

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE AND SPORT IN SCOTLAND

A BRIEFING PAPER

1 What is a Social Enterprise?

Social enterprises are organisations that want to do good and make a positive difference within society. Their primary purpose is to deliver clear and long-term social and/or environmental benefits, and they are run by people who have a drive and passion to create positive change.

Social enterprises effectively operate like traditional businesses in that they aim to generate income and make a profit. However, they reinvest profits back into their organisation or the local community to deliver their goals, whether that's tackling social or environmental issues, creating inclusive training and employment opportunities or supporting communities more widely.

Social enterprises seek to increase opportunities to generate their own income and reduce reliance on grant funding. This is important as it leads to financial independence – meaning that they can focus on achieving their mission and addressing the needs of their community, and not become bound by meeting the outcomes and requirements set out by funders.

In Scotland the criteria set out in the [Voluntary Code of Practice for Social Enterprise in Scotland](#) (The Code) is accepted by the sector and funders as the benchmark by which social enterprises are recognised. Social enterprise is not a legal structure, it's a way of operating. If an organisation meets the criteria set out in The Code, it can choose to subscribe and achieve recognition as a social enterprise.

2 Understand needs and barriers

Typically, sport social enterprises aim to use grassroots sport and/or physical activity as a means of addressing a social or environmental problem. They are aware of challenges within their local area and seek to deliver activities that will help tackle these.

This is in line with the [Changing Lives](#) approach where sport is intentionally used as a tool to bring about positive change. Worldwide, sport organisations and social enterprises have been creating programmes based on this approach for a long time.

Often a typical sports club or community organisation will be set up with the primary purpose of offering an opportunity for people to get involved in that specific sport or activity. Social enterprises have a different mindset – they will identify a need, such as a societal problem which is negatively impacting their community then use sport or physical activity as the tool to address that issue. They deliver targeted activities to specific beneficiaries with the intention of achieving a positive outcome. Social enterprises adopt a person-centred approach, where the needs of the people they are working with are taken into consideration – and activities are designed and delivered in a way which is intended to have the biggest positive impact for these individuals.

3 An example of Sport Social Enterprise

In Scotland, an example of this is [Kingdom Off Road Motorcycle Club](#). Already an established sports club delivering motorcycling activity within Fife, they realised that their community was badly affected by anti-social behaviour and a high instance of young people using motorcycles dangerously and illegally on the streets. In response, they developed diversionary activities, offering a safe and supervised space for these young people to come along and use their facilities. They were able to ride their bikes in an off-road environment and offered skills development and training opportunities. These initiatives have been highly impactful and led to a visible reduction in the levels of anti-social behaviour.

This example demonstrates how a sports club can move from being one which only delivers a particular sport-related activity, to one which uses that activity with the intention of addressing a specific problem for the benefit of an individual and the wider community. We call this the social impact of a social enterprise's activity.

4 The Scottish Policy Context

[Scotland's National Performance Framework \(NPF\)](#) outlines Scottish Government's vision of the kind of country they want to create. Social enterprises can play a role in delivering on key outcomes set out in this framework and this is reflected in the [Social Enterprise Strategy for Scotland](#). Priorities are detailed within the [Social Enterprise Action Plan](#).

The overarching framework which the wider sport sector delivers in order to achieve the objectives as set out in the NPF is the Active Scotland Outcomes Framework (ASOF). This was set out by the Scottish Government to achieve their vision of more people being more active more often. Physical activity is considered vital to ensuring a healthy population and a key ambition is to support well-being and resilience in communities through physical activity and sport.

[Sport for Life](#) is a strategy which delivers against the ASOF and aims to create an active Scotland where everyone benefits from sport. People have different motivations for leading an active lifestyle and no-one should face barriers to accessing opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity and enjoying its wider benefits. We are committed to inclusion underpinning everything we do. Our approach to [equality, diversity and inclusion \(EDI\)](#) brings this commitment to life.

The [National Club and Communities Framework](#) acknowledges the power of sport as a tool for social change and aims to help build the capability and capacity of club and community organisations. It recognises social enterprises as organisations within this environment, demonstrating the key qualities of being organised, sustainable and connected. The Changing Lives approach forms part of this framework outlined above and encourages sports clubs and community groups to put social values and a person-centred approach at its core and embed these within everything they do.

5 The Contribution of Sport Social Enterprises

In Scotland, sport social enterprises are delivering against all the agendas outlined above – and cumulatively they make a significant contribution to achieving key outcomes to a wide range of beneficiaries. In contributing to the frameworks outlined above, sport social enterprises are often working with individuals and groups who are disadvantaged, vulnerable and experience inequalities. Sport social enterprises tackle a variety of issues including:

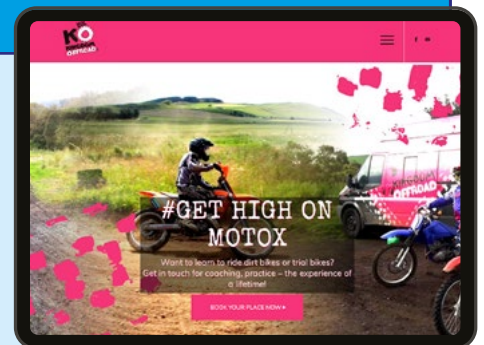
COMMUNITY SAFETY AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR



Kingdom Off Road Motorcycle Club

[Kingdom Off Road Motorcycle Club](#) is based in Fife and aims to make communities safer by providing a controlled area for children, young people and adults to enjoy off-road motorcycling.

In turn, this reduces anti-social behaviour and illegal use of off-road motorcycles. They deliver social awareness and re-education programmes in Fife, which seek to change behaviour, attitudes and values ultimately contributing to Safer Communities.



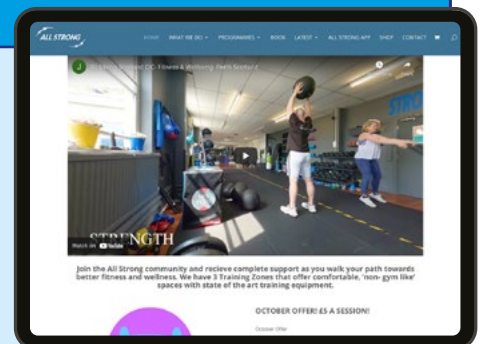
MENTAL, PHYSICAL & SOCIAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING



All Strong Scotland

As a social enterprise, [All Strong Scotland's](#) mission is to provide and promote mindful fitness, strength, relaxation and peer support for mental health benefits.

Their core programmes of fitness to feel better provide and promote physical activity, mindfulness and peer support as powerful tools for the recovery, self-management and early intervention/prevention of common mental health issues. This blended approach to wellbeing is delivered in a welcoming atmosphere and setting.



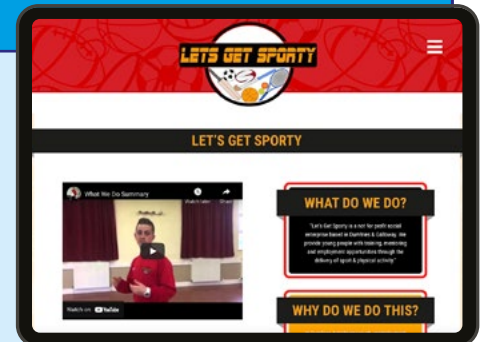
BARRIERS TO TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT



Let's Get Sporty

Highs levels of youth unemployment and low levels of physical activity in Dumfries and Galloway were highlighted as a cause for concern.

[This social enterprise](#) provides young people with training, mentoring and employment opportunities through the delivery of sport and physical activity. Individualised training programmes focus on improving social skills, employability skills and self-confidence.



LONELINESS AND ISOLATION



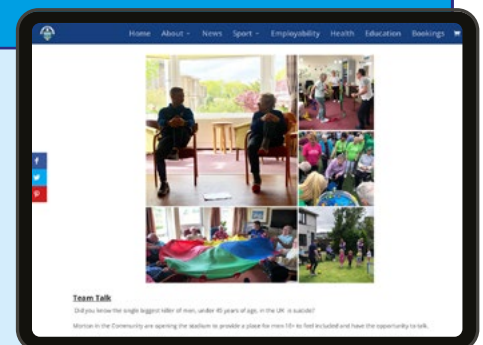
Morton in the Community

[Morton in the Community](#) use the power of football and physical activity to deliver a range of programmes across Inverclyde. They deliver various programmes which help to address loneliness and isolation including **ActivAge** which aims to improve physical activity, enjoyment and social interaction for care home residents.

Team Talk offering a safe place for men age 16+ to come together, talk and socialise.

Walking Football offers an opportunity to participate in physical activity and socialise.

Football Memories offers an opportunity for people with dementia to come together and share memories.



DISENGAGEMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN EDUCATION



Scottish Sports Futures

[Scottish Sports Futures](#) uses the power of sport and physical activity to engage with vulnerable and disadvantaged young people and their families.

Offering a range of services, some are targeted specifically at young people who are disengaged from education. This includes SSF Chance2Be which is a referral based programme, offering intensive personal development to support young people to overcome trauma and adversity and make positive life choices.



CLIMATE CHANGE



Garioch Sports Club

[Garioch Sports Club](#) in Aberdeenshire is more than just a gym! In addition to a host of fitness programmes, they are a pro-active and forward thinking social enterprise on the topic of climate change. They have made significant progress towards their ambition of achieving a net zero sports facility.

Through their [Garioch Goes Green](#) campaign they have also raised awareness of climate change within the community, encouraging and supporting people to make changes and be more climate and environmentally aware.



6. Social Enterprise Census

[Scotland's Social Enterprise Census](#) reports every two years on the scale, reach and contribution of social enterprise activity across our nation, as well as the characteristics, prospects, and needs of the sector. The social enterprise sector in Scotland continues to evolve and today there are an estimated **6,025 social enterprises active in Scotland**, representing a 16% growth rate since the first census of 2015. Social enterprises are active across all industries in our economy and have deep roots within our local communities. While there is no single legal structure for social enterprise, they take many forms, but are commonly connected and adhere to the principles of [The voluntary Code of Practice for Social Enterprise in Scotland](#) - setting the boundaries between social enterprise and the private sector.

We know that social enterprise activity is increasing across Scotland as evidenced through the SE Census. [The Headline Data and 2019 Census Summary Report](#) – provides a snapshot and demonstrates the rich diversity of organisations and activities that take place across rural and urban areas of Scotland and clearly demonstrates economic, social and environmental value and impact. Those operating in the sport & leisure area represent circa 5-6% of all social enterprises.

All social enterprises tackle social problems, strengthen communities, work to improve outcomes and people's life chances and protect the environment. They reinvest profits back into the business or for the benefit of the people they serve. Social enterprise is an inclusive business model – one that is underpinned by ethical, fair and inclusive business practices.

They are also creating social impact in many ways by:

- [Creating a sense of community cohesion](#)
- [Developing connections between traditional sport networks and third sector organisations to help engage with people who may be reticent, or struggle to engage with the sporting system](#)
- [Contributing to the local economy](#)
- [Increasing long term financial sustainability of sport and leisure organisations](#)
- [Developing inclusive, affordable and accessible community- focused sports facilities](#)

7. Could your organisation be a social enterprise?

As mentioned, social enterprise is not a legal structure – it is more a way of doing business and therefore social enterprises can and do adopt many different legal forms. If your organisation has an appropriate legal structure and meets the criteria set out in The Code, you could become recognised as a social enterprise.

If you answer yes to any of the questions below it might be useful to explore which social enterprise model would be most suitable for your organisation:

- Is your current primary focus, or are you planning to switch your key focus to using sport and/or physical activity to address social and /or environmental issues?
- Do you seek to be less reliant on grant funding and aspire to financial independence?
- Would you like to reinvest profits into programmes or services which are focused on achieving positive social outcomes for people and communities?

8. Support for Social Enterprise in Scotland

There are many organisations that can support your journey to adopt a social enterprise approach and a Social Enterprise Support Map has been designed to signpost you to the most appropriate.

Where are you on your Social Enterprise journey? Maybe you are a start-up or a community organisation looking to start trading? Or established but need a bit of tailored advice to get you to the next step? Wherever you are click on the [Social Enterprise Support Map](#) – it's a FREE tool connecting you with the key support organisations across Scotland.

9. Why become a sport social enterprise?

Social entrepreneurs commonly describe social enterprise as a mindset or way of achieving social change. They typically observe a societal problem then seek to solve it in a lasting and financially viable way.

By becoming more enterprising and maximising income generation, the need to rely on grant funding is reduced and you can make decisions which will potentially result in a better outcome for your organisation and the people you serve.

Engaging closely with communities of place and interest and offering more than just sport can help to build a feeling of goodwill within the local area which can be of benefit in terms of increasing support – that might be in finding volunteers or attracting sponsorship.

Often sports clubs will struggle because they fail to achieve buy in from the wider community, so it is helpful to operate a model where a range of beneficiaries are supported and a clear purpose of tackling societal issues is demonstrated.

An active support structure exists for social enterprise and there are opportunities to connect with a wide range of organisations who can support your development. As a sport social enterprise, you would be able to seek support through the **sport sector** and the **social enterprise sector**.

Peer support and networking opportunities which facilitate information sharing and problem solving are consistently identified as powerful tools by social enterprises to help them progress and there is typically a strong desire across the sector to collaboratively work together and provide a unified voice.

10. Our vision for the sport and social enterprise sector

The [Sport Social Enterprise Network \(Sport SEN\)](#) is facilitated by [SENScot](#) and exists to create a supportive environment where sport social enterprises can be informed, inspired and connected to help each other and create strong and flourishing organisations.

Our vision is to develop a vibrant sports social enterprise sector where the benefits of using sport and physical activity to positively impact society is clear to everyone. Embedded within communities, sport social enterprises should play a central role in shaping local services where sport is the delivery tool. We work to ensure that sport social enterprises are visible, valued and supported within the system for sport; and the contribution they make to sport and wider social outcomes are acknowledged, rewarded and celebrated.

We would like to see social enterprise as the model of choice to contribute to building an organised, connected, locally focused, and sustainable community sport sector in Scotland – where the cumulative social impact is measurable and evidenced.

11. SENS Scot / sportscotland Partnership

To help realise this vision for the sport and social enterprise sector, SENS Scot works with **sportscotland** to:

- Help raise **awareness** of Social Enterprise as an inclusive business model – supporting organisations to adopt a social enterprise model and/or connect with relevant social enterprises that will support their ambitions
- Promote a deeper **understanding** of the contribution that sport and physical activity can bring to wider priorities
- Foster **motivation** among leaders within the sport and physical activity system across different sectors
- Increase the **capacity and capability** for strong and meaningful collaborative working practices within the sport sector and between sport and other sectors.

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