

The Business Case for Community Investment

What is Community Investment?

Community Investment, or Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), as it is also called, is more than just donating money or providing sponsorship. It's about supporting communities and the organisations that work with them, by giving time, and access to the resources and expertise within your business.

It also requires you to think about how the choices you make about running your business, such as who you buy from or how you get rid of your waste, affect the local community, your employees and other stakeholders and to take action to ensure that your business practices have a positive impact on society. This is often referred to as 'social impact'.

What do we mean by Social Impact?

Social impact is the effect on individuals and communities that happens as a result of an action or activity. For a business positive social impact could be achieved by providing employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities, contracting with a recycling charity or providing staff volunteers to help a community project, such as the creation of a community garden or decorating the village hall.

What are the business benefits of Community Investment?

Research shows that businesses that invest in their communities and who see CSR as being an integral of their working practices:

- Improve their brand value and companies reputation
- Have increased levels of productivity
- Reduce their costs
- Find it easier to attract and retain staff
- Are more likely to be able to secure investment through the growing social finance market