

our organisation
is driven by
social enterprises

building capacity in the south east

The se² partnership is a collaborative partnership of well established networks and organisations whose principle aim is to support the development of social enterprise in the South East. As a partnership, the needs of social enterprises are our key driving force and tailor what we do around the region. Recent research identified the following key areas of need:

- Social impact measurement
- Access to professional, quality business advice and support
- Opportunities to network, share best practice and learn from others.

In response to these needs, the se² partnership as a whole, have worked collaboratively and developed three key projects that are being delivered in the South East – the Better project, the SEASON project and Communication for Action - all funded by Capacitybuilders.



capacity
builders



The Better Project



The Better Project is a great example of partnership working, as it is supported by three of the South East's sub regional networks:

- The More than Profit Network (Brighton and Hove)
- ESSEN (East Sussex Social Enterprise Network)
- WSSSEN (West Sussex Social Enterprise Network)

The purpose of The Better Project is threefold:

- to introduce and embed a social impact assessment tool/s into 6 pilot social enterprises across Sussex
- to enable those enterprises to produce high quality information to procurers, commissioners and support organisations, thereby improving access to public procurement opportunities
- to raise awareness of the social enterprise sector and its 'offer' to procurement teams

Project Delivery

To deliver this programme of social impact assessment learning, The Better Project partners are working with The Connectives (www.theconnectives.com) - specialists in supporting commercial companies to leverage the social benefit of their activities and in supporting social organisations to achieve commercial success. In order to capture the learning of the project as it proceeds, a series of case studies are being produced, each one tells the story of the participating social enterprises. The studies will share the experiences of the individuals involved as they undertake the process and ultimately will consider the effectiveness of Social Impact Assessment within the organisations.

In producing the case studies, The Better Project is ensuring that the knowledge, skills and competencies gained can be shared across the sector and with commissioning and procurement teams. By building capacity and capability within the 6 selected social enterprises, the region will build a body of knowledge and experience that can act as a resource for other organisations.

As an established and successful social enterprise with knowledge and expertise in this field, The Connectives is well placed to support the enterprises during the first reporting period, ensuring that each organisation can successfully introduce an effective assessment process which becomes embedded into day to day activities.

For further information -

www.se2partnership.co.uk/files/pdfs/The_Better_Project.pdf

the SEASON project



The SEASON Project is led by Co-operatives South East in collaboration with ESSEN (East Sussex Social Enterprise Network) and the se² partnership.

SEASON seeks to improve support for social enterprises in the South East through the creation, establishment and development of a regional network for social enterprise advisers. The network will be driven forwards by the social enterprise advisers, who will access the network to attend regular meetings where best practice is shared, hot topics are addressed and continual professional development is achieved.

The SEASON project seeks to:

- Build a strong regional network encouraging engagement from relevant (i.e. people working in the South East region whose primary role is to provide direct business support and advice to social enterprises) advisers, including those not accredited and Business Link advisers
- Build a better standard of advice available to the region's social enterprises through increased accreditation and the sharing of best practice models
- Build greater awareness of, and improved access to, good quality social enterprise advice for third sector organisations in the region

The SEASON network is membership driven and seeks to recruit individuals who are practicing as a social enterprise adviser or who are undertaking formal training to become a social enterprise adviser in the South East region.

SEASON recently launched a topical seminar programme across the South East, which included sessions on Community Shares, Companies Act 2006 and Social Accounting. The programme has been a great success and feedback has been encouraging:

"The SEASON training sessions have been really useful to update my knowledge, but perhaps even more beneficial has been making connections with the other advisers - new business has already come from it"

Alex Johns, Alex Johns Services

As a member of the SEASON network, I have been able to meet and network with other professional social enterprise advisers from around the South East region, which has given me great opportunities to share best practice, learn from other specialist advisers and attend a really good seminar programme aimed at supporting my CPD as an adviser. I really look forward to the next round of Seminars!"

Nigel Jeffrey, Business Link Business Adviser

For further information, please visit: www.se2partnership.co.uk/capacity-builders.asp?p=53

communication for action (C4A)



The C4A project is run by the se² partnership and overall, seeks to improve the networks and communication infrastructure, in order to help maximise the social change potential of social enterprise in the South East.

The first phase of the project has focused on developing a sustainable infrastructure that better enables social entrepreneurs to provide effective support to other established, new or fledgling social entrepreneurs through peer to peer support groups. This has led to 5 pilot groups being established in Milton Keynes, Berkshire, Kent, Surrey and West Sussex - with the intention to learn from the groups and models used in each of the areas and to then share the knowledge gained across the rest of the region. In addition, plans are underway to roll out the programme to the rest of the region during 2010.

Feedback so far has been really positive:

The C4A project is also about linking the three Capacitybuilder funded projects together - to ensure that they are interlinked and working collaboratively across the region for the benefit of the social enterprises.

For further information, please visit:

www.se2partnership.co.uk/capacity-builders.asp?p=54

*"I went to the initial meeting feeling a bit sceptical, however I found it very positive, useful and a good use of my time. I am therefore, looking forward to the next one.
The big thing is to get three hours out of office and to talk through management issues with people who are not involved in furniture"*
*Jenny Barratt, Furnistore
www.furnistore.co.uk*