



Case Study: Bute Produce

Web: <https://www.fynefutures.org.uk/bute-produce/>

Location: Isle of Bute

Organisation Background: Bute Produce is run by the charity Fyne Futures (a subsidiary of the housing association, Fyne Homes), on a leased 6 acre site. In late 2020 ownership was transferred to Fyne Futures. The objective is to grow local seasonal produce that is affordable to the local community and to respond to an emerging trend for food with a low carbon footprint. The community composting work is part of the supply chain of Bute Produce.

Current status of composting project: This is an illustration of a community composting project that sits within a much larger endeavour, with community food growing, skills development, job provision, and low carbon supply chain development. Operates under a Paragraph 12 exemption (no cost).

Relevance to the Highlands: Bute, as an island community, shares some of the same challenges as remote Highland communities e.g. in terms of services available. Its activities, involving food growing and composting, the management of resources locally etc, are also of interest to many highland community organisations.

Type of composting solution: Previously used a vessel operated by electricity, to provide heat. This broke down and is no longer being used. The project uses bays, to process Fyne Homes (housing association) garden waste and waste generated within the growing project. Compost tumblers are used, as are worms, to produce a good quality compost.

How the staff, volunteers and community work together: Bute Produce is a combined market garden and composting project with a paid volunteer co-ordinator. This provides support to many volunteers, providing training, volunteering, employment and education opportunities for the wider community. It works closely with all local nurseries and schools to support curriculum for excellence for 3 – 18, with a range of activities, workshops, work experience and certified courses. It supports local community food growing with the aim of making the island more sustainable and reducing food insecurity.

Scale: Bute Produce is a local community market garden, with 4 of the 6 acres currently in use.

Input material: Garden waste, wood chip, seaweed, shredded paper and well-rotted manure.

End use: The compost is used within the market garden, which supports the Green Box service to produce between 15 & 20 tonnes of vegetables per year.

Partners/ collaborators: The local authority, local schools, Fyne Futures.

Price: A composting system was purchased a number of years ago, but is no longer used.

Funding: Bute Produce sells food locally through its green box scheme, but the majority of funding comes from a range of grant schemes supporting employability, to deliver its social and environmental purposes. In the future it will be able to bid for local authority employability commissioning related to its activities.

Main motivator: Social and environmental reasons (reduced CO₂ emissions) , providing training, fresh, local produce with resources managed responsibly, including compost production.

Number of years the scheme has been running for: Fyne Futures run the Bute Produce project, and have been operating since 2008. The composting project began in 2014.

Additional Comments: The organisation runs “Master Composter” training courses for people and organisations across the country. A risk assessment (HACCP) was undertaken for both the composting and food growing elements of Bute Produce. This covers areas such as:

- Equipment and training provided
- Record keeping
- How to turn the waste into compost and how to deal with the compost once it is created
- How to manage leachate produced e.g. if running into a watercourse or if into a drain.