

Gini Dickinson

Age: 29

Location: Isle of Jura

<https://www.ginidickinson.com/>



Main Challenges



Enterprise support for young people



Digital connectivity



Transport

Rural Youth Project Involvement

Gini attended the 2019 Ideas Festival and has been featured on a Rural Youth Podcast episode.

“The idea of being a leader really resonated – I’d never really thought of myself as a leader before but it was great to own it and say ‘yeah, I’m young and powerful and I’m doing something really cool!’”

- Gini Dickinson

Background

Gini is a vivacious, creative, and environmentally conscious young woman spreading her message of female empowerment through her feminist jewellery and embroidery business, GiniBeanifairy. Inspired by ‘the female body, Mother nature and our ability to lift each other up when things get tough’, Gini aims to ‘bring a smile’ through her pieces. Gini’s unique collection features lots of ‘boobies’ as a playful celebration of the female body.

“I believe in making the planet a good and fair place for all, by making feminism fun and accessible.”

Sustainability is at the heart of everything Gini creates, “the planet comes first with all my makes. Each piece is made to last and designed to be kept”. Everything is handmade to order using only sustainable materials and practices.

Having studied Fine Art and Art History at Goldsmiths and first launching her business from her small London studio, Gini’s current life is quite the contrast. Two years ago, Gini left her buzzing urban life and moved to the Isle of Jura after falling in love with the island one summer when visiting her cousin.

Drawn to the community and the natural landscape of Jura, Gini has not only found she has more headspace and time to pursue her creative endeavours but has access to more opportunities.

“We do so many different things I would never have done before so actually I have found more opportunity there because you’re closer to it and closer to people.”



Image: Rural Youth Project

“Moving to Jura, I have found such a sense of belonging there. Although it is isolated physically, it doesn’t feel like it there. I’ve felt closer connections to people because the community is so strong.”

- Gini Dickinson

Background

Since living on the island, Gini has co-founded SO:AR; a community-minded artist collective. This is something she never felt able to pursue before.

‘Although it is much more limited place compared to a city, there are lots of likeminded people and there’s more access and opportunity to do things that in London are so competitive.’

A keen fell runner, wild swimmer and member of the all-female Jura Coastguard Rescue, Gini has a vibrant social life on Jura and has thrown herself into all elements of the community.

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Gini is certain that island life is for her but is clear it is not without its challenges. Gini’s relies on online sales. This has never been so important as now, during the Covid 19 lockdown. With plans to launch her mobile shop in Bessie -her converted ambulance- currently on hold, Gini has poured her energy into re-launching her website to improve her reach and ultimately her sales.

Connectivity remains a huge problem for islanders, however. To build her website, Gini found herself sitting outside in Bessie for hours hot spotting internet from her phone to laptop as providers had been unable to install internet in her house ahead of lockdown. Although relatively unperturbed by this, Gini recognises that this limits how much she can utilise social media platforms which could support the growth of her business.

Another challenge Gini has encountered living on Jura is transport. Gini’s family lives in Buckinghamshire and her business has great potential at UK festivals but due to the vast expense and logistical challenges she is unable to get back to the mainland as often as she would like. The 10-minute crossing from Jura to Islay alone can cost Gini £50 in her van, followed by a ferry to the mainland for £90. Gini believes subsidising ferry travel for islanders would greatly benefit young people living on Jura.

Solutions

1. Enterprise and connection: By maximising the use of online platforms you can extend the reach of your business and reduce reliance on local and tourist market. This way, you can be based where you want.
2. Create community: identify opportunities to bring together likeminded people within the community through shared interest groups.
3. Leadership and storytelling: Remember you are powerful as an individual and your message matters. Tell your own story and do not be afraid to push the boundaries!



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