


<b>FINAL EVALUATION REPORT</b>		
<b>Project Name: SOCIAL ENTERPRISE SUPPORT</b>		
<b>Project Number: SATS 14</b>		
<b>Start Date:</b> Jan 07	<b>Finish Date:</b> Mar 08	

## Introduction and Scope

1. This Final Evaluation Report requires **Economy & Europe Group, Somerset County Council** to provide a report on the success or otherwise of the **Social Enterprise Support Project** in achieving its stated aims and objectives. It moves beyond the scope of the Quarterly Progress Reports already completed for each claim, by reviewing the wider impact of the project. Please refer to the guidance notes

## Project Aims and Objectives

2. Please provide a brief narrative summary of the project's success or otherwise in achieving its broad aims and objectives as given in your original application and your M&E plans as appropriate. Describe how you achieved them, and if you didn't achieve some of them please explain why.

*Aim: To provide training, support and guidance to social enterprise projects in order to bring about robust and quality projects that can contribute to RR objectives and the objectives of Somerset rural communities.*

We feel the overall objective has been well achieved with us exceeding the original planned number of social enterprises (SE) supported. All have contributed in small or more significant ways to increasing quality of life in rural communities across Somerset be that through improved performance of staff skills or providing services that are currently lacking in Somerset

Clearly the project was offered significantly less money than we had originally applied for so we had to scale down the outputs and outcomes that we were looking to achieve to be commensurate with the offer letter. This meant reducing the number of SEs supported, removing the outcome of "performing more strongly and more likely to achieve long term sustainability", dropping a delivery of the business planning course, dropping the outcome of 20 business reviews carried out.

We feel we have had a good spread across the county and the delivery through direct support from SCC officer or CEU Ltd time has been an effective mechanism to support small rural enterprises. The process of providing support has been streamlined in order to provide a fast effective service enabling us to get out and work with enterprises quickly after initial contact. All support was provided through one to one guidance apart from one delivery of our six day business planning course.

The only intended support mechanism that was not utilised but had been planned was use of a business review tool call PERFORM. This use was delayed due to a delay in staff being

able to access training in the tools use and unfortunately this delay has been such that enterprises will only be able to access this tool from 08/09.

However this did not hamper us meeting all targets for the project.

### Project Outputs

3. The agreed Outputs for the **Social Enterprise Support Project** are set out below. Please report on the progress the project has made in achieving these Outputs, including, if relevant, detail of how the project overcame unforeseen difficulties in relation to delivering on the Output targets. Where possible outline the tools you used to measure them

4. Outputs Summary Table.

Output Type	Target total All years	Total achieved to date (31 March 08)	Future years (08-09)
10. No of social enterprises supported	30	37	
11. number of new facilities	1	1	
4.a number of business assisted to improve performance	30	37	

5. Report on Outputs Progress:

The project has been broadly on target all the way through to meet the outputs and we are delighted that we were able to exceed the original number by 7.

### Project Outcomes

6. The agreed Outcomes for the **Social Enterprise Support Project** are set out below. Please report on the progress the project has made in achieving these Outcomes, including, if relevant, detail of how the project overcame unforeseen difficulties in relation to delivering these Outcomes:

7. Outcomes.

Outcomes Summary Table:	
Outcome	Progress on Achievement
<b>SE providing where appropriate services that are currently lacking in Somerset</b>	Achieved. Some SEs looking at starting up are addressing issues around lack of certain services locally or increasing the effectiveness, level of operation of services they currently run i.e Minehead Eye, Seavington St Mary Shop/café.
<b>Staff of SEs more skilled and competent</b>	Achieved. Staff give support and guidance to improve skills, knowledge and confidence in running their SE i.e WHERE, Atwest.
<b>Increased understanding of SE and its role in Somerset</b>	Achieved. Through providing support to increasing number of SEs, publicising BP course and SE in general we have increased the understanding of SE in Somerset.
<b>30 SEs support through one to one guidance</b>	37 Achieved.
<b>1 Business Planning course completed</b>	Achieved.

**Wider Impact**

8. Please comment on the wider impact of the project across the region/area. Please also report on any evidence that you may not already have used.

9. Commentary on the Project's Wider Impact:

This programme of support has led us to work with a number of new SEs or VCS projects that we otherwise would not have come into contact with. These contacts have led on to a number of other contacts for support in rural and urban parts of Somerset. The continuing relationship with CEU is leading to new ideas around courses and services for SEs and working with the VCS infrastructure bodies is enabling us to promote SE more widely and think how we can work in closer partnership through 08/09 and beyond. VCS organisations are considering more and more how they can look to income generation to help secure their future and we are able to provide support and guidance on moving towards sustainable funding. We will be providing further courses regarding sustainable funding, business planning, understanding finances, asset development in future years.

**Ongoing Sustainability**

10. Where relevant, please report on the ongoing sustainability of the facility/service delivered by this project. Where project completion also represents the termination of a service delivered by the project funding, this section is not applicable.

11. Review of Ongoing Sustainability.

SCC has a continuing commitment to provide support to SEs alongside the new model of Business Support that will be provided to social enterprises through the Business Link brand. The new regional service will provide support through IDB (information, diagnostic, brokerage) linking to packaged solutions of support provided by consultants/agencies. SCC will be part of the supplier network providing the packaged solutions. This model is expected to come into operation towards the end of 08/09.

### **Publicity**

12. Please report on any key publicity undertaken. You should make specific reference to any SWRDA/Somerset Rural Renaissance inclusion in any publicity. Please include copies of any publicity materials or indicate if already provided.

13. Report on Publicity Undertaken.

Publicity has been through existing SE networks, VCS networks and LA contacts.

### **The Project Experience**

14. Please report on the project experience overall. Please indicate what you would do differently in future and in addition include anything else you think will help to show how you spent Rural Renaissance funding eg letters of support from beneficiaries, businesses or users, other reports etc. You should consider including lessons learned that could be disseminated to other Organisations delivering related projects or those using a similar delivery model. Please also include suggestions as to how relationships between your organisation and the beneficiaries of the project and also your organisation and Somerset Rural Renaissance could be improved/revised. This will help inform our thinking on future funding programmes.

15. Review of Project Experience.

#### **Overall**

We believe the project has been successful in delivering its outputs and that the RR funding as well as being vital in delivering additional outputs has been useful, appropriate funding for this type of project.

#### **Changes might have made**

There is nothing major we would have done differently with this project. A lot of research and thought had gone in the project design and this meant promotion, process, delivery and outcomes were realised. We are considering delivering a shortened version of our business planning course as enterprises find it increasingly difficult to take 6 days out of their work in

order to complete the course.

**Lessons learnt**

The main lesson taken from the project would be the need to schedule a longer lead in time to build up to full operation. Things started off slower than anticipated and it took us longer than anticipated to recruit people to the Business Planning course (6 day course).

**Improvements in relationship between beneficiary/SCC/CEU/RR**

The project has lead to an improved relationship between SCC/CEU as we have organised, monitored and delivered the project. The projects have benefited from an increased level of support and SCC/CEU have an increased understanding of the needs of social enterprises that can lead us to develop better-targeted services.

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the information contained in this claim and supporting document/s is true and accurate.

Signed		Date	9/04/08
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