

# Hannah Sutherland

Location: Penicuik, Edinburgh, Scotland



## Hopes for the Future



Launch her own business



Long term stable employment opportunities in Kent



Affordable housing on Hoy

## Rural Youth Project Involvement

Hannah has attended multiple Rural Youth Hacks, attending the Hoy hack in April and the Kent & Medway hack in May. Hannah's not stopping there and is keen to attend more events in the future.

## Background

With a passion for drama and theatre, Hannah Sutherland has been inspired to start her own business, after attending not one but two Rural Youth Project Hacks, which she feels gave her the push she needed. Hannah is hoping to launch a new arts based childcare initiative, incorporating her theatre background into a business, providing structured childcare in island/rural communities with a strong focus on learning the local history.

Having attended the Hoy hack in April, Hannah was eager to get involved again. Given her experience with design thinking and the hack model, Hannah was invited to the Kent & Medway Hack and jumped at the chance to take part. With little prior knowledge of both the area and the horticultural industry, Hannah admits she 'was going in a bit blind' to the Kent & Medway hack.

Coming as an outsider to the area, Hannah felt the venue of Bore Place was stunning and provided the delegates their own little haven for the weekend, exactly the space that was needed to unleash their creativity and spark open conversations. She described it as "a positive learning environment for the community" and felt it was an asset to the area.

Hannah was interested to learn about the fresh and food sector at the hack but her main takeaway from the event is the labour aspect and the realisation of what a big employer the sector is in the area.

"I went into the weekend thinking about fruit and veg and left thinking about employment particularly of young people, young women."

What struck Hannah as a big issue is how temporary some of the employment opportunities are, there are lot of opportunities, but they may struggle with recruitment due to a lack of long-term job security and a reduction in migrant workers post Brexit.

"I don't think any of the businesses owners proposed a solution to the temporary nature of jobs."



“The hacks provide a huge amount of enthusiasm, a bunch of creative mindsets coming together, we saw a lot of excitement from local leaders, and you could see it really revitalised the people.”

- Hannah Sutherland

## Background

Hannah enjoys the hack structure and credits the hack for bringing so many people together, all from different backgrounds with their own skills and experience to bring to the table.

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Her favourite idea from the Kent hack is the buddy system; a platform designed to connect Kent food growers with local business owners allowing them to establish connections and source produce locally. Hannah chose this idea as it was easy to see how it could benefit local growers and businesses.

“Even just with the speakers that were there, both the Laura’s would really benefit from a scheme like that.” - Referring to Laura Brady, a local grower and owner of the Wonky Parsnip, and Laura Anne Taylor, a local business owner of Wild Box, passionate about sourcing local produce where she can.

Looking to the future in Kent, Hannah hopes to see long term stable employment become commonplace in the sector particularly in berry picking. She believes this is possible as the people she met in Kent have the potential to make change. Hannah’s hopes for Hoy are that they can showcase the creativity that is already there; “the island doesn’t lack creative minds, they just need to be heard.”

“Affordable housing is the key, I would hope young people would want to move there but they need housing, jobs and a sense of community, which is definitely already strong on Hoy.”

The next step for Hannah is to get assistance from Queen Margaret University’s Business Innovation Zone; a programme giving practical business support and mentoring to staff, students and recent alumni like Hannah. Hannah hopes this will give her the support she needs to get her business off the ground.

## Solutions

1. Hannah has been inspired by the hacks to start her own rural childcare initiative.
2. Hannah would like to see more long term job opportunities in the growing sector rather than temporary positions.
3. For Hoy, Hannah thinks affordable housing is the key to getting more people to move there and unleash their creativity.



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