

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

Spring is around the corner

We are excited to bring you our March update, keeping you informed about the latest developments from the Small is Beautiful project throughout February - and let you know what is happening this month, in March.

As the pace of the project quicken, we aim to send these newsletters monthly to ensure you have all the latest key information.

This month, we are welcoming new contractors, providing updates on site access planning, stakeholder engagement, and recent visits.

DEFRA Landscape Recovery Meeting

Last month, Jaclyn Pearson (Programme Manager) and Heather Webb (Project Supervisor) attended the DEFRA Landscape Recovery Phase 2 meeting in London, alongside 34 other projects from across the UK.

The event was an opportunity to share progress, challenges and successes, and we were encouraged by the continued support from DEFRA for projects like ours. [Landscape Recovery: round two - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/landscape-recovery-round-two)



Jaclyn provides an update on Small is Beautiful to the other 33 projects across England.



Meeting on Tresco (Left to right: Alex Crawley, Dan Smith, Pasture for Life; Adam Dorrien Smith, Tresco Island Ltd, Jaclyn Pearson, SisB, Jacob Blackett, IoS National Landscape; Nick and Jilly Halliday, Tresco Island Ltd, David Mawer, SisB)

Bumble bee & honey bee biosecurity

We recently joined a symposium in Devon for The B4 Project: Sustainable Beekeeping – A Future Without Imports. It gave us plenty to think about in terms of protecting our native honey bees and ensuring their survival on Scilly. We are working with Jilly Halliday, Tresco Island Ltd to understand how the project can facilitate this and we look forward to providing updates. Visit www.b4project.co.uk/blog for more details.



Symposium members with Jilly Halliday (middle)

Pasture for Life visit to Scilly

Pasture for Life is working with us to develop a grazing plan that supports both conservation grazing on Wildlife Trust land and regenerative grazing on farms.

A big thank you to all the land managers and farmers who took the time to meet with Dan Smith and Alex Crawley from Pasture for Life, during their visit to Scilly last month. They are currently reviewing your survey responses and feedback. For those who have not yet spoken to them about conservation grazing, we will update you with their next visit dates as soon as possible.



Pasture for Life Alex and Dan (right) talk to Tom Smith (left), Down Farm, St Agnes.

Their expertise will help:

- ✓ Improve soil health and biodiversity by promoting regenerative grazing methods.
- ✓ Support farmers in finishing livestock on grass with minimal supplementary feeding.
- ✓ Develop site-specific strategies for managing cattle, goats, and ponies - key species in conservation grazing that help control invasive plants and maintain habitats like heathlands and maritime grasslands.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss how this could work on your land, please get in touch.

Welcoming our Contractors

Alongside Pasture for Life, we also welcome other contractors who will be helping develop the Site Access Plan and Stakeholder Engagement Plan for the Small is Beautiful project.

Julie Mawer has previously worked on Countryside Access for All projects, Rights of Way and spent many years on footpath management and maintenance around various islands in Scilly.



"I really look forward to working with everyone on the Isles of Scilly Site Access Plan."

Julie Mawer

We'll share more details in the next newsletter, but if you'd like to discuss this sooner, please get in touch!

Aisling Khan has worked across numerous sectors, including agriculture, a number of key infrastructure projects and developed strong relationships with many government departments and other significant partners.



"I am looking forward to working together to ensure the Stakeholder Engagement Plan captures the thoughts and ambitions of the community."

Aisling Khan

Over the coming month, we will be asking for your input about access needs on the Isles of Scilly, regarding:

- ✓ Signage – Would you like any signage to either promote or restrict access?
- ✓ Funding for Access Routes – Would you like support to open up and maintain routes?
- ✓ Ongoing Challenges – Are there any barriers to access that need to be addressed?

Small is Beautiful Biosecurity Workshop - Thank you!

We want to extend a huge thank you to everyone who attended the Isles of Scilly Biosecurity Workshop on Thursday, 13th February at the Old Town Inn, St Mary's. Your participation, insights, and commitment to safeguarding the Isles of Scilly's biodiversity made the event a great success.

With expert contributions from Tony Juniper, Geraint Richards, Matthew Berriman, Kelvin Hughes, and Jilly Halliday, we explored key biosecurity challenges facing the islands, from invasive species management to livestock health and plant biosecurity. A special thank you to Tony Juniper, whose inspiring opening remarks set the tone for an engaging and productive discussion.



Jilly Halliday, Tresco Island Ltd, discusses bee health.

His passion for nature recovery resonated strongly with everyone in the room and on the call.



Tony Juniper, Chair of Natural England provides words of inspiration.

This workshop was just the beginning. Over the next six months, we will be developing actionable plans to implement stronger biosecurity measures across sectors. We look forward to continuing this journey with you and welcome any further ideas or feedback.

Together, we can protect the unique biodiversity of the Isles of Scilly.

If you missed any part of the workshop or would like access to follow-up materials, please get in touch.

Abattoir Plans and Business Opportunities - Get Involved!

Plans for the abattoir continue. Detailed designs of the facility are underway with expert leadership from the Farmers and Growers Initiative (see more detail overleaf).

A local abattoir may provide opportunity for new business enterprises using waste products such as dog food, cosmetics, bone marrow for recipes etc. We'd love to hear feedback from anyone interested.

A workshop on St Mary's is planned to showcase ideas if there is enough support.

Get in touch with Jaclyn or the Farmers and Growers team and spread the word!



A visit to Strawberry Fields Farm Shop butchery.

Abattoir Update

Plans for a mobile abattoir for the islands took another step forward this month when designer, Andy Gray returned to St Mary's to visit the proposed site.

Andy is a Devon based farmer and butcher and has been a vocal advocate for the importance of local slaughtering facilities. He is on the Abattoir Sector Group and is a pivotal figure in promoting access to small scale abattoirs that support high animal welfare.

As well as visiting one of the possible sites at Parting Carn on St Mary's, he met potential slaughtermen, local planners and the Duchy of Cornwall to discuss the design.

Last year, the Isles of Scilly Farmers and Growers Initiative took a group from across the islands to Andy's beef and deer farm, Elston Farm.

They also went to the Cotswolds to visit the country's only mobile abattoir and to visit local slaughterman, Viv George.

Andy's visit underscores the critical need for a local abattoir, reducing transportation expenses, improving animal welfare and increasing the amount of local meat available on the islands.

Scilly's abattoir plans align with broader efforts across the UK to bring back small scale abattoirs. Andy Gray's involvement brings valuable insights into sustainable abattoir design, planning and operation. The plans will be available for islanders to see soon.



Andy Gray, Dave Mumford, Andy Watts, Kylie Carter, Issy Tibbs in discussion about the abattoir site.

Isles of Scilly farmers explore sustainable farming in the Tamar Valley

Issy Tibbs, from the Farmers and Growers Initiative tells us about the visit last month.

Farmers from across the islands embarked on an information gathering trip to the Tamar Valley in Cornwall. The three day event was organised by the Isles of Scilly Farmers and Growers Initiative, a project aimed at engaging and supporting Scilly farmers.

The visit, funded by FiPL, explored innovative farming practices and strengthened connections with the mainland. It began with a visit to Tamar Grow Local Farm Start Up at Lower Metherell. Rachael Forster, from the project, showed farmers around the various plots growing harvests such as lavender, flax and vegetables. Tenants are able to have a go at running small farm businesses with the hope they gain experience to start their own farms in the future.

At Bohetherick Farm near St Dominic, Jess and Will Jean showed the group around their National Trust tenancy, where they farm North Devon cattle. They have also diversified into alpaca walking. At Strawberry Fields Farm Shop at Lifton, Adam Mounce enthusiastically showcased his family's successful farm-to-fork business, including a tour of their tulip fields as part of their Tulip Festival plans. (It included seeing the Dutch windmill being constructed!). The itinerary also included Duchy College, where the farmers explored the work they are doing there to be more sustainable.

On the final day, everyone headed back to West Cornwall to visit Trink Farm near Hayle, who were inspired by a visit to Troytown Farm on St Agnes to expand their dairy.

The group recognised that there is a lot happening in the environmental space right now - new strategies, new advice, and both new and ongoing initiatives to absorb. We concluded that a key priority is streamlining and simplifying land management for Scilly. It also reminded us just how resilient we are as a community and how aligned we all are in our goals for protecting our farm businesses and biodiversity.



Small is Beautiful and IoS National Landscape, Jacob Blackett joined Farmers and Growers Initiative to visit farms in Devon and Cornwall.

Stay in touch

If you have any questions or would like to discuss any of the topics in this newsletter, please reach out:

Jaclyn Pearson: email: jpearson@smallisbeautiful.org.uk tel: 07386 675167

David Mawer: email: dmawer@smallisbeautiful.org.uk tel: 07386 675166