



COMMUNITY LOAN FINANCE
FOUNDED 1996

GOOD NEWS

FOR A CHANGE!

Summer 2019

Help us plan for the future!

REMINDER, if you have not done so already, please complete this brief survey - it only takes a few minutes.

Clann Credo - Community Loan Finance aims to enhance its social impact in the coming years.

If you are one of the many people who have already completed the survey, than you very much.

Your responses will help us to find out how we can improve our services and better meet the needs of communities across Ireland. And you could win €250 you for your favourite charity or community group.

Clann Credo is asking its community and partners to take an active part in designing its future by participating in a strategic planning process.

The survey is available until July 31st and is open to anyone, including customers, community members, other agency partners and supporters.

Click [HERE](#) to access the survey

Thank you for taking the time to help us create our strategic plan. We appreciate your interest and assistance!

The National Social Enterprise Policy is here!

Minister Michael Ring T.D. launched Ireland's first ever Social Enterprise Policy in Speedpak last Thursday. He said that the policy is designed to provide support in 3 key areas: building awareness, fostering growth and improving policy alignment.

"This is a landmark day for social enterprise in Ireland. It is an unprecedented opportunity for social enterprise to be developed, for the first time, in a coordinated and integrated way alongside other initiatives to support organisations that are providing services to communities or tackling social and socio-economic issues."

I am delighted to be able to publish this National Social Enterprise Policy for Ireland which will enable social enterprise to grow in scale, support jobs, and make a positive impact on individuals and communities in both rural and urban areas."

Our CEO, Paul O'Sullivan responding said, I wish to publicly acknowledge and thank Minister Ring, whose commitment to the development of rural and urban communities resulted in the government, for the first time ever, adopting a clear policy for social enterprise development. Clann Credo established the Social Enterprise Task Force (SETF) ten years ago and we are delighted to be here today to see the SETF's research and advocacy finally paying off.

He continued "The establishment of a National Social Enterprise Policy Implementation Group is the key to the next stage; its implementation. By bringing social enterprise stakeholders together, the Implementation Group will provide the necessary coordination to ensure the actions detailed in the policy are implemented.

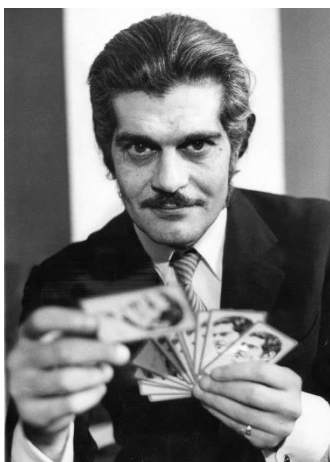


"While appropriate funding will be needed to assist social enterprise development, the commitment to provide a coordinated range of non-cash supports is an equally important element.

Synchronising and aligning the activities of the social enterprise stakeholders who currently give such support has the potential to deliver a lot of benefit to social enterprise development. For example, Local Development Companies working in collaboration with national support organisations, are ideally placed to deliver support for local social enterprise development.

You can get the full policy document here: [National Social Enterprise Policy for Ireland 2019-2022](#)

Associated Bridge Clubs of Drogheda – House of Cards



Omar Sharif was perhaps its most debonair exponent, but the late Hollywood star was in good company. Former general and US president Dwight Eisenhower was a regular player while, in more recent years, Martina Navratilova, Bill Gates, investor Warren Buffet and rock band Radiohead have all spoken of their passion for the game of Bridge.

Less a pastime than a way of life, Bridge is amongst the most enduringly popular of all card games, with regular tournaments played in dozens of countries across the globe and millions of players worldwide.

Included in that number are some 300 residents of Drogheda and the surrounding areas, all members of the seven bridge clubs that cater for the town and the wider region.

However, that popularity has created its own unique pressures not least the need to secure suitable, accessible spaces in which local devotees can meet and play.

On a weekly basis, up to 200 members and players had little choice but to make do with an array of rented rooms, hotels and quiet spaces in local bars. In many instances, poor accessibility and lack of parking forced older members to walk considerable distances to the venues.

The absence of suitable space not only made it difficult for existing members, especially those with an older age profile, but it was also less inviting and attractive for newer members to take up the game.

In pursuit of a solution to their common problem, the town's seven bridge clubs pooled their resources and the Associated Bridge Clubs was born.

In their search for a suitably sized and centrally located premises the Association came upon an old ESB warehouse in Drogheda, which they subsequently acquired. Plans were immediately drawn up to transform the building into a modern, accessible space that could cater comfortably for all clubs and members.

However, financing the modernisation and rebuild proved more difficult and the association approached Clann Credo for support.

A careful evaluation of the project revealed major social dividends for the 300 plus club members and the wider community, along with the undoubted economic benefits that a thriving club would deliver to the local economy.



Before



After



Today's vibrant centre!

‘A new way forward’ – the role of social enterprise in supporting employment of people with convictions.

“I wanted to change my life, but I didn’t think anyone would give me a chance.” This is a quote from a former prisoner that stuck in the ears of Siobhán Cafferty, the Social Enterprise Project Manager with the Irish Prison and Probation Service on her visit to a mattress recycling social enterprise in Cork. While Peter (not his real name) described his turbulent journey through alcohol addiction and various terms in prison, his tone changed as he talked about the positive impact getting a job in the social enterprise had on not only his life but that of his children too. This interaction with Peter confirms that social enterprises can and do play a crucial role in increasing employment opportunities for people who have found it difficult to secure work as a result of their criminal record. They provide a vital place of transition for people following their release from prison or on completion of their Probation sanction. Despite having the skills and training, some employers still find it difficult to see past a person’s criminal conviction; social enterprises help to address this.

Peter, a 38 year old father of three, had been in and out of prison all his adult life with many of his convictions the result of his alcohol addiction. He spoke of how everything started to slot into place once he had been given a chance to use the skills he had learned while in prison in this social enterprise (SE). After six months of working in the SE, he was headhunted by a local business where he has been employed full time for 18 months now. The employer to employer reference cannot be underestimated. The SE allowed him to get his foot on the employment ladder and from there, he proved himself as a trustworthy, hardworking and reliable employee. An additional bonus of having job security is that Peter has also remained abstinent since his release from prison.

Leading the way – Generating new thinking

For the past two years, the Department of Justice and Equality (DOJE) have been leading the way in supporting the development of social enterprise here in Ireland. In recognition of the positive impact that securing employment plays on reducing re-offending rates and creating safer communities, the DOJE developed and published Ireland’s first social enterprise strategy in May, 2017¹. The principal theme of the strategy is that people with education and training, who are in work, are less likely to offend.

Example of a participating Social Enterprise - The Mug Shot



The Mug Shot is a new mobile coffee cart built and operated by PACE social enterprise. It sells top quality, ethically sourced coffee and snacks and is located in the carpark of the Four Courts. The coffee is prepared by trained Baristas and rivals any coffee shop across Ireland. It just so happens that the Mug Shot also employs people who have been in prison. (<https://pacesocialenterprise.ie/>)

Could your social enterprise, business or community group employ people with convictions?

If you are an employer and are looking for trained, skilled employees, please get in touch with the SE Project Manager, Siobhán Cafferty: siobhan@bridge.ie or 087 202 6441.

Financial incentives are available to employers recruiting from this cohort of people.

¹ <http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/A New Way Forward - Social Enterprise Strategy 2017-2019.pdf/Files/A New Way Forward - Social Enterprise Strategy 2017-2019.pdf>



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Clann Credo Company Limited by Guarantee is a self-financing not-for-profit organisation service the community, voluntary and charity sectors. All its capital comes from private sources; religious charities and the retail banking sector through the Social Finance Foundation (SFF). The interest paid on its socially directed investments covers its operational costs.

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