

**SCOTTISH LEADER
PROGRAMME**
2007 - 2013





FOREWORD

Rural Scotland's greatest asset is its people. Improvements to life in rural areas are often driven by the individuals who live and work there.

This is key to the success of LEADER. It empowers enthusiastic, innovative people, with a keen understanding of what their community needs, to make their ideas a reality.

This Government plans to make Scotland stronger through creating sustainable economic growth, with all parts of the country able to flourish. We want to see a rural Scotland that is outward looking and dynamic, with a diverse economy and active communities. LEADER helps do that by supporting novel, ground breaking local projects and by building on the hard work of 20 Local Action Groups across the country, many of whose members are volunteers.

Developed by Scottish LEADER Coordinators, this brochure reflects the vast array of activities underway across the country to improve our rural areas. It presents just a tiny snapshot of what LEADER has already achieved and the people whose lives it has touched. From community hubs to festivals, sports initiatives and environmental schemes, the wide range of projects supported is staggering, and illustrates how LEADER supports the objectives of the Scotland Rural Development Programme. It also provides food for thought on how to initiate joint projects with other parts of Europe.

I have a vision of thriving rural communities filled with confidence and building for the future. But I know we can all do more to achieve this. I encourage rural communities across Scotland to take inspiration from these examples and consider how they too can develop projects in their area.

Great things can be achieved when rural communities come together!



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Lochhead".

RICHARD LOCHHEAD
Cabinet Secretary for Rural
Affairs & the Environment

INTRODUCTION

Since its launch in 1991, LEADER has provided rural communities in the EU with a way to involve local people in steering the future development of their areas. The approach is based on the premise that development strategies are more effective if decided and implemented at a local level by local partnerships, accompanied by clear and transparent procedures and with the support of the relevant public administrations.

The name LEADER is a French acronym - "Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale" – and, as this suggests, focuses on linking actions between the economic, social and environmental aspects of rural development. Key to this is LEADER's hands-on approach to encouraging and supporting the development of projects, which sets it apart from other support programmes. LEADER also encourages people to try out new ideas, through collaboration and co-operation between areas, communities, businesses and organisations.

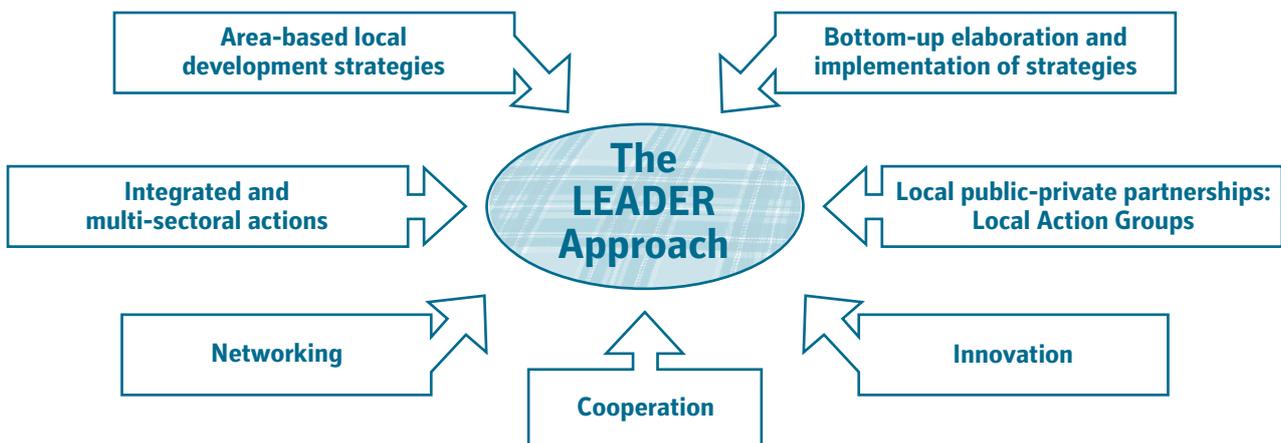
LEADER has evolved over the past 20 years. It is no longer a separate programme and is instead part of the Scotland Rural Development Programme (SRDP). It is delivered through Local Action Groups (LAGs) who have overall responsibility for developing and implementing a local development strategy, assessing project applications, allocating funding and ensuring financial and operational compliance with the SRDP's rules. It is a grassroots approach that brings together – on an equal footing – representatives from the public, private and community sectors who work together to identify and pursue common goals, ensuring that no one single interest dominates.

Over 95% of rural Scotland is covered by LEADER funding, from Shetland in the north to Dumfries and Galloway in the south. It accounts for 6% of the total SRDP funding pot and will provide around £52m to rural areas. An additional £19.2m of convergence funding has been awarded to seven LAGs in the Highlands and Islands in

recognition of its previous EU status as a disadvantaged and remote area. The total budget is divided between 20 LAG areas which vary significantly in size and nature. The largest is Highland with a total budget, including convergence funding, of £16.5m. The smallest is East Renfrewshire with a budget of less than £500,000. This diversity is consistent with the LEADER principle of developing activities based on bespoke rural area strategies, which vary from area to area.

LEADER is sometimes branded as a community grant initiative. This understates its role and potential, and is only part of the story. It is essentially a rural economic development tool with social, environmental and business outcomes that builds on a sense of local identity. It motivates and drives project development at a local level, embracing the principles of localism, community responsibility and empowerment, providing a framework of resources for communities to help them improve life for local people.

THE SEVEN KEY FEATURES OF LEADER









LEADER contributes significantly to the Government's strategic objectives to make Scotland 'Wealthier and Fairer, Smarter, Healthier, Safer and Stronger and Greener', and the National Outcomes emanating from these objectives.

At a local level, LAGs measure performance against the strategic priorities identified in each area's local development strategy. Performance is also measured at a national level to build a consistent picture of the impact of both EU and national investment.

Scottish LAGs have come together to showcase three projects from each area in this brochure, showing how they meet National Performance Framework objectives and demonstrating the impact the projects have made. More than 1,400 projects have already been approved for support during the current SRDP period, with more projects still to be approved as the programme progresses. The projects showcased here represent just a small part of the overall contribution LEADER projects will make to the economic, social and environmental well-being of our rural areas.

As many projects are now complete, the LAGs are now looking ahead to the 2014-20 SRDP and the contribution LEADER can make to the social inclusion targets of Europe 2020. It is clear that LEADER – in whatever form it takes – will continue to be an important component of EU rural development policy, and that area-based community-led development strategies will be a key feature. Greater flexibility in delivery, better integration between funding streams, less categorisation between urban and rural areas, more devolved decision-making, and strengthened private sector participation are among the issues being considered in the new programme's design.

Scotland has a huge amount of experience to contribute to this debate, and the Scottish LAGs look forward to getting involved.

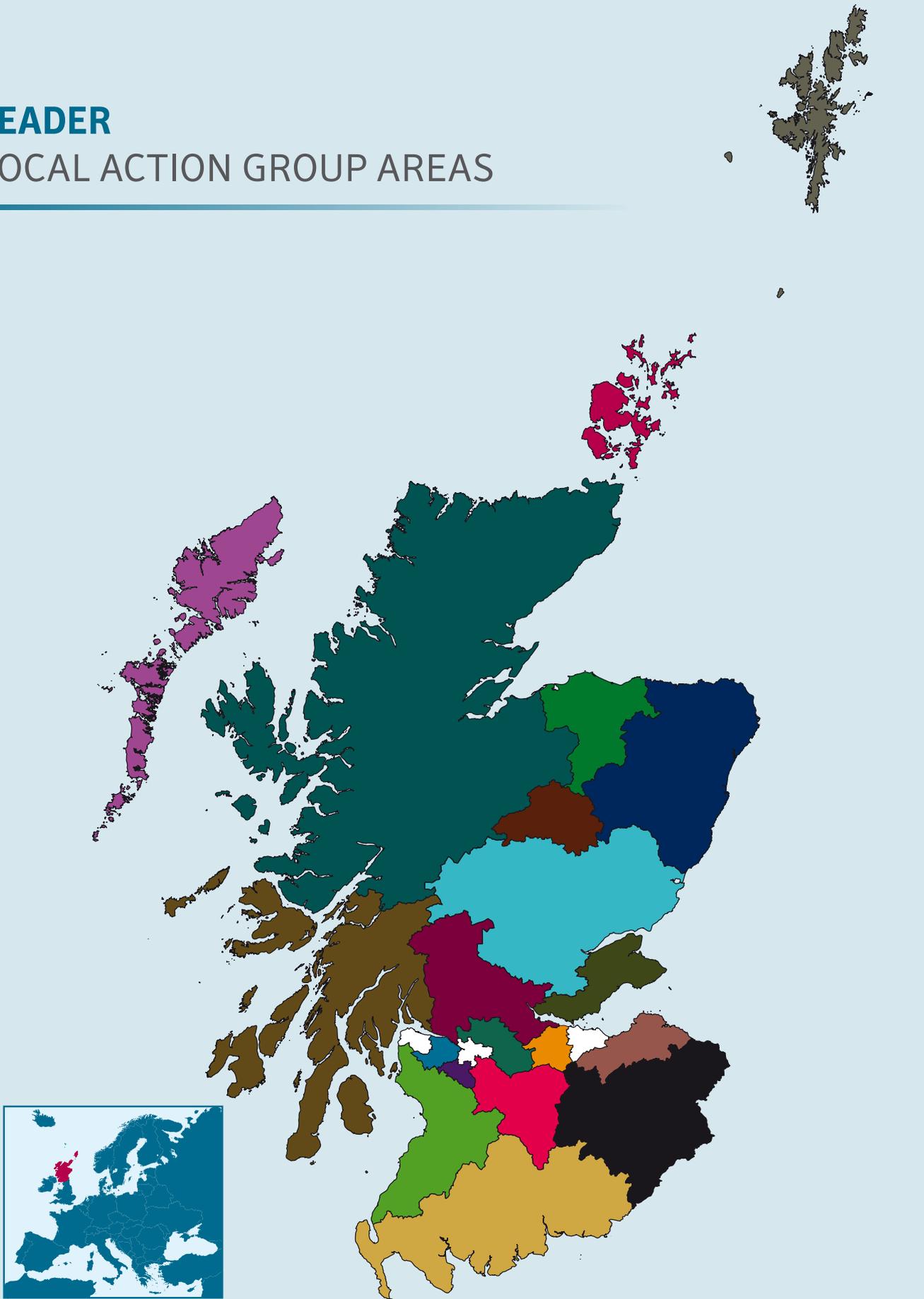


Scottish LEADER Coordinators

August 2011

LEADER

LOCAL ACTION GROUP AREAS



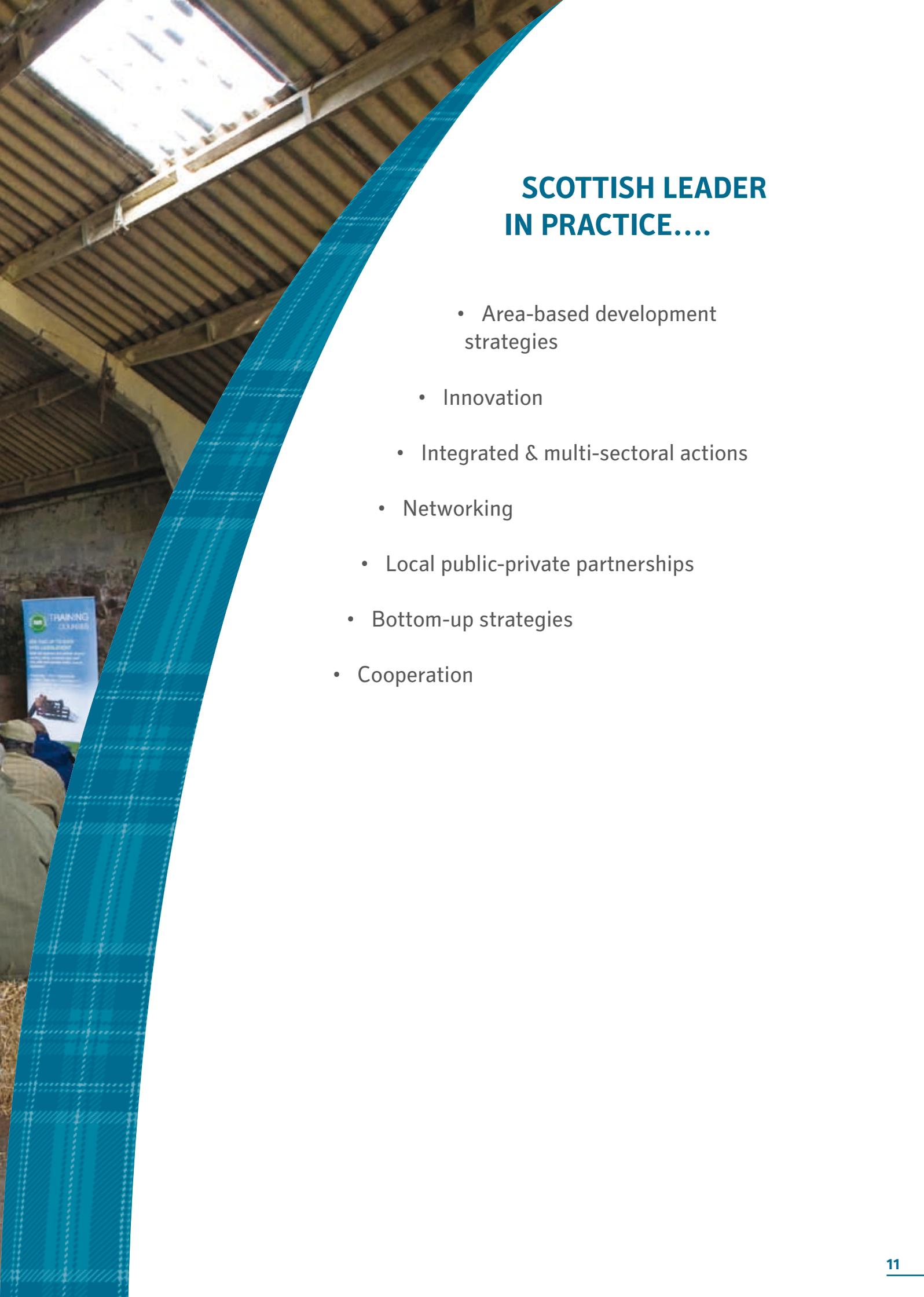
Aberdeenshire	East Renfrewshire	Moray	Scottish Borders
Argyll and the Islands	Fife	Orkney	Shetland
Ayrshire	Forth Valley & Lomond	Outer Hebrides	South Lanarkshire
Cairngorms	Highland	Renfrewshire	Tyne Esk
Dumfries & Galloway	Kelvin Valley	Rural Tayside	West Lothian



SCOTTISH LEADER AREAS 2007-2013

	Page
Aberdeenshire	12-13
Argyll and the Islands	14-15
Ayrshire	16-17
Cairngorms	18-19
Dumfries & Galloway	20-21
East Renfrewshire	22-23
Fife	24-25
Forth Valley & Lomond	26-27
Highland	28-29
Kelvin Valley	30-31
Moray	32-33
Orkney	34-35
Outer Hebrides	36-37
Renfrewshire	38-39
Rural Tayside	40-41
Scottish Borders	42-43
Shetland	44-45
South Lanarkshire	46-47
Tyne Esk	48-49
West Lothian	50-51





SCOTTISH LEADER IN PRACTICE....

- Area-based development strategies
- Innovation
- Integrated & multi-sectoral actions
- Networking
- Local public-private partnerships
- Bottom-up strategies
- Cooperation

ABERDEENSHIRE

Developing Confident Enterprising Buoyant Communities



Aberdeenshire

LOCAL ACTION GROUP INFORMATION

EU Theme: Revitalising Rural Communities & Progressive Rural Economies
Budget: £4.52M
Contact Person: Vicky Thomson
Address: Aberdeenshire Council, Gordon House, Blackhall Road, Inverurie, AB51 3WA
Phone Number: 0044(0)1467 628383
Email Address: vicky.thomson@aberdeenshire.gov.uk
Website: www.aberdeenshireleader.org

AREA INFORMATION

Surface Area (km²): 4,819 sq km
Population: 148,000
Population Density: 30.7 persons per sq km



BANFF COAST TOURISM PROGRAMME

BCTP is an innovative programme to build the rural tourism sector on the Banff coast through actions comprising product development, business development and market development. The project is supported by LEADER, Scottish Enterprise and Aberdeenshire Council and is delivered by Banff Coast Tourism Partnership.

Specific initiatives aim to increase quality and size of accommodation on offer and improve quality and provision of local food products through uplifted and more clearly focused service provision. Promotion of the unique coastal environment combined with activities such as wildlife tourism and water sports is improving the positioning of the Banff coast as a tourist destination.

The Tourism Partnership has developed a strategy and action plan to deliver a holistic programme of activity to address weaknesses and build on opportunities available to grow the tourism sector in the area.

The programme is delivering seminars and workshops on service quality, food and accommodation and new product development. The Tourism Partnership has developed a detailed marketing plan, events guide and website, while also undertaking research identifying new opportunities for Banff coastal area through increased accommodation capacity and quality. In addition, the strategic approach developed through public agencies and private sector businesses working together is key to building the capacity and sustainability of BCTP.

The project is directly supporting the rural economy by providing a mechanism for businesses within the tourism sector to work collaboratively to improve the overall visitor experience in the area.

STRICHEN COMMUNITY CAFÉ

Strichen Community Park Company purchased a derelict site in 1996 with financial assistance through the Scottish Land Fund to develop a community amenity. Strichen Community Park is now 30 acres comprising woodland walks, recreational areas, wildlife gardens and a loch, all managed and maintained by an enthusiastic group of volunteers.

The latest project is the total restoration and expansion of a Victorian Estate Lodge which has been transformed into Strichen Community Café.

The project is supported by Big Lottery, LEADER and Aberdeenshire Council.

The Café, which recently opened, is proving to be a highly popular meeting area for locals and visitors to the Country Park. Adjacent to the Formartine and Buchan Way, the Café is a welcome resting spot for walkers en route. There is an immediate benefit with the Café having created part-time posts for a number of youngsters from the Strichen area. Quality local produce is a key element in the catering provision and local art and crafts will be on sale in the Café.

The community facility enhances the whole complex which sees many visitors throughout the year. Since opening, the Café has generated increased footfall at the Community Park and with increased visitors to the village there is a knock-on benefit to local retail outlets.

The Café improves facilities contributing to sustainability of Strichen Country Park. The project is an excellent example of local stakeholders making key choices to develop facilities for wide community benefit.

COUNTRYSIDE LIVE

Countryside Live is an initiative brought forward by Royal Northern Agricultural Society, in partnership with local rural and land-based organisations. The project aims to showcase farming, food production, land management, rural crafts and skills to the general public providing an enjoyable and educational day out for all age groups. The two day event is held on Dunecht Estates, a 2700 acre farming and sporting estate 13 miles west of Aberdeen.

The project is supported by LEADER, Aberdeenshire Council and a large number of agricultural and rural businesses. The event encompasses a wide range of attractions comprising farmers market, cropping, livestock, forestry, sporting and recreational areas, conservation and land management displays.

Estate activities include arable cropping, livestock production, game birds and environmental management schemes which improve biodiversity with benefits for wildlife, farmland birds and other flora and fauna. Visitors experience what farmers do to produce quality, farm assured food and actions to protect the environment and maintain an attractive, living countryside.

Over 100 volunteers act as stewards ensuring smooth operation of the day. A shuttle service is provided to access each demonstration area. The second day is targeted at secondary school pupils focusing on rural industries. Technical experts are on hand advising on employment opportunities in the rural sector through livestock and arable farming, agricultural research, estate management and quarrying. The first day proved highly popular with 4,000 attendees enjoying the informative event.

AREA SUMMARY

Rural Aberdeenshire LAG covers Aberdeenshire minus larger settlements and western parts within the Cairngorms National Park. The LAG's vision is for vibrant, inclusive, rural communities, with sustainable environmental credentials relating to resource use, energy efficiency, landscape and biodiversity, against a backdrop of economically viable rural businesses and services. Traditionally, the area has been economically dependent on agriculture, forestry and fishing. More recently, emphasis is growing for new opportunities through renewable energy developments. Tourism is also important economically. For example, boat festivals in coastal areas and highland

games in rural uplands contribute to local economies and wellbeing of rural communities. The LAG area has strong heritage links to cultural activities such as music, literary and creative art. Challenges facing social and economic fabric include decline in traditional industries, access to facilities and services, distance to markets, housing pressures and rural transport. Opportunities include diversification within rural industries, ICT supporting rural businesses, emerging renewable energy industries, an expanding tourism sector and an increase in local processing of primary products serving local communities.

ARGYLL AND THE ISLANDS

Unlocking the Potential of our Communities



Argyll and the Islands

LOCAL ACTION GROUP INFORMATION

EU Theme: Revitalising Rural Communities & Progressive Rural Economies
Budget: £8.89M (£3.77M LEADER and £5.12M Convergence)
Contact Person: Sheila McLean & Lorna Elliott
Address: Cameron House, Albany Street, Oban, PA34 4AE
Phone Number: 0044(0)1631 563016 / 0044(0)1631 564424
Email Address: sheila.mclean@argyll-bute.gov.uk, lorna.elliott@argyll-bute.gov.uk
Website: www.argyllandtheislandsleader.org.uk

AREA INFORMATION

Surface Area (km²): 7,378 sq km
Population: 83,014
Population Density: 11.25 persons per sq km



CONSTRUCTIVE COMMUNITIES

This was a training and employability project managed by West Highland Housing Association and Argyll and Bute Council Employability Team. A previous LEADER supported project had provided training opportunities based on path-building and general environmental improvements. It was felt that a similar approach could be adopted for village halls. A telephone survey confirmed that there was a need for a repairs and redecoration programme for village halls throughout the area. Representatives from the Committees of various Village Halls cited a range of repairs required, such as painting and decorating, door replacements, access improvements, worn worktops, and step replacements.

The Constructive Communities project supported the enhancement of 26 Village Halls across Argyll and Bute thereby helping increase their attractiveness and sustainability as community hubs. The project also supported 27 voluntary Hall Committees in their own efforts to care for the hall premises. In addition to physical improvement including painting, decorating, shelving, landscaping and drainage the project enabled participating halls to take advantage of energy audit reports to reduce fuel & lighting bills.

Most importantly the project supported 18 local unemployed individuals to build a work history, gain skills, improve personal skills and undertake supported job search. Important outcomes for this project were the upgrading of the community buildings and the capacity building of the voluntary committees that run the halls, essential to the quality of life in rural areas. Match-funding for the project came from Wider Role and New Deal.

NORTH ARGYLL CARERS MARKET STALL

It is estimated that there are over 2500 carers in North Argyll. North Argyll Carers (NAC) is a social enterprise which provides support and guidance to carers aged eight years and over throughout the area. NAC's main activities are providing information & advice and the services provided help to give the carers resilience, enabling them to better cope with what can be very stressful circumstances. Caring often brings with it a feeling of being isolated and of not being valued.

This funding bid supports a worker who facilitates carers to produce goods and run a market stall at a Local Producers Market which is held on the first and third Thursday of every month at Kintaline Farm a few miles from Oban. The cost of the products is reimbursed and any profit goes to the Carers Centre. NAC are confident of the viability of this project as carers already donate handmade cards, earrings, tablet, vegetables, flowers, Christmas decorations and knitted hats for sale.

As well as increasing the sustainability of the organisation this project enables NAC to tap in to the wealth of skills that carers have, many of whom are very keen to support the centre and support other carers. The project has been very successful in reducing social isolation of carers and raising awareness of the work that carers do on a daily basis. Match funding has come from Princess Royal Trust for Carers, Robertson Trust, the Carers Networking Board as well as funds that they have raised themselves.

ARGYLL AND BUTE AGRICULTURAL FORUM

Argyll and Bute Agricultural Forum secured LEADER funding to employ a development manager to deliver actions identified within An Agricultural Strategy for the Argyll Area which was produced in 2005 and revised in 2008. The Forum has initiated and been successfully involved in many projects, training events, studies and regional lobbying initiatives. Research was undertaken to explore how best to make the links for consumers between quality food and drink and the environment it is nurtured in, and to create information and advice for producers on the success of different approaches to marketing biodiversity and the environmental stewardship credentials of quality food and drink products.

Working with five producers across Argyll: Robins Herbs; Winston Churchill Venison; Barbreck Farms; Argyll Hill Lamb Ltd and the Cultural Identity of Meat on Islay Project, the extent to which consumers respond favourably to each approach was analysed, and how this equates with sales success. A successful outcome of this project has been the establishment of Food From Argyll, an organisation dedicated to showcasing the best in food and artisan produce from throughout Argyll. This organisation now sells a range of fresh, local products from a farmers' market-style food marquee at a series of high-profile events across Scotland.

The Agricultural Forum has also secured further funding to become involved in a transnational LEADER project which is aiming to promote five regions across Europe as good food destinations. Match funding has come from Argyll & Bute Council, SNH, National Farmers Union, Quality Meat Scotland and Argyll Food Producers.

AREA SUMMARY

Argyll and the Islands is a complex and diverse rural area reaching from the Atlantic Islands of Tiree & Coll in the west over to Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park in the east, and from the parish of Appin in the north of Argyll, down to Arran & Cumbrae in the south. With 31 inhabited islands and a highly dispersed population, the area presents geographical and economic challenges in terms of accessibility, integration and development to its inhabitants.

However the unique natural and cultural heritage of the area, with its breathtaking scenery, abundant wildlife, fascinating history, and

vibrant communities, also presents great opportunities for individuals and groups to get together to address the issues that face them.

LEADER has a strong history in the area, and has contributed significantly in the past to enabling rural communities to find their own solutions to development issues. Innovation has been a central component of this success, with LEADER providing the opportunity for piloting new approaches to rural development throughout Argyll and the Islands.

AYRSHIRE

Funding Rural Development Throughout Ayrshire



Ayrshire

LOCAL ACTION GROUP INFORMATION

EU Theme: Revitalising Rural Communities & Building Rural Community Capacity
Budget: £4.55M
Contact Person: Sarah Baird
Address: Ground Floor, Liberator House, Glasgow Prestwick International Airport, Prestwick, Ayrshire, KA9 2PT
Phone Number: 0044(0)1292 673 765
Email Address: sarah.baird@south-ayrshire.gov.uk
Website: www.ayrshire-leader.com

AREA INFORMATION

Surface Area (km²): 2,819 sq km
Population: 148,843
Population Density: 52.8 persons per sq km



BOSWELL BOOK FESTIVAL 2011

The Boswell Book Festival 2011, inaugurated and staged by the Trust, provided a unique opportunity to soak up the atmosphere, enjoy the richness and the blether at the hidden architectural gem of Auchinleck House in East Ayrshire that was home to the father of modern biography, and one of Scotland's greatest literary lights, James Boswell.

People's life stories past and present are at the heart of the festival, just as they were at the heart of Boswell's writing. His groundbreaking *Life of Johnson*, has never been out of print. His confessional diaries, long kept hidden by his descendants for their unflinching honesty, finally saw the light of day less than a hundred years ago and became international bestsellers.

This literacy, culture and heritage event was held over three days in May and launched with a hugely successful Schools Day with Allan Burnett an author and historian who took the young people on a journey about magic and battles, everyday life and great Scottish Inventions which all linked to Literature for Learning as a model of Curriculum for Excellence best practice, this is really Education and Entertainment, at its best.

Day 2 and 3 saw a formidable line-up featuring live talks, discussions and performances from a sparkling line-up of brilliant writers and actors including Bill Paterson and Kate Adie.

4 SEASONS GROWING

This Community Garden project, built on a brown field site with contaminated soil and infested with knotweed has been transformed into a spectacularly successful community and family focused space.

The site is located on the west coast and is very open and exposed to adverse weather conditions meaning that the growing season was very short and people only attended in the summer months. With investment from Ayrshire LEADER, the group were able to purchase poly-tunnels and additional raised beds for in-tunnel use that allows the community to grow their own organic vegetables and fruit all year round, as well as vastly increasing the members capacity to grow throughout the year, the project actively composts and recycles waste from their homes at the garden site now.

The Group has benefited from a vast array of 'like-minded' groups visiting the site and enjoys the benefits of networking and sharing ideas and experiences with other local groups as well as further afield. With a high local-focus and integration of the site into everyday community life, the project liaises with local businesses including country centres, local artists and Fairlie Fair Trade group who supply the Group with the well-earned tea, coffee and biscuits for Growers and visitors to enjoy.

The 4 Seasons Growing project is a fantastic example of what can be achieved on a derelict piece of land that has been transformed for all the community to enjoy in a safe, sociable and healthy environment.

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT TEAM (OMT) INITIATIVE

The success of the Trust's voluntary youth work has been founded upon the ethos that young people in rural communities have the unique ability to grow, learn and socialise with their peers. Following the opening of the Z1 youth bar facility, the Trust approached LEADER to fund the support of young people to take ownership and a proactive role in the managerial operations of their facility.

The participants worked ten hours per week which equated to six hours bar/counter management duties including: money, ordering stock and managing peer group volunteers, organising rotas, securing entertainers, budget control and seeing the Z1 bar run smoothly and four hours of training in food hygiene, first aid, mixology, manual handling and team building sessions.

Employed on short term contracts and required to undertake a formal job application process, the OMT scheme has provided a genuine opportunity for young people to receive appropriate training, support and guidance that will enable them to develop and enhance their lifelong learning skills and increase their long term employment opportunities. In addition to embracing youth empowerment the initiative has also generated a positive interest amongst local employers including the world-famous Turnberry Hotel, where a number of participants have gone on to secure part time work.

AREA SUMMARY

The Local Action Group aims to ensure this fund inspires, motivates and stimulates the communities of Ayrshire to work together in achieving a lasting legacy and contribute to the rejuvenation of rural communities, helping them meet challenges and grasp the opportunities.

The main aims of the Ayrshire programme are to support community based projects that will assist in Revitalising Rural Communities and Building Rural Community Capacity which will achieve the principles of LEADER, including: local involvement, wide community benefit, equal opportunities for all, innovation and new ideas, sustainable

development and growth and sharing lessons with communities in Scotland and beyond.

The Local Action Group hope that LEADER will inspire local individuals and groups to take the first steps on a road leading to real improvements in life in their communities that will be an inspiration to others who wish to see these improvements reflected in their own lives and communities.

CAIRNGORMS

Developing Sustainable Communities



Cairngorms

LOCAL ACTION GROUP INFORMATION

EU Theme: Revitalising Rural Communities & Progressive Rural Economies
Budget: £2.17M
Contact Person: Patricia Methven
Address: 14 The Square, Grantown-on-Spey, PH26 3HG
Phone Number: 0044(0)1479 873535
Email Address: patriciamethven@cairngorms.co.uk
Website: www.cairngorms-leader.org

AREA INFORMATION

Surface Area (km²): 3,800 sq km
Population: 17,188
Population Density: 4.52 persons per sq km





YOUTH SHINTY INITIATIVE

Badenoch is the heartland of shinty. For several years Newtonmore and Kingussie shinty clubs had been concerned that despite the games importance to the culture of the area there was little activity taking place in schools.

Newtonmore shinty club decided to take action to get shinty onto the curriculum of the ten Primary and two Secondary schools in Badenoch and Strathspey and to provide after school clubs to give children an opportunity to play the game regularly.

LEADER funding provided training for PE staff to be equipped to coach shinty; provided shinty equipment, so that there were no barriers to participation during or after school; paid coaches to run a series of after school clubs throughout Badenoch and Strathspey; and trained more volunteer coaches from the existing playing members and parents. This resulted in a pool of people able to support after school activities. At the end of 3 years, parents remain involved and provide volunteer coaching at four additional primary schools.

This project has proved to be very successful and has raised awareness of Shinty as an exciting sport as well as being an excellent sport to participate in. As a result of this project, spectator numbers at Kingussie and Newtonmore have risen noticeably over the period.

A new senior development team has been started in Grantown where shinty had long ago died out. It was also particularly pleasing that the newly formed Badenoch and Strathspey ladies shinty club is now able to field two teams because of the young girls now taking part in the sport.

BRAEMAR CASTLE

The community of Braemar took over the running of the castle 4 years ago from Invercauld Estate on a 50 year lease. The Castle is administered on behalf of the community by Braemar Community Ltd with 75% of the village, members of the community company.

The priority on taking over the Castle, was to assess its condition and how to establish the Castle as a must-see visitor attraction. Various studies were conducted which confirmed that the building required significant repair. Initial essential work in demolishing and preparing the castle for re-opening was carried out by community volunteers.

With the enthusiasm of the community and a lot of hard work, the castle has operated successfully, staffed by volunteers for the past 3 seasons. The Castle is open to visitors during the summer months. Special events such as the Jacobite Day pictured above are also organised.

In November 2010, LEADER funded a Development and Business Plan and a complete review of the project was carried out. The next step was to engage the support of an architect with extensive conservation experience and their findings confirmed the roof needed urgent repair. To do this, £50,000 had already been secured from LEADER.

With an additional grant of £3,000 from LEADER, Braemar Community Ltd will employ a Development Worker to carry the project forward by developing Conservation, Business and Design Option Plans, complete the final renovation work and develop the operational aspect of the business.

This community are committed to fundraise further to address the full renovation of the Castle over the next few years.

EYES TO THE SKIES

Eyes to the Skies was launched in 2009 in response to the need to actively involve local Highland communities with conservation of red kites and the natural environment:

There were four main strands to the project activities:

Satellite tracking of red kites; This project was the first in the UK to attach satellite tags to young kites. Recording their progress on the dedicated website has been central to the project's success and has been particularly effective in engaging the attention of young people.

Education Programme; Over 500 school children and 16 schools have participated in the satellite-tagged kite adoption programme - providing an important element of community 'ownership'. A further 24 schools have received a 'red kite play' assembly piece and education packs have been produced for three different age groups of school children.

Red Kite Viewing Centre; The establishment of a viewing centre, where kites are fed daily provides spectacular views of these impressive birds up close, with up to 20 birds recorded at any one time. This centre acts as a hub, getting people out and enjoying the countryside, and contributing to sustainable local economic development.

Community and Business Engagement; Guided red kite walks and community talks engaged with over 2000 people with an interest in wildlife, and enriched their understanding and enjoyment of nature. Training given to 65 participants from the local business community has increased their skill sets and provides extra marketing opportunities.

Local volunteers have been crucial to the success of the project, with 20 currently active and well networked.

AREA SUMMARY

The Cairngorms LAG area is the Cairngorms National Park area (excluding the additional section of Highland Perthshire). The area includes a range of diverse communities. Each community has its own distinct heritage and culture. The Cairngorms LAG area boasts approximately 1.4 million visitors each year. 39% of the area is designated for nature conservation and 25% of the area is designated as of European importance for nature conservation. In addition, the area is home to 25 % of the UK's rare and threatened species and has

Two National Scenic Areas. Approximately 75% of the land is privately owned with extensive mountain areas including four of Scotland's five highest mountains. Two of Scotland's major rivers, the Spey and the Dee run through the area. Besides the above, the Cairngorms LAG area possesses important geological records and landforms, 424 Listed Buildings, 60 ancient monuments and the most extensive area of arctic-alpine habitat and Caledonian Forest in Britain.

DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY

Building Resilient Communities



Dumfries and Galloway

LOCAL ACTION GROUP INFORMATION

EU Theme: Revitalising Rural Communities
Budget: £3.83M
Contact Person: Ros Halley
Address: Rural House, 40 Main Street, New Abbey DG2 8BY
Phone Number: 0044(0)1387 850 228
Email Address: ros.halley@dumgal.gov.uk
Website: www.dgleader.co.uk

AREA INFORMATION

Surface Area (km²): 6,407 sq km
Population: 106,200
Population Density: 17 persons per sq km



SAVOUR THE FLAVOURS OF DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY

Led by food and drink businesses, this project is helping to create a stronger, more delicious food and drink industry in Dumfries & Galloway. It does this by supporting producers, retailers and manufacturers to grow and develop; by encouraging chefs and the wider hospitality sector to use local food and drink; by encouraging local people and visitors to embrace Dumfries & Galloway produce and by helping children learn about local produce.

Funding was sourced by a committee of representatives from across the region covering all sectors of the food and drinks industry and was successful in attracting funding from Dumfries & Galloway LEADER, Dumfries & Galloway Council and the Dumfries & Galloway Food Initiative contributed some of their own funds.

The biggest achievements of the project so far is the work done in bringing people together, opening lines of communication and getting people to work together for the benefit of the entire food and drink sector in Dumfries & Galloway. Farmers' Markets, open meetings and workshops are all examples of the ways in which Savour the Flavours of Dumfries & Galloway has engaged the industry resulting in a project which has far exceeded expectations of both the committee and the industry. Underpinning all of the project activities is clarity of communication, in particular listening to the concerns and experiences of businesses within the sector, learning about their needs and aspirations and adapting the project to meet those needs.

XCEL PROJECT AND BUILDING ON SUCCESS

This project is about providing opportunities for achievement amongst young people in the rural isolated area of Eskdale. This has been done through the implementation of several initiatives, identified and achieved in conjunction with local young people and the wider community.

The project responded to the lack of opportunities for young people in the Eskdale area and it has built on the successes of a previous Langholm based initiative, providing a place for young people to meet. Young people have been at the centre of developing the ideas for the Xcel Project and by doing so have taken a greater sense of achievement and ownership from their involvement.

Langholm Youth and Community Project were successful in securing funding from Dumfries & Galloway LEADER, The John Hammond Trust, Holywood Trust and Youthbank, and alongside their own funds and in-kind contribution this enabled them to appoint a Youth Development Manager to oversee the delivery of the project.

The project has provided the young people of Eskdale with a new centre, a comfortable place they can call their own and somewhere they can discuss their problems and ideas. Alongside the new Youth Information Centre the project has encouraged and assisted new groups to come together, giving them the confidence to take their ideas forward. The project has significantly improved the lives of young people in Eskdale, offering advice, support and a platform for them to have a voice in the community.

MOFFAT COMMUNITY NATURE RESERVE

Moffat & District Community Nature Reserve is a former gravel quarry on the A701 close to Moffat. The reserve comprises two distinct wildlife habitats areas: a large pond surrounded by trees and vegetation and a seasonally flooded meadow.

The Trust who owns the reserve comprises the Community Council, Moffat Wildlife Club and the local community initiative. The objectives of the Trust are: management, conservation, enjoyment, community involvement and education.

The LEADER project aims are to promote the reserve as a visitor attraction and educational facility and create a sustainable community asset that will become part of a cluster of local nature-based attractions.

Funding was secured from Dumfries & Galloway LEADER, Scottish Natural Heritage and Paterson's Quarries through the Land Trust. In addition, in-kind volunteer contributions were secured from the Moffat Wildlife Club, Dumfries & Galloway Council's Ranger Service, Solway Heritage and a disability access consultant. The grant monies have allowed the group to create a wildflower meadow where once a weighbridge stood and turned sand pit workings into wildlife pools. The group has also created a mini beasts trail; improved access, provided a new hide; developed interpretation, signage and marketing activities; facilitated by a project officer. The official opening of site took place in March 2011. Since then the site has seen visits from walking groups, local primary schools and the sightings book in the hide shows that visitors come from far and wide.

AREA SUMMARY

Dumfries & Galloway stretches 120 miles across the South of Scotland from Langholm in the east to Portpatrick in the west. The region boasts 200 miles of coastline including Scotland's most southerly point at Mull of Galloway. Rural Dumfries & Galloway is made up of attractive small fishing villages, small market towns and rural hamlets and accounts for 72% of the population of the region.

Agriculture accounts for 70% and forestry represents 25% of the geographical area. Alongside the decline in traditional industries, key challenges include access to facilities and services, rural transport

and affordable housing. The region however, offers opportunities for growth in tourism, food and drink, culture and renewable energy.

The development of nature based tourism clusters, environmental art initiatives and the promotion of health and recreation facilities across the region all hold great potential for Dumfries & Galloway.

LEADER is well established in rural Dumfries & Galloway and has played an important role in mobilising rural communities and bringing innovative, grass-roots projects to fruition across the region.

EAST RENFREWSHIRE

Maximising Rural Development



East Renfrewshire

LOCAL ACTION GROUP INFORMATION

EU Theme: Revitalising Rural Communities & New Markets and Products
Budget: £460,000
Contact Person: Suzanne McCall
Address: 2 Spiersbridge Way, Spiersbridge Business Park, Thornliebank, G46 8NG
Phone Number: 0044(0)141 577 3792
Email Address: suzanne.mccall@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk
Website: www.eastrenfrewshireleader.co.uk

AREA INFORMATION

Surface Area (km²): 144 sq km
Population: 16,400
Population Density: 113 persons per sq km



NEILSTON SCOUT AND COMMUNITY HALL

In 2004 Neilston Scout Hall was destroyed by wilful fire-raising. This left the 1st Neilston Scout Group homeless, and without sufficient funds to rebuild.

Over the last 7 years £60,000 has been raised by fundraising ventures. A remarkable total for such a small group of people. The passion, drive and determination has been outstanding. Planning permission was sought and approved for the project.

A total project cost of £180,000 was estimated to build a hall suitable for both the Scout group and the wider community's needs, within the East Renfrewshire council area. Several funders were approached, and the group successfully attained £10,000 each from the Postcode Lottery, Awards For All and Whitelee Wind Farm Fund. The remaining £90,000 was applied to from the LEADER project.

This LEADER funding of £90,000 allowed the Group to proceed with their ambitious plans for a fully fitted, modern, and adaptable complex, offering facilities for different organisations and groups of people within Neilston.

The impact on the 1st Neilston Scout Group and the local community is a feeling of great satisfaction, that this project can be fulfilled, in partnership, and support of major funders, and the local community.

The Neilston Scout and Community Hall, situated in the Main St, the heart of Neilston, will offer the community a focal and functional hall for use by all.

EAGLESHAM HERITAGE TRAIL

Eaglesham Heritage Trail is a project developed by Eaglesham & Waterfoot Community Development Trust (EWCDT) and funded by East Renfrewshire LEADER and the National Lottery Awards For All scheme. The aim of the Trail is to provide a valuable resource for both locals and visitors to the area, engaging and educating them about the history of Scotland's first outstanding conservation area. By bringing a new attraction to the area, it is hoped that the village will benefit from increased visitor numbers, capitalising on the popularity of the recent Whitelee Wind Farm development and helping sustain local businesses.

In developing the Trail, EWCDT have pulled together a team including local historians and members of the local Feuars Association and have jointly commissioned an archaeological survey of the village - the results of which will be made publicly available. The local primary school has also been involved in the project with pupils entering a competition to have their designs incorporated into the information panels.

Encouraging outdoor access and making use of existing pathways around Eaglesham in order to be as accessible as possible, users of the Trail will be encouraged to use a Trail Guide - available from local businesses, the library or to download from the website. This will identify key locations and expand on the information provided on the Trail panels.

In the long term, it is hoped that the Heritage Trail will prove to be a popular visitor attraction, promoting Eaglesham and providing a valuable educational experience.

BANKING ON NEILSTON

In 2006, Neilston Development Trust purchased the former bank building in the village through the Community Right to Buy Scheme. They saw the opportunity to create a physical focus for their work within the village, and a flagship for the renaissance of Neilston. The community put together an ambitious plan to renovate the Bank into a flexible hub offering a range of services for local residents.

With financial support from the Big Lottery Fund, LEADER, Cares, Climate Challenge Fund, The Robertson Trust, The Clothworkers Foundation, East Renfrewshire Community Health & Care Partnership, Whitelee Wind Farm Fund, Barrhead Housing Association and the Gannochy Trust, the Bank will reopen in Autumn 2011 providing a cafe, office and meeting space and access to a range of financial and health and wellbeing services, and recreational and learning activities.

Over the initial three year period of the project it is anticipated that the Bank will become fully financially sustainable, that over 500 people per year will access services provided and that more than 70 people will have progressed into further training, education or volunteering as a result of their involvement with the Bank.

AREA SUMMARY

Approximately 80% of the land mass of East Renfrewshire is rural, and the settlements within this area account for almost 20% of the population. While, in general, the area can be characterised as relatively affluent there are pockets of comparative disadvantage. The rural area consists of a variety of natural landscapes including moorland and woodland providing an attractive setting for the suburban area, small towns and settlements, however it also offers a range of economic opportunities, including agriculture, forestry, mineral extraction and renewable energy production and tourism.

Over recent years a number of discrete investments have been made in the rural area of East Renfrewshire, but these regeneration efforts have predominantly been of a traditional nature, focusing on individual project activity with relatively low levels of integration and collaboration between stakeholders at strategic and local level.

FIFE

Building Rural Community Capacity



Fife

LOCAL ACTION GROUP INFORMATION

EU Theme: Building Rural Community Capacity
Budget: £1.7M
Contact Person: Barbara Solway
Address: Funding & Monitoring Team, Fife Council,
Fife House, Glenrothes, Fife KY7 5LT
Phone Number: 0044(0)8451 555555 Ext. 441006
Email Address: barbara.solway@fife.gov.uk
Website: www.leaderinfife.org

AREA INFORMATION

Surface Area (km²): 947 sq km
Population: 84,146
Population Density: 88.85 persons per sq km



GETTING SMARTER IN THE HOWE

The Smart Community Fife portal is a unique online information resource that benefits individuals, businesses and organisations in the Howe of Fife and promotes the area to a global audience. The main aims of Smart Communities Fife are to encourage the use of the portal and associated web technologies to ensure individuals in the communities stay in touch, use local goods and services and improve their skills and entrepreneurship in order to proactively participate in sustaining their rural economies.

It was recognised that the long-term sustainability of the portal depended on local communities having the responsibility for and capacity to manage their own content and communications. The aim of the highly innovative "Getting Smarter in the Howe" project is to develop a rural employability programme recruiting 5 community reporters from local communities in the area - aiming for a mix of young, underemployed and newly retired local people - who would receive the necessary training to source, publish and promote information which would be relevant and of interest to their communities. By promoting local portal "ownership" and content in all communities this would ensure that Smart Communities Fife continues to be a valuable on-line resource for businesses, organisations, residents and visitors.

TAYPORT COMMUNITY CAFÉ

The community in Tayport identified the need for a community hub to provide a much needed meeting place and information point for locals and visitors alike. LEADER in Fife previously awarded a grant to the Tayport Community Café Study, to support the development of a Business Plan for the café.

Following completion of the Business Plan the group submitted an application to LEADER for renovation works to a derelict property in the harbour area of Tayport. The property had previously been a café but had become an eyesore. The renovation of the café has made the harbour area more attractive and has recruited one full time member of staff. Following higher than expected visitor numbers additional recruitment is now planned.

The café has led to an increased sense of pride in the area and the town as a whole and has shown local people what can be achieved. The café is a Welcome Point for the Fife Coastal Path with customers arriving on foot and by bike.

The community of Tayport and visitors are benefiting from the project with people using the café to meet and check out what is happening locally. Local artists and photographers are using the café as exhibition space and the police have expressed an interest in using the café for informal meetings with young people as part of their outreach programmes. In the long term it is planned to use profits from the café to support local community groups in Tayport.

LETS GET MOVING

The 83rd Fife Scout Group received an award of £15,375 from LEADER in Fife towards the purchase of a new 17-seater multi-purpose minibus which is now available for all groups in the 15 West Fife Villages to use. An on-line booking system was already in place.

The lack of transport in the villages has been a major issue for local groups with public bus services connecting villages to the main town, but not to each other. Already the local youth clubs, Youth Theatre group, playgroups, football teams, bowling clubs, church groups, elderly clubs and the chinese community plus many sections of local Scout and Guide Groups have used the minibus. It has been welcomed by local organisations and has proven to be a positive development in helping to bring communities together to participate in a range of activities across the West Fife Villages. Minibuses are exempt from the "car seat rule" and therefore the transportation of younger children has been made much easier due to adjustable seatbelts.

The minibus is also used to train young volunteers as drivers and already over 50 people have had lessons. It will operate as a self-drive hire facility for local groups. When static, it will double as an interesting information base with a DVD player and roof-mounted monitor installed, accessible for all age groups. It can also be used as a wet weather alternative for local groups for training or activities.

AREA SUMMARY

The area covered by LEADER in Fife has been defined as all of East Fife and the West Fife Villages with the exception of St Andrews. Just over 84,100 people are included in the eligible area with 75% in East Fife and 25% in West Fife Villages. Land use is dominated by arable farming with the bulk of this being in East Fife.

The East Fife area has a predominantly rural character with an attractive and varied mix of landscapes including the extensive coastline stretching from Newburgh on the shores of the River Tay to

Lower Largo on the Forth Estuary, the rolling farmland of the Howe and the Lomond Hills in the west. It has a wide range of historic townscapes including Falkland and the fishing villages of the East Neuk with Cupar the main administrative and shopping centre.

The West Fife Villages encompasses both coastal and inland settlements including Torryburn, High and Low Valleyfield, Culross, Kincardine-on-Forth, Blairhall, Saline, Oakley and Cairneyhill with mining being the industry most associated with the villages in the past.

FORTH VALLEY AND LOMOND

Improving the Quality of Life



Forth Valley and Lomond

LOCAL ACTION GROUP INFORMATION

EU Theme: Revitalising Rural Communities & Conservation of the Rural Environment
Budget: £3.73M
Contact Person: Anne-Michelle Ketteridge
Address: Stirling Council, Viewforth, Stirling FK8 2ET
Phone Number: 0044(0)1786 442687
Email Address: ketteridgea@stirling.gov.uk / info@fvl.org.uk
Website: www.fvl.org.uk

AREA INFORMATION

Surface Area (km²): 2,656 sq km
Population: 128,733
Population Density: 48.5 persons per sq km



SOUTH GREEN DRIVE PLAYPARK AND COMMUNITY GARDEN

In the village of Airth near Falkirk, the residents and tenants of South Green Drive decided in June 2008 that it was about time that their village had some facilities for children and families, as well as somewhere young people could learn about the environment. Fired up with enthusiasm and an infectious can-do attitude, the management committee of the residents and tenants association, got everyone they knew involved in the fundraising, design, works on site and planting. £12,623 of LEADER funding was used for landscaping and to purchase equipment. The playpark and community garden was opened in August 2010.

In addition to the management committee and the many volunteers recruited by them, the local primary school was heavily involved in the design stage, as were the contractors Play Practice Scotland and the BTCV run Jupiter project. Falkirk Council provided assistance at various stages in the development of the project, as did Falkirk Environment Trust. Key to the project's success was the Chair of the association who kept the project on track, whilst involving the many different people along the way. The match funding was provided by community fundraising events and Falkirk Environment Trust.

The project is complete and the play park and garden are well used. The site has been transformed, and looks fantastic, with even the former contractors spotted popping in for a quiet moment of contemplation or a sandwich. The pride the community feels from what has been achieved is palpable.

MUGDOCK MAKKERS

Mugdock Makers are a collective of around 25 artists formed in 2007 to assist in the promotion and sale of locally made art work. In 2008 they took on a lease for a gallery shop at Mugdock Country Park, in the west of Stirling, to display and sell their work, and to provide a permanent base for art and craft demonstrations by the members. With so many members from the outset, all with different 'products' to sell, the group started to encounter difficulties in the management of the new premises. In June 2009, the group approached Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER for a grant of £6,213 to assist with the production of a business plan for the group.

The group then entered into an innovative arrangement with the Stirling Management School at Stirling University who had been developing their social enterprise area of expertise. A grant of £1,000 was also awarded from Stirling Council's Tourism Development Fund. The "beneficiaries" of the project have been the individual member artists who have seen their sales increase, but also the visitors to Mugdock Country Park who now have a quality local retail outlet to add to the enjoyment of their visit to the Park.

Without a doubt the impact on the Makers has been significant. The Makers report that conflicts that were beginning to arise have now disappeared since the business planning work started. Turnover has increased dramatically, to a point where they can now break even. The Makers also report that having reached sustainable trading levels they are now looking into further ventures and innovations for the group.

TILlicOUNTRY ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION - REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

An existing allotment site had fallen into serious disrepair by the late 1980s. In 2004, a group of like minded individuals formed a new committee and gradually brought the site back into use to the point of now having a waiting list. Not stopping there, the group wanted to open up the site to more people in the community, particularly school groups and people with disabilities. The group approached LEADER in 2010 for £15,028 to support the purchase of materials for solid pathways and raised beds for people in wheelchairs, a composting toilet, a community orchard and an accessible drop-off and ramped entrance to the site.

One of the most striking aspects of this project is the work of the volunteers, from overseeing the works, to the practical design, build and planting elements. The group was able to use their volunteer time as part of the match funding for the project, with the remainder being funded by Awards for All (£10,000). The group also works closely with other local food growing initiatives in the area.

The project is still underway, with a committed band of volunteers on site most days, so the raised beds, pathways and (accessible) composting toilet are now complete. School groups and wheelchairs have already started visiting, keen to start growing their own vegetables. One of the biggest impacts of the project has been how it has inspired other groups to develop their own projects, one of which is already under appraisal at LEADER.

AREA SUMMARY

Encompassing the rural areas of Stirling, Clackmannanshire, Falkirk and part of West Dunbartonshire, the area is characterised by diverse geographical features. The area stretches from the spectacular Highland mountain scenery around Crianlarich and Tyndrum, down to the fringes of the urbanised central belt of Glasgow, Stirling and Falkirk, where the legacy of industry and coal mining is still evident today. The LAG area also includes a large part of the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park, where tourism and micro business have

become the main economic drivers, and visitors come to enjoy the many lochs, forested areas and mountains. However, it is the warmth and vibrancy of the communities which leaves the strongest impression on visitors. This had led to a growth in the social economy in the area, with many communities now having community development trusts or groups exploring the ownership and management of local assets for the benefit of the wider community.

HIGHLAND

Revitalising Communities in Highland



Highland

LOCAL ACTION GROUP INFORMATION

EU Theme: Revitalising Rural Communities & Progressive Rural Economies
Budget: £16.5M (£9.09M LEADER and £7.4M Convergence)
Contact Person: Nicole Wallace
Address: The Highland Council, Planning and Development, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness, IV3 5NX
Phone Number: 0044(0)1463 702524
Email Address: Nicole.wallace@highland.gov.uk
Website: www.highlandleader.com

AREA INFORMATION

Surface Area (km²): 23,315 sq km
Population: 146,229
Population Density: 6.27 persons per sq km



SUNNY LOCHABER UNITED GARDENERS (SLUG)

LEADER funding of £33,578 was granted towards a £75,000 project to create 17 allotment plots at Cow Hill, Fort William, together with the purchase of communal horticultural machinery. Training in the use of equipment is offered, together with general support and training in horticultural methods, particularly for those who may never previously have had an allotment. The project provides a "buddy system" to ensure new allotment members receive a full induction to the site and its facilities. There is also a communal poly tunnel and community shed on site for indoor work. The project also plans to hold open days and social events throughout each year to promote the work of SLUG and encourage people to consider taking up allotment spaces or start growing produce elsewhere.

A valuable long term community resource has been created through assistance from LEADER. There is a good level of demand for allotments locally, as evidenced by the local waiting list for these new plots. There is good local support for this project and a lot of community input to the proposals was made. There is also the potential in the future to expand the site, as land is available for this.

The project is managed by the Forestry Commission and match funding came from Awards for All, Climate Challenge Fund, Highland Council, The Forestry Commission and Lochaber Environmental Group.

GREENING THE BLACK ISLE

Greening the Black Isle is a Community Energy Partnership operating across the Black Isle in Ross-shire. The partnership aims to make Black Isle community facilities more sustainable by using energy efficient measures which reduce heating and lighting costs and in turn reduce carbon emissions.

The initiative involves 14 Community Groups, the Highland Council, the Highland LEADER Programme, the Black Isle Local Area Partnership and Community Energy Scotland working together to try to address key issues of chronic heat loss and high energy bills in local facilities.

The project has had a high level of community involvement and engagement. Groups have been encouraged to undertake renewable energy learning journeys to build local capacity ie little knowledge of renewable energy installations amongst local groups. Support was also provided by Community Energy Scotland to take a coordinated approach to procurement which resulted in cost savings and reduced bureaucracy.

To date 11 halls across the area have received grant aid from Highland LEADER, Community Energy Scotland and Highland Council to install biomass heating systems, energy efficient lighting, solar panels and insulation works.

A total funding package of £300,851 made up of £178,643 LEADER, £71,708 Community Energy Scotland (CARES), £20,500 Highland Council's Black Isle Ward Discretionary and £30,000 of applicants own contributions has enabled this project to be realised

COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS RESOURCE CENTRE PROJECT

Latheron, Lybster and Clyth Community Development Company (LLCCDC) applied to LEADER for £64,247 towards a total project cost of £142,771 to establish a community and business resource centre in Seaview House in the village of Lybster.

Match funding for the project was secured from the Climate Challenge Fund and from the group's own resources. Funds were used to employ a Community Powerdown Officer, and a Resource Centre Manager. Some funding was also made available for capital works to the building. The project aims to establish a "one stop shop" to support the business, community and voluntary sector in south east Caithness.

The project is building local community and business capacity by offering support, advice and training opportunities directly from Seaview House to local people.

A number of other initiatives have been undertaken by the staff: such as the creation of allotments and poly tunnels which local people can take on to grow their own produce. The allotments also include a number of areas that are fully wheelchair accessible. In addition the site also provides locally grown produce for the healthy eating classes run at Seaview

The ethos of the centre is to promote environmental sustainability.

The project has also gone on to apply for further funding (including LEADER) to install a new log boiler to reduce running costs and sustain the building.

AREA SUMMARY

The Highland LAG area covers the Highland Council area but excludes Inverness city, and the Cairngorms National Park Area

The Highland LAG cover some of the most sparsely populated and remote land in Europe. The LAG area comprises over 30% of the total land area of rural Scotland and has some 10% of its population. 48% of the population live in remote rural areas.

There are high levels of self employment and a greater dependency on jobs in the primary sector than elsewhere in Scotland

The LAG area enjoys an environment and landscape of exceptional quality, which is recognised in its high number of national and international designations.

The Highland LEADER programme has adopted an innovative approach to its delivery across the area. Rather than operate through one partnership the LAG consists of a strategic partnership and 11 local area partnerships, thus ensuring decision making is kept local.

KELVIN VALLEY

Revitalising Rural Communities



Kelvin Valley

LOCAL ACTION GROUP INFORMATION

EU Theme: Revitalising Rural Communities
Budget: £750,000
Contact Person: Paul Kane
Address: Regeneration Services, North Lanarkshire Council, Civic Square, Windmillhill Street, Motherwell, ML1 1AB
Phone Number: 0044(0)1698 302842
Email Address: kanepaul@northlan.gov.uk
Website: www.kelvinvalleyleader.org.uk

AREA INFORMATION

Surface Area (km²): 66 sq km
Population: 51,386
Population Density: 778 persons per sq km



SCENTS AND SENSITIVITIES

Scents and Sensitivities is located at the Auchinstarry Basin on the Forth and Clyde Canal, near Kilsyth in central Scotland and was carried out by the Waterways Trust Scotland. In recent years the Basin has been developed as a marina, facilities block and restaurant. The Scents & Sensitivities project sought to develop the remaining near-desolate section of the Basin by providing sensory gardens, trails and interpretation to help people appreciate the natural environment around the marina and local heritage.

The first phase of the Scents & Sensitivities Project established a sensory garden, stone sculptures, carved seats and a Nature Trail on wild sections of hillside to either side of the access road. The second phase used a mix of hard and soft landscaping to further improve the environment at Auchinstarry, by creating a new sensory trail that links the sensory garden with the rest of the basin, and further developing the phase one garden. The result is a sensory experience which can be used for relaxation, stimulation or education. In addition the project offered accredited training and employment which trained 3 young people in horticultural skills which they will use to help develop and maintain the garden and trail.

As well as a contribution from LEADER the project attracted eight other funders. The project has transformed the area around Auchinstarry and will play a significant role in attracting visitors to the area as well as providing ongoing employment and training in future.

BE ALL YOU CAN BE

The Be All You Can Be project was a partnership that involved Cumbernauld College, East Dunbartonshire Council Psychological Service, the Volunteer Centres in East Dunbartonshire and North Lanarkshire, University of Dundee, Forward Training and the Pacific Institute. This was a pilot project that delivered training to trainers from partners who then worked with a group of 16-19 year olds from the College's Get Ready for Work programme.

The approach taken was based on sound psychological knowledge and was designed to instil self confidence, strong self belief, character building and positive goal setting for young people who faced a number of challenges in finding suitable employment, training or learning opportunities for themselves. The project delivered training in an engaging, exciting and attractive manner that had a very up to date feel. It combined fresh and current imagery, music, and graphics with a taught element. The project and training had a massive positive impact on both the trainers and the young people who participated in the pilot programme in terms of their confidence and life skills and these results are evidenced by an independent evaluation of the programme. The programme is now self sustaining and is being cascaded throughout partner organisations for use with young people in and around the Kelvin Valley.

LINK-UP PATH

Delivered by Twechar Community Action, the Link-Up Path project created a pathway in the village of Twechar which provided better and safer access for villagers and visitors to reach amenities in the village. The village, which has faced a number of challenges since the decline of the coal mining industry, is surrounded by a rich natural and cultural environment and is bordered by the Antonine Wall on one side and the Forth and Clyde Canal on the other. The project also created a wildlife habitat in an area of wasteland, which had the potential and the physical characteristics to become natural wetlands, adjacent to the pathway.

By linking both sides of the village the pathway has enabled safer access to amenities such as Twechar Healthy Living & Enterprise Centre, Post Office, Pharmacy, School, Churches and play park for all residents and visitors but in particular for children, parents with pushchairs, and people with mobility problems. In creating the pathway a derelict area which was used for fly tipping and anti-social behaviour has been transformed. The pathway also makes the village more accessible to walkers and cyclists from the Forth and Clyde Canal walkway.

Finally the project engaged 23 local volunteers to do much of the work as well as providing accredited training to two young people in the construction of the pathway and biodiversity area and is a fabulous example of a local community effectively using LEADER to make a huge difference.

AREA SUMMARY

The Kelvin Valley sits within the boundaries of North Lanarkshire and East Dunbartonshire Councils. Within the context of central Scotland, the individual settlements of the Kelvin Valley are relatively isolated communities standing apart from the main transportation corridors and Clyde Valley conurbations. The disparate settlements of Croy, Kilsyth, Twechar, Lennoxton and Milton of Campsie have distinctive identities and differing local circumstances which are compounded by their secluded location. While each community identifies itself as

an individual entity, they collectively and proudly sit within a Valley that offers pleasant and high quality landscapes and enjoy significant unifying features of vast historical and environmental value. Running throughout the core of the Kelvin Valley are two nationally important monuments; the Forth and Clyde Canal and the Antonine Wall. LEADER has offered local communities the opportunity to collaborate and work together to join up rural regeneration activities and investment for the benefit of all.

MORAY

Innovative Rural Solutions



Moray

LOCAL ACTION GROUP INFORMATION

EU Theme: Revitalising Rural Communities & Progressive Rural Economies
Budget: £2.34M
Contact Person: David Watson
Address: 17 High Street, Elgin, Moray IV30 1EQ
Phone Number: 0044(0)1343 563 570
Email Address: david.watson@moray.gov.uk
Website: www.morayleader.org.uk

AREA INFORMATION

Surface Area (km²): 1,858 sq km
Population: 65,370
Population Density: 35 persons per sq km



WILD THINGS!: SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE ON THE WILD FRONT

Wild things! is a Scottish environmental education charity working in Moray, Grampian and the Highlands. Since 2003, Wild things! has enabled over 5000 people to learn from and be inspired by their local natural environment. Using the remote wilderness regions of Scotland Wild Things! engage with client groups ranging from the young (from 5 years) to the 'not so young' (55 years and above).

Wild Things! work mainly with children and vulnerable adults in Moray to deliver activities which use contact with the natural world to overcome educational, social or economic disadvantages. Working in partnership with a range of organisations Wild things! provides extra support for young people considered 'at risk' or who are struggling within mainstream education. All the courses that are delivered support the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence, the 3-18 Scottish Science Curriculum, and the Eco-schools program.

The overall aim of this project is to encourage the sustainable use of local natural resources to equip children and vulnerable adults with the skills and qualifications to become more enterprising and employable individuals who value their local environment. LEADER funding is allowing Wild Things! to deliver two new programmes; Level 2 NCFE Training in bush craft and sustainable environmental enterprise training focusing on non-timber forestry products and wild harvesting.

In the Autumn of 2010, schoolchildren started making Seaweed Fertiliser on a "Coastal Classroom" programme. This project was finished off in November with very smelly results! The class sold their products at their Christmas fair with great success.

KINLOSS COMMUNITY HALL COMMITTEE: KINLOSS COMMUNITY HALL

In 1997 the community of Kinloss decided to undertake a project which would enhance the local area and provide a multi-purpose community facility for use by all. A public meeting was held and a public questionnaire was produced and distributed at local public events. Although the preferred option was to build a new hall on ground adjacent to the Church the community eventually decided that the best, and most cost effective, way forward was to convert the local church itself into a hall by altering the interior and making fixed items, such as the pulpit and seats, moveable.

In 2010, after 13 years of hard work and planning in the local community, the funding was secured and work began. LEADER funding helped to pay to remodel the interior, provide movable seating, fit under floor heating and install a kitchen and toilets.

The hall is now run by a management committee made up of members of the community whilst The Church of Scotland maintains the fabric of the building. Any income that is raised from committee run activities and courses will be held by the hall committee and used only for the hall – either in refurbishment or new purchases for the user groups.

The completed project has proved to be very successful and the building is more vibrant than it has been in living memory, so vibrant in fact that the community are now planning an extension to provide more room to ensure that local services are not lost due to the closure of the RAF Kinloss base.

THE MORAY WAY ASSOCIATION: ESTABLISHING THE MORAY WAY

The county of Moray is bounded by three major walking routes, the Speyside Way, the Moray Coastal Trail, and the Dava Way. This project brought together all three of these paths to develop "The Moray Way" which, at just less than 100 miles, is now the longest continuous circular walking route in Scotland. It is estimated that the route can be walked comfortably in six to nine days.

The Moray Way combines the whole of The Dava Way, two thirds of The Moray Coast Trail and about half of The Speyside Way. These walks cover a very varied terrain including mountains, moors, rivers and the Moray Firth coast. Parts of the route are suitable for mountain biking and horse riding. Canoes or kayaks can be used down the River Spey providing an adventurous variation. It is hoped that the route, through its variety of terrain will become increasingly attractive for outdoor pursuits from casual leisure on the one hand, to outdoor rugged activities on the other.

The concept is the brainchild of The Moray Way Association, formed in 2009. LEADER funding helped to create a definitive map, guide book and a website. Funding also provided clarification and rationalisation of existing signage and provided new signage and map boards where appropriate. The next stage will involve the creation of a Moray Way walking festival which hopes to market Moray and The Moray Way to a wider audience.

AREA SUMMARY

The Moray LAG area falls within the boundaries of the Moray Council excluding Elgin and the areas of Moray that lie within the Cairngorms National Park.

A characteristic of the area is the network of market towns, Lossiemouth, Buckie and Keith in the East and Forres in the West. These towns are all within 15 km of Elgin, the main service centre. The upland part of Moray has a network of smaller towns around the Spey river system; including Rothes, Aberlour and Dufftown.

The area is diverse in terms of its landscape, environment and economy. It ranges from the remote upland areas adjacent to the National Park to coastal areas with distinctive communities and habitats of national importance.

Economic activity varies from traditional industries such as agriculture, fishing, forestry and the whisky distilling of Speyside to modern operations such as world class food processing and the currently threatened RAF bases.

ORKNEY

Helping Orkney's Rural Communities



Orkney

LOCAL ACTION GROUP INFORMATION

EU Theme: Progressive Rural Economies & Revitalising Rural Communities
Budget: £2.31M
Contact Person: Alister Brown
Address: Orkney Islands Council, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall, KW15 1NY
Phone Number: 0044(0)1856 873 535
Email Address: alister.brown@orkney.gov.uk
Website: www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/LEADER

AREA INFORMATION

Surface Area (km²): 990 sq km
Population: 19,900
Population Density: 20 persons per sq km



SCAPA FLOW LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP SCHEME

Over the last few years, a partnership of organisations led by Orkney Islands Council, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds have been working to develop the Scapa Flow Landscape Partnership Scheme. Over 80 local and national organisations and individuals are now involved. Scapa Flow lies in the south of the Orkney Islands and is an area of 50 square miles of deep water surrounded by islands.

This project's vision is to create a deeper and more unified understanding of the Scapa Flow area's landscape (including the natural, built and historical) as well as supporting its sustainable management, use and enjoyment by as many people possible. The project will be delivered under several key programmes which have been developed through extensive stakeholder and public consultation.

The project's four main objectives are to: Conserve or restore the built and natural heritage features of the Scapa Flow area; Conserve and celebrate the cultural history, events and other activities of the Scapa Flow area; Encourage more people to access, learn and become involved in the landscape heritage of the Scapa Flow area; Support the continuation of local craft and other skills linked to the project by providing training opportunities.

These objectives will help increase economic activity and build the capacity of local communities to become more economically active and productive. It will also allow local people to develop their understanding of their own heritage and strengthen local identity.

CONNECT

Connect was set up for young people aged between 16-19, who feel not quite ready to move on to employment or further training. The project has worked with young people who experience severe barriers to employment through lack of organisational skills, homelessness, substance abuse, etc and who need support and training before attending employment services offered within Orkney, such as "Get Ready for Work" and "Moving On". These young people have opted out of the education system but are ineligible for job seekers allowance and due to their erratic life patterns lack the ability to find or maintain employment. They need to learn, for example, the required discipline of regular attendance.

Connect have encouraged referrals from a variety of different sources including: Skills Development Scotland, Jobcentre Plus, Community Social Services, and various local organisations. Self referrals have also been welcome. All referrals are invited for an informal interview to discuss if the *Connect* Project is the right programme for them.

Those who end up participating have been given one-to-one, tailored personal and skills development within a dedicated environment to ensure that they each gain the confidence, skills and commitment which enables them to successfully move on to the more formal programmes/opportunities offered by partner agencies. It is an innovative programme that is person centered and where local agencies involved in delivery of services to young people will work collaboratively to provide a supportive learning environment and to identify the best possible routes for each young person.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE ORKNEY FOSSIL AND HERITAGE CENTRE COMMUNITY CAFÉ.

The Café based within the Orkney Fossil & Heritage Centre on the island of Burray had been operated by franchisees year-to-year, often by different people each season and providing only a limited income to the Centre. Because of this a group of volunteers from the local community decided to take over running the Fossil Centre Cafe in 2009.

The establishment of the Community Café, managed by the Orkney Fossil & Vintage Centre Ltd involved enhancing the kitchen, which was originally installed some 15 years ago and required major reinvestment. Specifically, this meant upgrading the kitchen floor and installing new kitchen equipment. In order for the Community Cafe to function efficiently and as a sustainable asset, the group also installed a baking station and oven separate from the main Café cooker.

Providing these facilities has allowed the group to run the Community Café for the community of Burray. It has also provided new employment and training opportunities, as well as helping increase interest in the centre from visitors and reignite interest locally. Ultimately, it is hoped that all of these efforts by a significant number of local people will help to continue to make the Orkney Fossil & Vintage Centre a focal point for long-term economic and community growth in Burray.

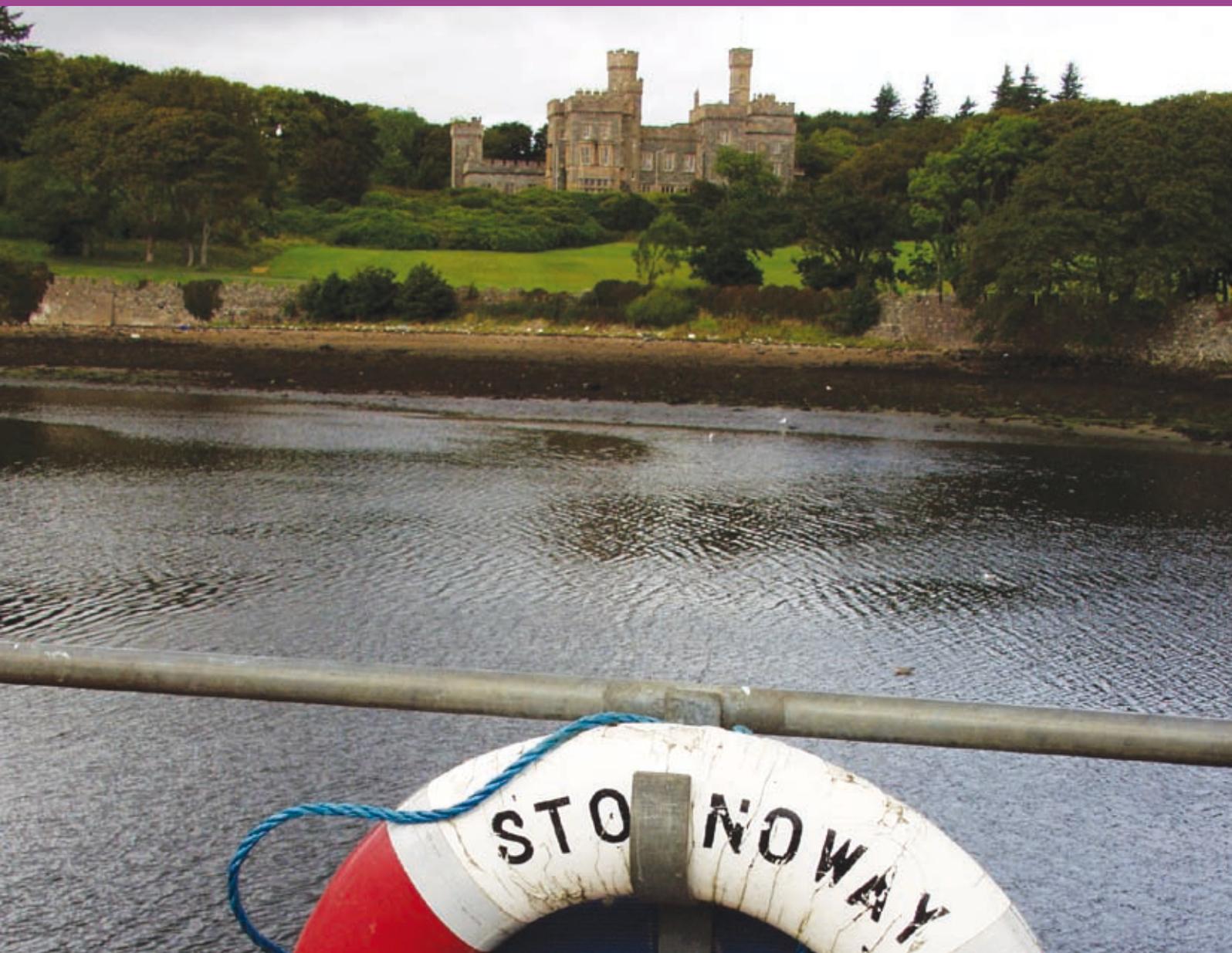
AREA SUMMARY

Orkney lies off the North East coast of mainland Scotland and comprises some 70 islands, of which 18 are inhabited. Lying only 150 miles off Greenland Orkney is, at its widest, 30 miles from East to West, and at its longest, 53 miles from North to South. Orkney's coastline consists of approximately 570 miles, of which the "mainland" island comprises more than half. Orkney's population of approximately 19,900 shows an increase of approximately 600 from the start of the decade.

Orkney still relies heavily on traditional industries like Agriculture and Fishing. However, Tourism is becoming a more important industry to the economy, with positive impacts on the craft sector. Ever since the late 1970's when the Flotta Oil Terminal was opened, the Oil industry has provided an economic boost to the isles. More recently, the Renewables sector has taken off with Orkney at the cutting edge of technological development.

OUTER HEBRIDES

Revitalising Communities



Outer Hebrides

LOCAL ACTION GROUP INFORMATION

EU Theme: Revitalising Rural Communities
Budget: £3.26M (£1.28M LEADER and £1.98M Convergence)
Contact Person: Kathlene Macdonald
Address: Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Development Department,
Sandwick Road, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, HS1 2BW
Phone Number: 0044(0)845 600 70 90
Email Address: kathlene.macdonald@cne-siar.gov.uk
Website: www.outerhebridesleader.co.uk

AREA INFORMATION

Surface Area (km²): 3,069 sq km
Population: 26,190
Population Density: 8.5 persons per sq km



BÙTH THOLASTAIDH

Tolsta is a traditional crofting township, located 14 miles from the largest town on the Isle of Lewis. At the beginning of 2008 the local village shop was put on the open market and after several months with no buyer in sight Tolsta Community Council held a meeting to ascertain interest in a community buy-out of the shop. This meeting boasted one of the highest recorded attendance in the area and there was an overwhelming majority vote returned in favour of the buy-out and purchase of the business to operate it as a community-owned and operated enterprise.

When the proprietor eventually agreed to sell the premises to the local community nearly five hundred residents bought shares in the shop and this contributed towards its purchase. The community's contribution was matched with funding from LEADER Innse Gall and the local authority, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar.

Once refurbished Bùth Tholastaìdh (Tolsta Shop) quickly regained its role as being a vital link for the residents; many of whom are over 60 and at times, unable to travel to the nearest town. The community established a local cooperative to run the enterprise and it currently employs four trained staff members. Turnover in the Bùth is continuously increasing through the provision of everyday goods and those specially requested by the community including fresh bread, meat and milk daily. Local crafts made by members of the community are also displayed and sold and the Bùth aim to shortly expand their services to local baking and soups.

COTHROM RE-STORE 'RESTORING LIVES'

Cothrom Re-Store is a furniture and textile recycling training project based in Bornish, South Uist. This social enterprise provides the chance for training and development for a whole range of people in the area. Re-Store gives opportunities for all, from those who want to experience a trade and take the first steps into joinery or woodworking, to those who need a boost in their confidence to help them get back into community life. Tutor/Mentors work in small groups and 1-1 with trainees supporting those with special needs and delivering job coaching, training, work experience, personal development, job search activities and aftercare support.

The project restores and repairs items that would otherwise end up in landfill and provides affordable furniture for the local community. One Tutor/Mentor likens Re-Store to "recycling knowledge as well as recycling furniture", in that skills are passed on as well as fresh starts given and new talent developed.

Funded by Outer Hebrides LEADER and the Henry Smith Charity, the project provides mentoring for all trainees, in order to identify problems and smooth the progress in life transitions such as returning to work or further education and training. In the last year, the programme worked with 21 trainees from throughout the Southern Isles developing practical skills in restoring furniture and working as part of a team, leading to full-time employment for four of the participants.

This project has not only enabled people to progress their lives but to also become active and confident citizens within their community.

CEANGLAICHEAN CROITEARACHD - CROFTING CONNECTIONS

The innovative and successful 'Ceanglaichean Croitearachd - Crofting Connections' project teaches sustainable farming skills to young people and reconnects them with their crofting heritage. The flourishing project is jointly run by Soil Association Scotland and the Scottish Crofting Federation and has received funding from LEADER, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Heritage Lottery Fund and Scottish Natural Heritage. The project is not only taking place and being supported by LEADER in the Outer Hebrides but it is also available in and being supported by LEADER Local Action Groups in the Argyll and Islands, Cairngorms, Highlands, Orkney and Shetland areas.

In the Outer Hebrides over 400 young people from seven schools are participating in the project through a range of crofting related activities to learn about the connections between food, health and the environment. They learn practical crofting skills from experienced crofters, how to cook traditional recipes, and why crofting is still very relevant. Each school also maintains a food-growing garden to produce fresh seasonal fruit and vegetables for the canteen. In addition, pupils learn about the connections between crofting and their rich cultural heritage including Gaelic.

Sir E Scott School on the Isle of Harris have stated that *Ceanglaichean Croitearachd* "is an ideal way of giving pupils an understanding of the importance of crofting in the context of the history and culture of the island and also of its capacity to support people who wish to live on Harris andit gives direct 'hands on' real experiences for the pupils."

AREA SUMMARY

The LEADER Innse Gall (Outer Hebrides LEADER) programme provides support to all communities throughout the Outer Hebrides which is a group of islands of the north west of Scotland. It therefore strives to promote measures that address the peripherality of the area including information and communication technology initiatives and those that encourage an entrepreneurial spirit in communities whilst also stimulating employment opportunities to reduce the continuing decline in the resident population through assisting community and

social enterprises. The Gaelic language and culture are imperative to the economic and social well-being of the islands with Gaelic being widely spoken throughout and the Local Action Group have supported a variety of cultural, tourism and educational initiatives to assist and sustain this. LEADER in the Outer Hebrides, has been recognised as an innovative economic catalyst for sustainable community projects and continues to encourage and showcase communities working together to produce benefits for all.

RENFREWSHIRE

Building Sustainable Communities



Renfrewshire

LOCAL ACTION GROUP INFORMATION

EU Theme: Revitalising Rural Communities & Conservation of the Rural Environment
Budget: £630,000
Contact Person: Keren Ferguson
Address: Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1LL
Phone Number: 0044(0)141 840 3097
Email Address: keren.ferguson@renfrewshire.gsx.gov.uk
Website: www.renfrewshireleader.co.uk

AREA INFORMATION

Surface Area (km²): 201 sq km
Population: 24,283
Population Density: 120 persons per sq km



JUNIOR FIRE REACH PROGRAMME

Strathclyde Fire and Rescue (SFR) was awarded £14,600 to help deliver the Junior Fire Reach Programme to the rural community. The concept was 'to open doors of the local community fire station, or other community premises, and offer young people the opportunity of training with fire fighters'. The project enabled SFR to engage with and through a positive intervention programme create a greater understanding between young people and the fire fighters who work in their community.

Each junior fire reach course took around an hour and a half to complete with 2 sessions taking place each day. The young people are treated as members of an on-duty watch and issued with junior fire kits. The programme activities included fire fighter drill – observe and participate; hose running; hydrant to pump exercise; opportunity to use the hose reel; casualty rescue and certificate award.

Junior Fire reach is accepted as an effective tool in raising young people's awareness of many safety issues including anti-social behaviour. The project aims were; to engage with young people to assist them to be successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to society; to challenge fire related anti-social behaviour and promote the safety of young people; to reduce the number of deliberate fires set in rural communities; to reduce the environmental impact of fire including fire waste, reduction in smoke and fire gases into the atmosphere and reduce the visually destructive damage caused to communities by fire.

The programme was deemed successful and SFR will continue to deliver it on a yearly basis.

LANGBANK SWINGPARK REGENERATION (LSR)

In 2010, community facilities became eligible under LEADER funding and £13,280 was awarded to LSR to provide their community with a safe place to meet and play. Extensive community consultation with children, parents, child care providers, teachers and local residents had been carried out and the project was match funded by a number of various other organisations.

While the main focus of the park was to cater for children aged 5 – 12, LSR wanted to improve the existing play park to create a social area for all generations to enjoy in a natural, healthy environment, making it the heart of the community. The aim of the park was to improve children's health and well being, develop their physical skills and create an environment for social interaction, reducing the need for residents to leave the village to enjoy the outdoors with their families.

LSR's treasurer Julie Gilmour said, "The Park has exceeded all our expectations. There is a heart back in the community and a real buzz about the place. Older children are using the new facilities in much higher numbers than we anticipated. It has given them a safe, stimulating, natural environment to meet each other and we have found that many children are walking from the other side of the village to meet their friends and play in the park. People are also visiting from surrounding areas which brings diversity to the community."

LSR has managed to secure the maintenance of the equipment through an agreement with Renfrewshire Council.

DISCOVER CLYDE MUIRSHIEL WILDLIFE ON SCREEN

Clyde Muirshiel Park Authority (CMPA) was awarded £16,436 to help deliver this project. There is a special protection area for Hen Harriers in Clyde Muirshiel Park as they are an iconic species and are rare in the UK. Hen Harriers are one of the most threatened birds of prey due to persecution and habitat loss, there are only 600 breeding pairs left in the UK. Clyde Muirshiel Park can on average support 10 – 12 breeding pairs, which is around 2% of the national number.

The birds were late in arriving last year and the cameras could not be placed until they found a suitable nesting site. This also brought the extra risk of food being scarce by the time the chicks hatched. Eventually the Hen Harriers did nest and the project successfully provided live footage of 5 eggs being laid and looked after by the birds. Everyone was a little apprehensive watching the chicks grow as Hen Harriers are ground nesting birds and are vulnerable to disturbance and predation.

Installing high quality cameras and positioning them to look upon a pair of nesting Hen Harriers helped attract tourism in the area by creating 'live' wildlife viewing opportunities. The live pictures also help increase awareness and understanding for children and the wider community of local wildlife, habitats and the environment in general.

Soon after hatching the young were taken by foxes and the nest abandoned by the adult birds. It was a sad end to the project but only added to the understanding of how vulnerable this species is and how difficult it would be to increase their numbers.

AREA SUMMARY

Situated to the west of Glasgow conurbation, seventy five percent of Renfrewshire is rural. As such there is considerable pressure for increased public access and informal recreation. The main focus of Renfrewshire LEADER is the villages which have developed to reflect the industrial heritage and economy of the rural area.

The overarching aim of Renfrewshire's Development Strategy is to enrich the quality of life of the communities of rural Renfrewshire

by making full use of our diverse assets, be they social, economic or environmental, to build sustainable communities in our rural area.

Rural Renfrewshire offers an abundance of quality heritage assets, including conservation villages, EU Directive Natura 2000 sites, Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park, designed landscapes and a rich cultural heritage.

RURAL TAYSIDE

Solutions to Enable Communities



Rural Tayside

LOCAL ACTION GROUP INFORMATION

EU Theme: Revitalising Rural Communities & Progressive Rural Economies
Budget: £2.69M
Contact Person: Rita B Callander
Address: County Buildings, Market Street, Forfar, DD8 3WD
Phone Number: 0044(0)1307 473239
Email Address: callanderrb@angus.gov.uk
Website: www.ruraltaysideleader.com

AREA INFORMATION

Surface Area (km²): 788 sq km
Population: 149,471
Population Density: 189 persons per sq km



KIRKMICHAEL VILLAGE SHOP

Local residents in the small village of Kirkmichael, in rural Perthshire, set up the Strathardle Community Interest Company because they wanted to save their local village shop from closure and retain the post office and petrol pump. Their first step was to buy the business, refit the shop, extend the café and improve the outside of the building.

Rural Tayside LEADER, along with the local fund raising campaign and donations of in kind time, the Drumderg Windfarm Community Benefit Fund and Scotland UnLtd joined forces to provide the necessary funding to help Strathardle Trading CIC to undertake this first stage and help them to retain and develop the village shop as a viable trading outlet.

The shop has been running successfully since it was formally opened in July 2010 and provides seven local people with part time employment. It's not only somewhere for visitors and residents to buy groceries and petrol but it is a vital community hub providing information about the local area and a central meeting and drop off point, particularly in winter. The shop is also an outlet for local crafts. The café thrives on selling local home baking and regular coffee mornings. Loyalty cards, advance purchase scheme, online ordering, good stock control, and available internet access are all measures that have been introduced to help sustain this new social enterprise for the benefit of the community and visitors.

BEE HEALTH AND POLLINATION AWARENESS TAYSIDE

Scottish Bee Services Ltd is a newly established cooperative comprising commercial honey farmers and hobbyists. The Coop was set up as part of a local response to reversing the decline of the honey bee, which is vitally important to the economy and the environment in rural Tayside and has been recently decimated by a virulent bacterial infection - foul brood.

Rural Tayside LEADER, along with Perth & Kinross Council and Scottish Enterprise, has helped the Coop to provide a solution to combating foul brood and increasing awareness of the importance of the honey bee as a pollinator.

The Coop will develop a basic health and hygiene programme and install a state of the art sterilisation unit, the first of its kind in Scotland, for used bee equipment. The unit will be sited in premises funded under the Scottish Rural Development Programme's Rural Priorities - and be available to commercial operators and hobbyists throughout Tayside at a reasonable cost. In addition the Pollination Awareness Project will involve field trials, and seasonal site visits to participating farms led by crop specialist.

The visits will raise awareness amongst farmers and land managers of what mainstream crops and specific pollinator cover mixes are good for Honey Bees and will be complemented by a new data base to link producers with growers. These activities will help maintain the bee population which is vital to biodiversity, the environment and the local economy and support the producer network.

MURTON WILDLIFE TRUST - TEAROOM

Murton Wildlife Reserve is a seventy acre reclaimed sand and gravel quarry, two miles east of Forfar in Angus. The Murton Wildlife Trust has delivered a range of environmental improvements and works with a range of schools and volunteers.

The Trust was successful in their bid for ten year funding support from Inspiring Scotland and is in the early stages of establishing a sixteen acre community farm and extending the range of training and learning opportunities for young people at risk. As part of this wider venture, Rural Tayside LEADER and Community Energy Scotland contributed towards the construction of a new cabin style timber tea room which uses a range of renewable energy sources - wind turbine & heat pumps and has a small information point and retail corner selling goods made on site .

In addition Rural Tayside LEADER has provided funding to the Trust to develop the tearoom as a viable not for profit enterprise, to both generate a revenue stream and provide a training venue. The tearoom team not only run the tearoom but are involved in delivering an alternative curriculum of vocational catering and hospitality training to young people that will also give them an insight into running a business and an opportunity for hands on experience. This new training venture will complement the existing land based accredited training and extend the Trust's partnership working with the local authority education department and the Volunteer Centre Angus.

AREA SUMMARY

Rural Tayside comprises hill areas leading to the Grampian Mountains to the north, coastal areas on the Firth of Tay and North Sea to the south and east, farming areas in the middle and south and covers most of the two local authority area's of Angus and Perth & Kinross. The Rural Tayside LEADER area's countryside is valued for its distinctive environment, the attractiveness and diversity of its landscape and cultural heritage, and its small, close-knit rural communities. The area,

traditionally dependent on the primary sector- agriculture, forestry and food production and processing - has seen some growth in the service sector and tourism generally. Sixty percent of the population is of working age. There are higher than average levels of self employment, educational attainment and migrant workers in the area and lower than average unemployment as well as a strong voluntary sector.

SCOTTISH BORDERS

Encouraging Innovation in Rural Areas



Scottish Borders

LOCAL ACTION GROUP INFORMATION

EU Theme: Progressive Rural Economies & Revitalising Rural Communities
Budget: £3.26M
Contact Person: Maria Mackenzie
Address: Scottish Borders Council, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA
Phone Number: 0044(0)1835 826 661
Email Address: mmackenzie@scotborders.gov.uk
Website: www.scottishbordersleader.co.uk

AREA INFORMATION

Surface Area (km²): 4,719 sq km
Population: 83,740
Population Density: 18 persons per sq km



CREATIVE ARTS BUSINESS NETWORK

The creative arts business sector is an important contributor to the Scottish Borders economy as well as adding significant value to its cultural life. However the sector was fragile and diverse with significant growth potential. In order to support its growth an integrated system of support was created, in the form of the Creative Arts Business Network [CABN].

CABN supported and created links between more than 300 local small businesses through networking and training workshops designed in response to requests from creative businesses. Training topics included: approaching galleries, pricing work, making successful funding proposals and how to get published. CABN recognised that in order to remain competitive creative arts businesses need to be innovative and produce new work and new products. CABN encouraged that creativity and innovation by exposing the sector to new ideas from other regions.

The CABN project also had the wider remit of supporting new events and festivals, such as the Alchemy Film & Moving Image Festival. Alchemy was a direct result of new partnerships and aspirational thinking around high quality arts events which could grow audiences and provide a focus for debate and networking.

The CABN pilot ended in August 2010. Since then it has become a South of Scotland project, enabling the development of support across the Scottish Borders and Dumfries and Galloway. It has also expanded support to other sectors including music, performing arts and film, and has recruited advocates across arts sectors to further develop networks.

WORKING TOGETHER - ADVENTURE, ACTIVITY, CULTURE AND TRANQUILLITY

The Working Together – Adventure, Activity, Culture and Tranquillity project is managed by the Tweed Valley Tourist Consortium, a group of approximately 90 tourism-related businesses in the Tweed Valley. The aim of the Consortium is to develop the Tweed Valley as a recognised brand and to work towards the goal of the Tweed Valley being a world class activity centre by 2015.

The Working Together project has focused on (a) establishing quality and consistency of services offered by members and (b) joining up the efforts of local organisations to ensure local events, activities and promotions are in keeping with the Tweed Valley brand.

The strengths of the Tweed Valley are its mountain biking, walking, fishing and historic sites. One example of the project's many successes has been the creation of the 'Mountain Bike Hospitality Scheme' aimed at providing the best, dedicated service for mountain bikers in the country. Accommodation providers who become members of the scheme supply a range of bike and rider-specific benefits including safe, lockable storage for bikes, clothes-drying areas and access to high quality, high-carbohydrate food to fuel an exhilarating day's mountain biking. A new guide showcases how businesses can help mountain bikers make the most of their stay by providing detailed information on topics such as how to access information on mountain biking facilities available in the area.

As a result of the project the Tweed Valley is associated with quality products which consistently exceed customer expectations.

CHEVIOT FUTURES

As a result of more extreme weather events farmers and land managers are becoming more open to using new techniques which create greater resilience to climate change. The most common threats from climate change are flood, wind erosion, wildfire and drought. In order to adopt new techniques farmers need to be assured that they can be integrated into their land management systems without too much disruption coupled with the prospect of economic savings in the long term.

The Cheviot Futures project employs a Facilitator to work directly with farmers and landowners to; raise awareness of the predicted threats and opportunities of climate change in the Cheviot Hills and Tweed/Till catchments; take simple practical approaches to land management that focus on adapting to the effects of climate change; share best practice to support and where appropriate diversify rural businesses; work with farmers and land managers to develop and trial new sustainable solutions to the impacts of climate change which deliver wider community and economic resilience; support local businesses by helping them to become more resilient to the predicted climate changes; share experience and expertise across the border to ensure that best techniques are deployed and 'regulatory processes' are streamlined as far as possible.

Cheviot Futures is a joint project between Northumberland Uplands LEADER and Scottish Borders LEADER. It is led by Tweed Forum, an organisation which works across the Scotland / England border to protect the River Tweed and its tributaries.

AREA SUMMARY

The Scottish Borders is a distinct geographical, administrative and cultural entity to the south east of Scotland. The Scottish Borders represents much of the catchment area of the River Tweed and is bounded by coastline to the east. The LEADER Programme covers 99% of the Scottish Borders area.

The Scottish Borders strengths lie in the strong cultural traditions, local natural assets and the high quality of life. Residents exhibit much civic pride and community spirit most evident during events such as the Common Ridings (a centuries-old celebration of the riding of the town boundaries).

The barriers to economic growth include distance to markets, limited infrastructure and skills (supply and demand). Investment is required in business advice, research, skills development and infrastructure to support a more productive local economy. Traditional recreational activities like fishing and walking continue to draw in visitors and the growth areas are adventure sports, creative industries, food and drink.

SHETLAND

Ensuring Vitality and Well-being



Shetland

LOCAL ACTION GROUP INFORMATION

EU Theme: Revitalising Rural Communities & Progressive Rural Economy
Budget: £2.36M (£0.87M LEADER and £1.49M Convergence)
Contact Person: Sheila Tulloch
Address: Shetland LEADER Programme, Economic Development Unit, Shetland Islands Council, 3 North Ness Business Park, Lerwick, Shetland, ZE1 0LZ
Phone Number: 0044(0)1595 744940
Email Address: leader@shetland.gov.uk
Website: www.shetlandleader.org

AREA INFORMATION

Surface Area (km²): 1,478 sq km
Population: 22,210
Population Density: 15 persons per sq km



ESTABLISHING THE CENTRE FOR CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Global Yell Ltd is a social enterprise based on the island of Yell with the aim of training, educating and developing the skills of children and adults in the areas of music and textiles. With the help of LEADER they have established the Centre for Creative Industries which is successfully delivering a diverse programme of activities and events throughout Shetland. These include; weaving workshops with nursery pupils in Shetland Schools, "Singing Saturdays" for older primary age children, adult learning sewing classes, singing sessions for adults with learning difficulties and "Textile tours" to market Shetland craft products to visitors.

The Centre's core running costs for 3 years have been supported by LEADER funding of £41,787 and by Shetland Islands Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. Funding has been successfully sourced from elsewhere for particular activities and events. The Centre houses four state of the art computer aided looms that enable it to attract professional weavers to take up residencies and are also used by textiles students from Shetland College. Global Yell aims to become self sustaining as far as its core activities are concerned through fees for classes and workshops and through weavers and other artists hiring workspace or taking up residencies and developing products for the Centre to sell. The project's benefits are widespread: individuals acquire new skills and confidence and come together in new community groups and the local economy benefits from the development of new craft products and the promotion of Shetland craft producers.

SKELD AMENITIES BUILDING

Skeld Waterfront Trust is a community social enterprise established with the aim of regenerating the area around a former fishing station at Skeld, a rural community on the west side of Shetland, and developing the tourism potential of the area. The Trust has constructed and successfully manages a 53 berth marina, the only recognised caravan and camping park on Shetland's Westside and picnic areas.

In 2005 a community consultation together with feedback from campsite users identified a clear need for better services, including showers, accessible toilets, laundry, drying, kitchen and dining facilities and a chemical waste disposal unit for the increasing number of visitors. With the help of funding from LEADER Convergence (£13,048) and Shetland Islands Council the Trust built an Amenities Building incorporating all of these facilities on a site adjacent to the caravan park, campsite and marina.

The Amenities Building was opened in 2009 and immediately generated very positive feedback from visitors as well as producing additional income for the Trust. Local visitors also benefit from the provision of accessible public toilets particularly on the occasion of the annual Skeld Regatta hosted by the Trust which includes fishing, rowing and sailing competitions and attracts hundreds of people from all over Shetland.

With the Amenities Building fully operational the Trust's Waterfront Complex has now been awarded a 3 star Visit Scotland status and has helped to further the Trust's long term aim of developing Skeld as a tourist destination and thereby boosting the local economy.

SHETLAND RE-CYCLING CENTRE

Shetland Community Bike Project is a social enterprise and a registered charity which has provided supported employment opportunities for long term unemployed clients with barriers to employment (typically recovering from drug or alcohol issues) since 1999 in Lerwick. The business is based on recycling old bicycles for resale to the public at affordable prices, repairing bicycles for customers and also offering recycled bicycles for hire.

The Bike Project also delivers bike maintenance classes to local schools. In 2010 they moved to new and larger premises in a more prominent location which provided the opportunity to expand their existing activities and branch out into repairing prams and buggies with space for promoting other eco products such as locally recycled glass paving and compost bins.

The funding of £16,978 (47.5% of approved costs over 2 years) from LEADER Convergence, matched with an equal contribution from the Shetland Alcohol and Drugs Partnership, has enabled the Bike Project to employ a part time project worker to help to expand the project, increase the Centre's turnover and develop a "One stop shop" for the promotion of carbon reduction initiatives in Shetland in partnership with other local agencies.

This project benefits: clients by providing them with new skills and helping them into employment, the local economy by moving clients from being a drain on society to making a positive contribution, the wider public by providing better and more coordinated access to information on reducing energy costs, increasing local food production and recycling.

AREA SUMMARY

Shetland comprises over 100 islands, 15 of which are inhabited and stretches around 100 miles from north to south. Aberdeen, the Scottish landfall for most Shetland services, is 211 miles (338km) away, not much closer than Bergen in Norway (225 miles, 360km) or Torshavn in the Faroe Islands (228 miles, 365km). The only town is Lerwick where a third of the islands' population live. The local economy is generally prosperous with unemployment rarely above 2.5% but is disadvantaged by remoteness from markets combined with high fuel and transport

costs. The outlying areas are considered fragile. Fisheries is the biggest industry with agriculture, tourism and knitwear well behind. North Sea oil has boosted the islands' economy over the past 4 decades and renewable energy is becoming increasingly significant. Shetland's natural history, geology, archaeology, vibrant music scene and unique cultural heritage attract an increasing number of visitors from around the world.

SOUTH LANARKSHIRE

Working Towards Sustainable Rural Communities



South Lanarkshire

LOCAL ACTION GROUP INFORMATION

EU Theme: Revitalising Rural Communities & Progressive Rural Economies
Budget: £1.98M
Contact Person: Chris Parkin
Address: 30 Hope Street, Lanark, ML11 7NE
Phone Number: 0044(0)1555 665 064
Email Address: chris@ruraldevtrust.co.uk
Website: www.southlanarkshireleader.com

AREA INFORMATION

Surface Area (km²): 1,576 sq km
Population: 77,056
Population Density: 48.89 persons per sq km



INCLUSION THROUGH ENTERPRISE

Clydesdale Community Initiatives [CCI] is a social enterprise company which has been moving from grant dependency to independent commercial trading. The organisation is both an innovative social work service and a commercial landscaping enterprise. Adults with special support needs are offered 'real work' through which they develop independence, vocational skills, social skills, self confidence and self esteem. Individuals and groups participate in commercial landscaping, woodwork and horticulture projects with an increased sense of the value of their work. There are also tangible community and environmental benefits by engaging the participants within the communities in which they live through delivering local priority projects.

In 2009 CCI were the beneficiary of a grant of £39,000 from LEADER for a two year project that aimed to help develop commercial activity. This has enabled it to successfully increase commercial income by 300% from £35,000 to £105,000. During this period CCI has been trading in landscaping, woodcraft and consultancy services. The challenge is now to deliver the products and projects to a commercial standard while continuing to fulfil their mission as a person centred social inclusion organisation. The organisation is still at an early stage of development and trading income is not yet covering the full operating costs of the business. The commercial growth has not been matched by public sector social care income despite a consistent increase in the amount and quality of the training and personal development programmes offered to people with complex support needs.

REVIVING THE ORCHARDS OF THE CLYDE VALLEY

Orchards are an important part of the areas local heritage and in their heyday in the 19th century the Clyde Valley was Scotland's leading commercial fruit producing area. Since then, the markets for local fruit have slowly declined and today some orchards are in danger of being lost. However the orchards are an important feature of the local landscape and provide an important resource at a time when local produce is starting to be valued by consumers.

The Project is led by the Rural Development Trust and is a partnership involving the Clyde Valley Orchard Group [CVOG] and Landscape Partnership Initiative. LEADER has awarded £19,000 to the project which is programmed to run to the end of 2011, after which activity will be mainstreamed into the Landscape Partnership.

This project is focusing on the identification of business opportunities, given the orchards are not viable as independent commercial businesses and there are capacity and production issues. It is also developing support for orchard restoration, seeking opportunities for collaboration on harvesting and management, developing the capacity and skills of the Orchard Group and raising local awareness through a Fruit Day showcase event including stalls selling fruit produce, cider making demonstrations, and children's games and activities. Over 1500 visitors attended the first event in October 2010. The project is also using specialist consultants to establish a framework within which individual projects can be developed and linked to the Heritage Lottery funded Landscape Partnership Initiative.

NEW BEGINNINGS CLYDESDALE

This project aims to support homeless people who find themselves in need, hardship or distress through distributing 'Home Starter' and 'Emergency Accommodation' packs to rural residents moving into emergency accommodation or to those who have recently been re-housed by the Council.

It was supported through the Developing Local Communities Fund [DLCF], a key component of South Lanarkshire's scheme based approach, which aims to make it easier for communities to access small scale support for projects that improve the quality of rural life and economic prosperity of the area. The Fund is a partnership of public, renewable energy community benefit and private sector money. Depending on the nature and location of projects, financing is drawn from the most relevant funding source, in this case LEADER and UK Steel Enterprise Ltd.

The DLCF grant of £3,566 was used to refurbish the charity's office and storage facility based in a former cemetery lodge house declared surplus to the local authorities' requirements. It has provided the charity's 10 female volunteers with a safe and efficient operational base and given the organisation the scope to develop linkages with the local authority homeless unit, social work department, social housing associations and local Womens' Aid, thereby assisting a wider range of referrals. The group are now planning to expand the range of their services to include providing recycled furniture and appliances.

AREA SUMMARY

Rural South Lanarkshire is a diverse rural area where agricultural and former mining communities exist side by side. Large parts of the rural area appear very attractive, but there is a great deal of hidden disadvantage. The economic structure has changed in recent years and many people now live in the area without being part of the rural economy. Isolation from services, job opportunities and activities are all issues that are exacerbated by the lack of public transport. The

area has a dispersed settlement pattern and is characterised by small villages [over 50] with populations below 3000. It has a rich natural, cultural and built heritage, prominent within which are the Southern Uplands, the upper River Clyde and one of Scotland's four UNESCO World Heritage Sites—New Lanark. The area also makes an enormous contribution to Scotland's renewable energy targets through being home to a number of large wind-farms.

TYNE ESK

Supporting Opportunities for Rural Communities



Tyne Esk

LOCAL ACTION GROUP INFORMATION

EU Theme: Revitalising Rural Communities & Progressive Rural Economies
Budget: £3.14M
Contact Person: Kat Purser
Address: Economic Development, East Lothian Council, John Muir House, Haddington, East Lothian, EH41 3HA
Phone Number: 0044(0)1620 827 101
Email Address: kpurser@eastlothian.gov.uk
Website: www.tyneesk.co.uk

AREA INFORMATION

Surface Area (km²): 1,002 sq km
Population: 68,528
Population Density: 68.3 persons per sq km



RENEWAL AND UPGRADE OF AUDIO VISUAL SYSTEM - THE FLAG HERITAGE CENTRE

The East Lothian village of Athelstaneford is the birthplace of Scotland's flag, the St Andrew's Cross or Saltire. The Flag Heritage Trust's main activities are to maintain and enhance the Flag Heritage Centre and Saltire Memorial at Athelstaneford, and to widen accessibility to and raise awareness of this unique and historic site.

The Flag Heritage Centre in Athelstaneford occupies a restored 16th century lectern doocot, located adjacent to the Parish Church. The Heritage Centre is open for seven months of the year (April to October inclusive), and from 9.00 till 18.00 each day. Admission to the centre is free. On entering the Heritage Centre, visitors trigger an audio-visual presentation about the origins of the flag. The presentation culminates in the St Andrew's Cross suddenly and dramatically appearing high above the visitors (using lighting and theatrical screens). The audio visual system, which was designed and installed in 1996/97, was no longer fit for purpose and was starting to fail.

LEADER funding enabled the audio visual system to be replaced using the latest technology. This has helped attract a wider audience and boosted overall visitor numbers to the Heritage Centre, from people living close by, day trippers from Edinburgh and the Lothians and overseas tourists. It particularly helps visitors from Europe by making the presentation available in a selection of languages, thereby enhancing their experience. The new system also caters for visitors with impaired hearing, making the centre more accessible to all.

ONLINE GRANTS DATABASE

Advice on external funding solutions is a specialist service often sought by community groups, businesses and council departments. The global economic downturn has had a negative impact on the amount of money available from statutory organisations, Trusts and Foundations. This has resulted in increased competition between community and voluntary groups over smaller pots of money.

The online database was a joint initiative between East Lothian, Midlothian and West Lothian Councils. In a time of restricted budgets and resources the councils were looking for innovative ways to provide funding advice in a more cost effective manner to maximise external funding and opportunities for projects. By forming a partnership, LEADER funding was secured to procure an online grant database to enhance existing funding advice and guidance.

There were two essential elements to the online database. The first was an outward facing system that is available to anyone in the areas, but especially useful for community and voluntary groups. This system enables these groups to search for up-to-date information on international, national, regional and local grants suitable for funding their projects. A range of guidance information and details of where to get support is available. The second online system is a 'back office' database for council officers and provides more detailed information on funding opportunities. This allows for wider and more detailed searches.

The project has enhanced community capacity in the three Lothian areas with just under 800 users, and supporting groups to find £89,675 worth of grants.

CRANSTOUN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Cranstoun Church has been increasingly active in the community over the past five years. Cranstoun Church was determined to extend its commitment to the community to cater for the needs of a broader range of people, but it was inhibited by the limitations in its own facilities. The project converted the church into a multi-purpose facility and sought to appoint a Community Development Officer to work in partnership with the church, in the community, to improve the quality of life for the neediest and provide appropriate support and activities in its building.

The church had an outside toilet that was replaced by an internal toilet that is in keeping with current-day expectations and easily accessed by the disabled. The new toilet displaced the existing vestry and a new vestry/community room was built. This provides a small private space where all in the community can consult the Minister, where small meetings can be held and where brides can be received.

The body of the church was upgraded to provide a warm, bright and flexible space for both services (which will continue to be held) and community activities. By replacing pews with individual seating, and by upgrading sound, heating and lighting, Cranstoun Church now has the facilities to extend its community programme. The Community Development Officer supports activities such as social activities for older persons; children's film club; carers support group; dementia day care; local access to council services; and counselling services.

AREA SUMMARY

The Tyne Esk LAG area lies to the east and south of the City of Edinburgh and covers two separate Local Authority areas: Midlothian and East Lothian. Although separate the combined areas have many common features and issues. The combined area covers a magnificent coastline with golden beaches and spectacular cliffs; rolling countryside and the

high tops of the Pentland and Lammermuir Hills; award-winning tourist attractions; the world's finest selection of links golf courses; Europe's longest and most challenging artificial ski slope; and many charming towns and villages. The Tyne Esk area combines the best of Scotland in miniature.

WEST LOTHIAN

Delivering Support for Rural Development



West Lothian

LOCAL ACTION GROUP INFORMATION

EU Theme: Building Rural Community Capacity & Revitalising Rural Communities
Budget: £1.4M
Contact Person: Avril Wallace
Address: Economic Development, Community Planning & Regeneration, West Lothian Council, The Enterprise Centre, Almondvale Boulevard, Livingston, EH54 6QP
Phone Number: 0044(0)1506 777916
Email Address: avril.wallace@westlothian.gov.uk
Website: www.leaderwl.co.uk

AREA INFORMATION

Surface Area (km²): 377 sq km
Population: 57,174
Population Density: 151 persons per sq km



ARMADALE UNIQUE YOUTH SPACE

The project aims to revitalise the local community by providing a 'hub' that young people will want to attend. A Youth Space Coordinator with experience in engaging young people and supporting them was employed to encourage activities including after school homework clubs, dance classes, Kids for Kids UK film festival, as well as workshops and educational sessions e.g. legal or political issues and their solutions and health sessions on reducing access to alcohol and smoking. Youth groups include young dads and Access 2employment targeting unemployed young people aged 16-25.

A local youth survey had provided comments such as; "We hang about the streets because there is nowhere else to go"; The adults group saw all young people as being "antisocial and disruptive"; "There is a lack of local activities and places to go at night, especially for people aged 13 – 17"

Phase one of this project was to find and refurbish a building in a central location where the young people not only felt safe but wanted to attend. Ten local young people participated in team building and citizenship courses enabling them to become fully involved in decision-making and form an action group (committee) to run the youth space. They organised and hosted an official opening for over 50 people including key partners and have supported the creation of a letting policy. They were also involved in redesigning an alternative curriculum to include training in bereavement and sexual health and confidently presented their achievements at the AGM.

ECCLESMACHAN AND UPHALL PATHS IMPROVEMENT

The project aimed to meet the need for safe and accessible walking routes in the local walks between Binny Craig & Uphall, Longmuir and Ecclesmachan areas enhancing the current core path plan and providing important linkage to longer East/West and North/South paths in the region. Binny Craig is a crag and tail rock formation left during the Ice Age within the Bathgate Hills area which can be seen for some miles and provides a viewpoint for the surrounding countryside. The project aimed to re-instate these very overgrown and deteriorated paths to a level that will encourage greater use.

This project will revitalise local communities and encourage more walkers from both the local surrounding area and visitors to it by improving accessibility. This will enhance the rural economy as local businesses may benefit from walkers from outside the area purchasing from the local shops and visiting other attractions during their visit. Paths prevent erosion of the environment and through use of local stone etc; the conservation of the rural environment has been maintained. This project also delivered some hands-on experience to volunteers, especially young unemployed, some of whom are now engaging in college courses in horticultural maintenance due to their participation of the reconstruction of these paths.

The volunteers will continue to maintain the paths and it is the applicants' intention to apply for future funding to extend and develop this excellent pathway with a link to Longmuirhall and possibly Beecraigs resulting from this LEADER funded initiative.

COUNTRY PARKS EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME

The project aims to make a practical and significant impact on the challenge of tackling youth unemployment, combining the development of a new community/tourism facility and improved access/ infrastructure with thirty job training opportunities based on rural land-based skills. The project made improvements to the infrastructure and encourages access of West Lothian's three Country Parks - Beecraigs, Polkemmet and Almondvale & Calderwood.

Trainees ranging from 18 -24yrs were given training courses including weed-killing, chain saw use, fencing, turfing, gate installation, forestry, installation of park, driving and gaining transferable vocational skills certification where possible. The trainees took part in a rotational set of activities which then determined if they had an aptitude or skill which could be developed.

Employability support was provided for a half day per week to assist in progressing trainees towards sustainable employment. Financial benefit advice was made available, if required, to assist with the transition from benefits to full time paid employment. Beneficiaries were referred to other services such as ABE, (Adult Basic Education) as required to increase their employability chances.

Results include; 4 at college completed their SVQ 3 fencing; 3 inducted into the construction team; 1 trained on 360 mini digger; 2 trained on front tipping dumpers and sit on road rollers; 1 HGV and 2 trained drivers looking at self employment; 3 garden maintenance self employment. All gained CITB certificates, sat and passed their CSCS construction Skills training tests as well as Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland Health & Safety certificates.

AREA SUMMARY

The area takes the form of a contiguous crescent shaped area around the major urban settlements of the West Lothian Council area. All settlements of over 10,000 population are excluded, namely Linlithgow, Bathgate, Broxburn, Livingston and Whitburn. The vast majority of the area is classified as either accessible rural or accessible small towns using the Scottish Government typology.

The character of the countryside varies from the high quality agricultural land in the North East to the higher and less productive land in the South and West of the area. Common challenges across the rural area include the former dependence on mining and other forms of heavy industry, the effects of population growth and demographic change and the influence of the large urban and economic centre to the East.

LEADER CONTACTS AT A GLANCE

Aberdeenshire	www.aberdeenshireleader.org
Argyll and the Islands	www.argyllandtheislandsleader.org.uk
Ayrshire	www.ayrshire-leader.com
Cairngorms	www.cairngorms-leader.org
Dumfries & Galloway	www.dgleader.co.uk
East Renfrewshire	www.eastrenfrewshireleader.co.uk
Fife	www.leaderinfife.org
Forth Valley & Lomond	www.fvl.org.uk
Highland	www.highlandleader.com
Kelvin Valley	www.kelvinvalleyleader.org.uk
Moray	www.morayleader.org.uk
Orkney Islands	www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/LEADER
Outer Hebrides	www.outerhebridesleader.co.uk
Renfrewshire	www.renfrewshireleader.co.uk
Rural Tayside	www.ruraltaysideleader.com
Scottish Borders	www.scottishbordersleader.co.uk
Shetland	www.shetlandleader.org
South Lanarkshire	www.southlanarkshireleader.com
Tyne Esk	www.tyneesk.co.uk
West Lothian	www.leaderwl.co.uk



Guide produced by Dumfries & Galloway LEADER Programme on behalf of all Scottish LEADER areas, with kind support from the Scottish Government.

Printed August 2011.

