

Investing in community micro-enterprise

Big community problems demand small community solutions

'Great things are done by a series of small things brought together'

Vincent Van Gogh

Community Catalysts is a social enterprise working across the UK to try to make sure that people who need care and support to live their lives can get that help in ways, times and places that suit them, with real choice of attractive local options.

Since 2007 we have worked with partners in 51 areas to help local people use their energies and talents to deliver social care and health support and services for other local people. These community micro-enterprises and ventures provide much more choice for people needing care and support. Their services are usually co-designed and often co-produced. They help people live a good life, connected into and contributing to their community.

Our local partners find that many small community solutions have a big impact. Community enterprises and ventures across the areas where we have worked support 14311 people and provide 2356 jobs and 2134 volunteering opportunities. We have brought our community enterprises into a network so that we can continue to provide them with some support and represent their interests and concerns. This network is called [Small Good Stuff](#).

Big problems – community solutions

Making personalisation real

Personalisation is a thread running through the governments' strategy for health and social care¹. Personal health and care budgets are seen as tools which will allow people to get the care they want in the way they want - but in many areas personal budgets are meaningless as the market is dominated by a small number of large traditional providers, with little real choice available. A succession of reports have shown that the traditional care market fails to deliver services that allow people to live a good life.²

Community micro-enterprises are tailored to the people coming to them for help to live a good life. When well-supported they provide real choice of personalised, high-quality services and supports.

¹ Care Act 2014; NHS England Five Year Forward View; Public Health England: **From evidence into action: opportunities to protect and improve the nation's health**

² <http://www.communitycare.co.uk/2015/03/27/15-minute-visits-leaving-care-workers-intolerable-choice>

Integrating health and social care

70% of health money currently is spent on people with long-standing conditions and complex care needs. The separation of the health and social care systems has been particularly unhelpful for people in this group, leading as it has to fragmented services and poor outcomes as well as wasted money³. The UK Government is committed to integrating health and social care systems and has put in place a number of initiatives to secure that integration, with varying degrees of success. A recent report by the Public Accounts Select Committee on the impact of the Better Care Fund⁴ suggest that there is still a long way to go to achieve this aim. The Kings Fund is clear that for progress to be made, health and social care services need to have a far more person-centred and holistic approach than they do currently and that investment in supporting carers and 'low-level' community support services is key

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Community micro-enterprises deliver services shaped round the person, naturally integrating health and social care at the individual level

Financial pressures and a fragile market

Changes in public sector finances means that the business model used by some large care providers is proving to financially unviable. Home care providers in nearly 100 local authority areas have ended their contracts because they consider them to be uneconomic⁶. People in many parts of the UK have limited or no access to responsive home care. Government recognises the fragility of the current care market and sees community involvement and alternatives as one solution. They also acknowledge that some services delivered by professionals are unaffordable and do not deliver the outcomes people want.

In contrast to unsupported micro-enterprise which has a failure rate of 90% in the first year, 94% of our supported enterprises are flourishing after 2 years and beyond. Recent research by Birmingham University⁷ found that micro-enterprises offered better value for money than larger providers.

Engaging and empowering communities

People want to stay connected and contributing to their communities,⁸ they want real relationships and support that lets them live a good life. Initiative after expensive initiative has been launched to deliver this holy grail of 'engaged and empowered communities'. These top-down initiatives often ignore the wealth of unseen work already being carried out by local people rather than nurturing what's there.

The Community Catalysts approach works with existing community structures, building upon and strengthening what is already there and working well. We help local people understand what they know and can do, provide patient coaching, expert support and access to strong local connections

³ <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/research/key-issues-parliament-2015/health/health-and-social-care/>

⁴ https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmpubacc/959/959.pdf?utm_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=8231553_NEWSL_HMP%202017-04-28&dm_i=21A8,4WFI9,OXAQGS,ILJYC,1&utm_source=Sign-Up.to&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=32163-204416-2nd+May+newsletter+%28Tues%29

⁵ (Goodwin et al 2013). <http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/topics/integrated-care>.

⁶ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-39321579>

⁷ <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/activity/micro-enterprises/index.aspx>

⁸ http://www.ippr.org/files/images/media/files/publication/2013/12/Condition-of-Britain-brief03-Getting-olderstaying-connected_Dec2013_11608.pdf?noredirect=1

This approach has proved successful in any demography and with people who have never seen themselves as an 'entrepreneur, including many older and disabled people and people with mental health problems.

Community enterprise

Community entrepreneurs run very small (micro) enterprises or ventures which provide services or supports linked to care, health and wellbeing. These include helping people to stay at home, gain a new skill or make friends, lead a healthy life or enjoy a leisure activity.

Urban Growth

Bruno is passionate about environmental education. In 2013 he established Social Enterprise, Urban Growth. Urban Growth offers horticulture training to all but with a focus on disabled people and people with mental health issues. Urban Growth was successful in obtaining funding so people who live in certain areas of Southwark can train for free. After completing the training, trainees may go on to start their own enterprise with the support of Urban Growth and Community Catalysts

The business models used by community micro-enterprises are on a continuum from fully commercial at one end to fully voluntary at the other. About 40% see themselves as a social enterprise or business and of these only 25% intend to grow. Only some enterprises and ventures are delivering formal health or social care services that require regulation by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Older and disabled people and those with experience of using services play a variety of roles in the design and delivery of community micro- enterprises and ventures. In nearly all cases people are involved in the co-design of services and a growing number of people are setting up their own community micro-enterprises.

Telford After-Care Team CIC (TACT)

TACT was founded in 2012 by Rob Evers who had endured 20 years of addiction. During his recovery Rob became aware of the lack of support available for people like himself. Rob set up TACT on a voluntary basis with a small amount of funding, starting with a smart recovery and gardening groups. In the last 2 years TACT has grown and was incorporated as a Community Interest Company in 2014. It is now a public health commissioned service for people in recovery or people struggling to come to terms with their addiction. TACT has 2 paid staff and 13 trained volunteers all of whom have recovered from addiction. They support 30-50 people every day with a rich variety of support groups, drop in sessions and activities

The challenge

Only a few community micro-enterprises and ventures are able to develop successfully without support. [UnLtd](#) estimate that for every 100 people in a community with a great idea only 1 will turn

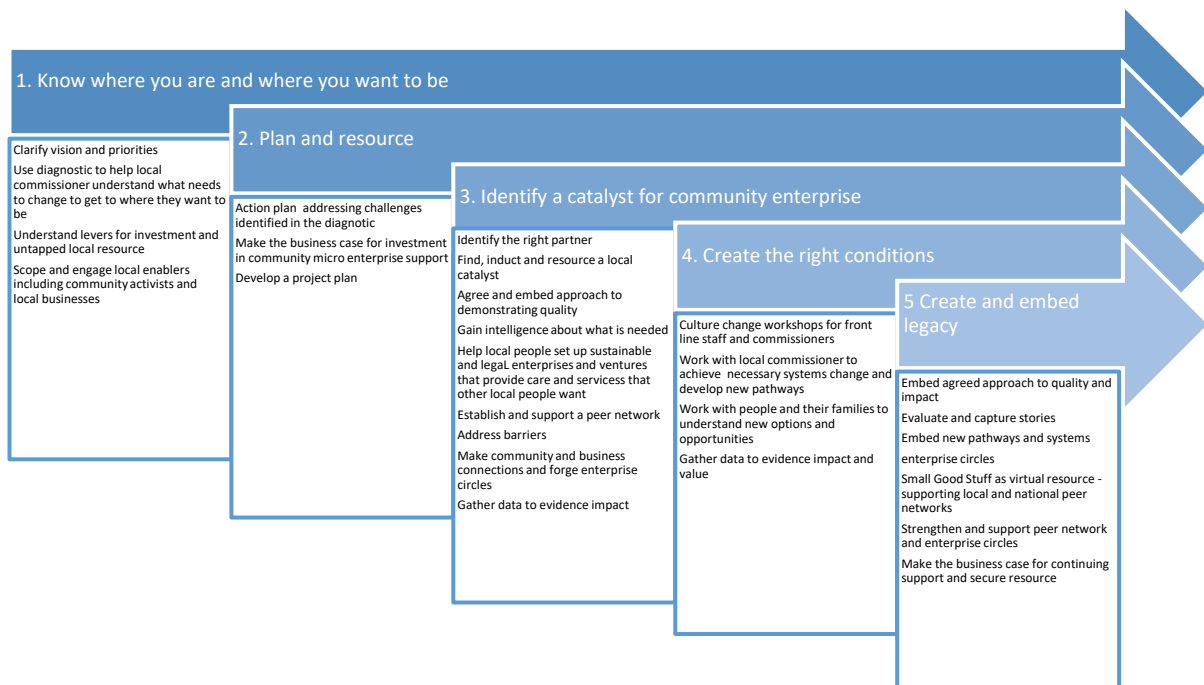
that idea into a successful enterprise. The [New Economic Foundation](#) found that the majority of community entrepreneurs operate under-the-radar, run their enterprise sub legally and last about 18 months before folding. [Business Innovation and Skills](#) state that 90% of micro enterprise start-ups fail within the first year.

The solution

'We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them'

Albert Einstein

Community eco-systems are fragile and easily disrupted. Community Catalysts has developed and tested a 5-step approach to stimulating and supporting community enterprise that works with existing community structures, building upon and strengthening what is already working well.



Our approach works at three different levels:

- Commissioning:** Helping commissioners understand what needs to change (culture, systems and pathways) and then helping them to implement those changes
- Community:** Identifying the right local partner and working with them to strengthen community organisations and activities that support community enterprise
- Individual:** Helping people to understand what is needed; shape their idea; find the resources they need to get started; provide patient coaching and expert advice to help ensure their enterprise is legal and sustainable.

The role of our Community Catalyst



The impact

This approach works across any demography, is replicable and delivers great outcomes. We know that any area which uses our approach will typically, over two years, help nearly 125 would-be entrepreneurs and see nearly 60 community enterprises successfully established. These successful community enterprises will be supporting over 700 older or disabled people and will have created over 100 jobs and 70 volunteering opportunities. We turn around the failure rate for micro-enterprise - over 2 years fewer than 4% of our established enterprises will have closed compared with an average failure rate for micro-business of 90%

Making it happen locally

A strong, sustainable community driven care and health micro-marketplace able to work in partnership with the public sector doesn't happen by itself. It needs targeted, intelligent investment that builds on community strengths and bridges the gap between the public sector and the public. The Community Catalysts' approach ensures that investment by the local area delivers the desired results.

Typically the cost to a local area of implementing the Community Catalysts' approach is:

Core Activity	Year one	Year two
Planning	Yes	No
Recruit and induct the Catalyst	Yes	No
Convene and manage a change group	Yes	Yes
Specialist support to the Catalyst	Yes	Yes
Assure ongoing legacy	No	Yes
Supply of tools, connections and resources	Free of charge where we employ	
Community Catalysts travel and expenses	Yes	Yes
HR management	Yes	Yes
Cost	£73390	£62405
Optional		
Diagnostic	£4500 - £11250	
Action plan	£1500	
Culture change workshops	£1500 per workshop	
Develop a business case for investment	£1500	
Cost	£7500 - £14250	

See www.communitycatalysts.co.uk or contact info@communitycatalysts.co.uk