

# Turning Ideas into Reality: Your Community Business Journey

Supporting rural  
community-owned businesses



We help you create resilient,  
thriving and inclusive rural  
communities.

- Business support
- Membership
- Research and policy

**Supporting rural  
community-owned businesses**



# Agenda

1. What is a Community Business?
2. Steps to Community Ownership
3. Where to find help

# What is a community-owned business?

- Locally-rooted
- Represents the community
- Controlled by and accountable to the community
- Trading for the benefit of the community



## Fox and Goose



## Draycott Village Shop



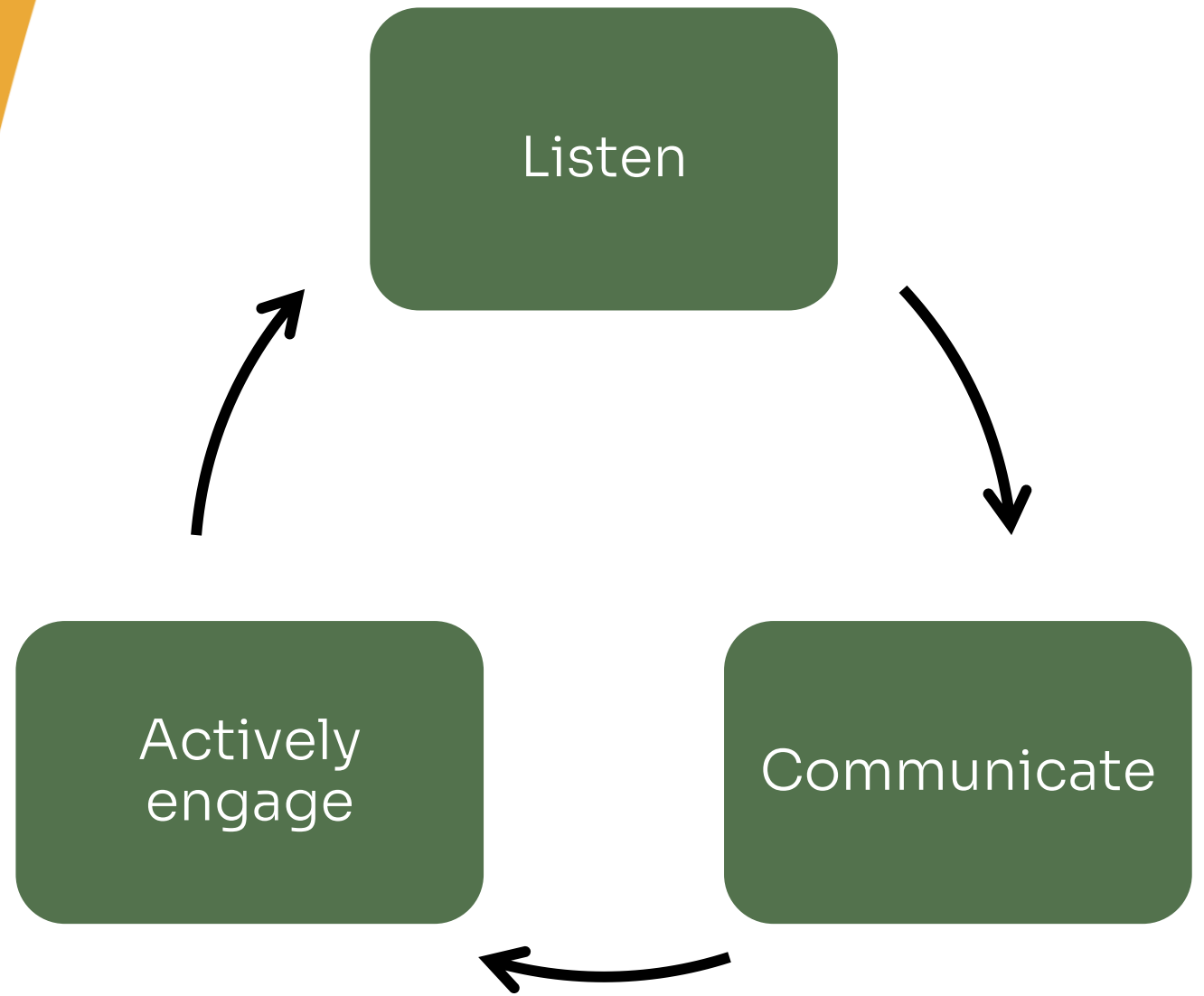
# 4 stages to success

DISCOVER	Establish a steering group Consult the community
DEVELOP	Decide on legal structure and governance Develop a business and community benefit plan Secure funds Acquire premises
PREPARE TO LAUNCH	Source suppliers Recruit volunteers and staff Marketing Opening event
THRIVE	Work together to thrive Community engagement Governance Use Plunkett support

# Form a steering group

WHY	WHAT	WHO	HOW
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# Engage and consult your community





# Do's and Don'ts

- Know your community
- Be creative
- Keep it simple
- Help people feel safe
- Give everyone a voice
- Empower community
- Start early

- Ignore community
- Be overly promotional
- Talk AT people
- Make unrealistic promises
- Ignore negative feedback
- Refuse to adapt or evolve
- Presume you know

# Legal structure and governance

Community  
Benefit  
Society

Co-operative  
Society

Company  
Limited by  
Guarantee

Company  
Limited by  
Shares

Partnership

Association

Charitable  
Organisation

Community  
Interest  
Company

# Business planning

Research

Collate

Select

Test

Write

Review

Publish

Use

Revisit

### Key partners

Who can help make your co-op a success?  
e.g. Suppliers, collaborators, funders

### Key activities

What does your business do  
What business processes are needed to create your product/ service?

### Key propositions - customers

What are the benefits of your products/ services to customers?

What difference does your offer make to customers?

### Customer relationships

How do you communicate with, attract and retain customers?

### Customer segments

Who are your customers?

What do you know about them

### Key resources

What raw materials, equipment, premises and people are need to run the business

### Key proposition - Member Benefit

Community Benefit

What benefits does membership confer that gives the co-op an advantage?



### Channels

How do customers, and members, access your product / service

### Member participation

How are members involved in the business - day to day and governance



### Members

Who qualifies for membership?  
How many?  
Can you segment your membership



### Cost structure

How much do your resources and activities cost?

### Revenue streams

How do you make income? Are there different sources or streams relating to products or customer types?

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# Raising Finance

## Community shares

- Unique to Coops and CBSs
- One member, one vote
- Shares can't be traded
- Value can't increase
- Interest can be paid
- Shares can be withdrawn

## Donations

- Fundraising events
- Philanthropists

## Grant funding

- From trusts, foundations, local and central government
- Eligibility criteria
- Timescales
- Application process

## Crowdfunding

- Online platform
- Rewards
- Commission payable

## Sponsorship

- Corporate giving
- Benefits in kind
- What you can offer

## Loan finance

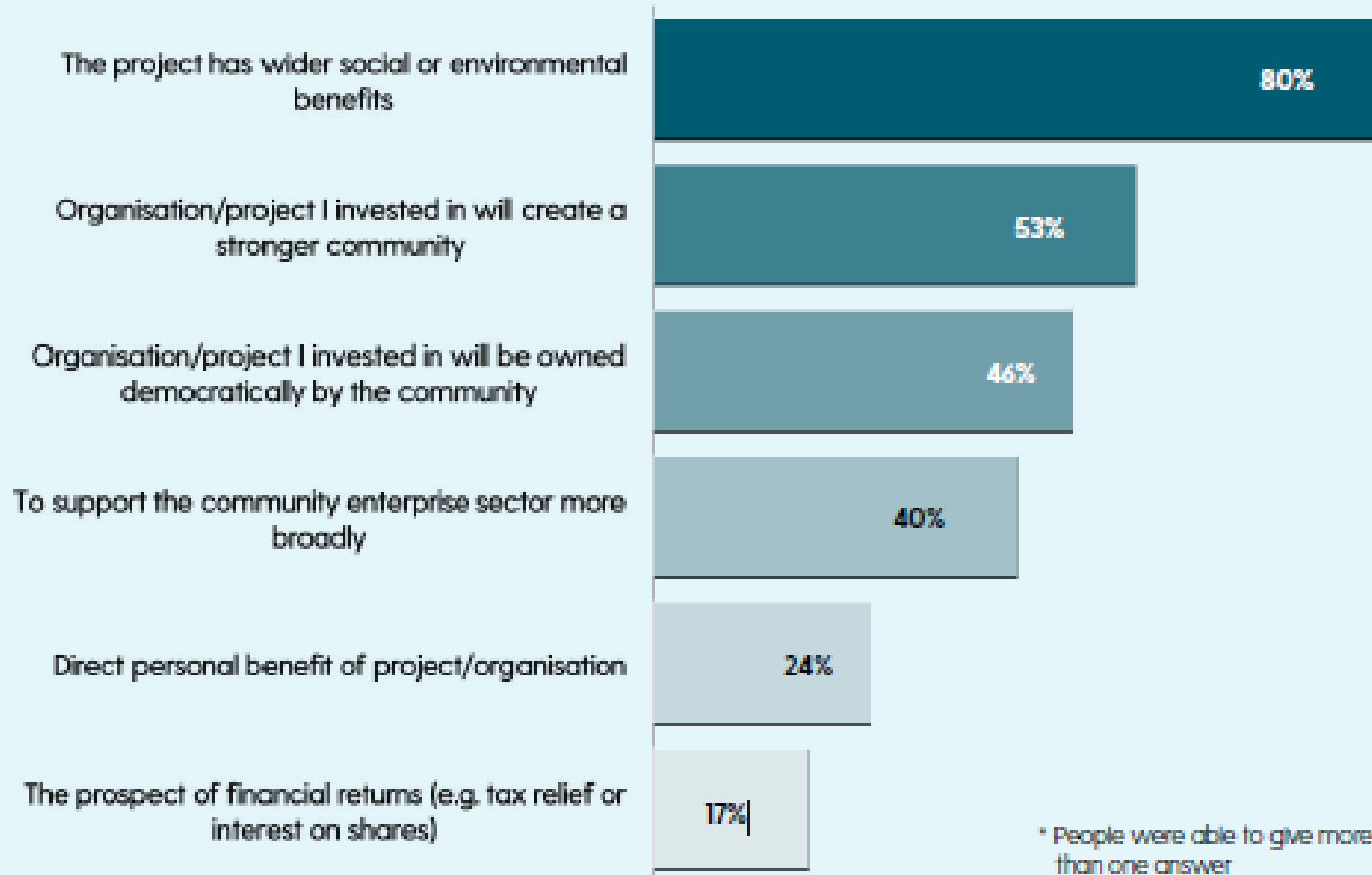
- Commercial loans / mortgages
- Private loans
- Financial projections need to add up

# Community shares

- A flexible form of raising equity investment & building a membership
- Unique to co-operative and community benefit societies
- Withdrawable, not transferable share capital
- Investments, not a donation
- Democratic, patient and flexible, the society set the terms



### Top reasons for investing in community shares\*





# Acquire premises



- Find locals with relevant skills
- Start early on
- Explore all the options
- Consider all the requirements and legal obligations
- Get professional advice

# Volunteers

- Lifeblood of the business
- Benefits for the business, the community and the individual
- Plan recruitment
- Look after them well

## VOLUNTEERING CAN BENEFIT YOUR HEALTH

Research shows that volunteering is linked to ...



**Better self-reported well-being**



**Increased life satisfaction**



**Increased self-esteem**



**Long living**



**Reduced brain shrinking**



**Reduced depression symptoms**

**NCO**

References: Carlson, M.C., et al. (2015) Impact of the Baltimore Experience Corps Trial on cortical and hippocampal volumes. *Alzheimer Dement.* / Jones, D., et al. (2015) The benefits of making a contribution to your community in later life. *The centre for Ageing better.* / Casiday, R., et al. (2008) *Volunteering and health: what impact does it really have?* Report to Volunteering England. Project Report. Volunteering England.  
Graphics: Head with brain made by Freepik from freepik.com / Monitor health made by Royyan Wijaya from the Noun Project / Self-esteem made by Lucas Fñie from the Noun Project / Health made by Tatiana Belkina from the Noun Project / Happy pose made by Abraham from the Noun Project / Crying made by James Fenton from the Noun Project

# Suppliers



# Building a customer base



# Open for business

- Plan for launch
- Licenses and insurance
- Policies and procedures
- Food and hygiene regulations
- Financial systems
- Community engagement
- Governance
- Official opening event



Governance

Team

**THRIVE**

Community

Ask for help

# Next steps



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**In the last 25 years we've supported over 700 UK community-owned businesses with free, expert advice, training and funding.**

[How we help >](#)



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