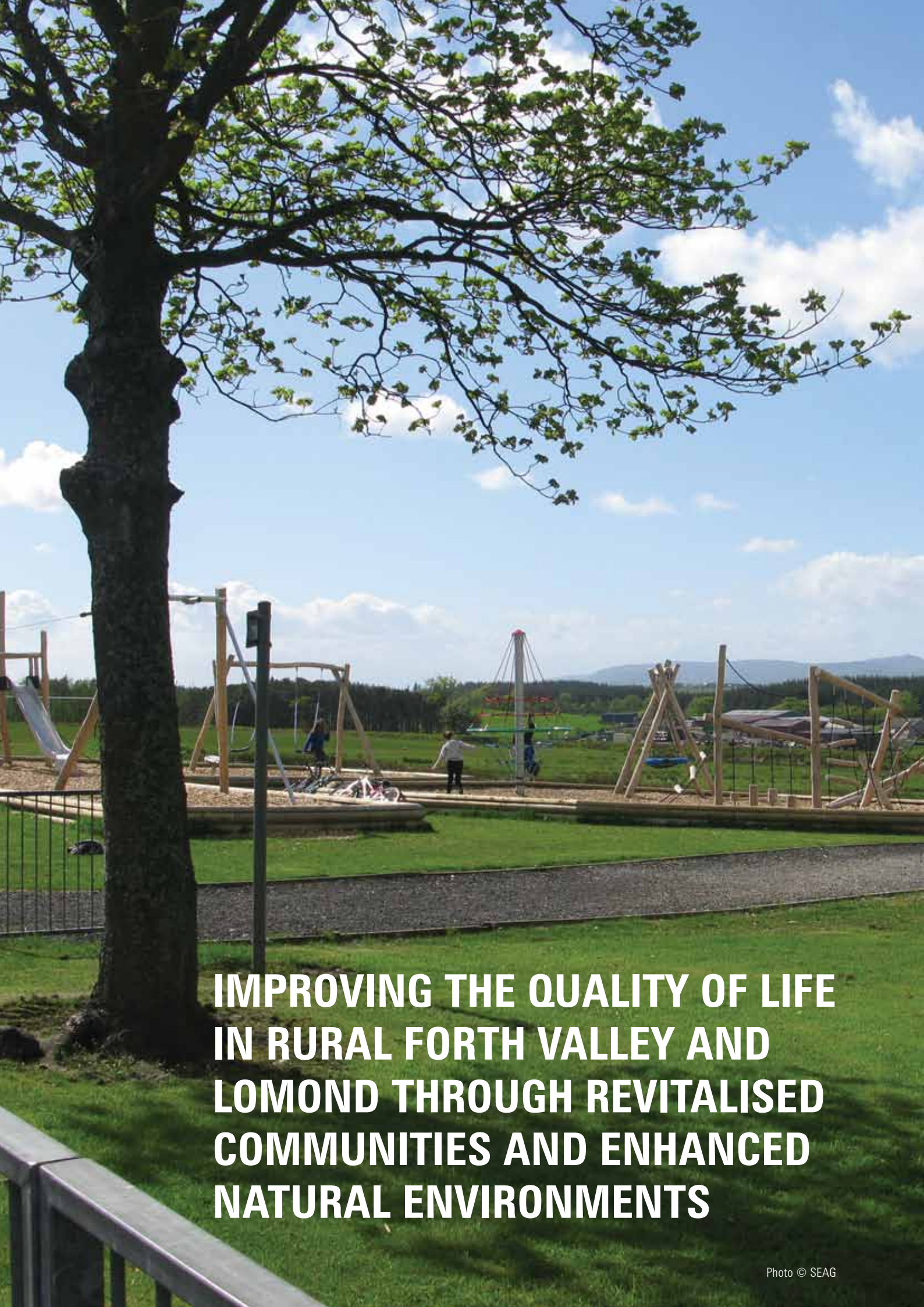
CELEBRATING 100 PROJECTS

FROM THE FORTH VALLEY AND

LOMOND LEADER PROGRAMME

2007-2013



IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN RURAL FORTH VALLEY AND LOMOND THROUGH REVITALISED COMMUNITIES AND ENHANCED NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS

Photo © SEAG

FOREWORD

I joined Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER Local Action Group during the last programme, when it only covered rural Stirling and West Dunbartonshire, and continued as Vice Chair and the Chair for this programme. For this LEADER programme the area expanded to take in rural Falkirk, rural Clackmannanshire and part of West Dunbartonshire more than doubling the population we covered. The escalation in LEADER coverage drove us to expand the Local Action Group (LAG) including many more people who had not had LEADER coverage before. The transition process was ultimately successful and the LAG became a knowledgeable sounding board for applications to LEADER, approving over £3m worth of projects in the area.

This transition from a small LEADER area to a much larger and more varied rural area would not have been nearly as successful without the leadership and friendly manner of Dereck Fowles, Chair of Rural Stirling LEADER and first Chair of Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER. Sadly, Dereck passed away in November 2013 at the rip old age of 86, eleven of those years having been spent supporting and leading us in LEADER. Dereck was a friendly and welcoming Chair with a quick wit that was always used to put people at ease. Always very generous with his time and absolutely committed to the improvement of the lives of people living in rural Scotland, Dereck, more than any other single person, helped make this LEADER programme a success and he will be sorely missed in the Forth Valley and Lomond area and in rural Scotland. Dereck was awarded an MBE for his work with LEADER in the 2010 Honours List.

Dereck understood more than anyone the importance of the team and the LAG has benefited from the time and skills of a great number of people over the last seven years. A list of all those who have contributed towards the working of the LAG is below and I thank them all for their efforts. I would also give my thanks to Stirling Council who have acted as Lead Partner throughout the two programmes, who have supported us in many ways and have accepted the ever-more-frequent changes in the rules governing LEADER with good grace and understanding.

Peter Sunderland
Chair Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

FORTH VALLEY AND LOMOND LEADER MEMBERS

Frank Beattie
Mick Stewart
Malcolm McArdle
Stuart Davies
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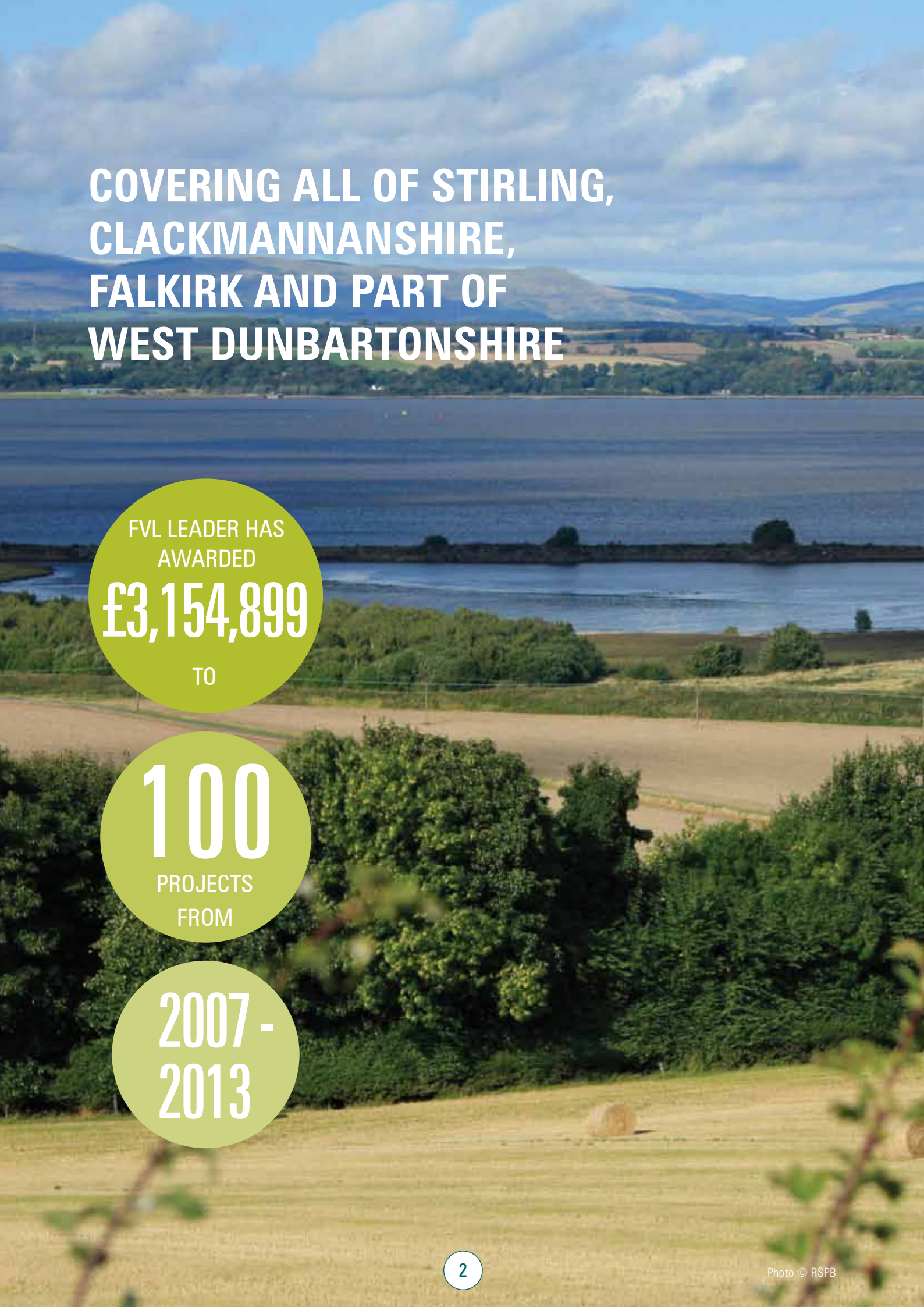

COVERING ALL OF STIRLING, CLACKMANNANSHIRE, FALKIRK AND PART OF WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE

FVL LEADER HAS AWARDED

£3,154,899

TO

100

PROJECTS FROM

2007 - 2013

Photo © RSPB

INTRODUCTION

The Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER (FVL LEADER) funding programme ran from 2007 to 2013 and invested over £3m in projects to develop the rural economy over this time. There were 20 LEADER areas covering all of rural Scotland and FVL LEADER covered all of Stirling, Clackmannanshire, Falkirk and part of West Dunbartonshire not including the urban areas of Stirling, Alloa, Falkirk, Stenhousemuir, Grangemouth, Polmont and Bo'ness.

LEADER is an EU-wide, funding programme that is founded upon a bottom up approach that embraces local decision making. This approach ensures that all projects have community buy-in and that projects are more likely to be sustainable.

FVL LEADER awarded a total of £3,154,899 to over 100 projects that met the aims of the Development Strategy. Each project in this publication has the aims appropriate to that project highlighted allowing readers to see how FVL LEADER met the aims set out at the start of the programme. The aims in the Development Strategy are as follows:

REVITALISING COMMUNITIES

- Ensuring sustainable local services
- Developing community owned assets
- Supporting sustainable local enterprise
- Celebrating Forth Valley and Lomond's culture
- Sensitively developing the built environment

CONSERVATION OF THE RURAL ENVIRONMENT

- Connecting businesses and communities to natural assets
- Environmental improvements
- Ensuring sensitive access for all
- Understanding Forth Valley and Lomond's natural heritage

FVL LEADER has invested in a diverse range of projects including micro-hydro schemes, community action planning and community led craft shops. FLV LEADER has contributed towards regional projects such as Forth Invasive Non-native Species, which involved 4 separate LEADER areas and a red squirrel conservation project covering the whole national park. There have also been a number of landscape wide projects wholly within this LEADER area such as the Historic Kirkyards Project in Clackmannanshire's hillfoots and the Communities Along the Carron projects in Falkirk. We are also very proud of a grant scheme we have run in the last half of this LEADER programme called the Sustainable Tourism Business Grant Scheme, which was targeted at businesses applying in collaboration with community groups to invest in their tourism business while delivering community benefits. This grant scheme has resulted in bike parks being built for communities, cafes being opened using local produce and allowing community meetings to take place and in space being created for sporting events.

This booklet showcases every project supported by FVL LEADER since it was formed up until December 2013 when 'Country Mumkins', 'The Unique Company, 'Intrepid Scotland', 'Lochend Chalets Ltd', 'Oak Tree Inn', 'Black Loch Fishery' and the 'Callander Youth Project' were all awarded funding too late to be included in this publication. Collectively these projects demonstrate how relatively small amounts of money being injected into rural communities can make a big difference to the quality of lives of people living or visiting these communities.

Forth Valley and Lomond is an area of contrasts, which presents many opportunities from a rural development perspective. With support from LEADER we built local capacity to grasp these opportunities and help realise our vision of the area as an exemplar for rural development in Scotland building genuinely sustainable communities.

We helped make Forth Valley and Lomond the first choice for people to live, work and visit – and we were leaders in sustainable development – ensuring that economic, social and environmental progress was for the long term.

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01

REAL JOBS FALKIRK **MUIRAVONSIDE PROJECT**

APPLICANT

The Action Group

www.actiongroup.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER **£1,150**

£1,150 Falkirk Council

PROJECT AIMS

- Recruit support workers to manage the café and the young volunteers.
- Provide a training facility for young people with support needs.
- Enable the young people to travel to the café.
- Maintain the café as a trading venue.
- Open the café during the school holiday weekdays, as a pilot to see how viable the café is at these busier times.

PROJECT DETAIL

Over the years the café facility in Muiravonside Country Park had gained a reputation for not being open during peak holiday times due to funding cuts. The Action Group sought funding from FVL LEADER to pay support workers to manage the facility during holiday periods while training young people with special educational needs to learn skills associated with running a café.

This project had the twin aims of upskilling young people to better enable them to get a job after leaving school and piloting the opening of the café during holiday periods to assess whether it could be a viable business.

LESSONS LEARNED

School holidays result in greater usage of the Muiravonside facilities as families take advantage of the outdoor activities in the Park and the food and refreshments available at the Café. The funding allows the provision of sufficient support to enable the young trainees to maximize their training schedules under the direction of the Café Manager.

This increased activity also creates greater awareness of the Project and the Park's attractions and is an invaluable marketing tool in producing enhanced footfall. As the Project becomes better established and its focus more widely known it is becoming a destination for organisations and carers managing others with disabilities and learning difficulties and there is regular and growing business from these sources.

02 THE BROCH CAFÉ AND GALLERY

APPLICANT

Arthur & Susan Crammon

www.fvl.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£10,000

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£30,000

Own resources

PROJECT AIMS

- Develop and build a building serving hot & cold refreshments
- Develop community based ideas and meetings.
- Incorporate within the building and surrounding area, close circuit TV to establish wildlife and animal viewing.

PROJECT DETAIL

This application came to LEADER through the Sustainable Tourism Business Grant Scheme and was primarily to help fund the development of a cafe on a cycle path in Strathyre.

The community benefit elements of this project were primarily that the cafe space would be available to use by community groups the produce used by the cafe would be locally sourced and there would be opportunities for local people to sell products such as art in the cafe. In addition, the toilets will be open for public use during open hours – a valuable community service, especially as the location is the site of previously closed down public toilets.

Photos © Arthur Crammon

03

BALLOCH RAIL: PLANNING STAGE

APPLICANT

Balloch and Loch Lomond Railway Co. Ltd.

www.fvl.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER **£6,705**

£6,705 Own resources

PROJECT AIMS

- Appoint consultants to develop a planning application for a narrow gauge railway line linking Balloch train station with Lomond Shores retail outlet.
- Engage with the community to consult on their opinions on the presence of a narrow gauge railway in the centre of Balloch.
- Gain planning permission for the development of the railway line.

PROJECT DETAIL

This project was the first step in a long term plan to build a brand new railway line going from Balloch railway station to Lomond Shoresretail outlet. The build phase of the project is expected to be very expensive and require a lot of planning so the applicant sought to commission consultants to undertake the necessary planning work in order to secure planning permission. It was felt that this was a necessary step before fundraising for the build phase could take place. This project is funded through the Sustainable Tourism Business Grant Scheme.

LESSONS LEARNED

Looking for funding is a long and tortuous journey, being let down by failed promises, having many rejections in the application forms you have so painstakingly completed and having employed experts whose subsequent funding applications failed.

Do as much as you can YOURSELF and realise that it is a long learning curve, have infinite patience and good colleagues to assist you.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

BARRWOOD
POOL CONVERSION

APPLICANT

The Barrwood Trust

www.barrwood.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£5,600 — Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£10,000 — Awards for All

£5,000 — Scottish Community Foundation

£4,480 — Own resources

£2,500 — Robertson Trust

£800 — Private donation

PROJECT AIMS

- Convert a disused and derelict outdoor swimming pool into a novel, constructed and almost unique caving activity.
- Replace what had been, years ago, a useful training facility by utilising the site to build another innovative and useful facility.
- Bury a series of varying diameter sewer type pipelines connected through built chambers in the base of and in ground adjacent to the disused swimming pool.
- Install escape hatches via a number of manholes to each chamber and pipe track.
- Provide many young people with a basic introduction to the sport of caving.
- Make the campsite more attractive to visiting groups, thus increasing income.

PROJECT DETAIL

Barrwood has been used as a camp and training ground for Scouts since 1922. An outdoor swimming pool was built between 1929 and 1932, which was used without incident until scout rules changed requiring two lifeguards to be on duty at any time youth members might be in the water. Barrwood Trust were unable to guarantee this condition and the pool was taken out of use, drained and fenced for safety reasons.

It became badly overgrown and derelict prompting the applicant to look for funds to use the facility for a different purpose. It was decided to partially fill in the pool with pipes to create a caving facility for young people as an introduction to the sport.

LESSONS LEARNED

It is best to anticipate longer build times than the optimistic timescales that contractors state.

10% contingency was not fully adequate.

Photos © The Barrwood Trust

05

COMPOSTING TOILET PROJECT

APPLICANT

The Barwood Trust

www.barrwood.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER **£19,750**

£10,000 Stafford Trust

£10,000 Awards for All

£6,500 Robertson Trust

£5,950 Barrwood Trust

£5,000 Clackmannanshire and Stirling Environment Trust

£1,000 Earlsburn Community Windfarm Trust

PROJECT AIMS

- Replace an outdated toilet system with a modern, hygienic alternative composting toilet that is both user and eco friendly.
- Utilise the resulting pathogen free compost as a fertiliser to support the propagation of native Caledonian pine and broadleaf trees on the estate.
- Two solar panel arrangements will be erected on pylons to provide power for lighting and ventilation.
- Two new sections of footpaths will be constructed to provide disabled access.

PROJECT DETAIL

The Barrwood Scout Campsite had been in use since the 1920s and was gifted to the trust in 1946 for use by Scout groups. Over the last six years the use of the site has increased very significantly from 1500 camp nights in 2006 to 4500 in 2010 with 890 day visitors rising to 2700.

Toilet provision for these visitors comprised an open pit latrine over which was situated a wooden Thunderbox or sedan chair type power for structure. When the pit was near full the box would be moved to a newly dug fresh pit and the old one filled in with earth.

This system became increasingly unacceptable and the Trust sought funds to pay for a new composting toilet and disabled access paths on its approach.

LESSONS LEARNED

It is prudent to have a 10% retention to ensure completion.

Photos © The Barrwood Trust

BESPOKE EVENTS CO-ORDINATOR

APPLICANT

Bespoke Community Development CIC

www.bespokefalkirk.co.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

- £12,239 — Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER
- £10,000 — BIG Lottery Fund
- £1,015 — Office space (In-kind)
- £581 — Own resources
- £643 — Volunteer time (In-kind)

PROJECT AIMS

- Employ a part time events co-ordinator to develop an annual events calendar including volunteering events, social/fun events and competitive/sporting event.
- Coordinate with schools to run a programme of school events and in particular to target schools or groups within schools that are not currently engaged with physical activity.
- Provide support and assistance to other organisations where Bespoke is not the lead partner.
- Promote events through the Bespoke web site, social media, leaflets and produce a monthly e-newsletter.

PROJECT DETAIL

Callendar Estate had spent years building many kilometres of paths for walking and cycling and this project came about through a local desire to organise more events to get people using these paths. The applicant was a new organisation who would work in partnership with Callendar Estate to pilot a calendar of events and work in particular with local schools and groups to encourage more people to use the facilities in rural Falkirk.

The project also planned to evaluate whether income generated from Events could fund the part-time post in the future.

LESSONS LEARNED

This project relies on volunteer effort, some of whom are highly skilled. It's best not to underestimate the potential activity volunteers can carry out.

Photos © Bespoke Events

07

ABERFOYLE
BIKE SKILLS AREA

APPLICANT

Bike Trossachs

www.biketrossachs.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER **£25,850**

£25,000 Legacy 2014 Active Places Fund

Own resources **£4,350**

PROJECT AIMS

- Create a safe, designed mountain bike facility close to the village where young people in particular, but people of all ages, can develop their bike skills to better prepare them for exploring the great bike trails in the forests and hills around Aberfoyle.
- Provide an additional attraction for visitors to the area.

PROJECT DETAIL

To build around 700 metres of trail in a Bike Park setting adjacent to the play park; comprised of a range of technical features that will provide enjoyment and development opportunities for young people, from beginners to expert.

It will build on the Bikeability training provided at local Primary Schools, providing an off-road venue to develop bike skills to a higher level. In bike jargon it will provide jumps, table-tops, drop-offs, rollovers, skinnies, rock gardens and other challenges.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

RING OF BREADALBANE **EXPLORER**

APPLICANT

Breadalbane Tourism Cooperative Ltd

www.facebook.com/breadalbaneexplorer

CONTRIBUTIONS

£11,000 — Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£11,000 — Scottish Enterprise

£11,000 — Rural Tayside LEADER

£9,000 — Breadalbane Tourism Co-operative

£5,000 — Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority

£4,250 — Perth and Kinross Council

£3,250 — TACTRAN

£2,500 — Stirling Council

PROJECT AIMS

- Provide a hop on / hop off bus transport service across Breadalbane.
- Ensure the service is as accessible as possible by having one bus travel clockwise and one anti-clockwise 4 days per week.
- Enable bikes to be carried by the bus allowing bike riders to travel much further distances.

PROJECT DETAIL

The Ring of Breadalbane bus service follows on from a pilot project held the previous year. A thorough evaluation was carried out following the pilot project, which found that users of the service were predominantly local (52%) but that 42% were staying visitors and that Customer satisfaction was very high with 73% describing the service as "excellent" and 24% as "good".

This project was a development of the pilot by extending the operation of the service from June till late October, whereas the pilot operated from July to September, increasing marketing and involving more businesses in the project.

LESSONS LEARNED

During this project, more than 2100 people used the bus service with a rating of good to excellent from 97% of those passengers. Good PR and publicity was key to the success of the project.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

09 RENOVATION OF TEAROOM

APPLICANT

Brig o' Turk Tearoom

www.brigoturktearoom.co.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£8,500

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£8,500

Own resources

PROJECT AIMS

- Building works to the Tea Room such as renovating the kitchen and toilets and overhauling the plumbing, ventilation and heating systems.
- Installation of kitchen equipment and seating areas.
- Re-invigorate the Tea Room to make it an integral part of the local community.

PROJECT DETAIL

The Brig o'Turk tearoom was closed when the previous tenant left in 2010. A husband and wife team plan to re-open it as a tourist venue, historical stopping off point, and become an integral part of village life.

The project aims to ensure that the Brig o'Turk tearoom can once again be a central part of the local community and a viable private business by amongst other things refurbishing the washrooms and kitchen.

LESSONS LEARNED

A Business Plan with a thoroughly grounded cash flow forecast is an essential tool for effectively planning your business development.

Photo © Brig o'Turk Tearoom

10

C.A.T.C.A.
CLEAR PROJECT

PROJECT AIMS

- Recruit a Project Officer to manage and administer the project outcomes.
- Establish an office base.
- Support educational activities and progress schools' demands for Education Packs in conjunction with the River Carron system across all school age groups (5-18 years).
- Support opportunities for people to appreciate and enjoy the outdoors.
- Encourage volunteers to make task forces and ensure they are supported to deliver community benefits as well as to develop their own skills.

PROJECT DETAIL

CATCA's management committee managed to develop the organisation to an extent, attracting funding and voluntary commitment for their activities. However, they found there was a need for a project officer and base to give the project the best chance of success.

The aim of the CLEAR project was to ensure that CATCA achieves the first phase of the ambitious projects within its 5 year Development Plan, by employing a Project Officer to assist the voluntary management group, and the 400 expected volunteers in individual projects. The project Officer was to assist the management committee through liaising with partner agencies, community partners, with schools and with the education sector.

LESSONS LEARNED

Delivering this project highlighted the value of widely advertising when recruiting staff. Christine Bell was recruited as Project Officer for this project and who made the project such a success that she later won an Enterprise in Education award.

APPLICANT

C.A.T.C.A

www.catca.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER **£17,440**

£17,440 Scottish Natural Heritage

Photos © CATCA

ST KESSOGS
BUSINESS PLAN

APPLICANT

Callander Community Development Trust

www.callandercdt.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

BIG Lottery Fund **£10,000**

£4,950 Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£4,000 Scottish Community Foundation

£2,050 Own resources (In-kind)

£2,000 Royal Institute of Architects

£1,000 Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority

£1,000 Stirling Council

PROJECT AIMS

- Develop a detailed plan for the restoration of the building working with relevant authorities and securing permissions where necessary.
- Bring in professional help to produce a business plan and provide legal advice.
- Consult with the community over options for the building.

PROJECT DETAIL

The St Kessogs building is located in the centre of Callander. It is an elegant eye-catching building with a spire, which can been seen from miles away with a function that played an important role in many local people's lives. For a decade prior to this application, the had been under-used and poorly maintained. For many years, the local community had wanted the building to be restored, resulted in a public meeting to decide its future. The meeting discussed the possibility of the community leading on a project to restore the building and convert for use as a cultural and events centre.

Stirling Council bought St Kessogs from the Church of Scotland in 1985 and turned the building into a visitor centre. Prior to this application, the exhibition in the upper floor was removed leaving it vacant. Stirling Council was receptive to the building being turned over to community ownership and management and this project was to appraise the options of what the facility could be and assessing feasibility of the community managing it.

LESSONS LEARNED

Community consultation can be difficult but constituting a new body called Friends of St Kessogs was a great way to draw people in and engage them on a specific topic.

Photos © Stirling Council

BRACKLINN FALLS **BRIDGE**

APPLICANT

Callander Community Development Trust

www.callandercdt.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£50,000
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£41,000
Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority

£9,000
Scottish Natural Heritage

PROJECT AIMS

- Build an iconic bridge over the Keltie Water at Bracklinn Falls.
- Reinstate a key core path link over the River Keltie.
- Provide Callander with a bridge that is a visitor attraction itself.
- Help secure economic viability of Callander as a visitor destination.

PROJECT DETAIL

In August 2004 extraordinary floods destroyed the existing bridge at this site and re-sculpted the gorge. The community, in partnership with the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park and the Forestry Commission investigated many ways in which the bridge could be replaced and the recommendation was to install a utilitarian aerial mast bridge. The local community rejected this proposal as they were keen that whatever bridge was built would fit in and enhance the surrounding area and so this project was created to build an iconic and unique bridge at the Bracklinn Falls.

LESSONS LEARNED

In a project like this there is one more key requirement and that is organisation. Not only did Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority provide funding, they also provided the expertise in facilitating the project. One of the Access Officers for the NP was effectively the 'Project Officer'. He co-ordinated closely with Strong Bridges Ltd and also kept CCDT on the right track. His advice and expertise was invaluable.

Photos © Callander Community Development Trust

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CALLANDER TOWN CO-ORDINATOR

APPLICANT

Callander Community Development Trust

www.callandercdt.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£16,480
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£16,480
People and Communities Fund

£5,200
Own resources (In-kind)

£4,000
Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority

£4,000
Stirling Council

£2,000
Callander Common Good Fund

PROJECT AIMS

Advertise and recruit a skilled and experienced Town Co-ordinator who would then:

- Co-ordinate communication and interaction between community groups and individual projects.
- Ensure greater efficiency in the delivery of projects.
- Avoid unnecessary duplication of effort or confusion of purpose.

PROJECT DETAIL

The community of Callander was involved in a Charette process, which is a form of community consultation championed recently by the Scottish Government. Charette is French for 'cart' implying that all the spokes of peoples' opinions lead to the centre - the output report containing the aims identified by the community.

This charette focussed on potential physical developments for the town, which would then, most likely, be actioned by the community working with public agencies.

The Town Coordinator Role was identified as a key element from the Charrette Process with the aim to help deliver the Community Action Plan and to bring the numerous groups within Callander together to focus and avoid duplication of activities and funding applications.

LESSONS LEARNED

The more planning and preparation you do at the application stage means you're better prepared when awarded the grant and can start the project quickly.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

CREATIVE IN CALLANDER

APPLICANT

Callander Community Development Trust

www.callandercdt.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£5,000	£3,700	£1,800
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER	Own resources	Own resources (In-kind)

PROJECT AIMS

- Employ a part time Project Officer to create accounting systems for Creative in Callander business.
- Purchase card reader and computer to allow card transactions in shop.
- Develop a website to showcase the shop and enable internet sales.

PROJECT DETAIL

The project grew from a timely coming together of two local interests; firstly CCDT and Callander Enterprise seeking solutions to the rising number of empty shops on the Main Street, and secondly local artists wishing to establish a craft selling co-operative and seeing empty retail space as an affordable opportunity.

The applicant applied to LEADER to pay for costs involved with paying someone to support the initial growth of the business and to pay for essential facilities that will help to ensure the sustainability of the venture.

Photos © Creative in Callander

15 CALLANDER COMMUNITY HYDRO LTD PROJECT- PROFESSIONAL ADVICE AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

APPLICANT

Callander Community Hydro Ltd

www.callandercdt.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£69,625
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£34,825
Community Energy Scotland Loan

£34,800
Callander Community Energy Ltd (In-kind)

PROJECT AIMS

To build the Callander Community Hydro Scheme maximising return to the community, whilst minimising disruption to those living nearby and meeting Planning and Health & Safety obligations. Individual actions to attain these goals were to appoint a:

- Quantity Surveyor
- Legal Advisor
- Consulting Engineer
- CDM Co-ordinator
- Financial Advisor
- Ecological and Landscape Clerk of Works

PROJECT DETAIL

Feasibility studies had already been carried out into the viability of hydro schemes in the Callander area and one site in particular had been pinpointed as potentially profitmaking. This site in Stank Glen had been assessed as costing £1.4m in total to set up and make £3.11m as a best case scenario or £1.32m as a worst case scenario over the next 25 years. This development was being spearheaded by the community and so the profit would go back into the community who raised the funds and managed the project.

LESSONS LEARNED

The main lesson we learnt was never be first to take on a major development. Callander Community Hydro is the first Community Project to be built on Scottish Government - FCS land. Right from the start there were no templates or mechanisms for the various agencies to follow, so we were faced with developing these agreements as part of the project. This added substantially to the cost of solicitors and consultants and of even greater concern to the time scales to get the development started.

Photos © CDT

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JAZZ ON THE LOCHS

APPLICANT

Callander Jazz & Blues Festival Ltd

www.callanderjazz.com

CONTRIBUTIONS

£2,900	£1,500	£1,425
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER	Own resources	Own resources (In-kind)

PROJECT AIMS

- Create leaflets and banners to market and promote the event.
- Develop a new website **www.trossachsevents.com** to collect details of all individual events and promote them.
- Advertise the event via local and national press with emphasis on Central Scotland.
- Provide transport for visitors going from central points to individual events.
- Administer bookings through venues, tourist information centres and through the website.

PROJECT DETAIL

Following two successful Jazz and Blues Festivals in Callander with a third planned, the applicant wanted to develop "Jazz on the Lochs" as a pre-festival event that would showcase the natural beauty of the Trossachs and encourage new and repeat visits and also help to extend visits.

The aim was to create a brand "Jazz Up The Trossachs" with this particular event occurring 2-3 times annually to support the brand. This project was to fund the marketing of the event with leaflets and banners, e-mails to existing database and new jazz clubs and associations and the development a new website **www.trossachsevents.com**.

LESSONS LEARNED

The events held as part of the Jazz Festival were well attended and the project was a success. However, when planning outdoor events, some elements, like the weather, are out of your control and can often be a bigger determining factor on attendance than pre-event marketing.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

17 CALLENDAR COUNTRYSIDE ACTIVITY CENTRE

APPLICANT

Callendar Estate

www.callendarestate.co.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER **£12,400**

£5,000 Scottish Natural Heritage

Callendar Estate **£ 3,775**

£3,750 Falkirk Council

PROJECT AIMS

- Investigate the feasibility of developing a Countryside Activity Centre that would contain some commercial elements like cycle hire and tea room space for social enterprises and community space.
- Explore the feasibility of expanding the path network to include a further 15.8km of paths suitable for multi-use and 10km of single track cycle trails.
- Work towards realising the aims contained in the completed feasibility study.

PROJECT DETAIL

Callendar Estate has had a long history of partnership working including working with Falkirk Council, Central Scotland Forest Trust and others but more crucially working with local communities. Through these partnerships a number of projects have been developed such as the creation of 16.5km of paths suitable for a range of users, the upgrading of 19.3km of paths and the regeneration of 181ha woodland.

Having completed a number of path network developments, the applicant then wanted to investigate the feasibility of developing a Countryside Activity Centre, which would encourage greater use of the network and provide facilities such as car-parking and toilets. The applicant also hoped to expand the path network to include a further 15.8km of paths suitable for multi-use together with approximately 10km of single track cycle trails.

LESSONS LEARNED

The initial timescales set out in the funding application were challenging and in the end proved to be unachievable. Rushing the process, in order to meet artificial deadlines would have resulted in a poor report with less robust conclusions.

Ideally more time would have been spent engaging with community groups and other stakeholders. Whilst this was carried out by the consultant as required, a greater emphasis on community engagement, involving Callendar Estate might have generated better awareness and enthusiasm for the project which in time would have helped in the process of fundraising for the first phase of project delivery.

The Feasibility Study and Business Plan informed a future LEADER funded project.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

CYCLE TRAILS SIGNAGE AND ORIENTATION

CONTRIBUTIONS

£10,000
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£5,000
Falkirk Council

£5,000
Falkirk Environment Trust

APPLICANT

Callendar Estate

www.callendarestate.co.uk

PROJECT AIMS

- Install five orientation boards, nine road signs and twelve timber waymarker posts.
- Increase the number of people accessing the paths and cycle tracks in Callendar Estate.
- Improve the fitness and health of local people.

PROJECT DETAIL

Following a feasibility study into the development of a cycle path network that LEADER funded in 2009 (see pxx), Callendar Estate levered in further funding from LEADER and Rural Priorities to build the trails and this is an element of this overall project.

This project came in under the Sustainable Tourism Business Grants Scheme and is a part of the larger trail development project, and is aimed specifically at raising awareness of the existence of the network and getting more people to use it.

LESSONS LEARNED

The design of the panels took a lot longer than originally anticipated. Delays were encountered working with a design team who were giving their time as an in-kind contribution but were unable to prioritise the project. It's worth bearing in mind that in-kind contributions for work might not be completed to the timescale needed.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

19 GREENRIG EVENTS SPACE

APPLICANT

Callendar Estate

www.callendarestate.co.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Own resources **£19,312**

£10,000 Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

PROJECT AIMS

- Obtain planning consent and building warrant for new building.
- Obtain tendered costs for the new building.
- Erect building on site.

PROJECT DETAIL

Callendar Estate sought funds to pay for a permanent events space to accommodate participants in their increasing events programme as they had previously had to erect a tent for every event. One third of the building will be leased to a bike hire and retail business.

This Greenrig Events Space is a modest yet practical building, which has been developed from the findings of the Callendar Countryside Activity Centre feasibility study.

Photos © Callendar Estate

IN TOUCH AND CRAFT
NEW BUILD PROJECT

APPLICANT

Camphill (Blair Drummond) Trust Ltd

www.camphillblairdrummond.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£300,000 Scottish Investment Fund

£237,168 Own resources

£120,000 Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

PROJECT AIMS

- Construct two workshop areas, one to be a therapeutic workshop space with the other a craft workshop.
- Run regular workshops that will develop students' motivation, self esteem, social interaction skills, cognitive skills, creative skills, dexterity skills.
- Train individuals and provide work experience.
- Generate income for investment into the organisation as a whole (by selling services to local authorities and selling items created by clients).

PROJECT DETAIL

Camphill Blair Drummond is a large social enterprise that offers residential and day care facilities for people with learning and support needs. Prior to this application, Camphill Blair Drummond found they were taking in students with increasingly complex learning disabilities and needed modern facilities to cater for the students.

This project was to construct two workshops to enable craft and therapeutic activities to take place to increase the activities on offer, increase the number of day students who could attend and help secure the future sustainability of Camphill Blair Drummond.

LESSONS LEARNED

As the new Craft and In Touch workshops were the second phase in our Capital Development Project, we were very fortunate in having had the opportunity to fine tune our project management procedures, cost controls and fundraising plans in the early preliminary phases of the project. This provided an excellent foundation ensuring the project was managed on time and within budget. We reflected on our learning from the preceding building phase, the new Woodwork and Estate workshops, and as a consequence delayed the start date of the Craft & In-Touch workshops. This delay offered opportunities to ensure the building was designed and constructed to meet all our requirements and doing so by involving all key stakeholders. As a consequence, we were able to complete this phase of the Project with added confidence and with the security of an effective project management process in place.

Photos © Camphill Blair Drummond

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PARKLANDS HOUSES: CONSTRUCTION AND FURNISHING AND FIT-OUT

APPLICANT

Camphill Blairdrummond Trust Ltd

www.camphillblairdrummond.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

PROJECT AIMS

- Build two residential homes for students currently staying in Blair Drummond House to stay in with five places for new students.
- Free up space in Blair Drummond House to better cater for day visitors without compromising the student community's privacy.
- Create career grade jobs.
- Improve the economic viability of the social enterprise.

PROJECT DETAIL

Camphill Blair Drummond is a well established social enterprise in rural Stirling which supports and cares for individuals with complex learning needs. In recent years it has found there were more students looking to attend than there was space for. Additionally, many of the residential students stayed in Blair Drummond House, which hasn't been ideal for them and has impeded Camphill Blairdrummond being able to open their doors to visitors as so much of the building is given over to living space.

This project is to fund the build and furnishing of two new purpose built residential houses for students and carers. This will increase capacity of Camphill Blairdrummond, give students their own newly built space and enable more of Blair Drummond House to be used for welcoming visitors and hosting workshops.

CARBETH **FUTURES**

APPLICANT

Carbeth Hutters' Community Company

www.carbethhuts.com/about.html

CONTRIBUTIONS

- £4,120 — Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER
- £2,100 — Schiehallion Trust
- £1,100 — Co-op Dividend
- £1,000 — Carbeth Hutters Community Company (In-kind)

PROJECT AIMS

- Create a business plan developing the vision of CHCC as land managers and owners, in consultation with Hutters and others.
- Identify community actions.
- Enable the company to approach future funders to deliver the anticipated community actions.

PROJECT DETAIL

Prior to this application, Carbeth Hutters Community Company had positively negotiated to end a prolonged period of rent dispute and agreed a two year option to buy the land. Following this step forward, CHCC sought funds from FVL LEADER to employ consultants to undertake consultation with the hutting community and neighbours to build a business plan that might take the organisation forward after buying the land.

LESSONS LEARNED

Three consultants were involved in the delivery of the separate strands to this project. This made the initial procurement process difficult as three briefs had to be produced and three separate tendering procedures managed but it ultimately resulted in three good quality outcomes that together made an excellent business plan.

Photos © Carbeth Hutters

TOPPS WOOD EDUCATION PROJECT

APPLICANT

Central Scotland Forest Trust

www.csft.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER — £35,900

£35,900 — Scottish Natural Heritage

Falkirk Environment Trust — £27,450

PROJECT AIMS

- Enhance the local environment through tree planting and other habitat creation/management measures.
- Enable Denny High School and associated cluster primary schools to participate in the development and long-term management of Topps Wood.
- Provide opportunities for fulfilling the four capacities of the Curriculum for Excellence.
- Raise pupils' awareness of the heritage and environmental value of the Carron Valley area in both a local and global scale.
- Provide opportunities for recognition of achievement through recognised award schemes.

PROJECT DETAIL

The Carron Glen is an area associated with traditional upland management practices including sheep farming and forestry. Whilst traditional land management practices continue, landowners and agencies are identifying opportunities for diversification in relation to the tourism and recreation industries, which has led to an increased number of people using the area, and consequent incidents of conflict between users and managers.

The applicant bought Topps Wood in the Carron Valley with the aim of enhancing the local environment through tree planting and other habitat creation measures. This project was to develop these plans over a period of time and allow opportunities to engage with the wider community through volunteering, business sponsored activity and engaging local schools in curricular linked activity. The idea in taking this approach was that the environment would be improved, people would develop an appreciation of the cultural and environmental value of the Carron Valley area, hopefully leading to less user conflict in the area.

LESSONS LEARNED

The project, as originally envisaged, evolved due to a number of factors outwith CSFT's control. Although allowance had been made for poor weather during planning, the 2 winters that the programme ran over were so extreme that the schedule was significantly impacted upon. Due to unforeseen changes in Denny High Schools curriculum timetable, staff were unable to commit to the originally intended number of sessions. In addition, a number of the pupils participating in the programme exhibited challenging behaviour and had special educational needs requiring a higher level of support out on site than initially anticipated by the school. With these challenges, flexibility in project management was key to delivering the programme.

Photos © CSFT

DENNY AND AREA
SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

APPLICANT

Central Scotland Forest Trust

www.csft.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£15,000	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER	Falkirk Council	Scottish Natural Heritage	Central Scotland Forest Trust

PROJECT AIMS

- Commission consultants to deliver a feasibility study into the potential for safe routes to Denny High School.
- Consult the community to identify what kind of path provision is required.
- Produce outline proposals to include design specifications, cost estimate and bill of quantities for further consultation.
- Develop an Action Plan for implementation of proposals.

PROJECT DETAIL

Denny High School serves a catchment stretching to 64 square kilometres and taking in pupils from seven primary schools. Prior to this application the school was planned to be rebuilt in a different place but there was a lot of local concern that safe routes for pupils to get to school had not been similarly planned.

This application was to commission consultants to consult with local groups and communities to create a feasibility study looking at safe routes for pupils to take to the new Denny High School site. This was an ambitious project looking to cost each option and look to the future funding of each.

As a result of the feasibility study, 2 key routes were upgraded providing over 2.8kms of barrier free access through Denny to the new High School. The study enabled a funding package of over £375,000 to be developed to deliver these improvements.

LESSONS LEARNED

Although the feasibility study identified a number of other opportunities for providing Safer Routes to School in the area, it is likely that these will need to be delivered when opportunity allows due to land ownership issues, technical complexity and cost.

Photos © Central Scotland Forest Trust

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EQUESTRIAN TOURISM PROJECT

APPLICANT

Central Scotland Forest Trust

www.csft.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER — £3,750

West Lothian LEADER — £3,750

Central Scotland Forest Trust — £2,250

Falkirk Council — £2,250

West Lothian Council — £1,500

Scottish Power — £1,000

British Horse Society — £1,000

PROJECT AIMS

- Audit the existing equestrian facilities, services, businesses and routes in the area, to identify what exists and where and what could be used to create a directory of equestrianism for the area, as well as to identify missing links and possible development opportunities.
- Run a stakeholder workshop to bring together businesses and other stakeholders to discuss and scope out any potential development opportunities.
- Produce an action plan and list of prioritised recommendations on possible opportunities to develop.
- Seek permission to develop a detailed set of proposals for physical improvements to a site or premises.

PROJECT DETAIL

This project aimed to take a strategic approach to improving horse accessible paths in rural Falkirk and West Lothian. The applicant sought to increase awareness amongst landowners and businesses about each other and the opportunities to diversify and develop equestrian tourism in the area. The eventual aim was to create a network of people and businesses committed to working together to promote equestrian tourism and establish joint projects in the area.

LESSONS LEARNED

The need to advertise the contract on the Public Contracts Scotland website was actually a huge administrative burden, even for an organisation that has paid employees. If this were a requirement for £3,750 worth of funding in future, we probably wouldn't apply.

It was difficult getting businesses to engage with the whole process. Where people are busy trying to run a business, they often don't have time (or are not inclined) to speak to consultants, or to engage fully in a process, that they can't always see the immediate value or benefit of. This is especially true when the contract period is quite short, or as in our case was over the busy summer period. As such, you need to ensure you engage good, committed and persistent consultants!

26 COMMUNITY ACTION ON INVASIVE WEEDS

APPLICANT

Clackmannanshire and Stirling Environment Trust

www.clacksweb.org.uk/environment/cset

CONTRIBUTIONS

£1,244 Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£1,244 Own resources

PROJECT AIMS

- Undertake six days of educational visits to schools and community groups.
- Hold at least six community action days to deal with invasive plants.
- Organise two full days of survey work in July/August to ascertain the level of control needed.

PROJECT DETAIL

Clackmannanshire and Stirling Environment Trust noticed that there was an increase in records of Himalayan Balsam along the banks of the Black Devon in Clackmannanshire and the Blane and Endrick Waters in Stirling. Himalayan Balsam is a highly invasive non-native weed that out-competes native species and is detrimental to local biodiversity. The applicant sought to counteract the invasion of this weed by involving local communities and educating them about the weed's existence alongside physical measures to eradicate it.

LESSONS LEARNED

To ensure a core number of volunteers it would be valuable to form, or work with, an environmental task force or community group who could take over and continue works over a longer time scale. The difficulty is identifying such groups, particularly since project location is dictated by sites of Himalayan Balsam, and not by existence of an appropriate community group. Therefore to ensure that work continues to produce results following from the original project, it is necessary to engage or set up a local community group/s and support these groups for at least a further year.

Photos © CSET

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CLACKSMAX FV RURAL BROADBAND

APPLICANT

Clackmannanshire Council

www.clacksweb.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£184,000

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

PROJECT AIMS

- Enable access to reliable and cost effective high speed wireless broadband to businesses and individuals based within the 60km^2 area covered as part of this project.
- Put in place the core infrastructure which will allow wireless broadband to be extended through the project area.

PROJECT DETAIL

Clackmannanshire's population was expected to rise 8.9% over 25 years to 53,245 but the existing wired infrastructure had not kept pace with the increasing population and business growth. Despite being located in the Central belt of Scotland and close to the heart of Scottish business, broadband provision across parts of Clackmannanshire and Stirling Council areas was limited. In many places, even where broadband was available, the speed of connection was well below 2Mbps.

This project covered 60 square kilometres, enabling access to reliable and cost effective high speed wireless broadband to residents and businesses located within that area. It also put in place the core infrastructure for the future, allowing wireless broadband to be extended out to other areas in the future.

LESSONS LEARNED

The provision of the shared internet backhaul was a significant milestone. This had been sourced from a location in Falkirk and was a good example of private/public sector partnership because it utilised a fire service site in Falkirk to connect to a local authority building in Alloa to allow a commercial service to be offered to business to provide service in an area not served by telecoms companies due to market failure.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

CLANRANALD VISITOR CENTRE

APPLICANT

Clanranald Trust for Scotland

www.clanranald.org

CONTRIBUTIONS

£18,205	£10,615	£7,590
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER	Own resources	Own resources (In-kind)

PROJECT AIMS

- Erect the visitor centre adjacent to the already completed car park.

PROJECT DETAIL

The Clanranald Trust for Scotland was constructing a replica 12th century motte and bailey fort in the Carron Valley Forest incorporating a living history village. The motte, a toilet block and a car park with impressive stone arch entrance to the visitor centre were completed by the time of the application and the palisade fortification was in the course of construction.

This application was to build the visitor centre adjacent to the car park that would house the ticketing area and exhibition centre.

LESSONS LEARNED

While the majority of the work was carried out by members of the Clanranald Trust themselves, the community service workers were also invaluable to the progress of the project. It was particularly pleasing to see some of the community service workers return as volunteers following their required period.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

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FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR COMMUNITY PATH NETWORKS **ALONG THE RIVER CARRON**

APPLICANT

Communities Along the Carron Association

www.catca.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£18,000
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£7,500
SUSTRANS

£5,000
Central Scotland Forest Trust

£3,000
Own resources

£2,500
Falkirk Council

PROJECT AIMS

- Contract consultants to publish a feasibility study that will address a comprehensive heritage and biodiversity trail for 19.8 miles of the River Carron and the potential upgrading of links between river paths.
- Map and appraise existing routes and infrastructure in the study area, desire lines, community aspirations and short links to local communities.
- Consult with key stakeholders and land owners.
- Conduct a SWOT analysis for all route options.
- Provide recommendations and indicative costs for preferred route options.

PROJECT DETAIL

Previously successful applicants CATCA sought to commission a study to consider the feasibility of establishing a comprehensive paths network along the 20 miles of the River Carron - to include biodiversity, heritage and links to local communities. The study was to cover mapping, consultation, recommendation of preferred route, indicative costings and next steps.

LESSONS LEARNED

Early on in the project it was clear that some of the paths that were expected to be included in the feasibility study were impractable due to the large number of landowners and lack of existing paths. However, what started as a limitation allowed the consultants to spend more time on the more achievable sections of path.

Photos © Communities Along the Carron Association

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ACCESS PATH FOR WHEELS

APPLICANT

Community Green Initiative (CGI)

www.cgiscotland.org

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

Own resources

Own resources (In-kind)

PROJECT AIMS

- Constructing a path suitable for wheelchair/ mobility vehicles to an associated viewing/seating area to link in with other paths in the park.
- Constructing a viewing/seating area.
- Maximising the accessibility of the park parkland by providing a necessary linking path.
- Researching content for an interpretation panel on the heritage of the park and installing it.
- Appraising the park and its environs for the location of geocaches.
- Training community volunteers in project management skills.

PROJECT DETAIL

This was a project creating a 100m long by 2m wide whinstone path to an associated viewing area. These were important additions to the park as they have made an area of the park more accessible to all users. The group was also keen for there to be an element of education in the project and sought to include the research and the new viewing/seating area.

In addition to the physical works involved in the project, the applicant also wanted the project to be a means to upskill the local community and bring them together. Having never managed a capital project before they were keen that this was managed by local people who learned from the process.

The volunteer who led this project won the Paths for All Volunteer of the Year 2013 award for her commitment to, and achievements in this project.

LESSONS LEARNED

You are never alone - The group has benefited from the networking opportunities that have arisen from the project and the support provided by various people including FVL LEADER, Paths for All, Falkirk Council and local community groups. The group has learnt not to be afraid to ask for assistance.

Tasks take longer than predicted - It was important to 'stick at it' even when progress seemed slow. The end result is worth it. Keeping good records, especially of volunteer time, will be of benefit for the future.

Be adaptable – Changes were made to the original plans but the end result has meant that the local community has benefited even more than originally planned.

Don't be afraid to attempt new things –Working with contractors and getting involved in the technical aspects of path construction and CDM regulations has been rewarding.

Volunteers feel more empowered and more confident in taking on future community led projects.

LEARNING FOR LIVING IN CLACKMANNANSHIRE

APPLICANT

CVS Clackmannanshire

www.fvl.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£19,000 Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£19,000 Fairer Scotland Fund

PROJECT AIMS

- Take the method of community green map making into the rural areas of Clackmannanshire, assisting these communities to contribute more effectively to the community planning process.
- Identify and train 6 community champions in facilitation and the process of map-making.
- Focus on using interactive map-making and pilot this newly developing resource.
- Work together with local people to build a unique picture of rural Clackmannanshire.
- Assess whether this tool is a viable method of helping create more sustainable lifestyles.

PROJECT DETAIL

The applicant was aware that little work in community action planning had been undertaken in rural Clackmannanshire and sought to address this by empowering the communities create the plans themselves.

Taking an innovative approach to creating the plans and to the format of the plans, the applicant looked to train members of the in modern crowd sourced cartography and enable them to create green maps of their rural areas. Supporting these participants and bringing in other members of the community to feed into the process would enable them to create records of rural Clackmannanshire that was informed by the community.

LESSONS LEARNED

All of the project activities relied on partnership working between voluntary and statutory agencies and, most importantly, the communities themselves. Working well with other local organisations and agencies is a key factor to creating successful outcomes. In particular, the good relationship with Council staff responsible for the environment and sustainability as well as with the housing department was expressed when CVS were asked to take on the role of vice chair of the Environment Partnership Team within Clackmannanshire Alliance.

Photos © Clackmannanshire CVS

INTERNATIONAL **HARMONY**

APPLICANT

Doune and Dunblane Fling

www.dunblanefling.com

CONTRIBUTIONS

£1,075 Doune and Dunblane Fling

£850 Dunblane Hydro

£750 Windfarm

£500 Doune and Dunblane Fling (In-kind)

£400 Historic Scotland

£300 Marshall Construction

£260 Scottish Fair Trade Forum

PROJECT AIMS

- Promote international harmony by holding a festival with three thematic headings of fair trade, sustainability and world music.
- Hold a fair trade fashion show, story-telling events, a ceilidh and workshops promoting sustainability.
- Launch plastic bag free Dunblane.

PROJECT DETAIL

The Doune and Dunblane Fling had been a successful community based music and arts festival since 1993 but the applicant wanted to introduce a new dimension to it and use it as a vehicle for promoting International Harmony.

A number of events were organised in order to promote international harmony including a fashion show, ceilidh and a fair trade café. These events were held under sub themes of fair trade, sustainability and world music, partly in order to help promote 2009's Year of Homecoming.

LESSONS LEARNED

The LEADER grant was instrumental in getting all other community groups and the local school involved, which had never happened to the same extent before. Having two marquees made a big difference as well because more people came along although the weather was very good, so we can't take all the credit.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

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DRUMBOWIE DISABILITY PATH AND SENSORY AREAS

APPLICANT

Drumbowie Environment Action Group

www.deag.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Falkirk Environment Trust **£43,817**

£43,791 Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

PROJECT AIMS

- Upgrade 1205m of sub-standard path to all abilities path.
- Provision of seating and signage.
- Improve the surface within the existing car park.
- Create four sensory areas (developed by groups from within the community) with loop access to the upgraded circular walk.

PROJECT DETAIL

Having been a working mine til the 1930s, the area that became Drumbowie Park was a derelict space used for cattle grazing until 1990. The community worked with the landowner to bring the land back into community use and Drumbowie Environment Action Group (DEAG) bought the land in 2009.

DEAG had previously undertaken work to improve the area as a recreation facility but sought funds from FVL LEADER to improve and build on these features. They planned to make one of the two circular paths around the park accessible to wheelchairs and create four sensory areas around it.

LESSONS LEARNED

This was the largest project we had dealt with and it would have been easier if we'd had more project experience so we learned if you don't have it find someone who has to help you.

Make sure you have genuine commitment or you could be left on your own.

Make your plan as detailed as possible - you may think you know what you want but you need to convey your thoughts to other parties.

Photos © Drumbowie Environment Action Group

DRYMEN CHURCH
- TIME TO BUILD PROJECT

APPLICANT

Drymen Church

www.drymenchurch.org

CONTRIBUTIONS

£523,429

Own resources

£38,000

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

PROJECT AIMS

- Provide new, purpose-built community space that is suitable to meet a variety of needs from the local community.
- Remove pews and redesign the church space so that it can be used as a community space throughout the week and not just on Sundays.
- Create a community space that is accessible to wheelchair users.
- provide a suitable community venue for concerts, films, conferences and lectures, in addition to regular community activities for all ages.

PROJECT DETAIL

This project stemmed from local concerns about the inadequacy of the current church hall, which was in poor condition, was not wheelchair accessible and was 500 metres remote from the church. Following a detailed option appraisal and consultation, the applicant decided to re-furbish the existing church building and provide a new annex that would meet the church's and community needs. The original church hall was sold to provide some of the necessary funding.

This project provided the local community with 21st century community space and enabled them to host a wide range of community clubs and events such as concerts.

LESSONS LEARNED

Having a clear vision and strategy for the Church in the Community while consulting with existing users of the building was invaluable.

As was an acknowledgement by all involved in the project, that once the contractor was appointed there had to be regular meetings with the architect and very strong control regarding any proposed variations.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

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DRYMEN SQUARE DEVELOPMENT

PHASE 1

APPLICANT

Drymen Community Development Trust

www.drymen.com

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER — £10,000

£10,000 — BIG Lottery Fund

Own resources — £1,055

PROJECT AIMS

- Appoint a consultant to produce a business plan and landscape architects to produce alternative designs for Drymen Square.
- Conduct community consultation and determine a preferred option to move forward.
- Identify demand and need for the redevelopment, along with costs, potential funding sources and anticipated outcomes.

PROJECT DETAIL

In September 2006 the applicant acquired ownership of Drymen Village Square and then determined to redevelop it through a large - regeneration project. The Square forms the heart of the village and is the location of a number of important village services but was to congestion and anti-social behaviour.

It was widely felt among the community that action was needed to address the appearance of the Square in conjunction with parking provision to enable Drymen to thrive as a rural community. This project allowed the applicant to take the first step towards this redevelopment.

LESSONS LEARNED

As the community purchased the square it was vital that the plans for its development were informed by the community. The appointment of consultants to undertake the consultation ensured a good quality consultation process and a high quality report with good value for money.

Photos © Drymen Community Development Trust

DUNBLANE GAP
SITE DEVELOPMENT

CONTRIBUTIONS

£43,500	£33,500	£7,000	£3,000
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER	Kippendavie Group Trust	BIG Lottery Fund	Own resources

APPLICANT

Dunblane Development Trust

www.dunblaneweb.co.uk/devtrust

PROJECT AIMS

- Preparation of development proposals with all supporting information necessary.
- Undertake commercial viabilities of proposals.
- Submission and management of all necessary statutory consents.
- Dissemination of information to community on process and progress.

PROJECT DETAIL

Dunblane's first Community Plan identified a priority aim of creating a thriving High Street which gave Dunblane Development Trust a clear steer to pursue actions and activities that would improve the attraction, economy and footfall in the town centre.

There was one gap site in the High Street on which two semi detached houses were to be built which would only create more dead frontage and would contribute little to enlivening the High Street. DDT secured a conditional contract to purchase the site with the vital assistance of Kippendavie Group Trust and with the aim of developing it with mixed uses that would benefit the High Street and create a commercial community asset.

The applicant sought a grant from LEADER to contribute to the costs of appraising options for the site and obtaining statutory consents for the favoured development option.

A development of commercial space for a restaurant and five low cost apartments was ultimately approved and procured largely with funding from the Scottish Governments Town Centre Regeneration Fund. Whether consequence or coincidence there has since been an increase in footfall and economic activity in the High Street where there is now only one empty retail unit, one less charity shop and three restaurants when at the outset of the project there was none.

LESSONS LEARNED

Changes in Board personnel protracted the LEADER claiming process. If there had been more of a handover period between Treasurers then this may have mitigated the impact of the inevitable changeover in volunteers.

Photos © Dunblane Development Trust

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DALES WOOD PATHS

APPLICANT

Falkirk Area Riders Access Group

www.farag.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER **£18,000**

£11,177 Falkirk Environment Trust

Scottish Power **£11,176**

PROJECT AIMS

- Build paths around Dales Wood near Falkirk suitable for walkers, cyclists and horse riders.
- Open up an area of woodland not currently accessible to the public.
- Improve the physical and mental wellbeing of people who access the paths.
- Improve the skills of the group so that we can take the lead on developing other path projects.

PROJECT DETAIL

After consulting with local horse-riders and dog walkers, the applicant found that there was widespread support for a project to build a path network in Dales Wood near Falkirk. Indeed support was so strong that many consultees expressed a keen interest in helping to maintain the paths.

The applicant sought funding to employ a contractor to carry out the building work although local people were to be involved in the monitoring and maintenance of the paths.

LESSONS LEARNED

The process of getting all the funding in place has been much more complicated than expected and has caused a significant delay in getting the project started.

Photos © Falkirk Area Riders Access Group

38 COMMUNITIES ALONG THE CARRON

APPLICANT

Falkirk Council

www.catca.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£10,000

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£10,000

Falkirk Council

PROJECT AIMS

- Create multiple 'community conversations' and events centring on the River Carron Corridor and in turn reconnect those communities with the river.
- Enable residents and organisations to share their expertise and to have extensive involvement in the project.
- Examine how these physical connections have the potential to stimulate further environmental and economic development.

PROJECT DETAIL

In April 2005, Denys Candy, a founding director of Community Partners Institute, USA visited Falkirk to make a presentation on the Pittsburgh "Find the Rivers" project and to help develop the "My Futures in Falkirk" Initiative. The innovative approach of the Pittsburgh project centres on building and solidifying relationships in the community. These relationships develop the community conversations to 'envision the future' and then move on to defining the current reality. The visit of Wendy Brawer (Founding Director of Green Map Systems) to Scotland also occurred in April 2005. These were new ways of engaging with communities, and have been recognized as examples of good practice by a number of agencies such as Scottish Natural Heritage and Communities Scotland. The Communities Along the Carron Project planned to create multiple 'community conversations' and events centring on the River Carron Corridor and in turn reconnect those communities along the river. These events would allow residents and organisations to share their expertise and to have extensive involvement in the project. The plan also considered how these physical connections have the potential to stimulate further environmental and economic development.

LESSONS LEARNED

The emphasis on innovation was not problematic, but in fact helped us to look at different methods in seeking community participation and in what type of consultancy support we wished to commission. The Project if anything exceeded our expectations in terms of community buy in, awareness raising, mapping a way forward and generally giving an impetus to developments.

Photos © CATCA

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COMMUNITIES ALONG THE CARRON: **FROM ASPIRATION TO ACTION**

APPLICANT

Falkirk Council

www.catca.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER — £4,712

£2,445 — Falkirk Council

Falkirk Council (In-kind) — £2,300

PROJECT AIMS

- Develop a formal framework of support for communities along the river.
- Set foundations for communities to enhance and regenerate previously neglected areas.
- Form new organisation to lead on delivery of all this.
- Deliver some quick-win projects.

PROJECT DETAIL

This application to LEADER followed the earlier, Falkirk Council led, Communities Along the Carron project, which was to consult with the communities on the Carron and determine the key aspirations and actions for these communities.

The first project produced a report that identified 6 priority actions. This second project was titled 'Communities Along the Carron: From Aspiration to Action' as it intended to take forward some of the easier outputs and create a community based constituted body that could deliver the longer term aims.

LESSONS LEARNED

As applicant, Falkirk Council has found the audit and compliance requirements of the LEADER programme to be challenging. The key lesson that we have learned from the process is the importance of undertaking a cost benefits analysis, including consideration of return on investment, prior to the submission of any application for funding. We must also ensure that processes are in place from the outset to ensure compliance with programme regulations.

Photos © CATCA

40 DALE BRIDGE

APPLICANT

Falkirk Council

CONTRIBUTIONS

£80,000	£36,000	£36,000	£40,000	£10,000	£7,500
Falkirk Council	Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER	Falkirk Environment Trust	Central Scotland Green Network	Falkirk Council project management cost (In-kind)	Other trusts and funds

PROJECT AIMS

- Demolish the existing bridge and construct the new bridge.
- Involve community groups as partners in project.
- Enhance community pride and satisfaction in local amenities.

PROJECT DETAIL

Following severe storms in 2010, the Dale Bridge, on the outskirts of Denny, became unsafe and was closed off. Having been in place for over 100 years and replaced a bridge that was itself over 100 years, the local community felt a strong need for a bridge crossing the Carron.

The bridge was a cast iron single span of over 30m and so was always going to cost a lot of money to replace.

Falkirk Council and Communities Along the Carron were successful in securing £173,500 in match funding from a number of different sources.

LESSONS LEARNED

This project is testament to the local community's ambition. The original bridge was a very attractive single span bridge and any replacement really had to follow that same aesthetic. Fortunately the funding was found to more than just a utilitarian replacement and so another single span bridge has been installed.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

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PARKING IN FANKY MADE SWANKY

APPLICANT

Fankerton Village Hall

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER — £48,755

£22,125 — Falkirk Environment Trust

Fankerton Village Hall — £1,000

£88 — Own resources (In-kind)

PROJECT AIMS

- Bring up to an acceptable standard a car park that is now used more by the local and wider community.
- Encourage more people to come and use the Village Hall and adjacent Wildlife Reserve.
- Disabled and elderly will not have a problem entering and using the Hall and surrounding area.
- Re-surfacing the car park and the re-building the boundary wall.
- Install proper directional and interpretive signage for the Village Hall and Wildlife Reserve.

PROJECT DETAIL

The ground Fankerton Hut stands on was donated to the people of Fankerton and Stoneywood by the owners of Carrongrove Paper Mill over 80 years ago. The people built a hut on the grounds to house a quoiting club and, years later, the present village hall was built to replace the old building.

In 2010 due to the condition of the village hall, usage decreased significantly and the management committee, consulted the community on how valued the hall was. The results were that the community were keen to keep the hall and so the applicant successfully sought funds to refurbish it. The refurbishment was so successful that the applicant needed further funding to develop the car park and access to the nearby Wildlife Reserve, to ensure that the hall would be well used and economically viable well into the future.

LESSONS LEARNED

The process of tendering the work has been more complicated than anticipated but has strengthened the skills of the group.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

INCLUSIVE OUTDOOR ACCESS NETWORKS

APPLICANT

Fieldfare Trust

www.fieldfare.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

- £84,375 — Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER
- £39,000 — Scottish Natural Heritage
- £28,125 — Fife LEADER
- £16,500 — Own resources
- £11,750 — Fife Council (In-kind)
- £11,750 — Clackmannanshire Council (In-kind)
- £11,750 — Falkirk Council (In-kind)
- £11,750 — Stirling Council (In-kind)
- £10,000 — Awards for All

PROJECT AIMS

- Identify disabled people's priorities for accessible routes especially on core paths.
- Provide and promote information on current levels of outdoor accessibility.
- Develop ways of abbreviating outdoor access information using 'grades' that are meaningful to disabled people.
- Establish mechanisms whereby disabled people can express and publish their views on outdoor access opportunities available.
- Assist project partners to utilise survey and planning data available from the project to develop more inclusive outdoor access strategies.

PROJECT DETAIL

This project came about with the backdrop of the recently enacted Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, which came into force in 2005. It introduced new rights, responsibilities and duties for both land managers and access takers. This Act gave disabled people a right to access much of the countryside at a time when the infrastructure for this was lacking.

As the Land Reform Act did not place a duty on anybody to provide fully accessible paths it was left to myriad organisations to react to their new responsibilities and develop them. At the time of this project there was a particular need to support disabled people who wished to enjoy the countryside through the development of outdoor access networks.

LESSONS LEARNED

Managing the project was made more tricky by bad winter weather, which made path surveying difficult. Path surveys being carried out primarily by volunteers were understandably reduced as the volunteers preferred to wait for the better weather.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

FORTH VALLEY ORCHARD REGENERATION INITIATIVE

APPLICANT

Forth Environment Link

www.forthenvironmentlink.org

CONTRIBUTIONS

£16,040	£9,999	£4,500	£1,541
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER	Scottish Natural Heritage	Falkirk Environment Trust	Own resources

PROJECT AIMS

- Identify and map orchard resource.
- Raise profile and awareness of benefits of orchards.
- Produce data/evidence for follow on projects.
- Capture benefits and encourage resources to be utilised in future.

PROJECT DETAIL

This project aimed to identify and map the nature and extent of the orchard resource (including individual fruit trees) in rural Forth Valley. During this phase of identification, it would raise the profile and awareness of the benefits of the resource with landowners and the community.

The project then aimed to produce data and evidence supporting the highlighted benefits, to build a case for the work to continue going forward in the Forth Valley.

LESSONS LEARNED

From the data collected throughout the project and at the 'Core Pickings' event, it was made clear from participants that there was a strong desire to develop a second phase of the project. Several people came forward to establish a Forth Valley Orchards Group, which was then taken forward after the project.

Photos © Forth Environment Link

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FORTH INVASIVE NON-NATIVE SPECIES PHASES 1 AND 2

PROJECT AIMS

- Recruit a project co-ordinator and field officer.
- Recruit and train volunteers to recognise, treat according to latest scientific advice, and monitor Invasive Non-native Species (INNS).
- Promote the programme and volunteer opportunities, including INNS educational presentations in secondary schools.
- Establish a network of trained volunteers to monitor, capture data and report on central INNS database.
- Produce interim report to inform the second phase of the project.

PROJECT DETAIL

This project looks to address the invasion of non-native species through the Forth estuary and its tributaries - in all covering 11 local authorities and gaining funding from 4 different LEADER areas. This strategic approach should achieve long term results in controlling certain species over a long period.

The primary species to be addressed are Himalayan Balsam, Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed over the whole project area. American mink will also be controlled in a smaller geographic area.

LESSONS LEARNED

There is significant community and volunteer enthusiasm for the tackling of Invasive Non Native Species. Take up of training places has been high, but there has been a proportion of volunteers failing the qualification - 10%.

The use of contractor spraying for targeted areas is important to 'kick start' the process in some areas. Secondary schools have been more difficult to target for talks than Primary schools.

Due to the shortening of the time for phase 1 organising River Forth Fisheries Trust standalone events has been impossible. However, networking has allowed for the programme to be included in events around the whole district.

APPLICANT

Forth Fisheries Trust

www.fishforth.co.uk/inns

CONTRIBUTIONS

- £99,068 — SNH
- £66,236 — Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER
- £36,962 — Tyne Esk LEADER
- £29,668 — Falkirk Environment Trust
- £28,675 — SEPA
- £27,352 — Fife LEADER
- £20,300 — Stirling Council
- £17,298 — West Lothian LEADER
- £15,000 — Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority
- £5,000 — Loch Lomond NHGS

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SUSTAINABLE TOILET PROVISION IN RURAL LOCATIONS PROJECT

APPLICANT

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER LAG

www.fvl.org.uk/eco-loo-study

CONTRIBUTIONS

Scottish Natural Heritage **£5,000**

£4,800 Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

PROJECT AIMS

- Research and collate up to date information on effective options for compostable toilets available to remote rural areas.
- Make these findings freely available to rural communities to inform future projects.

PROJECT DETAIL

The FVL LEADER Local Action Group found they were becoming involved in a number of projects and project enquiries that had been challenged by the provision of toilets in remote rural locations (see p10 Inverlochlarig Eco-loo). These projects were typically in areas that had none of the usual infrastructure such as mains water connections, electricity supply, street lighting, or within easy access of maintenance, staff, etc.

Information gathered, and lessons learnt, from these projects was to be provided to consultants and incorporated into the research study. This would then assist future projects by bringing together as much up to date relevant information as possible and presenting it in an easy to use format.

LESSONS LEARNED

The format has proved successful, as a link to digital copies of the report and individual case studies has been set up on the main FVL LEADER website (www.fvl.org.uk/eco-loo-study).

The information has been used by several projects (see Tillicoultry Allotments, pxx, Barrwood Trust Composting Toilet Project, pxx). The research highlights that there are many issues to consider - expense, maintenance, approval from regulatory authorities, the difficulties of handling human waste, Scottish weather and public safety.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

NEXT GENERATION BROADBAND STUDY VISIT

APPLICANT

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER LAG

www.fvl.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£7,500

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£7,500

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

PROJECT AIMS

- Organise a study visit to a leading European nation, that has already invested in Next Generation Access (NGA) to deliver Next Generation Broadband (NGB).
- Arrange talks and visits during the study visit to better understand the advantages of superfast broadband and how community groups and rural businesses use it.
- Arrange talks and visits during the study visit to better understand and rural businesses use it.
- Invite members of local groups interested in NGA and NGB in the Forth Valley and Lomond area on the study visit.
- Publish a report of findings from the visit to disseminate to more local community groups.
- Help build understanding and demand for NGA and NGB in the FVL LEADER area.

PROJECT DETAIL

Following a pilot project carried out by Clackmannanshire Council, in December 2010 FVL LEADER LAG (working with Clackmannanshire and Stirling Councils) were awarded £187k by the Scottish Government for the ClacksMax project (see pxx). Following the ClacksMax project the FVL LEADER LAG became aware of other communities within the rural Forth Valley that were interested in exploring how they could improve both the quality and coverage of Broadband in their areas.

The FVL LEADER LAG was approached by representatives of Blairlogie Community Council to discuss their interest in establishing an optical fibre network (NGA) to deliver 'superfast' broadband (NGB), which covers speeds greater than 24Mbps and up to 1Gbps. (NGA refers to the establishment of new infrastructure based on a network of fibre optic cables that will replace the existing 'twisted pair' copper cables used for telephone.)

In light of the imminent implementation of the high speed ClacksMax broadband project, and the growing interest in the establishment of optical fibre networks (NGA) to deliver NGB from both local groups and the Scottish Government, FVL LEADER LAG identified that there was a good opportunity to arrange knowledge transfer from European partners to our rural communities.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

47 DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR FVL AREA

APPLICANT

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER LAG

www.fvl.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

PROJECT AIMS

- Recruit a Consultant to work with FVL LAG and LEADER Support Team to gather information by interviewing Support Team members, LAG members, successful and unsuccessful applicants, enquirers who did not apply and projects from the previous LEADER+ programme.
- Publish a review of the impact of LEADER in FVL area to date, which will be widely circulated.
- Produce a report for FVL LAG and partners only, looking at recommendations and actions.

PROJECT DETAIL

The FVL LEADER Programme had been operational since March 2008. The total funds available for allocating to projects had become £2.98million. At the time of this project (2012) the Programme had committed £1.64m and had £1.34m left to commit before December 2013.

The LAG wished to critically evaluate the grant 'investment' to date; to inform it's activity in the remaining months of the 2007-2013 Programme, as well as start planning a strategy for 2014 and beyond.

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SECOND STEPS - SUSTAINABLE TOURISM BUSINESS GRANT SCHEME

PROJECT AIMS

- Appoint a consultant to work with the tourist business community in the Forth Valley and Lomond area to develop good quality applications to the fund.
- Hold regular monitoring meetings between the consultant and a LEADER LAG sub-group.
- Complete an evaluation at the end of the project so as to learn lessons from the scheme as a whole and the support provided to businesses.

PROJECT DETAIL

This was another project that Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER led on and was to build on the experience of the pilot Sustainable Tourism Business Grant Scheme project that was managed by Stirling Enterprise (STEP) (see p96).

The aims of this project were similar to the earlier project in that it was a way to get businesses to engage with LEADER and achieve an improved tourism offering while delivering a local community benefit. This project engaged a consultant to promote and deliver the scheme as the work was additional to that currently resourced, and specific tourism knowledge and business development skills were needed.

LESSONS LEARNED

With the recruitment of targeted key skills for a given period, the scheme was quickly up and running. The role required a wide range of skills, which must include an attention to detail and a knowledge of LEADER rules that the LEADER programme demands. This required the consultant to work from the LEADER team base at times so as to benefit from LEADER team "process" knowledge. The evaluation will be completed by March 2014.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

APPLICANT

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER LAG

www.fvl-sustainabletourism.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER £27,625

Stirling Council £3,000

£3,000 Scottish Enterprise

Clackmannanshire Council £2,000

£2,000 Falkirk Council

Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority £1,000

£1,000 West Dunbartonshire Council

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'OUR PARK' BUSINESS & CONSERVATION SCHEME

APPLICANT

Friends of Loch Lomond and the Trossachs

www.lochlomondtrossachs.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£14,978 — Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£14,978 — Argyll and the Isles LEADER

£8,000 — Friends of Loch Lomond and the Trossachs

£8,000 — Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority (In-kind)

£5,000 — Scottish Natural Heritage

£5,000 — Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority

£5,000 — Scottish Enterprise

PROJECT AIMS

- Recruit and support businesses to engage in the project.
- Raise funds from visitors to Park through voluntary contributions via participating businesses.
- Promote and market 'Our Park' scheme.
- Identify and support projects with environmental, wildlife and recreational impact through visitor donations.
- Promote and market environmental projects funded through the 'Our Park' scheme.

PROJECT DETAIL

The applicant sought funds to pilot a way to raise funds from visitors to the National Park through voluntary contributions. These were then to be used to support local projects with environmental, wildlife and recreational impact.

The project was an innovative way to invest in the conservation and enhancement of the natural heritage of Loch Lomond and Trossachs by providing a new mechanism for local business to fundraise on a voluntary basis in return for marketing benefits.

LESSONS LEARNED

There was some frustration with LEADER process as the charity had to subsidise the project during the time it took for approval of two separate Local Action Groups.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

GARGUNNOCK COMMUNITY CENTRE REFURBISHMENT

APPLICANT

Gargunnock Community Trust

www.gargunnock.com/community-centre

CONTRIBUTIONS

£185,882
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£90,000
Gargunnock Estates Trust

£79,352
Climate Challenge Fund

£44,100
Community Fund Raising

£20,000
Stafford Trust

£2,100
Own resources

PROJECT AIMS

- Agree with Stirling Council to take on the ownership of the two buildings that make up the community centre.
- Refurbish the two buildings by developing the kitchen, joining the main hall with the smaller hall and incorporating an acoustic Partition.
- Improve the upstairs offices to create two small office spaces to lease out.
- Ensure part of the new facility is community space for use by local groups.

PROJECT DETAIL

This was a large capital project to turn an underused community centre into a flexible space, accessible to all, that is self sustaining. By renovating the rooms in the two buildings for a variety of purposes, Gargunnock Community Trust planned to provide a community facility that would be usable for many different purposes.

The inclusion of 2 offices for rent enabled the Trust to generate income to help maintain the facility in the future. They also felt it important to have a kitchen attached to the events space so that they could hold bigger events that would be catered.

LESSONS LEARNED

Due to slippage in the project as a result of prolonged discussions on the transfer of ownership, the costs for some of the items increased.

The applicant took advantage of this delay by applying for funds from the Climate Challenge Fund, which was not open during their original fundraising, to raise additional money to pay for improved energy efficiency measures.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

GARTMORE VILLAGE HALL DEVELOPMENT PHASE 1

APPLICANT

Gartmore Association

www.gartmore-village.co.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER **£10,000**

£10,000 BIG Lottery Fund

Own resources **£1,055**

PROJECT AIMS

- Assess the feasibility of and identify a preferred design option for a future community centre building, and rural performing arts hub.
- Appoint a consultant to produce a business plan and a design team to produce alternative designs for inclusion in a feasibility study.
- Subject the feasibility study to community consultation to determine a preferred option to move forward.

PROJECT DETAIL

In 1979, Gartmore Association acquired ownership of a former church which fulfils an important function within the village offering space for local organisations to meet and a facility for holding events. However, the continued deterioration of the building in a reduction in its use as it became less and less fit for purpose. Consultation undertaken by the Association reaffirmed demand for the facility within the local community, thereby offering a community remit for the refurbishment or rebuilding of the Village Hall.

The applicant identified that the first step in this process was to commission consultants to assess the feasibility of a future community building, create a business plan for it and put the identified options out to local consultation. This project had a future ambition of fundraising for the preferred option identified by the community.

LESSONS LEARNED

- How to consult with the community and produce an Action Plan.
- How to apply for initial funding.
- How to tender for and appoint necessary professionals.
- How to produce designs and cost plans for Feasibility Studies.
- How to analyse community opinions and produce an agreed report.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

GARTMORE VILLAGE HALL AND RURAL ARTS VENUE

APPLICANT

Gartmore Community Trust

www.gartmore-village.co.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£673,110 Big Lottery Fund

£200,000 Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£160,000 Gartmore Development Trust Ltd

PROJECT AIMS

- Engage a design team to progress the development of Gartmore Village Hall to a stage to achieve planning permission.
- Tender for a contractor to undertake the building work based on the design team's costed plans.
- Provide Gartmore with a sustainable Village Hall that will meet the social, cultural, educational and indoor sports activity needs of all sections of the local community.
- Sustain existing community activities and provide new services and facilities such as the formation of a Rural Arts Venue, a Community Cinema, a heritage display and new parking in the centre of the village.
- Create new employment opportunities to manage and maintain the facility.

PROJECT DETAIL

Gartmore is a small rural community with poor public transport. The Gartmore Association leased a former church and established a Village Hall in 1952 and then bought the hall in 1979. The Gartmore Association then became part of Gartmore Community Development Trust who set about fundraising to develop the hall into a facility fit for multiple community purposes and office space for private lets to ensure some income.

LESSONS LEARNED

- How to work with funders and the Design Team to match costs with final funding.
- How to tender for a contractor using a PQQ on Public Contracts Scotland.
- How to use a Value Engineering process to cut costs and match the tender with the funding.
- How to manage the construction process and provide necessary client input.
- How to draw down from multiple funding sources and manage the cash flow.
- How to provide information and maintain community involvement.
- How to prepare for the management of a new Village Hall.
- How to develop necessary skills and pass them on.

Photos © Gartmore Community Trust

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GARTMORE VILLAGE HALL & RURAL ARTS **VENUE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

APPLICANT

Gartmore Community Trust

www.gartmore-village.co.uk/page19.htm

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER **£10,000**

£6,000 Awards for All

£2,000 Scottish Community Foundation

£2,000 RIAS Community Projects Fund

PROJECT AIMS

- Refurbish the Hall and modify it to provide flexible, multi-use accommodation that will allow expansion of its functions and meet new demands including a Rural Arts Venue.
- Employ a Design Team to work up local plans into costed architects designs.
- Appoint builders to build the costed plans created by the design team.

PROJECT DETAIL

To provide much needed facilities for the community, Gartmore Association, in 1952, leased a former church and established a Village Hall. In 1979 the Association bought the Hall from the Church of Scotland and in 2011 ownership was transferred to Gartmore Community Trust Ltd. The Hall has been the focus of village life, providing the only community space in Gartmore but, the building was increasingly unfit for purpose and use was declining.

This ambitious project sought to appoint consultants to design and cost a new village hall and tender for the construction work.

LESSONS LEARNED

- How to involve the community to establish needs.
- How to prepare more complex grant applications.
- How to tender using Public Contracts Scotland and appoint a Design Team.
- How to conduct an Options Appraisal and finish with an agreed design.
- How to prepare a Planning Application.
- How to develop a design for a Building Warrant application.

Photos © Gartmore Community Trust

54 MENSTRIE COFFEE SHOP AND CYCLE HIRE PROJECT

APPLICANT

Gordon and Angela Griffiths

www.fvl.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£36,000

Own resources

£10,000

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

PROJECT AIMS

- Renovate two disused garages in Menstrie Main Road and turn them into a cafe and bike hire business.
- Work in partnership with a local social enterprise, Recyke-a-Bike, who will supply and maintain the bikes for hire.
- Offer the use of the cafe to local groups for meeting space and community use.
- Use local produce wherever possible in supplying the café.

PROJECT DETAIL

Menstrie had grown in size considerably in the years before this application but remained with very few facilities. There had also been a large investment in the cycle paths surrounding Menstrie and so this project was spearheaded by a couple who were keen to add to Menstrie's shopping amenity and use the existence of the cycle network to create a tourism business. Alongside this, they were keen that the community would be keen to use the cafe for meetings and events. This project was funded through the Sustainable Tourism Business Grant Scheme.

LESSONS LEARNED

A good tendering procedure doesn't need to be a very time consuming affair if you put your mind to it and are focussed.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

55

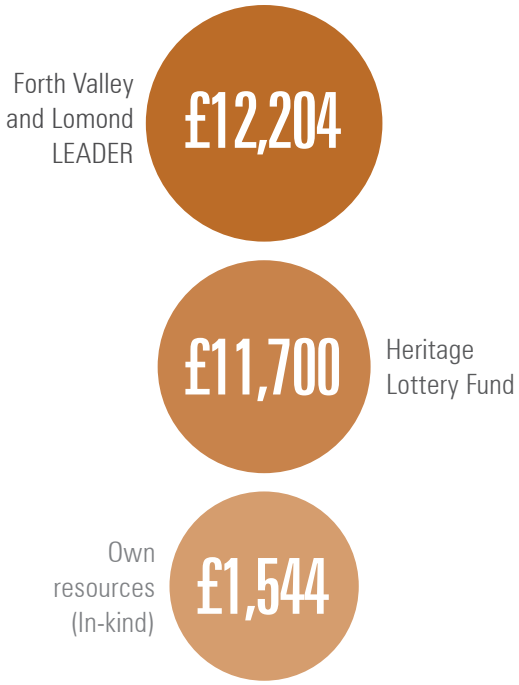
THE SCHOOLS ORCHARD PROJECT

APPLICANT

Grounds for Learning

www.ltl.org.uk/scotland

CONTRIBUTIONS



PROJECT AIMS

- Inspire and support children and the wider community to understand, enjoy and make practical steps to conserve local fruit-growing heritage.
- Establish an orchard in each of the three schools and make links with existing orchards.

PROJECT DETAIL

Scotland has a strong and diverse but largely forgotten fruit growing heritage. The loss of traditional orchards across Scotland since the 1970's has been significant and is estimated to be as much as 95% in some regions.

The Schools Orchard Project seeks to counteract the loss of Scotland's traditional orchards, enhance biodiversity and increase understanding of the cultural and socio-economic value of our traditional orchard habitats. Working with three schools in the Falkirk area over two years, the programme involved engaging the school communities in research, activities and celebration of these protected habitats, including seasonal visits to a local heritage orchard and the design, planting and maintenance of an orchard in the grounds of each school. The project formed part of a wider programme involving fifteen schools across Scotland.

A Schools Orchard Booklet was created following the completion of the project, which is available to download at **www.ltl.org.uk/pdf/web-copy1347959334.pdf.**

LESSONS LEARNED

One of the biggest successes of the project is highlighted in the number and variety of ways in which the project schools have achieved their aims. The project template has allowed flexibility and creativity, allowing the schools and their project advisor, to develop and run the individual projects in line with the interests of the staff and children.

Partnering schools with an established heritage orchard as part of their project really helped to bring the world of orchards alive for the children and staff involved. Always inform the relevant local authority staff about any planting undertaking in school grounds. Check with them regarding location to avoid underground utilities and to ensure the mowing teams are aware of the presence of new trees and hedging.

56

RURAL H2H PILOT

APPLICANT

Heart to Heart

www.hearttoheart.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

- £9,996 — Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER
- £5,000 — Parish Development Fund
- £5,000 — Santander
- £1,800 — Callander Kirk Hall office rental (In-kind)

PROJECT AIMS

- Recruit, induct and train a Lifeguide Co-ordinator.
- Recruit and train volunteer lifeguides.
- Promote individual Lifeguide support.
- Provide volunteering opportunities.
- Implement and maintain a virtual support network for volunteers.

PROJECT DETAIL

The applicant sought funding to pilot an innovative support service for young people following research involving adult clients when discussing their children and concerns for them during and after the time of their divorce or separation.

The applicant sought to recruit a 'Lifeguide' Coordinator to recruit and train volunteer Lifeguides who would then support young people in the rural area who were going through parental relationship breakdown. The term 'Lifeguide' came from the research as the role was not of a youth worker or a counsellor, but effectively someone who, in the capacity of providing one-to-one support, guides the young person to have a positive outlook on life and their future.

LESSONS LEARNED

Project partners reported that there is a real need for this service in the rural area but it was difficult to see how this perception of need links with young people being referred.

There is a need for a great deal of flexibility in how projects like this are developed so that it is bespoke to the needs of young people rather than one size fits all.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

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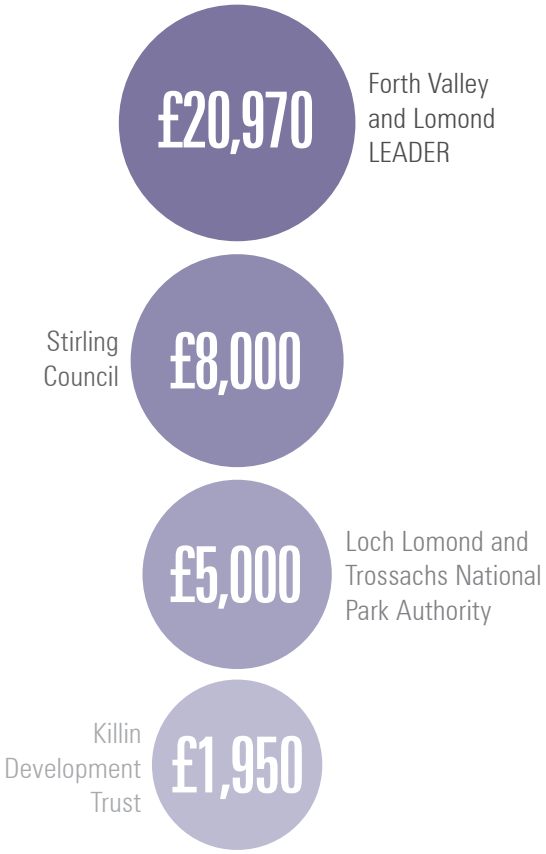
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT WORKER

APPLICANT

Killin and Ardeonaig Community Trust

www.killincdt.co.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS



PROJECT AIMS

Employ a Project Support Worker to work with the community of Killin and Ardeonaig to deliver four clear objectives, which were to:

- Prepare an audit of space needs and available space and create a written assessment of usable space for community activities.
- Work with the Old Mill Sub Group to advance the feasibility study, business plan and assist with the process for the Old Mill to become a viable asset for the community and visitors.
- Work with the Breadalbane Park User Group and the wider community to enhance this local asset for present and future use.
- Assist the Sports Pavilion Sub Group to explore possible development plans to secure its future and help the Sub group develop a sustainable business plan.

PROJECT DETAIL

The applicant was aware that there were a number of local assets such as the Old Mill building and the Sports Pavilion and that they could be utilised for the community benefit but wanted to undertake a period of consultation prior to developing anything.

This project was to employ someone to undertake all the consultation work and build the results of these into Business Plans and feasibility studies. The end objective was that these documents would form the basis of future fundraising efforts and that the value of the community assets would be realised.

LESSONS LEARNED

If you're struggling to meet the grant conditions then it's always worth getting in touch with the Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER team as they may well have suggestions for how to meet these conditions and it may avoid a premature and unnecessary ending of your project.

Photos © Killin and Ardeonaig Community Trust

58 WIDENING THE EXPERIENCE

APPLICANT

Killin Youth Group

www.facebook.com/pages/Killin-Youth-Group/218359431515215

CONTRIBUTIONS

£4,617	£3,331	£1,000	£286
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER	Awards for All	Cash back for Communities	Killin Youth Group Funds

PROJECT AIMS

- Integrate Abernethy Trust staff into the community to increase the capacity of community groups.
- Create a safe forum for young people to meet.
- Create opportunities for young people to socialise away from school.
- Create opportunities to widen the experience of young people through monthly outings.
- Offer opportunities for local young people to get work experience at Abernethy Trust in a variety of service sector skills.

PROJECT DETAIL

Killin has had no youth club since 2005 when the club folded due to a withdrawal of paid staff from Stirling Council. Killin Youth Group was recently set up as a positive response to complaints received by Killin Community Council about young people drinking.

This project will involve establishing a new youth group which will be a vehicle for young people to participate in community life; organising regular activities, fundraising and widening experience through monthly visits away from the area.

Retaining good part-time youth workers is difficult in a rural area and the link with the Abernethy Ardeonaig Outdoor Centre is a Positive response to this.

LESSONS LEARNED

The original project plan was to organise twelve trips out of the village over the course of the year but through the project it became clear that six day trips per year and a two day residential was more appropriate given the availability of young people being constrained by work and exams.

Photos © Killin Youth Group

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OUR COMMUNITY, OUR FUTURE

APPLICANT

Kilmadock Development Trust

www.doune.co/index.php/community-site/community-groups/39-kilmadock-development-trust-and-information-centre

CONTRIBUTIONS

£6,500 — Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£2,000 — Kilmadock Development Trust (In-kind)

£1,000 — Windfarm Trust

£1,000 — Stirling Council

£1,000 — Stirling Rural Housing Association

£1,000 — Loch Lomond and Trossachs Community Partnership

£500 — Kilmadock Community Council

PROJECT AIMS

- Prepare, advertise, recruit and manage a consultant to manage the community planning process and prepare Community Action Plan.
- Encourage the people within the community more aware of the community they live in.
- Bring the community closer together.
- Provide a vision for the community.
- Ensure that future projects and actions reflect the wishes of the people in the area.

PROJECT DETAIL

Kilmadock Development Trust covers the communities of Doune and Deanston and aims to increase the awareness of local people of the community that they live in. They also aim to bring local people closer together and through the development of a Community Action Plan, provide a vision for the community and ensure that future projects and actions reflect the wishes of local people.

LESSONS LEARNED

When putting your community action planning project together it is a good idea to include costs for printing the document at the outset because it is difficult to raise funds for a project that has already started.

Photos © Kilmadock Development Trust

WIRELESS BROADBAND FOR KINLOCHARD

APPLICANT

Kinlochard Village Hall

www.kinlochard.org/village_hall.html

CONTRIBUTIONS

£2,125

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

PROJECT AIMS

- Install wireless broadband in Kinlochard Village Hall for visitors to use freely.
- Organise IT courses for locals to improve IT literacy.

PROJECT DETAIL

Kinlochard Village Hall Committee was established to manage the hall for the benefit of the residents of and visitors to the village of Kinlochard. The hall is let to a wide variety of groups. Prior to the application, the committee was awarded funding to renovate and extend the hall to facilitate and promote local cultural activities for village residents and to provide facilities for visitors.

To build on this, the village hall committee wanted to install broadband in the hall to allow on-site connectivity for users of the hall, facilitate courses in IT literacy for local residents and provide a "free to use" Wi-Fi internet hotspot for the use of visitors and local residents. It would also make the hall a more flexible space and increase the number of people using it and so increase the committee's revenue.

LESSONS LEARNED

Gauging the interest of the community in your project prior to application is vital in ensuring your project is community based and community led.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

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SHERIFFMUIR HERITAGE TRAIL

APPLICANT

Kippendavie Group Trust

www.sheriffmuirpark.co.uk/heritage-trail

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER — £12,500

£12,500 — Own resources

PROJECT AIMS

- Finalisation of the Consultants brief for the Sherrifmuir Heritage Trail.
- Advertise, Tender and appoint a consultant's team.
- Manage the consultants through the consultation, design, cost planning and communication process.
- Review the delivered report and hold a close out meeting.

PROJECT DETAIL

Kippendavie Group Trust own and manage over 1,500 acres of land to the east of Dunblane. They had previously undertaken a research study into opportunities for developing paths from Dunblane into and around their land. This research involved a small amount of consultation with path users as to their reasons for taking access and future wants but the applicant looked to LEADER to part fund a More detailed community consultation and feasibility study into the path development including fully worked up costs.

Photos © Kippendavie Group Trust

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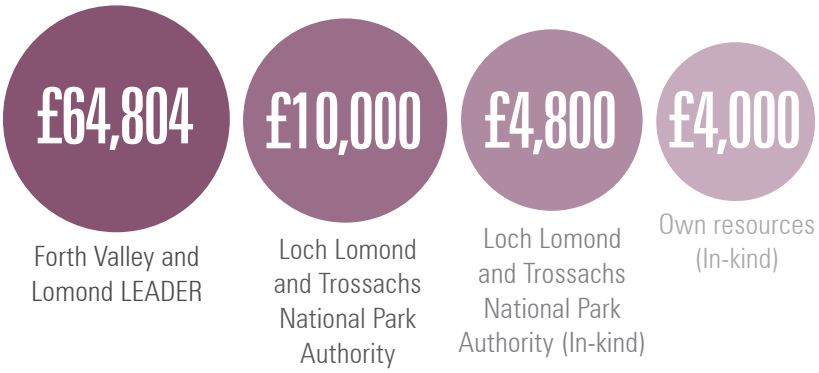
NATIONAL PARK SKILLS PARTNERSHIP: IMPLEMENTATION

APPLICANT

LLTNP Community Partnership

www.thecommunitypartnership.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS



PROJECT AIMS

- Recruit a Project Manager and a p/t assistant to manage and administer the project.
- Establish a 'Skills Partnership Group' containing businesses and trainers from the tourism and land-based sectors.
- Produce an operating plan and establish a pilot programme of training and education opportunities.
- Produce a marketing plan to promote tourism and land-based sectors as careers of choice.
- Develop and establish long-term career opportunities for young people in tourism and land-based sectors.

PROJECT DETAIL

Communities in the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park area found that they had two common issues affecting their areas. Their populations were aging due to a lack of opportunities for young people and there was a corresponding lack of skilled workers available.

The applicant sought to address these issues by starting a skills partnership linking training providers with trainees and so offering local opportunities for young people and increasing the skills in the tourism and land-based sectors.

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HERITAGE CONNECTIONS IN THE PARK

APPLICANT

Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Community Partnership

www.thecommunitypartnership.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER — £3,970

£3,040 — GU (In-kind)

Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority — £1,500

£1,000 — Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority (In-kind)

PROJECT AIMS

- Host a park-wide cultural heritage event in Carrochan, Balloch.
- Organise a number of follow on heritage visits to sites and existing trails in the four areas of the park within two months of this springboard event.
- Establish and develop a network for those with an active interest in the cultural heritage of the National Park area.

PROJECT DETAIL

The cultural heritage of the National Park is recognised for its special qualities and it has attracted significant interest from a variety of sources – local groups seeking to connect with their past, academic researchers and national organisations.

The work of each of these groups has produced valuable new knowledge of the Park's past. Valuable as this work has been, each initiative has largely been undertaken in isolation and a need was felt to make connections between individuals and groups. The applicant sought to make these connections by holding a large event followed by many smaller cultural events to across the National Park.

LESSONS LEARNED

Building an event brochure into the project was an excellent way of providing a level of sustainability to what was otherwise a one off-event. The brochure took the form of an illustrated directory of historic and heritage organisations active in the National Park giving recipients a useful resource for future years.

Photos © Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Community Partnership

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TROSSACHS 2010 (SCOTT'S LAND) - COMMUNITY GRANT PROGRAMME

APPLICANT

Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Community Partnership

www.thecommunitypartnership.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£19,500

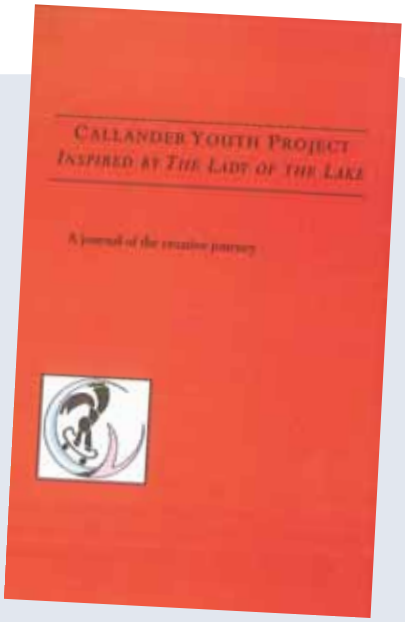
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£19,500

Own resources

PROJECT AIMS

- Provide a Grant Programme allowing community and business groups to apply for grants to develop an activity or event marking the 200th anniversary of the publication of The Lady of the Lake.
- Recruit a part time Project Manager to support applicants to help ensure that approved projects are successful.
- Market each grant funded event through the general programme of Scottsland.
- Set up a project steering group with members from the National Park and Stirling Council Community Team.



PROJECT DETAIL

This project was set up to coincide with the bicentenary of the publication of Sir Walter Scott's Lady of the Lake, which was set in the Trossachs and sparked the first tourist drive for the area. The applicant sought funds to run a small grant scheme to encourage local groups and businesses to organise events and attract tourists.

The grant scheme was to be for groups applying for funds between £250 - £2,500 and would fit in with a wider Scottsland Festival. Each funded event would be marketed within the wider Scottsland Festival and a steering group would be appointed to oversee the running of the grant scheme.

LESSONS LEARNED

While this was administratively onerous, it was very successful with 20 projects receiving funding and new groups being set up as a result. In future it would probably be better to increase the minimum amount of grant on offer to maximise the administrative capacity.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

CONSERVATION OF LOGIE OLD KIRK

APPLICANT

Logie Old Graveyard Group

www.logieogg.com

CONTRIBUTIONS

Heritage Lottery Fund **£41,000**

£18,000 Stirling Council (In-kind)

£18,000 Historic Scotland

£15,000 Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£150 Clackmannanshire and Stirling Environment Trust

PROJECT AIMS

- Stabilise and repair the ruined church using appropriate materials.
- Repair the boundary walls and arched gateways and rebuild them where necessary.
- Re-erect the fallen gravestones and clear the long grass to allow clear visibility.
- Convert the small watch hut into an interpretive centre for the site relating its history and giving information for genealogical research.
- Level the ground so that it is safe underfoot for visitors.
- Install litter bins and a bench for visitors.

PROJECT DETAIL

Following an enquiry from New Zealand regarding a gravestone in the Kirk yard, a visit was made to take a photograph and the condition of ruin and graveyard was notably bad. Many of the gravestones were unstable and dangerous, bushes and long grass obscured stones and the ruin itself was badly cracked and damaged due to overgrowth of ivy and self-seeded trees.

Shortly after this, a Trust was constituted with supporters willing to do something about the site and a team of volunteers tackled the overgrowth from the surrounding bushes and the Council laid over 30 stones that were seriously unsafe. This project sought to address the condition of the ruin, the boundary walls and the gravestones; and to interpret the history of the site to visitors.

LESSONS LEARNED

Get as much information and advice as possible before you start as it helps when you have to answer question from officials of various organisations. If construction work or anything that needs Planning Permission is involved start that early, it is an interminable process and can put your funding at risk if it takes too long.

Employ a professional project manager early it may cost money but will save you weeks of time.

Keep records of everything no matter how trivial it seems at the time, even emails. Keep minutes of all meetings particularly those with official bodies and keep copies of everything that you send away. Back up with hard copy in case the computer crashes. You will have a mountain of paper but proof of what you have done if needed.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

THE 4 BS BUS
BIKE SERVICE

APPLICANT

The Lomond 4B's Journey Association

www.fvl.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£14,800	Argyll and the Isles LEADER
£6,500	Strathclyde Public Transport
£5,000	Scottish Enterprise
£3,700	Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER
£2,000	West Dunbartonshire Council
£1,500	Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority
£1,000	Argyll and Bute Council
£1,000	SUSTRANS
£1,000	Own resources
£500	Lomond and Clyde Tourist Association

PROJECT AIMS

- Development of a bike carrying bus service linking into train and ferry services.
- Strong marketing of the service to day visitors and those staying in the area.
- Increase the number of visitors to the area and the time visitors spend there.

PROJECT DETAIL

Following a research visit to the Lake District in March 2006 to study the B4 (Boat, Boot, Bike and Bus) network which links transport in the Windermere area, the applicant looked at how the Loch Lomond area could benefit from a similar model. The long-term vision was fora series of integrated multi-modal journeys supported by local tourist businesses promoted as a coherent product offering an excellent opportunity for visitors to experience the National Park in a sustainable way.

The applicant sought funds from FVL LEADER to finance the pilot of a bus service that would link in with train and ferry timetables and allow the transportation of bikes. This would allow visitors to experience more of the Loch Lomond area in a sustainable way getting to places on bikes or on foot or using public transport.

LESSONS LEARNED

Marketing the service was difficult and most users of the service came from word of mouth or through seeing the bus passing. Leaflets advertising the service can be very useful but the key to their effectiveness is distributing them widely and in appropriate places.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

67 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY

APPLICANT

Lomond Folk Festival

www.lomondfolkfestival.com

CONTRIBUTIONS

£4,000	£1,766	£1,766	£468
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER	Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority	West Dunbartonshire Council	Own resources

PROJECT AIMS

- Recruit consultants to consult members of the community and businesses to find out their perspective on how the Festival affects them.
- Work with consultants before and during the Lomond Folk Festival (27th – 29th July).
- Receive final report and share information with other organisations, other folk festivals and local businesses and local community.

PROJECT DETAIL

This was an interesting project to research the role and impact the annual Lomond Folk Festival has on the local people and business community.

The applicant was keen that the project would not simply be about producing a report but that the process would be a way of engaging with the community and inspiring further volunteer help with it.

LESSONS LEARNED

Use Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER whenever you come up against a problem. They have a wealth of experience and can use that to help you with whatever problems or issues you find yourself with.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

LOMOND WRITERS' GATHERING

APPLICANT

Lomond Writers' Gathering

www.fvl.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£2,000	£1,000	£1,000
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER	Own resources	Own resources (In-kind)

PROJECT AIMS

- Organise and hold a Gathering for Writers in Balloch with events and workshops for adults, youth and particular need groups.
- Bring creative writing to the general as well the specialist audience in the Lomond area.
- Established writers and publishing professionals will give 'how-to' talks aimed at assisting new writers, facilitating or improving chances of publication by a constant interaction with the world of professional writing.
- Hold story-telling and open mic sessions to give the writers a chance to experience audience reaction and the general public access to the work of local writers.

PROJECT DETAIL

This project came about through a coming together of locals with professional experience of writing and publishing and others with aninterest in the literary heritage of the area wanting to develop local writing and literacy.

The applicant sought funds to organise and hold a number of events aimed at encouraging and inspiring new writers and to communicate the area's heritage. The project costs were modest compared to other projects with multiple events, which reflects the applicant's desire to hold the events in free spaces like shopping centres to make them as accessible as possible.

The project resulted in a publication: Telling Tales of Heroes, a book of short stories by new writers together with the best Scottish literary talent (James Kelman, Agnes Owens and Alasdair Gray) who gave their support to the venture and were present at the prize-giving.

LESSONS LEARNED

While holding events in public free spaces saved money and made the events more accessible to the public, it did have a down side in terms of some venues, such as a public bar, being on the noisy side.

Photos © Lomond Writers

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MAINS FARM MOUNTAIN BIKE TRACK

APPLICANT

Mains Farm Wigwams

www.mainsfarmwigwams.com

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER — £10,000

£8,007 — Own resources

Scottish Enterprise — £5,000

PROJECT AIMS

- Build a Mountain Bike Skills loop/track.
- Increase activities for existing customers and attract new visitors.
- Make the mountain bike track a community resource where local children and families can improve their biking skills.
- Improve the quality of the adjacent core path.

PROJECT DETAIL

Mains Farm was an established holiday accommodation provider with a number of wooden wigwams for nightly rent before applying to LEADER but wanted to develop the facilities for their customers and for local people. They decided to build a 450 metre long mountain biking course on land next to the wigwams, which would be available for customers and visitors to Thornhill to use. As this was funded under FVL LEADER'S Sustainable Tourism Business Grants Scheme, it was also important that the facility be openly available for the local community to use too.

The track was designed with a green route aimed at beginners and children but with a longer route for more experienced riders, which had alternative easier routes to bypass obstacles. The track was made with obstacles designed to help users develop their Mountain Biking skills, techniques and confidence.

LESSONS LEARNED

Registering for VAT part of the way through the project meant that some of the project costs could not be claimed. This left a project underspend but also an opportunity to add value to the project by using the underspend to increase the scale and quality of it.

Photos © Mains Farm Wigwams

MCLAREN COMMUNITY LEISURE FLEXI-SPACE

APPLICANT

McLaren Community Leisure Centre

www.mclarenleisure.co.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£16,875

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

PROJECT AIMS

- Put in place the essential basic features to make the space flexible, such as fixtures, fittings, chairs, tables and dividing curtains.
- Install additional electrical supplies to match the different requirements for use in each sub-area including emergency lighting.
- Purchase removable floor covering to ensure the carpet is protected during activities.
- Increase the number and range of activities taking place in the centre and thereby increasing income.

PROJECT DETAIL

This space within the Leisure Centre had been underused with only 50-60 people using the 11,000 square metres for bowling for part of the year. The applicant had already filled in the ditches and banks to create a space that was usable for a variety of purposes but needed extra funds to make it more flexible

It was a very large area so the applicant needed dividing curtains in order to subdivide it and use it for multiple purposes at the same time. They also needed a lot of basic equipment like tables and chairs to make its use more flexible.

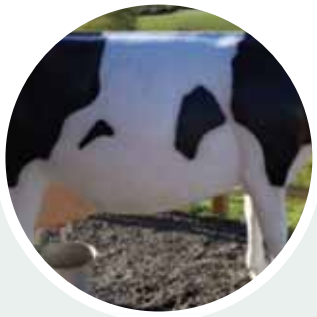
The outcome was not only to create a flexible space but to allow it to be used for activities already going on elsewhere in the building and so freeing up that space for other activities.

LESSONS LEARNED

The purpose of this project was to increase the flexibility of the McLaren Community Leisure Centre and so enable more activities to take place in it. The scale of increased use was greater than anticipated - what started as a project based on community need turned into a substantial income generator in its own right.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

71 COW TO CONE



APPLICANT

The Milk Barn

www.themilkbarn.co.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER **£1,525**

£1,525 Own resources

PROJECT AIMS

- Purchase a fibreglass cow to show visitors and pupils where milk comes from.
- Install interpretation around the cafe to explain the process milk goes through from the cow to ice cream in the cone.
- Hold visits from nearby schools to communicate dairy farming and how milk is processed.

PROJECT DETAIL

At the time of the application, the Milk Barn hadn't yet opened but was planned as a combination of an ice-cream parlour and a cafe with interpretation explaining the process milk goes through as it gets from the cow to the cone.

It was this desire to spread the message of dairy farming and food processing that drove the applicant to use their facility for taking and teaching school pupils. The project was to organise school visits to the facility and purchase a fibreglass cow that pupils could practice milking along with interpretation for the walls of the building.

LESSONS LEARNED

Chatting over your project idea with a Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER Development Officer can be very helpful as they can turn your project in a direction that best fits LEADER's strategic aims.

Photos © The Milk Barn

CONSTRUCTION OF NEW THEATRE ENTRANCE AND CAFE BAR

APPLICANT

Mugdock Country Park

www.mugdock-country-park.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£60,000

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£120,000

Own resources

PROJECT AIMS

- Deliver a new and expand existing services for visitors to the park of all ages, abilities, social and cultural backgrounds.
- Cater for all theatre goers as part of the visitor experience.
- Enhance the arts programme including theatre, craft, music and film to local communities.
- Develop the annual International Music Festival.
- Create a sustainable business model and create employment opportunities.

PROJECT DETAIL

Mugdock Country Park wanted to widen their facilities for visitors and felt there was a need to provide refreshments for visitors to Mugdock's theatre, particularly for evening performances. There was a need to build an entrance to the theatre that would link the entrance to daytime and evening cafe and bar trade.

This project meant that the applicant increased the number of jobs directly through the cafe bar being open in the evening and increased the income to Mugdock, helping to make it sustainable.

LESSONS LEARNED

Planning permission was an obstacle in this project as listed building consent was needed before work could start. It is well worth securing this or preparing for it at an early stage because the needs of the planners can have ramifications on your project.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

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BUILDING THE TEAM FOR ART IN THE PARK

APPLICANT

Mugdock Makkers Art & Craft Gallery Ltd

www.mugdockmakkers.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER — £6,213

£3,912 — Stirling University

Mugdock Makkers (In kind) — £1,800

£501 — Mugdock Makkers

PROJECT AIMS

- Support the collective and develop a sensible approach to business planning, promotion and marketing.
- Help build the team spirit and collective thinking which will support our future sustainability.

PROJECT DETAIL

Mugdock Makkers are a collective of around 25 artists formed in 2007 to assist in the promotion and sale of locally made and produced art work. They sought a grant from Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER to help build a business plan to enable the organisation to consolidate its development to date and grow further.

This was quite an innovative group at the time with an art gallery being run and staffed by a collective of artists. A similar business model has since been developed by Creative in Callander (see p19).

LESSONS LEARNED

The team building element was fundamental to the success of the project.

Photos © Mugdock Makkers

DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR OCHIL LEISURE CENTRE

APPLICANT

Ochil Leisure Enterprises

www.ochilleisureenterprises.org.uk

www.ochilleisurecentre.co.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£30,225

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£30,225

Own resources

PROJECT AIMS

Advertise for and recruit a full time Development Manager for a two year fixed term period who will then:

- Contribute to the business planning process.
- Design and facilitate a large scale community involvement process to inform the 'Phase 2' refurbishment of the complex.
- Secure funding to enable OLE to purchase further specialist business advice and support and specifically in developing the 'phase 2' 5 year business plan.
- Generate income through fundraising, contributing to and taking action on the Fundraising Strategy.

PROJECT DETAIL

The future of the Ochil Leisure Centre is dependent on raising over £1m to develop the facility and refurbish it to a modern standard. This project funded the employment of a Development Officer who would fundraise for these future long-term developments but also simply to buy much needed basic facilities that all leisure entres need such as badminton nets, tennis rackets and table tennis tables.

Ultimately the aim is for the centre to become self-sustaining, attracting enough paying visitors to continue staying open and thrive.

LESSONS LEARNED

So much of your project may rest on your recruitment process so it's worth making sure that it's as rigorous as possible.

Photos © Ochil Leisure Enterprises

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OCHILS ORIENTATION: **VIRTUAL VISITOR/ EDUCATION CENTRE**

APPLICANT

Ochils Landscape Partnership

http://ochils.org.uk/olp/index.html

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER **£29,512**

£16,765 Heritage Lottery Fund

EDF Energy **£8,107**

£5,684 Scottish Natural Heritage

PROJECT AIMS

- Create educational resources about the Hillfoots area and host these on the existing website, **www.ochils.org.uk.**
- Create a 3D virtual landscape of the Ochils Landscape Partnership area with the ability to zoom in showing selected changes over time.
- Create films utilising a combination of computer generated imagery, computer animation, graphic reconstructions, 3-D graphic models, creative animation, stop-start animation, modern and historic photographs and voiceovers.
- Work with each of the six OLP area primary schools who will create animations representing a specific aspect of their local natural environment.

PROJECT DETAIL

After consulting with the local communities in the hillfoots the Ochils Landscape Partnership found that there was a demand for a visitor centre of some sort in the area. It was decided that this visitor centre would be virtual, existing on a website rather than spending the significant sums needed to model and maintain a building for the purpose.

Much of the content for the website would be made by consultants creating animations of the changes in landscapes along with podcasts and geocache trails but there would also be a number of animations made by local school pupils with the help of professional animators. All of this content will be made available through the website.

LESSONS LEARNED

It is a good idea to be as rigorous as possible when managing a tendering procedure and to double check the LEADER requirements. Once a process has been followed, it's too late to resolve a problem short of re-tendering.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

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HISTORIC KIRKYARDS TRAIL

APPLICANT

Ochils Landscape Partnership

www.ochils.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£166,031
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

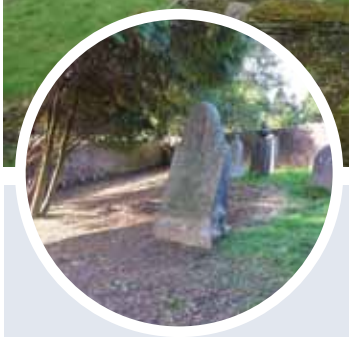
£102,949
Heritage Lottery Fund

£64,096
EDF Energy

£16,228
In kind contributions

£13,555
Clackmannanshire and Stirling Environment Trust

£6,000
Logie Old Graveyard Group



PROJECT AIMS

- Restore elements of seven different historic kirkyards by undertaking historic wall repairs using original lime mortar techniques, restoring the gravestones and repairing Dollar Old Kirk and Session House.
- Undertake remedial tree work and vegetation clearance.
- Train one person in specialist conservation skills.
- Encourage volunteers to research the kirkyards and record the gravestones along with their history and make the research available through a database of gravestone information on the applicant's website, **www.olp.org.uk.**
- Open the kirkyards up to the public.

PROJECT DETAIL

The Historic Kirkyards Trail sought to carry out urgent conservation work to the seven kirkyards in the hillfoots and to install interpretation at them. The applicant was already working on a linking path between them all and this project looked to make the historic attractions on the route better quality in terms of their physical condition and their interpretation.

At the same time the applicant sought to involve as many people in the project as possible and so recruited many volunteers to systematically record all the gravestones in every kirkyard and make the research available in a database that would be accessible through the Ochil Landscape Partnership website,

LESSONS LEARNED

It is a good idea to progress your project quickly because a hold up with one aspect can have long lasting ramifications and leave you with little time to spare.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

77 STEP FORTH

APPLICANT

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Scotland

www.rspb.org.uk/scotland

CONTRIBUTIONS

PROJECT AIMS

- Recreate salt marsh and saline lagoons for birdlife and otters.
- Installation of pipe and weir.
- Creation of new landward embankment and lagoons and islands.
- Installation of a car counter in the car park.
- Provide demonstration model for alleviation of flood risk.

PROJECT DETAIL

The Skinflats Tidal Exchange Project at RSPB Scotland's Skinflats Nature Reserve was the first of its kind in Scotland. The LEADER grant went towards the first phase of the project to create approximately 2ha of saline lagoons and 8ha of saltmarsh at Bothkennar Field. This habitat would then be used by breeding and wintering waders for which the Firth of Forth Special Protection Area (SPA) is designated.

Large scale landscaping was necessary such as inserting a pipe into the seawall (to allow water to flow into Bothkennar Field) and constructing a weir (to reduce the water's outflow). The tidal flood defence was moved from the seaward boundary to the landward boundary of the site where a new flood embankment was created, making the first example of this form of flood alleviation in Scotland.

LESSONS LEARNED

There were a few teething problems with the pipe going through the seawall which meant that safety reasons prevented us from doing as much work with local schools as we would have liked. This was remedied and links were then established with the schools that sowed the seeds of them using the site on a regular basis.

Photos © RSPB

INNER FORTH LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT YEAR

APPLICANT

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Scotland

www.rspb.org.uk/scotland

CONTRIBUTIONS

£100,000	£30,093	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£5,000	£5,000
Heritage Lottery Fund	Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER	RSPB	SEPA	Falkirk Council	Stirling Council	Central Scotland Forest Trust

PROJECT AIMS

- Employ 3 staff members to develop a project covering the Inner Forth area.
- Build understanding of the Inner Forth area and carry out local consultation to understand the aspirations of communities within it.
- Develop project ideas and assess the capacity to deliver projects during the delivery phase.
- Produce a Landscape Conservation Action Plan for the Inner Forth area.
- Commission specific pieces of work such as an audit of existing access strategies, an interpretation plan, archaeological investigations, an historical review, a detailed Landscape Character Assessment and wetland habitat surveys.

PROJECT DETAIL

The Inner Forth landscape has been shaped by people's interaction with the land. It has a rich history and wealth of features reflecting its industrial past and has areas of national and international natural heritage designations.

However, the area suffers from significant deprivation, unemployment and habitat loss. Poor access provision, limited heritage interpretation and little investment in habitat or in building restoration has spurred the Inner Forth Landscape Partnership to focuses on valuing and enhancing the area's rich heritage, as a way of helping regeneration and revitalisation, creating focal points for access to and enjoyment of the landscape, encouraging active participation and improving quality of life.

LESSONS LEARNED

Employing a Project Officer at the early stages in the design of a complex programme gives sufficient time to write early funding applications and continuity between the different stages of programme development.

Community engagement takes time, particularly within a diverse landscape such as the Inner Forth. Organising specific events to meet and consult local people can be time consuming.

Prior to this project, some of the partner organisations talked to each other and collaborated on specific projects, but never on such a scale and often only on a bilateral basis. Partnership building takes time, and the Project Officer found that the most effective way of building the partnership was by identifying and working to peoples' individual strengths and expertises.

Photos © I Kirkman - RSPB

DEVELOPING THE POTENTIAL OF THE INNER FORTH LANDSCAPE

APPLICANT

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Scotland

www.innerforthlandscape.wordpress.com

CONTRIBUTIONS

Heritage Lottery Fund **£23,200**

£21,543 Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

Central Scotland Green Network **£13,257**

PROJECT AIMS

- Enhance and restore the historical and natural character of the Inner Forth area.
- Provide new facilities for local communities.
- Improve physical access for local people and visitors.
- Improve intellectual access through on-site interpretation of natural and built heritage, technology, education programmes and events.
- Provide valuable green space for people to exercise in and enjoy.
- Provide opportunities for volunteers to learn new skills and take an active part in improving their environment.

PROJECT DETAIL

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds had previously received a grant from Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER to investigate the potential for the Forth Valley area to attract Heritage Lottery Funding for a wide range of community projects benefitting the environment. The applicant was ultimately successful in gaining funds towards a Landscape Partnership Scheme project and the applicant sought further funding from LEADER for the delivery of theprojects that had been planned in the previous year.

LESSONS LEARNED

Maintaining a good network of volunteers is a big job but well worth the time invested in terms of the work volunteers can take on and the good feeling engendered towards your project.

Photos © RSPB

THE LOCH LOMOND AND TROSSACHS RURAL HOUSING ENABLER

APPLICANT

Rural Housing Service

www.ruralhousingscotland.org

CONTRIBUTIONS

£11,488 — Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£11,488 — Argyll and the Isles LEADER

£20,000 — Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park

£5,000 — Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority (In-kind)

£2,525 — Own resources

PROJECT AIMS

- Build the capacity of communities to take action on their housing needs.
- Increase collaborative working between communities and housing organisations within the Park.
- Identify and attract new alternative sources of housing funding to enable rural housing proposals.
- Identify land for affordable housing in supported communities and help secure this for development.
- Develop solutions to enable empty homes to be brought back into use.

PROJECT DETAIL

Lack of affordable housing was highlighted in a number of the Community Action Plans developed by communities in the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park. The Rural Stirling Housing Association applied to LEADER for funds to employ an enabler to work with these communities to identify local housing needs and empower the communities to work towards solutions to these needs.

This was what is called an "Action 2" project and involved funding from both Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER and Argyll and the Isles LEADER.

LESSONS LEARNED

It is important to the success of a short term project to retain the project officer for the duration of the project. Planning for a change in staff and ensuring there is a handover period can help to mitigate the effect.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

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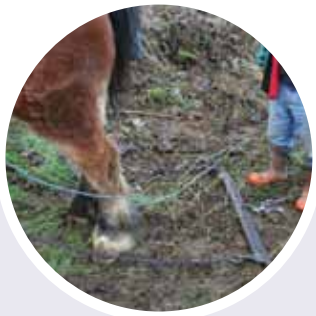
WORKING FARM WOODLANDS



APPLICANT

Scottish Agricultural College

www.sruc.ac.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forestry Commission £4,000

£3,000 Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER £2,725

£2,725 Argyll and the Isles LEADER

PROJECT AIMS

- Investigate motivation among farmers to undertake woodland work.
- Explore economic and environmental value of woodlands on farms.

PROJECT DETAIL

This project was to research the economic and environmental impact of farm woodlands and publish a feasibility study on the findings. The feasibility study would then investigate the potential to develop and implement the Working Farm Woods Project.

Another key output of the project was to run two workshops to inspire farmers to get involved in forestry and to enable them to take advantage of European funding opportunities for this work. Site visits were also organised to show farmers and landowners the potential for woodland.

LESSONS LEARNED

All participants believed that a kick start officer was necessary to make face to face visits to deliver their aspirations. The right person would be prepared to make the most of opportunities, be prepared to take the risks associated with innovation and be able to give good practical advice to stakeholders. Delivery would require that the Officer was supported by an organisation with the capacity to do so and the respect of the stakeholders.

Participants also valued the workshops and demonstrations as a means of learning.

Photos © Scottish Agricultural College

FLANDERS MOSS VIEWING TOWER AND ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

APPLICANT

Scottish Natural Heritage

www.snh.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£100,000

Own resources

£49,700

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

PROJECT AIMS

- Build a new visitor facility on Flanders Moss.
- Undertake an oral history project involving local inhabitants in order to compile a story of Flanders Moss.
- Provide material from the oral history project for the interpretation of the National Nature Reserve in the new visitor facility.
- Increase people's understanding of peatlands and their immense natural and cultural value and encourage people to stop using peat based compost products.
- Make Flanders Moss a destination which attracts people and provides visitors with a novel and rewarding experience.

PROJECT DETAIL

This project was planned to build on the "Connecting People with the Peatland" heritage project by creating a unique blend of interpretation and visitor facilities at Flanders Moss National Nature Reserve. Flanders Moss is one of the largest areas of raised bog habitat in western Europe, but also has a rich human history intertwined with this special wildlife value. Building a specially designed viewing tower and using it to showcase interpretation based on oral histories from the local communities brought people closer to the natural and the human aspects of the story of Flanders Moss through an innovative mix of aesthetic design and local voices.

LESSONS LEARNED

Resourcing a project such as this was a real challenge. Incorporating the oral history project involving local people added to the staff time required but added a very valuable extra dimension to the interpretation available to visitors.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

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SAVING SCOTLAND'S RED SQUIRRELS, WEST OF SCOTLAND

APPLICANT

Scottish Wildlife Trust

www.scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/what-we-do/scotlands-red-squirrels

CONTRIBUTIONS

PROJECT AIMS

- Establish a survey and monitoring system to monitor impact of conservation activities and recruit volunteers to carry out the surveying and monitoring.
- Employ a project officer to provide grey squirrel control and manage the volunteers.
- Increase community awareness and increase community engagement.
- Significantly reduce grey squirrel population.
- Increase the red squirrel population and safeguard their populations.

PROJECT DETAIL

The Scottish Wildlife Trust sought to address the incursion of grey squirrels into red squirrel habitats in the Loch Lomond and Trossachs and Argyll areas. To do this they sought a grant from Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER and Argyll and the Isles LEADER to employ a project officer who would create and manage the volunteer network that would undertake the work to show where the grey squirrel incursion routes were. Armed with this knowledge, the project officer would then know where to concentrate their energies in controlling that population.

LESSONS LEARNED

While volunteers are important to the success of a project, keeping good timesheets is essential in order to use their efforts as match-funding.

84 LINKING COMMUNITIES ON THE EDGE OF THE CAMPSIES

APPLICANT

ScotWays

www.scotways.com

CONTRIBUTIONS

£4,688 Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£3,750 Scottish Natural Heritage

£938 ScotWays

PROJECT AIMS

- Build a bridge over a frequently impassable river.
- Involve volunteers in the building of the bridge.
- Market the existence of the bridge and the route on the heritage paths website (**www.heritagepaths.co.uk**) and through the publication of a leaflet showing the paths around and into the Campsie Fells area.

PROJECT DETAIL

A long-distance walking route going north to south through the middle of Scotland had been in existence for many years but was frequently blocked by a burn regularly in spate. This burn was the only barrier on an off-road route from Kippen to Kilsyth but required an 11m long bridge to span it.

The applicant also published a leaflet on paths in the area to promote the area's path network and the bridge.

LESSONS LEARNED

Initially this project seemed straight forward and the timescale of completion within two months was entirely achievable. Involving volunteers in the build brought in a level of complexity that added to the time taken. As the bridge was built over the winter there were periods where building work was not possible. It is worth being realistic about project timescales as this delay had a knock on effect on other work that wouldn't have been as noticeable if we had planned for it.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

85 SHIELDHILL YOUTH/COMMUNITY HALL PROJECT

APPLICANT

Shieldhill Youth/Community Hall Project

www.shieldhillych.co.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Falkirk Environment Trust — £50,000

£28,745 — Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

Own resources — £1,000

PROJECT AIMS

- Develop a Community Recreational Resource, with the park open to the public at all times.
- Engage with the community from the outset in the development and creation of this resource so that there is a strong sense of Community ownership.
- Consult with stakeholders identifying opportunities for ongoing community involvement making informed decisions as a community.
- Sustain the project by raising money through small lets.

PROJECT DETAIL

Shieldhill is an old mining settlement near Falkirk that suffered from an under provision of facilities, poor quality green space, neglect, vandalism and anti-social behaviour. These issues were identified through dialogue with stakeholders and Falkirk District Council in their Local Plan.

The applicant sought to address these issues whilst maximising the potential of the park and regenerating the village. They did this by building a multi-purpose community building in the park for local clubs and groups to use as a meeting place or event space.

LESSONS LEARNED

There had been sleepless nights, especially at start of project over increased costs, and it needed constant monitoring to keep the project to budget. However, there was obvious community pride when at the stage of the building being on site.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

BLINKBONNIE
PLAY, SENSORY AND WILDLIFE PARK

APPLICANT

Slamannan Environment Action Group

www.facebook.com/Slamannan.Environmental.Action.Group

CONTRIBUTIONS

£25,000	£25,000	£2,990
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER	Falkirk Environment Trust	Own resources

PROJECT AIMS

- Clear play park of dilapidated equipment and old safety matting.
- Install new play equipment.
- Improve landscaping around the new play area.
- Finalise the design for the sensory and wildlife garden and build it.
- Design and install interpretation panels for wildlife garden and in natural biodiversity in the wetland area.

PROJECT DETAIL

Slammanan Environment Action Group were formed shortly after the dissolution of the local Community Council and quickly set about trying to improve the local park facilities. Before applying to LEADER, the park facilities consisted of a two baby swings, a climbing frame and a bench while there was a frequently flooded football pitch and derelict changing rooms.

SEAG secured funding to employ consultants to consult with locals about what they would like to see in a new park and the results of this process formed the basis of their application to LEADER. Following the funding from LEADER, the park facilities were much improved with better play equipment and more benches. A wildlife and sensory garden was planned, but this is now to be part of a bigger project for a bigger area, with help from the Central Scotland Forest Trust.

LESSONS LEARNED

This delivery of this project followed extensive community consultation. Basing it on what the community wanted meant there was increased community ownership and people valued the park more for their input.

Photos © Slamannan Environment Action Group

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SOUTH GREEN DRIVE PLAYPARK AND COMMUNITY GARDENS

APPLICANT

South Green Drive Tenants & Residents Association

CONTRIBUTIONS

Falkirk Environment Trust — £49,957

£13,908 — Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

Own resources — £155

PROJECT AIMS

- Install play equipment.
- Create a community garden with raised planters and wildlife areas.
- Strengthen the community by creating a multi-use space.
- Create an outdoor teaching space.
- Provide long term maintenance of the facility.

PROJECT DETAIL

Following a survey of residents, the applicant found that there was a strong desire for upgrading the local park (which had lost swings) with new play equipment and a biodiversity area as well. The applicant had already raised funds to produce costed plans for the park and this project was to realise those plans.

The community were particularly keen that the new park become a space for young people to learn about wildlife and ecology and so a teaching space was factored into the end park design.

LESSONS LEARNED

Money was saved as a result of the tendering process meaning that more money could be spent on a slightly enlarged and better quality product. There was enough left in the budget for one more piece of park equipment and some extra landscaping.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

MCLAREN COMMUNITY MULTI USER SYNTHETIC PITCH

APPLICANT

Stirling Council

www.mclarenleisure.co.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£152,000 SportScotland

£150,000 Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£150,000 Cashback for Communities

£40,825 Stirling Council

£20,463 School Fundraising

£6,000 Callander Windfarm

£1,537 Kilmadock Windfarm Trust

PROJECT AIMS

- Build a full-size all-weather astro-turf football pitch at McLaren Community Leisure Centre.
- Provide the Callander community and school catchment area with a facility for football, cricket, rugby and other sports all-year round.
- Encourage physical activities and support inclusive participation in sports and community events.
- Support the health and well-being of Callander and surrounding rural communities.

PROJECT DETAIL

Stirling Council (working closely with local community groups) was awarded Ł150,000 towards the 'McLaren Community Multi User Synthetic Pitch' project. The MUSP project will build a new full-size 3g synthetic pitch (106m x 70m) that meets the sporting requirements of a range of activities, including hockey, football, non-contact rugby and informal kick-about, within the open space at McLaren High school in Callander.

Local people driving this project aim to create a community facility that will be a centre of excellence for sporting activities and promote health and well being for all.

LESSONS LEARNED

The weather, which made it difficult to use the pitches year round, has also made replacing the grass with synthetic turf difficult. As a result of poor weather the project timescale slipped significantly, which impacted on administering the LEADER grant.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

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BERRYHILLS - MORE THAN A FOOTBALL PITCH - PHASE 1 & 2

APPLICANT

Stirling Council

www.fvl.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£84,108
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£79,598
SportScotland

£35,000
Landtrust

£5,000
Clackmannanshire and Stirling Environment Trust

£400
Cowie United (In-kind)

PROJECT AIMS

- Removal of existing blaze surface and replacement with grass.
- Removal of existing lighting and replacement with modern floodlights.
- Improving pitch drainage.
- Provide Cowie with sufficient football pitches for local demand.
- Improve local people's health and wellbeing.
- Encourage participation in sports among local people.

PROJECT DETAIL

Such was the growing popularity of football amongst all age groups of Cowie residents that they found they needed to increase the facilities from one playable pitch. The community, in partnership with Stirling Council, applied for funding to bring the Beryhills Ash Park back to a playable state and improve the Berry Braes Park for use for younger teams.

LESSONS LEARNED

The project has had unanticipated outputs such as donated containers that will serve as changing rooms for teams using the pitches. However, this has resulted in unanticipated problems in terms of finding somewhere suitable to site them.

Photos © Stirling Council

PROVOST'S PARK
BRIDGE OF ALLAN

APPLICANT

Stirling Council

www.bridgeofallan.com/Community/CommunityCouncil.html

CONTRIBUTIONS

£36,000	£25,000	£11,000
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER	Bridge of Allan Common Good Fund	Own resources

PROJECT AIMS

- Transform the Provost Park in Bridge of Allan.
- Create a Victorian style village square.
- Make the small space an attraction for visitors and locals to visit.
- Promote the use of the square for events such as carol singing.

PROJECT DETAIL

The Provost's Park is situated in the centre of Bridge of Allan and is regarded as the focal point of the village. The park has toilets that are accessible to disabled people and a ramp up to them that were built by Stirling Council in 2009 but the rest of the park is bare concrete.

Bridge of Allan's 2010 Community Action Plan asserted their first priority under the heading "gardens and village enhancement" was to redevelop the Provost Park and improve the visual impact of the new ramp and railings. This project planned to redevelop the park with a Victorian theme that reflects the village's Victorian history and make the park a visitor attraction in its own right.

LESSONS LEARNED

Managing a contract after it has been awarded and the project started is as important to the success of a project as submitting a "request for quotation" process.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

FORTH VALLEY - SUSTAINABLE TOURISM BUSINESS GRANT SCHEME

APPLICANT

Stirling Enterprise Park (STEP)

www.fvl-sustainabletourism.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER **£15,000**

£15,000 Stirling Enterprise

PROJECT AIMS

- Set up a grant scheme aimed at businesses working with community groups to apply to grow their tourism product and deliver some community benefit.
- Appoint a Project Officer to market the scheme and work with the businesses to develop their applications.
- Support rural businesses to grow and develop in a sustainable manner.

PROJECT DETAIL

STEP came to Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER as they were concerned about the lack of small grants available to businesses to grow their business. After discussion with LEADER staff, it was decided that the most appropriate use of LEADER funds was to develop the sustainable tourism offering and deliver community benefits.

This approach led to a partnership between STEP and FVL LEADER where STEP would employ a staff member to work with businesses and communities to develop applications that would be put forward to the LEADER LAG for decisions alongside applications to the general fund.

LESSONS LEARNED

Even with the audit requirements of an ERDF funded programme, the bureaucracy was a frustration for businesses who are used to implementing decisions quicker.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

92 STIRLING TASTES GOOD - ROYAL HIGHLAND SHOW EXHIBITION 2012

APPLICANT

Stirling Enterprise Park (STEP)

www.stirlingtastesgood.com

www.stepstirling.co.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£10,000	£7,500	£2,500
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER	Own resources	Own resources (In-kind)

PROJECT AIMS

- Hold an 8m by 8m stand at the Royal Highland Show showcasing Stirling's food and drink industry.
- Work with smaller food and drink businesses in rural Stirling to exhibit the produce of companies who would not ordinarily be able to afford to exhibit at the show.

PROJECT DETAIL

Stirling Enterprise found that many smaller food and drink companies in Stirling were very keen to exhibit their produce at the Royal Highland Show but felt the costs were prohibitive. STEP worked with the businesses to develop an application to LEADER to help fund the costs for a stand for the companies who would not Have otherwise been able to display there. The project also planned to develop a "Stirling Tastes Good" brand and business grouping to take other projects forward into the future.

LESSONS LEARNED

On reflection the timescale from the March LAG approval to the time taken to draw in the match exhibitor element of the project funds (the exhibitor stand contributions) left us with a very short window to recruit, resource and commission the brand development work. While we were largely happy with the end result, this created a very intense period of concentrated effort that meant we had to make and stand by design decisions that we may have adapted or enhanced with the benefit of time on our side.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

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BLANE COMMUNITY ALLOTMENTS

APPLICANT

Strathblanefield Community Development Trust

www.strathblanefield.org.uk/allotments/allotments.html

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER — £37,125

£19,000 — Climate Challenge Fund

Own resources (In-kind) — £13,400

£4,725 — Own resources

PROJECT AIMS

- Engage a contract manager to develop the specification in consultation with the group, tender for the work and manage the contract.
- Set out the area to comprise 20 allotment plots, each with its own small hut, optional greenhouse, compost bins and rainwater butts.
- Build a community garden with disabled access, raised beds and mini-plots.
- Build a store for tools and children's toys and to host committee meetings.
- Build a composting toilet.
- Create a permeable hard standing area for delivering bulky/heavy items.

PROJECT DETAIL

Members of the Strathblane Community noticed a lack of community growing space in the immediate vicinity and a growing demand for this and decided to set up their own allotment association. Strathblanefield Community Development Trust Blane Valley Allotments Group was then started and looked to apply for funding from LEADER to develop their ideas into reality.

This project was to create an advanced allotment site with a composting toilet, communal shed and individual shed for each plot-holder.

LESSONS LEARNED

Before the project started the specific site was changed because the original site was opposed by some sections of the community. We greatly underestimated the time needed to allay residents' fears about the site, and how long it would take to get formal planning permission and a lease with the landowner. On the new site we were able to achieve a thriving site with 30 plots but no composting toilet. The changes meant a lot of work revamping the budget, and this would have been easier if we had not itemised the original budget in so much detail in the LEADER application form. The other funding sources changed too: we were able to get a larger grant from the Climate Challenge Fund, which meant we did not have to apply to the Lottery or Clackmannanshire and Stirling Environment Trust as planned.

Photos © Strathblanefield Community Development Trust

STATION ROAD PATH IMPROVEMENT: BLANEFIELD – A FEASIBILITY STUDY

APPLICANT

Strathblanefield Community Development Trust

www.strathblanefield.org.uk/CDT/cdt.html

CONTRIBUTIONS

£7,821	£437	£432
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER	SCDT	Own resources

PROJECT AIMS

- Appoint experienced feasibility study consultants.
- Project manage consultants to undertake technical feasibility study of upgrade of 600 metres of the old railway line path from Station Road to the Blane Valley Allotments entrance.
- Undertake community consultation on the detailed proposals.
- Complete preparatory clearance work along the sides of sections of the path.

PROJECT DETAIL

The applicants had previously successfully managed a LEADER funded project to create allotments for Strathblanefield residents and this project was intended to build on the earlier project. There was a desire that the new allotments should be accessible by off-road paths including an old railway line that runs past the allotment site.

This project was to commission consultants to undertake a feasibility study on bringing the last undeveloped section of disused railway line linking Blanefield residents to the school, library, shops and village halls at the other end of the village back into an easily accessible condition for walkers, cyclists and wheelchair users.

LESSONS LEARNED

Raising the £150,000 necessary to develop a vital local path was a step too far for us and so we sought to make the job of raising those funds easier by first carrying out a feasibility study. Sometimes it's better to do more preparatory work, drawing on professional experience, to make the job of carrying out a big project easier.

Photos © Strathblanefield Community Development Trust

SCOTFEST

APPLICANT

Synergy Event Solutions

www.scotfest.co.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER — £3,556

£1,216 — Own resources

Clackmannanshire Council — £1,000

£841 — Synergy Event volunteers (In-kind)

£150 — Bollini's of Alva

PROJECT AIMS

- Hold a two day food festival in Alva.
- Involve two local primary schools in a new part of the event within Scottish Food & Drink Fortnight.
- Promote healthy living using locally grown foods to attendees.
- School children will display and sell food that they have grown at school.
- Professional chefs will cook healthy affordable food at the event with the children's produce.
- Provide free take-home recipe cards, and marketing information to attendees.

PROJECT DETAIL

The applicant took on the running of this event from the Wee County Development Trust after it had been run for two years. The applicant sought to engage more with local schools and businesses and ran a project teaching pupils the value of growing their own produce and held cooking demonstrations at the event.

LESSONS LEARNED

The funding allowed us to provide a more comprehensive approach to providing an educational aspect via the school project and cooking demonstrations and also in the production of items such as the recipe cards which visitors could take home. This inclusive element of the event helped make the outcomes for people last much longer than a simple one day event.

Photos © Synergy Event Solutions

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THORNHILL - A NEW COMMUNITY FUTURE

APPLICANT

Thornhill Community Trust

www.thornhillstirling.org

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

Stirling Community Planning Partnership

Rural Stirling Housing Association

PROJECT AIMS

- Establish a local Steering Group.
- Employ contractors to carry out the main consultation process aided by volunteer effort.
- Develop and produce a new Community Action Plan for the Thornhill area of rural Stirling.
- Print the Community Action Plan and distribute it to Thornhill inhabitants.

PROJECT DETAIL

Thornhill Community Trust received support in 2002 to prepare the first Community Action Plan, and to set up the Thornhill Community Trust. This was a hugely important process resulting in some notable successes and benefits. However, the applicant became increasingly aware that this Action Plan was out of date and losing relevance.

Thornhill had experienced a lot of changes in the eight years since the original Community Planning process and the applicant was keen to capture the opinions of the new inhabitants to form a new community mandate.

LESSONS LEARNED

There were no problems with controlling the expenditure but the project needed additional funds from Thornhill Community Trust to cash flow the project. The Trust did not have any significant reserves and much of the cash flow was enabled by a small upfront payment by another funder for a different project that was running concurrently. Cash flow was therefore a consideration when deciding how to divide the project up for submitting each of the three claims to LEADER. FVL LEADER did provide the first claim on an upfront payment basis making the process easier.

THE THROSK HUB

APPLICANT

Throsk Community Enterprise

www.facebook.com/throsk.centre

CONTRIBUTIONS

£84,755
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

£37,742
Own resources

£26,438
GH Groundworks Ltd (In-kind)

£10,575
MTS Repairs and Recovery (In-kind)

£5,000
Awards for All

£5,000
Stirling Council

PROJECT AIMS

- Demolish the existing community centre and build a new one.
- Use the building to host the existing youth club, community cafe adult learning classes.
- Increase the range of activities available in the community centre to include meeting rooms, office space and space for businesses.

PROJECT DETAIL

Throsk Community Enterprise felt there was a need to develop the existing community centre, which was a portacabin that had been second hand when installed over 20 years before the application. Having decided this building was no longer suitable they sought funds to demolish it and replace it with a building better suited to local needs.

It was designed with a main hall, small hall, a kitchen, two meeting rooms, youth space, office space, toilets and storage space. It would be accessible to all and would meet the current and future needs of the community while helping to create an income to help maintain the building and services.

LESSONS LEARNED

We feel we've learned a great deal about project management through delivering this project.

LEADER were great to work with as communication was excellent with someone available to speak to about the project at all times.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

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REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT INCLUDING DISABLED ACCESS

PROJECT AIMS

- Provide a ramped walkway suitable surface for wheelchair users and people with poor mobility.
- Build raised beds that will be suitable for children, people with chronic back problems, and wheelchair users.
- Create a safe haven where minibuses can turn and drop of passengers in a traffic free zone.
- Plant a wildlife/ heritage orchard.
- Build a composting toilet

PROJECT DETAIL

The Tillicoultry allotment site fell into disrepair and became a dumping ground during the 1980 and 1990s but by the mid 2000s a group of like minded people formed a new committee and started to work the site. During the initial period of re-establishing the site a young member established their plot only to give it up due to a disability that prevented working at ground level. The applicant was later approached by primary schools, vulnerable young people and local care home residents, who all wished to use the site but the lack of facilities resulted in only limited access being possible.

The applicant sought to address these limitations by installing a suitable surface for wheelchair users and raised beds suitable for children, people with chronic back problems, and wheelchair users. An orchard was to be planted and a composting toilet installed, both of which were to be accessible to wheelchair users and a safe area where minibuses could park and children exit safely was to be built.

LESSONS LEARNED

Having successfully completed a LEADER funded project and understood how the process works, we feel we would be happy to apply again to LEADER for contribution to a relevant project.

APPLICANT

Tillicoultry Allotment Association

www.tillicoultry.org.uk/local.htm

CONTRIBUTIONS

Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER **£15,028**

£10,000 Awards for All

Own resources (In kind) **£6,000**

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

TROSSACHS AREA **COMMUNITY TRANSPORT**

APPLICANT

Trossachs Area Community Transport

www.ta-ct.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Big Lottery Fund **£34,328**

£24,404 Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

Own resources **£2,287**

PROJECT AIMS

- Develop a takeaway food and drink facility at a community owned garage.
- Create a tourist and community information point and public transport information service.
- Build bike wash facility for off-road cyclists in the garage grounds.
- Enable Wi-Fi and internet facility for visitors marketing enterprise.
- Extend range of items sold in shop to include local produce and crafts (not stocked elsewhere).

PROJECT DETAIL

Trossachs Area Community Transport (TACT) were recently awarded Big Lottery funding to bring the Aberfoyle garage site into community ownership to ensure that a fuel supply remains in the area and to develop additional local services.

This was a very large capital project also involving costs of purchasing the petrol station and upgrading the critical fuel infrastructure. The elements the applicant came to LEADER for were primarily building work to create an improved public space with retail and bike facilities and marketing the facility.

LESSONS LEARNED

It is best to try and anticipate potential problems and plan for them. However, some issues have such a strong impact that they can result in delay to project elements for long periods.

Photos © Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER

MOSS O' BALLOCH

APPLICANT

West Dunbartonshire Environment Trust

www.fvl.org.uk

CONTRIBUTIONS

£109,800	£80,000	£29,200	£600
Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER	West Dunbartonshire Council	West Dunbartonshire Environment Trust	West Dunbartonshire Environment Trust (In-kind)

PROJECT AIMS

- Improve the drainage by building a Sustainable Urban Drainage scheme (SUDS).
- Build a performance space to enable events to be held year round.
- Create parks for children and young people.
- Improve directional and interpretation signage.
- Improve the landscaping throughout the parkland to increase the biodiversity and aesthetic value of the land.

PROJECT DETAIL

The Moss O'Balloch, as its name suggests, is a boggy space and heavy rains flood it. Following some wet summers and cancellations of events, West Dunbartonshire Environment Trust found that the community were keen to improve drainage so that the space could be used year round without fear of events being called off.

The Moss O'Balloch was also primarily grassland and the applicant was keen to make better use of the land by building more parks and improving access into and through the parkland. It was also intended that the landscaping work increased the biodiversity value of the area.

In order to gain planning permission for the work, the applicant used a phased approach where the first was to develop detailed plans and gain planning permission and the second was the implementation phase. The applicant's desire for all work to be as high a quality as possible resulted in an overspend and they applied to LEADER again to fill in some of this funding gap.

LESSONS LEARNED

Be prepared to apply to LEADER again for additional funds if the costs overrun. As contingencies are not eligible costs in LEADER applications, the project costs grew beyond our budget and we had to apply again for additional money.

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