



Case Study: Bisley Community Composting Project

Web: [Bisley Community Composting Scheme | \(bisleycommunitycompostscheme.org.uk\)](http://bisleycommunitycompostscheme.org.uk)

Location: Bisley, Surrey

Organisation Background: Located on the Bisley Chestergate Allotments, it opened in November 2005, the first community composting scheme in the Stroud District and the longest running community composting scheme in Gloucestershire. It is a members-only, open to residents of the parish of Bisley-with-Lypiatt. It is run as a Community Interest Company (CIC)

Current status of composting project: Members bring their garden waste and veggie/fruit peelings to the composting site. Volunteers manage it, with help from paid local labour. Once composted, the product is offered back to members and allotment holders, for use in their gardens and allotments. It serves a population of 1,000 people, with 160 households taking part - reported to be very popular and sociable. 3 volunteers started the scheme, 2 remain and new directors are taken on as needed.

Relevance to the Highlands: It utilises simple technology (no electricity needed) and is predominantly self-sustaining with funding applied for, as and when available. Driven by volunteers, it is on a scale (160 householders) that could be replicated within the highlands. It also generates an income through recommended donations and memberships.

Type of composting solution: Started with 4 bins (2m x 2m x 3m high) built by volunteers - now have 6 bins. There are also bays on site and members put the material into discreet bays depending on type of material e.g. woody material, grass cuttings, etc. Volunteers layer up organic 'wastes' within the compost bins to ensure that there is the correct balance of greens and browns - bins are turned once at a 3 month period by a freelance person who is paid. The compost is ready after 6 months. The organisation owns 2 machines (a shredder and a jimmy riddle sieve). Once ready, the compost is sieved and bagged. They decided to keep things 'simple' and avoid the PAS 100 route, therefore they ask for a donation rather than sell compost. Part of the compost pile is available to the allotment holders and non-members to bag themselves for a voluntary donation. The scheme operates under a T23 waste licence (similar to a Paragraph 12 Exemption in Scotland).

Scale: Turning over 70 – 110 tonnes per year (based on output tonnage of compost).

Input material: Green garden waste e.g. veggie peelings, leaves, grass, etc.

End use: Mixture of bagged compost and a pile of unsieved compost - collected by the community.

Partners/ collaborators: Close working relationship with the Council. A local district councillor has just joined the board of directors. Strong support from the councillors more generally - were aiming to get 3 additional schemes open prior to Covid, which is currently on hold.

Financials: Bagged compost is £3 per 30 litre bag, or 4 bags for £10 (recommended donation). Subject to availability, non-members may also make an appointment to fill their own bags with unsieved compost on a Saturday morning (in exchange for a donation). Also receive £62 per tonne waste credits from the council. Membership is £30 per year.

Capital costs: Received a grant of £2K to start up (build bins, gates, fences, a shed for tools, etc). There was some flytipping at the outset, but none recently. Capital costs were supported by the district and county council. Have also received funding from sources such as the National Lottery. Received £15K to buy a shredder and container and also money for hardstanding as site was boggy.

Main motivator: Environmental, also had a need for compost. Great social scene now.

Number of years the scheme has been running for: 15 years

Additional Comments: Very motivated by wider environmental concerns e.g. peat free compost, carbon in general, wildlife corridors, local solutions, circular economy, etc.