

NINTH ANNUAL REPORT

Covering the financial year 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021

Published: July 2021

Anthony Collins Solicitors | ART | Big Issue Invest | BVSC | brap | Bridging to the Future | Business in the Community | Changes UK | Colebridge Enterprises | Diocese of Birmingham | iSE | Jericho Community Business Ltd | Kajans Productions | RnR Organisation | Roots Human Resources CIC | School for Social Entrepreneurs West Midlands | Spot On Marketing & Communications CIC | Unity Trust Bank | UnLtd | Welcome Change CIC

Birmingham & Solihull Social Economy Consortium C.I.C (trading as BSSEC) is a company limited by guarantee registered in England & Wales No. 07992674. Registered Office address: Anthony Collins Solicitors LLP, 134 Edmund St, Birmingham B3 2ES.

CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION	3
2.0	HIGHLIGHTS 2020/21	4
3.0	ACCOUNTS & FINANCES	9
4.0	OUR MEMBERS	18

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1. BSSEC has now been operating for twenty-one years. This is our ninth Annual Report since incorporating as a Community Interest Company in 2012. We are a membership network of twenty organisations that share a common commitment to supporting the strategic growth and development of the sector. In pursuit of these aims we:
 - Work with the public sector to ensure that social enterprise is recognised, understood and clearly reflected in its priorities.
 - Work with the private sector to increase the opportunities for social enterprises as sub-contractors, suppliers and partners.
 - Lobby and advocate on behalf of the sector to raise its profile and increase its influence.
 - Share information and news so that social enterprises are better connected and more informed.
 - Raise resources to enable work that will benefit the sector.
2. The School for Social Entrepreneurs West Midlands, our twentieth member, joined during 2020/21 and we welcome them warmly.
3. Recent years have seen our work focus increasingly on finding new ways to support and encourage social enterprise, including working with new public sector partners, such as West Midlands Combined Authority, to ensure that social enterprise stays firmly on the policy agenda and is recognised as a significant part of the local economy, capable of delivering economic, social *and* environmental benefit and able to unlock social value in ways that many conventional businesses cannot.

2.0 HIGHLIGHTS 2020/21

1. We again acknowledge with gratitude the grant-funding BSSEC continued to receive throughout 2020/21 from The Barrow Cadbury Trust to help support social enterprise infrastructure in Birmingham and to help fund our continuing work to create long-term opportunities for social enterprise and social value. We especially want to record our appreciation of The Barrow Cadbury Trust's flexible and supportive approach. This has always been characteristic of the Trust but during the Covid-19 pandemic we found it especially helpful and especially reassuring.
2. The 2020/21 financial year will for ever be associated with the coronavirus crisis. This was just unfolding when we produced our Eighth Annual Report and since then the full scale of the crisis has become evident – the social, economic and human cost it has exacted, the change and adaptation it has required, and the continuing transformation that will be necessary as part of a just, equitable and inclusive recovery.
3. The pandemic inevitably had an impact on how we work to create opportunities for social enterprise and social value but did not diminish the importance of this work. Indeed, quite the reverse: the social economy has always been vital to helping create inclusive economic growth and stronger and more diverse local economies. It must also be central in helping to ensure a just, inclusive and equitable recovery from the pandemic. During the period in question we worked hard to mobilise these arguments wherever we could to influence and inform recovery planning and long-term economic development policies both at the city and the regional level.
4. With the enthusiastic agreement of The Barrow Cadbury Trust, £4,500 of its funding was reallocated to help support iSE's Covid-19 Social Enterprise Helpline. This funding was originally earmarked to support work around supply-chain opportunities but the pandemic made this virtually impossible. We thought it important to support the Helpline because as well as providing advice on business continuity, it was evident that it could also make an important contribution to wellbeing and positive mental health.
5. BSSEC's regular information and communication service continued to be important and well-regarded throughout the crisis. We took the view that it was important to continue efforts to keep the sector informed while also practising a degree of 'information hygiene' – focusing on clear, unequivocal and useful information and avoiding anything of questionable utility (or provenance). Our aim was good information used sparingly. Initially, requests to promote events, circulate news and information and cover sector stories dropped almost to zero but gradually increased as the year progressed, albeit events, meetings and activities were of a very different nature. Here are some examples of what we did:
 - a) We posted a total of 92 items on the BSSEC blog. From April 2020 onwards we instigated specific blog categories for 'Coronavirus Updates' and 'Covid-19 Recovery Planning' because we thought

these two aspects essential. We posted 54 items under ‘Coronavirus Updates’,¹ focusing on items explaining access to support, emergency funding provision, and the civil society/social economy response to Covid.²

- b) We posted a total of 23 items under ‘Covid-19 Recovery Planning’ and this became a particular feature of our communications work as we tried to keep ourselves and the wider sector abreast of what was happening amongst statutory sector organisations, government and other institutions regarding recovery planning. Wherever possible we provided detailed analysis of recovery planning strategies and reports as they began to emerge, covering (to name just some) the UK,³ Birmingham,⁴ the West Midlands, Wales⁵ and Scotland.⁶
- c) Stories and news items exemplifying successful business change strategies that were enabling some social economy organisations to both survive the crisis and repurpose services were especially important. Two examples serve to illustrate this:
- During April/May 2020 the University of Birmingham was keen to promote a new scheme it was testing for ‘virtual interns’. We thought this an inventive way of providing something of benefit to both students and social economy organisations and happily promoted the scheme. We were subsequently contacted by the scheme co-ordinator who said: “I thought I would update you on the progress of my original BSSEC post a month ago. I’ve now made contact with over 30 organisations as a result of this, some of them resulting from cross-circulation through other people’s networks. It’s a fantastic testament to the spirit of community in this sector; I’ve already advertised several placements and there are many more in preparation, which I hope will create a legacy of our students’ longer-term involvement. Thank you so much for your help, I am really indebted to you.”
 - An item we carried about counselling enterprise Citizen Coaching was widely read and received extensive comments, particularly on LinkedIn. This item explained the persistent difficulties the

¹ See: <https://bssec.org.uk/category/coronavirus-updates/>.

² For some examples see: <https://bssec.org.uk/womens-enterprise-hub-evolving-to-meet-new-needs/>; <https://bssec.org.uk/free-wise-wednesday-webinar-from-ise-recovery-innovation-growth-22nd-july/>; <https://bssec.org.uk/social-enterprises-could-you-benefit-from-a-funded-virtual-intern-during-the-summer/>; and <https://bssec.org.uk/new-body-established-to-plan-recovery-of-regions-cultural-sector/>.

³ See: <https://bssec.org.uk/levelling-up-our-communities-new-report-by-danny-kruger-mp-published/>.

⁴ See: <https://bssec.org.uk/new-bvsc-report-reveals-detailed-picture-of-the-impact-of-the-covid-crisis-on-birmingham-vcs-and-the-sectors-contribution/>.

⁵ See: <https://bssec.org.uk/wales-sets-out-plan-to-put-social-enterprise-at-the-heart-of-welsh-economy-and-society/>.

⁶ See: <https://bssec.org.uk/scottish-government-urged-to-put-third-sector-at-the-heart-of-recovery-for-a-wellbeing-economy/>.

company had experienced in trying to scale-up the business and the strategies that eventually enabled it to extend existing services and meet new demand arising from the covid crisis.⁷

6. Throughout the period in question we liaised closely – sometimes several times a week – with BVSC in its role as lead partner and co-ordinator for Birmingham’s civil society response to the pandemic, helping to ensure that wherever voluntary sector information and initiatives were also relevant to a wider social enterprise audience, this information successfully reached that audience. We also tried to ensure that wherever there were opportunities to influence and inform local recovery planning – particularly Birmingham City Council, for instance – we worked closely with BVSC colleagues to ensure the closest possible alignment between our approaches and key messages.
7. The more we considered the issue of recovery planning the more we became aware that we needed to find additional ways to inform and influence these plans and ensure that a social enterprise perspective was heard. We began to consider how best to do this. Discussions had already taken place during which it was agreed that the Birmingham Social Enterprise City⁸ steering group (led by iSE) should for the foreseeable future focus on recovery planning. Here are some examples of what we did in this context:
 - a) With input from other members of the steering group we drafted a briefing paper⁹ that could be used in a variety of contexts and with a range of stakeholders and policy-makers, not least West Midlands Combined Authority.
 - b) We then used this paper as the basis of a more substantial report called ‘Covid-19: Community Recovery and the Role of the Social Enterprise Sector’. This was partly in an effort to try and get across the message that the social enterprise sector should be regarded as making a meaningful contribution to both economic *and* community recovery, rather than being considered – as seemed all too often the case – solely in one or the other. These papers were used by the VCSE Crown Representative Group convened by Claire Dove CBE¹⁰ and were instrumental in Sarah Crawley, iSE’s CEO and BSSEC’s Chair, being asked to join West Midlands Combined Authority’s recovery planning co-ordination group.
8. The close relationship we maintained with West Midlands Combined Authority both during the pandemic and prior to it in 2018/19 as participants in its Social Economy Task Force had a further outcome. BSSEC, along with

⁷ See: <https://bssec.org.uk/how-one-social-enterprise-is-planning-to-be-part-of-the-post-virus-recovery/>.

⁸ See all the items we have posted about Birmingham Social Enterprise City: <https://bssec.org.uk/category/birmingham-social-enterprise-city/>.

⁹ See: <https://bssec.org.uk/social-economy-needs-to-help-plan-for-economic-social-and-community-recovery-read-our-briefing-paper/>.

¹⁰ See: <https://www.gov.uk/government/people/claire-dove>.

four other organisations, formed a consortium to bid for a WMCA consultancy contract to support the combined authority's planning for social economy growth over the coming decade. We were successful, winning the contract, we were subsequently told on "quality rather than price" – which we understood to mean that our bid wasn't the cheapest but was considered to be the best. During the period in question this work represented a substantial additional workload for all of the bid team but we believe that it has the potential to create real, long-term social economy opportunities across the region. We believe it may be one of the most important initiatives we have been able to be involved in.

9. Despite the profound challenges posed by the pandemic, we can be heartened at the way that key providers have managed to continue to offer specialist business support services for the sector, in some instances even establishing new programmes – for example, in women's enterprise (iSE), new-start social enterprise (iSE) and programmes for black social entrepreneurs, heritage social enterprise and new-start social entrepreneurs (School for Social Entrepreneurs).
10. Finally, as the 2020/21 financial year neared its end we were pleased to help with pre-publicity for iSE's week-long celebration of all things social enterprise, City Drive – now rebranded Social Enterprise Drive (19th-23rd April 2021). The rebranding of City Drive recognises that after eight years the event is now widely recognised beyond Birmingham and variants of it have the potential to take root in other parts of the region and indeed in other parts of the country.

2.2 Community Benefit

1. These activities have benefitted the wider social enterprise community by:
 - Raising the profile of social enterprise.
 - Improving public awareness and understanding of the sector, especially amongst policy-makers.
 - Securing support for the social enterprise sector and ensuring that it remains at the top of the policy agenda.
 - Helping create opportunities for inter-trading.
 - Helping to ensure that the sector is aware of new and emerging policy and understands the opportunities this may offer (and the threats it may pose).
 - Helping to promote social enterprises' events and offerings.
 - Helping to raise the profile of social value amongst policy-makers, strategic partners and the sector.
 - Helped alert the social enterprise sector to sources of help, advice and financial support relating specifically to coronavirus that might otherwise have been missed.

2.3 Changes in officers

1. There have been no changes in BSSEC's officers during the period in question.
2. We thank our members for their continuing support and involvement and we also thank: our serving Directors, Sarah Crawley (who also serves as Chair) and Alun Severn; our Company Secretary, David Alcock of Anthony Collins Solicitors LLP; our Treasurer, Jasbir Rai of BVSC and her assistant Paul Bowater, Chartered Accountant, BVSC Accountancy Services, who prepared the accounts included here.

3.0 ACCOUNTS & FINANCES

Company No 07992674

**Birmingham & Solihull Social Economy Consortium C.I.C
(Company limited by guarantee)**

Unaudited Financial Statements for the year ended

31st March 2021

Birmingham & Solihull Social Economy Consortium C.I.C

Company Information for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

DIRECTORS: Alun Severn
Sarah Crawley

COMPANY SECRETARY: David Alcock

REGISTERED OFFICE: Anthony Collins Solicitors LLP
134 Edmund Street
Birmingham
B3 2ES

REGISTERED NUMBER: 07992674 (England and Wales)

ACCOUNTANTS: BVSC Accountancy Services
138 Digbeth
Birmingham
B5 6DR

Birmingham & Solihull Social Economy Consortium C.I.C

REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS Year ended 31st March 2021

Summary notes to accounts

The accounts show a loss of £3,417 during the year, made up of £4,500 outflow in restricted funds (this is funding from Barrow Cadbury received in the previous year to deliver activities in 2020-2021) and a £1,353 surplus in unrestricted funds.

Impact on the reserves is as follows:

- Restricted reserves have moved from a surplus of £3,750 to a nil position at the end of March 2021, a reduction of £3,750.
- Unrestricted reserves have moved from a surplus of £5,243 to a surplus of £5,846 at the end of 31st March 2021, an increase of £603.
- Total reserves at the end of 31st March 2021 are £5,846, nil in restricted and £5,846 in unrestricted.

Directors' remuneration

During the year in question no Directors have received remuneration for being a Director, although their employing organisations (in one case a sole trader) have received payment for undertaking specific pieces of work in connection with Birmingham & Solihull Social Economy Consortium C.I.C's Barrow Cadbury Trust-funded research and policy development project.

Statement of directors' responsibilities

The directors are responsible for preparing the Report of the Directors and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law, the directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law, the directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the profit or loss of the company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006.

Birmingham & Solihull Social Economy Consortium C.I.C

REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS Year ended 31st March 2021

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Small company provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies exemption.

This report was approved by the board of directors on 26 July 2021 and signed on behalf of the board by



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Alun Severn – Director

Birmingham & Solihull Social Economy Consortium C.I.C

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS ON THE PREPARATION OF THE UNAUDITED STATUTORY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF BIRMINGHAM & SOLIHULL ECONOMY CONSORTIUM C.I.C FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

In order to assist you to fulfil your duties under the Companies Act 2006, I have prepared for your approval the financial statements of Birmingham & Solihull Economy Consortium C.I.C for the year ended 31 March 2021, which comprise the income statement and statement of financial position from the company's accounting records and from information and explanations you have given me.

This report is made solely to the Board of Directors of Birmingham & Solihull Economy Consortium C.I.C, as a body, in accordance with the terms of my engagement. My work has been undertaken solely to prepare for your approval the financial statements of Birmingham & Solihull Economy Consortium C.I.C and state those matters that I have agreed to state to the Board of Directors of Birmingham & Solihull Economy Consortium C.I.C, as a body, in this report in accordance with ICAEW Technical Release 07/16 AAF. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than Birmingham & Solihull Economy Consortium C.I.C and its Board of Directors, as a body, for my work or for this report.

It is your duty to ensure that Birmingham & Solihull Economy Consortium C.I.C has kept adequate accounting records and to prepare statutory financial statements that give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities, financial position and profit of Birmingham & Solihull Economy Consortium C.I.C. You consider that Birmingham & Solihull Economy Consortium C.I.C is exempt from the statutory audit requirement for the year.

I have not been instructed to carry out an audit or a review of the financial statements of Birmingham & Solihull Economy Consortium C.I.C. For this reason, I have not verified the accuracy or completeness of the accounting records or information and explanations you have given to me and I do not, therefore, express any opinion on the statutory financial statements.



Paul Bowater
Chartered Accountant
BVSC Accountancy Services
138 Digbeth
Birmingham B5 6DR
United Kingdom

26 July 2021

Birmingham & Solihull Social Economy Consortium C.I.C

Income Statement For the year ended 31st March 2021

	2021 £	2020 £
Turnover	36,270	14,195
Other operating charges	(39,417)	(16,847)
Loss for the year	<u>(3,417)</u>	<u>(2,652)</u>

Birmingham & Solihull Social Economy Consortium C.I.C

Statement of Financial Position As at 31st March 2021

	2021 £	2020 £
Current assets	6,146	9,233
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(300)	(240)
Total Current Assets	<u>5,846</u>	<u>8,993</u>
Capital and Reserves		
Restricted reserves	-	3,750
Unrestricted reserves	5,846	5,243
	<u>5,846</u>	<u>8,993</u>

For the year ending 31st March 2021 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

No members have required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year ending 31st March 2021 in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the micro-entity provisions.

The average number of paid employees during the year was 0 (2020: 0).

The financial statements were approved by the directors and authorised for issue on 26 July 2021 and signed on behalf of the board by:

Director



Name: **Alun Severn – Director**

Birmingham & Solihull Social Economy Consortium C.I.C

Notes to the Accounts Year ended 31st March 2021

Detailed Income Statement

Turnover

		2021	2020
		£	£
Grants	Barrow Cadbury	34,000	12,250
Other income	Anthony Collins Solicitors	300	100
	Art share limited	250	250
	BITC	-	350
	BRAP LTD	100	100
	Big Issue	50	50
	Bridging to the Future	175	-
	BVSC charity	100	100
	FSE (UNLTD)	-	100
	Int s/ent It	250	250
	Roots Human Resources	100	100
	CHI UK/Welcome Trust	150	150
	Thriv Tog Birmingham	100	-
	The Birmingham DBF	-	100
	The Colebridge Trust	120	120
	The Jericho Foundation	175	175
	School for Social	400	-
Total		<u>36,270</u>	<u>14,195</u>

Other operating charges

		2021	2020
		£	£
Grant expenditure	Barrow Cadbury	38,500	15,900
Other expenses	IT	81	357
	Secretariat function	750	240
	Sundry	86	350
Total		<u>39,417</u>	<u>16,847</u>

Birmingham & Solihull Social Economy Consortium C.I.C

Notes to the Accounts Year ended 31st March 2021

Capital and Reserves

	Opening Balance 1st April 2020	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Closing Balance 31st March 2021
Unrestricted Reserves	<u>5,243</u>	<u>2,270</u>	<u>917</u>	<u>(750)</u>	<u>5,846</u>
Restricted Reserves:					
Barrow Cadbury	<u>3,750</u>	<u>34,000</u>	<u>38,500</u>	<u>750</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Restricted Reserves	<u>3,750</u>	<u>34,000</u>	<u>38,500</u>	<u>750</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Reserves	<u><u>8,993</u></u>	<u><u>36,270</u></u>	<u><u>39,417</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>5,846</u></u>

4.0 OUR MEMBERS

We would like to thank all our members for their continuing commitment to BSSEC, to the sector, and to working together to for the benefit of the sector.



Law firm offering a wide range of legal services, including advice for social enterprises on legal structures, CICs, directors' responsibilities, contracts, property, and employment law



Provides loans of £10k-£100k to small businesses and social enterprises in the West Midlands where the bank is unable to assist in full or in part



BIi is the social investment arm of The Big Issue. Our mission is to back sustainable social enterprises and ventures that help tackle poverty and inequality by providing loans and investments, not grants, from £50,000 to £1.5m



Specialists in human rights, equality and diversity, including SFEDI-accredited business development



A business incubator specialising in micro-business and social enterprises. Services include business start-up, investment, young entrepreneurship and business growth



A movement of UK companies committed to improving their positive impact on society



Supports voluntary action in the city of Birmingham, providing information, advice and guidance to voluntary and community organisations and social enterprises



Delivers innovative, person-centred support for people seeking abstinent recovery from drugs and/or alcohol



The social enterprise arm of Solihull SUSTAIN – supporting the development of social enterprise in Solihull



THE DIOCESE
OF BIRMINGHAM

Co-ordinates and delivers development support to church-based community projects



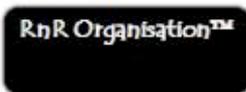
Provides business development for the social economy and voluntary and community sectors. SFEDI-accredited. Specialisms in health and disability



Paid work experience and social enterprise opportunities for people who experience difficulties in finding work



Training and personal development courses and delivers specialist support for the black social enterprise sector



Event organisation, project and operational management to grassroots and minority cultural and community groups



Specialist human resources services for charities, voluntary and community groups, social enterprises and any other civil society organisation



School for Social Entrepreneurs West Midlands provides peer based, action learning to individuals who wish to start, develop or grow a business which addresses a social or environmental issue in their communities



Accessible and affordable marketing, PR and design services for the public sector and civil society organisations



The specialist bank for civil society, social enterprises, CICs, councils, and trade unions



Leading provider of support to social entrepreneurs in the UK. UnLtd resources hundreds of individuals each year through its core Awards programme



Welcome Change Welcome Change CIC is wholly owned by Welcome, a registered charity, and is its enterprise arm

-Ends-