



THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE MARK
TRADING FOR PEOPLE AND PLANET

'Making a Mark'

Mark Holder Social Impact Declaration

Big River Bakery

Big River Bakery is a small batch bakery in Shieldfield, which delivers training and opportunities to people facing complex barriers to employability.

Through our bakery we offer employability programmes for local people furthest from the job market and also provide employment for people with learning disabilities, such as autism.

Our team has over six years' experience of using baking to bring communities together, creating pathways to employment, and making healthy food affordable and available to all.



The Social Enterprise Mark criteria includes a requirement for all applicants and renewing Mark Holders to answer a set of social impact questions, which illustrate how they are striving to meet their social/environmental objectives.

Below are examples of how the **Big River Bakery** is Making a Mark, striving to create a positive impact on people and planet.

Creating pathways for employment

We use baking as a means of bringing diverse communities together and to help create pathways to employment. Our 'One Loaf at a Time' employability programme is funded through the European

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Social Investment Fund and moves long term unemployed people towards employment and further training.

We are about to start a second bakery on Teesside located in the most deprived area of Middlesbrough in a large BAME community. This project is being developed in collaboration with Teesside University.

Making local healthy food accessible to all

We believe that local, healthy food should be affordable and available to all. We run a 'pay what you can' shop at our bakery two days each week and have run a food parcel scheme in lockdown for local communities and produced baking kits for households.

We source food ingredients locally and have been growing wheat in collaboration with a community project in Newcastle. This year we produced loaves from wheat grown on Tyneside for the first time in several hundred years using our mills. We aim to scale up this project to shorten and localise the bread wheat supply chain.

Outcomes for beneficiaries

In the last year, we have supported approximately 200 people, including delivering skills and employability training to approximately 30 people and delivering schools-based training to 100 children.

Formal outputs from our ESIF employability programme include:



- Created a healthy and affordable local food system at scale
- Developed a franchise model with wider geographical spread
- Created a viable brand which has a recognised ethos enabling it to operate much more widely than a bakery
- Created a pipeline of businesses under our umbrella offering both products and services
- Created systems change in the food sector

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