

Somerset Co-operative Services



Corporate CV

Somerset Co-operative Services (SCS) mission is to promote the application of international co-operative principles, to help people establish new co-operative and social enterprises and to enable them to work together to be financially, environmentally and socially sustainable. We aim to provide high quality services to our user members and secure, fairly rewarded work to our worker members.

SCS CIC began trading in March 2008. Although based in Somerset we exploit our specialist expertise to fill important niches in the co-operative movement nationally.

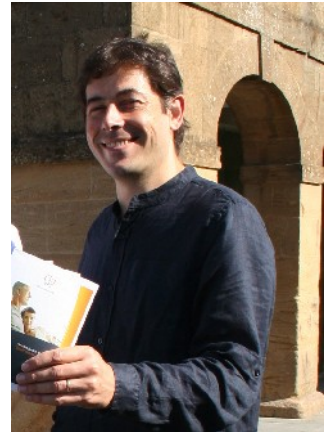
Alex Lawrie

Qualifications

- BA Politics & Parliamentary Studies
- SFEDI Accredited Social Enterprise Advisor

Key Skills

Alex is an expert social enterprise advisor with significant experience in legal structures, financial management, community share offers and co-operative housing. With over 14 years' experience in the sector, his in depth understanding of the different legal structures available for social economy organisations and of the range of options available with respect to raising finance, provides clients with the confidence to make the right choices, whether at start up or when considering options for growth or diversification.



Experience

Alex is the author of the Somerset Rules - a new and unique set of I&PS Model Rules for a multistakeholder co-operative, combining the accountability and democracy of co-ops with the social reporting and investment opportunities associated with social enterprise. The Somerset Rules were devised as a result of a policy review by the Financial Services Authority (FSA) in 2006 which for the first time permitted non-user member investment, allowing UK co-operatives to invite into membership natural and legal persons who wish to invest, but not otherwise participate in the business of the society. The Somerset Rules are also unique in that they include a requirement for a social audit, which for the first time in the UK, makes it incumbent on co-operatives registering using these rules to produce an annual audit measuring their achievement of social goals.

He is also the author of Simply Finance – a Co-operatives UK publication written for people working

A Community Interest Company no. 6018662

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in the social and community enterprise sector seeking to finance a new business, or an existing business that is growing or diversifying.

Using the Somerset Rules, he has managed several community share issues, raising finance for GOCO Co-operative, Lightweight Community Transport, Somerset Co-operative and Community Land Trust and the Ecological Land Co-operative.

Publications

1994 Coal and Energy Policy (Yorkshire and Humberside Green Party)

1996 Local Party Support Guide (Green Party)

2000 Empowering the Earth (Green Books)

2005 (with Paul Sander-Jackson) Social Enterprise Support in Somerset (Somerset County Council)

2007 How to set up a Secondary Co-operative (SCS CIC)

2010 Light Rail Innovation (Lightweight Community Transport)

2011 Simply Finance (Co-operatives UK)

Kate Whittle

Qualifications

- BA (Hons) Social Science;
- MA Post Compulsory Education & Training
- Learn To Teach Online
- SFEDI Accredited Social Enterprise Advisor
- ILMVRQ Level 5 Certificate in Social Enterprise Advice



Key Skills

A self-motivated and enthusiastic team player, with excellent communication skills and a deep understanding of what makes a team function effectively. Over 25 years' experience in co-operative training and facilitation helps Kate provide support for third sector enterprises, building sustainability through robust organisational structures and efficient participative processes.

Relevant Experience

Training

- Social Enterprise Core Practice Modules - Introductory courses for Business Link Advisors: London, Manchester and Durham
- Associate trainer and Internal Verifier for the ILMVRQ Level 5 Certificate and Diploma in Social Enterprise Support run by Baker Brown Associates.

Co-operative development

- Choosing the right legal structure; registrations with FSA & Companies House
- Governance support and advice
- Business planning
- Amendments to Somerset Model Rules (I&PS)
- Presentations to seminars & working breakfast sessions on a range of co-operative topics

GOCO Co-operative Secretary: wide ranging role, including briefing the Board, ensuring good governance, providing support for the Chair, AGM arrangements including elections to the Board; issuing share certificates and maintaining an up to date members' register.

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Publications

From conflict to co-operation - a series of cartoon booklets for Co-operatives UK designed to help co-operatives deal with inevitable conflict when it arises and avoid unnecessary conflict

<http://www.uk.coop/fromconflict2co-operation>

Sandra Aldworth

Sandra qualified as a Chartered Accountant in 1986 and is a member of the Tax and Finance and Management Faculties of the Institute of Chartered Accountants. She worked in practice until 1990 and then branched out into industry. Most recently working as South West Finance Manager for the Museums Libraries and Archives Council, Sandra is now fully self employed. She has a wide variety of experience in many different industries. She is a founder member of SCS, and is responsible for year end accounts for over fifteen co-operatives and social enterprises, in some cases also providing payroll and quarterly management accounts.



SCS CIC is a co-operative development body member of Co-ops UK and an associate member of Radical Routes.

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