



Case Study: Always Wanted To CIC

Catherine, a Whitefield-based musician, has spent many years performing, teaching piano, and working as a classroom music teacher. In 2024, she launched a community arts initiative called Always Wanted To, with the aim of offering inclusive group drumming and singing sessions for adults in the local area.

Inspired by conversations with older people who said they had “always wanted to” play music in a group but never had the chance, Catherine launched a pilot programme called Drum4Fun. Her ambition was to provide high-quality, accessible music activities that promote wellbeing and connection across the community.

Although Catherine had a strong background in music, she had no experience in setting up and running a social enterprise. As a sole trader, she found it difficult to navigate the process of becoming incorporated and understanding the broader requirements of establishing a CIC, such as insurance, financial planning and marketing.

Catherine approached Bury VCFA to seek support in formalising her offer, becoming legally incorporated, and gaining clarity on her social purpose and path forward.

E26 Thematic Areas:

Financial and legal support – navigating the complexities of CIC registration on Companies House and the related documentation. We have now produced a simple 2-page guide for others looking to register a CIC – [Factsheet-How-to-register-a-Community-Interest-Company-CIC.pdf](#)

Contract bidding and marketing – for the latter, marketing, the Development Officer advised on setting up a social media to help spread the word about the activities and to make it easier for interested clients to get in touch.

Mentoring and coaching – Catherine is new to the sector after a lifetime of classroom teaching and gigging as a freelancer. The Development Officer adopted a mentoring approach to help demystify the language around social impact and social enterprise. To assist other budding social entrepreneurs curious about social enterprise, we created a factsheet for people wanting to know more – [Factsheet-Social-enterprise.pdf](#)

Collaborative Networks and Innovation – encouraging Catherine to attend local sector networking initiatives to build their network and meet potential collaborators.

Outcomes:

Always Wanted To was officially incorporated as a CIC in August 2024. Catherine now runs regular community drumming and singing sessions in Whitefield and continues to build momentum through improved visibility, stronger governance, and a growing professional network.

She has gained clarity and confidence in her vision and is now positioned to expand her activities and reach. Through the mentoring relationship, she has also developed new skills in business planning, communications, and sector navigation, creating a strong foundation for sustainable growth.

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Insights and Lessons:

Becoming a CIC can seem overwhelming, but local infrastructure support can make the process much more manageable.

Having a mentor or guide is especially valuable for sole traders moving into the social enterprise space.

Don't underestimate the power of local networking and marketing tools like social media—they can play a key role in reaching communities.

Questions for other Social Enterprise organisations:

Do I need to move beyond sole trader status to fully realise my social goals?

Am I confident about the legal and financial responsibilities of running a CIC?

What simple steps can I take to build visibility and engage my target community?

Reflections:

"I really want to be able to offer high-quality musical activities for adults in Whitefield as I know just how much of a difference music can make in people's lives. Without the Bury VCFA I would not have known where or how to even get started.

From the very beginning they had faith in my vision and encouraged me to develop my ideas, showed me the path I should follow and guided me through the whole process of starting a CIC. Now I am getting excellent advice on marketing my idea and Owen is helping to put me in contact with other groups and organisations in the borough who will help me to connect with the people that I can work alongside so that I can achieve my goal.

Bury VCFA are a wonderful organisation. The staff have helped me to achieve something that I really couldn't have done on my own. They have really inspired me and have given me the skills I need to try to make a difference to people's lives."

Link: <https://www.buryvcfa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Factsheet-Social-enterprise.pdf>,
<https://www.buryvcfa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Factsheet-How-to-register-a-Community-Interest-Company-CIC.pdf>

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