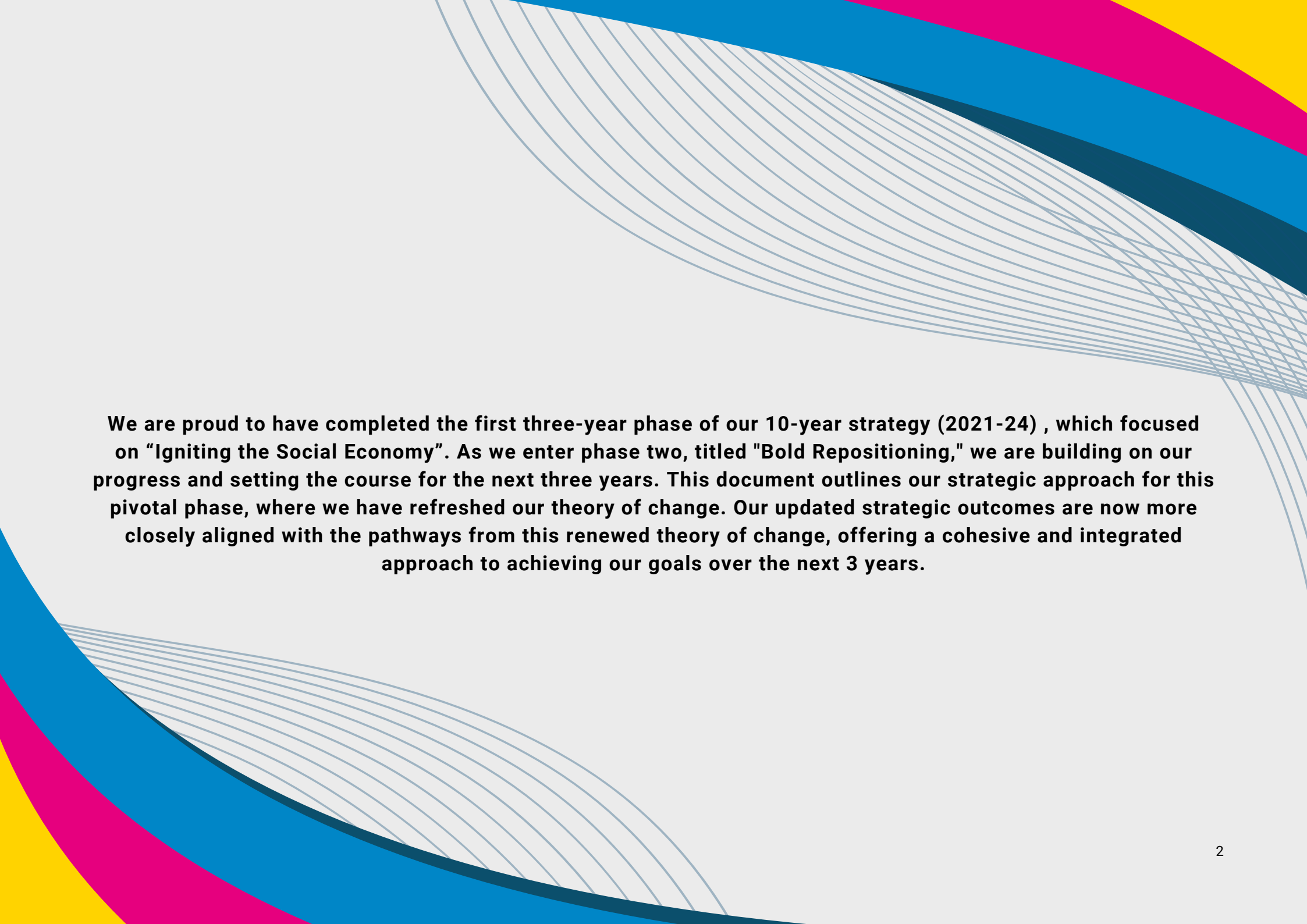




SSE Strategy 25-28

BOLD REPOSITIONING

The background features a series of curved, overlapping lines in shades of blue, pink, and yellow, creating a dynamic, wave-like pattern. The lines are more densely packed in the upper right and lower left corners, tapering off towards the center.

We are proud to have completed the first three-year phase of our 10-year strategy (2021-24) , which focused on “Igniting the Social Economy”. As we enter phase two, titled "Bold Repositioning," we are building on our progress and setting the course for the next three years. This document outlines our strategic approach for this pivotal phase, where we have refreshed our theory of change. Our updated strategic outcomes are now more closely aligned with the pathways from this renewed theory of change, offering a cohesive and integrated approach to achieving our goals over the next 3 years.

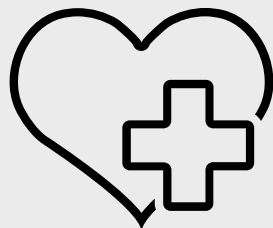
SSE Strategy 25-28

We can't fix issues like poverty, inequality, health and climate change alone. We are fully conscious of the scale of the challenge that faces the country and the urgent need to respond. That's why the School for Social Entrepreneurs exists, to empower and equip people with entrepreneurial ideas and solutions to grow the social economy. The social economy is a movement of organisations and enterprises that prioritise people and planet. Together, we are committed to tackling the greatest social and environmental challenges of our time.

The most reported issues for the UK public in 2024 are¹:



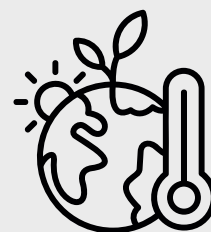
*Cost of Living
Crisis*



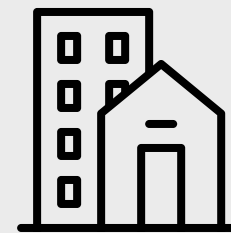
Health (NHS)



The Economy



*Climate change &
the environment*



Housing



Crime

Data² shows that these issues impact some groups disproportionately, including:



People with disabilities



LGBTQ+



*Racialised and minoritised
communities³*



Women

¹: Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain - Office for National Statistics

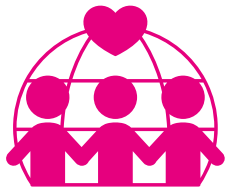
²: What do the data tell us about 'Is Britain Fairer'? – UK Data Service

³: We know that language about identity is personal, and these terms won't feel right to everyone. We mean people who may identify as Black, Brown, bi- or multi-racial, being from a diaspora, having Asian/African/Caribbean/Latinx/Middle Eastern/Indigenous heritage, as a "person of colour", Jewish, and/or from a white ethnic minority such as Gypsy, Roma, Traveller. We have consulted our community to shape this language.

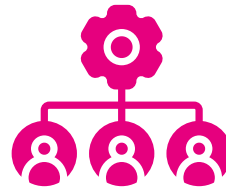
Our vision is: A socially and environmentally just society where the potential of all people is fully realised.

Our mission is: To empower and equip people with entrepreneurial ideas and solutions to grow the social economy in order to tackle the greatest social and environmental challenges of our time.

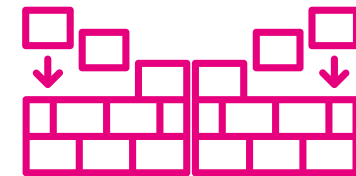
Our organisational outcomes are:



Empowered and equipped
social entrepreneurs
achieving social, economic
and environmental renewal
in their communities



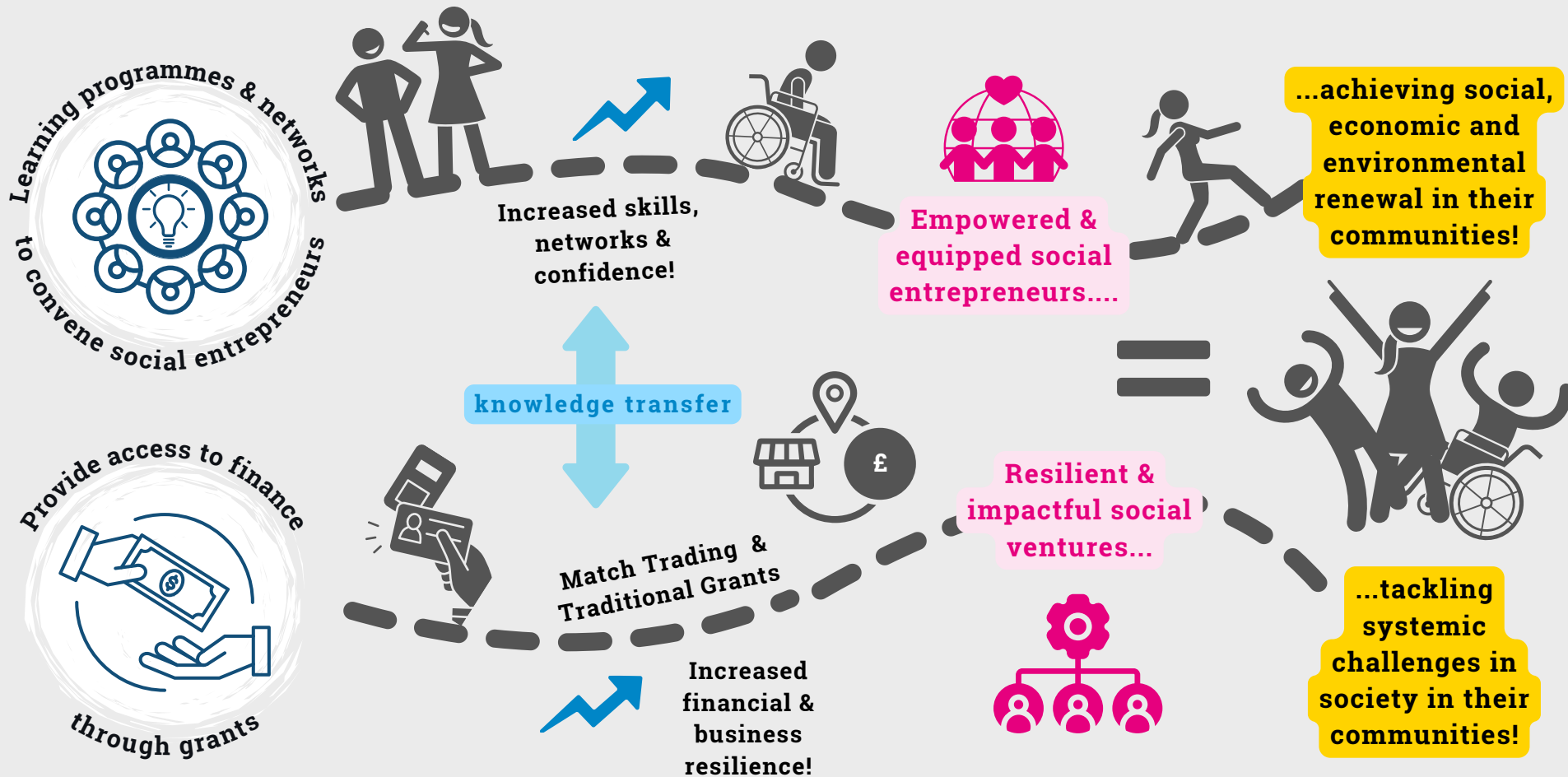
Resilient and impactful
social ventures tackling
systemic challenges in
society in their
communities



Policy and practice
influenced to create
the foundations for
social enterprises to
thrive

We achieve our vision, mission and outcomes through three pathways, as illustrated in our Theory of Change.

THEORY OF CHANGE



Amplifying voices of marginalised entrepreneurs.



Greater awareness of social entrepreneurs.

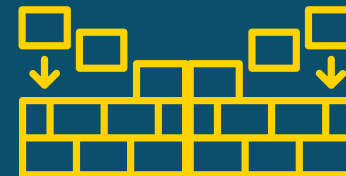
Increased sector funding.



Policy & Practice influenced...



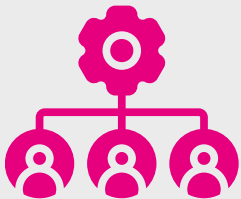
...to create the foundations for social ventures to thrive!





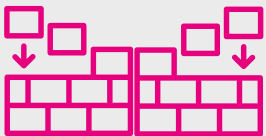
Outcome 1: Empowered and equipped social entrepreneurs achieving social, economic and environmental renewal in their communities

The first pathway in the theory of change illustrates how we achieve outcome 1 of our strategy. We work alongside and in service to social entrepreneurs by running accessible learning programmes. This increases their business skills, social impact skills, networks, healthy resilience, confidence, power and agency, which leads to empowered and equipped social entrepreneurs who in turn run resilient and impactful social ventures, creating change in their communities and beyond.



Outcome 2: Resilient and impactful social ventures tackling systemic challenges in society in their communities

The second pathway in our theory of change illustrates how we achieve outcome 2. We support social entrepreneurs in building resilient, impactful social ventures by providing access to finance. Many social entrepreneurs require funding, particularly in underserved markets where traditional businesses avoid operating due to higher costs. Social ventures address these needs but often rely on grant funding. Match Trading grants help shift the focus from chasing grants to creating sustainable business models, fostering resilient social ventures that strengthen the social economy.



Outcome 3: Policy and practice influenced to create the foundations for social enterprises to thrive

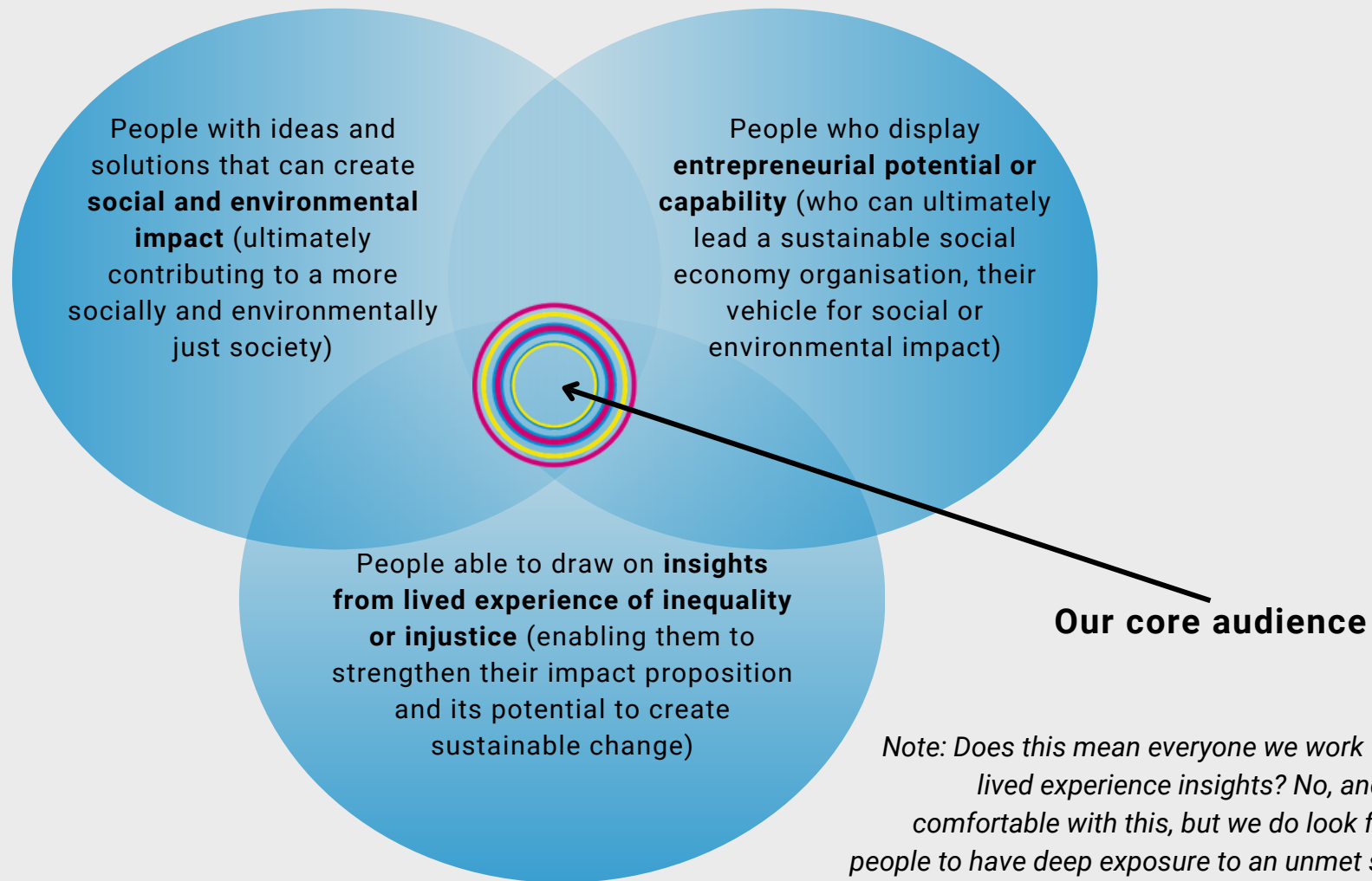
The third pathway in our theory of change illustrates how we achieve outcome 3. We harness our data and evidence, form partnerships and collaborate within and outside the sector to influence policy at local and national levels. This leads to an increase in money in the sector and more equally distributed finance for social entrepreneurs, more favourable policies for social ventures, and an increased mainstream awareness of social entrepreneurs and ventures. Collectively these changes contribute to building a strong social economy.

The three pathways build on each other

The three pathways interact and build on each other and together achieve our vision and mission. We believe that empowered and equipped social entrepreneurs are part of creating resilient and impactful social ventures and that in turn these contribute to a strong social economy to tackle the greatest social and environmental challenges of our time.

Social entrepreneurs and social ventures that we partner with:

We believe that individuals with lived experience of the issues that they are tackling are best placed to make the most effective change in tackling the greatest social and environmental challenges of our time. Therefore, we aim to overrepresent the underrepresented on our programmes.



Note: Does this mean everyone we work with has lived experience insights? No, and we are comfortable with this, but we do look for these people to have deep exposure to an unmet social or environmental need to inform their idea or solution.

The context social entrepreneurs are operating in:

Political change

The shifting landscape of government priorities, including the anticipated acceleration of devolution, granting more powers to counties, mayors, and combined authorities. This is expected to have a significant impact on key areas such as public health and housing, particularly in line with Labour's current focus areas.

Economic instability

Rising costs, challenging market conditions, and fragmented funding are creating significant hurdles. Labour's emphasis on economic growth to fund public services increases the importance of leverage, which can disadvantage poorer communities at the end of the market, while favouring social investment and scaling.

Complex social issues

Growing inequality and societal division, fuelled by misinformation, is intensifying the complexity of social challenges. Addressing these issues requires multifaceted approaches from social enterprises. Marginalised groups also face additional barriers to entry, further complicating efforts to create inclusive solutions.

Fast-moving tech

Advances in AI and other tech offer opportunities for greater efficiency but also heighten the risk of widening the digital divide. These technological developments also increase the spread of misinformation. Additionally, the growing importance of data is accelerating its role in driving evidence-based public spending decisions.

Complex legal structures

Social entrepreneurs face increasingly complex legal frameworks. The rise of mission-driven businesses presents both opportunities and challenges. Social enterprise is no longer the sole leader in this space, and the blurred lines between business models make it harder for traditional social enterprises to differentiate themselves.

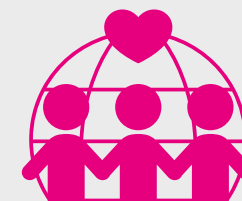
An accelerating climate crisis

The climate crisis requires focusing on a "just transition" that balances environmental action with social equity. Rather than only assessing business impacts, social enterprises must prioritise efforts that address broader societal effects and ensure vulnerable communities are supported in this transition.

Our 2025-2028 strategy refresh incorporates both the opportunities and challenges presented by this evolving landscape, along with feedback from social entrepreneurs on our strengths and areas for improvement. This input has shaped the strategic focus areas for each of our organisational outcomes.

We are fully conscious of the scale of the challenge that faces the country (see page 2), and understand the significant contribution that social entrepreneurs (and SSE) can play. This strategic framework does not however attempt to quantify our ambitions in this regard. Rather it provides a framework, which we believe gives us the maximum flexibility to respond to opportunities and thus maximise our contribution to the challenges of our time.

Outcome 1: Empowered and equipped social entrepreneurs achieving social, economic and environmental renewal in their communities



We are working to ensure that social entrepreneurs:

- improve the lives of those in their communities
- are empowered with increased skills to be social leaders
- grow an extensive network
- increase in confidence and healthy resilience
- develop their skills in leading on environmental sustainability and EDI (equity diversity & inclusion)

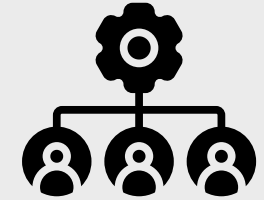
We achieve this through:

- serving social entrepreneurs through accessible action-based learning programmes
- empower and equip fellows of SSE
- recruiting diverse social entrepreneurs to place and theme-based opportunities
- building a strong regional presence with a focus on broken markets

Strategic focus areas for 2025-2028

- **Convene markets and facilitate connections** for social entrepreneurs with market makers and key local players, increasing the number of witnesses and experts who are decision makers and business leaders in positions, which enable them to bring connections and resources to the social entrepreneurs in the room, and connect them to local and national ecosystems.
- **Increase focus on commercial acumen** and wider skills needed to run a business in the current context through our learning programmes, and place greater emphasis on skills for strengthening income generation. This includes a stronger focus on increasing traded income and enhancing the commercial acumen of our learning interventions as well as navigating AI, data management and social polarisation.
- **Convene social entrepreneurs working on similar themes** and Labour's five missions to multiply their impact through working together. Aggregating our impact data across themes to demonstrate the social value we are part of catalysing.
- **Support social entrepreneurs to be part of the 'just transition'** and tackle the climate crisis by embedding environmental sustainability into their work.
- **Embed an evidence-based learning approach**, contributing to a "What Works" centre with better data and insights, to ensure we tailor our content to adapt to an ever changing external context, and ensure learning is relevant and impactful for social entrepreneurs at all levels.
- **Reframe our Fellows offer** to integrate all the support we provide to social entrepreneurs, including trade-up and scale-up assistance, while fostering connections with other social entrepreneurs and tracking their SSE journey.

Outcome 2: Resilient and impactful social ventures tackling systemic challenges in society in their communities



We are working to ensure that social entrepreneurs:

- improve the lives of those in their communities
- increase their traded income
- increase their business resilience
- increase their organisational impact

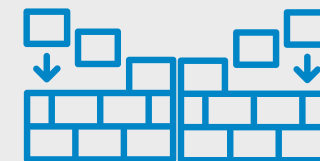
We achieve this through:

- providing access to finance through Match Trading grants
- providing access to finance through traditional grants and other relevant financial support mechanisms

Strategic focus areas for 2025-2028

- **Develop and promote our flagship Match Trading initiative**, clarifying and amplifying our USP in the market.
- **Evolve our social investment strategy** including developing relevant partnerships.
- **Demonstrate and collate evidence** of how Match-trading enables social ventures to scale their social impact.
- Support social entrepreneurs to move from addressing the symptoms, to **addressing the causes** of social impact issues, whilst adopting business models which build sustainability and resilience.
- **Evidence based grant making:** Focus on evidence based grant making, understanding what works and what doesn't, and using this knowledge to drive Trading performance. Developing a "What Works" centre with better data and insights could be key in improving our impact and decision-making.

Outcome 3: Policy and practice influenced to create the foundations for social enterprises to thrive



We are working to ensure that:

- there are more favorable and equitable policies in place for social ventures
- we amplify the voices of social entrepreneurs from across the UK

We achieve this through:

- influencing national policy
- engaging local government
- collecting and sharing data and evidence
- sector collaborations
- forming partnerships with private sector, VCSE and government

Strategic focus areas for 2025-2028

- **Strategic alignment with funder, government and corporate priorities:** Position ourselves as a key partner for government to achieve their economic and social impact aims.
- Position ourselves as a **vehicle for achieving social value, and a thought leader in social enterprise**, with a focus on social entrepreneurship as a model for regenerating the UK economy. This will be backed and evidenced by solid data, demonstrating the multiplier effect and economic return of every £ invested.
- **Policy influence and government engagement:** It's vital to align our policy influence with government priorities, particularly regarding Match Trading. We will demonstrate how Match Trading can be leveraged as a policy tool to support local growth in key areas.
- **Expand our data and public affairs work**, positioning ourselves as a trusted data aggregator: enhancing our role in gathering and analysing reliable, robust data. This will strengthen our ability to lead high-profile research initiatives, such as Treasury-supported studies into business models, optimal trading ratios, or "invest to save" initiatives, and build strong relationships with political figures and stakeholders.
- **Collaborate with research institutions and maximising our evaluations:** Strengthening partnerships with research institutions offers another avenue for influence.

Enabling the 2025-28 Strategy

The following areas are essential within SSE to ensure successful delivery of the strategy:



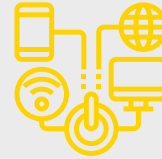
Financial Resilience

- Strong capital reserves and financial planning
- Cost optimisation and operational efficiency
- Profitable programmes
- Diverse revenue streams: number and sector



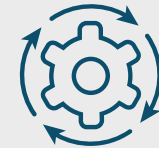
People Excellence

- A diverse workforce
- High performing, accountable staff
- Strong talent acquisition and development



Digital Optimisation

- Enhanced digital infrastructure
- Improved data analytics and decision-making automation
- Enhanced customer facing digital experience (application, online learning and grants)
- Digital transformation projects



Operations & Governance

- Process optimisation and automation
- Strong project management approach



Climate Action

- Better tracking of our environmental data
- Improving our environmental footprint
- Embed climate action in operations



Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

- Thought leaders shifting EDI narrative towards agency that contributes to increased social cohesion and community building
- Data-driven whole lifecycle approach (recruitment, enrolment, experience, outcomes) with staff and students



Branding, marketing & outreach

- Showcase and package SSE's data to communicate our impact, in alignment with Labour's five missions
- Elevate our brand by convening and leading in our space through conscious funded brand activities
- Thought leaders in social entrepreneurship and growing the social economy
- Clearly defined brand and messaging
- Clear audience segmentation and appropriate corresponding messaging

Bold Repositioning: 2025-2028

- Intentional pursuit of re-positioning drawing on 'test and learn' evidence and supported by strategy aligned income generation
- Significant growth in trading & unrestricted income (including through higher margins and diversified income streams), driving innovation & resilience
- Established thought leader with regular sharing of learning / insights within & beyond sector
- Relational vs transactional approach embedded within our community.

Scaling Impact: 2028-2031

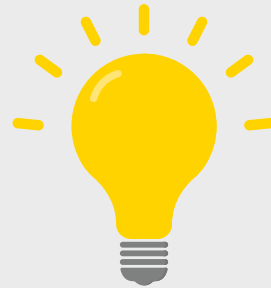
- Intentional growth in scale of activity & impact based on renewed offer & financial model
- Diversified income streams generating annual trading returns to reinvest into the business
- Restricted programme income <50%
- Endowment secured towards fixing broken markets
- Significantly enhanced profile, UK & internationally

Our values



Integrity

We do what we say we're going to do. We take ownership and responsibility for our actions. We rely on open, authentic relationships.



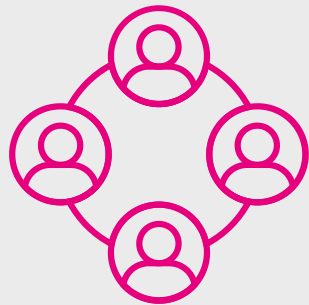
Entrepreneurial

We innovate with purpose to create value and deliver results. Bold and ambitious in our thinking, we blend creativity and commercial acumen to maximise impact. Resourceful and solutions-focused, we ensure our actions drive sustainable growth and meaningful outcomes.



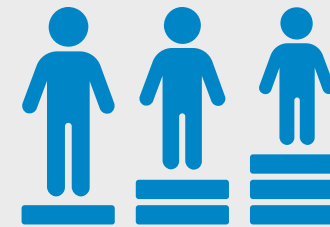
Impactful

Everything we do is ultimately about creating impact and achieving our vision and mission. We are impact-focused in all we do.



Collaborative

We achieve more when we work together and partner with others. We are in service to our social entrepreneurs and fellows and are committed to amplifying their work. We have fun together. We ask others for help so we can find solutions.



Equitable

We value talent, merit and insights. We recognise that due to circumstances and systems some people face more challenges to achieve the same goal and therefore we aim to amplify the practice of the underrepresented in our programmes and in how we work.