



Impact report 2015 - 2016



Building resilient and cohesive communities through social entrepreneurship

Learn • Love • Live

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A WORD FROM OUR FOUNDER



Lisa Stepanovic

I am extremely proud of each and every one of the young people we have worked with over this past year, it has been an honour getting to know them all. What makes them so unique is that they are the real deal, and have lived experience of the issues they address.

We have proven, through non-judgmental support and guidance we are able to nurture even the hardest to reach young people to become social entrepreneurs and leaders in their own right.

By sticking to our values and insisting on inclusiveness for all we have witnessed something magical; project by project we are bringing people together and ultimately working towards a more resilient and cohesive community, this is a very exciting time for Social Ark!

INTRODUCTION

Social Ark CIC is a registered community interest company in Tower Hamlets that works with young people to set up social businesses in their communities. Partnering with Barclays and securing the UnLtd 'Do It For Real' London partnership has enabled us to equip grassroots, social entrepreneurs, with both the hard and soft skills needed to test and try out ideas which then lead to the development of community projects and sustainable businesses.

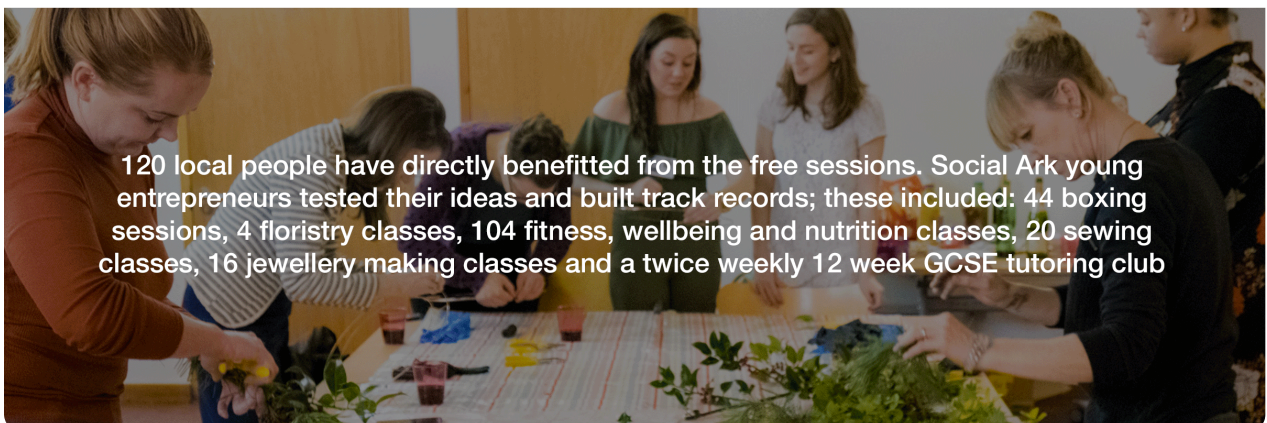
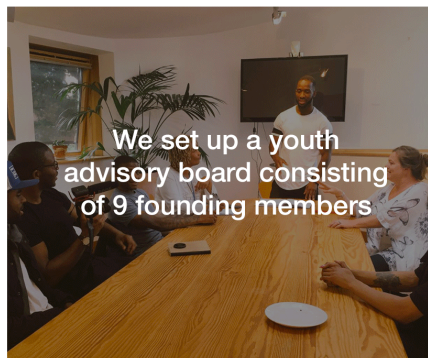
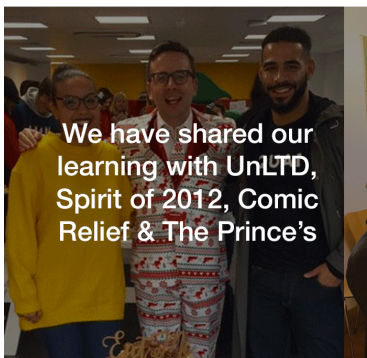
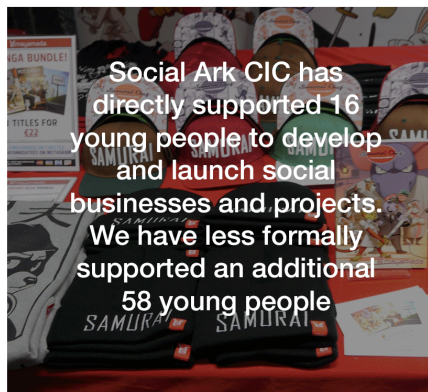
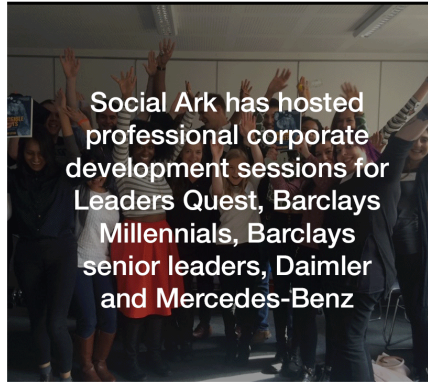
Rebranding in June 2016, Social Ark CIC, is looking to grow in the next five years. Driven by our inclusive values, we're on a mission to reduce discrimination and cultural bias, and create a movement of people that champion each other to explore entrepreneurship and community cohesion as alternatives to deprivation and social exclusion.

This report outlines what we have achieved so far and our plans for the future. It tells you ten things about Social Ark CIC and our impact.



Social Ark works collaboratively in partnership with local government, housing associations, corporates, education and other non-profit organisations towards empowering grassroots leaders. Together, we provide hands-on learning and support to build track records, mentoring and funding for local young people aged 18-30.

10 HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PAST 12 MONTHS



OUR IMPACT

Our impact has been far reaching. Social Ark young entrepreneurs have delivered workshops, events, talks and seminars, to more than 8000 people. Their messages have been amplified with over 15,000 followers collectively on Twitter alone and streamed to more than 52,000. One tweet alone had 19,537 impressions.

By insisting on our inclusive values we have made our mark in the local community, people from different cultural and social backgrounds are getting to know each other and having fun. We are determined to create a resilient community where people are defined by how they empower and support each other, rather than wealth or social status.

Residents have grown to trust us. An example of this is: *Moses Adeyemi's Silver Line Project, a wellbeing and fitness twice weekly class that Social Ark has funded for 12 months. In the beginning, women asked for 'ladies only classes', but as their confidence grew they started to join in the mixed sessions, they have told us this is something they have never done before!*

Shazan - Local Resident

"We have never felt included in anything that doesn't identify us through our race or religion; we love what you're doing here!"

Moses Adeyemi - Founder, The Silver Line Project

"When I first came to Social Ark, I was in a very different place. Although I did lots of work on wellbeing and fitness, I couldn't get local organisations to help or understand the value I could bring to the community. Social Ark believed in me; they were genuinely excited as they listened to me and helped me put a plan together and run a pilot. I learned how to monitor, measure and evaluate and about policies and procedures and their relevance to my work. I also received funding and a great mentor and became an UnLtd Award winner. Social Ark opened up a whole new world to me; they have connected me with people I would never have met. I have now created The Silver Line Project, currently, commissioned by Poplar Harca to deliver to residents. Being part of the Social Ark advisory board and peer network means I can be part of something that helps young people just like me."



James Arthey - Social Ark Mentor & Vice President, Barclays

"Moses, my mentee was enthusiastic and passionate about his project from the very first meeting, which made it a pleasure to work with him. We were well matched by Lisa and the team at Social Ark, both having similar interests which helped enormously. Moses has worked very hard to get the project off the ground and I am proud to have played a part in helping him this far. I would recommend the mentoring experience to anyone looking for a challenge and hope that my contribution has been as valuable as what I have learnt during the process."

WHAT'S NEXT? ... 2017

This April we are launching Step Up! Step Up is a 12-month programme that will support between 8-10 young people to start social businesses. The course is fully funded and comes with a start-up grant and a corporate mentor from Barclays. Advertising across Tower Hamlets, Newham and Hackney we aim to encourage applications from young people with lived experience - no formal qualifications required.

We will continue to support the development of our entrepreneurs. In addition to facilitating our weekly drop-in sessions, from April we will also host a monthly networking event.

We aim to build new partnerships with The Prince's Trust and Safer London.

We are working towards securing a permanent building to open the 'Social Ark School for Grassroots Social Entrepreneurs' - this will be a space where entrepreneurs will be able to learn while delivering services and opportunities to the local community.



Gaia Conti - Social Ark Mentor, Brand Building Manager, Unilever

“The social entrepreneurs are passionate and committed to social change. I soon realised the sessions were mutually beneficial; the entrepreneurs could question and get responses from someone coming with a fresh perspective. I absorb so much of their energy and passion, at the same time, it allowed me to challenge my professional competencies. I believe everyone can learn so much from mentoring and encourage other organisations to get involved. I commissioned entrepreneurs Moses Sangobiyi and Jason Rock to deliver a Unilever team building exercise where they told their stories and shared their values; they showed us how to reach unpredictable and almost impossible goals in our own lives. We attached a photo of Moses and Jason to our office wall; this reminded us of their bravery and the challenges they faced and overcome. I wholeheartedly recommend volunteering at Social Ark, and I admire the people behind the organisation very much.”

HERE'S WHAT SOME OF OUR ENTREPRENEURS HAVE TO SAY...

Megzi Pearlz

Megan Kavanagh, Founder

Social Ark gives support to young people that need it most. I dropped out of school, left home and had my son Roman when I was 19. I felt let down by a system that should have supported me. I have always been passionate about floristry, but I never had the confidence or education to start a project or business. Social Ark has helped me to take my idea to reality; I've attended the weekly workshops and learnt about everything from networking to measuring impact; the one-to-one sessions helped me stay on track. Corporate professionals, disadvantaged and socially excluded people come together in my inclusive workshops; people that would never usually speak to each make friends and have fun with flowers. Social Ark has introduced me to a whole new world, and way of thinking. They don't judge and believe in young people who've had a tough time; they believed in ME!



Miguel Garcia, Director

When I first came to Social Ark I was at a very early stage with my business; not being sure of which route to take, I struggled with planning and making the right connections. Social Ark helped me explore business ideas and helped me develop as a person.

Being part of the Social Ark family is a wonderful thing that can change your life but it does depend on the effort you make yourself. Social Ark supported me, I have a great mentor from Barclays, and I'm so glad to be part of it.



Sandy Abdelrahman, Founder

Skaped is a grassroots project that uses creativity to explore Human Rights. Using my lived experience I address this important issue because as a child growing up in Egypt I witnessed people denied the most basic rights. Social Ark believed in me, and supported me to shape Skaped. Social Ark is my community family, we all work together and help one another to take that next step. The team care about every every member, they understand and respect our individual life stories and the importance of how we can use our lived experiences to help the wider community.



Cheryl Walker, Artistic Director

Purple Moon Drama is an inclusive youth lead theatre company that's on a mission to empower young creatives. From financial advice and assistance, to practical actions, including marketing, and making great connections, Social Ark provides it all in an easy to understand way. The support has been invaluable. I'm excited about the year to come as I know I have a source of knowledge and resource that I can rely on. Lisa and her team are honest and trustworthy. They give me the confidence to move forward with my idea, I can now see how valuable my work is, and I also have a community of equally passionate people to share my entrepreneurial journey with.

THE FILM BUNCH

Shajna Begum, Founder

Social Ark's workshops have been very valuable to me. When I first started my social enterprise, the workshops helped me to stay on the right track. I learnt about social impact, writing evaluations and lots more. I've made new connections through Social Ark and the team have always shown support which is really encouraging.



Nigel Twumasi, Co-founder

Social Ark has supported me to take my creative workshop enterprise from an idea to a commercially ready package, one that has started delivering in the local and wider area. It has been great to work with an organisation that goes above and beyond to support its members!



Matt Boyd, Founder

Social Ark has given me a community and network of like-minded young people to help me achieve to the best of my ability. Lisa, Cathy, Rosanda and Moses have supported me with growing my social enterprise and given time which has enabled me to support more dyslexic people. Having Social Ark's support gives me the confidence to do things I never thought I was capable of.



Nelsandro Farmhouse, Director

Social Ark has introduced me to Social Entrepreneurship. I am passionate about creative baking, my aim is to establish myself as an exemplary cake maker and create a stand out brand that's fun and socially conscious. I am learning the importance of business planning and well on my way to developing a sustainable business model, delivering workshops, and supplying businesses and individuals. I've met some great people and became an UnLtd award winner. I'm full of aspirations and really looking forward to the future, and being part of Social Ark



Moses Sangobiyi, Founder

The Successful Failure was an idea I first shared with Lisa at Social Ark. I remember coming away from our first meeting feeling really excited about the journey ahead. Since that first meeting I have worked on brand 'The Successful Failure', I have interviewed such inspiring people, given talks, hosted events and delivered seminars, all exploring using 'failure' as a tool for 'success'. Social Ark is a social entrepreneur's dream. Having the support of the staff and being surrounded by other like minded startups, gives you the confidence to strive and persevere with both business and personal goals. Thank you!

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS & SUPPORTERS!



*Kathleen Britain - Director, Head of Charities,
Wealth and Investment Management, Barclays*

"Social Ark CIC is a dynamic and innovative enterprise in Tower Hamlets enabling meaningful support for disadvantaged people across the borough. The social enterprise provides a sustainable approach to support new local services. Social Ark CIC has been very rewarding to work with, Barclays was thrilled to engage with an organisation that makes such a significant impact on peoples life."



Mark Norbury - CEO, UnLtd

"Social Ark is an exceptional organisation, passionate about enabling young people to fully achieve their exceptional potential and deeply embedded in its local community. Courageous, honest, dynamic, innovative and driven by a strong sense of impact, Social Ark makes amazing things happen. Lisa's authenticity and devotion to what is best for a talented, energetic group of young entrepreneurs marks her out as a leader. UnLtd is really lucky to have Social Ark as our partner in Tower Hamlets."



Debbie Lye - CEO, Spirit of 2012

"I met Social Ark through the Do it for Real project funded by Spirit of 2012 and Comic Relief. They do awesome work with young people who have life's odds stacked against them. Do it for Real aims to support young people to become social entrepreneurs, and Social Ark's role is to unlock their hidden potential. Lisa and her team do that brilliantly, with empathy, realism and loads of practical help. They really are changing lives for the better for individuals and the wider community in Tower Hamlets."



YOU have made this a very special year for us!

THANK YOU



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