

COMMUNITY ANCHOR ORGANISATIONS ACTION PLANS



EAST BIRMINGHAM SHARED PROSPERITY FUND, COMMUNITY PILLAR

READY 2 LEVEL PROGRAMME

ST MARGARET'S COMMUNITY TRUST



OVERVIEW OF THE CAO

St Margaret's Community Trust is a community development charity which works to care and support all residents of Ward End, Birmingham and they are at the heart of our local community. As an asset-based charity, they facilitate residents to find solutions to individual and community challenges by sharing their skills, gifts and talents to benefit the wider community and make Ward End a better place to live for all. They facilitate a number of events and activities identified by, and led by where possible, local people. These include:

- Community allotment project and outdoor meeting space where people grow and share seeds, produce and skills.

- Women's groups where women of all ages and backgrounds come together for peer support and friendship and learn and share new skills such as carpentry, handicrafts and cooking
- Men's groups, particularly for older men, who have been significantly impacted by loneliness and isolation during the pandemic
- Community celebration events and activities such as joint Eid and Christmas celebrations
- Activities that improve the local environment
- Intergenerational and intercultural arts-based projects



CONTEXT

The project was an action research project with female residents to understand and research the barriers they face in setting up their own business and provide a programme that will build their confidence, develop their skills in areas such as finance, administration and selling and provide advice and support in them starting trading, either as an individual or group/s.

Working with an existing group of women mentoring sessions were provided to identify and work to remove any final barriers they feel they are facing to start their business/enterprise.

A community event, held at the Unity Hubb Centre, to which local women who had an idea or a hobby that they might want to turn into a business were invited. At the event, the existing group of women entrepreneurs shared their experiences, and the opportunities and barriers to setting up businesses were explored.

All sessions were delivered within the context of levelling up so participants became aware of the potential future opportunities and the action plan being developed will be the delivery of this programme within the community both to more women but also other groups who could potentially benefit from the Levelling Up Zone.



APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY PROCESS SUMMARY

Definition

- Action learning project on women into enterprise
- Building on the work that has been happening over the previous 6 to 12 months with a group of women who are close to setting up their businesses.
- Looking at the barriers local women have in generating an income from their hobbies or interests.
- Explore what the local need is for support services.
- Work towards sustaining the delivery of business support in the future.

Who we are

- COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION
- ABCD EXPERTS
- EMBEDDED IN OUR COMMUNITY
- BOARD OF TRUSTEES
- A COMMUNITY SPACE
- CREATING A SAFE AND TRUSTED SPACE

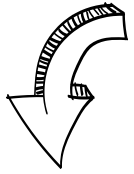
What we're good at

- LISTENING
- ENGAGING WITH OUR DIVERSE COMMUNITIES
- RECOGNISING SKILLS, GIFTS AND TALENTS OF LOCAL PEOPLE
- BRING LOCAL COMMUNITIES TOGETHER THROUGH EVENTS
- LETTING LOCAL PEOPLE TAKE THE LEAD
- EMBEDDING A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT APPROACH
- WORKING AT THE SPEED OF TRUST



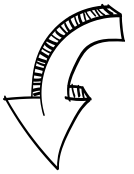
Women into Enterprise – Golden Circles Exercise

WHAT



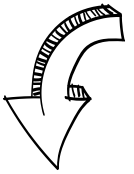
- Regular in-person business support sessions for women to overcome the barriers to self-employment.

HOW



- Small groups
- Mutual support network
- Individualised support from someone who has done it before
- Based in the community

WHY



- Everyone has talents that can be supported to grow. (Feedback from group)

Feedback

What difference has it made to the current participants. – 19/02/2024

- More positivity
- Guidance
- How and where
- Able to tap into an available resource
- Dependable access
- Encouragement
- Showing people it can be done
- Someone who knows what they are talking about
- Confidence
- Consistency
- Team working
- Working with each other
- Kemi has been through it.
- People around each other – supportive
- Uplifted that it can be done
- Kemi has kept it focussed
- Clarity/clear advice and guidance – if need to go back and ask again that's ok
- Location/venue

Dream

What we want to do

- A BUSINESS SUPPORT HUB TO HELP PEOPLE INTO ENTERPRISE
- DIFFERENT BUSINESS TYPES – PRIVATE BUSINESSES, SELF-EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL ENTERPRISES, COMMUNITY BUSINESSES, COMMUNITY GROUPS, CHARITIES
- EXPLORE THEIR IDEAS AND HELP THEM MAKE INFORMED CHOICES
- PROVIDING SUPPORT AND REASSURANCE
- TRAINING
- SIGNPOSTING/ NETWORKING/MARKETING

Why we will be good at it

- RECOGNISING PEOPLE'S STRENGTHS AND TALENTS
- WORKING WITH PEOPLE FROM WHERE THEY AT
- NURTURING
- UNDERSTANDING OUR COMMUNITY
- TRUSTED SPACE
- TAKE AWAY THE FEAR
- SOMEONE TO TALK TO
- SHARING WITH OTHERS
- TRAINING EXPERTS
- SIGNPOSTING – LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

Design

Theory of Change – Ward End Business Hub

What is the problem you are trying to solve?

There isn't access to appropriate business support for members of our community, especially women.

Assumptions:

There are people in community who want to set up their own businesses including self-employment.
Current provision doesn't deliver what is needed.

Who is your key audience?

Residents who want to explore their ideas and the requirements and implications of setting up businesses but face challenges that traditional business support services cannot assist with.

Assumptions:

There are people in community who want to set up their own businesses including self-employment.
Current provision doesn't deliver what is needed.

What is the problem you are trying to solve?

There isn't access to appropriate business support for members of our community, especially women.

Assumptions:

There are people in community who want to set up their own businesses including self-employment.
Current provision doesn't deliver what is needed.

What is your entry point to reaching your audience?

Based in the heart of the community – local/walking distance.

Safe and trusted space.

Established relationships.

Already in regular communication with some people in the community.

Assumptions:

The people we are already in contact with are the people who want to set up businesses.

The message that the support is available will be spread through our existing contacts.

What are the steps needed to bring about change?

Being clearer about what a business support hub might look like

- What services does it deliver?
- How are they delivered: 1-to-1, mentoring in small groups, open access advice and guidance?
- Who is it for?

Identifying resources to deliver:

- People
- Money
- Spaces
- Partners

What is the measurable effect of your work?

The creation of locally owned businesses.

People are able to make informed decisions and choices about the route they want to take.

Assumptions:

There are sufficient enquiries that can become viable businesses.

What are the wider benefits of your work?

Inspiration to others.

Setting up businesses is more accepted as an option.

Perception of how the neighbourhood is seen, a place to 'do business'.

What is the long term change you see as your goal?

Increased economic activity in the community.

More income generated to spend locally.

A more confident community – 'we can do it'.

Local businesses are more visible.

Assumptions:

The businesses created will keep the money and wealth created locked in to the local economy.

Delivery

Develop the vision for the business support hub. Further work needed to understand the support requirements of people at the different stages of development; idea/hobby, early first steps, new starts, existing.

Identifying resources to implement.

Explore the role of the existing private sector.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for the CAO by the learning mentor

Visioning exercise with the staff/board to explore what any business support hub will look like now and in the medium to long term. To include:

- Who is it for? People with an idea, people with a product, people already trading, women only, everyone.
- What type of businesses? Social enterprises, private businesses, sole traders, voluntary organisations that want to trade.
- How is the support delivered?

Look at other examples of community business support services, such as Centre4 in Grimsby <https://centre4.org.uk/services/community-business-hub/>, what they deliver and how it is resourced.

Carry out more research into the business support needs of the community.

Collaborate with other CAOs to explore the development of a network of business support services across East Birmingham.

Develop networks with anchor institutions and private businesses to build routes to market for the emerging businesses.

Recommendations for being Ready to Level

For St Margaret's CT's business support hub to play a role in the levelling up opportunities locally it needs to be able to utilise the organisation's position in the community. It could do this by:

- Creating the links with the large anchor organisations to create a route to market for the goods and services being delivered by the new businesses (eg culturally appropriate and specialist catering services for hospital, businesses on the energy park).
- Develop relationships with local (anchor) businesses:
 - what is the business hub offer to them
 - what support can they provide to the business hub and/or the emerging businesses
 - can the emerging businesses be part of their supply chain
- Have a better understanding of the aspirations of the other CAOs for the delivery of business support – create a network of business support hubs – each with their own geography or specialisms?



THOUGHTS ON LEGACY

A more viable, vibrant, and inclusive business community in Ward End and East Birmingham.

Opening up opportunities to explore the potential for setting a business to residents who wouldn't otherwise consider it.

Creating a mutually supportive network of businesses in Ward End.

Being part of the existing and any emerging business support services networks in East Birmingham.



COMMUNITY ORGANISATION

ACTION PLAN

Introduction

The project was initiated to find out what skills, crafts and experience local women have and to identify any barriers they face and support they would need in setting up their own business.

Local women who had an interest in starting their own business were invited to a community event, held at the Unity Hub. The event was split into three sections. We began with working in 2 groups to explore what their skills or hobbies are, what barriers they face and what support they believe they need to take their ideas to the next level. After this was fed back to the wider group we had a panel where the existing group of women entrepreneurs shared their experiences, and the opportunities and barriers to setting up businesses were explored. We also brought in women who operate businesses within different legal structures for example CIC's, Co-op's and private Ltd company to talk about their experience and answer questions. The last section was a chance to network and speak to people one on one.

The outputs achieved were:

Number of people reached 22.

Number of local events were 1

What we have learnt from the Appreciative Inquiry (summary)

From the event we hosted we learnt that the skills within the community are vast.

The questions we asked has given us a framework to work within should the Unity Hub wish to continue to work with these women. We now know some of their key barriers and fears that would need to be addressed in order for them to grow and sustain any business or ideas they have. We also uncovered how important it is for those who are in the early stages of business to have a space or community of peer support. We have seen that this for some women can be the difference in continuing or giving up.

We also identified that the time of day we held the session perhaps defined the local women we attracted. Which could mean women who work but also wish to start a business may have been excluded from attending.

How to identify need and whose need are we going to support at what level. From idea/hobby to trading or already have a product to ready to trade.



COMMUNITY ANCHOR ORGANISATION ACTION PLAN

Action Area	Description	Timeline	Where we need input from other partners
1. RESOURCES	Identify what resources are available to take the action plan forward.	SHORT TERM	Information about available funding
2. VISION	What do you want to see happening? Clarify the approach that wants to be taken forward. Is it to create a business hub or provide business support?	SHORT TERM	
3. RESEARCH	Who is the target group? Which types of business are going to support? What is the current make-up of the business sector in Ward End? Other examples nationally, how are they resourced? Find out what the aspirations of the other anchor organisations are? Explore if and how the private sector can support local businesses.	MEDIUM AND LONGER TERM	Mapping information from partners. Details of resources.
4. IMPLEMENTATION	Actions depend on outcomes of vision and research.	LONG TERM	Partners Resources/funding

DISSEMINATION

Narrative summary of each community dissemination made, evidencing the numbers in attendance, feedback received and with photographic and social medias.

A 'Women's Enterprise event was held at St Margarets on 7th March, local women were invited to share what crafts, skills or hobbies they have. Workshops were facilitated with a key focus on:

- What skills, crafts, hobbies women have
- What support women would need to set up a business?
- What barriers may be in the way.

Please see attached flyer.

The event was advertised via BVSC, Community WhatsApp groups and through the circulation of a flyer.

Professionals representing different types of business were invited, they took part in the workshops and a panel discussion.

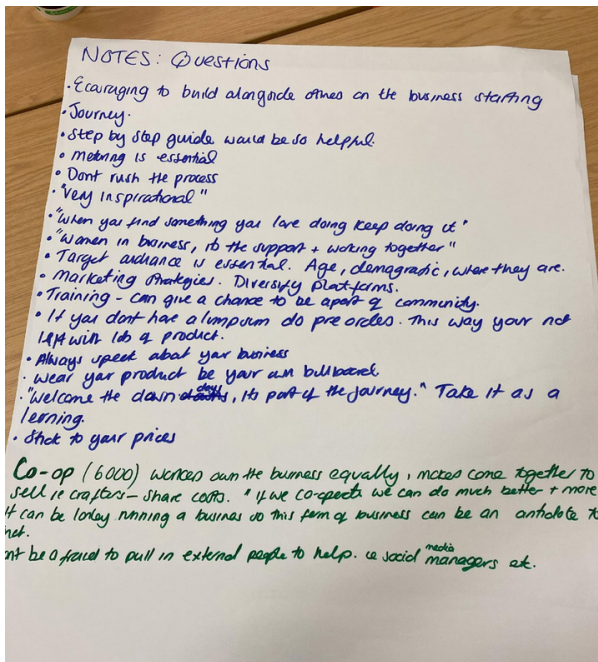
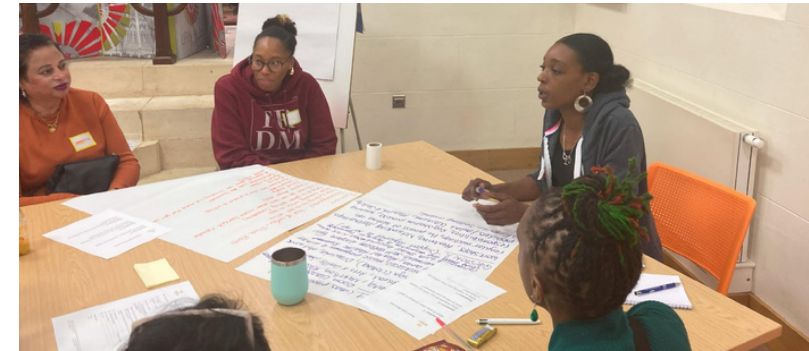
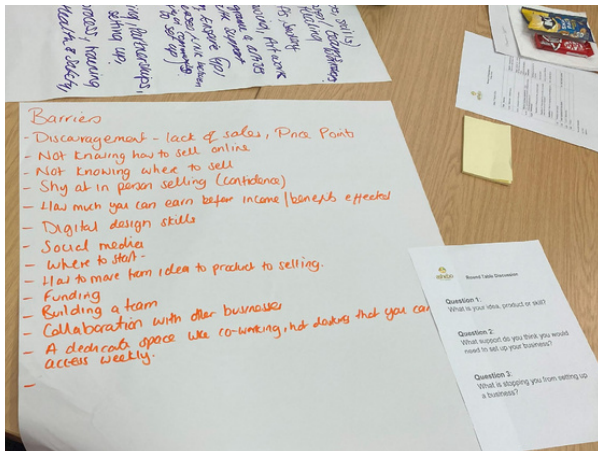
Out of 30 women that pre-registered for the event 22 attended.

The feedback from the event:

- What skills hobbies did women have:
Women had a range of skills and hobbies Sowing, painting, Upcycling, Knitting, Flower arranging, Jewellery making, Henna, community development and coaching.
- What support they would need to set up a business?
Mentoring, training, policy information, networking opportunities, regular meeting, business start up information, how to sell online, what is needed in relation to – insurance, legal documentation, tax, qualifications
- What barriers may be in the way.
Venue, space, time, is the product right to sell, fear of the unknown and failure, marketing, promotion, how it affects benefits collaboration.



PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE OF AI SESSIONS



WOMENS ENTERPRISE

Thursday 7th March 2024
12:00pm - 3:00pm

You are invited to the Unity Hub's **FREE** women's enterprise event.

Join us to find out how you can make money from your hobbies, crafts and skills.

Local women will be sharing their products and experiences of how they have turned their passions into businesses.

An opportunity to network and a Free lunch will also be provided.

●●●●●

Book your place [HERE](#)

Or call 07930856817 for more information