



Social Enterprise **PLACES**



LEWIS

Social Enterprise Scotland Introduction

This brochure demonstrates strong case studies highlighting the impact of Social Enterprise organisations in Lewis.

There is much the Placemaking and Community Wealth Building Agenda can learn from the Islands and we hope you'll be inspired by this brochure and the organisations listed within it.

According to the Social Enterprise Census (2019) there are 122 social enterprises in the Na h-Eileanan Siar local authority area. The data also notes that with 45 social enterprises per 10,000 people the area is second only to Shetland, making this one of the highest concentrations of social enterprise bodies in Scotland.

For Lewis, the impact social enterprise has had in this island community cannot be overstated. In addition to providing vital services and links to all these remote communities and residents the sector in Lewis has innovated and played a lead role in demonstrating the power of strong community action.

Chris Martin, CEO, Social Enterprise Scotland

According to the Social Enterprise Census 2019



122 social enterprises in the Na h-Eileanan Siar local authority area



45 social enterprises per 10,000 people



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Lewis Social Enterprise Introduction

We have long been proud of the impact social enterprise has had here in Lewis.

We're delighted to work with Social Enterprise Scotland on this brochure. We have long been proud of the impact social enterprise has had here in Lewis. Our community is close knit as demonstrated by both the way all our social enterprises work with and for their communities and the way we connect with each other.

While we have much in common with other island communities, we are also keen to highlight the distinct nature of social enterprise activity here in Lewis too. The case studies include a number of examples of land ownership and estate management. We're proud of that but also note that reduced personal incomes and community needs also

play a significant role in influencing the work and focuses social enterprise in our area too.

We are always amazed by the breadth of activity our social enterprises here in Lewis are involved in from ambitious land buy outs, leading renewable community energy schemes and people focused social care, heritage, and community facilities

As remote communities we have been Placemaking here in Lewis for as long as we can remember and moving forward, we will continue to build our community for future generations.

Lewis Social Enterprise Stakeholder Group

Our Place

Lewis sits on the Atlantic fringe of Europe as the most northerly island of the Hebridean archipelago. Sharing its latitude with southern Sweden and Alaska, the area offers unique cultural, Gaelic and natural heritage with a rich and strong crofting tradition. With a population of around 18,000, just under half of these live in the main town of Stornoway, remaining inhabitants scattered in crofting townships around the island.

While the outstanding landscape, beaches and long summer daylight offer a fabulous

environment in which to live the island faces significant challenges including depopulation, narrow employment opportunities and combined factors every note remoteness, high costs of delivering services, low population density and high transport costs. It is against this background that social enterprise has risen to the forefront.



Our social enterprises



Lewis has long been a hotspot social enterprise activity. Following pioneering work in the early 2000's by Third Sector Hebrides, a new focus around Point and Sandwick from 2010 onwards and of recent pilot on community wealth building by the public sector all highlight the impact of community led action in our island communities.

Access to land and resources has played a key role in overcoming decades of powerlessness and enabling growing community entrepreneurship. 80% of the land is now community controlled and this has been transformative in creating the conditions for locality-and asset based growth.

Social enterprise activity and inventiveness has thrived in Lewis and we wish, through this brochure, not to blow our own trumpets but simply to say there are some good ideas here, come see and share what can be done so we can learn together and show future generations there are positive ways to build, grow and nurture people and place for the benefit of all.





Colaisde MacAmhlaidh - Macaulay College CIC

Founded 2009

- The first student joined in 2010 and now supports 24 adults and young people, employing 14 staff.
- Provides people with additional social and educational requirements with a programme of activities that enables the students to achieve their full potential.
- Following referrals from NHS, Social Work and Education students meet friends, have fun, look after animals, grow produce, create art/craft items and learn independent living skills.
- Popular jams, chutneys, sausages and beautiful candles produced are sold locally.



Back Football & Recreation Club (Coll Centre)

Started 1933

- This volunteer-run sports hub and community centre supports healthier lifestyles and life choices through all-year indoor and outdoor activities.
- Offers a community gym and various sporting activities, including a golf driving range, as well as other recreational activities such as an art club, youth club, toddlers group, community events, and more!
- Facilities include a large indoor hall and games room, kitchen, gym, an all-weather sports arena, a full-size outdoor pitch, and the golf range. All facilities are available for hire.



Buidheann Leasachaidh Thorsiadair / Horshader Community Development

Established 2008

- For the benefit of the people of the Western Isles, and particularly for the Westside villages of South Shawbost, Dail Beag, and Dail Mòr the trust manages community space at Raebhat House, North Shawbost;
- In addition, it oversees community allotments in South Shawbost and Dalmore and delivers rural transport and grass-cutting service.
- It manages the HCD Community Fund offering grants and bursaries for individuals and groups.



Great Bernera Community Development Trust (GBCDT)

- GBCDT has been set up to promote the economic and social development of Great Bernera and the Tir Mor and it is currently involved in the ongoing process of a Community Land Buyout of the Bernera Estate.
- The trust is involved in developing the Kirkibost Pier Area with pontoon berths (phase one) and a new build to for a pontoon management office, toilet, shower and laundry facilities (phase two). Separate EV points, campervan hook ups and waste disposal points will also be located in this area.
- Other initiatives include The Old Hatchery Project - currently looking at purchase, redesign and repurposing of this building as a community social and small enterprises business space and research and development in process for new Social Housing in Bernera.



Hebrides Alpha Trading CIC

Founded 2007

- Hebrides Alpha Trading is a self-financing company that gives therapeutic employment to individuals with alcohol and other drug addiction problems.
- It offers a window cleaning, power washing and gutter cleaning service to domestic and commercial customers in Lewis and provides a textiles recycling service throughout Lewis and a cardboard recycling service to businesses in and around Stornoway.
- Service users (aged 18 – 65 years) attend for 16 hours/ week and are involved in all their activities and have access to a range of certificated training courses to enhance their employability.



Pairc Trust

Purchase of South Lochs estate completed in 2015

- Champions heritage and visual arts.
- In 2015 the Trust completed the purchase of the estate in South Lochs, which extends to 10,840ha with 213 crofts spread over 11 townships and a population around 400 people.
- It has also since purchased the Kershader Resource Centre through a community asset transfer as office space for the Trust and offers space for other community uses; childcare service and gym facilities.
- Through the renovation of a vacant property on the estate the trust now offers two properties for affordable rent and is seeking opportunities to further increase housing provision in the area.



Isles FM

Launched in the late 90's

- A community owned radio for the Outer Hebrides.
- Operated entirely by volunteers the station operates from a purpose built studio in Stornoway.
- Includes a mix of Gaelic and English speaking shows.



Point and Sandwick Trust

Established 2009

- A 100% community-owned commercial enterprise which built, operates and maintains the UK's largest community wind farm in the villages of Point and Sandwick.
- The Trust uses income generated by its three wind turbines to support development of community projects in its 18 villages and in the wider Western Isles.
- The vision behind PST was to create a long-term source of funding from renewable energy and use this funding to support local initiatives to promote the social, educational, cultural and environmental well-being of people living in the community. To date over £1.6M has been given back to local projects and groups.



Urras Stòras an Rubha (Point Development Trust - USAR)

Established April 2012

- USAR owns the Old Knock School, which has been operating as a community resource for a number of years, incorporating a shop, café, offices, and community space.
- To ensure the long-term future of the former Knock School building, USAR is redeveloping the site as Aros An Rubha, creating attractive, flexible, energy-efficient facilities for new enterprises and for community groups, and thereby bring about an improved sense of social cohesion.
- USAR will manage Aros An Rubha as a self-sustaining business in which any profits from rental and any other income would be used to support the cultural, social, heritage and linguistic activities that Urras Stòras An Rubha aims to support within the Point area.



Urras Sgìre Oighreachd Bharabhais

34,200 acre estate purchased by the community in 2006 along with the local hatchery

- Comprising of six Townships, Lower Barvas and Park, Brue, Arnol, North Bragar, South Bragar, and North and New Shawbost, the state has just over 340 crofts and is home to a population of over 1000. The Barvas Estate area also includes The Harris Tweed Mill in Shawbost, The Whalebone Arch and The Arnol Blackhouse.
- Three Polycrubs have been erected to help the community and is the beginning of a community garden. The Trust is looking to develop further community projects along with environmental and Tourism projects within the estate area.



Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn (Galston Estate Trust)

**Established as a company limited by guarantee,
with charitable status in 2007**

- Managing the 56,000 acre Galston Estate for and on behalf of the community.
- UOG aspires to a “thriving and well connected community with excellent local services and amenities, harnessing its natural assets to sustain a unique cultural and social environment”.
- It runs a number of projects, including infrastructural developments such as tourism and recycling facilities on the Estate, as well as the construction of three wind turbines, from which proceeds are distributed back into the community via UOG’s Community Investment Fund.
- UOG also conducts in-house management of all crofting and estate business, and delivers long-standing activity programmes catering to the entire demographic of the Estate. These include community wellbeing programmes, arts and heritage events, and school holiday activity programmes for young people.



Gallan Head Community Trust

**The Trust took over the former MOD Aird Uig site in
2016, enabling public access to Gallan Head**

- Seeks to advance community regeneration and wellbeing by sensitively developing Gallan Head for locals and visitors whilst preserving the unique surroundings.
- Opened a community hub used as Trust offices and for communal activities and operates a café and gift shop to support local producers which is well used by locals and visitors.



Stornoway Trust

Lord Leverhulme gifted the estate in 1923

- It is one of the oldest community landlord's in Scotland.
- Covering 69,000ha the estate is home to almost 11,000 people over 40 townships, consisting of 1,300 crofts and 200 allotments.
- The trust manages a number of social enterprise initiatives including a Café, Forestry, Tree Nursery and Milling service in the Castle grounds in Stornoway.



Urras Oighreachd Chàrlabhaigh (Carloway Estate Trust)

In 2015 the 11,500 acre Carloway Estate was purchased on behalf of the community

- Two of the most popular tourist attractions in Lewis are located on the estate. The Calanais Stones are a world-renowned Neolithic stone circle and an exceptionally well-preserved Iron Age Broch is located at Doune Carloway.
- Urras Oighreachd Chàrlabhaigh work is focused on helping to achieve the community priorities identified in the Dalmore to Garynahine Community Plan. Current projects include the development of a growing area and workshop for community use and the purchase and redevelopment of the visitor centre at Doune Carloway Broch.



Aline Community Woodland

Purchased from the Forestry Commission by the Erisort Trust in 2007

- Community owned woodland in the Lochs district on the road to Harris covering 636ha.
- The site is a popular recreation spot for locals and visitors, enjoying the woodland walks, playpark and watersports.
- The Trust continue to develop the woodland through the addition of new walking tracks, planting new trees and exploring environmental projects like carbon capture.



Urras Coimhearsnachd Bhràdhagair agus Àrnoil (Bragar and Arnol Community Trust)

- Bragar and Arnol Community Trust is focussed on delivering services and support which will enhance the lives of the people of Bragar and Arnol.
- The renovation of the former Bragar School on the West Side of Lewis now sees Grinneabhat offering a range of excellent facilities including en-suite accommodation, launderette, àite-cèilidh café, EV Charge Point, exhibition and community meetings and events spaces.
- The promotion, usage and development of the Gaelic language and local history, culture and environment are at the heart of the work of Urras Coimhearsnachd Bhràdhagair agus Àrnoil.



The Old Shop and Post Office, Upper Bayble

- The Old Shop Bayble contributes to local life by bringing a much-loved historic shop back into community use.
- Old Shop Bayble works to support greater reuse, sustainability and local craft production in our community. Through donating unwanted clothing, books and toys, swapping and sharing our resources, we help to reduce the number of new things we buy, therefore reducing our impacts on the environment. We also sell a wide range of local crafts, and zero waste products.
- People volunteering at the shop enjoy having a local space in the community where people can get to know others that live locally and work together to run the shop.



Kinloch Historical Society

Funded in 1983

- This heritage and community runs a museum, archive and research facility promoting local heritage and running of range of events.
- The gift shop showcases local crafts and there are electrical charging points on site too.
- In addition, the society runs the Self Service Launderette and has offices for rental.

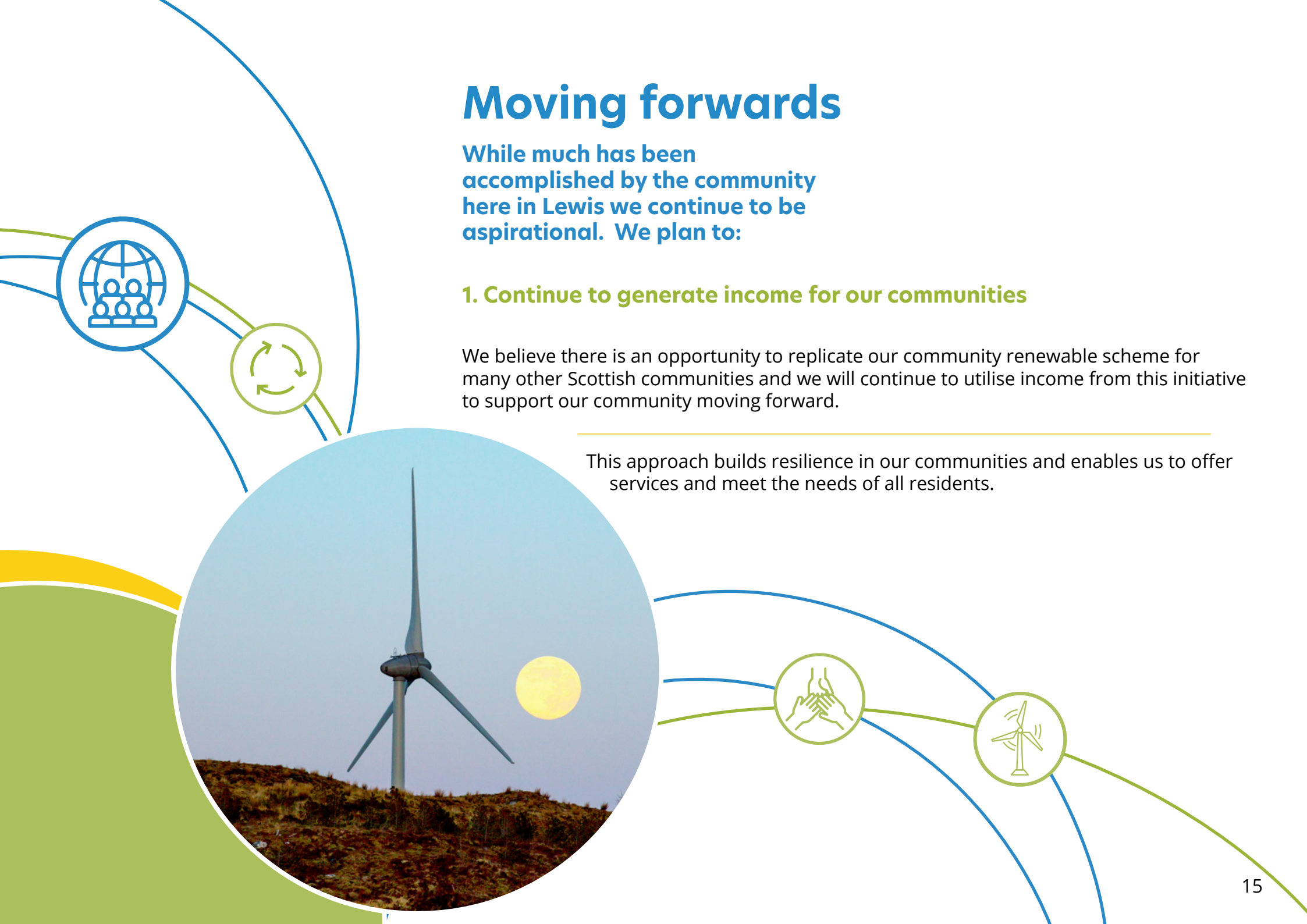
Moving forwards

While much has been accomplished by the community here in Lewis we continue to be aspirational. We plan to:

1. Continue to generate income for our communities

We believe there is an opportunity to replicate our community renewable scheme for many other Scottish communities and we will continue to utilise income from this initiative to support our community moving forward.

This approach builds resilience in our communities and enables us to offer services and meet the needs of all residents.



2. Enhance our natural environment for the benefit of residents and visitors

Work on the coastal path and the development of our natural environment will continue for the benefit of all residents (not just the humans) and visitors alike.

We want to connect walking, cycling and green transport routes adding further value to the Stornoway Harbour development.

The environment is a key attraction for visitors and those who live here and we believe that looking after the world around us will in turn benefit our economy and the lives of people in it.



3. Consolidate and grow community hubs throughout our community

We want to see the various locality hubs consolidated, developed and grown over the next two year period.

Covid has shown us even more the way community can work together for the benefit of all who live there.

We want to build on this ethos making our communities strong for future challenges and creating places people want to live and work in.





4. Utilise the community benefit/community wealth agenda for the benefit of all who live here

We believe the community benefit approach that is growing in momentum will continue to highlight potential supply chain and collaboration opportunities.

There is great potential in this approach to support local enterprises and community enhancing approaches including;

- Green Community Transport (e-bikes, E charging vehicle points and E- vehicles),
- Local Agricultural Produce and Nurseries,
- Marine and Adventure Tourism,
- Cultural and Eco-tourism (services, accommodation, events and festivals),
- Locally Based Community Facility Enhancement,
- Support Provision for Older and People and those suffering from Rural Isolation.





Do you want to highlight how social enterprise has made a difference to your place?

Get in touch if you want us to help promote your place.

The Social Enterprise Places Scotland programme is delivered by Social Enterprise Scotland and seeks to promote the work and impact of social enterprise organisations throughout our communities. Supported by the Royal Bank of Scotland and Scottish Government we're always interested to hear from you and look at how we can highlight your area as a Social Enterprise Place too.

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