

Dunoon Goes Pop

Designer, illustrator and innovation expert explore feasibility of sustainable soft drinks to celebrate Dunoon's heritage. (5 Minute Read)

Useful Facts

Local and community groups are a valuable & knowledgeable resource for heritage protection. ¹

There were 20 heritage based enterprises registered in Scotland in 2019. ²

23000 events were held across Europe in 2018 to celebrate the Year of Cultural Heritage. ³

Once home to a thriving soft drinks factory Dunoon is set to be the scene of a soda revival as a new partnership has secured funding to launch soft drink brand Dunoon Goes Pop.

Described as a cultural heritage project it sees three creative practitioners come together to reinvigorate what was once a thriving hub for the soft drinks industry for over 100 years. Dunoon Goes Pop is one of three of three creative 'place making' collaborations across Argyll and Bute, that have been selected to be supported and delivered in 2021 as part of the Place Makers: Micro-cluster Networks Fund. Run by **Culture Heritage and Arts Argyll and Isles (CHARTS)**, in partnership with the Innovation School at **The Glasgow School of Art**, the grant seeks to enable fledgling projects to develop creative partnerships in the Argyll and Isles region.

Dunoon Goes Pop is a collaboration between Hannah Clinch of Dunoon based design agency Tacit Tacit, local illustrator Walter Newton and heritage innovation ex-

pert Manda Forster of Digventures. This new funding boost allows the team to build on the success of the first samples of Dunoon Pop produced in 2019 as part of the Shop Keepers of Dunoon initiative backed by the Dunoon's Conservation and Regeneration Scheme (CARS). The drinks were served to members of the local community to encourage conversations about the town's heritage. The concept proved so effective that the idea of producing pop in the town once more was mooted. Now with the support of CHARTS in addition to Zero Waste Scotland and Business Gateway, Tacit Tacit is spending the next 12 months looking at the viability of bringing local pop manufacturing back to Dunoon.

Speaking following the announcement of the award Hannah Clinch of Tacit Tacit said:

"For over 100 years a soft drinks factory thrived in Dunoon town centre, a town that expanded rapidly during the 19th century, with the rise of steam powered transport and wealth generated through global commodities trading. George Stirling's original factory made and distributed 'Aerated waters' including Lemonade, Pot Ash Water, Ginger Beer and many other effervescent favorites in reusable glass bottles. Our goal with Dunoon Goes Pop is to use this enterprise heritage to inform the development of a new brand of locally made soft drinks, for and with our community.

Over the next 12 months we will be using co-design and participatory research

¹ "The Trends and Future of Urban Heritage"
BOP CONSULTING, 2018.

² "SGrowth Sector Database"
SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT, 2019.

³ "The Trends and Future of Urban Heritage"
BOP CONSULTING, 2018.

processes to ask questions about the use of natural resources within drinks manufacturing, the ethical dimensions of the sugar industry and the environmental and social tensions around product design, making and manufacturing. Scotland has a complex relationship with pop and we are interested in exploring these tensions, learning more about the industry and figuring out if it is possible to build an ethical soft drinks business in our town.

Securing this Place Makers: Micro-cluster Networks Fund from CHARTS is not just a vote of confidence in the project but a vital step in providing the support we need to make Dunoon Go Pop again."

The awarded placemaking projects include:

- **Eco Creatives Cluster**, establishing a creative community network around a community dye garden set up on the grounds of the The Rockfield Centre, a newly refurbished culture and heritage venue based in Oban
- **Take Flight**, an arts programme led by SO:AR artist collective, of collaborations and workshops across several artforms to introduce a regular selection of arts experience and participation for both community and visitors on Jura, linking with communities on other islands;
- **Dunoon Goes Pop**, building on The People of Place: Shop Keepers of Dunoon project to develop drink products, associated maps, marketing material and an exhibition on Dunoon High St from local heritage narratives and archive material to create new experiences relating to the town's cultural history.

These were recognised as innovative proposals of creative collaborations with local heritage, industry, cultural and community organisations in ways that aim to enable local places to survive and thrive. The proposals showed ambition for partnerships and impacts to last beyond the funding period, with funded collaborations also able to access additional expert support when delivering their projects.

“We must look forward to further developing innovative network support systems and building the profile of creativity, culture and collaboration across Argyll and Bute over the coming months.”

These Awards form the final phase of the CHARTS Micro-Cluster Networks project in partnership with the Innovation School at The Glasgow School of Art, funded through Creative Scotland’s Create: Networks programme. Since March 2020, creative workers, enterprises, venues and organisations across Argyll and Bute have been receiving bespoke development support through one-to-one mapping sessions and a programme of network-building webinars and workshops.

Jo McLean, Chair of the CHARTS Board, says: ‘Participation in this project has included a very broad range of members to share their

experiences and expertise from across mainland and islands. Coupled with the intensity of engagement in digital workshops and webinars, this has offered a significant development opportunity to the sector overall. The Board is delighted with the very positive feedback received from our members to date about what they have personally gained from this project and is especially pleased that the CHARTS network partnership with GSA's Innovation School has exceeded all expectations to support growth against the backcloth of the pandemic. We must look forward to further developing innovative network support systems and building the profile of creativity, culture and collaboration across Argyll and Bute over the coming months!

Find out more about The Culture Heritage & ARTS (CHARTS) network:

www.chartsargyllandisles.org/

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