

Treasa Cadogan

Age: 21

Location: Cape Clear,
Ireland

 @TreasaCadogan

Main Challenges



Employment opportunities



Adequate infrastructure

Rural Youth Project Involvement

After attending 2019 Ideas Festival
Treasa said:

“My love of home and my draw to go back home has increased so much after this weekend just speaking to other young people in similar positions. I’ve received the networking, the friends and the support team to know that people can support us to bring an idea home – to create or to recreate ones that are going on in Scotland.

It has encouraged me to come up with more ideas to push to come home and have a career at home.

Even if I could work from home – because it is important to me that I do want to move home eventually.”



Image: Rural Youth Project

Background

Treasa comes from Cape Clear, the southernmost inhabited island at the bottom of Ireland. Just 3 miles long and one-mile wide, it’s 8 miles off the coast of West Cork with a population of 120 to 130 people depending on the time of year.

Treasa’s family history on the island goes back for generations. She is passionate about the island, adoring of the community and committed to returning in the future; but there are key challenges that she would need to overcome for island life to be a viable option.

“I loved it! I love it still. It was the best place to grow up by far – you’ve got so much freedom. I never felt anything other than safe and supported growing up.

“I really want to go back but there needs to be more industry and more job opportunities.”

Treasa faces the same challenges that many islanders face – the conflict between her love of the place, the lifestyle, and the community; and the economic challenge of living in an isolated rural place with limited job opportunities and infrastructure that is vulnerable to population decline.

“It is quite sad because the population is decreasing already and the biggest worry for the island is that the school will close down – and once the school closes down it will have a ripple effect – if there’s no kids, then there are no families coming in.”

Currently Treasa is studying International Development at Cork City University. Naturally, this is an incubation stage of life for Treasa. She is exploring, connecting, and learning from different places and people; hoping to one day take back what she has learnt to her beloved island.



“I really want to go back but there needs to be more industry and more job opportunities”

- Treasa Cadogan

Background

The island community recognise how important it is for young people to travel and get off the island to broaden their perspectives and have a range of experiences.

“You are encouraged to leave the island to travel which is what I want to do – I don’t want to move straight back.”

Treasa is full of drive, energy, and ideas with an enterprising spirit ready to take advantage of the opportunities she seeks out. This was partly her motivation for attending the Rural Youth Project’s Festival of Ideas – to connect with other young people, learn from others living in rural communities and to collaboratively brainstorm solutions to the challenges they face.

Whilst here, an enterprising idea to set up a takeaway/pop up restaurant emerged from a story Treasa told about her plight as a young person to get a takeaway delivered to the island like her friends on the mainland. Only when the superfast ferry came to the island - reducing travel from 50 to 25 minutes - could they get a takeaway from the mainland that would arrive warm.

“It was revolutionary for all the young people on the island!”

But what if the food was made on the island? Treasa is excited to explore the idea of starting a pop-up street food business – ‘The most southerly takeaway in Ireland’. She believes this would contribute to attracting more tourists to the island and, in time, could make Cape Clear a more vibrant and sustainable place to live and work.

“I’d really like to look into it to see if anything could come from it because once you bring in tourists, it brings jobs, it brings in families and again – could have a lovely ripple effect.”

For Treasa, it is fundamental she finds an innovative way to return to the island.

“It’s a commitment to keep the island life going – not for just me but for the island and the community.”

Solutions

1. Networking and community: Make the most of all connections and contacts – sharing ideas with others and seeking support. Become part of a wider ‘rural youth community’. It is important to realise that – although physically isolated – your ‘rural issues’ are not unique and if shared with others further afield experiencing similar problems, you will feel stronger, more supported and generate more ideas for solutions.

2. Experience elsewhere: It is often important to go away and gain different perspective to problem solve in a creative way and bring new fresh ideas. There are so many good ideas out there already – often these could be transferrable and replicable in different rural communities. (No need to reinvent the wheel!)

3. Innovation/enterprise: use your experiences: the challenges may well become the solutions! Ideas like a takeaway on the island would appeal to young people but also support tourism and create a positive ripple, solving more than one problem. strong throughout.



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