

# Ripples



04

A portrait of  
philanthropy  
Joey Newton



30

Enterprise on the  
menu  
Neve Howells-Aitken



11

The power of  
circular economies  
Fiona Keir

# Inside Ripples

May 2024



02



**Introduction**

Why enterprise is important to us

Kai Wooder

04



**Feature**

A portrait of philanthropy

Joey Newton

09



**Feature**

In the cycle of improvement

Elenid Roberts

11



**Feature**

The joy of circular economies

Fiona Keir

14



**Feature**

In the cycle of improvement

James Beecher

16



**Feature**

The spirit of enterprise

Alan Qualtrough

20



**Feature**

Overcoming inequalities

Vasha Parmer

23



**News**

Fellowship News

John Hind

26



**Fellowship Feature**

Language of heritage

Mariama Techie-Afful

28



**Fellowship Feature**

Making good decisions

Mark Herbert

30



**Fellowship Feature**

Enterprise on the menu

Neve Howells-Aitken



Welcome

# Welcome

This edition of the Rank Ripples focuses on enterprise throughout our Network. You will read about some inspirational examples of how our Members have risen to the tough challenges that face us all today.



**Kai Wooder** Executive Director, Rank Foundation

# Why enterprise is important to us

In 2013, under the new stewardship of Chair Joey Newton, Rank committed to accelerating the Foundation's interest in social enterprise, capitalising on Arthur Rank's success in leveraging innovation and enterprise for social good. I was initially appointed as Director of Enterprise, and my mission was clear: Build on the founder's pioneering acumen and the Network's enterprising spirit. We started from fertile ground. Rank Foundation has a well-deserved reputation for being an innovative Foundation. Often, the first funder of new or emerging ideas. Often the first funder of innovative approaches (place-based programmes a case in point). Often, the first funder testing creative solutions to stubborn issues (Time to Shine & RAP are clear examples).

Through Joey's leadership, we made a strategic commitment to support social enterprises in all their forms and continue to be an 'enterprising' foundation, using resources and capacity to initiate new approaches. That willingness to journey alongside the development of social enterprise was in itself a pioneering approach. This commitment remains strong and has been evidenced recently with the introduction of Rank's own social

enterprise, Garden Walk, a social sector co-working hub in London. Launching our own enterprise has allowed us to truly experience what social enterprise can and should be and, in doing so, to create more social good. We know that innovation can feel risky. As you take your first steps into new territory, you may feel alone

those looking to reignite their flair for innovation and get new income-generating ideas off the ground.

- Plymouth Rise innovated through the Plymouth place-based programme and providing incentivised grant funding for new start-ups.
- Repayable Grants are an



Launching our own enterprise has allowed us to truly experience what social enterprise can and should be. 99

or even out of your depth. It requires confidence to say, 'I have an idea,' and courage to push ahead with it, especially when those around you are not fully on board.

Our sector needs social innovators like never before. More than a decade of austerity and world-changing events have seen many projects fighting to survive, with the capacity and the sheer energy to innovate being reduced on the way. With support from the Network, we have introduced a range of enterprising programmes, including:

- Profit for Good, a programme for leaders of established organisations,

opportunity to build capacity and income over the longer term, with a commitment to pay back and pay forward.

In this edition, which also marks the end of Joey's time as chair, you will hear from true pioneers who are making ideas flourish, organisations stronger, and people's lives better by being the drivers of disruption and change. We hope you'll enjoy meeting them and feel as inspired as we do to keep finding different ways of doing good. ●

Feature

# A portrait of philanthropy



Joey Newton will be stepping down as Chair of the Rank Foundation this year. Joey dedicated 32 years to the Foundation, 11 of those years as Chair. He presided over a period of great transformation and challenge, not least the Foundation's responses to Covid19 and the current cost-of-living crisis. Here, he tells Louise Kavanagh his story.

**Joey Newton**, Chair of the Rank Foundation



Despite being the grandson of Rank's founder Arthur Rank, the path to becoming the chairperson of a national charity was unexpected for Joey Newton. With nearly three decades of experience as a dairy farmer, the idea of leading the Foundation hadn't crossed Joey's mind. Yet, fate had different plans for him

(as did his mother), leading him to embrace his role with humility and dedication.

It wasn't just his mother who encouraged Joey to engage with the family's philanthropic endeavours, his uncle Robin Cowen also helped. Robin encouraged Joey to engage with Rank's subsidiary, the social and educational content producer, CTVC. At the time it was based in Bushey,

near Watford, making what Joey described as "programmes with no customer".

Today CTVC produces religious, moral, ethical, and educational programming, which is broadcast in the UK and around the world. Current commissions include the BBC's Songs of Praise and Pilgrimage. Joey remains on the CTVC board, but he says: "Until I became Chair of >>



Rank, I didn't get to see the places and meet the charity leaders; all sorts of different people that have been incredibly talented. They made me more thoughtful."

### **Relational philanthropy**

Joey emphasised the importance of relationships and partnership in the Foundation's work, referring to the genuine connections with charity leaders, the atmosphere of

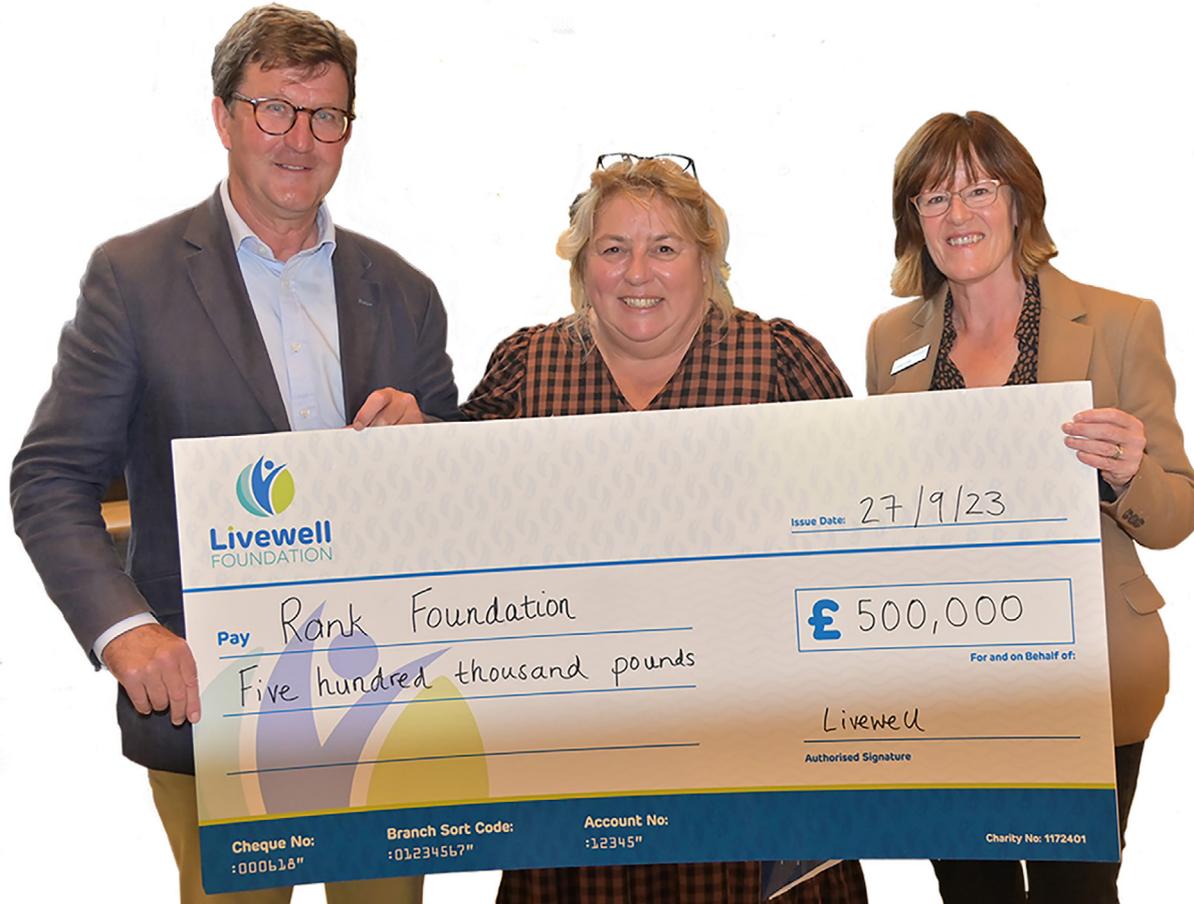
collaboration and the mutual support as a privilege to be a part of. Joey particularly enjoyed seeing the start of programmes such as Time2Shine and Rank Aspire Programme (RAP) over the years that help people on their own leadership journey. "I've tried very hard to get to those openings to see the raw talent that we come across. "Then the programme and Rank's

team does something: the participants grow in confidence. Everything gets slicker." Reflecting on the Foundation's evolution over the years, Joey recalls significant changes and milestones, from the emergence of place-based philanthropy to the emphasis on entrepreneurial initiatives that he is proud to have initiated. The progression of place-based philanthropy was and is exciting. Joey

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**"My thought was to create an entrepreneurial strand, to give people a leg up; a chance to develop their talents and shine in their chosen careers."**

shared that it has been quite a journey. "To think that we woke up one day and said we were going to do place-based giving, is far from the truth. It's always been the executive 'kicking the tires' and getting the feel for a place." Rank's place-based journey started



in 2001 in Burnley. Since then, it has taken Joey from Essex to Blackpool, Corby to Dundee, and back south to Plymouth.

Joey's recalls a visit to Jaywick, in Essex when Rank gave £10,000 to local people along with the authority to decide how to spend it. They

choose to give out grants of up to £200 to applicants and scrutinised each application themselves. Joey explains that as Chair he was concerned that as the gifts got larger the Foundation was giving away its responsibility, but he says he was persuaded by the executive this was

an innovation worth testing. "While Rank still does its due diligence we don't interfere with local people's plans. They understand what's going on and they know how local people work. Each place has been incredible because of the learning that we've taken from - and to - each area. It's >>

quiet learning but it's progressive."

### **Enterprising philanthropy**

When asked what he wanted to do when he first became Chair Joey talked about his desire to create a stream of work that was about investing in potential.

"My thought was to create an

Now, with programmes like Profit for Good, entrepreneurialism is firmly embedded in the Foundation alongside the other major strands of faith, community, and leadership.

What lies ahead?

When asked what his message is for his successor, Joey says:

"We must keep evolving. Listen to the

through his role at CTVC and the occasional visit to Rank's coworking space in Shoreditch, London. But first he must make a start on the list of domestic chores he and wife, Emma, plan to tackle!

Joey said: "It's been a privilege and an honour and the most stimulating thing that I could possibly have ever done." ●

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66

"It's been a privilege and an honour and the most stimulating thing that I could possibly have ever done." 99

entrepreneurial strand, to give people a leg up; a chance to develop their talents and shine in their chosen careers."

Since then, he says "better brains, wiser people have turned it into magical schemes" that help individuals and charities to be entrepreneurial.

"That naturally led to work with social enterprises.

"Social enterprise is the nice bit of business ... you've got a business but you're not being greedy with it. My grandfather always said it wasn't making the money that was the problem, it was how you made it and what you did with it after you've made it."

exec's, challenge them, and welcome their challenge in return."

The one thing Joey always insisted upon from the executive team was "no surprises," emphasising transparency and open communication as essential for him and the leadership team.

"I have been incredibly lucky that David Sanderson was in place. Yes, there have been highs and lows.

There have been moments that we've disagreed about things, but as a working relationship, it has been brilliant. And he's such a good communicator."

Joey's passion for philanthropy and dedication to the Foundation's mission endures. He will remain involved

Feature

# Building relationships

Elenid Roberts describes how the Profit for Good programme brought her organisation the skills and knowledge to transform an empty building into the Cymru Fydd community hub.



**Elenid Roberts**, Transport Coordinator Yr Orsaf

**L**ocated in the heart of Dyffryn Nantlle in Gwynedd, North Wales, Cymru Fydd is part of Yr Orsaf, a community enterprise providing support and opportunities for the community.

This includes an accessible community hub for friendly advice and support with everyday needs such as cost of living, meeting spaces for people to hire for various activities, workshops, and workspace. It also houses a co-working space for individuals to use. There is an enterprise centre for young adults to develop the skills and confidence to start and run their own businesses.

We also provide a community transport scheme using our electric vehicles for vulnerable people. It targets those affected by lack of public transport, a growing problem in rural parts of Wales. We also run an electric bike hire scheme to encourage people to reduce their carbon footprint and improve their health.

Last year, we were fortunate to be part of Rank's Profit for Good Programme. It has allowed us to gain not only financial support but also provided us with the tools and a safe space to develop the skills and knowledge that are required to run a successful and sustainable business.

When we started the Profit for Good Programme, we were in the

early stages of our enterprise, which was transforming an empty building (Cymru Fydd).

During construction, we faced many uncertainties and delays. During this time, with Profit for Good guidance, we built relationships with skill-set organisations such as local colleges to offer varied workshops and training for young entrepreneurs.

We also partnered with three other like-minded community transport organisations based in Gwynedd. Together, we are expanding our

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**“We built relationships with skill-set organisations such as local colleges to offer varied workshops and training for young entrepreneurs.”**

services and developing new bus routes that will allow us to help and reach more individuals.

Through collaboration and intensive marketing, we have generated interest and have started to receive bookings ready for when we open.

Our enterprise is more effective due to the learning through the project. I have gained confidence and increased my knowledge through participating in the session and learning from other experiences. I have had the



opportunity to raise problems I have faced with the Action Learning Set and have been supported in thinking about practical solutions to these challenges.

As a result of the programme, Cymru Fydd and I have increased our impact. We are confidently looking forward to opening our doors at the end of the month. ●

<https://www.yrorsaf.cymru/en/>



Feature

The power of

# circular economies

**Fiona Keir tells of how the Green Hive workshop became self-sufficient in income from selling their recycled products, in order to meet their running costs.**

**Fiona Keir, Operations Officer Green Hive**



**G**reen Hive is a community development and environmental charity based in Nairn, on the Moray coast in the Highlands.

We have been operating since 2015, with 2022 seeing the most significant evolution in the charity,

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**“We became self-sufficient in income from selling our recycled products, meeting the running costs of the workshop space.”**

which coincided with our becoming a Rank Network member.

We have two sites in Nairn. One is a plastic recycling workshop that upskills volunteers and empowers them to create outside furniture using recycled plastic.

We can recycle plastic locally, and the volunteers love nothing more than a local project using locally recycled plastic with the new product being used in the community - an actual circular economy.

The Green Hive workshop has always run as a social enterprise. In 2023, we became self-sufficient in

income from selling our recycled products.

This has been a target to reach in the four years since it opened and one we are proud of.

Some of our recycled plastic benches can be found outside the Citizen’s Advice Bureau. A custom-made accessible picnic bench is on the riverside beside the kids’ playpark, and we are about to install a newly designed table and seating at the beachfront as part of a new accessible path project.

We expanded in 2022 with the acquisition of Seaman’s Hall. We were successfully inducted into the Profit for Good programme at a timely point when we looked to create a sustainable community hub in a Victorian community hall that had been out of public use for some time.

Last year was a whirlwind of learning for our staff as we appointed new positions and embedded an ethos of social enterprise across all business aspects.

Even our Outdoor Volunteering section took on the task of diversifying income streams. It was successful in gaining commissions to teach other community groups how to create community orchards and to share learning about social media

and volunteer tracking software that we use. With a new riverside location, our e-bike hires exceeded expectations, and we continue to look at ways to expand our offer to the community and visitors sustainably.

We were successful in securing a Time to Shine candidate in January 2024, and already, we have seen a significant increase in our capacity to run fabric workshops. Using fabric diverted from landfill, we’re teaching the community how to sew. One of our biggest successes in this area has been parent-child workshops, where parents and children learn together, and young people’s workshops, where the next generation begin their dressmaking futures.

One of the biggest challenges we have faced has always been how to create a social enterprise model without excluding the vulnerable and marginalised in our community through a fair pricing structure for our activities and workshops. We have managed to overcome this hurdle by predominantly using a ‘pay what you can’ offer. This has proven successful and exceeded our income projections in almost all areas where we have deployed this pricing option.

Seaman’s Hall is flourishing and has become a ‘much loved’ community asset. Hall hire from external groups >>

continues to grow month on month. In our first year, we focused on community engagement, ensuring an open-door policy and offering events to bring the community over the threshold. Word has quickly spread, and we now have regular bookings every night of the week and a diverse calendar of external events using our



space. We have formed a crucial connection and partnership with the local leisure trust, Highlife Highland. They use the hall six days out of seven for community fitness classes and will soon offer NHS classes. Everything we have achieved to date, has centred the cornerstones of our work: we are entirely community driven and

volunteer led, and we focus on environmental impact in all we do. <https://www.hub.greenhive.co.uk>



Feature

# In the cycle of improvement

**James Beecher on how Profit for Good helped Access Bike recover from the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and find the road to sustainability**

**James Beecher**, Project manager Creative Sustainability



**A**ccess Bike is a community bike workshop and youth space in an old Mill building in Stroud, Gloucestershire. Our mission is to reduce the financial barriers to owning and maintaining a bike. We're part of a Community Interest Company called Creative Sustainability, which focuses on Inclusion, Empowerment, and Sustainability.

We accept donations of old bikes and use them to engage and train disabled and otherwise marginalised people, predominantly those aged 13-25. Once bikes have been refurbished, they are offered to young people or sold to help fund the project.

Our aim with the Profit for Good scheme is to maximise the community bike workshop's benefit by developing and extending our provision while organising processes to maximise earned income.

The scheme has enabled us to reinvigorate the project after the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and accompanying restrictions. We've increased our opening hours through additional staff and casual employment time and invested in renovating our space – with a new coat of industrial floor paint and a wrap-around wall mural designed and painted in collaboration with our young participants. We've also taken on a new shopfront space in the nearby town centre, which will



provide us with greater visibility and footfall and the opportunity to expand our stock of accessories and sales of these. In 2023, we more than doubled the number of bikes we sold to 115, giving a further 27 bikes away to young people and supporting another 200 people with bike mechanics.

Some of the young people we supported benefitted from improvements to our mentoring offer – 1:1 ratio staffing for young and/or disabled people who need support to participate in the workshop for any reason. We produced a new leaflet and an online referral form, supporting more people and increasing our mentoring income.

We are also collecting interview and observational data through the trial provision of bespoke 'cycle buddy' support that can help people understand what sort of bike they might need, how to check their bike for maintenance issues and develop

riding confidence and road sense. Feedback has been very positive.

Finally, we have started a process that will enable us to launch a membership scheme to generate further income—redesigning our logo and website and building a new email newsletter that now has over 200 subscribers.

We increased our earned income by £11,162 in total. This is excellent news, but it has been essential in a year when we received a £ 20,813 reduction in funding from grants, foundations, and the Lottery.

The Profit for Good programme has enabled us to step things up at Access Bike! We've also received guidance to explore our stakeholder network and partner relationships, our value proposition – and develop skills relevant to managing the project. I've found participating in the programme beneficial regarding conversations with others." ●

<https://www.accessbike.org>

Feature

# The spirit of enterprise

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**Alan Qualtrough considers the positive effect that the Rank Foundation has had on the social enterprise network and entrepreneurship in Plymouth.**

**Alan Qualtrough**, Editor, Stonehouse Voice

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The Rank Foundation's focus on Plymouth sowed the seed of enterprise, which has blossomed vigorously.

Enterprises run by individuals or small teams have flourished, as have larger organisations such as Nudge Community Builders, who specialise in bringing abandoned buildings back to life.

Nudge focuses on Plymouth's Union Street, which they have made one of the most exciting UK streets for urban regeneration.

Their mission to transform derelict buildings into community spaces has been a great success. They have reclaimed more than 4,000 square metres of abandoned structures, a remarkable 37% of the empty buildings on Union Street.

And the Rank Foundation has been with them every square metre of the way.

One of Nudge's most recent acquisitions is the former C101 nightclub, which has been derelict for many years. The other is the Millennium, a vast landmark building and architectural Art Deco gem at the very edge of the city centre.

Nudge was able to buy the Millennium with Art Work Eat and with the support of The Rank Foundation and Power to Change. Coincidentally, the building was a former Gaumont cinema built by Arthur Rank in 1931 to show his films about Methodism. >>



Nudge was set up in September 2017 after Hannah Sloggett and Wendy Hart had been Chair and Vice Chair of Stonehouse Action for 10 years and realised the importance ownership has in how communities can change.

The pair immediately started reclaiming a shop that had stood derelict for years. After volunteers rebuilt and restored it, it's now called Union Corner, a thriving community hub.

**“The Rank Foundation has been with them every square metre of the way.”**

A pub called The Clipper was next to be ‘nudged’. Then came The Plot, an abandoned warehouse space now crammed with small enterprises and a food hall.

Planning permission has been granted to turn the Millennium’s ground floor into eight medium-sized workshops. Although the building has yet to be cleared out, future plans for C103 include social housing and a hydroponic farm.

When Nudge set out in 2017, they received a re-cyclable grant loan from Rank that set them on their way

and replaced the neglect and dereliction with energy and enterprise.

“Without Rank, we wouldn’t have started,” says Wendy.

It’s unusual for a social enterprise to work in the scientific field—especially one so critically important to humanity—but Pollenize is making a success of it.

In 2018, best friends Matt Elmes and Owen Finnie failed to find local honey to relieve hay fever symptoms. They sought innovative and accessible ways to keep honeybees in urban landscapes. They say the rest is history (and the future).

After developing a business plan and undertaking apiculture training, Pollenize set up a network of 11 community beehives with native honeybees across Plymouth landmarks.

Public members could get involved and share the honey crop each year. Pollenize used this to create a lasting positive impact in the city.

In 2020, Owen participated in the Plymouth Rise programme and was coached in all aspects of social enterprise.

Five years on, Pollenize has a team of 12 and has been on an incredible journey with bees, moths, and butterflies. They are investigating their vital role in a healthy planet and,



most importantly, what we can do as humans to protect bees.

Through academic partnerships, innovation, and AI technology, Pollenize is developing ways to track and improve biodiversity, allowing insects to recover and our environment to flourish.

As a result, the social enterprise has gained tremendous momentum. It has become a key player in driving environmental research and social change within the city and beyond.

Their energy and enterprise are impressive. Last year, they raised £119,750 in funding and distributed 1443 seed packets, with 2,000 square metres of wildflower meadow created. A total of 44 individuals joined them for community beekeeping, five bee hotels were installed across Plymouth, and two



innovative products were launched – Floradex and Hornet AI. Floradex is part of their Tech for Good campaign, which was developed in collaboration with the University of Plymouth. It is an AI-powered tool that empowers landowners and businesses to create pollinator-friendly habitats. The Nest Sweeper Project is their most recent crowdfunding campaign involving fighting the invasive species, the Asian hornet.

As they expand nationally, Pollenize now collaborates with farms across the UK, installing research beehives and moth boxes to monitor pollinator health.

In 2010, Gareth Thomas gave up his full-time teaching job to offer an alternative learning route to pupils excluded from school. He hired a small industrial unit in Devonport, Plymouth. He set up Bikespace, a social enterprise that uses bicycles for social and environmental good.

By the time you have read this story, Gareth will have moved to Madrid, where his wife is to work as a full-time teacher. But he will have left behind a remarkable legacy.

In recent months, when he was organising his move to Spain, he transferred the organisation to a Worker Cooperative and will no

longer be involved. “I’m very confident they will succeed,” Gareth says. The full-time Bikespace employees will take the reins and appoint directors; all have equal rights.

Hard work and enterprise are behind Gareth’s success story, but the Rank Foundation helped. Gareth participated in Rank’s Rise programme in Plymouth, which equipped him with the enterprise skills to move forward.

He says, “The Rise programme gave me the confidence and network to pursue more significant contracts. I worked with a fellow Rise participant, Dataplace, to scope out markets. I got a lot of insight from a Witness Statement from Co Cars, Exeter.

The first contract Bikespace won after the Rise programme was a Trail Therapy scheme during which participants learn basic bicycle repair skills and set off on weekly off-road

cycling trips in all weathers. At the programme’s start, they receive a helmet, jacket, gloves, and a recycled bike to keep.

A more lucrative outcome soon followed. Gareth won a contract to operate a Beryl Bike e-bike network in Plymouth, which has 510 bikes and 40 in Saltash, southeast Cornwall. It is the second-most extensive e-bike network in the UK, and it has meant hiring nine full-time staff to maintain and repair the bikes and moving to a larger industrial unit.

“The Rank Rise programme forced me to go networking, and it worked,” says Gareth.

In Plymouth, the initial Rank ripples of 2017 are turning into a torrent of positive social change. ●

<https://www.nudge.community>  
<https://www.pollenize.org.uk>  
<https://www.bikespace.org.uk>



Feature

# Overcoming inequalities

**Varsha Parmer** writes about how Profit for Good enabled Equality in Action to embed equality, diversity and inclusion in service provision across Leicestershire and Rutland.



**Varsha Parmer**, Chief Executive, Equality Action

**W**e applied for Profit for Good in 2021 because we wanted to set up a trading arm that would generate unrestricted income.

Historically, we heavily relied on grant funding to deliver much-needed services to people from vulnerable and disadvantaged backgrounds in Leicestershire.

Over the last few years, the challenges everyone faces have highlighted the need for equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) to be embedded in service provision across all sectors.

Through our work, we know health and well-being are vital areas in which to embed EDI so that people marginalised by society are less reluctant to access health services.

Our charitable aim is to build EDI capacity within communities. We do that by offering training to grassroots organisations, youth groups and the NHS. We work with them to ensure EDI is at the heart of whatever they plan and deliver. This includes ensuring they consider cultural and other barriers in service delivery. Course content includes things like:

- EDI terms and sensitive use of language
- Bias and microaggressions
- Equality Act 2010 and the nine

protected characteristics.

Since our Profit for Good funding, we've helped embed EDI in many of the services and support provided here in Leicestershire and Rutland.

The funding has enabled us to create a flexible pricing strategy so smaller organisations aren't excluded, and it has covered the costs of some casework.

It's a tough sector to work in, but our relationship with Rank is fantastic. They understand the reality of being a small charity.

With Rank's support, we've strengthened our team with a Time to

Care Board (LLR-ICB).

We helped them identify 'connectors' with lived experiences of cancer, hypertension, respiration and long-term COVID-19.

We work with connectors to support them in sharing their experiences and any barriers they may have faced in accessing services, raising awareness, and encouraging others to take up early interventions and manage their health.

We're delighted to have seen an increase in the way service providers and professionals, particularly those in the health sector, take feedback

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**“The challenges everyone faces have highlighted the need for equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) to be embedded in service provision across all sectors.”**

Shine leader, which has set us up for growth.

Profit for Good has helped us open doors we didn't think possible. Last year, we had seven commissions for our EDI training, and we're aiming for 10 this year.

A significant achievement was reaching hundreds of local people by working with the Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Integrated

from service users and incorporate it into their service delivery.

Putting EDI at the heart of their service enables providers to better understand the needs of their target audience, address barriers around culture, language, and digital access, and tailor their services.

Listening to people share their experiences, both negative and positive, and listening to suggestions >>

on what can be done to improve their services is making their services more accessible and increasing their use.

It is a slow process, but we are seeing service users' confidence grow, and they are now less reluctant to see health specialists.

They are also more confident in self-care, spotting signs of health issues, and taking early interventions.

More are now regularly checking their blood pressure etc., and staying on top of cancer screening, etc.. They can see that the professionals are tailoring their services to address cultural needs and sensitive matters in a more inclusive manner.

These results show how an enterprising approach can help increase social impact. ●

<https://www.equalityaction.org.uk>



News

# Fellowship News

**John Hind**, Director of Education  
and Leadership Rank Foundation

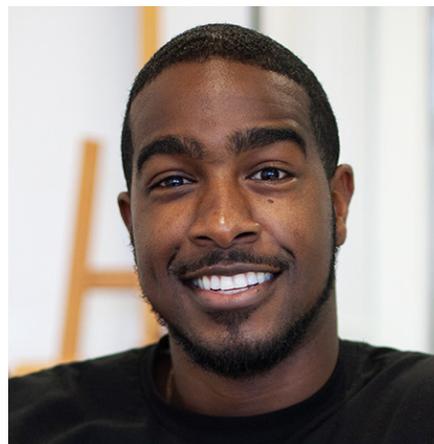


**An update on the development and activities of the Rank Fellowship.**

## The Fellowship: a collective wealth of experience

Whilst leadership remains central to all aspects of the Fellowship, promoting an entrepreneurial spirit – arguably the translation of leadership into action – is rarely far behind. This was never more obvious than in September’s ‘Leadership Event’ for current holders of the School Leadership Award. What had traditionally been a ‘leadership day’ this year blossomed into a two-day event held at University College London. The event

focused on the concept of social enterprise. Inspired by an excellent introduction from Rank Foundation Trustee Joel Davis (pictured right) – himself the founder of Tutors United, at the age of just 16 – the award holders worked in groups to create a proposal for a social enterprise to tackle a problem they had identified. A range of imaginative proposals covering various social issues was presented to the judging panel, with the winning team focusing on childcare costs. Perhaps the most telling of the unanimously positive feedback from award holders was this: It was inspiring and was not an area of my life that I had considered in depth. I now would really like to



contribute to/have a social enterprise in the future. Of course, some award holders were already familiar with social entrepreneurship. Neve Howells-Aitken’s (class of 2022) piece >>

clearly sets out her commitment to the work of 'Hot to Go' while highlighting the learning experiences such work can bring. There are many examples of a similar entrepreneurial spirit within the wider Fellowship. Mariama Techie-Afful's (class of 2009) imaginative start-up (something she has managed alongside caring for her young family and a professional role as a manager with a biochemistry company), serves as a representative of each and every one of the Fellows who have shown their leadership potential by daring to be entrepreneurs.

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**“It was inspiring and was not an area of my life that I had considered in depth. I now would really like to contribute to/have a social enterprise.”**

Mark Herbert's (class of 2003) reflections on his work with Salt and Light show a similarly entrepreneurial spirit whilst also highlighting two further elements of the Rank mission – namely leadership and the Christian faith.

– [john.hind@rankfoundation.com](mailto:john.hind@rankfoundation.com) ●



## Changes at the top

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December saw Lindsey Clay (above) stand down as chair of the Fellowship after seven hugely successful years in post. Her tenure saw a host of innovations and developments: initiatives such as Learning through Leadership, Fellowship Futures and the Welcome to the Fellowship Event; the establishment of “Class of” leadership cohorts; the instigation of class reunions on Zoom; the development of regular newsletters and the 2018 celebration of the Fellowship's fifteen years.

Lindsey's last initiative was restructuring the Fellows Leadership Team to ensure it clearly focuses on the three strands central to its work: community, support and

inspiration. Lindsey's successor – Louisa Searle (class of 2003) – has certainly built on this work in her short time in post.

Herself an excellent example of the entrepreneurial spirit as founder and CEO of First Give – a charity that inspires and equips young people in secondary schools across England and Wales to tackle social issues – Louisa brings first-hand experience of third sector work to the leadership of the Fellowship and is keen to develop this aspect of our work, aligning the Fellowship more clearly with the general purposes of the Foundation. The return of Piers Mudd (pictured below) to the team will no doubt help in this regard, given his global entrepreneurial work in climate justice.





### Keeping in Touch

One of the first actions as chair by Louisa (pictured above) was to hold 2024's first Zoom reunion for the 1998-2001 classes. A small but select group shared interesting and valuable memories of their award.

Peter Ferguson's journey after Monkton Combe School saw him enter the world of recruitment, highlighting again the entrepreneurial spirit amongst the Fellowship.

In 2019, Peter (pictured below) established Ferguson Consulting, a start-up that has become a successful recruitment business.



Peter credits the School Leadership Award with instilling in him a sense of service, perhaps most evident in his passionate advocacy of the needs of children in care. He and his wife have fostered children alongside caring for their own 14- and 16-year-olds, so they have seen the challenges looked after children face first-hand. The Rank Foundation is helping to address this through its financial support for the Royal National Children's Springboard Foundation's Broadening Education Pathways project, which aims to place looked-after children in selected state and independent schools. Like Peter, Amy Barber (pictured top right) credits the School Leadership Award with enabling her to stay in school at Giggleswick. She took all opportunities given to her and considers it to be where she developed a true sense of herself and what life can offer.

Graduating from Brunel University as an Occupational Therapist, she now specialises in brain and spinal injuries and works with those with amputations. Her expertise in these fields makes her an expert witness in legal cases involving such injuries and a case manager supporting patients with catastrophic life changes.

A mother of two children aged



seven and 10, she has also served on their pre-school committee. She is currently a member of their school's PTA, supporting links to the village Environmental Group and other community groups. Both Peter and Amy (pictured above) were delighted to re-engage with the Foundation. Our online reunions are a great opportunity to do this, and we hope many Fellows from the 1995-1998 classes will be able to attend the next such event later in the year.

### Communications

Preparations for the long-awaited unveiling of the Fellowship section on RankNet are almost complete: please watch for the invitation in your email inbox. Our RankNet presence will allow us to share stories about Fellows and about the activities of the Fellowship to highlight the work of the wider Foundation and to highlight forthcoming events. ●

Feature

# The language of heritage

**Mariama**, a first-generation Briton born in the UK to Sierra Leonean parents has developed a deck of cards to help Africans learn their native language and be connected to their cultural roots.

**Mariama** Techie-Afful, Rank Fellowship 2009



I'm Mariama, from the Fellowship class of 2009, a first-generation Briton born in the UK to Sierra Leonean parents, married to a Ghanaian, mother of two and the founder of Nafolan (pronounced Na-foh-lan).

My parents did a fantastic job instilling a sense of cultural pride in my siblings and me.

Although our ability to have conversations in Krio is questionable at best, it's a skill we possess, nonetheless. Many Africans living on the continent are multi-lingual. Meanwhile, those born outside of Africa to African parents tend to only be receptive to bilingualism; that is, they cannot engage in active conversation despite being able to understand the language.

Nafolan (which means 'You should learn') was birthed out of the desire to see more learning resources for my son in Krio and Twi so that he will be connected to his cultural roots, especially as English is the default language in my home.

There are limited resources on the market for parents of African heritage who wish to teach their children their native language, something I discovered in 2021, shortly after my son was born.

With this in mind, I created a deck of 25-27 cards containing words and phrases commonly used in everyday speech and a pronunciation guide.

I launched the business in 2022, and with just over two years of experience, it is still in its infancy.

The reception so far has been overwhelmingly positive, and whilst I am no marketing guru or know every supporter personally, it has been important from the onset to ensure I share the brand's vision with simplicity and clarity.

I have been able to leverage the



**“There are limited resources on the market for parents of African heritage who wish to teach their children their native language”**

power of community, a lesson I first learnt during my Community Action Placement at the Arun Community Church; it is to this that I accredit my success.

Currently, we have four languages spoken by communities across Africa's Western and Eastern coasts (Krio, Twi, Yoruba, and Swahili).

We are working on a series of audio guides to supplement the cards.

There are more than 2000 languages spoken in Africa, so the long-term goal is to be able to provide comprehensive language resources for as many of these languages as possible. ●

<https://nafolan.com>



Feature

# Committing to values that help leaders make good decisions

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**Mark Herbert joined forces with best friend Jon Bircher to equip leaders with better decision-making skills based on true Christian values.**

**Mark Herbert**, Co-founder Salt & Light

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I'm Mark Herbert (Class of 03), co-founder and director at Salt & Light Leadership Coaching. Our company helps leaders and leadership teams make better decisions.

I benefited from the Rank Scholarship during my time at Monkton and have spent the last 20 years in education and not-for-profit leadership, including 10 years in church leadership.

Each of these different contexts was rich with opportunities to develop my leadership skills and help release the leadership in others. I learned more about effective communication, managing conflict and motivating teams.

I published a book, "I'm Not a Leader", in 2021, and began an entrepreneurial journey into leadership coaching. In 2023, I co-founded Salt & Light Coaching Ltd with my friend Jon Bircher, and we work in various sectors, equipping leaders to make better decisions.

As we worked with leaders, we realised that navigating the dynamics around decision-making was a common challenge. Our world needs better leaders, and quality decision-making is one of the marks of outstanding leadership. For us, this is rooted in leaders doing better thinking and asking better questions. We strive to create organisational ecosystems that support a thinking environment, empowering leaders to

make better decisions.

Our world is volatile, and leadership is complex, especially when the stakes are high. Decisions matter because our leadership is visible in our choices and how we make them, demonstrating who we are, how we think, and what we value. We are convinced that every decision has a ripple effect and that our life story unfolds one decision at a time.

Choosing to step away from a familiar career in my mid-thirties and embark on uncharted territory was daunting. The journey involved a steep learning curve, asking

hundreds of questions and building a network. I made mistakes and had to dig deep into reserves of resilience, especially with the additional pressures of supporting a young family while starting a new company from scratch. Looking back, the leadership foundations I have drawn upon daily were founded during my time at school. The opportunities that Rank gave me to develop my leadership as a teenager started the ripples that continue to spread today.



People often ask us - "Where does the name Salt & Light come from?"

Salt and Light are Biblical metaphors. We work with leaders from multiple faiths or none, but as Christians, Jon and I are committed

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**"Salt & Light is committed to helping grow people as much as delivering quality work, which is why decision-making is such an interesting area of focus."**

to being Salt and Light as Jesus encourages his followers. For us, this means adding flavour and value to our coaching conversations, spotlighting the genius in others, and shining a light on a clear path ahead.

At Salt & Light, one of our core values is to walk alongside our clients, nurturing lasting relationships and offering a mix of challenge and support. ●

<https://www.saltlightcoaching.com>

Feature

# Enterprise on the menu



**Neve Howells-Aitken was part of a management team that ran a successful student social enterprise at a south Wales college, which provided sustainable, inclusive, and affordable meals for the student body.**

**Neve Howells-Aitken** Rank Fellow

**H**ot to Go (HTG) is a student-run social enterprise based in UWC Atlantic College, which serves as a restaurant for the student body. It was founded by a student in 2019 and has been dedicated to fulfilling its three core values on campus and in the wider South Wales community: charity, community, and sustainability. HTG attempts to emulate a working restaurant as closely as possible; we have a head chef, sous chef, and head pastry chef who lead a team of



**“Our financial model is also sustainable so that our impact on the community is long-lasting and can continue”**

more than twenty people in the kitchen weekly. The front-of-house team has bartenders, baristas, head waitresses and a dedicated team of over 20 rotating waitstaff. I got involved in HTG in August of 2022 and worked as part of the management team until March 2024, when I passed down the position as my time at the college ended.

Charity, being one of the core values at HTG, means our impact on the community is always at the forefront of events and services. This year, we have successfully donated over £3,500 to scholarship fundraisers at the college to directly impact our college community. This will help future students by contributing to the financial aid required to attend UWC. Additionally, we strive to make Hot to Go as inclusive as possible. This is vital as we aim to serve all students, who are a highly diverse group of people in many ways. The gap between the socio-economic backgrounds of Atlantic College students is relatively large; however, we never want this to stop people from affording our food

and enjoying themselves with us. Because of this, we offer a free dining experience for those who qualify for the school’s ‘Student Financial Services’. This has sometimes been challenging, as the costs we incur have risen dramatically over the last two years due to the cost-of-living crisis. First and foremost, we are a charity, so our aim to serve all students on campus has been unwavering.

Our efforts to be sustainable have also proved challenging; however, they have been a brilliant endeavour for growth and learning. HTG has always been vegetarian to minimise emissions and make food accessible to as many people as possible. At the >>

beginning of the year, I completed a research project analysing the impacts of only using hyper-locally sourced ingredients on HTG. The limited produce we would have access to, with the infrastructure and resources available, would negatively impact our desire to share global culture and possibly limit the menu, which would restrict customers and our impact on the charity. We are

able to serve an extremely diverse menu because of our collaborations with national groups on campus and the unique background of every chef. People love to come and enjoy the delicious dishes we prepare. We can unite our campus community as a team, serving between 50 to 100 students and staff weekly. Hot to Go has been an incredible experience that I will value for the rest

of my life. Not only has it taught me the intricacies of running an enterprise, ignited a passion for food and helped me nurture personal skills surrounding finance, leadership, and organisation; but it has allowed me to enjoy making a positive impact on my community. ●

<https://www.uwcatlantic.org>





# Ripples



**The Rank Foundation** works in communities across the UK to encourage leaders, develop entrepreneurial mindsets and form strong Networks that improve life.

Founded in 1953 by the flour miller and film maker Arthur Rank, the Foundation is built on his Christian faith, enterprising spirit and commitment to community. During his lifetime, Arthur spotted opportunities to innovate, growing a multi-million pound empire. He remained committed to helping and encouraging others, describing young people as “the seed corn of the future and the leaders of tomorrow”.

Today, the Rank Foundation continues to support the leaders of tomorrow and encourage enterprise for social good.

Our grant programmes focus on:

- Leadership – nurturing purposeful, confident and inspiring leaders who drive positive change.
- Enterprise – developing resilient, impactful organisations that contribute positively to the people and places they serve.
- Community – building on and investing in a community’s strengths.
- Faith – engaging in respectful conversations about faith in all its forms.

At the heart of the Foundation, is our supportive Network of over 1,500 leaders working in communities across the UK.

Together, they learn, share and connect to tackle society’s challenges. We build deep and lasting relationships of support with our Network, going beyond traditional funding to philanthropy based on mutual respect, trust and empathy.

Our thriving Network leads positive change to improve life in the communities they cherish.

**The Rank Foundation**  
21 Garden Walk, London, EC2A 3EQ  
Charity Number 276976