

**EMBARGOED: 14<sup>TH</sup> August 2009**

**PRESS RELEASE and PHOTO OPPORTUNITY – see MEDIA INVITATION below**

**14 August 2009 at 12.30 pm**

**First in Scotland to be awarded the Social Enterprise Mark**

Five pioneering organisations will become the very first businesses in Scotland to be awarded the **Social Enterprise Mark**. The prestigious accreditation is a testimony to customers and supporters that the organisation is founded on the highest environmental and social standards.

Senscot have been working with RISE (managers of the Mark in England) to bring the brand for social enterprises to Scotland. Bookdonors CIC, The Engine Shed, **Out of the Blue Arts & Education Trust** (OOTB), The Wise Group and Recycle Fife all join other visionary social enterprises that have the Social Enterprise Mark, such as Hill Holt Wood, Sunlight Enterprises, Eden Project, Sandwell Community Caring Trust, Emmaus and the Co-operative Group, as well as Employers for Childcare in Northern Ireland.



OOTB is a key provider of space and support to the artistic community of Edinburgh, leasing out studios at affordable rates, running projects, hosting exhibitions and providing selling opportunities for arts and crafts workers at quarterly Arts Markets. Since OOTB bought the ex-army Drill Hall on Dalmeny Street, Leith in 2003, it has become a hub for the local community, from running dance workshops and drama summer schools, to initiating a 150-strong Friends of Dalmeny Street Park group, which organises activities and campaigns for the improvement of this vital local resource. In 2007, OOTB launched The Drill Hall Arts Café and began a Training Scheme, which provides training and experience to young people from the local area who are not in employment or higher education. The most recent project from the Café is the Village Store, a new food co-op for Leith staffed by trainees and volunteers which is not run for profit, but to provide cheap, fresh, local produce to the community.

Since 2003, OOTB has undertaken a phased refurbishment of the Drill Hall and environmental sustainability has been at the forefront of the project. By using innovative heating methods such as air source heat pumps and natural, renewable materials such as sheep's wool to insulate the building, OOTB has reduced the short term environmental impact of the build project as well as its future carbon footprint. Phase 3 of the refurbishment is currently underway and will include the installation of an array of solar tubes to harness the sun's energy to heat water.

Rob Hoon, Co-ordinator of Out of the Blue, said:

"We're very proud to be leading the way in Scotland with the Social Enterprise Mark. Here at Out of the Blue Arts & Education Trust we firmly believe that many more organisations in Scotland will benefit from having the Social Enterprise Mark. Social enterprise is a way of generating resources and opportunities for people to work together and the Social Enterprise Mark enables us to show people that we are well respected for our socially useful initiatives."

Colin Campbell, Senscot Chief Executive added:

"Customers want to spend their money responsibly but often aren't sure where their money will go. For shoppers, the Mark guarantees their money will go towards tackling social or environmental need, and for traders it's a great opportunity to show off their ethical credentials and to attract new customers."

'Social enterprise' is a different way to do business, and is becoming more important to customers, especially following growing mistrust in privately-run banks and businesses. Recent research revealed that consumers are crying out for the Social Enterprise Mark: 7 out of 10 people (in a survey conducted by ICM Research\*) said they would prefer to buy from firms who put their profits back into the community rather than into the pockets of shareholders and that they would rather buy from a company that makes decisions based on concern for society and the environment.

\*The full research report is available at [www.rise-sw.co.uk](http://www.rise-sw.co.uk) or [www.socialenterprisemark.co.uk](http://www.socialenterprisemark.co.uk)

### **Media Invite and photo opportunity**

Jodie Boswell, the most recent trainee to graduate from the Drill Hall Arts Café Training Scheme, will present the award along with Mark Thomas, comedian, writer and activist, at 12.30 pm on 14<sup>th</sup> August at The Engine Shed, 19 St Leonard's Lane, Edinburgh, EH8 9SH.

Photographs will be made available for media unable to attend.

Media wishing to attend, or unable to attend but requesting photographs, should contact Anna McCrum on 0131 555 7101 ([marketing@outoftheblue.org.uk](mailto:marketing@outoftheblue.org.uk)) or Anne Mountjoy on 07812 029 228 or ([annemountjoy@rise-sw.co.uk](mailto:annemountjoy@rise-sw.co.uk)).

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Notes to Editor

1. Since its beginnings in a rented building in New Street in 1994, OOTB has grown to become a key provider of space and support to the artistic community of Edinburgh. Its headquarters have been at the Drill Hall since 2004, but other outposts include the Bongo Club and another 32 studios at the Powerhouse in Portobello. The OOTB Drill Hall currently houses around 73 artists and creative industries and hosts hundreds of classes, workshops, conferences, training seminars, arts markets, performances and exhibitions.
2. The Social Enterprise Mark is a fairtrade-style identity that social enterprises can apply to use. Customers can be sure that companies carrying the mark are using their profits to tackle a social or environmental need and are governed in a way that benefits their communities.
3. The Social Enterprise Mark in South West England is funded by the National Lottery through the BIG Lottery Fund.
4. The Social Enterprise Mark is sponsored by the Co-operative Group South & West and Triodos Bank.
5. The Social Enterprise Mark is the only label of its kind that is open to all types of social enterprises that successfully meet a set of qualification criteria. The Mark will be available across the UK by the end of 2009.
6. RISE is the voice for South West social enterprise and manages the Social Enterprise Mark. RISE is supported by the South West RDA. [www.rise-sw.co.uk](http://www.rise-sw.co.uk). For more information contact: Anne Mountjoy, m: 07812 029 228, e: [annemountjoy@rise-sw.co.uk](mailto:annemountjoy@rise-sw.co.uk)