



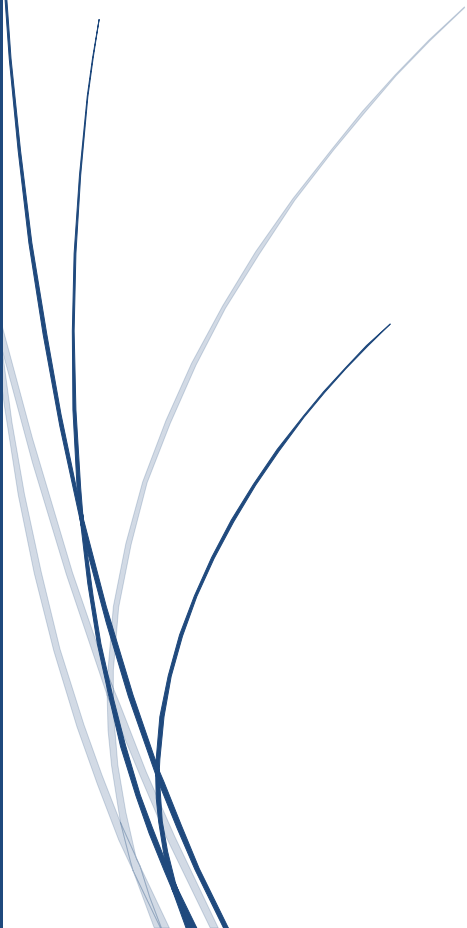
People
together
are stronger

community empowerment

Resilience

About Us

Community Empowerment Ltd



‘ABOUT US’

Community Empowerment Ltd

-A Democratic Charitable Society for the benefit of the Community’

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‘ABOUT US’

Community Empowerment Ltd

-A Democratic Charitable Society for the benefit of the Community’

Legal Structure

Community Empowerment Ltd is an industrial and Provident Society (Community Benefit Society) registered with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) – previously the Financial Services Authority (FSA).

Registration Number 28936R (Industrial and Provident Societies Act 1965).

We were formed on 2nd July 1999 as CDA South-East Hants and Wight Limited.

Our change of name was registered on 9th October 2009.

Charity Registration

Community Empowerment Ltd is an EXEMPT charity granted charitable status by H.M.R.C. Reg. No.: XT18774. We were registered as a charity on 20th October 2009.

Charity Governance & Regulation

As a Community Benefit Society accountable to its members and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority, the charity is exempt from registration with the Charity Commission. The Charity Commission cannot register or regulate Community Benefit Society Charities because the role of the charity Commission is to regulate ‘private’ charities and those formed under other legislation where there is NOT already an appropriate regulator. Charities are not permitted to have two regulators.

Nevertheless, the FCA and HMRC do require the charity to abide by Charity Commission Guidelines.

Membership and Governance

Membership of the society is open to users and supporters of our services. Membership requires the purchase of a single £1 (one pound) none-withdrawable, none-transferable, share in the society and then the payment of a £1 monthly membership fee. Payment is normally via PayPal which means that you can cancel at any time. The monthly membership fee meets the cost of our basic operation and

enables us to then apply grants and donations for specific projects as well as serving to keep the membership register up to date. To join visit - www.empower.coop/membership.html

The Board is elected by and from the membership. The board is responsible for the strategic direction of the Society but they may delegate the day to day operational decisions to the CEO.

The CEO is appointed and removed by the board. The CEO is not a director and is answerable to, not a member, of the Board. The Board may however instruct the CEO to act on its behalf in representing the Society in its function as a corporate member of other bodies. In these circumstances the CEO may act on behalf of the Society as a Corporate Director of those other bodies.

The Board may delegate day-to-day financial operations to a Finance Director.

Insurances and Licenses

The Society holds a Certificate of registration for Money Laundering Regulations for the purpose of Company Formation. The M.L.R. registration number is 12368627.

The Society holds Public and Employers Liability Insurance in the sums of:

Employers Liability (which includes volunteers) £10.000.000-00 (ten million pounds)

Public/Products Liability £5.000.000-00 (five million pounds)

The Society also holds Professional Indemnity Insurance in the sum of 1.000.000-00 (one million pounds) plus defence costs.

Statement of Purpose

The Common Purpose of the Society is 'The empowerment of communities through mutual self help'. This means people working together to improve matters for themselves and others. The emphasis is therefore upon the 'shared good' (shared benefits) and community benefit is held greater than the benefit to any individual. This is 'people doing it for themselves' working together and co-operating in order to meet common needs and solve common problems.

We therefore place a high importance upon promoting co-operation both in behavioural terms and in organizational structures.

We support both community social and community economic development including promoting, forming and supporting Co-operatives, Social Enterprises and community enterprises.

Charitable Purposes

We seek to support the creation and retention of employment, to reduce poverty and to empower communities. To these ends we support co-operation and mutual-self-help for both community economic and social development

In line with our common purpose, we encourage the application of co-operative solutions, conflict regulation, mutual self-help, and the creation of Co-operative organizations.

We develop Co-operatives using Co-operative & Community Benefit Society legislation, Company legislation and Co-operative Community Interest Companies (CICs). We do not promote or support enterprises that are created primarily for private profit nor for the creation of private wealth beyond the limitation outlined in Charity Commission Guidelines. We do support enterprises where there is a clear identifiable community benefit that outweighs any benefit to the individual. That does not mean that there cannot be benefit to individuals within the common benefits or that individuals cannot be rewarded for their work.

Volunteers

Our volunteers can be classified into the following groupings.

- 1. Board of Directors** (Management Committee).
The Board consists of voluntary Directors elected by and from the members of the Charitable Society.
- 2. Day to day management**
This is carried out by the CEO and Deputy CEOs, Development Managers and Finance Director and other appointees under the strategic direction of the Board. These 'officers' are long-term volunteers and often consist of professionals that have retired or semi-retired.
- 3. 'Other' long term volunteers**
These task specific (or project specific) volunteers are an important source of support for our project development. They are volunteers that have committed a day or more per week to manage specific projects. They may be based at our premises or elsewhere. They often consist of retired people, people seeking to return to the 'jobs market' at a future point in time, or students.
- 4. Short term volunteers** are mainly drawn from our 'Community routes into employment' and 'Co-operate into employment' projects. They mainly consist of unemployed persons seeking work experience in order to improve their CVs and employability. We have an excellent success rate in assisting these types of volunteers and there are mutual benefits from these activities. These volunteers are usually with us for 8 or 12 weeks (unless they find employment during the period). They are a useful source of support for our day to day operations.

We also from time to time, accept shorter term (average 4 weeks) placements of volunteers from EU programmes.

Code of Professional Practice for Community Empowerment Ltd

Co-operative values and principles are central to the ethical and professional standards adhered to by Community Empowerment Ltd. These values and principles, enshrined in the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) Statement on Co-operative identity, inform how Community Empowerment Ltd and its practitioners should provide support to their clients.

Ethical values

Community Empowerment Ltd and its practitioners will conduct themselves in accordance with the co-operative values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, solidarity, honesty and openness, social and environmental responsibility, promoting sustainability and caring for others in all dealings with its clients.

The creation and the retention of ethical employment and support for community empowerment through mutual-self-help, including the development of trading and non-trading co-operative structures are central to our values.

Serving the Client

Maintaining the autonomy and independence of clients is paramount to the service given by Community Empowerment Ltd. All practitioners will continuously strive to act in a completely objective manner, distinguishing between factual evidence and personal opinion in order to act honestly and in the best and proper interests of the client and any other relevant parties to the relationship. The interests of the client group will stand above the interests of any related parties, such as funders or commissioners of the support service.

Transparency and Confidentiality

Practitioners of Community Empowerment Ltd will encourage all clients to be open and transparent about their activities as an expression of their concern for community, education, and the key feature of co-operation among co-operatives. This will be balanced by respecting the commercial confidentiality of clients, by not divulging information which may threaten their autonomy and independence.

Professional service standards

Community Empowerment Ltd and its practitioners will establish mutual work agreements with clients, respond as promptly as possible to all client communications, keep records of all meetings, ensure clients are aware of the procedure for handling client complaints, and inform clients of all of these professional service standards, whilst regularly reviewing these standards to maintain effectiveness. To aid this process where possible, clients will be asked to provide feedback on the service provided and to allow practitioners to discuss client case work with other practitioners, purely on a confidential basis.

Professional development

Community Empowerment Ltd will invest in the personal professional development of their practitioners and maintain professional networks for the benefit of its clients. They will work with other practitioners to develop a shared understanding of professional competencies and ethical standards when providing support to clients.

They will also share best ideas and practice in co-operation, and promote co-operation among co-operatives, whilst simultaneously always respecting client confidentiality and respecting the judgement of their peers.

Conflicts of interest

Practitioners are encouraged to develop their professional competencies by being directly employed by co-operatives as managers, and to serve on governing boards. In return, practitioners must declare any potential conflict of interest, or seek instant clarification in cases of doubt, when securing funding for client work or seeking employment by a co-operative.

Equality and Discrimination

All practitioners will respect the diversity in the social and cultural aspirations of co-operatives and all clients they serve, whilst maintaining their own independence and autonomy.

Equity

It is recognised that clients approach Community Empowerment for support at different stages of development. When working with clients practitioners will take account of the level of development that the client has reached and the further development that the client is seeking.

A realistic appraisal of the potential type and degree of support will be provided so as not to raise unrealistic expectations.

When appropriate clients will be provided with templates in order to record their plans, track their development and to benchmark progress and further needs.

The practitioner and the client will be asked to record the value that has been added to the client's development resulting from the support.

Mutual-Self-Help

Community Empowerment seeks to further the practice of co-operation as well as the development of Co-operatives and Social Enterprises. In line with Charity Commission guidelines, support given to an individual related to the creation of enterprises is strictly limited. Support to individuals is directed towards the common good. We encourage and seek to enable development through mutual-self-help. This means people and their enterprises working together to collectively meet their common needs and aspirations.

In so far as is practical and appropriate, we will not carry out tasks for clients but will instead train and support them to carry out the tasks for themselves.

Projects

Projects are our main source of 'earned' income. We 'trade' in line with our charitable objectives including offering consultancy services for other support organisations, existing and developing social enterprises and registration services for appropriate corporate structures under Company, Charity or Society legislation.

In addition to the above 'core' trading activity, Community Empowerment Ltd undertake a wide range of projects mostly in co-operation with other support organisations. Most of our projects are in London, Sussex, Hampshire or Dorset. We have shared Training Facilities in London and Southampton. We are seeking facilities in the Portsmouth area.

Together with Social Enterprise Link (Wessex) CIC and an Action Group, we manage the Solent Social Enterprise Zone on behalf of Social Enterprise UK. We are also approved delivery partners for "The Hive" Co-operative Support Programme on behalf of Co-operatives UK.

We are keen to support community economic development and mutual-self-help including the development of Co-operatives and also potential consortia to increase the involvement of social enterprises. We encourage larger social enterprises as well as others to include smaller social enterprises in their supply chains and tender applications in order to assist the growth of the sector.

Infrastructure & Support

Community, Co-operative and Social Enterprises are not voluntary organisations.

Social Enterprises are trading enterprises. They require to generate profit in order to survive, they should not be grant dependent. **They therefore require commercial support from their infrastructure organisations.**

After reinvesting in the development needs of the enterprise, Community Interest Companies (CICs) use surplus profit for the benefit of their communities in ways set out in their CIC registration documents. Like Charities, they have an 'asset lock' to protect those assets from inappropriate distribution. Co-operatives however do distribute surplus profit to their members, in an equitable manner related to the member's contribution to the success of the venture. They may also offer community benefits approved by their members..

The appropriate infrastructure support organisation for social enterprises within the Wessex Region is Social Enterprise Link (Wessex) CIC, of which Community Empowerment Ltd is both a Corporate Member and Consultancy.

For information about joining this infrastructure organisation and working in co-operation with other Social Enterprises, visit www.socialenterpriselink.co.uk

Social Enterprise support needs include choosing the most appropriate governance model (one size does not fit all), business planning, and an understanding of regulatory and legislation differences from other enterprise types.

For specialist support use our contact form via our website www.empower.coop