



Business Plan Executive Summary

February 2025



Community Sauna Baths, London. We hope to build a similar sauna in Bellfield Park, Inverness.

Community Sauna Highland aims to provide accessible and affordable sauna spaces for Highland residents, starting with a flagship community sauna in central Inverness. This will allow residents to incorporate regular sauna bathing as part of a healthy lifestyle. Visiting the local sauna space allows social connection and contributes to physical and emotional wellbeing, in the same way as meeting friends for a walk or a game of tennis. As a community interest company (CIC) profits are asset locked and will be used to benefit wellbeing in the Highlands.

The community sauna CIC model is based on the highly successful Community Sauna Baths CIC (CSB) in London. CSB runs a profitable sauna and the asset lock funds local community outreach and engagement, including a community engagement officer post. In 2024 CSB established the Community Sauna Network to help others achieve the same. The Community Sauna Network have already supported the opening of Community Sauna CIC's in Brighton, Bristol and London and are now supporting Community Sauna Highland's flagship Inverness project.

The CIC community sauna model is to run a financially successful sauna for the local paying public, with an asset lock. The asset lock for Community Sauna Highlands has committed all profits being used for Highland wellbeing projects, including providing subsidised sauna sessions for groups who might struggle to access or afford sauna bathing.

Objectives

Year One

- To open a flagship urban community sauna space in Inverness providing an outdoor thermal experience and rest space for everyday use.
- To provide employment at living wage for those working for the CIC.
- To be offering the sauna sessions for free, or minimal contribution, to community groups and individuals who might experience barriers to sauna bathing.

Year Two

- Open further sauna spaces in the Highlands based on stakeholder interest.

Year Three

- To have established a motivated and well trained staff team to coordinate the operational management and community outreach of Community Sauna Highland sauna spaces.
- To have a positive impact appraisal of the benefits of the sauna for the local community and successful social outreach to a diverse community of sauna bathers.

Vision

Our vision is to build and run a 26 seat electric sauna in Bellfield Park, Inverness with a cold plunge, rest area and changing room. We will employ well trained sauna hosts, an operational manager and a community engagement officer, and are committed to being a Fair Work Employer. The sauna will be financially stable and the asset lock will support wellbeing projects in the Highlands. For example, we hope to work in partnerships with GP link workers on social prescribing and with third sector groups, running hosted sauna sessions for them and their communities.

Finances

For the established saunas operating in the UK currently, demand is high and many businesses are successful and expanding. The community sauna baths in Hackney Wick operates at approximately 66% of its total capacity and operates with a 25% profit from revenues. In Inverness we have estimated that 200 people using the sauna once a week represents a break-even state for the CIC's operation. 200 people is just 0.3% of the population of urban Inverness (population 63,730 [Population Inverness](#)), and many will visit more than once a week. We believe that regular sauna bathers, tourists and pop-in users will adequately fund the operating costs of the sauna and therefore also fund the provision of subsidized and free sessions for specific groups and the expansion of community sauna in Highland.

We believe that the financial stability of this business model can meet the aims and objectives of the first three years. Community Sauna Highland CIC will be applying for funding to cover start-up costs but expects to be financially independent and meet all its objectives within the first year and moving forward.

Operations

The CIC Business Plan incorporates a climate commitment following the guidance of the SME Climate hub to ensure the sustainability of the project and an Active Travel Plan to encourage and reward people who walk, cycle or use public transport to visit the sauna. Our Statement of Operations outlines the quiet and peaceful ambiance and culture that we hope to nourish at the first sauna site. We also plan for the sauna spaces to be accessible and open to children and adults. Community Sauna Highland CIC will be responsible for Health and Safety and hold appropriate insurance for this. We can provide an example Risk Assessment from Community Sauna Baths CIC on request. The staff team will be well trained and supported with a Safeguarding Lead identified to hold in mind wellbeing for all staff and sauna bathers. The sauna space will be an asset to the Inverness community and in the future the wider Highlands.

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