



**Enterprise
Support
Alliance**

<https://enterprisesupportalliance.com/>

Definition of a social enterprise

A social enterprise is not a legal structure but a way of doing business. The exact definition can vary, but in general they:

- are focused on their mission and exist to tackle social or environmental issues set out in their governing document
- re-invest over 50% of their profits in pursuit of their mission
- aim to get over 50% of their income needed to operate from trade

Social enterprises can take on many different legal structures. Some charities operate as social enterprises, so social enterprises can have a charity legal structure.

A common legal structure for a non-charitable social enterprise is a Community Interest Company (CIC). A CIC is a special type of limited company which exists to benefit the community.

Other legal structures for a social enterprise include:

- a private company limited by guarantee or shares
- a cooperative society
- a community benefit society
- a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO)
- a sole trader or business partnership.

For more information look here –

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

<https://www.socialenterprisemark.org.uk/what-is-social-enterprise/>

<http://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/setting-up/understanding-social-enterprise/#/>