



Social Firms Scotland
Supporting businesses to transform lives

Scottish Government - Next Mental Health Strategy

Social Firms Scotland

Social Firms Scotland is the national support body for Social firms in Scotland. A Social Firm is a specific social enterprise where the mission is to create employment, work, training and volunteering opportunities for people who face significant barriers to employment, primarily people who have a disability which **includes people who experience mental ill-health**.

Social Firms Scotland is a member-led organisation and many of our Social Firm members have been specifically set up to provide such opportunities for people with mental health issues, supporting them back into the workforce, improving their health and well-being and to become active members of our society. Likewise, most if not all, of our additional member organisations work with people who experience health and disability issues (including dual diagnosis) or support people who are involved in the justice system, all of whom can be said, cut across the mental ill-health spectrum.

Our **values** reflect our **objective to tackle inequalities in society** and within the labour market and our core purpose of supporting Social Firms reflects this.

What is a Social Firm?

Social Firms are businesses that operate in a range of markets; they offer an **inclusive workplace environment** where people are valued for their abilities, encouraged to participate and supported to achieve. People undertake meaningful work and contribute on many levels to the success of the business.

Social Firms can act as a stepping stone to open employment for some people; for others they create supportive employment or training opportunities in situations where they would find difficulty in gaining and retaining a job in mainstream society.

Social Firms provide 'good work in the right environment' that is necessary to achieve **good mental health and well-being**. They offer work environments that are '**person centred**', they **promote positive mental health and are deliberately focused on aiding long term recovery**.

Social Firms significantly contribute to **social inclusion, economic activity and health improvements**. Because they are a business and earn a proportion of their income from trading, they are one **effective solution for the employability and employment of people** and we believe a model of best practice in terms of what works to support people with mental health

problems into sustained work where they are valued for the meaningful contribution they make.

Social Firms are established sustainable business models and offer public sector **opportunities for increased efficiencies**; they provide value for money and improved quality of service provision.

Size of our sector – Social Firms and social enterprises

A large scale census was undertaken in September 2015 which has recorded the significant size and scale of Scotland's social enterprise businesses and the vital contribution they make to the economy and society. Scotland is a world-leading nation in nurturing social enterprises and therefore aligns with Government's aims of an inclusive, socially-just, equal and prosperous Scotland.

- 5000+ social enterprises operate throughout urban and rural Scotland
- 501 **Social Firms** in Scotland
- **48% currently employ people formerly disadvantaged in the labour market**
- 58% provide volunteering opportunities
- **53% improve health and wellbeing**
- **43% address social isolation & exclusion**
- 45% social enterprises report a stated objective of 'creating employment opportunities'
- 67% of social enterprises provide training or support intended to improve employability
- 28% of social enterprises **target** recruitment of **disadvantaged groups and/or areas**

Policy Context

Commitments in the Mental Health Strategy 2012-15

Within the current strategy and 36 focused commitments, Social Firms/enterprises contribute specifically to:

Commitment 2

- We will increase the involvement of families and carers in policy development and service delivery. We will discuss how best to do that with VOX and other organisations that involve and represent service users, families and carers.

Commitment 29

- We will promote the evidence base for what works in employability for those with mental illness by publishing a guidance document which sets out the evidence base, identifies practice that is already in place and working, and develops data and monitoring systems. Change will require **redesign both within health systems and the wider employability system** to refocus practice on more effective approaches and to realise mental health care savings

Commitment 32

- We will promote work between health and justice services to increase the effective use of Community Payback Orders with a mental health condition in appropriate cases.

National Performance Framework

Scottish Government's purpose is to focus their work and public services on creating a more successful country with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish through increasing sustainable economic growth. Social Firms/enterprises **support this framework** and **contribute specifically** to:

- We Realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people
- We live longer, healthier lives
- We tackle the significant inequalities in Scottish society
- We improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk
- We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others
- Our people are able to maintain their independence as they get older and are able to access appropriate support when they need it
- Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs
- We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity

Indicators

- Reduce underemployment
- Improve mental wellbeing
- Improve the skill profile of the population
- Improve support for people with care needs
- Reduce emergency admissions to hospital
- Improve the quality of healthcare experience
- Reduce premature mortality
- Increase physical health
- Increase the proportion of young people in learning, training or work

A Route Map to the 2020 Vision for Health & Social Care

Scottish Government recognises that Health and Social Care services will radically change over the next few years and they have a commitment to ensure that services continue to be of high quality meeting the needs of the people. Their focus is on delivery of services that secure the best possible outcomes for people who live and work in Scotland.

Social Firms supports and **contributes to the 2020 vision** by supporting and enabling people to remain within their homes and communities leading more independent and healthier lives:

- Prevention – supporting people at an early stage in their ill-health by providing high quality services and support tailored to meet individual needs within a local, supportive sustainable work setting.
- Ensuring that people remain within their home or community environment where reduced interventions are being achieved by working in partnership with health and social care experts achieving high quality outcomes.

Next Mental Health Strategy

Key Outcomes that can be achieved for mental health in Scotland

The outcome(s) that Social Firms wish to achieve (build upon) and specific steps that can be taken to achieve change:

- Many more people with mental ill-health are supported back into the workforce or engaged in meaningful activities within their communities; they have increased confidence, gain new skills, are economically active, are socially included and lead more independent lives.
- People live longer, happier & healthier lives whilst being valued for their contribution to society; reduced stigma, reduced discrimination, reduced medical interventions.
- Increased collaborative working with experts, service providers and support agencies involving people who suffer mental ill-health to realise enhanced services and increased outcomes – a bottom up approach that achieves long term results and efficiencies
- Redesign of services to meet people's needs; a truly person centred approach which achieves high level results and outcomes in terms of health improvements and well-being; improved value for money and preventative spend
- Build upon the experiences and learning to date; focus on what works well already and embrace alternative models that currently support people to recover from mental ill-health; supporting a less medicalised approach and relatively new model of delivery, e.g. Social Firms.
- Social Firms and enterprises are recognised as being an integral part of the solution to supporting people to recover from mental ill-health; are part of the mechanism for achieving a fundamental step-change; integrated into a wider healthcare system and part of a shared prevention agenda.

Social Firms Scotland would very much **welcome the opportunity to discuss** the role that our Social Firms/enterprises can play in **embedding employment and employability** into the next Mental Health Strategy.

Mental Health & Employment

There is already a strong evidence base showing that work is generally good for physical and mental health well-being; work is therapeutic and 'good' work outweighs the harmful effects of long-term unemployment and exclusion from society. Good work for all has an important role in reducing inequalities.

It is widely recognised that employment is important for people with mental health problems and health and social care services have a critical role to play in promoting employment as a means of recovery and improving people's lives. People with long-term mental health problems have the lowest employment rate of any of the main groups of disabled people. Only 24% of adults with long-term mental health problems are in work (Ref Mental Health & Social Exclusion, Social Exclusion Report, 2004). **With the right 'whole person' support**, many more would be **able and would like to work**. Underemployment is known to be associated with worsening mental health.

“paid work gives people a real sense of their own value, improves their self-esteem and gets them out of their illness” (Mental Health & Social Exclusion, Social Exclusion Unit Report, 2004).

As such, Social Firms and enterprises are vehicles used to help **people recover from illness, sustaining and improving their overall health and mental well-being**, especially people who are disadvantaged in society and face multiple barriers to work.

‘Getting people back into work and addressing health and well-being in work can help to reduce the huge economic cost of workplace injuries, ill health, sickness absence and worklessness’.

‘People with fluctuating health conditions may benefit from flexible employment that recognises their needs. Those disabilities may require appropriate workplace adjustments to be made’. (NHS Health Scotland, Good Work For all, briefing paper).

Social Firms can provide an innovative, effective and efficient solution to addressing the prevention and inequalities agendas:

- ✓ Providing flexible employment, training and volunteering opportunities; supporting people who experience fluctuating health conditions, assisting them to maintain jobs or access work and training opportunities;
- ✓ Workplace adjustments are made to enable people with disabilities and mental ill-health to work within a commercial setting. Barriers to work are overcome by making adaptations and adjustments that enable people with language and numeracy skills to become actively involved and engaged in meaningful activities, working towards gaining new skills;
- ✓ People with additional complex or multiple needs are supported (by working in partnership with other agencies/specialists) to deal with non-work related problems and;
- ✓ The very ethos of a Social Firm ensures that everyone is valued for their abilities and contribution; the focus is not on their ill-health. This goes a long way to help break down barriers and reducing stigma associated with mental ill-health; people are more open about their mental health which results in better interventions and support being sought and provided when it is really needed.

Overall framing for next Mental Health Strategy

As specified, there are huge demands put on specialist mental health services and recognition that primary care services do not always meet the needs of people experiencing mental health problems or distress.

There is a greater need for tackling and preventing illness and mental ill-health through working together to create real innovative solutions; connecting with organisations, communities and people (including at a local level). This will entail taking a collaborative approach to support people in their recovery; connecting and working in partnership across services and sectors which, will not only achieve better, more effective and efficient service deliveries but will achieve far greater long term outcomes for people who experience mental ill-health.

Engaging with Social Firms provides further opportunities to **drive transformational innovation and change**, whilst providing growth in the economy as set out in Scottish Governments 'A Route Map to the 2020 Vision for Health and Social Care'.

- Social Firms provide an accessible and flexible approach that fits with strategic priorities and meets people's needs - **focusing on their abilities and capabilities not on their ill-health**.
- Social Firms offer an effective solution, can achieve **cost savings** for the public purse whilst creating much **added value and quality outcomes** for people and society.
- Social Firms offer **a less medicalised approach** and **person centred** focus, they already work effectively in partnership (across sectors) and are currently an effective part of the recovery pathway for people.
- Social Firms offer people a 'protected' supportive workplace environment, tailored to suit a person's needs **and** tackle their health issues, delivering wider 'added value' in the form of health and social inclusion benefits. They are committed to **recovery focused practices in mental health**.

We feel strongly that the Social Firm model enables **people to engage in a recovery pathway** that values their contribution and potential rather than their deficits, where employability and employment is part of an individual's personal goal as this has been proven to be a primary driver of mental health rehabilitation.

The right to work is enshrined in Article 23 of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, which states that 'everyone has a right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment'. The majority of people who experience mental health problems continue to be denied this right.

Any **redesign of services**, remodelling of mental ill-health management and consideration of priorities in the balance of healthcare, presents an opportunity to engage constructively with Social Firms and enterprises. These grassroots organisations work directly with people, the wider community and public, health and third sector support agencies to achieve high level outcomes.

Supporting efficient and effective service provision and redesign

Public Social Partnerships

Social Firms Scotland is part of the Ready for Business programme that works with commissioners and buyers to encourage the adoption of social value in public procurement and to increase the share of these services that the third sector delivers. This is done in a number of ways including supporting the development of **Public Social Partnerships (PSPs)**.

PSPs are strategic partnering arrangements, based on a co-planning approach, through which the public sector can connect with third sector organisations to share responsibility for designing services based around service user need. Once designed and trialled, such services can then be commissioned for the longer term through a competitive tendering process. These are cost effective solutions to the redesign of services that achieve high end outcomes to meet clients' needs and aspirations for healthier, happier futures.

A PSP approach **involves clients and peer workers** at the heart of redesigning of services; takes a much less medicalised approach to interventions and a person centred approach to meet and address the specific needs of individuals & society overall – all of which **fits within** the next mental health strategy framing.

We believe that an evidence base of **recovery focused best practice** in Social Firms drawn from the experience and expertise of people with lived experience, will help embed the principle of meaningful work (within a supportive environment) as a positive route to recovery at a policy level which in turn will lead to it being provided and resourced at a practice level on the ground.

Public Social Partnership Case Studies

NHS Lothian – Health Transformation through the Third Sector

In collaboration with NHS Lothian, the City of Edinburgh Council, Queen Margaret University and the Third Sector, the Royal Edinburgh Hospital campus redevelopment programme has been identified as a major opportunity to redesign services through the collaborative application of the Public Social Partnership (PSP) model. With support and guidance from Ready for Business, four work streams of activity are underway and beginning to reshape the way that health services are delivered.

[Download Full Case Study](#)

Low Moss Prison Prisoner Support Pathway

In 2012 the new Low Moss Prison opened with a capacity of 700 prisoners, mainly convicted short-term and remand prisoners. Reducing reoffending is a priority both locally and nationally. Low Moss Prison chose to engage with the third sector in a Public Social Partnership (PSP) through which the Low Moss Prison Prisoner Support Pathway was developed as an innovative approach to service redesign, resulting in a step change in the way reducing reoffending is tackled both in the prison and in the community.

[Download Full Case Study](#)

Westbank Enterprises – Co-production of a service

Perth and Kinross Council transformed its plant nursery into a Social Firm providing employability opportunities to vulnerable clients of PKC's Youth Justice, Mental Health and Learning Disability teams through coproduction with the Shaw Trust using the PSP model.

[Download Full Case Study](#)

The Life I Want

The Life I Want Public Social Partnership was initiated in 2013 and is committed to the modernisation of day services in Glasgow for adults with Learning Disabilities. This commitment is not only a response to Self-Directed Support legislation, which is designed to enable service users to exercise choice and control over their care and support arrangements, including choice of provider, but also because it was clear to partner organisations that services needed to change to meet the aspirations and needs of the people who use them.

[Download Full Case Study](#)

Anticipated priorities

Social Firms and enterprises currently actively contribute to:

Promoting wellbeing through physical activity

- Social Firms/enterprises offer people the opportunity to enhance and sustain their physical and mental health and well-being through being actively supported back into the workforce and included in society to lead meaningful and purposeful lives. People have the opportunity to gain new skills, share their knowledge and enhance their social networks further reducing isolation.

Better responses to mental health in primary care and better responses to distress

- Social Firms/enterprises offer people who are within the mental health care system an opportunity to be supported back into work and included in society. They offer a less medicalised approach to a recovery pathway – this is an alternative and different model of service provision that responds to people's needs at a local and community level.

Addressing inequalities

- Social Firms and enterprises offer a person centred approach to recovery where the **focus is firmly placed on abilities** not their medical condition. This goes a long way to reduce the stigma associated with mental health illness, offers a non-medical intervention that enables people to make choices and take more control of their lives.

Social Firm Case Studies

Clydesdale Community Initiatives

Background

Clydesdale Community Initiatives Scotland's mission is to give people with significant support needs the opportunity to make a contribution to their community. By participating in positive tasks, individuals with learning disabilities, mental health issues and young people experiencing difficulties can be supported to develop new skills, improve their health and become included within their community on the basis of their contribution rather than their support needs.

Number of people with mental health issues CCI work with

CCI worked with just over 100 people last year.

Outcomes being measured/achieved

Number of Participants	Outcome
30	Informal vocational training
22	Certified vocational training
13	Moved into non supported volunteering programmes
8	Further Education
13	Gained employment

Funding

CCI has never had major core funding from any public sector source and therefore in 2008 established a social enterprise in landscaping to support their model of inclusion and to generate worthwhile commercial opportunities in which volunteers can participate. The landscaping company has now developed so that it employs 5 individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds and is on its way to becoming an established contractor in its field.

CCI has demonstrated its viability year after year and its growth in turnover proves and validates this claim (T/O for the end 13/14 was £613k with enterprise representing £490k). It is a business model that can support communities, create jobs and grow. CCI has achieved the transition from a grant dependent organisation to become a sustainable social enterprise and social value business. They have concentrated on commercial delivery of their landscaping service whilst balancing it with meeting their social objectives.

Elsewhere CCI's funding comes from a cocktail of funding including the Scottish Government along with income from trusts and foundations.

In 2015 CCI moved to a new building which has been the catalyst for increased services and opportunities for people within South Lanarkshire and surrounding areas.

Community Food Initiatives North East

Background

Community Food Initiatives North East (CFINE) is a Social Firm selling fruit, veg and other products on a commercial and competitive basis, operating in Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire and West Lothian. CFINE works with disadvantaged and vulnerable people, and excluded geographical interest companies to:

- Improve health and well-being;
- Create employment and increase employability;
- Address environmental issues and;
- Contribute to community regeneration.

The key purpose of CFINE is to create **a supportive, inclusive working environment**, dedicating significant resource and to supporting people within their business.

CFINE does this through:

- 100 Community Food Outlets making affordable fruit and vegetables accessible with **120 volunteers growing in confidence, learning new skills, and crating social networks**

- Operating a FareShare scheme where produce the food industry would not use but is edible is donated, organised and distributed to people in food poverty
- CFINE is lead partner in the 19 (and growing) organisations strong Food Banks Partnership Aberdeen; circa 7,000 emergency food parcels distributed in 13/14
- 41 staff of whom **33 recruited from priority groups** e.g. unemployed, **mental health issues including drug and alcohol and drug issues, learning disability**

Number of people with mental health issues CFINE works with

There are a number of individuals who come to CFINE as customers, volunteers or staff explicitly as people experiencing mental health issues. For example, over a one year period:

- 35 volunteers through e.g. Cornhill Hospital, Momentum, Aberdeen Foyer, Social Work etc
- 30 adults with learning difficulties/mental health issues in supported employment and work placements
- 12 staff who are experiencing e.g. depression, anger management, alcohol and drug issues, panic and anxiety, physical disability, confidence issues and low self-esteem.

Outcomes being measured/achieved

CFINE's services and support, for and with disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals and communities, are designed to increase employability, build confidence and self-esteem, foster skills acquisition, and address isolation through establishing social networks, all of which contribute to and improve individual and community capacity and health and well-being. To be effective, CFINE operates to Community Development principles which underpins and permeates the organisation and their activities:

- Everyone has something to offer and we need to start from where people are;
- Partnership working is essential because no one organisation can do it all, and;
- Equality should underpin all activities, goals and approaches.

CFINE's ethos is critical to effectively achieving outcomes, which are defined by their purpose and mission:

Equality of opportunity	democracy
Collaboration and partnership	mutuality and reciprocity
Recognising that everyone has something to offer	enterprise

Funding

CFINE, the charity, has a wholly owned trading company, CFINE enterprise, which trades commercially and competitively with all profit invested in their work for community benefit. CFINE's key strategic goal is to grow enterprise sales to secure their sustainability to ensure they can maintain and grow their work for considerable community benefit.

As the organisation progresses towards this goal, CFINE meets its expenditures, staff, vehicles, premises, training etc with a 'cocktail of investment' through grants, Service Level Agreements and donations e.g. Technip has adopted CFINE as a charity it is supporting and now purchases produce, runs food drives for the food bank, provides volunteers and last year donated £10,000. It is anticipated that this donation will be repeated.

The bread maker

Background

The bread maker is an exemplary Social Firm in Aberdeen; a commercially focused enterprise producing high quality breads and confectionery. The purpose of their business activities is to provide meaningful employment, training, educational opportunities and social activities to Adults with Learning Disabilities who are excluded in mainstream society.

Their Apprenticeship Scheme **offers 24 Adults** with learning disabilities work experience within a dedicated bakery unit and welcoming coffee house. Additionally the bread maker's **continuous personal development programme** ensures that everyone has the opportunity to maximise their own potential to become a fully active member of society valued for their abilities.

Outcomes being measured/achieved

The bread maker values the right for everyone to work and to be included in society as employment matters. They firmly believe that work is positive for health, for income, for social status and for relationships. Employment and being socially included is core to independent living and for many, work is a key part of their identity.

An evaluative SROI analysis (2011) assessed the impact and effectiveness of their Apprenticeship Scheme, made possible by a contract for Support Services from Aberdeen City Council during 2009/10. This resulted in a SROI ratio of £4.50 of added value for every £1.00 of investment.

All 24 Apprentices expressed their huge sense of pride in having a real job in a commercial environment where they are valued for their abilities and contribution. There is a wealth of positive change and outcomes being achieved:

- Increased confidence and self esteem
- Empowered – adults with learning disabilities are able to travel more independently
- Reduced isolation and improved communication skills
- Increased network of friends and social life
- Achieved recognised qualifications
- Improved health and well-being – reductions in health interventions

The bread maker work in partnership to achieve high level outcomes for their Apprentices including the Community Health Team in Aberdeen. The team have reported the most profound change being the **reduction of 'behaviour issues' and interventions** for Apprentices resulting in healthier, happier people contributing to society.

The Community Health Team believe the raised levels of self-esteem and pride in having a real job coupled with the structured routine has had such a **profound effect** on the Apprentices' lives that it is believed **will last for the rest of their lives**. What the bread maker provides cannot be replicated with 1:1 support (the bread maker: proving & improving impact, Accredited SROI Evaluation Report, 2011).

Funding

The bread maker is a commercially viable Social Firm that generates its income from trading competitively. They contract with Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils to provide an employability & training programme for Adults with learning disabilities. The bread maker is non-reliant on grant funding to sustain their core activities but they do source additional funds, when necessary, to enable them to provide additional social activities and therapies that further enhances their Apprentices health and well-being.

Watch Us Grow

Background

Watch us Grow was developed in March 1999 and the journey over the past 14 years has always been exciting, positive and extremely fruitful. People who access Watch US Grow either have a learning support need, are recovering from mental health issues, or a combination of both. Further indirect beneficiaries include carers, a significant proportion of whom experience or have experienced mental health issues.

Their aims and ambitions are to utilise positive environmental action to enable people often excluded from the wider community to lead more inclusive, independent and fulfilling lives. Over the years Watch Us Grow have developed skills and methods which have enabled them to realise these ambitions. Working from their organic garden in Palacerigg Country Park they have worked with people with support needs who access their 24 places to grow and develop both in confidence and skills.

As members of the Watch Us Grow garden group have become ready, the organisation has developed paid employment opportunities in 2 Social Firms developed over the past 10 years. The jobs created have made a wonderful impact on the quality of lives of the supported employees, their families and the wider community. Whether employees are building a path through Greenfaulds Orchard, or planting trees and spring bulbs in Abronhill, or whether they are preparing donated nursery goods for resale through the charity shop in Kilsyth, they are key ambassadors for the work in which Watch Us Grow is involved.

Number of Attendees currently at Watch US Grow experiencing mental health issues:

- 10 – 24 Students (with support needs and mental health issues)
- 6 Volunteers (with mental health issues)
- 6 Carers (with mental health issues)
- 2 Staff recovering from mental health issues

Outcomes being measured/achieved

- Numbers of places accessed by people with learning support needs in the Watch US Grow garden
- Numbers of people (with learning support needs) moving into supported employment from the watch US Grow garden
- Numbers of volunteers (with mental health issues) currently working with the project
- Carers supported by providing respite care for family members

Funding

Watch us Grow has a number of funding sources and generates income from trade. For example, North Lanarkshire Council currently funds 24 placements x 5 hours per week via SLA/Contract and 7 hours of respite for 12 families per week through their Carers Strategy Funding. Lanarkshire Primary Care Trust contributes and grants are sought as required to help the Social Firms move towards sustainability.

Delivered Next Day Personally

Background

DNDP CIC is a courier service aimed at professional services, social enterprises and local authorities, and is set up to break down the many barriers that prevent people with disabilities from working. It enables disabled people to work to a flexible business model that puts their care and health at the forefront. They also employ able bodied co-pilots, 18 to 24 year olds, to do the 'leg work'

Number of people with mental health issues DNDP work with

Currently DNDP works with 3 people with mental health issues. In the last year; they have had 7 people with mental health issues.

Outcomes being measured/achieved

Some of the tools & principles that are used by DNDP are:

- Distance travelled questionnaire (to measure Soft Outcomes)
- Creation of Individual learning plans (a roadmap for inclusion) which have been monitored & part of their strategy during the last 12 months.
- DNDP are in discussions at the moment with Strathclyde & Glasgow Caledonian universities to recruit an intern to do some research on SROI. (Social Firms Scotland to support)

Funding

DNDP has had level 1 & level 2 funding from Firstport; finishing August 2014. They have also been funded through the enterprise ready fund, category 3, for £24,000. This had to be utilized by 31 March 2014. DNDP also has service level agreements with the Shaw trust which provide wage subsidies for up to 26 weeks. Service sales make up the rest of their income.

Solstice Wholesale Nurseries

Background

Solstice Nurseries provides training, qualifications and work experience to people with mental health issues to improve health and wellbeing and to assist them to move forward towards employment or work related activity. Placements can be short or long term as appropriate.

Solstice has a commercial horticultural nursery and landscape maintenance team which provides specific and general training, paying particular attention to confidence building, social skills and key employment skills required for any type of work: communication skills, time keeping, team working.

They offer workshops in Manual Handling, Emergency First Aid and Health and Safety at Work to all participants and a VQ in Amenity Horticulture to those who feel they would like to find related work.

Number of people with mental health issues Solstice work with

Currently working with 18 participants (service users), but have placements for up to 30 participants.

Outcomes being measured/achieved.

Solstice has a couple of long term participants for whom Solstice is their ‘workplace’, and the desired outcome is mental health stability, a sense of wellbeing and quality of life, social inclusion at community level and succeeding in not requiring hospital stays i.e. minimising expensive intervention.

An evaluative Social Return on Investment (2006) examined the additional value created by the early interventions and work of Solstice whose primary purpose is to realise long term mental health improvements for people who are engaging in their activities:

- SROI ratio of £2.93 realised for every £1.00 of investment (indicative of very early SROI pilot/study).

However, the aim is to progress the majority of people towards employment or work related activity. Outcomes being measured/achieved vary according to individual needs and setting realistic and achievable goals.

The following is a list from Aberdeen City Council by which success (as well as the participant’s) is measured:

Outcome*	Indicator
Increased confidence	Self-reporting Setting and achieving goals
Increased motivation	Maintaining improvement in attendance Improving participation Improving ability to identify own goals and outcomes Improving willingness to engage
Increased social skills and ability to integrate	Participating in groups on offer Demonstrating acceptable behaviour Maintaining presentable appearance Communicating acceptably Positively engaging with local community Improving social networks Contributing positively to the community and others Improving social inclusion Accessing information about resources available
Improvement in attending work at set times	Improving punctuality Taking responsibility for arriving at work on time
Improved numeracy and literacy skills where appropriate	Accessing appropriate learning support
Improved ability to structure day	Organising and taking control of own life Constructive use of time Clear work/life balance

Increased ability to cope in work setting	Taking responsibility for own health and seeking appropriate support
Improved ability to apply for jobs	Improving ability to identify own strengths and skills Improving presentation of self Improving communication skills Improving capacity to complete applications forms, CV Improving interview skills
Achieving personal goals	Personal plans identifying and monitoring progress towards achieving realistic goals
Increased skills in particular areas of work e.g. caring, retail or chosen field	Developing skills in areas of personal interest Taking advantage of opportunities offered
Attaining recognised qualifications	Number and nature of qualifications gained
Improved interview skills	Demonstrating ability to be interviewed Attending appropriate training, which could include personal coaching
Sustaining employment, meaningful work activity and voluntary work	Number of hours and length of time sustained
Constructively using opportunities for service user feedback	Regular involvement in service development forums Demonstrating involvement in personal planning and goal setting
Increased ability to deal with discriminatory behaviour and attitudes	Building confidence and awareness of rights and where to seek support when challenging discrimination Improving acceptance and understanding of own health issues

Funding

In the past Solstice has had grant funding e.g. Esmee Fairbairn, Comic Relief and Government funding.

Currently their limited funding comes from Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils where Solstice are required to bid into the tendering process under the local Employability Framework and are paid on an individual basis.

Rosie's Social Enterprises

Background

Rosie's Social Enterprises includes Rosie's Cafe, Rosie's Framers & Crafts (including a gift shop) and their latest enterprise Rosie's Wedding Stationery. Rosie's Social Enterprises provides vocational work experience placements for people with mental health issues or acquired brain injuries - helping them to recover and gain skills for employment and help them into jobs and off benefits.

Number of people with mental health issues Rosie's Social Enterprises work with
Rosie's is currently working with **approximately 60 service users per week.**

Outcomes being measured/achieved

Rosie's utilises its outcomes monitoring tool in relation to the progress and development of its staff and operations.

Funding

Rosie's is funded by the local authority who buys individual placement packages from them, a lottery grant, and through their own commercial income.

Tayberry Enterprise Ltd – 'Empowerment through Employment'

Tayberry provides creative arts activities, volunteering opportunities and training and supported work placements in catering for people with significant health barriers to employment.

Traineeships

Tayberry Café's training programme offers the opportunity for individuals experiencing barriers to employment to gain essential skills development in a supportive and friendly environment. This programme is run as a partnership with Dundee City Council's Supported Employment Unit.

These placements are unique as they are not time limited but rather **each trainee experience is tailored to the individual's needs**. It is the role of our colleagues in employment support to enable individuals to move into employment within the hospitality industry upon completion of the training. <http://www.tayberryenterprise.org>

Tayberry Enterprise Ltd - Testimonials

Lynsey – aged 21 (Written with support worker)

Lynsey had never had any paid employment before but had carried out work experience in cleaning and also short placement in a charity shop whilst at school. Lynsey has Dyspraxia which can cause fatigue and affects her ability to stand for long periods. She is currently claiming ESA and DLA in relation to her health condition. The dyspraxia also has an impact on her confidence and she could become quite anxious about completing tasks with the worry that she may not be able to complete them. She also found working on the till at the charity shop quite stressful during busy periods. Lynsey was keen to assess her capabilities in a working environment and eager to progress towards work. She has a quiet determination not to let her health hold her back.

An opportunity was offered within the Tayberry Café as a Trainee on a Work Placement. This was seen as a chance for Lynsey to increase her confidence and also try new types of work within a kitchen environment and also tackle till work in a more supportive environment. The placement began carrying out laundry duties for the canteen and this went very well and Lynsey soon progressed, at her own request, onto other duties. The support Lynsey received from the Tayberry staff helped her overcome fears and anxiety to become an accomplished cashier. She also moved on to serve food and carry out kitchen porter duties safe in the knowledge that if things were too much physically, the approachable supervisors within Tayberry would be able to accommodate this.

Following excellent progress through the work placement, Lynsey was a candidate for a paid kitchen assistant position that became available within the café. After a successful application and interview, Lynsey was offered the post. As an ESA claimant, **Lynsey is in a position to commence paid employment** with limited earnings whilst remaining on benefit. This allows her to make the **transition into work whilst still addressing her health issues**.

Tayberry Café was able to show generous flexibility with the post in order to help Lynsey fit the criteria for this Supported Permitted Work. This allows Lynsey to experience a working routine in paid employment whilst also focussing on improving and maintaining her health.

The **improvement in Lynsey's confidence and social interaction through her time at Tayberry has been substantial**. Since commencing the job, she has taken part in extra training and has also participated in a chocolate making course which she thoroughly enjoyed. The supportive environment created within Tayberry has played a key part in Lynsey's development and she hopes this can continue for a long time to come.

Alice Lindsay – (written entirely by individual)

I have had mental health issues my whole life. I was very anxious as a child, problems with nightmares, insomnia, social anxiety issues, religious obsessions. From 15 I had a break down and have suffered panic attacks, anorexia, bipolar disorder, hallucinations, delusions. I became very ill through university and went straight into a full time job. I was on various medications none of which were very successful. After 5 years of working while being ill the whole time, my employers stopped me from coming into work and I took voluntary redundancy. I was very unwell by this time and could not manage a working life.

Being unable to work affected my confidence, self-esteem and social anxiety hugely. I developed Generalised Anxiety Disorder on top of everything else and this was the most crippling thing I have been through. It changes who you are as a person and effects everything you do. I was put on Quetiapine alongside my other meds and although it has been good for my psychotic symptoms the drowsiness made doing things very hard. There was not a permanent Consultant Psychiatrist in my area for around 6 years and the locums were not at all helpful, when I asked for help with my anxiety they just shrugged their shoulders. I was desperate for my life to improve but could not access help for years, until I got a new psychiatrist who listened to me and referred me to a Psychologist who diagnosed me with GAD. I underwent 2 years of CBT which has been completely life changing. I learnt so many strategies to help deal with my anxieties, social anxiety, low self-esteem and illnesses, it was incredibly hard work but I was determined to improve. I couldn't do much for myself before, including getting on a bus. A support worker took me on the bus a few times and I needed this support for any new route, but with my free bus pass I am much more independent now. It has made a big difference and every time I do something by myself I gain more confidence.

I started volunteering at an information centre where I get to interact with people and this is vital. I started volunteering with Tayberry in the office and moved onto Supported Permitted Work with them. Just being able to say I am working when people ask that question 'what do you do?' is wonderful. It used to terrify me because I was so ashamed of being ill and on benefits, so many people are judgemental about this and in the current anti-benefit climate with this government, it is real and constant stress.

I have always done voluntary work because I like to do as much as I can even in difficult times but there is a big difference between doing that and being ready for the world of work. The fear of the DWP taking away your benefit is horrifyingly stressful. It is difficult to live with severe and enduring mental illness everyday without the constant worry on top of it. It actually makes doing more things even more frightening because you worry they will think you are ready for work when you are not. Bullying does not help, support does.

I am now in the position that I am working towards getting back into work, it is a long process and many things have got me to this stage. Help from my OT, support with buses, CBT, voluntary work and SPW with Tayberry and a psychiatrist who actually listens to you alongside benefits. I learned with CBT that improvement doesn't come in one big event, it is an accumulation of small changes. It also depends on you personally. I am lucky that I have a lot of insight into my illnesses and I am a very determined and reflective personality who has stayed away from drugs and alcohol with supportive parents and a complete miracle of a husband, not everyone is as lucky as me.

Doing SPW with Tayberry has allowed me to test out what I can cope with, and I continue to improve because I can try things in a measured way. This is important. Jumping straight into work is a surefire way for me to be ill. I have to increase what I do slowly, when I do too much too soon I get my symptoms back, this is frustrating but I have learned that slow but sure is more successful and I need support to do this.

I have also realised that to be well and working I have to find a job that is suitable for me personally and office work may not be right for me. I am a very creative person, I have been a dancer for 13 years and have done some teaching with Tayberry in the past, so now I am thinking about working for myself as a dance instructor and I am doing a sewing course to get involved in making costumes and dressmaking skills. Even 6 months ago the idea that I could cope with running my own business was unthinkable so I am very excited about the future. I am not quite there yet but am working hard to get back into work.

Nb. I wrote this case history myself.

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