

2025

Location: Argyll

Forget Me Not Choir

Impact: Moving towards financial sustainability



Background

The Forget Me Not Choir was founded in 2019 to support individuals living with dementia and their carers through weekly singing sessions, public performances, and community outreach across Argyll and Bute. Operating from premises in Lochgilphead, the choir serves 22 members with the help of 10 volunteers and 7 trustees.

Despite its popularity, the choir faced capacity constraints and an unsustainable workload for its founder, who was managing operations voluntarily. With growing demand and interest in replicating the model in other areas, the organisation needed to transition to professional management.

Need for Support

The choir applied to the Nadara A'Chruach Wind Farm Community Fund for £25,000 to employ a full-time Development Coordinator. The initial application was deferred, with the panel requesting a more robust development plan. This led to engagement with tAccelerate the programme to support in strengthening the proposal.

“An excellent understanding of how and what my charity needed to move forward. Helped set up funding applications and cash flow/budgets. Easy to work with and very dedicated staff. 100% will recommend”

What did the support from Accelerate help you achieve?

Accelerate supported the choir in developing a comprehensive three-year business plan, including:

- Strategic fundraising plans
- Cashflow projections
- Risk mitigation strategies
- Governance strengthening
- Outreach and expansion planning
- This helped secure additional funding from Age Scotland (£10,000) and other sources, bringing the total secured funding to £56,000.

Without Accelerate's guidance, the choir would have struggled to move beyond its voluntary model. The programme enabled the organisation to present a compelling, sustainable plan that led to full funding approval and laid the groundwork for long-term growth.

What is the economic and social impact of the support?

The funding enabled the hiring of a Development Coordinator to:

- Manage and expand choir sessions
- Coordinate outreach performances
- Develop referral processes with healthcare partners
- Explore income-generating activities (e.g., CD production, care home services)
- Establish satellite choirs in Campbeltown and Tarbert

The project is expected to benefit 70 individuals directly and build capacity for future regional expansion. The coordinator role is projected to become self-sustaining through trading income and ongoing grants.