

# Social Value in Salford



## **CASE STUDIES – Measuring and Evaluating for Social Value**

### **Get into Reading initiative in Wirral, Merseyside – an example of evaluation**

Get into Reading is a social inclusion shared reading project, based on a collective reading model in group settings which was developed by The Reader Organisation (TRO). The initiative aims to improve mental wellbeing, extend reading pleasure and build community cohesion through shared reading. In weekly groups, short stories, novels and poems are read aloud, with pauses for group discussion and shared personal responses. The project has been running since 2002, and now has 362 groups across the country, including more than 100 on the Wirral.

This evaluation aimed to explore the impact and social value of Get into Reading on its stakeholders, specifically focusing on the health and wellbeing changes brought about as a direct result of engagement in the project. A social return on investment (SROI) analysis was used to determine the impact and social value of the initiative and the health and wellbeing implications for all service users and providers, including volunteers, facilitators and partner organisations.

As a result of the confidence gained from their Get into Reading sessions, many group attendees felt empowered by their own achievements and had become involved in volunteering within their own communities. Many donated both time and effort to their reading groups, or to other, usually third sector, organisations. Some stakeholders had progressed to find paid employment as a result of the new skills and confidence and because of the experience they had gained through Get into Reading. Moreover, many of the benefits were experienced by all group members, irrespective of their individual needs or personal circumstances.

### **Local providers – examples of measurement and reporting on Social Value**

**Unlimited Potential (UP)** uses a range of tools and techniques to measure social value, including:

# Social Value

## in Salford



- **Outcome monitoring:** All services have a primary focus on outcomes from activities - the differences made to people's lives - rather than outputs (the 'deliverable' products from a process). This is a responsibility of each service manager, together with their team.
- **Social accounting and audit:** The organisation produces social accounts each year, led by its Positive Impact Committee and using the framework provided by the Social Audit Network. The draft accounts are audited by a social auditor together with a social audit panel of independent people. The aim is to prove our value and improve our performance and impact. UP seeks views from clients, customers, members, staff and volunteers, using a range of survey and feedback techniques, both quantitative and qualitative.
- **Social return on investment:** UP has been involved with two SROI processes. The most recent was on their Host service with the Local Involvement Network (LINK). This involved the commissioner (Salford City Council), Host staff, LINK steering group members and health and social care providers.

**Social AdVentures** - has incorporated social, environmental and economic value into its Annual report and used Social Return on Investment to measure its social value.

**Big Life Group** - publishes a series of Impact Reports which describe the social, environmental and economic value of each part of its business.

**City West Housing Trust** - has just published its first set of social accounts and have used the HACT (Housing Associations' Charitable Trust) wellbeing measures described below under 'useful resources'

**..and others nationally include:**

**Furniture Resource Centre, Liverpool** - The whole purpose of FRC Group is to make a difference to people's lives, to create a social impact. They have a strong commitment to their "Proving It" agenda because this is how they give information to

# Social Value

## in Salford



all the people that they matter to and who matter to them - customers, partners, staff, trainees, work placements, volunteers and trustees and a whole host of interested academics, politicians, civil servants and opinion makers - they provide regular information about the social impact that we are creating.

"Proving It" is about understanding the impact that they make, measuring our impacts, setting stretching targets for improvement and valuing what matters to the people who matter. The nuts and bolts of "Proving It" is about collecting information from their activities and using it to tell their story. The result is information that helps to reward and motivate staff for their hard work and passion.

**Traidcraft** - were one of the pioneers of social accounting and have published social accounts for over 20 years. They have recently published their 2014 performance and impact report.

**Neuro-Muscular Centre, Cheshire** - NMC are a small charity which focuses on providing support for people with neuro-muscular disease. They have reported on their social value for about 10 years, using social accounting, and report that they feel that they understand their stakeholders much better as a result, and have been able to raise additional funds as a direct result of this. They have also set up a social enterprise which employs people suffering from neuro-muscular disease who provide design and print services.