



Rural SEN – 29th November 2022

Notes

Participants:

Fiona Thomson – Outside the Box, Hannah Clinch – Tacit Tacit, Reeni Kennedy-Boyle – Fyne Futures, Paul Ives – Shopper-aid, Richard Thorne – Portsoy Community Enterprise, Lynn Spence – Brothers of Charity Scotland, Gary McManus – Brothers of Charity Scotland, Eva Milroy – Dumfries & Galloway College, Thomas Fisher – Codel, Jane Benson – Outside the Box, Dawn Mullady – Coaching in Communities, Carmen Paputa-Dutu - First Port, Kim Wallace – Social Enterprise Scotland, Andy Lippok – Connecting Scotland, Pamela Galbraith – Connecting Scotland, , Aimee Spence – Inspiralba and Ailsa Clark – Inspiralba.

After some brief introductions, the group were introduced to our three speakers, Andy Lippok and Pamela Galbraith from Connecting Scotland and Kim Wallace from Social Enterprise Scotland.

Collective Leadership Training

Pamela and Andy discussed what Connecting Scotland do and how they became involved in the Argyll Leadership Training. [Connecting Scotland](#) are a Community Interest Company registered in Scotland and formed in 2015 with the purpose to:

- Support a growing network of trained practitioners.
- Organise and deliver training in the practices of participatory leadership, hosting and harvesting conversations.
- Deliver work with organisations and communities when they're invited to help.

Pamela and Andy provided an overview of the work of Connecting Scotland and their wider involvement with Toke Moeller and James Eade from InterChange Denmark.

They also discussed the recent Collective Leadership Training held at Barmolloch Farm, Argyll at the end of October 2022. The purpose of this training was to gather a community of practitioners who share values, personal and collective practices and ideas to take forward the advantages of good leadership and collaborative learning across all sectors in Argyll.

Some of the practices explored during the Training include; [Art of Hosting](#), [Groundwork Practice](#) and the [Flow Game](#). A full account of the Collective Leadership Training can be found [here](#).

Andy and Pamela offered to provide their contact details with participants should anyone want to get in touch to enquire about hosting a similar training in the future.

- Andy's email address - resolis_associates@live.co.uk and phone number – 07795 682570
- Pamela's email address - pamelagalbraith@yahoo.co.uk

Transition Group Recommendations

Kim Wallace from Social Enterprise Scotland (SES) then gave an overview of the recommendations put forward to SES by the Transition Group after the decision earlier this year to create a single intermediary for social enterprise. 17 recommendations were made in total which fit into several categories including; membership structure, governance, services and functions and critical relationships. The full Transition Group Report can be found [here](#).

There was then some discussion around on the need for SES to engage more effectively with rural and community-led enterprise and how we can ensure this is addressed. It was said that the narrative has been frequently dominated by urban bias. Feedback was that the voluntary code was welcome as some have seen the corporate sector 'greenwashing' which is a risk. The non-competitive element, review of SE code and board refresh were also highlighted as welcome changes to SES. It was recognised that there is a need for SES to have a strategic lobbying role but also acknowledging different levels of policy.

There was comment around the need for increased confidence in the skills, experience and expertise that the third sector has in relation to community wealth building. If social enterprises weren't delivering services in communities, many of those communities would not have survived. The research element was also welcomed and the opportunity to build on the work that the Rural SE Hub has already developed in terms of the Rural Research Group and should not just be the extractive mode where academics take the lead and those with the knowledge and expertise on the ground are treated as 'lab rats'. It was highlighted that there were opportunities to support PHD students while, at same time, building a knowledge base for communities.

SEWF Update

Inspiralba's Rural Social Enterprise Coordinator, Aimee then gave a presentation which gave an overview of her experience at the Social Enterprise World Forum '22 (SEWF). SEWF '22 was held in Brisbane, Australia on the 28th and 29th of September. Community Enterprise in Scotland, in partnership with SEWF via the International Social Enterprise Observatory were able to support delegates from the Scottish third sector to attend SEWF22 in-person.

Aimee spent just over two weeks in Australia, taking part in the Youth Forum, the official SEWF, two social enterprise bus tours and the Rural Gathering in North-east Victoria. Aimee was struck by the parallels between issues faced by social enterprises and rural communities in Scotland to those faced in Australia. Moving forward, Aimee is going to use the skills and experience learnt through the SEWF '22 to guide and inform her work with the Rural SE Hub. You can read Aimee's blogs [here](#).

Community Wellbeing Exchange

Inspiralba Development Manager, Ailsa then gave an update on the [Community Wellbeing Exchange](#) and how it could be a useful tool for community-led organisations. The Community Wellbeing Exchange builds upon the valuable learning of previous work, with the approach based on the fundamental premise that community organisations have access to a small budget to purchase activities and services from social enterprises that contribute towards improved mental health. This enables community organisations who understand the needs of their local community to tap into services they may previously have been unaware of or been unable to afford, whilst also supporting social enterprise suppliers.

We have identified that many rural social enterprises have been working on the frontline in their communities throughout the pandemic and continue to respond to community needs in terms of household and fuel poverty. This has an impact on personal wellbeing and mental health.

There are 20 community organisations that each have an allocation of £1000 to access 100's of brilliant and wide-ranging activities and services being offered by social enterprise suppliers. Inspiralba, for the Rural SE Hub, have secured a small fund to support the health and wellbeing of staff and volunteers to care for their personal wellbeing to ensure their personal resilience to continue to meet needs.

We have secured £500 through the fund but we will match to make the budget up to £1,000 and organisations can apply for costs to support mindfulness, yoga, breathing techniques, etc. If you'd like some more information about

this please contact aspence@inspiralba.org.uk. More information will be available via the Rural SE Hub and our social media channels soon.

Legal Right Materials

A new module is now live in the Learning Materials section of the Rural SE Hub which focuses on legal rights in the context of social enterprise! Rights are important to social enterprises because they help to; assess and manage risks to business, protect business reputation and open up new commercial opportunities.

This new module titled 'Legal Rights in Social Enterprise' consists of 5 chapters which aim to:

- Demystify what rights mean for rural social enterprises
- Build confidence in others to identify where rights interrelate with their work
- Build skills in others to use a practical rights-based approach to their work
- Increase awareness of where to find information, resources and peer support about rights.

This includes introductory materials, practical case studies and signposts where you can find further reading and support. The module was created by the social enterprise [JRS Knowhow](#), with grateful thanks to everyone who was involved and contributed case studies.

You can access these materials [here](#).

The potential for a workshop to discuss the materials at further length was discussed and there was some interest.

Upcoming Learning Exchanges

As it is the run up to Christmas, we don't actually have any official [Community Learning Exchanges](#) planned at the moment. However, we do have a few ideas in the pipeline. Drawing back to the need for the Community Wellbeing Exchange, we have been developing a new project for the Rural SE Hub which will centre around creating materials specifically looking at prevention and support for poor mental health, with a focus on young people and the struggles unique to them.

The project will be developed in association with other organisations and individuals who have experience in this area. We thought that it would be useful to hold a virtual community learning exchange on this topic to get a little bit more background and prompt some interesting discussion.

The second idea we have for a future Community Learning Exchange would focus on the increasing cost of living and what community-led organisations are doing to help alleviate this crisis. This topic is obviously extremely relevant at the moment and we have been seeing the issue brought up in many exchanges and meetings recently. This exchange could potentially be done in person if the right conditions were met but it could also be virtual if need be.

The third idea for an upcoming Community Learning Exchange centres on the topic of women in the Rural Economy and will be held in association with [Scottish Rural Action](#).

Some suggestions from participation of topics for future learning exchanges included; Women in social enterprise & menopause and Rural research.

Final Points

There will be a Cross Party Group (CPG) meeting on rural policy on the evening of the 31st of January 2023 which will look at how we can shift the narrative and highlight some stories of Rural Resilience in Post-Covid Scotland. This

meeting will focus on different examples of positive interventions tackling mental and physical ill-health in rural and island Scotland.

The link to register for this event can be found [here](#).

It was agreed that moving forward, Rural SEN meetings will occur quarterly, with the next date TBC.