



# Spotlight

## The Ceilidh Kit: a community resource for sustainable celebrations

March 2025



**The Ceilidh Kit is a community-run hire initiative, offering reusable tableware, serving dishes, and event essentials to reduce the need for disposable items at gatherings. It provides an affordable, accessible way for local individuals and groups to host events sustainably, with all income reinvested into community projects.**

### Background

The Ceilidh Kit was developed in response to two key challenges faced by our community: the environmental impact of single-use items at events and the financial barrier to accessing quality event ware for one-off occasions

We recognised an opportunity to tackle both issues through a shared resource. Inspired by similar reuse schemes and zero-waste movements, we created a kit of reusable items that can be hired at low cost, encouraging sustainability and inclusion while supporting local events and gatherings. The kit was curated using a selection of second-hand items, a selection of new items and also hand-made table cloths and napkins made by our local mental health charity Rag-Tag.

This work builds on earlier community-led efforts to reduce waste across Skye and builds on the ethos of shared ownership, environmental care, and mutual support.



## Development

To address the problem of event-related waste and cost, we created a well-curated inventory of reusable items available for hire. These include plates, glasses, cutlery, tablecloths, serving bowls, napkins, teapots, and decorative elements like vases and placemats.

We took a hands-on, collaborative approach. Items were sourced through donations, reuse initiatives, and selective purchasing. Community members helped identify needs and contributed items. The hire system was designed to be simple, flexible, and low-cost, ensuring accessibility to all.

## Impact

The Ceilidh Kit has been warmly received by the community and has successfully enabled more sustainable celebrations. It has helped reduce single-use waste at events including ceilidhs, community meals, and school functions.

Particularly, the addition of plastic **reusable cups** used at music festivals and events have been the most popular, with our local event organisation Seall using these 400+ cups at every large event they had over the past year, helping to save hundreds of disposables being used.

In total, we have achieved the following:

- **10** local events supported within the first 12 months.
- Estimated **2,000+** single-use items avoided, based on average event usage
- Over **£1,000** saved collectively by hirers compared to buying or renting commercially

*These figures were estimated by tracking average quantities hired per event and comparing against typical disposable use.*

Feedback from users highlighted the value of having access to attractive, high-quality tableware without the cost or waste. The kit has also made events feel more special and inclusive, with many users noting how real dishes enhanced the experience.

***“We loved using the Ceilidh Kit for our community supper – it was easy to use, looked lovely, and meant no waste at the end.”*** — Community Organiser

We achieved our objectives in terms of both environmental impact and community benefit. A key success was the collaboration and pride it fostered among locals who contributed to the kit's development.



## Learning

The main takeaway from the Ceilidh Kit is that small, community-driven initiatives can have a significant impact when they combine environmental care with local connection.

A key learning was the importance of making the hire system straightforward and friendly – something people weren't intimidated by.

Flexibility around pricing and bundles encouraged wider uptake.

We also saw the value in involving the community early in the process, from donations to decision-making.



## Legacy

The Ceilidh Kit is an ongoing resource housed at South Skye Campus and continues to be available for hire year-round.

Plans are underway to expand the inventory based on feedback (e.g., more children's items, outdoor-friendly options) and to develop a themed event package (e.g., "Rustic Wedding Set" or "Highland Supper").

**Learn more:** [www.broadfordandstrath.org/](http://www.broadfordandstrath.org/)

**See also:** [Thurso Party Kit](#)

### **The Highland Community Waste Partnership (2022-2025)**

Funded by The National Lottery Climate Action Fund and coordinated by Keep Scotland Beautiful, the Highland Community Waste Partnership (HCWP) brought together eight community groups in the Highlands to reduce waste and promote more sustainable consumption.

**Learn more here:** [www.keeptscotlandbeautiful.org/highlandcommunitywaste](http://www.keeptscotlandbeautiful.org/highlandcommunitywaste)