

# Social Enterprise Mark CIC

*Stakeholder Survey Summary Report 2016*





"THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE MARK  
ENABLES US TO ENGAGE IN A  
CONVERSATION REGARDING OUR  
SOCIAL ENTERPRISE ETHOS"

## Introduction

Social Enterprise Mark CIC conducts an annual survey of its Mark Holders and other stakeholders, to inform the future direction of the organisation and its accreditation services. The 2016 stakeholder survey was made available online from October 2016 through to the end of January 2017.

## Survey Objectives

The principal aim of the survey was to engage with key stakeholders with shaping the future of Social Enterprise Mark CIC accreditation services, by monitoring their evolving requirements and perceptions of current services.

## Methodology

Stakeholder feedback was gathered via an online survey, using the Survey Monkey tool, which was made available via the Social Enterprise Mark CIC website, social media channels, and email newsletters.

## Executive Summary

The majority of Mark holder respondents believe that the Social Enterprise Mark/Gold Mark enables them to demonstrate their credibility as a genuine, independently assessed social enterprise. It also helps them to start conversations around their social enterprise ethos, enabling them to communicate their values to both internal and external stakeholders. This helps Mark holders distinguish themselves from competitors.

It is also largely felt that the Social Enterprise Mark is a positive influence on the UK social enterprise sector, although this is not yet widely established at an international level.

” The Social Enterprise Mark is an important recognition of organisational values and impact. ”

## Summary of responses

### Who responded

64% of respondents were from organisations that currently hold Social Enterprise Mark (97%) or Social Enterprise Gold Mark (3%) accreditation. The majority (63%) of these have held the accreditation for 3 years or more.

Of the remaining 26% of respondents, 11% are from organisations that have previously held the accreditation.

These respondents came from a wide range of business sectors, including:

- Business services
- Education and training
- Health and social care

They work in organisations that range in size, from less than 10 employees and a turnover of less than £100,000, right up to over 250 employees and a turnover of more than £10 million.

### Impact of the Mark

Respondents who currently hold the accreditation were asked to reflect on the purposes of the Social Enterprise Mark/Gold Mark and to what extent they think these are being met.



*The Mark helps us communicate the significance of being a social enterprise to our employees and other stakeholders and this is important to us*



**96% of respondents agreed, of which 35% strongly agreed**

*"The Mark opens opportunities for discussion around supporting communities through trade...and what this really means"*

“

*The Mark is important in helping distinguish us from other social businesses, by showing we submit to the scrutiny of accreditation, which helps prove and ensure we fulfil our commitments as a social enterprise*

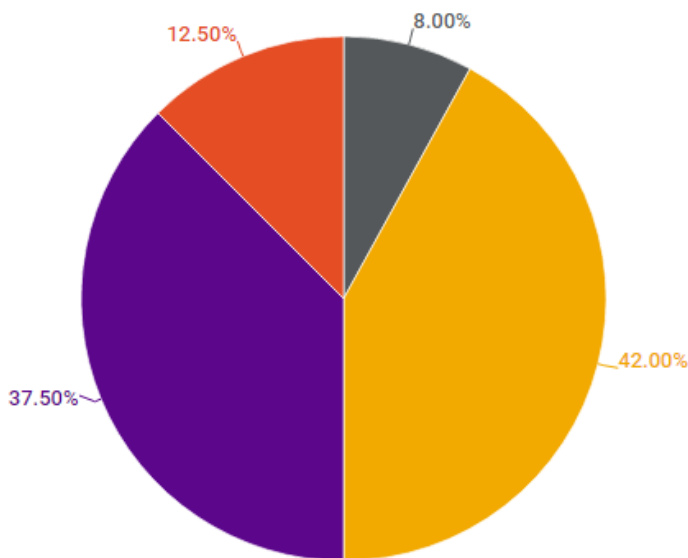
”



**79% of respondents agreed, of which 32% strongly agreed**

“  
Having the Social Enterprise Mark shows we are credible

## Does the Mark help you generate and/or maintain business output?



- I believe it does but it's difficult to qualify or provide specific examples
- Not possible to qualify how it may have helped or not
- I don't believe it has helped but it adds value to us for other reasons
- Yes - and we can qualify and/or provide specific examples

Respondents say it is difficult to qualify whether the Mark directly affects sales, or to provide specific examples, but there is a general feeling that it does have some impact.

## **Wider influence of the Mark**

All respondents were asked to consider the wider influence of the Social Enterprise Mark/Gold Mark on the social enterprise sector, both nationally and internationally.



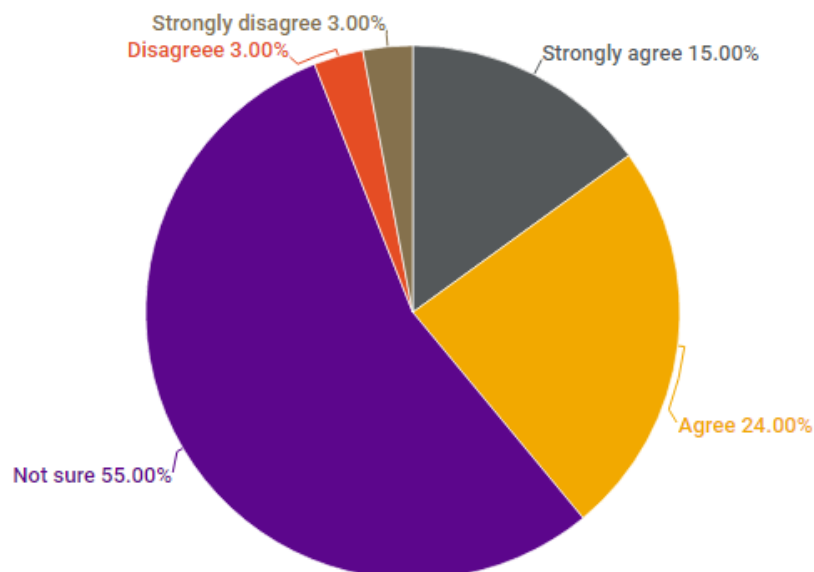
***The Mark is a worthwhile and useful influence  
for the social enterprise sector in the UK***



**73% of respondents agreed,  
of which 50% strongly agreed**

However, the response was slightly different when asked about the international influence of the Mark.

## **The Mark serves as a worthwhile and useful influence for social enterprise internationally**





### Benefits of accreditation

Respondents who currently hold accreditation were asked to consider the most useful things about Social Enterprise Mark/Gold Mark accreditation for their business.



*It proves our commitment to creating benefits for people and planet*



**59% of respondents ranked this as the most important benefit of accreditation**

### Strategic direction of Social Enterprise Mark CIC

All respondents were asked to what extent they would agree that Social Enterprise Mark CIC is achieving its mission of ***assuring the social enterprise business model remains ethical, credible and commercial through accreditation.***



**84% agreed that this mission is being achieved, of which 27% strongly agreed**

They were also asked about the new core proposition underpinning what the Mark stands for, and whether they think this defines what is important about being an accredited social enterprise.



*Social Enterprise Mark CIC exists to recognise and promote the capability of social enterprises as competitive, sustainable businesses, dedicated to maximising social impact above that of shareholder profit*

90% agreed it does define what is important about being accredited, of which 26% strongly agreed



**What is Social Enterprise Mark CIC doing well and what could it do better?**

All respondents were asked what they felt Social Enterprise Mark CIC is doing well, and what it could do to better support them and the sector, especially with regards to addressing their key priorities and challenges.

"Our key challenge is to shift the emphasis of our organisation from a charity to a social enterprise and communicate this to staff, partners and the community.

The social impact statements and language used by Social Enterprise Mark CIC has already helped us on this journey."



We need more people to be made aware of the Social Enterprise Mark at a strategic, government, and commissioning level.



"THERE NEEDS TO BE SOME BETTER COORDINATION AND LINKAGE BETWEEN THE VARIOUS INTERMEDIARY SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS."



**Social Enterprise Mark CIC is responsive, and committed to supporting mark holders**

***"Social Enterprise Mark CIC is keeping alive the understanding that a clear definition of social enterprise does really matter - which I believe to be the case."***