

## Hints and Tips

Micro enterprises - small scale services run by and for people in their communities

### What is a micro enterprise?

A micro enterprise is a venture that is run or provided by 5 or fewer people. Some definitions put it at 10 or fewer people.

This set of Hints and Tips looks at examples that involve older people, but micro enterprises are run by and for people in lots of circumstances.

One situation is when older people are doing something themselves:

- Setting up a small peer support group.
- A community group or business that supports other older people.
- A group that does something else that is needed within that community and gives the people involved a purpose and a contribution within their local area.

The other is support for older people from a very small provider:

- They can be delivering care and support or another type of practical support.
- The provider can be a charity, a social enterprise, a community group or a small business.

We have tips and examples here for both these situations. We also have tips for bigger organisations when they want to work in micro-enterprise-type ways, and for Councils and other public bodies when they are funding or encouraging this type of support.

Many of the examples come from projects and organisations that supported the development of micro enterprise as part of giving older people more choices in their life and in the support they use, and helping them stay well at home in their own communities. There is more information about these sources of development support at the end of the Hints and Tips.

### When are micro enterprises useful?

Micro enterprises are providing support for many people all over the country.

These are some situations where people find them especially useful.

- Services organised by or for people living in rural areas and parts of towns where there are few older people needing support. A small provider can focus on support for people living in a village and the surrounding farms, or for a few streets.
- Support for people who want a lot of consistency in who they see. A small provider can be a few workers giving assistance to a few people, so people are able to get to know each other.
- People who feel their needs are less likely to be understood or met by bigger support providers. Examples include older lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender people who want support from people who respect and understand their experiences. Another is people who are from minority ethnic communities and people who want support from people who use their preferred language or understand their culture.

People in many parts of Scotland are looking to develop more micro enterprises as part of giving older people more choice in the care and support they can get.

- There are new arrangements when a Council pays for people to get care and support called Self-directed Support. This gives people more choice in what support they use - how it helps them achieve their outcomes and have a good life.
- Some older people and their families organise and pay for support themselves.
- For some people this means looking for a different type of support that is more flexible. Small local services can be part of the solution.

## What do micro enterprises do that is different from bigger care providers?

There are many big, middle-sized, small and micro-sized organisations that provide good quality support to older people and to other people who need some help.

A recent research study confirmed ways in which micro providers work that people value, and where this approach has benefits:

- There is usually a lot of flexibility in the support that each person gets.
- The relationship between the workers and people getting support is positive, as people get to know and trust each other.
- They are as good as the bigger providers in quality of support and have fewer instances of poor quality support.
- They are good value for money in situations that many bigger providers find difficult, such as support to people who live in isolated areas.
- See the report from Birmingham University for more information – the details are at the end of the Hints and Tips.

## Examples of micro enterprises run by older people

### Reiki therapy for older people and for carers in Pitlochry

This service was set up by Isobel, who is a carer. She had Reiki and got a lot of benefit from it. This led to her getting training to deliver Reiki herself and to thinking about how to make this therapy available for more people.

Isobel got advice and encouragement through the Creative Care and Support project to set up her service, plus some financial help to get started with the equipment and room hire. The level of interest was higher than expected so she needed some more equipment to make it possible to deliver more sessions. Isobel is working with another trained therapist to extend what they can offer.

The success of the service led to discussions with the older people's mental health team to look at ways to offer a service based at the community hospital in Pitlochry, and to discussions with people living at a housing complex for older people in Pitlochry.

**"I was also involved with the set up of the Perth and Aberfeldy Carers' Therapy Days and gave Reiki at Aberfeldy for the first few years. I continue to give Reiki at the Carers' day in Perth. I have witnessed first hand the difference this makes to the carers who attend. Feedback from carers after their Reiki treatment is that they feel more relaxed, more able to cope and that overall they feel better within themselves. The benefits are many."**

### Arts group in Whithorn

When David retired he decided to set up an arts group in his local community in Whithorn. He got support from Community Catalysts, who are working with the Council, NHS and other people to develop more micro enterprises across Dumfries and Galloway.

The project is aimed at local people who are aged 50 and over. It is about people enjoying themselves and providing the chance to take part in a new activity and share experience, contributing to positive physical and mental health, and helping to reduce social isolation.

The group is now running 2 sessions a week and has 27 members.

# Examples of micro enterprises supporting older people

## Elderware in Fife

A sole trader was selling goods that were useful for older people from a market stall at Kirkcaldy shopping centre. He got involved in the SHINE project in Fife.

BRAG gives support to new businesses and community developments in Fife, and was a partner in SHINE. BRAG helped him to expand to going to people's homes, taking the goods to them. They also found access to training for him on preventing falls and looking for potential trips and hazards. Through the SHINE project he met staff from the NHS – he learned from them and they learned what he could do.

He now could offer services to many more people who really needed them, and also give advice on how to be safe at home when he was at their homes. This led to him doing more work commissioned by NHS Fife on services for people at home, which led to even more older people benefitting.

## Bspoke Social Care, Lincoln

This is a small and friendly community based service offering a wide range of supports, for people with dementia and other older people, reflecting what each person wants.

They can assist people with personal care, planning and preparing meals, help with shopping, helping people with their housework and jobs in the garden, and supporting people in getting to and taking part in any social activities and groups in which they are interested.

The timing is flexible and they are often supporting people and their family carers for just a few hours each week.

The service is registered with the Care Quality Commission and the small team of workers have qualifications and training. There is more at <http://www.smallgoodstuff.co.uk/provider/bspoke-social-care/>

## Fresh rooms, Nottingham

Jo set up a cleaning and ironing business for older people. She had 16 years' experience of caring for older people and people with dementia in a care home, and wanted to set up a business that put her experience to good use.

The service is flexible and Jo will also do other tasks that will help the older people or their family carers. You can get more information at [www.smallgoodstuff.co.uk/provider/fresh-rooms/](http://www.smallgoodstuff.co.uk/provider/fresh-rooms/)

## Riding Stables in Fife

People in a local area who had significant mobility problems wanted more choice in getting exercise and getting out. One of the local micro businesses in that area was a riding stables. The people there thought they could offer riding to older people with mobility problems, learning from what they already knew from providing riding for younger people with disabilities.

Older people came along with zimmers and walking aids that the horses hadn't seen before and didn't like.

BRAG brought together people from the stables and staff in the Occupational Therapy Department. The OT team brought along the sort of equipment older people use and that gave the horses time to become familiar with people using these items. BRAG's contribution was the idea and the introduction.

Next time the older people came along the horses were fine with them and their equipment. The people got to go riding and it has been a good experience for them since then.

A further development came from people at the stables talking to the people who came along for the riding. Many of them were bereaved and getting out for these sessions was a good way to help them improve their mental wellbeing as well as helping with their mobility. The Stables has now developed links with a local bereavement support charity and has developed sessions aimed at other people who have been bereaved.

### Confidence of Belly Dancing, Falkirk

Diane has enjoyed belly dancing for many years. She now teaches belly dancing as a way to help people – mostly women, but also men – about being confident in their bodies. It helps people improve their posture and be safe when they are moving in a confident way, as well as feeling more confident in themselves. It is designed for people who are sitting as well as for anyone who wants get up and join in the dancing.

She delivered a session to the Make it Happen Forum, which is the forum for people aged 50+ in Falkirk and the surrounding district. People at Make it Happen thought this would be a good opportunity for other older people.

From that, Diane delivered sessions to people in local care homes as part of the Wisdom in Practice project based at Outside the Box. This is now leading on to sessions for older people living in care homes in other areas, building on contacts made through Outside the Box.

## Useful tips on how to get micro enterprises going

Most of the very small groups and enterprises we know about came about when people asked ‘What is needed and what will help?’

### Make places and time for people to meet each other and explore ideas

It helps to have space to talk about what life is like for older people, what groups, people and businesses are already doing, and being open to ideas and possibilities around ways to create more opportunities for older people.

Usually there is nothing already there that helps these fluid conversations, as most people talk only to others in their sector and often those doing similar roles or working on similar topics within that. If so, the first step is to start bringing people together to have conversations.

Our first Tip for everyone is to help these conversations take place and to make the time to take part.

### Tea Parties in Fife

As part of the SHINE project, older people in Fife were asked for their ideas on what would make life easier for them and what could help them be confident living at home. This included people who were already getting care and others who were thinking about what they might like in the future.

BRAG organised a series of tea parties. People could just come along and chat and talk about what was happening in their lives and in their local areas.

From this, there was a huge list of things that would have an impact on the lives of older people. Some were very easy to fix. Others took more planning. For others, there was no obvious solution.

Then these gaps were put to a wide range of voluntary organisations, community groups and local businesses in the area. They were asked if they could do anything to help, or suggest ways that people could work together to come up with new ideas to fill the gaps.

There was scope to try out the new approaches. Sometimes things did not go as planned, but from this people came up with other ideas that did work.

### Creative Care and Support in north Perth and Kinross

There was a series of four workshops sessions for people in Pitlochry and the north Highland part of Perth and Kinross. They were planned to ensure that everyone got an opportunity to contribute ideas and thoughts, with enough flexibility to ensure that conversations and the stream of ideas were not hindered.

They asked three questions about the future of care and support in Pitlochry:

- 1 How can we better support people in Pitlochry?
- 2 How can we think more creatively about how people are supported?
- 3 What could the caring Pitlochry look like in future?

Participants took turns in sharing personal experiences that highlighted how they saw the needs and opportunities of the local area, and together provided a possible future for Pitlochry and the surrounding area. What they came up with was complex but had a lot of opportunities.

<http://blogs.iriss.org.uk/pitlochry/category/about-project/>

**“It needs to be a place where older people feel comfortable and that gets away from everyone thinking just about existing services. Social settings are better than the sort of places Councils and the NHS use for consultations.”**

**“It helps to have a series of conversations. People need time to think about it and reflect on what they have heard. They come back the following week with lots of ideas on ways to fill gaps and ways to help each other take things forward.”**

**“People need to be there as equals – everyone contributing and working together to make things better for folk in this area. It is not about the usual roles of ‘service users’, ‘voluntary sector’, ‘care providers’, ‘commissioners’ and so on.”**

## **Be open in who you talk to**

Often there isn't an obvious match between what older people want and what social enterprises - and other organisations - offer.

Ideas come from lots of people and places, and especially when people from different situations and experiences get together.

Older people and their families and friends – including people who are not yet getting support  
Potential sources of support as well as people and organisations doing this now  
People who know the local area  
People who know about finding solutions and getting new ideas into practice.

**“Talk to some people don't know much about care systems – because they don't know about what is supposed to be difficult and just come up with sensible solutions.”**

**“You need to tease it out on both sides to find the solution. It needs lateral thinking, conversations and time to explore possible links.”**

**“Our most creative ideas often come from chance conversations when people have come together.”**

The match-making between people who need some help, coming up with ideas and finding people to make them happen can also be achieved by a micro enterprise.

### **Local micro enterprises in Somerset**

Girl Friday Somerset is a community micro enterprise based in Watchet, which is a small coastal town in Somerset. It offers a matching and introduction service between local people who are able to offer 'home help' type services and older people needing support to live their lives independently at home.

Pearl runs Girl Friday out of 'The Garden Room', which is her florists shop at the centre of Watchet. It grew out of customers and other people she knows in this community telling her about things that would make their life easier.

This is how it works.

- Most people come to Girl Friday when people who have got good support tell others.
- Each gardener, cleaner or helper is self-employed and operates as a community micro enterprise.
- Each takes responsibility for the support that they provide to older people.
- They are independent of Girl Friday, but can get encouragement and information on more sources of advice from Pearl.
- Community Catalysts' micro enterprise project is giving advice on how to establish systems and offer their services in a safe and high quality way. There is also a close link with the local Employment Hub.



## Think about micro enterprises as part of the mix

In many situations people just started looking for a way to fill a gap, or make life easier for themselves and other people they knew.

The answers included small ventures, but also included community groups involving volunteers in new roles and bigger organisations changing what they do.

- Some people were open to any solution.
- In other situations, people started talking about co-production – when older people and a bigger organisation are planning and delivering a service together – and came up with ideas that were better done as micro enterprises.
- Some people started thinking about micro enterprises but came up with solutions that could be achieved more quickly through an existing activity.

There are other Hints and Tips from Wisdom in Practice to help you with other types of solution.

### Volunteering with Forth Pilgrim

Forth Pilgrim provides people with walks and displays linked to Dunfermline Abbey and other historic sites in south Fife. They were involved in the SHINE project.

There was a retired engineer who had dementia. Both he and his wife needed an activity where he would be happy, meet other people and be occupied for a few hours. But most of the activities he was offered did not interest him.

Forth Pilgrim needed someone to help them design and build a trebuchet (a big machine that was used in sieges). The retired engineer got involved with Forth Pilgrim as a volunteer helping them with this particular project, and then went on to do other things with them.

The idea about this person becoming a volunteer came out of a conversation between people who were at one of the SHINE sessions.

### Grass cutting in Fife

Older people were having problems when they could no longer manage to clear away the grass and hedge clippings after a gardening service had been. They stopped using the service but of course their gardens got very overgrown, they got upset, the neighbours got grumpy and everyone was stressed.

The first solution BRAG suggested was talking to the gardening service and asking if they could take away the garden refuse – which they could. It just became an extra service that the garden service could offer to their clients.

## Find development support to get things going and then continue into the longer-term

People need development support to both help them get started and to keep going.

- It should be support that knows how to take account of the circumstances of older people – or other people who need some extra support – as well as covering the basic elements of getting a new venture going.
- It needs to be there for long enough, and this is usually much longer than people expect.

Remember that it is normal for many new ventures of any size to run into some problems after the start up stage, as circumstances change. For very small enterprises there are extra challenges as there are fewer people to share ideas about solutions and put in some extra effort to get things sorted.

- Good advice at the start can help people anticipate potential problems, so there are fewer difficulties and the impact is less.
- It helps to have someone who has wider experience of micro enterprises and knows of ways to solve difficulties.
- It also helps to have a fresh perspective.

### Working Towards new user-led services

Outside the Box supported 80 groups to plan and develop new activities led by people who use care services over 4 years.

The average length of time it took to get the new activity going was 10 months. Some people took 2 years to get their new activities underway, and then went on to provide a service that benefitted other people.

## New ideas in Pitlochry

People at the Creative Care and Support sessions came up with over 80 ideas, all with a view to improve the lives of Pitlochry residents, so there were a lot of things that could be taken forward.

Within the workshop session they focused on the ideas for which there were people already keen to dedicate their time and energy to make it into reality.

There was £10,000 seed fund to support the development of enterprise ideas seeking to support the improvement of outcomes for people who live in Pitlochry and surrounding area.

Six projects were funded to benefit people within the local community: Heartland Befriending, Reiki for Carers, Herbalist, Welcome All Soup Lunch, Arts and Craft club and a sensory garden.

Now that the local micro enterprises are established, GrowBiz – which supports micro and small businesses in this rural area – is bringing people together to share and learn from their experiences and deal with any problems that arise.

## Look at what is good quality support or services in a fresh way

People are entitled to expect that the support they get is good quality, that workers have the right skills and access to on-going and training and advice, that the people in the micro enterprise know how to keep everyone safe, and that they know what to do when a problem does arise.

This is also about getting away from presuming that care providers will be big organisations, and getting away from the assumptions that underpin this.

- Small providers and new providers can be as or more safe for people who are vulnerable.
- New providers can be led by people with a lot of relevant experience and skills.

People have found solutions that work well to ensure that micro enterprises can work to a good standard.

## East Neuk Home Care

Marie had worked in a bigger care organisation and left to set up a small new organisation to offer more flexible care to a small number of people.

She went to the Care Inspectorate to start the registration process. The Care Inspectorate regulations said she needed training to SVQ standard in management. The problem was that she was not doing the job yet, so could not evidence working as a manager in the way the usual SVQ training course required.

BRAG put together a package to get the learning and experience in another way. They took the package to the Care Inspectorate who said yes, this is fine. Marie completed her learning and the Care Inspectorate were satisfied she could provide a good quality service.

That led to the new support service becoming registered and getting underway, and people getting good support from it.

## Knowing about Adult Protection

People have used various ways to give people involved in micro enterprises the skills they need to be aware of risks and notice situations where people may be at risk of abuse or neglect, and then know what action to take to keep people safe. They include:

- Council staff providing training for the micro enterprise, sometimes as part of a programme for a lot of people in that area.
- A bigger organisation with more staff offering places on their in-house training to people from smaller organisations.
- The micro enterprise getting someone with experience to be one of their board members/trustees.
- Getting someone to be an advisor to the micro enterprise. This approach works for self-employed people as well as for micro enterprises that are companies and/or charities.



## Explain what micro enterprises do and how this approach is special

Most micro enterprises are developed to fill a gap. But the people involved can sometimes feel that the need for this response is so obvious that they forget to explain it to other people.

### Fife Shopping Delivery Service

This is a service that had previously been based in the Council. It was set up as a separate business after the Council decided not to provide this themselves.

The people running the service were struggling to make it pay for 2 reasons:

- They were not yet able to tap into people having their own budgets for care under the Self-directed support arrangements as this was just getting underway.
- People could get help with some elements of shopping from supermarkets, where it was cheaper or free.

The service got support from BRAG to help them explain what they did that was different from what the big supermarkets do – it needed a fresh perspective to see what the service was good at. The supermarkets will deliver shopping to someone's house and bring it to the kitchen. But the people at this service do more:

- Bring the shopping in and put it away just as the person wants this done
- Sit down and have a chat with the person
- Know how to respond to anything the person mentions, such as when they are struggling with something or seem lonely or unwell
- Every person has PVG checks and on-going training.

Once people could see what the service offered, they could decide if they wanted to use this extra level and type of support.

## Bigger organisations taking a micro enterprise approach

Some micro enterprises happen through partnerships between local groups and larger organisations.

One situation is when the bigger organisation becomes a host for a potential micro enterprise when the new small venture is not yet ready to do everything on its own.

### Boleskine Community Care

This group is centred in the scattered communities of Stratherrick and Foyers on the south side of Loch Ness. It is a rural community with an increasingly aging population. In recent years people have been unable to access home care. This meant that older people had to move into care homes in Inverness.

In October 2014 a small group of people got together. They held an open day in the village hall and received much support from the community. Many people volunteered to help and needs were identified. A Scottish Charity was formed with the principal aim of preventing social isolation for those older and less able folk but also to tackle the problem of home care.

The group is providing some services themselves, such as lunch clubs, soup drop-ins and a handyman service. The care at home service is a partnership with Highland Home Carers, which is one of the biggest providers of home care in Highland.

Boleskine Community Care finds the carers. Highland Home Carers trains and employs them, thus saving the local group the problem of employment responsibilities. Boleskine Community Care is then responsible for the care requirements locally.

The care workers can be very flexible in their distribution of care, fitting in with each person's needs. The older people receive the care that they want, when they want it. Highland Home Carers holds the Individual Service Fund for each one of them.

Without these arrangements older people in this area would still be without any home care.



## Macmerry Men's Shed, East Lothian

Macmerry Men's Shed began when staff at East Lothian Council asked people if they were interested in this idea, and how they would want it to work.

The Shed got underway with a few members. The membership has grown but there is still a small core group of volunteers who make sure everything runs properly.

You can see a film about how the Macmerry Men's Shed got started:

<http://youtu.be/OPYuNy00YNw>

There is more information about this and the development of other Men's Sheds in the report from the event which Wisdom in Practice organised along with Voice of Experience and Age Scotland to enable people in North Lanarkshire and other places to find out more about Men's Sheds.

See: <http://www.wisdominpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Monklandsconferencereport.pdf>

Another situation is when a big organisation sets out to work in a micro enterprise way.

## Working in micro enterprise ways

These ideas came from discussions around the potential contribution of micro enterprises as part of implementing Self-directed support.

Turning a Council building into a Hub to support the development of new micro enterprises, especially by people who get support but also for people living in the neighbouring area.

Giving small staff teams control over their own budgets and encouraging them to create and run with ideas that are developed in partnership with people in the local area.

Partnership between public sector staff, an Older People's Forum and micro enterprises, where the Forum and micro enterprises take the lead.

Workers looking for activities and resources in very local areas within the community and taking a swapsies approach to helping each other create more opportunities for older people. An example is the way someone in East Renfrewshire worked and other local examples that were featured in the We're Here Too events: <http://www.wisdominpractice.org.uk/were-here-too/>

Ways of working that help bigger organisations to work in more flexible ways include:

- Encouraging staff to work in innovative ways
- Giving staff scope and responsibility to work in flexible ways
- Good management support to people taking on that role
- Being good at partnership working with key stakeholders within both services and communities
- Financial systems that let staff know how much they can spend and letting them make most of the day-to-day spending decisions
- Linking to changes that are happening anyway, such as service redesign or when a service needs to move location.

## Tips for creating successful micro enterprises

*"Be open to ideas that sound a bit odd and don't yet have all the details worked out. That's where the innovations grow."*

*"We're all learning how to do this."*

## Tips for older people

There are opportunities in each area for people to say what they want and how they hope to see services developing.

- It helps when lots of people contribute their ideas, so we are encouraging you to take part.
- It is good to include people who are not yet using care services.
- Think about what will help you and other people in your day-to-day life, as well as any comments you want to give on current services.

Start the conversation about all the small things that can help older people have better lives. You can take the initiative if no-one else is doing it, or if they are just talking about traditional services and responses.

- Invite people to come along to meet your members and people you know. Offering tea and cake often helps.
- Write up what people are saying.
- Then send it round to people and groups who may be able to help – shops and businesses and ordinary community groups as well as services for older people and the Council and NHS. Ask how they can fill some of the gaps that people are describing.
- Invite people to come again to hear what is happening and talk it over. Eventually people will come to you.

Be open to the possibility of you being part of a micro enterprise – leading as well as (or instead of) benefitting from a service.

- Think about the skills and experience you have and what you can offer.
- Remember that you can get training and advice on any aspects where you need some help.

## Tips for people starting small support services

Listen to what older people in your community want and the gaps that they see in current support. Be part of conversations about what could make life better for people.

Get some friends or support from other people to encourage you and help you think through the problems that will arise.

It is ok to plan to do something that is a one-off or will only last for a short while.

If you want to do something that is going to last for a longer period, think about building it in stages.

Think about how your micro enterprise will work when you are not there – on holiday, or if you are unwell or have family commitments, or just want to have a break.

Get feedback from the people who benefit from your activities right from the start. Get some advice on how to record what people say. This will help you show other people what difference your venture is making.

Remember to look after yourself as well as looking after the business.

## Tips for bigger providers who want to help micro enterprises

Welcome ideas for new activities from as wide range of people:

- People you know, including staff and people who use the services
- Staff and volunteers
- Partner organisations
- Community groups and others in local areas
- Staff in planning and commissioning roles in the Council and NHS.

If you are giving a base to a micro enterprise or helping in other ways, work from the beginning on the basis that the bigger organisation is not going to run the new venture and there will soon be an independent micro enterprise. Reflect this in the practical arrangements such as having an independent identity and the people running the new activity being responsible for expenditure and decisions.

Build relationships with people who will help the new venture: this can be a mix of people inside and outside the host organisation.

Help with access to small amounts of money to get the new activity going can have a big impact.

## Tips for Councils, NHS and Health and Social Care Partnerships

There is a lot that Councils and the new Health and Social Care Partnerships can do to help as part of the way they ensure that people in their area have access to support that will lead to people have good outcomes in their lives.

Encourage and support wide-ranging conversations about what a good life means for older people, the gaps that they see and what could help fill them.

Self-directed support policies and practice have a big impact.

- Have processes that focus on the outcomes for people getting support, and be open to ideas on ways to achieve this.
- Look at how individual people get to know about the range of possible sources of support.
- Look at how staff learn about the range of possible solutions as part of care plans.
- Think about how you explain what the range of current and potential support providers do.
- Look at ways to develop or use a quality mark or other ways to show which services and supports are good quality, to reassure staff and the public.

## Staff training

The SHINE project in Fife included training for staff on how community support contributed to good outcomes for older people and how micro enterprises could be part of the range of local supports.

The examples of services commissioned from micro enterprises and the benefits for older people showed that this approach was possible within the good practice and rules.

Staff could hear about the ways micro enterprises helped people be well and safe in the community, reduce acute hospital admissions and help people get home from hospital earlier.

The evaluation found that the initial learning was important and that staff also needed on-going encouragement from senior managers that it was ok to work with this different type of community services.

## Commissioning for short breaks in Falkirk

The Falkirk Short Breaks Bureau in Falkirk is using a voucher system for short breaks. This began for people with mental health problems and is now being rolled out for people with dementia as well. The vouchers enable people with to have more flexibility in the providers they use as well as when they take up the short breaks that they need.

This is enabling micro enterprises to provide support in a way that works well for the person getting support, the Council and for the providers that are taking part. There is more information in a presentation about this scheme at: [www.gettingtheresds.com/march-2015](http://www.gettingtheresds.com/march-2015)

Falkirk Council has been working with a couple of local providers to provide alternatives to traditional support. One of these is an arts studio, which has space for individual artists and classes run by people who are micro enterprises: see Delta studios in Larbert, <http://www.deltastudios.net/>

Public bodies can also do a lot to help new small ventures or groups get underway.

- Make sure a wide range of people know about access to small sources of funding to try out ideas, such as innovation programmes and community grants.
- Look at your commissioning approach, and whether this works for smaller and newer organisations as well as for established ones.
- Find ways to include the people who are part of micro enterprises in the way strategies and plans are developed. For example, when there are only 1 or 2 people running a service it is hard for someone to come to day-long meetings.

Make the links with other aspects of public sector responsibilities.

- Community planning: developing a range of support providers, including micro enterprises, is part of ensuring that all the resources in a local area work together to give people a good life and there are thriving, sustainable communities.
- Economic development: supporting micro enterprises is part of councils' role in ensuring that there is the right mix of employment opportunities and businesses in the area.
- Equality duties: public bodies have responsibility to ensure that services work well for all groups and people. Micro enterprises are often a way of ensuring that all people have the type of support that meets their circumstances.

Support the changes that run through all of these roles and responsibilities.

- Give people time to get used to a different way for older people to get and to give support: staff across the range or roles and older people and their families.
- Give staff who work alongside services and people using services encouragement and support to work with micro providers.
- Reassure people who are less familiar with micro enterprises – especially in a care and support context – that this is a safe way for people to get support. This includes elected members and staff in senior roles.



# Development projects and support organisations

## Current sources

**Outside the Box** provides community development support to people and groups across Scotland, including people who are starting or developing new services and other activities.

The Wisdom in Practice project has supported the development of services that are led by older people.

Getting There has resources for smaller user-led support providers who want to make best use of the opportunities that Self-directed support brings.

0141 419 0451

[www.otbds.org](http://www.otbds.org)

[www.wisdominpractice.org.uk](http://www.wisdominpractice.org.uk)

[www.gettingtheresds.com](http://www.gettingtheresds.com)

**BRAG** is Benarty Regeneration Action Group. BRAG began by providing development support as part of regenerating communities affected by the decline in heavy engineering and mining in Fife. Since then it has provided support to groups improving opportunities and support for people living in communities across fife and developing employability and other opportunities for young people and others.

BRAG is a social enterprise and it supports other social enterprises and other initiatives by providing development support such as training, accommodation, on-going practical support and advice.

[www.brag.co.uk](http://www.brag.co.uk)

**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 they have worked with partners in nearly 40 areas. The community micro-enterprises and ventures they have helped people to create provide much more choice for people needing care and support.

Community Catalysts has brought the community enterprises into a network to continue to provide them with some support and represent their interests and concerns. This network has contacts for the micro enterprises and is called Small Good Stuff.

“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 over 10,000 people and provide 1720 jobs and 860 volunteering opportunities.”

[www.communitycatalysts.co.uk](http://www.communitycatalysts.co.uk)

**Community Enterprise** supports new and growing community organisations, including micro enterprises. They work with people and groups in most parts of Scotland.

The support they provide includes help with planning new ideas, finding the income, managing organisations, marketing, and a collective social enterprise online shop for micro enterprises that make things.

[www.communityenterprise.co.uk](http://www.communityenterprise.co.uk)

**GrowBiz** provides development support in 2015-2018 for micro enterprises in North and East Perth and Kinross as part of the Scottish Government's SDS capacity building programme.

GrowBiz provides support to anyone thinking of becoming self-employed, or starting (or growing) a small business or social enterprise. The organisation provides one-to-one meetings, peer support, specialist advice from the GrowBiz panel, mentoring and training.

<http://growbiz.co.uk>

**Life Changes Trust** has introduced Investment and support for Social Businesses in Scotland. In July 2015 Life Changes Trust and Big Issue Invest launched a funding programme to support social businesses in the early stages. This includes ventures to benefit people in Scotland affected by dementia.

The support includes loan investment and mentoring and training from experts to help with planning and identifying the impact of the new ventures.

[www.lifechangestrust.org.uk/trust-funding/cross-programme-initiatives](http://www.lifechangestrust.org.uk/trust-funding/cross-programme-initiatives)

## Earlier projects

### Creative Care and Support, Pitlochry and Highland Perthshire

This project ran from October 2013 to May 2015. The partners were:

- IRISS: Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services
- Service Design Masters students from Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design, who carried out an in-depth asset mapping
- GrowBiz, which is a community-based enterprise support service covering Eastern and Highland Perthshire
- Perth and Kinross Council's Community Care department, which provides services for older people and vulnerable adults, helping them, wherever possible, to live independently within their own homes
- PKAVS is charity advancing the lives of thousands of disadvantaged people and the voluntary sector in Perth and Kinross. It is the Third Sector Interface for Perth and Kinross
- Perth and Kinross Healthy Communities Collaborative (NHS Tayside), which is a community-led health promotion initiative. It works with older people from specific communities, and empowers them to improve health and quality of life for themselves and their peers.

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[www.vaperthshire.org](http://www.vaperthshire.org)  
<http://blogs.iriss.org.uk/pitlochry>

### SHINE project in Fife

This was part of the UK-wide SHINE programme, which supported innovation to help health services improve their quality and impact. The project ran from 2011-13.

The aim was to find new and sustainable community-based ways to support older people to live at home safely, with less need for crisis intervention by health and social care services. A central part of the project was developing a new local health economy of businesses, care co-operatives and micro-enterprises offering flexible and personalised care for older people.

The partners were:

- BRAG (Benarty Regeneration Action Group), which provides development support to community groups and social enterprises in Fife
- Community Catalysts, which helps people across the UK start up micro enterprises
- Fife Council, for planning for personalised care for older people, including a pilot on the way Self-directed support can work for older people, and for commissioning services
- Health Foundation (original funders of the innovation programme)
- NHS Fife, for delivery of health services and learning for health care staff around working in new ways with the families, friends and neighbours of older people as well as with other community resources
- Scottish Government, for the learning for other places.

See more at: <http://www.health.org.uk/programmes/shine-2011/projects/micro-enterprise-care-solutions-reduce-acute-hospital-admissions#sthash.pdn2DpRt.dpuf>

## Useful reports and resources

**Small Good Stuff** is a website supported by Community Catalysts. It has a directory of hundreds of local micro enterprises that support or have been set up by older people and people with disabilities or other needs.

<http://www.smallgoodstuff.co.uk>

**Wisdom in Practice** has publications to support groups and the support work between small community groups and other organisations:

There are Hints and Tips on:

- Participation by Older People
- Effective Partnerships
- Effective Co-production
- Getting Organised
- Getting Started
- Finding the Funds
- **Keeping Going**

[www.wisdominpractice.org.uk](http://www.wisdominpractice.org.uk)

**Over the Fence** has tips on points to think about and look for, to ensure people get good quality of support and are safe. The practical advice covers ordinary community supports, regulated care services, Personal Assistants and support that people get from family and friends.

This is a website resource for people who are looking for support for themselves or for people they care about. It was developed by Outside the Box as part of the SDS capacity building programme.

[www.overthefence.org.uk](http://www.overthefence.org.uk)

[www.overthefence.org.uk/home/in-detail/good-quality-support](http://www.overthefence.org.uk/home/in-detail/good-quality-support)

**Catherine Needham and others: Micro-Enterprises: care and support on a scale that's 'just right'?**, University of Birmingham and Economic and Social Research Council, 2015

<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-social-sciences/social-policy/HSMC/research/micro-enterprise/Micro-enterprise-full-report,-final.pdf>

**Think Personal Act Local: Top Tips – commissioning for market diversity:** 2015

<http://www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk/Latest/Resource/?cid=10756>

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