

CASE STUDY

WOODSIDE ARRAN CIC

Funding Amount: £8,963.71

Community Led local Development - Ayrshire Rural and Islands Ambition (ARIA) Fund Small Capital Grant (2022/23)

BACKGROUND

A pilot study to increase onsite composting Woodside Arran CIC, a social enterprise farm. The project was created to reduce carbon emissions onsite, providing cost saving benefits while also providing data towards supporting a larger island wide composting initiative

PROJECT OVERVIEW

This project set out to reduce the organisation's carbon emissions, which are specifically high in this one area due to the previous import of compost to the island for our no dig, biodiverse market garden. While specifically affecting Woodside Arran CIC and the members, the wider community wealth building ambitions were to contribute to a future wider Island initiative, which will tackle the long standing issue of a lack of green waste and food recycling on the island.

WHAT STAGE IS THE PROJECT AT NOW?

The project to purchase the equipment is complete (completed March 23), but the pilot is still ongoing and we hope to complete in October this year.

At which point we will review if the small-scale compost collection service is still viable for us to offer. During this time, we will also be liaising with other local partners to try and assist with the momentum surrounding the creation of an island wide service.

While this pilot will complete within this year, the project will in a way not be fully complete until the wider issue of the lack of green/food waste recycling has been resolved on the island.



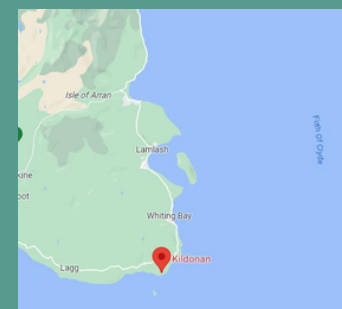
AT A GLANCE

CHALLENGES

- Resource & capacity
- Nature of the work
- Site size

BENEFITS

- Increased production
- Skills training and capacity building
- Environmental improvement



JENNY MACDONALD

Woodside Arran CIC

"Thanks to the ARIA small capital fund we have without a doubt proven that an island wide, community led composting scheme is both realistic and essential, providing a substantial range of both direct and indirect benefits for the island."

WHO WILL THE PROJECT BENEFIT AND HOW?

This project mainly supported the members of our social enterprise, who are part of the pilot however indirectly supported a lot of others.

We grow fresh produce for a variety of consumers, both residents and visitors to the island and even those who were not directly involved in the pilot can enjoy the indirect benefits, through the increase in produce available, due to the higher quality organic materials ,created by the pilot, fertilising the produce available locally.

We have also kept costs down by cutting the cost of buying in compost which was increasing rapidly with the cost of living crisis.

Long term we hope the pilot will benefit the whole island, if we can now go to on support a wider green and food waste collection service for all 4500 residents.

WHAT CHALLENGES HAVE YOU ENCOUNTERED DURING THIS PROJECT AND HOW DID YOU OVERCOME THEM?

We have had to focus only on what our small team can achieve, which is nowhere near enough for the size of the issue.

Due to the nature of working with waste we have had to limit our use of volunteers but in the future, should we expand the service we would like to appropriately train supportive individuals so that we could create a wider network of participants.

The volunteer support is there - we just do not have the capacity to utilise this within our current small team.

Longer term a much larger site would have to be found and for this significant amounts of capital funding would have to be found.

WHAT BENEFITS HAVE YOU SEEN AS A RESULT OF THE PROJECT?

The pilot has been a success in regard to reducing the inputs to the farm, significant amounts of compost have already been produced in a short time frame, proving that a much larger system could be implemented with adequate staffing and initial capital investment.

There is the potential for significant community capacity building, employment benefits and a vast environmental improvement.

While the scale of this project has so far has limited benefits, we believe it has started a ripple effect which will produce significant benefits over the coming years.

WHAT ADVICE COULD YOU OFFER FOR ANYONE LOOKING TO TAKE ON A SIMILAR PROJECT?

Community composting at first can seem overwhelming and even unpleasant! However, once you get over the licensing from SEPA and build up the onsite infrastructure it can actually be easily incorporated into the day to day running of a community growing project.

We fully acknowledge that to jump up from this scale, to a community wide approach, will take significant planning and financing.

However, if you are looking to reduce costs, provide wider community benefits and have a small amount of space within your projects location adding composting services to your remit is a great way to increase your environmental impact, support your community and find cost saving benefits all at the same time. it.



FUNDING INFORMATION

'Community Led Local Development' or 'CLLD' gives local communities the power to tackle their own, local challenges. By building knowledge and skills, supporting new ideas and encouraging cooperation, CLLD helps to create viable and resilient communities.

£8.6 million has been allocated to Local Action Groups (LAG) to support CLLD within their areas through the Rural Community Led Fund (RCLF).

Ayrshire LAG used their funding to establish the Ayrshire Rural and Islands Ambition (ARIA) Fund

FINALLY, ON REFLECTION, IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD HAVE DONE DIFFERENTLY?

In retrospect we could have been more ambitious from the outgo. While it was unlikely that a larger project could have been supported by this particular fund, in the short timeframe available, the results of such a small-scale pilot can only go so far.

However, despite saying this it was essential that some practical experience was gained, after so many years of inertia and purely theoretical analysis having being undertaken by stakeholders.

Now with thanks to the ARIA small capital fund we have without a doubt proven that an island wide, community led composting scheme is both realistic and essential, providing a substantial range of both direct and indirect benefits for the island.

You can find further information about current funding availability at the Scottish Rural Network Website including a free local, online [funding search tool](#) for your charity, community group or social enterprise.

From small grants to funding for big capital projects, we can help you track down the funding you need to make a difference in your community. The Scottish Rural Network is a one-stop-shop for news and information about rural development.

Don't miss a thing! [Sign up for our email newsletter](#) and you'll get the latest news from across rural Scotland

