

Multiplying Social Value

Community Enterprise for Success, Solihull's flagship business support programme for voluntary and community organisations and social enterprises, has helped create jobs and opportunities for local people.

It was commissioned by Solihull Council in 2012 to support social enterprises, targeting the borough's poorest neighbourhoods with the support of the European Regional Development Fund.

The support was aligned with major investment in the physical regeneration of North Solihull so local organisations and residents could fully benefit from new capital projects.



Gro-Organic CIC in their community.

Now in its second year, Community Enterprise for Success is managed by the BEST Network and delivered by social enterprise experts Development in Social Enterprise CIC (DISE) and Dynamic Marketing. The programme is creating significant social value.

One business that has been supported is Gro-Organic CIC, a social enterprise which aims to support people of all ages and abilities to understand where their food comes from and what healthy living is. It also supports the community to transform under-utilised areas of land into vibrant food growing or communal gardens.

They were advised on business planning, financial forecasting and identifying the impacts and outcomes of their work. Sarah Gill, director, said "*Gro-Organic CIC has come so far this year, we owe a great deal to the business support we've received from the programme, which has not only developed our skills and confidence, but has provided a great springboard for the future.*"

Councillor Ian Courts, cabinet member for economic development & regeneration, added: "*We wanted to ensure that local communities had a long-term stake and involvement in the regeneration of their neighbourhoods. We are committed to ensuring social value is in our everyday considerations, whether that be through contracts let or in ways which we as a council can work efficiently.*"

Dave Lane, chief executive of DISE, said: "*This contract has helped us grow our business, increase our own social impact and is supporting the sector's growth and sustainability. It's a definite win-win and demonstrates that investment in social enterprises can really create social value for everyone.*"

Dave Lane

Email: David@disecic.org

Tel: 0121 667 6810

Partners have engaged with over 65 organisations to date and work intensively with around 20 clients at any one time. Through business advice surgeries, training and coaching, the contract is delivering tangible outcomes:

- new businesses started
- new jobs created
- jobs safeguarded
- volunteering opportunities
- increased turnover
- improved business resilience
- increased likelihood of securing financial investment
- winning of new contracts (public and private)
- reaching new marginalised individuals.

