



# BLACKERHILL COMMUNITY HUB

## BUSINESS PLAN

2016

# **CONTENTS**

- 1. Introduction**
  - 1.1 This document**
  - 1.2 The Centre**
  - 1.3 Blackerhill**
  - 1.4 Forge Community Partnership**
  
- 2 Ownership and Managerial Underpinnings**
  - 2.1 Landlord/Tenant relationships**
  - 2.2 Management structures**
  
- 3 Our social commitment**
  - 3.1 Guiding principles**
  - 3.2 Local residents**
  - 3.3 Local community organisations**
  
- 4 Business Foundations**
  - 4.1 Recent History**
  - 4.2 Compliance with local strategies**
  - 4.3 Business Principles**
  - 4.4 Market Segmentation**
  - 4.5 Competition**
  - 4.6 Buying Patterns**
  
- 5 Strategy for Sustainability and Growth**
  - 5.1 Competitive Edge**
  - 5.2 Marketing Strategy**
  - 5.3 Growth Strategy**
  - 5.4 Areas for growth**
  
- 6 Business Projections**
  - 6.1 Assumptions**
  - 6.2 Tables**
  - 6.3 Risk Analysis**
  
- 7 Contacts and further information**
  - 7.1 Forge Community Partnership**
  - 7.2 B C H Staffing Structure**
  - 7.3 Policy statements**
  
- 8 Stray bits.**

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 This document**

The Management of Blackerhill Community Hub (B C H) is committed to the Centre's further development as a vibrant and dynamic community asset.

This Plan has been written late in 2016 to act as an introduction to the vision, aims and objectives that support our business strategy.

We hope that the document will provide an overall picture of B C H as a Community Enterprise and that the content will be useful to a range of existing and potential partners. As we advance B C H's business we anticipate entering into further organisational and financial partnership arrangements. The information that we have included has been collated to provide a generic starting point which partners should find useful. Further information including commercial and/or confidential detail will be available to partners as appropriate.

The plan inevitably has elements of being a "snapshot" reflecting our enterprise at the time of writing. Its content will therefore be reviewed regularly to allow up-to-date supplementary information to be available to partners and facilitate the production of future versions.

### **1.2 The Centre**

B C H is situated in a charming building which serves its local community as a place of learning, education, skills development and employability.

The Centre exists to provide a non-threatening environment for people to become involved, become aware of opportunities and undertake developmental activities.

Building on the successes of the previous managing organisation, B C H opened its doors to continue to provide valuable access to services in the community.

Since that date the Centre has again established itself as a thriving base for the local community providing a base for:-

- Courses and learning opportunities
- Available meeting space for community and commercial organisations
- Youth Partnership
- Activities for parents/guardians and young children
- Support for local organisations and volunteers
- Post office service
- Advice sessions

### **1.3 Blackerhill**

Blackerhill Community Hub (B C H) is the only community provision at the heart of Blackerhill, a small rural village at the southern side of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough.

Blackerhill is a long-established community with approximately 1000 residents. Its historic roots lie in South Yorkshire's rich heritage involving both coal-mining and agriculture.

It lies less than a mile from a major motorway junction giving easy access to the M1 and the Dearne Valley Parkway. The latter leads to a host of other neighbouring communities and

provides a road link to the A1 and beyond. The junction is also close to the A616 leading towards Huddersfield and Penistone and across the Pennines to Manchester.

The village is not well served by public transport with limited bus connections to neighbouring villages and further afield to Barnsley, North Sheffield and other residential and commercial centres. Elsecar and Wombwell railway stations lie less than 3 miles away providing direct links north to Leeds and south to Sheffield via the renowned Meadowhall shopping centre.

The village is also situated on the edge of open countryside with nearby walking links to the Trans Pennine Trail and other outdoor recreational attractions.

## **1.4 Forge Community Partnership**

Since April 2015, B C H has been managed by Forge Community Partnership (FCP) on behalf of the local community.

Forge is a genuine Community Partnerships (local organisations driven by local residents) that cover all parts of the Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council area. In addition to Hoyland Common, Forge's area includes, Hoyland, Elsecar, Birdwell and smaller local communities including Blacker Hill, Platts Common, Tankersley and Pilley. The total population in the Forge area was just over 20,000 at the start of 2015. More details about the Forge area and the local challenges and opportunities can be found in the Forge Community Partnership History Document.

Forge has successfully launched a wide range of initiatives to turn its community's vision into reality. These have included running the Local Learning Net project to encourage lifetime learning, the well-respected Hoyland and Jump Sure Start working with families and children, an innovative and popular Art for Health project and a Sports Development Project. Hoyland Common Community Centre, Elsecar Nursery and the Rockingham Centre.

More recently Forge has also evolved a core staff team to provide support and advice to the many independent community organisations in the area.

Forge's involvement with the Blackerhill Community Hub stands as one of the "jewels in the crown" amongst these achievements.

## **2. Ownership and Managerial Underpinnings**

### **2.1 Landlord/Tenant relationships**

The building is owned by **BMBC** and Forge is seeking to build on its relationship with BMBC to progress the lease and or asset transfer of Blackerhill Hub

In 2015 the previous tenants ceased to operate from the Centre and the Blackerhill Community Hub. At that point Forge Community Partnership were delighted to commence a management agreement to engage the wider community in the longer term future of the Hub. That agreement ensured that the building's doors were swiftly reopened and the community facilities were secured.

### **2.2 Management structures**

Forge Community Partnership is a not-for-profit Company Limited Guarantee (Company Registration Number 3691518). At the time of writing the Company is reviewing the possibility of achieving recognised charitable status.

Forge's Board of Directors is known as its Executive Committee. They are all local residents or nominated by organisations active in the locality and are nominated and elected annually at the Company's AGM. The Partnership's officers are in turn nominated and ratified by the Executive.

Forge has appointed a Management Board to steer B C H's development.

Forge's support for B C H reflects its view of local renewal being essentially holistic and inclusive. It accords with the Partnership's intention "to undertake initiatives throughout the communities to enhance their educational, economic, environmental and social potential".

### **3. Our social commitment**

#### **3.1 Guiding principles**

B C H is part of Forge's strategy to challenge social exclusion, encourage participation, support life-long learning and develop community ownership.

Its strategy as it becomes a self-sustaining business will maintain Forge's approach based on inclusivity and best practice in contemporary Community Development and local renewal.

The fundamental elements of B C H's business development will depend on building mutually beneficial relationships with local residents and their organisations.

#### **3.2 Local residents**

Within that framework, B C H's success depends on it successfully identifying and addressing the needs of local residents.

The Centre runs to consistently support and attract those experiencing or at risk of social and/or economic exclusion.

Priority groups include:-

- Teenage parents
- Families with young children
- Older people
- Carers
- People with disability
- Those on low income
- People experiencing "worklessness"
- Those most marginalised from paid employment
- Local ethnic minorities and immigrants
- People with low-skill levels

### 3.3 Local community organisations

Support for local not-for-profit organisations will operate in a number of ways. The table below shows schematically a shifting mixture of support.

<b>Main geographic focus of group</b>	<b>Status of group</b>	<b>Possible types of support - In order of likelihood</b>
Blackerhill and immediate surroundings	Existing – stable	Available meeting space Printing/Reprographics Information/signposting Group development Group support
	Existing – needing support	Developmental support Group development Information/signposting Available meeting space Printing/Reprographics
	Emerging	Available meeting space Developmental support Group development Printing/Reprographics Information/signposting
Forge-wide	Existing – stable	Information/signposting Group development Group support Printing/Reprographics Available meeting space
	Existing – needing support	Group support Group development Information/signposting Printing/Reprographics Available meeting space
	Emerging	Group support Group development Information/signposting Printing/Reprographics Room hire
Cross-boundary	Existing – stable	Room hire

## **4. Business Foundations**

### **4.1 Recent History**

As Forge helped to secure funding for the development of the Centre during 2003 they received help and assistance from a host of local regeneration agencies. Those included Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, Yorkshire Forward's Single Regeneration Budget, the Coalfield Regeneration Trust, Social Enterprise Barnsley and South Yorkshire Key Fund.

The start of 2015 saw the Centre move into a challenging new phase. Under Forge's Management the facility was reopened and the remainder of the building promptly regained its role as a centre for community learning, a venue for activities and a focal point for local community development.

### **4.2 Compliance with local strategies**

B C H continues to strengthen community capacity.

It is planned that the activities at the Centre deliver some or all of the following:-

- Community environmental projects with a basis in local job creation and the development of community enterprises
- Health awareness including campaigns to tackle teenage pregnancy and drug awareness
- Integrated approaches to tackling those barriers to employability which arise from inequalities
- Projects and facilities which advance the social isolation strategy and provide opportunities to reconcile family life and work
- Community-based and led research and feasibility projects

At the regional level B C H's operation accords with the key objective in the "region's communities to economic opportunity". It also fits in with commitment to community participation.

B C H's retention and relaunch during 20014-15 was consonant with the objectives of Forge community partnership and the local Area Council from which significant support has been received.

There are also evident linkages for wider community benefit. The vision identifies The Centre and the activities based there particularly addressing– "Reducing Social Exclusion", "Transforming Communities". In addition the activities envisaged for the Centre are very likely to impact on Learning, ,culture and leisure", "Children and Young People", "Healthier Communities and Older People", and "Clean and Green Communities".

### **4.3 Business Principles**

B C H's approach to business is underpinned by our social commitment described in 3.1 above coupled with the four core ethical starting points for Community Development – Transparency, Accountability, Openness and Inclusivity

Policies and procedures are in place reflecting current best practice on all aspects of employment and customer service.

The Centre's commitment to good practice around Environmental issues and Inclusivity are reflected in the documents included in Section 7.3.



## 4.4 Market Segmentation

The centre is located in the heart of Blackerhill surrounded by a close knit community and is very close to junction 36 of the M1 a major industrial development, and also, the main route between Barnsley and Rotherham. The Centre will therefore have a diverse range of customers but it will have a number of user groups that will be specifically targeted:

- Local residents. Based on the experience of the previous venture, much of the trade consists mainly of local residents, many of whom are retired. They use the centres warm, friendly environment as a meeting place.
- Passing trade. It is envisaged that this will be passing trade with some becoming repeat business as people call in on their way to and from work.
- Established. The community centre hires rooms out to organisations and groups for meetings, conferencing and training sessions. The centre will cater for these groups as necessary.

B C H's Community Centre facilities are mutually dependent wings of the overall enterprise. The business opportunities of each wing overlap and provide positive synergies. For the purposes of clarity the two functions have been dealt with separately in this subsection.

### 4.4.1 Bright Beginnings

The target market for the Nursery is the local community along with organisations and groups that use the meeting and conference facilities. A further, potential opportunity concerns the provision of external crèche facilities to companies and groups in the surrounding area.

The Nursery is placed in a very strong position to win business within the area by offering a relaxed high quality environment to the community as well as broadening its reach by offering onsite and off site daycare facilities to businesses and organisations.

### 4.4.2 B C H Community Centre

B C H offers function rooms for hire to the public and organisations for training, meetings and private functions. They have a number of rooms that can be used for booking and these range in size from 4 person occupancy to 20. If greater numbers are required, the cafeteria can be used to accommodate these increased numbers

The cost of hire is £15 & £ 22.50 per hour and a day is classed as 8 hours.

The table below shows a typical month's usage during the period at the end of 2015 and early in 2016.

---

<b>Client</b>
BMBC electoral services
Little Explorers Day Nursery
Northern College
Forge Family Foundation
Youth Partnership
Post Office Service
Children's Parties
Unneed
Options for Life
Healthy Lifestyles
Internal Training

---

## 4.5 Local Competition

There are no other community facilities that offer the surroundings, service and quality for a very competitive price. In the locale, there are 2 main competitors offering similar facilities on specific days. These are:

- Westbank House is situated in Hoyland in close proximity and are the strongest competitor in the area and provide room hire
- Hoyland Common Community Centre provides rooms and services associated with this organisation.

## 4.6 Buying Patterns

To promote and support the community to which it serves, Blackerhill Community Hub trades, as much as possible, with local retailers. These businesses are identified below along with the produce received from them:-

Tesco	Miscellaneous Products
Hoyland Common DIY	Building / Decorating Materials
Nat West Bank, Hoyland	Business Banking
Walkers Newsagents	Miscellaneous Items
Co-op, Hoyland Common	Day to Day Food items
Hoyland Insurance Brokers Ltd	Building, Employers and Contents Insurance
Gibson Booth Accountants	Business Accounts
Post Office	Stamps
YPO	Office supplies & PPE
NDS Supplies	Cleaning Products

## **5.0 Strategy for Sustainability and Growth**

### **5.1 Competitive Edge**

B C H's competitive edge is focussed on the provision of an excellent range services at very affordable prices. These prices appeal to the "drop in" clientele as well as organisations that use the facilities for training and meetings. The ethos is to make the visiting experiences one to enjoy, remember and repeat.

Second, they offer first class training facilities to organisations and groups.

### **5.2 Marketing Strategy**

Additional activities under consideration for later in the project include:-

- Accredited and non-accredited vocational training CERTA
- A regular meeting place and support facilities for local community groups
- Printing/reprographics for not-for-profit organisations
- Advice sessions
- Information/signposting
- Developmental support
- Employment support and upskilling

A marketing strategy to win more local customers and new businesses for their meetings and conferences is to be planned. This will raise the profile of the centre with companies and enable them to be booked into the centre.

Direct Local Initiatives to enhance the centres reputation for a quality facility managed effectively by the local community will be championed.

Encouraging marketing throughout the local communities by word of mouth

However, certainly initially, some cost-effective marketing will be needed. In order to raise interest in the venture considering:

#### **Banners**

High visibility banners have been produced to fit outside the building to advertise the training and community facilities.

#### **Hoyland CAP Digital News**

The centre has produced its News that is distributed throughout the area. This promotes activities within the wider community, the centre and in the district.

#### **Local papers**

The local press promotes the work of the centre and the cafe.

#### **Leaflets**

Leaflets are available in the centre that promote and advertise the facilities within the B C H.

#### **Social Media**

Social media site will be developed and managed by the users of the Centre to cascade awareness and encourage participation at events and promote the facilities.

#### **Web site**

A web site is planned as part of the strategy and will be introduced later this year. The web site will promote all aspects of the B C H. An additional description is found in the section covering web site strategy.

#### **Word of mouth**

Word of mouth is very important for B.H.C and the quality and availability of service provision is crucial to building a reputation that will draw in new custom.

### **5.3 Growth Strategy**

Growth will be gained through several methods:

- Secure stable long term “Anchor” clients.
- Developing local business / enterprise
- Occasional room bookings for meetings and training
- Community ownership and responding initiatives

All short term on one off revenues will be banked weekly and kept in a safe overnight. All sales will be administered by the centre and deposited with the FCP for accounting purposes.

Long standing repeat bookings or recharges to anchor clients, Collection of this revenue will be carried out by the centre administration but applied to the cafe's department for accounting purposes.

## 6. Business Projections

### 6.1 Assumptions

The financial plan depends on important assumptions, most of which are shown in the following table as annual assumptions. Interest development in Centre, tax rates and payroll liability are based on conservative assumptions.

Some of the more important underlying assumptions are:

- The company is not VAT registered.
- There are no unforeseen changes in the patterns of employment.

**Table: General Assumptions**

---

Annual contribution from Forge Secured for Yr1 – Yr3
Securing additional Anchor (Long term clients)
Community engage more with the facility for Social & Leisure benefit
Establish Income from hosting Post Office Service received by Forge
Development of Social Enterprise Growth Hub from Sheffield City Region
Within the year the site secures significant host tenant through Social Inclusion or other community benefit

## 6.2 Tables

### Blackerhill Community Hub

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>April 17 - Jun 17</b>	<b>Jul 17 - Sept 17</b>	<b>Oct 17 - Dec 17</b>	<b>Jan 18 - Mar 18</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>GRANTS (REVENUE)</b>					
Staff	£1,750.00	£1,750.00	£1,750.00	£1,750.00	£7,000.00
Running costs	£750.00	£750.00	£750.00	£750.00	£3,000.00
Materials	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>£2,500.00</b>	<b>£2,500.00</b>	<b>£2,500.00</b>	<b>£2,500.00</b>	<b>£10,000.00</b>
<b>SELF-GENERATED (REVENUE)</b>					
Sales	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Room Hire	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£8,000.00
Services provided	£1,750.00	£1,750.00	£1,750.00	£1,750.00	£7,000.00
<b>Total Revenue Income</b>	<b>£3,750.00</b>	<b>£3,750.00</b>	<b>£3,750.00</b>	<b>£3,750.00</b>	<b>£15,000.00</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>April 17 - Jun 17</b>	<b>Jul 17 - Sept 17</b>	<b>Oct 17 - Dec 17</b>	<b>Jan 18 - Mar 18</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>CAPITAL</b>					
Building	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Other	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
<b>Total Capital</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>
<b>REVENUE (SALARIES/WAGES/Inc. NI and PAYE)</b>					
Project Co-ordinator salary	£1,200.00	£1,200.00	£1,200.00	£1,200.00	£4,800.00
Co-ordinator on costs	£240.00	£240.00	£240.00	£240.00	£960.00
Premises Person	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£4,000.00
Oncosts	£200.00	£200.00	£200.00	£200.00	£800.00
Office Equipment, Furniture	£500.00	£200.00	£200.00	£200.00	£1,100.00
Plant, Machinery, Equipment	£300.00	£0.00	£300.00	£0.00	£600.00
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>£3,440.00</b>	<b>£2,840.00</b>	<b>£3,140.00</b>	<b>£2,840.00</b>	<b>£12,260.00</b>
<b>REVENUE (OTHER COSTS)</b>					
Materials	£500.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£1,400.00
Rates (Charitable Status)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Gas	£150.00	£350.00	£700.00	£700.00	£1,900.00
Insurance	£750.00	£750.00	£750.00	£750.00	£3,000.00
Electric	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£1,200.00
Advertising & Community. Consultation Events	£200.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£500.00
Office Consumables	£250.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£550.00
Sundries/Contingencies	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Leasing Charges	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Bank Charges	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Professional fees	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£600.00
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>£2,300.00</b>	<b>£2,050.00</b>	<b>£2,400.00</b>	<b>£2,400.00</b>	<b>£9,150.00</b>
<b>Total Revenue Costs</b>	<b>£5,740.00</b>	<b>£4,890.00</b>	<b>£5,540.00</b>	<b>£5,240.00</b>	<b>£21,410.00</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£5,740.00</b>	<b>£4,890.00</b>	<b>£5,540.00</b>	<b>£5,240.00</b>	<b>£21,410.00</b>
<b>Opening Balance Initial Contribution</b>	<b>£7,000.00</b>	<b>£5,010.00</b>	<b>£3,870.00</b>	<b>£2,080.00</b>	<b>£590.00</b>
<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>£5,010.00</b>	<b>£3,870.00</b>	<b>£2,080.00</b>	<b>£590.00</b>	<b>B/Cf</b>

## 6.3 Risk Analysis

A table of risks, their impact, likelihood and mitigating actions are shown below. This table was originally drawn up in 2015 to support the application for funding.

Main risks	Likelihood	Consequences	Steps to be undertaken to minimise/mitigate
Failure to find the right staff	Medium-high	Severe	<p>Job Descriptions, Employee Specifications and job adverts will all be discussed amongst Forge's Management Team and Officers before recruitment takes place. Approval of the JDs and ESs will also be sought from funders prior to recruitment.</p> <p>Within financial and operational constraints efforts will be made to recruit from as wide as possible a field and cascading information through local networks.</p> <p>The interviewing process will include exercise(s) to ensure that candidates can demonstrate key skills and knowledge. References will be taken up prior to any post being offered.</p> <p>In all cases a probationary period will be specified as part of the contract of employment.</p>
Problems with retention	Medium-high	Medium	<p>Wherever possible conditions of service will be offered that are competitive and attractive.</p> <p>Self-development will be encouraged within the posts with the post-holders being encouraged to benefit from Forge's underlying commitment to Life Long Learning.</p> <p>Despite such efforts there still remains the issue of staff being relatively likely to leave towards the end of a fixed term contract. The negative effects of this will be reduced by ensuring accessible and adequate documentation capable of being picked up by other staff. Good information flows between the post holders, line manager(s) and other team members using minutes meetings, written progress reports and other documentation</p>
Inadequate customer base	Low	Medium	<p>While the building was being run by the Barnsley Community Learning Service a more than adequate number of individuals used its facilities - it should be noted that its business failure was not due to the number of people using the facility. Forge is confident that the customer base can be restored and enhanced by providing relevant opportunities and careful use of publicity and marketing.</p> <p>The number of people using the Centre will be carefully monitored as will the number of bookings and room occupancy levels. This will be regularly reported to the Centre's Management Committee, a sub-committee of Forge's Board.</p>
Users not "moving on"	Medium	Medium	<p>The purpose of the building is to address social and economic exclusion by providing pathways towards development for individuals and organisations. For this to succeed there needs to be a rich mixture of activities in and around the centre providing progression paths. There is a risk that activities and their users become embedded in "comfort zones" with a stagnant and ultimately declining client base.</p> <p>The range of activities and customer base will both be regularly monitored. Co-operative arrangements will be established with all providers to establish an evolving range of activities that enables and encourages progression and development.</p>
Failure to attract and retain activity providers	Low-Medium	Medium-severe	<p>Forge's existing relationships with external partners and its internal "umbrella"-type structure will help minimise this risk. Particularly useful will be its close links with organisations that deliver or commission local provision</p> <p>The incoming Centre Activities Co-ordinator will be expected to produce a forward business strategy with diversification as a central theme to avoid over-dependence on any single income stream.</p>
Inadequate financial and/or management	Low	Severe	<p>Forge is already implementing a significant range of community service projects. The necessary improvements and enhancements to the systems that have been generated during that project will also be applied to the proposed project.</p>

controls			As well as Forge's internal procedures, accounting and audit arrangements the project will be bound by all agreements with funders and subject to any inspections, audits etc. that the funders may decide.
Withdrawal of support by funders during the life of the project	Low	Severe	Best use will be made of the considerable relevant skills and experience amongst Forge's Officers and paid staff. Every effort will be made to foster positive relationships with funders. Compliance with all funders requests will be built in to the targets for staff employed in the project and those with responsibility for financial monitoring within the Regeneration Team.



## 7. Contacts and further information

### 7.1 Forge Community Partnership

Forge's Board of Directors is known as its Executive Committee. They are all local residents or nominated by organisations active in the locality. They are nominated and elected annually at the Company's AGM.

The Partnership's officers are in turn nominated and ratified by the Executive. Prior to the 2006 AGM the main officers were as follows.

Chair	Michael Sanderson	Former Chair of Governors at Kirk Balk Academy and an active participant with a local Church. A retired deputy Chief Officer in the public sector.
Vice-Chair	Robin Franklin	Local Elected Member . Long-standing owner of a local business.
Secretary	Neil Spencer	Former Hoyland and Jump Sure Start Project Manager with extensive experience in education and community development.
Financial Reporting Member	Paul Reckless	Local Business man with over 20 years' experience in a variety of commercial functions.

The Executive meets every two months at a local community venue. During the intervening months Forge holds open meetings encouraging discussion and dialogue around Forge's activities and pertinent local issues.

The Partnership and/or its Executive receive regular reports from projects and sub-groups. A separate Management Committee for B C H has been created. The Management Committee's minutes are presented to Forge's Executive and a report made to the full Partnership meetings.

### 7.2 B C H Staffing Structure

At B C H's core are two posts. Funding for those posts is currently secure until the middle of 2017.

The Centre Activities Co-ordinator supports the overall development of the Centre by :-

- Fostering long-term relationships with existing and new users
- Effectively networking with other local facilities
- Making best use of publicity and marketing resources
- Ensuring day to day monitoring and recording of clients and usage

A Premises Person will build the current and future strength of local voluntary and community sector organisations by :-

- Supporting and developing volunteer-based activity within the Resource Centre and elsewhere in the Forge area
- Connecting local volunteers with relevant opportunities
- Facilitating developmental events and activities for volunteers
- Supporting access to the facility by interested parties

## **7.3 Policy statements**

The statements below were adopted early in 2015 shortly after Forge took over the management of B C H.

### **Environmental Good Practice**

The project is not environmental in nature but good practice has been taken into account during all parts of its preparation.

Much work has been carried out on the building in the last five years. All of this has been to a standard to accord with the requirements of the landlord and the community organisation who were the previous tenants. In particular the work has been in compliance with all the requirements of the providers of public funding.

Difficulties remain with accessibility to the upstairs facilities for those with mobility problems. This results from the age and design of the building. Investigations will be carried out to assure compliance with DDA and whether any remaining “reasonable adaptations” will be possible.

Forge is committed to embedding sustainability and environmental good practice in all its projects. Energy costs will be a critical factor in the overall costs of the project. An energy audit will be carried out aimed at working towards energy efficiency and, within the constraints imposed by the building design and finances, best environmental practice.

Procedures for recycling will be embedded in the Centre’s manual.

### **Diversity and Social Inclusion**

This project has social inclusion at its core and relevant considerations were central to the design of project. Forge has a comprehensive Equal Opportunities Policy that will be applied to all activities in the Centre and any recruitment.

Particular attention will be paid to ensure detailed monitoring of usage of the centre with assessments being made on the grounds, at least, of gender, age, ethnic origin and ability/disability. That monitoring will be reported regularly and remedial actions taken on a rolling basis.

The local population, because of historic reasons, is characterised by minimal ethnic diversity. Events will be structured and participation encouraged to develop better contact and understanding between local residents and their organisations and colleagues from more diverse communities.

Ranges of activities previously held at the centre were particularly aimed at older women and men. Where former activities are discontinued the effect on the make-up of the client base will be analysed and Initiatives taken to mitigate any negative dynamics.

## 8.Stray bits

The planned activities, many of which have now commenced since the building's reopening, break down into two main categories :-

- a) Those activities which are a continuation of activities which previously took place in the same building under the auspices of the BMBC – e.g. Limited training courses, venue for meetings, Employment support.
- b) Activities which are new to Blackerhill Community Hub – e.g. Extended training courses, Family activities, Smoking cessation, other Health-related activities, signposting to other local developmental opportunities,.

The range of activities on offer, together with the planned further developments, has benefited significantly through the Centre providing a single venue. The identified benefits include:-

- Easy travel for local users
- An informal and non-stigmatised atmosphere
- Links with emerging community enterprise

The above aspects help to make the venue welcoming, unchallenging and accessible to local residents, including those who would feel excluded from more formal provision. By attracting those clients into a single venue further benefits flow, including:-

- A growing recognition of the centre as a point of support and focus of activity
- Positive synergies between local volunteer-driven activities and organisations
- Encouraging and allowing individual clients to progress to higher levels of development

A straightforward point of contact for existing and future providers

### Strategic Fit

- Community-based and led research and feasibility projects

### Employment and Skills

The project will provide opportunities to remove barriers to work and develop skills required by employers. The project has been specifically designed to provide a welcoming and appropriate environment enabling progression employment and skills development.

#### *Removing barriers to work*

- Activities targeted at hard to reach groups
- In-house and outreach sessions aimed at individuals experiencing, or at risk of, social exclusion
- Specialist advice (in-house or signposted) on work-related benefits
- Specialist advice (in-house or signposted) on job seeking and career development

- Support for those disadvantaged in the labour market due to disability (including mental health issues)
- Working with partners to develop links with local employers

*Developing skills required by employers*

- Developing individuals through participation in employment and training programmes
- Networking with other opportunities in the Forge area
- Signposting to opportunities elsewhere in Barnsley and other parts of South Yorkshire
- Developing appropriate links with other local learning providers (e.g. Barnsley College, local schools, Northern College)
- Regular contact with local employers

**Creativity, Innovation and Technology (ICT)**

Maximum and best use of ICT has been planned to support the management of the project and address user needs.

The Centre will act as another gateway for local people to develop their ICT skills and knowledge. This will involve encouraging contact with local ICT-based training suites such as those at the Rockingham Centre, Hoyland Common and Milton Hall, Elsecar. It is also likely to include in-house sessions using portable ICT equipment.

Particular attention will be paid to increasing ICT awareness and providing initial access to supported informal access to ICT-based learning. Experience locally, and from further afield, also suggests that further successes will be achieved by targeting older women and men in the community, particularly those seeking re-entry to the labour market.