support functions should be well articulated and resourced to avoid challenges with fairness.

   d. Social enterprise has the potential to drive systems change starting by tackling misconceptions and stigma associated with homelessness both in terms of individual interactions and through wider communications. Challenges in terms of 'pity marketing' and how participant's stories were used by enterprises identified through the research.

3. Managing tensions associated with social enterprise requires organisational policies, a proactive working culture and clear, collaborative decision-making processes. In all cases these should be underpinned with honesty, consistency and transparency.

The research identified good practice in participating enterprises which features in the research report and this guide. The challenges, tensions and concerns of people who were engaged in this project were analysed, collectively verified and suggestions and recommendations for change were agreed through workshops. This guide has been developed based on these recommendations, drawing in learning from academic and good practice sources.

The full research report is available here: **homeless.org.uk/knowledge-hub/ fairness-in-enterprise**

Where tensions emerge

The research identified seven areas where unfairness can be experienced by participants who are engaging in social enterprise. These areas were initially identified in existing literature and then further refined through data collection and analysis work with the input of participants. In any organisation, not least social enterprises working with people who are homeless, tensions can and likely will emerge. When not considered or poorly managed these can create an environment where unfairness and exploitation might occur. Even when decisions are made for the best intentions, those engaging in activities can feel something is 'unfair' and this can be the root of rising resentments.

In the enterprises that participated, as in any organisation, there were tensions evident with some participants. Participants noted how addressing these tensions was never simple, and how mitigating factors for one area of tension can lead to other inadvertent challenges, or create spaces for new tensions to arise. Some participants shared how these tensions are in many ways "inevitable" and reflected on how there is no "quick fix", rather there are areas for ongoing monitoring and reflection.

In this guide we will explore good practice steps that have been taken to manage these issues. The seven areas are set out in the table below.

Table 1: Areas where tensions commonly arise	
Areas where tensions commonly arise	**Examples**
Defining who and how you work with participants	• How participants are engaged (e.g. volunteering, employment or training models) • Setting a threshold for who you work with and 'cherry picking' participants
Remuneration and defining working conditions	• Setting rates of pay for employees and other forms of compensation for participants • Working hours and how they are allocated • Potential or actual job substitution by volunteers
Unclear offers and unrealistic expectations	• Unclear offers around compensation and support • Unrealistic expectations of roles, responsibilities and relationships • Unfounded promises about employment within the enterprise or more widely
Transitions into, through and out of organisations	• Entering enterprise including recruitment and induction • Moving between unpaid and paid roles • Moving on from organisations
Defining support	• Levels of support and who can access it • Whether support tapers, is time limited or open-ended • How participants are supported with personal development and professional progression • Managing the impacts of engagement (e.g. negative impact on wellbeing or benefits)
Unintended and unwanted consequences	• Dependency and feelings of 'indebtedness' • Participant compliance and challenges around 'speaking up' • Replicating workplace inequality by creating roles or preparing participants to move into low paid and insecure work
Reinforcing stigma	• 'Pity marketing' • 'Quality' of enterprise/product • Sharing participant stories

Principles to ensure fairness in enterprise

Before outlining how to address some of these challenges in practice, there are three key principles that should underpin responses: transparency, honesty and consistency. Acknowledging the existence of potential tensions is a first step, leading to an ongoing dialogue and responsiveness to when they arise. Discuss their implications honestly and transparently, both as they arise and with consistency through practice and processes including contracting, forums and supervision.
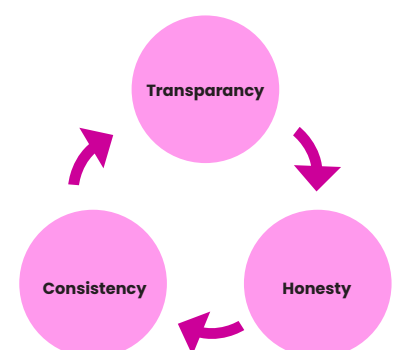
Through this guide we will highlight how these principles are practically applied to different challenges and in managing emerging tensions. Embedding shared decision-making processes, scrutiny and coproduction are cross-organisational approaches that can ensure these principles are upheld.

Coproduction

Coproduction is one potential route to mediating some of the tensions that have been identified by the research and helping to maintain fairness. It can also support a proactive approach to scrutiny. It is all about getting the right information and acting on it. When we say coproduction, what we mean is this:

> "Co-production is not just a word, it's not just a concept, it is a meeting of minds coming together to find a shared solution. In practice, it involves people who use services being consulted, included and working together from the start to the end of any project that affects them."[1]

The benefits of coproduction in a social enterprise are as follows:
- It can improve relationships with participants through balancing power and breaking down hierarchical barriers within the enterprise.
- It gives a voice to participants on the quality, safety, accessibility and effectiveness of the enterprise, and its products or services.
- It helps those working in social enterprise gain insight into the needs and concerns of the people they are supporting.
- It provides an opportunity for participants to contribute to and comment on the organisations' priorities and shape intended outcomes.
- It enables enterprises to develop new services, products and approaches. It can increase efficiency and is ultimately good for business.

Many enterprises, including those participating in the research, have mechanisms for information sharing, collective decision making and collaborative planning. The following steps are insights into practices employed by enterprises involved in this study:
- Help participants to see the whole organisation and understand the business side of the enterprise. Share financial information and where possible train participants to support the business side of the enterprise by offering shadowing or roles in administrative and back-office functions.

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[1] Quoted from the Think Local Act Personal National Coproduction Advisory Group: www.thinklocalactpersonal.org. uk/co-production-in-commissioning-tool/co-production/In-more-detail/what-is-co-production/

- Develop and implement a range of formal and informal structures to engage participants, share information, gather perspectives and make decisions collectively.
- Feed back to all participants about why and how decisions have been made.
- Explore hierarchies and power dynamics. Even when 'flat structures' are in place, informal hierarchies emerge that introduce new power dynamics and can undermine the equality. Think and talk about power and these dynamics.
- Some enterprises have looked into getting independent support to improve shared decision making and scrutiny, including working with partners to support coproduction, unionisation and evaluation delivered by partner organisations.

The case study on Emmaus Bristol explores how they have embedded scrutiny and the voice of participants within their organisation.

Resources

There are many useful guides on having effective coproduction in organisations. Here are a few to consider:

Homeless Link's coproduction toolkit: homeless.org.uk/knowledge-hub/co-production-toolkit

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) has coproduction resources for training and resources for people working in and using services in health and social care: www.scie.org.uk/co-production

The National Lottery Community Fund has a wealth of resources around coproduction and other learning from the Fulfilling Lives programme: www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/insights

Approaches to engagement

Defining the right model for how you work with people experiencing homelessness is key for any enterprise. For example, this could be offering voluntary roles, employment, or training as an 'enrichment activity' or a hybrid of different types of engagement.[2] Different approaches to engagement bring benefits, challenges and the potential for tensions to arise.

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[2] The research report features a typology of engagement approaches revealed through the research process.

Voluntary roles

Decisions on whether roles should be paid employment or on an unpaid basis can be a fertile area for unfairness. An organisation's available resources will often dictate whether paid roles are on the table, but offering roles on a voluntary basis can also be an impactful way to work with participants who are not in a position to take on paid employment or where volunteering might better meet their needs. Voluntary roles should be beneficial to the participant, offering personal growth and a valuable and meaningful experience.

There are many benefits to offering voluntary roles instead of paid roles:

- Various circumstances can mean that participants are not ready to take up employment, including personal challenges and disincentives and barriers within the welfare system that make starting work difficult.
- Voluntary roles can offer a good opportunity to get a feel for work and the organisation with a lower level of commitment.
- Voluntary roles can offer more flexibility than paid work.

Voluntary roles should, however, always offer something in return to those engaging in them. This could include training and development opportunities, support from an organisation or personal budgets. Out-of-pocket expenses should always be paid. Among enterprises participating in this study there was solid consideration of providing a fair offer for volunteers and good practice in avoiding unfairness. Clarity in what the role entails and the 'offer' for participants is crucial from the outset.

In order to promote fairness in volunteering:

- Offer voluntary roles that are meaningful and provide opportunities for personal development and career progression.
- Construct roles that offer value to both the enterprise and the participant. Ensure flexibility in volunteer roles to match individual needs, goals and interests.
- Consider the duration of voluntary roles. This may mean offering a fixed-term role or agreeing and reviewing the time spent in a role with the participant.
- Offer supervision and support that regularly reviews a participant's circumstances and progression.
- Treat voluntary roles as 'added value', rather than being reliant on specific volunteers for delivering the business activity. If a volunteer cannot attend,

can you continue to run the business? Ensure that there are adequate numbers of volunteers involved and that staff have the flexibility and capacity to take up the slack if a volunteer is unable to attend.

- Avoid partially paid roles where an individual is doing both a paid role and a voluntary role in the same organisation at the same time.
- Avoid job substitution and be cautious of saying to a participant that their contribution might lead to a paid job. This could create false expectations, and even a lawsuit, should the employment not materialise (see section below).

Resources

There are many guides to managing volunteers and volunteer experiences effectively. Here are a few:

NCVO (The National Council for Voluntary Organisations) has a range of materials on involving volunteers including the law related to voluntary roles: www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/involving-volunteers

The Voluntary Organisations Disability Group and National Care Forum have a useful volunteer management toolkit: www.vodg.org.uk/resource/volunteer-management-toolkit.html

Revolving Doors Agency and Russell Webster have produced a guide on how to support people with lived experience in peer volunteer roles: www.revolving-doors.org.uk/publications/peers-who-volunteer

Avoiding job substitution

Job substitution is when volunteers have similar duties to paid staff members, either where an organisation directly replaces a paid member of staff with a volunteer or where an organisation does so indirectly by offering a service staffed by volunteers, outcompeting ones that use paid workers.

Existing literature identifies that the most successful voluntary roles for moving people towards employment are those that closely replicate employment, which can push organisations towards inadvertent job substitution. Some enterprises manage this by setting time limits for voluntary roles; others rotate volunteers around different roles in the organisation, which also has the advantage of providing a variety of experience.

The Volunteering England and Trade Union Congress (TUC) charter for strengthening relations between paid staff and volunteers (2009)[3] says:

> *"Involvement of volunteers should complement and supplement the work of paid staff. They should not displace paid staff or undercut their pay and conditions of service."*

It further recommends:
- The added value of volunteers should be highlighted as part of commissioning or grant-making processes, but their involvement should not be used to reduce contract costs.
- Effective structures should be put in place to support and develop volunteers and the activities they undertake, and these should be fully considered and costed when services are planned and developed.
- In the interests of harmonious relations between volunteers and paid staff, volunteers should not be used to undertake the work of paid staff during industrial disputes.

Transparency in roles

Transparency in roles is crucial to avoiding unfairness. When the boundaries are blurred between paid and unpaid roles or participants do not have a good understanding of their role and the expectations around it, tensions and resentments can emerge. The findings from the research suggest the following are essential to achieve transparency in roles:
- clearly defined role descriptions outlining tasks and/or responsibilities
- a clear 'offer' of what people will receive in return for their contribution
- time to discuss roles and ensure clarity in all aspects of what to expect
- clarity in what people need to succeed and how they will know if they are succeeding
- investment in building relationships and getting to know each other (see later in the guide).
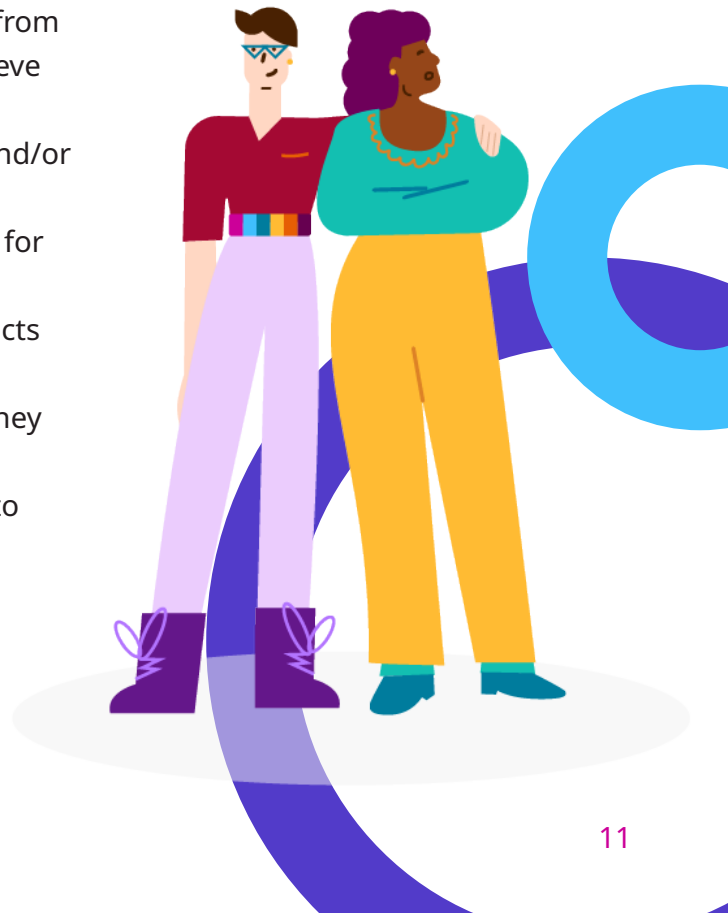
[3] Available at: www.tuc.org.uk/research-analysis/reports/charter-strengthening-relations-between-paid-staff-and-volunteers

The case study on <u>Standing Tall</u> explores how it has ensured clarity for all in the roles it offers.

Fair paid roles

Participants in this study stressed the importance of all paid employees receiving a fair wage for their time, either at market rates for the role or using a universal fair payment rate such as the Real Living Wage or London Living Wage.[4]

Other insights emerged from the research around recognising how payment through employment will impact on a participant's actual income. This is particularly the case when the role is not full time, whether it has fixed hours or is sessional work. It is important to understand and acknowledge the following factors:

- how much income the participant needs to cover their costs, looking at all their outgoings including housing, childcare and other bills
- how their benefits will be impacted by working (if applicable), what the requirements will be for reporting to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and how support will be provided to manage this.

Resources

Fulfilling Lives South East Partnership has produced a useful resource on employing people with lived experience of multiple and complex needs: www.bht.org.uk/fulfilling-lives/learning-and-resources

Valuing time and safe compensation

More often than not, whether in paid or unpaid roles, social enterprises are working with people who continue to need additional income support through welfare benefits. Being flexible around how individuals are renumerated for their time and contribution is essential and takes time to manage effectively. For both paid and unpaid roles, when finding ways to safely compensate people for their time, enterprises should focus on the following:

- **Be generous and proactive.** Participants should not be out of pocket as a result of their engagement.
- **Be flexible.** Give participants as many different choices as realistically possible in how they can personally and professionally benefit from their

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[4] Find out more at: www.livingwage.org.uk

time. Some examples identified in the research were training bursaries, provision of equipment, deposits for accommodation and opportunities such as trips, training or event tickets.

- **Think about what might support people day to day.** Rather than requiring people to purchase lunch with volunteer expenses, could expenses be used to pay for shopping so that people can make their lunch and bring it with them?
- **Consider the impact.** Be aware of the legal and practical implications of sharing funds on participants' benefits, housing or other factors related to their personal situation.

Resources

Some useful resources around benefits and managing these while engaging in work and volunteering:

Turn2Us has a range of resources on benefits including around how benefits are affected by working hours: www.turn2us.org.uk/Your-Situation#A-Z

NCVO's resources around involving volunteers include advice around volunteering and benefits and ensuring you don't create an employment contract with volunteers: www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/involving-volunteers

Approaches to engagement: key questions

- What do the people engaged in your activities get in return – is it fair?
- Are responsibilities, tasks and expectations of roles clearly articulated and understood by participants?
- When working with volunteers, are the opportunities on offer likely to be meaningful and rewarding for a volunteer? How is it monitored to ensure strong reciprocal benefits to the volunteer?
- Are roles on offer flexible to individual needs and circumstances?
- Are the tasks a volunteer would be undertaking fundamental to the organisation's business activities? What would be the impact on the enterprise if a volunteer in this role left tomorrow?
- Is the level of responsibility within a volunteer role appropriate for a volunteer to carry out?
- Are the rates of pay you offer your staff in line with market rates?

Boundaries and transitions

Lack of clarity in relation to boundaries and expectations can lead to tensions and resentment. Transitions in, within and out of organisations can be catalysts for relationships becoming less positive. In this section we explore how boundaries, realistic expectations and participant transitions can be managed within an organisation.

Recruitment and induction

Participants in the research stressed the importance of social enterprises and participants finding "the right fit". It makes sense for participants and it makes sense for the enterprises. Investing in the early stages of engagement through enhanced recruitment and induction processes can help participants to know whether an engagement opportunity is right for them from the start. Some steps identified to support this are:

- Throughout the recruitment and induction process communicate honestly and consistently around what a role entails and what is on offer to participants in return for their contribution. Going beyond a written role description is key, as is taking time to discuss the role in depth.
- Offer opportunities to meet people, explore roles and try different activities before a commitment is made. Examples could be recruitment days, group activities, taster sessions and informal learning experiences.
- Implement a protracted, involved induction process, including how to manage situations where engagement does not work out. There should be an emphasis on identifying transferable skills, and helping recruits feel welcome, connected and a sense of belonging.

Throughout recruitment and induction, emphasis should be placed on getting to know each other and forging relationships.

Getting to know each other

Forging relationships, building trust and a common understanding is crucial to maintaining fairness and has a significant impact on participants making the most

of their experiences. From the start, investing time to get to know each other is key. Consider the following points on how to get to know participants:

- It is a process that depends on listening to an individual without judgement, taking their needs, strengths and aspirations seriously and ensuring they feel heard.
- Keep expectations realistic, while hoping and planning for the best, ensure there is capacity to be there for participants if things do not go to plan.
- Attend to lines of communication, maintain regular contact and work on developing trust.
- Use activities that are work related and social to build relationships across the enterprise. Food is a great way to connect!
- Understand and work through the obstacles between a person's current circumstances and where they want to be. Discuss what people want out of the opportunity and tailor it as far as possible to meet these aspirations.
- Consider how motivations to engage with an enterprise might influence a participant's ability to speak up and give feedback. For example, if a participant hopes to progress to employment from a voluntary role, or to access a particular opportunity, they might be less likely to raise concerns or might accept tasks that they are not comfortable doing.

The case study on the [Connection Crew](#) explores the approaches it uses to get to know participants.

Managing transitions

When people move between different roles and relationships it can create tensions. This is particularly so when moving from an unpaid to a paid role, or when there is a move from being someone who accesses support from an organisation to engaging in their trading activities. Making these transitions is often much harder than anticipated. The following points are important to consider in managing transitions between roles:[5]

- Participants moving into volunteering roles from a relationship of support may face a lack of self-esteem or feel beholden to the organisation. This can mean a relationship where the organisation represents 'the parent'. In employment, when contracts break down it is rarely about the contract terms and more likely about the psychological agreement between employers and employees. For people engaging in a social enterprise moving from a relationship of support with an organisation to working for it changes the

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[5] Some of the points below are adapted from Ellis (2001), which highlights the challenges of transitions in not-for-profit organisations: Ellis, S. (2001) 'When a volunteer transforms into an employee', Energize Inc., www.energizeinc.com/hot-topics/2001/june

psychological contract. You need to recontract and set the boundaries again from the start of their new role.

- Moving from volunteering to employment typically means contributing more hours, which can change both how the participant feels about the workplace and how colleagues view the individual. Small irritants that seemed insignificant when only encountered once or twice a week for a few hours are now magnified into more serious issues. The enthusiasm of focusing attention on tasks for a few hours a week becomes tempered by daily or weekly repetition. Where once the participant could ignore the mundane responsibilities of employees, these now become a part of the job.

- Don't labour the point! A changing role is not necessarily a "promotion out of" volunteering or being a service user. If there are too many congratulations or comments like "this person used to be a volunteer but now we've given them a job", listeners might infer that the new employee was elevated rather than transferred. Key is finding a balance that recognises a participant's progress as well as the value in each opportunity.

- Relationships change among participants and with employee colleagues. If the participant enjoyed friendships with other participants, there may be disappointment. Just as employees promoted to leadership positions speak of being treated differently by their former colleagues, the same perspective shift can occur when a participant moves to a new role in an enterprise.

- A participant who moves from volunteering to a paid role may find that work previously accepted without comment is now criticised or that other rules have changed to make the work harder. As performance is scrutinised more closely, employee colleagues may suddenly seem less satisfied than when the participant was a volunteer.

Insights from the research suggest that successful transitions benefit from psychological recontracting of relationships, reforming perceptions of the relationship between participants, enterprises, other staff and volunteers and influencing how people behave.

The case study for Handcrafted explores its approach to ensuring transitions are safe and meaningful.

Resources

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development has resources on managing the employment relationship including a factsheet to support psychological contracting: www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/fundamentals/relations

Connecting with the community

Social enterprises and the staff working within them often play a role in connecting participants to the wider community as an essential part of supporting participants' routes out of homelessness. In many ways this is an inherent part of social business, but also enterprises that are proactive in building these connections can support people to move on. For those especially focused on forging good pathways to work they can increase their impact by forging connections with employers, other services and the community.

Establishing strong connections can involve making connections for participants with different stakeholders in the following ways:

- **Between participants:** While connectedness is often friendship and mutual support forming organically, creating spaces for these connections to blossom can help build the skill of connecting and encourage participants to forge connections beyond the host project.
- **Connections with the public and wider community:** Engaging with customers and other people in the local community helps people to feel 'normal' and see themselves differently. It gives people an opportunity to have positive interactions outside homelessness spaces.
- **Connections with industry and employers:** This helps people to see the opportunities available to them and build relationships with potential employers relating to the social enterprise and beyond.
- **Connections to social and progression opportunities:** Many research participants referred to a variety of opportunities to get busy through the social enterprise, including attending events, travelling, meeting informally, training sessions, and creative workshops.

> *"I try to do things that are run by other people. So rather than just putting on yoga or running, what I want is to be able to take [participants] along to a running club. And to help [participants] overcome that fear of new people. And then once they are in there, perhaps I can leave them there, that is the kind of hope. So, I really feel like... if people have got other communities that they are part of, they will do well."* – Frontline worker

The case studies on [Daylight Centre Fellowship](#) and [The House of St Barnabas](#) explore how they have created connections with the local community and employers.

Boundaries and transitions: key questions

- Are your role descriptions clear and accurate?
- Is the time you spend with each participant adequate to help them understand the role and organisation?
- When participants make transitions within the organisation, what is your approach to making sure these go smoothly?
- What opportunities does your project provide for those who have experienced homelessness to engage with the community and employers?

Support for participants and staff

Participants' ability to engage in enterprise and develop new skills and a readiness to move on is, to a significant degree, made possible through support. Support has many facets, whether provided through a designated support function or by a member of staff or team, or more generally through a supportive environment and on-the-job guidance. There is significant variation in how support is provided, how it fits in with the enterprise activities and how these two factors impact on participants. In this section we explore some of the good practice around this.

Adequate support

Across the many types of support the key is ensuring that it is well resourced. It makes good business sense to ensure that people are supported in their roles. Good practice in providing support in enterprise includes the following:

- Consider how support can create the circumstances that allow participants to engage with the activities on offer. The support on offer should be matched to the other aspects of the enterprise including how people engage, the type of activities and how they are compensated. For example, if participants are working in flexible or sessional paid work, but are likely still to be in receipt of benefits, the enterprise should support participants to manage these benefits where appropriate.
- Enterprises should offer support so that participants can make the most of their personal and professional development.
- Support should be well resourced and costed into the business model. Investing

in support for participants is an investment in the enterprise.

- Support delivery should not be reliant on volunteers. Challenges can emerge when there is too much reliance on peer or volunteer support mechanisms. In these instances, support can feel and look like job substitution. Voluntary approaches should be part of a wider approach to supporting people.
- From the outset, inform people about what support is on offer, the approach used, how to access it and what to expect, as well as articulating that people may get different levels of support based on their needs.

Supportive environments

Offering support goes beyond having a designated support function. Creating supportive environments that nurture, develop and challenge people is key, as is taking into account the journey people have been on, and the potential for experiences of trauma and exploitation. Good practice is to implement a shared framework for support that takes this into account. This could mean embracing psychologically (or trauma) informed environment or recovery models that go beyond individual support workers to whole organisational approaches.

Part of having a supportive environment is also creating the conditions for participants to speak up about their needs and aspirations. Indebtedness from participants to organisations and the people within them can lead to compliance, doing things they may not want to do and being less likely to raise concerns around fairness. Enterprises should acknowledge the risks of indebtedness and consider how this can shape Participants' ability to speak up and engage with support.

'Having a wobble'

In a focus group, a group of staff reflected on a common experience where participants, having gained employment, 'have a wobble' and return to misusing substances or face a mental health crisis. Following this, participants get in touch full of regret, anxiety and shame.

This is unfortunate and common. It can also be a golden opportunity to normalise the situation for a participant. Suggestions on how to manage this include:
- Coach participant on how to 'phone in sick', send a text and stay in contact when issues arise.
- Give participants the time to do what they need to address the 'wobble', and return to the enterprise as soon as possible.
- Keep the lines of communication open and help the individual to reflect on the situation.
- Identify what the triggers were, and reflect and learn from them.

Support to do a role in a practical or line-management sense and support around personal and circumstantial issues beyond the enterprise are very different, as highlighted in the research. Challenges can arise when these functions overlap, where personal support is provided by a line manager. This is more common in smaller enterprises, where there are smaller teams and less diversified roles. Some enterprises dealt with this by separating support and management functions, but while this is often a luxury of larger organisations, this brings benefits and pitfalls.

Table 2: The pros and cons of separate and unified support structures		
	Splitting support	**Keeping it together**
Why it works	Allows participants to be different things in different spaces, presenting different sides of themselves to the organisation. It can mean participants are more open around personal challenges in their lives.	Staff can get a more holistic picture of a participant and allows the participant to confront the totality of the issues they are facing in one space.
Why it doesn't	Can mean competing priorities between different functions or teams within organisations and subsequent tensions. For example, the need for participants to deliver a task versus taking time off when needed.	Can mean participants do not feel comfortable to come forward with personal challenges.

Resources

Homeless Link has guidance on trauma-informed care, psychologically informed environments (PIE) and reflective practice: homeless.org.uk/knowledge-hub/trauma-informed-care-and-psychologically-informed-environments/

PIELink is an online community of practice that aims to connect people involved with addressing the psychological and emotional issues that go with homelessness, and particularly in the development of psychologically informed environments, including a library of resources

A useful tool for supporting wellbeing in the workplace is a 'Wellness Action Plan'. Mind has a set of guides and templates for employees, organisations and managers on how to implement these: www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work

Support with moving on

When the time is right for participants, moving on from an enterprise, whether into further employment, another volunteer role or to take some time out can and should be a positive experience. There are, however, multiple factors that can prevent people from moving on, ranging from a lack of work and accommodation opportunities outside the enterprise, being tied to a housing/benefits scenario or health issues, through to participants feeling tied to organisations because they enjoy the work or even feel beholden to it. Moving into employment from a volunteering role after periods out of work or having never experienced employment can feel daunting and can be a shock to the system. With the right support, however, it can also be a fast track away from homelessness.

Some organisations encourage moving on through time-limiting programmes. Others are against this approach, stressing that time-limited models may push participants too quickly before they are ready. There is no right answer and decisions around whether or not to time limit a programme or engagement opportunity should be made based on the approach of the enterprise and the target participant group. That said, good practice is that the approach should be person led and delivered with flexibility to suit the individual.

The following points should be considered when supporting participants in moving on from an enterprise:
- Through the support offer, work to address the self-identified barriers preventing individuals from accessing the work or other opportunities they want through coaching and guidance.
- Offer or support participants to access accredited qualifications and industry specific certification.
- Offer stepping stones and pathways to participants to find out about work options, meet employers and test different sectors.
- Identify jobs and employers that offer stable and fairly paid employment to participants.
- Rather than having fixed cut-off points for support, consider having review periods to consider opportunities for ongoing engagement and next steps.
- Having an open door for people to stay in touch, return to the enterprise and engage in activities can mean participants feel supported and provides inspiration to other participants.
- Identify ways in which participants can give back after they move on to maintain connectedness without indebtedness.
- Ongoing support to help people as they start their new employment can make a significant difference in maintaining the employment.

The case studies on The House of St Barnabas and Printed by Us explore supporting participants engaging in enterprise activities.

Resources

FEANTSA has a number of resources around employment targeted at organisations working with people experiencing homelessness including an employability starter kit: www.feantsa. org/en/resources/resources-database

Supporting staff

A key finding in the research was the crucial role that staff play in managing the potential tensions alongside the competing priorities of social enterprise. Often the greatest burden of managing tensions will fall on one individual or a small group of key people. These people are aware of tensions, hold them together and strive to resolve them in real time and for the future. Participants stressed the importance of recognising that enterprises need these people, but also how managing tensions takes resilience and when unsupported can be overwhelming.

There is a need for a personal and organisational approach to supporting staff. Adopting some of the good practice outlined in this toolkit will reduce the pressure on key staff members, but the following steps will help manage this further:
- Create spaces for debriefing and reflective practice. This may be within the organisation or through engaging in networks of people in similar roles.
- Ensure staff know the boundaries of their role and when it's okay to say, "That's not my job."
- Limit the number of people that staff are responsible for and accountable to, reducing the different dynamics that people have to manage.
- Make sure people are not isolated through recruitment or support.
- Have a clear framework of the organisation's values, aims and intended outcomes.

Resources

Homeless Link offers guidance on reflective practice for staff in homelessness services and also provides training around this area: homeless.org.uk/knowledge-hub/trauma-informed-care-and-psychologically-informed-environments

Support for participants and staff: key questions

- How well does your support offer match your enterprise's business and engagement models?
- In what ways could you further develop your support to be psychologically informed?
- Is the support you offer participants well resourced? Does the support you offer rely on voluntary functions?
- In what ways does your enterprise prepare people for the 'real world' and in what ways could you do more?
- How could your enterprise better support people with moving on from the enterprise?
- Are there staff within the enterprise who are at the forefront of managing tensions and challenges within the enterprise? How are they supported?

Communicating and creating change

The research highlights how social enterprise has the power to shift dialogue, challenge perceptions and highlight the value evident in people experiencing homelessness. Through day-to-day interactions with members of the public, wider communications and engaging in social advocacy, enterprises have the potential to create lasting change. This section explores good practice around this.

How enterprises communicate

When enterprises communicate about what they do, how they work with participants and the impact they have, there is a risk of perpetuating negative public attitudes and misunderstandings around homelessness.

Enterprises should focus on articulating a standpoint on homelessness itself and how the enterprise responds to it. These elements can then be honestly, consistently, and transparently communicated across all stakeholder groups. The following areas need to be defined around how you articulate and communicate what your enterprise does:

- What is your standpoint on what homelessness is and how you talk about it? Be consistent across the organisation and with

external partners and audiences.

- How is the homelessness experience understood and valued by your enterprise?
- How does your business model respond to homelessness, and how you can generate income from it?
- What is your model of change is (also known as a 'theory of change')? What is your enterprise doing about homelessness and how does social business contribute to this?
- Consider how you are framing your communications and using evidence to make deliberate choices in the words and images you use to tell our stories about homelessness?

Avoiding 'pity marketing'

Linking participants' experiences to the sale of products or services brings risks of exploitation around 'pity marketing'. This is where adversity is used in a way that is exploitative of participants and manipulates the customer. Presenting social impact as added value when marketing products or services, rather than relying on good will to sell a product, can reduce the risk of 'pity marketing'. At its core, providing and marketing a product or service as of equal or better quality to those of competitors goes a long way to achieving this.

Resources

Crisis has a toolkit exploring how to frame homelessness that focuses on what to emphasise, what to explain and what to leave unsaid: www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/homelessness-knowledge-hub/services-and-interventions/talking-about-homelessness-introduction-to-framing

NCVO and NPC have useful resources for developing a theory of change:
- www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/strategy-and-impact/strategy-and-business-planning/theory-of-change
- https://www.thinknpc.org/resource-hub/ten-steps

Sharing stories

Sharing participant's stories can be a powerful tool for heightening awareness of issues relating to homelessness and raising the profile of social enterprises, but when badly managed it can be exploitative and lead to vulnerability. Participants are often keen to share their stories and customers to hear them. The question is

how social enterprises should use stories and anecdotes, and develop and articulate good practice around this.

As an organisation you should consider the following in how you use participants' stories:

• Offer time limits for how long an organisation uses a story and ensure the person whose story it is has full control over its usage.

• Sharing stories should not be the only way for participants to be involved in the organisation and should sit alongside wider involvement activities (see section on coproduction on page 7).

• Offer different levels of disclosure and confidentiality to suit the comfort levels and circumstances of individual participants.

• Have a sign-off process for any stories being used publicly. Give participants time to review and consider an output fully.

• Avoid using negative life experiences as stories for promoting products directly or specifically for fundraising activities because this can be particularly close to pity marketing.

• Consider how your enterprise frames the story and wider perceptions of homelessness.

Good practice in using participant stories involves the participant being fully informed around how information is used and any potential consequences of doing so. When discussing sharing stories with a participant, the following are useful points to explore:[6]

• How is the participant feeling at the time of the discussion? Have they got a lot on their plate, are they stressed or not feeling their best, and how might this affect their decision to share their story?

• Why does the participant want to share their story? What impact do they hope it will have and why?

• Who has already heard their story? Sharing a story publicly will mean many people could see it, so if there is anyone you'd like to tell personally, consider doing this before sharing it publicly.

• Has the participant had enough time to process a negative experience and put it behind them?

• How and where will the story be shared? Is it in the media, at an event, or on social media, for example? Once stories are online, it's important to consider that they can remain there forever. Some organisations will take down a story if requested to do so, but most will not (especially if the story has been shared with news outlets). If it has been shared on social media, deleting the story

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[6] Some of the questions are adapted from the Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand resource that aims to prepare people with lived experiences for sharing stories, before, during and after sharing: mentalhealth.org.nz/resources/resource/how-to-tell-your-lived-experience-story-safely

entirely may not be possible. The participant should consider this before sharing their story. Telling a story anonymously is also an option in some cases (but not all) – check this in advance.

• Telling a lived experience story in a public way can stir up some deep emotions. What support will you offer the participant and what support do they have more broadly around them?

Creating systems change

Besides creating change for individuals, social enterprise has the power to achieve change more broadly. The research highlighted how social enterprises are in a unique position to do this and identified instances of how participating enterprises were driving change.

CFE Research defines the 'system' as "the people, organisations, policies, processes, cultures, beliefs and environment that surround all of us".[7] Systems change is a change to any of these elements that is beneficial to people experiencing multiple disadvantage; sustainable in the long term (in that it is resilient to external future shifts in the environment); and transformational.

New Philanthropy Capital (NPC) sets out six key principles for systems change. The first three principles are in the planning stage: "understand needs and assets, engage multiple actors and map the systems". In the implementation stage, they recommend "distributed leadership and foster a learning culture". They stress that "engaging multiple actors is key and we need to keep an open mind about who to engage and how".

On a practical basis, what could this mean for individual social enterprises on the ground? What part of the system could they affect? Some enterprises include delivering services that are specifically focused on creating system change within their business model. For others the changes are more subtle but still with impact. The research highlighted examples of enterprises working with businesses to change their employment practices and make them fairer and hold them to account. Some enterprises are doing work in the community and with schools to

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[7] CFE (2020) The role of lived experience in creating systems change, in the series Evaluation of Fulfilling Lives: Supporting people with multiple needs. This report and other evaluative reports from the Fulfilling Lives programme can be found here: www.fulfillinglivesevaluation.org/

challenge perceptions of those who have experienced homelessness. Others have knowledge and learning that could be incredibly useful for shaping DWP and job centre approaches and policies.

Not all enterprises will be in a position to deliver campaigns and advocacy work directly, but the following steps can be taken to support change:

- Gather insight: Enterprises working with people experiencing homelessness are doing incredible work to address the personal, practical and systemic challenges surrounding homelessness. The learning generated is valuable and can be fed back to statutory bodies and decision makers.
- Think local: Identify issues that are affecting participants in your community. Link with local partners and identify stakeholders with whom you can make connections and work collaboratively.
- Network: Identify networks to join and partnerships that can be formed to share learning, pool resources and feed into the bigger picture. These may be national bodies around homelessness or local organisations that cut across service user groups. A great place to start is making contact with the Homeless Link partnerships team because members' input here feeds into policy and influencing work nationally.

The case study on Expert Citizens CIC explores its approach to communications and systems change.

Resources

There are many guides and materials that can be used to understand systems change, learning and thinking. Here are some to consider:

Systems change: A guide to what it is and how to do it – developed by New Philanthropy Capital: www.thinknpc.org/resource-hub/systems-change-a-guide-to-what-it-is-and-how-to-do-it

'Designing out homelessness: Practical steps for business' is a toolkit for employers on how to prevent, offer help and create pathways out of homelessness: www.bitc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/bitc-healthycommunities-toolkit-designing-out-homelessness-practical-steps-business-july21.pdf

Communicating and creating change: key questions

- What is your conceptualisation of homelessness? Do your stakeholders have the same conceptualisation of homelessness and the value of your participants?
- What do you do with people's experiences of homelessness?
- Do you use participants' stories to sell products or to create systems change?
- Do you know how your project, and those who use it, is considered by the local community and public? What mechanisms do you have to work with any negative perceptions and extenuate good ones?
- To what extent do you rely on goodwill in order to sell your products or services?
- Are participants fully informed about the implications of sharing their stories?
- Do you have insights and learning that could be used to create systems change?

Good practice case studies

Emmaus Bristol – Embedding scrutiny

Since 2003 Emmaus Bristol has been providing homes, support, training and work experience for formerly homeless men and women (known as 'companions'), as well as family homes for those in housing need and move-on homes. Emmaus has three shops, an online store, a furniture collection service, a house clearance service and a warehouse to sort, upcycle and sell donated, pre-loved furniture, clothes and household items. It also has a business incubator for small businesses, charities and social enterprises. At the heart of their central office and warehouse they have also recently built Eco Holiday Accommodation as a new social enterprise.

Emmaus Bristol has 22 companions, most of whom work in one of the community's social enterprises. They sign off all benefits, except for housing benefit. Companions receive accommodation (a room of their own), food, clothing, a weekly allowance and an allowance for holidays.

Emmaus has a very thoughtful referrals process that is audited by a trustee to ensure it is fair and well considered. The CEO takes scrutiny seriously:

> *"I don't think people are going to go into it [social enterprise] with … bad intentions. But I think bad things can happen by mistake. And I think there is also a danger that someone could use a social enterprise badge to disguise poor practice."*

A number of years ago the organisation identified that its warnings and evictions procedures should have the same level of scrutiny as the referrals process and has since addressed this. It developed a system where if somebody receives a warning

it has to be documented, and support must be offered to the individual (fairly standard practice). In addition, evictions can only be made with the sign off of two other people, usually the CEO and a trustee. The CEO explains that this is not an easy process: it is time consuming and puts pressure on the team because people feel concerned about the risk to an individual. Without evidence and due process, this sort of exclusion can be unfair.

In addition to the built-in scrutiny within these processes, Emmaus Bristol consistently employs a series of mechanisms to capture feedback and involve staff and companions in day-to-day and strategic decision making within the project, including:

- a snapshot survey every quarter
- companions attending board meetings
- companions having space to communicate with trustees without staff involvement through monthly trustee visits
- a companion forum
- ad-hoc meetings to feed into strategic and business planning.
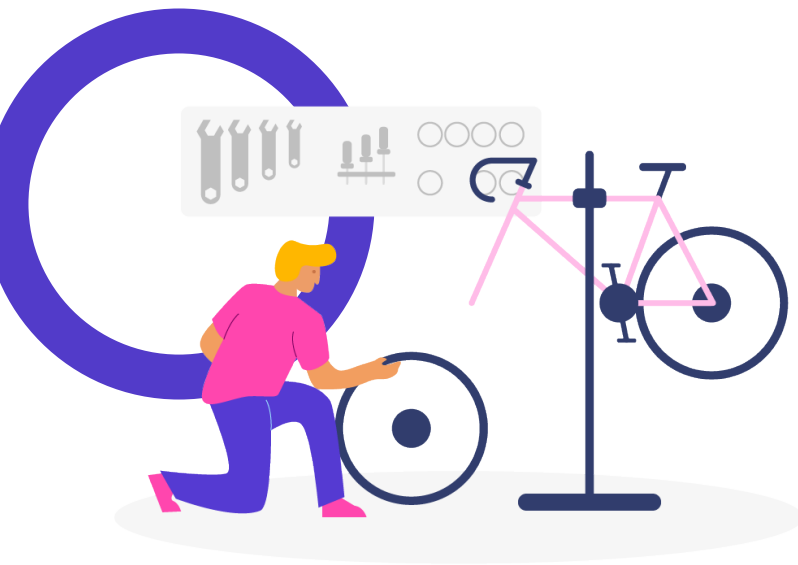
Michael House – Defining engagement models

Michael House is a hostel based in Bournemouth that operates the 'On the Move' project. This is an enterprise offering bicycle servicing, second-hand bike sales and providing affordable or, where possible, free bikes to people in need, including people who are homeless and key workers. The project started in 2019 as a pop up in a local park and has developed into a self-funding community project. It has, however, faced a decline in income due to the pandemic.

The enterprise works with residents of the hostel as an enrichment and community engagement activity for residents. Residents can get involved in activities flexibly

at the onsite workshop or at the pop up. Residents have the opportunity to learn new skills, gain Level 2 Bicycle Maintenance qualifications or AQA Unit Awards, and engage with members of the local community.

Since the pandemic, Michael House has been exploring whether to expand the enterprise. There is potential to grow the trading activities and create a more structured programme for residents as part of this. Keeping it in its current form with a focus on it being an 'enrichment activity' is an important consideration because growth could mean it loses its flexible approach and person-centred focus. It is also aware that as a small organisation growing the enterprise could take away from their organisational mission. They are also aware that other opportunities are available locally that could be signposted to or partnered with. With these considerations in mind, the organisation is clear about its objectives and aims to develop the enterprise and associated roles that correspond to this, recognising that with growth will come change that could impact on how it delivers on its mission.
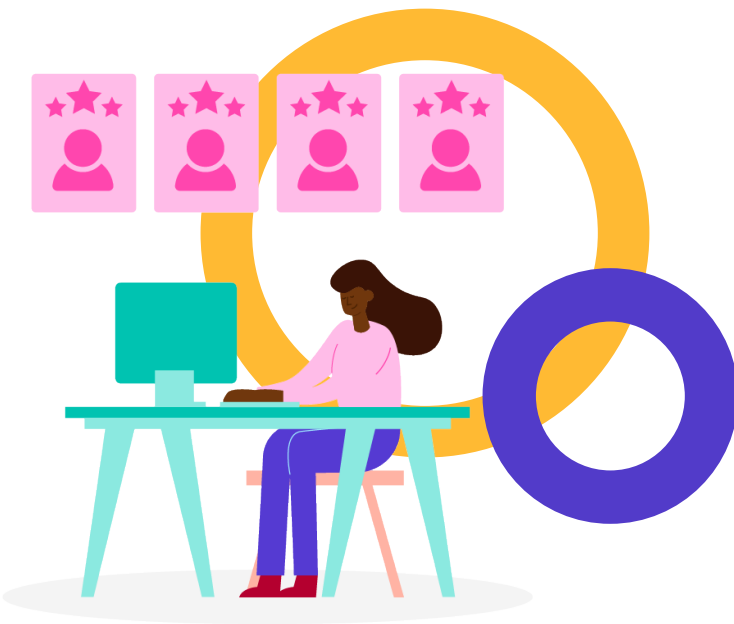
Standing Tall – A clear offer that benefits all

Standing Tall is an enterprise that works with businesses to find stable jobs for people experiencing homelessness. It officially started trading in 2020 in Birmingham and has recently expanded operations to Manchester and London. The enterprise has grown out of a simple idea: to connect employers looking for good staff with people experiencing homelessness who have skills and a desire for employment.

Standing Tall has a clear offer for all involved:
- For people experiencing homelessness it offers to find work with a living wage and a guaranteed length of employment, and provides access to

accommodation through an 'Amici' host.

- The 'Amici' host is paid rent for comfortable and lightly supportive accommodation, while their lodger saves enough for a deposit for permanent accommodation.
- For employers, Standing Tall finds them suitable employees and takes on employing the individual for the first three months of their contract. Employers then take on the employment of the person directly and pay a finder's fee to Standing Tall.

The staff work as talent scouts, listening to all parties, understanding what they have to offer and matching participants to job roles. Beyond creating stable routes out of homelessness through employment, the organisation is also actively challenging conceptions of homelessness by highlighting value in people moving away from homelessness. It is also championing the living wage and employers that commit to a living wage and promoting this nationally. Standing Tall has found that employers are actively seeking employees who will stay longer term and they are prepared to invest to secure them.

> *"The way I look at it is, if we come across someone who is ready for work and that's what they want to do, that's what they are passionate about, then we will find them that job…"*

Connection Crew – Getting to know each other

Connection Crew CIC is a London-based social enterprise that provides event staff to support in setting up staging, audio visual equipment and other logistics, and moving services. It uses an employment-based model where people who have had experience of homelessness can be trained and employed as a member of its crew. Since 2005 when the organisation started, it has employed 312 ex-homeless people to complete more than 172,500 hours of work.

Connection Crew has an academy programme for participants to access employment with the enterprise. The academy programme places an emphasis on hands-on employment preparation aimed at those who are motivated by practical and physical work, but would like to feel more

confident in professional settings. It provides training to prepare people for roles followed by an assessment to see if people are able to join the team. The work is physically demanding and people joining the programme need to be in a position to deliver the role and be confident to manage their hours and income independently. While employment is not guaranteed, programme graduates automatically get a job interview for the role of event crew.

Staff are emphatic about the need to really get to know their participants and from experience highlight that "just because something is really common to us, and something we have dealt with hundreds of times, that doesn't mean that that is the experience of that person sat opposite you". Listening to individuals is one thing, but this must be accompanied by individuals feeling "that we are ready to hear them", "we show we take them seriously" and trust them, lines of communication are attended to and connection maintained. Connection Crew has found this approach fosters trust so that individuals can openly present their very particular needs, barriers and strengths and the organisation can respond flexibly to them. Trainees and employees in turn feel trusted, understood and accommodated.

Handcrafted – Meaningful transitions

Handcrafted aims to empower people who have experience of multiple disadvantage. It works with individuals to enable them to make positive steps to turn their lives around, be part of a community and start to give back. The organisation currently has 43 properties housing 50 people. It recently won the Homeless Link Excellence Award for Social Enterprise of the Year. It has three hubs, each with an enterprise, including house renovation, a community café, screen printing, wood working workshop and a pickle and chutney making project. In

this social enterprise the priority is very much on supporting the development of the client group, rather than income generation and enterprise growth. People with experience of homelessness volunteer and work alongside others who don't have experience of homelessness, primarily developing their skills, confidence and connections with the communities they live in. In the past, Handcrafted relied on a support tool that is widely used and valued in the sector, but found that it wasn't working for them and in response developed the Empowerment Matrix.

The Empowerment Matrix considers the holistic aspects of empowering people facing multiple disadvantage and recognises the stages along the journey, while placing an equal value on pausing at any particular stage. The Matrix aims to see people empowered in five areas:

- Living space – a safe place to live that feels like home
- Using time – something meaningful to do each day
- Social life – people to talk to and a good support network
- Self-confidence – trust in our own abilities and having something to give
- Coping strategies – ways to cope and bounce back when things get tough.

At referral, Handcrafted identifies the relevant areas of need, then measures four stages of empowerment in each area:

- Entering – "I am open to using resources available to me with some support."
- Engaging – "I am using my own initiative and taking hold of opportunities."
- Applying – "I have my own ideas of what I want to do using my new skills."
- Extending – "I am looking beyond myself, to build up my community" or "I am taking steps to strike out on my own without needing support."

The appropriate stage is determined for each individual, scoring 1-4 for each of the five areas. This reveals several elements:

- each trainee's average level across the five areas
- the change in the trainee's level in each area since the previous review – how many levels they have moved up
- how long a trainee has maintained a level if they have stayed at the same level since the previous review
- the average 'distance travelled' by all trainees in each of the five areas
- how many trainees are 'maintaining stability' at each stage, and how many have maintained that level for three or more months.

An important aspect of the Empowerment Matrix is that the organisation's need to be accountable and measure impact is uncoupled from an individual having to achieve a score or get to the next stage. They "celebrate individual journeys and applaud every success as it arises", but are not bound to 'make it happen' for the sake of performance metrics. The outcome bears witness to what has taken place rather than driving a person's support plan.

Daylight Centre Fellowship – Connecting with the community

The Daylight Centre Fellowship was established in 1994, registered as a charity in 2003, and ever since has assisted disadvantaged and vulnerable adults, particularly people sleeping rough, vulnerably housed, in poverty and socially isolated. As such, the Fellowship sees itself as at the very forefront of social action in the north Northampton area. The organisation's mission is "to prepare adults impacted by homelessness, poverty and social exclusion for a healthier, happier, independent and purposeful futures". It operates a community hub, a shop, a food bank, an allotment project and venue hire.

The strapline for the organisation is 'Embracing our local community through inclusion, provision and action' and it has an emphasis on working with community volunteers. It has a tailored induction process for community volunteers and a detailed induction package for clients as well. It recognises that the clients are part of the community, so while they come in as a client volunteer, once they get their lives back on track, you can see there is the potential for them to become a community volunteer. A good example of this in action is the new allotment social enterprise project where clients volunteer together with volunteers and staff to grow fruit and vegetables so people can have healthy nutritional meals that everyone has worked together to grow.

The project helps build community links all round and breaks down the ingrained feelings of those who have experienced homelessness being 'othered' and 'othering' themselves. Working together on joint endeavours on an equal basis helps break down any stigma around homelessness from the community, and helps those who have experienced homeless reintegrate with their local community. The project also recognises that many people in the community are themselves isolated, suffering from mental health issues and in food poverty. Integration breaks the isolation

of community members and provides them with mutual support with those with similar lived experience of mental health issues, and helps those who have experienced homelessness become normalised, recognising that mental health issues affect us all, and that they have some expertise to offer in this area.
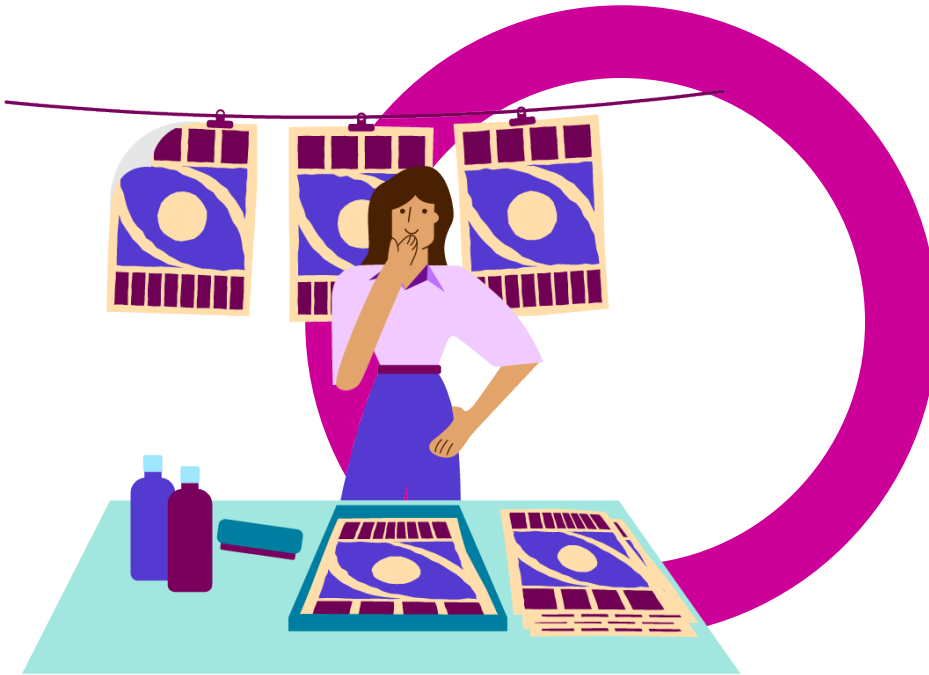
Printed by Us – Enterprise as a vehicle for personal development

Printed By Us (PbU) is a social enterprise based in Sheffield that operates as part of the Cathedral Archer Project charity. The enterprise produces high-quality art prints, garments and mugs and sells them online, through their shop, at festivals and at markets. The PbU team is 90-95% comprised of people with experience of homelessness.

Participants in the PbU programme are paid employees working on a sessional basis. To qualify for employment with PbU, participants need to have permanent housing, be managing any personal issues like addiction, and want to engage with the mentoring and wellbeing programme. Often participants will have undertaken some volunteering with the Cathedral Archer Project before employment. Once in a job with PbU, performance is monitored and reflected on against the 'four-point outcomes framework' and in relation to 'three streams' that focus support and map an individual's journey in the project. The aim is to establish a holistic approach to development that is person centred, enables transparency around decisions regarding progression and types of support offered, and addresses the 'bigger picture' beyond housing and employment.

The three streams are:
- engagement – where there are a lot of support workers involved and they do the kind of work required with people who are in crisis
- stability – where individuals are housed but they need a lot of support with their benefits, the council etc. They aren't perhaps managing any addictions or health issues.
- fulfilment – a focus on wellbeing; aiming to have that holistic view, that work is not the only thing that will help you lead a satisfying life.

The outcomes framework covers four distinct areas each with indicators:
- accommodation
- health
- wellbeing
- citizenship.

The progression in these areas does not always happen in tandem. A common trend is that as participants become more stable they move into the middle of each of the areas. Participants often see employment as the end point, but the early days in employment can be experienced as a 'honeymoon period'. "People's sense of self sky rockets" and other issues around health and wellbeing or even accommodation take a back seat. The holistic approach taken by PbU continues to attend to the areas that might catch up with the individual over time and when the participant looks for more personal development around employment.

The House of St Barnabas – Moving on to good work

The House of St Barnabas (HOSB) is a private members' club in central London that operates as a social enterprise. Profit from the business as well as donations from members, corporate partners and trusts and foundations fund the impact work. The Employment Academy supports people affected by homelessness in London to find and thrive in lasting paid work. Trainees join a 10-week programme on a

voluntary basis that includes on-the-job, practical training in the members' club around hospitality and administration skills.

On completion of the training programme, graduates receive person-centred, holistic support to find suitable employment and with personal or circumstantial issues like housing. HOSB's 2,000 club members also play a role in this process, offering mentoring, employment opportunities and specialist knowledge when called upon.

A number of years ago HOSB undertook a review of its evaluation data and found that while people were getting into work and staying in work it tended to be low paid and sometimes insecure. This made them vulnerable to losing that work if and when life threw new challenges at them or finding themselves experiencing in-work poverty. From this point the organisation made a deliberate shift to 'good work', which in their context encompasses the London Living Wage, a secure contract, opportunities for progression and employers who look after their wellbeing. The criteria for the employers HOSB is willing to work with are as follows:

> *"We never go in with a clipboard. And we ... like most things, the determinant factor isn't if you can tick all the boxes and sign on the dotted line. It is the commitment there? Are people really engaging for the right reasons? Are employers in it for the long term with us? Or are they looking for a pipeline of workers for vacancies that they can't fill? So, it's very much about bringing people into the community really of House of St Barnabas."*

Once people have moved into employment, HOSB stays in touch with graduates to support them and their employers to ensure that people are supported, roles remain fair and that a good working relationship is maintained between employers and employees. The graduates are matched with a volunteer mentor who is able to use their experience and connections to continue developing pathways.

Moving on for good is crucially underpinned by reframing homelessness, taking on a graduate from HOSB is not an opportunity to appear to be doing good but one that should support organisations with excellent employment practices by providing excellent candidates.

Expert Citizens CIC – Communicating for change

Expert Citizens CIC (EC) is a community interest company built by and for people with lived experience and based in Stoke-on-Trent. It was founded as a service user group and formed as a community interest company in June 2016 working closely with and funded by the local Fulfilling Lives programme. It offers a range of services focused around using the insight of lived experience to motivate change including coproduction work, consultations, research and evaluation with clients including local authorities, universities and not-for-profit organisations.

From the start EC understood the need to reframe the conversation around multiple disadvantage. By naming themselves 'Expert Citizens' they distanced themselves from ideas around disadvantage and exclusion and used lived experience as a saleable asset. The 'Expert Citizens' have an equal place at the table in strategic decision making alongside professionals and policy makers.

EC recognises the difficulties and risk in telling stories relating to multiple disadvantage, for those telling their stories themselves and in terms of embedding stigma. This is particularly the case when short snapshots are used for web communications. As a response EC has developed creative and exciting ways to share experiences led by people with lived experience of multiple disadvantage. This includes: storytelling training, and using podcasts, videos, art and poetry. They reflect that they are telling truths that might be difficult to hear, and could be dark and depressive, but sharing these stories is essential to creating change. A crucial consideration is that stories are not used as fundraising tools.

EC members report how sharing stories through these mechanisms and the various engagements with decision makers to influence systems has supported them to

build confidence, feel part of a wider community and take ownership of their own experiences as they move away from difficult periods of their lives.

> " *"And self-believe in myself, even though I have been through these lived experiences and it's been a really negative thing I can actually harness that and use it as a positive to help create change for another person that is struggling. By using my story to help other people, [...] and if you have resilience and self-believe in yourself, you can challenge yourself and challenge people. And motives and mental health strategies. But without having a community and having people that believe in you, it's hard to express your views. But with Expert Citizens it gives us all a platform to speak clearly and tell the truth, even if the truth isn't what people want to hear, it needs to be heard. Because there is a lot of poverty and health inequality in Stoke-on-Trent."* – Lived experience participant

Homeless Link

Homeless Link is the national membership charity for frontline homelessness services. It works to improve services through research, guidance and learning, and campaigns for policy change that will ensure everyone has a place to call home and the support they need to keep it.

homeless.org.uk

INCLUSIVE**insight**

Inclusive Insight works with organisations to gather insight, improve policy and practice and embed the participation of people affected by homelessness in strategy, decision making and service design. It is passionate about the power of participation and believes that people and communities need to be in the lead to create meaningful change.

inclusiveinsight.co.uk

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