



# Sunderland Bangladesh International Centre

## Annual Social Impact Report

April 2024 to March 2025



Social . Economic . Impact

October 2025

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page No</b>
Executive Summary	3
SBIC Introduction	7
Population Patterns	9
Sunderland Race Riots	11
Racially Minoritised Communities	12
SBIC Method of Work: Strength-based perspective	14
SBIC - Gatherings & Events	16
SBIC & SBMEN: Enterprising Sunderland	18
SBIC - Education and Training	24
SBIC - Youth work	32
SBIC - Information Advice and Guidance (IAG)	37
SBIC - Health & Well-being	41
SBIC Partnerships & Collaborations	48
SBIC Social Return on Investment Calculation	52
SBIC - Recommendations & Observations	53

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# 1. Executive Summary

- ∞ Established in 1999 in Hendon, Sunderland, the Sunderland Bangladesh International Centre (SBIC) serves as an anchor organisation supporting racially minoritised communities that are frequently underrepresented in community engagement, with a membership of 1,847 active individuals from Sunderland's racially marginalised communities. SBIC focuses on addressing social, economic, and racial inequalities by fostering connections rooted in shared language, culture, and trust, as well as experiences arising from encounters with discrimination, migration, and other forms of inequality. Over the past 25 years, SBIC has promoted racial and social justice through initiatives in employability, enterprise, health, and education, thereby positively influencing disadvantaged individuals, their families, and communities, while also contributing to economic and societal progress.
- ∞ The Sunderland Bangladeshi International Centre (SBIC) reopened in May 2025, following a 14-month refurbishment that began in April 2024. It features a large hall for 350 people, six education and training rooms, and a youth activity hub. Upgrades include advanced audio-visual equipment, high-speed internet, and Wi-Fi. The Youth Investment Fund (YIF) funded £1.3 million for capital works. A commercial kitchen was added using a loan and a grant from the Social Investment Business (SIB). The improved car park now serves as a versatile outdoor space for youth activities and pop-up markets. Design and planning for capital works often take time.
- ∞ The building modernisation began in 2019, led by a Sunderland-based architect, staff, volunteers, and trustees of SBIC. A feasibility study was conducted in 2021, followed by a planning application in November 2021, which was approved in April 2022. In September 2022, the YIF application and business plan were submitted, with detailed costs in October. The YIF was approved in December 2022. Arcus Consulting LLP joined in March 2023 and submitted revised planning permissions the same month. Final costs and designs were approved in June 2023, with updated planning in September 2023. Construction was contracted to Arcus FM in February 2024, with work commencing in April of that year. The building was handed over in April 2025 and was opened to the public in May 2025.
- ∞ While the building was under construction, SBIC rented office space at FISCUS's Co-op Centre in Hendon. The organisation continued its activities with a flexible approach, running community group sessions, youth work, and one-to-one support for users from racially minoritised backgrounds. With limited scope for large projects, participant numbers declined compared to previous years. Still, the focus remained on youth services, education, training, and guidance.
- ∞ Over the past four decades, the City of Sunderland has experienced significant demographic changes. Census data from 1981 to 2021 indicates a consistent decline in population from 294,102 to 274,200 residents, representing a reduction of 19,902 individuals, or 6.7%. Conversely, the proportion of the racially minoritised population has increased markedly, by 266% between 2001 and 2021, despite an overall population decline of 2.4%. The Black Community in Sunderland has grown exponentially since 2001, with successive Census results demonstrating a 534% increase between 2001 and 2021 (mean average annual increase 26.7%). According to data from the 2021 Census, mid-term census figures, HESA, and the Migration Observatory, the racially minoritised population in Sunderland is approximately 41,677.
- ∞ Recent racist riots have impacted Sunderland and marginalised communities, facing socio-economic and racial inequalities. These effects are visible both in affected areas and where prevention measures are taken. Austerity policies have widened social divides and fostered resentment, often blaming migrants. Despite ongoing efforts, progress is slow, and the

root causes of the issue worsen both nationally and locally. Misinformation, social disengagement, and divisive politics fuel a hostile environment that increases racist violence across Britain.

- ∞ The good news is that there was a footfall of 2,653 visitors to the centre as from May to July 2025 as it returns to normal. Over the next six months, SBIC will expand its services using a new website, social media, word of mouth, presentations, and local ambassadors.
- ∞ SBIC enhances its strengths-based approach by utilising Social Accounting, SROI methods, and the Theory of Change to connect actions to outcomes. Stakeholders identify outputs, outcomes, and indicators to inform planning and review. Impact tools measure social changes among racially minoritised users, families, and the community. The co-produced approach helps trustees, staff, volunteers, and users reflect and learn, clarifying the delivery of actions to achieve outcomes.
- ∞ SBIC staff advocated for service users, connecting them to support in employment, education, health, wellbeing, and anti-racism. This strengths-based approach improved health, support networks, finances, skills, confidence, and qualifications. Many successes are owed to SBIC. In the User Impact Survey, 79% of 456 respondents said no external projects influenced their outcomes, and 96% attributed the change to SBIC.
- ∞ The Social Impact Report shows each pound invested in SBIC yields a social return of £8.25. It highlights the project's effectiveness and its positive impact on racially minoritised people, their families, and communities. To emphasise social value, SBIC should integrate it into its strategic and charitable goals, ensuring all plans and strategies reflect this. Regular evaluation of social value allows stakeholders to shape services and outcomes, helping staff appreciate the impact of their work on individuals and communities.
- ∞ Strategic partnerships can be transformative, enabling organisations to combine strengths, share resources and achieve greater collective results. Developing these partnerships requires building relationships grounded in trust, transparency, and shared visions. SBIC is effective at identifying synergies that go beyond mere recognition of opportunities.
- ∞ During the social impact year, the project distributed 1,000 surveys and received 456 completed responses. Of these respondents, 433 (95%) felt safe and respected. Additionally, 351 (77%) indicated that no outside initiatives influenced their changes. A total of 396 (87%) reported increased social confidence, and 403 (88.3%) felt more involved in their community since joining. When asked about outside influences, 77% (351) responded "No," highlighting the project's significant impact.
- ∞ SBIC's and SBME Network's *Enterprise Programme* engaged 140 participants, resulting in 37 'enterprise-ready' individuals and the creation of 7 businesses by racially minoritised people. SBIC plans to expand in collaboration with the Sunderland BAME Network and NE-BIC, developing integrated, holistic programmes focused on pre-enterprise, start-up, and SME growth within racially minoritised communities and EMBs. Incorporating racial inequality strategies will help EMBs overcome challenges, while removing structural barriers will foster a fairer environment. Culturally appropriate training will empower EMB leaders to contribute effectively to planning, leadership, investment, and networking.
- ∞ SBIC's youth programmes create safe, welcoming environments for young people to explore their identities and develop skills through various activities. In the past year, 302 young people participated in these programmes, with an additional 246 attending cultural events. Staff emphasise building self-awareness, social understanding, and decision-making, establishing trust, and promoting choices that boost confidence. With limited available support heightening risks, SBIC proactively involves the community and facilitates open conversations about mental health, safeguarding, and crime prevention. The organisation empowers youth by including them

in decision-making to help them gain more control over their lives. Thanks to YIF investment, youth work is expected to grow in 2025-26. Recent research reveals that 75% of youth spend most of their free time at home (48% in their bedrooms), only 13% socialise in person, and 19% do so online. Although 85% hadn't visited a youth centre in the past year, attendance increased from 9% to 15% in 2024.

- ∞ Individuals from minority ethnic backgrounds often face significant barriers that impede their educational progress. SBIC addresses these barriers by offering a combination of qualifications and practical work experience. Through upskilling opportunities, we empower learners to advance beyond entry-level positions, achieve financial independence, and build rewarding careers in high-demand fields such as healthcare, technology, and construction. Although the centre was closed during the social impact year, SBIC continued to provide accredited training to 155 racially minoritised learners. With recent investment in a new building, SBIC aims to offer accredited training to 375 racially minoritised users in 2025-26.
- ∞ Incorporating multiple English accents through AI offers a fresh take on language learning within ESOL settings. Digital tools often reflect the richness of linguistic diversity better than traditional methods. While ESOL students may initially be anxious about unfamiliar accents, exposure through AI promotes inclusivity and can boost learners' confidence in understanding diverse speakers. Engaging in authentic, real-life tasks builds both confidence and speaking skills. AI based tools provide novel opportunities to simulate conversations and assess speaking and listening in ways that are engaging, accessible, and formative. SBIC will spend the coming year exploring AI-powered strategies to better support learners and improve real-world communication in ESOL education.
- ∞ For 2025-26, SBIC should expand its employability IAG and training framework, currently serving 242 users. The six-stage framework enables caseworkers and users to jointly evaluate key areas, including health, well-being, education, skills, finances, support networks, motivation, and confidence. They collaborate on setting actionable goals for employment readiness. Support activities include interactive group sessions, formal learning, work placements and shadowing, one-to-one support, personalised action plans, comprehensive health and financial reviews, and advice on debt and welfare.
- ∞ Substantial health inequalities persist across Sunderland and throughout the UK. These disparities stem from intersecting factors such as race, poverty, gender, location, occupation, and age, representing unfair, preventable inequalities that challenge principles of fairness. These issues have been consistently documented over the past 50 years, for instance, the Black Report and Acheson Reports. Leading organisations like The King's Fund, the Health Foundation, the Nuffield Trust, and the Centre for Health and the Public Interest highlight the role of systemic racism and discrimination in exacerbating these inequalities.
- ∞ Health organisations such as NHS England, NHS Trusts (through the Workforce Race Equality Standard and anti-racism initiatives), the Care Quality Commission (via State of Care reports), and Public Health England (with the COVID-19 Beyond the Data review) recognise the need to tackle these issues through community engagement, dialogue, and learning. Building trust is vital for meaningful change. Impacted communities are increasingly demanding visible, sincere, and compassionate leadership. Addressing health inequalities driven by structural racism and discrimination is both a moral and public health imperative.
- ∞ Health organisations like NHS England, NHS Trusts (via the Workforce Race Equality Standard and anti-racism initiatives), the Care Quality Commission (through State of Care reports), and Public Health England (with the COVID-19 Beyond the Data review) acknowledge the need to address these issues through community engagement, dialogue, and learning. Building trust is essential

for meaningful change. Impacted communities increasingly demand visible, sincere, and compassionate leadership. Addressing health inequalities caused by structural racism and discrimination is both a moral and public health duty. By collaborating, sharing learning, adopting systemic policy solutions for wider determinants of health, and investing, we can create equal health and well-being for all communities, transforming outcomes and the systems driving them.

- ∞. The government's 2025 Fit for the Future: 10-Year Health Plan aims to shift focus from treatment to prevention and from hospitals to community-based care. Its objective is to enhance health services and overall well-being by establishing new neighbourhood health centres in communities with the lowest HLE. HLE will also serve as a key indicator of health within the Local Government Outcomes Framework. Achieving thriving communities relies on partnerships rooted in fairness, inclusion, and shared responsibility. This involves collaborating directly with those most affected to develop solutions together, empowering communities to actively participate in shaping the systems that support their well-being and fostering meaningful, sustainable change.
- ∞ The social impact report highlights these inequalities and describes the comprehensive actions of the SBIC health and well-being team, who served over 467 users this year, addressing the various causes of ethnic health disparities, including protected characteristics, socioeconomic deprivation, geographical location, and the ongoing effects of structural racism and discrimination.
- ∞ In summary, SBIC's service model effectively tackles the issues faced by racially minoritised residents, such as poverty, unemployment, underemployment, and disparities in health, education, and training. They also assist individuals dealing with everyday racism and Islamophobia. SBIC appreciates our social investors, whose ongoing support, guidance, and resources enable us to create meaningful change for racially minoritised individuals, their families, and communities. SBIC 2024-25 programme was funded by the Youth Investment Fund, Social Investment Business (SIB), City of Sunderland, Macmillan Cancer Support, Community Foundation NE, UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Ballanger Charitable Trust, National Lottery Community Fund, Lloyds Foundation, Phoenix Way Fund, Pual Hamlyn Foundation, Sport England, SBMEN, Mercers Charitable Trust, and Sunderland Voluntary Sector Alliance, Creggs Foundation and Independent Age.

## 2. SBIC Introduction

The Sunderland Bangladeshi International Centre (SBIC) aims to support racially minoritised communities in Sunderland. SBIC is a well-established community anchor organisation based in Hendon, Sunderland, an area ranked among the top 1% most deprived in the UK, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). Established in 1999, the centre is led by 1,847 racially minoritised members through elected trustees. SBIC draws on its firsthand experiences with social, economic, and racial disparities to actively support residents. It fosters trust through shared languages, cultures, and intergenerational connections, reflecting a collective history of forced exile, discrimination, and inequality.

Embedded in the lived experience of social, economic, and racial inequality, SBIC is uniquely positioned to connect with and support marginalised and hard-to-reach communities. Our shared language, culture, intergenerational bonds, and deep trust, built through common experiences of discrimination, forced migration, and systemic challenges, are the source of our resilience. This foundation enables us to offer holistic, intuitive, and collaboratively designed services that address the community's genuine needs.

SBIC emphasises community development by forming partnerships with racially minoritised



residents to nurture, support, and grow initiatives that uplift these groups. Its aim is to tackle racial and social injustices while enabling communities to develop their own solutions to local issues. SBIC's projects are customised to help individuals build confidence, independence, and skills, allowing them to lead healthier, more fulfilling, and financially secure lives. The following priorities are incorporated into SBIC's flagship Impact for Change programme:

- Health & Well-Being
- Youth Work provision
- Education & Training
- Employment & Enterprise
- Improving Livelihoods
- Older People
- Volunteering Opportunities

SBIC's mission states: *"Develop initiatives for racially minoritised communities to promote an inclusive society that values social and racial justice."* SBIC envisions a society where all individuals, regardless of ethnicity or country of origin, have the opportunity and freedom to lead meaningful lives.

SBIC Vision: By 2029, SBIC will be a vibrant, sustainable organisation that shapes public policy and stands as a leading advocate for social change, racial and social justice for racially minoritised communities within Sunderland and the surrounding region. SBIC values include:

- A belief in building a society that is fairer and inclusive
- Respecting each person and recognising their worth
- A conviction that working together and self-reliance are strong drivers of change
- A commitment to fostering racial and social justice in every form, for the good of the economy and society
- A learning organisation that constantly seeks new ways to support users and improve skills.
- Emphasise outward engagement to collaborate on shared goals and maintain community visibility.
- SBIC are a pragmatic organisation ready to face real situations, bringing energy, dedication, and creativity to our work
- Being honest, transparent, approachable, and responsible

This year marked a milestone for SBIC with a major expansion and modernisation of its 25-year-old building, funded by a £1.3m Youth Investment Fund and SIB's Social Investment. Despite the building's closure for over a year, SBIC continued services across multiple locations, supported by community outreach and detached sessions. Management functions were housed within the FISCUS Co-operative Centre, ensuring programmes remained accessible and effective during the transition.

Over 25 years, Sunderland's racially minoritised population grew from 5,000-8,000 to 41,246. Despite this, issues of racism and Islamophobia persist, evidenced by the August 2024 race riots. Understanding how socio-economic status, race, gender, and spatial inequalities intersect is vital for improving social, economic, and health outcomes. These disparities affect many aspects of life and can have long-term consequences for racially minoritised individuals and their communities. Recognising these intersections is essential when creating interventions and policies. Addressing systemic inequalities will help build a fairer, more inclusive, and healthier society.

### 3. SBIC Aims

- SBIC aims to build on the Centre's strengths to support a shared community vision of leadership among racially minoritised groups, addressing both economic and racial inequalities.
- Enhance co-produced youth facilities for racially minoritised, disadvantaged, and hard-to-reach groups in Sunderland, particularly in Hendon and the East End, through Youth Investment Fund refurbishment. Aim to create inclusive, open-access spaces for events, training, and gatherings for all ages.
- Improved support for underrepresented racial minorities by providing targeted programs in enterprise, employability, education, information, health, and youth development. The goal is to address and overcome racial, economic, and social barriers.

- To create a state of the art commercial kitchen and hospitality space focused on training, education, and generating income.
- To build on the SBIC NCFE Accredited Learning status by designing and delivering more co-produced training qualifications for racially minoritised groups.
- To partner with others to enhance service delivery for racially minoritised groups in Sunderland, focusing on health, well-being, economic engagement, youth development, and nurturing future leaders.

## 4. Scope of Social Impact

Measuring and managing an organisation's social impact is essential for understanding its community contribution. This process provides insights that support the SBIC vision and mission. Impact evidence is crucial for attracting funding, investment, and transparent stakeholder communication. SBIC differs from traditional businesses by prioritising people and purpose over capital, promoting participatory governance, and reinvesting surpluses into the community and users, shaping how social impact is measured and managed. The approach also enhances the communication of expected and actual outcomes, thereby boosting accountability for investors and stakeholders. Strategic decision-making, planning, and offers a clear overview of results.

This report assesses the activities of SBIC from April 2024 to March 2025, concentrating on the impact of projects, strategies, and areas for improvement. It informs SBIC's plans for the period from April 2025 to March 2026 and is part of a wider social impact initiative (January 2020 - March 2027), which incorporates tools, methodologies, outcome frameworks, and an Indicator Library to measure impact. The SBIC Social Impact Report utilises Social Accounting, Auditing, and SROI methods to track, evaluate, and demonstrate impact to stakeholders. It helps SBIC plan, manage, and stay true to its values by evaluating performance across social, environmental, and economic objectives. Data capture includes:

- Session sign-in sheets
- Case studies
- Excel-based monitoring spreadsheet for quantitative analysis of beneficiary activity
- Stakeholder structured interviews
- Quantitative data gathered through user questionnaires
- Focus groups with young people and adult beneficiaries
- Qualitative data, including journals, award logbooks, and group feedback sessions
- Impact Surveys to gather specific measures
- Activity and premises rental booking forms to support qualitative data.

### Stakeholder Analysis & Omission

SBIC's social impact report examines the effects on users, staff, investors, and trustees, but excludes regulators, authorities, NCFE, suppliers, and healthcare providers due to budget constraints, time constraints, and month closure. During this time, SBIC focused on Youth Investment Fund projects related to Enterprise, IAG, Training, Youth, and Wellbeing, omitting community and cultural events.

## Stakeholder Map

Keep Satisfied	Manage Closely
<b>Partners.</b> New Horizon, FISCUS, SBMEN, FODI, Lighthouse, ICOS, City Council NE-BIC, Macmillan, NHS	<b>Customers...</b> Rental Workshop Users, Training workshops, Cultural Customers, Cultural Events, Users, room hire, kitchen
<b>Investors.</b> Youth Investment Fund, Social Investment Business (SIB), City of Sunderland, Macmillan Cancer Support, Community Foundation NE, UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Ballanger Charitable Trust, National Lottery Community Fund, Lloyds Foundation, Phoenix Way Fund, Pual Hamlyn Foundation, Sport England, SBMEN, Mercers Charitable Trust, and Sunderland Voluntary Sector Alliance, Creggs Foundation and Independent Age.	<b>Staff Team...</b> Staff members Volunteers, Managers SBIC trustees
<b>Users/clients.</b> IAG, Enterprise star-up, Learners, Young people, Elders, cultural gatherings, wider local community members, Diverse Community groups	<b>Investors.</b> Social Investment Business (SIB) Youth Investment Fund, City Council, Lloyds Foundation, Creggs, National Lottery, Sport England, Mercers charitable Trust, Pheonix fund
Monitor	Keep informed
<b>Regulatory/Governance.</b> Charity commission Companies House H & S regulations & compliance Green Checklist	Other Organisations SBIC works with... Community groups NHS Gentoo/RSL's GP Practices Social Media outlets / campaigns

## 5. Population Patterns

Recognising demographic patterns is crucial; policy initiatives must ensure all residents have equal access to education, healthcare, and housing. An inclusive city means involving everyone in decision-making. Organisations representing racially minoritised groups need to understand demographic changes to tailor their services and develop new initiatives.

Census data from 1981 to 2021 show a steady decline in the city's population, from 294,102 to 274,200, representing a 6.7% drop of 19,902. Meanwhile, the racially minoritised population rose by 266% between 2001 and 2021, even as the overall population fell by 2.4%. Over the past twenty years, this community has grown by 534%, highlighting its increasing diversity and contributions. By analysing data from Census 2021, mid-term census data, HESA and Migration Observatory, the report estimates the racially minoritised population in Sunderland stands around 41,677

## Racially Minoritised Population Estimate Methodology Feb 2025

	Evidence / Methodology	Total
Census 2021	ons.gov.uk	19,518
HESA 22/23	Hesa.ac.uk	7,415
Population Growth (21-24)	Based on average % increase (2001 / 2021 – 266%) annual average 13.3% x 3 years (40%)	7,807
Student Population Growth	Based on 184% increase over 5 years (average 37%)	2,743
Student Dependents (2022 / 2023)	Minium (data unavailable from other nations) Based on average number of dependents per student Nigeria 1.03 (3,888) India 0.28 (201) Pakistan 0.29 (105) <a href="https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/briefings/student-migration-to-the-uk/">/migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/briefings/student-migration-to-the-uk/</a>	4,194
<b>Total</b>		<b>41,677</b>

By using the Census Interactive Map tool, we pinpointed an area in Sunderland with the highest concentration of racially minoritised residents. Analysing this local data enables us to better understand the specific barriers and needs of the racially minoritised Global Majority community. The area comprises 13,100 households and has a population of 29,100.

	East Central Area	Sunderland	England
Born outside the UK Asian	19.5%	5.1%	17.4%
Black	16%	3%	9.6%
Muslim	4.4%	1%	4.2%
	12%	1.8%	6.7%
Economically Inactive	46.5%	44.3%	39.1%
Unemployed	6.3%	3.9%	3.5%
Never worked	37.7%	31.3%	25.6%
Disabled	22.8%	23.5%	17.3%
No qualifications	22.7%	22.9%	18.1%
No car or van	44.5%	30.9%	23.5%
Households deprived in at least 1 dimension*	60.9%	58.5%	51.6%

\* 4 Dimensions - Employment, Education, Health & Disability, Household Overcrowding

Several insights emerge from this analysis. If the racially minoritised population had not increased, Sunderland's population decline would have significantly affected its social and economic landscape. Evidence shows that these racially minoritised communities haven't taken jobs, school places, or healthcare from the 'white population', despite a slight population decrease of 0.5% from 275,500 in 2011 to 274,200 in 2021. This refutes myths about violence and counters narratives from recent race and Islamophobia riots in Millfield, Pallion, and Hendon. Racially minoritised groups constitute about 14% of Sunderland's population, yet these figures appear to be overlooked in the city's strategies and policies.

## 6. Sunderland Race Riots

The racist riots in Sunderland, Bristol, Hull, Leeds, Manchester, and other towns and cities during the summer of 2024 were deeply shocking, yet they resulted from years of failed policies. This rise in Islamophobia and racial hatred was not an isolated event. Recent data shows a 25% increase in religious hate crimes before the riots, mainly involving antisemitism and Islamophobia. Reports of hate crimes to the Crown Prosecution Service rose by 23% in one quarter during the riots. Since last summer, racist violence and hate crimes have risen sharply across the UK. Economic pressures, declining political trust, demographic changes, and the rapid rise of social media use are stressors that foster both new and continuing tensions at local and national levels.

The criminal justice system responded quickly and effectively to curb the violence, whilst the Government's uncritical reaction to the race riots and far-right agenda was concerning. The government dismissed the riots as mere acts of thuggery by "a few bad actors". Often, law enforcement lacked a clear understanding of the racial elements underlying the violence. Addressing the root causes is essential to prevent future incidents and foster more harmonious community relations. The race riots revealed Islamophobia as a new form of racism, where anti-Muslim narratives marginalise minoritised groups, causing social and political divisions. Critics pointed out that leaders often hesitated to acknowledge or condemn this racism and Islamophobia after these attacks, despite evidence of harm to Muslim and minoritised communities.

The austerity measures enacted by various governments, combined with the enduring impacts of COVID-19 and the rising cost-of-living crisis affecting many communities, are seen as factors encouraging dissatisfaction and unrest. Many observed that "austerity is pitting different groups against each other," which intensifies the tendency to direct frustration at those perceived as different, including scapegoating migrants for the country's economic problems.



Over two-thirds of those accused of crimes came from the most deprived 20% of neighbourhoods, with about 75% living within 5 miles of the scene. Rioters were more likely to come from areas with poor health, with 36% from the bottom 10% by self-reported health, such as Sunderland's Hendon, where at least six residents were charged. The area also faced high unemployment and low or no qualifications. Interestingly, the August 2024 race riots involved a higher number of angry adults, as opposed to disaffected youth. Addressing these issues is vital to preventing future violence and promoting multicultural living.

SBIC gathered evidence using a strength-based approach by utilising social impact reports and engaging with our users. People's Health Trust enhanced this effort by connecting Trust members and community experts who directly address issues of inequality, marginalisation, and discrimination to evaluate how these challenges impact individuals and their communities. Many respondents highlighted the effects on Muslim girls and women, who face a combination of Islamophobia, racism, and misogyny, resulting in verbal and physical attacks, humiliation, fear, anxiety, and reluctance to leave home or send their children to school.

The evidence indicates that certain groups, such as asylum seekers, refugees, Muslims, and marginalised communities, are more prone to racist riots. These groups often face poorer health outcomes, driven by fears of hate crimes, discrimination, racism, and xenophobia. Such fears and trauma negatively impact both mental and physical health, increase feelings of isolation, and weaken community bonds. Data suggests that racist riots are likely to occur again, with most people believing that their local colleagues are 'likely' or 'very likely' to encounter racist violence soon.

The health effects have persisted over time, worsened by a more hostile environment for racially minoritised communities after the racist riots. For some people, ongoing fear, anxiety, hyper-vigilance, and stress are causing physical health issues and deteriorating mental well-being. To understand the causes of these events, their health impact, and how to prevent future racist violence, it is essential to listen directly to frontline community workers across Great Britain, including regions affected by racist riots and areas where such violence was avoided.

The racist riots have had widespread effects across the UK and in Sunderland, particularly in deprived communities facing significant socioeconomic and racial inequalities. These impacts are evident both in areas directly affected by the violence and where prevention efforts were focused. Austerity policies are deepening divisions and fostering resentment, often leading to frustrations to be directed at perceived outsiders, such as migrants, who are frequently scapegoated for economic hardships. Despite ongoing initiatives, progress remains slow, and the situation has deteriorated both nationally and locally concerning the root causes of these riots. The hostile climate, stimulated by social media misinformation, social disengagement, and divisive political rhetoric, is accelerating racist violence and hatred throughout many UK communities.

## **7. Racially Minoritised Communities:**

SBIC recognises social, economic, and racial issues, enabling it to support hard-to-reach racially minoritised communities. By utilising shared language, culture, and trust derived from common experiences of discrimination, SBIC offers practical, inclusive services. Collaborating with local groups, SBIC promotes initiatives that empower these groups to combat social injustices. Sadly, racism and Islamophobia still harm people in Sunderland and the North East, exposing ongoing inequalities faced by racial minorities. The UK is known for its regional disparities and inequalities. According to a report by NIESR, Pabst and Chadha highlight that England is one of the most geographically unequal nations within the OECD<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Pabst, A. and Chadha, J.S. (2023). Where are we? Regional inequalities in the UK. National Institute of Economic and Social Research.

- Racism and Islamophobia are long-term concerns in the lives of racially minoritised residents in Sunderland.
- Nearly 70% of Bangladeshi and Pakistani children and 52% of Black children are growing up in relative poverty (after housing costs) compared to 26% of children in White households<sup>2</sup>.
- A significant 67.5% of respondents frequently face Islamophobia and racism in their daily lives, with a staggering 80% unable to identify the perpetrators of these incidents. Tell MANA AGM Reports 2025<sup>3</sup>.
- A 2022 TUC report on UK workplace racism found 40% of ethnic minority workers experienced racism in the past five years.
- In 2022, the ONS indicated that UK-born White employees had higher earnings than most ethnic minority employees, even after adjusting for personal and work-related factors for a like-for-like comparison<sup>4</sup>.
- Analysis from the Living Wage Foundation shows that Pakistani and Bangladeshi workers are almost three times as likely to earn below the Real Living Wage as White workers.
- As well as being more likely to be in low-paid work, ethnic minority groups are more likely to experience insecure work and less likely to be satisfied with their employment<sup>5</sup>.
- South Asian communities, including Bangladeshi, Indian, and Pakistani groups, have higher death rates from ischaemic heart disease and cerebrovascular disease, and higher diabetes prevalence, compared to White ethnic groups<sup>6</sup>.
- The 2024 Mothers and Babies report<sup>7</sup> finds Black women are nearly three times more likely to die from pregnancy-related complications than White women.
- Debt Justice highlights that individuals from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds face nearly twice the risk of severe debt compared to White people<sup>8</sup>.
- The TUC discovered that BAME workers are more than twice as likely (specifically 2.2 times) as White workers to experience unemployment. with the<sup>9</sup>.
- Police are 6.5 times more likely to strip-search Black children and 4.7 times more likely to strip-search Black adults than their white counterparts<sup>10</sup>.
- Women of colour are three times as likely as white men to be on zero-hour contracts<sup>11</sup>.
- Religious hate crimes against Muslims or those perceived as Muslims constitute the most significant proportion of hate crimes, at 44%.
- A 26-year life expectancy gap exists between white individuals and people of colour with significant multiple learning disabilities<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/2024/oct/racism-damages-health-and-wellbeing-and-drives-inequalities-london> & ONS Annual Population Survey 2022. Retrieved from: UK government (2023).

<sup>3</sup> <https://tellmamauk.org/tell-mama-records-the-highest-number-of-anti-muslim-hate-cases-in-2024-since-its-founding/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.instituteoftheequity.org/resources-reports/structural-racism-ethnicity-and-health-inequalities/executive-summary.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://niesr.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Bangladeshi-Pakistani-Women-Good-Work-final.pdf?ver=zIMw5c8JA4xTjoErrD>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.health.org.uk/evidence-hub/health-inequalities/inequalities-in-good-health-by-ethnicity>

<sup>7</sup> <https://maternalmentalhealthalliance.org/news/mbrrace-2024/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://irr.org.uk/research/statistics/poverty/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.tuc.org.uk/research-analysis/reports/jobs-and-recovery-monitor-bme-workers>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/article/2024/jun/10/police-more-than-six-times-more-likely-to-strip-search-black-children>

<sup>11</sup> Ibid

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/NHS-RHO-Report-Cost-of-Racism-March-2025.pdf> The cost of Racism March 25, NHS Race & Health Observatory

- Among the South Asian group, men have six fewer years of disability-free life expectancy than white British men<sup>13</sup>; this excludes spatial inequalities
- Racially Minoritised residents are less likely to be in employment than white people – 69.2% were employed in 2025, compared with 76.8%<sup>14</sup>
- Racially minoritised people face a higher risk of poverty than white people. For instance, 19% of white households are in poverty, compared to nearly half in Pakistan (49%) and Bangladesh (53%), and 42% Black African and 39% Asian households<sup>15</sup>.
- According to the Runnymede Trust, Black African and Bangladeshi households have ten times less wealth than White British households. They also highlighted several trigger events that appear to raise the chances of entering severe poverty, including<sup>16</sup>:
  - ⇒ relationship breakdown or bereavement
  - ⇒ the arrival of a child (or children)
  - ⇒ having fewer people working in a household
  - ⇒ workers moving into less secure jobs
  - ⇒ rising housing costs
  - ⇒ living in a household with a single adult
  - ⇒ living in a large family
  - ⇒ self-employed or in insecure employment
  - ⇒ living in private rented accommodation

## 8. SBIC Method of Work: Strength-based perspective

The inequalities related to race are further worsened by the high levels of deprivation in Sunderland. According to the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), over 41% (75 out of 185) of Sunderland's Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) rank among the 20% most disadvantaged areas in England. More than 40.6% of Sunderland's population lives in these LSOAs, and 23% of the city's LSOAs (42 out of 185) are within the 10% most deprived areas nationally.

SBIC contributes directly to four of the government's five Missions<sup>17</sup>, boosting economic growth, removing barriers, reclaiming streets, and the NHS 10-year health plan, focusing on prevention, community care, and digital systems as part of the "decade of national renewal." The Government tasked the Independent Commission on Neighbourhoods (ICON)<sup>18</sup> with leading "Mission Need" in areas with resistant social and economic issues, called 'sticky' locations. ICON identified 613 Mission Critical Neighbourhoods for targeted improvements, including the Hendon and Docks areas of the city of Sunderland.

ICON highlights issues in Critical Mission Neighbourhoods: half of adults (375,000) are economically inactive, and 33% (250,000) have no qualifications, nearly double the national average. Welfare spending is £5,372 per person, compared to the £2,128 national average, costing £3.2 billion more. These areas, which account for only 2% of England's population, are responsible for half of the locations with a life expectancy under 70. Productivity is 40% lower, with average earnings of £33,100 compared to £54,500 elsewhere. ICON estimates annual losses of about £4.5 billion, half from economic loss, the rest from inactivity and unemployment. Despite challenges, the government says investing in critical neighbourhoods offers benefits. Thousands

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid

<sup>14</sup> Bangladeshi and Pakistani Women in Good Work: Barriers to Entry and Progression – National Institute of Economic & Social Research Aug 2025

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.jrf.org.uk/uk-poverty-2025-the-essential-guide-to-understanding-poverty-in-the-uk>

<sup>16</sup> Ibid

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/missions>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.neighbourhoodscommission.org.uk> March 2025

could fill 780,000+ vacancies nationwide. If productivity matched the national average, it could add £4.5 billion to the economy and generate £1.6 billion more in tax revenue<sup>19</sup>.



Within this context, SBIC demonstrated an effective, successful strengths-based approach that assesses situations realistically and recognises opportunities to build on and support the existing strengths and capabilities of racially minoritised users rather than focusing on problems or concerns. SBIC is highly effective in utilising the resources available within racially minoritised communities and collaborates with individuals, organisations, and groups to recognise and celebrate their strengths. SBIC's methodology shifts the focus from "what is wrong with us" to "what is right with us."

SBIC commits to continuously improving its strengths-based approach through an annual Social Accounting and Audit system, enhanced by SROI techniques and the Theory of Change, which links actions to outcomes. Users and stakeholders identify project outputs, outcomes, and indicators, helping design, review, and develop activities. Impact tools measure change and social impact on racially minoritised users, their families, and the community. This ongoing engagement fosters informed decision-making throughout the project's lifetime.

SBIC begins its strengths-based approach by identifying users' needs, risks, and strengths through engagement techniques that capture the user's imagination. This leads to Personal Action Planning, which outlines personalised support packages. A trusted worker plays a vital role in maintaining engagement, reflection, and driving progress towards users' goals and aspirations. Framed in a holistic and integrated way to maximise users' ambition to thrive.

SBIC plays a crucial role in building strong relationships and maintaining visibility among target groups and young people, which is essential for outreach. By working closely with communities, SBIC fosters trust, shares opportunities, and supports service users and marginalised groups. Key activities include:

- Informal, inclusive sessions that appeal to a wide range of participants, promoting community spirit and involvement.
- Flexible and adaptable sessions alongside structured activities with local groups, linking participants to the broader community.
- Workshops focused on health, financial literacy, nutrition, equality, diversity, social integration, youth issues, and community history, which support personal and social development.

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<sup>19</sup> <https://www.neighbourhoodscommission.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/10957-Mapping-the-Landscape-ICON-Report-V2.pdf> June 2025



## 9. Strengths and Barriers identified by SBIC Users 2024-25

As mentioned earlier, SBIC conducts annual social accounting and auditing using SROI methods. To identify the strengths and barriers faced by racially minoritised residents of Sunderland, SBIC holds regular focus groups, workshops, and impact surveys with users and stakeholders. The findings are summarised in the table above. Respondent feedback provides essential insights into our efforts and how our services and projects align with users' needs, preferences, and strengths.

Identified Strengths by SBIC Racially Minoritised Users	Identified barriers by SBIC Racially Minoritised Users
<p>Within our communities, we are more trusting of our neighbours and less divided by values and politics            Strong desire to succeed and progress            Strong intergenerational bonds.            Excellent overseas work experience and qualifications            Trust built through shared languages and cultures.            Strong intergenerational bonds.            High degree of Resilience            Strong family and extended family networks            Shared lived experience of racism and islamophobia            Strong togetherness and common ground            Bonding relationships are close connections between people who share similar characteristics.            We live in close-knit communities            Strong Interpersonal trust            Lived experience of forced exile, discrimination, and inequality.            Desire to meet and mix with others in our community We get along well at our neighbourhood/street level. We have strong communities of interest.            We have strong communities built on identity, that is, faith, values, and culture.            Strong common ground through stories and shared traditions within nations and regions            Celebrating shared history.            Strong connections built through communities of interest</p>	<p>Islamophobia and racism are on the rise.            Communication and language barriers are prevalent.            Negativity/anti-Muslim stories in press and social media            Poor Housing            Wealth disparities            widespread anti-Muslim prejudice and a growing concern about broader racism in society.            Tensions among first, second and third generation racially minoritised community members            debt, income insecurity, and financial exclusion.            Increasing Far-right presence English Defence League High levels of unemployment for both men and women            Mistrust of public services, police, health care, social services and probation            Digital exclusion and barriers related to technology.            Substance abuse and alcohol dependency.            Lack of access to local job opportunities.            Disconnect from the wider community.            Intergenerational disconnection.            Educational and skills barriers, particularly in basic, life, and employment skills.            Meeting employer requirements and expectations.            Family, parenting, and relationship issues.            Health and well-being, encompassing physical and mental health.</p>

<p>Mixing through community action, We mix and maintain our cultural and religious identity. We have stronger bonds with other ethnic minorities than with the white community because we face similar challenges and share values and interests.</p>	<p>Low confidence, motivation, and self-esteem, especially among racially minoritised women and young people. Low social capital/ networking Limited access to relevant information and resources, especially among young people. Lack of professional networks, particularly among young people, women &amp; men Limited or no work experience, especially among young people and women. Accessing loans and capital High refusal rates of business loans Lack of generational wealth Lack of access and networks for business skills, knowledge, and ideas. The perceived complexity of the tax and benefit system. Limited access to finance for start-up support. Limited BAME business role models Lack of trust with banking services (2021 Lloyds Bank Report 'Black British in Business &amp; Proud' Lack of capacity to develop new projects or services, particularly for youth and community. A disconnect from banking and financial services Need for funding and social investment expertise &amp; support &amp; investment readiness</p>
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## 10. SBIC Project Activities

This social impact report will review the following project activities: Enterprise & Employment, Education & Training, Youth Work Activities, Information, Advice & Guidance services, Health and Well-being, and Partnership Working.

## 11. Gatherings community events

Although the centre was closed for refurbishment during the social impact year 2024-25, SBIC still hosted several successful cultural and consultation events that were well-attended by people from racially minoritised communities. These events, which drew 1,312 participants, including 973 adults and 246 young people, featured progress updates and proposed new uses for the buildings. To foster inclusivity, SBIC ran Participatory Appraisal (PA) workshops and activities throughout the project, making participation and learning accessible to all, regardless of language, age, socio-economic status, race, or gender.

### Cultural Consultation Community Gatherings

Community Event 2024-25	Adults	Young People	Total
South Asian Heritage Day July 2024	70	18	88
MacMillian Day	38	5	43
Community outings July 2024	32	18	50
Community Iftar April 2024	97	21	136
Bede Campus Eid gathering June	39	27	66
Eid Women event May	41	0	41
International Women's Day Ficus May	43	13	56
Black History Month, October	87	16	103
Community Cohesion BBQ August	38	8	46
Community Inter-generational Sports November	83	17	100
Bangla Day April	23	26	49

Badminton Cohesion event Beacon of light	74	18	92
Muslim culture Thornhill School May	9	19	27
Men's group day outings x3 May to August	56	0	56
Community Fair Richmond Av Primary School July	110	40	150
International language day feb	72	21	93
Badminton May Raich carter	78	0	78
Men's well-being celebration	38	0	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,044</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>1,312</b>



## 12. SBIC & SBMEN: Enterprising Sunderland:

Throughout the programme, the Sunderland BME Network and Sunderland Bangladesh International Centre engaged with over 140 members of Sunderland's racially minoritised communities regarding enterprise awareness opportunities. Of these, 37 were officially registered on the Enterprising Sunderland Programme, and seven new businesses started. The investment only permitted .75 FTE (28 hours per week) of staff resource.

### Backdrop

The House of Commons Research Briefing (11 November 2024) reports that, as of 1 January 2024, the UK has 5.5 million private sector businesses, accounting for 99% of all businesses. This reflects a 1.0% decline from 2023 and an 8.0% decrease since January 2020. Since 2000, the total number has increased by 59%, primarily driven by small, non-employee firms. The ONS estimates that in 2021, 12% of UK self-employed business owners belonged to minority ethnic groups, and 95% of UK businesses employed fewer than 10 staff. Businesses without employees have shaped changes in the business landscape. Since 2000, the growth of small, non-employer businesses has increased; however, a decline has been observed since 2020. The share of businesses that employ others has dropped from roughly one-third in 2000 to around one-quarter in 2024.

Ethnic Minority Businesses (EMBs) play a crucial role in the UK economy, generating approximately £25 billion each year. Despite facing numerous challenges and barriers that hinder their growth, approximately 250,000 such firms exist, many of which have strong ambitions for expansion, particularly in innovation and exports. They employ over one million people and provide essential goods and services to diverse communities. Recent studies suggest that with appropriate support, the contribution of EMBs to GDP could increase fourfold, reaching £100 billion<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> Unlocking Potential: Rethinking Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship Policies and Perspectives. Kasperova, Roberts and Ram, 2022 (ISBE) & Aston University Centre for Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship (CREME), Its Time to Change.

EMBs boost economies, create jobs, and promote social inclusion for marginalised ethnic minorities. This national evidence aligns with local insights from SBIC impact studies. Unfortunately, policymakers, practitioners, and researchers often overlook and underestimate the contributions of EMB. SBIC reports and national data indicate that EMBs are often viewed as a homogeneous group, overlooking their diversity, unique needs, ambitions, and potential. Stereotypes and prejudices continue to hinder their opportunities and growth.



## Barriers to Enterprise & EMBs

According to the SBIC evidence-based approach, in addition to national and regional research<sup>21</sup>, users from racially minoritised groups are less likely to be employed than white individuals, with 69.2% employed in 2025 compared to 76.8% of white people. Although this employment gap, just under eight percentage points, remains significant, it has narrowed from a 16-point difference two decades ago. Data from the Office for National Statistics also indicate a slight increase in minority ethnic entrepreneurship. In 2021, non-white individuals accounted for 12% of business owners, up from 8.9% in 2012. This growth roughly corresponds to the increase in ethnic minorities, from 14% to 18% of the total population, between 2011 and 2021.

A British Business Bank report<sup>22</sup> shows ethnic minority businesses have a median turnover of £25,000 after startup, compared to £35,000 for white entrepreneurs. SBIC social impact data reveal that ethnic minority businesses in Sunderland have productivity under two-thirds that of their white peers. Only 50% of ethnic minority businesses meet their non-financial goals, compared to nearly 70% of white-owned businesses. Racially minoritised female owners report 37% with no profit last year, compared to 16% of white males. Female entrepreneurs of all ethnicities have a median annual turnover of £15,000, which is lower than the £45,000 median for men, and fewer reach financial goals. These disparities stem from societal inequalities and gender roles, such as caregiving. Even after accounting for these, female entrepreneurs tend to be less successful.

SBIC's research into social impact across the UK highlights factors such as a lack of access to finance, social capital, deprivation, education, underrepresentation in senior roles, and systemic barriers as contributing to disparities. Evidence shows EMBs often feel isolated or reluctant to seek external funding, fearing discrimination and rejection. This sense of separation from financial institutions and support services is particularly strong among racially minoritised entrepreneurs, resulting in less engagement and greater disillusionment than their white peers.

## Social Capital – individuals' access to a collective resource

Business networks are crucial for success, as they provide access to valuable resources, information, and opportunities. According to Halpern & Haldane, there is strong evidence that

<sup>21</sup> Ibid

<sup>22</sup> British Business Bank, Alonetogether: Entrepreneurship and diversity in the UK 2020

Increasing social capital leads to higher rates of economic performance<sup>23</sup>. Research by SBIC using social impact methods shows EMBS often avoid mainstream support, feeling excluded from professional networks. They distrust formal institutions and struggle to get timely help. Wealth gaps impact entrepreneurs from racial minority communities. Long-term, targeted support is necessary to build trust in Sunderland. SBIC's community hub promotes collaboration, fostering trust and increasing participation among marginalised groups.

## Access to Finance

Racially minoritised enterprises in the UK face substantial financial challenges. In the UK, an entrepreneur's ethnicity significantly affects their access to investment. Non-white entrepreneurs face substantial hurdles compared to their white counterparts. For example, just 39% of Black entrepreneurs obtain loans, whereas 67% of White entrepreneurs do, often under less favourable terms and at higher interest rates<sup>24</sup>. This finding aligns with SBIC social impact evidence. SBIC users consistently identify barriers such as limited access to funding, disconnection from vital financial, business, and political networks, and ongoing scepticism for both women and ethnic minorities.

*“Black founders received just 0.24% of venture funding and female founders only 11% of venture funding in the last 10 years. However, Black people and women represent 3.5% and 51% of the UK population, respectively.”<sup>25</sup>*

## Wealth Disparities

As previously discussed in this Social Impact Report, inequalities in economic, social, and racial aspects are prominent among racially minoritised communities, who have lower net worth, income, and property ownership relative to other groups. These economic disparities hinder racially minoritised entrepreneurs from accessing necessary assets for loans and make it harder for them to finance their businesses. According to IPPR data, only 20 per cent of racially minoritised households own their homes, versus 68 per cent of White British households.

## Racial Justice

Racially minoritised entrepreneurs face bias from customers, suppliers, and investors, including prejudice and systemic financial discrimination. These challenges hinder their growth. The Race Disparity Audit<sup>26</sup> (Cabinet Office 2018) highlights disparities in employment and business opportunities for these groups. Owners from racially minoritised backgrounds often report experiencing greater discrimination when seeking finance, contracts, and support compared to White owners. These national disparities are also evident in the SBIC Social Impact methodologies, particularly in local focus groups and impact surveys.

## SBIC & SBMEN: Enterprise Journey

The journey of SBIC & SBMEN offers an effective and robust blend of practical, community-based enterprise coaching and mentoring to assist prospective racially minoritised entrepreneurs who encounter various challenges and barriers to accessing traditional business support. Staff carry out an individual needs assessment to develop a tailored action plan that aligns with each participant's strengths and needs. This plan typically encompasses pre-start support, intensive coaching, and mentoring across the five stages of the enterprise journey, as detailed below. Although in this project, activity stages 4 and 5 are referred to NE-BIC (mainstream Business advice agency)

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<sup>23</sup> Halpern, D & Haldane, A, Social Capital: The Hidden Wealth of Nations, Demos, 2025

<sup>24</sup> [https://www.extend.vc/\\_files/ugd/446c2c\\_2545bfc7323646fa8d757ea8a2ac2a10.pdf](https://www.extend.vc/_files/ugd/446c2c_2545bfc7323646fa8d757ea8a2ac2a10.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> Diversity Beyond Gender UK 2023 & Extended Ventures 2023

<sup>26</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a9ec73a40f0b64d7d48f2b7/Revised\\_RDA\\_report\\_March\\_2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a9ec73a40f0b64d7d48f2b7/Revised_RDA_report_March_2018.pdf)

## SBIC & SBMEN Enterprise & Business Start Journey

Business Stage	Enterprise Activities & Skills
<p><b>Pre-start-up Stage</b></p>	<p>This approach provides open and friendly one-on-one enterprise guidance and advice. It is integrated and comprehensive, tailored to the needs of individuals or groups, allowing for an exploration of the personal implications of starting a business.</p> <p>Peripatetic, estate-based engagement models            Confidence &amp; motivational building            Developing communication skills and trust            Raising awareness in racially minoritised communities            Identifying local enterprise heroes and champions            Discussing opportunities and expanding horizons through workshops            Addressing personal finance and benefit transitions            Engaging, maintaining, and delivering from neighbourhood partners.</p>
<p><b>Ideas Stage</b></p>	<p>Recruiting users from racially minoritised communities            Developing trust and assessing enterprise needs of racially minoritised user</p> <p>Delivering targeted enterprise workshops for idea generation            Providing one-to-one business support, Sole traders, Partnerships, Limited companies, Mutuals, Co-operatives, Social enterprises            Creating Individual Action Plans (IAPs) to formalise informal activities            Establishing an ideas bank for generating and testing business ideas            Enhancing financial capability during the benefit transition            Addressing personal finance issues and related concerns</p>
<p><b>Start-up Stage preparing for business</b></p>	<p>This activity primarily provides personalised business advice, guidance, and support, beginning with an initial diagnostic interview to assess support needs and develop an action plan that leads to a comprehensive business plan.</p> <p>Reviewing skills and resources            Legal compliance, including HMRC regulations &amp; Health &amp; Safety            Financial capability, focusing on personal survival budgeting            Drafting a business plan            Investment readiness, marketing strategies, and financial planning            Opening bank accounts            Additionally, mentoring ensures that everything is ready for launch, covering aspects such as premises, stock, equipment, and utilities, alongside further investment readiness.</p>
<p><b>Post start-up stage. implementing the business</b></p>	<p>To implement the business, consider the following steps:</p> <p>Start operating the business.            Introduce basic marketing and sales strategies. Establish basic bookkeeping practices.            Seek business mentoring and celebrate local business start-up successes.            Maintain motivation and provide ongoing business support to residents.            Engage in problem-solving activities.            Offer information, encouragement, and signposting to mainstream support.</p>
<p><b>Growth Stage intensive aftercare mentoring</b></p>	<p>To ensure continued support for growth, monitoring, and identifying strengths and weaknesses of businesses, we propose the following:</p> <p>Maintain matched funding to facilitate ongoing development.            Provide information and advice tailored to specific problems as they arise. Keep track of progress and financial capabilities.            Measure impact and identify unique selling propositions (USP).            Signpost relevant support available from mainstream providers.</p>



### 13. Reported Impact of the SBIC Enterprise Programme

The enterprise project showcases the SBIC partnership with partners such as SBIC, Sunderland BME Network, and NE-BIC. It engaged over 140 members from Sunderland's racially minoritised communities, with 37 enrolling in the Enterprising Sunderland Programme, resulting in six new businesses within a year. Additionally, 141 impact surveys were distributed, and 81 (57.8%) were completed.

**Case Study: Al-Falaq Counselling:**

*Syeda Chompa Begum joined the 'Enterprising Sunderland' programme in January 2024 to create a culturally competent counselling service for Asian women. Over 15 months, she received 50.5 hours of support from SBMEN, focusing on business structure, planning, and financial forecasting. With her strong community ties, serving as director at Sunderland Bangladesh International Centre and engaging with Tyne & Wear Citizens, Chompa registered Al-Falaq Counselling as a Community Interest Company in April 2025. She has begun building a client portfolio and launched 'Tea & Talk', a peer support group introducing counselling concepts in a supportive setting.*

When asked, "If you weren't coming to SBIC, what would you most likely do instead?" 63 enterprise users (77%) said they would either stay at home (32 users) or were unsure (31 users). Only 6 users would seek an alternative activity or provider, showing a low external influence rate. The Deadweight effect was minimal, as all respondents felt safe or very safe with SBI services. Additionally, 100% said they feel respected or very well respected by SBIC staff. Enterprise users were asked about their agreement with feeling more involved in the community since joining the project: 85.1% (69 users) agreed, with only 4 strongly disagreeing. All reported increased social confidence.

**Has the level of your social confidence increased since becoming involved with SBIC?**

Descriptor	No	%
not at all	0	0%
somewhat	30	37.9%
Yes	41	50.6%
Yes a lot	5	6.1%

Users were asked if their feedback and consultation were considered in SBIC. All enterprise users responded positively, with 63 saying 'yes' and others indicating 'yes, a lot'. The majority, 58%, felt they had influenced the delivery of the enterprise programme, while 30.8% believed they had 'somewhat' influenced it. The impact survey asked, "Can you recognise challenges and solve problems because of the activities offered?" Among surveyed enterprise users, 56 (69.1%) felt better equipped to do so due to the programme. Additionally, 78 users said, "things have improved since starting the programme." When asked about their journey with SBIC, most (67) reported increased confidence, followed by increased social interaction (61), and improved employability skills (53).

**Case Study: Ananas Networks:**

*Abdul Baten Chowdhury joined the project on 25 April 2024. With 15 years' ICT experience in both technical and sales roles, he sought greater schedule flexibility for family reasons and decided to start a business. After early discussions, he chose to form a limited company. Over six months, with support from SBMEN and NEBIC, he completed a business plan, registered the company on 28 November 2024, and plans to focus full-time on the business from January 2025.*

More importantly, in terms of attribution, the project activities indicate a low level of *Attribution*, as shown in the tables below. 71.6% of users indicated that there were no outside initiatives that influenced this change, while 62.9% (51) reported that the "change" was the responsibility of SBIC service provision. In terms of attribution, the project activities demonstrate a high level of influence. Notably, 71.6% of users indicated that no external initiatives affected this change, while 62.9% (51 users) stated that the responsibility for the change lay with the provision of SBIC services.

**Have any outside initiatives or projects influenced this change?**

Descriptor	No	%
Yes	23	28.3%
No	58	71.6%

**If there has been any change, has your involvement in SBIC been responsible?**

Descriptor	No	%
None	0	0%
some effect	30	37%
Mostly	47	58%
all of it	4	4.9%

**Business Start & Enterprise: Value for Money: Added Social Value**

Sunderland BME Network and SBIC engaged with more than 140 individuals from Sunderland's racially minoritised communities during the programme. From this group, 37 participants formally joined the Enterprising Sunderland Programme, each benefitting from an average of 18 hours of business advice, thus classified as "enterprise ready". Furthermore, 6 start-ups were supported, averaging 42 hours of assistance per business. Due to limited funding, staff resources were restricted to 0.75 FTE, equivalent to 24 hours per week, and there was little or no support costs for the project.

- Sunderland CLLD End of Programme Evaluation 2023 (Centrifuge Consulting) highlighted that the North East Business and Innovation Centre (NE-BIC) enterprise project "Innovate for Good, including Social Innovation Grants," cost £1,121,014. One of the outputs was supporting 24 new enterprises, resulting in a unit cost of £46,708 per supported enterprise<sup>27</sup>. This is compared with the SBIC cost per new racially minoritised business start-up was £4,916 (project cost of £29,500)

- A DCMS evaluation report of the Social Boost Fund highlighted a unit cost of £11,534 per social enterprise start<sup>28</sup>.
- Users reported increased income from employment. Greater Manchester CBA model<sup>29</sup> informs that each new business start/job equates to £10,504 per enterprise/job; therefore,  $6 \times £10,504 = £73,528$  in added social value. This is compared with the Sunderland Community Led Local Development Programme potential entrepreneurs assisted to be enterprise-ready were £8,370 (CLLD against all ERDF costs)<sup>30</sup>
- Enterprise users reported Increased Positive Functioning, autonomy, control and aspiration.  $37 \text{ user respondents} \times £3,500 \text{ (Greater Manchester CBA modal)} = £129,500$
- The survey respondent reported 'Feeling belonging to a neighbourhood'. HACT<sup>31</sup> identified a financial proxy of £3,753 per unit, thus  $37 \times £3,753 = £138,861$  in added social value
- Users reported increased confidence and self-esteem/self-esteem 73 (51% of 144 enterprise-ready users) reporting this via an impact survey. HACT utilises a financial proxy of £3,500 for this outcome; thus,  $73 \times £3,500 = £255,500$  in added social value.
- Estimated Gross added social value = £597,389 (less deadweight, displacement, attribution and displacement). Net added social value is indicated at the end of the report via the Social Impact Map

<sup>27</sup> [https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/media/31433/Sunderland-CLLD-project-summaries/pdf/CLLD\\_project\\_summaries\\_Final.pdf?m=1732612810870](https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/media/31433/Sunderland-CLLD-project-summaries/pdf/CLLD_project_summaries_Final.pdf?m=1732612810870)

<sup>28</sup> DCMS Evaluation of the Social Enterprise Boost Fund July 2025

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/tackling-child-poverty-pathfinders-evaluability-assessment/pages/16/> and Greater Manchester Combined Authority CBA model

<sup>30</sup> Sunderland Community Led Local Development Programme Final Evaluation and Summative Assessment July 2023 Sunderland Community Led Local, Centrifuge Consulting pp 40

<sup>31</sup> <https://hact.org.uk/tools-and-services/uk-social-value-bank/>

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## 14. Education and Training.

SBIC employs a strength-based approach to education that addresses social and economic inequalities. By boosting confidence and a sense of belonging, SBIC promotes an inclusive society and addresses issues of justice. Racially minoritised individuals are disproportionately impacted by disadvantages that hinder their educational progress. SBIC supports these learners by helping them leverage international qualifications and offering upskilling opportunities. This enables learners to advance beyond entry-level roles, gain financial independence, and pursue careers in high-demand fields such as healthcare, technology, and construction.

A core aspect of SBIC's strength-based approach is that returning to education, regardless of subject or level, can significantly boost an adult learner's confidence. By acquiring new skills and achieving educational milestones, learners experience an improvement in self-esteem and a sense of personal accomplishment. SBIC's educational programmes specifically support racially minoritised learners by creating opportunities to connect with others, build social networks, and foster a stronger sense of belonging within Sunderland communities. This process of building social capital and community involvement not only encourages civic participation but also helps to reduce loneliness and social isolation. Additionally, SBIC's programmes equip learners with vital knowledge and skills needed to fully participate in society, such as understanding their rights, accessing information, and contributing to community life.

A core objective of SBIC's educational initiatives is to tackle systemic and institutional barriers. Persistent institutional racism in the education system can lead to racial disparities, impacting the outcomes and experiences of racially minoritised individuals, as noted by the Race Equality Foundation<sup>32</sup>. Adult education serves as a valuable resource for breaking down these barriers by providing access to knowledge, skills, and support. Adult education plays a crucial role for those who are socially excluded or unemployed. It provides a pathway for adults to gain qualifications and confidence, enabling them to re-enter the workforce or pursue new employment opportunities and as such, it's integral to the government's ambition to kickstart the economy

### Training Trends

Adult education is set to become more individualised, with a stronger focus on addressing specific needs and career aspirations. For this transformation to succeed, collaboration among Institutions, businesses, and government will be essential to ensure that adult education fosters personal development while also supporting broader economic and social goals.

*“To gain skills which will lead them to meaningful, sustained, and relevant employment, or enable them to progress to further learning which will deliver that outcome”*

Policy makers promote lifelong learning to help individuals adapt to a changing world. AI-powered platforms support personalised learning by assessing needs and tailoring content. Blended and flexible models, which combine online and in-person instruction with modular courses, are crucial for supporting diverse adult learners. Inclusivity remains a priority in adult education, especially for disadvantaged groups like racially minoritised communities, those living in poverty, and individuals with disabilities. Recognising and validating non-formal and informal learning helps promote social cohesion and equal opportunities by allowing learners to earn formal accreditation for their diverse experiences.

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<sup>32</sup> <https://raceequalityfoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Collaborative-briefing-education-FINAL-1.pdf>

### Training outcomes for 2025-25

Course Type	Male	Female	Total
Teaching Assistant Levels 1 & 2	3	13 & 11 & 18	45
Childhood Illness	2	9	11
Mentoring/Mental Health Training level 2	3	8	11
Child Care	0	15	15
ESOL	10	50	60
Adult Care	2	11	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>155</b>

## 15. Reported Impact of Education Service

The project shared 155 impact surveys with SBIC learners; 78 were completed, a 50.3% response rate. Of respondents, 84.6% (66 learners) said they would stay at home or were unsure if not attending SBIC. No responses indicated interest in another activity. All 78 said they felt safe at SBIC and respected within it.

*"It was nice attending the course at the SBIC; it was interactive, and I acquired more knowledge on children's mental health and the regulations. The trainer was good, and it provided a conducive environment with great learning teammates. It made it a memorable experience for me." Abiodu Oluwagbeminiyi Makanjuola*

The SBIC training project asked participants the following question: "To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement, 'I feel more involved in my local community since joining the project'?" An impressive 97.4% (76 individuals) reported that they either "strongly agree" or "somewhat agree" with this statement, whilst only 2 reported "somewhat disagree". 74.3% (73) of respondents stated that their level of social confidence increased since attending SBIC training and education provision, with 25% of the respondents reporting "somewhat".

The project posed a critical question to participants: "To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement, 'I feel more involved in my local community since joining the project'?" An impressive 97.4% (76 individuals) either "strongly agree" or "somewhat agree" with this statement. In contrast, only 2 participants reported "somewhat disagree." Additionally, 74.3% (73 respondents) indicated that their level of social confidence has increased since attending SBIC training and educational activities, while 25% reported feeling "somewhat" more confident.

#### *My Experience at SBIC: Vicky Chan*

*I first heard about the Teaching Assistant course at SBIC through a friend. After enrolling, I learned that the course was free and provided valuable knowledge and hands-on experience, which I greatly benefited from. The environment at SBIC is very comfortable and conducive to learning. In addition to the Teaching Assistant course, I also took an ESOL English course at SBIC and obtained certificates for both programs. I'm truly grateful to the teachers and staff at SBIC for their support — my English and overall knowledge have improved significantly.*

*Now, I'm also participating as a volunteer to give back to the community, which has provided me with a lot of personal experience as well.*



### **Case Study Layla Begum**

*Upon seeing an advertisement from the Bangladeshi Community Centre, I was inspired to enrol in the Level 1 and Level 2 Supporting Teaching Assistant courses*

*. This opportunity was pivotal for me, especially as a busy mum, as it opened doors, I never thought possible. The course equipped me with essential skills and knowledge that laid the foundation for my career in education.*

*After completing the course, I sought practical experience and volunteered at Barnes Junior School for two months. This experience was invaluable as it allowed me to apply what I had learned in a real-world setting, interact with students, and understand the dynamics of a classroom environment. Following my volunteer work, I applied to an agency and have been working there for a year now, further developing my skills and confidence in the role.*

*Currently, I am pursuing a Level 3 Diploma in Supporting Teaching, which will enhance my qualifications and further my career in education. I am incredibly grateful to the Sunderland Bangladeshi Community Centre for this opportunity. Their support has enabled me to work around my family life, giving me a sense of self-satisfaction and fulfilment in my role at the school.*

*This journey has not only impacted my professional life but has also positively influenced my personal life. The support from the Bangladeshi Community Centre has been instrumental in my success, and I hope to inspire others in my community to pursue their dreams, regardless of their circumstances.*

The tables below indicate that 98% of respondents felt their feedback and consultation were valued by SBIC. Moreover, 73% believed they had an influence on how SBIC delivered co-produced training and education classes, while 25% felt they had only some influence. Notably, only one respondent reported having no influence at all.



**Was your feedback and consultation taken into consideration within SBIC?**

Descriptor	No	%
somewhat	1	1.3%
not at all	0	0%
yes	64	82.1%
very much so	13	16.7%

**Do you feel that you influenced how SBIC delivered the activities?**

Descriptor	No	%
somewhat	20	25.6%
not at all	1	1.3%
Yes	50	64.1%
Yes a lot	7	9%

When asked, “Can you recognise challenges and solve problems because of the activities offered?” 61.5% of respondents (48 individuals) answered “a great deal to yes,” while 30 respondents indicated “somewhat.” Importantly, when questioned, “Are things better with you since you started at SBIC?” 78.2% (60 respondents) reported “a great deal to yes,” and 21% (17 respondents) answered “somewhat.”

The table highlights some indirect outcomes of SBIC's training, like employment (3) and increased employability (34). These weren't from SBIC’s mainstream initiatives. Key outcomes included qualifications (71), confidence (59), self-esteem (48), making friends (39), and social interaction (39).

**What is the outcome of your journey with SBIC?**

Activity	No
Increased confidence	59
Increased participation	39
Increased self esteem	48
Making Friends	39
increased social interaction	39
Increased qualifications	71

Increased employability skills	34
employment	3
self-employment	0

<b>Total</b>	<b>295</b>
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The project aimed to assess the level of attribution regarding SBIC training and education provision. The two tables below show a high level of attribution: for example, 76.9% of respondents indicated there was no outside influence, and if there was, ‘change’ to what extent SBIC was responsible. 73% (57) of respondents stated, “mostly to all of it.”

**Have any outside initiatives or projects influenced this change?**

Descriptor	No	%
Yes	18	23%
No	60	76.9%

**If there has been any change, has your involvement in SBIC been responsible?**

Descriptor	No	%
None	0	0%
some effect	21	26.9%
Mostly	40	51.2%
all of it	17	21.7%

### Education Value for Money: Added Social Value

In cost-benefit analysis, financial proxies denote the monetary value of an intervention's impacts when precise financial measures are unavailable. They quantify the economic significance of these impacts. For instance, the proxy measure for an increase in earnings among residents reaching Level 2 NVQ is valued at £443 (152 learners X £443 = £67,336), while the earnings boost for those advancing from Level 2 to Level 3 NVQ is valued at £921, as outlined by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority CBA model<sup>34</sup>. Based on the project’s evidence, 87 learners successfully progressed from level 2 to level 3 qualifications. The total social value of these qualifications amounts to £80,127 (calculated as 152 multiplied by £921).

Out of 152 learners, 73 reported an increase in self-confidence. This improvement holds a social value of £3,500 per person<sup>35</sup> according to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority CBA model, resulting in a total social value of £255,500 for the project (73 x £3,500).

*"Completing the Childhood Illness Level 1 course has been incredibly enlightening. I now feel more confident in recognising common childhood illnesses and understanding how to respond appropriately. The knowledge I gained has empowered me to make better decisions in caring for children and supporting their health. This course has truly equipped me with practical skills that I can apply in real-life situations." Silver Omene*

Within the project learning environment, learners learn how to acquire local advice, support, and guidance, which has been reported to have a valued impact of £2,457<sup>36</sup>. Consequently, the overall social value of this aspect of SBIC training provision amounts to £373,464 (calculated as 2,457 x £ 152).

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/tackling-child-poverty-pathfinders-evaluability-assessment/pages/16/> and Greater Manchester Combined Authority CBA model

<sup>35</sup> *ibid*

<sup>36</sup> *ibid*

<sup>37</sup> Greater Manchester Combined Authority CBA model

Additionally, an unintended outcome of the project learning framework is the development of a sense of 'belonging' among participants, fostering equality within the group. This impact has a recognised social value of £1,850 per individual<sup>37</sup>, totalling £281,200 (1,850x 152).

Estimated Gross added social value = £1,058,621 (less deadweight, displacement, attribution and displacement) = Net social value is explained at the end of the report via the social Impact map

### Key partners within Education and Training

- Sunderland College – progression interviews, assessment, referral routes.
- New College Durham – progression to Adult/HE prep, advice & admissions.
- Richard Avenue Primary School – placement host, mentor support, DBS coordination.
- Other Local Community Schools (various) – placement hosts across Sunderland, contact via each school office

### Why these educational partnerships matter:

For SBIC, education and training rely on seamless pathways that connect community engagement with recognised progression. Further Education partners, including Sunderland College and New College Durham, provide accredited routes, shared quality assurance, and swift referrals, enabling learners to progress from Entry ESOL to vocational studies without delay



School partners, such as Richard Avenue Primary and other local community schools, offer genuine placement opportunities that are essential for Teaching Assistant qualifications. These partnerships also strengthen safeguarding and professional standards through joint oversight while supporting family learning and outreach, effectively reducing barriers for parents with caring responsibilities.

Operationally, these partnerships expand venues, align curricula with local labour needs, and facilitate mentoring and CPD exchanges that enhance teaching quality. Strategically, they

demonstrate civic impact, support funding applications, and improve retention by providing learners with clear next steps and real-world employability experience.

### Case Study: Shahela

#### My Journey into a Teaching Assistant role

*My journey into becoming a Teaching Assistant started when I saw Syeda's ad for a local centre offering Level 1 and 2 TA courses. I joined and was supported by Gillian, who helped boost my confidence and knowledge. After completing Levels 1 and 2, I progressed to Level 3 in Supporting Teaching and Learning at Bede College, a one-year course ending in June 2025. I completed 170 hours of placement at Richard Avenue Primary School, working with KS1 children, gaining practical experience in classroom support and working with young learners.*

*Afterwards, I joined an agency to gain more experience, working since February as a lunchtime TA. My duties include supervising 13 children during dinner and toothbrushing, and supporting a child with SEND during outdoor play.*

*From seeing Syeda's ad to learning from Gillian and now working with children daily, this journey has strengthened my skills and passion for supporting children's learning and development.*

### Learning from ESOL Classes

The Department of Education highlights the importance of practical communication skills for adult learners. According to the Skills white paper<sup>38</sup>, teaching methods should address learners' real-life needs, particularly for ESOL students using English at work, in healthcare, or when accessing public services. Yet traditional ESOL curricula often use scripted dialogues that aren't always practical, limiting learners' ability to use English confidently in everyday situations. Such limitations can undermine confidence<sup>39</sup>, especially as many ESOL learners experience anxiety around speaking and listening. This anxiety is often connected to negative past educational experiences, fear of mistakes, and limited exposure to English environments, leading some to avoid speaking. Confidence-building through approaches like pair work, peer support, and low-pressure speaking activities is as vital as language instruction itself.



AI using various English accents offers an innovative approach to language learning. Digital tools often better capture linguistic diversity than traditional methods. While ESOL students may initially feel anxious about unfamiliar accents, AI promotes inclusivity by reflecting this diversity and boosting confidence. Authentic, real-life tasks help build learners' confidence and speaking skills. AI tools simulate real conversations and evaluate speaking and listening skills in an engaging, accessible way. Over the next year, SBIC will explore AI-supported strategies to better assist learners and improve real-world communication in ESOL education

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-for-jobs-lifelong-learning-for-opportunity-and-growth>

<sup>39</sup> <https://sure.sunderland.ac.uk/id/eprint/16069/>

## 16. Youth Work

SBIC's youth programmes provide a safe and supportive space for young people to discover their identities and build essential life skills through team-based activities. Through meaningful experiences, young people develop self-awareness, learn about others, and gain a better understanding of society. The programmes focus on co-produced support, helping young people develop skills such as risk assessment, informed decision-making, and taking responsibility, while also promoting social interaction.

SBIC youth workers build trust, make young people feel valued and supported, provide guidance, encourage positive choices, and boost confidence. SBIC recognises that limited access to support, opportunities, and stability can increase risks for young people. To address these challenges, SBIC promotes community involvement, positive change, and open discussions on topics such as mental health, safeguarding, bullying, offending, online risks, and crime prevention. By empowering young people and including them in decision-making, SBIC helps them gain more control over their lives.

*"I love coming to the sessions so I can see and play with my friends. I love the activities we do." Juwariah –*



The SBIC approach to youth provision is based on the recent YouGov and Generation Isolation Report 2024, which revealed that 75% of young people spend most of their free time at home, with 48% spending most of it in their bedrooms. Only 13% spend most of their free time with friends in person, and 19% communicate online with friends. The survey also found that 85% of young people did not attend a youth centre, but the proportion attending increased from 9% in the previous year's survey to 15% in 2024.

SBIC views young people as active partners, providing opportunities and resources to help them take control of their lives. The core of this approach is the relationships between young people and SBIC workers. Participation is voluntary; they can engage, have fun, or withdraw at any time. SBIC engages with youth in their personal and recreational settings, respecting their experiences and allowing them to influence discussions and agendas.

*"I really enjoy coming here. I get to see my friends, play, dance and do the activities. My favourite one was when we were dancing, I can't wait to do it again." Mahera –*

SBIC collaborates as equals with young people to bring their ideas to life and support their full potential by providing tools, resources, and assistance. As a result, SBIC expects these outcomes for young people:

- ⇒ To foster, develop, and leverage young people's learning by effectively communicating their skills and achievements.
- ⇒ Enhance young people's ability to work efficiently in groups, teams, and partnerships.
- ⇒ To enhance the young person's decision-making skills, evaluate risks, make informed decisions, and take control.
- ⇒ To enhance young people's capacity to become active citizens by expressing their opinions and encouraging change.
- ⇒ To expand and enrich the young person's perspectives by exposing them to new experiences and ideas.
- ⇒ To improve and support the health and well-being of young people.
- ⇒ To enhance the young person's ability to manage relationships effectively.

## 17. Impact of Youth Activities

During 2024-25, SBIC conducted outreach and detached youth work sessions while the building underwent a major refurbishment, which lasted 14 months. Despite this challenge, the project successfully connected directly with 304 young people (males: 191, females: 113), and a further 243 young people via cultural consultation events, although with the latter group, SBIC would class these as a light-touch approach



Throughout the past year, the youth programme has offered a consistent schedule of engaging activities that encouraged both fun and personal growth. Weekly sessions included football, outdoor activities, swimming, and arts and crafts, giving young people a balance of physical

activity, creativity, and teamwork. To recognise commitment and regular attendance, special trips were organised as treats.

*"I like coming to the sessions. I have made new friends and I enjoy seeing them too. I loved going bowling and eating desserts. I hope we can go again." Yusaira*

Highlights included exciting days out such as paintballing and bowling, which rewarded the group's dedication while also strengthening friendships and building confidence in new settings. These activities together created a safe, enjoyable environment where young people could stay active, develop new skills, and share positive experiences with their peers.

### Case Study Volunteer – Ismail Ali age 17

*Hi, my name is Ismail Ali. After finishing school, I wanted to gain some experience in community work to help me in the future. I play football on Saturdays at Goals, delivered by SBIC through the Youth programme. When the opportunity to volunteer arose, I decided to put my name forward. Becoming a volunteer has made me more confident and improved my communication skills. It has also given me the belief that I can handle responsibility and be trusted. I would highly recommend any young person to take up volunteering roles to develop their personal skills and confidence. Currently, I am studying for my A levels, have a part-time job, and volunteer at the SBIC youth project.*

As part of SBIC's social impact methodologies, a co-produced Young Person Impact Survey was designed and conducted, gathering 123 completed responses from young people aged 11 to 18. This notable response rate (%%) aimed to assess the impact of SBIC's youth activities on these individuals.

Answering the first question, "If you weren't coming to SBIC, what would you most likely do instead?", 9.7% (12) of young people said they would take part in another activity. The majority, 62.6% (77), said they would either stay at home or weren't sure, while 27.6% (34) said they would. Addressing the first question, "If you weren't attending SBIC, what would you likely do instead?", 9.7% (12) of young people said they would participate in another activity. The majority, 62.6% (77), said they would either stay at home or weren't sure, while 27.6% (34) said they would meet up with friends. These findings indicate that without SBIC's youth provision, only 37.3% (46) of young people would have any group interaction.

*"When I first came to the sessions, I was very shy. Now I feel more confident and enjoy the sessions more." Ruhi -*

A majority of respondents (92.6%, 114) felt safe or very safe during their interactions with SBIC youth services. Regarding respect, 91.8% (113) felt respected or very respected, and only 2.4% (3) felt not at all respected.

#### Do you feel Safe with SBIC?

Descriptor	No	%
Somewhat	5	4.0%
not at all	4	3.2%
safe	48	39%
Very safe	66	53.6%

A significant 118 young people (95.9%) either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement: "I feel more connected to my local community since joining the project through SBIC activities." Additionally, as indicated in the table below, 102 respondents (82%) reported an increase in self-confidence, while 21 (17%) noted a slight increase.

**Has the level of your social confidence increased since becoming involved with SBIC?**

Descriptor	No	%
not at all	0	0%
somewhat	21	17%
Yes	76	61.7%
Yes a lot	26	21.1%



82.1% of young people (101) reported their feedback was considered in SBC's youth provision, with only 1.6% (2) saying it was not. 74.7% (92) felt they significantly influenced SBIC youth services, 92% (74.7) felt they had some influence, and 18.6% (8) felt they had no influence. Most respondents, 93 (75.6%), reported that SBIC youth activities helped them recognise challenges and feel more capable of solving problems, while 29 (23.5%) expressed a different view.

**Can you recognise challenges and solve problems because of the activities offered?**

Descriptor	No	%
A great deal	35	28.4%
Yes	58	47.1%
Somewhat	29	23.5%
No at all	1	0.81%

When asked if things had improved since starting at SBIC, 77.2% (21.1) of young people said yes, with a great deal. 21.1% (26) said somewhat, and 1.6% (2) said not at all. The table below summarises the positive outcomes reported from their interactions with SBIC's youth activities.

**What is the outcome of your journey with SBIC?**

Activity	No
Increased confidence	97
Increased participation	76
Increased self esteem	81
Making Friends	123
increased social interaction	93
Increased qualifications	4
Increased employability skills	14
employment	0
self-employment	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>488</b>

(Note: Young people could tick more than one)

The tables show a positive link between SBIC youth activities and young people's experiences. 109 (86.6%) said no external initiatives influenced their outcomes. When asked if SBIC caused changes,

75.6% (93) reported most or all were due to SBIC youth services, while 23.4% (29) said it was "somewhat" the case.

**Have any outside initiatives or projects influenced this change?**

Descriptor	No	%
Yes	14	11.3%
No	109	86.6%

*"I didn't know anybody when I first came here, but now I know all the girls and I look forward to coming every week." Hana*

**If there has been any change, has your involvement in SBIC been responsible?**

Descriptor	No	%
None	1	0.81%
some effect	29	23.5%
Mostly	57	46.3%
all of it	36	29.2%



**Youth Work Value for Money: Added Social Value**

The project's value for money has been highly successful, as demonstrated by several key metrics. The average national value for attendance and participation at youth centres is recognised at £2,300 per individual<sup>40</sup>. 304 young people were involved in the project; however, we received only 123 completed impact surveys, indicating that they participated. As a result, this equates to a proxy social value of £282,900 (123 completed impact surveys x £2,300).

Additionally, being a social group member is valued at £1,850 per person, adding £567,950 to the project's value. The project also benefits from the contributions of 4 volunteer youth workers, with a nationally recognised value of £13,500 per volunteer<sup>41</sup>, amounting to an additional £54,000 of added social value. 93 of 127 impact survey respondents reported more problems with problem-solving. The Greater Manchester CBA model values positive functioning (autonomy, control, aspirations) at £3,500

<sup>40</sup> HACT Measuring the Social Impact of Community Investment: A Guide to using the Wellbeing Valuation Approach social value calculator

<sup>41</sup> GVE Estimating the value of volunteering using subjective wellbeing data (Daniel Fujiwara, Paul Oroyemi and Ewen McKinnon) Reference: Fujiwara, Oroyemi, McKinnon Data source

per<sup>42</sup> beneficiary, adding social value of £325,500. Additionally, 102 respondents reported increased confidence, valued at £3,500 per person, adding £357,000 in social value. 118 young people (95.9%) reported feeling more connected to their community after participating in SBIC activities. Using the 'good neighbourhood' proxy<sup>43</sup> (£1,747), this yields a social value of £206.146.

*"I love coming here! I've made a few new friends, and I enjoy doing the activities with them." Mariam*

Estimated Gross added social value = £1,793,496 (less deadweight, displacement, attribution and displacement) = Net social value is outlined at the end of the report via the Social Impact Map.



## 18. Information Advice and Guidance (IAG)

SBIC aims to provide a free, community-oriented bilingual information service that helps individuals make informed decisions about personal development. It encourages self-reliance in managing well-being, finances, debt, benefits, energy, employment, education, immigration, and legal issues. The IAG service promotes volunteering and work placements to build skills and experience. It supports racially minoritised users in accessing mental health and social care, overcoming language and cultural barriers. SBIC translates materials into community languages and offers Cultural Awareness and Competency Training to staff and local groups, enhancing understanding and improving culturally appropriate, inclusive services.

IAG supports clients with services like Universal Credit, pensions, council tax, and housing benefits. It helps those with IT or language challenges, and offers personalised assistance for UC journals, interpreter referrals, and applications for PIP, passports, citizenship, housing, mortgages, tax, DBS checks, and schools. Many rely on IAG to accurately complete forms and ensure proper payments, making its professional help highly valued.

The IAG service is face-to-face, accessible to diverse users, including non-native English speakers. Providing info and support boosts confidence and independence. SBIC IAG's main principle is a partnership approach, collaborating with Independent Age and FISCUS to assist 300 racially minoritised women aged 65+ in poverty. SBIC leads the project. The programme includes:

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<sup>42</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/tackling-child-poverty-pathfinders-evaluability-assessment/pages/16/> and Greater Manchester Combined Authority CBA model

<sup>43</sup> HACT Measuring the Social Impact of Community Investment: A Guide to using the Wellbeing Valuation Approach social value calculator

- Wealth & Health MOTs: Sessions on maximising income, cutting costs, and identifying follow-up needs.
- Culturally Appropriate Warm Space
- Sessions: Weekly activities focused on social interaction and well-being, including seated exercises and culturally sensitive food, held over 40 weeks.
- Financial Hardship Support: Includes welfare benefits and debt advice through FISCUS (FCA registered), available by appointment and home visit.
- Home Safety Checks: Conducted to maintain warm, secure, and accessible living environments, including referrals for adaptations and fuel top-up vouchers from the Fuel Bank Foundation.
- Crisis Support: Including referrals for housing, domestic abuse support, emergency food, and clothing.

A further example of SBIC IAG partnership work is the Centre for Warmth Initiative with Northern Gas Networks. In partnership with FISCUS (which is the lead applicant), SBIC backs the Centre for Warmth pilot, a project funded by Northern Gas Networks. This initiative offers:

- Energy-saving advice and support to reduce fuel poverty
- Income maximisation and crisis support
- A dedicated BAME outreach worker (funded by FISCUS) based at SBIC, working 15 hours per week to ensure the inclusion of hard-to-reach ethnic minority residents

#### Case Study Mrs M Nessa

*I am an elderly woman (82) who struggles with severe knee pain, which makes it difficult for me to attend SBIC in person. However, I receive weekly phone calls from Razna, who checks in on my well-being and provides me with ongoing support over the phone. During one of our conversations, she asked if I had applied for Attendance Allowance for my knee issues. I told her I wasn't aware that I could apply for it.*

*Razna immediately took action and arranged a home visit at the earliest available time. When she visited, she explained everything clearly and asked for my permission to book an appointment with Courtney, who could assist in completing the application. She also offered to accompany me and translate.*

*Razna went ahead and booked the appointment, shared the date and time with me, and even reminded me the day before. On the day of the appointment, she kindly picked me up and took me to Fiscus, where we met Courtney. Courtney completed the application form for me while Razna translated everything, and they submitted it on my behalf.*

*A few weeks later, I received a letter regarding the application. I called Razna to come and help me understand it. She came to my home, read the letter, and informed me that my application was successful—I had been awarded Attendance Allowance. I am truly happy and deeply grateful to Razna, Courtney, and all the staff at SBIC for their support and kindness.*

## 19. Reported impact of the IAG service on users

The IAG team distributed 157 Impact questionnaires; 70 were returned, a 37.5% response rate. When asked about alternatives to SBIC, only 3 would attend another activity, while 78.5% (55 respondents) would stay home or didn't know. All respondents felt safe at SBIC, and 98.5% felt respected.

IAG users were asked to rate their agreement with the statement: 'Since joining the project, I feel more involved in my local community.' A significant majority, 95.71%, responded positively, with 18.5% stating they "strongly agreed" and 77.5% indicating they "somewhat agreed." Additionally, when asked if their social confidence had increased since becoming involved with SBIC, 59.2% of

users (45 individuals) answered “yes,” while 36.8% (28 users) responded “somewhat,” and 3.9% (three users) stated “yes, a lot.”



#### **Case study IAG: Abu Baker Siddik**

*A client visited the Sunderland Bangladeshi International Centre seeking help with his Pension Credit application. He has been in this country for less than a year. We assisted him in making an application over three months ago, but he hadn't received any response. I called on his behalf to check the status of his application. They told me it wasn't accepted because they required more ID, presuming he didn't have a UK settlement visa. I explained that the client has indefinite leave to remain, and his paperwork states he is eligible for public funds. I was advised to submit a new claim and include an explanation of what happened in a covering letter.*

*I completed a new online application, uploaded all supporting documents, and sent his Home Office letters, which could serve as supporting evidence of his settled status in the UK.*

*After five weeks, he returned saying he still hadn't heard anything from the DWP. I called again, and they explained that the claim had now been accepted, a payment had been made that day, and the paperwork had been posted out. The gentleman asked me to help him log in to his online banking to verify whether the payment had been credited to his account. It turned out he was backdated to the very first time he applied, and he received a lump sum of £7,000. The client was very happy with the support he received. I also helped him apply for Attendance Allowance, which he has now received, and his daughter will be applying for Carer's Allowance, as she has been caring for him since he moved to the UK to live with her and her family.*

Users were then asked, “Was your feedback and consultation taken into account within SBIC?” 52 (74.2%) said ‘yes’, 11 (15.7%) said ‘yes, a lot’, and 6 (8.5%) said ‘somewhat’, while only one user reported ‘not at all’. The survey then followed up with this question, asking, “Was your feedback and consultation taken into account within SBIC?” 55.7% (39) said ‘yes’, 16 said ‘somewhat’, and 6 said ‘very much so’, with only one person responding, ‘not at all’.

Respondents of IAG were asked, “Do you find it easier to identify challenges and solve problems due to the activities on offer?” Of those surveyed, 34 users (48.5%) reported having a better understanding of the challenges and how to address them. Additionally, 27 users answered “somewhat,” while 9 stated ‘not at all.’ Overall, as shown in the table below, 74% of participants reported improvements since beginning their journey with SBIC.

### Are things better with you since you started at SBIC?

Descriptor	No	%
A great deal	1	1.3%
Yes	52	74%
Somewhat	16	22.8%
not at all	1	1.3%

The table below outlines the outcomes of users' journeys with the SBIC IAG service. Users could indicate multiple outcomes, with increased confidence, participation, and self-esteem being the most prevalent. Interestingly, 31 respondents noted an unexpected outcome of enhanced employability skills, despite not participating in the SBIC enterprise and employability project.

### What is the outcome of your journey with SBIC?

Activity	No
Increased confidence	46
Increased participation	37
Increased self esteem	43
Making Friends	24
increased social interaction	29
Increased qualifications	2
Increased employability skills	31
employment	0
self-employment	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>218</b>

The survey aimed to assess the level of attribution to the project and found a high level of attribution. Notably, 71% of IAG users responded 'no' to the question, 'Have any outside initiatives influenced this change?' Furthermore, among the respondents, 31 users attributed the change primarily to SBIC involvement: 14 stated it was 100% responsible, while 28 indicated it was 'somewhat' responsible.

### Have any outside initiatives or projects influenced this change?

Descriptor	No	%
Yes	18	28.9%
No	52	71%

### If there has been any change, has your involvement in SBIC been responsible?

Descriptor	No	%
None	11	14.4%
some effect	28	315%
Mostly	31	35.5%
all of it	14	18.4%

## IAG Value for Money: Added Social Value

In total, the project's case files identified 213 users, with an average intervention of 15 hours per user (ranging from 8 to 35 hours); this equates to over 3,195 guidance and counselling hours delivered. 57 users said they felt better after being freed from debt and financial stress, according to the HACT Social Value Bank<sup>44</sup>. This works out at a social value of £11,078 per user, adding up to an extra social value of £631,446 for the project.

According to the national CAB, the average social value of reducing personal debt is £13,000<sup>45</sup> per case; as a result, the project generated a further £74,100. Additionally, 61 respondents reported a

<sup>44</sup> HACT Measuring the Social Impact of Community Investment: A Guide to using the Wellbeing Valuation Approach social value calculator

<sup>45</sup> Delivering Debt Advice during a Pandemic

general improvement in their well-being, which, based on the Greater Manchester Combined Authority's CBA model equates to a social value of £4,671. This adds to the total additional social value of £284,931. Moreover, the Scottish Government Child Poverty Pathfinder programme allocated a proxy social value of £500 per user for more straightforward navigation through the administrative welfare system; therefore, the IAG team generated a further £106,500 in added social value (213 x £500) of £141,500 for this proxy value for the project.

Health outcomes in some of the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods, as identified by the Government's new Neighbourhood Commission, closely resemble those observed in developing countries. While these neighbourhoods comprise just 2% of England's population, they represent half of all areas where life expectancy falls below 70<sup>46</sup>.

A decade after the original Marmot Review, the 2020 follow-up confirmed the existence of "clear systematic inequalities" involving region, poverty, social class, and ethnicity. SBIC's Health and Well-being team is committed to addressing health inequalities by examining factors such as gender, socio-economic status, and geography, and by acknowledging the lasting effects of structural racism on ethnic health disparities.

## 20. Health & Well-being

Healthy life expectancy in the UK varies considerably across regions, with lower-than-average healthy life expectancy at birth notably observed in Scotland, the North of England, the East Midlands, and Wales. Conversely, people in the South of England and London enjoy higher life expectancies<sup>47</sup>. Health outcomes in mission-critical neighbourhoods, defined by the Government's new Neighbourhood Commission as severely deprived communities, are alarmingly like those in developing countries. Despite representing only 2% of England's population, these areas account for half of the locations where life expectancy is below 70<sup>48</sup>.



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<sup>46</sup> [https://www.neighbourhoodscommission.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/The-Anatomy-of-Mission-Critical-Neighbourhoods-Report\\_.pdf](https://www.neighbourhoodscommission.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/The-Anatomy-of-Mission-Critical-Neighbourhoods-Report_.pdf) May 2025

<sup>47</sup> Watt, T., Raymond, A. and Rachet-Jacquet, L. (2023) Quantifying health inequalities in England. The Health Foundation. [www.health.org.uk/reports-and-analysis/analysis/quantifying-health-inequalities-in](http://www.health.org.uk/reports-and-analysis/analysis/quantifying-health-inequalities-in)

<sup>48</sup> [https://www.neighbourhoodscommission.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/The-Anatomy-of-Mission-Critical-Neighbourhoods-Report\\_.pdf](https://www.neighbourhoodscommission.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/The-Anatomy-of-Mission-Critical-Neighbourhoods-Report_.pdf) May 2025

This variation is most evident at the upper-tier local authority level, where the gap in healthy life expectancy at birth reaches 23.5 years for women and 21.2 years for men<sup>49</sup>. The healthy life expectancy age gap in Sunderland is 18.6 years. A review of 145 studies revealed a positive relationship between higher levels of social capital and improved physical health<sup>50</sup>.

Longevity is often regarded as an indicator of a country's overall health and prosperity, yet it also highlights existing inequalities among different populations. Notably, individuals in the most deprived areas are three times more likely to die between the ages of 60 and 64 compared to those in the least deprived areas<sup>51</sup>.

There is a strong connection between income, resources, and health<sup>52</sup>. A stable income enables us to access essential resources for survival and well-being while also alleviating the anxiety associated with indebtedness. Income influences nearly every aspect of our lives, impacting not only our material circumstances but also our social interactions, which can, in turn, affect our health. Research by The Nuffield Foundation shows neighbourhood effects influence outcomes because disadvantaged areas persist. Poorer, less healthy individuals often remain trapped, while those with better circumstances and higher incomes tend to move to other areas.<sup>53</sup>

Almost a year after Sunderland's racist riots, which affected racially minoritised communities, the violence was utterly abhorrent. Yet, silence persists regarding subtler, everyday racism rooted in the intersection of poverty, race, employment, housing, and wealth. These issues continue to cause harm and lead to unequal health outcomes for racially minoritised groups.



Individuals from minority ethnic groups often experience lower earnings. For example, 51% of Bangladeshi, 45% of Pakistani, and 38% of Black households are situated in the lowest fifth of income distribution, compared to just 18% of White households. In terms of wealth, for every £1 held by White households, Indian households possess 90-95p, Pakistani households 50p, Black Caribbean households 20p, and Black African and Bangladeshi households only 10p<sup>54</sup>.

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<sup>49</sup> The Health Foundation. (2022) Life expectancy and healthy life expectancy at birth by deprivation. [www.health.org.uk/evidence-hub/health-inequalities/life-expectancy-and-healthy-life-expectancy-at-birthby](https://www.health.org.uk/evidence-hub/health-inequalities/life-expectancy-and-healthy-life-expectancy-at-birthby)

<sup>50</sup> Rodgers, J et al, 'Social Capital and Physical Health: An Updated Review of the Literature for 2007–2018'. Social Science & Medicine, 2019

<sup>51</sup> How Racism Affects Health 2025 Runnymed & The health Foundation

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.jrf.org.uk/uk-poverty-2025-the-essential-guide-to-understanding-poverty-in-the-uk>

<sup>53</sup> van Ham, M et al, Geographies of socio-economic inequality. IFS Deaton Review of Inequalities, 2022

<sup>54</sup> The Colour of Money <https://www.runnymedetrust.org/publications/the-colour-of-money>

Alarming, more than half of children in Bangladesh and Pakistan, as well as around 60% of Black children, live in poverty after housing costs. This starkly contrasts with only a quarter of White children experiencing the same plight. Additionally, members of minority ethnic groups are disproportionately likely to reside in poor-quality, overcrowded, and unaffordable housing, particularly within the private rented sector<sup>55</sup>.

The Health Security Agency's 2025 report<sup>56</sup> highlights persistent social and economic inequalities causing unequal health outcomes in England. It discusses how background, ethnicity, and location influence health risks, with ethnicity being especially significant. Emergency hospital admissions for TB remain disproportionately high among certain ethnic groups compared to White British people.

- Groups from Asian countries: 29 times higher
- Groups from Indian countries: 27 times higher
- Groups from Black African countries: 15 times higher

Ten years after the initial Marmot Review, the 2020 report reiterated the existence of "clear systematic inequalities" related to spatial, poverty, class, and ethnic disparities. Researchers know recessions impact racially minoritised backgrounds differently. SBIC's Health and Well-being team aims to address health inequalities by examining factors like protected characteristics, socio-economic influences, and geography, acknowledging the lasting effects of structural racism on ethnic health disparities.



SBIC partnered with Macmillan Cancer Support to address cancer care disparities in Sunderland. They conducted surveys, interviews, workshops, and focus groups to understand health inequalities and improve care. The team also worked with South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS

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<sup>55</sup> National Housing Federation (2023) Overcrowding in England. <https://www.housing.org.uk/resources/overcrowding-in-england-2023/>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-inequalities-in-health-protection-report/health-inequalities-in-health-protection-report-2025>

Trust and NHS North East & North Cumbria ICB to develop cultural awareness training. The table below details the workshops and focus groups.

### Type & Nature of SBIC Health & wellbeing Workshops 2024 – 2025

Workshops	Workshops	Workshops
The NHS Busting Cancer Tour	Interactive Surveys on Access to Primary Care	Pamper Sessions for Mental Health
Macmillan Coffee Morning	Mindfulness Exercise Sessions	Wellbeing sessions
Let's Talk Menopause - Awareness Presentation	Breathing Techniques Workshops	Mindfulness
Cancer Screening - Breast Screening Sessions	Dementia Awareness Session	Financial Wellbeing Workshops
Cancer Screening - Men's Screening Sessions	Workshops on Palliative and End of Life Care	Sewing Classes
Breast Clinic Visit	Health & Wellbeing Coaching	Exercise, Cookery, Arts & Crafts
Cancer Awareness Training sessions for BAME Community	Workshops on Organ Donation Awareness	Assessing Risk
Targeted Lung Health Checks Awareness	Sisters with Voices - Dance and Fitness Sessions	Breast, Bowel, abdominal, Aortic sessions
Prostate Cancer Awareness Sessions	Cooking Sessions for Healthy Diet & Lifestyle	Dance
Male Awareness Sessions - Cance Screening	Informal Drop-in Therapy and Social Care Service	Cancer nursing share and learn event

The details of the comprehensive approach can be found in the *"Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic SBIC & Macmillan Cancer Report of 2024"*.

Results from the SBIC project were positive, with focus groups praising the content's valuable insights, which enhanced screening knowledge through health education and personal stories. Workshops and surveys emphasised faith-based health and care messages, resonating with the community and boosting participation, aiding project success. The project reached 148 racially minoritised households via local seminars (36), focus groups (10), and 99 impact surveys.

The SBIC health and well-being team collaborated with faith leaders to ensure support was sensitive to spiritual beliefs. This led to an innovative *"Appropriate Culture Care Matrix"* and a co-produced report on End-of-Life care titled *"Enhancing Awareness of Palliative Care Services within Global Majority Communities."*

SBIC staff, in collaboration with STSFT and the Lead Nurse for Patient Experience, briefed ward managers and sisters on involving racially minoritised patients, carers, and families in care planning. They organised workshops with Sunderland Healthwatch and local GPs to address access issues, particularly around e-consultations, and shared the findings for review and action. SBIC also hosted organ donation workshops with Muslim scholars to discuss religious views, led by Dr. Saeed Ahmed and NENC, aiming to boost organ donation awareness among ethnic minorities with low rates.

## 21. Reported Impact by Health and Well-being User

Of 148 health and well-being users, the project achieved a 66.8% response rate, with 99 impact surveys completed. Users attended 36 seminars, supported 29 cancer patients, and contributed 1,837 hours of service, averaging 38.2 hours per week with a staff team of 2.5. Only 19.1% of health and well-being users would choose another activity if they were not attending SBIC, while 98.9% felt safe and well-respected there. When asked about their feedback, 74.7% said it was valued. Users were asked about their feelings of increased involvement in their community since joining the project. 97.9% strongly agreed or agreed that they feel more involved since joining SBI

**Case Study: Patient P**

Patient P, a 34-year-old woman originally from Nigeria, resides in the UK with her husband and two young daughters. Her husband is in the UK on a student visa, and Patient P is here as his dependent. She does not currently hold a visa herself. Patient P's medical journey began in Nigeria and continued in the UK following her relocation.

**Medical History and Diagnosis:**

In November 2021, while breastfeeding her younger daughter, Patient P noticed a lump in her right breast. The lump raised concerns, and in December 2021, upon moving to the UK, she sought medical advice. Initially, in January 2022, a General Practitioner (GP) reassured her that the lump was non-cancerous. Persistent worries led to a referral to a specialist in March 2022 at Grindon, where a biopsy confirmed that the lump was cancerous.

Despite a mammogram not detecting the cancer, an MRI scan identified the lump, leading to its surgical removal in April 2022. Additional surgeries were necessary, including the removal of lymph nodes. A second lump, initially dismissed, was later confirmed as cancerous through another biopsy. Patient P underwent a total of four surgeries. Her treatment plan included six rounds of chemotherapy and ten radiology sessions, along with ongoing medication and monthly blood tests.

**Support and Care:**

Throughout her treatment, Patient P experienced various forms of support:

- **Healthcare Support:** She received consistent care from the hospital team, including surgical interventions, chemotherapy, and radiology.
- **Emotional and Social Support:** The Sunderland Bangladesh International Centre and her support worker played vital roles in providing emotional support. Regular phone calls ensured she was kept informed and felt supported.

**Practical Support:** Financial aid, such as a wig voucher, was provided. Although additional financial assistance was limited, encouragement to participate in social activities, like coffee mornings and messy play sessions, was offered to reduce isolation and support her mental well-being

**Personal Life:**

Balancing treatment and personal responsibilities, Patient P is also caring for her two young children. Her younger daughter, aged two, benefits from activities that provide engagement and a sense of normalcy.

**Community Engagement:**

Patient P agreed to become a cancer champion, using her experience to help and inspire others facing similar challenges. Her involvement underscores the importance of community and peer support in the cancer journey.

**Outcome:**

On 24 October 2023, Patient P reported being cancer-free. She continues to attend regular checkups and remains on medication to monitor her health and prevent recurrence. The enduring support from the Sunderland Bangladesh International Centre, the healthcare team, and her support worker highlights the collaborative effort in her recovery and ongoing care.

**Conclusion:**

Patient P's case underscores the significance of a multi-faceted support system for cancer patients, encompassing medical, emotional, and practical assistance. Her journey from initial diagnosis to being cancer-free demonstrates resilience and the critical role of timely medical intervention and comprehensive support networks in patient outcomes.

*"I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to the support worker from Sunderland Bangladesh International Centre. They provided a compassionate listening ear and were there for me during emotional times. They also helped me find activities for my daughter, which prevented me from staying home all the time and feeling isolated. This support enabled me to get out, make new friends, and significantly improve my mental health. As a result, I was able to stay more focused and positive throughout my cancer treatment. I am overjoyed to share that I am now cancer-free and have returned to employment."*

Of health and well-being service users, 87.8% reported increased social confidence, and 70.7% influenced how SBIC co-produced and delivered the service, with only 3 users saying, "not at all." 87 users (87.8%) reported increased social confidence from SBIC. Additionally, 70.7% (70 users) influenced how SBIC co-produced and delivered services, with only 3 reporting no influence. The table shows users improved problem recognition and solving abilities, with 61.6% (61 users) seeing a significant positive impact and 34 experiencing moderate benefits.

**Can you recognise challenges and solve problems because of the activities offered?**

Descriptor	No	%
A great deal	31	31.3%
Yes	30	30.3%
Somewhat	34	34.3%
No at all	4	4.3%

Overall, 68% of health and well-being users reported improvements since starting at SBIC, with 29% saying 'somewhat.' When asked about the outcome of their journey, respondents Most of the health and care respondents reported better self-esteem, confidence, social interaction, and the ability to make friends. The table shows unexpected benefits of SBIC's service, such as improved employability, qualifications, and employment, as well as self-employment among family members of participants or carers. These benefits weren't directly tied to SBIC's enterprise or training. The table shows unexpected outcomes of SBIC's health and well-being service. Some users, including family members of recipients involved in activities or volunteering as caregivers, experienced benefits, such as improved employability skills (12), better qualifications (34), increased job opportunities (7), and increased self-employment (2). No benefits were directly linked to the SBIC.

**What is the outcome of your journey with SBIC?**

Activity	No
Increased confidence	44
Increased participation	45
Increased self esteem	33
Making Friends	53
increased social interaction	28
Increased qualifications	34
Increased employability skills	12
employment	7
self-employment	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>258</b>

The project asked health and well-being users if outside initiatives influenced change. 88.8% (88 users) said no, 11.1% (11 users) said yes. When asked if SBIC involvement caused changes, 81.8% (81) said "Mostly to all of it," others said "Somewhat," and no one said "None."

**If there has been any change, has your involvement in SBIC been responsible?**

Descriptor	No	%
None	0	0%
some effect	18	18.8%
Mostly	58	58.5%
all of it	23	23.3%

## 21. Health & Well-being Value for Money Added Social Value

Our project provided valuable workshops and training. The Scottish Community Development Centre charges £600 daily for its Introduction to Community-Led Health course. The Health and Well-being team held 36 seminars, thereby adding social value of £21,600 if each had been a day-long session. A recent study<sup>57</sup> identified a proxy value for restoring good wellbeing or avoiding the cost of poor wellbeing as £10,053 per case. As a result, the project further generated an additional social value of £271,431

According to PSSRU<sup>58</sup>, the average cost to the NHS per person referred through social prescribing is £398. Therefore, providing one-to-one support to 29 users affected by cancer would amount to a total cost of £19,104 (29 x £398). Additionally, using the national Real Living Wage rate<sup>59</sup> of £12.60 as a benchmark, the total value of this support equates to £23,146, calculated from 1,837 hours of one-on-one cancer support at £12.60 per hour. HACT<sup>60</sup> estimates that membership of a social group is valued at £1,850 per person, totalling £270,100 for 146 users (146 x £1,850). Furthermore, the average cost of an online counselling session ranges from £30 to £80 per hour<sup>61</sup>. Assuming each user requires intensive one-to-one counselling at least 8 times, the estimated total added social value to the project amounts to £6,960. (£30 x 8 sessions = £240 x 29 users = £6,960)

While the project has benefited users and their families, major changes are still needed to tackle health inequalities arising from socioeconomic status, race, and gender. Equal access to healthcare can only be achieved through cooperation among policymakers, healthcare professionals, and local communities. To reduce health disparities, future Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs) in Sunderland should prioritise addressing race and ethnicity.

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<sup>57</sup> Bichard, Hargreaves & Kempton (2020) <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/-/media/phi-reports/pdf/2022-06-james-place-year-2-sroi-report.pdf>

<sup>58</sup> <https://www.pssru.ac.uk>

<sup>59</sup> <https://www.livingwage.org.uk/what-real-living-wage>

<sup>60</sup> HACT Measuring the Social Impact of Community Investment: A Guide to using the Wellbeing Valuation Approach social value calculator

<sup>61</sup> <https://affordablecounsellingnetwork.co.uk/#:~:text=Online%20Counselling:%20%20per,Affordable%20Counselling%20>

## 22. Partnerships & Collaborations

Strategic partnerships can be transformative, enabling organisations to combine strengths, share resources, and achieve greater collective results. Developing these partnerships requires building relationships grounded in trust, transparency, and shared visions. SBIC is effective at identifying synergies that go beyond mere recognition of opportunities. Its success depends on fostering long-term collaborations through ongoing communication and alignment, with clearly defined roles and expectations to promote mutual commitment. When executed well, these alliances amplify impact, foster innovation, reduce risks, and drive growth. To address local challenges, organisations committed to racial and social justice should partner with both strategic and community groups. Establishing community connections helps reduce inequality and drives success for both the organisation and the wider community. These collaborations enhance SBIC's capacity to provide comprehensive, user-focused support, improve service coordination, and optimise referrals to ensure resources reach those in need. Core partners of SBIC include:

### SBMEM

SBIC collaborates with Sunderland BME Network (SBMEM), a charity supporting Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups in Sunderland and nearby areas. It includes 12 racially minoritised organisations with over 50% racially minoritised Directors, Trustees, staff, and volunteers.

SBMEM's core functions are:

- Governance and Leadership
- Workforce Development
- Funding Advice and Planning
- Strategic Development
- Consultation and Research
- Partnership and Collaborations
- Information
- Celebrations and Thematic Events
- Pre-Business Start-Up Support

SBMEM aims for a fairer society by offering equal opportunities and promoting self-help, resilience, optimism, cooperation, social justice, and intersectionality in racially minoritised communities in Sunderland. It fosters community resilience through trust, civic engagement, social bonds, and shared identities, enhancing social cohesion. Collaborations drive change. The 'hub' supports Black leadership with resources, information, and networks for racially minoritised groups, reducing racial inequalities and empowering communities through leadership, sustainability, entrepreneurship, coaching, and social impact programmes led by practitioners with lived experiences.

### New Horizon

New Horizon Sunderland, led by the African community, empowers Black and Global Majority groups towards social and economic progress. Founded by refugees and asylum seekers, it understands their challenges when settling. It advocates for equality, development, and addresses poverty. The mission is to provide culturally appropriate support and leadership, fostering prosperity, racial justice, and self-determination, helping communities thrive. It offers essential services and resources to support these goals.

- Youth Work Activities: safe spaces for young Black users to connect, build friendships, and develop essential life skills.
- Educational Training Support.

- Well-being guidance and support.
- IAG services for the Black African communities, welfare benefits, in-work benefits, debt resolution, housing assistance, immigration advice, and community events.

## Fiscus

FISCUS is a charity that provides essentials such as hygiene products, sanitary items, baby packs, toys, and clothing for all ages. They also offer advice on debt and welfare benefits regulated by the FCA. Not a minority-led charity, FISCUS partners with us in the Pilot for Black and Minority Ethnic Future Leaders. SBIC has collaborated with FISCUS for over 10 years on various projects. For instance, SBIC's partnership with Independent Age and FISCUS includes the Thrive Project, which supports 300 women from minority backgrounds aged 65 and above living in poverty over a 30-month period. It also involves the Centre for Warmth Initiative with Northern Gas Networks. Through this pilot, SBIC and FISCUS participate in a project funded by Northern Gas Networks. The managers of FISCUS and SBIC are recognised community leaders who have completed leadership programmes and are eager to inspire others into community leadership.

### **FISCUS: Case Study**

*FISCUS is an independent charity in Hendon, Sunderland's most deprived ward, working closely with the Sunderland Bangladesh International Centre (SBIC). During SBIC's recent refurbishment, FISCUS hosted them at our 3-storey shipping container community building, located nearby.*

*Since the refurbished centre opened, it has offered more opportunities for FISCUS and improved understanding of social cohesion and cultures within Hendon and Sunderland. Our charities have collaborated on projects, but the major refurbishment of SBIC has greatly expanded partnership opportunities. This enhances outcomes and access to services for a diverse range of customers from various backgrounds.*

*The new SBIC space extends FISCUS' reach, offering access to more services and better coordination between our charities. This reduces duplication, maximises resources, and benefits service users with improved outcomes. Additionally, SBIC staff and volunteers act as interpreters, helping customers understand our advice, crisis services, rights, and entitlements. Together, we now offer better access to services in a safe, diverse environment.*

*The FISCUS team supports people from various cultures, with about 28% from racially minoritised communities. This joint work and co-location improve understanding and integration across backgrounds, strengthening community*

## Phoenix Way

Phoenix Way is a nationwide, community-led initiative focused on tackling the structural inequalities faced by Black and racially minoritised communities. Led by The Ubele Initiative in partnership with the Global Fund for Children, this grant program aims to create transformative change within these communities. It was launched with six Regional Leads across the UK- Yorkshire & Humber, South West, North West, North East & Cumbria, Midlands, and London & South East- and is supported by new UK funders like The Youth Endowment Fund and the Lloyds Bank Foundation for England & Wales. SBIC aligns with Phoenix Way's three core values: Promoting equity in philanthropy, grant-making, and social investment; making bold investments in Black and racially minoritised voluntary and community organisations; and empowering communities to address systemic racial inequalities through learning and systems change.

## ICOS

ICOS focuses on supporting those who lack access to information and services to promote equal opportunity. We have particularly strong links with the Eastern European community, but we have also successfully worked with refugees, asylum seekers, and BME people born in the UK. Currently, most of our work is carried out in Sunderland and the surrounding area. Our approach emphasises both the assets within our community and the challenges it faces. While we are committed to supporting those in crisis, we firmly believe that preventing crises is also our duty.

## Health & Wellbeing Partners

Global majority groups are experiencing disproportionate health inequalities. Census data<sup>62</sup> reveal that ethnic minority groups are much more likely to live in the most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods in England compared to white British people. For instance, Pakistani and Bangladeshi individuals are over three times more likely, and Black African and Caribbean individuals are more than twice as likely to reside in these disadvantaged areas when compared to white British individuals.

SBIC actively takes part in the city's key health and wellbeing networks, including Starting Well, Living Well, and Ageing Well, which helps SBIC align its services with wider health priorities and support integrated community care strategies. By partnering with healthcare providers, SBIC raise awareness, encourages early detection, and empowers women to advocate for their safety and well-being. SBIC collaborations promote mindfulness, creativity, physical activity, and mental health, and support budgeting and debt management, further enhancing SBIC efforts and fostering education, safety, and inclusivity.

Together, SBIC make sure women from racially minoritised communities receive the necessary support for their health and empowerment. An example of a particular collaboration with the NHS Foundation Trust has resulted in a Cultural Competency Training Programme. A pilot has been launched, and a trial session for staff at Sunderland Royal Hospital is scheduled for later this year. The training aims to enhance culturally appropriate care within local health services. Below is outlined a range of sub-partnership activities:

- NHS Breast Screening Service: Promotes awareness, culturally sensitive breast screening support, and early detection.
- End of Life Care (STSFT): Advocates for compassionate, culturally appropriate end-of-life care.
- NHS – South Tyneside & Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust: Patient Experience & Complaints Service strengthens feedback loops between service users and providers.
- Stroke Association (Danielle Cottrell): Awareness of stroke symptoms and recovery support.
- Community Health Bus: Accessible, localised health checks and information.
- IMCAN / University of Sunderland: Cervical and cancer screening research with Muslim women.
- Healthwatch Sunderland: Ensures community voices shape local healthcare priorities and services.
- Voicibility – Advocacy Services: Independent advocacy support to navigate health and social care systems.
- Minerva Arts and Wellbeing: Creative workshops improving emotional wellbeing and confidence.
- Active Families Northeast: Promotes physical activity and healthy routines.
- Female Multicultural Group: Engagement and co-design activities with Arab and other diverse women.
- Mindful Muslima Session: Safe space for faith-informed wellbeing.
- Abbeyfield Living Society (Hope Bank View): Staff and resident sessions on cultural awareness, housing, and care collaboration.
- Northern Cancer Voices: To engage those with influence over policy, commissioning, and service design

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<sup>62</sup> <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/demographics/people-living-in-deprived-neighbourhoods/latest/>

### **Case Study: Healthwatch Sunderland Engagement Officer**

*The collaboration among SBIC, Healthwatch Sunderland, and local communities has had a significant impact on health and social care. Engaging diverse populations, especially the Bangladeshi community, Healthwatch amplified previously unheard voices. This partnership led to organisations such as Macmillan Cancer Support, enabling tailored BME cancer awareness and support initiatives.*

*Efforts to educate the Local Authority about social care gaps improved community information sharing. Feedback from women's groups on accessing GP tools, such as e-consult, prompted discussions with local practices and the Integrated Care Board to find solutions for non-English-speaking patients.*

*Healthwatch's ongoing commitment to work with the SBIC in every initiative ensures that health and social care services continually evolve to meet the needs of all residents, fostering a more inclusive and responsive healthcare system in Sunderland.*

## **Training & Education Partnerships**

For SBIC, education and training rely on seamless pathways linking the community Involvement with recognised progression. Collaborations with Further Education providers like Sunderland College and New College Durham offer accredited routes and quick referrals, allowing learners to move smoothly from Entry ESOL to vocational studies. Local schools, such as Richard Avenue Primary, provide crucial placements for Teaching Assistant qualifications. These partnerships enhance safeguarding, foster family learning, and alleviate barriers for parents with caring responsibilities. They also expand venue availability, align curricula with local labour market needs, and support mentoring and CPD to enhance teaching quality. Strategically, they show civic impact, support funding, and increase retention by providing learners with clear next steps and practical employment experience.

- Sunderland College – progression interviews, assessment, referral routes.
- New College Durham – progression to Adult/HE prep, advice & admissions.  
*[Higher Education Degree Datachecknewcollegedurham.ac.ukapply.newdur.ac.uk](http://Higher Education Degree Datachecknewcollegedurham.ac.ukapply.newdur.ac.uk)*
- Richard Avenue Primary School – placement host, mentor support, DBS coordination.
- Other Local Community Schools (various) – placement hosts across Sunderland, contact via each school office



### Case Study Wearside University of 3rd Age (U3A)

*I'm pleased to return to SBIC for the Wearside U3A monthly meeting. The welcoming building has an adjustable temperature, and the staff make me feel at home. As an early bird, I sit in the cosy reception corner, looking at flyers about upcoming events before entering the meeting room. These flyers inform over 300 members about our diverse programme, and everyone is welcome at any event. We are becoming accustomed to the new equipment and appreciate the team setting up rooms and checking for additional needs. Minor sound system issues have been swiftly fixed. Hiring the new facility for the Boardroom's Executive Committee meetings has been a notable improvement; the chairs are comfortable, and the tables are arranged so our nine trustees can settle quickly and work effectively. It's the best venue we've used for these meetings. I am glad I can visit the centre to handle admin tasks for Wearside U3A and am always welcomed. Whether photocopying Activity Sheets or preparing AGM papers, staff quickly resolve issues like running out of paper and always greet me, which I appreciate.*

*New ventures are regularly shared with us, and many members attend SBIC cultural and training events. These activities have helped members deepen their understanding of diverse cultures in Sunderland, fostering greater social cohesion in Hendon and beyond. We look forward to continued collaboration.*



## 23. Social Return on Investment Calculation

The financial investments allocated to SBIC come from various funding sources, namely the National Lottery, the Ballanger Charity Trust, City Council, Mercers Charitable Trust UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Macmillan Cancer Support, and the Lloyd's Foundation. For this analysis, the financial input is based on expenditure during the financial year April 2024 - March 2025, which aligns with the timeframe of the social impact report. However, we have excluded the large-scale capital investment by the Youth Investment Fund for our centre refurbishment works that occurred throughout 2024-25.

The Social Return on Investment (SROI) ratio assesses the social impact of an investment by showing how much social value is generated for every pound invested. For example, each pound invested in SBIC results in a measurable social value, also expressed in pounds. The SROI is calculated by dividing the Total Present Value (PV) of the social value created by the total financial investment. Using data from this report, which includes baseline outcome measurements and the Value Map, we estimate the SROI for SBIC services from April 2024 to March. The calculation considers the social value of outcomes experienced by stakeholders, adjusting for deadweight, displacement, attribution, drop-off, and duration. The table below provides further clarification.

<b>Attribution</b>	<b>Deadweight</b>	<b>Displacement</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Drop off</b>
Who else helped you with these changes to your life?  Were there any other people or organisations that helped?	What do you think your life would look like if you hadn't received support from SBIC?  How much do you think this would have happened without SBIC?	Did you give up anything or change anything to work with SBIC?	How long do you think these changes will last?  Where do you think you will be a year from now?	How much do you think this "outcome" will change or grow in the future?

## Impact and Causality of Outcomes

This analysis demonstrates the positive social value generated by SBIC's work and highlights the outcomes that have the most significant impact on stakeholders. The results can help guide the development of SBIC programmes. Assessing the impact of services requires adjusting all outcome values to ensure they accurately reflect causality. This process involves modifying the measured impact to account for factors beyond the SBIC services that may have affected outcomes. Such adjustments are crucial in social value assessments and SROI calculations, as they help maintain the credibility of findings and minimise over-claiming. Examples of these adjustments include:

## Explanations for Causality Variable Decision Making

	<b>Discount rate</b>	<b>Reason for Rate</b>
<b>Deadweight</b>	20%	Most users saw SBIC as crucial to their progress, believing it sped up their outcomes and helped them avoid less suitable or sustainable training and qualifications and employability they might have found alone.
<b>Displacement</b>	25%	Rationale based on the Discount rate from DWP CBA for supply-side employment interventions; from the Unit Cost Database for demand-side interventions.
<b>Attribution</b>	30%	Service users generally felt that SBIC is the primary source of the changes to their lives, with some additional from outside, such as family
<b>Duration</b>	2 years	Although long-term data for forecasting is limited, most users believe the changes will have a lasting impact, justifying a one-year duration. We've set it cautiously, but this may change with new data
<b>Drop off</b>	10%	A conservative estimate of 25% was applied to reflect that, although most service users felt their new mindset and/or strengthening of their support network would last a long time,

## 25. Recommendations and Observations

- The Social Impact Report presents an analysis showing a Social Return of £8.25 for every pound invested, demonstrating the positive impact and effectiveness of SBIC project activities on the lives of racially minoritised users, their families, and communities.
- As demonstrated by this report, SBIC offers a meaningful and impactful service delivery model to racially minoritised residents who face high levels of poverty, unemployment, underemployment, and inequalities in health, education, and training, while also confronting issues of racism and Islamophobia daily.
- Acting as advocates, SBIC staff linked service users to a wide array of internal and external support services focused on employment, education, youth development, health, wellbeing, and combating racism and Islamophobia. This personalised and strength-based approach led to significant positive changes for users, including improved health and wellbeing, stronger support networks, financial stability, enhanced skills, increased confidence, motivation, and qualifications. Many of these outcomes would not have been possible, or would have taken much longer, without SBIC's support.
- Strategic partnerships can be transformative, enabling organisations to combine strengths, share resources, and achieve greater collective results. Developing these partnerships requires building relationships grounded in trust, transparency, and shared visions. SBIC is effective at identifying synergies that go beyond mere recognition of opportunities
- SBIC should prioritise social value by embedding it into its strategic and charitable aims, including business plans, mission statements, and operational planning. Assessing social value enables stakeholders to influence services and outcomes, while helping staff recognise the positive impact of their work on individuals and the community.
- SBIC should allocate staff time and resources to data collection, outcome analysis, and insights, and report findings regularly. Consider joining Social Value UK, training staff on social value and SROI, creating dedicated roles or time for assessment, stakeholder engagement, and data collection, along with outcome monitoring via dashboards. These steps ensure social value is maximised organisation-wide.
- The social impact report recommends that the Trustees update SBIC's three-year business plan (September 2025 – September 2028). This updated plan should reflect insights from the report, revise SBIC's values, aims, and objectives, position SBIC for future investment, and include strategies for generating sustainable trading income.
- As outlined in the SBIC business plan, a comprehensive operational plan will be implemented in November 2025. This plan outlines how SBIC will maximise the benefits of its NCFE accredited Centre status in the newly refurbished building to enhance its training, education, and hospitality offerings. It will also present strategies to commercialise the new kitchen and food facilities and to maximise income through rentals and facility hires.
- SBIC's growing body of evidence from social impact initiatives highlights that food-centered gatherings, particularly those that promote cultural unity, are effective in driving community engagement and social change. Food is not only vital for nourishment but also plays a key role in shaping our cultures and identities. It brings people together and enables individual expression. As such, dedicating resources to these events can boost income through hospitality, expand training opportunities for residents, and foster greater community cohesion, all while advancing racial justice.
- The Sunderland JSNA forecasts significant growth in the city's racially minoritised population over the next twenty years. Despite this, the report does not sufficiently address persistent health disparities tied to race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, nor does it consider the current racially minoritised community in Sunderland, estimated at 41,000 people according

to SBIC research. To better represent these communities, SBIC should prioritise securing representation on the City's health and well-being board and other related support forums.

- Over the past 15 years, youth service funding has faced significant cuts, despite rising challenges like youth violence and declining mental health. Short-term funding cycles exacerbate this issue by hindering sustainable youth work and fostering instability. For instance, SBIC employs three part-time youth workers but can't fund a full-time role due to this instability. The demand for youth support far exceeds resources. While emergency funding helps immediate crises, greater investment in preventative services is urgently needed to address issues early and reduce costly interventions. A shift from reactive responses to proactive support through open-access and detached youth work is essential for early intervention and crisis prevention.
- SBIC's Enterprise programme, designed for individuals from racially minoritised backgrounds, has proven successful. Building on this, SBIC plans to expand by forming official consortia agreements with the Sunderland BAME network and NE-BIC. This partnership will enable SBIC to develop more comprehensive, integrated, and holistic programmes focused on pre-enterprise, business start-up, and SME development for racially minoritised communities and EMBs.
- Integrating a comprehensive strategy for addressing racial inequalities into the wider City of Sunderland plan will ensure that ethnic minority businesses (EMBs) receive consistent support in overcoming entrepreneurial challenges. Eliminating structural barriers is key to creating a fair and level playing field.
- Ensure culturally appropriate training addresses the needs of racially marginalised entrepreneurs, thereby boosting EMB leaders' participation in business planning, leadership, investment readiness, and networking.
- Collect more detailed data on entrepreneurial diversity to inform evidence-based policymaking. Establish a data-driven foundation for providing targeted funding and resources that foster positive change and reduce inequality.
- Allocate funding to racially minoritised enterprises, specifically to support participation in leadership training, idea generation, and the integration and application of effective practices within their business
- This impact evaluation uses interviews and focus groups to understand the theory of change. We recommend ongoing engagement with SBIC service users, staff, and investors. This will clarify the order and experience of stakeholder changes and minimise overclaiming or double-counting outcomes. Any newly identified outcomes should be evaluated to determine if they are distinct or part of existing outcomes. Differences in stakeholder experiences should also be reviewed to determine whether new subgroups are needed.
- In future evaluations, calculate service user totals by counting active users at the start, plus new starters and leavers during the year. This method provides accurate annual figures and dropout rates (April 2025–March 2026). Currently, evaluations use target registration numbers due to limited data, but more precise data may soon be available, making projections less reliable.

# Appendix One:

## Combined User Impact Survey Results

Number of respondents 456

### 1) If you weren't coming to SBIC, what would you most likely do instead?

Descriptor	No	%
Attend another activity	37	8.10%
Stay at home	187	41%
Get together with friends	109	24%
Don't Know	123	27%

### 2) Do you feel Safe with SBIC?

Descriptor	No	%
Somewhat	18	3.90%
not at all	4	0.87%
safe	233	51%
Very safe	201	44.70%

### 3) Were you respected within SBIC?

Descriptor	No	%
somewhat	49	10.70%
not at all	0	0%
Respected	275	60.30%
Very Respected	132	28.90%

### 4) From your involvement in SBIC activities, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement "I feel more involved in my local community since joining the project"

Descriptor	No	%
Strongly agree	181	39.60%
Somewhat agree	222	48.60%
Strongly disagree	11	2.40%
somewhat disagree	42	9.20%

### 5) Has the level of your social confidence increased since becoming involved with SBIC?

Descriptor	No	%
not at all	57	12.5%
somewhat	128	28%
Yes	212	46.4%
Yes a lot	59	13%

### 6) Was your feedback and consultation taken into consideration within SBIC?

Descriptor	No	%
somewhat	114	25%
not at all	49	10.70%

yes	212	46%
very much so	81	17.70%

7) **Do you feel that you influenced how SBIC delivered the activities?**

Descriptor	No	%
somewhat	168	36.80%
not at all	26	5.70%
Yes	203	44.50%
Yes a lot	59	12.90%

8) **Can you recognise challenges and solve problems because of the activities offered?**

Descriptor	No	%
A great deal	55	12%
Yes	214	46.90%
Somewhat	155	34%
No at all	32	7%

9) **Are things better with you since you started at SBIC?**

Descriptor	No	%
A great deal	73	16%
Yes	223	48%
Somewhat	137	30%
not at all	23	5%

10) **What is the outcome of your journey with SBIC?**

Activity	No
Increased confidence	234
Increased participation	161
Increased self esteem	126
Making Friends	200
increased social interaction	202
Increased qualifications	130
Increased employability skills	121
employment	16
self-employment	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>1202</b>

11) **Have any outside initiatives or projects influenced this change?**

Descriptor	No	%
Yes	102	22%
No	354	77%

12) **If there has been any change, has your involvement in SBIC been responsible?**

Descriptor	No	%
None	29	6.3%
some effect	112	24.50%

Mostly	248	54%
all of it	67	14.60%

**13) Has your work with SBIC affected your employability?**

<b>Descriptor</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes a lot	88	19.20%
Yes somewhat	142	31.10%
No	97	21.20%
Don't know	129	28.20%

