

Birmingham & Solihull Social Economy Consortium (BSSEC) Annual Report 2012-13 www.bssec.org.uk

From 2000 to 2011, BSSEC operated as an informal consortium, enabling key players with a shared interest in supporting and growing the social enterprise sector to work together effectively and increase the value and impact of what they do. During this time we established ourselves as an acknowledged centre of expertise on all things social enterprise.

BSSEC has been an acknowledged centre of expertise on all things social enterprise for nearly 13 years

In March 2012 we incorporated as a Community Interest Company and formally began trading in June 2012.

Choosing the CIC form has been a great success for us. Within months of incorporation we were able to raise almost £46,000 to help fund two major projects, including extending the email information and news service which goes out virtually every day to hundreds of subscribers.

Within months of incorporating we had raised nearly £46,000

The two primary funders of BSSEC's activities during the year have been the BIG Lottery Awards for All programme and the Barrow Cadbury Trust. The latter is funding a substantial programme of work to help us improve implementation and use of the new Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 legislation, and over the past year we have worked closely with key partner Birmingham City Council to help it implement the new law, and with social enterprises to raise awareness and understanding of the Act.

Our work on social value is moving the debate on – from theorising about the concept to real, practical lessons about its use and implementation

This work is currently being followed by a variety of public bodies, MPs, academics, and other local councils. It is shifting the debate on social value from theorising about the concept to real, practical lessons about its successful use and implementation.



An overview of the year...

In the year in question we have:

- (a) Engaged in research, policy development and support to help a key local partner – Birmingham City Council – and local social enterprises better understand and implement new social value legislation (the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012). You can access all of the briefing materials we have so far produced on social value on the dedicated policy page of our website.¹
- (b) Held a policy briefing event on social value for c.40 senior council officers/commissioners, produced briefing materials, supported Birmingham City Council's Head of Procurement & Strategy in developing social value guidance; and drafted a Social Value Policy for Birmingham City Council which was adopted by Cabinet on the 22nd April 2013.
- (c) Produced free briefing papers for social enterprises and third sector organisations on:
 - 'The Community Right to Challenge: A guide for social enterprises and the third sector'²
 - 'The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012: A guide for social enterprises and third sector organisations'³
 - 'Social enterprise & public service reform: A guide for public sector workers, social enterprises and third sector'⁴
 - 'The Localism Act 2011: A guide for social enterprises and third sector organisations'⁵
- (d) Disseminated hundreds of emails on issues of relevance to the sector, including promoting numerous social enterprise events, successes and news. In fact, some organisations we have distributed information for have told us that they have filled – and sometimes over-filled – events as a result of our e-mailshots!
- (e) Posted over 110 items on our blog consisting of news, policy updates and other matters relevant to the sector.

Social enterprise & the LEPs

In addition, for almost two years now we have been working closely with the Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) to try and ensure that social enterprise is firmly on the LEP's agenda.

This is important because the LEPs – which are private sector business-led bodies – are the successors to the old Regional Development Agencies, and while they don't have the financial budgets that the RDAs once had, they are responsible for all aspects of local economic development,

¹ <http://bssec.org.uk/policy-issues/public-services-and-social-value/>

² <http://bssec.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Right-to-Challenge.pdf>

³ <http://bssec.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Social-enterprise-and-the-PSSV-Act-1.2.pdf>

⁴ <http://bssec.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Social-enterprise-public-service-reform.pdf>

⁵ <http://bssec.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/The-Localism-Act-2011.pdf>

including, from June 2013, deciding how EU structural funds are spent locally. This makes it even more important that the LEPs acknowledge the economic and social role of both social enterprise and the wider third sector.

To this end we are currently developing a research method for a social enterprise survey across the GBSLEP territory which will help build-up the evidence-base regarding the sector's economic and social contribution.

Extending the audience for social enterprise

Thanks to the BIG Lottery *Awards for All* programme we have also successfully carried out a complete rebuild of our website, extended our news and information service and continued to build on the readership and profile of the BSSEC Blog.

It is a sign of how social enterprise is changing in Birmingham that just four or five years ago, when last we had major work done on our website, we had to accept tenders from as far away as Bradford in order to find a social enterprise provider able to undertake the work. This time, the tender was won by Citizen Coaching, a young social enterprise right here in Birmingham, which delivered not just great quality but unprecedented value for money.

Business support

Anyone who has tried to find and access free business support for social enterprise over the past couple of years will have learned how difficult this has become.

But in extremely difficult operating circumstances, individual BSSEC members have continued to secure funds that enable their continued delivery of support and development for the sector, including some support delivered in partnership. Our members will continue to work to maintain specialist business support which is free-at-the-point-of-delivery, and we are also working hard to try and ensure that the LEP's future investment priorities regarding business support include services that are appropriate to and reflect the values of social enterprise.

Raising awareness & understanding

Despite social enterprise being yet again at the forefront of many aspects of government policy – in public service 'reform', the setting-up of public service 'mutuals', and in new legislation like the Localism Act that offers new powers to local communities – we still find that public understanding of social enterprise (and that of politicians and policy-makers!) is not what one might hope.

In the coming year, then we will continue to prioritise research, information production and general educational efforts to support the social enterprise sector and help aid public understanding of it.

It is essential that LEPs recognise the importance of social enterprise and have it clearly included in their strategic priorities

We have completely rebuilt our website and continue to expand our free information service – now over 350 subscribers

We must ensure that the LEP's future investment priorities include business support that is appropriate for and reflects the values of social enterprise

Research, information and educational efforts to support the social enterprise sector and help aid public understanding of it will continue to be a priority

Impact

While difficult to quantify impact, we believe these activities have been of benefit to the wider social enterprise community in a number of ways:

- By raising the profile of social enterprise and improving public awareness and understanding;
- By creating opportunities for inter-trading;
- By helping to ensure that new and emerging policy (such as the Social Value Act) does create new market opportunities for social enterprise;
- By ensuring that social enterprise remains at the top of the policy agenda, including that of the Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership;
- By helping to promote social enterprises' events – we have received numerous emails from enterprises whose events we have helped promote to say that not only did they manage to sell out and fill the event but they got a much better audience profile as a consequence of our support.

The impact of our work continues to be closely aligned with our original aim of offering strategic support and development to the social enterprise sector

Our activities remain closely aligned with our original aims of offering strategic support and development to the sector.

BSSEC and its members will continue to work together for the benefit of the social enterprise sector, focusing on growing the sector, making it more sustainable, and adding value wherever we can.

BIRMINGHAM & SOLIHULL SOCIAL ECONOMY CONSORTIUM C.I.C

**Profit and Loss account
For the Year ended 31st March 2013**

	Notes	2013 £
Grants	1	26,800
Other		2,793
Cost of Sales		0
GROSS PROFIT		<u>29,593</u>
Administrative Expenses	2	13,062
OPERATING PROFIT/(LOSS)		<u>16,531</u>
Interest Receivable and similar income		0
PROFIT ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES BEFORE TAXATION		<u>16,531</u>
Tax on profit on ordinary activities		0
PROFIT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR AFTER TAXATION		<u><u>16,531</u></u>

BIRMINGHAM & SOLIHULL SOCIAL ECONOMY CONSORTIUM C.I.C

Balance Sheet

As at year ended 31st March 2013

	Notes	2013 £
Fixed Assets		<u>0</u>
Current Assets		0
Cash at Bank		<u>16,531</u>
		16,531
Creditors		
Amounts falling due within one year		
Creditors		0
		<u>16,531</u>
Net Current Assets		<u>16,531</u>
		<u>16,531</u>
Total Current Assets less Current Liabilities		<u>16,531</u>
Capital and Reserves	3	
Restricted reserves surplus/deficit		14,827
Unrestricted reserves surplus/deficit		1,704
		<u>16,531</u>

For the year ended 31 March 2013 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Responsibilities of directors:

- (a) The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.
- (b) The directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Notes to the accounts:

1 Income breakdown		£
Grants	Barrow Cadbury	16800
	Awards For All	10000
Other income	Credit	560
	Art share limited	713.46
	BVSC charity	595
	Brap LTD	150
	iSE	100
	Action for blind	175
	Spot on marketing	100
	BITC	150
	Other	250
Total		<u>29593.46</u>

2 Administrative Expenses		£
Grant expenditure	Barrow Cadbury	9312.72
	Awards for All	2660
Other expenses	IT	83.33
	Secretariat function	1000
	Bank charges	6
Total		<u>13062.05</u>

3 Grant income and expenditure	Barrow Cadbury	Awards for All
Opening balance	0.00	0.00
Income	16800.00	10000.00
Expenditure	9312.72	2660.00
Closing balance c/f	<u>7487.28</u>	<u>7340.00</u>

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Acknowledgements

BSSEC would like to thank the following people and organisations for their continuing support:

All of our members:

Anthony Collins Solicitors	Diocese of Birmingham
ART	iSE
brap	Jericho Foundation
Business in the Community	Kajans Productions
BVSC	RnR Organisation
Cloudberry Innovation & Development	Roots HR (CIC)
Colebridge Enterprises	The Social Enterprise Loan Fund
Concept Conference Centre/Action for Blind	Spot On Marketing & Communications CIC
People WM	Unity Trust Bank
Digbeth Trust	UnLtd

ART, Anthony Collins Solicitors and iSE for generously hosting meetings

The Barrow Cadbury Trust

The BIG Lottery – Awards for All programme

Birmingham City Council for the close working relationship that has developed during our work to support and embed social value

BVSC for enabling Jasbir Rai, our Treasurer, to prepare these accounts and Surpreet Bhogal to provide support with financial systems and statements

Citizen Click for its outstanding work in rebuilding our website and blog

Sarah Crawley & Tony Clabby, co-chairs and Directors

Published August 2013

Serving Directors	Sarah Crawley (iSE)	Tony Clabby (The Digbeth Trust)	Alun Severn (BSSEC secretariat)
Company secretary	Simon Lee (Anthony Collins Solicitors)		
Treasurer	Jasbir Rai (BVSC)		
