

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE IN SCOTLAND

CENSUS 2024: TECHNICAL REPORT

Contents

Contents	1
Introduction	2
Identification of Social Enterprises	4
Data Classifications	8
Financial data	16
Primary Research: Survey and Qualitative Fieldwork	21
Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire	29
Appendix B: Qualitative Discussion Guide	48

Introduction

Overview

The Social Enterprise Census 2024 is the fifth comprehensive account of social enterprise activity in Scotland, following similar censuses undertaken in 2015, 2017, 2019 and 2021. The study provides a detailed profile of social enterprise activity in Scotland. It focuses on the scale, reach and contribution of this activity and the characteristics, health, prospects and needs of those organisations that are delivering it.

By 'social enterprise' the study refers to organisations that are undertaking social enterprise activity and operating in a way that is consistent with the Voluntary Code of Practice for Social Enterprise in Scotland. This offers a broad but widely agreed set of criteria by which social enterprises can be identified and recognise each other.

The Methodology

As the fifth in the Social Enterprise Census series, the research adopts a consistent study methodology that enables longitudinal analysis. The methodology utilised for this study is as follows:

- An online survey of social enterprises in Scotland which gathered 763 responses. After purging and combining duplicate responses the survey was left with 702 unique valid responses which are analysed within this report.
- Interviews with 20 social enterprise leaders. These interviews each lasted an hour and offered social enterprises the opportunity to discuss in detail their experiences of operating as a social enterprise in 2024.
- Analysis of financial data available for organisations identified to be social enterprises was carried out. Data from the various sources were combined and cleaned for further analysis.
- An economic analysis of the financial data was carried out. This involved aggregating, analysing and benchmarking using various financial ratios relating to financial performance, strength and sustainability. Income, employment and GVA (Gross Value Added) estimates were also produced.

Identification

The Social Enterprise Census is based on a dataset of social enterprises first developed in 2015. The 'population' of social enterprises was identified through cross-matching, verifying, and filtering data from multiple regulators. The dataset was then enriched with survey responses and financial data collected as part of the project. This dataset is screened against the criteria set out in the [Voluntary Code of Practice for Social Enterprise in Scotland](#), which defines the essential characteristics of a social enterprise in the Scottish context.

The Voluntary Code has continued to evolve since its introduction, reflecting the organic growth and diversification of the sector. The dataset is updated with each Census to provide a current estimate of the number and types of social enterprises active at that point in time.

Social Enterprise Definitional Criteria

The study has identified social enterprises systematically and objectively based on agreed definitional criteria, consistent with the Voluntary Code of Practice for Social Enterprise in Scotland. This includes five essential elements of a social enterprise:

1. They trade, with the primary objective of social or environmental benefit but also to enhance their financial independence.
2. Any profits are reinvested back into the business or used for the benefit of the people it exists to serve, rather than distributed to owners, shareholders, or investors.
3. On dissolution, any assets are reinvested in another organisation with similar aims and objectives.
4. They are constituted and managed in an accountable and transparent way – particularly with regard to the community they serve.
5. They are distinct from the public sector and cannot be the subsidiary of a public body.

Identification of Social Enterprises

There is no legal definition of a 'social enterprise' in Scotland, and different stakeholder groups have their own views about what the characteristics of a social enterprise are or should be. A clear, workable and widely agreed definition has therefore been essential to the study.

Defining Social Enterprise

The Social Enterprise in Scotland Census adopts a working definition for the purposes of the research based on the Voluntary Code of Practice for Social Enterprise in Scotland and agreed by the Census Steering Group. This Voluntary Code is widely accepted as the basis for a diverse, self-regulating community of organisations that includes well established community and co-operative enterprise activity, the trading activity of community and voluntary organisations, and the work of social entrepreneurs.

The Census report uses the term 'social enterprise' to refer to those organisations that are undertaking social enterprise activity. The study is therefore not primarily concerned with whether organisations recognise themselves as social enterprises or not but on whether they are undertaking enterprise activity and operating in a way that appears to be consistent with the Voluntary Code.

The following sets out the interpretation of the Voluntary Code used in the Social Enterprise Census. It describes the basis for including and excluding organisations based on the Code criteria, as well as the associated limitations and challenges in the approach adopted.

Basis for the Assessment

The Voluntary Code of Practice for Social Enterprise sets out the criteria, values and behaviours by which social enterprises can be recognised and recognise each other. This Code continues to evolve.

The main criteria set out in the Code are reasonably broad and therefore require some interpretation for the purposes of the research. Table 1 sets out five aspects to the identification of social enterprises that have been included in the Census and which form main components of recognition under the Voluntary Code.

Table 1: Basis for Assessment

Criteria	Definition	Interpretation	Assessment
Social Purpose	The primary objective of a social enterprise is to achieve social and/or environmental benefit.	Transparency of purpose is key. The social/environmental purpose should be clearly stated in the legal objects of the organisation. This purpose may extend to cultural, health, or other outcomes for a defined community.	The Census applies a 'charity test' and 'community interest' test to screen organisations. Organisations must actively provide or intend to provide benefit. Dormant companies or those with no economic activity are excluded.
Trading Activity	A social enterprise is a trading business that sells goods/services and aspires to financial independence.	Social enterprises generate income through trading, which enhances financial independence. This includes primary purpose trading or unrelated trading that supports its social/environmental mission	Organisations selling goods/services to consumers, businesses, or the public sector are included based on verifiable trading income. No strict income threshold is set.
Asset Lock	Profits are reinvested in the business or beneficiary community, and not distributed to owners, shareholders, or investors. On dissolution, assets must go to an	Social enterprises prioritise social/environmental objectives over profit distribution. The asset lock ensures funds are reinvested for community benefit.	Only organisations adhering to asset lock criteria are included. This includes SCIOs, CICs, Companies Limited by Guarantee, and some Registered Societies. Shareholding entities (except CICs) are generally excluded.

	organisation with similar aims.		
Accountability	Social enterprises are accountable and transparent, particularly to the community they serve.	Governance structures should include stakeholder involvement. Best practice suggests a minimum of three (unrelated) directors.	Community cooperatives, share companies, credit unions, SCIOs, and registered societies are included. Legal forms with transparency requirements are prioritised.
Independence	Social enterprises are distinct from the public sector and cannot be subsidiaries of a public body.	Social enterprises must operate independently, without control by public authorities or government agencies. ALEOs are excluded.	The Census has not included organisations under the direct control or influence of public authorities.

Limitations

Extensive work has been undertaken since the first Social Enterprise Census in 2015 to continually improve the accuracy and coverage of data on social enterprise activity in Scotland.

Despite these efforts, some limitations and challenges remain:

- The identification of social enterprises draws on a wide range of data sources, including information from regulators, survey responses, and financial records. However, in the absence of a single legal definition of a social enterprise—and with the Voluntary Code of Practice providing broad, interpretable criteria, the process of identification will always be imperfect.
- As a result, the dataset may include organisations undertaking social enterprise activity that do not self-identify as social enterprises, while also excluding some organisations that do self-identify but do not fully meet the agreed criteria.

- The Census focuses on organisations headquartered in Scotland. It does not include social enterprises registered elsewhere but operating within Scotland, which may lead to a partial underrepresentation of overall activity.
- The analysis is largely based on organisations subject to some form of statutory registration (e.g. companies, charities, societies) or operating in regulated sectors (e.g. housing, care). This means smaller, unregistered or informal community enterprises, particularly those that are unincorporated, are less likely to be captured in the data.
- Financial data used to verify trading activity is drawn from publicly available annual accounts, which are not consistently available for all organisations. Income from trading or contracts may also be inconsistently reported. Where verification has not been possible, a conservative approach has been taken in estimating trading income. All financial data reported are estimates of activity based on the available data sourced.
- The study includes an analysis of social enterprise activity using a snapshot of data drawn from regulators such as Companies House, the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR), and the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), along with historic accounting records covering the most recent available financial years. As such, it may not fully reflect the most recently registered, deregistered, or dormant enterprises, nor capture the latest significant changes in trading or financial activity. However, this provides a robust and consistent baseline for understanding sector trends over time.
- The 2024 Census incorporated qualitative insights through interviews and open-ended survey responses, adding valuable depth and context to the findings. However, as with any self-reported data, these insights are subject to interpretation and may reflect individual perspectives rather than universally representative views. It should be noted that survey respondents are self-selecting and may not be representative of the sector as a whole.

Data Classifications

Social enterprises identified in the Social Enterprise in Scotland Census are categorised in a number of main ways.

Classification of Regions

Enterprise Regions

The Social Enterprise Census examines the coverage of social enterprise activity across regions. It adopts the Enterprise Region classification, providing the geographic basis for regional planning of Scotland's enterprise agencies, enabling segmentation of activity into the operating area of Highlands and Islands Enterprise (Highlands and Islands) and Scottish Enterprise (the other regions which together comprise Lowland Scotland). The study classifies social enterprises according to the location of their headquarters. Table 2 sets out the regions classified.

Table 2: Regions

Region
Aberdeen City and Shire
East of Scotland
Highlands and Islands
South of Scotland
Tayside
West of Scotland

Classification of Urban-Rural Areas

The study adopts the Scottish Government's standard Urban Rural Classification. This datazone classification provides a consistent way of identifying urban and rural areas based on settlement size and drive times.

An analysis of social enterprise activity has been undertaken using the 6-fold classification., see Table 3 for definitions.

Table 3: 6-fold Urban Rural Classification

Classification	Definition
Large Urban Areas	Settlements of 125,000 or more people.
Other Urban Areas	Settlements of 10,000 to 124,999 people.
Accessible Small Towns	Settlements of 3,000 to 9,999 people and within 30 minutes drive of a settlement of 10,000 or more.
Remote Small Towns	Settlements of 3,000 to 9,999 people and with a drive time of over 30 minutes to a settlement of 10,000 or more.
Accessible Rural	Areas with a population of less than 3,000 people, and within a 30 minute drive time of a settlement of 10,000 or more.
Remote Rural	Areas with a population of less than 3,000 people, and with a drive time of over 30 minutes to a settlement of 10,000 or more.

High level breakdowns of data are also provided using the 2-fold Urban Rural Classification set out in Table 4.

Table 4: 2-fold Urban Rural Classification

Classification	Definition
Urban Areas	Settlements of 3,000 or more people
Rural Areas	Settlements of less than 3,000 people

Classification of Economic Sectors

The study categorises social enterprises by the principal activity through which they generate income from trading. Towards this end, a straightforward, high level and non-hierarchical form of classification has been developed for use in the study, which reflects the main areas of social enterprise activity in Scotland.

Table 5: Economic Sectors

Economic Sector
Arts and Creative Industries
Community Centres and Halls
Early Learning and Childcare
Education, Training and Employment
Environment and Recycling
Financial Services
Food, Catering and Hospitality
Health and Social Care
Housing
Information, Consultancy and Support Services
Property, Energy, Utilities and Land Management
Retailing
Sport and Leisure
Tourism, Heritage and Festivals
Transport
Other

Inclusions and Exclusions From the Study

The following illustrate typical inclusions and exclusions for each economic field of activity in which social enterprise activity is evident, although there are exceptions. In practice there is inevitable overlap between categories, which has been avoided as far as possible.

Challenges also arise where social enterprises generate earned income from activity in multiple fields.

Table 6: Typical Inclusions and exclusions

Sector	Typical inclusions	Typical exclusions
Arts and Creative Industries	Music and performing arts groups Theatres, galleries and other arts venues Community radio and broadcasting groups Community and independent cinemas Video, film and imaging companies Digital media and design companies Craft/arts studios and similar spaces	Amateur choirs Dramatic societies Dance groups Bands (brass, silver, pipe, etc.) Arts and crafts groups Film clubs and societies Arts and cultural trusts (Council-controlled)
Community Centres and Halls	Community centres Multi-use community hubs Village halls	
Early Learning and Childcare	Mobile crèches Playgroups (registered care providers) Play services (employing staff) Community nurseries Outdoor kindergartens Play and children's centres Out of school care services	Childminders Playgroups (volunteer-led, unregistered) Parent and toddler groups Council nursery classes Council out of school care services
Education, Training and Employment	Adult education services Language schools Outdoor education providers Training providers Employability services	Private schools Parent teacher councils Further education colleges Universities

Environment and Recycling	Conservation services Environmental management services Reuse services (e.g. furniture, clothing) Repair services (e.g. electrical, bicycles) Recycling services (e.g. glass, aluminium)	
Financial Services	Community credit unions Occupational credit unions Industrial credit unions Social lenders	Grant-making organisations
Food, Catering and Hospitality	Community cafes Community bakeries Coffee shops and restaurants Contract catering Community food projects Events management services	Allotment societies
Health and Social Care	Adoption and fostering services Care homes Day centres and respite care services Residential special schools Housing support services Care at home services Riding for the Disabled Associations Alternative therapies	Patients associations Self-help groups Advocacy services Medical research organisations
Housing	Housing associations Housing co-operatives Self-build associations	Tenants and residents associations Housing information and support (classified elsewhere)
Information, Consultancy and Support Services	Advice services Consultancy services Intermediary support services Law centres	Networking services Membership and trade bodies Lobbying and campaigning groups Research institutes

	Counselling services	and foundations Occupational associations
Property, Energy, Utilities and Land Management	Community harbour trusts Facilities and workspace providers Community land organisations Community broadband groups Local regeneration groups Community farms Community energy projects Forest and woodlands trusts Multi-purpose development trusts	Urban Regeneration Companies Business Improvement Districts Community benefit funds
Retailing	Charity and thrift shops Boutique shops Village shops Craft shops Charity merchandising	
Sport and Leisure	Community sports hubs and clubs Community-owned swimming pools Recreation grounds and facilities Community-controlled leisure centres Fitness classes and services Outdoor adventure services Watersports, boating and sailing Alpine and snow sports	Council-controlled leisure trusts Sports clubs (no wider community role) Recreation and hobby groups
Tourism, Heritage and Festivals	Local heritage and arts festivals Community-controlled visitor attractions Heritage and visitor centres Community-owned museums Building preservation societies and trusts	Friends groups (unless trading)

Transport	Minibus group travel Community buses Voluntary car schemes Car clubs Car sharing schemes Patient transport services Community ferry services	
Other	Services not classified elsewhere Manufacturing Building and maintenance services	Religious organisations Uniformed organisations Agricultural societies

Financial data

The Social Enterprise in Scotland Census includes an analysis of the financial performance of social enterprises based on the best available and most recent available data for known social enterprises.

Sources

The financial data for social enterprises was collated from public available sources of the accounts of social enterprises. These were primarily sourced from the following sources:

- OSCR: The OSCR register publishes account information for social enterprises registered on the OSCR register or points to Companies House where appropriate.
- Companies House: The latest accounts available from Companies House were examined in order to extract key account information.
- Scottish Housing Regulator: Information for Registered Social Landlords was available through the databases and accounts published on the Scottish Housing Regulator website.
- Financial Conduct Authority: Information on accounts for some Credit Unions was available via the Financial Conduct Authority website.
- Websites of social enterprises: In some cases it was necessary to go to individual websites of social enterprises to access their accounts in order to source account information.

Data Extracted

It would then involve extracting 'common sized' data relating to the latest and previous financial year for the social enterprises where this was possible to find within accounts.

Table 7: Data Extracted

Data extracted
Total income
Income from trading
Income from grants
Income from other sources
Total Expenditure
Staff Cost

National Insurance/PAYE
Other costs
Net income
Fixed assets
Debtors
Current assets
Current liabilities
Net current assets
Creditors > 1 year
Net assets
Unrestricted funds
Designated Funds
Total Unrestricted funds
Restricted funds
Revenue reserves
Total Restricted Funds
Total funds
Depreciation

Allocating Income and Expenditure Between Categories

Income

The income of social enterprises has been determined by extracting the total income from the annual accounts (Income and Expenditure Account) or, if annual accounts were unavailable, from their submission of total income and expenditure to the charity regulator OSCR.

From the information provided in the annual accounts we have allocated income to three categories:

- Trading – earned income through the sales of products or the fees for services.
- Grants – funding provided by public agencies and charitable trusts for a specific purpose.
- Other Income – anything that is not identified as trading or grant. This can include investment income, interest, donations, general fundraising activities and sundry income.

Identifying Trading Income

The first level of analysis was the Income and Expenditure Account. More and more social enterprises (and their accountants) are becoming more precise in identifying trading, or earned income, and reporting it separately from other income streams.

However, for most accounts we had to dig a level deeper in the notes to the Income and Expenditure Accounts, where income is usually itemised.

If required, we have also reviewed the Director's report and the appendices to the accounts to identify trading income (contracts).

Where there was clear evidence of trading through contracts or Service Level Agreements, but the exact amount was not clearly identifiable, we have made an estimation on a case-by-case basis.

Expenditure

Expenditure was allocated in three categories:

- Staffing Cost – the cost of staff wages
- NI and PAYE – the employers contribution to National Insurance and the withheld employee contribution to National Insurance and Income Tax (PAYE).
- Other costs.

Producing the Estimates

The 2024 Census study team did not have access to the previous calculations from previous studies. Therefore, this section sets out the approach taken to producing the estimates in the 2024 Census report for the financial data.

Once financial data had been extracted and input into the spreadsheet a straightforward method of calculation was employed to gross up the missing values.

For income and expenditure, this involved applying the median value across other social enterprises, housing associations and credit unions individually to estimate the income and expenditure for each type of social enterprise. These were then summed to provide the total income and expenditure. The surplus generated by the sector was calculated by subtracting the income estimates from the expenditure estimates.

In order to provide estimates of staff costs we consulted the survey data to provide an estimate of the proportion of social enterprises with paid staff and produced an estimate of the associated staff costs based on the administrative data as a percentage of total costs.

Similarly, for estimates of the number of employees the median value was taken and applied to the missing data for the likely population of social enterprises with paid staff in order to produce an estimate of the number of employees.

The study estimates the economic contribution of social enterprise through GVA that was developed in previous years in consultation with Scottish Government analytical staff and economists. In assessing GVA, reported surplus, employment costs and depreciation have been aggregated in all sectors except housing. In the housing sector depreciation has been excluded because the scale of provisions made against the housing stock overshadows other components of GVA.

Therefore this was developed using the following calculation based on the estimates of each of these produced:

$$GVA = OPERATING SURPLUS + EMPLOYMENT COSTS + DEPRECIATION$$

Financial Ratios

The financial data can be aggregated, averaged, or benchmarked in a variety of ways. Illustrative financial ratios examined are as set out in Table 8.

Table 8: Ratios

Financial Ratio	Interpretation	Calculation
Staffing Cost Ratio	The percentage of total expenditure that is allocated to staffing	$\text{Staffing Cost} / \text{Total Expenditure} \times 100\%$
Profitability Ratio	The amount of surplus per £1 of income social enterprises have earned after taking account of all expenditure.	$\text{Net Surplus or (Deficit)} / \text{Total Income} \times 100\%$
Current Ratio	The ability to meet the short term obligations ((those obligations due within 1 year or less) from its liquid assets (cash and assets that can quickly be turned into cash).	$\text{Current Assets} / \text{Current Liabilities}$
Grants Ratio	The extent of reliance of social enterprise on external grant funding.	$\text{Grant Funding} / \text{Total Income} \times 100\%$
Self Sufficiency Ratio	Indication to what extent cost are covered by trading income.	$\text{Earned Income} / \text{Total Expenditure} \times 100\%$
Survival Ratio	Indication, in weeks, of how long social enterprises could survive if income dried up and levels of activity remained the same.	$\text{Unrestricted Reserves} / \text{Total Income} \times 52 \text{ weeks}$
Debt Turnover Ratio	Indication, in days, of how long debtors take to pay their accounts. If debtors are excessively slow in being converted into cash, the cash flow of social enterprises will be affected.	$\text{Debtors} / \text{Total Income} \times 365 \text{ days}$

Primary Research: Survey and Qualitative Fieldwork

A large-scale survey of potential social enterprises was carried out to verify and extend upon the data already gathered. In addition to this, 20 interviews were carried out with social enterprise leaders across Scotland.

Survey

This Social Enterprise Census survey was set up online and an invitation to participate extended through all relevant social enterprise media and networks and via direct emails to prospective social enterprises where email contact records could be sourced.

Questionnaire Design

The design of the 2024 Social Enterprise in Scotland questionnaire was based on the survey instrument used in 2021. The questionnaire covered information and views relating to their scale, characteristics, geographic reach, barriers, and prospects of social enterprises.

The development of the 2024 survey was based on experience from the study in 2021 and on feedback from the study Steering Group. Most of the topics and questions included in the earlier survey were included again. There were additional questions on social impact, Real Living Wage and Pensions, and a smaller module relating to Net Zero which focused on the use of tools such as the Growing Climate Confidence score card and Net Zero Accelerator Tool.

The 2024 questionnaire covered the following themes:

- **Organisational Structure and Activities:**
 - Main trading sector and any additional sectors.
 - Geographic area of operation and export activities.
 - Employee details, including numbers and fair work practices.
- **Governance and Employment Practices:**
 - Employee engagement in decision-making.
 - Working hours arrangements and fair wage practices.
- **Impact and Beneficiaries:**
 - Number of beneficiaries and changes over the last year.
 - Targeted beneficiary groups and outcomes enabled by the organisation's activities.
- **Social Impact Measurement:**
 - Extent and methodologies used for measuring social impact.

- Barriers to measuring social impact and required support.
- **Sustainability and Net Zero Initiatives:**
 - Use of climate confidence tools and sustainability practices.
- **Financial Health and Support:**
 - Economic impact on the organisation and financial changes over the last year.
 - External financial assistance and attitudes towards loan funding.
- **Public Sector Contracts:**
 - Engagement with public sector contracts and support needed for bidding.
- **Challenges and Prospects:**
 - Main barriers to development and areas where support is needed.
 - Confidence in economic prospects and expected changes in the next 12 months.
- **Equality and Diversity:**
 - Data collection on workforce equality and diversity.
 - Proportion of workforce in various demographic categories.
- **Additional Information:**
 - Financial data collection and interest in participating in interviews.
 - Membership interest in Social Enterprise Scotland and consent for sharing survey responses.

The full survey questionnaire is available in Appendix 1.

Dissemination

The survey was widely promoted throughout the social enterprise community in Scotland, with active support from the main intermediary organisations which gave credibility to the study. Members of the Steering Group disseminated the survey link and materials throughout their networks.

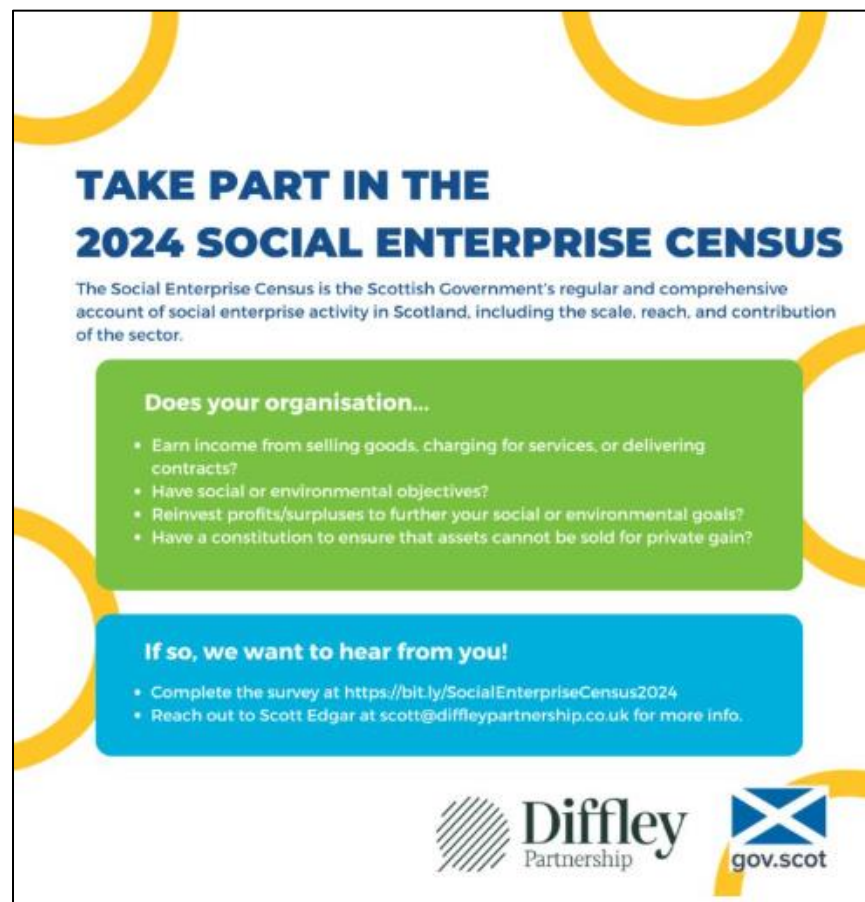
The study team developed a suite of materials to promote the survey through various channels, these included:

- A flyer and social media posts which were regularly posted on LinkedIn and X throughout the study period in order to drive social enterprises towards (see Figure 1 for an example),
- The study team were provided with email addresses of those who were happy for them to be shared and had completed previous studies by Scottish Government. However, given the last study was three years ago many of the email addresses were out of date.

Therefore, the study team manually sourced email addresses for social enterprises and directly emailed invitations to take part and issued regular reminders during the study.

- The study team produced newsletter text that intermediary bodies could use in their communication if they wished.
- The study team secured coverage in SCVO's Third Force News to promote the survey.
- Intermediary bodies including the Census Steering Group disseminated the survey and the study team wrote to all Third Sector Interface organisations and Chambers of Commerce to ask them to distribute the survey in their networks.
- A member of the study team attended an event for social enterprises in Glasgow around funding and promoted the survey there in person.

Figure 1: Social Media Post



Survey Response and Representation

The survey which gathered 763 responses. After purging and combining duplicate responses the survey was left with 702 unique valid responses which were analysed for the report. The proportion of these responses that were wholly complete is comparable to previous years at 79% (78% in 2021).

As the survey uses a non-random sample, it is not possible to calculate how representative the results are at a national level. However, as an indication of representation, the tables below show the sample sizes in relation to the relevant social enterprise population share.

Table 9 below presents the sample make up and share against the overall estimated share of all social enterprises.

Table 9: Local Authority Response

Local Authority	2024 responses	% share of sample	% share of all social enterprises
Aberdeen City	16	2%	2%
Aberdeenshire	36	5%	5%
Angus	7	1%	2%
Argyll and Bute	42	6%	4%
City of Edinburgh	76	11%	13%
Clackmannanshire	6	1%	1%
Dumfries and Galloway	39	6%	4%
Dundee City	14	2%	2%
East Ayrshire	7	1%	1%
East Dunbartonshire	9	1%	1%
East Lothian	16	2%	2%
East Renfrewshire	4	1%	1%
Falkirk	3	0%	2%
Fife	23	3%	4%
Glasgow City	83	12%	14%
Highland	76	11%	9%
Inverclyde	8	1%	1%
Midlothian	7	1%	1%
Moray	31	4%	2%

Na h-Eileanan Siar	18	3%	2%
North Ayrshire	8	1%	2%
North Lanarkshire	12	2%	2%
Orkney Islands	3	0%	1%
Perth and Kinross	17	2%	3%
Renfrewshire	19	3%	2%
Scottish Borders	36	5%	4%
Shetland Islands	8	1%	2%
South Ayrshire	18	3%	1%
South Lanarkshire	19	3%	3%
Stirling	19	3%	3%
West Dunbartonshire	9	1%	1%
West Lothian	12	2%	2%

Data Cleaning

Steps were taken to clean the census survey data in order to minimise errors. Responses from ineligible organisations were removed, where organisations did not meet qualifying criteria and form part of the final 'population' list of social enterprises. Duplicate responses were also removed.

Incomplete cases were removed, where respondents provided only identifying information and did not answer any of the substantive survey questions. The dataset was cleansed to remove nonsense answers, such as those including symbols or other words or numbers which did not make sense in the context of the question or field.

Data Analysis

The data was initially analysed and a topline of the survey results was produced and provided to Scottish Government.

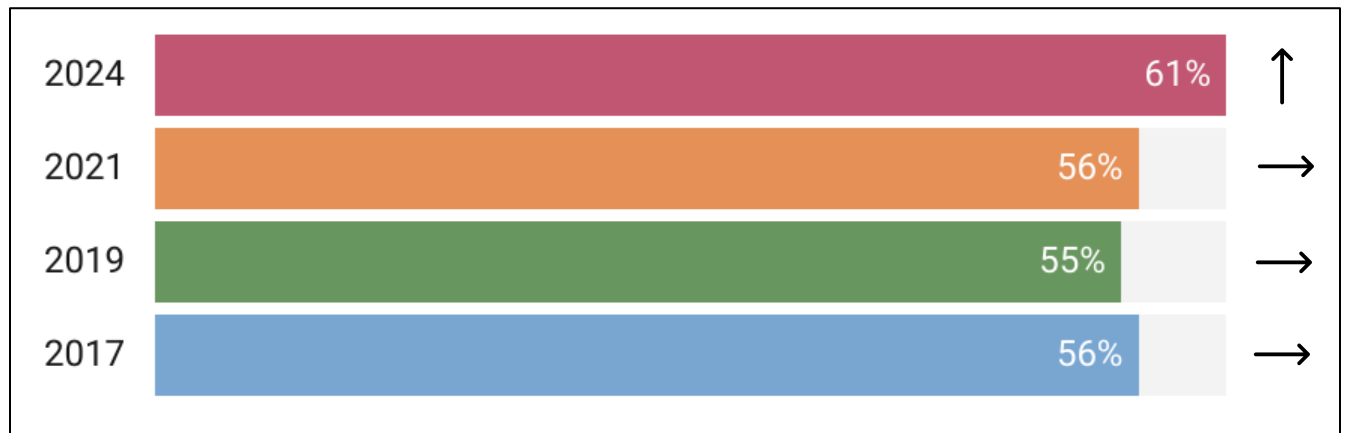
Prior to providing the analysis presented in the report, the data was analysed to find correlations, patterns and trends. Survey responses were cross-tabulated with other data points and a full set of tables were provided to Scottish Government.

A series of engaging charts and visuals were produced in order to summarise the data. See Figure 2 below for an example of one of the charts produced for the report.

Qualitative data from survey responses were analysed thematically and a summary of the themes explored are presented in the report.

The data produced was also compared with relevant data points from 2015–2021 to draw further meaning from the dataset.

Figure 2: Example of chart



Qualitative Interviews

In addition to carrying out the survey, the 2024 Social Enterprise Census included a qualitative component to the research. This has significantly strengthened the research by allowing deeper exploration of themes that emerged in the analysis of the survey data.

This involved interviewing 20 leaders of social enterprises across Scotland. Interviewees could indicate their interest in taking part through a recruitment questions which was included in the survey questionnaire (see Appendix A).

Prior to taking part interviewees were approached and provided with information and a privacy notice. Participation was anonymous and all reporting of the findings from the interviews is conducted in a manner which protects the confidentiality of participants.

Interviews were conducted online via Microsoft Teams or Zoom at a time convenient for the participant. Sessions were recorded with the consent of the participant and interview notes and transcripts were analysed thematically using QDA Miner software in order to draw out key themes in reporting.

A discussion guide was developed and agreed with Scottish Government prior to conducting the interviews. The final agreed discussion guide is available in Appendix B of this document.

The interviews covered the following themes:

- 1. Introduction and Setup:**
 - Introduction of the Diffley Partnership team and the purpose of the interview.
 - Explanation of the confidentiality and anonymity of the discussion.
 - Request for permission to record the discussion.
- 2. About the Organisation:**
 - Overview of the organisation's mission, goals, activities, services, and target groups.
 - Discussion on whether the term "social enterprise" is used by the organisation and any preferred alternative terms.
- 3. Governance, Equalities, and Diversity:**
 - Changes in workforce size, including employees and volunteers, over the past 12 months.
 - Embedding fair work practices, including fair pay, flexible working, equal opportunities, employee representation, and training opportunities.
 - Challenges and opportunities related to fair work practices.

- Accreditation as a Real Living Wage, Real Living Hours, or Living Pension employer.
- 4. **Impact and Social Value:**
 - Changes in the number and composition of beneficiaries over the past year and their effects on the organisation.
 - Methods and barriers to measuring social impact.
 - Examples of the organisation's social impact.
- 5. **Net Zero and Sustainability:**
 - Embedding net zero and sustainability initiatives.
 - Challenges and opportunities related to these initiatives.
- 6. **Public Sector Contracts:**
 - Experience and interest in bidding for public sector contracts.
 - Barriers and support needed for bidding.
- 7. **External Financial Assistance:**
 - Experience in applying for external finance and interest in future applications.
 - Impact of the economic climate on the organisation over the past and next 12 months.
 - Main barriers to the organisation's development and gaps in government policy or sector support.
- 8. **Conclusions and Wrap-Up:**
 - Final thoughts and any additional points not covered in the discussion.

Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire

Welcome to the Scottish Government's Social Enterprise Census 2024. This is the fifth official review of enterprising charities and social enterprises in Scotland.

Every two years, this official study helps inform policy and funding, and shows the impact of the sector in your area. Find out previous results at www.socialenterprisecensus.org.uk.

If your organisation has social or environmental goals and generates income through contracts or fees of any kind, then we want to hear from you. This could include things like running a business in your community generating energy, providing arts activities, running a hotel which provides housing, or delivering social care services.

So, we ask you to commit just 15–20 minutes of your time to share information about the work of your organisation and its needs. Each and every question you answer is important to us.

You can view the questions being asked in this survey at the link below so that you can prepare your answers in advance of completing the survey:
[INSERT LINK]

The Social Enterprise Census is conducted on behalf of the Scottish Government by Diffley Partnership. Any information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence and no information will be released that can identify the specific views of you or your organisation. See full Privacy Notice.

Join thousands of others contributing to this important source of knowledge about the sector. Just click below to get started.

About your organisation

ASK ALL

Q1. Please provide a few basic contact details

- Registered name of organisation
- Postcode
- Email address

ASK ALL

Q2. Please provide relevant registration numbers (if known):

- Company No.:
- Charity No.:
- IPS/Society No.:

ASK ALL

Q3. Please state whether the following statements about your organisation are true or false:

- We have social or environmental objectives
- We earn income from selling goods, charging for services or delivering contracts
- Profits/surpluses are reinvested in furthering our social/environmental goals
- Our constitution ensures that the assets of our organisation cannot be sold for private gain

SCALE: TRUE, FALSE

ASK ALL

Q4. Is your organisation led and accountable to people in a particular neighbourhood/community?

1. Yes
2. No

ASK ALL

Q5. Is 'social enterprise' a term that your organisation uses to describe itself?

1. Yes
2. No

Your activities and services

ASK ALL

Q6. In which sector is the MAIN trading activity of your organisation? (i.e. the main area of activity through which you generate income from fees or contracts)

- Arts and Creative Industries
- Community Centres and Halls
- Early Learning and Childcare
- Education, Training, and Employment
- Environment and Recycling
- Financial Services
- Food, Catering & Hospitality
- Health and Social Care
- Housing
- Information, Consultancy & Support Services
- Property, Energy, Utilities, and Land Management
- Retailing
- Sport and Leisure
- Tourism, Heritage and Festivals
- Transport
- Other (please specify)

ASK ALL

Q7. Does your organisation trade in any other sectors in addition to your main trading sector? Please select all that apply.

- None (FIXED POSITION)
- Arts and Creative Industries
- Community Centres and Halls
- Early Learning and Childcare
- Education, Training, and Employment
- Environment and Recycling
- Financial Services
- Food, Catering & Hospitality
- Health and Social Care
- Housing
- Information, Consultancy & Support Services
- Property, Energy, Utilities, and Land Management
- Retailing
- Sport and Leisure
- Tourism, Heritage and Festivals
- Transport
- Other (please specify)

ASK ALL

Q8. Does your organisation mainly sell goods or services?

1. Mainly goods
2. Mainly services
3. Both goods and services

ASK ALL

Q9. What is the widest geographic area across which your organisation operates?

1. A single neighbourhood/community
2. A local authority area
3. Multiple local authority areas
4. Regionally (e.g. Greater Glasgow, Lothian)
5. Scotland-wide
6. Across the UK
7. Internationally

ASK ALL

Q10. Has your organisation exported/licensed goods or services to overseas markets in the last 12 months?

1. Yes
2. No

Governance

ASK ALL

Q11. Does your organisation have any paid employees? (including yourself)

1. Yes
2. No

ASK ALL

Q12. Including yourself, how many employees work for your organisation? (across all sites)

[Please provide numbers. Enter '0' if none]

1. Full-time paid staff (30 hours or more per week)
2. Part-time paid staff (less than 30 hours per week)
3. Full-time unpaid volunteers
4. Part-time unpaid volunteers

ASK ALL

Q13. Approximately what is the ratio between the salary of the highest and lowest paid employee in your organisation?

[To estimate divide the highest by the lowest salary, e.g. 5:1]

[OPEN RESPONSE]

ASK ALL

Q14. Please select the fair work practices that your social enterprise has in place (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

1. Real Living wage commitment
2. Secure employment with fair pay and conditions
3. Hybrid working
4. Flexible and family friendly working arrangements
5. No inappropriate use of zero hour contracts
6. No use of fire and rehire practices
7. Equal opportunities and diversity policies
8. Taking action to tackle the gender pay gap
9. Employee representation in decision-making
10. Training and development opportunities
11. Safe and healthy work environment
12. Recognition or awards for fair work practices
13. Other (Please specify): [Open text field]
14. None of the above

ASK ALL

Q15. Does your organisation pay at least the 'Real Living Wage in Scotland' to all paid employees? (Living Wage Foundation rate of £12 per hour as of 1 January 2024)

1. Yes
2. No

ASK ALL

Q16. Is your organisation a Real Living Hours accredited employer? (Information on the scheme can be found [here](#))

1. Yes
2. No

ASK IF NO at q16.

Q17. Do you intend to become a Real Living Hours accredited employer in the next 12 months?

1. Yes
2. No

ASK ALL

Q18. Is your organisation a Living Pension accredited employer? (Information on the scheme can be found [here](#))

1. Yes
2. No

ASK IF NO at q18.

Q19. Do you intend to become a Living Pension accredited employer in the next 12 months?

1. Yes
2. No

ASK ALL

Q20. Which of the following formal arrangements does your organisation have in place to engage employees in organisation decisions? (Select all that apply)

1. Staff representatives on the Board
2. Staff have voting rights on certain matters under the organisation's articles of association
3. Staff can submit or present items for Board meetings
4. 'Open door' policies between employees and leaders
5. Use of staff council/representative employee groups
6. Have a recognition agreement with a trade union
7. Staff engagement forums
8. Staff feedback is sought through emails, surveys and so on
9. Don't Know
10. Other (please specify)
11. None of the above

ASK ALL

Q21. Does your business offer any of the following working hours arrangements for employees?
(Select all that apply)

1. Flexitime (flexible working hours)
2. An annualised hours contract
3. Hybrid working
4. Term-time working
5. Job-sharing
6. Compressed hours
7. Zero hours contracts
8. On call working
9. Other flexible working patterns
10. Other (please specify)
11. None of the above

The difference you make

ASK ALL

Q22. In the last financial year, approximately how many people, if any, DIRECTLY benefited from the projects, programmes, goods or services of your organisation?

(Please provide numbers. Enter '0' if none and 'Unknown' if Don't Know)

ASK ALL

Q23. To what extent, has the number of beneficiaries changed in the last year?

1. Increased a lot
2. Increased a little
3. No change
4. Decreased a little
5. Decreased a lot
6. Don't Know

Tell us more to help us understand any big changes

ASK ALL

Q24. Do you target services or support to any of the following beneficiary groups? (please tick all that apply)

1. People experiencing socio-economic disadvantage
2. Alcohol or drug addiction/dependency
3. Carers
4. Homeless/coming out of homelessness
5. Individuals with a physical disability or long-term condition
6. Long-term unemployed
7. People from rural and island communities
8. Older people
9. People from a minority ethnic background
10. People identifying as LGBTIQ+
11. People with convictions
12. People with mental illness or mental health conditions or illnesses
13. Refugees and asylum seekers
14. Veterans/ex-military
15. Victims of crime
16. Women and girls
17. Young people
18. None of the above
19. Other (please specify)

ASK ALL

Q25. Which of the following outcomes, if any, have your activities directly enabled during the last year? (select all the apply)

1. Enabled children and young people to grow up loved, safe and respected so they realise their full potential
2. Enabled communities to be more inclusive, empowered, resilient, and safe
3. Enabled creativity and vibrant and diverse cultures to be expressed and enjoyed widely
4. Enabled a more globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy
5. Enabled people to become more educated, skills and able to contribute to society
6. Enabled people to value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment
7. Enabling thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone
8. Enable people to become more healthy and active
9. Enabled people to respect protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination
10. Enabled Scotland to be open connected and make a positive contribution internationally
11. Enabled poverty to be decreased by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally
12. None of the above
13. Don't Know

Measuring social impact

This section focuses on measuring social impact.

Social impact is often understood as the effects on people and communities that happen as a result of an action, activity, project, programme or policy. A common way to think about social impact is to consider it as the change that happens for or to people as a result of an action or activity.

ASK ALL

Q26. To what extent does your organisation measure its social impact?

1. A large extent
2. Some extent
3. Not at all
4. Don't Know

ASK IF AT LEAST SOME EXTENT TO Q26

Q27. What specific methodologies or tools does your organisation use to measure social impact?

PLEASE SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

1. Surveys or questionnaires
2. Interviews or focus groups
3. Case studies or success stories
4. Quantitative data analysis (e.g., metrics, indicators)
5. Qualitative data analysis
6. External evaluations or assessments
7. Other (Please specify): [Open text field]

ASK ALL

Q28. What are the main barriers your organisation faces to measuring social impact?

PLEASE SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

1. Lack of resources (financial, human, technological)
2. Lack of expertise or knowledge on how to measure impact
3. Perception that measuring impact is not relevant or necessary
4. Concerns about the complexity or feasibility of measuring impact
5. Prioritisation of other organisational activities over impact measurement
6. Other (Please specify): [Open text field]

ASK ALL

Q29. Which of the below does your organisation require to feel better prepared to measure social impact?

PLEASE SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

1. Impact measurement workshops
2. Online courses/resources
3. Funding for tools/software
4. Budget for hiring staff/consultants
5. Grants specifically for impact measurement
6. Access to impact measurement software
7. IT infrastructure upgrade
8. Best practice guidelines
9. Mentorship from experienced organisations
10. Networking opportunities
11. Promoting a culture of impact measurement
12. Overcoming resistance/scepticism
13. Other (please specify)

Net Zero

ASK ALL

Q30. Has your organisation used either of the following?

1. Growing Climate Confidence score card
2. Net Zero Accelerator Tool
3. No, I have used neither of these

IF NO AT Q30

Q31. Why have you not filled out the Growing Climate Confidence score card?

[Open]

IF NO AT Q30

You can complete the Growing Climate Confidence score card at <https://climateconfident.scot/scorecard> after you have completed this survey.

ASK ALL

Q32. Beyond net-zero initiatives, how does your organisation incorporate sustainability into its daily operations? (Select all that apply)

- Sustainable sourcing and procurement policies
- Waste reduction and management strategies

- Biodiversity and conservation efforts
- Sustainable transportation for employees
- Other (please specify)

Challenges, and prospects

ASK ALL

Q33. Has the economic climate over the last 12 months positively or negatively affected the prospects of your organisation?

1. Positively
2. Negatively
3. Neither positively nor negatively
4. Don't Know

ASK ALL

Q34. In the most recent financial year, what has happened to the following elements of your finances?

- Income
- Grants
- Debt
- Costs
- Profits
- Reserves

SCALE: Increase > 50%, Increase 25-50%, Increase <25%, No effect, Decrease <25%, Decrease 25-50%, Decrease >50%, Don't Know

ASK ALL

Q35. What do you perceive to be the main factors that have influenced market conditions over the last 12 months?

[OPEN RESPONSE]

ASK ALL

Q36. Do you believe that your organisation's financial circumstances will be better or worse over the next 12 months?

1. Much better
2. Somewhat better
3. About the same
4. Somewhat worse
5. Much worse
6. Don't Know

Public Sector Contracts

ASK ALL

Q37. Does your organisation sell goods or services (including under contract/agreement) to any of the following customer groups? (Select all that apply)

1. Public sector
2. Private sector
3. Third sector (inc. social enterprises)
4. General public

ASK ALL

Q38. Has your organisation bid for and won a public sector contract in the last 12 months? (Select all that apply)

1. No, didn't bid for any contracts
2. No, unsuccessful in bidding for contracts
3. Yes, won a contract as part of a consortium
4. Yes, won a contract bidding alone

ASK ALL

Q39. If you didn't bid or were unsuccessful in bidding, which of the following would your organisation require to feel better prepared to bid or win a contract?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

1. More capacity to write bids
2. Streamlined procurement processes
3. Diversification of offerings
4. Lower levels of insurance to be eligible to bid
5. Training or workshops on bidding processes
6. Consultation with bid writing experts
7. Mentorship programs for bidding guidance
8. Access to online resources or guides
9. Networking events with potential partners or clients
10. Collaboration opportunities with other organisations
11. Support from industry associations or networks
12. Feedback sessions on previous bid submissions
13. Legal support for contract review and compliance
14. Financial assistance for bid preparation costs
15. Other (please specify)
16. None of the above

ASK ALL

Q40. In the last 12 months, have you accessed any of the following support in preparing a bid?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

1. Training or workshops on bidding processes
2. Consultation with bid writing experts
3. Mentorship programs for bidding guidance
4. Access to online resources or guides
5. Networking events with potential partners or clients
6. Collaboration opportunities with other organisations
7. Support from industry associations or networks
8. Feedback sessions on previous bid submissions
9. Legal support for contract review and compliance
10. Financial assistance for bid preparation costs
11. Other (please specify)
12. I have not accessed any support (SINGLE CODE ONLY)

IF CODES 1-11 on Q40

Q41. How helpful was the support you accessed in preparing a bid?

1. Very helpful
2. Somewhat helpful
3. Neither helpful nor unhelpful
4. Somewhat unhelpful
5. Very unhelpful

Accessing external financial assistance

ASK ALL

Q42. Has your organisation applied for any of the following external finance in the past 12 months? (select all the apply)

1. A grant
2. Community share capital
3. A loan
4. Leasing/Hire Purchase
5. An overdraft
6. Equity finance
7. Crowdfunding
8. None of the above
9. Don't Know

IF CODES 1-7 on Q42

Q43. Was your organisation successful in accessing the following external finance in the past 12 months? (select all that apply)

1. A grant
2. Community share capital
3. A loan
4. Leasing/Hire Purchase

5. An overdraft
6. Equity finance
7. Crowdfunding

SCALE: Yes, No –applied but was unsuccessful

ASK ALL

Q44. Is your organisation willing to consider the use of repayable/loan finance?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't Know

ASK ALL

Q45. In what ways, if any, has your organisation's attitude to loan funding changed over the last 12 months?

PLEASE SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

1. Increased openness to exploring loan funding options
2. Actively seeking out loan opportunities for growth or expansion
3. More cautious approach due to economic uncertainties
4. Greater willingness to consider loans as a strategic investment
5. Expanded use of loan funding to support innovation or new projects
6. Shift towards alternative financing options instead of traditional loans
7. Greater emphasis on financial sustainability, leading to more conservative loan strategies
8. Increased reliance on loan funding to bridge gaps in revenue or cash flow
9. Heightened awareness of the importance of loan terms and conditions
10. No change in attitude towards loan funding

ASK ALL

Q46. What is your current cashflow/financial position?

1. We have funds to operate for up to 3 months
2. For 3-6 months
3. For 6-12 months
4. 12+ months
5. Don't know

ASK ALL

Q47. How concerned are you about your financial sustainability in the coming year?

1. Very concerned
2. Somewhat concerned
3. Not very concerned
4. Not concerned at all

5. Don't Know

[TEXT] If you are particularly concerned about your financial stability, there is free support available to help you find a new route forward. Just click here and fill in a very simple support request. <https://sesupportmap.scot/recovery/>

ASK ALL

Q48. Please tell us about any changes in the last 12 months, and what you expect to change for your organisation in the next 12 months:

Options are: last 12 months or next 12 months

- Total income
- Proportion of income from trading/contracts
- Contracts with the public sector
- Geographic coverage
- Product or goods service/range
- Demand for services or goods
- Operating costs
- Joint working with others
- Reliance on grants
- Total employees
- Total volunteers
- Digital delivery of activities
- Activity to reduce carbon footprint
- Support for staff wellbeing
- Operational processes

SCALE: Increased, No Change, Decreased

ASK ALL

Q49. Overall, how would you describe your confidence in the economic prospects facing your organisation over the next 12 months, compared to the previous 12 months?

1. Much more confident
2. Slightly more confident
3. As confident
4. Slightly less confident
5. Much less confident

ASK ALL

Q50. What are the prospects for your organisation over the next 12 months?

1. Positive, expecting growth or expansion
2. Stable, foreseeing consistent operations
3. Uncertain, with potential fluctuations in business activity

4. Challenging, anticipating difficulties or setbacks
5. Negative, facing significant obstacles or risks to sustainability
6. We expect to close permanently

ASK ALL

**Q51. What, if any, are the main barriers/obstacles to the development of your organisation?
(Select all that apply)**

1. Difficult marketing/trading conditions
2. Competition within the market
3. Difficulty complying with regulations or legislation
4. Lack of time/capacity to develop trading potential
5. Inadequate business support
6. Difficulties securing Public Contracts/Service Level Agreements
7. Public awareness or preconceptions of social enterprise
8. Recruitment and retention difficulties
9. Insecure or declining grant funding
10. Increasing costs
11. Cashflow difficulties
12. Difficulty accessing finance
13. Skills gaps or shortages
14. Supply chain disruption
15. Lack of digital infrastructure
16. Other (please specify)

ASK ALL

Q52. From this list below, which, if any, of the following might your organisation usefully benefit from help with during the next 12 months? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

1. Attracting new and young talent
2. Attracting repayable/loan finance
3. Collaborating with others to succeed
4. Developing digital capabilities
5. Developing leadership capabilities including developing board capacity
6. Developing new products or services
7. Developing your marketing strategy
8. Developing your workforce
9. Doing business in international markets
10. Finding a business mentor
11. Finding property solutions
12. Improving environmental sustainability
13. Improving your business practices
14. Learning new business skills

15. Managing your intellectual property
16. Measuring social impact
17. Planning for business change and succession
18. Preparing a business plan for growth
19. Recovering from business difficulties
20. Researching new opportunities
21. Starting up a new business venture
22. Tendering for public sector contracts
23. Other (please specify)

Equalities and Diversity

ASK ALL

Q53. What workforce data on equality and diversity does your organisation collect? (Please select all that apply):

1. Data on age
2. Data on sex
3. Data on gender reassignment
4. Data on disability
5. Data on race
6. Data on socio-economic background
7. Data on pregnancy and maternity
8. Data on marriage and civil partnership
9. Data on sexual orientation
10. Data on religion and belief
11. Data on caring responsibilities
12. None of the above
13. Don't Know

ASK ALL

Q54. Approximately, what proportion of your workforce:

Identify as female

Identify as non-binary

Are residents of the local area(s) in which your organisation is based

Are aged under 30

Are aged over 55

Have caring responsibilities

Consider themselves to have a disability or a long-term condition

Consider themselves as from a minority ethnic background

Were previously unemployed before taking up post

Were previously unemployed young people (aged under 30 years)
Received training or support intended to improve their employability
Identify as LGBTIQ+

Scale: None, 1-24%, 25-49%, 50-74%, 75-100%, Unknown

ASK ALL

Q55. How many individuals in the following categories currently serve on your organisation's governing board/committee? (You might refer to them as trustees, board members or committee members)

[Please provide numbers. Enter '0' if none or 'unknown' if Don't Know]

1. **Total** trustees or board/committee members
2. Of which identify as **female**
3. Of which identify as **non-binary**
4. Of which are people from **minority ethnic backgrounds**
5. Of which are people aged **under 30 years**
6. Of which are people aged **over 55 years**
7. Of which consider themselves to have a **disability or long-term health condition**
8. Of which identify as **LGBTIQ+**

ASK ALL

Q56. Please answer 'yes' or 'no' to the following statements about the characteristics of the most senior employee in your organisation (Chief Executive, Manager or equivalent):

1. Identifies as female
2. Identifies as non-binary
3. Is from a minority ethnic background
4. Is aged under 30 years
5. Is aged over 55 years
6. Considers themselves to have a disability or long-term health condition
7. Identifies as LGBTIQ+

SCALE: Yes, No, Unknown

ASK ALL

Q57. What support, if any, would your organisation benefit from to improve equality and diversity in your workforce?

[OPEN]

Appendix B: Qualitative Discussion Guide

Social Enterprise Census – Discussion Guide

Discussion Guide, July–September 2024

Set up

Introduce Diffley Partnership Team.

Welcome to the interview–

- Explain the discussion will last up to 60 minutes
- Scottish Government has commissioned us, Diffley Partnership as independent researchers, to conduct this wave of the Social Enterprise Census – a regular and comprehensive account of social enterprise activity in Scotland.
- Fully anonymous and confidential; The Diffley Partnership abide by the Market Research Society Code of Practice and the SRA Ethical Guidelines.
- Request permission to record discussion – with your permission I will record the discussion; this is just so we can go back and listen again after the discussion

Do you have any questions before we start?

About your organisation, including activities and services – 10 minutes

Please briefly introduce yourself, including your first name, your organisation, and some details about your organisation's work

PROMPT: what mission/goals does your organisation work towards?

PROMPT: what activities or services does your organisation engage in?

PROMPT: where does your organisation operate?

PROMPT: who does your organisation serve? What target/priority groups?

Is 'social enterprise' a term that your organisation uses to describe itself?

PROMPT: why/why not?

PROMPT: is there another term you prefer?

Governance, and equalities and diversity – 15 mins

Have there been any changes to your workforce size in the last 12 months? Including employees and volunteers.

PROMPT: what changes have you seen?

PROMPT: have these been challenging or enabling?

How does your organisation embed fair work practices?

PROMPT: any actions surrounding fair pay and conditions, flexible working, equal opportunities and diversity, employee representation in decision-making, training and development opportunities?

Have you had any challenges embedding elements of fair work practices?

PROMPT: what elements have been challenging?

PROMPT: what made them challenging?

PROMPT: any fair work initiatives you have looked into and were unsuitable to your organisation?

PROMPT: any fair work initiatives in development?

Have you seen any opportunities for your organisation as you embed fair work practices?

PROMPT: any examples?

Are you accredited as a Real Living Wage employer?

PROMPT: What about as a Real Living Hours employer?

PROMPT: What about Living Pension?

Have you found these initiatives helpful?

PROMPT: In what way(s)?

The difference you make and measuring social impact – 15 mins

Has the number of beneficiaries changed in the last year?

PROMPT: in what way(s)?

Has the composition of beneficiaries changed in the last year?

PROMPT: in what way(s)?

Have these changes had any knock-on effects for your organisation?

PROMPT: what effects have they had?

PROMPT: how have you managed these effects?

PROMPT: any support needed to better manage these effects?

How does your organisation measure social impact?

PROMPT: any specific methodologies or tool you use?

PROMPT: any barriers you face to measuring social impact?

PROMPT: any support needed to measure social impact?

And what have you found about your social impact?

PROMPT: any examples you can share?

Net Zero – 5 mins

How does your organisation embed net zero and sustainability initiatives?

PROMPT: any examples?

Have there been any challenges embedding net zero and sustainability initiatives?

PROMPT: what elements have been challenging?

PROMPT: what made them challenging?

PROMPT: any net zero/sustainability initiatives in development?

Have you seen any opportunities for your organisation as you embed net zero and sustainability initiatives?

PROMPT: any examples?

Public sector contracts – 5 mins

What experience do you have in bidding for public sector contracts?

PROMPT: have bid? Alone or with partner/collaborators? Successful/unsuccessful?

Would you be interested in bidding for public sector contracts?

PROMPT: any specific barriers you face in bidding?

PROMPT: any desired support?

Accessing external financial assistance, and challenges and prospects – 10 mins

What experience do you have in applying for external finance?

PROMPT: any specific types of finance? Successful or unsuccessful?

Would you be interested in applying for more external finance?

PROMPT: any specific types of finance that you are interested in?

How has the economic climate over the past 12 months affected your organisation?

PROMPT: any changes to your organisation's financial circumstances?

PROMPT: Have there been any challenges that have continued on from Covid-19?

And how do you think the economic climate over the next 12 months will affect your organisation?

PROMPT: any particular concerns?

And what would you say are the main barriers/obstacles to the development of your organisation?

Is there any particular gaps in government policy or sector support that you would highlight?

Conclusions and wrap-up

Thank you very much for the discussion, **is there anything not already covered that you would like to mention?**

Thank and close.