

# Evaluation of Social Care Ideas Factory: Wee Enterprizers Project

March 2017

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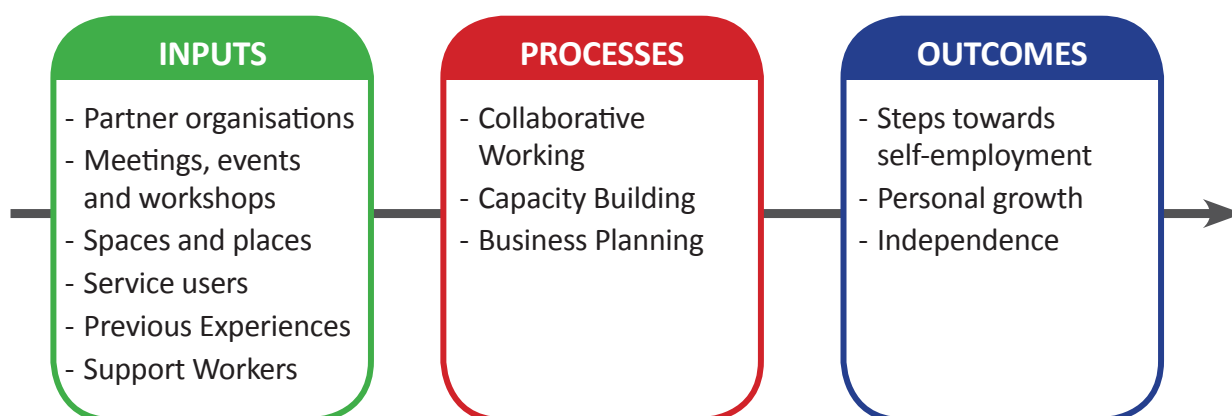


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## Overview

The Wee Enterprizer project was started by Social Care Ideas Factory (SCIF) in 2014 in response to a changing local and national context in which there was an increased need for more innovative and empowering approaches to supporting people with disabilities. The rationale was to provide a space for people to meet and work collaboratively whilst exploring ‘what more choice and control over how they live their lives’ might mean in practice through the development of business skills. In many ways, this approach follows a business incubator format yet the aim and level of support provided are markedly different. It has been important to build collaboration across the health and social care sector, develop capacity in individuals and promote the idea that people with disabilities can, and should, have opportunities to pursue employment. An initial exploratory piece of research was conducted to examine the early stages of the Wee Enterprizers idea and developed a process model shown below:



Keys to Life funding has enabled SCIF to develop the Wee Enterprizers idea further and apply the approach with two new groups. The research in this paper was commissioned to report on the outcomes of this funding and to consider how the experiences of the newer groups might help to refine the initial process model.

Over the course of two months 13 interviews were conducted; 9 with Wee Enterprizers, 1 with support workers and 3 with representatives from the support organisations working with the Wee Enterprizers. In several of the interviews with Wee Enterprizers, their support worker was also present and their quotes are included in the report. These interviews were supplemented with notes taken at Wee Enterprizer meetings and training sessions and a variety of written documents provided by SCIF that included meeting agendas and notes, powerpoint presentations, completed worksheets and business plans and the monitoring reports prepared for the funder. The combination of these sources of data offered an in-depth insight into the Wee Enterprizer groups in Glasgow and Motherwell.

This report tells the story of the Wee Enterprizer experiences in order to answer the questions:

- How has Social Care Ideas Factory (SCIF) facilitated and implemented the Wee Enterprizers programme?
- How has the programme created innovative employment opportunities and social connectedness for people with learning difficulties?



## **Background**

After a successful Wee Enterprizers project in 2014-15 SCIF explored opportunities to expand the reach of the project with funding from Keys to Life. Building on the relationships established during the first project, SCIF has been able to develop a group incorporating people from Key Community Supports, Community Lifestyles, C-Change and Fair Deal. Key Community Supports have taken a strategic role as a stakeholder from the previous Wee Enterprizer project and a community development worker from the organisation has been working alongside the Wee Enterprizers to provide day-to-day assistance for the Glasgow group and the Wee Enterprizers project lead. In the interview, she described the variety of practical tasks and strategic role she played in the group. For example, helping the Wee Enterprizers to go out shopping for the equipment they needed to set-up their businesses as well as helping out during the meetings themselves with issues regarding IT support for the Wee Enterprizers and help with the meeting administration.

*“All the things like booking rooms and that sort of thing and helping out with minutes again...And I think I have almost been a bit of a sounding board...I think I've very much played that role in the past few months”*

***Lucy, Stakeholder***

The Wee Enterprizers have benefitted from having this in-depth support on a practical level as Key Community Supports also provided access to centrally located meeting facilities including break out rooms and some IT equipment including tablets, PCS, projectors and screens.

Support for Ordinary Living (SOL) helped to co-ordinate the meetings in Motherwell and provided the space and some administration support for the Wee Enterprizers when they piloted their business idea. Due to a lack of available meeting spaces within the SOL offices SCIF used some of the funding to pay for meeting space in the buildings adjacent to the SOL office. Similar to Key Community Support, SOL also had two members of staff who have taken a strategic role in the project and combined that with some of the day-to-day running of the meetings where they provide administrative assistance. One SOL worker spoke of her time assisting in the Wee Enterprizers group:

*“It's really just going along to the meeting and if there's anything that's needing done I'll go away and do that. Like if we need to find the karaoke machines and that then I would go away and research. We've done the flyer today so I've took that to our design person so he'll do up the flyer and then I'll get it and distribute that out and that, just help it tick along.”*

***Amanda, Stakeholder***

## **Starting point...**

### **Who is involved in Wee Enterprizers?**

There are two Wee Enterprizer groups that have received support through the funds accessed from Keys to Life. The groups are significantly different in terms of age, type of disability, work experience and geographical context. One was based in Glasgow, drawing support from some of the organisations involved in the previous Wee Enterprizers group and the other based in Motherwell within SOL, an organisation relatively new to this approach. We found some differences between the two groups that we reflect on throughout the report.

Many of the Wee Enterprizers in Motherwell had recently left college and all required the help of a support worker in order to attend the meetings. This is compared to the Glasgow group who were older, with more work experience. The majority of this group were able to attend the group meetings alone. Both of these factors meant that there were different atmospheres within each group meeting, where activities had to be adapted and tailored to the requirements of the group. Yet, at the heart of the Wee Enterprizers model, and the aim of the project in both Glasgow and Motherwell was to enable people to access the information, training, networks and resources necessary in order to begin to consider self-employment as an option for the future.

### **What were their aims and aspirations?**

The Wee Enterprizers involved in the group in Glasgow had previous work experience, whether through other support organisations or through voluntary work. This meant that their aims and aspirations from the first meeting were to develop their ideas further and build on their previous experience. One Wee Enterprizer had accessed some funding for equipment for his DJ business through a Dragon's Den type scheme but had experienced some changes in his level of support and the organisation that was supporting him and had not had the opportunity to pursue the idea further. Another had been working as a car washer but had not been able to bring in enough custom; he was keen to be involved to get support for designing flyers and purchasing equipment.

The Wee Enterprizers in the Motherwell group had various levels of experience, with two members who had worked, or volunteered, in other settings. However, most of the group had recently left college and so had more limited experiences and no concrete plans regarding business development. The aspirations were a lot less clear than those in the Glasgow group as they did not really know what to expect, and were initially motivated to go to the meetings to get out of the house, and as one Wee Enterprizer said:

*"it gives me something else to do in my week"*

***David, Wee Enterprizer***

## **Where are the Wee Enterprizers now?**

### **Wee Enterprizers have grown in confidence**

Comments from support workers and project administrators referred to the transformation of individuals within the group and their confidence. At the beginning of the project, some Wee Enterprizers were unsure of being part of the group, and would not speak to others, as the project continued these individuals have become more comfortable within the group. One member, for example, left the first session early as she struggled to cope with the situation at the time. However, she returned the following week thanks to support from the organisation and their support workers. She has remained on the course and towards the end of the project she co-chaired a meeting with another Wee Enterprizer, helping to guide the group through the agenda and confirming the plans for the pilot event in which they held a bingo and karaoke afternoon. This significant change was reflected upon by a stakeholder at SoL:

*"[She] has just really come out her shell. Her confidence has really improved, even just in other things outside Wee Enterprizers; she's much more assertive, she's more likely to put her views across which she wasn't as willing to do before."*

***Amanda, Stakeholder***

More specifically this confidence came in the form of communication, where individuals in the group could speak to one another about their challenges and ideas. Others in the group would then respond, with the confidence to suggest that they were against a certain idea or supportive of another suggestion. There were several occasions when the Wee Enterprizers would receive a tip from another Wee Enterprizer that would specifically help their businesses.

During the observations of the Glasgow group, for example, Chris suggested to another Wee Enterprizer that there was a venue that would be suitable for an event he was planning. They discussed how and why this was a good option and then Chris shared the contact details of the person in charge of the venue. Similarly, in the Motherwell group, Daniel was able to give advice to Robert about using a headset microphone for use in his training business. Daniel had experience of using this equipment and so was able to discuss the benefits with Robert and offered him a chance to try it out to see if it was useful for him.

### **Wee Enterprizers are thinking about employment differently**

The Wee Enterprizers aim to pursue a different approach to helping those experiencing disadvantages within the labour market. Instead of training them to adapt to existing roles already set by the labour market, they seek to show the Wee Enterprizers that self-employment is also an option for them. This approach is something that none of the Wee Enterprizers had been offered in the past. Several participants noted the change in awareness and mind-set regarding employment opportunities from being part of the group. Daniel for example mentioned how the Wee Enterprizers project had opened new doors for him.

The Wee Enterprizers met with Gary Hadden who started his own business, selling eggs, using some of his Self-Directed Support (SDS) budget. He talked about how he started this business, the challenges he faced in expanding his business and coping with increasing customer demand. He highlighted the benefits of social media and its ability to reach out to new and current customers. Both groups also met with Alexander Warren, who runs a business as a motivational speaker and workshop leader. Support workers too noted the importance of these interactions as an attempt to change the mind-set about employment:

*“It opens up avenues. Things you wouldn't necessarily look at. Daring to dream... You don't ever see karaoke presenter in the job centre. You might see bingo caller in the job centre but you know what I mean, we all just pick sort of office work, support worker. But it is, it's good to be creative and go for what you actually want to do. There's nothing wrong with daring to dream.”*

**Tom, Support worker**

Visits such as these gave Wee Enterprizers a chance to meet people like themselves, with learning difficulties, who had set up their own businesses and could offer meaningful and relevant advice on pursuing their businesses and how to overcome specific challenges.

Another perspective on the business development aspects of the Wee Enterprizer project was offered by Jane, a woman involved in the previous Wee Enterprizers project. She commented that being part of the group had widened her scope in terms of what she can do with her existing hobbies and skills; she also made clear that she did not think she would have this opportunity elsewhere and that she would not be as far along with her business if it were not for the Wee Enterprizers. Her attendance at the meetings in Glasgow helped inspire the group members, and allowed them to see the success of another person who had started at the same point as them.

### **Wee Enterprizers have plans for businesses**

Planning, development and progression were observed as being cornerstones of the Wee Enterprizers project from the outset. A long-term strategic goal was set for either the individual in the case of the Glasgow group or for the group as a whole, as was the case in Motherwell. These long-term goals were then broken down into weekly achievable targets that the Wee Enterprizers would then report back on at each meeting. These goals included actions like researching and buying equipment by a set date before moving on to the next stage of business development.

Many of those involved in the Glasgow group had clear goals as to what the next steps for their business would be when they were no longer part of the Wee Enterprizers group. They all had plans to run pilot events, and were working hard finding venues, designing flyers and business cards and marketing their business to potential clients. They referred to goals of numbers of customers they want to have, and anticipated income for the early months of their start-ups.



The Motherwell group ran a pilot, which gathered together all of their skills and businesses ideas into one event. This free event was a bingo and karaoke afternoon where members of the community were invited to join in. The Wee Enterprizers had to organise the venue, the bingo equipment, the karaoke equipment as well as the marketing of the event and catering. This meant that they could all explore their own roles and how they would like to take them forward. The venue was full which showed both the successful marketing of the Wee Enterprizers but also the demand for similar events in the future. As a group, they created a successful event and so as part of the business plan they are now looking to be able to roll it out to an even wider audience and generate income from running other events, in addition to their individual business development. This type of business would mean the entire group working together as opposed to the more immediate focus on the individual approach taken by the Glasgow group. There is good reason to suggest this approach would be successful in the local area where there is a demand for events like these as noted by one of the stakeholders:

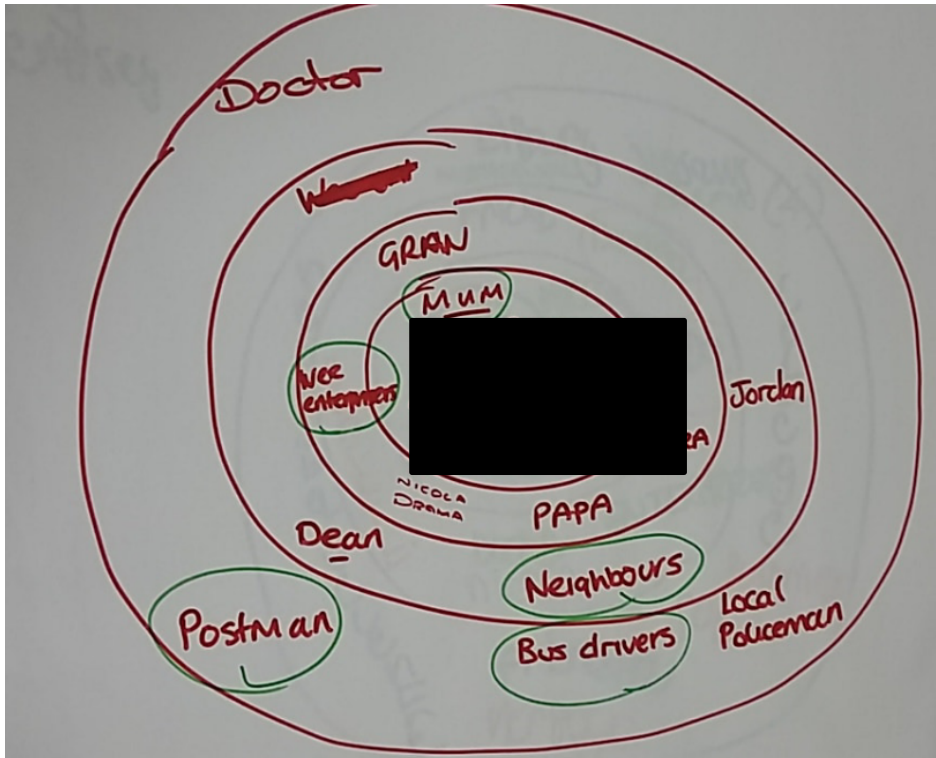
*“There’s a load of people who live in North Lanarkshire who travel to Shettleston to this thing that’s on in Shettleston Juniors Club every Friday, and basically it’s karaoke, an open mic thing...and it is literally standing room only...Can they [Wee Enterprizers] not join like their skills and their ideas up and start their own wee mini-enterprise over here and charge people a couple of pounds to get in and make that standing room only?”*

***Sarah, Stakeholder***

### **Wee Enterprizers have an increased social network**

Developing social networks and social connectedness was observed as an integral part of the project. From the outset, the Wee Enterprizers were asked to visualise their own social networks as they were upon entering the project. This allowed the Enterprizers to think about the type of people in their lives that could help support them through their journeys but also how the other Wee Enterprizers would fit into their support network.

After filling in their own circles of support these were then presented by another Enterprizer which meant that everyone got familiar with other people’s social circles, an exercise which helps strengthen these ties. Over the page there is an example of the exercise from one of the Wee Enterprizers. Within the second circle, you can see the inclusion of Wee Enterprizers.



\*name blanked out for anonymity

Throughout the interviews with the Wee Enterprizers, it became clear that meeting together and building relationships was something that was valued. Robert, for example, said that his favourite part of the project was meeting people and he appreciated the support he got from the other Wee Enterprizers who helped him to speak out. Not only was this a key route to improved communication and confidence but it was also the group discussions that he most enjoyed during the training. Jenny also talked about the fun she had during the meetings and highlighted another important experience:

*'It was good fun and in the project I like all the people and that and they all make me welcome'*

**Jenny, Wee Enterprizer**

The welcoming aspect that Jenny mentioned when asked what she enjoyed about being involved in Wee Enterprizers illustrates the fact that the project has helped create a sense of community and belonging.

## **How did they get there?**

### **Training and regular meetings**

To support the development of the Wee Enterprizers SCIF facilitated a series of trainings workshops and meetings. The content of the sessions was flexible in order to be able to accommodate the emerging aims of the Wee Enterprizers. In Glasgow, the group sessions started with discussion of existing business ideas and progressed into the development of more formal business plans, market research, naming the businesses and designing business cards and flyers. In the latter meetings the Wee Enterprizers began to research the equipment they needed to purchase in order to carry out their business ideas. There were also a number of occasions when the Wee Enterprizers met with the facilitator on a one-to-one basis in order to be able to access more tailored support. With this group the emphasis was on support to achieve goals between meetings.

Given the difference in the starting points for the Wee Enterprizers in Motherwell the training sessions followed a different path and began with activities that encouraged them to think about the things that they enjoy and how they might start to think about turning these interests into business ideas. The Wee Enterprizers were asked to map out their key interests, skills and gifts to help them form ideas about the types of business they might want to pursue. The groups also considered their circles of support and their existing networks. This exercise encourages the Wee Enterprizers to think about the different skills and expertise they have around them which they could draw upon to help form a business.

The focus then shifted to develop skills to support the Wee Enterprizers in their chosen activities. They were visited by outside speakers such as a comedian from a local comedy club and a motivational speaker with learning difficulties, both of whom passed on key tips for public speaking and encouraged the Wee Enterprizers to pursue their dreams. Finally, the last stage of the training sessions were centred around the organisation of an event that the group organised as a pilot for their activities- bingo and karaoke. These sessions were focused on the practicalities of organising the venue and venue layout, designing flyers and promoting through word-of-mouth and arranging the programme for the event.

### **Practical and financial support**

In developing their plans, the Wee Enterprizers were provided with both practical and financial support throughout. The practical support was delivered through activities such as help using Microsoft Word to develop marketing material, assistance to purchase equipment from a store and helping to set up for events. The financial support largely came in the form of buying equipment required by the Wee Enterprizers to carry out their business plan. This equipment was either to be used to help set up the business like software to create businesses card or for the carrying out of the service itself such as a pressure washer for a car washing business. Several Enterprizers commented on how the opportunity to get equipment for their business was a big incentive to get involved with the project.

## **Innovative approach and empowering ethos**

Despite the difference in the content of the training sessions the ethos underlying the sessions was the same across both groups. At the heart of the Wee Enterprizers project is the innovative idea that people with disabilities can and should be supported to pursue business development and self-employment.

Although the approach to the training sessions is similar to some aspects of the person-centred approach to support, it differed in the commitment to following the plans through. Rather than what someone described as a 'tick box exercise' there was accountability and all plans were followed up and progress was reported on at the start of each session:

*"There's a real value in them coming back together. They go off and do their homework and the bits and pieces that they need to think about...I actually think the value really has been in the continually coming back to check where people are with progress rather than that being a plan you do once a year and then you come back the next year and go how did that go?"*

**Sarah, Stakeholder**

Another key feature of the training was the way that Wee Enterprizers were encouraged to take the lead with the support of the facilitator. This was summarised by one participant in the Motherwell group with the following football metaphor:

*"I kick off the ball and I pass it to the facilitator and she interprets it through the group, but I score the goal!"*

**Daniel, Wee Enterprizer**

The facilitator played an important role, introducing the idea of Wee Enterprizers, driving plans forward and acting as a translator when communication was difficult for some members. She also sought to empower the Wee Enterprizers and build their capacity. From the unique position as someone who has not worked extensively in the health and social care sector, she had none of the preconceptions of what people with disabilities can and cannot do. She encouraged extensive participation, supporting and empowering them to co-chair meetings, write minutes and negotiate the agenda for each session. The representative from one of the support organisations noted the importance of this when the facilitator's approach training was discussed:

*"There's something that I love about it, in that she doesn't have a social care background and I think that is really, really important because she doesn't come with a set of preconceived ideas about what's likely to be possible for folk. She's come in with her head in this is possible. People are going to have a microenterprise, people can have their own business, people can get this up and we'll help them. I think that if you've been in social care for a long time, you end up getting infected by the limitations that society in general and other people put on folk."*

**Sarah, Stakeholder**

***Sarah, Stakeholder***

The empowering ethos of capacity building is therefore in stark contrast to the other groups and networks that Wee Enterprizers are involved in as described in the following quote from another representative from a support organisation:

*"It's different... because normally it's just kind of groups that people go to like music groups and that but this is actually letting them grow and become like independent...The other groups are just like classes that they go to, so if it's like a drama group they might put on shows like but it's like everybody in there could be getting told what to do whereas with the Wee Enterprizers they're kind of deciding what they want to do, yeah so they're kind of taking the lead."*

***Amanda, Support Worker***

**Support worker involvement**

In the Motherwell group the support workers played a key role to support the Wee Enterprizers throughout the meetings and in between each session to help Wee Enterprizers further their plans and meet the deadlines set. This was a challenge for some of the support workers, particularly in cases where there was not consistent presence at each meeting. Due to the nature of support work it was common for there to be different workers with the Wee Enterprizers each week. This had the potential to hinder some progress as each support worker needed to catch up on developments every time they met up. However, given the commitment from the Wee Enterprizers and the emphasis on updating on progress each week the Wee Enterprizers often took ownership over the actions to be completed between meetings.

In Glasgow the majority of Wee Enterprizers did not require support workers to attend the meetings but there was one support worker who attended and it was clear that he played a significant role in supporting the Wee Enterprizer with his plans. The experience that he had, regarding IT skills was an asset for the Wee Enterprizer who needed help setting up new equipment and using new software.

Support workers also noted their own development and growth as a result of being on the project with the participants. They had found it a challenge to cope with the idea of helping someone set up a business but now they feel more confident in their own abilities to support other people. The guest speakers also seemed to make an impact on the support workers, as the advice being given could be applied in a variety of situations, not just in business. The support workers developed their own confidence as the person they were supporting also developed theirs. Tom made specific reference to his own development alongside that of the person that he is there to support;

"There's a lot. But really it is the confidence building for myself and Daniel it is the, basically, what the word. Basically it's been the thing, dare to dream, think why not."

Tom, Support Worker

**LIBRARY JIGSAWS (4)**

Tricia  
Diane  
Dad  
gran  
NICKOL  
shawn  
AS  
wheri  
DORON  
NICOLA  
ENTERTAINMENT  
friends

**WHO AM I ?**

- ADULT
- CARING **HELPFUL**
- FRIENDLY
- POLITE.
- BROTHER
- LOOK SMART

**INTEREST, HOBBIES & PASSIONS**

- VIDEO GAMES
- FILMS
- IPAD
- DVD's
- TELEVISION

**SKILLS, TALENTS & RESOURCES**

- I AM GOOD WITH TECHNOLOGY.
- COLLEGE (Finished) Prospects (JUNE 2016)
- PLAYING VIDEO GAMES

**MY GIFTS**

- HELPING PEOPLE
- GETTING ALONG WITH PEOPLE

**ME**

Medicine WORK

MAN UTD

PS4

NETFLIX

IPAD

## **What challenges did the Wee Enterprizers face?**

### **Early Stages**

Initially some of the Wee Enterprizers were apprehensive about being involved in the project, especially within the Motherwell group. The first event in Motherwell proved too much for some individuals and they ended up leaving early as a result, this was observed by both support workers and stakeholders. The numbers reduced after this first meeting yet a core of five people continued to return to the meetings. The challenge in this case was for them to overcome the fear of being involved in a group with strangers. With help from project leaders and support workers, people were able to overcome this initial apprehension through group activities and discussion about each other's interests and ideas. The support workers themselves commented on how they felt at the beginning of this project too:

*"I must admit to begin with it feels like a big big...it is a big thing...but you know it feels daunting."*

**Tom, Support Worker**

### **Timescales and deadlines**

Timescale was another challenge faced, particularly by those involved in the Glasgow group. Although they began with clearer business ideas they felt some level of pressure to meet the deadlines of decisions about the equipment they needed to purchase. This was partly attributed to the level of support that Wee Enterprizers were able to access in between the meetings to be able to research the necessary equipment. One Wee Enterprizer and their support worker discussed the limits to the progress that could be made when their support hour contact time was limited.

*"I think what has had a lot of impact as well is the amount of support hours he gets per week so the amount of support hours he gets per week determines how often or how long he works on it so for example I'm with Stuart 12 hours per week and with that he's got other things that he'll prioritise within that week"*

**Ash, Support Worker**

There was some concern from the representative of the support organisation in Glasgow that this had meant that the group had not bonded in the same way as the previous Wee Enterprizer group had.

*"The first group spent a long time meeting together...So I think they definitely had a sort of group identity...I don't think this current group (have one) and I think it's because of how quickly they have had to do things. I don't think that they really feel a kind of group connection, a group dynamic."*

**Lucy, Stakeholder**

Mid-way through the project in Motherwell a meeting with the support workers was organised. The meeting was facilitated by SCIF and a manager at SOL and was designed to help the support workers understand some of the rationale for the Wee Enterprizers project. The group (including support workers and Wee Enterprizers) discussed the importance of 'inclusion' and the role that employment plays in all aspects of inclusion; choosing, contributing, belonging, being someone, and sharing ordinary places. In reviewing the progress of the group the two key impacts that were highlighted were confidence and trust.

The meeting also offered a chance to discuss the progress so far and the support workers were given a short questionnaire to complete (anonymously). They were asked to consider the following questions:

1. What have you learned from Wee Enterprizers?
2. What have been the challenges for you in supporting the development of a business idea?
3. What would you do differently next time you are supporting a person who is developing a business idea?
4. What training would help you support a Wee Enterprizer?

Reflecting on these questions with the support workers was an aspect of the project that builds on the previous experience from the Wee Enterprizer project. In the previous evaluation, a key challenge that was identified was the need to empower support workers and social care organisations involved in this innovative approach. Responses to the above questions show that this remains an important area for development that highlights some of the limitations of the ways that social care is delivered and the need to balance time spent on basic support needs and that which is spent on working on Wee Enterprizer's business plans. This links back to some of the challenges faced by the Glasgow group. The following answer from the above questions illustrate this clearly:

*'The main challenges have been timing as we have limited time and shifts to spend developing the business ideas with the Wee Enterprizers.'*

When asked what they would do differently next time another support worker responded:

*'I would arrange a schedule to fit in time for the business ideas weekly'*

As the Wee Enterprizers groups continue, or even expand, it will be vital to gather input from potential participants and support workers in order to design a programme that accounts for the support schedule of those involved and encourages ways to facilitate development between meetings and trainings. This may include a series of training, or discussions with support workers and Wee Enterprizers of how best they can develop skills and support one another as they move forward with the business plans.



### **What happens next?**

In the Motherwell group there is a lot of enthusiasm following the successful pilot event which attracted 67 people. There is also significant buy-in from the support workers and practice manager at SOL who said the following when asked 'what next for the project?':

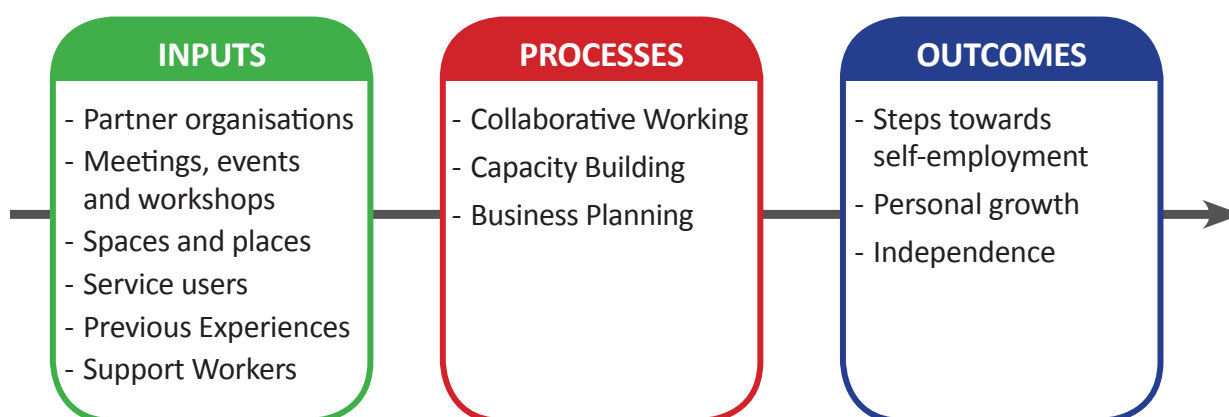
*"We want Wee Enterprizers to leave a legacy in the organisation; we want to support, hopefully, the Wee Enterprizers doing that going forward"*

***Sarah, Stakeholder***

SOL are in the process of seeking further funding for the project but hope that eventually it will be self-sustaining, with the potential for the current Enterprizers to become the facilitators for future groups.

Whilst there is available support and potential for the Glasgow group to remain meeting, it is not clear whether there is the will within the group. Given the non-prescriptive nature of the Wee Enterprizers approach, the group members will be left to make the decision of whether there is value in the continued group meetings. This group have decided to communicate using existing personal Facebook accounts. Despite lack of clarity regarding the group as a whole, there are definite plans for the individual business. Two of the Enterprizers have piloted their businesses whilst another is beginning to establish a client base and exploring potential for running his own pilot.

### **Developing the process model**



The process model above illustrates the key aspects of the Wee Enterprizers project that began in 2014. It highlights the wide range of inputs that were required in the very early stages of the project that emerged from training delivered by the Social Enterprise Academy. The project was supported by a working group made up of representatives from Key Community Supports, Community Lifestyles, C-Change, Deafblind Scotland and Capability Scotland. The processes cover not only what happened within the regular meeting and training for the Wee Enterprizers but also the wider working group.

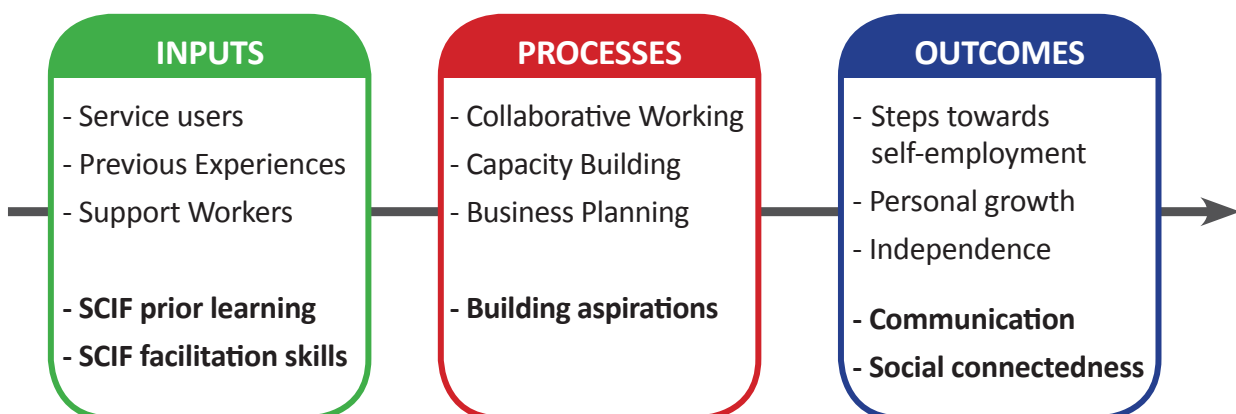
This project has differed in the inputs as many of the key underpinnings were already in place and so many of the meetings, events and workshops that were part of the first Wee Enterprizers project were not required. Instead, the project built on the learning and processes established in the first project in the content of the training sessions, including a focus on the practical aspects of business planning and the importance of capacity building.

The significant process of building aspiration was highlighted in this project due to the starting point of the Motherwell group who required support to see the potential for business and skills development. This was in contrast with their usual support services in which they are considered dependent recipients, defined by what they cannot do, rather than what they can. Although this was most explicit in the Motherwell group, the comments from the stakeholder in Glasgow emphasise the point that the underlying ethos of the Wee Enterprizers approach is innovative and much needed within the health and social care sector:

*“Even the idea of somebody with a learning disability having a business is totally alien to people. So a lot of my frustrations with the support that I see being offered, not just by our organisation but across the board, is that we very much...we don’t support people to do things for themselves, we very much care for people and do things for people which sort of keeps them reliant on us a little bit.”*

**Lucy, Stakeholder**

In the original model, the outcomes were framed in terms of steps towards self-employment, personal growth and independence. Exploring some of these concepts further highlighted the role of communication within the idea of personal growth, which was initially understood as a growth in confidence. In both groups improvements in confidence was related to the ability to communicate better. However, it was also attributed to the content and format of the training sessions, which opened Wee Enterprizers eyes to new experiences, vocabulary and strategies for communication, which are invaluable beyond the group setting.





This word cloud is a visual representation of the most common words mentioned by the Wee Enterprizers in the interviews. These interviews were transcribed and then analysed to identify the top 25 words across both the Motherwell and Glasgow group. The larger words signify that they were used more often and by more people. Visualising the interviews in this way represents the key aspects of the project which aligns with the views of both the stakeholders and support workers provided throughout this report. Communication comes through as the most often mentioned aspect by the Wee Enterprizers as a key part of developing their social networks. Communication also facilitates the development of confidence and independence for the Wee Enterprizers as it allows them to express their ideas as well as support others.

Acknowledgements

