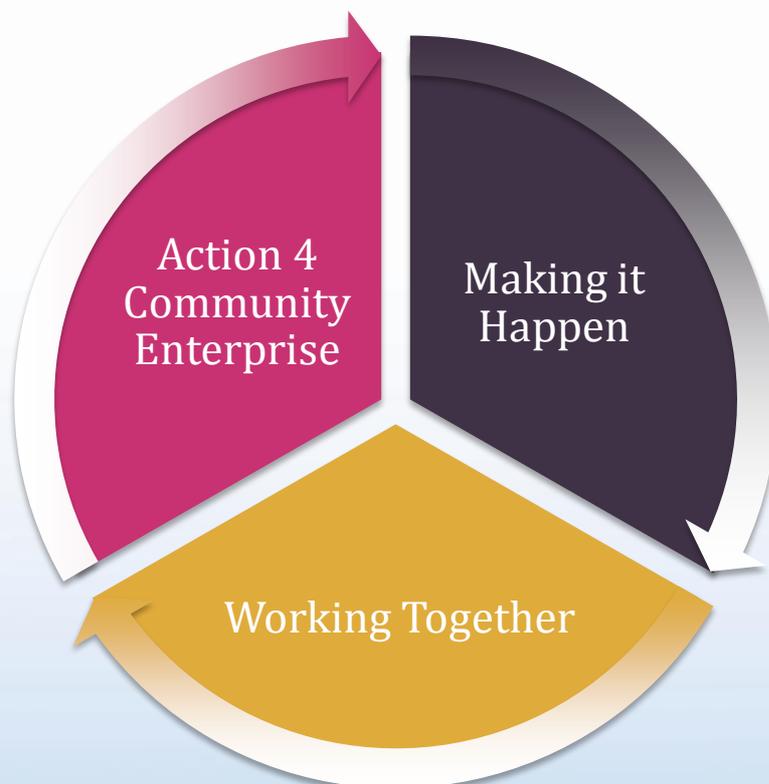


Enterprising Communities Programme

Funding cuts mean that communities will need to quickly learn and apply enterprise skills relevant to solving local problems. This programme is designed to train community leaders, groups and activists to exploit the opportunities that arise from emerging government policy and deliver community benefit. It focuses on the importance of working together within the context of social justice.

The programme provides a package of training and support to equip community groups and others with the means to develop their ideas and translate these to enterprising solutions. The programme has been developed by EASI4communities and will be delivered through its growing network of associates and volunteers so that training and support can be tailored to the needs of each individual community and group.

Course delegates will be able to explore in depth the key technical and people skills required to help them turn their idea into enterprise. The training, focused on enabling people to help themselves, will be of value to any group or individual considering enterprise including community groups, residents associations, parish and town councils, community forums, students and schools to name but a few.



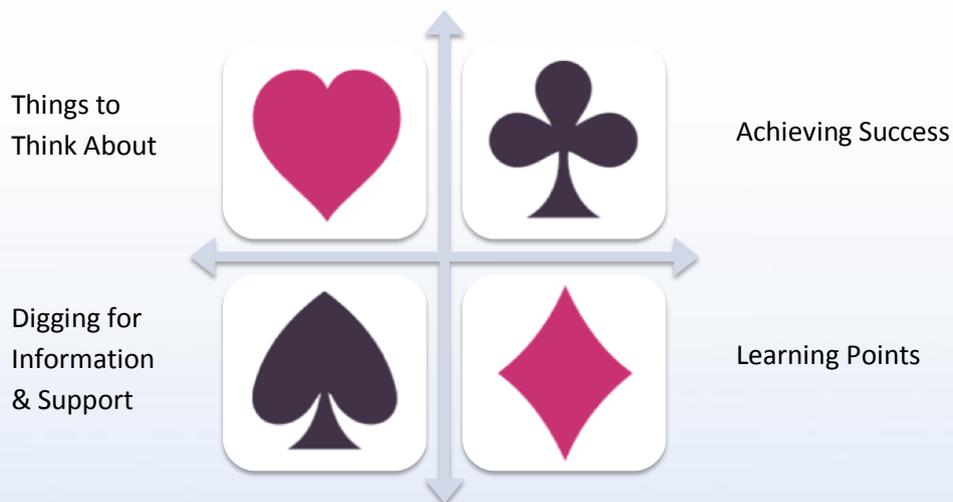
The programme consists of three integrated elements, as illustrated, which can be used in any combination. We recommend that delegates first learn the basics through 'Action 4 Community Enterprise' and progress to 'Making it Happen' before moving onto 'Working Together'.

Enterprising Communities: Action 4 Community Enterprise

Action 4 Community Enterprise provides an overview of the key personal and technical components to be considered in the start-up process underpinning community/ social enterprise.

Thirteen themes to support successful enterprise and leadership are considered through the use of a board game and cards, prompting discussion and raising awareness of matters to be mindful of – both the personal considerations such as confidence, trust, social justice, and local support, and a range of technical considerations linked to running a successful community enterprise. The cards allow people to look into the fundamentals of community enterprise, in whatever depth they choose, in their own time and aim to equip people with the skills needed to cope with the 'technical bits'.

The product is a low cost, high value training aid using the four suits of a traditional pack of cards to explore the following areas:



The game takes about 90 minutes to play and engages all members of the group equally by dealing a hand of cards to each player. Key enterprise considerations relating to each theme are captured on all Heart cards, with the corresponding Clubs, Spades and Diamonds prompting more food for thought. As cards are placed in sequence around the board, the group discusses the two or three key points on each Heart card, supported by corresponding cards from the three remaining suits.



The cards are accompanied by a short guide explaining how to play the game and translate the outcomes into a plan for action. Groups can learn at their own pace without the involvement of EASI trainers if cost is a barrier to learning whilst retaining quality information and guidance. A set of notes describes the points made on each card in more detail and the questions your group needs to answer before proceeding. Groups can, of course, revisit discussions and travel round the board any number of times to refine their thinking.

The game is designed to distinguish between fact and fiction in the practical application of ideas, through a process of discussion and reflection. More ambitious plans may need the increased detail and support offered in 'Making It Happen'.

The game is underpinned by detailed enterprise research into all thirteen themes, backed with appropriate references and independently quality assured.

Cost: 'Action 4 Community Enterprise' will be affordable to all groups and will be made available at cost. The board is made of laminated paper in order to keep costs down and make the game affordable and accessible.

Some groups will find 'ACE' sufficient to form a plan for action. Others may find they need more detail, depth and support from the training offered within 'Making it Happen'.

Enterprising Communities: 'Making It Happen'

'Making it Happen' training and facilitation builds on the 'Action 4 Community Enterprise' and explores in more detail the personal and technical elements of community enterprise covered in the pack of cards. This three-hour session provides groups and individuals with a more detailed level of understanding of community enterprise, thus building the foundations for more effective local leadership.

The training is designed for groups and organisations looking for independent facilitation and additional guidance, tailored to meet the specific needs of groups. The 'Making it Happen' training can be adapted to focus on any area of community and social enterprise, without the need for prior experience and knowledge provided through playing 'Action 4 Community Enterprise' beforehand, although the products are complimentary.

The facilitation and training session is focused around the board game that supports the use of the pack of 52 'enterprise cards'. Detailed checkpoint information around the board links the game to key learning and discussion points.



The EASI facilitator will guide the discussion and support the process of clarifying options to develop a coherent plan. The facilitator will draft a short plan based on decisions made during the session. The plan can either be progressed independently, via a third party or through a continuing relationship with EASI4communities and our implementation service. The draft plan remains in the ownership of the client. Specific issues focused on collaboration can be addressed through our 'Working Together' element of the programme.

Where the session is for general training purposes and no specific idea exists, EASI4communities will provide a suitable scenario.

The session can be provided to groups, associations, individuals, parish and town councils, schools and other learning institutions along with the private and business sector, in fact anyone who'd like to know more about starting up a community or social enterprise!

Cost: £200

The short, draft plan included in the above price will be no more than a structured summary of the points recorded during the session. This is to keep costs low. The value of "Making it Happen" is the depth of the issues identified through facilitated discussion and their conversion to a coherent plan.

Enterprising Communities: 'Working Together'

'Working Together' is a key card in the 'Action 4 Community Enterprise' game as the success of many community projects usually depends on bringing the right people together, both those within the immediate vicinity and others beyond local boundaries that are able to help.

This training has been developed to help people in communities organise themselves to take action. In particular, it aims to show them how to find professional and business support within their own communities to progress community enterprise. The training explains the 'why' and 'how' of working together and focuses on networking and partnership in particular.

'Working Together' is designed as two sessions that can be purchased together or separately. The first session looks at working within the community and the second at finding help outside the community (and helping others outside your community).

Working Within Community takes community groups beyond what they will learn in 'Making it Happen'. It focuses on the skills that community leaders need in order for the community to identify what it wants and needs to succeed in implementing change. The success of any organisation depends on how well its members work together. We look at what builds trust and how it can be rebuilt when confidence has fallen away. The same basic skills of working together in an organisation also apply to working with those outside it. We will consider how individualistic values have undermined community and working together. The draft plan from 'Making it Happen' can be considered in more detail.



The session concludes with the importance and value of building an informal network of support in and between community groups and activists, and those living in or close to a community that have professional and business experience to volunteer to a community project or enterprise. We also explore how to build a stronger network to tap social capital within neighbourhoods. Learning will strengthen skills in networking and the means to manage and navigate challenging relationships.

Working Outside the Community takes community groups beyond what they will learn in 'Making it Happen'. Whilst many community projects can run on their own, resources for change may be needed from beyond the reach of the local community. This might include legal consents to initiate change, and rules that must be adhered to. EASI4communities will provide a checklist of these and signpost to where help can be found. The detailed checklist can be used to improve the draft plan from 'Making it Happen'.

Whilst 'Working Within Community' includes looking at networking inside the community, there will be a need to network outside the community even if this is only to learn from others' mistakes. We will explore existing networks with you, what you might bring to them and how they might help you. This part also explores where to find affordable and trusted help outside the community.

Some external help will need formal agreement that will commit the community. This is where financial and other risks can get out of control. We explain how external help should be chosen with care. Some of this is about communication, both verbal and in writing.

A handout provides a checklist for successful partnerships. A fictional scenario illustrates how it can be used. Training is completed by reviewing how the learning might affect your plans.

Each session lasts for 90 minutes and can be run consecutively.

As with the 'Making it Happen' training, we can adapt the training and facilitation to focus on any areas of community and social enterprise in general terms. Some clients may need more support than this. If this is so, then 'Working Together' can be supplemented, possibly at additional cost, to meet your specific requirements. This can be done at the same time as 'Working Together' or afterwards, or both.

Cost: Each session costs £150 per group, or £250 if both sessions are run consecutively. Maximum number in a group is eight.

All three training products will be developed and piloted with community groups before their launch in March 2012. The training products may change as a result of feedback from those involved in the initial pilots. Continuous improvement gleaned from practical use of the products will ensure the continued relevance of the programme and client feedback will be collected during and after activities to inform evaluation and further development.

