

# Clydesdale Community Initiatives

Clydesdale Community Initiatives is a social firm which builds community gardens and wood crafted products in the community of Clydesdale, South Lanarkshire. CCI employs as volunteers and trainees people who are often excluded from the community and have a wide range of social care needs. This includes people who experience or are recovering from mental health difficulties, individuals with autism and people with learning disabilities. Volunteers work alongside expert craftsmen, members of the public and local community groups to design and create beautiful gardens, unique pieces of furniture and other items commissioned by community groups, schools and other organisations.

CCI offers volunteers the opportunity to engage in worthwhile projects which enable them to build vocational and personal skills and confidence and to overcome barriers to participation in community life and the world of work and education. Volunteers are involved in the practical elements of creating projects, design and promotion of products as well as development and promotion of CCI itself. Volunteers and trainees provide peer support and mentoring to other project members.

Since its inception in 2002, CCI has developed strong social care partnerships with statutory (NHS Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire Council), non-statutory (Community Service Volunteers) and voluntary organisations (Scottish Society for Autism, Princes Trust, COVEY). Working closely with partners, CCI can ensure that each individual who chooses to volunteer has a programme of activity and involvement that the individual has set for him or herself.

CCI uses an innovative evaluation approach which seeks to identify social return on investment and this involves looking at the contribution and benefits the project makes to the lives of the volunteers themselves. This includes measurement of health and social benefits, practical skills development, social integration, community involvement and social responsibility.

## **Contact:**

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