

'Making a Mark'

Mark Holder Social Impact Declaration

Start Creative

Start Creative, the trading enterprise of Start in Salford, provides a range of high quality hand crafted products and services to the public, private and social sectors, whilst providing positive commercial experiences to volunteers who are referred via primary and secondary mental health services in Salford.



The volunteers at are very much part of a team and work in all aspects of the business, from sales and customer service to manufacture, packaging and stock control. It's an important part of their journey to recovery and proven to make a huge difference – improving their wellbeing, raising confidence and building self-esteem.

The Social Enterprise Mark criteria includes a requirement for all applicants and renewing Mark Holders to provide 'social impact statements', which illustrate how they are striving to meet their social/environmental objectives. Below are examples of how **Start Creative** is making a mark, striving to create a positive impact on people and planet.

Providing commercial experience for volunteers

The people who work with us are highly trained individuals as volunteers at risk of or suffering from mental ill health, all of whom benefit in some way from the creative process that goes into making our products. Start Creative continually develops in response to the needs of the volunteers that engage in the work to provide a vibrant and supportive working environment and retail opportunities for their work.

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Our products are made to the highest standards, using a blend of traditional skills with modern techniques and equipment.

We build service users fundamental skills along with the acquisition of practical transferable skills, helping them move towards job seeking services and employment.

Improving mental health and wellbeing

We offer individual support through personal development plans and consultation exercises to keep our current 46 volunteers on the road to recovery and at the heart of our business model.

Before our interventions, our volunteers rated their mental wellbeing & general wellbeing at an average of 5.7 out of 10. After our interventions, this had risen to 8.2; an increase of over 42% in member's mental health & wellbeing. 92% told us they benefited from increased social contact, leading to reduced social isolation.

Creating social, economic and environmental impact

- **Social** - We provide a safe working and learning environment for volunteers to come together and improve community cohesion and avoid the problems caused by loneliness, isolation and exclusion. This increases confidence/self-esteem and improves the quality of their lives.
- **Economic** - Participants are more employable with the skills they acquire, and with the support provided move closer to job seeking services, employment and/or further education. This leads to them reengaging with work and moving off benefits.
- **Environmental** - Through direct partnerships with local trusts and Salford council we have affected real change in attitude and implementation of green space management plans, taking an environmental impact approach to tree work, habitat protection and biodiversity.

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