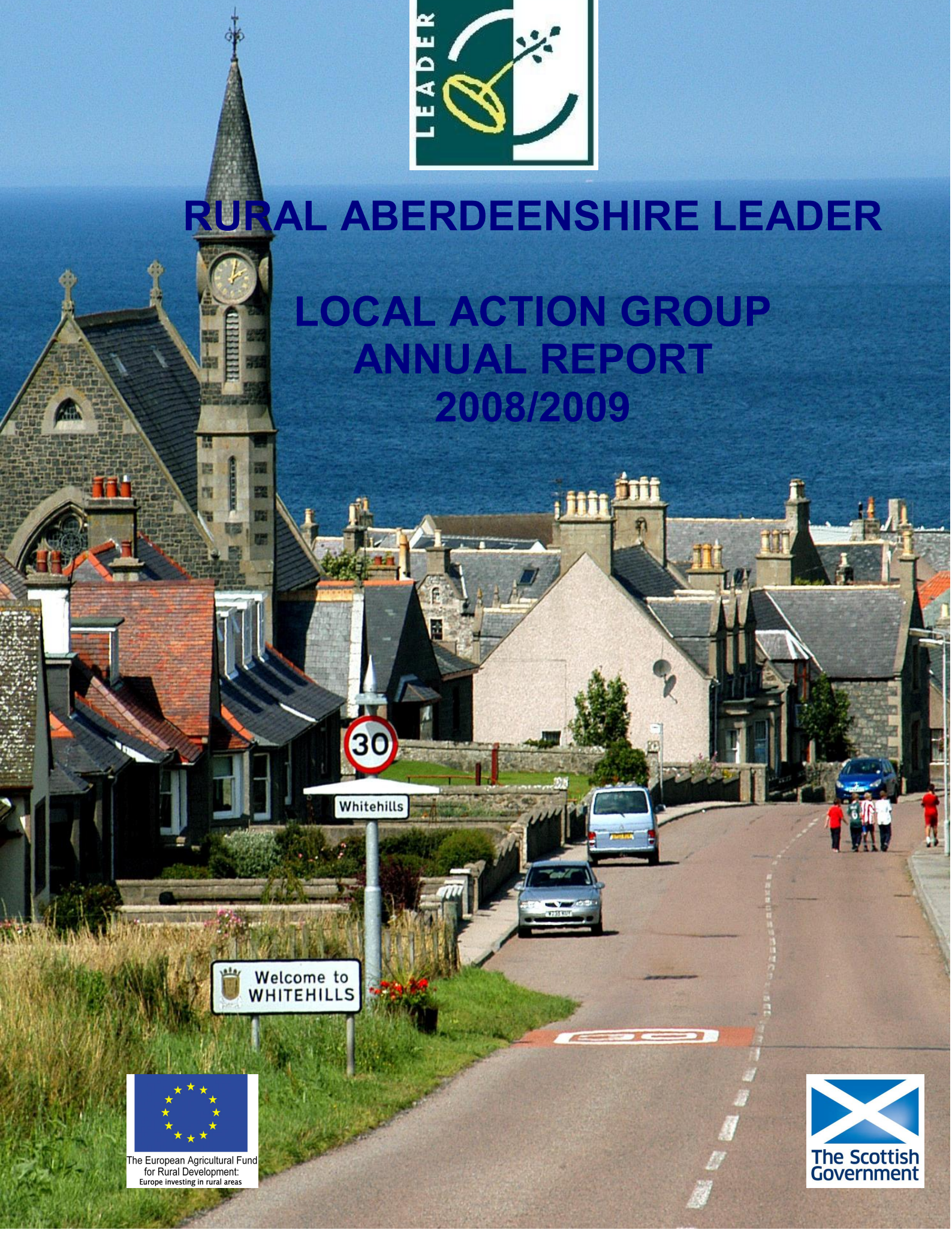




RURAL ABERDEENSHIRE LEADER

LOCAL ACTION GROUP ANNUAL REPORT 2008/2009



Chairman's Statement



Welcome to the first Annual Report for the Rural Aberdeenshire LEADER Programme.

Following a successful launch in June 2008 the Local Action Group (LAG), a partnership comprising a wide range of rural stakeholders, has considered an array of projects across Aberdeenshire that reflect the key aims and objectives of the LAG Strategy which are Revitalising Communities and having a Progressive Rural Economy.

Rural and coastal communities throughout Aberdeenshire are benefiting from a diverse range of projects brought forward by local groups, organisations and public sector partners.

One of the real benefits of partnership working is the high level and breadth of matched funding that is being levered in towards LEADER Projects. This clearly demonstrates the innovative approach of LEADER in delivering rural development support through a local decision making process.

Having completed four assessment rounds to 30 June 2009 a total of 46 projects have been approved by the LAG that will receive LEADER funding totalling £1.36m. The LAG Partnership is to be complimented on its enthusiasm and proactive stance in making LEADER happen in Aberdeenshire.

Throughout the year LEADER has been promoted at a series of events and with many projects now underway, and some completed, it is evident the programme is working very well in Aberdeenshire.

LEADER is contributing to the development of community facilities, cultural and natural heritage projects and also feasibility studies so that groups can take the valuable step in identifying the viability of larger projects.

In addition LEADER in Aberdeenshire is supporting events and festivals which this year are directly linked to Homecoming 2009. As a result LEADER is helping to promote local food and craft products and initiatives that focus on the cultural heritage of our rural communities while stimulating the local economy through increased visitor numbers attending events.

Instrumental in the successful delivery of LEADER has been the staff and their efforts must be recognised.

The future suggests more projects are on the horizon and the LAG looks forward to considering these.

James Knowles, LAG Chairman

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1. Introduction

LEADER is a key element within the Scotland Rural Development Programme (SRDP) 2007-2013. LEADER in Aberdeenshire aims to increase capacity of rural community and business networks through projects and initiatives that deliver community benefit and reflect one or both overarching LEADER themes, namely Revitalising Communities and Progressive Rural Economy.

LEADER is funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the Scottish Government with match funding from the public and private sectors.

The Rural Aberdeenshire Local Action Group (LAG) which delivers the programme was formed in August 2007. A bid for LEADER funds was submitted to the Scottish Government in October 2007. The Rural Aberdeenshire LAG was awarded LEADER funds of £3.36 million and the programme was launched on 27 June 2008 and will close on 31 December 2013.



Photo courtesy of Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust

The Aberdeenshire LAG has assisted a wide range of projects and has managed to reach groups right across Aberdeenshire.

Eleanor Anderson, Aberdeenshire Local Rural Partnerships

Four funding rounds have been undertaken in the first year's operation of the Rural Aberdeenshire LEADER programme. Forty six projects have been approved to 30 June 2009 across Aberdeenshire with total grant commitment of £1.36 million towards eligible costs of £4 million and overall costs in the region of £6 million.

2. Local Action Group

2.1 LAG Partnership

The LAG is a partnership of 14 member organisations with an equal mix between the public and private sectors. More than 50% of the organisations represented on the LAG are also members of Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership. A list of LAG member organisations is attached as Appendix 1 of this report.

Aberdeenshire Council is the lead partner in the LAG and the Council acts as banker for the LAG through drawdown of EAFRD and domestic funds and disbursement of LEADER grants. A Service Level Agreement between the Scottish Government and Aberdeenshire Council sets out the roles and responsibilities of the lead partner.



Photo courtesy of
Scottish Natural Heritage

Scottish Natural Heritage is delighted to be an active player in the Aberdeenshire LEADER Programme. Many of the projects coming forward for support are absolutely inspiring in terms of the vision and determination of the communities putting them forward. Aberdeenshire LEADER is also a terrific example of what “partnership working” can deliver; especially when the partners are bold, imaginative and pulling together. This is a fantastic thing to be part of.

Ewen Cameron, Operations Manager, Scottish Natural Heritage

2.2 Coherent LAG Area

The area covered by the Rural Aberdeenshire LAG is the Aberdeenshire local authority area excluding the area within the Cairngorms National Park and eight settlements each of which have populations greater than 5,000. The population in the LAG area is approximately 148,000 and includes rural communities and settlements with populations up to 5,000.

The underpinning synergy across the region is the vision for vibrant, inclusive, rural communities, combined with sustainable environmental credentials, in terms of resource use, energy efficiency, landscape and biodiversity, against a backdrop of economically viable rural businesses and rural services.

2.3 Population and Economy

The LAG area is estimated to be 4,819 sq km. The population density in the LAG area is 31 per sq km, reflecting the rural nature of the region. Population density varies across the LAG area, from 12 persons per square kilometre in Marr in the west of the LAG area, to 77 in the more populated areas, such as Garioch.

The LAG area includes around 50 settlements with populations ranging from 432 in Cuminstown to around 4,500 in Turriff and Huntly. Approximately 70,000, or 47% of the LAG population live in rural areas outwith settlements.

Traditionally, the LAG area has been economically dependent upon the primary sectors including agriculture, forestry and fishing, with value added activity generated through processing activities related to the primary sector.

Tourism is important economically for communities throughout the LAG area. The area's appeal is based on the high value environment, the landscape, heritage, culture and people. There is an opportunity through LEADER to market the overall tourism product and up-skill the workforce enhancing employment opportunities and stimulating rural business networks.

In recent years the number of rural facilities in Aberdeenshire has fallen across most areas with significant decline in banks, petrol stations, shops and post offices. Reduction in these services is seen as critical in terms of impact on quality of life and maintaining the viability of self-contained rural communities. LEADER has a pivotal role to identify and deliver innovative solutions for rural communities.

3. LAG Strategy

3.1 Strategic Objectives

The Rural Aberdeenshire LAG Strategy was developed taking account of the European Commission's three main axes within the Rural Development Regulation (1698/2005):

- Improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sectors
- Improving the environment and countryside through land management
- Improving quality of life through diversification of economic activity

and also the priority outcomes for the SRDP:

- Improved business viability
- Enhanced biodiversity and landscape
- Improved water quality
- Tackle climate change
- Support thriving rural communities

3.2 Rural Aberdeenshire Key Priorities

LEADER in Rural Aberdeenshire focuses on two overarching themes, namely:

- Revitalising Communities
- Progressive Rural Economy



The Aberdeenshire LAG has been a big success thus far, funding a variety of innovative community projects. The LAG has worked well with the Grampian RPAC as our links on community type proposals have assisted projects towards grant awards under LEADER and RDC-RP.

Stewart Johnston, Principal Agricultural Officer
Grampian RPAC Chairman

The priorities the LAG Strategy is focusing on are:

- Sustainable Communities
- Sustainable Energy
- Innovative Value Added Products & Markets
- Sustainable Tourism Development
- Innovative Micro Enterprise
- Versatile Rural Workforce
- Conservation of the Rural Environment

New Deer Community Association were delighted to hear they had been successful in their application for LEADER funding. We have been upgrading our Public Hall over the past few years and this award helps us to fulfil our aims to make our facility as attractive and user friendly as possible for everyone in the New Deer area.



Susan Robertson, Convener,
New Deer Public Hall



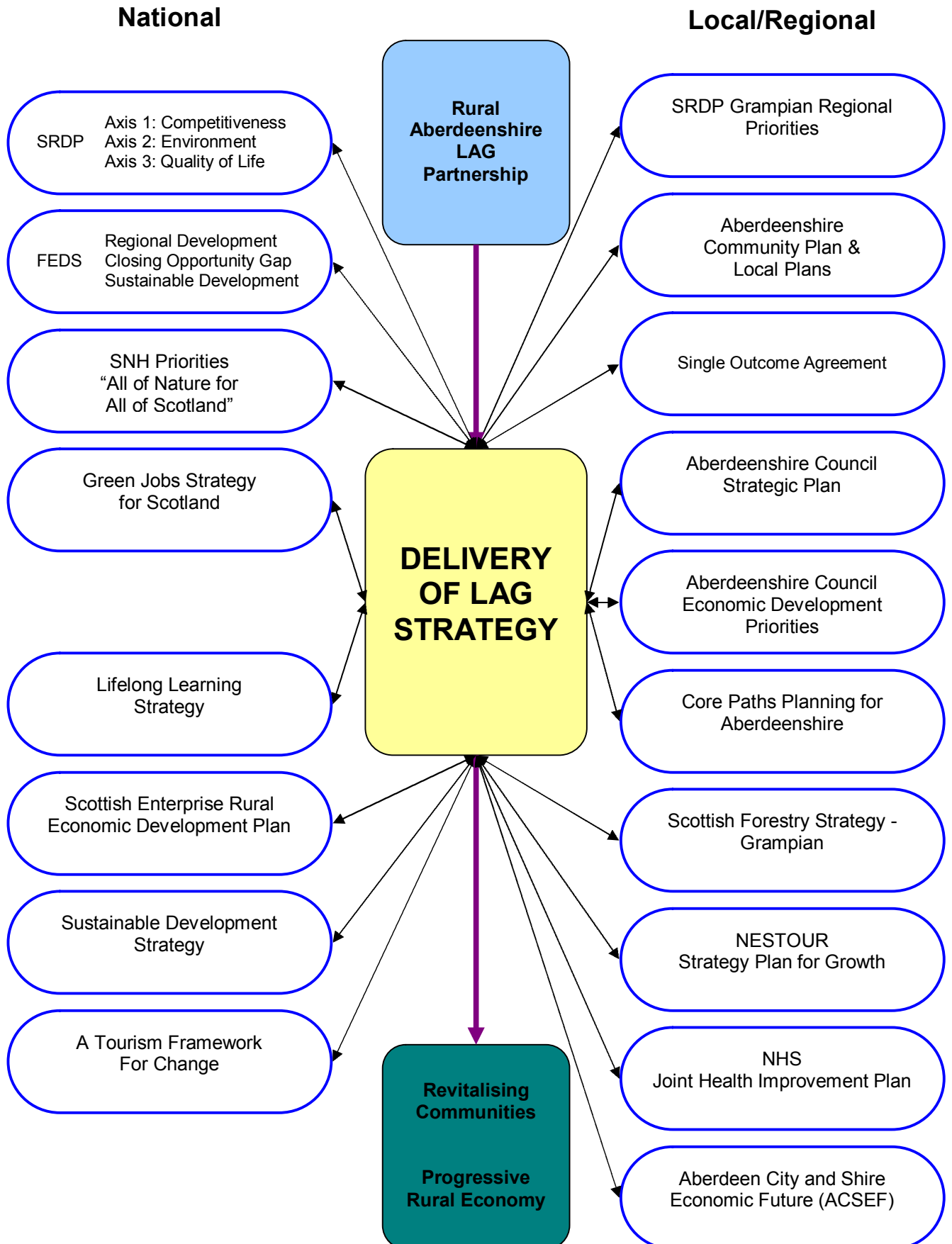
Huntly Development Trust is delighted to receive LEADER funding as a crucial contribution towards delivery of our business plan for the organisation's first few years. HDT's nature as community enterprise means that we must strike the balance between undertaking projects of community benefit on the one hand and moving towards financial independence on the other. As a new organisation the funds represent a statement of confidence in HDT and what we stand for, as well as reflecting the track record of successful projects undertaken by the active community of Huntly over the last few years. HDT is extremely grateful to the LAG partners for their support.

Donald Boyd, Development Manager,
Huntly Development Trust

3.3 Strategic Links

The LAG Strategy aligns well with National, Regional and Local strategies and in particular with Aberdeenshire's Community Planning Partnership Themes of Community Wellbeing, Jobs and the Economy, Lifelong Learning and Sustainable Environment. The flowchart overleaf demonstrates the integration and complementarity of the LAG strategy with national, regional and local priorities.

Strategic Links



3.4 Delivery of LAG Strategy & Business Plan

From launch of LEADER in Aberdeenshire to 30 June 2009 it is evident that the LAG Strategy is being delivered, demonstrated by:

- 100% of projects approved in the period relate to one or both of the overarching themes: Revitalising Communities and/or Progressive Rural Economy.
- 100% of projects approved relate to one or more of the key priorities the LAG strategy is focusing on.
- The LAG Partnership is strong, supportive and cohesive and not averse to taking bold decisions on innovative projects.
- Continuing demand and capacity of participants to bring forward new projects.

It has been a great experience for me to represent businesses on the Aberdeenshire LEADER LAG. The exceptionally high quality of projects received and the effect the successful ones will have on our Rural Communities is to be complimented. I personally can't wait to visit some of the projects on completion. The quality of life in our Aberdeenshire Communities will be even richer as a result of this European funding. The LAG is an exceptionally good and productive public/private partnership that proves and shows just how efficiently and effectively funding can be allocated.

Andy Willox, Chairman,
Federation of Small Businesses



In light of above, Scottish Government has been advised that there are no proposed changes to the LAG Strategy and Business Plan in the first year of the programme. The Strategy and Business Plan will be kept under review in relation to the budget, regional priorities and LAG membership etc.

4. Programme Delivery

4.1 Year 1: 27 June 2008 to 30 June 2009

Applications are assessed in quarterly cycles. Once submitted, applications are checked for eligibility and links to the LEADER Strategic themes and priorities. The applications and individual summary reports are considered in full by the Project Assessment Committee (PAC) and scored against a set of criteria selected by the LAG.

PAC representation, a sub group of the LAG, includes the lead partner, business, community, enterprise, environment and land based interests. The PAC makes recommendations to the LAG. Final decision on applications is made by the LAG. It should be noted that the PAC has delegated authority to approve projects with grant applications up to £5,000.



Photo courtesy of Forestry Commission Scotland

LEADER is progressing really well in Aberdeenshire. Projects such as the Forest Education Initiative and Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels are delivering real and tangible benefits to the people of Grampian. LEADER has part funded a project officer for the Forest Education Initiative who is actively encouraging better use of Grampian's fantastic woodland resource as a learning tool for schools and communities. These projects are ensuring young people growing up in our communities are developing key life skills such as teamwork, leadership, confidence and much more. The Saving our Red Squirrels project is vital to safeguard north Scotland's red squirrel population the officer is encouraging active management of woodlands for squirrels with the help of Grampian's landowners, public and private agencies and of course the community.

Dan Cadle, Woodland Officer
Forestry Commission Scotland

One of the positive outcomes of the application and approval process is the strong buy-in and partnership approach towards projects. This is clearly demonstrated in the level of match funding that has been levered in. The LEADER intervention rate on total eligible costs currently stands at 33%. A table summarising the range of match funding per round is attached as Appendix 2. Approved projects are listed in Appendix 3. A map detailing location of projects is included overleaf.

To deliver the programme, Scottish Government made a 7% advance payment of the budget to the LAG. These funds are held by Aberdeenshire Council. Thirty two grant claims/progress reports have been processed to 30 June resulting in grant disbursement of £147,270. Three claims to 30 June totalling £163,033 relating to administration costs and project grant payments have been submitted to the Scottish Government for further drawdown of LEADER funds.

4.2 Summary of Activities 27 June 2008 to 30 June 2009

Total number of applications	53
Total number of approvals	46
Total amount of LEADER funding	£1,364,077
Total amount of public funding	£3,085,798
Total amount of private funding	£1,586,403
Total number of projects withdrawn	1
Total value of LEADER funding for projects withdrawn	£5,000
Total amount of Convergence awards	N/A
Number of inter-territorial co-operation projects	3
Number of transnational co-operation projects	0

4.3 Employment Generation to 30 June 2009

Project Ref	Project Name	Number of Jobs Created
RAL/R1/Jul08/002	Forest Education Initiative Co-ordinator North East	1 FTE x 3 yrs
RAL/R1/Jul08/003	LIFT (Lifeskills/Involvement/Fitness/Transition)	1.5 FTE x 3 yrs
RAL/R2/Nov08/013	Turra Coo Sculpture Project	3 x 0.5 FTE x 6 months
RAL/R2/Nov08/016	Portsoy Salmon Bothy	1 FTE x 3 yrs
RAL/R2/Nov08/017	Aberdeenshire Conservation Recycle Store (ACReS)	0.75 FTE yet to be appointed
RAL/R2/Nov08/025	The Local Hub, Kintore - Phase 1	2 FTE voluntary
RAL/R3/Feb09/040	Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels (North East)	1 FTE x 3 yrs
RAL/R4/Apr09/043	Brighter Horizons – Stage 2	3 x FTE x 2 yrs yet to be appointed
RAL/R4/Apr09/044	Moray Firth Ganseys	1 FTE x 2 yrs
RAL/R4/Apr09/045	Deveron District Bio-Security & Fisheries Development Project	1 FTE x 3 years
RAL/R4/Apr09/048	Environmental Education Project	1 FTE x 3 years
RAL/R4/Apr09/049	Sustaining Huntly	2 FTE x 2 yrs 0.5 FTE x 1yr

5. Promotion & Publicity

5.1 Promotional Events

LEADER has been promoted across Aberdeenshire at a series of rural funding and community events and specific LEADER seminars including the following:

- Joint promotion of LEADER and SRDP with Rural Aberdeenshire and Cairngorms LAGs (July 2008).
- Aberdeenshire Council - EU Rural Funding Seminar (July 2008).



Turriff Show (August 2008).

- Formartine Partnership (August 2008).
- LEADER Networking Event, Battleby, Perth (September 2008).
- Marr Area Partnership Community Gathering (September 2008).
- Kincardine & Mearns Area Management Team (February 2009).

LEADER Community Seminars,
Johnshaven and Auchenblae
(February/March 2009).



- Buchan Development Partnership Spring Forum (March 2009).



Transnational LEADER
Seminar in Levi,
Finland (March 2009).

- First Year Promotional Event, Sandend (June 2009)

5.2 Promotion of Projects

One of the key features of LEADER is transferability, networking and exchange of ideas with other participants and LAG areas. To facilitate this, Case Studies have been used at promotional events, some of which are attached in Appendix 4. LEADER participants have also made a positive contribution to promoting LEADER through presentations made at LEADER seminars.

We are absolutely delighted to receive LEADER funding. We are very excited about starting on our new project which we feel will be of real use to residents and visitors to the North East. LEADER and SNH funding is a real vote of confidence for Buchan Countryside Group. We can now begin mapping out the format for our project before working with our community contacts for their input. Many thanks indeed for supporting us in developing this valuable resource for our community.



Ellen Firmin, Buchan Countryside Group

5.3 Publicity

LEADER has been widely publicised at National events, eg: Royal Highland Show and through the Scottish National Rural Network. Aberdeenshire's LEADER projects have received good coverage in local and regional press. A sample of press articles is attached in Appendix 5.



Johnshaven Fish Festival Management Group is a gathering of people from the local community who got together in 2007 to oversee the running of the annual Fish Festival. All profit from the Fish Festival is gifted back into the community to benefit various local organisations and sports groups. The Committee are all thoroughly delighted to have secured LEADER funding for our event this year as this now means the lower our running costs are, the more funds we have to distribute to help boost the community groups.

Kevin Dunbar, Johnshaven Fish Festival Management Group

6. Website

6.1 Management of Website

The Rural Aberdeenshire LEADER Website www.aberdeenshireleader.org was launched 27 June 2008. The website contains details on the LAG partnership, the LAG's strategic priorities, the application process, approved projects, news items and links to partner organisations and other LAGs across Scotland. An extract of the website content is attached in Appendix 6.

The website is updated on a regular basis and has been found to be a useful resource for applicants in accessing information. Usage statistics are detailed below:

6.2 Website Statistics for Period 27 June 2008 to 30 June 2009

Total Visits	4,017
Absolute Unique Visitors	1,883
% of New Visits	46.88%
Page Views	21,776
Average Page Views	5.42

7. Looking Ahead

7.1 Calendar for 2010

It is proposed the quarterly cycle of LAG meetings continues in 2010. A Timetable for LAG meetings will be confirmed and uploaded to the website by December 2009.

7.2 Budget Monitoring

Analysis of budget commitment, grant disbursement, drawdown of LEADER funds from Scottish Government and balance of funds available will continue. Based on current and projected level of demand, future budget constraints could be an issue, resulting in the need to research and identify any additional sources of funding for the Rural Aberdeenshire LEADER Programme.

A watching brief will be maintained on European Fisheries Fund (EFF) Axis 4 which will be targeted at fishing communities. This funding may be delivered through the LEADER approach.

7.3 Project Monitoring

As the number of projects completing increases, project monitoring will be undertaken in 2010. This will feed into monitoring of outputs and outcomes which will be required by Scottish Government.

7.4 Future Rural Development Policy

Looking to the future (2014 to 2020), there is a need for LAGs to be involved and participate in the discussion process with the European Commission and the Scottish Government in relation to delivery methodology for future Rural Development Funding Programmes. Experience at present in Aberdeenshire suggests that local and regional delivery based on a partnership approach such as LEADER is a useful approach to adopt.

Partners in the Rural Aberdeenshire Local Action Group

Aberdeenshire Council (Lead Partner)

Aberdeenshire Community Councils

Aberdeenshire Councils for Voluntary Service

Aberdeenshire Local Rural Partnerships

Federation of Small Businesses

Forestry Commission Scotland

National Farmers Union Scotland

National Health Service

Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs

Scottish Enterprise

Scottish Natural Heritage

Scottish Rural Property & Business Association

Scottish Women's Rural Institute

VisitScotland

Appendix 2

Rural Aberdeenshire LEADER Programme

Project Match Funding per Application Round as at 30/06/09

	R1	R2	R3	R4	Total to Date
Total Project Costs	911,613	1,275,029	2,551,085	1,300,751	6,038,478
Total Eligible Costs	390,133	996,684	1,722,889	1,071,360	4,181,066
Total Ineligible Costs	521,480	278,345	828,196	229,391	1,857,412
Total LEADER Funding	157,074	413,171	433,807	360,025	1,364,077
LEADER % Eligible Costs	40%	41%	25%	34%	33%
LEADER % Total Costs	17%	32%	17%	28%	23%
Match Funding					
Aberdeenshire Council	64,000	111,435	51,000	189,731	416,166
ATP	4,000	3,000	0	0	7,000
Landfill Grant/SITA	0	29,700	25,000	10,000	64,700
Community Asset Fund	10,000	20,000	10,000	20,000	60,000
Planning Gain	0	20,100	0	0	20,100
Top Up Budget	0	12,310	7,000	0	19,310
Community Planning	0	1,000	0	0	1,000
FCS/FES	44,750	5,200	30,000	148,358	228,308
NHS	33,000	0	0	0	33,000
Scottish Enterprise	33,609	20,000	0	0	53,609
SNH	46,000	61,000	81,900	134,018	322,918
NFUS	0	0	0	200	200
Aberdeen City Council	6,000	0	0	0	6,000
Community Councils	0	0	0	530	530
Own Contribution	64,480	221,660	384,590	104,439	775,169
Lottery Funding	343,625	57,494	18,189	71,550	490,858
Event Scotland	0	0	5,000	0	5,000
SCHRI	76,925	65,912	66,963	0	209,800
Energy Saving Trust	0	0	23,141	0	23,141
Climate Challenge Fund	0	0	53,500	0	53,500
Formartine Tourism Ptship	0	5,500	0	0	5,500
Area Partnerships	0	0	0	1,000	1,000
Voluntary Action Fund	0	0	0	38,945	38,945
Other Grant Applications	0	4,350	0	0	4,350
Other Trust Funds	0	34,125	112,783	46,005	192,913
Increase III	0	39,560	0	0	39,560
Cairngorms National Park	0	10,000	0	0	10,000
Bank Loans	0	1,575	0	142,000	143,575
Scottish Arts Council	0	5,500	307,412	0	312,912
Arts Forum/Per Cent for Art	0	2,143	1,000	1,000	4,143
Paths to Health	0	0	4,280	0	4,280
Private Contributions	28,150	50,000	99,813	2,750	180,713
Sales	0	53,184	155,800	0	208,984
Donations/Fund Raising	0	27,110	62,162	1,200	90,472
Joint Application Funding	0	0	617,745	29,000	646,745
Total Match Funding	754,539	861,858	2,117,278	940,726	4,674,401
Total Project Costs	911,613	1,275,029	2,551,085	1,300,751	6,038,478

Rural Aberdeenshire LEADER Programme
Approved Projects 01/07/08 to 30/06/09

Project Name	Admin Area	Eligible Cost	Ineligible Cost	Total Cost	LEADER
Birse Community Assets	Marr	41,600	393,400	435,000	20,800
Forest Education Initiative Co-ordinator NE	All	30,000	90,000	120,000	15,000
Life-skills Involvement Fitness Training	Banff & Buchan	90,815	9,000	99,815	45,915
Collieston Community Centre	Formartine	76,000	0	76,000	38,000
Cairnbulg Harbour	Banff & Buchan	125,080	0	125,080	10,000
Peregrine Wildwatch	Marr	47,500	0	47,500	23,750
Banffshire Coast in Pictures	Banff & Buchan	7,218	1,000	8,218	3,609
Scolty Trails	Marr	130,000	0	130,000	63,000
Tullynessle Hall	Marr	13,500	0	13,500	4,000
Turra Coo Sculpture Project	Formartine	98,377	0	98,377	37,769
Woodhead & Windyhills Community Woodland	Formartine	13,131	0	13,131	6,566
Rothienorman Community Bowling Facility	Formartine	245,675	0	245,675	112,975
Portsoy Salmon Bothy Manager	Banff & Buchan	57,137	0	57,137	28,568
Aberdeenshire Conservation Recycle Store	Buchan	22,776	78,956	101,732	11,388
The Town is the Venue	Marr	224,604	0	224,604	72,586
The Enchanted Glen	Marr	19,000	89,000	108,000	5,000
Portrait of Our Time	Marr	27,100	0	27,100	4,800
Udny Community Wind Turbine	Formartine	31,750	0	31,750	15,562
Old Deer Children's Play Area	Buchan	21,454	45,189	66,643	10,677
The Local Hub Kintore	Garioch	24,600	28,000	52,600	10,000
Tarland Community Path Network	Marr	43,000	5,000	48,000	19,000
Fyvie Homecoming Festival	Formartine	10,620	30,000	40,620	4,800
Rannes Hall Carbon Footprint	Marr	8,960	0	8,960	4,480
Contours	Banff & Buchan	5,000	0	5,000	2,000
Sandend Harbour	Banff & Buchan	40,000	0	40,000	18,000
St Ninian's & Forglen Kirk	Formartine	414,850	0	414,850	50,000
The Brander	Marr	49,057	0	49,057	5,000
Aberdeenshire/Cairngorms Path Network Project	Marr	168,196	0	168,196	47,086
Scottish Sculpture Workshop	Marr	532,896	0	532,896	135,000
New Deer on the Up and Up	Buchan	26,055	0	26,055	10,366
St Teman's Church	Kincardine & Mearns	85,077	45,969	131,046	42,298
Glass Hall Windows	Marr	13,024	0	13,024	6,512

Project Name	Admin Area	Eligible Cost	Ineligible Cost	Total Cost	LEADER
Into the Wild	Marr	71,935	0	71,935	8,000
Scotland's Red Squirrels	All	154,992	150,553	305,545	45,545
Turriff Haughs Exhibition Hall	Formartine	166,807	13,929	180,736	66,000
Horizons - Stage 2	Banff & Buchan	133,291	96,105	229,396	66,646
Moray Firth Ganseys	Banff & Buchan	32,824	65,648	98,472	13,000
Deveron District Fisheries	Marr	303,544	9,880	313,424	52,705
Dinosaur Extinction	Banff & Buchan	6,274	941	7,215	3,137
Burns in the Mearns	Kincardine & Mearns	44,250	0	44,250	20,000
Buchan Environmental Education Project	Buchan	92,855	0	92,855	34,766
Sustaining Huntly	Marr	359,759	112,000	471,759	153,386
Johnshaven Fish Festival	Kincardine & Mearns	2,800	0	2,800	1,600
Huntly Hairst Food Festival	Marr	5,000	200	5,200	2,500
Hatton Public Hall	Buchan	20,380	0	20,380	9,285
Mountain Bike Trail Study	Kincardine & Mearns	7,500	7,500	15,000	3,000
				Total	£1,364,077



RURAL ABERDEENSHIRE LEADER PROGRAMME

CASE STUDY: SCOLTY TRAILS ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

STEP aims to improve and enhance existing path networks on Scolty Hill, a major local and tourist attraction on South Deeside near Banchory. As recorded by Forestry Commission Scotland, the paths are used by over 1000,000 people per annum. The project is community led and community supported. Improved Scolty paths will link to the strategic Deeside Way.



Tony Brown, Director, Banchory & District Initiative and Chair, Scolty Trails Enhancement Project commented:
“It was marvellous news to learn that our application for LEADER funding had been successful – indeed, an early and much appreciated Christmas present! The award is enabling the repair of the very badly damaged footpaths on Scolty Hill to proceed. Without LEADER, it might have been some considerable time before this work could be done - with increasing impact on the pleasure visitors get from the hill.”



PROJECT FUNDING	£
Total Project Costs	130,000
Match Funding	67,000
LEADER	63,000

**Photographs courtesy of:
Banchory & District Initiative Ltd**



RURAL ABERDEENSHIRE LEADER PROGRAMME

CASE STUDY: INTO THE WILD

This cultural arts project will involve local residents in undertaking research into the history of Battlehill Woods, Huntly and to create theatrical and cinema performances linked to Halloween events in Huntly. This project is innovative and has a strong community focus, engaging with all age groups but particularly focusing on working with young people in film production techniques and dance. Battlehill Woods are a popular recreational area owned and managed by Aberdeenshire Council. The project fits well with community aims for the woodlands.



PROJECT FUNDING	£
Total Project Costs	71,935
Match Funding	63,935
LEADER	8,000

Photograph courtesy of:
Dudendance Theatre

Clea Wallis, Artistic Director, Dudendance Theatre commented: “Dudendance are delighted to be offered the funding from LEADER to support their Public Art project Into the Wild. The funding will allow Dudendance to work with collaborative artists who will work directly with the local community collecting oral histories and interesting stories relating to Battlehill Woods. The resulting performances planned for the woods and at Huntly Halloween will serve and be seen by a wide spectrum of the community.”



RURAL ABERDEENSHIRE LEADER PROGRAMME

CASE STUDY: PORTSOY SALMON BOTHY

The Portsoy Salmon Bothy is a listed building which was restored in 2008 part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund. LEADER Funding has contributed to the employment of a Manager who will be responsible for running the Bothy, training volunteers and marketing and promoting the facility. The opening of this facility will bring additional tourist revenue to Portsoy and the surrounding area, while creating new facilities for local user groups.



PROJECT FUNDING	£
Total Project Costs	57,137
Match Funding	28,569
LEADER	28,568
















**Photograph courtesy of:
Scottish Traditional Boat
Festival**

Robin Maddock, Director of the Scottish Traditional Boat Festival commented, “The Portsoy Salmon Bothy houses a genealogical research centre, where people can delve into their family roots and an open space called “Upstairs at the Bothy”. This area can be used for business meetings, recitals, art and craft displays, tutorials etc. There is also a museum which is almost complete, showcasing the industrial history of Portsoy and the Scottish salmon net fishing industry which was very important to this part of the country.”



Welcome to the Rural Aberdeenshire LEADER Website

www.aberdeenshireleader.org

Home	<p>LEADER is an innovative rural development funding programme for Communities and Groups in Rural Aberdeenshire.</p> <p>LEADER is being delivered by the Rural Aberdeenshire Local Action Group (LAG) from July 2008 to 2013.</p> <p>In the first year the LAG has committed a total of £1.36 million towards 46 approved projects.</p>	
LEADER	<p>LEADER is an innovative rural development programme which aims to improve the quality of life and economic prosperity in rural communities through locally driven initiatives and projects.</p>	<p>LEADER in Rural Aberdeenshire will focus on two key themes namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revitalising Communities• Progressive Rural Economy
LAG Partnership	<p>The LAG partnership comprises representatives from community, business, land based, youth, and women's groups in the area, together with representatives from public sector organisations.</p>	
<div></div>		
LAG Area	<p>LEADER operates throughout Aberdeenshire excluding the area within the Cairngorms National Park and settlements which have populations greater than 5000</p>	<p>LEADER 2007-2013 Rural Aberdeenshire LAG Area</p> <p>LEADER 2007-2013 Rural Aberdeenshire LAG Area</p> <p>Towns shown (population over 5,000) are excluded from the Rural Aberdeenshire LAG Area</p> 

Application Process	<p>Guidance on how to submit an application can be found in this section of the website.</p> <p>Applicants require to contact the LEADER Co-ordinator before submitting an application to ensure their project meets eligibility criteria.</p>	<p>The timetable of application deadlines can be viewed here.</p> <p>Application Forms and Guidance Documents can also be downloaded from here.</p>
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Leader Project Examples	Information on all approved projects to date by application round can be found here along with a quote from participating organisations.	Project Reference	Project Name
		RAL/R4/Apr09/043	Horizons - Stage 2
		RAL/R4/Apr09/044	Moray Firth Ganseys
		RAL/R4/Apr09/045	Deveron District Fisheries Development
		RAL/R4/Apr09/046	Dinosaur Extinction
		RAL/R4/Apr09/047	Burns in the Mearns
		RAL/R4/Apr09/048	Environmental Education Project

Funds Awarded	<p>This section of the website details the total awards made under LEADER in Rural Aberdeenshire by Application Round.</p>	<p>Details of Total Project Costs, Match Funding, LEADER Award and a brief description of each project can be found here.</p>
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News and Events	 <p>August 2009 Mearns Connections</p>	<p>Some examples of news and events stories displayed here are:</p> <p>July 2009 Promotional Event at Johnshaven Harbour June 2009 LEADER Programme Celebrates Successful Year May 2009 Launch of All-Abilities Path, Alastrean Woods, Tarland April 2009 Launch of Turra Coo Project</p>
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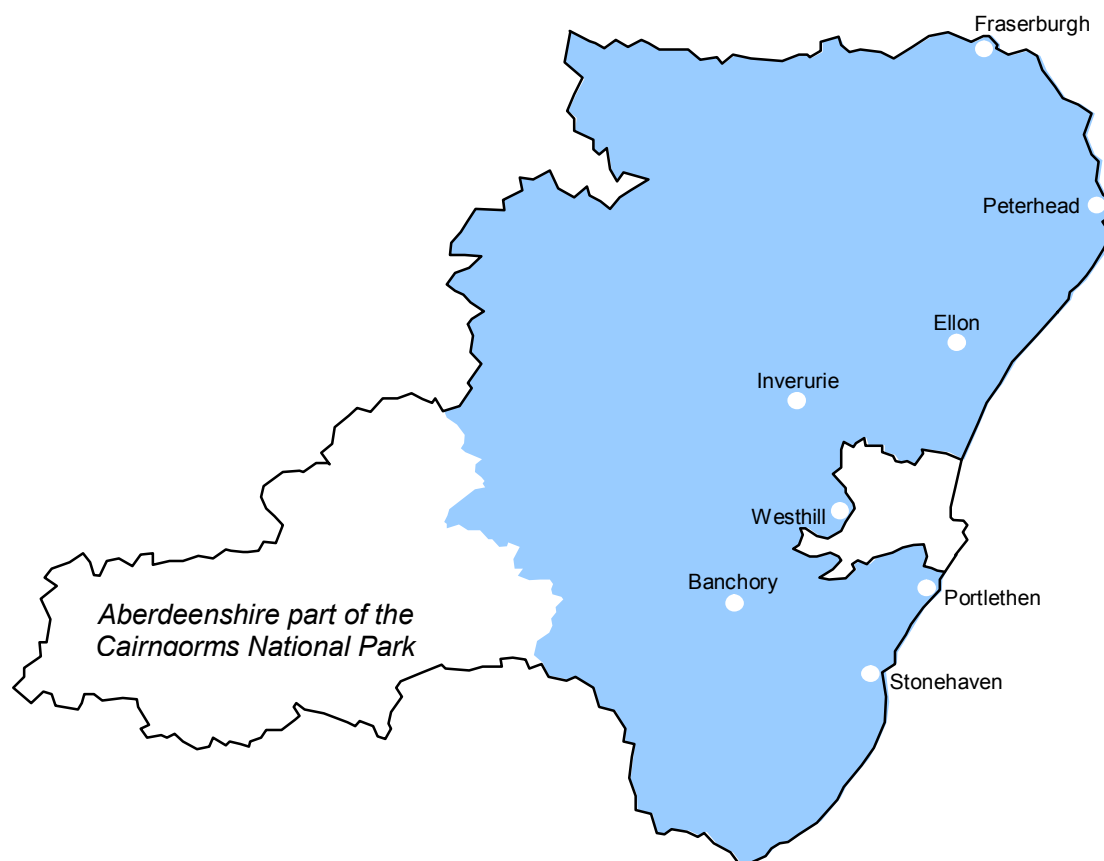
Document Library	<p>The following documents can be downloaded from this section of the website:</p> <p>Rural Aberdeenshire Development Strategy Document Rural Aberdeenshire Business Plan LEADER LAG Guidance Document Scottish Statutory Instrument LEADER Regulations Document</p>
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SRDP	<p>Information on how SRDP relates to LEADER can be found in this section of the website.</p>
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Contact Us	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>Vicky Thomson LEADER Co-ordinator Tel: 01467 628383</p>  <p>e-mail: vicky.thomson@aberdeenshire.gov.uk</p> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>Anne MacLennan LEADER Administrator Tel: 01467 628299</p>  <p>e-mail: anne.maclennan@aberdeenshire.gov.uk</p> </div> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">LEADER Office: Aberdeenshire Council, Gordon House, Blackhall Road, INVERURIE, AB51 3WA</p>
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LEADER 2007-2013

Rural Aberdeenshire LAG Area



Map and Photographs courtesy of Aberdeenshire Council

