

To: Economy and Regeneration Policy Board

On: 29 August 2023

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Invest in Renfrewshire: Start-Up Street Update

1. Summary

- 1.1 Further to previous reports regarding the development of Start-Up Street initiatives in Paisley, Johnstone and Renfrew this report provides a short update on progress across all three centres which are at 100% occupancy.
- 1.2 Start-Up Street is an economic development initiative which aims to help grow the local economy by supporting start-up businesses looking to make their first step into commercial premises.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Board members are asked to:
 - (i) Note the overview and progress of the Start-Up Street developments which are all now at 100% occupancy and provide 26 supported incubation space and 7 hot desking spaces to local businesses.

3. Overview

- 3.1 Start-Up Street is an economic development initiative in Renfrewshire offering new and growing businesses low-cost, high-quality workspace and wraparound support to nurture and develop early-stage business.

- 3.2 Initially approved by the Leadership Board in December 2018 the Start-Up Street proposal responded to the local need for low-cost business space with ongoing business advice and support. It aimed to encourage business growth and support the leap into commercial premises.
- 3.3 The incubation spaces are offered for a maximum of 2 years to small or early-stage businesses with a staged rental model which increases over the 2 years. At the end of the contract period the business will be paying the full rental value and can then be supported to move to an alternative commercial space in the Renfrewshire area.
- 3.4 The Start Up Street model was developed to address as many local requirements as possible and each project aims to provide a high degree of added value such as utilising long term vacant premises, supporting the local regeneration of the area, supporting under-represented groups and identifying where the greatest impacts can be made.

4. Start-Up Street Paisley

- 4.1 The first Start-Up Street initiative was developed at refurbished Council owned commercial units at 65-71 George Street, Paisley. Opening in October 2020 it provides 12 managed workspaces for early stage businesses. The centre was fully occupied within the first 3 months and due to the success, and the demand for places, plans for further centres are being developed.
- 4.2 Start-Up Street Paisley is delivered in partnership with Launch IT, Paisley, a social enterprise with a focus on youth entrepreneurship. Around half of the spaces are specifically for young entrepreneurs.
- 4.3 Since opening, Start-Up Street Paisley has provided support to 67 local businesses. Initial tenants have completed the 2-year support offer and have moved out. Launch It have published a short report (attached as Appendix 1) with an overview of the first few years and highlighting some of the businesses supported.
- 4.4 Demand for units and support remains high with a waiting list in place to ensure that new businesses can be supported as spaces within the centre become available.
- 4.5 All 12 business units are currently fully occupied with a range of businesses which include a local radio station, clothing designer, tailoring services, ecommerce retail, beauty therapy, upcycling, and diving tuition.
- 4.6 In addition to the managed workspaces, Start-Up Street Paisley offers a tailored programme of support to pre-start businesses which aims to help them progress their business idea to start-up stage creating a culture of entrepreneurship in Renfrewshire.

5. Start-Up Street Johnstone

- 5.1 Start Up Street Johnstone is delivered in partnership with Active Communities, an award-winning health and wellbeing charity in Renfrewshire.
- 5.2 Based at Station 7, Quarry Street, Johnstone the managed workspaces opened in August 2022 providing 4 well-appointed business units in redeveloped garage areas at the centre. In line with the remit of Active Communities, Start-Up Street Johnstone also has a focus on health and wellbeing businesses. Business advice and support is provided by the Council's Economic Development Service with Active Communities acting as landlord.
- 5.3 In the first year of operating two of the initial four tenants (a creative therapies training company and healthy eating catering company) grew at a quicker rate than anticipated and successfully progressed to renting their own commercial premises within Johnstone.
- 5.4 Two new businesses quickly replaced the two who moved on and the centre is currently fully occupied with four businesses offering services in podiatry, baby massage classes, a health and wellbeing clinic and physiotherapy.
- 5.5 All four businesses are developing well, and further reports and future evaluations will be brought back to Board in due course.

6. Start-Up Street Renfrew

- 6.1 The third centre to open was Start Up Street Renfrew, based at 7-13 Dunlop Crescent where long term vacant Council retail units were fully refurbished to provide 10 modern managed workspaces of different sizes to accommodate business needs and an additional range of hot-desking spaces.
- 6.2 Start-Up Street Renfrew is managed by Inspirent Ltd, a very successful and well-established not-for-profit business consultancy. Inspirent have successfully delivered a range of Business Gateway services in Renfrewshire, across many years, since they were established in 1987.
- 6.3 Start-Up Street Renfrew opened in February 2023 and, following two successful open days, the centre is now fully occupied by a range of businesses. The new centre hosts start-ups including product design and innovation, photographer, podcasting studio, audiologist, physiotherapy, counselling service, financial coaching, and children's sports coaching.
- 6.4 In addition to the managed workspaces, the centre uniquely has 7 co-working and hot desking spaces which offer a flexible business space for very early stage businesses who are still planning their business proposals but with plans to progress to commercial premises in the future.
- 6.5 All businesses within the centre have access to an enterprise manager as well as a Council Business Start-Up advisor.

- 6.6 Further reports will be brought to Board on Start Up Street Renfrew but in the meantime you can view the Start-Up Street premises at this link: https://youtu.be/OHOWV_EBQz0

7. The Start-Up Street Network

- 7.1 All three Start-Up St centres are now open and at 100% occupancy. They are at the early stages of working as a network, supporting each other in the development of the centres and the support to those interested in starting a business.
- 7.2 As well as providing incubation / workspaces each centre also acts as a business hub for start-up and wider business enquiries which can be referred to the Council's Business Team. They each host the Council's Business Gateway 'meet the advisor' sessions and monthly peer group meet up sessions for businesses to network and share best practice.
- 7.3 Several Start-Up Street businesses have employed people from the local area through the Invest in Renfrewshire employability service. In particular, parents returning to work through the parental employability support programme have accessed work experience and employment opportunities.
- 7.4 In support of the Council's aim to strengthen the local supply chain and increase local spend, a number of the Start-Up Street businesses have been given additional support to register on Public Contracts Scotland to enable them to bid for public sector contracts (where this is appropriate).
- 7.5 A Women in Business networking group was successfully launched on the 11th of July 2023 with 22 attendees from across Renfrewshire. The group comprised of a mix of sole traders, limited companies, pre-start individuals and social enterprises. The inaugural speaker at the event was Lesley Compston of KLAS Care Community Interest Company, who was an alumni of the Renfrewshire Women Led Accelerator programme.
- 7.6 The Renfrewshire Women in Business networking events are scheduled monthly for the next 6 months and fall on a Tuesday evening 6pm-8:30pm. Future themes for events will include marketing on a budget, social media that works, building an online presence & websites, business planning for growth and Wellbeing.

8. Further Actions

- 8.1 Future reports will be brought to board to update on progress.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - No additional finance is sought for this proposal.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None.

3. **Community/Council Planning** – None.
4. **Legal** – None.
5. **Property/Assets**- Start-Up Street currently operates from 43-45 & 65-71 George Street, Paisley and 7 -13 Dunlop Crescent, Renfrew.
6. **Information Technology** – None.
7. **Equality & Human Rights**- None.
8. **Health & Safety**- None.
9. **Procurement** – None.
10. **Risk**- None.
11. **Privacy Impact**- None.
12. **Cosla Policy Position**- Not Applicable.

List of Background Papers

- Economy and Regeneration Board: 22 September 2022; “Invest In Renfrewshire: Start-Up Street”
- Economy and Regeneration Board: 23 August 2022; “Invest In Renfrewshire: Start-Up Street
- Leadership Board:28 April 2021;“Start-Up Street”
- Leadership Board:5th December 2018; “Invest in Renfrewshire Proposal: Start-Up Street”

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Appendix 1: Start-Up Street Paisley Update



CENTRE FULL OF YOUNG SUPERSTARS

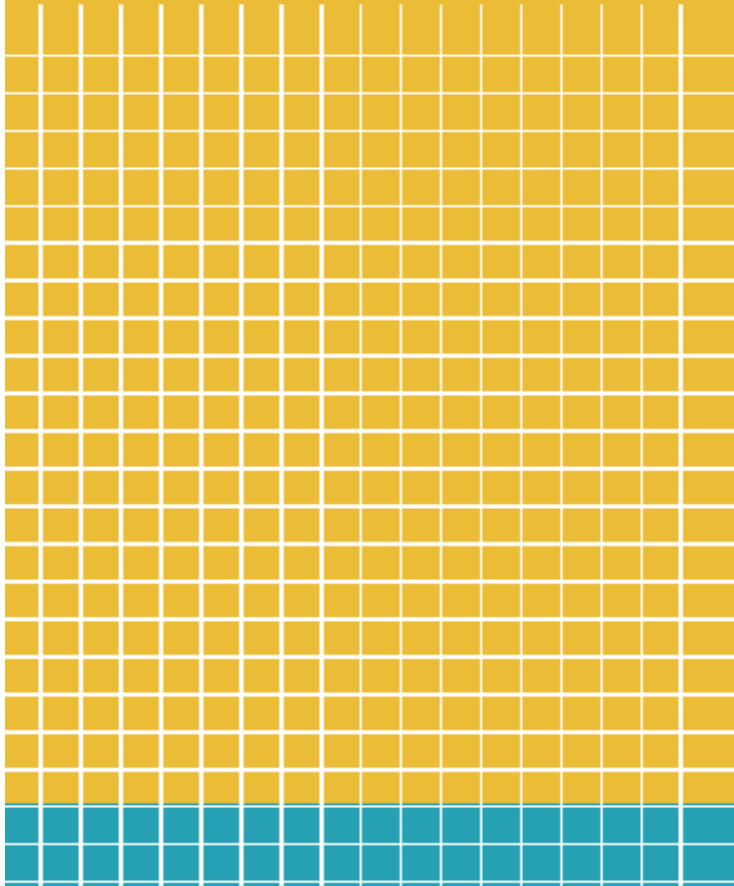
Launch It Paisley Start-Up Street has been a supportive centre for many growing businesses.

At the moment, we have different businesses moving in and out and a waitlist of people hoping to secure units as soon as they're available. **About 70% of our units are rented to businesses** of inspiring individuals under 30 years, which is something we would like to not only continue but increase. This commitment fits with the **values and original focus of Launch It being youth enterprise**, supporting the future of entrepreneurship.

In this report, you will see some of the clients who are part of this vibrant community and where their businesses are currently at. As of June 2023, our building has a 100% occupancy rate.



A SELECTION OF SOME CURRENT TENANTS



CHRISTY AFFLECK

CHRISTY'S LASHES

 @CHRISTYS.LASHES  WWW.CHRISTYS-LASHES.BOOK.APP

Christy has been a client in the centre for around a year and a half now. She started as a lash technician and has now branched out into selling her own products such as lashes and lash glues to the local lash techs in the Paisley area.



LAURA HAMILTON

JUST DIVE

 @JUST.DIVESCOTLAND  WWW.JUST-DIVE.CO.UK

Laura's CIC "Just Dive" has almost finished her two years at Start-Up Street. Just Dive conducts scuba-diving lessons and mermaid themed pool parties. She is due to move out soon and is working with the Business Gateway Growth Team.



MARK SWAROOP

PAISLEY SPICE CO.

 WWW.PAISLEYSPICECO.COM

Mark has opened a new spice blend company called "Paisley Spice Co" which is authentically crafted spice blends. He launched this business at The Paisley Food and Drinks Market and has been expanding ever since.



REBECCA & KATE SEW FITTING GLASGOW



@SEWFITTINGGLASGOW



WWW.SEWFITTINGGLASGOW.BOOK.APP

Rebecca and Kate specialise in bridal, prom dresses and evening wear alterations and customisation. This extremely busy duo is well connected in the industry which has allowed them to build a partnership with a large bridal shop called 'Brides in the City' in Glasgow and any alterations their brides need they are sent to Sew Fittings.



CHRIS & PAUL PAISLEY RADIO

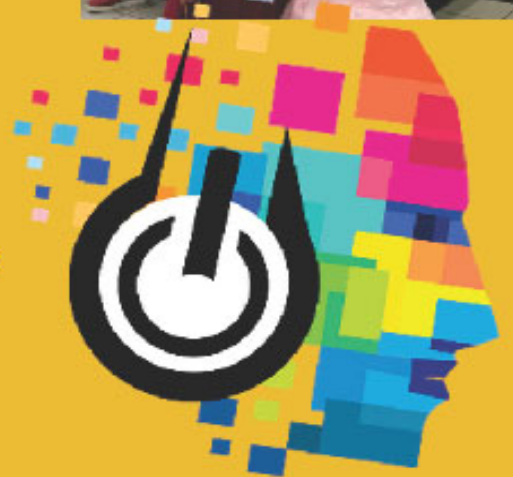


@PAISRADIO



WWW.PAISLEYRADIO.COM

Chris and Paul from Paisley Radio are based in our Centre and continue to do their radio station work from the Centre. They are coming up to a year and a half of being in here and have won multiple different awards.



OUT-OF-CENTRE CLIENTS

It is also worthwhile noting that we are currently working with around **8 out-of-centre clients** who are in the pipeline for a space in the centre. They are pre-start up at the moment and when their business grows and succeeds, the goal is to add them to the waiting list of people wanting a space at Start-Up Street.





LAUNCH IT LEAVERS

Launch It clients are at the very heart of what we do. One of the key things we strive to do is to make our enterprise centres a safe, supportive space they can call home. We want them to find community; a place where they can feel free to live out their entrepreneurial dreams and to thrive.

That is why endings aren't always easy. At the same time, we feel so proud, joyful and excited to see them take it to the next level and start a new journey. And as they do, we will be cheering on, celebrating and supporting them through.

This brief section of the report is one way **we celebrate these talented, inspiring young superstars** and the successful businesses that current tenants are building and the leavers have built.

Indie and Grant are our next tenants to move out – here is what they are planning to do:

GRANT FRASER SWEETPUNKZ



Grant Fraser started his business journey with Launch It Paisley back in March 2021. This driven young man started by selling PicknMix, then branched into international sweets and is now going to expand into the new craze: **freeze-dried candy**.

He has purchased his own machine which will allow him to not only sell them to his customers but also wholesale them to different local shops and newsagents.

In the two years that Grant was with us, he moved into a bigger unit in our centre and changed **from being a sole trader to a limited company all within a year!** He also bought his own customised SweetPunkz van.

Grant has tons of sweet ideas on how his business can expand and we cannot wait to see where he takes it next!



GRANT FRASER SWEETPUNKZ



@SWEETPUNKZ



WWW.SWEETPUNKZ.COM

Grant is still actively trading and growing every month and has **expanded and moved into a 1800sqft warehouse unit** still located in Paisley. He is also hoping to soon take on his first employee. Recently, he also won the **"Inspirational Community Enterprise Award"** at the Renfrewshire Inspirational Awards 2023.

We are extremely proud of how far Grant has come and we can't wait to see where he takes SweetPunkz.



"We are grateful for the help and advice of Launch It, alongside the low cost space with facilities to establish and accelerate SweetPunkz growth at an early stage. Launch It's advice on food standard documentation also helped us gain our first food hygiene pass standard. **Without Launch it, SweetPunkz would never have started!**"

launchit.org.uk



INDIE MCCUE SCOPE



@SCOPE.RENFREWSHIRE



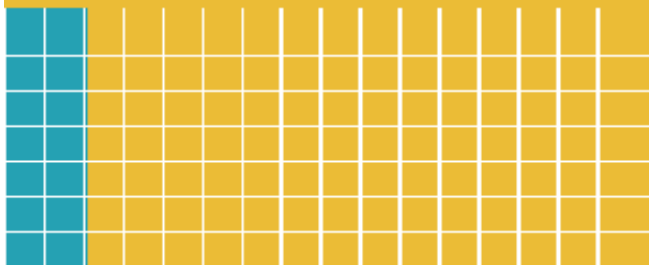
WWW.SCOPE.RENFREWSHIRE.COM

Indie came to Launch It Paisley in August 2021 to explore his dreams of having his own creative arts space in Paisley. The biggest challenge that he faced was finding the ideal space. Now, Indie is moving to the perfect location- a unit the Piazza Shopping Centre which will allow for him to get some fantastic footfall.

Indie has continued to grow and expand his **community interest company** and this new space will allow him to continue to do this in the best way possible.

Here, he will have his monthly Art Chats and an annual creative showcase which highlights the quality of creatives who live and breathe life into Renfrewshire.

We wish Indie all the success in the world and we will be keeping up with him every step of the way.





LAUNCH IT ALUMNI

This section showcases some of the former tenants who have started, grown and built thriving businesses at Start-Up Street. They continue to become part of our community; true inspiration to the next generation of Launch Itteers in the area.

JAYNE LASLEY

FAIRLIE CURVED

 @FAIRLIECURVED  WWW.FAIRLIECURVED.COM

Fairlie Curved is a clothing company focused on fuller bust and curve friendly clothing.

Jayne rented out a space at Start-Up Street for two years before she outgrew the space and had to move out. She is currently still trading out of a much larger unit in Inverclyde.

Whilst at Launch It, she also utilised the Ren Council Employability team to assist in taking on her company's first employees. She also used a Renfrewshire Employment Scheme and continued to keep employees on full-time. An inspiration and role model for body positivity, Jayne also won the **Business Woman Scotland Start Up Business of the Year Award**.

JENNY MCDONALD

HONNAN

PURE BARKIN

 @PUREBARKIN  WWW.PUREBARKIN.COM

Jenny has a slow fashion business called "Pure Barkin". She left our space after around 6 months in our spaces to move into a larger space and to also get a stall in the Barras Market in Glasgow where you'll find her every weekend. Jenny is continuing to trade and expand her clothing range.

