



SOCIAL ENTERPRISE RESET

Report

May 2020

SENSCOT



**Social
Firms
Scotland**
Supporting businesses
to transform lives

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Executive Summary

Background

COVID 19 has brought about a new appreciation of what is important and valued in society and the reliance we all have on our local communities. The response to the virus has demonstrated the true value of 'localism in action' with community-based social enterprises providing crucial services and a lifeline within their local communities.

As the national focus moves into the next phase of looking towards recovery and developing the road map that can lead us towards a more normal way of life, our sector has also begun to reflect on how best we can support our communities and contribute to what will inevitably be a very difficult journey towards national recovery.

There has never been a more critical time to ensure that the central goal of economic recovery and the various strategies that will deliver it, also delivers collective well-being and greater community resourcefulness which will be essential in order to tackle the deep-rooted inequalities that this crisis has not just laid bare but exacerbated.

The transformed economic climate, new norms and behaviours and, no doubt, increasing service delivery pressures highlight the importance of community-based social enterprises to the economic and social recovery at a neighbourhood level. Our sector has proven to be resilient in crisis and agile in responding to the needs of Scotland's most vulnerable groups and communities.

Community-based social enterprises will make a significant contribution to our nation's recovery – stimulating economic, social and community action that can help drive that recovery. These organisations are so important because their explicit goal of strengthening communities is not a mere by-product of their enterprising activity but their *raison d'être*.



Grassmarket Community Project

Overview

[The SE Census 2019](#) states 6,025 social enterprises in Scotland employing 88,318 fulltime equivalent employees with a combined income of £3.1Bn. Social enterprises are active in many parts of the economy with 4 main areas that account for around half of all social enterprises: Community centres and halls; Arts and creative industries; Early years and childcare and Health and Social Care.

SE Reset Week took place w/c 11 May – hosted by Senscot, Social Firms Scotland, local SENs and Third Sector Interfaces – and included a series of conversations with community-based social enterprises to determine their support and resource requirements over the medium to longer-term.

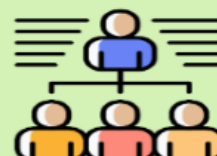
SOCIAL ENTERPRISE RESET WEEK IMPACT REPORT



800+
Individual
participants



65,000
Social media
impressions



300+
Organisations
took part

This provided an opportunity for SEs to contribute on a local and thematic basis from across Scotland via virtual SEN meetings and discussions including virtual focus groups where SEs were able to identify and explore challenges, ideas and opportunities in conversation with their peers.

The SE Census 2019 also states “social enterprise is often a localised phenomenon. One quarter of organisations serve only a single neighbourhood or community”. Many social enterprises provide support for vulnerable and/or disadvantaged groups – supporting people experiencing mental health issues or with physical or learning disabilities. It is, therefore, no surprise that community-based social enterprises are at the forefront of communities’ response to Covid-19. It is widely acknowledged the work of these organisation in working collaboratively with others in providing invaluable services to the communities in which they operate has been one the most striking elements of local, community-led responses to the current pandemic.

The Census 2019 also tells us that 43% of SEs experienced a decline in growth in the last 2 years and that more than half of all organisations still operate with an annual income of less than £100k. Earned income from trading continues to remain at modest levels with typical profitability around 4%. These figures, that have been consistent across all the Censuses since 2015, underline the fact that so many organisations were already operating in challenging circumstances.

Questions set

Virtual sessions during SE Reset Week focused on 2 primary questions:

1. What are the plans for the future of your social enterprise?
2. What funding and support do you think you will need to get you there?

Key themes

Clear themes emerged from SE Reset Week which highlighted the current challenges, issues and opportunities arising as a result of Covid-19. These included how SEs have addressed the immediate challenges; how they are preparing to move forward in the coming months; and the support structure and resources required to enable this to happen. All of this is within the context of uncertainty about economic and social factors and what the future might look like.

More than 20 events engaging 800 participants took place during SE Reset Week with some running again the following week to respond to the high demand for the sessions. All of the sessions are featured within this report.

Throughout the 20 events there were 3 recurring key themes.

1. Collaboration

Collaboration has been largely reactive in direct response to the crisis although there were examples of existing partnerships strengthening their collaborative working in direct response to opportunities to do more; do things differently etc. The unprecedented need to address significant challenges and to do this with limited resources, in a very quick timescale, has made the need for collaboration of greater importance - driving SEs together, putting communities first – and moving quickly to adapt service provision responding to local need.

2. Peer support and networking

Discussed at all of the sessions, peer support and networking came out consistently as the most important aspects of support needed for moving forward - and key to a strong and resilient sector. Social enterprises identified networks and connections as an effective way to provide a clear voice and evidence for policy-makers and support.

3. Mental Health

In common with other organisations, social enterprises noted that morale is low at the moment and that it's difficult to keep both staff and service users engaged and motivated as lockdown continues. Many of the SE Reset participants talked about the need to focus on the health and wellbeing of staff and volunteers during the crisis, recognising that there are many factors impacting upon an individual's ability to continue to work and be productive.

Conclusions and next steps

There is little doubt that this current crisis is going to have a long and lasting impact on the social enterprise community. Many organisations with a higher percentage of trading income have been hit hardest – losing most, if not all, trading overnight. During SE Reset Week, the 300-odd participating organisations broadly fell into two categories:

1. Organisations that have furloughed the majority of their staff and are delivering limited / no services. These organisations may have accessed funding - I.e. the Resilience Fund, Small Business fund etc.
2. Organisations that are responding to local community need - I.e. food providers have kept their 'doors open' and have been able to access funding such as the Wellbeing or Community Funds to enable them to deliver emergency services.

Senscot, Social Firms Scotland and local SENs are already responding to a number of the support needs raised throughout SE Reset Week with a particular focus on peer support, networking and collaboration. Working with other key stakeholders including Scottish Government we will seek to address the other challenges, issues and opportunities that are highlighted within the report with a view to informing a Recovery Plan for the sector moving forward. It is important that time is taken now to fully understand the impact that Covid-19 on the social enterprise community.

Despite the concerns and fears that continue to exist, there remains a sense of optimism moving forward – not just within the sector but across the communities which they serve. There was clear evidence of a determination to build on the positive aspects that have emerged during this crisis – the increased levels of community involvement, social capital, innovation and, of course, collaboration. Our challenge – and opportunity – is help ensure that this can be the case.



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Themes

Collaboration

Emerging issues

Collaboration has been largely reactive in direct response to the crisis although there were examples of existing partnerships strengthening their collaborative working in direct response to opportunities to do more; do things differently etc. The unprecedented need to address significant challenges and to do this with limited resources, in a very quick timescale, has made the need for collaboration of greater importance - driving SEs together, putting communities first – and moving quickly to adapt service provision responding to local need. Organisations indicated that some of these collaborations, tested during this period, will continue; or at least there is a willingness to strengthen partnership working moving forward.

Organisations indicated that for collaboration to be strengthened and/or to formalise consortium working - further sector support would be required. Some organisations indicated that they would look for help with finding suitable partners and developing new operating models such as consortia working

Seasonality is a big issue for many organisations, particularly in the horticulture, leisure and tourism industries - with some being locked down until next April if they miss their summer season.

Collaboration will be needed to either pick up gaps from services no longer being delivered, or to help support organisations that are struggling to survive.

The crisis has also heightened increasing demand (now and in the future) for support in particular areas such as mental health, use of technology etc. – with organisations indicating that they would face greater demand to support their staff, volunteers as well as their client group in these areas as we move forward.

Looking forward and opportunities:

Recognising each other's strengths - there is a strong desire and willingness to continue or to explore new opportunities by working together to address challenges, inequalities and to deliver efficiencies. Collaborations have been about local communities identifying local needs and coming together to respond to those needs. Collective purchasing, making use of available space, exploring opportunities to skill share between social enterprises, share back office services i.e. HR, Finance and inter-trading all featured in conversations. Particular sectors such as social care and childcare will be in greater demand, but it won't be business as usual and we need to look at consortia models as a viable approach to delivering future policy objectives.

Support required

- Social enterprises cited support to collaborate effectively, define operating models and legal models etc as key to moving forward.
- Support to identify and work with a range of stakeholders including public bodies/private sector and wider third sector
- Social enterprise matching service by sector or area – matching potential partners to address key challenges and take advantage of opportunities

- Brokering service to bring together public, private sector and third sector to continue delivering services beyond the current crisis and in some cases that which is currently grant funded
- Support from a national level to remind public sector to engage and partner with social enterprises
- Showcasing examples of good practice, raising awareness of the range of services delivered by the sector

Peer support and networking

Peer Support

- Sharing learning, ideas and experiences
- Accessing information
- Collaboration

Discussed at all of the sessions, peer support and networking came out consistently as the most important aspects of support needed for moving forward - and key to a strong and resilient sector. Social enterprises identified networks and connections as an effective way to provide a clear voice and evidence for policy-makers and support.

- Supporting one another from a local and national level.
- Expanding on the extraordinary level of social capital we have witnessed
- Create new opportunities to build on the positives we have seen as a result of this crisis.

Networks

- Representing and influencing at both local and national level
- Utilising support networks to move individual organisations forward as well as the sector as a whole.
- SEs have been delivering key services during the crisis and participants were clear in their call to be included in strategic discussions around delivering services in the future.

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Challenges:

In common with other organisations, social enterprises noted that morale is low at the moment and that it's difficult to keep both staff and service users engaged and motivated as lockdown continues.

Many of the SE Reset participants talked about the need to focus on the health and wellbeing of staff and volunteers during the crisis, recognising that there are many factors impacting upon an individual's ability to continue to work and be productive. Some of the responses to this are outlined in the Workforce section below. Many participants were very open in expressing high levels of stress and anxiety as they struggled to secure the financial survival of their social enterprise whilst

also delivering much needed services. Frustrations and anxiety in relation to trying to secure funding when this is not a route they would normally take was also emphasised.

Many of the mental health and wellbeing services delivered by social enterprises have been on hold through the crisis, with reference to many of these workers not being categorised as 'key workers' despite delivering what the organisations describe as essential services. This was highlighted as having a negative impact for their service users, with this being further exacerbated with a recognition that many individuals who struggled with social interaction pre-Covid19, will now face a further set back, finding it even more difficult to re-engage with services. The importance for allowing befriending services (as an example) as restrictions are eased was highlighted as crucial.

With many strong relationships and partnerships developed with statutory partners over the years, there is now a worry amongst some social enterprise that as a result of practitioners within the NHS and other agencies being redeployed to focus on Covid-19 related areas of work (which is understandable), it has subsequently been difficult or not possible to engage with usual contacts and to start discussions on how joint planning to respond to mental health and wellbeing in future. It was highlighted that partnership working and collaboration has never been more important and necessary than it is now.

Looking forward and opportunities:

In looking ahead it was recognised that it is currently very difficult to assess the extremity of the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on future mental health as organisations don't have access to the usual environment they work in to get a sense of the landscape and scale and type of issues. Whilst this uncertainty exists, based on the previous needs identified (often unmet) there is an expectation that it will have a huge impact that the nation is not currently equipped to deal with.

Accompanying this is a concern that some of the previous work provided by social enterprises to support mental health issues and much of the preventative work that is commissioned or funded may not be prioritised to be delivered again once things return to normal. There are concerns that the value of services might be lost whilst they are not being delivered and that it may be difficult for some to see the immediate value when not being exposed to the impact that services and activities have for beneficiaries.

In addition to the previous and existing level of demand, it was suggested that there is likely to be a significant number of people who didn't suffer from social isolation, anxiety, lack of confidence, etc before who may experience this in the future and subsequently there will be a huge need to support people to engage within their community and local activities.

Concerns were also expressed about the availability of funding in the future and whether there will be enough funding committed by Scottish Government to address all of the ongoing and emerging problems, recognising that a significant amount has already been spent on addressing immediate issues.

Support required:

With mental health currently having a high profile, it was highlighted that it must remain a priority on the Government's agenda and that more investment is required. Accompanying this there needs to be recognition that social enterprises are delivering essential services and this should be properly resourced

It was also highlighted that there are many issues which will need to be addressed following lockdown and these will need to be considered holistically with a recognition that all sectors will be affected. For example, as individuals return to their workplace there are important considerations around safe travel, childcare, the accompanying additional stress, etc.

Social enterprises were clear in expressing the importance of partnership working and collaboration moving forward to ensure that the mental health and wellbeing challenges in the future are addressed. Some also emphasised that this needs to happen in a way that addresses any competitiveness between and within sectors and organisations active in this area - ensuring that resources are shared across both national and local organisations.

One suggestion emerging to address this was facilitated sessions for organisations who are working in the same industry to come together and discuss how they can collaborate effectively. This would involve a diverse range of organisations in terms of focus and size and would benefit from input from other relevant sectors, e.g. education, social care & public health. There is also scope for this to build upon the extraordinary level of social capital witnessed during the crisis.

Community & Social Capital

Emerging issues

The role of local communities and their community based social enterprises has been critical in the response to address local needs and provide essential services during the current crisis, e.g. food provision. SE Reset participants highlighted witnessing an increase in social capital amongst their local communities with this accompanying the crucial role social enterprises played in providing a community anchor role to enable the Supporting Communities Fund resources to reach smaller grassroots groups.

Looking forward and opportunities:

SE Reset participants emphasised the importance of building on social capital and keeping the momentum going to ensure that that this increase is a key factor in building more resilient communities as we approach the 'new normal'. Several issues emerged strongly from this theme, including:

- It's crucial that we have a focus on young people within our communities as we move forward, particularly in relation to the potential impact that Covid-19 will have on their mental wellbeing and future employability.
- Recognising that no one's life has been untouched by the crisis, community based social enterprises are already seeing how this is impacting upon individual's mental health & wellbeing and are anticipating that in the future that many people will experience loss in confidence, fear of going out and interacting with other people. They also suggested that in amongst the uncertainty about the future, there is potential for conflict to emerge. Social enterprises want to be equipped to be able to address these issues moving forward, realising that health inequalities may be exacerbated following Covid-19.
- The community anchor role of community-based social enterprise has been vital during the crisis and it's important that there is recognition of this value and it is indeed realised in relation to broader public health in the future - particularly if the current predictions relating to poverty and unemployment come to fruition.

Support required

- Increased recognition of the value of social capital and the contribution of community-based social enterprises in supporting and generating this at a local level.
- Support to develop collaborative approaches amongst local community organisations.
- Investment in community-based social enterprise and further exploration of their role in community wealth building.

Adapting Services

Emerging issues

During the crisis, many social enterprises displayed agility in adapting or remodeling their services to provide a continuation in service and to move quickly to respond to the emerging needs relating to Covid-19. There were many examples of innovative service re-design, including a huge shift to digital delivery and reconfiguration of spaces, with many of the adapted services involving new collaborations with others. However, this often resulted in social enterprise trying to overcome two concurrent issues – a significant or total loss of income whilst also trying to provide effective services and support.

For social enterprises where service adaptation was not possible and they were required to halt all activities, they often indicated that this time has provided them with an opportunity to reflect, review and plan ahead.

Looking forward and opportunities:

There was recognition that there will be an ongoing need to change and adapt services in the coming months, both for those re-opening services and those who have been operational throughout, as lockdown is gradually eased and more activities and services become available. This needs to be addressed in the context of the 'new normal' of social distancing etc. Accompanying this is the need to review business models, giving consideration to income generation and sustainability

Social enterprises identified several opportunities to have emerged from this, including:

- Anticipating changing needs as they re-engage with existing customers and explore new markets
- Potential for diversification and development of new services
- Build on and improve the digital developments – but ensuring that this does not wholly replace the much needed face to face / in person interactions that are often a crucial aspect of services.
- Strengthen new collaborations and explore further potential for wider partnerships
- Examine where efficiencies were identified and consider this in longer term

Support required:

- Clarity from Scottish Government and dissemination of relevant and consistent key messages from national intermediaries.
- Support for scenario planning
- Guidance on reconfiguring spaces and re-starting activities safely
- Health & safety guidance

- Digital guidance, support and sharing of best practice
- Developing tools to help people feel safe to come out of their homes and join activities.

Adapting business

Challenges:

The effect of the Covid-19 pandemic has had a seismic effect on social enterprise in Scotland and the economy as a whole. Organisations have had to react quickly and efficiently in order to survive. For many the impact has been catastrophic, and this will only be able to be fully assessed over the coming months. For those that have had reserves, or have been able to access funding, they have had to work at a reduced capacity, dealing with multiple issues such as staffing, moving trade and services online, diversifying to deliver new services – and maintain customer, staff and board relationships virtually.

Looking forward and opportunities:

Social enterprises in Scotland recognise the changes that need to be made within their organisations in order to move forward. Many are re-visiting business plans in preparation for the next phase - how to retain and connect with customers old and new; adapt services, develop new ideas and identify savings and efficiencies. As noted above, significant re-designing of services will need to take place to ensure health and safety for all, as well as bringing in enough income to deliver services.

Support required:

Recognising that the way people do business and interact with one another has changed, social enterprises identified several support requirements to help them move onto the next stage.

- Re-visiting business plans- taking into consideration reduced use of space, scenario planning (should lockdown move back a phase), juggling traditional services with new services, dealing with lost income from the summer season.
- Clear and concise guidance for re-opening and staying open, including sector guidance.
- Governance, compliance and liability-information, guidance and one to one support.
- Risk management and conflict resolution.
- Market development - connecting with customers new and old, developing new trade to replace lost trade.

Assets

Challenges:

Social enterprises that are responsible for running assets face uncertain and challenging times. The main challenges cited include loss of trading income; capacity and funding to re-configure space and services; some services have moved online, however, not everything is transferable; concerns local authorities increase price of community assets; If, as potentially likely, the virus impacts in waves, organisations need support/guidelines to ensure the safety of communities. Leases have been given up to reduce costs, buildings have been locked up. Loss of tenants and general loss of income create uncertainty over the long-term sustainability of maintaining assets. There are also many examples of

community spaces remaining open to support local communities during this time mostly relating to food provision, childcare etc.

Looking forward and opportunities:

As commented on in previous sections, there is a lot for organisations to consider when re-opening premises. Preparation for health and safety and affordability will take priority and concerns exist over the cost implications of readying a space for re-use. In terms of building adaptations can these be achieved with low energy, climate friendly solutions and thus maybe get Scot Gov to release funding for low carbon adaptations?

Response of the sector has been impressive and the role of community anchors has been key – for communities to be more resilient, they need to be encouraged to take on assets for the benefit of the community.

Support required:

A mixture of practical support and funding is sought by social enterprises.

- Longer-term transition funding, on a sliding scale (as income is rebuilt) particularly during the transitional phase - including funding for practical renovations and adaptations that will be required.
- Community Shares
- Inspiration of community wealth building and how to invest locally
- A re-start fund that would cover costs such as deep clean, new signage/info, sanitiser points, room/building modifications i.e. perspex screens at receptions, staff training/re-inductions etc

Workforce

Emerging issues:

Throughout SE Reset week, social enterprises referred to the huge impact that the current crisis is having on their paid staff and volunteers and highlighted the crucial importance of employer responsibilities at this time. Several aspects of furlough featured in the conversations, with clarity being sought on the process and timescales. Social enterprises were also keen to explore how they could keep in touch with furloughed staff and volunteers who weren't active in their usual role, being aware of the potential impact on their mental wellbeing.

Similarly, social enterprises were concerned about the well-being of staff shifting to working from home as a result of the current situation, with consideration being given to care responsibilities, access to equipment, workload. Many social enterprises reported adjusting working hours, workload, roles & responsibilities and increasing flexibility and introducing additional support arrangements to ensure staff well-being.

Supporting members of their workforce continuing to work on the frontline was also a source of concern, with a range of alterations made (e.g. number of staff on premises, one way systems etc) to ensure the necessary health & safety regulations were upheld and social distancing was achieved. The mental well-being of frontline staff was also highlighted as requiring consideration.

There were also issues faced by some social enterprise in being required to recruit additional staff and volunteers to meet demand.

In relation to the Social Firm/Work Integration Social Enterprise sector, there was significant concern that as they are likely to have a disproportionate number of vulnerable people as either employees, volunteers or beneficiaries. Covid19 will therefore impact more negatively on these organisations

In addition, there was a genuine worry from members that people already social and economically excluded will be pushed further from the labour market. This will lead to increased demand and need for employability services alongside, crucially, employment within a supportive environment.

Furthermore, volunteers can be the backbone of some WISEs and for these organisations there is the fear that it will be harder to retain existing volunteers and recruit new ones (because of their safety fears or a downturn in their mental health). This will impact on the range of services and support that can be delivered to some of our most vulnerable citizens, when they are needed most.

This also relates to another issue for WISEs who, because of a significant reduction in their income, may have to rely more heavily on volunteers to run their enterprise and deliver their services.

Looking forward and opportunities:

With so many different scenarios and experiences evident, the one thing that's applicable to all social enterprise is the need to focus on workforce planning as we move forward. Some factors highlighted as requiring immediate attention include supporting furloughed staff to return and also the potential for job losses and redundancy.

Recognising that everyone's life has been affected by Covid-19, there's also anticipation amongst employers that there will need to be an increased awareness of the future mental health and well-being and also physical health of the workforce.

There is an opportunity for employers to tap into the expertise and valuable services available across many social enterprises to support both the mental and physical well-being of the workforce.

Support required:

- Funding to support WISE to integrate people furthest from the labour market into meaningful activity and employment
- Redefine employability programmes to enable them to genuinely reach and support our most excluded people
- Clarity on Furlough going forward (part-time phased return to work - allow orgs a gradual return to business)?
- Paid staff recruitment support.
- Volunteer recruitment and retention support.
- Guidance for employers on mental health well-being.
- Funding to access mental health and well-being services for paid staff and volunteers in relation to covid-19 related issues.

Digital

Challenges:

The digital aspect of delivery has seen huge change for most organisations, new skills had to be developed quickly, services moved online, knowledge and practice shared. While we have seen

upskilling in this area on a grand scale, for individuals and clients as well as organisations, challenges including internet and computer access, lack of physical contact, extended screen time and remote management exist.

Looking forward and opportunities:

Many organisations reported that they found the switch to digital delivery positive and allowed them to reach new markets/customers. Some of the new ways of connecting online have been well received by beneficiaries and there are some delivery methods which could be sustained into the future but these discussions included a caveat that online should not be at the cost of face to face connections.

There is a desire and need within the sector to explore digital opportunities further, investigate how to generate an income from online activity, and how to ensure high quality delivery.

Support required:

Practical support was identified for a variety of digital needs:

- Switching to online selling
- Live streaming
- Support to move services to online platforms
- Advice on intellectual property



Studio 1, Showcase the Street in partnership with Dundee and Angus ADHD Support Group

Funding and Income Generation

Challenges:

Funding and income generation is a significant challenge for organisations now and looking to the future. Whilst the Scottish Government, UK Government and funders reacted swiftly to open various funding streams, some organisations have slipped through the gaps and have struggled to access funds. SE Reset Week highlighted capacity issues and a knowledge gap for those applying for funding. There is a sense that those that already had relationships with funders were more likely to receive support and funding. Many organisations feel that they have been penalised, not being able to access funds as they do not meet eligibility criteria – i.e. they have more than 3 months reserves. Organisations raised concerns in relation to furlough ending - bringing staff back and not being able to cover costs as trading income has significantly reduced.

Loan funding was clearly rejected by social enterprises in several discussions during SE Reset Week, social enterprises commented on the risk being too high when pre-covid income levels are not guaranteed.

Looking forward and opportunities:

SE Reset Week highlighted the innovation and ability of the sector to move quickly when reacting to the pandemic. However, income generation continues to be a concern for many going forward. SEs are looking to diversify and looking at new opportunities whether that be moving products and services online or looking at entirely new income streams for the future.

Support required:

- Long term flexible funding that compensates social enterprises for reduced income caused by social distancing and the incremental return to full trading.
- Funding to support organisations with re-opening and reconfiguration of premises and with PPE
- Bridging fund to cover core costs for organisations bringing staff back from furlough until trading income is back to previous levels.
- A shortfall fund to be made available early 2021 to organisations that used their reserves to continue operations because they were either unable or were unsuccessful in accessing funds - undermining their own sustainability.
- Funding support for those organisations that wish to utilise greater IT/technical approaches going forward and/or wish to mainstream many of the online services they offered on a pilot/temporary basis during the pandemic.

Rural

Emerging Issues:

A positive to emerge from Covid-19 is that the move to more online activity has resulted in greater access to training, workshops, events and meetings for rural social enterprises, thus demonstrating it is possible.

With rural social enterprise often providing key services and support essential to the social fabric of rural communities, the importance and emergence of partnership working during Covid-19 crisis has

further strengthened this. The crisis has also flagged up the huge importance of social capital and localism.

It has also flagged up that for the 'in-between' rural areas which are located in the peripheries of large towns, but are very much still rural, that many people living in these areas are now discovering local enterprises and services for the first time that pre-lockdown they weren't aware of.

Many social enterprises in rural areas rely on incoming tourism, and there is a big timing gap between the end of lockdown/funding, and the reintroduction of tourism to these areas, which will be particularly problematic for small organisations.

Looking forward and opportunities:

Given the increased access to rural SEs in training etc, we need to ensure that we avoid returning to the old normal where digital access becomes a bolt-on and rural participants have unequal access. Following on from this, we need to ensure that there isn't an urban-centric influence on policy and support that disadvantages rural social enterprise.

Looking forward, rural social enterprises, especially ones with large sites which are able to adhere easily to social distancing, will be able to utilise these spaces their benefit in the post-lockdown landscape.

It's also important that we continue to tap into the asset and social-based approach demonstrated during lockdown and consider how we can encourage people to keep supporting local enterprises and sustain that sense of community.

Support required:

- Need to ensure support is much better informed by rural social enterprise needs and aspirations moving forward.
- Support for ongoing networking and collective voice for rural social enterprise.
- Need for advertising platforms to promote rural enterprises.
- Although support is available at present, many rural social enterprises rely on increased income during the summer months to help tide them over the winter, so most of the support mechanisms are based on support for the here and now and may not be available when they hit the lean months. This support needs to be available at the time it is required.

Start Up and Early Stage

Challenges:

During SE Reset Week, it appeared that there was disparity between social enterprises that have had to pause or stop development and those that received funding through the Resilience Fund and The Wellbeing Fund. Absence of previous accounts and financial information made new social enterprises ineligible for most emergency funding opportunities and people reported confusion about how to take their new social enterprises forward. Some start-ups were just about to start trading / open their doors as Covid19 lockdown started – they are now in a very vulnerable position with the perception they have no access to funds available – need clarity.

At an already high-risk phase of development, organisations have had to completely overhaul their business models and re-visit business plans - whilst more mature social enterprises have been in a similar situation, start-ups do not have the safety of market knowledge and partnerships.

Looking forward and opportunities:

The start-up and early stage social entrepreneurs that took part in SE Reset Week assured their commitment to getting their organisations up and running, they recognise the value in collaborating with each other – and, in particular, with more mature social enterprises and the private sector in achieving their aims.

Support required:

The value of peer support was cited as key to the success of new social enterprises, being part of a collective to feel connected and supported and reducing isolation.

One to one support is recognised as of high value, as is seedcorn funding to support research and development and the piloting of new ideas, to move organisations away from grant dependency as they develop the trade element of their organisation.



Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at mail@senscot.net

Thank you to all the participants and partners for taking part in SE Reset.



Scottish Communities Finance
Reinvesting In Your Community



SOCIAL ENTERPRISE RESET

Appendix 1- SE Reset sessions and participant numbers

Session	Participants
Adapting your business model in response to the impact of COVID19 (1)	42
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Edinburgh SEN (SE RESET)	11
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Rural SE Session	30
Sport SEN - Thinking about relaunching sport and physical activity	48
Start-up and Early Stage Social Enterprises	36
Sustaining the energy and resilience of communities	37
Tayside and North East	41
Tourism SEN Peer Response Group	35
Total	807



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The word 'unprecedented' has been used a lot to describe the times we are living in as we seek to cope with the challenges posed by this pandemic. And this unprecedented situation requires unprecedented action from government to do what we can to support our people and communities as best as we can.

That is why I announced a £350m funding package in March, that would help support the most vulnerable in society and also support our partners in local government, third sector, social enterprises, and community groups.

In amongst the challenge however, what has gladdened my heart has been the tremendous effort of individuals, groups, and organisations found across Scotland who have stepped up to do their bit. We've seen over 75,000 people register to volunteer and help communities and public services during the Covid-19 pandemic, we've seen organisations refocus and reprioritise what they do to help, and we've seen countless acts of kindness and compassion all motivated to ensure folk are looked after and supported.

And that same agility and action is visible through Social Enterprise Reset Week. It's a fantastic initiative to provide a platform to bring together the knowledge, skills, and experience of the social enterprise sector to help support each other.

I've no doubt that now more than ever, this mutual and peer support is critical to help social entrepreneurs navigate the ever changing landscape around us.

From the small, local social enterprises that contribute throughout Scotland, to our larger social enterprises, that deliver both Scotland-wide and internationally, our social enterprises are well placed to be at the forefront to help us get through this current crisis. More importantly, you will also be crucial to help Scotland look to the future to not just recover, but to renew, reform and rebalance to enable our communities and country to emerge through this guided by the principles of fairness and equality.

I would like to take this chance to thank you all for the work you have done and continue to do. These are challenging and uncertain times which makes our strong relationships and ability to work together all the more important.

Stay well, stay safe and stay in touch and let's work together to build the fairer Scotland we all seek.

AC

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