

# BURWELL COMMUNITY PRINT



## Perfect Print

In the heart of a Cambridgeshire village, a social enterprise is providing training and work experience for people with learning disabilities, whilst providing high quality printing services and helping to build self confidence and esteem amongst its service users.

Burwell Community Print Centre Ltd, which began life in a Portakabin on the school site in 1988, was set up when interested individuals and representatives of organisations in the wider community identified a gap in work experience opportunities for people with learning disabilities in the area.

### The Printers

After a lengthy and successful fundraising campaign, the Print Centre moved to purpose built premises in 1999, still on the school site. It is now a thriving business, providing training and work experience for up to twenty five adults with learning disabilities, including some who also have physical disabilities and/or sensory impairment. The Printers (trainees), who attend one or two days a week, experience a variety of jobs; from working in reception and the Print Room, to customer service, stock control and doing some DIY and gardening to keep the Print Centre in good repair. People are also beginning to access training in their newest business venture of printing on mugs, T-shirts, bags, placemats.

Perfect Print are working in partnership with Cambridge Regional College to provide an accredited training programme; Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement. Many of the Printers complete certificated modules, providing them with transferable skills to help them to enter other voluntary work placements or open employment. The Printers also do one paid task each day and it is perhaps a symbol of their empowerment that they have recently asked the Trustees for a pay rise, which will be considered at the next Management Committee meeting.

## Social Enterprise Creative Industry Case Study

Burwell Print encourages everyone to be actively involved in all aspects of its operation and two Printers have seats on the Management Committee. Advocacy is encouraged and the Print Centre has an elected Member of the Speaking Up Parliament, helping to represent people with learning disabilities who attend this social training enterprise and others across the county.

and high standards in all our design and print service products which means that we tend to keep our customers and also get plenty of work referred to us by them” explains Sue. “Producing good quality work for the local community and beyond also helps to address stigma around people with learning disabilities and enables us to promote our ethos in terms of citizenship, rights and responsibilities.”

Refreshments left over from a fund-raising disco were the catalyst for the creation of a Tuck Shop for the Printers. Running it themselves, they are supported to buy and sell the stock. Developing money skills has brought its rewards, with the Printers choosing to purchase a new CD player and other items out of the profits.

### Developing the Business

Burwell Print is actively involved in STEnG, the Social Training Enterprise Group, a local partnership working with people who are disadvantaged within the labour market. STEnG members provide community based work experience and training. This membership enables Burwell Print to be part of joint funding bids, to share good practice and also gives much valued peer-to-peer support. “Sometimes it’s good to have somewhere you can go and have a quiet moan”, laughs Sue, who has been Manager for nearly six years.

### Secrets of Success

With printing firms facing immense competition as more advertising and communication is done over the internet, the manager Sue Anderson believes the careful management of development and growth has been a key contribution to sustainability. Burwell Print’s success is also due to their inclusiveness and the way the company is embedded in the local community. Of the Trustees, all but one live in Burwell, as do five of the six volunteers.

“We prioritise working with the community whenever possible and are seen as an extremely valued community resource, for all to be proud of. It’s a busy village with about a hundred small companies and we get work from a large number of them. We maintain excellent quality

One dilemma for Burwell Print is that they always have a waiting list for work experience places. “It would be good for social enterprises to be used more in public procurement, or for officers to split the really big jobs up, so we could compete for the work of local authorities.” says Sue. “I want to see the whole organisation grow and develop so that we all believe that we can make a real contribution to society”.





### Felixstowe Radio on the Suffolk Airwaves

A Suffolk coastal town has become a focal point for community radio, giving a voice to the town and providing local information for local people.

community action groups to have a voice; recently helping the “Save Felixstowe Countryside” campaign. It also supports other social enterprises with one of their more innovative programmes being “Charity Shop Challenge”.

Licenses are issued by Ofcom to cover very small geographical areas; Felixstowe has just obtained its FM broadcasting license, which has a radius of just 5K from its broadcasting base. As the number of community radio broadcast licenses grows to almost two hundred in the UK, some are branching out into TV and video.

#### Financial Sustainability

The broadcasting license for Community Radio stations stipulates that it must deliver social gain, rather than operate primarily for commercial reasons and only some of their revenue may be sought from advertising.

To help provide better opportunities for generating advertising revenue, Anglia Media Association has recently been formed to establish much needed training in creative media locally and create online tools as a support mechanism for radio professionals.

The average income for community radio stations is currently £66,500 a year (Ofcom), but some are as low as £6000.

Felixstowe started with private funds and donations of equipment and also received grants from several sources including ACRE and EEDA's Building Communities Programme, which in addition to contracted work from people like HMRC, has provided income.

As a move towards sustainability Felixstowe Radio is about to move into retail; renting a shop from the

Co-op to sell sheet music, musical instruments and CD's. This will provide valuable income for the radio station also support the growing number of local musicians who use Felixstowe Radio as a show case for their work.

[www.felixstoweradio.co.uk](http://www.felixstoweradio.co.uk)

#### Diverse FM, Luton

Diverse FM, a company Limited by Guarantee is a community radio station that reaches out to the diverse community of Luton. The station engages with all groups including black ethnic minorities, disabled people, the unemployed, asylum seekers and lone parents.

The station's aim is to act as a voice of the local people and to promote a positive image of Luton and its cultural mix to encourage community cohesion. Providing a diverse programme includes Ashuk Ahmed with his “Bangla Mix” to Mintu with “Rnb, HipHop and Asian Flavours”. In an eclectic mix of cultures, Polish and Irish interests sit alongside Classic Soul. They also offer accredited training to unemployed young people sixteen to nineteen years old in Radio Broadcasting and Presenting.

#### Saint FM Community, Essex

Across the region in Essex, Saint FM Community Radio, based at the High school in Burnham-on-Crouch, has students from schools around the Maldon District broadcasting their own shows. They also cater for the older generation in their programme “The Old Biddies”; a show for women of a certain age.

Serving the community and broadcasting 24 hours a day, Felixstowe Radio boasts an impressive programme list; from its religious content “Felixstowe Faith”, to drama and short stories, to its very own soap “Jewels of Suffolk”.

Broadcasting via internet and mobile phone networks Felixstowe Radio Community Interest Company was formed in 2007. It now has a talented team of individuals, from top sound engineers to ex producers of TV programmes such as Spitting Image. Over 70 volunteers are involved with programme productions.

#### Opportunities for community action groups

Working with the wider community the radio station has created a social network for Seeing Is Believing, Prince Charles' Business Engagement Program, which provides training and skills for category D prisoners at Hollesley Bay. Felixstowe Radio also provides opportunities for



## For Empowerment and Social Change

opportunities for exploration and self discovery. Annual public performances, devised from material put forward by the participants during workshops, have received high acclaim, changing attitudes towards disability and creating positive images within the community.

### Financial sustainability

Thalia's reputation as a unique and well-managed company has enabled it to overcome the main challenges of financing and sustaining a growing business. Income from performances, workshops, consultancy, direct payments and individual budgets, plus donations, sale of Thalia merchandise and some volunteer time, have provided sufficient resources for Thalia to have a secure base from which to expand its work.

With so many arts organisations struggling to survive, Thalia's growth and proven sustainability is impressive. "It's all about good team work", explains Molly. "There is no hierarchy here, we are all equal and have mutual respect".

As a registered charity, a Board of Trustees supports Molly's role. "The charity status has helped us," says Molly. "Everyone understands the value of our work and we are able to access funding more easily".

### Referrals

Due to the vulnerable nature of Thalia members the company takes its 'Duty of Care' very seriously and has a notable bank of policies and procedures, which enable the theatre to accept referrals from social services and further education providers such as City College Norwich.

### Reputation

"We are well known throughout the Eastern region as a professional, high achieving organisation that operates best practice and offers rich learning experiences," Molly.

Thalia Theatre Company, formed in 2004 by social entrepreneur Molly Rose-Hutchinson, provides an educational arts related learning facility for disabled people with physical and sensory impairments and learning difficulties in particular.

Through a blend of arts-related learning, outreach, workshops and performances, it has given a voice to those previously unheard, with physical theatre used as a tool for communication rather than relying on the spoken word.

Members (service users) of the company aged 19 and over meet weekly in Norwich and Dereham to develop interpersonal skills, independence and promote self esteem. The environment is safe and secure with everyone treated with respect and dignity, providing

### Partnership working

They work in partnership with other theatres, sometimes involving puppet making and performance, arts organisations, schools, colleges and the University of East Anglia. They also work with other local charities such as the Hamlet Centre Trust where they recently collaborated with the "Yoghurt Collective" to create soundtracks to support performance.

Throughout the year, Thalia take part in festivals and other events, and hold residencies in collaboration with other professional artists such as Rambert Dance and disabled visual artist Tanya Raabe, winner of the DaDa Fest International 08 Visual Arts Award.

"I just love it working with Thalia members," says Tanya. "The pool of creativity is immense. Thalia is like one big hug!"

### Flourishing Future

Future plans include further development of their community outreach programme to include some Thalia 'Roadshows', expansion of their service into Great Yarmouth, and a push towards acquiring their own premises in Norwich, to enable them to develop and diversify their range of services.

[www.thaliatheatre.co.uk](http://www.thaliatheatre.co.uk)

"Thalia" is the Greek muse of comedy and poetry, to "flourish and bloom", and the Thalia Theatre Company is doing just that; empowering communities to work towards a just and equal society where everyone's talents and skills are recognised and valued.



## A gem of an idea

Businesswoman, Ekky Archibong, Creative Director of Neomari, first turned to craft as a means of sustenance after deciding to work part-time in her building society job. Paying for childcare for three young children meant home working was the best option for Ekky. She initially began making jewellery for giving as gifts to friends and family, but then developed the idea as a business. Despite having little business acumen at that stage, Ekky found her ethnic jewellery business worked well, and provided a steady income that enabled her to balance her working life with responsibilities at home.

Ekky, was community focussed and immediately realised

there must be other women with creative skills, who, because of language barriers or child care problems, had to stay at home with little or no income of their own. With the help of Harrow Council Ekky organised a hugely popular bead craft workshop, which was quickly over-subscribed. Ekky began running more craft workshops and, following completion of a five day business skills course, added business skills workshops, to encourage women to start their own businesses.

Through mentoring, signposting, networking and work with craft workers, Neomari promotes and develops people's skills. They often bridge the gap between grassroots and mainstream organisations, to use creative skills to help build a healthier and safer environment for people in the community.

"One woman who came on the jewellery course has transferred her skills and now owns a successful cake decorating business. Another lady opened up an alteration and dress making business three years ago and now employs three people", explained Ekky.

Neomari works in partnership with external agencies such as Exemplas, Business Link and Wenta to provide training and consultancy. Through Neomari Bead craft (the trading arm of Neomari) women can sell on their website, with some income coming back to support the social enterprise.

Neomari is also involved in Family Learning and Family Welfare programmes running themed workshops. They also provide an event management, research and promotion service for the creative industry.

### Worldwide Links

Ekky organises foreign group exchanges to share skills and has run various Lottery funded projects. Neomari

aims to promote the ethos of social entrepreneurship within migrant and ethnic minority communities, helping to create collaborative partnerships not only in the UK but also in Eastern Europe and Africa.

Ekky's fellow Director of Neomari, Ayoka Tamuno, lives in Poland. Following an invitation to attend the European International Craft Fair, Neomari have active links with The Centre for Folk Art Production, a craft school in Bratislava, a collaboration made possible with help from East of England International.

### Financial sustainability

Neomari is still growing, and whilst Ekky works full time, all other workers are subcontractors. Already 40% of its income is through trading, workshops and consultancy. "I would like to have this at 70%", explains Ekky, who has plans to eventually have a dedicated website manager to increase trade.

"My dream is to open a craft retreat for bead craft holidays in a leafy place, where people can come and relax, with a gallery and workshop. And then take it out to communities in Africa, Spain and Poland", she explains.

The economic value of creative Industries in the Eastern region is estimated at over £7 billion, yet this small social enterprise in Watford, proves that creative skills are worth much more than merely pounds sterling; not only enriching communities in the East of England, but across the world.

[www.neomari.com](http://www.neomari.com)

# OTHER SEEE MEMBERS WORKING IN THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES SECTOR

## Bedford Creative Arts

An educational charity that promotes contemporary visual arts; specialising in work that includes an element of film, photography or animation.

[www.bedfordcreativearts.org.uk](http://www.bedfordcreativearts.org.uk)

## Graphic Design and Print CIC

Registered with the UK Register of Learning Providers; a graphic design and printing company employing people with learning disabilities, providing modern apprenticeships and training.

[www.gdpcic.com](http://www.gdpcic.com)

## Community Music East Limited

Providing music and multimedia activities for a diverse range of people, with a team of tutors and office staff who are dedicated to offering new and exciting learning opportunities.

[www.cme.org.uk](http://www.cme.org.uk)

## Goldhay Arts

A charity offering adults with learning disabilities the opportunity to train and develop their artistic skills and interests in the performing and visual arts.

## Social Enterprise Creative Industry Case Study

### Inspire

A leading arts organisation working primarily within Cambridgeshire, committed to the promotion of the value of the arts within a holistic approach to health.

[www.inspire.org.uk](http://www.inspire.org.uk)

### Quay Theatre

An arts centre offering a range of theatre and film classes for young people and others.

[www.quaytheatre.org.uk](http://www.quaytheatre.org.uk)

### Produced in Norfolk

A co-operative of rural art and craft people working to protect traditional skills and knowledge; helping to protect rural jobs and sustain isolated rural communities.

[www.producedinnorfolk.com](http://www.producedinnorfolk.com)

### The Bridge Project Sudbury

Vocational training, education and employment opportunities for adults who face multiple disadvantage through their learning, physical and or 'hidden' disabilities.

[www.thebridgeproject.co.uk](http://www.thebridgeproject.co.uk)

### Workwise (Suffolk) Ltd

An emerging Social Firm with additional craft and training facilities, providing work-based rehabilitation for adults who are recovering from various forms of mental health problems.

[www.workwisesuffolk.org.uk](http://www.workwisesuffolk.org.uk)