

Social Enterprise Mark CIC

Stakeholder Survey Summary Report 2019





THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE MARK
TRADING FOR PEOPLE AND PLANET



SOCIAL ENTERPRISE GOLD MARK
ACCREDITED FOR BUSINESS EXCELLENCE



Introduction

Social Enterprise Mark CIC periodically conducts a comprehensive survey of its Mark Holders and other stakeholders, to inform the future direction of the organisation and its accreditation services. The 2019 stakeholder survey was made available online from early February 2019 through to mid-March 2019.

Survey Objectives

The principal aim of the survey was to engage 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, the link to which was shared via the Social Enterprise Mark CIC website, social media channels, and email newsletters.

Executive Summary

The vast majority of Mark holder respondents believe that the independent accreditation of the Social Enterprise Mark/Gold Mark helps distinguish them from other social business, by demonstrating they are fulfilling their commitments as a social enterprise, trading for the good of people and planet.

It also helps to communicate their status as a social enterprise, what this means and why it is important.

It is also largely felt that the Social Enterprise Mark/Gold Mark is a positive influence on the UK social enterprise sector, although this is not yet widely established at an international level. Respondents also agree that Social Enterprise Mark CIC plays an important role in encouraging and supporting good practice in the social enterprise sector.

"HOLDING THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE MARK ALLOWS US TO TELL PEOPLE WHY BEING A SOCIAL ENTERPRISE IS IMPORTANT US."

Summary of responses

Who responded

69% of respondents were from organisations that currently hold Social Enterprise Mark (62%) or Social Enterprise Gold Mark (7%) accreditation. The majority (73%) of these have held the accreditation for 2 years or more, with over 40% having held it for over 5 years.

The respondents are from a wide range of business sectors, including:

- Health and social care (26%)
- Education (29%)
- Business services (11%)
- Communities (17%)

They work in organisations that range in size, from less than 10 employees and a turnover of less than £50,000, right up to over 200 employees and a turnover of more than £10 million. The majority operate primarily within the UK, with a small proportion operating mainly outside the UK/internationally.

Their main activities cover a wide variety of areas/issues, including education & training, community regeneration, health & social care, and charity/social enterprise enablement & support.

This all demonstrates the growing boundaries of the evolving social enterprise sector and the wide variety of organisations that are choosing this model of business.

Impact of the Mark



"The Mark helps us communicate the significance of being a social enterprise to our employees and other stakeholders"

88%

of respondents agreed,
of which 45% strongly agreed

"The credibility of being found to meet international best practice standards is highly valuable... to credibly identify ourselves as a true social enterprise is important to us."

"Credibility, integrity, accountability, and objectivity of assessment are all benefits."



"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."

92%

of respondents agreed,
of which 41% strongly agreed

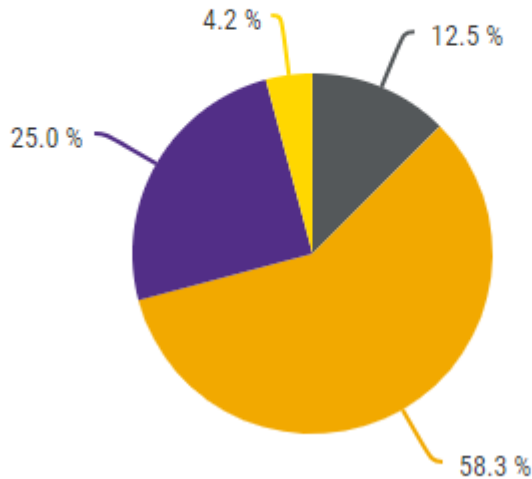


"The Mark reinforces our positioning as a business that is primarily committed to using surplus income (profit) to maximise social impact above that of individual profit."

83%

of respondents agreed,
of which 75% strongly agreed

The Mark helps us generate and/or maintain our 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
- Yes - and we can qualify and/or provide specific examples
- I don't believe it has helped

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

” AS A GENERAL INDICATOR OF CREDIBILITY, THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE MARK CONTRIBUTES TO THE TRUST AND CONFIDENCE THAT PARTNERS HAVE IN OUR ORGANISATION ”

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.

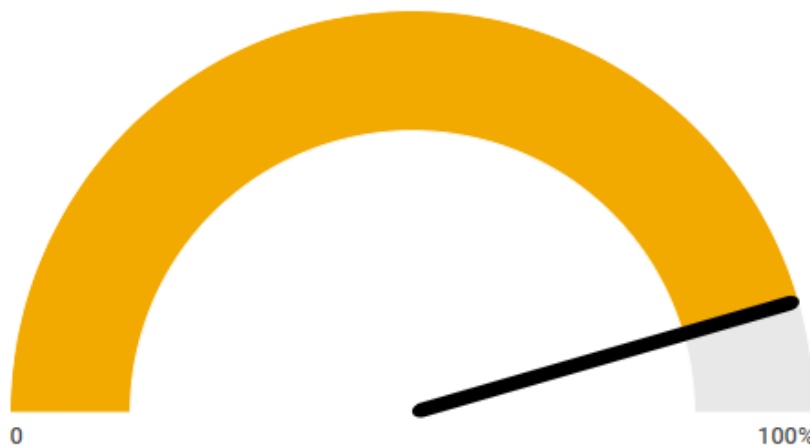


"The Mark provides clear and credible standards for the social enterprise sector and defines what it means to be a genuine social enterprise."

94%

of respondents agreed,
of which 45% strongly agreed

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



91%

of respondents agreed,
of which 47% strongly agreed

However, the response was slightly different when asked about the international influence of the Mark. Less than ½ of respondents agreed the Mark is a useful influence at an international level, and 48% said they were 'not sure'.

49%

of respondents agreed,
of which 24% strongly agreed

"Wider international representation would be helpful in extending the value of the Mark"

Our impact

All respondents were asked to consider the impact that Social Enterprise Mark CIC has on the social enterprise sector, and to what extent we are achieving our objectives.

"Social Enterprise Mark CIC assures the social enterprise business model remains ethical, credible & commercial."

85%

of respondents agreed,
of which 36% strongly agreed



"Social Enterprise Mark CIC provides a route to social enterprise excellence, by encouraging continual improvement in line with best practice"

85%

of respondents agreed,
of which 36% strongly agreed



★ *"Very pleased with the support & responsiveness"* ★

Benefits of accreditation

Respondents who currently hold our 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 positive social change



58% of respondents ranked this as the most important benefit

96%

of respondents rated our overall service as good or excellent



83%

of respondents would recommend the accreditation to other social enterprises

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.

” SOCIAL ENTERPRISE MARK CIC IS RAISING THE PROFILE OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISE AS A VIABLE WAY TO DO ETHICAL BUSINESS ”

”All companies are getting in the act of ethical trading etc. so more needs to be done to differentiate social enterprise as a model for business.”

”Social Enterprise Mark CIC is championing social enterprise as a viable and effective alternative to for-profit business activity”

Top business needs

All respondents were asked to list their top three business needs, and it was interesting to see some common themes appearing in the responses.



Respondents were also asked how Social Enterprise Mark CIC could better support them with their key business needs.

*"Get the importance of the
★ Mark more into the minds of ★
commissioners."*

“
Tools to measure
impact

“
Regional
networking
events

"EXPOSURE AND INTRODUCTIONS
TO FUNDERS INTERESTED IN
MAKING IMPACTFUL INVESTMENTS
TO ACHIEVE SOCIAL OUTCOMES"

“
Work with
commissioners