

Social Enterprises, their Contribution and County Fermanagh



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Foreword

There is a proud track record of entrepreneurial spirit in County Fermanagh with local people identifying opportunities and responding to need and demand in the area. This is evident in the private sector which is characterised by a high number of indigenous businesses created by Fermanagh entrepreneurs. However, it is important to note that the tradition of social entrepreneurship is equally strong in County Fermanagh. This report explores the role and contribution of social enterprises in the County. What is clear is that, in many areas, social enterprises such as credit unions and playgroups are an integral part of the DNA of local communities. Many social enterprises play such an important role in these communities that they deserve to be nurtured, cherished and celebrated.

In the present difficult economic climate, the social economy faces many challenges. Though, thankfully to date, the organisations which participated in the survey and the case studies have shown a determination and resilience to continue to meet the needs of their customers and community, and in some cases continue to grow. No social enterprises are closing down their operations here to move abroad! This report outlines a number of recommendations on how we can continue to strengthen and nurture the social enterprises in County Fermanagh and potentially in other similar rural areas throughout the region.

A special word of thanks to Graeme Dunwoody and Catriona Maguire who completed the research report, which included survey work, meeting with social enterprises from across Fermanagh and preparing the case studies. We are confident that the report makes a positive contribution to both acknowledging the work of social enterprises in a rural community like Fermanagh; and to identifying the challenges and opportunities which exist going forward.

We are extremely grateful to all of the community based organisations which contributed to this research. Hundreds of people give their time on a voluntary basis to develop and run these social enterprises. They deserve our thanks for making such a significant contribution to life here in Fermanagh and in many cases to communities beyond the County.

Lauri McCusker
Director

1 Introduction

The social economy plays a very important role in life in Co. Fermanagh, both in terms of its contribution to the local economy and the creation of sustainable employment. There has been a very successful track record of social enterprise development in the county, with enterprises making a major contribution to local communities and peoples lives. Their work has received much recognition with a number of these organisations receiving highly regarded social enterprise awards.

Indeed across Northern Ireland the role of social enterprises is becoming increasingly recognised and initiatives such as DETI and DSD's decision to undertake a Third Sector Mapping exercise, the development of DTNI and Social Enterprise NI are all encouraging.

This report aims to provide a greater understanding of the social enterprise sector in Co. Fermanagh and the contribution which it makes to social and economic life within the county. The report includes the results of a survey distributed to social enterprises in Co. Fermanagh, in addition to 12 case studies highlighting the work of social enterprises. It is hoped this report will be helpful in widening the understanding of the contribution social enterprises are making. The report includes a number of recommendations on the future potential to sustain and develop social enterprises in Co. Fermanagh and similar areas in Northern Ireland.

What is a social enterprise?

Whilst there is a range of different definitions of what constitutes a social enterprise, this report has adopted a definition used by the UK Government. The UK Government defines a social enterprise as 'a business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders and owners'.¹

Social enterprises operate across a wide range of business sectors and can range in size from small community based organisations to large national and international organisations. They act as important drivers of positive social, economic, ethical and environmental change. Social enterprises often help to tackle pressing issues facing society such as unemployment and fuel poverty amongst many others.



A number of organisations operate on a full-time basis and rent office space in Fermanagh House. One of these organisations is Liveability Ireland. (above)

¹ Business Link (2012) <http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?topicId=1077475650> (Accessed 31/07/2012)

2 Methodology

A survey of social enterprises in Co. Fermanagh and 12 case studies on individual social enterprises form the basis of this report. The case studies were compiled through information sources provided by participating social enterprises which included in-depth interviews with each organisation.

Prior to conducting the survey it was necessary to create a database of social enterprises in Co. Fermanagh. A database was created by using the Fermanagh Trust's existing knowledge and experience of working with third sector organisations and social enterprises in Co. Fermanagh, the Social Enterprise Trade Directory as well as other sources of publicly available information. This included information available from organisations such as Irish League of Credit Unions, Ulster Federation of Credit Unions and Western Education and Library Board. This helped to identify organisations such as credit unions and education providers which may have regarded themselves as social enterprises. The survey was then distributed by post to identified organisations. The survey was also made available online to encourage organisations to respond.

Surveys were distributed by post at the end of May and during the month of June 2012. Where necessary, attempts were made to contact organisations that had not responded to the survey. This was done via telephone and/or email depending upon the contact details available for individuals within those organisations to which the survey was sent and the circumstances of those organisations. For example, some organisations identified as social enterprises operate from community venues and were known to have limited opening hours. This therefore influenced the ability to contact these organisations and the means of doing so.

The survey asked respondents if they adhered to a definition of a social enterprise used by the UK Government as previously outlined, in order to determine if they were a social enterprise. A total of 43 organisations responded to the survey, with 39 organisations identifying themselves as a social enterprise based on this definition. Whilst the definitive number of social enterprises in Co. Fermanagh is not known, taking into account factors such as the small population size of Co. Fermanagh and level of economic activity in comparison to other areas, the number of responses is likely to account for a significant proportion of the social enterprises which are currently based in the county. These responses therefore help to build a strong picture of the nature and activities of social enterprises in Co. Fermanagh.

Interpretation of results

All results and analysis are based on the responses from the 39 social enterprises identified by the survey. The results have accounted for occasions where respondents failed to provide a response to a particular question(s) in the survey. On such occasions, were not all of the 39 social enterprises responded to the relevant question(s), it is stated either in text or in a footnote if this is the case.

3 Results from survey of social enterprises

a) Background to Social Enterprises

Types of social enterprises

A wide range of different types of organisations were found to make up the social enterprise sector in Co. Fermanagh. To demonstrate this, it was necessary to categorise these social enterprises (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Types of Social Enterprise

Types of Social Enterprise	Number of Social Enterprises
Community Associations	4
Credit Unions	5
Playgroups & Childcare Providers	11
Training/Education Providers	4
Providers of Care/Counselling & Support Services	6
Enterprise Centres	3
Other	6
Total	39

Whilst the sector is diverse it is noticeable that a large proportion of social enterprises which responded to the survey were playgroups and education providers, making up just over a quarter of all responses.

'Other' types of social enterprises included a wide range of organisations. This included for example an outdoor activity and adventure centre, a social enterprise which provided environmental services and raising environmental awareness, and a social enterprise which delivered dance workshops and productions.

Age of social enterprises

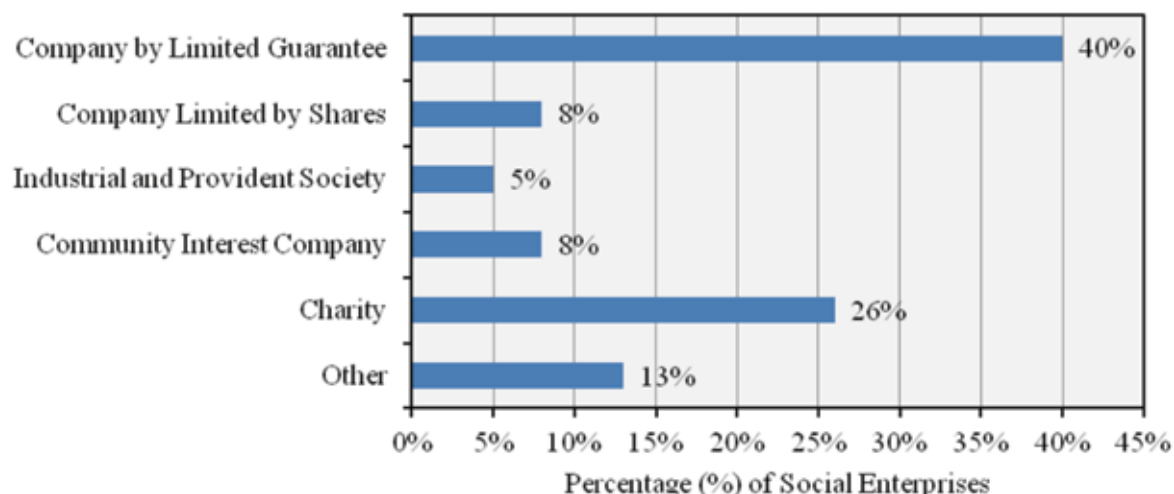
A large proportion of social enterprises had been established for over 20 years (44%). Despite the first signs of challenging economic circumstances in 2007, 7 of the 39 social enterprises which responded to the survey had been established in the last 5 years. It is therefore encouraging that despite difficult economic conditions which have existed since 2007, social enterprise start ups in Co. Fermanagh have continued to take place.

Legal status of social enterprises

Although many social enterprises had similar goals or social objectives, social enterprises adopted a wide range of different legal forms. Figure 2 shows the legal status of the social enterprises surveyed in Co. Fermanagh with 40% stating that they were a Company by Limited Guarantee. Twenty six per cent of social enterprises stated that their legal status was a charity.²

² The results showing legal status were based on 38 responses. One social enterprise failed to complete the relevant question in the survey.

Figure 2: Legal Status of Social Enterprises



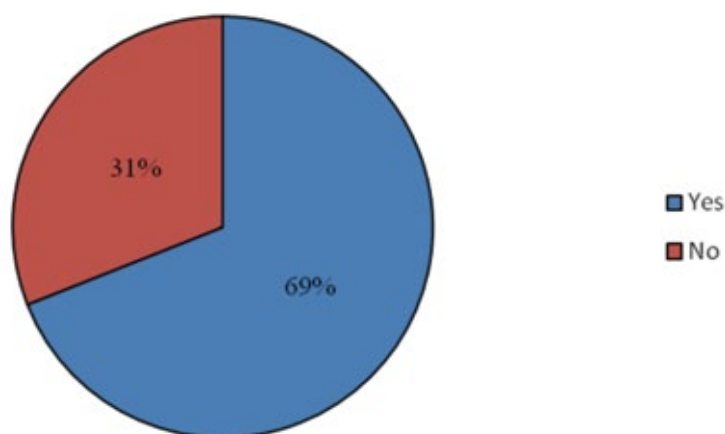
Charitable status of social enterprises

Social enterprises were asked 'Does your enterprise have charitable status?' to which almost 70% said yes to having charitable status (Figure 3). A number of notable trends existed:

- All 11 playgroups & childcare providers who completed the surveyed had charitable status.
- A total of 5 credit unions completed the survey – no credit union had charitable status.
- Just over half of social enterprises with charitable status (54%) were Companies Limited by Guarantee.

The analysis of the survey results looked at those social enterprises which had charitable status and whether they made a profit in the financial year 2011- 2012. Of the 27 social (69%) enterprises which had charitable status - 10 of these made a profit; 9 of these broke even; 7 of these made a loss; with 1 social enterprise not responding to the relevant survey question relating to its financial position.

Figure 3: Percentage (%) of Social Enterprises with Charitable Status



Key Points

- A wide range of different types of social enterprises exist in Co. Fermanagh. A large proportion of social enterprises who responded to the survey were playgroups and education providers.
- A large proportion of social enterprises (44%) had been established for over 20 years.
- 69% of social enterprises had charitable status.
- 54% of social enterprises with charitable status were Companies Limited by Guarantee.

b) Employment and Volunteer Contribution

Employment numbers

Like any business, social enterprises have the ability to create and sustain employment. The analysis of survey responses looked at the number of people employed by social enterprises in Co. Fermanagh. The 39 social enterprises who responded to the survey employed a total of 429 people either on a full time or part time basis as of 28th May 2012 in Co. Fermanagh. Figure 4 summarises the ratio of males to females and the ratio of full time to part time employees across these social enterprises.

Figure 4: Employee composition across social enterprises: gender ratio & full time versus part time ratio

	Male	Female	Total
Full Time	54	149	203
Part Time	10	216	226
Total	64	365	429

A noticeable pattern in the composition of employment within social enterprises is the ratio of male to female employees. Of the 429 employees, 85% were female and 15% were male. From this it is clear that females seem to dominate the workforce of the social enterprises surveyed. However as previously noted a large proportion of respondents were playgroups or childcare providers and this is likely to have an impact on the male to female ratio. For example, one social enterprise which was involved in the provision of childcare had a total of 24 employees which comprised of 23 females and only 1 male.

In addition to this there were a considerable number of social enterprises who were involved in health care provision, some of which were amongst the largest employers of the social enterprises which responded to this survey. Often these types of organisations have female dominated workplaces due to the nature of their activities, and may help to explain the high proportion of females to males employed by the social enterprises who responded to the survey.

Of the 429 people employed by social enterprises, 203 employees worked full-time in comparison to 226 employees who worked part-time.

The number of people each social enterprise employs helps to provide an indication of the size of social enterprises in Co. Fermanagh (Figure 5). Social enterprises within the county tend to be small organisations. The majority (65%) of social enterprises had between 1 and 9 employees, 15% of social enterprises had between 10 – 49 employees with 5% of social enterprises employing between 50 – 249 employees. However a noticeable trend was that a significant proportion of social enterprises (15%) had no employees at all, and relied completely on volunteers to run these organisations.

Figure 5: Employee numbers across social enterprises

Number of Employees	% of Social Enterprises
No employees (reliant on volunteers to run social enterprise)	15%
1 - 9 employees	65%
10 - 49 employees	15%
50 - 249 employees	5%

It is important to note that a number of social enterprises are large employers in Co. Fermanagh. Examples include Lakeland Community Care throughout south and west Fermanagh, and ARC Healthy Living Centre based in Irvinestown.

Changes in staff numbers

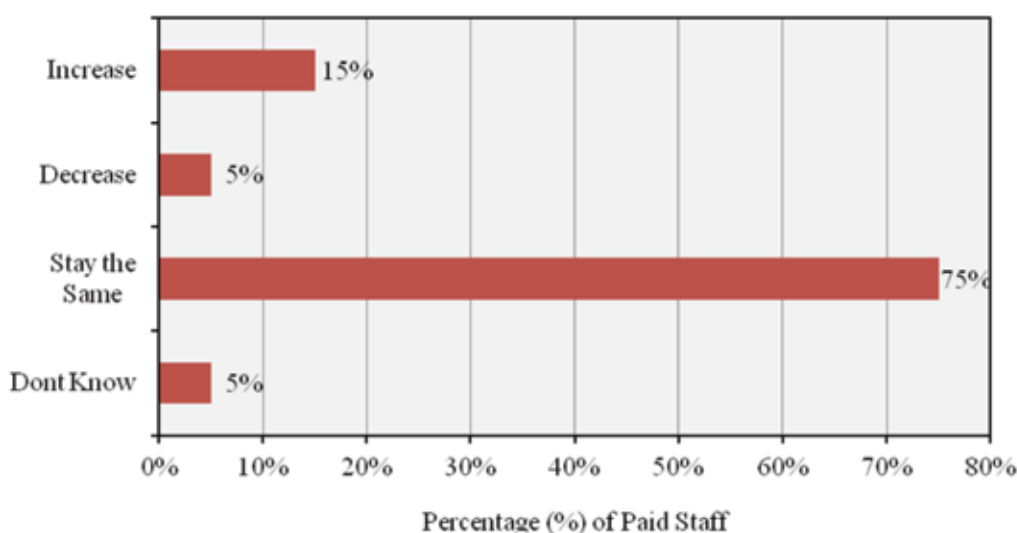
Respondents were asked the question 'Do you expect there to be any change in the number of paid staff in your enterprise in the current financial year 2012/2013'. Importantly for this question, the survey was distributed at the beginning of the financial year.³

Figure 6 shows the expected changes and a number of important trends:

- Encouragingly 75% of social enterprises surveyed indicated they expected current staff levels to stay the same.
- A total of 15% of social enterprises expected to increase staff numbers. These social enterprises are based in 5 towns and villages across Co. Fermanagh namely Enniskillen, Lisnaskea, Irvinestown, Belcoo and Kinawley.
- Only 5% of the social enterprises surveyed expected to decrease their staff numbers.

These results are relatively positive taking into account the current economic climate.

Figure 6: Expected changes in the number of paid staff for the financial year 2012/2013



³ The survey was distributed at the end of May/beginning of June 2012 and respondents were asked to complete the survey by Monday 18th June 2012.



Volunteer numbers and hours

In addition to paid employees, social enterprises in Co. Fermanagh are highly dependant on the contribution of volunteers. The survey revealed that there are nearly as many volunteering opportunities as there are employment opportunities within social enterprises. From the 38 social enterprises that answered the relevant survey question regarding volunteer numbers, 33 of these social enterprises had volunteers. This amounted to a total of 402 volunteers as of 28th May 2012. The number of volunteers however varied across social enterprises (Figure 7). These figures are important to take into consideration given that the majority of social enterprises which responded to the survey were small organisations.

Volunteers contributed approximately an average of 5 hours per month to social enterprises.⁴ However this varied greatly across social enterprises. For example some social enterprises had volunteers who each gave an average of less than 2 hours per month, whereas other social enterprises had volunteers who each gave on average in excess of 20 hours per month. In one particular circumstance, a social enterprise had 1 volunteer who gave nearly 100 hours a month on average to that organisation. The importance of volunteers will therefore vary depending upon the circumstances of each social enterprise.

It is also important to recognise that some social enterprises also had a higher ratio of volunteers to staff numbers than other social enterprises. Indeed a number of social enterprises did not have any paid staff and were totally reliant on volunteers; this applied to 6 of the 38 valid responses. An example of this is Kinawley Community Hall Association which had a total of 22 volunteers, but currently has no paid staff.

⁴ This includes only those social enterprises who stated they had volunteers and completed the relevant survey questions.

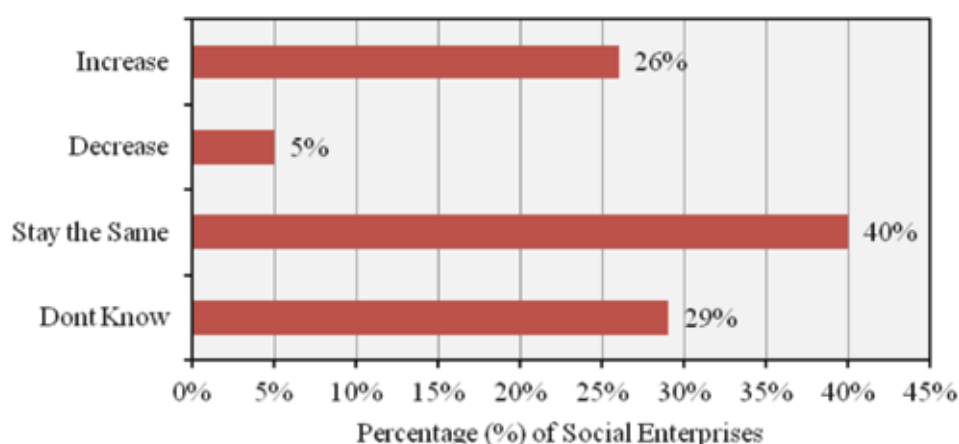
Figure 7: Volunteer numbers across social enterprises

Number of volunteers	Number of social enterprises	Percentage of social enterprises
0	5	13%
1-10	19	50%
11-20	11	29%
21-30	2	5%
31+	1	3%
Total	38	100%

Changes in Volunteer Numbers

Volunteers play a crucial role in the day to day running of social enterprises. There was a mixed response to whether social enterprises expected volunteer numbers to change⁵, with 40% of social enterprises expecting the number of volunteers to stay the same in the financial year 2012/2013 (Figure 8).⁶

Figure 8: Expected change in the number of volunteers in the financial year 2012/2013



Key Points

- Social enterprises make an important contribution to providing employment and volunteering opportunities in Co. Fermanagh.
- The 39 social enterprises which responded to the survey had a combined total of 429 employees in Co. Fermanagh.
- The majority (65%) of social enterprises in Co. Fermanagh had between 1 and 9 employees.
- Volunteers contributed approximately an average of 5 hours per month to social enterprises. However this varied greatly across social enterprises.
- The majority of social enterprises (75%) expected the number of paid staff they have to stay the same in the immediate future.
- A total of 40% of social enterprises expected the numbers of volunteers they have to stay the same in the immediate future.

⁵ The results showing expected changes in volunteer numbers were based on 38 responses. One social enterprise failed to complete the relevant question in the survey.

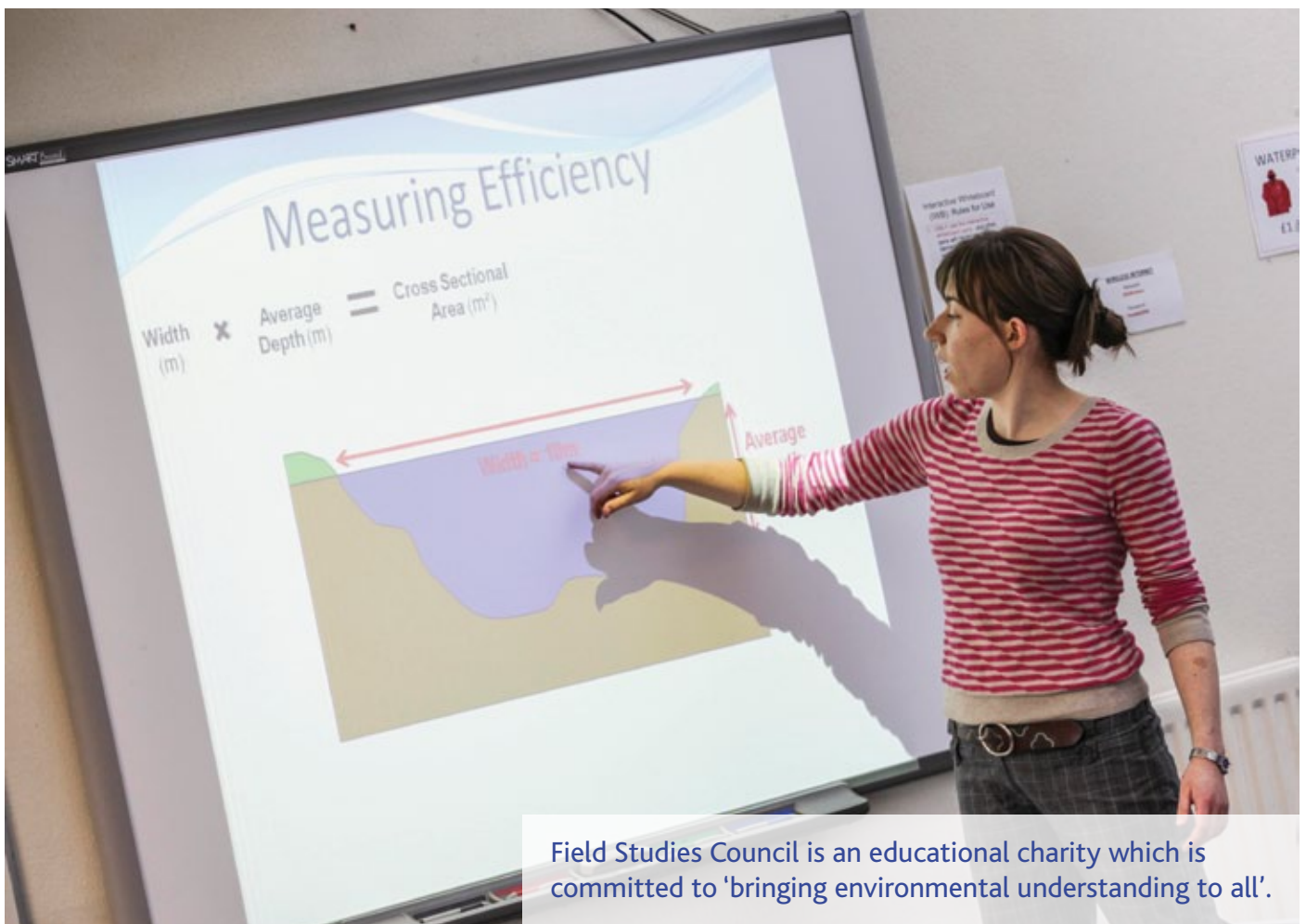
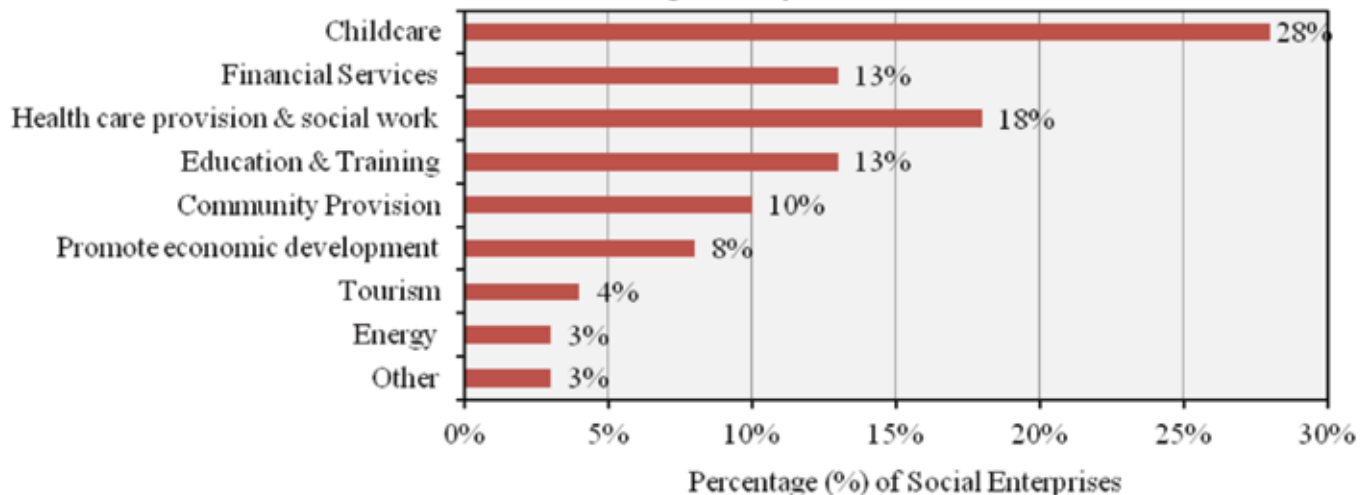
⁶ The survey was distributed at the end of May/beginning of June 2012 and respondents were asked to complete the survey by Monday 18th June 2012.

c) Nature of Social Enterprises, social objectives and beneficiaries

Main Business Sectors

The survey sought to explore the main business sectors which social enterprises traded in. Respondents were asked to choose one option only. Childcare was the main business sector which social enterprises were involved in with 28% of organisations indicating this. Health care provision & social work, financial services and education & training were other significant sectors (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Main business sector which describes social enterprises core trading activity



Field Studies Council is an educational charity which is committed to 'bringing environmental understanding to all'.

Main Social Objective/Purpose of Social Enterprises

Respondents were asked to expand on the main social objectives or purpose of their enterprise. The majority of social enterprises had several key social objectives/purposes and therefore provided more than one response. The most common key social objectives/purposes of social enterprises were to support children and young people (33%), to provide community services/facilities (28%) and to improve health and well being (26%).

Other key common social objectives included:

- supporting vulnerable people including the elderly and disabled
- education provision
- environmental awareness
- improving community relations
- promoting economic development and / or creating employment opportunities

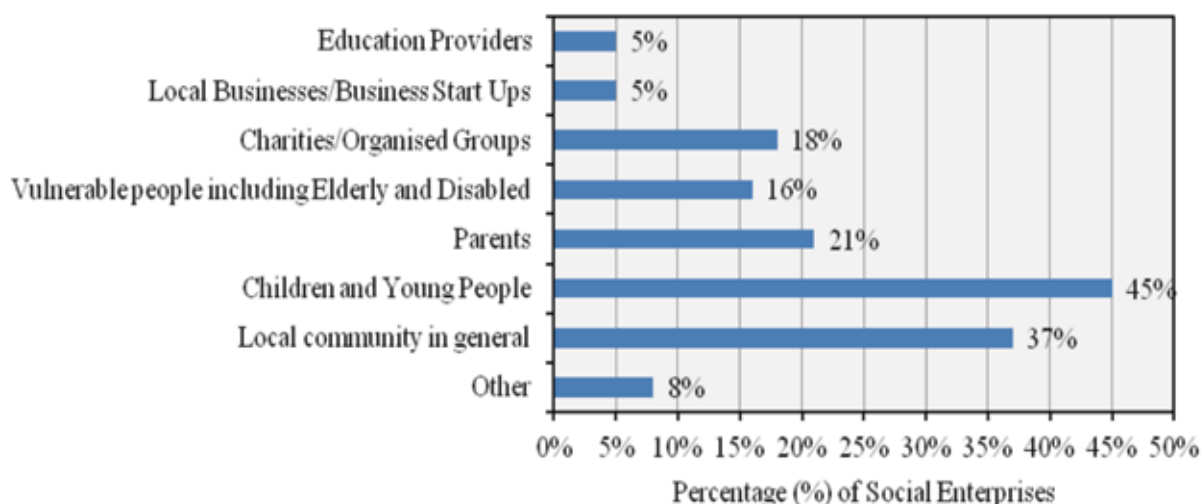
Volunteers play a crucial role in Kinawley Community Hall Association.



Main Beneficiaries of Social Enterprises

Social enterprises were asked who were the main beneficiaries of their activities with the majority of respondents giving more than one answer.⁷ The three main beneficiaries of social enterprises activities were children and young people, the local community in general and parents (Figure 10).

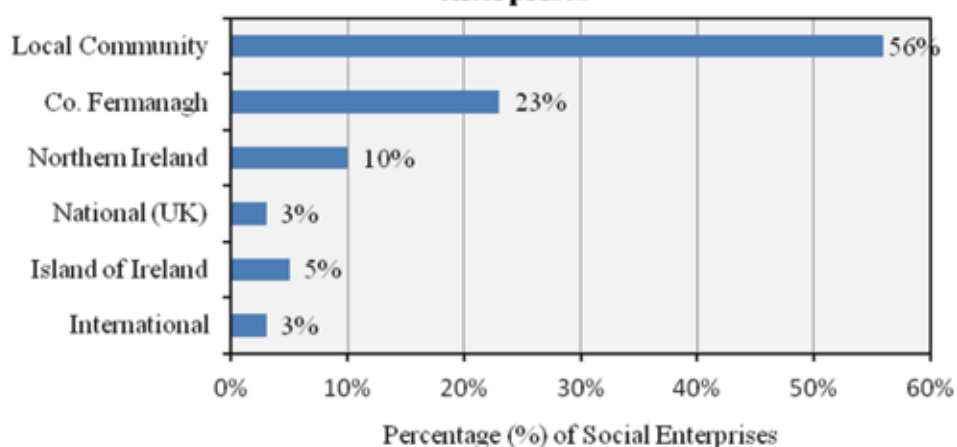
Figure 10: Main beneficiaries of Social Enterprises



Geographic coverage of Social Enterprises

Social enterprises described the geographic scale of the area/customer base which they serve (Figure 11). The majority of social enterprises (56%) indicated that the main geographic scale which they served was their local community, with 23% indicating serving the Co. Fermanagh area and 10% serving Northern Ireland.

Figure 11: Geographic scale of area/customer base served by social enterprises



⁷ The total percentage in Figure 10 is greater than 100% as the majority of respondents indicated that they had more than one main beneficiary. The results showing main beneficiaries were based on 38 responses. One social enterprise failed to complete the relevant question in the survey.

The range of beneficiaries of social enterprises and their geographic scale helps to show the valuable contribution social enterprises make to economic and social life in Co. Fermanagh. The contribution of social enterprises to local communities is particularly important. The localised services provided by social enterprises to rural communities in Co. Fermanagh are often the types of services that would otherwise not be available to people who live outside of major towns in the county.

An example of this is Newtownbutler Cross Community Playgroup which has successfully served a rural community and improved cross community relations. The playgroup was established in 1985 against a back drop of a lack of pre-school provision in the local area. The playgroup has a large rural catchment area and children come from neighbouring villages including Roslea, Magheraveely, Donagh and towards the border. Given the level of pre-school support in the area, Newtownbutler Cross Community Playgroup helps to provide a valuable service to parents who might otherwise have to travel much further in order to bring their children to pre-school.

The provision of services and facilities and in particular the focus on children and young people are also important. Helping vulnerable groups in society and improving general health and wellbeing are also extremely important especially given the changing demographics in Co. Fermanagh (a growing number of elderly people). Other social enterprises such as community associations which often operate from purpose built halls help to bring together whole communities, whilst social enterprises such as credit unions allow members from a town or village to borrow and save money locally.

Key Points

- Childcare and health care provision & social work were more common business sectors for social enterprises to be involved in.
- The most common social objectives/purposes of social enterprises were to support children and young people (33%), closely followed by provision of community services/facilities (28%).
- The three main beneficiaries of social enterprises activities were children and young people, the local community in general and parents.



Newtownbutler Cross Community Playgroup provides a crucial service to a rural community. Children and parents benefit greatly from the Playgroup

d) Finance

It is important to look at the financial performance of social enterprises especially given the current economic climate.

Financial performance - annual turnover and profit & loss

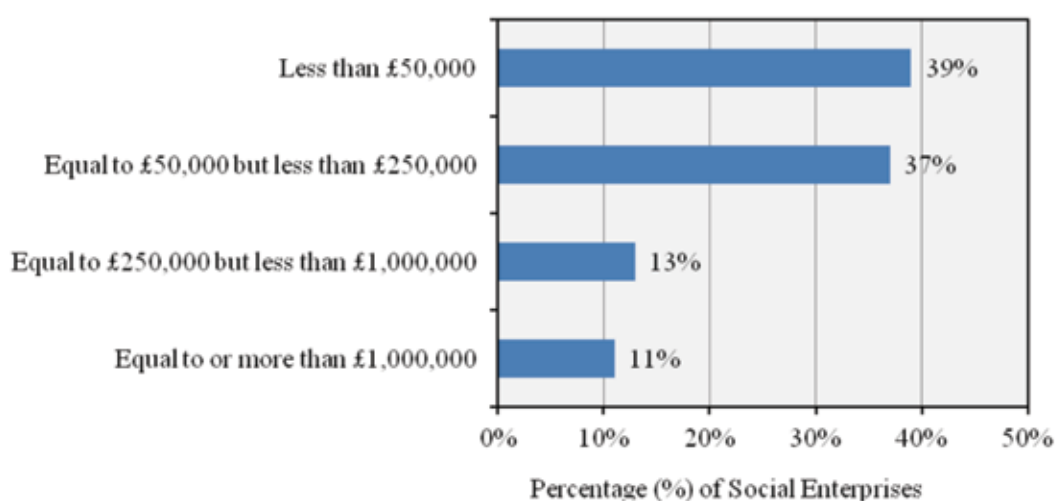
The majority of social enterprises (76%) had an annual turnover of less than £250,000 in the financial year 2011 - 2012 (Figure 12). A total of 13% of social enterprises had a turnover equal to £250,000 but less than £1,000,000, with 11% of social enterprises having a turnover equal to or more than £1,000,000.⁸

Social enterprises generate income from a range of sources. This includes income earned from trading activities, grants and donations and other sources such as fundraising. It is important however to recognise that the % of social enterprises turnover from each of these sources will vary greatly depending upon the nature of these organisations and their activities.

For example social enterprises such as those which promoted economic development and credit unions in most circumstances, generated 100% of their income from trading activity. Many other social enterprises generated over 90 percent of their income from trading activity. However other social enterprises such as playgroups tended to have generated a lower proportion of their income from trading activity. Indeed some social enterprises relied more heavily upon a combination of grants, public sector funding and fundraising. The social enterprise sector is therefore very diverse. There is a wide range of different types of organisations which rely on different sources of income, depending upon the nature of their activities and their organisation type.

Social enterprises were also asked if they made a profit or loss during the financial year 2011-2012 (Figure 13). A total 78% of social enterprises surveyed either made a profit or broke even during this period.⁹

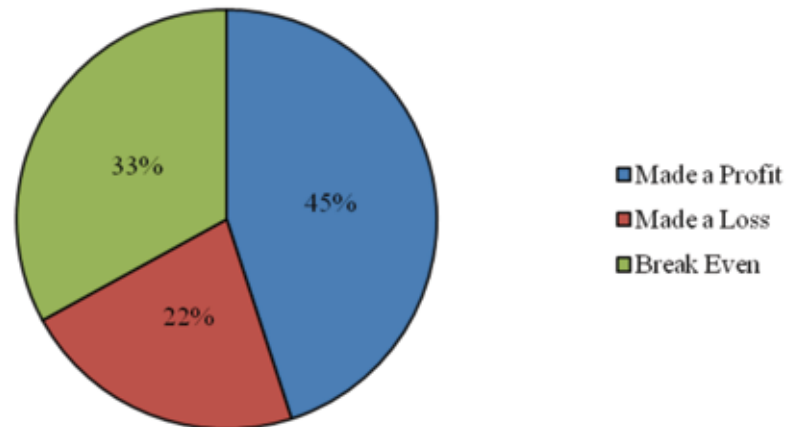
Figure 12: Annual Turnover of Social Enterprises in the financial year 2011-2012



⁸ The results showing annual turnover were based on 38 responses. One social enterprise failed to complete the relevant question in the survey.

⁹ The results showing profit & loss were based on 36 responses. Three social enterprises failed to complete the relevant question in the survey.

Figure 13: Performance of Social Enterprises in the financial year 2011-2012

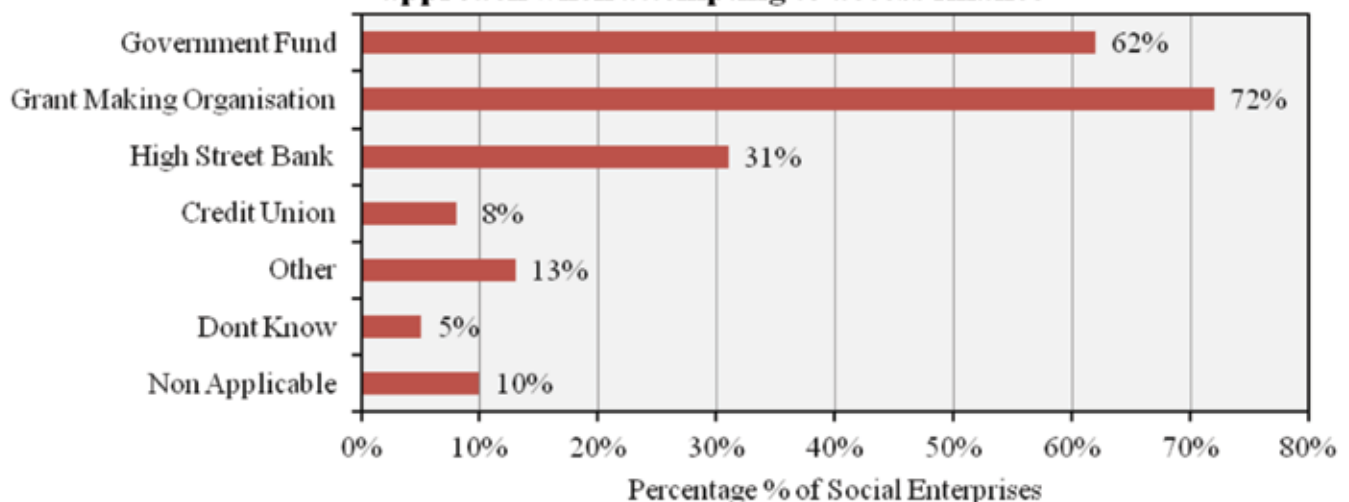


Access to finance

Social enterprises turned to a range of different organisations when attempting to access finance. Respondents were allowed to choose more than one option when asked the question 'What types of organisations would you normally approach when attempting to access finance?'.

It is interesting to note that a high number of social enterprises would normally approach a grant making organisation (72%), closely followed by Government funding when attempting to access finance (62%). A total of 31% of social enterprises stated they would normally approach a high street bank.

Figure 14: Organisations which Social Enterprises would normally approach when attempting to access finance



Key Points

- The majority of social enterprises (76%) had an annual turnover of less than £250,000 in the financial year 2011 -2012
- Social enterprises generated income from a range of sources.
- A total 78% of social enterprises surveyed either made a profit or broke even during the financial year 2011-2012
- Social enterprises indicated that they would normally approach a range of different organisations when attempting to access finance. A high proportion of social enterprises turned to a grant making organisation (72%), closely followed by Government funding when attempting to access finance (62%).

e) Sustainability and Challenges

Main challenges facing sustainability and growth of social enterprises

Respondents answered an open question regarding the challenges they faced. Two of the common challenges included:¹⁰

- A lack of / access to funding – a total of 37% of social enterprises stated this.
- The current economic climate and associated factors including high unemployment - a total of 21% of social enterprises stated this.

However many of the social enterprises provided responses which were very specific to their organisation or drew attention to wider challenges facing the social enterprise sector. It would be valuable for some of these challenges to be investigated in further detail in future research as they are likely to be important for stakeholders such as Government bodies to consider when engaging with social enterprises. Examples of these include:

- One of the most successful social enterprises in Co. Fermanagh stated its frustration towards the perception of social enterprises and the third sector by Government bodies:

'The public sector perceives the third sector as being more risky/amateurish and therefore putting more protectionist measures in place. This means then not everybody gets the same terms and conditions.'

This organisation highlighted above, felt that social enterprises were very innovative and highly competent organisations which need greater recognition.

- A number of social enterprises raised the difficulties involved when applying for funding, stating that there was a lot of "red tape" and administration involved with accessing funding. It was noted by one social enterprise that the process of applying for funding from Government bodies can very challenging particularly for small organisations which may have a lack of resources in terms of time, cost and number of volunteers to dedicate to the application process.
- A number of social enterprises felt that there are challenges associated with the procurement process surrounding the awarding of Government contracts. These social enterprises noted that in the past there had been a greater number of smaller organisations or organisations based in the community delivering these contracts over a smaller area. However these social enterprises felt that the public procurement process now tends to award contracts to larger companies who deliver these contracts over a larger area. One social enterprise noted that the public procurement process had become more "supermarket style" and that the community element of delivering these contracts was being diminished. This organisation felt that larger companies were more focused on profit making and that this removed a community element of delivering some services.

¹⁰ The results showing challenges were based on 38 responses. One social enterprise failed to complete the relevant question in the survey.

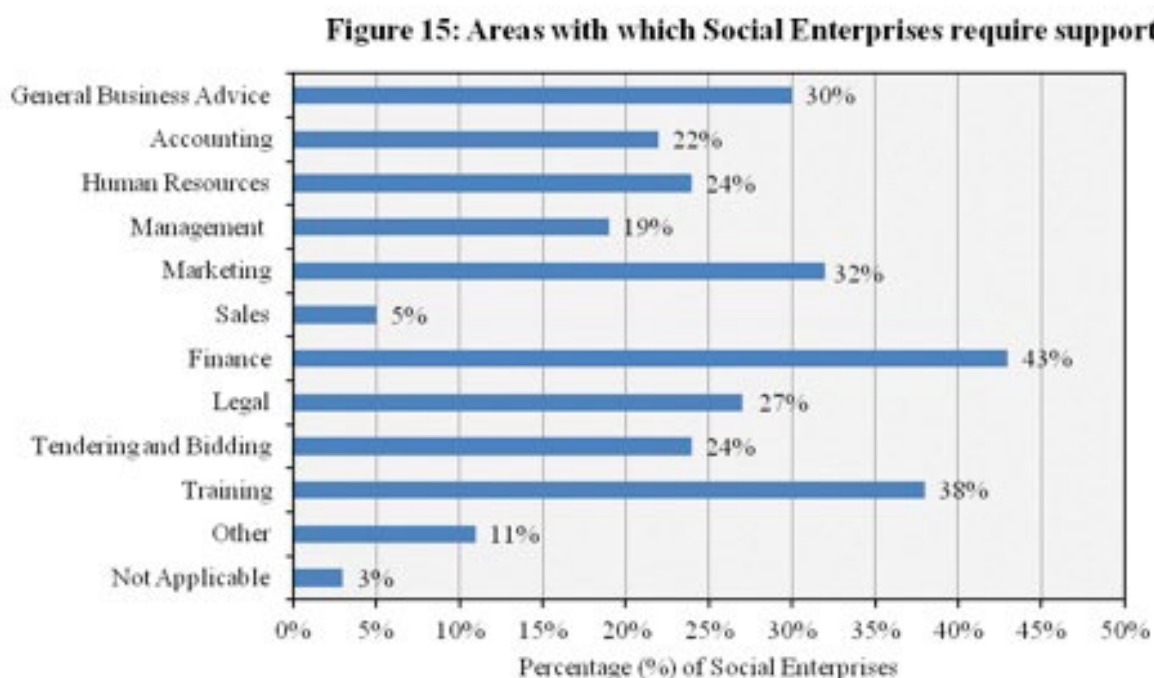
Social enterprises – advice and support

Social enterprises like all businesses require a range of support services to assist their enterprise including general business advice, legal advice and support with marketing and sales. When asked what areas their enterprise required support with in the future a range of feedback was given. Respondents could indicate more than one response and with a number of key themes emerging (Figure 15). The most common areas which social enterprises required support with was finance (43%) followed by training (38%) and marketing (32%).¹¹

A number of social enterprises provided further comments with regards to areas such as training. For example some social enterprises highlighted the importance of staff training and the positive impacts this can bring to their organisation. However these organisations also noted challenges to training staff including the cost, finding time for staff to attend training courses whilst balancing busy work schedules and the types training available to meet their needs.

However many social enterprises also indicated more specific types of areas of support they would like to see in the future. It is important to recognise that these are likely to be specific to the individual nature of each social enterprise. Examples of comments made by a number of different social enterprises included:

- *'To be able to employ more graduates, increase our turnover and cross border network.'*
- *'Recognition of the value of social enterprises'.*
- *With reference to business support schemes - "A number of support schemes offer mentoring however due to extremely busy timetables it is very challenging to put the knowledge gained from these mentoring sessions into practice... I think therefore more financial and practical support in identifying good partners, employees and or medium to (fairly) long term mentors i.e. not short term.*
- *'Greater support and interest from local council. Organisations similar to ourselves have much greater local council support in areas like Belfast, Armagh and Derry.'*



¹¹ The results showing challenges were based on 37 responses. Three social enterprises failed to complete the relevant question in the survey.

Key Points

- Two of the most common challenges facing social enterprises were a lack of / access to funding; and the current economic climate & associated factors including high unemployment
- However many social enterprises indicated a range of other challenges which were very specific to their organisation or drew attention to wider challenges facing the social enterprise sector
- The most common areas which social enterprises required future support with included the areas of finance (43%) training (38%) and marketing (32%)



4 Conclusion

The report helps to show the vital contribution social enterprises make to social and economic life in Co. Fermanagh. The sector is diverse with a wide range of different types of social enterprises operating in many different business sectors. Playgroups and childcare providers were the most common type of social enterprise which responded to this survey and make a valuable contribution to the local communities particularly in rural areas. The majority of social enterprises primarily focused on serving the local community and had a wide range of beneficiaries. The most common beneficiaries included children and young people, the local community in general and parents.

Social enterprises are important employers, and the 39 social enterprises that responded to the survey had a combined total of 429 paid employees in Co. Fermanagh. Social enterprises also provide many volunteering opportunities enabling people to gain new skills and provide an important role in the operations of these organisations. Based on numbers of paid employees and the annual turnover of social enterprises which responded to this survey, the majority of social enterprises were small organisations. For example the majority of social enterprise which responded to the survey had an annual turnover of less than £250,000 in the financial year 2011 – 2012.

There were a wide range of challenges facing the sustainability and growth of social enterprises. Whilst many of these were very specific to that particular enterprise, two of the most common challenges included a lack of / access to funding and the current economic climate. Interestingly a number of social enterprises raised concerns regarding the amount of 'red tape' associated with accessing funding, and challenges associated with the procurement process surrounding the awarding of Government contracts. Such issues warrant further investigation and are important for decision makers to take into account.

The advice and support needs of social enterprises also need to receive more attention. Whilst there are common themes amongst the advice and support needed by social enterprises, a lot of the advice and support needed by social enterprises can be quite specific to that organisation.

5 Recommendations

Looking to the future

What are the best approaches to supporting current social enterprises in County Fermanagh now and in the future, and how do we encourage and support new social enterprises?

Over the last hundred years in County Fermanagh social enterprises have 'developed in cycles' from food co-operatives to credit unions, from playgroups to childcare projects, from care initiatives and enterprise centres to social entrepreneur driven initiatives.

Potential future areas of growth include community energy; health and social care; educational initiatives as well as responses to other and new emerging needs. The following is a set of recommendations based on the feedback from those who responded to the survey, case studies, discussions with key individuals and scanning the external environment:

1. A mechanism is needed to identify and support 'early stage' social entrepreneurs. The UnLtd funding model is a good example of how this could be packaged.
2. Increased recognition needs to be developed at a local level i.e. within districts via collaboration with Councils and local newspapers etc to celebrate social enterprises and the contribution they make to society and the economy.
3. Start-up capital not grants. Social enterprises are not necessarily ready or interested in applying for grants. They need a supportive external environment and start-up capital. Can the NI Assembly create special social development zones building on the proposed social enterprise hubs?
4. Proposed social enterprise hubs – at least one to be located in County Fermanagh, and include some innovation space to help start up social enterprises.
5. Financial innovation – develop and pilot new finance models in Northern Ireland i.e. Community Share schemes which unlock community engagement and link with investment, ownership and enterprise, or; hybrid grant / loan projects.
6. Establish social innovation camps, to assist in the development of new ideas
7. Importing ideas – learn from social innovations and entrepreneurs from home and abroad i.e. across the EU and beyond. Franchising, partnership working etc offer significant opportunities.
8. Government must recognise the huge contribution social enterprises make to tackling social and economic issues and invest the appropriate resources 'which marries' this contribution compared to other sectors.
9. Community Asset Transfer, namely the transfer of land and buildings from Government to community based organisations – could provide a huge impetus to support the continued growth and development of social enterprises.
10. Government procurement and proposed social clauses offer social enterprises with a significant opportunity. Social enterprises must harness this opportunity by building their awareness, understanding and capacity in this area.

11. Invest NI – support programmes should raise awareness of availability and actively target social entrepreneurs. The inclusion of social enterprise organisations in workshops and events with private sector organisations, will promote knowledge transfer and development of collaborative relationships.
12. To maximise engagement and encourage the development of social entrepreneurs in terms of business support and practice, and workforce development activity must be delivered in a flexible way i.e. utilisation of technology, flexible learning structures etc.
13. Social enterprises have specific training needs in relation to staff development, marketing and finance. An opportunity exists for Social Enterprise NI to meet this demand.
14. Legal structures – there is a range of structures which new social enterprises can consider. An appropriate education measure should be developed and promoted to assist new and emerging social entrepreneurs about these structures.
15. Succession planning – an effective programme of activity is required to support succession planning in the longer established social enterprises, to ensure continuity and continued success.



Fermanagh Enterprise Ltd supports and gives advice to people wishing to set up a business and those currently running a small enterprise.

ARC Healthy Living Centre Ltd



The ARC Healthy Living Centre is a refurbished building located in Sallyswood Estate in Irvinestown and was **opened in 2001**. The Centre aims to address health inequalities and improve the well-being of local people by bringing together a partnership of community health and services.

The origins of ARC Healthy Living Centre are closely aligned with the work of Irvinestown Trustee Enterprise Company Ltd (ITEC). ITEC is a non-profit taking company limited by guarantee and was incorporated in 1994. ITEC aims to increase economic development and employment opportunities in the town of Irvinestown and surrounding hinterland, and currently manages over 55,000 square feet of affordable workspace located in and around the Irvinestown area.

However in the 1990s, ITEC recognised that the rate of social development was not happening at the same pace as economic development in the Irvinestown area. Serious social problems were evident in areas such as the Sallyswood Estate. This prompted ITEC in partnership with the local community and other stakeholders, to identify that there was a need for a facility to help address these problems. As a result the ARC Healthy Living Centre was created.

The ARC Healthy Living Centre responds to the needs of the local community by providing opportunities to enable and empower people to develop their own resources for creative and healthy living. The Centre works very closely with local communities and promotes community participation and volunteering. An example of this is ARC's close relationship with Irvinestown Community Partnership which acts as community forum for 36 community groups. ARC actively listens and responds to issues raised by the forum.

The Centre delivers services to over 11 rural wards with high levels of deprivation, poor statutory services infrastructure, high levels of unfit housing and high levels of long term sickness. The ARC Centre operates in 'hard to reach' areas which are often neglected. In addition to the Health Living Centre based in Irvinestown, ARC also has a number other sites geographically located throughout the targeted area to help deliver its services. A key component of its work involves delivering health programmes. This involves a combination of both the Centres self designed programmes in addition to a number of health programmes from public sector bodies which they have successfully tendered for. Examples of

these programmes include Cherish Sure Start and Solace.

Cherish Sure Start works with parents and children to promote the physical, social, emotional development of pre-school children. In particular this programme is aimed at those children who are disadvantaged to ensure that they are well prepared for school. SOLACE (Supportive Opportunities for Living with Addiction in a Community Environment) provides a support service aiming to reduce harm caused by chronic addiction, to individuals, families, and communities.

A key aspect of ARC is that has a broad interpretation of the concept of healthy living and in addition to delivering local health programmes, it also provides high quality childcare at the Active Allsorts Children's Centre, as well as hosting a range of additional services. Additional services host by the Centre includes providing access to the Housing Executive Advice Clinic, Community Mental Health Care staff, statutory addiction counselling services, Relate, and Citizens Advice Bureau.

At the time of writing the Centre employs 81 people in addition to 102 volunteers who make a significant contribution its operations. Surpluses that are generated by ITEC are reinvested back into the ARC Healthy Living Centre. Both of these organisations have a close relationship and share the same Chief Executive Officer. This helps to plan for the future and share experiences and knowledge across both companies.

ARC Healthy Living Ltd has ambitious plans for the future, including plans to develop a state of the art Health and Care Village which will be one of the first of its kind in Europe. This will engage the services of doctors, nurses, dentists and other health professionals. ARC envisages this as a being new and more sustainable model of health care. Rather than focus on the treatment of illness, the new model of



health care in Irvinestown will provide a greater focus on the prevention of illness and encourage people to keep themselves healthier for longer.

ARC Health Living Centre makes an invaluable contribution to social and economic life in Co. Fermanagh. The contribution and success of the Centre has been well documented. This was clearly demonstrated last year when Prime Minister David Cameron along with the then Secretary of State Owen Paterson visited the Centre.



KEY POINTS

- Opened in 2001
- Employs 81 people in addition to 102 volunteers who make a significant contribution to its operations
- Enables and empowers people
- Further information can be found at www.irvinestowndevelopment.com

Bryson Energy

Bryson Energy is one part of the Bryson Charitable Group, Northern Ireland's leading social enterprise with staff based in Enniskillen, Derry/Londonderry and Belfast. Formed in 2007 it became the new name for the Northern Ireland Energy Agency. The main role of Bryson Energy is to provide energy advice and energy measures to homes across NI. Its mission statement is 'To secure the support and active engagement of Northern Ireland's energy users, particularly households, in implementing strategies, programmes and measures to combat climate change.'

Liaising with and working alongside a range of partners including the Housing Executive, Fermanagh District Council and the Public Health Agency, Bryson Energy provides a valuable service to residents in Northern Ireland. Bryson Energy with a direct workforce of 49 people, of which 10 are based in Enniskillen, is committed to tackling fuel poverty and its long term aim is to energy proof homes across NI. It also indirectly supports a further 50 jobs with Bryson Energy delivering over twenty separate programmes and initiatives to meet their core objective of making homes more energy efficient. These include the Warm Homes scheme which is the largest of Bryson Energy's projects, the Bryson Energy Advice Line and Cosy Homes Insulation among others.

The Warm Homes Scheme means warmer, healthier and more energy efficient homes. Under this scheme homes are given insulation and heating measures such as solid wall, new cavity wall insulation and loft insulation as well as replacement jackets for hot water tanks. Certain eligibility criteria are required for this scheme but generally those on low incomes or in receipt of benefits may be eligible. Bryson Energy uses a number of subcontractors to deliver the measures, putting money into local communities through local employment.

Funding has been provided to Bryson Energy by local councils along with the Department for Social Development through the Housing Executive for a new impartial advice service helpline. This ensures that all households in Northern Ireland have access to local, free and impartial energy advice. Advice can also be given on grants; cash backs and offers which households may be entitled to. In the year 2010-2011 the company provided advice to over 115,000 households across Northern Ireland.

Energy Efficiency Education programmes are also run by Bryson Energy to help young people understand



their relationship with the environment and by doing so aims to preserve the environment for future generations. Energy awareness is also promoted at public events, in schools and in tenants own homes. Bryson Energy also facilitates the delivery of practical improvements such as loft insulation and solid wall insulation to improve domestic energy efficiency.

Those living in poverty and vulnerable groups such as the elderly and the long term sick benefit greatly from the work of Bryson Energy by having their homes energy proofed. Those who live in isolation in rural areas have also benefitted from the schemes run by Bryson Energy, and they hope to continue this work into urban areas starting with South Belfast.

By providing a service of reducing energy waste and energy proofing homes they are improving the health and general wellbeing of householders across Northern Ireland. At the same time they are playing a crucial role in changing people's attitudes and behaviours towards the environment. Given the current economic climate and the continuous rise in fuel prices, the work of Bryson Energy is paramount to the health and wellbeing of the people of Fermanagh, particularly those who are socially and economically affected.

KEY POINTS

- In 2010/2011 energy advice was provided to over 115,000 households
- Employs 49 staff including 10 who are based in Enniskillen directly and supports a further 50 staff through its subcontracting model
- Committed to eradicating fuel poverty
- Further information can be found at www.brysonenergy.org





CASE STUDY

Field Studies Council Derrygonnelly

The Field Studies Council (FSC) is an educational charity which is committed to 'bringing environmental understanding to all'. It helps to provide opportunities for people from all ages and with a range of abilities to discover, be inspired by and understand the natural environment. It has a national network of 17 education centres, international outreach training projects, research programmes, information and publication services and a range of professional training and leisure courses. Opened in 2001, Derrygonnelly FSC is one of 17 education centres in the UK. It is however the only one of its kind on the island of Ireland.

A key component of FSC's work includes the provision of both formal and informal education to a range of education providers as well as community based organisations. At the education centre in Derrygonnelly, schools are the main beneficiaries of the formal education provided. Much of the formal education delivered at the centre involves working with schools on curriculum based material. This is available to schools and other education providers

from north and south of the border, as the centre can cater for the different curriculums that exist in these jurisdictions. Informal education is also provided through means such as running summer schemes which often involve youth groups.

The centre at Derrygonnelly consists of an education building, a resource room, games room, kitchen, restaurant, a laboratory and accommodation blocks with 60 beds and can cater for people with disabilities. The centre accommodates for both day visits and residential visits to enable people to avail of its services. Residential visits are extremely popular especially amongst schools, with many rebooking a year in advance to ensure a visit for the following year. The centre is ideally located in relation to different habitats including those found in the nearby Geopark; the Donegal coast; forest parks; and the River Silles which flows through the centre grounds. The proximity of the centre to these habitats is extremely important to help complete practical fieldwork and provides an unique educational experience in an 'outdoor classroom'.

A group that benefits greatly from residential trips

are children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Derrygonnelly FSC runs a programme known as 'The Kids Fund' and is designed to help these children. Derrygonnelly FSC uses its income to help subsidise this programme. Indeed the provision of bursaries and The Kids Fund which support children from disadvantaged backgrounds are examples of how the centre reinvests any surpluses back into the organisation whilst helping it to achieve its social and environmental objectives.

In addition to the services Derrygonnelly FSC provides at its own centre, it also delivers education offsite. In January of this year it implemented its Outreach Programme for Key Stage 3 pupils and with over 1060 pupils in Co. Fermanagh benefiting.

The centre is not only used by students from the island of Ireland but also from further afield. For example, students from the University of Liverpool come across every year to use their services and the centre has had students from as far as the Netherlands and Singapore. In addition to students using the facilities, teachers also avail of professional training courses offered in areas such as taxonomy and teacher training.

Volunteers play a huge role in the running of the centre with short term placements being offered to graduates from Queens University Belfast and the University of Ulster to help gain valuable work experience. The centre also works in partnership with the local job centre as part of the back-to-work

scheme which helps to reduce unemployment in the area.


Becoming a community centered facility and delivering outdoor learning to a wide and disparate audience of schools, colleges, universities and community groups have been the centre's biggest achievements to date. However, not only do local schools and students benefit from the educational services offered, but the local community and businesses in Derrygonnelly also benefit greatly with the centre and its visitors using local amenities and purchasing goods and services in the local area. This in turn creates and supports employment for the local people in Derrygonnelly and surrounding areas. The centre therefore provides an invaluable service to the community of Derrygonnelly and further afield by delivering an essential educational and community resource.

KEY POINTS

- Opened in 2001
- Main objective: 'Bringing environmental understanding to all'
- Local community and businesses benefit greatly from the centre



Dylan Quinn Dance Theatre



Dylan Quinn Dance Theatre (DQDT) is a Community Interest Company which was established in 2009 by Dylan Quinn. Dylan is an experienced professional dancer who identified a new opportunity to utilise his skills whilst providing a valuable service to the wider community. The company aims to promote personal, social and community development and positive wellbeing through engagement with or through arts and in particular dance. An important long term goal of the theatre is to encourage people of all ages to be involved in the arts.

A key component DQDT's work involves the provision of dance classes. A wide range of dance classes are provided in areas such as Salsa, Zumba and Contemporary dance. Members of the public are the main beneficiaries of these classes. There are generally 4-5 classes held on a weekly basis, although on some occasions there can be up to 9 per week. Dance classes are held in a range of public venues including local leisure centres and community halls. The success of the dance classes can be demonstrated through the large numbers of people participating. From March to May of this year up to 500 people per week participated in dance classes. The classes help people to develop their personal, social, communication and artistic skills as well as promoting positive health and well being. DQDT also runs a large range of Outreach projects which involves going out and working with community based organisations and schools in their own settings. Two examples of the Outreach work include the Start Up and Education projects. Start Up was a project which involved Eglinton Community Centre. DQDT worked with Sole Purpose Productions and In Your Space to deliver dance, drama and circus workshops for young people living in Eglinton. This resulted in a performance in Eglinton Community Hall. DQDT has also been involved in a large number of Shared Education projects which help to integrate young people from different communities. A recent example of this involved the staging of a concert involving 140 young people from 4 different schools from across Co. Fermanagh. The concert was performed to an audience of more than 700 people at the Share Holiday Village in Lisnaskea. DQDT operates throughout Northern Ireland; however the majority of dance classes and Outreach projects take place in Co. Fermanagh and Co. Tyrone. In addition to these services, the company also delivers a range of professional productions. Through the professional productions DQDT attempts to explore complicated social issues which may often be overlooked by society. This has seen the company extend its work beyond Northern Ireland. An example of this is the production 'Fallout' which raises questions about the increasing objectification of violence as entertainment. Fallout has been performed in London, Dublin (representing Ireland at the Dublin Dance Festival), Belfast and various other venues across Northern Ireland. Professional productions are an important part of the company's operations and an area which the company intends to grow and develop further in the future.

KEY POINTS

- The company promotes personal, social and community development and positive wellbeing
- From March to May of this year up to 500 people per week participated in dance classes
- DQDT has grown rapidly and in the financial year 2010/11 generated a turnover in the region of nearly £140,000
- DQDT received the Northern Ireland Social Enterprise Start Up of the Year Award 2011 at the Social Economy Awards
- Further information can be found at www.dylanquinndance.org

People from all ages and backgrounds benefit from DQDT services. Dance classes and Outreach projects have huge health and social benefits, helping to improve physical and mental wellbeing as well as people's overall fitness. These services are instrumental in bringing people from all sections of the community together; providing new social opportunities and helping to develop confidence among young people, including those with behavioral difficulties and those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Despite being a relatively new Social Enterprise, DQDT has grown rapidly and in the financial year 2010-2011 generated a turnover of nearly £140,000. Indeed its success was recognised in February this year, when it received the Northern Ireland Social Enterprise Start Up of the Year Award 2011 at the Social Economy Awards. Dylan Quinn Dance Theatre has therefore proved to be an extremely successful social enterprise which makes a valuable contribution to life in Co. Fermanagh and across Northern Ireland.



Fermanagh Enterprise Ltd

Fermanagh Enterprise Ltd, one of the first Local Enterprise Agencies to be established in Northern Ireland in 1985, represents the vision of a group of local professional and business people who came together to find solutions to the problems of unemployment, through promoting the establishment, development and growth of small businesses.

These objectives are reflected in the company's Mission Statement – 'To strengthen the economy of Fermanagh through encouraging, assisting and advising individuals wishing to move to self-employment and set up and grow their own business.'

Fermanagh Enterprise Ltd, which has charitable status, provides a range of different services, including the provision of information and business advice to people wishing to set up a business or to those involved in the running of a small enterprise.

Fermanagh Enterprise Ltd delivers a number of programmes to help start up and existing small businesses. These programmes provide support to individuals and/or businesses at different stages of their development. In general terms, these can be divided into three main categories, namely pre start up, start up and post start up. This includes a free business start up programme which provides an initial one to one advice session to discuss the business idea, a 1 day/2 evening practical course on how to set up and run a business and help and support with the development of a business plan.

A key milestone for the company was its move to its current premises based at Enniskillen Business Centre, a 5 acre site, on the outskirts of Enniskillen. The company had previously been situated in Enniskillen town centre. However in 1997, the company began to build phase 1 of its new premises and has since added 2 extensions. These premises provide 42,000 square feet of work space and comprise of 63 units available to small enterprises, at reasonable rates and on an easy term licence.

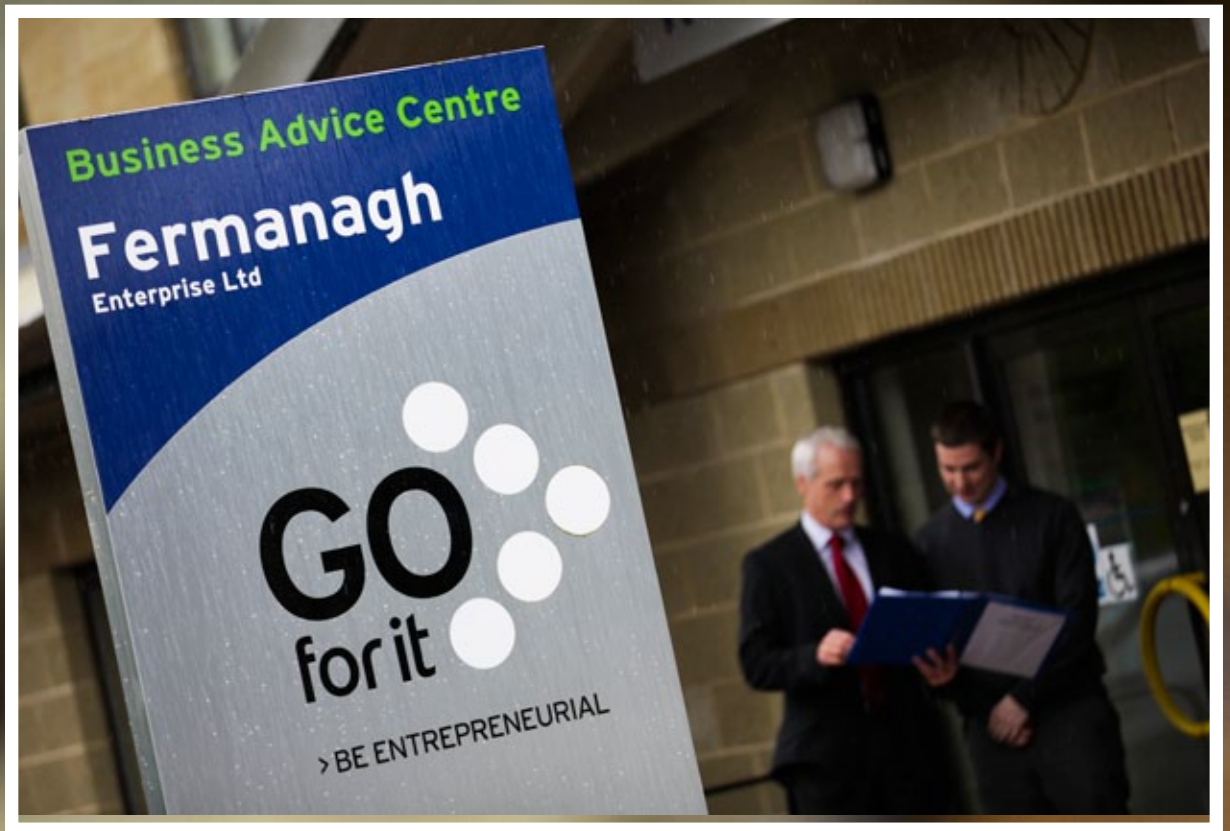
The Bite Group is a sandwich and fresh food distributor based in Enniskillen and is a well known successful business in the area. They were originally located in the Enniskillen Business Centre and Fermanagh Enterprise Ltd provided support to the company in the early stages of its growth and development. The flexibility within the Business Centre enabled the Bite Group to move 14 times to different units during their tenancy to accommodate their growth. In 2007, the Bite Group had outgrown the Business Centre and moved into their own factory premises and have continued to go from strength to strength.

Any surpluses generated by Fermanagh Enterprise Ltd are reinvested back into the company to help promote the company's aims and objectives. Through its activities it makes a significant contribution to help to tackle unemployment, support wealth creation, enabling people to take more responsibility for their economic future and bringing revenue into Co. Fermanagh.

KEY POINTS

- Aims to strengthen the economy of Co. Fermanagh through encouraging and assisting individuals wishing to move to self-employment and set up and grow their own business
- Premises provide 42,000 square feet of work space and comprise of 63 units available to small enterprises
- Surpluses generated by Fermanagh Enterprise Ltd are reinvested back into the company to help promote its aim and objectives
- Further information can be found at www.fermanaghenterprise.com





Fermanagh
enterprise



Fermanagh Trust – Fermanagh House

Fermanagh House opened in Enniskillen 2007 as a community hub for the community and voluntary sector. A lack of facilities and meeting space in Co. Fermanagh acted as the primary motivation for the initiative. The project was made possible with the support of Fermanagh District Council who leased the site for the premises at Broadmeadow, in addition to the Fermanagh Trust and other charitable trusts who funded the building. The facility was officially opened in October 2007 by the then President of Ireland Mary McAleese.

The main social objective and purpose of Fermanagh House is to promote charitable, community and voluntary activity in Fermanagh and beyond. It provides a variety of meeting rooms and office space to cater for a range of individual needs and requirements, in addition to a range of administrative support services. The building is an ideal environment for organisations to promote their activities and provides invaluable networking opportunities.

The building was carefully designed to fully accommodate for the needs of people with disabilities and is open Monday to Friday from 8:30am to 10:00pm and Saturday from 9:00am to 6:00pm subject to bookings. Rooms can be hired on an hourly or daily basis at competitive rates and catering can be provided. In 2011 alone, over 130 different organisations used the centre. The facilities are regularly used as a resource for the entire community and by many groups and organisations such as Breast Friends, Killadeas Day Care Centre, and Erne U3A to name just a few. Nine charities have office space in Fermanagh House. At the time of writing this includes The Fermanagh Trust, Bryson Energy, Development Media Workshop, The EEL Project, Fermanagh Citizens Advice Bureau, Mencap, Livability, Volunteer Now and WEA.

The website www.fermanagh.info is also managed by Fermanagh House for voluntary and community groups. The website provides a useful source of information on events and activities taking place in Co. Fermanagh, gives advice and support on a

KEY POINTS

- Nine charities have office space in Fermanagh House
- In 2011 over 130 organisations used the centre for a range of activities
- Plans to extend Fermanagh House to meet the demand
- Surplus income supports the Fermanagh Trust's grant making
- Further information can be found at www.fermanaghhouse.org

range of issues affecting the voluntary sector and provides an online resource which allows organisations to search for grants. The 'Grant Finder' is a detailed resource which searches thousands of potential funding sources. The website also includes a member's portal to which 150 community based organisations currently belong to. Organisations can use the portal to contact other members and highlight their activities, helping to encourage cooperation and raise awareness amongst members. This website which is updated regularly acts as a helpful advocacy tool and is very useful for helping groups to help boost

their membership and use of their services.

Fermanagh House's income comes entirely from trading activity which includes the renting of office space, hire of rooms and use of its services. Surpluses generated by room hire and rental space are used to support the Fermanagh Trust's work, helping to reach out to local groups and charities and assist them with grant making and development support. As a result, these charities are able to carry out their valuable work throughout Fermanagh and further afield. Every year Fermanagh House also makes a significant contribution towards the distribution of Christmas toys to children from families in Co. Fermanagh.

In the future Fermanagh House plans to extend its current premises to allow more office and meeting space due to the high demand for its services. Many groups in the community and voluntary sector rely heavily on the support provided by Fermanagh House. This support is crucial to their long term operations, helping to strengthen and grow the community and voluntary sector in Co. Fermanagh and further afield.





CASE STUDY

Glendurragh Childcare Services Ltd

Glendurragh Childcare Services Ltd is a not-for-profit company which was established in 2003. It originally began as a playgroup which operated from the local community hall in the village of Kesh. However it was soon recognised that there was the demand for the provision of day care services to children of older ages as well. Following the awarding of initial funding from the PEACE Programme, the company began to provide childcare services and currently provides for approximately 70 children up to the age of eleven. The catchment area which it serves lies predominantly in the Kesh, Ederney and Lack wards. The establishment of Glendurragh Childcare Services was very much driven by members of the local community. A number of key motivations lay behind its establishment including the need to provide affordable childcare to a rural area; to help bring money into/encouraging spending in Kesh and to help to build community relations. These motivations continue to act as key social objectives for the organisation.

Childcare provision is split into three age groups

namely Baby, Toddler and Afterschools and caters for children from 6 weeks to 11 years old. Children are currently cared for at the company's centre in Kesh. It is open Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6pm and the centre includes a breakfast club. The company rents the centre from Kesh Enterprise Company Ltd which helps to provide a reduced rental rate to Glendurragh Childcare Services and is important to its day to day running.

The centre provides an excellent environment for children to interact with one another and is ideally located in relation to other facilities in the village including the local community hall, a public football pitch and green space as well as a public play park. Glendurragh Childcare Services uses the local community hall for both the Baby and Toddlers groups, providing a safe and controlled area for the toddlers to run about and enjoy themselves. Older children also have the advantage of being able to play games such as football and dodge ball on the public football pitch and use the play park. This year a summer scheme was run for children which included



a number of day trips. Trips were made to venues such as Belfast Zoo, Castle Island Children's Indoor Activity Centre, Castle Archdale and the cinema. Glendurragh Childcare Services also operate their own bus service to collect children from school and bring them to the centre once school has finished. This is extremely beneficial for parents who are at work during the day and who would otherwise find it difficult to move their child from school to the childcare centre. Another important dimension of their care is their ability to look after children with disabilities and the centre is designed to accommodate for their needs. Volunteers play a crucial role in the day to day running of Glendurragh Childcare Services. There are currently around 20 parents who volunteer in addition to a number of paid staff who dedicate their free time. Volunteers are very important in helping to meet regulations surrounding childcare provision and maintain the correct ratio of adults to children required. The majority of Glendurragh Childcare Services

incomes is from parental fees, however they have also received grants from a number of other organisations including Lloyds TSB and Awards for All. In the future Glendurragh Childcare Services would like to provide an I.T. facility for the older children it cares for. This is however dependent on funding available. Indeed the current economic climate presents challenges, with a significant number of parents in the local area losing their jobs and this has had an effect on the demand for childcare services.

Glendurragh Childcare Services therefore provides a crucial service to a rural area in North Fermanagh for both children and parents alike. Parents would otherwise be forced to travel much further, to towns such as Enniskillen which is 25 minutes away by car, in order to find a similar service provider. Glendurragh Childcare Services also makes an important contribution to economic life in the local area, employing 24 staff and this in turn has positive spending implications for local shops and businesses in the area. Improving cross community relations is also extremely important and providing social opportunities for parents is advantageous. Indeed within the last year Glendurragh have begun to run parental meetings, which give parents the opportunity to discuss childcare issues, socialise and help to build a relationship between themselves and Glendurragh Childcare Services.

KEY POINTS

- Established in 2003
- Provides for approximately 70 children up to the age of eleven
- Caters for children from 6 weeks to 11 years old
- Provides a crucial service to a rural area in North Fermanagh for both children and parents alike

Kinawley Community Hall Association

Kinawley Community Hall Association was formed in 2008 with the objective of creating and maintaining a much needed community space that would be of benefit to all members of the Kinawley community and the surrounding area. It is a limited company with charitable status and is an initiative which has been driven by the local community.

The community of Kinawley has previously had no centre in which services can be provided for the benefit of the entire community. During the last 20 years discussions had taken place regarding the need of a community space which would be a central focus of community life. In early 2008, a number of stakeholders including the local church and activity groups came together to develop these ideas. They actively engaged with the local community and an extensive public survey was carried out. This showed that there was overwhelming support for the need of a new community hall which would help to act as a focal point for village life and the decision was taken to build a build community hall.

A limited company was formed which helped

to establish a secure financial structure for the organisation. A voluntary board of directors was then selected along with a management committee. The management committee was involved in engaging with the local community regarding the plans, carrying out fundraising efforts for the hall, working with building contractors and funders who support the project and agreeing on the designs and plans of the layout of the new hall. The project has therefore required much dedication from a group of volunteers. A fundraising target of £700,000 was set to complete the hall. This includes sufficient funding to purchase the necessary site, construct and fit out the building and also provide enough working capital for the first year of operation of the new facility. The Association received significant financial support from a range of sources including the local community, local businesses, community based organisations and funders. This has included SWARD Rural Development Programme, Fermanagh District Council, St Naile's Church, the Big Lottery Fund, The Quinn Group, Kinawley GAA Club. UCIT has also





provided a significant loan to support the project. The new hall which is on schedule to be completed prior to Christmas this year, will provide much needed basic infrastructure for the village and surrounding hinterland, providing services to a local crèche, schools, scouting group, GAA, drama and women's groups as well as sports related activities. It is also hoped that the provision of a new community space will encourage new groups to be created and help to expand existing groups, some of which whose membership in the past may have been limited due to the inability to access adequate facilities.

Once the hall is built members of the management committee will be allocated roles to successfully run the hall. The Association wants to ensure that charges to use the hall are not too expensive and that it is available to everyone. Any surpluses that will be generated will be reinvested back into the hall and to help to maintain and improve its facilities.

A key objective of the new hall also includes the need to build community relations in the local area. This is important to take inconsideration given that Kinawley and the surrounding area suffered greatly

during The Troubles. The new hall will therefore be extremely important in improving cross community relations to help integrate the community. Indeed much care was taken when choosing a site for the new community hall, and the most 'neutral' site close to the centre of the village was chosen to encourage greatest use of the hall from people of all backgrounds.

The new hall will make a large contribution to social and economic life in Kinawley and the surrounding area, and will reach a catchment area of approximately 1000 people. It will not only help to create a much needed community space and build community relations, but it will also bring significant social and health benefits.

KEY POINTS

- Huge voluntary commitment
- Over £200,000 raised locally towards the cost of new hall
- Driven by the local community
- Further information can be found at www.kinawleycha.com





CASE STUDY

Lakeland Community Care

Lakeland Community Care Ltd (LCC) was established in 1993 and is a non profit taking company which aims to provide facilities in the interest of social welfare and the promotion of health. The main services it provides are day care and domiciliary care, which are designed to assist people to live independently in their own home with dignity and respect. The elderly and people with disabilities are the main users of these services. Today LLC has successfully grown into one of the largest employers in western Fermanagh, currently employing a total of 159 people.

LCC was formed by representatives from the local communities of Belcoo, Derrygonnelly, Garrison and Teemore with the support of organisations including the Department of Agriculture & Regional Development and the Sperrin Lakeland Trust (which has now been incorporated into the Western Health and Social Care Trust). Initially attempts were made to run a day centre in Teemore for the elderly and this acted like a pilot project. From this it was quickly realised that there was a lack of facilities for the elderly and this resulted in the expansion of their services to other areas in order to help meet their needs.

Currently LCC operates 5 day centres across western Fermanagh. The day centres present an opportunity for people to improve their health and well being. Lunch is provided along with activities such as storytelling, arts and crafts and people are educated about healthy living including the importance of having a good diet. In addition to the day centres, domiciliary care – the provision of care in the home is also provided by LCC. The company was awarded the contract to deliver Flexicare in the Co. Fermanagh area. Flexicare is a low level care service to supplement persons who have no immediate need to personal care but help with day to day needs, such as shopping, social interaction, general maintenance, duties etc.

LCC works alongside a range of organisations including not-for-profit, commercial as well as individuals. The company works with the voluntary sector to help deliver Flexicare. The majority of the company's income comes from day centre provision and domiciliary care, with the main purchaser of their services being the Western Health and Social Care Trust. Due to the nature of LCC's work, the training of staff is crucial to its day-to-day activities

and provides specialist training for its staff. LCC has been approved by City and Guilds to provide the appropriate staff training which includes the awarding of NVQs in areas such as food and hygiene, first aid and working with vulnerable adults etc.

Another important part of the company's day to day running is the role of volunteers. Volunteers take on a range of roles including volunteer drivers who take people to and from hospital appointments. It currently has approximately 20 volunteers and hopes to increase this number in the future, though the recruitment of volunteers is difficult due to the amount of regulation surrounding the nature of LCC's work. Regulation for example may require volunteers to undergo background checks and extensive training which can deter people from volunteering in the first place.

LCC have ambitious plans for the future including the 'Building for the Future' project which will include the construction of a new purpose built building. SWARD is helping to financially support the new building in addition to LCC using their reserves. The new

facility which has been granted planning permission, will incorporate LCC's current headquarters and the Belcoo Day Centre in addition to providing medical facilities where people will be able to gain access to doctors and nurses, facilities to help meet staff training needs and potentially facilities for the community including I.T. rooms and a fitness room designed for the elderly.

LCC makes a significant economic and social contribution to life in Co. Fermanagh. Importantly it is a large employer within the county and the company also makes a conscious effort to buy materials locally as part of its social responsibility. Its services help to empower the elderly and disabled people and encourage them to interact with the community and keep active. The services it provides play a key role in helping to keep these people out of the care system and contribute to their health and social well being. Given the demographic changes currently taking place in our society and the dramatic increases in the number of people over 65s, LCC is providing a particularly important service to rural areas in Co. Fermanagh.



KEY POINTS

- Currently LCC operates 5 day centres across western Fermanagh
- Employs 159 staff and has 20 volunteers
- Ambitious plans for the future including the 'Building for the Future' capital project
- Further information can be found at www.lakelandcare.org.uk





CASE STUDY

Macnean Credit Union

Macnean Credit Union was established in 1989 by the local community and provides financial support to the people of Belcoo and surrounding hinterland in South West Fermanagh. Macnean is a financial corporative which supports local people to save together and lend to each other at a fair and reasonable rate of interest. Individuals make up 99% of Macnean Credit Union's membership which includes 622 adult members and 170 minors (those under 16 years of age).

The credit union had its origins in local people identifying the need to have a savings and borrowing facility in the area. Twenty two people came together to discuss the potential need and research the demand for a local based credit union. A range of factors were decisive in the decision to forming the credit union. These included the perception that high street banks were distant and too far removed from the community and also that they were not paying enough attention to small savers. Subsequently Macnean Credit Union was formed.

Initially the credit union simply operated out of the homes of local people who helped to establish it. However in 1995 the credit union purchased land and built premises in Belcoo. The building of premises was a key milestone for the organisation and this project was supported by the International Fund for Ireland. The new building also enabled them to provide others services available to local people including the use of photocopying services and access to the internet.

Macnean Credit Union is open on a part time basis from 2-5pm on a Monday, Tuesday and Thursday and from 2-8pm on a Friday. Currently a Board of Directors and three part-time paid members of staff help to run the organisation. Volunteers are extremely important to the running of the credit union and volunteers find the work extremely satisfying, knowing they are doing something valuable for the community. In the past the credit union has provided opportunities for pupils from local schools to gain work experience, helping young people to learn new skills and develop their CVs.

The credit union recognises the importance of having a well trained workforce and continues to train its staff. The Irish League of Credit Unions of which it is a member, helps to meet these training needs and the workforce attends training courses depending upon their requirements.

Independence is key to the philosophy of the credit union which makes an extremely positive contribution to the local community, and members of the credit union benefit financially in terms of the dividend they receive each year. The main customers of the credit union primarily include individuals wishing to use their services. As for many organisations the current economic climate is proving challenging. However Macnean Credit Union aims to continue the positive work it is doing in the local community and build momentum going forward. Macnean Credit Union helps to provide a much needed financial service for a rural area, creating jobs and volunteering opportunities and helping to build community cohesion.

KEY POINTS

- Established in 1989 and provides financial support to the people of Belcoo and surrounding hinterland in South West Fermanagh
- Membership includes 622 adult members and 170 minors (those under 16 years of age)
- Provides a much needed financial service for a rural area, creates jobs and volunteering opportunities and helps to build community cohesion



Me Unltd

Me Unltd was established in April 2009 as a Community Interest Company (CIC). It was founded by Noreen Kettyles who at the time had been involved in the research, development and delivery of a tailored personal development programme for mothers of children with severe learning disabilities. Her work with these women she realised that they faced many exceptional challenges which adversely affected their emotional, mental, physical and holistic well-being. This provided the motivation for Noreen to establish Me Unltd, and bring the benefits of the "Its All About Me" Programme to wider range of carers who were facing similar demands, across all care sectors.

Me Unltd aims to deliver high quality, creative and sustainable personal development initiatives in order to promote positive change in the lives of carers, and inspire them to unlock their true potential. The company provides carers with opportunities to access education, to acquire new skills, to find employment, to build a career, to alleviate situations of poverty, to improve their health, fitness and well-being, and ensure they feel included in everyday life. It also provides a commitment to making a positive

contribution to building and sustaining healthy communities.

Me Unltd received assistance from Unltd in its early stages of development. This support was particularly useful in determining the legal status of the organisation, helping to decide that establishing itself as a CIC would be the most appropriate form. Trading as a CIC would work in line with its operations and social objectives as well as ensuring the correct regulation was in place for the future. Me Unltd has also received support from Invest NI through the Social Entrepreneur Programme.

Me Unltd runs a number of personal development programmes to help carers along their personal journey. All personal development programmes are approved by the Institute of Leadership and Management. The programmes help to improve the physical and mental well being of carers, allowing them to meet new people and interact with other carers who understand, as well as offering opportunity to access education and employment. Ten percent of carers who use Me Unltd services, go back into education or employment.

The programmes also promote the development of





a range of self-management and coping skills for the carers who participate, and empower carers to harness positive change and set up and run 'Me-Time' groups when the different various Me Unltd programmes finish.

When the company first started there was only one programme known as 'It's All About Me' which is a 10 week personal development plan aimed towards women. However with the success of the company the number of programmes has grown and at the time of writing there are currently seven. This includes programmes aimed at male carers and young carers. Customers of Me Unltd include a number of health trusts throughout Northern Ireland and charities who find their services extremely valuable. Around 98% of MeUnltd's income is generated through sales. The personal development programmes are operated on a commercial basis and the income generated from them is used to help fund voluntary work including the creating of 'Me-Time' Groups and other events they run. This includes seminars and workshops addressing issues such as physical well being as well as social events.

Me Unltd has proven very successful and won the Best New Social Enterprise Start-Up Highly Commended Award in 2011. More recently MeUnltd was presented the Social Enterprise Award by the Fermanagh Trust at the Fermanagh Herald Business Awards 2012. A key achievement of Me Unltd however has been the success of the 'Give-A-Care-Scheme' This allows any organisation / individual, who can help to meet the personal development needs of carers, to make a real

difference by providing some of their services for free. Give-A-Care involves a whole range of generous sponsors including health clubs, alternative therapists, image consultants, beauticians, dieticians, specialist counselors, driving instructors and tutors. At the time of writing the value of the Give-a-Care support was £167,500 and the voluntary contributions made by these stakeholders/organisations help to make a real difference to carers and their families.

Me Unltd currently operates in Northern Ireland and the border counties. In the future it would like to continue to growth and develop its business and generate new customers within this geographic base including the Greater Belfast area.

KEY POINTS

- Established in April 2009 as a Community Interest Company
- Delivers personal development initiatives to promote positive change in the lives of carers and inspire them to unlock their true potential
- Voluntary contributions are made to Give-a-Care-Scheme which is valued at £167,500.
- Recently won Social Enterprise Award at the Fermanagh Herald Business Awards 2012

Newtownbutler Cross Community Playgroup

Newtownbutler Cross Community Playgroup was established in 1985 and developed against a backdrop of a lack of pre-school provision in the local area. The playgroup, a registered charity, was formed when the community came together and raised enough funding to build a new purpose-built building. A scheme known as 'build a brick for £5 scheme' was promoted in the local community and was key to raising funds for the building.

The playgroup caters for children aged 3-4 years old and operates Monday-Friday during school term time. Key goals of the playgroup are to provide pre-school services on a cross community basis; to provide a service on behalf of the community; and to help prepare children for school. The playgroup is community run and in addition to 6 part-time members of staff there are 12 volunteers in the playgroup. Volunteers play an essential role in the day to day running and management of the playgroup in addition to making endless fundraising efforts. A key benefit of having volunteers is that it gives volunteers from both sides of the community the opportunity to work together.

The playgroup has proved very successful and has grown significantly in recent years. For example, in 2005, the playgroup had 8 children enrolled in its sessions. In this academic year the playgroup has over 40 children, making it necessary for the playgroup to run two sessions a day. The playgroup helps to cater for children from a wide range of different socio-economic backgrounds and as well as children with special needs.

The playgroup provides a crucial service in a rural community and has a large rural catchment area. In March 2012, a new extension to the building was completed with capital funding from the Department of Education. In recent years the playgroup also received funding from The Big Lottery for equipment and resources. A purpose-built outdoor area provides children with a fantastic area to play and enjoy the fresh air. The outdoor area provides them with an opportunity to interact with nature and is especially beneficial for those children who do not have access to a garden at home or live in a more built-up area. The extension to the existing building was a key milestone for the playgroup and helped to improve its facilities. In the future they would like to provide a longer day care service. Income for the playgroup comes from a range of sources including

the Department of Education which helps to fund the children's places. Income from fundraising is also important to the playgroup. A recent example was the hosting of a fundraising event based on the theme of 'Strictly Come Dancing', which helped to raise approximately £20,000 for the playgroup once all costs had been deducted.

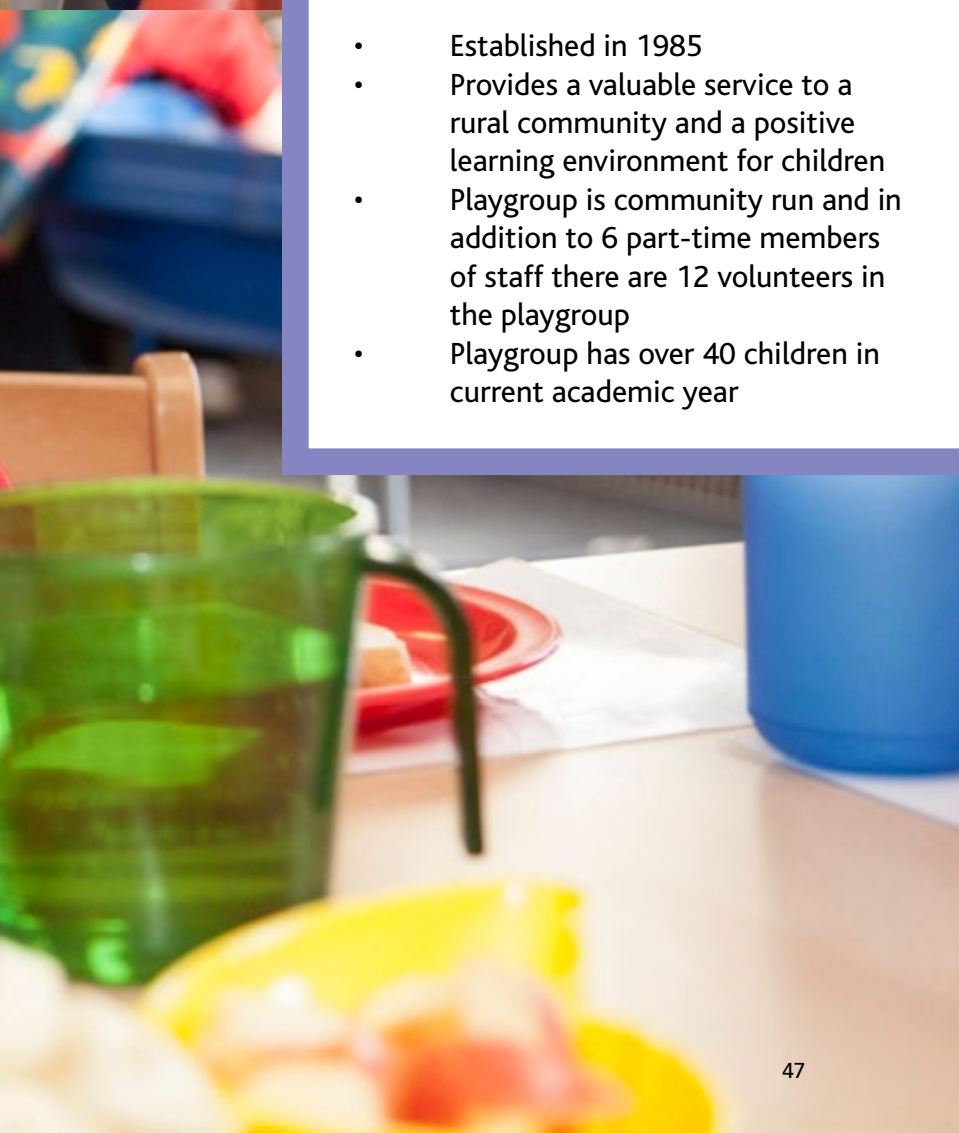
The playgroup helps to provide a valuable service to a rural community and a positive learning environment for children, as well as helping to develop community relations in the local area.





KEY POINTS

- Established in 1985
- Provides a valuable service to a rural community and a positive learning environment for children
- Playgroup is community run and in addition to 6 part-time members of staff there are 12 volunteers in the playgroup
- Playgroup has over 40 children in current academic year



Fermanagh House - a community venue for local charities and community groups.



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