



# Community-led transport initiatives

Inspiring overview of a community bus project, showing how community scale sustainable public transport can work



## Local United – diffusing practical initiatives in response to climate change and peak oil

Local United brings together and supports community activists who are setting up social enterprises to address the challenges of peak oil and climate change. We aim to speed up the rate at which good ideas are adopted by community groups motivated to build low-carbon economies.

Initially eight 'diffusion packs' have been produced which offer practical suggestions for setting up initiatives in the following areas:

Energy Farms	Community-led Food Initiatives
Community-led Hydro Initiatives	Sustainable Community loan Fund
Community-led Wind power	Community-led Reuse of Resources
Energy Performance Energy Services Company	Community-led Transport Initiatives

NESTA provided funding for the development and dissemination of these information packs which have been written and reviewed by people with first-hand knowledge of the community and climate action sectors they work in. Often the authors will have been involved in the conception of the project idea and in many cases they would now be regarded as experts in their fields. Biographies will soon be available on our websites

All of these packs are intended as on-going 'works-in-progress'. We are hoping that other groups working in these areas will add in their experience. In time they will build into a comprehensive library of good practice case studies. They will become a source of inspiration to community groups. They will provide information on motivational projects which have been carried out by other community groups and they will act as a directional tool to help communities who are ready to take action, to do just that.

These packs are offered to groups who are interested in setting up social enterprises in these areas. They can be downloaded from the many partner websites.

Of course, any information provided is only as up to date as the day it goes to print. Many of the specific examples have worked so well because of the people involved, the skills they possess or the resources that were available to them. Thus these examples will predominantly serve as an inspirational call to arms. However, many of the packs contain useful 'how to' guides, copies of legal templates or list of regulations, all of which may be useful to community groups wishing to set out on their own project. All of the packs contain notes or links on where to find more help.

Feedback on these packs is continually being sought. Community groups who have used the packs to support their own projects are very welcome, and indeed are invited, to provide information on how useful the packs have been, what other information we should be providing or any other feedback which may help us to improve these in the future.

Local United is keen to work with other groups and organisations active in these areas who may be interested in offering the diffusion packs through their websites. We are also actively seeking funding to follow up these packs with a mentoring/buddying system which will provide additional support to emerging social enterprises.

## **Empowering change in sustainable transport**

### **Introduction**

This diffusion pack is designed to provide an overview of how a community scale transport project could work. It is designed to inspire community groups to take action and uses many examples from The Big Lemon, a community bus project in Brighton. Much of what you find in this pack will be specific to the Big Lemon and will predominantly serve to educate and inspire, but much will be very detailed and will show how your community could emulate this project.

### **Background**

## **The Big Lemon**

The Big Lemon was formed in 2007 to provide friendly, affordable and sustainable public transport for communities in order to encourage people away from car use, improve health and wellbeing and reduce the impact of transport on the environment. The Big Lemon runs all its vehicles on 100% recycled waste cooking oil from local restaurants, the first bus company in the UK to do so.

They quickly built a reputation as the friendliest bus company in town, and since 2008 demand for their services has snowballed. The Big Lemon now offers public bus services, coach hire, festival coach services and waste oil collection. Their next project is the development of a biodiesel processing plant so that they can produce their own fuel from the waste oil they collect, and passengers, members of the public and local schoolchildren can come and learn how it's made.

In 2009 The Big Lemon won the Dandelion Award for sustainable business and came 8<sup>th</sup> in the SE100 Index of highest-growth social enterprises. In 2010 they were nominated for Best Green Business in the Sussex Eco Awards, and won Best Sustainability Initiative in the Brighton & Hove Public Service Awards

Core principles of service, sustainability and community are at the heart of their success. But behind the scenes there is a system that works, and it is this system that is being made public to enable other communities to run their own successful enterprise providing their community with an attractive and sustainable transport service.

The Big Lemon organises its business into three areas: strategy, operations and support. Strategy provides leadership, direction and culture; operations runs all the services; and support provides the infrastructure and support for operations. For each of these there are different functional areas, and together they outline all the different areas of work involved in running a community bus company.



Strategy	Operations	Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Culture</li> <li>- Business Planning</li> <li>- Policy</li> <li>- Positioning</li> <li>- Distribution</li> <li>- Networking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Service Delivery</li> <li>- Training</li> <li>- Marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Administration</li> <li>- Accounting &amp; Finance</li> <li>- IT</li> <li>- HR</li> <li>- Legal &amp; Compliance</li> <li>- Premises Management</li> <li>- Vehicle Management</li> <li>- Supplies</li> </ul>

The organisational chart is ordered along these lines too, and this ensures that no matter how large or small the business is, the responsibilities are clear. If the enterprise is a 'one-man-band', the above is their job description, split into three areas. If there are three people, one of them would be the Director of Strategy (usually the Managing Director), one would be the Operations Director/Manager and one would be the Business Support Director/Manager. A larger business may have a different person responsible for each functional area, or even a team of people under a manager.

This paper is organised in two parts. The first part examines in a bit more detail, how the business is organised and run, and the second part goes through step-by-step, how to set up your own version of it. At the end there will be a summary of the key points, and an outline of how The Big Lemon can help you make your perfect bus service a reality.

## **Section 1: The Functional Organisation of a Community Bus Company**

### **Strategy**

#### *Culture*

The culture of a community bus company is very important. The most important aspect of the service is the customer experience, and for the customer experience to be a good one, the culture must be right. It is crucial that openness, fairness, integrity, teamwork, innovation, communication and sustainability are at the heart of the culture of the business; and that all staff buy into the culture, feel proud of their company, and enjoy their work.

#### *Planning*

The Big Lemon's year is reasonably seasonal, with busier public services during the university terms; more private hire demand in the Spring and Summer, most festival coaches between May and September and more oil collected in the summer months and less in the winter. Therefore, the forward planning of bus purchases, recruitment, route registrations, communications, timetable printing, marketing campaigns, training and cash-flow is critical. If things are not done in time, it's often the case that the opportunity is missed for that year and will not be round again until the following year. A good system is to outline all the important jobs that need doing in the different areas of the business, and map out deadlines throughout the year. There is an example at Appendix 3.





The same principle applies to planning each day and planning the week and the month. Each job role will have daily tasks, weekly tasks and monthly tasks as well as annual tasks, and it's a good idea to draw up checklists for the day, the week and the month, and then allocate time to each day, week and month to review the current period, and plan the next period. Planning the next period will also require knowledge of certain key data ('Key Performance Indicators' in management speak) that you will need to know. Examples of KPIs are things like number of passengers per hour per bus; passenger revenue per hour per bus; percentage of services run (*reliability*); percentage of services run within -1 to + 5 minutes of the published time (*punctuality*) and conversion rate of private hire enquiries (%). These indicators will inform you where you need to invest time, resources, finances, training and so on. It is important for managers to put reporting systems in place to collect the data they need to plan effectively.

### *Policy*

The policies of the business define what kind of a business it is. Does the community want to run a normal business? Of course not. It wants to save the world, starting in its own locale. Once it is clear what the group is hoping to achieve then the policies will define the parameters. For all manner of things, the business needs a policy to state its position on it. The difference here is that normal businesses have off-the-shelf policies, policies for the sake of policies, or policies cobbled together without much thought, whereas policies for a community project will have been put together thoughtfully, and are designed to define the kind of business that is needed by that community.

### *Positioning*

What is the position in the marketplace? The Big Lemon positions itself as friendly, sustainable and affordable. Therefore it ensures that it always provides the friendliest service, ensures that everything is done as sustainably as possible, and it charges the *minimum* it can afford, ensuring that it is cheaper than the alternatives. It's best to position your project in a small number of areas so that it is always very clear to all stakeholders what that position is, and it's also good for strategy to have one area that trumps the others. When the Big Lemon started, its trump position was price. That was where the pain was, and strategically that was the most important territory to secure and keep. It doesn't mean that you stop caring about the other things, you carry on being as friendly and sustainable as you can, but within your budget. The position you hold in the market can change, just as political parties shift themselves across the spectrum depending on the feeling amongst the electorate and the positions of the other parties.

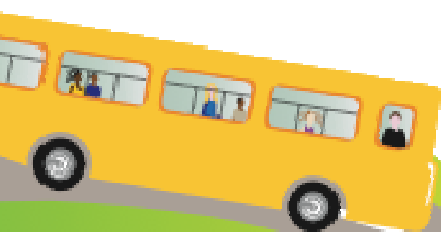


### *Distribution*

How are people going to find information on the services? How are they going to pay for them? The Big Lemon has a number of distribution channels: bus drivers sell tickets on the bus, members recruit other members who then pay for their membership online, newsagents sell tickets, private hire customers recommend them to friends, and staff also act as ambassadors and salespeople.

### *Networking*

Networking is key to any strategy; to succeed, a group needs to go out and talk to people, share experience, find people who are good at the things that the current members aren't, and spread the idea as widely as possible.



## Operations

### *Service Delivery*

This is what it's all about– the service. Planning needs to start with the end goal. For The Big Lemon, it's all about the passenger experience. If they are going to encourage people to use sustainable alternatives, they have to be attractive, and that means affordable and enjoyable.

The Big Lemon makes it affordable by making it financially efficient, and they make it enjoyable by giving the best service they possibly can. In order to give a consistently good service, it is imperative to set out clearly what the staff need to do. At The Big Lemon, drivers are trained in delivering the best customer experience every time by following ten key rules:

1. Be smart, and make sure the bus is smart too
2. Pull up as close to the kerb as possible
3. Greet everyone as they board, *looking them in the eye*.
4. When talking to passengers give them your full attention, not doing anything else (e.g. listening to music/chewing gum) at the same time
5. Ensure they are seated before leaving the bus stop
6. Always look for 'runners', people running for the bus, and wait for them
7. Triple check blind spots, especially for cyclists
8. Drive smoothly, minimising acceleration and braking
9. Be courteous to all other road users
10. Acknowledge people as they get off the bus

### *Training & Supervision*

In order to provide the service, staff must obviously be trained. But training is not simply a routine to be gone through. Training is an opportunity to instil the values of the business in the staff. It's an opportunity to communicate exactly what the aims of the project are and how it is possible to achieve them. Training must be regular too; staff need to be updated on new procedures and given feedback on how they are doing. They need to be enthused, and always reminded about the bigger picture. They might think they are just driving up and down the same road all day, but what they are actually doing is providing a vital public service, contributing to the local and national economy, reducing congestion and pollution, giving hundreds of people a pleasurable experience, and developing the company's experience to enable the business to improve the service, grow and do more good stuff.

### *Marketing*

The key here is to identify the target audience and then build a relationship with them. The Big Lemon does not advertise in conventional ways, instead it engages with the community it serves. Their first public service served the Universities of Brighton and Sussex, and one of the reasons this was successful was that there was an identifiable community, which was easy to engage with. There was the university management, the students union, the student newspaper, student radio station, clubs and societies, campus shops and the canteens and bars (some of which provided waste oil too!). All of these were engaged with to build a mutually beneficial relationship.





## Support

### *Administration*

An administrator is often the first person employed in the business who is not directly involved in revenue generation, so it's crucial that there is a plan in place to finance the role. For example, having someone to answer correspondence, pay bills, manage timesheets and wages, update the books, organise the filing and so on can mean that the General Manager / MD doesn't have to do all that any more, and can use the time planning growth, new business and identifying cost savings. It's very important to make sure that the new activity in those areas does actually cover the cost of the administrator, not in six months or a year, but straight away.

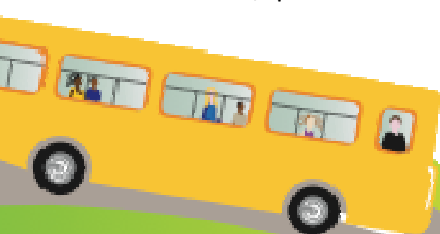
The administration itself must be organised so that everything has its place, geographical and chronological, and that the systems and routines are adhered to. Then there's a plan. Such and such lives here, this gets done on a Wednesday morning, and this is what happens at the end of the week/month/year. The systems need to be written down, as they are constantly changing as the business grows, and everyone needs to be clear what the system is. Then when the administrator is ill, it doesn't matter, someone else can jump in and the routine's clear. This happens today, this is how it's done and this is where it's filed afterwards.

### *Accounting & Finance*

The most important thing here is information and accountability. To succeed, the business must have up-to-date information available at all times to aid decision-making and financial planning. Budgets must be set, and individuals accountable for their budgets. At The Big Lemon there are currently seven management posts; Bus Services, Private Hire, Festivals and Waste Oil on the Operations side, and Office, Finance and Transport on the Support side. Each manager is responsible for their own budget, and the Finance Manager ensures everyone stays within their budget, giving the MD and the Board of Directors the financial information they need at regular intervals.

### *Information Technology*

Information Technology is very important in a bus company, underpinning everything from client and staff records to ticket machine functionality, data collection and analysis, accounts, payroll and communication. The Big Lemon has been developing a systemised IT system which does everything the business needs to do on a repeat basis, whilst eliminating the risk of human error at every opportunity. The system will enable The Big Lemon to manage all its records on the same database, generate forms, orders, quotes, invoices; email newsletters, questionnaires, feedback forms and so on.





## Human Resources



The Big Lemon uses a professional HR consultant to help with recruitment, and as a member of the Federation of Small Businesses, benefits from a free legal advice line to advise on employment matters. Larger businesses may do this in-house, but for a small company this system works well. The key is to ensure that systems are in place to help staff perform, and to provide help, support and training where there is underperformance. It shouldn't matter who they are or where they come from, the system should work regardless; some people may need more help than others, some may require less. If the system is fair, legal and well-communicated, it will work, and with the benefit of experience, it will always improve. Occasionally there will be people who simply aren't quite right for the business, but that's life

and it shouldn't be seen as a failure. For everyone else, if the deal is clear and fair, the system will develop individuals into the role and the personnel will always be the business's most valuable asset.

## Legal & Compliance

The bus industry is closely regulated by the Traffic Commissioner and Vehicle & Operator Services Agency, as well as by HMRC, the Health & Safety Executive and Companies House, the same as any other business. As a Community Interest Company, The Big Lemon is also regulated by the CIC Regulator. Building relationships with regulators is very important indeed. For any project like this it is important to learn the rules, and to stick to them. Most importantly, someone in the organisation must be accountable for each area of legislation, for knowing it and ensuring that the organisation complies. The MD and the Board are ultimately responsible, so they must make sure that the person responsible is doing their job properly. Regulators love to see records, and it always helps the business if these are up-to-date, accurate and easily accessible. Even if they show occasional misdemeanours, these should never be covered up. It's dishonest, and will probably be noticed anyway. There are steep penalties and these could tarnish a good relationship with the regulators. If a mistake is made, then it is always best to be proactive, to inform the regulator concerned, and let them know what is being done about it.

## Premises Management

Premises management is pretty dull but also fundamental. The main thing to remember and the only exciting thing about it is that there are many opportunities to save money by looking at the premises, making sure it is fit for purpose and streamlined. The layout of the depot is very important, allowing management of the processes which carry on there. For example, if drivers have to fuel up the bus at the end of the shift, the position of the fuel supply is very important. The location of the stores and cleaning materials are likewise very important. If by placing them close to where they are being used you can save three minutes at the start and finish of each shift, you can save six minutes per shift, and if there are 20 shifts per day, that's two hours work saved per day, and over a year that will add a lot to the bottom line.

## Vehicle Management

The aim of the game here is to account for every mile driven by every vehicle: who the driver was, what time they started, what time they finished, what the mileage was at the start and finish, how much fuel they used, whether they checked the vehicle before and after they used it, what (if any) defects were found, whether the defects were rectified, who by, when and so on. With full information on maintenance and fuel usage of each vehicle costs can be managed and accurately guide pricing of services, and with a full history of each vehicle the Examiner from VOSA will have the best day of their life so far.





## Supplies

Always have a spare! In order to do this accurate information is needed on usage of supplies, lead times for different things, preferred supplier lists, and a clear procurement policy which defines what the parameters are. Remember that a procurement policy is always a chance to shape policy for the community group. It's a chance to support specific external suppliers. Clear research is required here to ensure that supplies come from organisations with similar ethos. Remember for this kind of project, a sustainable sourcing policy may be a marketing tool. It can let customers know what ingredients are in the product.

## **Section 2: The Next Step - Getting Started**

### 1. *Identifying the Pain*

What's the problem? *Is there a problem?* There are generally two types of transport problems: one being the lack of it, and the other being the quality, sustainability or affordability of it. A rural community may have limited transport and an identifiable need to get a number of children to school/employees to work/shoppers to the shops in a nearby town (and home again!)? Or a community may be fed up with the quality of services in their area and motivated to do something better? In both cases, it's important to identify the people who *feel* the pain. Are there enough of them? Is the pain *enough* to motivate enough people to support the idea? To begin, the following questions need answers:-

- a. How many people feel the pain and *who are they?*
- b. How *much* does it hurt for each one (how much money are they willing to pay for the pain to go away?)

in the case of The Big Lemon, there were over 1600 people who felt the pain and they were students at the Universities of Brighton and Sussex. They all signed a petition against bus fare increases, and for many of them the pain was enough to warrant a one day on-the-bus protest. They bought day tickets, filled a number of double-deck buses and stayed on the bus all day. The buses had to keep running their scheduled timetable, but they could not take any other passengers and consequently spent the day turning people away, losing money and generating customer complaints. This rather extreme action did not, however, have any effect on bus fares in the short term, but it provided fertile ground for The Big Lemon to start building a relationship with the student population, and as a result the two universities now have a cheaper bus service. Incidentally this could have been anyone – it could be university students, school-children, factory-workers or shoppers: any group of people who share a common transport-related problem. And it doesn't have to be a big group; in theory it could be anything from two people upwards, although the benefits will be greater the more people there are.

### 2. *What's the Solution?*

Once the audience has been identified, ideas need to be generated about what kind of service would solve the problem. It is important not to become emotionally attached to pre-conceived ideas. The best idea will be the one that has the most support from the target audience. In terms of practicalities, a community will need to find out:

- a. The number of people that need the transport
- b. The days they need it
- c. The times of day they need it
- d. The number of people likely to need it at the same time (ie what size vehicle you need)
- e. Any seasonal variations (ie summer/winter, term time/holidays)



### 3. *Vision, Mission & Values*

Once the perfect solution has been found, that's the vision. The mission is to make it happen, and the values will be the *non-negotiable* parameters within which a community group agrees to work. Obviously these are negotiable to start with, but once they are agreed by everyone they will be set in stone.

### 4. *Building a Team*

Ideally the core team should come from the audience; people in the community. Inevitably there will be a need to bring in expertise from outside at some point, depending on what's missing when the talent and skills in the community have been assessed. However, for the greatest chance of success, the team needs to be made up of *people who care*. Some will care about different things than others, and it's inevitable that everyone will have a different reason for being involved. But they have a reason over and above any financial incentive, and that's important. The size of the team will vary considerably depending on how ambitious the plan is, and may be anything from one person to a full team of people, each with different skills. If the plan is to run a minibus to a workplace or school a couple of times in the morning and evening, this could be done by one keen all-rounder supported by a group of people meeting monthly to make sure everything's on track, or it could be a small group of people sharing responsibilities and volunteering in their spare time. At the other end of the scale, a group may need to run a fleet of buses to serve an important hub in a city with poor public transport options, and for this a good leader is needed to drive the organisation, with a capable team of motivated people with skills in finance, marketing, service delivery and administration. Transport experience is clearly advantageous, but it definitely isn't a requirement, and if anyone with experience can be found then they will need to be open-minded and keen to try out new ways of doing things.

### 5. *Finding a Name*

Taking advice about naming a business from someone who called a business *The Big Lemon* may seem like a bad idea, so let it simply be pointed out that naming an organisation is the next step. The name needs to be something that stands up and gets noticed, because it needs to be noticed. And it needs to be something that stakeholders will still be happy with in twenty years' time.

### 6. *Legal Structure*

This is an important consideration, and requires a lot of thought and discussion, and possibly some professional advice from an accountant. The Big Lemon is a Community Interest Company limited by shares, and this form was chosen in order to allow it to operate and raise finance in a normal commercial manner, but with its aims and values embedded in its structure by law. Other options are:

- a. Company limited by shares
- b. Company limited by guarantee
- c. Limited liability partnership
- d. Community Interest Company limited by guarantee
- e. Industrial and Provident Society
- f. Co-operative
- g. Charity

When choosing, consideration needs to be given to which structure will allow the group to function in the way it wants to function, while safeguarding the values which have been set in stone and sending the right message to the audience; current and future.



## 7. Business Planning

There is a wealth of information on the internet about Business Planning, and Business Link has a pretty comprehensive guide at <http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?topicId=1073869162>. According to the guide (accessed via the link above on 17 November 2010), a plan should include:

- An executive summary - this is an overview of the business. It's vital. Many lenders and investors make judgments about the business based on this section of the plan alone.
- A short description of the business opportunity - who the community is, what it plans to sell or offer, why and to whom.
- Marketing and sales strategy - why people will buy what the group wants to sell and how they plan to sell to them.
- Management team and personnel - all the credentials of the people in the group and those who may be recruited to work with it.
- Operations - premises, production facilities, management information systems and IT.
- Financial forecasts - this section translates everything that has been said in the previous sections into numbers.

The Big Lemon's Route Planning Aid in Appendix A will help with the financial side of the business planning, and bank managers, accountants and Business Link / Business Gateway advisors are also pretty good at helping out.

## 8. Funding

One of the key lessons learned during the early days of The Big Lemon was the need to identify funding up front. The prevailing wisdom in 2007 was to do a lot of market research, work out projected costs and revenue, and make sure the latter is greater. The only problem with this system is that no matter how well you do your research, you really have no idea what these numbers are until you try it.

When The Big Lemon started out, costs came in twice the forecasted amount, and revenue was less than half the amount expected. This led to a near-death experience, and through this, the membership scheme was born. The idea of the scheme is to do your marketing and customer-gathering before you start running any buses, and only start a service when you have enough paid-up members to finance it. Once a group has identified the problem, the audience and the solution, the next step is to identify what the solution costs, and then what this costs each person in the audience over, say, a year. The Planning Tool in Appendix A will help do this. Once enough people willing to pay enough money for a year's membership such that the costs for the required provision are met, then the service can be launched. If the available audience has been exhausted but there is still a shortfall, there are a number of options.

The first is to ask the audience if they are willing to commit to a higher membership fee. Another is to reduce the service level to match the budget. A third is to talk to local businesses and see if they have staff who would be able to use the service to get to work, and whether the business would be interested in promoting the membership to their staff, or even subsidise them as part of their staff travel plan. A fourth option is to look for grant funding from the local authority or another interested body, but this option is not an easy one and the chances of success are not fantastic. There is also another option, but it is more risky.

If the potential for selling on-bus tickets is good, work out from your research the likely number of non-members who would use the service at different times of day/week/year, and estimate the revenue you would receive



based on your proposed fare structure. And then halve it. People's habits are incredibly difficult to change and even if the bus were free it could take six months for people to cotton on to it. The Big Lemon has been reasonably successful at attracting non-members onto the buses; and has managed to keep the membership fee reasonably low (£150 in 2010-11) due to the revenue received from non-members. Fare levels on The Big Lemon have always been set as low as possible; how you set yours will depend a bit on whether you are in competition with another operator or not, and your preferred *position* in the marketplace.

If you are the only operator on your chosen route, you can choose your position in the market, and you must do your market research carefully in order to inform your decision-making. What is your audience willing to pay? What kind of service do they want? Are they willing to pay more for a better service, or do they want something cheap and cheerful? One aim of your market research should be to introduce people to the membership, but if non-member revenue is going to factor in a big way in your business plan you need to know as much as possible about the wider travelling population too. If you are going to be running in competition with another service, your position will be largely determined for you. Go back to the problem – what is it? Is the existing operator too expensive? Or is their service awful? If they are too expensive, you need to be (noticeably) cheaper; if their service is rubbish you need to offer something better, and in order to do that you *may* need to charge a little more, although you should always charge the least you can get away with.

The Big Lemon decided to compete on price because that was where the pain was at the beginning – bus fares in Brighton were simply too high and rising too fast. One word of warning however, if you are competing on price with another operator, make sure you work hard to get customer *loyalty*. If the other operator decides to reduce their prices as a result of you starting up you have won a major coup on behalf of the community, but it may be the end of you if you do not have a loyal following and a large membership, as non-members may just go back to the other operator. And you cannot just say 'job done' and wind up, because the moment you're off the scene the other operator's fares will go up again!

How the organisation is structured legally also has a bearing on finance. As a Company limited by shares (including CIC limited by shares) or a Co-operative, finance can be raised by selling shares. If this route is chosen then it is advisable to separate the costs of setting up the organisation from the costs of setting up the service. Sell shares to finance the start-up of the Company and the buying of assets such as buses and computers, but do not use share income to finance the running of the service. This must come from membership fees and/or bus ticket sales. It is advisable to look for investment from people in the community, who care about the project, as well as friends, relatives and other interested parties as these people are likely to offer support as well as finance, and this is important. This kind of project is unlikely to be hugely profitable (if it is then the charges are probably too high) so attracting people who are only interested in financial return is not a good idea as they are likely to be disappointed. Remember that the aim is to make money in order to run the service, not the other way round! Having said that, it's important that you do give investors a long-term financial incentive for investing, otherwise even if they support the idea in principle, they may not be in a financial position to help you.

## 9. Compliance

The transport industry is very highly regulated and it is important that all the rules are fully understood. The good news is that the rules are easy to find and pretty clear, so compliance is not too onerous, although it can be expensive and it's important to factor it into predicted costs. Below are the main areas of legislation that need to be complied with, but this list does not include everything and professional advice should be sought from a lawyer in the community with an interest in the project (that way it may be provided free!). If there aren't any lawyers willing to give free advice, get in touch with the Law Society or ProBonoUK who might be able to help.

- a. Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- b. COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) Regulations
- c. RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995)
- d. Transport Act 2000





- e. The Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000
- f. The Employment Act 2002
- g. Community Interest Company Regulations 2005 (if applicable)
- h. Companies Act 2006
- i. Local Transport Act 2008
- j. Corporation Tax Act 2009.
- k. Equality Act 2010

This sounds like a lot of rules, and there's no getting away from the fact that there are a lot of rules, but it is not too difficult to get a handle on the basics and there are a lot of resources to help. Below is a list of resources to help with the main areas of legislation:

- a. Company rules:  
Companies House; <http://www.companieshouse.gov.uk>
- b. Corporation Tax, PAYE & VAT:  
HMRC; <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk>
- c. Employment Law:  
The Federation of Small Businesses has a very good legal advice team to help members with employment issues; it's like having your own in-house legal department: <http://www.fsb.org.uk>
- d. Health & Safety:  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk>
- e. Vehicle Roadworthiness:  
Vehicle & Operator Services Agency (VOSA) <http://www.dft.gov.uk/vosa>,  
Guide to maintaining roadworthiness:  
[www.businesslink.gov.uk/.../070051\\_Guide%20to%20Maintaining%20Roadworthiness.pdf](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/.../070051_Guide%20to%20Maintaining%20Roadworthiness.pdf)
- f. Operator Licensing & Registration of Local Bus Services:  
Traffic Commissioners: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roads/tpm/trafficcommissioners>  
Operator Licensing:  
<http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?r.s=b&r.l4=1082081416&r.l1=1081597476&r.lc=en&r.l3=1084756173&r.l2=1082103262&topicId=1084756173&r.i=1082081655&r.t=RESOURCES>  
ES Registering a local public service:  
<http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?itemId=1082044837&type=RESOURCES>
- g. Other Government information on buses: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/regional/buses>

## 10. Operator Licensing

In order to get an operator's licence, the Traffic Commissioner must be satisfied that all the requirements set out below will be fulfilled. More detailed information can be found on the Business Link web-link above.

- a. Good Repute  
Every bus operator must have a nominated transport manager, and he or she must be a good egg. Certain types of convictions may affect their ability to get a licence, and if they have previously been a transport manager who has found themselves in hot water with the traffic commissioner, this could also be a problem. However, providing they have not been in trouble before, they should be all right.



b. Professional Competence

Transport Managers must have professional competence, and this usually involves getting a Certificate of Professional Competence in Passenger Transport from a training provider such as the Freight Transport Association (FTA) (<http://www.fta.co.uk/services/training/index.html>) or Go Skills <http://www.goskills.org>

c. Financial Standing

The organisation must have enough resources to satisfy the traffic commissioner that they can afford to maintain the vehicles to a high enough standard. This means a group must have at its immediate disposal, either in the bank or in guarantees of loans, overdraft or other, the equivalent of:

9,000 Euros for the first or only authorised vehicle

5,000 Euros for each additional authorised vehicle

It is advisable to ensure that the money is available within the organisation, but if this is not possible, there is a provision in the legislation for someone to provide a Statutory Declaration that they will stump up the cash if necessary.

d. Operating Centre

The operating centre must be named (the place where your vehicles will be parked) on the application, and sent to the relevant traffic commissioner (there are eight different traffic commissioners, each with a different *traffic area*). If it is intended to have operating centres in different traffic areas, then applications will need to be made in each area.

e. Maintenance Provision

The traffic commissioner requires proof that there are adequate facilities to maintain the vehicles. These facilities do not need to be owned by the community group, and it makes sense at the beginning to use a local commercial vehicle workshop. However the traffic commissioner must be supplied with the name of your workshop and a maintenance agreement signed by both the community group and the workshop. For an example maintenance agreement, see [http://www.dft.gov.uk/vosa/repository/Maintenance%20Agreement%20\(GOL%206\).pdf](http://www.dft.gov.uk/vosa/repository/Maintenance%20Agreement%20(GOL%206).pdf)

f. Ability to follow the rules

The traffic commissioner must be satisfied that adequate policies, procedures, training and supervision are all in place to ensure all staff can follow the rules.

## 11. *Registration of Services*

All public bus services must be registered with the traffic commissioner, and then they must be run as they are registered. Registering a service involves filling out a form; ([http://online.businesslink.gov.uk/Transport\\_files/066970\\_Application\\_to\\_Register\\_a\\_Bus\\_Service\\_PSV\\_3.pdf](http://online.businesslink.gov.uk/Transport_files/066970_Application_to_Register_a_Bus_Service_PSV_3.pdf)) and giving the traffic commissioner a copy of the proposed timetable and route. The traffic commissioner needs at least 56 days notice, and a copy of your application must be sent to each local authority whose area the service will operate in.

## 12. *Premises, Vehicles & Fuel*

The Big Lemon started operations with three buses and a van parked in a lorry park, and although not ideal, it worked for a short while. So it is possible to start simple, and then improve as resources allow. Ideally there should be some kind of security, so a unit in an industrial estate is ideal, or if in a rural area, it may be possible to find a nearby farm that has some space to rent. Requirements can be registered with local commercial lettings agents, particularly for industrial units.



For vehicles, there are a couple of options. Once the size of vehicle you need for your service has been identified it can either be leased or bought. Leasing is more convenient, and usually it should be possible to get a better vehicle, but it is more expensive in the long run. Buying provides more control and gives the project an asset. Care should be taken when buying, don't be tempted by the cheapness of an old rust bucket on eBay, take an engineer to a dealership and get proper advice, take vehicles for a test drive, have a look underneath them, and remember that usually the more money spent at the beginning, the more money will be saved on maintenance in the long run.

The chosen fuel will make a huge difference to the sustainability of the operation. Using biodiesel from waste oil is currently the greenest method, and there is an online database of most of the biodiesel suppliers in the country at <http://www.biodieselfillingstations.co.uk>. Most diesel engines will run on 100% biodiesel without any modifications, but there are a few things to be aware of:

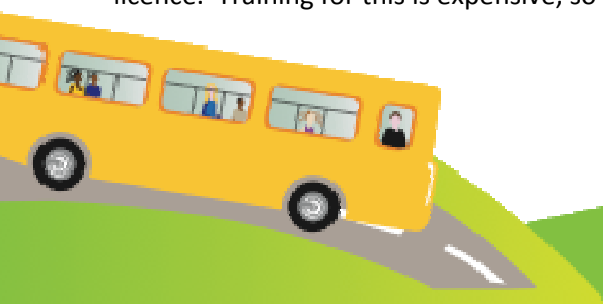
- a. Biodiesel is a solvent, so it cleans out the carbon deposits that have built up over time in your fuel lines. This sounds great, as you end up with a cleaner engine. However, the muck will end up in your fuel filter(s) so you need to change the filter(s) after the first hundred miles or so of using biodiesel, and then again about a thousand miles later.
- b. As a solvent, biodiesel can erode rubber washers and seals, so one must be aware of this. Injector pump failure has also been associated with biodiesel, and it's important to have a heavy duty one.
- c. In the winter, biodiesel will start to solidify at approximately -5C. Even before that, it will thicken, and may reduce performance as the fuel pump struggles to pump it through. Starting the vehicles may be difficult in winter, and it will help considerably if the vehicles can be housed indoors, although this may not be possible in the early days. Always use the 'cold start'/choke if possible to give the best chance! There are additives that can be added to biodiesel to stop it thickening in winter, but these need to be tested properly and mixed correctly. If it is not mixed properly bits of sediment may build up in the fuel tank and block outlets, stopping fuel from getting to the engine. Particles may also end up in the pump, and damage it. It is possible to get a fairly good idea of the quality of the biodiesel simply by looking at it. If it is light and clear it is good; if it is dark and/or cloudy or has particulates in it, it is poison to the engine!



### 13. Recruitment & Training

Before any recruitment, talk to someone who's done it before! Depending on the size of the intended operation, it may be possible to find the people in the community, and if they already have an interest in the service, that is best. Gumtree (<http://www.gumtree.com>) is a good place to advertise for extra people, and the job centre is worth doing too but may not give you such high quality candidates. It is important to understand the basics of employment law before any recruitment. The FSB, if you have decided to join, can be very useful here. The FSB legal service can provide employment contracts, as well as policies and procedures on a wide range of employment issues.

Drivers of vehicles of more than 8 seats used for hire or reward must have a PCV (Passenger Carrying Vehicle) licence. Training for this is expensive, so it is best at the beginning to look for people who already have one.



All new PCV drivers must have a qualification called a Driver CPC (Certificate of Professional Competence), and existing PCV drivers must have the Driver CPC by September 2013.

In terms of any organisation-specific training, a check list should be drawn up of all the things that need to be included in the training of new staff, and then bit signed off as it is given.. This gives each person a full list of the training they need, and shows them what they have done, and what they still need to do. As the organisation develops, more things can be added to the checklist as and when necessary.

#### 14. Policies & Procedures

Policies are an organisation's rules. Key policies are very important, and are required to govern how an organisation operates. However they needn't be too onerous – too many policies will get confusing. Remember that all members of staff will need to learn all the policies, and if there are more than about 12 of them this becomes impossible. The Business Link website has a lot of information on policies, and explains which ones have elements which are a legal requirement:

<http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?r.s=sc&r.l1=1073858787&r.lc=en&r.l3=1073982502&r.l2=1084607683&r.i=1075101475&type=RESOURCES&itemId=1073791959&r.t=RESOURCES>

The glaring omission here is the Sustainability Policy, and this is something every organisation should have. The Big Lemon used a local sustainability consultancy (Green Minded: <http://www.greenminded.co.uk/>) to help formulate a good policy, but there are also many resources online to help. The important thing is to have someone to champion the policy to make sure it actually does what it's supposed to!

Procedures are 'How you do things'. Some things must have a procedure, and the regulations referred to in the section above will explain what these are. Broadly speaking, there must be employment procedures, health & safety procedures and vehicle maintenance procedures, and it is highly recommended to have procedures for all aspects of the operation in addition to these. It needn't start complicated; it can start with a small number of the most important procedures, and then others can be added as the project grows. The minimum requirement is:

- (i) Recruitment Procedure
- (ii) Absence Reporting Procedure
- (iii) Disciplinary Procedure
- (iv) Grievance Procedure
- (v) Procurement Procedure
- (vi) Waste Management Procedure
- (vii) COSHH Reporting Procedure
- (viii) Workplace Accident Reporting Procedure
- (ix) Vehicle Defect Reporting Procedure
- (x) Vehicle Breakdown Procedure
- (xi) Road Traffic Accident Procedure
- (xii) Procedure for dealing with aggression on the bus
- (xiii) Complaints Procedure

In addition to these, a procedure should be available for each type of activity that staff are likely to carry out, for example vehicle inspection, cleaning, and fuelling.

#### 15. Health & Safety

Health & Safety is a hot topic, and one which fills most people with dread. However, with the correct policies, risk assessments, procedures, training, inspection, reporting and supervision in place, it'll be a walk in the park. The Health & Safety Executive has a lot of information and guidance on essentials such as risk assessment, and is





actually very good at informing people of the rules and helping them comply. They would much rather help avoid accidents than investigate them afterwards.

## 16. Insurance

It is a legal requirement to have motor vehicle insurance and employer's liability insurance. Public liability insurance is also highly recommended, and is reasonably affordable. There are all sorts of other insurances that safeguard against things going wrong, and some may be useful, although most can be avoided if the budget is tight.

## 17. Marketing, Networking & PR

The secret here is *relationships*. A relationship must be established with the target audience. The Big Lemon's target audience is the students of the two universities in Brighton. So ever since the early days, the Company has focussed on building relationships with the universities and the stakeholders there (as mentioned above), and even directly with the residents of different halls of residence through their Facebook groups. Every Wednesday night is sports union club night, and every Wednesday night members of the sports union in fancy dress get a free ride into town (although they have to pay to go home!). During Fresher's Week everyone who brings a lemon onto the bus rides free. On the first Sunday of every month there are no fares at all but passengers make donations and at the end of the day all the donations are split in half; half to the staff social fund and half to a local not-for-profit organisation working to improve Brighton in some way. Organisations meeting the criteria are free to apply, and every month the passengers vote on who gets the money. All these things help build a relationship with the audience, and as a result there is a huge amount of loyalty towards The Big Lemon from the target audience.

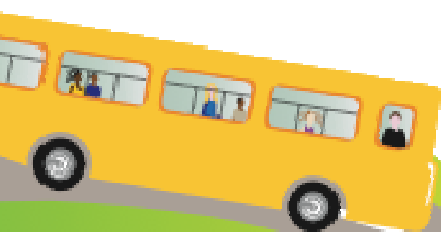
So... once the audience is identified, attention must turn to building a relationship with them. Find out who the movers and shakers are and bond with them! Chat up the local journalists, go and meet people from residents groups, the local council and other organisations with an interest in local transport. Join the local Chamber of Commerce or business networking organisation. Find out which voluntary organisations are working in the area and talk to them. It may not be easy to make contact with certain organisations, but the most important thing is to publicise the project and how it could benefit them..

## 18. Launch!

Is it really possible? Is it really going to happen? Yes! It's happening, whether you are ready or not. Tell everyone! This is the opportunity to make a big splash and cement the vision in the minds of the people in the community. Invite some local dignitaries and the local media. Have a party. Organise someone important to make a speech. Invite everyone onto an inaugural journey. Make it a bit different in some way: add a bit of eccentricity to make sure it's a day that people remember.

## 19. Reality

Reality is going to hurt. Things are going to go wrong, things are going to cost more money than had been anticipated, and all sorts of crazy stuff is going to happen which no one had imagined possible. But as long as everyone is prepared, it will be fine. This is just a stage in the process, simply part of the journey to the holy grail. There are going to be times when it all seems to be going wrong and people so over-worked and over-stressed it may feel as though it is all going to fall apart, but persevere and don't give up. This may be the hardest part of the journey, but if the systems are in place, a strong team is behind the project and a good relationship had been made with the audience, it will succeed.



## 20. Success

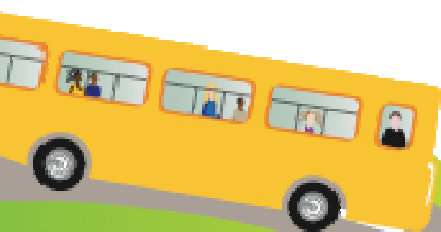
What is success? Success is the smile on people's faces as they get on the bus. It is the difference made to a community and to the environment. It is fewer cars on the road, less pollution, a stronger community, better health and better prospects for the future.

### **Summary**

So, there it is - what you do with it is up to you! With a bit of luck you now have a basic understanding of what's involved: identifying the pain, finding the people who feel the pain, building a relationship with the community and planning your service. Remember that what your service ends up like may be different from what you had in mind at the beginning, but that's fine – just go with it. It's going to be difficult at times, and you may occasionally wish you stuck with your day job, but remember to surround yourself with people who can do the things you can't, and if your vision is strong and you communicate it well, you'll be surprised at who appears out of the woodwork to help you.

### **How The Big Lemon can help you?**

The information here is free to use, copy and distribute; indeed this is encouraged. If you are reading purely out of interest, have a think about who might be able to benefit from it and send it on. If you are interested in setting up a similar community enterprise to run a bus service The Big Lemon would like to hear from you! At the very least we can put a link on our site to your project and give you some encouragement and a few tips, and if you'd like someone to come and talk to your group or even walk through setting up the project with you, this could be very valuable and we'd be delighted to help. Whatever you choose – good luck!



Calendar		
Term weekdays =	155	per year
Holiday weekdays =	106	per year
Saturdays =	52	per year
Sundays =	52	per year

Support Costs	Monthly	Annual
Administration	£500	£6,000
Accounts		£500
IT		£2,000
HR & Training		£3,000
Legal		£1,000
Rent	£800	£9,600
Parking	£800	£9,600
Vehicle inspection	£1,000	£12,000
Road Tax & MOT		£2,000
Insurance		£21,000
Cleaning	£400	£4,800
Marketing	£100	£1,200
<b>Total</b>		<b>£72,700</b>

<b>Set-up Costs</b>	
Market Research	£1,000
Operator Licensing	£2,000
Buses & Screens	£50,000
Painting & Lettering	£5,000
Ticket machines	£5,000
Inspections & MOT	£5,000
Premises	£3,000
Office Supplies	£500
Bus Stop Signs	£3,000
Marketing	£2,000
IT	£5,000
Training	£10,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£91,500</b>

[illegible]

	<b>Strategy:</b>	<b>Business Support:</b>			<b>Operations:</b>			
	<b>The Board/MD</b>	<b>Office/HR/Admin</b>	<b>Transport/Premises/H&amp;S</b>	<b>Finance/Legal</b>	<b>Bus Services</b>	<b>Private Hire</b>	<b>Festivals</b>	<b>Waste Oil</b>
	<b>Board/Tom</b>	<b>Katie</b>	<b>Keith</b>	<b>Rich</b>	<b>Keith</b>	<b>Rich</b>	<b>Alexis</b>	<b>Alexis</b>
<b>January</b>	Annual Report (last yr)	Co. House Annual Return	Premises review	Last year's Accounts	Year plan	Year plan	Year plan	Year plan
<b>February</b>	AGM Plan & new products?	AGM Invites	Coach purchases	BSOG application	Consultation	Marketing	Marketing plan	Marketing
<b>March</b>	Capability audit		Review risk assessments	Compliance review	Membership push	Marketing	Marketing	Infrastructure work
<b>April</b>	AGM	P60s all round	Licence disc application	Cashflow forecast	September plan	Lots of hire!	Marketing	Summer prep
<b>May</b>	Board coaching	Employers Annual Return	Health & Safety inspection		Register service	Lots of hire!	Festivals!	Collect lots!
<b>June</b>	Big Party		PAT tests & Fire inspection		Marketing plan	Lots of hire!	Festivals!	Collect lots!
<b>July</b>		Print Sept service info	Bus purchases		Recruitment	Lots of hire!	Festivals!	Collect lots!
<b>August</b>		Uniform/winterwear orders	Prepare buses for service		Training	Lots of hire!	Festivals!	Collect lots!
<b>September</b>		Membership admin	Winter maintenance plan		Launch new service!	Lots of hire!	Networking	Collect lots!
<b>October</b>		Membership admin	Winter fuel plan		Coaching new staff	Feedback	Networking	Kit maintenance
<b>November</b>	Strategy for next year	Review year & Report	Review year & Report	Review software	Review year & Report	Review year & Report	Review year & Report	Review year & Report
<b>December</b>	Next year's plan & budgets	Xmas party/presents/cards	Operationally tied up!	Next year's budgets	Christmas plan	Christmas plan	Christmas plan	Christmas plan



	funding; Main funding – for major building/refurbs and Small Grants.	
Camelot Community Support Programme	Independent funds to unlock social innovation	<a href="http://www.camelotfoundation.org.uk">www.camelotfoundation.org.uk</a>
Architectural Heritage Fund	Grants for building preservation	<a href="http://www.ahfund.org.uk">www.ahfund.org.uk</a>
Impetus Trust	Long term funding and capacity building for larger charities	<a href="http://www.impetus.org.uk">www.impetus.org.uk</a>
European Funding	Click on the Community Initiatives link	<a href="http://www.gos.gov.uk/gol/European_funding/?a=42496">www.gos.gov.uk/gol/European_funding/?a=42496</a>
Government Office for the South East	Regional Government Office – including ESF funding	<a href="http://www.gos.gov.uk/gose">www.gos.gov.uk/gose</a>
Charities Information Bureau (CIB)	Resource for funding for Charities	<a href="http://www.cibfunding.org.uk">www.cibfunding.org.uk</a>
Baxi Partnership Ltd	Equity investment for employee-owned companies	<a href="http://www.baxipartnership.co.uk">www.baxipartnership.co.uk</a>
Goodwill Gallery	Donated products and services for Charities	<a href="http://www.goodwillgallery.co.uk/">http://www.goodwillgallery.co.uk/</a>
On-Line Grant Databases	For access to an on-line database of grants	<a href="http://www.j4b.co.uk">www.j4b.co.uk</a>
	Government Funding Database	<a href="http://www.governmentfunding.org.uk">www.governmentfunding.org.uk</a>
	Funder Finder	<a href="http://www.funderfinder.org.uk">www.funderfinder.org.uk</a>
	Access Funds website	<a href="http://www.access-funds.co.uk">www.access-funds.co.uk</a>
	Grants Net	<a href="http://www.grantsnet.co.uk">www.grantsnet.co.uk</a>
	Grants OnLine	<a href="http://www.grantsonline.org.uk">www.grantsonline.org.uk</a>
	Database of funding streams	<a href="http://www.trustfunding.org.uk">www.trustfunding.org.uk</a>
PRIME	Encourages business start-ups for over 50s including access to finance and has CDFI facility	<a href="http://www.primeinitiative.org.uk">www.primeinitiative.org.uk</a>
Prince's Trust	National charity supporting young people into business, including social enterprise	<a href="http://www.princes-trust.org.uk">www.princes-trust.org.uk</a>

### **Appendix 3: Resources & Links**

#### **Forms and Information**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Web Link</b>
Operator Licensing Guides:	<a href="http://www.dft.gov.uk/vosa/publications/manualsandguides/operatorlicensingguides.htm">http://www.dft.gov.uk/vosa/publications/manualsandguides/operatorlicensingguides.htm</a>
Operator's Licence Application Form	<a href="http://www.transportoffice.gov.uk/crt/repository/CONT067024.pdf">www.transportoffice.gov.uk/crt/repository/CONT067024.pdf</a>
DfT policy documents on sustainable transport:	<a href="http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable">http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable</a>
Information on Finance	<a href="http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?r.s=m&amp;r.l4=1082081416&amp;r.l1=1081597476&amp;r.lc=en&amp;r.l3=1084756173&amp;r.l2=1082103262&amp;topicId=1073858790">http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?r.s=m&amp;r.l4=1082081416&amp;r.l1=1081597476&amp;r.lc=en&amp;r.l3=1084756173&amp;r.l2=1082103262&amp;topicId=1073858790</a>
Registering a Local Bus Service	<a href="http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?itemId=1082044837&amp;type=RESOURCES">http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?itemId=1082044837&amp;type=RESOURCES</a>
Traffic Commissioner's Role & Responsibilities	<a href="http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roads/tpm/trafficcommissioners/rolesandresponsibilities/">http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roads/tpm/trafficcommissioners/rolesandresponsibilities/</a>
VOSA Guide to Maintaining Roadworthiness	<a href="http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/.../070051_Guide%20to%20Maintaining%20Roadworthiness.pdf">www.businesslink.gov.uk/.../070051_Guide%20to%20Maintaining%20Roadworthiness.pdf</a>
Information on Corporation tax, VAT, PAYE	<a href="http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/index.htm">http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/index.htm</a>

#### **Other Useful Resources**

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Web Link</b>
Business Link	Business Link's National pages for Social Enterprise	<a href="http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?itemId=1073789616&amp;lang=en&amp;type=RESOURCES">http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?itemId=1073789616&amp;lang=en&amp;type=RESOURCES</a>
Business Gateway		<a href="http://www.bgateway.com">http://www.bgateway.com</a>
Federation of Small Businesses	Membership Organisation offering help and support to small businesses	<a href="http://www.fsb.org.uk/">http://www.fsb.org.uk/</a>
Confederation of Passenger Transport	Bus & Coach industry trade body	<a href="http://www.cpt-uk.org/">http://www.cpt-uk.org/</a>
British Chambers of Commerce		<a href="http://www.britishchambers.org.uk">http://www.britishchambers.org.uk</a>
Social Enterprise Coalition	National Trade Association for Social Enterprise	<a href="http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk">http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk</a>
Business in the Community	Independent business led charity who's aim is 'to create a public benefit by inspiring companies to improve the positive impact of business in society'	<a href="http://www.bitc.org.uk/index.html">http://www.bitc.org.uk/index.html</a>  <a href="http://www.bitc.org.uk/regions/bitc_in_your_region/london/prohelp/index.html">http://www.bitc.org.uk/regions/bitc_in_your_region/london/prohelp/index.html</a>
Community Action	Organisation focussing	<a href="http://www.can-online.org.uk/">http://www.can-online.org.uk/</a>

Network (CAN)	on development, promotion and support of social enterprises	
Social Enterprise Partnership (SEP)	Implements infrastructure and systems development, capacity building, research and development for the social enterprise sector in UK	<a href="http://www.sepgb.co.uk/">http://www.sepgb.co.uk/</a>
Social Enterprise Visit Programme	Programme seeking to share and spread good practice in social enterprise sector	<a href="http://www.socialenterprisevisits.com/">http://www.socialenterprisevisits.com/</a>
Resource Centre	Database and information for running community and voluntary groups	<a href="http://www.resourcecentre.org.uk">www.resourcecentre.org.uk</a>
REACH	Opportunities to recruit volunteer retired business executives	<a href="http://www.reach-online.org.uk/">www.reach-online.org.uk/</a>
Community Development Exchange (CDX)	UK-wide membership-based organisation for community development. Sharing information through events	<a href="http://www.cdx.org.uk">www.cdx.org.uk</a>
The Fredericks Foundation	Business start-up support for disadvantaged groups	<a href="http://www.fredericksfoundation.org">www.fredericksfoundation.org</a>
Plunkett Foundation	Educational Charity supporting the development of rural group enterprise world-wide	<a href="http://www.plunkett.co.uk">www.plunkett.co.uk</a>
PRIME	Business start-up support for over 50s including access to finance and has CDFI facility	<a href="http://www.primeinitiative.org.uk">www.primeinitiative.org.uk</a>
Prince's Trust	National charity supporting young people into business, including social enterprise	<a href="http://www.princes-trust.org.uk">www.princes-trust.org.uk</a>
Law Society	Legal signposting	<a href="http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/home.law">http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/home.law</a>
Pro-Bono UK	May be able to offer free legal help for social enterprises	<a href="http://www.probonouk.net/">http://www.probonouk.net/</a>

The Big Lemon	Offers help, advice and support to anyone who wants to set up a similar initiative!	<a href="http://www.thebiglemon.com">http://www.thebiglemon.com</a>
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### Specific to 'type' of Social Enterprise

Organisation	Description	Web Link
Co-operatives UK	Body representing Co-Operatives	<a href="http://www.cooperatives-uk.coop">www.cooperatives-uk.coop</a>
Social Firms UK	Body representing Social Firms	<a href="http://www.socialfirms.co.uk/">www.socialfirms.co.uk/</a>
ABCUL	Body representing Credit Unions	<a href="http://www.abcul.coop">www.abcul.coop</a>
Development Trusts Association	Body representing Development Trusts	<a href="http://www.dta.org.uk">www.dta.org.uk</a>
National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)	Body representing Voluntary Sector	<a href="http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk">www.ncvo-vol.org.uk</a>
Food & local Agriculture Information Resource (FLAIR)	Body enabling the development of a national food links network	<a href="http://www.localfood.org.uk">www.localfood.org.uk</a>

### Models/Structures

Type	Organisation	Web Link
Limited Companies (Shares and Guarantee)	Companies House	<a href="http://www.companieshouse.gov.uk">www.companieshouse.gov.uk</a>
Community Interest Companies (CIC)	CIC Regulator	<a href="http://www.cicregulator.gov.uk">www.cicregulator.gov.uk</a>
	Companies House Business Link	<a href="http://www.companieshouse.gov.uk">www.companieshouse.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.businesslink.gov.uk">www.businesslink.gov.uk</a> - follow the links; Regulation Updates, Archived regulation, Updates, Creating a Community Interest Company
Industrial Provident Societies and Credit Unions	Financial Services Authority	<a href="http://www.fsa.gov.uk">www.fsa.gov.uk</a>
	Co-operatives UK for rules associated with IPS	<a href="http://www.cooperatives-uk.coop">www.cooperatives-uk.coop</a>



Charities	Charities Commission	<a href="http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk">www.charitycommission.gov.uk</a>
	Charities and Trading 'rules'	<a href="http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/publications/cc35.asp">www.charity-commission.gov.uk/publications/cc35.asp</a>

## Training

Organisation	Description	Web Link
School for Social Entrepreneurs	UK-wide programme for social entrepreneurs	<a href="http://www.sse.org.uk/">http://www.sse.org.uk/</a>
GoSkills:	Training provider for wide range of courses including Certificate of Professional Competence	<a href="http://www.goskills.org">http://www.goskills.org</a>
FTA	Training provider for wide range of courses including Certificate of Professional Competence	<a href="http://www.fta.co.uk/services/training/index.html">http://www.fta.co.uk/services/training/index.html</a>
Ladder for Learning	Online database of learning and training opportunities for community and voluntary groups in South East	<a href="http://www.ladder4learning.org.uk">www.ladder4learning.org.uk</a>

## Funding

Organisation/Scheme	Description	Web Link
Community Development Finance Institutions (CDFI)	Independent financial institutions providing capital and support to develop and create wealth in disadvantaged communities	<a href="http://www.cdfa.org.uk">www.cdfa.org.uk</a>
Credit Unions ABCUL	National body supporting Credit Unions	<a href="http://www.abcul.coop">www.abcul.coop</a>
Big Lottery Fund	Focus on voluntary and community sector infrastructure, children's play, environmental projects, well-being and international aid.	<a href="http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk">www.biglotteryfund.org.uk</a>
Carbon Trust:	Information and loans for energy-saving and CO2-reducing initiatives	<a href="http://www.carbontrust.co.uk/Pages/Default.aspx">http://www.carbontrust.co.uk/Pages/Default.aspx</a>

Bridges Community Ventures Ltd	Invests equity capital in SME's located in deprived wards and interested in Social Enterprises	<a href="http://www.bridgesventures.com">www.bridgesventures.com</a>
Venturesome Fund	Finance in the form of loans or equity, which can be used for income-generating activities for Charities	<a href="http://www.cafonline.org/default.aspx?page=6903">www.cafonline.org/default.aspx?page=6903</a>
Charity Bank	Makes loans to registered charities only.	<a href="http://www.charitybank.org">www.charitybank.org</a>
Futurebuilders	Fund that enables the voluntary and community sector to engage in the delivery of public services.	<a href="http://www.futurebuilders-england.org.uk">www.futurebuilders-england.org.uk</a>
Local Investment Fund	Provides loans to SMEs and social enterprises through a network of regional loan funds.	<a href="http://www.lif.org.uk">www.lif.org.uk</a>
Triodos Bank	Provides loans as well as arranging other forms of capital finance, including public equity offers. Specialises in supporting social and ethical firms and projects	<a href="http://www.tridos.co.uk">www.tridos.co.uk</a>
Unity Trust Bank	Owned by the trade union movement and has a track record of lending to social economy projects	<a href="http://www.unity.uk.com">www.unity.uk.com</a>
Industrial Common Ownership Finance Ltd	Established loan fund for social enterprises	<a href="http://www.icof.co.uk">www.icof.co.uk</a>
UnLtd	Provides grants to social entrepreneurs. Will support groups of social entrepreneurs under special circumstances	<a href="http://www.unltd.org.uk">www.unltd.org.uk</a>
The Scarman Trust	Funding opportunities for community projects	<a href="http://www.thescarmantrust.org/">http://www.thescarmantrust.org/</a>
Lloyds TSB Foundation	Grant-making trust for charities	<a href="http://www.lloydstsbfoundations.org.uk">www.lloydstsbfoundations.org.uk</a>
Percy Bilton Charity	Grants for charities that support people with disabilities – two types of	Tel: 020 8579 2829

	funding; Main funding – for major building/refurbs and Small Grants.	
Camelot Community Support Programme	Independent funds to unlock social innovation	<a href="http://www.camelotfoundation.org.uk">www.camelotfoundation.org.uk</a>
Architectural Heritage Fund	Grants for building preservation	<a href="http://www.ahfund.org.uk">www.ahfund.org.uk</a>
Impetus Trust	Long term funding and capacity building for larger charities	<a href="http://www.impetus.org.uk">www.impetus.org.uk</a>
European Funding	Click on the Community Initiatives link	<a href="http://www.gos.gov.uk/gol/European_funding/?a=42496">www.gos.gov.uk/gol/European_funding/?a=42496</a>
Government Office for the South East	Regional Government Office – including ESF funding	<a href="http://www.gos.gov.uk/gose">www.gos.gov.uk/gose</a>
Charities Information Bureau (CIB)	Resource for funding for Charities	<a href="http://www.cibfunding.org.uk">www.cibfunding.org.uk</a>
Baxi Partnership Ltd	Equity investment for employee-owned companies	<a href="http://www.baxipartnership.co.uk">www.baxipartnership.co.uk</a>
Goodwill Gallery	Donated products and services for Charities	<a href="http://www.goodwillgallery.co.uk/">http://www.goodwillgallery.co.uk/</a>
On-Line Grant Databases	For access to an on-line database of grants	<a href="http://www.i4b.co.uk">www.i4b.co.uk</a>
	Government Funding Database	<a href="http://www.governmentfunding.org.uk">www.governmentfunding.org.uk</a>
	Funder Finder	<a href="http://www.funderfinder.org.uk">www.funderfinder.org.uk</a>
	Access Funds website	<a href="http://www.access-funds.co.uk">www.access-funds.co.uk</a>
	Grants Net	<a href="http://www.grantsnet.co.uk">www.grantsnet.co.uk</a>
	Grants OnLine	<a href="http://www.grantsonline.org.uk">www.grantsonline.org.uk</a>
	Database of funding streams	<a href="http://www.trustfunding.org.uk">www.trustfunding.org.uk</a>
PRIME	Encourages business start-ups for over 50s including access to finance and has CDFI facility	<a href="http://www.primeinitiative.org.uk">www.primeinitiative.org.uk</a>
Prince's Trust	National charity supporting young people into business, including social enterprise	<a href="http://www.princes-trust.org.uk">www.princes-trust.org.uk</a>