



**BRIGHT STARS**



**Make a Profit and Make a Difference**

**2026**

# Impact Report

**Autumn/Winter Programme**



**CENTRE for  
LEADERSHIP  
PERFORMANCE**

[www.cforlp.org.uk](http://www.cforlp.org.uk)

## Key Social Enterprise Facts for Cumbria

The Cumbria Social Enterprise Partnership (CSEP) report that:

- Cumbria has over 1,400 social enterprises, ranging in size from one person organisations to large co-operatives, health and education providers
- About £475m is generated and used within the local economy each year by social enterprises
- Cumbrian social enterprises hold combined assets of approximately £144m in buildings, equipment and financial reserves
- Over 11,000 people are employed by Cumbrian social enterprises
- Volunteering opportunities for around 15,000 people arise from Cumbrian social enterprises
- **The Centre for Leadership Performance is itself a social enterprise... and runs Bright Stars to help educate Cumbrian young people about what a social enterprise is and develop the employees, entrepreneurs and volunteers of the future.**



***Bright Stars offers young people the opportunity to be inspired and see that their actions will be recognised and their voices will be heard. Pupils are exposed to positive role models from the world of business and the programme encourages leadership, building confidence as they showcase hidden talents and develop new skills.***

***Now in its thirteenth year, the programme enables children to learn through experience about key business principles like innovation, budgeting, problem solving and delivering deadlines, while linking with core curriculum subjects such as English, maths, design and technology.***

***For companies, Bright Stars creates on-going links with local primary schools, connects with young people and makes them aware of what the companies do, while positively impacting communities and providing development opportunities for staff who get involved.***

## Project Summary

- Over **290** pupils from **15** schools took part in Bright Stars
- **15** local businesses and organisations volunteered support
- **15** social enterprises were created
- Over **£6.4k** was raised for local charities and to continue the schools' social enterprise projects from an initial **£50** seed fund per school

### TEACHER FEEDBACK

**100%** want to join a future Bright Stars project

**100%** achieved output results they wanted for their pupils and school

**100%** felt they had created better community/business links for their school

The top skills that the pupils learnt (according to the teachers) were:

- Teamwork
- Confidence
- Organisation and problem solving
- Leadership
- Aspirational thinking

### PUPILS FEEDBACK

**100%** had fun working on Bright Stars

**89%** knew more about local jobs and careers

**93%** thought they had learned new skills

**89%** understood what leadership is now

**90%** felt they were a better team player and understood more about teamwork

### BUSINESS MENTORS FEEDBACK

**100%** achieved the output results they wanted for themselves

**100%** achieved the output results they wanted for their business

**100%** felt they had created better community/business links for their school

**100%** want to join a future Bright Stars project

*The outcome percentages and graphics listed in this report have been gathered from the pre-and post-project impact surveys sent separately to pupils, schools and businesses.*

*Quotes and incidental evidence are taken from the surveys, as well as emails, weekly reports and general feedback received from the school and business leads.*

*The impact and outcomes can be seen in the final montage **Bright Stars Project Film** on YouTube, use the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-KeiNcbVi8>*

## Introduction

### Make a Profit – Make a Difference

Fifteen schools across Cumbria took part over 12 weeks and the primary school pupils developed leadership, teamwork, marketing, accounting, creativity and communication skills – in fact, everything involved in running a business.

The mini entrepreneurs, who set up and ran their own social enterprises with the help of local companies and organisations, all delivered fantastic campaigns, which traded for 8 weeks and raised over £6.4k in profit to date. An amazing result!

Some of the schools intend to continue to develop and trade with their social enterprises and involve more pupils and people from the community.

Both schools and businesses stated they had made stronger relationships within their local community and the teachers and business mentors felt they had got a lot from taking part in the project too.

To measure the impact of the programme surveys were sent out to all schools and business volunteers, both before and after the project. This year the pre-impact questions were collected on the registration forms for schools and businesses, which increased the response rate. We received the following returns:

- **Schools:** 15 surveys (100%) pre project and 6 (40%) surveys post project
- **Pupils:** 5 surveys (33%) pre project and 9 (60%) surveys post project
- **Businesses:** 14 surveys (93%) pre project and 8 (53%) surveys post project

NB: to increase the post project feedback, as well as the survey forms (listed above), we also ran separate online meetings for the businesses and schools after the Celebration event, as well as undertook 1-2-1 conversations with them and received email comments.

**Bright Stars helps pupils to plan and develop their creative ideas and then implement these skills to run a profitable social enterprise**



## Participating schools and businesses and their social enterprise projects

### Find out more about the Bright Stars social enterprises:

Watch the school project films on YouTube at:

[https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLK\\_8VmJahxk3DZfLc9OxmOW9pTJWkB-qB&si=t8XTyaSmyduYhA02](https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLK_8VmJahxk3DZfLc9OxmOW9pTJWkB-qB&si=t8XTyaSmyduYhA02)

Read the school project weekly blogs online at:

<https://cforlp.org.uk/brightstars/bright-stars-autumn-winter-2025/>

Read the Bright Stars Winner Announcement online at:

<https://cforlp.org.uk/news/bright-stars-autumn-winter-2025-winners-announced/>

View the Bright Stars Celebration Film at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-KeiNcbVi8>

### Beckermet C of E Primary School

*partnered with AECOM*

Business 34 created a Science Garden for the purpose of consolidating learning and education in school. It will be used by all classes to help with curriculum

experiments and learning, as well as offering sensory opportunities. The Science Garden is in the grounds of the school, for the whole school and community.




The children have really enjoyed learning about different aspects of finance and social enterprises and working together on different parts of the project. They look forward to making a difference for our school.



### Beckstone Primary School

**Winner of Most Profitable Social Enterprise**

*partnered with Workington Town Community Trust*



Arabella's Angels decided to raise money to support the building of a new adventure playground, being built in memory of one of their fellow pupils – Arabella Kelly. They organised a range of activities and events including a Pumpkin Decorating Event and had Halloween music, drinks and snacks for the crafting session. They then created hot chocolate cones, reindeer food and snowman keyrings to sell as part of a Christmas Range of products to sell. They also organised a Christmas Disco (attended by 180 children) and a cracker craft workshop. They raised an amazing £1,742.41!

**Beckstone Primary School** *(continued)*



This Bright Stars project and fund raising for our Arabella Adventure Playground has given our children time and space to cherish special memories together and for years to come.



**Crosthwaite CofE Primary School**  
**Winner of Best Community Engagement**  
*partnered with Experience Lakeland*



The Snowy Owls organised a Christmas Fair and created games and a special fair currency for the event. They made scrunchies, mince pies, planted bulb pots and cookies to sell too. They worked with their village hall and the wider community to make their event a success.



We have established better links with the local community and our business partner. The Christmas Fair was a resounding success and we feel that we can develop this in future years, continuing to build on the relationships with the community. Many people commented on what a fantastic job the children had done. The children enjoyed it too.



**Dane Ghyll Community Primary School**  
**Winner of Best Logo and Marketing Campaign**  
*partnered with 32West Ltd*  
*sponsored by the Cumbria Community Foundation*



The Cookie Crumbles team made cookies to sell and ran several sell-out sale events throughout the project.

The whole community got behind the Cookie Crumbles and supported our whole process, from helping to advertise, making use of additional staff to help baking, making use of the kitchen ovens and, of course, buying and eating the cookies!



**Grasslot School**  
**Winner of Best Team Work, Collaboration and Leadership**  
*partnered with Firpress Ltd*



The Kind Kids of Christmas team designed festive goods and hosted engaging activities at the school's Christmas Fayre. They made sweetie cones, reindeer dust, decorations, bells and calendars. They also created a **project book** with their mentor to report on their progress.

The children not only benefitted from learning skills, such as pencil control and drawing, but also communication and teamwork, as they often worked in small groups, pairs and they learnt a lot about voting and fair ways to make decisions.



**Hensingham Primary School**  
*partnered with Bechtel and Cavendish Nuclear Solutions*

The Hensingham Helpful Elves created a Christmas Fair and invited all the children and adults connected to Sycamore Class to attend for some Christmas fun by playing games and running stalls.



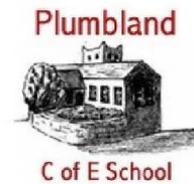
**Pennine Way Primary School**  
 partnered with Eden Valley Hospice  
 sponsored by the Cumbria Community Foundation



The Memories and Moments team made friendship bracelets and food cones to sell, as well as organising a family movie night, showing the film Nativity.

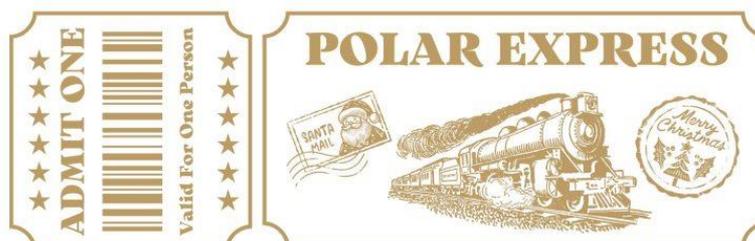


**Plumbland C of E Primary School**  
 Highly Commended for Best Logo  
 and Marketing Campaign  
 partnered with Rebecca Watson Design  
 sponsored by the Cumbria Community Foundation

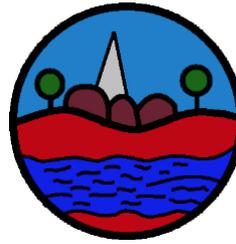


The Polar Bearz organised a Festive Film Night, with a showing of The Polar Express with lots of sweet treats and fun for all of the children in School. The children planned and organised the catering for the evening too.

The children worked hard at generating ideas, as well as sketching and creating their logo for the project. The promo video they planned and starred in was engaging and created such excitement with the pupils and parents alike!



**Rockcliffe CE Primary School**  
**Highly Commended for Best Team Work,**  
**Collaboration and Leadership**  
*partnered with My Community Penrith*  
*sponsored by the Cumbria Community Foundation*



Rockcliffe Roots pupils organised a community fair, to bring their community together, to be inclusive and for everyone to enjoy it. They baked cakes and made lemonade to sell, as well as collecting books and toys for a preloved stall at the event. They also made baby blocks.



**Pupils have been fully engaged with business ideas, working as a team, promoting our school in our community and thinking of those in need. They have thoroughly enjoyed the whole process.**

**This has enabled my class to understand how a business works and for them to learn how to work together.**

**Seaton St Paul's C of E Junior School**  
**Highly Commended for Best and Most Positive Long-Term Impact**  
*partnered with Jigsaw, Cumbria's only Children's Hospice*



The school ran two separate projects with Classes 5N (Sweet Treats) and 5O (MASC Jars), combining the money raised to donate to Jigsaw.

The MASC jars and gift bags had different themes (art, mystery or Christmas). All jars had a hot chocolate sachet and a handmade bracelet, as well as a hug and themed gift. They ran a Christmas Coffee Day to sell their products.

Sweet Treats pupils made sweet kebabs and sweet boxes to sell. All had positive quotes as labels. For Christmas they created snowmen kebabs, which they sold at a coffee morning/afternoon too.



**South Walney Junior School**  
**Winner of Best and Most Positive**  
**Long-Term Impact**

*sponsored by and partnered with BAE Systems*



Happy Hearts organised an arts and crafts event for the whole school to take part in. The pupils created wooden and felt hearts, bookmark, friendship beads, tree decorations, bracelets and decorated cookies. They also ran a raffle. Everything was in the theme of a red heart, in keeping with the charity being about hearts and how to keep healthy and, most importantly, to raise funds for children to get early testing through CRY (Cardiac Risk in the Young), which the school already has links to.

**YEAR 6 BRIGHT SPARKS PROJECT CRY FUNDRAISER**

THURSDAY 11TH DECEMBER

NON-UNIFORM WITH A PINK AND RED THEME

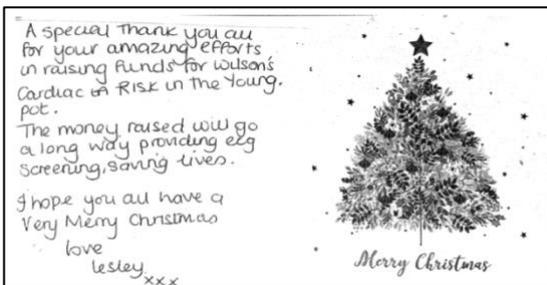
ALL CHILDREN TO PAY 50P (INCLUDING A GIFT BAG)

LOTS TO BUY:

- HEART-SHAPED BEAD DECORATIONS 50p
- BEAD BRACELETS £1
- TREE DECORATIONS 50p
- WOODEN HEART DECORATIONS 50p
- BOOKMARKS 50p
- DECORATE-A-BISCUIT 50p

Y3 – 1PM Y4 – 1.45  
 Y5 – 2.30

YEAR 6 CLASSROOMS



**St Bridget's CE School – Parton**  
**Highly Commended for Best Community Engagement**  
*partnered with Arup*



Santa's Little Helpers made Christmas decorations with positive messages on, to make people feel happy when they look at them, which they sold at the school's Christmas Fayre.

The children have thoroughly enjoyed making their Christmas ornaments. They learnt about how a business works, what a social enterprise is and how to budget.



**Thornhill Primary School**  
*partnered with Nuclear Waste Solutions (NWS)*  
*working in collaboration with GRAHAM*



Thornhill Thunderbirds organised a Christmas Fair, raising £661.85 for Animal Concern Cumbria.



**Westfield Nursery and Primary School**  
**Highly Commended for Most Profitable Social Enterprise**  
*partnered with AtkinsRéalis*



 AtkinsRéalis

The Snack Station team created healthy snacks to sell at break times, all made by the children. These included Halloween themed snacks, fruit jelly and flapjack. At their Christmas Fayre they organised games, raffles and sold more homemade, healthy snacks.

The programme has had a hugely positive impact on our school, developing pupils' confidence, teamwork, leadership and communication skills while strengthening links with our community. Pupils showed real ownership and pride in their work, applied learning in meaningful real-life contexts, and demonstrated empathy and social responsibility through their fundraising and charitable decisions.



## School Feedback



It is an extremely positive response from schools, with **100%** achieving what they wanted from the project for both their pupils and the school itself. The skills developed are all important ones that the pupils can use throughout their other classes and social interactions, and build on for the future to help them have a better life in their workplace, family, friendships and beyond...

Although some had links with their business or local community already, the project has helped nurture established relationships and helped them get involved with and support the local area. Several teachers mentioned that the project often had revealed hidden talents in their pupils that were not necessarily as academically or socially involved in class too, creating new ways for them to engage in their education, plus gain friendships and confidence which reach further than the project.

The winning schools have also received a money prize, to help fund further project development.

**There was a resounding thumbs up for Bright Stars!**



### More comments from the schools after completing Bright Stars:

I feel it has been a good opportunity for them to see in to their future, a taste of real life outside the classroom.

The children engaged and enjoyed the process.



It has been amazing for the pupils to have experience of the skills needed to work together as a team, to run a successful event. We saw dedication, good listening skills and pupils who were highly motivated to succeed. They worked very hard on the evening too, as well as before the event, to ensure it all ran smoothly and successfully.

The programme has enriched our curriculum by allowing us to bring in math skills alongside DT skills. It has also allowed us to challenge pupils and show them what the world looks like for different people through our partnership with Jigsaw Children's Hospice.

We have really benefitted from the Bright Stars project. We have found it a great way to incorporate further focus and structure to our lessons, whilst working towards a specific project.

Bright Stars has helped the children learn about different occupations. They have seen a business first and and are now able to better understand what running a business involves.

I know the school will enjoy using the Science Garden as part of future curriculum experimenets and learning, as well as use it for sensory opportunities, that the whole school will have access to.

## Pupil feedback

Pupils had a lot to say after completing Bright Stars:

We have been able to be creative about making something for our school and we felt involved when being a business.

Bright Stars has been lovely, because you get to do lots of drawing, like the logo, the gingerbread men and the calendar people.

Bright Stars has meant a chance to work for ourselves and be creative.

It has been a fantastic opportunity to create an event for the whole school community.

It has helped us spread happiness to those who may be lonely at Christmas time.



We learnt all about teamwork and how a business works. We liked raising money and deciding where it goes!

We learnt and understood about different parts of the business world through teamwork and good community engagement.

Working as a team we have learnt a lot about businesses. We enjoyed making and selling the cookies.

Bright Stars helped us work as a team, build confidence and support our community. It showed us that even as children we can make a difference and feel proud of what we achieve.

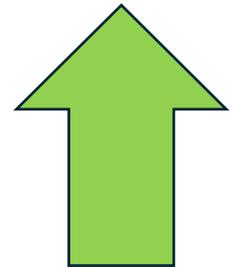
Bright Stars has meant working as a team and doing something to raise money for charity.

Bright Stars has taught us that making money takes time and that 'money doesn't grow on trees' and hard work and dedication can help you achieve your goals.

The direct quotes from the pupils about their Bright Stars experience (including the development of learning, enjoyment, friendship, understanding, confidence, pride in what they have achieved and ability to help others), shows the wide range of benefits for them from being involved in this project, both in skills and personal development.

The survey results collected from the pupils, collected pre- and post-project, showed an **INCREASE** in their understanding of the issues and skills addressed in the project.

- What a social enterprise is (*from 10% to 79%*)
- The UN Global Sustainability Goals (*from 0% to 52%*)
- Local jobs and careers (*from 87% to 90%*)
- Leadership (*from 69% to 89%*)
- Confidence levels (*from 63% to 78%*)
- Ability to make a difference and volunteer in future (*from 51% to 84%*)



There were some areas that showed a decrease for pupils from taking part in this project:

- Wanted to consider starting their own business (*from 82% to 64%*)
- Felt they worked hard at school and dreamt of a big future (*from 92% to 86%*)
- Effectiveness as a team player and understanding of teamwork (*from 95% to 90%*)



While three areas showed small decreases, these reflect pupils' growing maturity and more realistic self-assessment rather than reduced skills or aspirations. After experiencing real teamwork, business challenges and decision-making, pupils gained a clearer understanding of what these skills truly involve, leading to a shift from optimistic self-perception to informed self-awareness - a positive developmental outcome. In addition, the number of post-project pupil surveys was modest (only nine returned), meaning that each response represented more than 11% of the total and small variations could noticeably shift percentages. Importantly, teachers consistently highlighted teamwork, confidence and leadership as the top skills gained, and overall results show overwhelmingly strong improvement across nearly all areas.

The pupils gained an insight into the world of commerce and developed basic business and financial skills, whilst building their confidence, team working ability and community/environmental awareness. Plus, they have had fun whilst learning and developed an awareness of how they can be involved in, and influence, change in their local community.



**100%** of the pupils declared they had fun working on their Bright Stars project.

**96%** stated they had developed new skills through being part of it, which will be a basic, but valuable start to their career and adult life.

**89%** of pupils pledged that they will continue to make a difference in future.

**This is a positive outcome for the future...** It is clear the pupils gained a lot from taking part, developing skills and links with the local community, as well as having new aspirations for the future. The money they have raised will be a considerable help for their chosen charities and community projects too.



**Another thumbs up for Bright Stars!**

## Business mentor feedback



It is extremely positive that **100%** of businesses showed overall satisfaction with the outcomes they achieved and **100%** of volunteers had achieved their own personal outcomes for Bright Stars too. This confirms that it is not just the pupils and schools that gain from being part of the project.

All businesses thought they had built stronger links with the schools/community, even if they were existing relationships – some of these through previous CforLP project partnerships.

The businesses involved have often been amazed at the learning they and their staff acquire as they offer support and strengthen their own community and social impact commitments. The feedback frequently mentions the enjoyment, personal development and satisfaction the business lead gets from interacting with pupils that have imaginative ideas and enthusiasm, but need commercial skills to make things work in reality. Some volunteers stated they had also enhanced their own leadership, listening and communication skills through working with the pupils on Bright Stars too.

The adults have reported having fun being involved in Bright Stars too!

### Businesses made the following comments after completing Bright Stars:



Bright Stars makes business concepts accessible, but more importantly, it encourages children to think about purpose, responsibility and the wider impact their actions can have.



After being involved in Bright Stars a few years ago, I was eager to get involved again, having seen the positive effects on the pupils being on the programme...  
I know this relationship with the school will be long lasting, thanks to the connections we've made with the school, staff and pupils.



Watching the pupils develop stronger problem-solving abilities was particularly rewarding.



The experience reminded me how important it is to give young people the space to lead.



Something one pupil said resonated with me "doing this each week with the BAE ladies has really helped my confidence." I will say no more!



It felt important to help give the children an experience that connected creativity, teamwork and community impact with real-world learning.

## Businesses made more comments after completing Bright Stars:

Seeing how much this project (in memory of a pupil) meant to the whole school, made it really important that we made as much money as possible.

It is great to watch the pupils proudly presenting their project outcomes to their families, the whole school and the local community.



Really enjoyed taking part in Bright Stars – it is so very rewarding

There is always a surprise doing Bright Stars, watching how the pupils develop their ideas.

I love working with the schools, as you always learn something every time you take part in a Bright Stars project – each project is different so you have to be very adaptable!

Bright Stars has great resources and easy processes – it lets the pupils show off different skills each week.

The pupils all get very excited, which is very rewarding – I love being part of Bright Stars!

I'm already looking for reasons to go back to the school and build the relationship further!

It gave me the chance to have conversations with the pupils about disabilities and difference, showing that everyone is as important as everyone else – this is a very important message.

I have improved my own presentation and communication skills through being involved in Bright Stars.

The pupils always enjoy Bright Stars. It is a good way for them to learn about more serious issues too.

## The Local Community

The local community benefits from the money raised, closer working relationships and raised awareness of local issues, as well as helping to secure future interest, commitment and enthusiasm for their area from the young people growing up there.

By showing the possibilities and range of local careers on offer, it may also encourage more youngsters to stay in the area when they embark on their working life.

As previously mentioned, this Bright Stars project raised over £9k to date. Some of the profit has been invested back into the primary school projects for them to continue, with the rest being shared with the following organisations, chosen by the Bright Stars pupils:

**CancerCare**



**YOUNGMINDS**



As well as:

- **Arabella's Adventure Playground**
- **Plumbland Community Group**
- **West Cumberland Hospital's Henderson Suite**

## Future Bright Stars Projects

The outcome from such positive engagement with Bright Stars, is that pledges for future participation in the project are high.



**100%** of businesses and schools would like to be involved in a future Bright Stars project. This is tremendous news and confirms the benefits from, and enjoyment in, taking part.

Bright Stars is a rolling programme and many schools and businesses have already signed up for a future Bright Stars project, either starting in April or October (or both!).

Finally, the longevity and continued development potential through Bright Stars for pupils, the school and the local community can be seen in two new case study films:

Victoria Junior School (Welfare Packages):

<https://youtube.com/shorts/aXH8YH-6dfg?feature=share>

Pennington C of E Primary School (Penn Pals):

<https://youtube.com/shorts/Ks8fZpiyDvc?feature=share>

**The positive commitment to the Bright Stars project shows that all involved see it as a very beneficial, positive and fun project to be part of, with all parties involved learning from the experience, not just the pupils!**



[www.cforlp.org.uk/bright-stars-primary](http://www.cforlp.org.uk/bright-stars-primary)

## A bit about us – The Centre for Leadership Performance (CforLP)

CforLP have high aspirations for the people and businesses within Cumbria, and we believe that **everyday leadership** is key in leveraging the potential that exists in our schools, communities and workplace. We are a small purpose driven not for profit social enterprise working to build leadership aspirations, potential, and capabilities for the people of Cumbria, because we believe better leadership means better lives for everyone.

We adopt a place-based long-term approach to developing leadership skills, aspirations and capabilities whilst promoting, nurturing and encouraging **life-long leadership learning**.

Rather than silos of provision, we want to continue to build and expand our inclusive integrated **leadership pathway** that extends from **primary through to retirement**, working collaboratively with other providers and partners to make real long-term impact.



This year we have spent time developing and building the foundations for future growth and impact – we are incredibly proud of all our collaborative work across the County.

## **Can YOU help us develop the workforce for the future?**

### Businesses

Self-funding to take part would have been a considerable barrier for many of the micro and smaller SMEs for this project, as they are able to contribute through volunteer time and resources, but not monetary support. We are very grateful for the vital support from our project funders for this too.

Bright Stars offers a great development opportunity for your staff, including graduates and apprentices, and helps them feel engaged with the local community, helping their wellbeing, productivity and job satisfaction.

We would love to hear from organisations who would like to be involved, including those funding their own place or possibly funding a place for a smaller organisation too. This report shows what a positive impact being involved in Bright Stars has on so many in the community.

### Schools

Would your pupils benefit from the skills they can develop taking part in Bright Stars? It is a fun way for them to learn, be inspired and to make a difference!

***We are already looking for organisations to support our next Bright Stars projects – could that be YOU?***



Thank you

Contact us now with any Bright Stars questions or to register an interest:

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