



Case Study: Tameside Social Economy Network and Wendy Breakell

As part of our commitment to supporting the local social economy, Action Together hosted a workshop with business consultant Wendy Breakell. This event was part of the wider Tameside Social Economy Network offer and focused on strategic planning and sustainable growth for social enterprise leaders.

The “Planning for Success” workshop was designed to equip social enterprise leaders with the tools and strategic thinking necessary to scale their impact sustainably. Wendy Breakell, a successful entrepreneur and business mentor, shared practical insights into innovation, leadership and financial resilience.

Many social economy organisations face common challenges around sustainability, growth planning and leadership, particularly in balancing social impact with financial viability. There was also a need to create spaces for peer learning and networking across the sector.

Organisations needed guidance in business planning, understanding Unique Selling Points (USPs) and identifying how innovation and leadership can support long-term success.

E26 Thematic Areas:

The workshop provided strategic business guidance from a well-established entrepreneur and created space for reflection, challenge and networking.

Demonstrating social impact – A key theme was how social enterprises can balance their social mission with a financially viable offer, and how innovation is central to that balance.

Outcomes:

The workshop prompted business planning and helped individuals articulate the financial and social value of their work more clearly. Two organisations who attended the workshop have since received 1:1 follow-up support from Wendy to develop and implement action plans for 2025/26. The workshop highlighted Tameside Social Economy Network as a space for peer support and development.

Insights and Lessons:

Social impact and financial sustainability are not mutually exclusive. A clear USP can help communicate your value and secure income.

Group sessions can uncover shared challenges and inspire new thinking when alongside expert facilitation and follow-up coaching.

Questions for other Social Enterprise organisations:

What does sustainability look like for your organisation and how does innovation contribute to that?

Can you clearly articulate your USP to a potential funder, customer, or partner?

Are you a part of any peer network groups for Social Enterprises where you can provide each other with mutual support?

Reflections:

“I thought Wendy Breakell did an excellent job engaging with the participants, listening,





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comprehending, and responding. I enjoyed the format, getting us all talking, gently pushing us to get us thinking. It was good to hear the issues the different participants raised, and it also worked really well as a networking opportunity. A big thanks to Action Together for organising!"

Link: <https://www.actiontogether.org.uk/tameside-social-economy-network-planning-success-workshop>

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