



Uig Community Shop

Location: Isle of Lewis

Organisation: Uig Community Cooperative

Uig, Isle of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides lies 40 miles from Stornoway on the far west coast of the island and is home to the Uig Community Co-operative. This co-operative consists of a shop, post office and petrol station which, back in 2003 successfully raised £12,500 through its residents who were invited to buy community shares of £25 to maintain their lifeline services. The community shares themselves were only a small part of bigger funding package including grants.

The key to the success of this offering was the work undertaken by the original steering group which included:

- 6 months research & information gathering
- Feasibility study - HIE & Lottery funding
- Regular reporting back to community
- Market research analysis
- Good community engagement
- Business plan & cash flow projections
- Study visits to other community-owned shops
- Legal structures research

Although the amount was modest, it was an important demonstration of commitment from a small scattered community. The work doesn't stop with a successful community share offer - operating and managing the business, ensuring good governance & keeping the community engaged are all vital on-going issues. Luckily one of the other benefits of community shares is that shareholders not only engage with the start up phase but continue to commit to the long term success of the venture.