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## First shares offer to raise £1.5m for Barra distillery

A community share offer has been launched to raise £1.5m to build the first whisky distillery on Barra.

Peter Brown is the local businessman behind the project. He said that using the "community benefits society model" will ensure that the distillery will be owned and run by the local community. Shares can be purchased by investors outside the area as well. Community shares are a democratic form of governance, offering one vote per member investing, no matter how much is invested. They can also offer four per cent interest to attract investors and often see money rolled back in to other projects which will benefit the community.

The community benefit society model creates an organisation owned by the community and for the community, where any profit made in the future is reinvested.

Peter Brown and fellow directors Neil MacKinnon and architect Malcolm Fraser intend that the distillery will be environmentally friendly, using the local water from a reservoir close by, barley grown on the islands, and driven by renewable power from the reservoir, solar power and wind turbines.

For Community Shares Scotland, which advised [Barra Distillery](#), this was the second distillery project they helped through the process of raising money in this way. An earlier project on the mainland raised over £2.5m in 2016, from 2,441 supporters in 30 countries around the world. This was more in community shares than any other UK organisation.

Mr Brown said: "Scottish distilleries like to think that their whisky is imbued with the elements of the place in which they are

Scotland sell out and take the capital, with the business ending up in overseas ownership. Jobs are often lost, and they're not wholly Scottish any more. We want the distillery to be owned for posterity by the

community it serves. It will provide long-term employment, some seven new jobs when fully up and operational, an attraction for the tourist industry with a visitor centre, and products for a growing market."

"Barra whisky will be a top-quality niche product, sought after by whisky connoisseurs the world over. Whisky sales are increasing worldwide, against the general tide of alcohol sales, and in countries where there is no overall market growth there is a move from blended to single malt. And there is a trend towards people increasingly seeking a unique artisanal product, which is true to its roots."

created. This claim can be indisputably made by the Barra Distillery."

"This is where Scottish author Compton MacKenzie wrote his novel which became the famous movie 'Whisky Galore' filmed here on Barra in 1949, and it's believed the mythical island location was in fact Barra.

"We've seen so many good traditional and modern businesses in



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