



Inspiring women to work in the Social Enterprise & Social Investment Sectors

Melanie Mills

Big Society Capital

Melanie was previously the Chief Executive of Social Enterprise West Midlands (SEWM) CIC and led the organisation from a publicly funded project to a sustainable social enterprise through four years of trading and growth. SEWM's income was directly generated through the sales of products and services so she has first-hand experience of the challenges and opportunities that social sector organisations face in order to be successful businesses.

Melanie brings a frontline perspective to the Big Society Capital team and particularly focuses on developing relationships with social enterprises and charities across the Midlands and the North of the UK and raising awareness of social investment. Since joining the team she has helped lead the Social Investment Tax Relief Campaign 'Get sITr', has instigated a new initiative Let's Talk Good Finance and is passionate about our most recent initiative GETINFORMED – Social Investment for Boards.

Melanie is passionate about helping to translate the opportunities that social investment can present to help social enterprises and charities create even more social impact.

Melanie is also the Social enterprise champion for the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP, Chair of Governors at a Local Authority Maintained School and a Charity Trustee in her spare time.

What would be your 3 top tips to someone looking to do what you do?

1. Be honest about what you don't know and be confident about what you do.
2. Failure is part of the rich tapestry of life!
3. Challenge with humour and humility is one of the best ways to make change.



What do you love most about the work you do?

I love working with social enterprises and charities. The impact they create is definitely the driving force behind my work. I want to create, support and drive change and daily I am reminded there is still so much to do. Big Society Capital was the first social investment wholesaler in the world created using dormant bank account money. This gives us a unique insight and responsibility to lead, learn and support the sector.

Who inspires you?

I am inspired by ordinary people like me: from my first two retail managers and mentors (who I still keep in touch with), both my dad and father in law shaped me sharing tough business and life lessons to the passion for social change but mostly I am inspired by great speakers and great leaders from across the sector like Sarah Atkinson from the Charity Commission, my boss Geetha Rabindraukumar at Big Society Capital and Peter Holbrook at SEUK.

What is your biggest achievement to date?

My family... being married for 28 years requires love, commitment and compromise and like all Mums I am so proud of my two sons - I always say they will be the best of my life's work!
Establishing SEWM as a sustainable and highly valued social enterprise, and being part of the team that brought www.goodfinance.org.uk to life it was such an obvious gap and just didn't previously exist to help social enterprises and charities simply understand more about social investment.