

# Social What?

## **Mapping Social Enterprise in Bedfordshire**

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# Voluntary and Community Action South Bedfordshire

## MAPPING SOCIAL ENTERPRISE IN BEDFORDSHIRE

This research supports work being undertaken as part of the Bedfordshire Local Area Agreement to baseline and increase the *number of identified social enterprises created and other organisations growing social enterprise activity*; focussing, in particular, on the scope for increasing *social enterprise activity* from within the voluntary and community sector. This work complements that undertaken by the Bedfordshire & Luton Social Enterprise Network (BSEN) to map *identified social enterprises*.

Voluntary and Community Action South Bedfordshire and CVS Mid and North Bedfordshire set out to map voluntary and community sector organisations across Bedfordshire that have social enterprise characteristics, as defined in our earlier report *Social What? Defining and Mapping the Characteristics of Social Enterprise in Bedfordshire*.

### Purpose

In agreement with Bedfordshire County Council, and after reference to *Guidance on Mapping Social Enterprise* published by ECOTEC Research and Consulting Limited, the primary purpose of this research was determined to be:

**Strategic Development** – by collecting quantitative and qualitative data to provide a more accurate ‘baseline’ for the sector. It includes analysis of the wider social economy or third sector to identify those organisations that have the potential to be classified as emerging social enterprises and so provide the foundations for a growing social enterprise sector. It also provides the mapping project with some depth by covering the development needs of the organisations that feature in the mapping.

The secondary purposes of this research were determined to be:

**Programme Delivery** – the findings include the development needs of organisations that feature in the mapping; these can be used to identify the extent to which particular aspects of social enterprise need development advice and support, and thus future programme delivery by Local Infrastructure Organisations.

**Assessing Economic Contribution** – although not a key part of the mapping exercise the data collected has enabled some assessment of the economic contribution in terms of the levels of earned income that is generated by the sector.

**Social Enterprise Directories** – the study has collected and/or verified systematically categorised information on the social enterprise sector in Bedfordshire, which will be added to an existing database of local voluntary organisations and community groups. Some of this data (such as contact details, key areas of interest and locality) will be available on line while other data (on earned income, governance structure etc.) will be available as part of our knowledge management systems.

## Methodology

Voluntary and Community Action South Bedfordshire and CVS Mid and North Bedfordshire both use the *Volbase* data management system, are able to share data and have some 3,000 records of voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations operating within (all or part of) Bedfordshire.

We used what the *Guidance on Mapping Social Enterprise* calls the *Bottom-up Local Approach* where such studies *focus on a restricted area and tap into the existing knowledge of intermediary support agencies*. Our research was in three phases:

**1. Scoping** – where we compiled a list of organisations that met the qualifying criteria (see below). The original scoping study of the database revealed there were 347 organisations across Bedfordshire that could be, or have the potential to become, a social enterprise. At the beginning of this mapping exercise this number was pruned, taking out duplicates that were contained in both databases and a total of 331 organisations remained.

This data was then restructured to show organisations that meet the greatest to lowest number of qualifying criteria. From this we were able to prioritise those organisations that should form part of the study.

Voluntary and Community Action mapped 180 organisations that either operated county-wide or in South Bedfordshire. CVS Mid and North Bedfordshire mapped 151 organisations operating in Mid and North Bedfordshire.

**2. Collection of Data** – a questionnaire was developed and sought to ascertain whether organisations met any, and if so which, of the characteristics of (an emerging or operating) social enterprise and what their development needs were. Key questions from this social enterprise data set were then included in our main *Volbase* data set to allow for the continued collection of data as part of our on-going knowledge management.

All organisations with an email address were invited to fill in a mapping questionnaire, which could be done online. Where appropriate, organisations were also invited to one of the social enterprise awareness events, organised as part of the IIC Pathway to Enterprise Social Enterprise Markets and Procurement project. These events gave us an opportunity to explain and discuss the criteria used to identify and map social enterprise activity.

Those organisations that did not complete the online questionnaire were followed up with further email and/or telephone requests, where possible.

Voluntary and Community Action also used additional resources to contact organisations that did not complete the online questionnaire. These organisations were sent a refined (and shorter) questionnaire by post and all non-returned questionnaires were followed up by telephone. Desk research (using the Charity Commission and Companies House websites and (if it had one) the organisation’s website and latest available Annual Report) was also undertaken to ascertain the proportion of income received through trading activity, whether the organisation has a governing document that included social objectives, an incorporated legal structure and some form of asset lock.

**3. Data Entry and Analysis** – findings from phase 2 were included in the database, analysed and reported on.

## Data Collected

The research focused on collecting **core data** in relation to four criteria:

- core trading activity(ies);
- the proportion of income derived from earned income;
- an incorporated legal structure;
- a commitment to social objectives in their governing document.

This is mapped against the earlier research *Social What? Defining and Mapping the Characteristics of Social Enterprise in Bedfordshire*, which identified the characteristics of social enterprise organisations and the *Volbase* field description used in scoping study, as follows:

Criteria No	Characteristic	Core Data Criteria	Volbase field description used in scoping study
1	Enterprise orientation with a clearly defined market base	Core trading activity(ies)	Key areas of work with specific category for <i>social economy/enterprise</i> indicated. Other key areas will also be indicated.
2	Profits are reinvested in the community/ business	Proportion of income derived from earned income	Funding – Annual Income with any of the two higher bands indicated (i.e. income of over £25,000) AND funding from any of the following sources indicated: Borough/District, Business and Commercial Companies, Central Government, County Council, European Programmes, Health Authority/Primary Care Trust, Learning and Skills Council, Subscriptions/ Fees/Charges, all of which may indicate earned income.
3	Social ownership	Organisation has an incorporated legal structure	Structure – where a company OR where any other governing structure e.g. Community Interest Company, Industrial Provident Society etc. is indicated AND if their registration number has been given.
4	Social aims and values	Organisation has a commitment to social objectives in their governing document	Structure – where the organisation indicates that it is a Registered Charity AND if their registration number has been given.

In designing the questions to map this data we recognised the need to include questions that would enable us to identify whether the organisation had an enterprise orientation with a clearly defined market base. A series of questions were therefore included in the questionnaire and cross referenced with other questions about earned income. We also recognised that in order to determine how an organisation's profits were reinvested we would need to include a question that would provide this answer. The results would also need to be cross referenced with other questions about earned income, legal structure and charitable status.

For record purposes, in relation to all organisations meeting the above criteria, we also collected and/or verified **desirable data** that provided:

- Organisation name
- Main contact details: address, telephone and email
- Description of organisation and services provided
- Key areas of work
- Client groups
- Area of service by local authority and Town/Parish
- Organisation needs

## **Data Collection Findings and Limitations of the Research**

The overall response rate was 72%.

The use of a mapping questionnaire was found to be the most effective means of obtaining the mapping data, although the social enterprise awareness events proved more useful in collecting more qualitative data.

Many of those contacted were 'put off' by the type of information we were asking for because it was not known to them or was difficult to obtain. Follow-up telephone calls either helped respondents to complete the questionnaire (or provide the information over the telephone) or antagonised them. In deed, the experience of doing this in Mid and North Bedfordshire led them to abandon this method of obtaining data because of the antagonism it provoked.

The organisation contact often had little knowledge of the information we were requesting. In many cases the information was held by someone else in the organisation. This was particularly the case for many charity shops where the local manager oversaw the operations of the shop; financial and legal matters being dealt with regionally or nationally.

Some organisations stated that they had no interest or commitment to selling or marketing their products or services, yet clearly had earned income from contracts as a result of doing so. This lack of understanding about the characteristics of a social enterprise was a difficult area to overcome. Those that attended the social enterprise awareness events were able to gain that understanding and provided qualitative answers as a result. Information on social enterprise was also included in our newsletters (both prior to and during the research period), on our websites and at later social

enterprise training workshops. In South Bedfordshire, we were able to send some potential respondents our *Introduction to Social Enterprise* Information Sheet or explain these concepts in follow-up telephone conversations.

In order to ascertain how an organisation's profits were reinvested we devised and included a individual question on this with three possible answers. In field testing the questionnaire, and in the early returns of questionnaires, it became clear that people did not understand this question and we subsequently dropped it from the main questionnaire in order to avoid deterring future respondents. The data collected is therefore insufficient to determine this, although, where an organisation has social values and is a registered charity, it is extremely likely that the profits are reinvested in the community/business.

Many organisations had little knowledge or understanding of their governing document and were unfamiliar with governance terms. For those organisations that were registered charities we took the view that they had social objectives as the Charity Commission would not have registered them as such if they had not. For those organisations that did not know whether they were a registered charity or whether they were incorporated, desk research undertaken by Voluntary and Community Action enabled this to be checked and verified.

When asking about earned income generated by the sector many organisations were reluctant to provide such data because they do not currently distinguish between grants and donations or earned income. Annual Reports similarly did not distinguish between grants and earned income. Many organisations were unable to ascertain whether funding received from local authorities and other public sector agencies were grants or contracts. Service Level Agreements were often ambiguous in that they referred to grants but were written in such a way as to suggest they were contracts. In some cases we determined or revised the organisation's original classification of income generated, particularly where we were aware that the local authority or public sector agency identified had a culture of awarding contracts.

The earlier research *Social What? Defining and Mapping the Characteristics of Social Enterprise in Bedfordshire* identified the characteristics of organisations as either an operating or emerging social enterprise. In the course of this research we found that many organisations were either:

- (1) interested in the idea of becoming more entrepreneurial and although they probably had a commitment to social objectives in their governing document there was little else to show that they had travelled anyway towards emerging as a social enterprise;
- (2) displaying social enterprise characteristics, such as significant levels of earned income through contracts, but were not interested in marketing or selling their services (i.e. a commitment to enterprise); in some cases they would not want to describe their organisation as a social enterprise.

In (1) the organisation (or individuals within it) recognised it had the potential to be a social enterprise but little else at this stage and in (2) we recognised the organisation's potential, but that it would be a 'hard sell' if we were to interest them in adopting a social enterprise approach.

The earlier research also stated, in the characteristics of social ownership, that a social enterprise must be a legal entity. We believe that, given the increased risks involved in trading and the personal liabilities of unincorporated associations or trusts, social enterprises are well advised to adopt an

incorporated structure. In this research, we used incorporation as a key criterion for mapping social enterprises. However, we recognise there are successful social enterprises that are not incorporated, such as those governed by a trust deed.

In terms of the criterion for social ownership, the important factor is that the organisation's governance arrangements are based on member participation. To ascertain this, further discussions would be needed with many of the organisations and this was outside of the scope of this research undertaken. In those cases where existing local knowledge is available we have taken the view that other criteria (income over 50%, market orientation and social aims) strongly suggest the organisation is a social enterprise. These organisations all appear in the Emerging Social Enterprise category (as defined in the original criteria) and are listed in *Appendix B as Organisations Classified as Emerging Social Enterprises that are likely to be Operating Social Enterprises*.

### ***Criteria for Classifying Social Enterprises***

For the reasons set out above, we created an additional category of Potential Social Enterprise. Our definition of the categories used is as follows:

***Operating Social Enterprise*** – Organisations that have a commitment to enterprise, whose earned income represents more than 50% of their total income, are incorporated and have social objectives in their governing document.

***Emerging Social Enterprise*** – Organisations that have a commitment to enterprise, whose earned income is between 25%-50% of their total income. They may or may not be incorporated and are likely to have social objectives in their governing document.

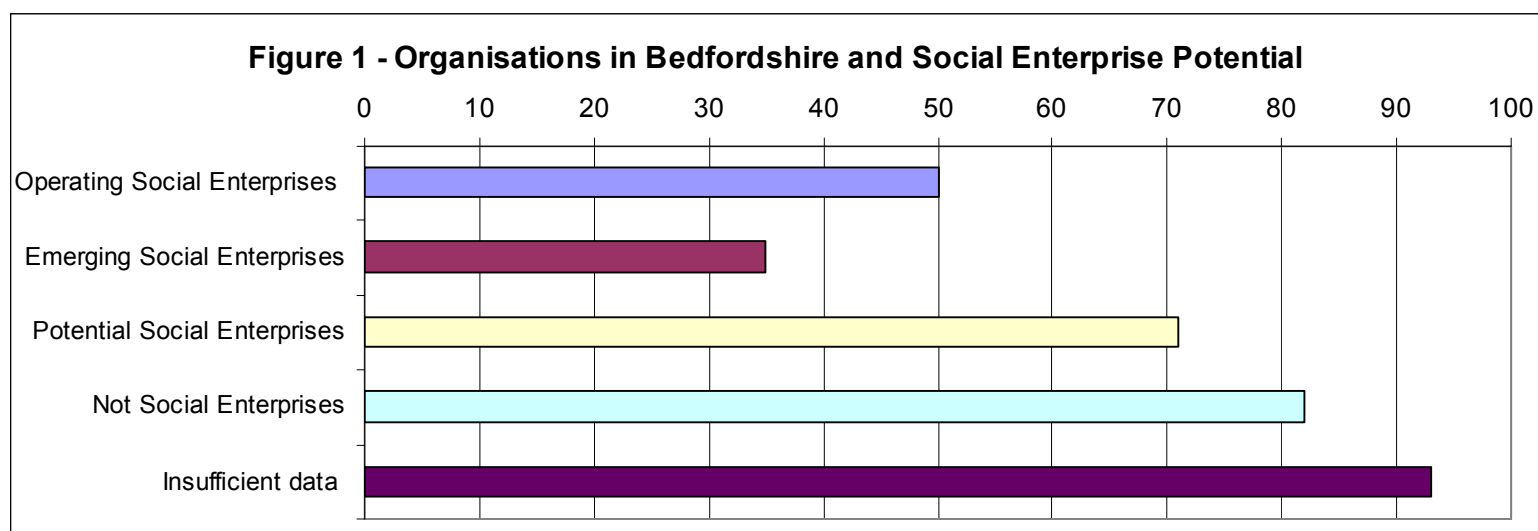
***Potential Social Enterprise*** – Organisations that have some earned income through contracts OR have a commitment to enterprise (i.e. they are interested in, or are currently looking at, developing or selling their organisation's products and services).

***Not Social Enterprise*** – organisations that did not meet any of the criteria above.

## Results

The 331 organisations in the survey can be broken down into the following categories:

- 50 Operating Social Enterprises (15.11% of the sample) – see Appendix A
- 35 Emerging Social Enterprises (10.57% of the sample)
- 71 Potential Social Enterprises (21.45% of the sample)
- 82 Not Social Enterprises (24.77% of the sample)
- 93 Insufficient data (28.10% of the sample)



The large number of organisations designated as *Not Social Enterprises* contains:

10 charity shops that are run by national trading arms or locally by an organisation included elsewhere in this survey;

6 organisations that are national and although they have a presence in Bedfordshire cannot be seen to be Bedfordshire Social Enterprises;

3 organisations that have closed down operations recently;

3 private companies;

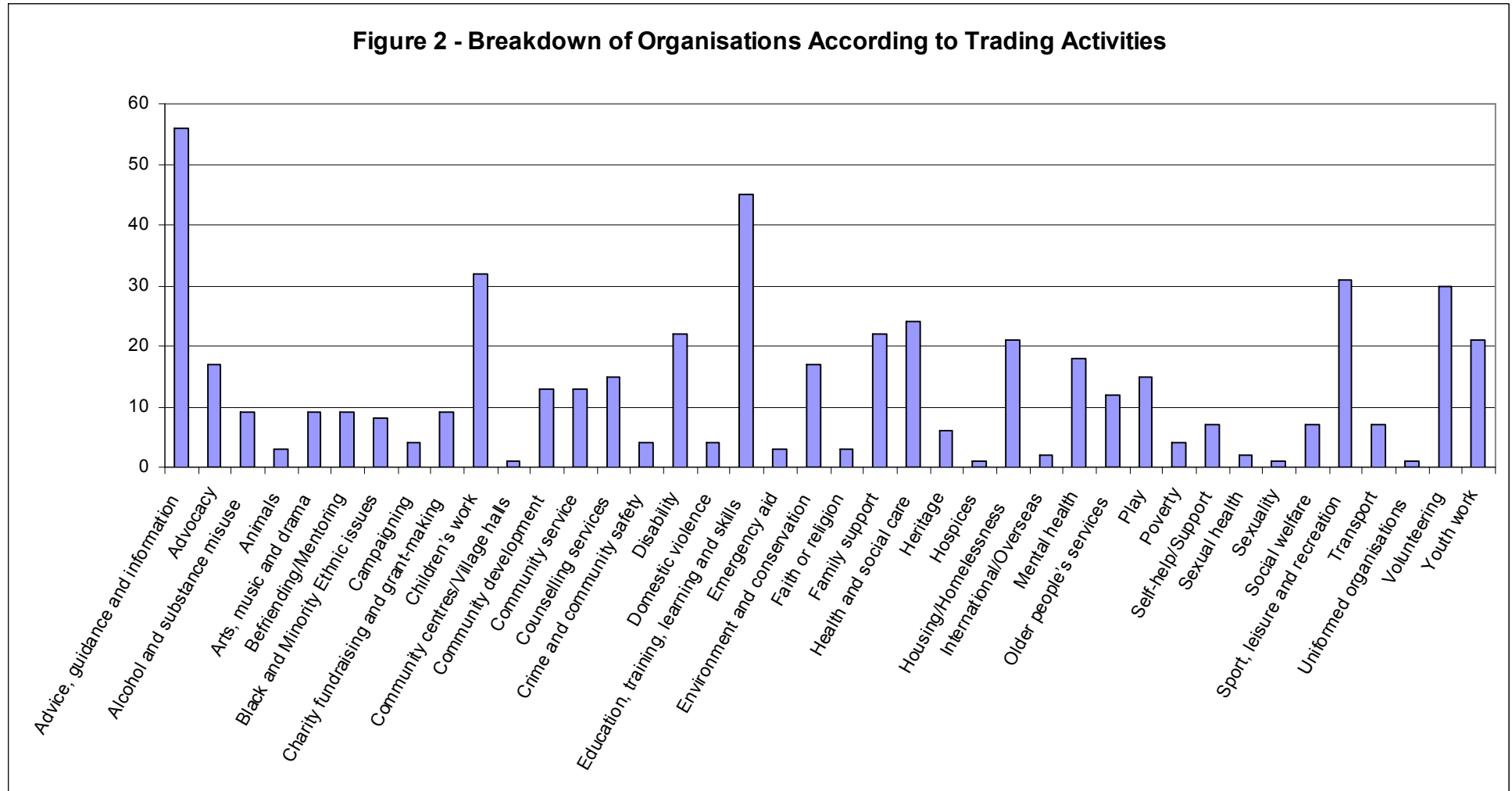
2 organisations run by statutory agencies;

1 organisation, a local trading scheme with all of its activities focussed around trade and community engagement. They are not a company and all trade throughout the scheme is conducted by exchange of a non-monetary currency;

57 mostly small community groups with a low income.

## Trading Activities

Of the 156 organisations identified as operating, emerging or potential social enterprises all had an enterprise orientation (defined above), delivering a wide range of trading activities.

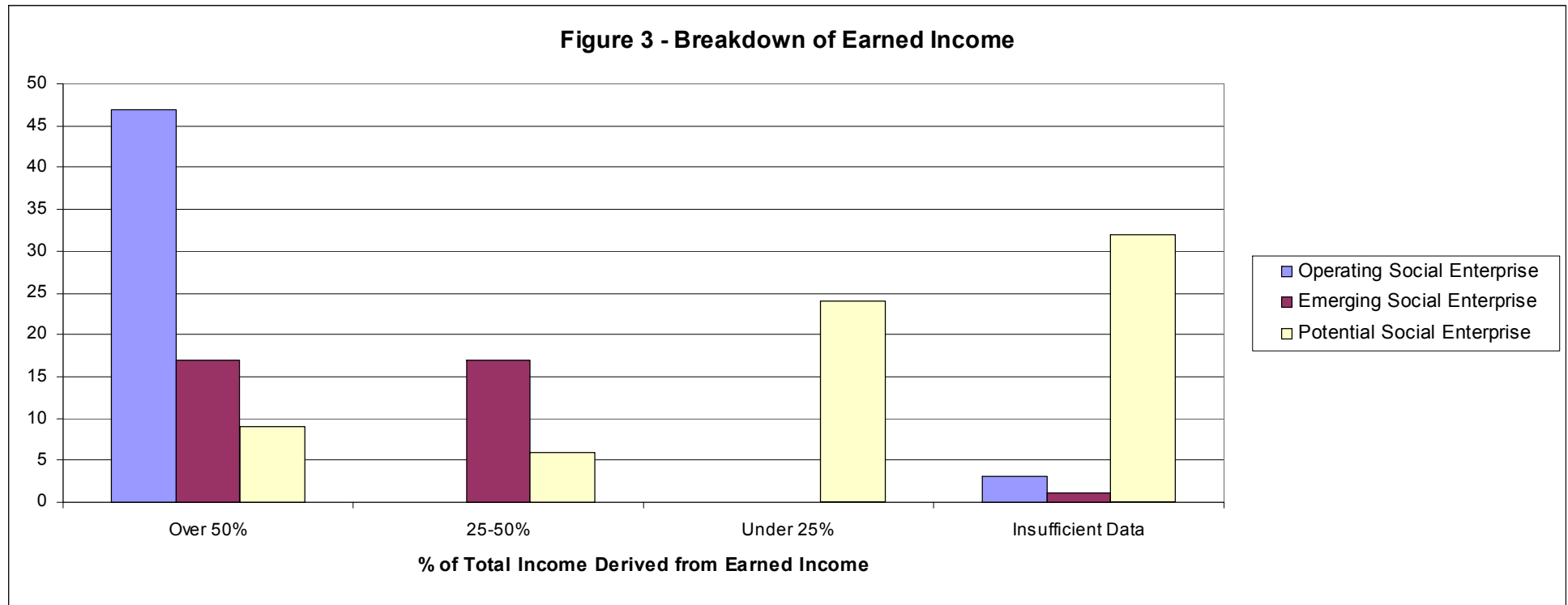


## Earned Income

Of the 156 organisations identified as operating, emerging or potential social enterprises:

- 73 have an earned income of over 50%
- 23 have an earned income of between 25-50%
- 24 have an earned income of less than 25%
- there is insufficient data for 36 organisations to determine their level of earned income.

Figure 3 below shows the breakdown of organisations according to the proportion of income derived from earned income.



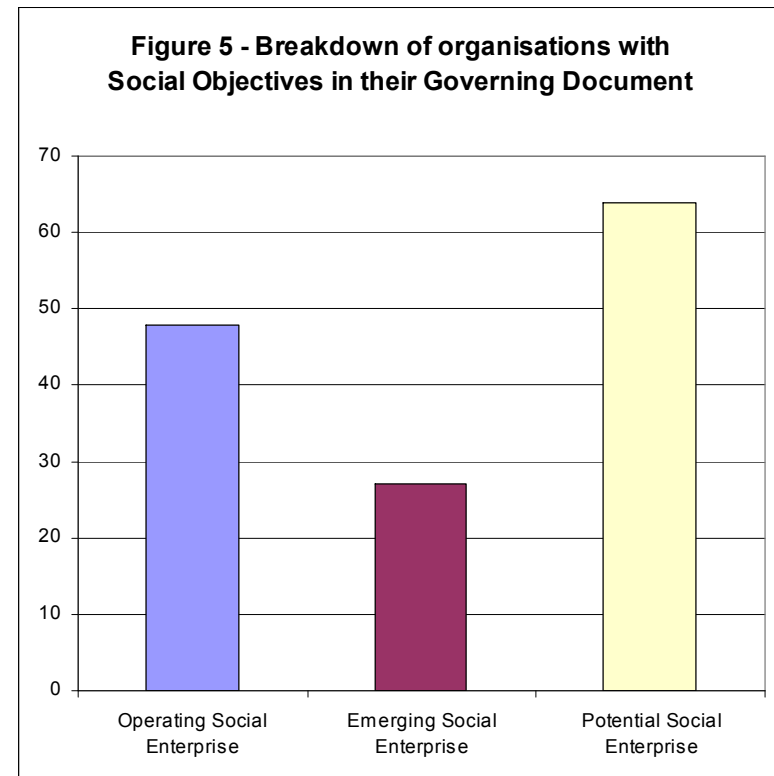
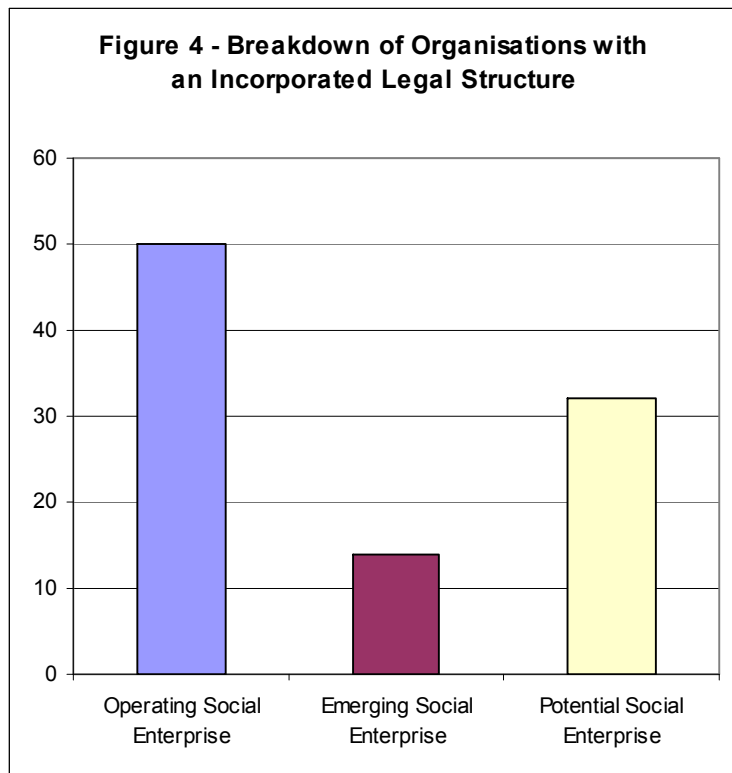
There are three organisations that did not provide a breakdown of earned income that have been classified as operating social enterprises through other supporting information known about them.

## Social Ownership

Of the 156 organisations identified as operating, emerging or potential social enterprises 96 have an incorporated legal structure. Figure 4 below shows the breakdown of organisations with an incorporated legal structure.

## Social Aims and Values

Of the 156 organisations identified as operating, emerging or potential social enterprises 123 are registered charities (indicating social objectives in their governing document) and another 16 have answered yes to the question *Is there a commitment to social or charitable objectives in your organisation's governing document?* Figure 5 below shows the breakdown of organisations that have a commitment to social objectives in their governing document.

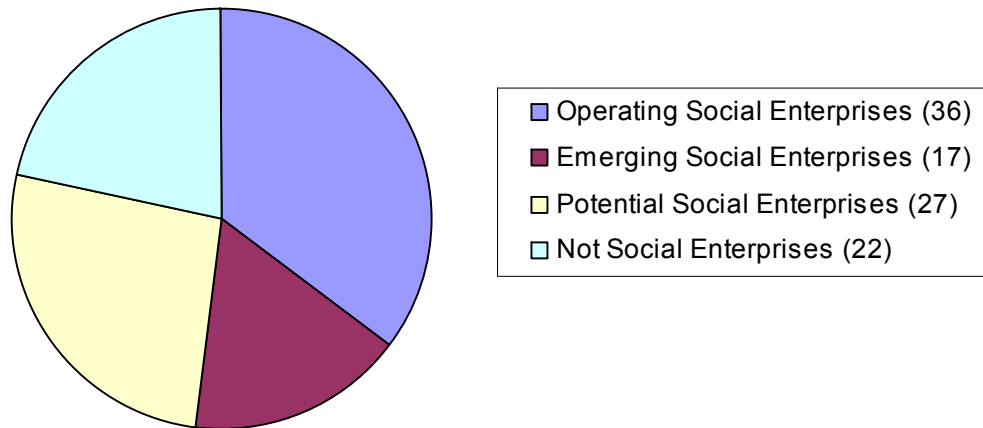


## County-wide Organisations

From the 102 county-wide organisations, 80 have been identified as either an operating, emerging or potential social enterprise.

- 36 Operating Social Enterprises
- 17 Emerging Social Enterprises
- 27 Potential Social Enterprises
- 22 Not Social Enterprises

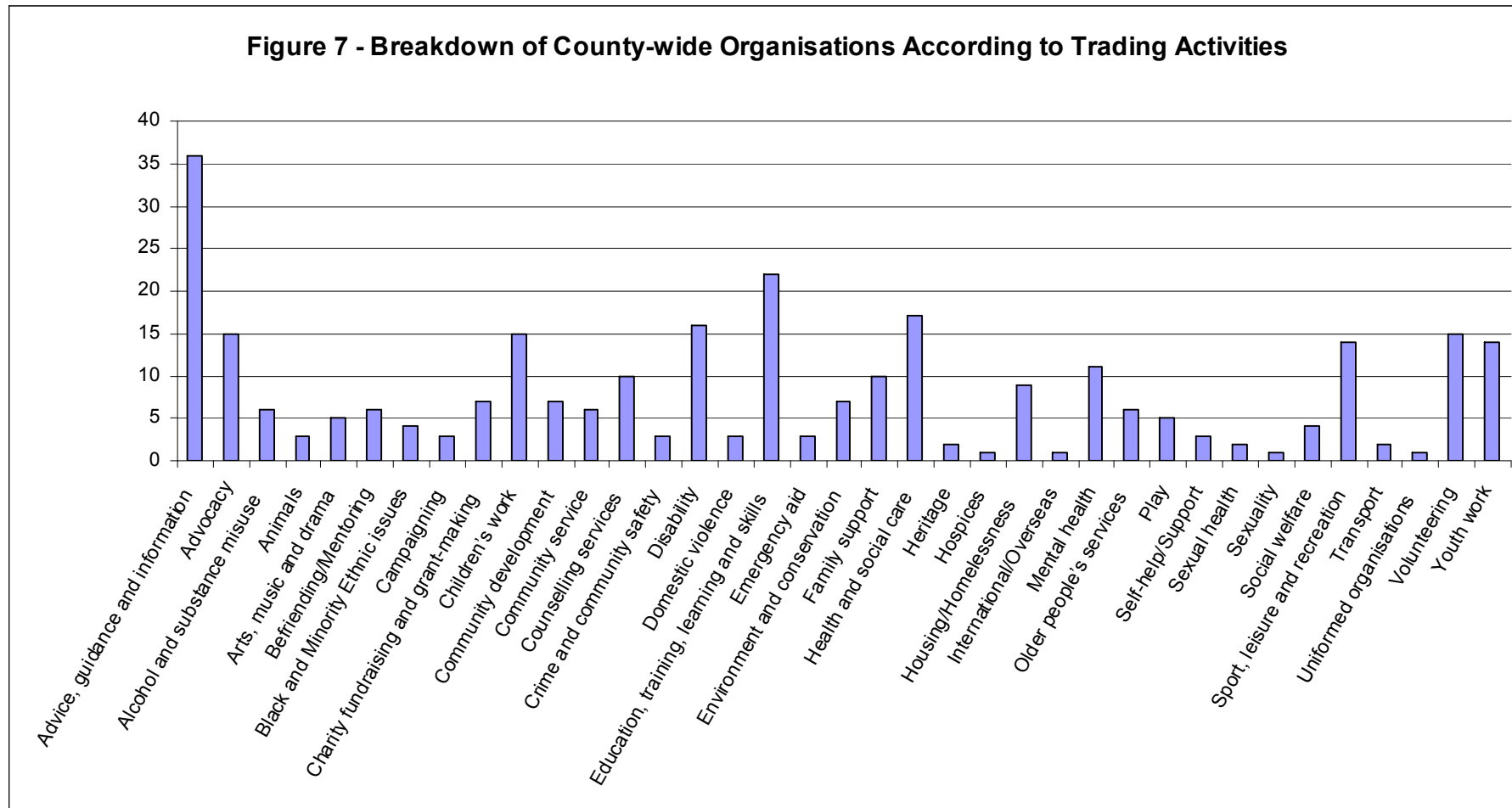
**Figure 6 - Breakdown of County-wide Organisations**



## Trading Activities

Of the 80 organisations identified as operating, emerging or potential social enterprises all had an enterprise orientation (defined above), delivering a wide range of trading activities.

Figure 7 below shows the breakdown of organisations according to trading activities.

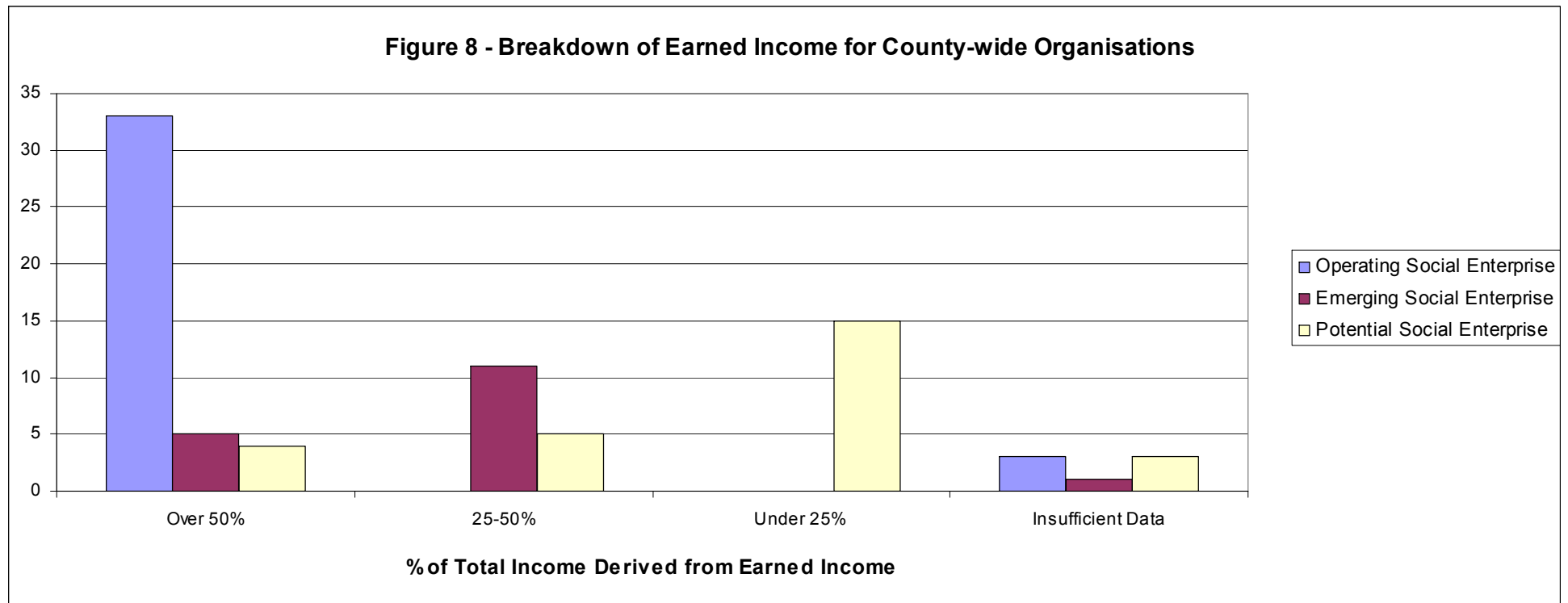


## Earned Income

Of the 80 organisations identified as operating, emerging or potential social enterprises:

- 42 have an earned income of over 50%
- 16 have an earned income of between 25-50%
- 15 have an earned income of less than 25%
- there is insufficient data for 8 organisations to determine their level of earned income.

Figure 8 below shows the breakdown of organisations according to the proportion of income derived from earned income.



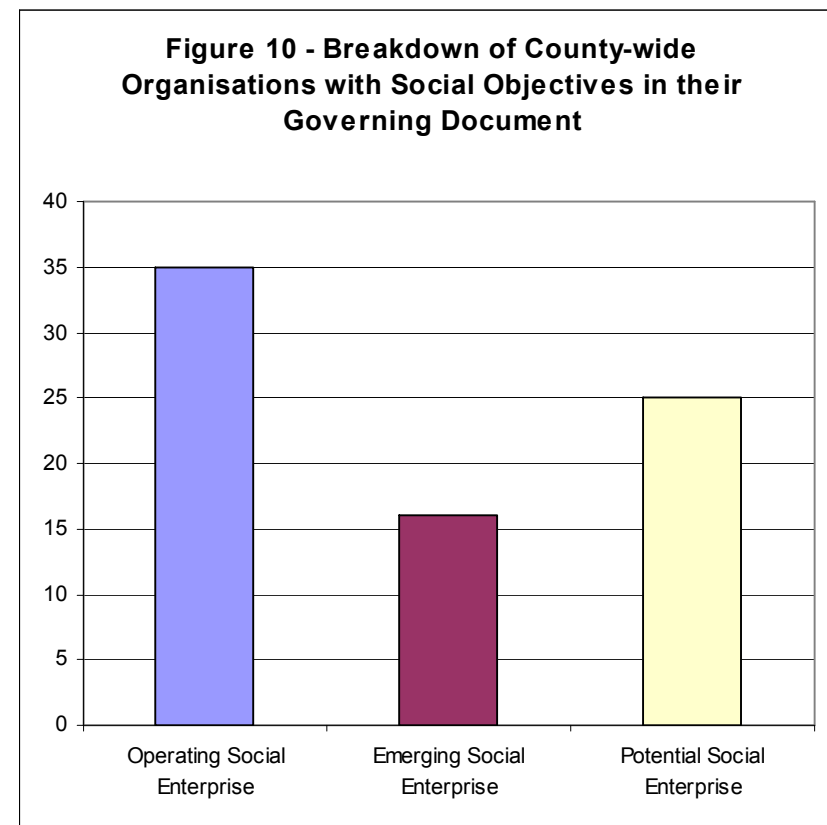
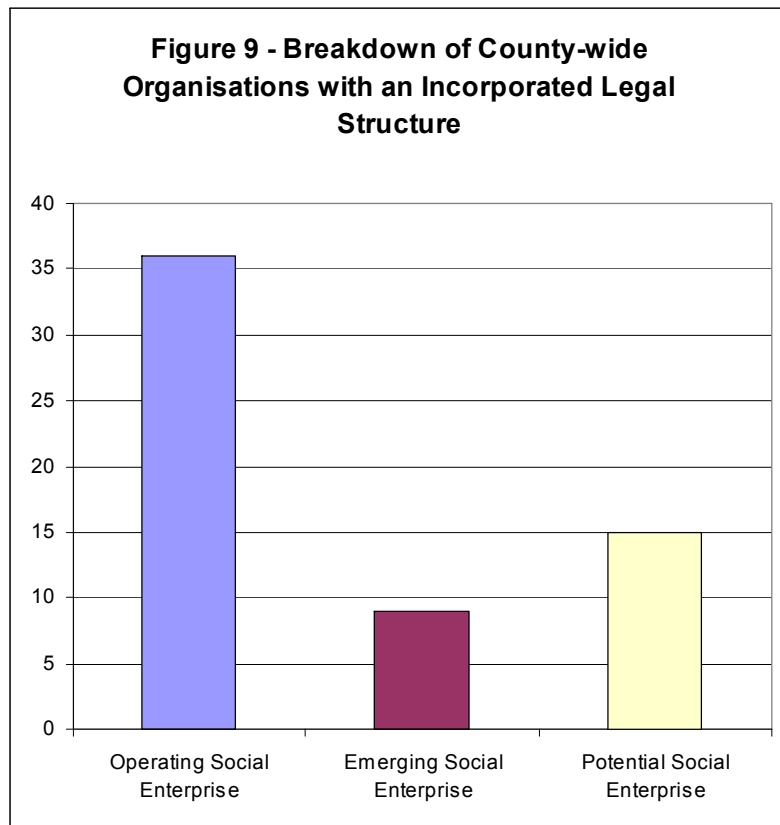
There are three organisations that did not provide a breakdown of earned income that have been classified as operating social enterprises through other supporting information known about them.

## Social Ownership

Of the 80 organisations identified as operating, emerging or potential social enterprises 60 have an incorporated legal structure. Figure 9 below shows the breakdown of organisations with an incorporated legal structure.

## Social Aims and Values

Of the 80 organisations identified as operating, emerging or potential social enterprises 70 are registered charities (indicating social objectives in their governing document) and another 6 have answered yes to the question *Is there a commitment to social or charitable objectives in your organisation's governing document?* Figure 10 below shows the breakdown of organisations that have a commitment to social objectives in their governing document.

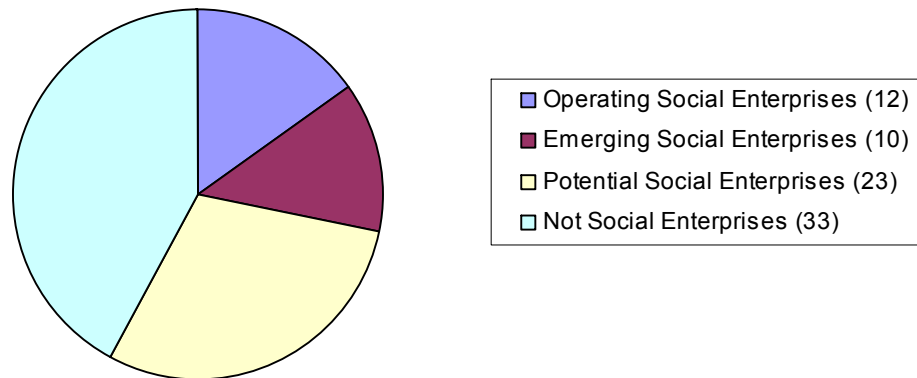


## South Bedfordshire

From the 78 organisations operating predominantly in South Bedfordshire, 45 have been identified as either an operating, emerging or potential social enterprise.

- 12 Operating Social Enterprises
- 10 Emerging Social Enterprises
- 23 Potential Social Enterprises
- 33 Not Social Enterprises

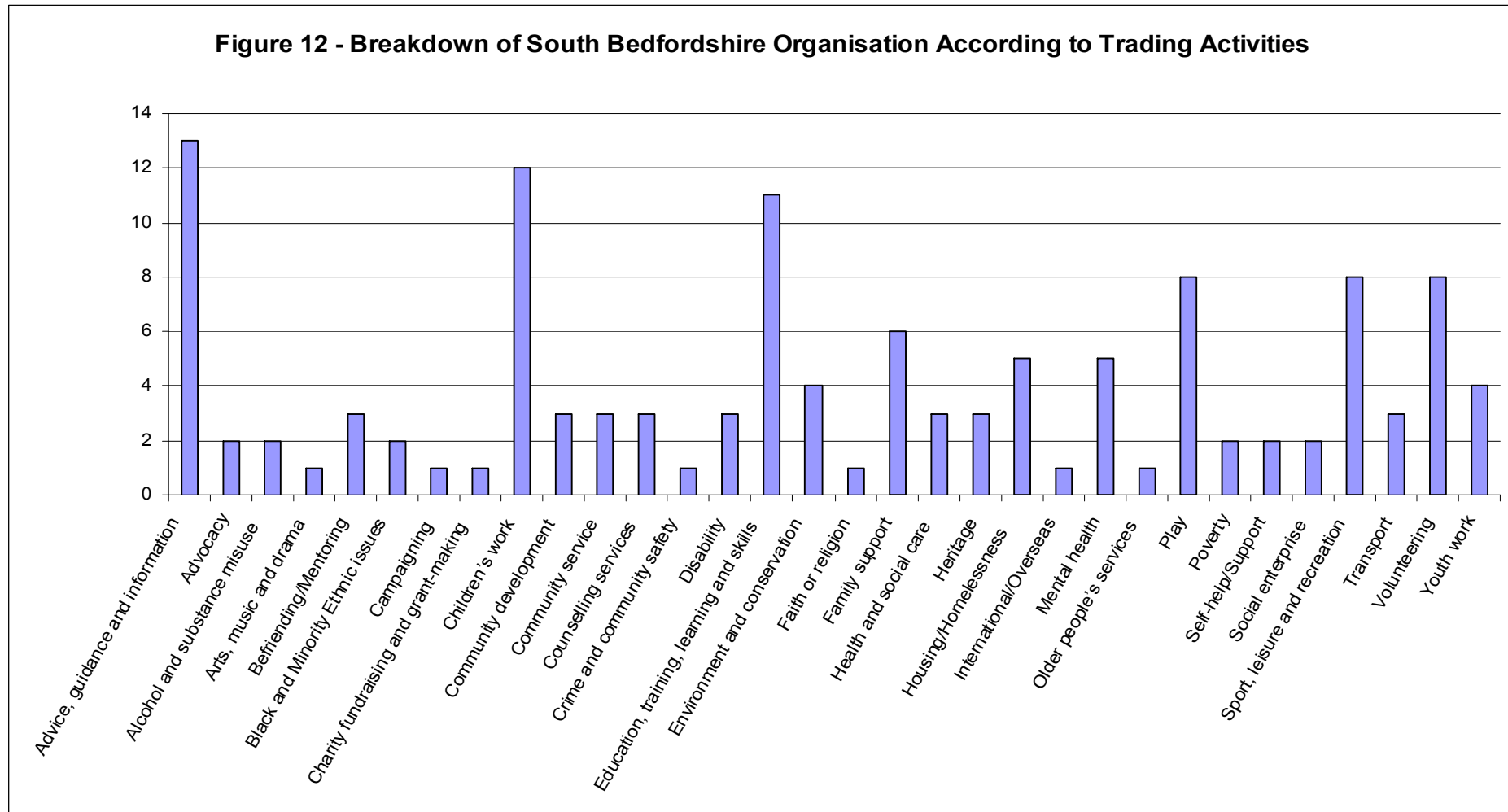
**Figure 11 - Breakdown of South Bedfordshire Organisations**



## Trading Activities

Of the 45 organisations identified as operating, emerging or potential social enterprises all had an enterprise orientation (defined above), delivering a wide range of trading activities.

Figure 12 below shows the breakdown of organisations according to trading activities.

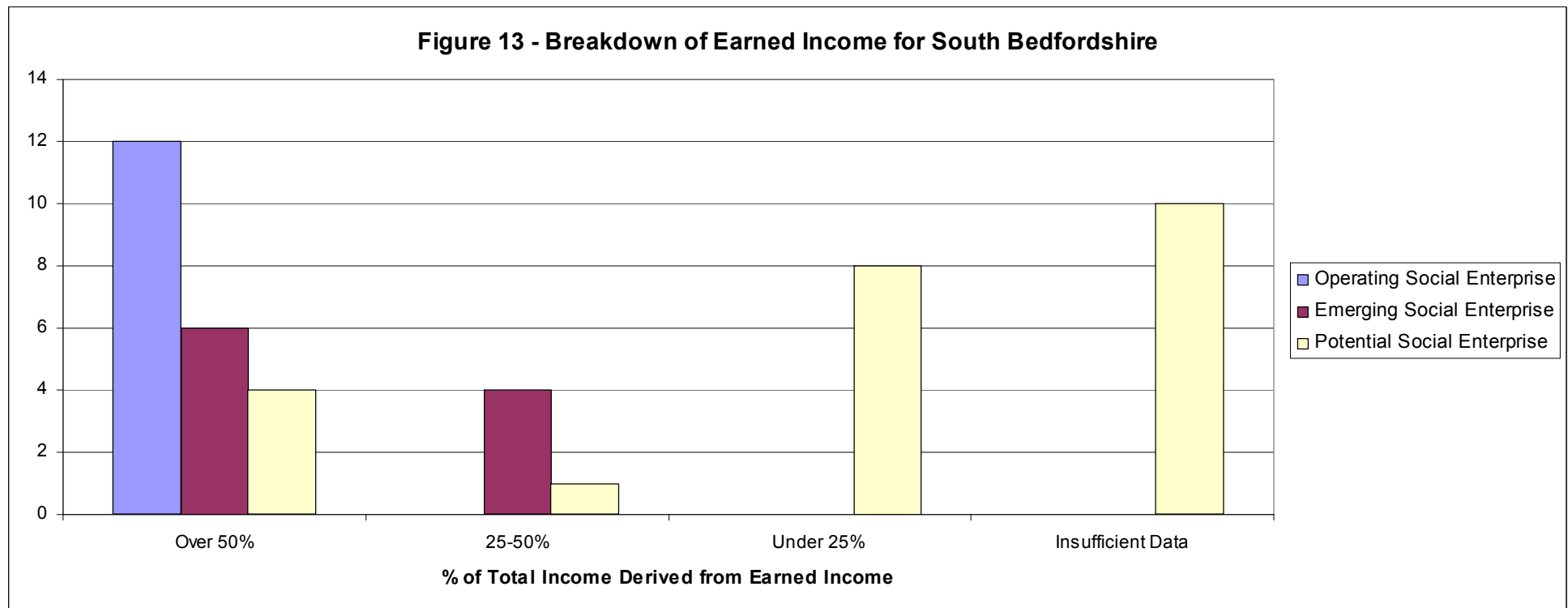


## Earned Income

Of the 45 organisations identified as operating, emerging or potential social enterprises:

- 22 have an earned income of over 50%
- 5 have an earned income of between 25-50%
- 8 have an earned income of less than 25%
- there is insufficient data for 10 organisations to determine their level of earned income.

Figure 13 below shows the breakdown of organisations according to the proportion of income derived from earned income.

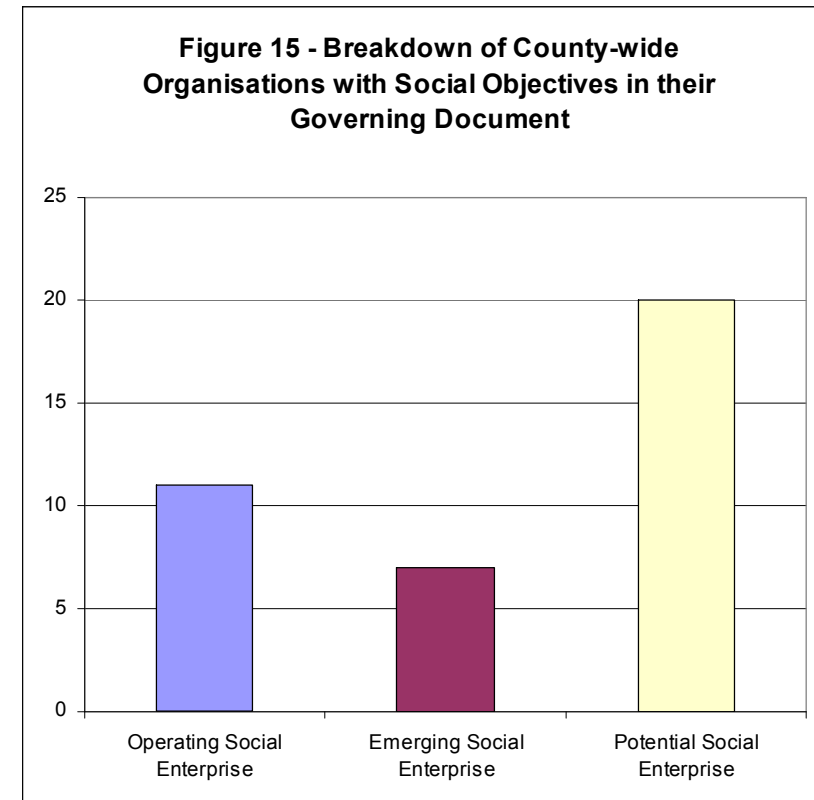
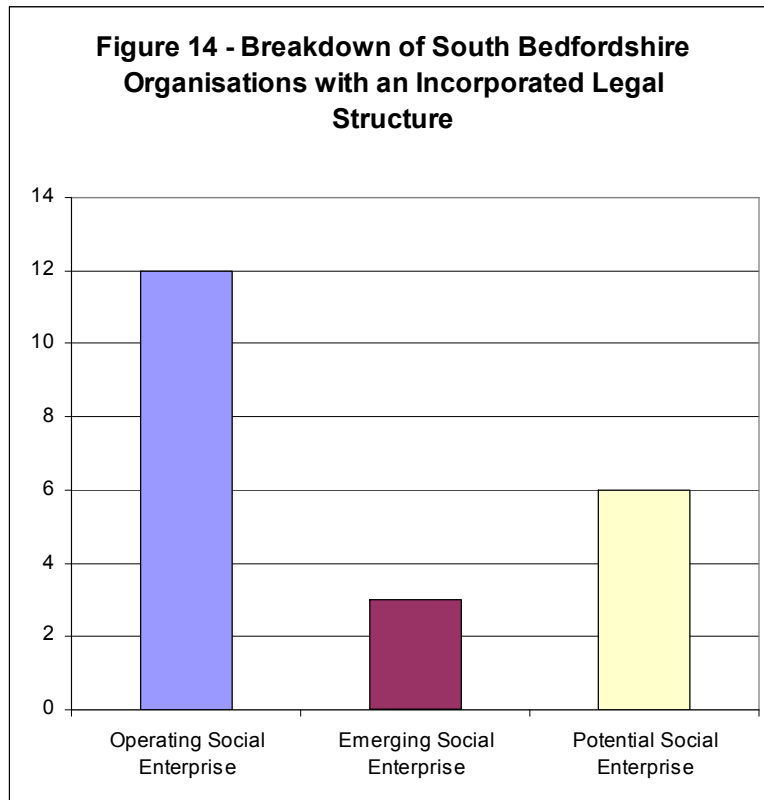


## Social Ownership

Of the 45 organisations identified as operating, emerging or potential social enterprises 21 have an incorporated legal structure. Figure 14 below shows the breakdown of organisations with an incorporated legal structure.

## Social Aims and Values

Of the 45 organisations identified as operating, emerging or potential social enterprises 28 are registered charities (indicating social objectives in their governing document) and another 10 have answered yes to the question *Is there a commitment to social or charitable objectives in your organisation's governing document?* Figure 15 below shows the breakdown of organisations that have a commitment to social objectives in their governing document.

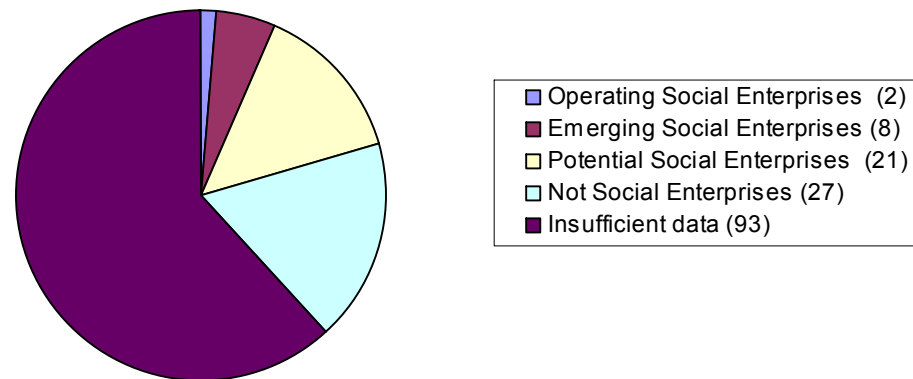


## Mid and North Bedfordshire

From the 151 organisations operating predominantly in Mid and North Bedfordshire, 31 have been identified as either an operating, emerging or potential social enterprise.

- 2 Operating Social Enterprises
- 8 Emerging Social Enterprises
- 21 Potential Social Enterprises
- 27 Not Social Enterprises
- 93 Insufficient data

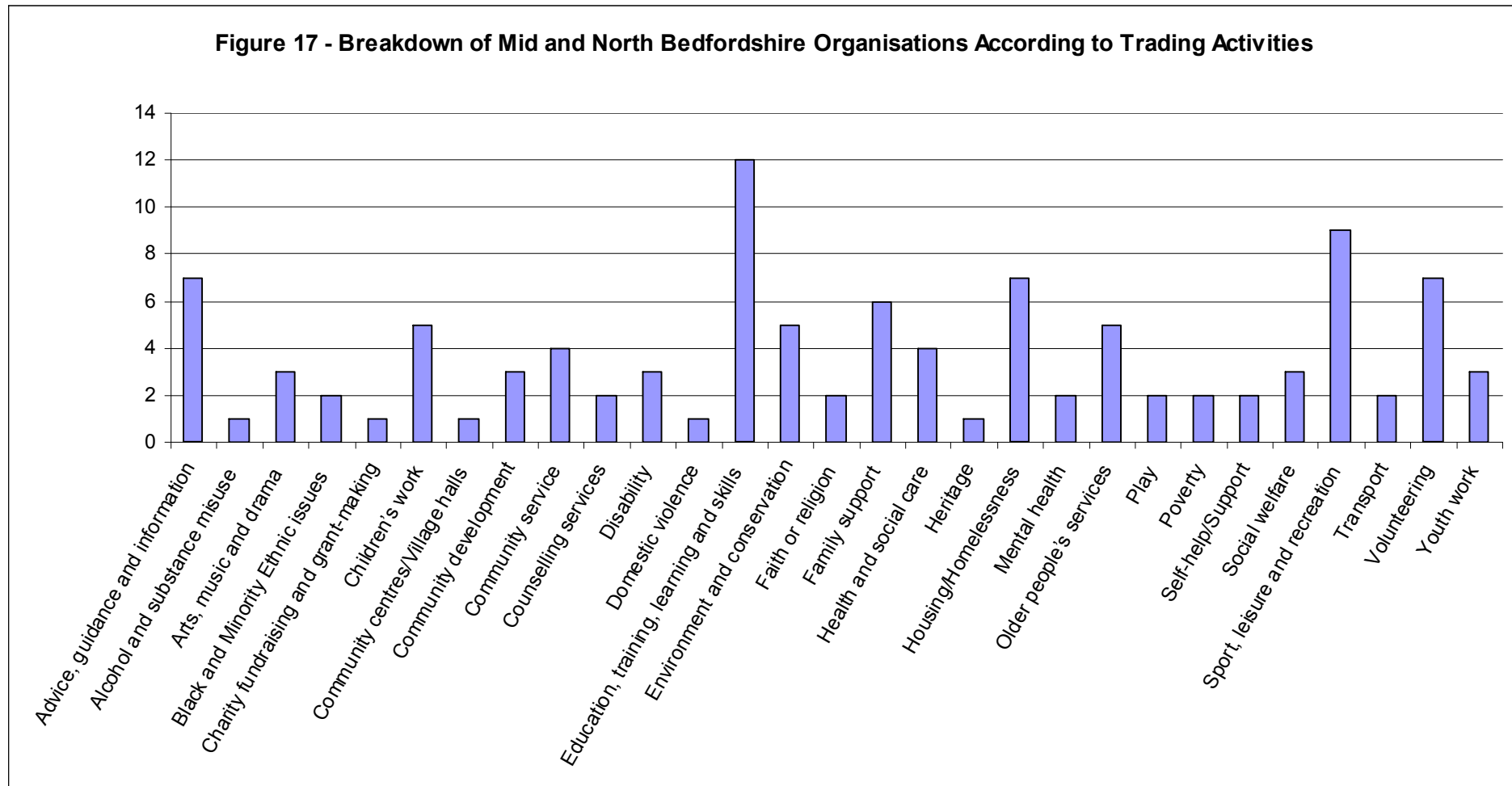
**Figure 16 - Breakdown of Mid and North Bedfordshire Organisations**



## Trading Activities

Of the 31 organisations identified as operating, emerging or potential social enterprises all had an enterprise orientation (defined above), delivering a wide range of trading activities.

Figure 17 below shows the breakdown of organisations according to trading activities.

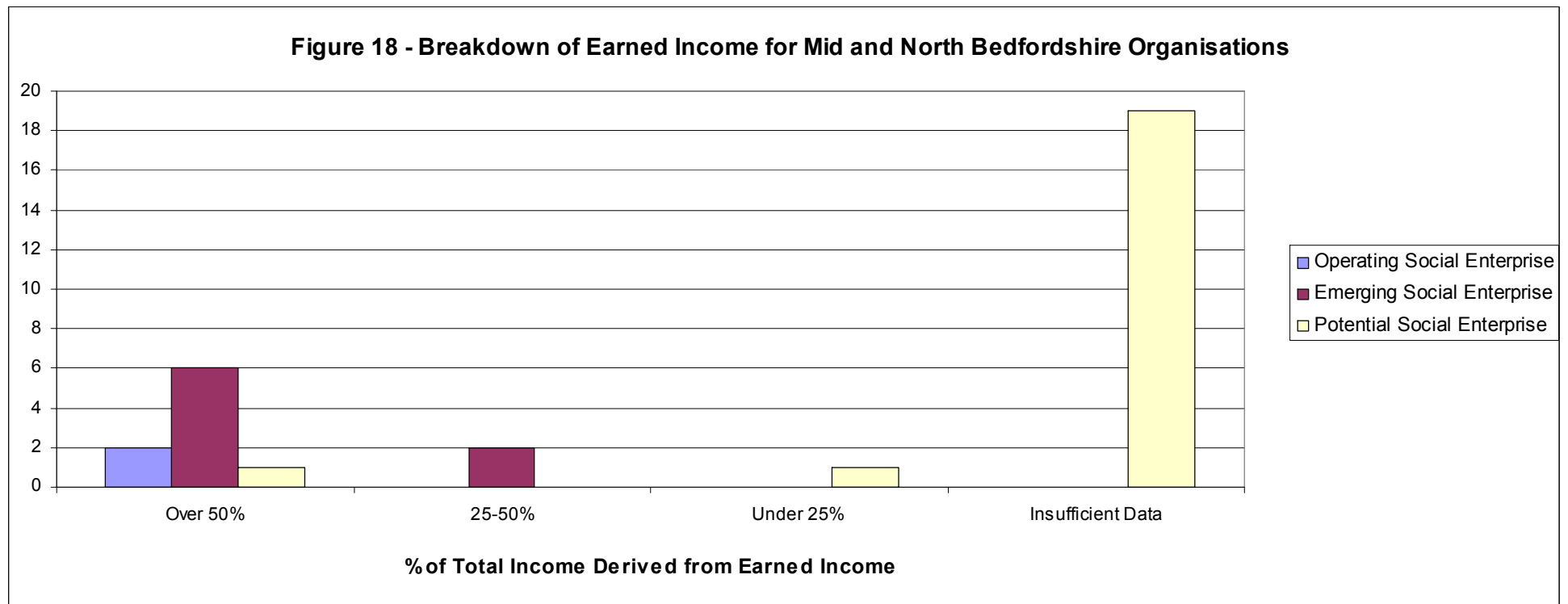


## Earned Income

Of the 31 organisations identified as operating, emerging or potential social enterprises:

- 9 have an earned income of over 50%
- 2 have an earned income of between 25-50%
- 1 has an earned income of less than 25%
- there is insufficient data for 19 organisations to determine their level of earned income.

Figure 18 below shows the breakdown of organisations according to the proportion of income derived from earned income.

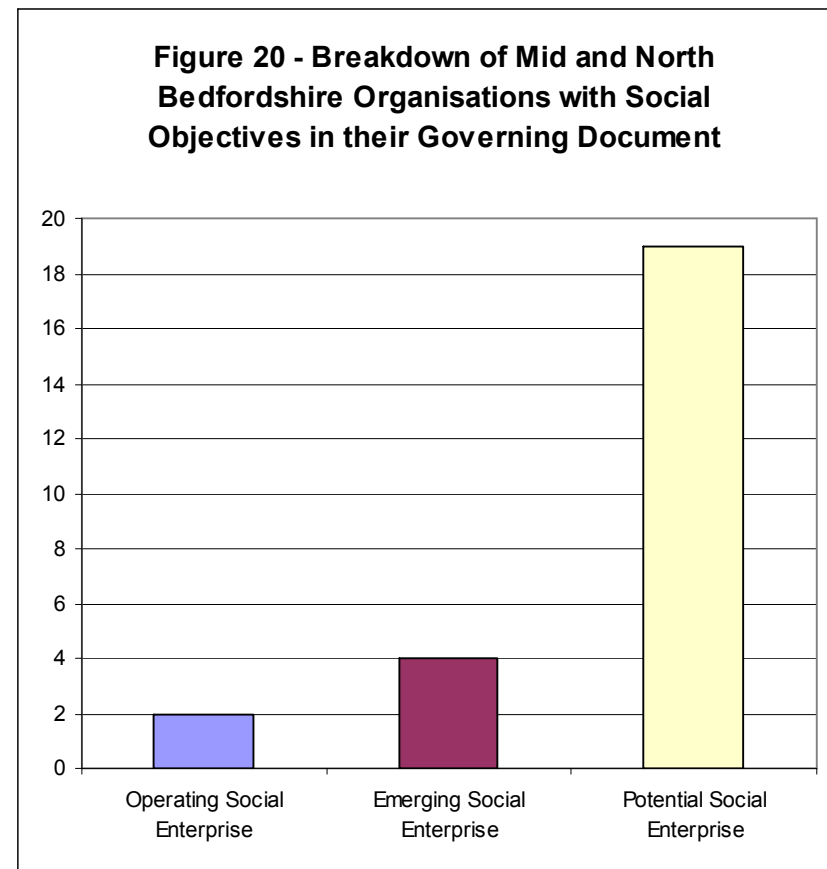
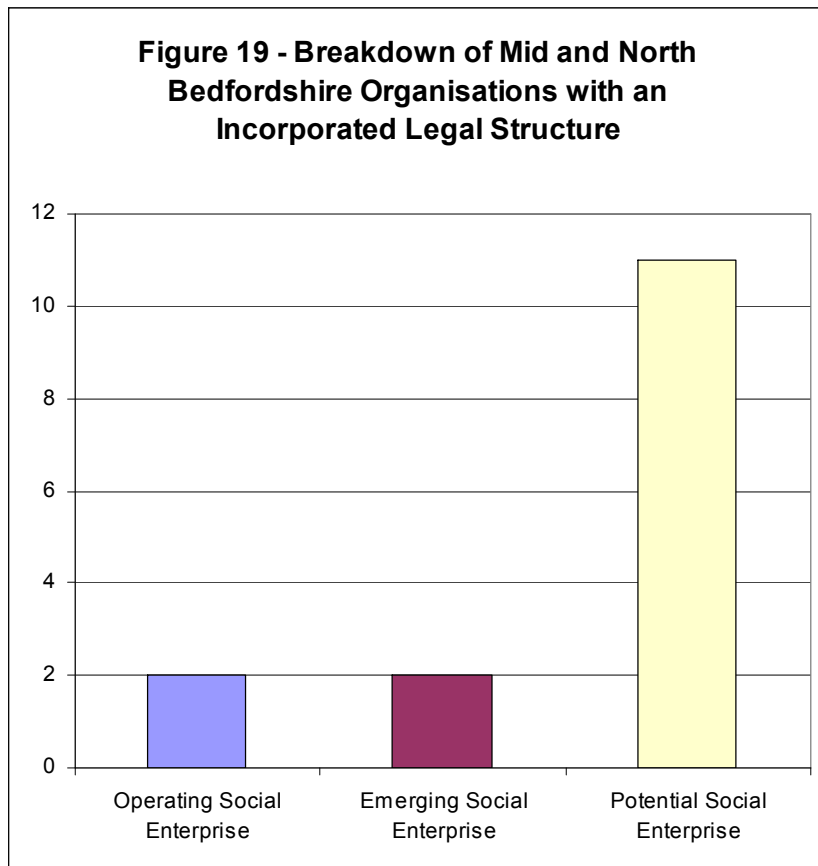


## Social Ownership

Of the 31 organisations identified as operating, emerging or potential social enterprises 15 have an incorporated legal structure. Figure 19 below shows the breakdown of organisations with an incorporated legal structure.

## Social Aims and Values

Of the 31 organisations identified as operating, emerging or potential social enterprises 25 are registered charities (indicating social objectives in their governing document). Figure 20 below shows the breakdown of organisations that have a commitment to social objectives in their governing document.



## Development Needs

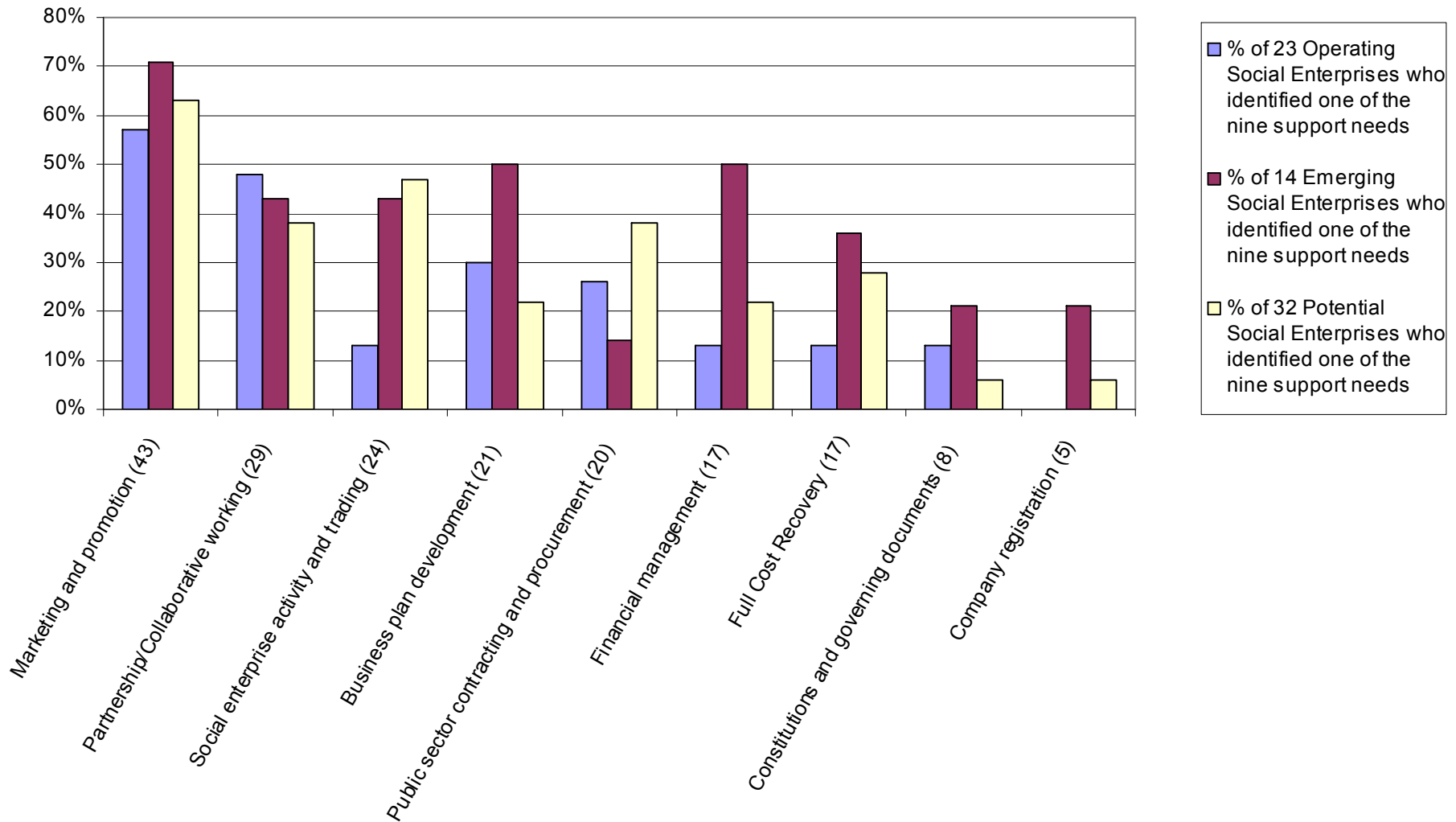
The research findings include the development needs of organisations that feature in the mapping. These can be used to identify the extent to which particular aspects of social enterprise need development advice and support, and thus future programme delivery by Local Infrastructure Organisations.

Of the 156 organisations identified as operating, emerging or potential social enterprises, 69 identified at least one or more of the following support needs:

- 43 Marketing and promotion (62%)
- 29 Partnership/Collaborative working (42%)
- 24 Social enterprise activity and trading (35%)
- 21 Business plan development (30%)
- 20 Public sector contracting and procurement (29%)
- 17 Financial management (25%)
- 17 Full Cost Recovery (25%)
- 8 Constitutions and governing documents (12%)
- 5 Company registration (7%)

Figure 21 below gives a breakdown of the development support needs of operational, emerging and potential social enterprises in Bedfordshire.

**Figure 21 - Breakdown of the Development Support Needs of Operational, Emerging and Potential Social Enterprises in Bedfordshire**



## Appendix A – Operating Social Enterprises

Name	Operate in South Bedfordshire	Operate in Mid Bedfordshire	Operate in North Bedfordshire	Charity No	Company No
Age Concern - Bedfordshire	✓	✓	✓	1090535	4160627
Aldwyck Housing Association Ltd	✓	✓	✓		IP21083R
Apex Charitable Trust Ltd	✓	✓	✓	284736	01628566
Aragon Housing Association	✓	✓	✓		IP27816R
Arena Touring Theatre	✓	✓	✓	298108	2168056
Autism Bedfordshire	✓	✓	✓	1100722	4632497
Bedford Community Rights Centre	✓	✓	✓	1057474	3234444
Bedford Model Engineering Society	✓	✓	✓		4087828
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre	✓	✓	✓		03553525
Bedfordshire Childminding Association	✓	✓	✓	295981	02060964
Bedfordshire Family Support Service	✓			1097940	4764232
Bedfordshire Football Association	✓	✓	✓		03872573
Bedfordshire Garden Carers		✓	✓	1091271	4327714
Bedfordshire Historical Record Society	✓	✓	✓	1098629	4257047
Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association	✓	✓	✓	2675112	IP26751R
Bedfordshire Pre-School Learning Alliance	✓	✓	✓	1096526	4539003
Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity	✓	✓	✓	1061538	3327628
Bedfordshire Youth Dance Company	✓	✓	✓		03194481
BTCV Bedfordshire	✓	✓	✓	261009	976410
Chiltern Society	✓	✓		1085163	04138448
Christian Family Care - Head Office	✓	✓	✓	276677	1371199
Disability Resource Centre	✓	✓	✓	1041712	2898000
Dunstable and Luton Counselling Service (Herts & Beds Pastoral Foundation)	✓			1014988	2713806
Energize			✓	1082429	5528592
Freelance Hair and Beauty Federation	✓	✓	✓	SC022164	SC148052
Goalside Sports Ltd	✓	✓	✓		4736742
Headway - South Bedfordshire	✓			1080775	3917437
Home-Start South Bedfordshire	✓			1109262	5414484

<b>Name</b>	<b>Operate in South Bedfordshire</b>	<b>Operate in Mid Bedfordshire</b>	<b>Operate in North Bedfordshire</b>	<b>Charity No</b>	<b>Company No</b>
Hope House Project	✓	✓	✓	22981R	L3076
Hula Animal Rescue	✓	✓	✓	1094115	04112693
James Kingham Project	✓	✓	✓	1080715	03943800
Leighton Buzzard Narrow Gauge Railway Society	✓			Exempt	2319743
Luton Community Housing Association	✓				IP19688R
Luton Law Centre	✓	✓	✓	1039998	2906544
Mayday Trust - Leighton Buzzard	✓	✓	✓	1035524	2911222
Money Matters Credit Union Ltd	✓				IP00447C
National Childminding Association (Eastern Region)	✓	✓	✓	295981	2060964
NOAH Enterprise	✓			1059672	03248392
Presentation Housing	✓				IP19527R
Relate - Bedfordshire and Luton	✓	✓	✓	1096688	4672292
Rethink Bedfordshire Carers Support Service	✓	✓	✓	271028	01227970
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)	✓	✓	✓	207076	2693778
Sight Concern Bedfordshire	✓	✓	✓	1078157	5966120
Signposts (Luton and Dunstable)	✓			1040860	2914936
South Bedfordshire Dial-a-Ride	✓				IP25620R
St John Ambulance - Bedfordshire	✓	✓	✓	1077265	03866129
Stotfold Mill Preservation Trust		✓		1086392	04118651
Stroke Association	✓	✓	✓	211015	00061274
Victim Support - Bedfordshire	✓	✓	✓	1025458	2835289
Yoga for Health and Education Trust	✓			Pending	06051565

**Appendix B – Organisations Classified as Emerging Social Enterprises that are likely to be Operating Social Enterprises** [see explanatory note on pages 7-8]

<b>Name</b>	<b>Operate in South Bedfordshire</b>	<b>Operate in Mid Bedfordshire</b>	<b>Operate in North Bedfordshire</b>	<b>Charity No</b>	<b>Company No</b>
Carers in Bedfordshire	✓	✓	✓	1106364	
Connections Christian Counselling Service	✓			1083115	
Furniture Link (Bedford)		✓	✓	1071982	
King's Arms Project			✓	1116359	5899019
Leighton Buzzard Working Mens Club	✓			Friendly Society	
Leonard Cheshire Disability - Agate House	✓	✓		218186	00552847
Ludon Industries Trust	✓	✓	✓	284271	
The Bedford Charity (the Harpur Trust)			✓	204817	
Toddington Social and Services Club	✓			Friendly Society	



## **Voluntary and Community Action South Bedfordshire**

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