



## Grace Enterprises: Transforming lives through supportive employment in our sustainable businesses:

November 2022 Update

### Context:

The mission of Grace Enterprises (“GE”) is to grow a network of sustainable, commercially competitive and socially responsible businesses that help reduce long-term unemployment and poverty in Nottingham and beyond. GE creates supportive, paid jobs for people who face significant barriers to work. Our teams include ex-offenders, ex-homeless, ex-addicts, people who have suffered domestic abuse and those with physical and mental health challenges.

The first business we started was Radiant Cleaners, a multi award-winning and pioneering Social Enterprise cleaning company. Along the way it has employed over 75 people, paying everyone the real Living Wage, and it has won the support of major corporate clients who believe in our mission and have seen us deliver a consistent quality service. Cleaning is not the answer for everyone though. The Grace Enterprises vision has always been to have multiple businesses with the same ethos and values. Our future ventures will provide different kinds of employment opportunities, to help those people whom Radiant Cleaners cannot.

Since October 2021 TTECF has awarded grants totalling £21,000 to Grace Enterprises.

*"In my life I've been abused, suffered domestic violence and been isolated. I had no qualifications and thought 'what's the point of life?' Now I've got a job my life is a lot better, I'm not isolated, I have the chance to get out and meet different people. It makes me feel a lot better. I feel like someone again. My confidence is a lot better, I'm more positive, I've got more hope."*

Sarah, one of the first Radiant Cleaners employees and a positive role-model

### November Update:

#### Grace plans ethical snacks social enterprise as it delivers jobs and dignity:

##### Express Newspaper article

By [MAISHA FROST](#)

10:44, Wed, Oct 19, 2022 | UP-DATED: 13:25, Wed, Oct 19, 2022

Snacks are set to be next for Grace Enterprises, a social purpose business whose cleaning and events ventures are bringing hope to the long term unemployed.

<https://www.express.co.uk/finance/city/1684785/grace-enterprises-ethical-snacks-social-enterprise>



Founded in Nottingham by former teacher Matt Parfitt in 2017, **Grace's** award-winning **Radiant Cleaners** has grown to a team of 30 plus providing services to large corporates and organisations.

This year it was joined by **Jubilee Events**, a marquee hire and hospitality operation with a core of six staff.

The outlook is positive for both with Radiant's turnover expected to hit £350,000 in 2023 and Jubilee's £75,000. All profits from the two certified social enterprises are either reinvested or passed to parent Grace, a charity.

"Times are changing and charities can't rely on the traditional model. We are all on more dicey ground now so we aim to combine the best of both worlds – the heart and work of a charity with the entrepreneurial wealth creation of a business," declares Parfitt.

"We aim to be a sustainable next step on from handouts, giving people on the margins opportunity and the dignity work brings.

"We have chosen to be disruptors in sectors blighted by poor working conditions and low pay. We employ those who have struggled hardest to find work: ex-offenders, ex-addicts, victims of abuse, refugees and the homeless.

"We pay them more through the real Living Wage based on the cost of living – no matter what the cost we will absorb that and keep to that promise.

"Then we support them holistically so they can flourish – for instance coaching, English lessons or debt advice. The business is a vehicle for being a good employer and demonstrating compassion for people – from that comes transformation. We sum it up as time, talent, treasure."

Chronic unreliability born of the turmoil they have experienced is a common trait among those Grace brings into the fold. "We keep going with them, it's hard but then we see people come through and the difference it makes," adds Parfitt.

One former Radiant cleaner was a modern slavery victim, trafficked from Eastern Europe, who was paid nothing for nine years. Working for Grace helped restore his trust so he was able to face the world again and earn a living.

As both a business and a charity more doors are open, Parfitt finds. Companies, their investors and customers generally are looking for more social purpose now, he explains.

"Corporates like our demonstrable social impact and value, it also benefits their credibility which is why they choose Radiant. We offer them a terrific, reliable and safe service.

"They are becoming customers of Jubilee too, along with universities and couples looking to have an ethical wedding celebration.

“Jubilee doesn’t use single-use items, the marquee’s flooring is recycled plastic, food is supplied locally and we are looking to do that with flowers. They want to know those doing the work to make their perfect occasion are treated fairly.

“Having proved our model for cleaning and events this has made us think more about franchising.”

Investment first came from social action church funding – Grace has rock strong Christian connections – along with a £60,000 grant to buy the marquee equipment and a £40,000 interest-free loan for Radiant.

Seed funding to create something self-sustaining has the biggest appeal for philanthropists and some £50,000 will be needed for Grace’s ethical snacks venture now in development which involves collaborating with a national partner and has plenty of scale-up potential.

A UK Social Enterprise Awards winner last year Radiant has now been short-listed again and will hear if it has been successful on December 8.

TTECF are supporting Grace Enterprises in the care they provide for their employees which is helping them to develop and grow their social enterprise companies sustainably. Grace Enterprises objective in the creation of a snacks business is about creating sustainable employment opportunities at the real living wage for yet another group of people who would otherwise struggle to find employment. It’s a great example of Grace Enterprises working for greater benefit within the community, demonstrating: bravery, kindness, humility, and the consistent delivery of high quality service (some of the “Nine Habits of Trust” <https://trustedexecutive.com/nine-habits-of-trust>).