



# NOMS CFO SOCIAL ENTERPRISE PROGRAMME



BIS Social Enterprise Day

## NOMS CFO Social Enterprise pilot programme reviewed

In June NOMS CFO commissioned The Connectives (a social impact consultancy Social Enterprise (SE)) to produce a report on aspects of the NOMS CFO Social Enterprise programme. An event was held in Brixton, Lambeth where several of the grant funded social enterprise representatives came together to discuss their engagement with the SE programme. Their thoughts were captured in a concise document that produced several recommendations for NOMS CFO to consider in their future development of the Social Enterprise programme.

The event was hosted at the Lambeth Accord, which is a social enterprise venue, where Lambeth artists can showcase their work at a dedicated gallery.

### Recommendation 1

If the goal of NOMS was to see a richer supply chain emerge that could be commission ready then social entrepreneurs would need to come to the fore and be the ones who challenge each other to deliver more. NOMS could enable robust and resilient options to emerge by funding such an initiative and should it run another similar programme we would recommend that an evaluative process is embedded throughout.

To support this thinking we would recommend the next programme:

- a. starts with a kick start event undertakes a strategic mapping exercise that identifies thematic or regional gaps; establishes action learning sets to build peer to peer review
- b. sources a research partner that can inject findings from academia into the practitioner world and where practitioners can provide data about what's happening in the field.

This presented a satisfying backdrop to the serious events on the day where SE projects were encouraged to articulate the highs and lows of their projects and how these interfaced with Offenders and the Criminal Justice System environment.

The report produced by The Connectives and is available to read on the co-financing website [www.co-financing.org](http://www.co-financing.org)

A detailed response to the conclusions and recommendations has been developed by NOMS CFO and is also available on the [CFO website](#). Extracts from the response are presented below.

### NOMS CFO Response - Recommendation 1

- a. A significant part of the NOMS CFO market engagement plan has been codified by the commitment that NOMS CFO have had in the Social Enterprise arena. NOMS CFO have funded some Social Enterprise infrastructure organisations such as Social Firms UK and Social Enterprise West Midlands to organise and participate in stakeholder engagement exercises across the UK either directly or through other SE infrastructure organisations. This has included the VCS sector in parts with the aim to understand better ways in which the SE and VCS sector can compete in a fair market. This is integral to the reduction of re-offending revolution as outlined by the Secretary of State. Within this remit NOMS CFO are creating special policy groups within NOMS to consider the manner in which the NOMS CFO/ESF innovation pilot learning can be best disseminated throughout NOMS.

As a result of some of the lessons already learnt and feedback from the regional engagement, NOMS CFO had started a consortia building procurement programme which encouraged SME social businesses to create consortia to enable them to compete at scale with larger organisations. The results from this will be identified and shared during 2013.

- b. As part of the Consortia Building procurement exercise NOMS CFO procured additional assistance for the consortia bidders by offering specific thematic support which was delivered by 4 independent providers. This support was provided to all the bidders (45) who successfully completed the first round of evaluation. This programme was designed to support the enrichment of the supply chain of social enterprises that work with the Criminal Justice System for mainstream NOMS and NOMS CFO.



## Consortia News

The NOMS CFO consortia building commissioning process had been progressing to timetable but unfortunately the announcement of the consortia programme winners which should have taken place mid-December has had to be delayed.

This is due to a recent audit which was conducted by the European Commission in relation to the Managing Authority's administration of Technical Assistance (TA) funds to all Co-financing organisations (CFO's). The Commission has raised points of clarification with the Managing Authority which needed to be resolved prior to any further TA activity progressing by CFO's.

Once the Pause is lifted and the issues resolved, this will allow NOMS CFO to announce the Consortia winners.

After the bidders have been notified there will be a dedicated newsletter with details of the results and further information on the projects, including their areas of production and expertise and information on how SEs can get involved and support the programme further.

Please note that this point of clarification applies to all Co-Financing Organisations not just NOMS CFO. Further information on co-financing organisations can be found at: <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/esf/resources/co%2Dfinancing%2Dorganisations/>

More <sup>than</sup> the Sum

## Social Enterprise policy group news

NOMS CFO have been further developing their SE approach over the past few months. These have included some significant and positive changes as to how engagement is to be structured in the future. As a response to the recent announcements from the MoJ with regard to private prisons and the Probation Service NOMS has decided that a cross departmental policy group be created to look at the social enterprise and the Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) activity across the service, ensuring that all departments have a consistent, innovative, co-ordinated and effective approach to developing SE engagement and activity.

NOMS CFO, Business Development, Offender Services Co-Commissioning, Custodial Services Commissioning and Community Commissioning Groups will all be represented at the policy meeting which will look to harmonise SE engagement, deliver learning outcomes from the PBR, consortia and other pilot initiatives. It is also envisaged that the policy group will be able to unravel the misunderstandings that SEs may have had with how different parts of NOMS individually engage with the sector. Navigating NOMS can be extremely difficult for SEs as the additional ESF regulations and support offered by NOMS CFO can in some instances seem distinct, but cause interface difficulties with mainstream NOMS. These difficulties can then be compounded when opportunities for procurement/commissioning for mainstream NOMS are enacted. In the developing market places these differences can be profound and cause different expectations.

The emerging policy group is designed to have access to the right levers to be able to untangle the perceived regulation that prevents advancement of the Social Enterprise initiatives from permeating mainstream NOMS delivery and assist in its objective of reducing recidivism.

All positive outcomes from the group will be presented in the forthcoming newsletters to the SE arena.

# Social Enterprises Prime Cuts

(This is the first in a series of reports written by the Prime Providers re their Social Enterprise engagement in their area.)

Ben Humphris the Social Enterprise Development Officer for the REACH Project - 'Regional Employ-Ability CHallenge' is working to enable jobless offenders to find employment. REACH Programme are part of the Leicestershire & Rutland Probation Trust (LRPT) delivery arm.

## Ethos Bicycles – reinventing the wheel at HMP Stocken

In keeping with the theme of Great Britain's glorious year of competitive cycling what with Bradley Wiggins' historic Tour de France victory, sports personality of the year award and GB's track team conquering the world at the Olympic velodrome we have an exciting bike related social enterprise to report on.



The REACH programme in the East Midlands part of the NOMS CFO ESF funded Prime provider programme Leicestershire & Rutland Probation Trust has been working with a new social enterprise called Ethos Cycles. Ethos is the brainchild of Adam Townsend, a serial social entrepreneur and social enterprise advisor based in Derbyshire. Adam wanted to set up an environmentally friendly enterprise that would deliver social value by providing opportunities for people at a disadvantage in the labour market. Adam soon hit on the idea of recycling bicycles as a potential business that could deliver both environmental impact and opportunities for training that could lead to jobs in the burgeoning cycling industry. Sourcing the highest quality unwanted bikes Adam would strip them bare, powder coat the frames, replace the worn parts with high quality new ones and then ice the cake with decals to create an entirely new brand – Ethos Cycles. Having completed his first test bike and with thirty frames awaiting the Ethos treatment Adam sought partners that could help him grow the business and maximise its social returns and that's when REACH got involved.

A chance meeting with REACH's social enterprise development officer sent Ethos down a new avenue. Knowing that HMP Stocken had already established a bike workshop REACH brought Adam together with key staff at the prison to see what they might accomplish by working together. Within a few short weeks we had arranged for the prison to take delivery of ten old bikes where they would be stripped down ready for powder coating. Once coated the frames were returned to the prison where the inmates in the bike workshop began to reassemble them to a very high standard using new parts. Previously the prison had been renovating a small number of old bikes to be donated to charity, and while this worked well both the prison and REACH believed there was potential to do a whole lot more. With the arrival of the Ethos operation at HMP Stocken we are now working towards the production of 20 Ethos bikes per week. This will provide 20 prisoners with a full week of engaging and rewarding work as well as level 1&2 City & Guilds qualifications

Its early days for Ethos Cycles but Adam, REACH and HMP Stocken are working together to find new routes to market for Ethos bikes but also, and equally importantly, routes into employment for inmates upon release. The UK cycling market is expanding rapidly and with it the demand for fully qualified and experienced bike mechanics, either self employed or working within an existing business. REACH, Ethos and HMP Stocken are adamant that, together, we can provide real opportunities for ex-offenders to access these jobs. The way that Ethos, REACH and HMP Stocken are working together is a great example of what can be achieved when complimentary partners work in their own ways, playing to their own strengths towards a common aim.

**Ben Humphris**  
**Social Enterprise Development Officer: REACH**

## BIS SE day and the Business Innovation and Skills Minister Vince Cable

On 15th November the NOMS CFO Social Enterprise team attended the Social Enterprise Day event held at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). The event was part of Global Entrepreneurship Week. The day was hosted by Social Enterprise UK, CEO Peter Holbrook with the Business Minister Vince Cable attending.

Many social enterprises were able to showcase their activities in an environment that mixed social entrepreneurs, government departments, social enterprises and those who were genuinely interested in encouraging businesses that operate for a social purpose. The National Offender Management Service were lauded as a leading government department in social enterprise innovation. NOMS has encouraged SEs that engage with offenders to take up opportunities within the commissioning and funding market and assist them as they attempt to break down some of the traditional barriers that prevent SEs from competing in procurement opportunities.

Several workshops were held on the day including a session on Social Enterprise Skills and Employment. This discussed the contribution that social enterprises play in creating a skilled and employable workforce. What BIS and other departments could do to support social enterprises unique offering and how they could have a greater impact as part of the "The Government's vision to improve the skills of the workforce, the performance of the economy and engagement in learning."

During the day the opportunity was given to ask the Business Minister questions on how the coalition government were going to encourage social enterprises to thrive and grow in the future; how they intend to support innovation and provide opportunities for the sector to achieve economic growth.

The day concluded with excellent opportunities for effective networking and prospecting to bridge gaps between government departments and the SE market.



## Active Inclusion to Mainstreaming (AIM) project

NOMS CFO social enterprise programme have been supporting the AIM project – Research into the enterprise journey.

Business and Enterprise Support are a social enterprise from the West Midlands who have been doing innovative work with offenders since 1986. They are looking to build their knowledge base around enterprise, both social and business in the CJS and have contacted the NOMS CFO social enterprise programme team to help them with this important piece of research into the viability of self employment as a significant first option for offenders.

The hope is that the research will not only be a valuable piece of work and help the policy makers look at alternative methods to reducing recidivism but will also provide scope for creating new social entrepreneurs through the CJS system, thus supporting the recovery of the economy and providing economic solutions to a social problem.

Active Inclusion to Mainstreaming (AIM) are looking to test enterprise pathways and approaches to mainstream convergence of offenders into lawful enterprise.

NOMS CFO hopes that the results from the research will be shared in early 2013 and this will be coupled with NOMS CFO programmes supporting both offender self employment and dedicated offender led employment agency such as The Small Business Consultancy, Ubique and St Giles Trust.

