

AT A GLANCE

AIM – To change the world for the better ! By enabling people in communities to take control of spaces and places that are important to them and create their own 'local wealth' through inclusion, enterprise and seriously fun collaboration.

OUR SOLUTION

Sharing what CBS's are and helping people to set them up! If you have never heard of a CBS you might want to read our 'What is a CBS' paper.

Our concept paper on Transforming Communities is attached

WHAT CAN WE OFFER

- An introductory chat
- An initial workshop for groups
- Support to access funding to progress your CBS
- Our experiences of 'community transformation' blog

WHAT WE ARE WORKING ON

- A CBS Handbook for sharing
- A place based approach – in Coalville – Come and visit!

PRICE :

Free introductory chat and blog. £300 for introductory workshop. Talk to us about follow on support packages available.

WHAT TO EXPECT : An insight into these unique legal vehicles that have the power to do what's much talked about – but less often seen - hand power over to the people!

WHAT YOU WILL LEAVE WITH : Understanding about what a CBS is, why you want one and how to go about creating one.

WHO IS IT FOR?

Any person, group or organisation that wants genuine community control and believes in the solutions to positive social transformation are all around us locked into the strengths and passions of local people.

CONTACT:

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WHAT AM I?

I give legitimate power to the people
I thrive on sharing and trust
I'm an entity that's tried and tested
To know me, you'll see, is a must

Through my unique and open share offer
I contribute to a communities health
Securing buildings, and assets and spaces
Establishing a genuine common wealth

Self - help, I empower people to strive for
Responsibility, I support people to take
Through solidarity and making connections
Stronger communites I help to create

I'm independent and owned by my members
Through equality everyone has a say
This workshop'll show how I'll help you
Everyone's welcome - come learn the CBS way



THINK FC

• People • Place • Potential

Concept Paper for Transforming Communities

The aim is to develop an approach which over time makes a significant and measurable difference in the wellbeing and prosperity of a community, building on the strengths of each community, being transparent and replicable.

Our approach is being developed in Coalville, Leicestershire. Working with people from the community, investors and other stakeholders – aiming for sustainability and building long term relationships.

Context

There have been many years of ‘interventions’ in communities. There is a general recognition of the need for a different approach by many involved with community businesses and the social economy. There are numerous articles, networks and research findings agreeing there needs to be a relationship focussed, asset-based approach over years to make a community wide and sustainable impact.

Our impression is, for understandable reasons, focus, activity and funding has gone into those areas with an existing lead or anchor organisation with pre-existing relationships.

This has significantly limited the potential of making positive long-term change in most communities. A brief paper cannot be fully nuanced. Many of the current approaches do not include developing the capacity of those ‘worked with’ and focus instead on finding people ‘in need’ and helping them. Many of the current approaches rely on having an active and ‘on board’ local council. In a conversation with one of the key organisations when asked “what if your council is not leading on this agenda the reply was that’s unlucky, we don’t know”

Challenge

THINK FC are committed to taking up the challenge of how do you make this sustainable change without an existing social economy eco-system nor an existing lead anchor organisation.

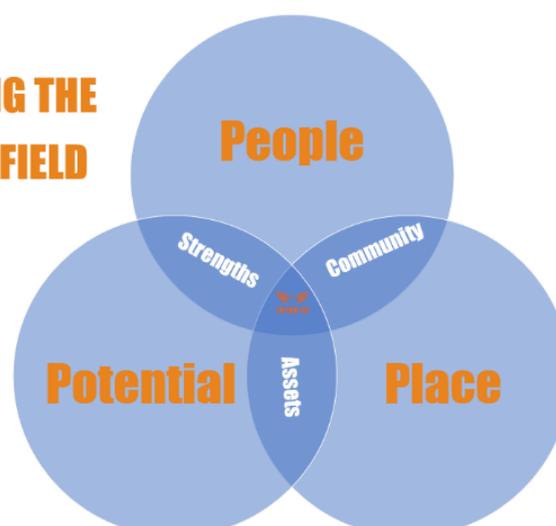
THINK FC is a co-operative community business that aims to level the playing field. It enables people to make better decisions that lead to a sustainable difference when combined with community owned and/or managed asset and activities.

THINK FC is inspired by the Co-operative Values and Principles, Asset Based Community Development (ABCD), the Be More Pirate movement and the ideas of a Positive Revolution.

Our Model of

Understanding

**LEVELLING THE
PLAYINGFIELD**



Community readiness

Sustainable change needs motivation, a strong reason why, combined with the self-belief, knowledge, skills and understanding to make a difference. It needs people willing to take on accountable leadership roles, positively working with others and to take responsibility and action.

These habits are best done at the pace of each community; people respond best when given genuine decision making and responsibility, building on their strengths.

Eco-system and Community Business Development

Our aim is to develop a way of working in a specific place, over the long term, to support community businesses as part of an approach of developing community well-being and wealth building. The specifics of any place-based approach must be rooted in the specific community. The precise recipe for each place will be different and shaped by that community with its unique strengths and opportunities.

Community Benefit Societies (CBS) are THINK FC's default structure for lasting community engagement, giving people a direct say in the economic and social life of their community.

People need self-belief, resources, ideas and networks to thrive.

- **Working together:** long term relationships with local “anchor” organisations, strategic partners and strengthened relationships with existing and emerging community minded organisations; not seeking to duplicate or supplant what is already strong.
- **Fair jobs**, a key sustainability approach is to create fair jobs.
- **A community voice for community assets**, local communities should have a voice in how assets and services work in their community.
- **Make money work locally over the long term;** look for longer term financial commitments from social investors, grant bodies, public and private sector.
- **Shop local;** include businesses and anchor institutions. Develop local supply chains.

How this might work for an Ecosystem in Coalville

The plan is to set up a CBS for Coalville, which will hold the contractual relationships for assets and provide services. A CBS offers many benefits not least allowing people and communities to develop their democratic “muscles” and offering a vehicle for community ownership for people and organisations

The aim is to develop several projects that are place specific and work around the overarching wellbeing theme coming together with the concept of a circular economy. The strengths and opportunities of each place will shape the mix. Community life is diverse and includes the high street, culture, sport and community; housing, energy solutions, learning and food. Each element will be viable and self-managing and part of the CBS as equal partners. Any surpluses pooled in a Community Wealth Fund, run by the CBS members.

Each element will be majority run by local people. THINK FC will remain a partner / mentor, developing the ‘tool kit’ to share with others and be able to use the learning from Coalville.

We are inviting people to form long term partnerships and relationships anticipated to last at least ten years around financing and ways of working in the development, learning and sharing.

Contributions and conversations are invited...