

free promotional pack for social enterprises

Birmingham & Solihull Social Economy Consortium (BSSEC) has published a free resource pack entitled Promoting Your Enterprise.

BSSEC, a practitioner-led network of agencies and enterprises involved in the social economy in Birmingham and Solihull, hopes that the pack will help social enterprises improve the effectiveness of their promotional activities. Each instalment offers clear, practical help and suggestions on PR and promotion.

The pack, which is available to download via BSSEC's website, includes the following parts:

- Getting started - a general overview of promotion, its functions, and some broad principles that will help improve the effectiveness of an enterprise's promotional activities.
- Defining your market - an outline of how developing a better understanding of your target markets can help you make crucial promotional decisions.
- Writing press releases - general writing tips and guidance.
- Creating leaflets and brochures - guidance for enterprises that are either producing a simple in-house leaflet or commissioning a design agency to create a major new brochure.
- Producing a newsletter - aims to help enterprises plan the production, content and distribution of a regular newsletter to help ensure that it's both engaging and a more effective use of time.
- Creating website content - rather than focus on the technical aspects of building websites, this section looks at how to maximise the promotional potential of a website.

The website also features BSSEC's Purchasing Guide to Social Enterprise & the Voluntary Sector. The guide is a free service to the Birmingham and Solihull social enterprise sector, and has been designed to meet public purchasers' need for better market intelligence about what social enterprises are out there, the services they provide and - most importantly - the benefits and added-value of using the social enterprise option.

www.bssec.org.uk

caring christmas trees

Caring Christmas Trees, a social enterprise that aims to help homeless people in Scotland, has launched its new Caring Christmas Tree Appeal for Christmas 2007.

The enterprise sells Christmas trees to support Bethany Christian Trust in helping homeless people in Scotland. The initiative ensures that for every tree bought, a homeless person will receive a hot meal and shelter as well as advice at one of the Trust's shelters and drop-in centres.

The shelter is open from November to March and represents a vital service for those who don't have a warm home, especially in winter.

The trees on sale are sourced from sustainable forests by members of the British Christmas Tree Growers Association. Customers can choose their preferred tree size, pick up point and collection date.

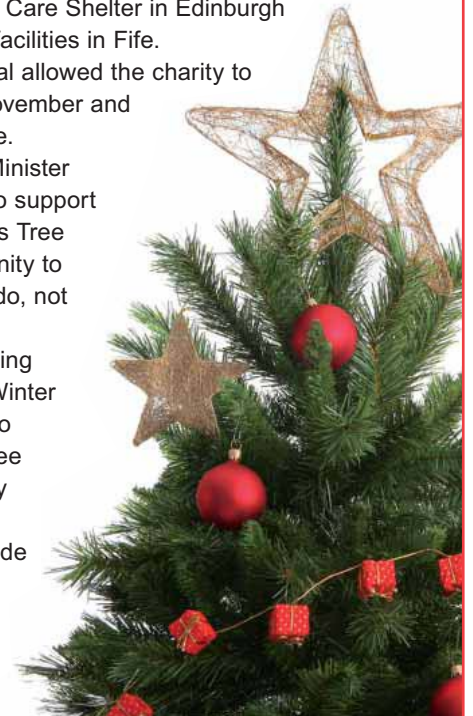
The Caring Christmas Tree Appeal has been running the initiative since 2005. Since then it has funded more than 7,000 bed spaces for homeless people at Bethany Christian Trust's Winter Care Shelter in Edinburgh and helped fund the charity's five drop-in facilities in Fife.

Last year the money raised by the appeal allowed the charity to help more than 750 homeless between November and April - the critical time for homeless people.

The initiative has the support of Prime Minister Gordon Brown who said: "I am delighted to support Bethany Christian Trust's Caring Christmas Tree Appeal and would like to take this opportunity to thank them for all the excellent work they do, not only at Christmas, but all year round."

Catherine Rawlinson-Watkins, Fund raising Manager, Bethany Christian Trust, said: "Winter is a very dangerous and unpleasant time to be homeless and the Caring Christmas Tree idea works because it's very simple. Many people, including the Prime Minister, want new Christmas trees and we need to provide services to the homeless. We are over the moon that Mr Brown is continuing to support our work."

www.caringchristmastrees.com



more co-op housing in perth

Work will shortly get underway on a development to bring seven much-needed new affordable homes to Perth.

Communities Scotland has invested over £600,000 in the project by Fairfield Housing Co-operative. The homes will be built in the Fair City's Angus Court with all seven available for affordable rent.

Sandy Watson, Communities Scotland's area director for Tayside and Forth Valley, added: "These homes will be a welcome addition to housing in Perth, where demand for affordable homes to rent is high.

"Our support to Fairfield Housing Co-operative outlines our commitment, and that of our partners, to deliver high-quality affordable homes to people in the area."

Grant Ager, director of Fairfield Housing Co-operative, said: "We are as always grateful for the support of Communities Scotland in delivering this project which is part of a robust development programme the co-operative hopes to complete in the next three-year period."

Fairfield Housing Co-operative manages just under 400 homes and is planning to increase in size over the next two years, to 600 properties in management. The co-operative is managed by a voluntary Management Committee who are all Fairfield tenants, which ensures local control of the co-operative and a better understanding of tenants' need.

www.fairfieldhousing.co.uk