

PROVIDING EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR OFFENDERS

GROWING SUSTAINABLE WORK INTEGRATION SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

A CASE STUDIES SERIES



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The views expressed in these case studies are those of the respective organisations and the publication of the case studies should not be viewed as an endorsement of these organisations and their work by the Home Office and Ministry of Justice. The data and statistics presented within the case studies have been locally collected and cannot be verified by the Home Office, Clinks and Social Firms UK.

Background

Low qualifications and lack of employment are recognised within the Government's strategy for *Transforming Rehabilitation* as key social issues related to re-offending.*

Some local areas have already developed social enterprises as one way to overcome barriers around the employability of ex-offenders. However at the time of writing there is currently very little that brings together learning or examples of effective practice to assist others in doing this.

Recognising this gap, the Home Office commissioned a short term programme of work undertaken in February and March 2013 by Clinks and Social Firms UK.

The programme set out to explore and assess the role of social enterprises in enabling both adult and young offenders to access training and employment opportunities. The results provide a body of work that will significantly contribute to cross-Government thinking about how to embed and support social enterprises working with offenders. The programme included two elements:

- The development and publication of this series of twenty Case Studies. The social enterprises featured in the case study series were invited, following a competitive application process, to write about their own experiences and insights into the opportunities and barriers confronting their development and sustainability.
- A Summary Report which brings together the key learning about developing and sustaining social enterprises offering employment and employability training to offenders.

Together they provide a valuable resource for newly established social enterprises, for those planning to establish social enterprises, for police, prisons and probation providers, for Police and Crime Commissioners, for local Integrated Offender Management (IOM) partnerships, and for policy makers.

These resources also complement previous work undertaken in partnership between Clinks and the Home Office aimed at increasing the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector's involvement in local IOM arrangements.

* Ministry of Justice. May 2013. *Transforming Rehabilitation: A Strategy for Reform*: www.justice.gov.uk/transforming-rehabilitation

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Building social enterprises focused on providing employment and training opportunities for offenders

CASE STUDY

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CORNWALL
FOUNDATION of PROMISE
inspiring young people

Jamie Oliver's
FIFTEEN
CORNWALL

Introduction

Fifteen Cornwall and the Cornwall Foundation of Promise have welcomed one hundred and twenty young people to its kitchen as apprentice chefs. None of them were in education, training or employment, yet of those that graduated in a seven year period over 90% are still in full time employment, 70% as chefs. Some are now Head Chefs in their own right.

Despite working forty-eight hours a week for a year in a commercial restaurant environment while studying at Cornwall College on day release, eighty of these young people have completed this gruelling programme. This high success rate depends on the unique Fifteen balance of intensive chef training combined with a tailored personal development and support Welfare Programme.

Around a third of Fifteen Cornwall trainees have a background of offending behaviour, and choose the Fifteen programme to focus on the effect that cooking and learning to be a professional chef can have on their personal development and rehabilitation. The case study focuses on how the Fifteen programme, particularly the welfare component, addresses the following questions:

- What are the main obstacles to helping offenders into employment?
- How can offenders be supported?
- What are some of the barriers to developing a sustainable social enterprise initiative in providing employment and training opportunities?
- How can social enterprises build stronger links with the private sector and local businesses to provide further pathways into employment?
- Where are the success stories and how transferable is our experience?

Background

Fifteen Cornwall is a high-end restaurant in a stunning beachside location that trains disadvantaged 16-24 year olds from Cornwall to become professional chefs. Owned by the charity the Cornwall Foundation of Promise, and operated under franchise to Jamie Oliver's Better Food Foundation, the restaurant is a social enterprise that believes food skills are essential life skills and uses them and the magic of food to inspire and empower young people.

Established in May 2006, Fifteen Cornwall's business model is of a commercial restaurant operating as a charity subsidiary serving over seventy thousand diners a year and passing 100% net profits up to the parent charity. This profit covers the majority of the training and welfare costs of helping ten to twenty young people per year to become chefs. The balance of those costs is met through public contracts to Jobcentre Plus and partners.

The commercial business and charity relationship, although very successful, contains a tension: between delivering excellent food and a great experience to customers on the one hand, and training individuals with multiple complex needs on the other. Resolving this tension is a day to day leadership challenge for restaurant managers and senior chefs alike, but this resolution gives the restaurant a unique ethos that makes it a more rewarding place to work and dine.

Fifteen Cornwall has always worked with young people facing diverse challenging situations and who are in great need of focus to turn their lives around. We have worked in the past with young

people with mental health issues, including bi-polar disorder, depression and eating disorders. We have also worked with people who have addictions to drugs and alcohol. Usually offending and antisocial behaviour are linked with a number of those issues and many of our young people have a criminal record or have experienced these problems at some point in their lives.

Our experience: Fifteen Cornwall

We select around thirty young people for each intake. We use a variety of techniques, methods and practical qualification to address the issues faced by our trainees. We provide professional training and a recognised qualification at Cornwall College; all our students obtain a VRQ Level 1 in Catering Studies, a pre-requisite for working in the kitchen and for coming on to the Fifteen programme. From those thirty we select between ten and twenty young people to join the main Fifteen Cornwall programme, where they have on the job training alongside weekly day release to college to complete their NVQ Level 2.

We provide one-to-one training in the kitchen that provides a regimented and structured programme which helps trainees with focus. We organise trips to source ingredients as well as work placements in other restaurants to help with social integration and providing pathways onto employment. Alongside the development of vocational skills, we run a Welfare Programme that tackles challenging behavioural issues which would otherwise get in the way of the apprentices' learning. The complete package works to help the young people to confront the past and look to the future, with the various approaches helping them to make positive steps towards employment and improved wellbeing.

The restaurant kitchen serves as a training environment where the professional chef brigade provides one-to-one training to the apprentices, facilitated by our specialist Training and Development Chefs. In this pressurised learning environment, where the highest standards of quality and consistency of food and service are expected, our welfare support is key to keeping the apprentices engaged, dealing with both planned interventions and reacting to sudden situations.

The combination of high expectations and a package of bespoke support, together with the 'Jamie magic', drives fundamental attitude and behaviour changes for the apprentices who move away from their previous offending behaviours. These changes enable them to move into skilled and sustainable employment.

At Fifteen, we build constant relationships and links with the private sector and local businesses, which has positive outcomes for the apprenticeship programme. Throughout the year our apprentices take part in a variety of work experience and placement options including learning skills in baking, butchery and fish preparation. Towards the end of their time they are placed in some of the country's best restaurants, to gain further experience and employment opportunities. During the year, our apprentices are encouraged to manage their own enterprises at our farmers markets. We run a Lord Sugar 'apprentice' style challenge, where our apprentices work in teams, creating and designing their own food offer to be sold at the markets, with a prize for the winning group. These types of challenges broaden horizons and stimulate young people to have entrepreneurial ideas whilst also breaking down barriers and negative feelings.

Securing good quality job opportunities for offenders can present some obstacles. Many apprentices are apprehensive about applying for jobs, and in particular they worry about

Disclosure and Barring (formerly Criminal Records Bureau) checks being a barrier to them applying for jobs. These and other perceptions can cause negative thinking, low self-esteem and depression, which can cause setbacks preventing them from securing employment.

Fifteen Cornwall supports young people through these difficulties using a multiple range of methods which help them back into employment. The training in the kitchen in a public facing environment gives them a sense of empowerment and confidence. Training at Cornwall College gives them professional qualifications (NVQ L2) which enable them to move forward in their careers and quantify their level of expertise. Our welfare support helps them by reinforcing their confidence and we also work on any other issues they may face, helping them to engage with full time employment and society.

Working in a rural environment, transport costs can be a significant barrier to participation and the charity can spend as much as £100,000 each year to get apprentices from home to work and college. Although the costs seem high, it is a vital part of engaging with them and assisting our young people into employment. Without this provision, most would certainly not successfully complete the programme. Long journey times make the programme even more demanding.

Fifteen Cornwall has so far recruited one hundred and seventy-six young people to Cornwall College (where the majority completed their VRQ Level 1 in Catering Studies) and recruited one hundred and twenty-nine of those to the Fifteen Cornwall kitchen. Of these eighty-six graduates, 72% are still cheffing and over 90% are in full time employment (seven have lost contact). Of the apprentices recruited to the kitchen there have been forty-five offenders and of those only 10% of graduates have re-offended.

There are several positive outcomes for our apprentices. They gain a sense of belonging within the team and an identity being a chef and having a profession. Getting into a routine, building relationships and performing under pressure helps young people to deal with stress and gives them a sense of achievement which they may have never had before. A large number of the offenders Fifteen has dealt with have mental health issues. The programme can help to lift depression, improve confidence, develop motivation and enthusiasm whilst also creating a renewed sense of purpose and drive to achieve. Certain sessions have a specific focus on helping to eliminate offending behaviours, including sessions on making positive change, beliefs and motivation, taking different perspectives and drug and alcohol information.

Fifteen Cornwall has found that the hardest-to-reach people and those with the most chequered backgrounds tend to generate the greatest success stories. For them, Fifteen presents an enormous opportunity, being given the chance to prove themselves and focus their lives on something positive. The practical learning offers cooking as a therapy and allows them to escape the negative and to focus on something they are good at. The majority of our apprentices failed at school as they have better practical skills rather than academic abilities.

Another benefit of the Fifteen approach is the impact on the local economy. In a seasonal tourist economy the restaurant would not be open all year round if it were not for the training programme, so a key achievement has been the creation of seventy-five full time jobs in an area of high unemployment. Similarly, by buying over 70% of the produce served in the restaurant in Cornwall, and by engaging apprentices with those producers on regular sourcing trips, Fifteen Cornwall assists in local economic development as well as offender re-integration.

Key learning

Our Welfare Programme has been vital to Fifteen Cornwall's success and the key learning has been the importance of providing a linked up programme that caters to the needs of the people we are working with. Offering training, work experience and welfare support together helps offenders address all issues which may in the past have acted as barriers to their success. Keeping the programme varied helps to keep their enthusiasm and interest, and prevents some young people from failing and not successfully completing the programme.

Some amendments were made to our Welfare Programme which initially only began when the apprentices started in the Fifteen Cornwall kitchen, rather than when they first engaged with Fifteen starting their VRQ Level 1 at Cornwall College. Now, by providing welfare support throughout their time at college, apprentices' needs may be properly analysed and risks assessed before they enter the kitchen. For those that are not selected from college to enter the Fifteen Cornwall kitchen, the Welfare Programme helps them onto other progression routes, including practical pathways to employment and training as well as personal development or therapeutic opportunities.

Effective links with partners such as the Probation Trust, Youth Offending Service, Cornwall College, Jobcentre Plus, Cornwall Council and the police and with organisations offering accommodation, therapeutic and other support have been key to the programme's success.

Jamie Oliver's endorsement and presence is central to the inspiration and engagement of young people within the programme. The aspirational qualities that come with the Jamie Oliver brand, someone that young people admire, helps them to work harder to achieve. The brand is attractive to our customers and wider audiences, and the profitability of the business means that just over half of what we do is funded by restaurant profits.

Each young person brings different challenges with which they may need further assistance. Some have come to us with complex addiction issues and over time it has become clear that young people with severe problems cannot cope with the Fifteen Cornwall programme and need a prior intervention from another organisation better placed to support them. The Fifteen team has learnt to recognise people who need such prior intervention. We offer appropriate signposting to alternative help and support. In some such cases applicants have worked through these complex issues and then made a successful application to join us on a later programme.

During the last six years various external factors have resulted in significant modifications to the apprenticeship programme. Initially the apprenticeship programme used to finish at the beginning of June, when most relevant jobs were already established and there were few opportunities for the graduate apprentices. With this in mind the programme was altered and timings adjusted to suit the seasonality of job opportunities in the county.

What changes would we make to policy and development support? Having more local commissioning with less national control could enable greater flexibility and avoid inappropriate rigidity. Commissioning services for longer than a year at a time would also help development and forward planning. It would be encouraging to see further support for preventative solutions rather than help for solely acute situations.

