Revitalising Communities in the Highlands
Ag Ath-bheothachadh Coimhearsnachdan na Gàidhealtachd

The Highland LEADER Programme 2007-2013
Prògram LEADER na Gàidhealtachd 2007-2013
Highland LEADER Programme Area

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Foreword

Communities in the Highlands are enterprising, dynamic and forward-looking. They actively seek to overcome the challenges of their remoteness and access to services by taking control of assets and implementing projects that address local needs and realise local opportunities. The Highland LEADER Programme has helped these communities to help themselves in turning their aspirations into reality.

This brochure showcases the success of our very different and distinctive communities in moving towards a confident, sustainable future and describes their experience of the journey. We have selected the featured projects to demonstrate the diversity and innovation of the Programme. The list of projects approved, at the back of the brochure, show the total number and range of projects of equal merit which have received LEADER funding. LEADER funding of £14,735,694 has been approved towards 367 projects.

The current LEADER Programme is a challenging one to deliver but for me its legacy is not the paperwork involved, but the projects delivered and the benefit they bring to our rural communities.

Whether operating strategically or locally, partnership is the ethos of everything we do through the Highland LEADER Programme. By adopting a unique, devolved decision making structure we have made LEADER ‘local’ and have enabled as many members of the community as possible to become actively involved.

It has taken the work of a large number of people and organisations across Highland to make the LEADER Programme successful. I would specifically like to acknowledge the work of the Local Area Partnerships and the Strategic Local Action Group for their help and assistance, but wish to conclude by thanking all our applicants, as, without you and your work, LEADER would not be helping to revitalise and sustain rural Highland.

Andy McCann
Chair of the Highland Strategic Local Action Group

Maiden Pap and Morven from Braemore, Caithnes
Facal-toisich

Tha coimhearsnachdan air Ghàidhealtachd adhartach, sùbailte agus comasach. Bidh iad a’sireadh dhòighean gus buaidh fhaighinn air na dùbhlain a tha an cois na h-iomallachd agus gus cothroman nas fheàrr fhaighinn air seirbheisean. Bidh iad a’dèanamh seo le bhith a’gabhail smachd air maoin, a’cur pròiseactan an gnìomh a chuireas aghaidh ri feumalachdan ionadail agus a ghласas chothroman ionadail. Tha Prògram LEADER na Gàidhealtachd air a bhith a’ cuideachadh nan coimhearsnachdan seo gus iad fhèin a chuideachadh ann a bhith a’toirt nam mòr-mhiannan aca gu bith.

Tha an leabhran seo a’ taisbeanadh cho soirbheachail ’s a tha cuid de na coimhearsnachdan diofraichte agus sònraichte againn air a bhith ’s iad a’ gluasad a dh’ionnsaigh misneachd mhàiriannach, agus tha e cuideachd a’mineachadh na dhèirich dhaibh air an raithadh thuige. Thagh sinn na pròiseactan a tha a’nochdadh san leabhran gus ionadachd agus urchliomh a’Pòrògraism a shealtainn. Tha na stàitistigean a’sealtainn cho lionmhor agus farasaing ’s a bha na pròiseactan co-mholt a fhuar a moineachadh bho LEADER na Gàidhealtachd.

‘S e dùbhlan a bhios ann am Prògram LEADER a th’ann an-dràsta a chur an sàs, ach dhomhsa, chan e a dhileab an obair-phaípeir a bha an sàs, ach na pròiseactan a chuirear an gnìomh leis, agus a’ bhuanachadh a tha iad a’toirt do na coimhearsnachdan ionadail againn.

Co dhiubh a tha sinn ag obair gu ro-innleachdail no gu h-ionadail, ’s e com-pàirteachas tús-smuain gach rud a bhios sinn a’dèanamh tro Pòrògraism LEADER na Gàidhealtachd. Le bhith a’gabhail ri structar co-dhùnadh cho-riomnte, rinn sinn LEADER na rud ’ionadail’, ’s thug sinn cothrom do dh’uireadho ’s a b’urrainn de dhaoine sa choimhreachadh a dhol an sàs.

Thug e oidhirp mhòran dhaoinne agus bhuidhean air feadh na Gàidhealtachd gus am Pòrògraism LEADER a dhèanamh soirbheachail. Bu mhatr leam gu h-àrainn obair nan Com-pàirteachas Sgìre Ionadail Aithneachadh, gu h-ìomh nan le obair na Bhuidhe-n-gnìomha Ionadail Ro-innleachdail air sgàth ’s na thug iad de thaic ’s de chuideachadh. Ach tha mi arison co-dhùnadh le bhith a’toirt taing agus buidheachas do gach duine a chuir a-steach airson moineachadh, oir, às ur n-aonais, agus às aonais ur n-obraich, cha bhiodh LEADER na mheadhan air coimhearsnachdan dùthchail air Gàidhealtachd ath-bheothachadh agus a bheathachadh.

Andy McCann

Cathraiche Buidheann-ghnìomha Ionadail Ro-innleachdail na Gàidhealtachd
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Old Fishing Station at Sarclet, Near Thrumster, Caithness
LEADER is an EU fund designed to help rural communities to plan and drive forward their future development. It was developed in response to an increased awareness of the range of issues faced in rural communities.

There have been three previous LEADER Programmes (LEADER 1, 2 and LEADER+). The fourth Programme runs from 2007 to 2013 and forms part of the current Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP).

LEADER aims to promote economic and community development within rural areas. It is a bottom up method of delivering support for rural development aimed primarily at small and medium sized, community driven pilot projects that are innovative in nature.

LEADER in the Highlands
LEADER sa Ghàidhealtachd

The aim of the Highland LEADER Programme is:

‘To enable people in the Highlands to realise their ambitions to live in communities where they can fulfil their personal, social and economic potential’

The Highland LEADER Programme has the following objectives

- to stabilise and grow population levels and the balance between age groups
- to increase the benefits communities can derive from their natural and cultural heritage and from tourism
- to maximise the benefits of community assets
- to improve access to services in the community
- to assist communities to create, update and implement development plans
- to increase the scope and range of training and learning opportunities available locally
- to support the development of social enterprise and micro-businesses

The Highland LEADER Programme covers the mainland Highlands, the Small Isles and Skye except for the city of Inverness and the Cairngorms National Park. It has been shaped by the belief in putting communities first and by the distinctive nature of the region’s geography. The Highland LEADER Programme covers around a third of the land area of rural Scotland but only a tenth of its population, nearly half of whom live in scattered communities including some of the remotest in Europe.

The Highland LEADER Programme secured the largest allocation in Scotland, £16.5 million of EU funds (LEADER and Convergence), to implement local and strategic projects.
Highland LEADER (LAG)

**The Highland LEADER Local Action Group (LAG)**

The Highland LEADER Programme is structured around a Highland LEADER Local Action Group (LAG) consisting of a Strategic LAG and 11 Local Area Partnerships. The main aim of adopting this structure was to reflect the scale and diversity of Highland and involve local people in the decision making process.

**Local Area Partnerships**

The focus of planning and delivering LEADER is through 11 Local Area Partnerships. They are made up of around 150 members in total drawn from the local public, business and voluntary sectors. Each partnership:

- prepares and implements a development plan for its area
- promotes the LEADER Programme locally
- takes decisions on local projects seeking LEADER support
- ensures wide community involvement

**The Strategic LAG**

The Strategic Local Action Group oversees the management of the Programme throughout the Highland LEADER area. The Strategic LAG is responsible for endorsing the Local Area Development Plans and approving projects which cross regional (Strategic) and national boundaries (Action 2/Cooperation Projects). The Strategic LAG works under the direction of The Highland Community Planning Partnership with The Highland Council as lead partner: the Council manages the LEADER Programme’s finances, administration and development team.

This devolved decision making structure ensures that Highland LEADER:

- responds to local needs
- ensures bottom up development and involvement
- reflects Highland geography
- supports existing capacity and structures
- complements the work of existing partnerships
Black Isle  An t-Eilean Dubh

The fertile Black Isle lies between the Moray and Cromarty Firths. Its landscape of farmland, forest and coastline benefits visitors and local people in terms of recreation and wellbeing. Influenced by its proximity to Inverness, the Black Isle has a growing population of 10,000, being popular both with commuters and retired people. Rapid growth has brought its own pressures with a need to invest in opportunities for young people, community facilities and improved transport links.

A PARK for all

PARK - Place for Active Rosemarkie Kids

LEADER helped turn a run-down park into a Place for Active Rosemarkie Kids. Identifying a lack of play facilities in the village, the PARK sub-group of the Community Council approached The Highland Council to partner them in developing a play and exercise park for all ages. The community spearheaded the project from researching the needs of the community, to drafting the LEADER application, to selecting the supplier, organising fundraising and involving people from nearby sheltered housing in the design.

‘The group steered the process and kept each other on their toes.’

Three months after the first sod was cut in April 2012, the community turned out to celebrate the opening of its park. It has become a social hub where generations meet and chat.

‘PARK shows what can be achieved in a short time with determination and a willingness to work together.’

Next on the agenda is a football pitch.

LEADER Contribution: £55,001 (69%) towards total project costs of £80,000
North Kessock Hall to 2025 Phase 1

Village halls are the focus of community life in many parts of the Highlands. The North Kessock Amenities Association, known locally as ‘the Amenities’, manages the local hall which serves a growing population because of its proximity to Inverness. As well as providing a venue for regular clubs and classes with nearly 300 users, the hall hosts private functions and business events.

The LEADER part-funded project arose from the recommendations of an energy audit conducted in 2009. It identified significant savings for the hall in switching from oil to biomass as a fuel for heating, backed by solar panels and better insulation.

‘The project proved a longer process than expected but worthwhile in the end.’

Users and visitors appreciate the warm, welcoming ambience and bookings remain high. ‘The Amenities’ are moving on to upgrading other hall facilities as part of their forward plan to 2025.

**LEADER contribution**: £68,344 (57%) towards total project costs of £119,134
‘That used to be the blacksmith’s shop’

Black Isle Heritage Memories

ARCH (Archaeology for Communities in the Highlands) encourages people to discover, record and celebrate their past. Its team seek out localities where knowledge of the built heritage is an untapped resource.

One such area is the rural hinterland of the Black Isle. During the Black Isle Heritage Memories project, ARCH ran reminiscence sessions with older members of the community who then shared their memories in schools. Training allowed ‘silver surfers’ to join a dedicated web community. The resulting knowledge was disseminated through a booklet, website and exhibition as well as being added to Highland-wide heritage databases. LEADER supported the administrative, marketing and technical costs of delivering the programme.

‘It was a great project which left people asking for more.’

Residents from Tore formed their own local history group. Over 300 entries on the Highland heritage database were created or enhanced. ARCH applied the lessons learned to create and share a cost-effective methodology of capturing heritage memories.

LEADER contribution: £5,497 (37%) towards total project costs of £14,662

A new twist on Celtic art

Developing the George Bain Collection

The Groam House Museum in Rosemarkie opened in 1989 primarily to showcase the area’s Pictish carvings. In 1997 it mounted an exhibition by George Bain, the ‘father of modern Celtic design’, some of whose work was inspired by Pictish art. His family then donated most of his collection to the Museum.

After conserving and displaying highlights of the collection, the Museum wanted to make the work of this remarkable artist accessible to a wider public. Staff put together an ambitious outreach programme including public lectures, a touring exhibition, schools activities and a series of community art workshops where participants tried their hand at some of Bain’s techniques.

LEADER funding supported the delivery of the programme throughout the Highlands including the appointment of a part-time co-ordinator, exhibition equipment and marketing. As a result public interest in George Bain has grown and the Museum has benefitted from an enhanced profile locally and nationally.

LEADER contribution: £20,061 (40%) towards total project costs of £50,152
Engaging and informing older people

Developing Services and Activities for Older People in the Black Isle

The Black Isle has a growing population of older people. In 2008 researching their needs revealed an interest not only in services but also in activities in which they could participate. In response the Black Isle Ward Forum secured LEADER funding to support The Highland Council in partnership with two very different initiatives with the common aim of engaging older people in planning and taking greater ownership of services and activities.

The Festival for Older People was held in partnership with the Black Isle Gathering in September 2011 with displays, advice and information exchanges. Over 800 people visited the Festival, far exceeding the target of 150. Young people volunteered to welcome and entertain the older visitors who enjoyed a free lunch and dancing.

‘The event totally exceeded expectations.’

A goal for Resolis

Active Resolis

For half a century the residents of the scattered rural parish of Resolis had the ambition of using land gifted to the community as a sports facility. The dream was realised in 2009, the 50th anniversary of the Resolis Memorial Hall, whose committee manages the land.

Adults and young people formed the Resolis sports Club to pursue their ambition. The pressure to put funding in place for an all-weather sports facility increased after the proposal was shortlisted for The People’s Millions Award after a public vote on television. Success secured £58,750 to add to fundraising efforts. A condition of the award was that finances had to be in place by August 2009. LEADER ensured that the package was completed in time.

LEADER helped fund the landscaping of the site, a flexibly designed sports court, play equipment and associated lighting and security. Now residents keep fit and enjoy the challenge of competitive sports from basketball to volleyball.

LEADER contribution: £34,923 (34%) towards total project costs of £103,866

Researching a directory of services for older people even included consulting village notice boards for local information. Currently running to 196 pages and being piloted across the area, the directory will be distributed through libraries and surgeries and be posted online.

LEADER contribution: £4,050 (45%) towards total project costs of £9,000

Young Volunteers

Shooting the goal
Case Study: Two teas, a scone and a slice of cake

Rosemarkie Beachfront Development

In a family resort like Rosemarkie, the seaside experience would be incomplete without a beach café. In 2008 the opportunity arose for the community to take over the running of the existing café from The Highland Council, through the Rosemarkie Amenities Association. Community consultation and a three year business plan demonstrated the café’s viability and potential for development.

‘Everyone expressed a positive interest.’

The Association drew up plans for the café extension including additional storage and space to interpret the village’s heritage and wildlife. The plans included disabled friendly facilities, an upgraded kitchen, a shower room for the use of visitors and the installation of solar panels.

The Association then tackled project funding. It became a company limited by guarantee, organised bank accounts for the different elements of the project and completed grant applications including LEADER.

‘The process was demanding. Identifying appropriate funding streams took time. We had been advised not to seek charitable status which then ruled out some funders but enabled us to access others.’

With funding finally in place, the Association appointed a local architect to draw up a brief. An unexpected expense was the planning requirement to carry out a full structural survey of the building. There was the added pressure of a tight contract period so that the café benefitted from the start of the 2012 tourist season. More unanticipated expenses were incurred by having to put in an access road to transport contractors’ materials over a muddy field and the need to insulate the original building.

Although work did not start until the first week of January 2012, the building was completed on time by the end of April.

‘The tender we accepted proved to be a good choice. Communication with the builder was excellent with queries handled daily. It did mean a lot of volunteer input from the committee.’

The community came out in force to celebrate the reopening, with sand-castle building and welly paddling adding to the fun. The Association unveiled the café’s new logo based on Katie the Keeaaw: the ‘Keeaaws’ is the nickname for the rooks which have nested in the trees next the cafe for over a century.

The café now has extended opening hours. Customers enjoy a warm indoor seating area with sea views when the weather is inclement and buy beach toys when the sun shines. Increased business provides an income stream which is reinvested in the community.

‘Our project was a success because of the commitment of everyone involved. Our Beach Café is so much more than just another seaside eatery. It’s part of our community tradition.’

LEADER contribution: £84,000 (73%) towards total project costs of £115,375
Caithness  Gàllaibh

Caithness is the north east corner of mainland Britain, its contrasting landscape ranging from seabird cliffs to Europe’s largest area of blanket bog. For decades the economy has been influenced by the presence of the nuclear energy research reactors at Dounreay which are currently being decommissioned. Coastal fishing villages now rely on tourists rather than herring. Drawing on their distinctive heritage, Caithness’s forward looking communities are characterised by the vigour, quality and quantity of their volunteers.

‘Restoration rather than regular patching’

Brough Community Harbour Project

For many years the slipway at Brough served as the landing point for supplies to Dunnet Head lighthouse. Battered by winter storms, the slipway was increasingly at risk of collapsing.

Investigating funding made the Brough Bay Association appreciate the potential for a wider heritage project. LEADER matched contributions from four partners and the Association’s own funds. The money came in the nick of time as a storm in 2010 revealed that five metres of pier stonework was hanging in mid-air.

LEADER helped Brough to secure not only its slipway but also its story, from improved access to and interpretation of the harbour to a digital archive of photographs and oral history. A book, CD and exhibition recorded the efforts of the local primary school and 37 volunteers gained skills as diverse as path laying and interviewing.

‘There is no shortage of potential funders for a project like ours provided the project matches their priorities.’

LEADER contribution: £16,852 (36%) towards total project costs of £46,664

Sharing Brough’s stories

Crossroads pupils creating their heritage
Climb, swing and slide’

**Boating Pond Play Area**

Designed in the 1960s, the Boating Pond Play Area in Thurso was more than showing its age. The Thurso Town Improvements Committee identified a lack of family-friendly, outdoor leisure facilities for local people and visitors. It consulted with young people to find out what they would like and involved them in planning the site.

The Committee approached Thurso Rotary Club whose members volunteered their professional expertise to implement the brief. LEADER match funded contributions from The Highland Council and local groups. As well as the installation of play equipment, the Rotary Club project-managed the redesign of the area including the removal of the crazy golf course, the extension of the play area, tree preservation and improved safety. An underused resource has been turned into a place where children have fun keeping fit and active, where the generations meet and where visitors are attracted to stay longer, thus boosting the town’s economy.

**The Caithness Broch Centre**

Brochs have been part of the Caithness landscape since these dry stone towers were built uniquely in Scotland 2,000 years ago. Local people wanted to put community at the heart of their story, in celebrating the broch builders and excavators and exploring how brochs instil a sense of place today.

The Caithness Archaeological Trust developed the Caithness Broch Centre in an old school close to Nybster Broch. The National Museums of Scotland has loaned artefacts from past excavations to their place of finding.

“We aimed to produce a high-quality exhibition to rival the best in Europe. Our partners helped us to achieve it.’

LEADER funding demonstrated a high percentage of leverage, allowing the project to go ahead. It ensured that the Centre remains rooted in the community, especially through the involvement of young people. Through LEADER the Trust delivered interpretation and displays to the highest professional standards. Appropriately the Centre’s opening in July 2009 was marked by a Community Open Day.
The Dunbeath Fishings Project

Around 1850 Dunbeath was one of Caithness’s top three fishing villages until lack of a proper harbour resulted in the ‘chase for herring’ moving elsewhere. Local families still retain connections with their seafaring past.

The Dunbeath Preservation Trust wanted to tell the story of the fishings before it was lost. Building on their experience of running the Dunbeath Heritage Centre and with full community backing, Trustees put together a funding package to restore a harbour storehouse and a herring gutting wall. LEADER funding supported the project. Volunteers received training in interview techniques to gather people’s stories which were woven into interpretation at the harbour. The primary school was fully engaged, pupils’ artwork enhancing the landscaped access path. Contractors gained lime mortaring skills and a local business moved into the restored building.

‘It was an almost perfect project. The recipe for success is having the community behind you and a track record of spending money wisely and well.’

Filling the energy gap

Fill the Gap

Ormlie Community Association Ltd sought to tackle fuel poverty through its Caithness Energy Advice offshoot. Following a successful pilot and the purchase of a thermal imaging camera, in 2008 the Association launched ‘Fill the Gap’ with support from LEADER.

Funding allowed the thermal imaging and energy advisory service to be extended to the The Highland Council and housing association properties throughout Caithness and North Sutherland. The LEADER grant also supported the training of unemployed people and volunteers in thermography, energy awareness and performance. Individual households benefitted by energy audits and practical information on how to reduce energy costs and tackle fuel debt. Awareness raising events were targeted at primary schools, tradesmen and the public.

The three year project proved so successful that Pentland Housing took over its management to ensure a continuing service.

‘We could not have asked for a better outcome.’

LEADER contribution: £48,371 (36%) towards total project costs of £135,453
Turning wind power into community profit

Turning to Wind Power

Following its complete renewal in 2009 Mey Village Hall is a hub of activity from sports clubs and evening classes to markets and weddings.

With a ground source heat pump, the Mey Village Hall Trust was already ‘going green’. A natural next step was to install a 20Kw wind turbine. This would not only meet the rest of the hall’s energy costs but also earn income by feeding excess power into the National Grid.

“Selling energy reduces the need for our 900-strong community to be constantly fund raising and allows us to offer affordable letting fees to even the smallest groups.’

‘We are confident that the turbine will soon be earning us money towards building a day care extension for older people in North East Caithness.’

LEADER contribution: £80,313 (90%) towards total project costs of £89,237

Thurso thespians

Mill Theatre Extension Project

The Thurso Players bring a rare experience of theatre to audiences along Scotland’s northern coast. The company puts on a varied, year-round programme of performances and workshops for adults and children. It owns and manages the Mill Theatre.

Operating out of a historic water mill has its downside.

The Players addressed this by designing a three-storey extension which provided a more welcoming entrance for audiences and made the building fully accessible to disabled people including actors and stagehands. LEADER matched their fund raising efforts.

‘It is a fitting use of funding like LEADER to ensure that a historic, Caithness vernacular, building is retained while meeting modern access standards.’

The glazed entrance and box office area increase the public’s awareness that the building is a theatre as well as providing full disabled access. The Mill Theatre looks forward to meeting its target of increasing audiences by a fifth and promoting the area’s rich artistic culture in Gaelic and English.

LEADER contribution: £23,000 (25%) towards total project costs of £90,000
The Johnston Collection Digitisation Project

Through The Johnston Collection Digitisation Project a production unit was created in the college’s Wick campus and learning materials were developed for a new, accredited digital imaging course. Demand resulted in a doubling of the target number of trainees. The goal of scanning and conserving 10,000 images was met in a very short timescale. An eCommerce website was developed for the Wick Society to widen access to the collection and generate revenue from sales of the images. The project caught the media’s attention resulting in coverage by national newspapers and the BBC.

The project has benefited partners, trainees and people interested in tracing their family history worldwide. The Wick Society has enjoyed increased sales and the commitment of ex-trainees as volunteers. Since the end of the project a further 10,000 images have been scanned, identified and conserved.

‘NHC Online has gained from the experience of working on a community project like this and is currently planning a similar digitisation project with the Thurso Heritage Society.’

The value of a collection only exists if people can see it. This has proved to be a really good project.’

LEADER contribution: £43,118 (45%) towards total project costs of £95,818
Cromarty Firth  Caolas Chrombaidh

The north side of the Cromarty Firth has a population of 11,595 with its main centres being Alness, Invergordon and Evanton. The closure of the aluminium smelter at Invergordon and the offshore fabrication yard at Nigg, has resulted in some areas being among the 15% most deprived in Scotland. Communities are actively embracing change and benefitting from tourism opportunities created by the A9 and the cruise ship terminal at Invergordon.

Lest we forget

Heritage Project
Run entirely by volunteers since it opened in 2000, the Alness Heritage Centre has motivated local people to donate their memorabilia. The current focus is the town’s critical role in the Second World War where up to 22 air crews a week learned to fly Sunderlands and Catalinas. With a growing collection, the Alness Community Association sought professional help to manage its archives, train volunteers in museum techniques and extend its programme with the town’s three primary schools. LEADER assisted the Association to recruit two part-time heritage workers for a year. Already the workers have made a difference from dressing a heritage window in the shop to encouraging interaction through memory and learning boxes. The lives and possessions of local people are proving easier to access through a computerised information system. 

LEADER contribution: £34,758 (90%) towards total project costs of £38,620

Delivering on the doorstep

Easter Ross Young People’s Training and Support Centre
The Calman Trust works with young people who are disengaged from learning to help them towards work or education and to achieve independent living. It runs a number of social enterprises in Inverness which are accredited training centres.
Delivering the ‘Get Ready for Work’ national training programme in Easter Ross made staff aware of the difficulties young people experienced in having to travel to Inverness. It meant a long day away from familiar support networks: some trainees were unable to travel independently. LEADER backing will enable the Calman Trust to establish a new training facility in Easter Ross to enhance its existing work with young people, forge links with employers and to establish local social enterprises. Support goes towards the costs of a trainer and a part-time administrator over a 22 month period and the relocation of the Trust’s office to more suitable premises in Invergordon. Twenty five trainees will benefit from support delivered locally.

LEADER contribution: £78,022 (41%) towards total project costs of £190,288
Going places on the red bus

Alness Community Minibus Scheme

Alness Community Association had £19,000 to spend following the sale of land, no longer fit for purpose as a play park. It wanted to invest in a resource that young people would use.

The idea of buying a minibus had been on the agenda for years but had been rejected as too expensive. Cash in hand provided the opportunity to revisit its feasibility. Market research among community groups identified that there was significant demand, not just from young people. Groups struggled to raise funds to hire a minibus for outings or to organise transport from volunteer car drivers.

After LEADER matched its funds, the Association bought a minibus with full disabled access in early 2011. A local sign writer decorated it with pictures advertising the town.

‘Dozens of organisations use the bus from sports clubs to groups for older people. We also ferry passengers from the cruise ships docked at Invergordon to enjoy our town.’

LEADER contribution: £16,784 (47%) towards total project costs of £35,784

Pedalling pirates

Crawl Park

Bounded by woodland and the river Averon, Crawl Park is a community-owned space in the centre of Alness. It had become run-down and seriously under-used because of lack of investment until Alness Partnership, an umbrella body of community organisations became involved.

Consultation especially with school children generated ideas for activities and trails to complement the town’s existing footpath and cycle network. LEADER funding contributed to essentials such as drainage being tackled and to creating spaces for different groups. An all abilities path by the river has proved popular with mothers with buggies and wheelchair users; young children play pirates on the low impact play equipment while older children test their mountain biking skills on the cycle trail. A dog-free area is reserved for youth activities and picnickers.

The number of people using Crawl Park has increased significantly, bringing health and social benefits to the community and business for the local cycle shop.

LEADER contribution: £73,004 (45%) towards total project costs of £162,228
Develop Training Facilities

Ross Sutherland Rugby Football Club has been in the thick of the scrum for 90 years. It coaches and fields eight teams, from eight year olds to seniors. Although there is little that it can do about ‘training through the worst weather that the north of Scotland can throw at us - sub-zero temperatures, gales and lashing rain’, the Club was keen to upgrade its facilities to match its success on the pitch. Its teams are the most widely dispersed geographically in the UK. ‘Players have to travel for up to two hours so they deserve a decent welcome on arrival.’ Winter training was handicapped by floodlighting that was over forty years old: ‘The lighting was so poor that players were trying to catch the shadow of a ball at times.’ The Club occasionally had to train on a pitch in Tain, a 15 mile drive away. The shower rooms and boilers were also showing signs of age. The boilers were expensive to run and when they broke down, the Club had to call on facilities at the local school or football club.

Although, in principle, Sportscotland supported the Club’s ambitions, boilers and shower rooms did not qualify for grant aid. It also wanted evidence of other sources of funding before committing. The whole project was at risk after cost estimates revealed a considerable shortfall. Advice from The Highland Council pointed the Club to LEADER.

Negotiating and administering the funding package and delivering the improvements took three years. ‘As Treasurer, I had to take time off work to meet the funding partners. LEADER has different priorities and administrative procedures to Sportscotland: both, for example, wanted original invoices and bank statements before making payments. It could be a bit complicated at times.’

The finances came together without having to raise a loan. The grants from LEADER and Sportscotland, coupled with the Club’s own fund raising and volunteering, mean that the Club’s finances remain healthy. With a new boiler, showers, floodlighting and an upgraded car park, the Club can now expand its training activities especially for younger players: over 120 school children are already involved and numbers are growing. The Club will also be able to host six tournaments a year with confidence.

‘Seeing the lights on during the 2012/13 season will be a boost to the whole community of Invergordon – a very visible sign of our success.’

LEADER contribution: £25,346 (34%) towards total project costs of £75,348

CASE STUDY: ‘Final success for young Stags’
Dingwall and Seaforth
Inbhir Pheofharain agus Sìofort

Dingwall is a traditional market town, the administrative and retail centre for a compact, largely agricultural area. Thanks to good transport links and an attractive lifestyle, the population of 12,000 is set to grow, albeit bringing with it associated pressure on services. A vigorous grassroots approach has brought the community together to realise Dingwall’s assets, through a portfolio of physical improvements, heritage and marketing.

Shedding light on Dingwall’s past

Conservation Area Appraisal

When Dingwall’s application for funding under Historic Scotland’s Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme was turned down in 2008, feedback highlighted the need for a conservation area appraisal and management plan.

The Highland Council partnered Dingwall History Society in addressing this issue. Match funding from LEADER allowed them to appoint a consultant to undertake the work more quickly and in greater depth than would otherwise be possible. Local historians searched their archives and shared their knowledge of individual buildings with the conservation experts who presented their findings to the Dingwall and Seaforth Forum less than four months after being appointed.

‘LEADER kick-started the process of protecting Dingwall’s built heritage for the future.’

A second application to Historic Scotland was successful. A conservation architect has been appointed for the town to manage specific projects from shop front improvements to the restoration of the tollbooth, with continued input from the Dingwall History Society.

LEADER contribution: £3,960 (45%) towards total project costs of £8,800

Dingwall Tolbooth
Saying it with flowers

**Dingwall Streetscape Partnership**

The volunteers of Dingwall in Bloom, a sub-group of the Community Council, approached The Highland Council with carefully thought out ideas for the visual improvement of the town. It was agreed that they would lead the community landscape element of the Council’s town centre streetscape improvements.

A contribution from LEADER turned ideas into reality. The baskets were up and the planters flowering for the town’s celebration of the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee. Without the dedicated volunteers who undertook daily watering and inspection of the plants, Dingwall would not have been able to deliver its floral tribute.

An agreement is in place for the future with the Community Council meeting the cost of plants and the Council maintaining the seating and planters.

‘LEADER is there to make ideas from the community happen. Its impact is felt long after a specific programme is completed.’

**LEADER contribution:** £16,440.61 (45%) towards total project costs of £36,534.68

‘Dingwall … the market town’

**Dingwall Town Rebranding and Regeneration**

The renewal of the town centre gave local businesses the opportunity to capitalise on the benefits by promoting Dingwall’s assets to residents and visitors. The local football team’s promotion to the Premier League and the growing number of cruise ships calling at the local port of Invergordon created new markets to exploit.

Dingwall Business Association spearheaded the promotional drive, its 50+ members volunteering time and expertise in IT, management and promotion. LEADER backed the Association’s Dingwall Town Rebranding and Regeneration initiative. Its support allowed the Association to conduct the town’s first ever market research survey. The results shaped the ensuing marketing and events campaign and helped the Association to recruit new members.

‘There is a real buzz to the place.’

While many town centres are suffering during the recession, Dingwall is bucking the trend with few ‘to let’ signs in the High Street.

**LEADER contribution:** £13,500 (45%) towards total project costs of £30,000
Every picture tells a story

Dingwall Museum Trust and a team of dedicated volunteers run the Dingwall Museum. Over the years the museum has amassed thousands of photographs and artefacts, many of which have been donated by the community.

From 2006 volunteers transferred notes relating to artefacts from card files to a computer system. Appreciating the benefits in terms of easier access to information for exhibitions and enquiry handling, the Trust sought to match individual photographs with relevant notes and to digitise the collection to conserve the originals.

LEADER’s contribution allowed the Trust to employ a short term contractor who recorded and digitised 8,000 photos. It also supported volunteer training to carry on the work. A further 2,000 photographs have been added to the digital collection.

‘Our collection is so much more accessible. Staff access the system on behalf of visitors and print off photocopies for them. A weekly feature in the local newspaper means that our collection is enjoyed by the wider community.’

LEADER contribution: £5,620 (39%) towards total project costs of £14,500
A floor to ceiling makeover

**Mulbuie Hall Insulation and Floor Improvements**

Mulbuie Hall was built as a military hospital which the community inherited after the Second World War. It is a testimony to the care the building has received over the succeeding 60 years that it is still fit for purpose today.

In 2010 the Hall Committee commissioned an energy audit and options appraisal to explore ways of reducing costs, enhancing sustainability and providing the warmth and comfort that users now expect. LEADER supported their application to tackle insulation from the pitched roof to under the floor. All wall spaces including the loft were lined, doors and windows were draught-proofed and the upgraded wooden floor sat above under-floor insulation. The Committee also took the opportunity to introduce energy efficient lighting.

Profits from increased use of the hall are being reinvested for future delivery of another of the energy audit's recommendations – the installation of solar panel water heating.

**LEADER contribution:** £18,643.50 (75%) towards total project costs of £24,858

**Click, twitter and blog**

**Dingwall Town Website**

Although well designed for its time by 2009 the Dingwall website was becoming dated. A dynamic and modern site with improved functionality and design was needed to showcase the town's forward looking approach and branding.

After taking ownership of the site, the Dingwall Business Association received funding from LEADER and The Highland Council to reinvigorate it. A local web design company won the contract to rebuild the site with sections for visitor and community information and a link to a sister website promoting the town's business interests. The local community provided content for www.dingwall.org.uk which went live in September 2010.

Funding also covered the costs of the first year of hosting the site. Hits included visitors from France, Germany and the USA. With the addition of Facebook and the option to introduce other social media feeds, the website has the flexibility to keep abreast of modern technologies in promoting the town, 21st century style.

**LEADER contribution:** £1,807 (43%) towards total project costs of £4,207
**CASE STUDY :** Moving Dingwall centre stage

**Pro-Motion**

Dingwall is a town which is going places. Its strong and active community traces its roots back to its Norse assembly. Its 17th century tollbooth is a reminder of town government and an icon for the town today. A series of very different projects, from conservation of the town’s heritage to a website embracing the latest social networking technology, continues the tradition of a community working together for the common good. Many initiatives have attracted LEADER funding.

As well as representing the voice of the community at a local and national level, Dingwall Community Council is a key driving force in the renewal of the town, its activities ranging from running the Green House charity shop to organising the Christmas lights. Council members realised the value of a busy events calendar to help re-energise the town. Better stage equipment would make it easier for groups to put on entertainment. Market research had identified the need for local visitor attractions and events to put Dingwall on a competitive footing with the city of Inverness.

Through Pro-motion, in 2011 LEADER supported the purchase of a stage which can be erected or dismantled in half an hour. A portable electricity generator allowed stage equipment to be used in even the remotest location. LEADER also provided funds towards a year-long promotion of the events calendar. Training workshops in marketing and event management were organised in association with the Dingwall Business Association to give people the skills to put on professional events.

The up-to-date stage equipment is already providing a platform to showcase local talent and attract new audiences. ‘It has been put to good use already and bookings are flowing in.’ Hiring out the stage at low cost to gala days, Highland shows and fairs throughout the area has encouraged communities to put on events and provided a source of income to meet equipment maintenance costs.

‘Pro-motion is one piece in the jigsaw that shows how groups within the community are working together to make Dingwall a better place. Activities such as events encourage informal networking and involvement. As well as formal groups, we now have a list of over 50 individuals willing to volunteer their skills.’

The stage came into its own during the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee celebrations. The whole town dressed up and partied into the night to the sound of Tin Pan Alley on the stage.

**LEADER contribution:** £13,229 (83%) towards total project costs of £15,887

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*Setting up the stage*  *Plugged in!*
Although centred on Fort William, the Outdoor Capital of the UK, Lochaber contains a significant number of remote communities within its overall population of 19,000. The area has a long and effective tradition of partnership working and delivery. Initiatives from deep sea diving to all-weather family activities are re-invigorating the traditional tourist economy while community-led plans for play parks, allotments and high-speed broadband enhance the lives of local residents.

A stop on the world’s greatest railway journey

**Glenfinnan Station Museum Development Stage 1**

Glenfinnan on the West Highland Line is unusual in being both a working station and a railway museum. Since 2004 the charity behind the museum has spearheaded a major development of the site. Its ambition was to achieve the quality status of museum accreditation in 2011. This depended on implementing a number of specific improvements.

With a very tight timetable to achieve accreditation, LEADER matched the museum’s ambitions. It part-funded the conversion of a signal box into an audio-visual studio and learning centre, the creation of open storage that met conservation standards and the training of volunteer guides. Improvements to the access road were carried out as a condition of planning approval.

The contractors faced unexpected challenges in meeting the deadline of the start of the 2012 tourist season, from night working to fit around train timetables to one of the severest gales in decades. Now guides are putting training into practice as they greet visitors to the site.

‘Through the LEADER investment the museum has gained not only a significant enhancement of its facilities but also long term benefits of developing from a secure foundation.’

**LEADER contribution:** £48,334 (16%) towards total project costs of £288,034
A fast solution for a small community

**Small Isles Wireless Broadband Project**

Each of the Small Isles of Eigg, Rum, Muck and Canna supports a small but enterprising community. Advanced communications help enormously to reduce the drawbacks of their remoteness.

The islands were reliant on slow and expensive satellite broadband until residents learned of Edinburgh University’s pioneering pilot to design a community-run terrestrial wireless broadband network for the remote mainland area around Loch Hourn. Eigg residents formed a Community Interest Company, HebNet CiC, to develop the pilot, initially by linking to mainland telephone exchanges.

After successfully linking 37 households on Eigg, HebNet CiC successfully applied to LEADER for support in extending the network to the other Small Isles and Knoydart. A connection to the University of the Highlands and Islands Sabhal Mor Ostaig on Skye will very soon deliver broadband speeds in excess of 50Mbps to 150 households, making them the envy of many city-based businesses.

**LEADER contribution:** £16,311.19 (75%) towards total project costs of £21,748.26

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Mainland Britain’s most westerly village green

**Kilchoan Community Park**

Kilchoan lacked a play park and outdoor social space. The nearest facilities for children were a 45 minute drive away. Consulting the community revealed a desire for something more innovative and inclusive than a traditional play park, something with the feel of a village green.

The designer appointed by West Ardnamurchan Community Council, suggested adopting the theme of stone, reflecting the area’s geology and natural environment. Individual ideas included a beach area, stepping stone boulders, a play house and a pipe tunnel. The aim was to encourage play among children of all ages and abilities.

A site was acquired next to the community centre. Fundraising included sponsoring families to walk the West Highland Way. The small population raised £40,000, to be matched by LEADER. While local people volunteered for tasks like path laying and planting, LEADER helped to pay for play equipment and landscaping.

Now Kilchoan has a new focus of village life.

**LEADER contribution:** of £41,500 (43%) towards total project costs of £95,534
Is that hump a whale?

Ardnamurchan Lighthouse Trust
– Path Network and Wind Turbine Project

Ardnamurchan lighthouse has been guiding ships through the waters off Britain’s most westerly mainland point since 1849. Following automation of the light, the Ardnamurchan Lighthouse Trust was formed in 1996 to manage the building as a seasonal visitor attraction.

Growing visitor numbers and the popularity of whale and dolphin watching started to take its toll on the surroundings. Surveys confirmed that visitors would welcome better access to viewpoints. LEADER helped to fund a picnic area and a new footpath network. The paths allow people with mobility problems and off-season visitors to appreciate the views. Managing visitor flows has reduced wear and tear on the landscape and provides for a safer and more enjoyable experience. People stay longer and spend more in the café and shop.

Through a separate LEADER project, the Trust is reducing energy costs by harnessing the winds that blow over the headland.

Path Network: LEADER contribution: £5,000 (41%) towards total project costs of £12,112

Wind Turbine: LEADER contribution: £18,430.75 (21%) towards total project costs of £85,265.75

A welcome SLUG in the garden

SLUG Allotment Project

SLUG, the Sunny Lochaber United Gardeners, was born in 2007 after a public meeting in the Plantation put forward the idea of allotments as a way of using land behind Fort William. The site had been acquired by Forestry Commission Scotland for community use. Three years later SLUG held its first open day with volunteers busy creating raised beds.

LEADER funding helped SLUG deliver their plans for 17 allotments.

‘Meeting one-off start-up costs brings sustainable and long term benefits to the community.’

SLUG’s start-up costs included landscaping of the site, which will be managed by Forestry Commission Scotland, communal equipment, a compost toilet and a community portacabin.

SLUG believes in supporting its gardeners. Newcomers are paired with an experienced ‘buddy’ and attend training sessions on organic growing techniques. Everyone joins in for open days, vegetable sales and social events. As well as promoting healthy lifestyles, ‘we are planting the seeds of community spirit, growing together and reaping the benefits.’

LEADER contribution: £33,578 (45%) towards total project costs of £74,618
More than Spanish galleons in the Sound of Mull

**Sound of Mull Artificial Reef Project Feasibility Study**

Wrecks are a playground for divers and sea anglers and home to an astonishing diversity of marine life. Local dive centres came together to set up a community-backed trust, The Sound of Mull Artificial Reef Project, to explore the concept of sinking an ex-naval ship deliberately to create the second artificial reef in the UK.

The Trust’s first step was to commission an impact assessment which identified the potential of an artificial reef to generate a 160% increase in income from diving which already brings in £1.1m to the local economy.

The second step was to conduct a feasibility study. LEADER funding supported a full technical, economic, environmental and site appraisal.

The feasibility study gave the green light for the Trust to seek project funding armed with robust data.

‘There is a long way to go, but with all the proper consultation, funding and planning in place, it is possible that we could sink a ship in spring 2014.’

**LEADER contribution:** £33,250 (46%) towards total project costs of £71,848

*The Earl of Wessex launching the project*

*Exploring an amazing world under the sea*
**CASE STUDY :** Riding the rainbow

**Nevis Centre - Activity Area**

The Nevis Centre has been running as a community activity centre since the 1980s under the auspices of a not-for-profit trust. It is the largest sports and events venue in the West Highlands and a major draw for tourists to Fort William, the UK’s outdoors capital. In recent years the Centre’s children’s play area had become very dilapidated and risked being dangerous. Renewing the children’s nursery and care centre had freed up space to build a new bigger and better play area.

The development took three years from initial thinking to delivery. LEADER funding ‘allowed the project to grow arms and legs. It has changed from being a place where kids nagged to be allowed to play for half an hour to a destination in its own right.’ With comfortable seating and a café parents now relax for a couple of hours while watching their kids at play.

There are three areas – one for babies, one for toddlers and the largest area for children. Features include a chute down the three storey cube with two balconies for parents to watch, a climbing wall, an area with soft aerobic-type balls, a test the speed of your reactions game, go-kart tracks, soft ball cannons and zip wires.

The Nevis Centre was no stranger to the LEADER Programme which had already helped to fund the installation of a biomass boiler to reduce energy costs.

‘We had a business advisor to guide us through the process and LEADER staff proved very helpful.’ Managing the project had to be efficient as revenue was being lost while the play area was shut. Profit from the play space is vital to the overall sustainability of the Centre.

‘We delivered the project over a ten week period.’

When the contract came in under budget, the additional money was used to implement the results of an equal opportunities audit, suggested by the LEADER team. This led to the creation of a soft play and sensory space for children with learning difficulties.

The play area is called ‘Spectrum – ride the rainbow’, the name suggested through a local schools competition. The prize was for the winner’s class to test out the area before opening. Feedback forms from consumers have been really positive – ‘fantastic’. Revenue from the play area will be ploughed into renewing other elements of the Nevis Centre. A priority is the development of activities for older children such as laser quest games or pottery classes.

As well as attracting local people from as far away as Oban, the indoor family leisure centre is boosting the tourism product in a town renowned for its rain.

**LEADER contribution:** £150,000 (75%) towards total project costs of £200,000
Nairnshire  Sìorrachd Inbhir Narann

Climate, a varied landscape and a long human heritage have given the coastal area east of Inverness many assets to build on. The area’s heart is the beach and golf resort of Nairn which is renewing its visitor product with a programme of festivals and cultural events. The area both benefits and loses out through its proximity to Inverness. The community is active in preserving the area’s independent identity and in involving young people in its future through sport and creativity

Drumming up a storm

**NAIRN Winter Festival**

INSPIRE, the young people’s working group, grew out of a community celebration run initially by Nairn Children’s Art Club with the core aim of teaching young people how to organise events. With previous LEADER backing, INSPIRE created a procession to celebrate The Highland Year of Culture, 2007.

The success of the inaugural event in 2005 led to annual winter community festivals. When INSPIRE faced a funding gap in its efforts to mount the 2009 WINTERSONG Community Festival, LEADER stepped in. This allowed INSPIRE to contract additional assistance including a project worker to help organise and market the event. A community song was premiered, as two processions converged on an open-air stage to mark the switching on of the winter lights. Driven by street music, young people were at the heart of this transition project including all pupils moving from primary to secondary education.

INSPIRE’s creativity continues. With support from Creative Scotland’s Youth Music initiative, Nairn was chosen as one of the three locations for the Hoots on the Streets Project, to encourage the development of carnival street bands.

**LEADER contribution:** £9,740 (36%) towards total project costs of £26,740
Practice makes perfect

Covered Golf Coaching/Practice Facility

Founded in 1889, Nairn Dunbar is ranked as one of Scotland’s top golf courses. In order to remain competitive as a host for regional and national tournaments, the club committee won LEADER backing to install a covered practice range with a video facility so that golfers can analyse their own performance.

As well as reinforcing Nairn’s reputation as a golf resort for visitors, the new facility, which opened in late 2010, supports the club’s aim of bringing on the next generation of champion golfers. For the last six years the club has coached local children through the national junior golf programme. Now professional coaching of junior club members and school pupils is a fixture regardless of the weather. Taster sessions are also run to introduce primary schools to the game.

LEADER contribution: £13,118 (25%) towards total project costs of £52,471

Anyone for tennis

Nairn Active

Sport is a way of life for residents of the beach and golf resort of Nairn. LEADER funding has helped Nairn Sports Club to pilot innovative approaches to reach target groups within the community through the Nairn Active programme.

LEADER contributed to the three strands of the programme: introducing tennis to primary school age children, encouraging teenagers to become active in sport and trialling a GP Referral Programme.

After attending the tennis classes, young local children showed off their new talents in a mini-competition with children from Inverness. The project gave children the opportunity to take part in a new sport. Young people were introduced to a variety of sports such as Zumba, Spinning and Circuits at the Centre. It has helped to change perceptions, increase well-being and boost sports participation. A GP referral service offering lifestyle tuition, monitoring and exercise supervision had a lower uptake than anticipated. In the light of experience, the service, the first of its kind in the Highlands, is being refocused on groups with conditions like arthritis.

‘It’s been a learning curve but we are delighted with the progress made. LEADER has been amazing. Without it we could not have done what we have done.’

LEADER contribution: £122,214 (81%) towards total project costs of £150,225
Church hall to community centre

_Lethen Road Church Hall Refurbishment_

Auldearn is an expanding, rural village to the west of Nairn. Increasingly over the years the Lethen Road Church Hall, owned by the local parish church, has become a focus for the whole community not just churchgoers. It is used as a meeting place for local groups and an activity space for the primary school and youth groups as well as being available to hire for private functions.

The fabric of the hall, however, was showing signs of age. Auldearn and Dalmore Parish Church approached LEADER to back its own fund raising efforts. Replacing the front door with a more welcoming entrance and skylights with Velux windows, the hall was given a complete refurbishment. Facilities for disabled people and a new kitchen were designed to increase the hall’s hospitality potential. Insulation and the installation of a gas supply will have a positive impact on energy bills, freeing up funds for potential future developments.

The keys were handed over in July, 2012

**LEADER contribution:** £50,963.60 (90%) towards total project costs of £56,625.60
Nairn Allotment Society

People in Nairn have been digging their allotments for nearly a century. The Nairn Allotment Society was formed in 2005. With a waiting list of 40 potential plotters, the Society successfully negotiated a long term management agreement with The Highland Council.

The Society’s first project to win LEADER support was at a different site, a disused nursery at Mill Road. The land had been turned down for development because of its proximity to the river and risk of flooding. The LEADER funding helped to create 30 plots of different sizes including raised beds for people with disabilities. It also supported communal facilities for allotment holders including a meeting space, poly tunnels, and training sessions for plotters in gardening techniques. A wetlands area was created to encourage wildlife. Since its opening in 2010 ‘Mill Road has been a great success. Our plots are so beautiful that we hold regular open days serving teas in the community hut and we were invited to participate in the Scotland’s Gardens Scheme.’

Success bred success and the opening of Mill Road had the effect of lengthening the waiting list back to 40 again. The Society’s next project was to extend the Sandown allotments, whose 18 plots had opened in 1985 on common good land on the western approach to the town. Having already earned a track record for delivery, the Society secured LEADER funding towards the expansion of the Sandown site and the remodelling of existing plots to make 40 in all. As with Mill Road the works included car parking, fencing, landscaping and signage. ‘It was a real rush to put our application together, to benefit from 90% LEADER funding. Everyone was really supportive including the community, our Councillors and the local LEADER team.’ The first carrots were planted in summer 2012.

The Society’s support from LEADER also allowed toilets for the disabled, which were surplus to requirements, to be moved to the allotments. It took over the Health and Happiness project creating communal gardens for people with learning difficulties or facing other lifestyle challenges. LEADER also backed the creation of a Jubilee hedge at Sandown involving local schools and youth groups in planting over 500 different species.

The Society now manages a hundred, low rent plots, a third of the total number of allotments in the Highlands. ‘We feel a real sense of accomplishment as the allotment holders move in, erect their sheds and design their own gardens.’

With all this activity and forward planning to create a community park at Sandown, the one garden that has suffered is that of the Society’s Chairman!

Sandown Allotments: LEADER contribution: £46,990 (90%) towards total project costs of £52,211

Mill Road Allotments: LEADER contribution: £33,978 (87%) towards total project costs of £38,928
Rural Inverness  Inbhir Nis Dùthchail

Around 18,000 people live in the villages and scattered settlements of rural Inverness-shire which stretches from Beauly in the north to Fort Augustus in the south, and from Glen Affric in the west to Strathnairn in the east. The landscape of mountain, loch and moor is a magnet for tourists as well as a leisure and wellbeing resource for local people. The traditional land uses of agriculture and forestry are still significant employers. Despite proximity to Inverness, some communities are disadvantaged by isolation, the withdrawal of essential services and poor transport links while others risk becoming dormitory villages for Inverness.

Letting in the light

Securing Aigas for the Community

Aigas was once famous for its native pine forests. After the Second World War the Forestry Commission Scotland replanted the area with fast-growing conifers. In 2009 it put the, by now, dense, dark plantation up for sale.

The community voted in favour of a buyout. It set up a social enterprise, Aigas Community Forest, to secure the 700 acre resource for timber production, leisure and the encouragement of wildlife. Profits will be re-invested in the forest for the benefit of local people.

After confirming the concept’s viability the next step was to plan how to raise the £800,000 purchase price. LEADER and The Highland Council stepped in to support the massive fund raising campaign needed to meet the target. Additional consultancy and business planning has enhanced the credibility of the business case and provided the flexibility to respond to a changing funding environment. A marketing campaign including forest open days and a drive website is underway. Part-time support has been recruited to assist the Directors with funding applications and presentations.

‘Fundraising by a small community for such a big project is a challenge. LEADER has helped to provide the tools and the credibility. In a century’s time our residents may look out on to a very different landscape.’

LEADER contribution: £4,000 (40%) towards total project costs of £9,988
Stepping stone to securing funds

**Ardersier War Memorial Hall**

Built by the community in the 1920s, Ardersier War Memorial Hall had fallen into disuse. After years of debate, it was decided to restore rather than demolish the hall, both as a cheaper option and because of its significance as neighbour to the historic Fort George army base.

The Hall Committee’s initial application for LEADER funding towards the redevelopment was turned down in 2011 as the lack of supporting information did not demonstrate a strong case for investment.

LEADER contribution: £55,000 (73%) towards total project costs of £75,000

**Play for kids not cats**

**Glenlia Community Development**

Glenlia Residents Community Association was established in 2009 after parents joined together to campaign about play facilities in the village. Play equipment had been removed for health and safety reasons; fencing stopping children running into the main road was falling down and the bark surfacing proved popular with local cats for all the wrong reasons.

The Association consulted the community, set up a grants sub-committee and raised funds. ‘Organising events like quiz nights and manning stations for the Loch Ness Marathon was hard work but great fun.’ The local LEADER development officer guided the Association through the application and paperwork procedures. LEADER funding supported resurfacing, the creation of seating areas, a sensory garden and play equipment for all ages and abilities.

The play park opened only a month after work commenced on site.

LEADER contribution: £55,000 (73%) towards total project costs of £75,000

‘There are always children playing now no matter what the weather.’

All sections of the community, not just parents, are involved in the Association as Glenlia looks to the future.
Robust planning into reality

Kirkhill Centre Forward

In 1987 the Kirkhill District Amenities Association opened a community centre serving a rural population of around 1,000, six miles west of Inverness. Twenty five years later the population has doubled. Although the hall is well-used and financially sustainable, there is the potential to do much more.

The community raised over £80,000 which, with a loan of over £20,000, gave a solid base for grant applications to extend and refurbish the hall. The project had community backing, a user needs analysis, a business plan and a costed design brief. A first tranche of L EADER funding allowed the Association to move ahead with detail designs, planning permission and a building warrant.

Plans include space for community meetings, learning and health, a post office and better toilet and kitchen provision. More users, space for letting and insulation will generate income to employ a part-time hall administrator.

After a second phase of L EADER funding, building work is due to be completed in December 2012.

Planning Phase: L EADER contribution: £13,135 (72%) towards total project costs of £18,135

Capital Phase: L EADER contribution: £165,000 (53%) towards total project costs of £305,813

A gala day raised over £8,000 for the hall

Satisfied customers include nesting bats

Upper Reelig Community Resource Building

Kirkhill and Bunchrew Community Trust’s Woodland Group manages Upper Reelig Community Wood in partnership with the Forestry Commission Scotland. Users include local and forest schools, community and youth groups, the ranger service and walkers.

The one thing that the group lacked was an onsite base to store equipment, support its firewood business and extend learning opportunities and increased appreciation of biodiversity as well as providing shelter from the weather.

An opportunity arose when the Forestry Commission Scotland offered for sale an unfinished building created as a demonstration in traditional log construction techniques. L EADER helped to pay the costs of relocating it from Glenurquhart Forest. A local log builder, trained in traditional techniques during the construction of the original building, worked alongside the contractor and volunteers.

Already the group is reaping the benefits from increased work with schools and more efficient organisation.

‘The L EADER process was very educational as we had to learn new skills. The project has given us renewed drive and commitment and the bats also appreciate their new home.’

L EADER contribution: £7,462 (90%) towards total project costs of £8,291
Development of Strathglass Community Centre

Cannich Village Hall opened as a canteen and cinema for thousands of temporary hydro-electric construction workers in the late 1940s. Built only to last ten years, the hall was uninsulated and latterly underused: kitchen and toilet facilities were totally inadequate by modern standards.

Strathglass & Glen Affric Community Company was formed in 2009 to take over ownership of the hall from The Highland Council. The hall is now used five nights a week and daytime activities include primary school gymnastics. Following community consultation the Company drew up a redevelopment plan, securing funding from LEADER towards the cost of delivering phase 1.

By remodelling and extending the hall, groups will no longer have to use the kitchen as a meeting space. The historic hall will be warm and welcoming. The former stage will now provide a large storage area and the new extension, a meeting room and kitchen. Thoughts are turning to delivering phase 2 of the project involving an upgrade to the hall’s heating system and additional fittings and furnishings.

**LEADER contribution:** £136,317 (46%) towards total project costs of £291,913
Strathdearn Sports Facility

The scattered, rural community around Tomatin and Strathdearn had to travel to Inverness to participate in sport. The city is over 25 miles away and public transport links are poor.

In 2006 a Community Participatory Appraisal was undertaken in the Strathdearn area with the assistance of the Partnership for Rural Inverness and Nairn. Its main recommendation was a facility where the members of the community, especially younger people, could meet and play sports. After a series of public meetings, it was agreed that the best way to carry out the wishes of the community was to build a sports facility in the village of Tomatin.

The local community was heavily involved in the process, from the initial consultation to specific input as to what people would like to see in the facility. The Community Council received regular updates on progress. LEADER added its contribution to funds secured from sportscotland and charitable trusts.

Everyone can now enjoy a covered, floodlit, multi-use sports area for practice and play. Young people can even access free tokens for the facility’s flood lights. The facility has proved to be very well used for sport even during periods of bad weather.

The hall committee then looked at broadening the uses of the hall during quieter periods. Flower shows and other ‘indoor’ events have proved popular especially in summer as the design of the building permits fresh air to circulate freely. The Committee sourced tables which can be placed on the playing surface without risk of damaging it.

The facility has had a wider impact on the community in general by helping to counteract the village’s isolated location. Residents have a community asset which enhances Strathdearn as a place to live. Potential residents can see that Strathdearn is a self-contained community with modern facilities. Local businesses have also benefitted. Residents no longer have to leave the area for recreation while people are also attracted into Strathdearn to participate in sports.

Other communities have expressed considerable interest in the Strathdearn solution. The facility has generated a considerable degree of interest from other communities who had not previously considered such an innovative design approach.

‘Overall the facility is a very welcome addition for the community and one which is proving to offer a wider range of benefits than originally anticipated.’

LEADER contribution: £35,000 (23%) towards total project costs of £151,000.
Skye  An t-Eilean Sgitheanach

The island of Skye and the adjoining mainland are top of the agenda for many tourists from mountaineers to those seeking their family roots. The drama of the landscape, however, conceals issues from higher than average house prices, fuel poverty and seasonal unemployment to the need to retain younger people and to halt the decline in Gaelic language and culture. Ensuring that everyone is able to participate fully, feel that they belong and have equal access to services is a constant challenge, in an area of scattered and often remote settlements.

On air since 2004

Cuillin FM Ltd – Sustainable Development Project

Cuillin FM Ltd is a community radio station relaying news, features and music in English and Gaelic throughout Skye and mainland Lochalsh. With over 70 hours of broadcasting a week, it provides a vital link for remote communities. Over 40 volunteers run the station supported by a Board of Directors and an administrator.

While income from advertising and sponsorship meets general running costs, LEADER funding, along with assistance from Highlands and Islands Enterprise and the Highland Culture Fund, has allowed the Directors to put the station on a more sustainable footing. A household survey identified programming priorities and an outside broadcasting vehicle has extended live coverage of events. Two new radio masts and studio equipment will improve the service technically. The station also produced a CD for sale featuring local artists to promote Gaelic language and culture especially among young people.

‘Without LEADER funding we would not have been able to move forward and develop what is seen as an important service in a remote, rural area.’

LEADER contribution: £12,134 (35%) towards total project costs of £34,671
What did you do in the War?

**The Crofters and the War Oral History Project**

Despite Skye and Wester Ross’s remoteness from the main theatres of war, the crofting communities played an important part in the Second World War. Everyday lives were touched by the presence of mine-laying squadrons, radar station operators and military personnel on training missions.

LEADER funding backed the Museum of the Isles’ participation in a Heritage Lottery Fund programme ‘Their Past Your Future’.

Eleven themes were selected from croft work to leaving and loss. The project co-ordinator and her assistant carried out around 40 interviews as well as training community groups and school pupils in oral history techniques.

‘It took us into homes, day centres and schools. We filmed some sessions and conducted some in Gaelic.’

Treasured photographs, memorabilia and objects relating to the War illuminated the oral testimony and enriched the outcomes of the Crofters and the War project. These included exhibitions, touring displays, a book and a contribution to the website, Remembering Scotland at War.

**LEADER contribution:** £13,483 (45%) towards total project costs of £29,983

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Creating a link between land and sea

**Developing Access to the Sea at Carbost**

Community company Carbost Pier Ltd is dedicated to developing access to the sea for everyone from commercial fishermen landing a catch to young people messing about in boats.

Three years of complex negotiations secured community access to the land, foreshore and seabed. A condition of achieving this was the restoration of the derelict pier which was threatened with demolition. An engineering survey established that the pier could be restored at a fraction of the cost of renewal. The company successfully applied to LEADER in 2010 to match fund Phase 1. This put in place the necessary infrastructure, including a new concrete deck on the pier with fendering, ladders and refurbished handrails, a car park and upgrading the access road.

‘The pier is now safe to use and enjoy.’

The company is fundraising to deliver Phase 2 – a slipway, pontoon jetty and improved public facilities – to secure the bridge from land to sea for future generations.

**LEADER contribution:** £93,000 (66.5%) towards total project costs of £140,000

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Auchtertyre primary school pupils at the exhibition in Kyle Hall

Over the sea from Skye
A door to door service

Energy Advice Service
Residents of Skye and adjoining mainland Lochalsh face real problems in reducing their energy bills. They do not have access to mains gas and face higher than average fuel costs. Up to a fifth of the population live in extreme fuel poverty in homes that are costly and difficult to insulate.

Lochalsh & Skye Housing Association set up their Energy Advice Service to guide people towards warmer, more fuel efficient homes. LEADER funding helped them deliver the service by supporting the costs of two energy efficiency workers.

‘What is unique about our approach is that we visit people in their homes. We work with them to achieve real improvements based on their specific needs.’

From 2010-12, energy advisors using insulation surveys, thermal imaging, temperature and electricity monitoring, provided energy and carbon saving advice for 491 homes and 22 community buildings in an area of over 1,000 square miles.

LEADER contribution: £21,558 Wester Ross Local Area Partnership (12.5%) and £43,115 Skye & Lochalsh Local Area Partnership (25%) towards total project costs of £172,927

Bridge to the past

Broadford Heritage Trail Project
The three mile area around Broadford Bay reveals important but neglected traces of the past. The Broadford and Strath Community Company (BSCC) started to create a heritage trail in 2007. ‘This is the jewel in the crown of our projects to date. It encourages tourists to stay longer, trains local people in heritage skills and gives the community pride in its past.’

LEADER’s commitment secured other funding offers on the table to complete the trail. The most expensive element was a footbridge incorporating the bridge supports of the 1904 railway that transported marble from the quarry to the pier. Opened in 2010, the bridge now connects the pier to the village and to a network of local footpaths. Funding also helped restore a Neolithic cairn and early Christian well at each end of the trail and improve boat moorings at the pier.

‘Developing a local skills bank has meant that we can now take forward even more ambitious projects.’

LEADER contribution: £45,000 (35%) towards total project costs of £126,029
Growing community assets

**SCT Forestry Development**

Sleat Community Trust supports sustainable development in the area known as the ‘garden of Skye’. Sleat is one of Scotland’s fastest growing rural communities and over 70% of the local population are members of the Trust.

A sub-group was set up to investigate the feasibility of the community acquiring the coniferous Tormore Forest and woodland at Kinloch. Action became urgent when the Forestry Commission Scotland put Tormore up for sale unexpectedly in 2009.

A business plan was a pre-requisite of the Trust’s approaching the National Forest Land Scheme for assistance. LEADER funding helped towards the services of a professional consultant. The plan allowed the Trust to identify any risks associated with the purchase and assess potential uses of the Forest from a biomass business to establishing new crofts.

The business plan was a small but vital step in taking ownership of the forest in 2011.

“For the first time ever, the community owns the land where we live.”

**LEADER contribution:** £1,000 (20%) towards total project costs of £5,000
Staffin Goes Green

Nearly a hundred square miles separate the 22 townships that make up the area of Staffin in northeast Skye. A village hall is vital in providing a base for community activities and as a means of strengthening social networks. The tourists and climbers who pass through one of Skye’s most dramatic landscapes offer revenue potential towards sustaining a hall.

Staffin’s problem was that its village hall was so cold, damp and dilapidated that ‘it was virtually uninhabitable’, the only occasional user being the badminton club.

The ten-strong Hall Committee which also manages the community shop and rents out space to a café operator within the building decided that it was time to act. The Committee commissioned an energy survey which recommended two solutions – a wind turbine and energy-efficient storage heaters.

‘Raising the money was a long and arduous task. We underestimated the length of time it would take to gain a commitment. LEADER was really supportive and helped us to complete our funding package.’

There was a further delay when the contractor installing the storage heaters went out of business.

Finally Staffin went green at the end of 2011.

‘Already it has made a huge difference. Four new user groups have started up in the last six months from bowls to zumba dancing.’

The Committee also hopes to attract new community initiatives such as craft fairs and ceilidhs.

The Committee’s second project, where LEADER matched Awards for All funding, went much more according to plan. A community laundrette was proving increasingly popular with self-catering holidaymakers and walkers needing a dry change of clothing. The existing machines were too small to cope with demand resulting in loss of custom.

Again Staffin chose to go green which fitted the LEADER renewables theme.

‘The paperwork can be challenging but our local LEADER development worker was fantastic. Such support is vital when five community volunteers can only dedicate their spare time.’

Solar panels heated the water for the café and new energy-efficient laundrette equipment meant a better service for more people.

A warm, welcoming hall has resulted in more business for the café and shop whose income feeds in to supporting future improvements. The committee is now looking at replacing the car park which can be hazardous in bad weather and a new pitch for the football club.

‘With experience under our belts, we are getting good at what we do. We have already reduced our carbon footprint and made the hall a sustainable resource for the whole community.’

**LEADER contribution:** £39,815 (37.8%) towards total project costs of £105,329.16
Sutherland Cataibh

With 13,500 people scattered over a land that makes up a quarter of the Highlands, Sutherland is one of Europe’s most sparsely populated areas. The proportion of older residents is double that of Scotland as a whole. Remoteness can hide deprivation and in many localities access to a car is an essential rather than a lifestyle choice. Forestry, tourism and the public sector are major employers. The number of self-employed people and social enterprises demonstrates the area’s enterprising spirit. Communities are actively building on the area’s outstanding natural, cultural and heritage assets.

Who lived here in 2000BC?

Hidden Lives of the Assynt Landscape

There are tantalising glimpses of the people who have lived within Assynt’s dramatic and challenging mountain landscape since Neolithic times. For several years Historic Assynt has brought together local people to further knowledge of the area’s built and natural heritage.

A steering group of Historic Assynt’s members drove forward a project to survey and record the traces of those hidden lives with a view to interpreting their stories. The community was involved at all stages from planning to field work. LEADER backing part-funded the programme including a full archaeological survey, an education pack, work with schools and volunteer training. The survey delivered a sound understanding of the condition of Assynt’s known heritage assets from chambered cairns to crofting townships, and identified access issues and the potential for interpretation. A touring exhibition and a book have given the wider public the chance to share those hidden lives.

Historic Assynt then successfully secured funding from LEADER, Historic Scotland and Heritage Lottery Fund to carry out detailed archaeological excavation of three key sites first identified and investigated through the Hidden Lives project.

Hidden Lives of the Assynt Landscape: LEADER contribution: £46,270.41 (45%) towards total project costs of £103,572.41

Life and Death in Assynt’s Past: LEADER contribution: £56,391 (40%) towards total project costs of £142,360
Extending the reach

**CASWA Violence Against Women – Equality and Diversity Project**

Since 2004 Caithness and Sutherland Women’s Aid (CASWA) has delivered outreach services within a widely dispersed area. Through increased awareness, demand started to outstrip the resources of one outreach worker.

Women in remote communities face particular challenges owing to distance from services, isolation and lack of privacy. Concerned that women in such communities were losing out, CASWA sought LEADER backing to fund a second worker. This allows the service to be extended to and piloted in the far north and west.

As well as working with individual families, the worker has built networks to increase referrals from the police and housing authorities, raised awareness of equality and diversity in schools and organised activities where women can come together and share experiences.

> ‘As we become better known, women are starting to self-refer to the service. It helps to know that you are not alone.’

**LEADER contribution:** £66,999.60 (60%) towards total project costs of £111,666.00

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‘A long haul but we got there’

**Rosehall Rejuvenation Project**

Rosehall village hall has thrived ever since it was built by the community in 1936. Its hosting of music, theatre and arts productions draws people from across Sutherland and generates profit to support local activities.

Consultation with the community identified priorities to enhance the facilities available for local people and tourists.

- upgrading the kitchen and toilets
- providing more storage space for theatre and youth groups
- Introducing energy-efficient lighting and heating.

The committee commissioned an architect and applied for grant-aid. Initially it applied for 90% funding through the SRDP Rural Priorities Programme. When the relevant part of this funding stream was transferred to LEADER, the committee had to begin the application process again for LEADER backing.

> ‘Although it was a long haul, perseverance paid off. Nine months after work on the hall started, we held our reopening ceilidh.’

**LEADER contribution:** £120,506 (90%) towards total project costs of £139,896
Twelve burst pipes a year

**Invershin Hall Green Upgrade**

Village halls have to be well used to remain sustainable. Invershin competes for business with four other halls in the vicinity. Modelled on an agricultural shed, its uninsulated hall was erected in 1994. The hall committee identified a community café as a potential revenue earner. A warmer, welcoming hall was a prerequisite. It would also bring more bookings as the hall had to close in winter because of the cold.

An energy audit identified full insulation including pipe lagging as the way forward. The Committee raised £6,000 towards the cost, an impressive amount from a community of under 70 people. LEADER supported the green upgrade including insulating the hall fully, lowering the ceiling, enhancing double-glazing and installing energy efficient lighting. Following a disastrous flood as work was about to start, the successful insurance claim paid for new floor-coverings and kitchen units.

A warmer Christmas welcome

_“We delivered the project on time and within budget. We are making a healthy profit and welcoming new activities.”_

**LEADER contribution:** £6,394 (22%) towards total project costs of £28,844

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**Engaging communities in contemporary art**

**Art across Sutherland**

Established in 1986 as a community heritage centre, Timespan has grown to become Sutherland's only contemporary arts space. In 2009 consultancy helped Timespan to put in place an action-centred arts strategy to reduce reliance on project funding and to widen outreach. It identified that Timespan needed additional resources to demonstrate its arts programming capabilities to potential funding partners and to develop a long term growth plan as a social enterprise to underpin future sustainability.

LEADER supported the contracting of curatorial, artistic and programming expertise to deliver the 2010-11 ‘Art Across Sutherland’ programme. It included temporary and touring exhibitions with associated learning events. Artists worked with local communities to interpret their landscape and heritage in a 21st century way. Such support allowed the Director to build relationships with future long-term partners and demonstrate Timespan’s ability to deliver sustainable arts programming. Communities derived greater confidence in contemporary art as a means of expressing their landscape and culture.

**LEADER contribution:** £51,309.92 (40%) towards total project costs of £128,273.78

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*Inspired by art!*
Britain’s remotest toilet

Enhancing the Visitor Experience on Handa

The uninhabited island of Handa is home to one of northwest Europe’s largest seabird colonies. The Scottish Wildlife Trust manages it as a reserve in partnership with the Scourie Estate. Attracting over 7,000 visitors a season, Handa is Sutherland’s top ‘green tourism’ destination.

Lack of a toilet spoilt the quality of the visitor experience. Using the remains of the old village as a makeshift solution was damaging its ecology. LEADER part-funded the installation of a composting toilet designed to fit with the sensitive environment. The grant also went towards the upgrade of a boggy, degraded pathway with a boardwalk to keep birds and visitors safely apart.

‘The logistics made this a mammoth task. We needed a helicopter to deliver what may also be Britain’s most expensive toilet and an amphibious landing ferried over a digger and building materials.’

The Trust has benefitted from increased visitor numbers and positive national media publicity.

LEADER contribution: £28,006 (55%) towards total project costs of £50,466
Lochinver Mission

Lochinver in northwest Sutherland was once Scotland’s second largest fishing port. With the recent decline in the Scottish fishing fleet, the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen decided to close its Lochinver facility: its eating and meeting spaces were also used by local people and visitors. A packed public meeting in July 2009 voted to secure the building for community use. The 40+ members and four directors of the Scottish charity, the Assynt Community Association, were charged with raising the funding to buy and redesign the building.

A steering group worked hard to develop the concept and draw up a business plan. Their aims were to reduce isolation; create a community meeting place; preserve the village’s maritime heritage; create jobs, volunteering and training opportunities; utilise and promote energy efficiency and provide facilities such as a bunk house to encourage tourism. It was decided that the Assynt Community Association would rent out the building to a trading company Lochinver Mission Ltd, independent of the Association and with its own Directors so that risks could be shared and the Association would continue to own the building.

Having clear aims and a robust business plan paid off. In 2010 Lochinver Mission was one of six UK winners of the Big Lottery’s Village SOS competition, securing over £400,000 towards their project.

‘Making our final presentation in London was really nerve-racking but our team working and planning stood the test.’

Securing the rest of the funding was relatively straightforward with LEADER match funding the building conversion. LEADER funding also went towards the creation of a digital archive to preserve the maritime and local heritage and the development of the bunk house. Such versatile accommodation increases tourist time and spend in the area.

The work went according to plan and the Mission opened in June 2011.

‘It was just in the nick of time. We had to hit the summer season running as we were living on credit.’

The main problems arose with managing the financing. The Committee followed the rules of their major funder, the Big Lottery, which did not cover the need to advertise the building contract in Europe. As this approach did not meet LEADER procurement requirements, the programme was temporarily unable to release funding.

‘It was a nightmarish time as we were committed to paying the workmen.’

Fortunately Assynt Community Association was able to demonstrate that the process they undertook offered value for money which enabled LEADER to continue to support the project.

The first year of operation has gone well. Three full-time and five part-time posts have been created including employment for two people who would otherwise have been forced to leave the village through redundancy. Use of the bunk house by mountaineering and diving clubs is extending the tourist season. After minor teething troubles, energy bills are reducing: ‘our renewables have been brilliant.’ Feedback from the community has been very positive and the Mission is close to breaking even.

The Directors sum up the ingredients of a successful project as ‘clear objectives, a tight team and the right chemistry.’ The Ward Manager considers it ‘one of the strongest projects that have taken place in my area, covering so many objectives and themes.’

**LEADER contribution:** £89,339.00 (27%) towards total project costs of £326,008
Tain and Easter Ross
Baile Dhubhthaich agus Taobh Sear Rois

Tain and Easter Ross embraces the communities of the Dornoch Firth with nearly half the population of 8,700 living in the Royal Burgh of Tain. From whisky distilling to energy, manufacturing is a more significant employer proportionately than in most parts of the Highlands. Communities are proud of their Pictish heritage and their environment of beaches and gentle hills which provide opportunities both to attract visitors and to create a strong community sense of place.

Spot, Max and Bhoi

2011 International Sheepdog Trial

Competing in an international sheepdog trial is the ultimate test of a dog and its handler. Despite sheepdogs being part of the Highland way of life, such trials had not been hosted in the region since 1952. On winning the backing of the International Sheepdog Trials Society to host the 2011 International, the local trials community formed the Highland Sheepdog Association.

Organising the international was a major undertaking from venue selection, laying out the course and putting operational arrangements in place for marketing and visitor information. LEADER matched the funds needed to mount the trials, held on 8th -10th September on a farm outside Fearn. The event attracted around 3,000 visitors including TV crews and HRH Princess Anne.

With people travelling from all parts of Great Britain and Ireland, the trials brought over £300,000 into the local economy, showcased local producers, promoted the area as a visitor destination and provided a model for hosting similar events.

LEADER contribution: £33,257 (40%) towards total project costs of £83,192
Everything’s coming up roses

**Tain Rose Garden Development**

The community created the Rose Garden behind Tain High Street in the 1960s to celebrate the town’s 900th anniversary. Fifty years later, the garden was so neglected that few people were even aware that it was a public space.

The Tain Initiative took on the challenge. Funding became an urgent priority when Tain was chosen from hundreds of community gardens to benefit from the professional assistance of the BBC’s Beechgrove Garden team.

‘**LEADER delivered the final strand of support to a truly community partnership.**’

A local contractor tackled the hard landscaping and installation of play equipment while volunteers planted flowerbeds, trees and grassed areas. Schools designed a central pergola as an events space and a sensory garden. An army of volunteers ensured that the Garden was ready in time for filming in 2009.

Tain now has a civic space to be proud of and over 30 volunteer gardeners to maintain it.

**LEADER contribution:** £30,000 (36%) towards total project costs of £82,000

**Development of Inver Hall**

Last refurbished in 1993, Inver Village Hall is the social hub for a scattered, agricultural community east of Tain. The hall is used for school activities, sport, meetings, dances and fundraising events as well as hosting a lunch club for older people.

In recent years the hall was losing customers and usage was declining. The problem lay with the hall’s high ceilings, lack of insulation and inadequate heating arrangements.

LEADER awarded funding towards the costs of lowering the ceiling, installing low energy lighting, rewiring and replacement of some electrics.

Since the refurbished hall opened in spring 2011,

‘**we have been delighted with the response from everyone and hall usage has shot up. Thanks to LEADER, we are a viable, running hall again with a great future.**’

**LEADER contribution:** £49,356 (90%) towards total project costs of £54,840
Snakes, monks and a miraculous raven

Conservation and Display of Nigg Pictish Monument

For a millennium the Nigg stone, an outstanding example of a carved Pictish cross slab, stood in the churchyard until blown down in a gale. Later vicissitudes included being broken and hung outside the church.

Concerned as to the condition of the stone and its display, the Nigg Old Trust commissioned an options appraisal in 2009. It recommended that the room housing the slab should be redesigned to provide better support for the monument and a more appropriate setting for its display.

LEADER and Heritage Lottery funded a development phase which included non-invasive investigation work and detailed project design development and costings. This phase led to Heritage Lottery fund awarding a substantial grant with LEADER providing the rest of the funding to conserve and display the Pictish monument.

Re-securing the conserved slab will allow visitors access to the church’s Poor Loft for the first time. Better lighting, new interpretation and the training of volunteers will enhance the visitor experience when the room reopens in spring 2013. The Trust is preparing an activity plan and website to encourage interactivity and learning.

Development phase: LEADER contribution: £10,073 (43%) towards total project costs of £23,523

Conservation and display of the monument: LEADER contribution: £49,653 (28%) towards total project costs of £178,393

Simple ideas punching above their weight

A Facelift for Portmahomack

St Colman recognised the beauty of Portmahomack’s setting when he established a priory here in the 10th century. The village later grew prosperous as a fishing port and beach resort.

Recently local people felt that the village was letting itself down by looking scruffy and uncared for. The Community Council suggested ideas for improvement after consulting every household in 2007. A local artist volunteered to visualise the potential transformation.

The ideas were simple - a welcome sign at the village entrance, seating, a community noticeboard, bins, stone planters and shrubs. LEADER helped deliver the community’s aspirations. A package of simple initiatives has had a real impact. Portmahomack now presents itself to visitors and potential residents as a cared-for village which has pride in itself. The local news sheet The Tarbat Crack summed up the facelift:

‘Altogether very much a community project, and one which reflects well on us as a community’.

LEADER contribution: £8,899 (45%) towards total project costs of £19,772
Seaboard Memorial Hall

The Seaboard Memorial Hall is a community hub for the 700+ residents of the villages of Balintore, Shandwick and Hilton, which face out to sea at the end of the Tain peninsula. Built as a memorial after the Second World War, the hall, which was community-owned from the outset, was no longer fit for purpose by the late 1990s. It took perseverance and four attempts to secure funding before the Management Committee was able to build a new hall on the site. It opened in 2002.

With the closure of other village halls in the area, Seaboard has become even more of a focus of community life with over 20 organisations using its resources. Activities range from sports clubs and keep-fit classes to monthly old time dancing which draws in enthusiasts from throughout East Sutherland. Local groups and service providers use the hall for meetings and training events and the NHS holds blood donation sessions and mother and baby clinics. The hall is also available for weddings and functions.

‘We have had birthday parties for all ages from one to ninety.’

The Management Committee believes that a programme of continuous improvement is the key to the hall’s sustainability. Recently a new stage, a stairlift for disabled people and solar panels have been installed with the support of LEADER funding. The Committee had previously identified a need to upgrade the kitchen to meet the rigorous standards required for training and commercial purposes. It also wanted to remodel the café space to make it more customer friendly and less like a canteen.

‘Every area of the hall must earn its keep.’

LEADER funding supported the redesign of the kitchen and café area and the marketing of the facilities to attract new business.

‘Applying for LEADER was very straightforward, especially as one of our Directors was already familiar with the Programme. The installation also went to plan. Managing project finances can be very time-consuming. We are lucky in having a hall manager to tackle the paperwork and liaison required by four funders.’

From the start the Committee placed emphasis on the design process to ensure that the café area would attract new business while retaining its community character. It has succeeded as the hall has never been busier. Visitors appreciate the welcoming entrance and café with comfortable seating and stunning sea views. Increased numbers of tourists provide the potential for retail and showcasing local crafts. Existing user groups benefit from safer and more efficient kitchen facilities which also enable the hall to attract training providers and to host larger events. The community benefits from improved access to learning and from the revenue going into the local economy.

Seaboard Memorial Hall looks forward confidently to a sustainable future as a social enterprise.

LEADER contribution: £10,550 (17%) towards total project costs of £59,000.
Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh
Taobh Siar Rois, Srath Pheofhair agus Loch Aillse

Mountains and sea loch separate many of the communities of Wester Ross. These communities vary from the tourist destination of Gairloch and the Victorian spa of Strathpeffer to crofting townships and forestry villages. Managing and promoting Wester Ross’s outstanding natural environment is an opportunity for employment creation and sustainable energy. It also presents a challenge to ensure that the balance between people and wild places is retained especially given the popularity of second homes. A strong and active approach to development by the community is helping to ensure that everyone has access to services, whether sports facilities or resources for people with special needs.

A new hub for Gairloch

Multi-use Community Building in Gairloch

GALE (Gairloch and Loch Ewe Action Forum) has a ten year track record in community enterprise from operating weekly markets to running the Tourist Information Centre and managing a photography project for people with mental health problems.

Having acquired derelict land in the centre of Gairloch, GALE sought to create a multi-purpose, village hub to serve a scattered, rural population and thousands of visitors. A new building would allow GALE to create a year-round community space for meetings and adult learning, to exhibit and sell local crafts and produce, to rent space to generate income and to relocate the Tourist Information Centre.

GALE negotiated a funding package including LEADER to build the hub, the first in Scotland to meet passive energy standards. Eight years’ planning and voluntary effort paid off when the GALE Centre opened in summer 2012.

‘It provides the base for an enterprising community to grow.’

LEADER contribution: £190,000 (26%) towards total project costs of £738,269
‘The best thing I ever did at school’

Am Batá

Within living memory Wester Ross communities built boats for sporting estates, fishermen, crofters and racing enthusiasts. Their builders relied on hand tools, local timber and skills passed down the generations.

Recognising that these skills risked being lost, Am Bàta was set up in 2007 to deliver training in boatbuilding and repair to pupils at Plockton High School which had received a gift of larch for a boat. Given the popularity of the course, Am Bàta put together a funding package, primarily from HLF’s Skills for the Future programme. LEADER backed the project which offered accredited work-based courses, delivered by a professional boat builder, for 17 pupils and two apprentices. Support included two part-time oral historians to gather memories for a year and the development of a website to preserve and present local seafaring heritage.

LEADER helped turn Am Batá from a school activity into a social enterprise based around boat building and repair.

LEADER contribution: £42,072 (48%) towards total project costs of £86,433

A perfect Victorian spa

Destination Strathpeffer Phase 2

In 2008 the Strathpeffer Initiative was established as a community venture to develop and promote the assets of the village, where visitors once flocked to take the waters, and the surrounding area. The community chose priorities which the Initiative undertook to deliver - floral displays, an audio tour, an archaeological trail, a feasibility study for a festival, a community website and marketing. The Community Council and the Forestry Commission Scotland addressed the eighth priority, a network of woodland walks.

The Initiative acted as an umbrella group to develop community-driven mini-projects in a highly innovative approach to rural development. The core team of eight volunteers drew on skills within the village from archaeology to web design. Their successful application to LEADER helped them deliver the three year programme.

With product development in place including the innovative one-touch audio tour, the priority is on marketing. Strathpeffer now has an offering which makes it a visitor destination in its own right.

LEADER contribution: £36,000 (40%) towards total project costs of £90,000

Interpreting Strathpeffer’s story

Gateway to the village
Encouraging woodland crafts

**Smithy Development**

Formed in 2009, the Kirkton Woodland and Heritage Group aims to manage land for community benefit in the Loch Carron area and to promote understanding of local, natural and cultural heritage. The social enterprise’s commercial activities encompass a monthly crafts and food fair, training workshops and the rental of craft workspace.

Two strands of the group’s ambitions came together when it was gifted Smithy Barn in 2010 and applied to buy Kirkton Woodland. A condition of National Forest Land scheme backing for the latter is to establish a training and environmental awareness centre.

The group took the first step towards meeting the condition by building two timber extensions to the existing Smithy and tree house with support from LEADER. The extension provides two craft workshops and space for craft demonstrations and training. Rental income has helped the sustainability of the enterprise which is now planning the conversion of the Smithy itself into a field and visitor centre.

**LEADER contribution:** £118,146.39 (65%) towards total project costs of £181,762.39

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A gift from Ullapool

**Made in Ullapool – Wax Works**

Made in Ullapool is a social enterprise run by volunteers which provides training and work opportunities for 13 younger people who experience physical, learning, emotional or social barriers to finding employment. Its commercial arm produces hand-made craft goods such as candles and candleholders for sale to local people and tourists.

Temporary premises which provided a poor environment for trainees hampered the organisation’s growth. An opportunity arose to move into more permanent premises above the ferry terminal’s ticket office.

The enterprise successfully put together a funding package including LEADER to covert the space into the Wax Works. Accessible to all abilities, the workshops support creative learning and provide more production space which translates into increased sales. The retail outlet benefits from its central location with increased footfall especially in the tourist summer months.

**LEADER contribution:** £29,888.66 (70%) towards total project costs of £42,697.66

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‘Greener’ lengths for swimmers

**Raising the roof**

Ullaspool is a community owned and run indoor swimming pool serving residents of and visitors to the far North West. It currently offers 17 activities from sea kayaking to sub-aqua as well as swimming lessons for primary schools, an essential skill for fishing communities.

Rising energy costs led the community trust to apply for LEADER funding to make a partial switch from oil to solar energy through a roof-mounted system. LEADER funding has also enabled Ullaspool to enhance the energy efficiency and sustainability of the swimming pool through a variety of measures:

- Upgrading of the roof to allow for installation of solar energy systems
- Increased insulation within the building to reduce heat loss
- More energy efficient lighting to reduce energy costs

The project also involves creating a part-time post of Business Development Manager for 21 months to educate the local community about energy efficiency and renewable technology using the swimming pool as a working example, and to ensure the long-term sustainability of Ullaspool as a social enterprise.

**Raising the Roof LEADER contribution:** £326,620 (68%) towards total project costs of £475,220

**Solar Pre-heat: LEADER contribution:** £20,857.40 (17%) towards total project costs of £117,167
**CASE STUDY : Building on the past**

**Applecross Trust**

Applecross is one of Scotland’s remotest and most beautiful peninsulas. Led by the Applecross Trust, nine local organisations formed ALPs (the Applecross Landscape Partnership Scheme). ALPS’ aim is to conserve and celebrate the peninsula’s natural and cultural heritage, a challenge given an area covering 110 sq km. ALPS recognised that opening up Applecross’s heritage would encourage sustainable tourism and give local communities a strong sense of place and cohesion.

ALPS secured two rounds of Heritage Lottery funding, the second award being approved in principle subject to the confirmation of other match funding. LEADER approved funding towards elements of the project’s second phase, helping to implement a £2.2m project over three years.

As well as overall project administrative costs, LEADER backed a palette of specific initiatives. The Applecross Historical Society is digitising its photographic archive following specialist training for volunteers and staff. This provides a resource for other ALPS initiatives to tell the Applecross story. The Society is also researching and recording Applecross’s rich seam of place names. Applecross Primary School pupils interviewed residents to harvest their local knowledge and photographed sites associated with place names for a CD-ROM. Outputs also include a searchable database and a map to be displayed in the Heritage Centre.

The Applecross Bealach Group, which promotes Gaelic culture, received support to run three, five day summer schools exploring the Bardic tradition with Fringe events for everyone to join in. Enthusiasts are investigating the area’s past after training in archaeological surveying and excavation techniques. From overall planning in consultation with the community to enhancing specific projects, interpretation underpins the theme of several projects. Through such projects the community acquired accredited skills as diverse as ecological surveying and dry stone dyking.

To encourage visitors to explore the landscape, local people have been trained as walking guides and the peninsula’s paths network is being promoted. The potential for events and celebrations is also being explored: already Applecross hosts an annual Tree Festival.

A specific need identified through ALPS’ work was the creation of a central, creative events and interpretation hub for the peninsula. At one time the heart of the community and adjacent to the Applecross Heritage Centre, the early 19th century, B-listed Clachan Church was identified as an ideal candidate for such a venture. As well as its support to ALPS, LEADER part-funded the restoration of the church. This included making safe and opening up the gallery to provide seating for 50 people, essential plumbing, improved lighting and interpretation of the area’s religious heritage.

Applecross demonstrates how a patchwork of individual, LEADER-backed projects come together to strengthen the local economy and give a widely scattered community a real sense of where it came from.

‘It’s about making sure that everyone who visits or who lives here connects with the unique qualities of this community and landscape – and that is just as much about the present as it is about the past.’

**Applecross Landscape Partnership Scheme:** LEADER contribution: £94,891 (43%) towards total project costs of £216,065

**Enhancing Clachan Church:** LEADER contribution: £52,750 (50%) towards total project costs of £105,500
Strategic Projects
Pròiseactan Ro-innleachdail

With a population of just over 145,000, the Highland LEADER area has the second lowest density of people per square kilometre of the 20 Scottish LEADER areas. It is a region of contrasting landscapes and culture from the Norse and Pictish traditions of the north east to the Gaelic croftlands of Wester Ross and Skye, from the fertile farmlands of the Black Isle to the crofting townships of Sutherland. Communities draw on these assets to create opportunities in tourism, sustainable energy and natural resources.

Some communities are growing, fuelled by the expansion of the capital, Inverness, in recent decades, while remote localities experience the loss of younger people owing to their isolation. The region includes towns whose economies grew on the back of industries, from fishing to offshore oil which are now in decline. The legacy can be pockets of multiple deprivation, as acute as in Scotland’s Central Belt. Distance and lack of transport are challenges especially in delivering services for people with particular lifestyle and learning needs.

For hundreds of scattered rural settlements, overcoming distance is key to fostering community spirit and social enterprise.

Managed by the Strategic Local Action Group, strategic projects link localities within the Highland LEADER area which share common opportunities and challenges from exploring their past to planning their future.
Community Led Growth

Drawing on its long experience, Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HiE) has developed a programme – Community Account Management – to encourage community-led growth in selected, fragile rural localities including the Highland LEADER Programme areas of Caithness, Sutherland, Lochaber, Wester Ross and Skye.

Locally recruited community development workers help anchor organisations to develop a growth plan and deliver a range of projects. With specialist support from HiE and other partners, groups receive support of up to five years to achieve enhanced resilience, generate projects with an income stream and build capacity within the community.

Following an initial bid to LEADER, HiE received a second tranche of support to continue the programme to the end of 2013 with the focus on project implementation.

To date, sixteen communities have been supported, 14 of which have functioning development plans with a further 2 plans in draft. Project prioritisation and implementation has resulted in nine social enterprises, all of which are trading or have immediate trading potential. A further nine are being formed. Social enterprises range from energy advice, local food production, marine infrastructure and services, Gaelic education delivery, small business workshops, land acquisition, renewable energy in the form of tidal and hydro, a visitor interpretation and accommodation centre and social housing provision.

‘A key element of all the development plans was the provision of affordable housing for local need. Securing sustainable revenue in order to maintain the current LEADER and HiE investment has also been a key objective.’

Phase 2: LEADER contribution: £560,895 (50%) towards total project costs of £1,121,790
Reaching out to people in need

**New Start Highland – Rural Service Centre Development**

Based in Inverness, for the last decade the social enterprise New Start Highland has delivered practical support to individuals and families who have been homeless or are on low incomes. From starter packs of household goods and furniture to advice on tenancies, New Start aims to help people towards a more sustainable way of life. It also offers accredited training and volunteering opportunities for individuals having difficulties in finding work as well as making a significant contribution to Highland recycling targets.

New Start Highland wanted to extend its reach by establishing three service bases in Lochaber and the Cromarty Firth in areas which experience multiple deprivation. LEADER part funded the costs of purchasing two vehicles, staffing and office costs. The project has created 10 full-time posts within New Start Highland and 78 training and volunteering placements and has delivered starter packs of domestic items to 1,331 households.

**LEADER contribution:** £204,255 (40%) towards total project costs of £510,636

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**Living wild**

**Chance for Change Highlands**

Venture Trust has successfully delivered the ‘Living Wild – Chance for Change’ programme for over 15 years. The programme gives participants intensive learning opportunities in wilderness environments - challenging and supporting them to re-evaluate their lives, develop new skills and return home equipped to make their ambitions reality. Continued outreach support helps participants make and sustain long term changes in their lives.

Venture Trust has a track record of delivering this programme to young people involved in offending in Inverness and the Highlands. In more remote areas, course preparation and follow-up historically had to be delivered largely by email or telephone. LEADER’s support helped tackle this challenge by part funding the costs of a Highlands-based outreach worker for two years. This has enabled more participants from Highland LEADER areas to join the programme – thereby extending the breadth and enhancing the quality of Venture Trust’s work in reducing the risk of re-offending.

**LEADER contribution:** £83,049.54 (75%) towards total project costs of £110,732.72
Going for gold

Quality Youth Work Training Initiative

Youth Highland is a membership network of 119 youth clubs and groups in the Highlands, providing a vital meeting place in remoter communities. Nearly 5,000 young people participate in group activities. Three quarters of the 600+ youth workers and leaders are volunteers.

Youth Highland recognised the need to deliver a programme of youth work training especially for volunteers to enhance quality and skills, put in place effective management, safety and evaluation procedures and encourage young people to become more involved in the running of their clubs. They developed a portfolio of courses in practical youth work delivery and youth group management.

With LEADER backing towards training and administrative costs, Youth Highland has a target of delivering 32 training courses to 320 youth workers over its two year programme. It has also launched a Training Recognition Scheme with bronze, silver and gold awards.

In its experience, many volunteers are not interested in accredited training but welcome recognition for their dedication in attending Youth Highland courses.

LEADER contribution: £11,801.77 (60%) towards total project costs of £19,669.62

LEADER supporting Lead

Get Connected and Lead: Maximising the Influence of Minority Voices

The charity, Lead Scotland, supports disabled people and their carers in learning. Its innovative ‘Get Connected and Lead: Maximising the Influence of Minority Voices’ project delivers the skills and confidence to influence local services through community action. It is being piloted in four areas of Scotland. LEADER made it possible to roll-out the programme in the Highlands, using new technology to overcome geographical isolation.

The first year was devoted to developing an interactive website and accredited learning programme. Funding supports a development worker to train disabled people in making their voice heard in the design and delivery of local services. Training in mentoring ensures that the programme has the maximum impact.

Since autumn 2011 four learning groups have been established in Highland LEADER areas.

Different interactive ways of communication such as personal video-conferencing are being tested. Programme partners regularly share their experience.

‘We are learning all the time and constantly looking at ways to expand our project to meet the needs of more disabled people in the Highlands.’

LEADER contribution: £96,658 (37%) towards total project costs of £256,587.62
Learners Got Talent

Learners Conference - Run by Learners for Learners

Held in Nairn in March 2010, the event was a first for Scotland, bringing together adult literacies learners from throughout the North of Scotland. The Highland Adult Literacies Partnership won LEADER backing towards its contribution to the conference.

With support from tutors, learners planned the conference through face-to-face meetings and videoconferencing. Groups took responsibility for arranging particular tasks – workshops, transport, budget accommodation, catering and displays. Learners chose the theme of ‘Learners Got Talent’. On the day they welcomed international guest speakers and led workshops for participants in varied skills including drumming and filmmaking.

The conference gave delegates the chance to share experiences and ideas, try out new skills and learn the art of conference management.

Delivering a successful conference

‘I enjoyed meeting new people. It built my confidence and I feel good.’

The conference has kick-started the creation of learners’ forums throughout the Highlands.

LEADER contribution: £6,230.60 (45%) towards total project costs of £13,860.60

Learners receiving a Good Practice Award from Scotland’s Learning Partnership
Stop, Look and Listen

Inspired by the sign beside a level crossing on the Kyle line, this is the name of a three year programme to encourage people in the Highlands to learn about, record and engage with their local heritage. ARCH (Archaeology for Communities in the Highlands) put forward the project in response to growing interest in past lives and landscapes.

‘Our aim is to respond to grassroots interests and concerns and to become a Highland-wide provider of community archaeology.’

ARCH secured a funding package from the Heritage Lottery and LEADER with in-kind support from The Highland Council and ScotRail. Together they provided two project workers, a part-time administrator, a part-time outreach officer and the services of specialist archaeological consultants, artists and project evaluators.

The programme has six strands.

Community Timelines – Eight communities researched their local heritage to present it as a multimedia timeline.

Pathways into the Past – Seven communities explored old routes through landscapes between Beauly and Tain, learning archival research and field survey techniques on the way.

Display the Past – Participants worked with Groam House and Nairn Museums to create an exhibition around an aspect of their collections.

Heritage Along the Kyle Line – ScotRail provided transport enabling groups to research the stories associated with places along the route from Dingwall to Kyle of Lochalsh. A leaflet and MP3 player commentaries are enriching rail passengers’ journeys.

Living in the Past – Young people and teachers learned how to ‘read’ the remains of a crofting township. Working with an artist they interpreted the sites.

Delving into the Past – In 2011-12 enthusiasts, young and old, have been getting their hands dirty with training in archaeological techniques on sites close to public transport and with childcare laid on. ‘The ARCH archaeological digs are something special, offering an incredible opportunity to learn through the step-by-step tuition process, which gives everyone the chance to try out all the basic tasks of excavation.’

Funding also supports ARCH to signpost individuals towards more advanced training, to collaborate with heritage organisations, to disseminate results, to give talks to schools and groups and to contribute knowledge to heritage databases. A conference in September 2012 brought the groups together to share knowledge and experiencing about what they have learned from stopping, looking and listening. Using the programmes as pilots and shaping them in the light of community feedback will allow ARCH to use the past as a way of engaging future generations of local people and visitors.

Stop, Look and Listen has delivered impressive results. Over 400 people have taken part in courses, well over the project target. Participants have created over 20 heritage displays which have toured the Highlands and 20 archives have been submitted to local libraries and museums. Groups have contributed to nearly 2,000 records held on the database of all known heritage in the Highlands, which the public can access over the internet. Over 400 people enjoyed talks, crafts, indoor and outdoor workshops and displays from throughout the Highlands during the Taking Part in Your Past family festival in April 2012.

‘Altogether the project has shown a large public interest in learning about and recording local heritage, and a thirst for more.’

LEADER contribution: £121,875 (40%) towards total project costs of £299,441
**CASE STUDY: ‘I’m a Masher’**

**Mashed – making healthy life choices**

When one of the founders of the Mashed Youth Project in Manchester moved to Fort William, she brought Mashed with her. She identified the opportunity to deliver this innovative approach, which gives young people the tools to take responsibility for their life choices, in a very different environment. ‘Young people in rural communities face real challenges around isolation, transport and access to resources, places to meet and make new friends and the move towards independence. Alcohol is very much part of the culture and opportunities for self-expression are limited. Although young people are “looked out for” more than in cities, family and community ties can be a frustration as well as a comfort zone.’

Children in Need confirmed their support for the launch of Mashed in the Highlands provided their funding could be matched.

‘**LEADER was the most difficult application form that I had ever tackled but it paid off. It has proved to be really flexible. It trusts what you are trying to do and travels with you on the journey.**’

LEADER helps to cover trainer and staff costs and materials. It also contributes to the delivery of free workshops for youth and field workers, allowing the approach to be adopted more widely.

The 10 week programme is open to anyone between the ages of 13 and 19 living in the Highlands. Through teamwork, sharing experiences and self-expression in drama, art and film, Mashers explore issues that shape life choices from substance abuse and risky sex to emotions, relationships and respect for other points of view. They set and work towards their own targets and assess their own performance. Mashers can opt for a recognised qualification and additional one-to-one mentoring. Some move on to Mashed 100 where they devise and deliver a project of benefit to their community.

They also take on the challenge of raising funds towards supporting themselves on the 100 hour course including a two day residential session. Fort William Mashers researched the need for the programme in Lochaber while Balintore Mashers hosted the premiere of their film, ‘Risky on Whisky’ with showings in local schools.

Mashed has already made an impact in places as different as Nairn and Kinlochleven working with scores of young people. LEADER targets have already been met with a year of the programme still to run and there is now a waiting list for places. Activity agreement commissions from The Highland Council to help young people towards employment have boosted both funds and the number of participants. One of the first trainees is already being considered for a youth worker post.

‘**Mashed could not have achieved so much in such a short space of time without our volunteers, supporters, youth workers and partners like LEADER.**’

The last word goes to the Mashers. ‘Before I came to Mash, I was bored and got into trouble. It’s about being self-assertive, not aggressive. ’I’ve changed – I listen more and care more about other people. ’I’ve learned to say “No” and who my true friends are.’ ‘I’ve found out that work can be fun.’

**LEADER contribution:** £29,151 (61%) towards total project costs of £47,789
Cooperation Projects
Pròiseactan Co-òbrachail

Cooperation is a key theme under the Highland LEADER Programme encouraging community groups and partnerships to undertake joint projects with other LEADER groups within the UK or internationally. Cooperation goes further than networking. It encourages and supports a group to undertake a joint action with an identified Partner to deliver shared outcomes and community benefits for both areas.

A partner for LANDsARE

LANDsARE – Landscape Architectures in European Areas

The Centre for Recreation and Tourism Research, West Highland College UHI is working with the Highland LEADER Programme to deliver a cooperation project in partnership with four Italian groups and one German group.

Regional activities will include working with local communities to develop and deliver training in the eradication of invasive floral species. It is hoped that this will lead to 60 trained operatives in the community-led, private and public forestry sectors.

The project aims to create greater opportunities for utilising forest resources through effective forestry management. Transnational activities include a series of conferences, one of which will be held in Scotland in early 2013, workshops and study visits to look at management techniques and good practice. One or two demonstration areas in the Highlands will be designated where good practice can be tested and adopted. Case studies will be developed to share lessons learned.

Development Phase: LEADER contribution: £1,634 (90%) towards total project costs of £1,815

Cooperation Project: LEADER contribution: £88,209 (90%) towards total project costs of £98,115

Being interviewed for Italian TV at the project launch meeting
Homecoming, French style

Tillidh Mi Dhachaidh (I Will Return)

With LEADER support, in 2009 Ullapool High School put together Tillidh Mi Dhachaidh. The project showcased the creative work of former students and engaged primary school pupils and the wider community in making art and music. High School pupils acted as tour guides to introduce younger children to the work of a former student which they had researched while the former students themselves led workshops whose creative output was celebrated at the end of the project.

LEADER then supported a visit by the High School to its counterpart in Olargues near Montpellier to share the model of Tillidh Mi Dhachaidh in promoting cultural heritage within a community.

‘We spread the message - Homecoming - for a week. Everyone on the trip was keen for the people of Olargues to learn something from us but also for us to learn something from the people of Olargues.’

Cultural relationships continue to cross geographical boundaries.

LEADER contribution: £8,850 (54%) towards total project costs of £16,360
Learning Journey leading to Wild North Festival

For years communities along the northerly coastal fringe of mainland Scotland had ambitions to celebrate the area’s distinctive natural and cultural heritage from the machair croftlands to the unique Scottish primrose. Hearing about Slovenia’s Bohinj International Wild Flower Festival provided the catalyst.

LEADER part-funded a delegation under the aegis of North Highland Tourism to visit the Wild Flower Festival to study how a local community event launched in 2007 had grown into the country’s top environmental celebration with the President as its patron. Links are being formed with other European regions keen to adopt the Bohinj model.

The outcome of the study visit was the formation of a group to turn the idea of a Wild North Festival into reality. LEADER subsequently supported a one year post of Festival Co-ordinator to develop and market a Festival in 2012. From guided walks to whale watching, the Festival aims to extend the visitor season and increase local people’s awareness of their heritage.

Learning/Development Journey: LEADER contribution: £9,186 (65%) towards total project costs of £14,186

Wild North Festival: LEADER contribution: £30,336 (68%) towards total project costs of £44,881
CASE STUDY: Communities and kites

Eyes to the skies

In 1989 the first red kite reappeared in the skies above Easter Ross. The RSPB had mounted a major operation to reintroduce these magnificent birds of prey which had been hunted to extinction. Now red kites are not only nesting in the Black Isle but spreading south into the Cairngorms.

After setting up a long term partnership with the Brahan sporting estate outside Dingwall, the RSPB developed Eyes to the Skies. The project aimed to raise awareness among local communities of the history and behaviour of red kites and of the need to protect them. LEADER matched funds from the RSPB, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund. ‘LEADER was a natural choice as we have been working with them for many years.’ Because the birds are heading south, an Action 2 partnership was formed with the Cairngorms LEADER Local Area Group to share the expertise gained on the Black Isle.

The two-year Eyes to the Skies project embraced a number of strands, all targeted at increasing community engagement with the red kites. A new viewing area opened in 2009 within a converted farmstead building at Tollie on the Brahan Estate. The glazed gable end gives visitors a close-up view of the table where volunteers feed the birds daily in summer while a viewing screen outside offers photo opportunities. LEADER helped to fund the design of the interior of the building as an interpretative centre.

Fifteen schools each championed a red kite chick fitted with a sat tag, tracking its journey and learning about the birds’ ecology and history through specifically designed classroom activities and field visits. The children chose names like Red Arrow and swooper Trooper for their adopted birds, although Lewis had to be renamed Louise when the kite laid eggs. The development of learning kits allowed schools in a wider area to become involved.

Funding also supported a field teacher and a red kite officer who spread the word within local communities through talks and guided walks. It is estimated that over 15,000 people became involved in the project through volunteering, joining in activities or viewing the birds’ progress on the web. Informational hubs were established in local tourist outlets and over 300 businesses were trained as kite experts and champions.

The momentum of the project continues.

‘Eyes to the skies has been a success. Visitor numbers to the viewing site are growing, helping to keep people in the area longer. We have a strong team of volunteers and our work with schools continues as well as satellite activity with schools in the Cairngorms. For us LEADER is a well-known funder which helps to support biodiversity in the Highlands.’

LEADER contribution: £53,915 (40%) towards total project costs of £134,787
**CASE STUDY: Knitting communities together through gansey heritage**

**Moray Firth Ganseys**

The seamless, hard-wearing pullovers known as ganseys were once everyday work-wear for fishermen and sailors around the UK. Made up of simple but clever plain and purl stitch combinations, patterns represented familiar objects such as ropes, nets, flags, anchors and waves.

The maritime tradition of knitting and wearing ganseys has almost disappeared. Early patterns, traditions and stories not written down are in rapid decline, along with the fishing industry. Only a handful of the North East herring girls, who followed the fleet are still alive. They knitted when not gutting fish.

It was vital to capture and promote what remained of this unique heritage before it was too late. The Moray Firth Partnership attracted funding to support the delivery of an ambitious, three-year programme in the LEADER areas that fringe the Moray Firth – Highland, Moray and rural Aberdeenshire. Funds supported the use of researchers, trainers and specialists, the provision of materials and equipment, marketing including a website and DVD and the development of an event and exhibition programme. Each strand helped knit the Moray Firth Ganseys project together.

Training has been at its heart. Over 300 individuals can now cast on to the fishing heritage of the North East. Over 30 volunteers were trained in recording oral history to capture the memories of fisher folk and herring girls, some now in their nineties.

Talks and associated events engaged knitters, whether members of informal groups or professional designers. Competitions challenged people’s imagination and skills.

The programme included two main events, Extravagansey in 2010 and Ganseyfest in 2011. Talks and demonstrations have been given to a range of groups. Hundreds of children have been engaged through work with schools and extra-curricular activities such as an animated film based on the ganseys.

Expert knitters participated in gansey masterclasses while young children learned to knit on giant pins. A travelling exhibition also toured the Moray Firth.

Inverness hosted The Moray Firth Gansey Project International Seminar, Ganseyfest in October, 2011. It attracted top, international speakers and tutors, encouraged networking and knowledge exchange through lectures, workshops, advice clinics, a fashion show and a suppliers’ marketplace. It generated continuing interest in ganseys and the local area.

A knitting co-operative, Highland Loop, was established to help generate income for knitters in the area. Highland Loop is independent and will continue when the Gansey Project ends. Through Highland Loop, area groups are emerging to train and support individual knitters locally. Modern garments featuring gansey patterns and techniques graced the catwalks at London Fashion Week.

Researchers scoured museum collections and archives and individuals donated ganseys for conservation and display. Over thirty donations form the basis of an important local archive.

The end of the project is being celebrated with a booklet and DVD. It is hoped to find a willing host for the online archive as part of a permanent national resource. In 2013 the travelling gansey exhibition will start a UK tour, possibly extending to Scheveningen in the Netherlands.

‘The response to the gansey project has been immense. Each gansey is a living part of history and the legacy from this project will provide a great resource for the future.’

**Highland LEADER contribution:** £13,000 (13%) towards total project costs of £98,472
# Projects Approved by Area

Pròiseactan Aontaichte a rèir Sgìre

## Black Isle Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Group</th>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Funding Approved</th>
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<td>Archaeology for Communities in the Highlands</td>
<td>Black Isle Heritage Memories</td>
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<td>Avoch Amenities Association</td>
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<td>Words Inc</td>
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**Number of Projects: 19**  
**LEADER funding approved: £455,668.08**
## Caithness Projects

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<td>£82,416.00</td>
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<td>Development of a new Permanent Museum exhibition relating to the Dounreay Nuclear Establishment</td>
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The Clan Sinclair Trust
- Interpretation Signs at Noss Head & Castle Sinclair Gormigoe
  - £7,178.07

The Highland Council
- Wick Assembly Rooms Performance Space Upgrade
  - £45,478.60

The Highland Council - Education, Culture & Sport
- National Theatre "Transform" Project
  - £9,157.50

The North Highland College
- The Johnston Collection Digitisation Project
  - £35,217.45

The Rotary Club of Thurso
- Boating Pond Play Area
  - £63,450.00

Thurso Players
- Mill Theatre Extension Project
  - £23,000.00

Thurso Town Improvements Association
- Thurso Youth Shelter
  - £7,677.30

Traill Hall Community Trust
- Traill Hall
  - £10,000.00

Wick Flower Basket Committee
- Britain in Bloom and MOD 2010
  - £3,616.00

Wick Harbour Authority
- Wick Marina Showers, Toilets and Drying Room
  - £53,844.60

Wick RBLs Pipe Band
- Wick Pipe Band 90th Anniversary Pipe Band Festival
  - £3,332.35

Yarrows Heritage Trust
- Thrumster People and Place Project
  - £32,077.73

Number of Projects: 44
LEADER funding approved: £1,561,413.08

Cromarty Firth Projects

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Number of Projects: 15
LEADER funding approved: £444,402.20
### Dingwall & Seaforth Projects

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<td>Every Picture Tells a Story</td>
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<td>Dingwall Business Website</td>
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<td>Young Skateboarders</td>
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**Number of Projects: 17**  
**LEADER funding approved: £274,909.20**

### Lochaber Projects

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<td>Thomas Telford Watersport Centre Feasibility Study</td>
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<td>Sunart Oakwoods Initiative Business Plan</td>
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<td>West End Regeneration</td>
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<td>The Highland Council on behalf of the Lochaber Partnership</td>
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**Number of Projects:** 64  
**LEADER funding approved:** £2,210,891.94

### Nairnshire Projects

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<td>Sandown Allotments Development Project</td>
<td>£46,987.19</td>
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<td>Nairn Book &amp; Arts Festival</td>
<td>Nairn Open Art Competition</td>
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<td>Covered Golf Coaching and Practice Facility</td>
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<td>River Nairn Regeneration Project</td>
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<td>Nairn Sports Club</td>
<td>Nairn Active</td>
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<td>Nairn Winter Festival</td>
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<td>Watermill Foundation Ltd</td>
<td>Watermill Cycling Project</td>
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**Number of Projects:** 10  
**LEADER funding approved:** £449,197.53
### Rural Inverness Projects

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<td>Abriachan Forest Trust</td>
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<td>Securing Aigas Forest for the Community</td>
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<td>Beauly Camanachd Club</td>
<td>Braeview Park Upgrade</td>
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<td>Beauly Community Council</td>
<td>Braeview Community Development</td>
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<td>Beauty Cycling Week</td>
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<td>Cantraybridge Development Project - Phase 1</td>
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<td>Croy Community Council</td>
<td>Culloden Moor Community Development Plan</td>
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<td>Destination Loch Ness Ltd</td>
<td>Gateway Signage Feasibility Study</td>
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<td>Destination Loch Ness Ltd</td>
<td>South Loch Ness Trail</td>
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<td>Dores &amp; Essich Community Council</td>
<td>Dores Village Improvement Plan</td>
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<td>Fort Augustus &amp; Glenmoriston Community Company</td>
<td>Fort Augustus Village Hall</td>
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<td>Fort Augustus, Glenmoriston, Glengarry Business Initiative</td>
<td>Micro Business and Tourism Enhancement for the Great Glen</td>
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<td>Glenlia Community Development</td>
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<td>Outside Adventure Play Fitness Facility</td>
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<td>Lower Strathglass Community Regeneration Project - Phase 1</td>
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<td>Kirkhill &amp; Bunchrew Community Trust</td>
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<td>Culloden Access and Interpretation Project</td>
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<td>Canal Environment &amp; Heritage Officer</td>
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<td>Strathdearn Hall</td>
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<td>Strathglass Community Council</td>
<td>Cannich Community Recreation Space</td>
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<td>Beauty Village Improvements</td>
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**Number of Projects:** 32  
**LEADER funding approved:** **£1,805,630.96**
### Skye Projects

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<td>Broadford Bay Heritage Trail</td>
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<td>Broadford Children's Play Association</td>
<td>Multi Use Games Area</td>
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<td>Carbost Pier Ltd</td>
<td>Developing Access to the Sea at Carbost - Phase 1</td>
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<td>The Crofters and the War Oral History Project</td>
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<td>Clan Donald Lands Trust</td>
<td>Baile Chlann Domhnaill: A 'Chill Bheag (Clan Donald Village: Kilbeg)</td>
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<td>Cuillin FM Ltd</td>
<td>Cuillin FM Sustainable Development Project</td>
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<td>Kilmuir and Kilmaluag History &amp; Heritage Group</td>
<td>More Echoes from the Past</td>
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<td>Duntulm Castle Conservation Study</td>
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<td>Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association</td>
<td>Energy Advice Service</td>
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<td>Portree YMCA</td>
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<td>RSPB</td>
<td>Seeviews</td>
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<td>Skye &amp; Wester Ross Community Building Event</td>
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<td>Skye &amp; Lochalsh Environment Forum</td>
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<td>Stafainn A 'Dol Uaine (Staffin Goes Green)</td>
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<td>Stafainn A 'Dol Uaine - An Darna Ire (Staffin Goes Green - Phase 2)</td>
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<td>The Collie &amp; Mackenzie Sculpture Group</td>
<td>Seoid nam Beann (Heroes of the Hills) Phase 2</td>
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<td>Waternish Community Hall Committee</td>
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**Number of Projects: 20**  
**LEADER funding approved: £490,683.98**

### Sutherland Projects

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<td>Lochinver Mission</td>
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<td>Bettyhill Play Park Committee</td>
<td>New Village Play Park</td>
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<td>Caithness and Sutherland Women's Aid Diversity Project</td>
<td>Violence Against Women - Equality and Diversity Project</td>
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<td>CVS North</td>
<td>Creation of a North West Sutherland Youth Experience</td>
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<td>CVS North</td>
<td>Sutherland Summit</td>
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<td>Dornoch and District Community Association</td>
<td>Dornoch Community Centre Feasibility Study</td>
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<td>Drumbeg Development Association</td>
<td>Renovate to Access Project</td>
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<td>Durness Development Group</td>
<td>Renewable Energy Community Co-ordinator</td>
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<td>Edderton Community Council</td>
<td>Dounie Fort Footpath</td>
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<td>Organisation</td>
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<td>Elphin, Ledmore &amp; Knockan Community Association Ltd</td>
<td>Conversions at Elphin Community Hall</td>
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<td>Forest Canoeing Sutherland</td>
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<td>Golspie Community Power</td>
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<td>Halladale Hall &amp; Amenities Association</td>
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<td>Helmsdale Gateway Project</td>
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<td>East Sutherland Woodlands</td>
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<td>Historic Assynt</td>
<td>Life and Death in Assynt’s Past</td>
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<td>Smolt Traps in the Upper Tributaries of the River Shin</td>
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<td>Learning to be Enterprising</td>
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<td>Mackay Country Community Trust</td>
<td>Moving Times and Telling Tales: Education and Migration in the North</td>
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<td>Mackay County Community Trust Limited</td>
<td>To investigate the feasibility of social enterprise status</td>
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<td>North Highland Curling Trust</td>
<td>Technical Feasibility Study</td>
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<td>Wild North Festival Co-ordination</td>
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<td>Rhue Stoer Community Hall</td>
<td>Wind Generator Installation</td>
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<td>Rosehall Village Management Committee</td>
<td>Rosehall Rejuvination Project</td>
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<td>Scottish Natural Heritage</td>
<td>Explore for a Day</td>
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<td>Knockan Crag National Nature Reserve: Rock and Stroll Project</td>
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<td>Scottish Wildlife Trust</td>
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<td>Coigach Assynt Living Landscapes Development Officer</td>
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<td>Scourie &amp; Badcall Grazings Committee</td>
<td>Scourie Football Field Redevelopment</td>
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<td>Scourie Community Development Company Ltd</td>
<td>Scourie Harbour Regeneration Project</td>
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<td>Development of Heritage Awareness</td>
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<td>Sutherland Agricultural Society Show Ltd</td>
<td>Blas Na Fasaich (Flavour of the Wilderness)</td>
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<td>Sutherland Partnership</td>
<td>Lawson Memorial Hospital Greenspace Project</td>
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<td>Sutherland Partnership</td>
<td>Geodiversity Audit &amp; Geotours - Protecting &amp; Celebrating our Geological Heritage</td>
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<td>Sutherland Partnership</td>
<td>Employment of a Development Officer</td>
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<td>Sutherland Partnership - Geopark NW Highlands Geopark</td>
<td>Geopark Geo-centre Feasibility study</td>
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The Highland Council - Brora Environmental Projects £23,475.11
The Highland Council - Provision of Marina Equipment to Develop Marine Tourism in North West Sutherland £180,000.00
Timespan - Art Across Sutherland £51,309.92
Tongue and Farr Sports Association - NCLC Community Development Project £54,180.00
Voluntary Groups East Sutherland - Voluntary Training Programme £3,086.31

Number of Projects: 48
LEADER funding approved: £1,817,718.28

### Tain and Easter Ross Projects

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<td>2011 International Sheepdog Trial</td>
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<td>Inver Hall Committee</td>
<td>Development of Inver Hall</td>
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<td>Nigg Old Trust</td>
<td>Conservation and Display of the Nigg Pictish Monument - Stage 1 Development</td>
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<td>North Highland Curling Trust</td>
<td>Feasibility Study into Establishing a Curling Facility</td>
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<td>Seaboard Memorial Hall Ltd</td>
<td>Community Gardening &amp; Fruits of Labour</td>
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<td>Tain &amp; Easter Ross Civic Trust</td>
<td>Hidden Tain Scoping Study</td>
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<td>Tain Initiative</td>
<td>Town Entrance Development</td>
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<td>Tain Initiative Group</td>
<td>Tain Rose Garden Development</td>
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<td>Tarbat Community Council</td>
<td>A Facelift for Portmahomack</td>
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Number of Projects: 12
LEADER funding approved: £305,963.55

### Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh Projects

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<td>Applecross Broch Community Archaeology Project</td>
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<td>Braemore Community Hall</td>
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<td>Coigach Community Development Company</td>
<td>Community Ownership of Coigach Piers - Feasibility Study</td>
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<td>Multi Use Community Building in Gairloch</td>
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<td>Culture, Arts and Performance Project</td>
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<td>Gairloch Heritage Museum</td>
<td>Gairloch Heritage Museum Re-Development - Development Phase</td>
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Highland Museum of Childhood  The Goods Shed  £35,975.86
Kinlochewe Hall Trustees  Kinlochewe’s Green  £16,392.00
Kirkton Woodland and Heritage Group  Smithy Cultural Development (Phase 2)  £118,146.39
Kyle Public Hall  Douglas Park Regeneration Phase 1  £43,916.00
Laide & Aultbea Community Woodland  Project Independence  £4,260.50
Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association  Energy Advice Service  £20,973.50
Made In Ullapool  Wax Works  £29,888.36
Scottish Wildlife Trust  Outdoor Marine Banner Display “Living with the Sea”  £9,029.33
Shieladaig Sports Association  Shieladaig Pontoon Project  £46,500.00
Skye & Kyle Rail Development Co Ltd  The Great Highland Railway Journey  £110,946.00
Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations  Skye & Wester Ross Community Capacity Building Event  £1,402.07
Skye & Lochalsh Environment Forum  Skye and Lochalsh Mink Survey  £1,584.14
Skye & Lochalsh Environmental Forum  SLEF Community Biodiversity Project  £4,054.95
Strathpeffer Community Council  Destination Strathpeffer  £5,016.88
Strathpeffer Initiative  Destination Strathpeffer Phase 2  £36,000.00
The Applecross Trust  Applecross Landscape Partnership Scheme  £94,891.00
The Highland Council  Ullapool Environmental Improvements  £35,550.00
The Highland Council in Partnership with Gairloch Climbing Wall Project  Gairloch Climbing Wall  £19,702.41
Ullapool Harbour Trustees  Down By The Jetty  £19,965.53
Ullapool Harbour Trustees  Dedicated Cruise Tender & Leisure Pontoon  £38,400.00
Ullapool High School  Tillidh Mi Dhachaidh (I will Return)  £19,917.05
Ullaspool  Ullaspool Raising the Roof  £326,620.00
Ullaspool  Ullaspool Solar Pre-heat  £20,479.59
Wester Ross Fisheries Trust  River Revival  £4,896.00
Wester Ross Radio Ltd  Embracing New Communities with Local Radio  £45,640.00

Number of Projects: 34
LEADER funding approved:  £1,757,664.16

Strategic Projects

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<th>Name of Group</th>
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<th>Funding Approved</th>
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<td>Archaeology for the Communities in the Highlands</td>
<td>Stop, Look and Listen</td>
<td>£121,875.00</td>
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<td>Black Isle Development Planning Group / Partnership</td>
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<td>Enterprising Woodlands</td>
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<td>Community Woodlands - Employability Service</td>
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<td>Cromarty Firth Interim Local Area Partnership</td>
<td>Production of Cromarty Firth Local Action Partnership and Development Plan</td>
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<td>Dualchas na Cloinne</td>
<td>Beul Altriris tro Dhealbhàn Bheòi/Tradition through Animation</td>
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<td>Feis Rois</td>
<td>Ruigse - Reaching Out</td>
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<td>Feisean nan Gaidheal</td>
<td>Ceilidhèan air Cuairt - Slighean Ura (Ceilidh Trails - New Routes)</td>
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<td>Get Connected &amp; Lead: Maximising the Influence of Minority Voices</td>
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<td>Culture for All: Transforming Lives</td>
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<td>Crofting Connections</td>
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REVITALISING COMMUNITIES IN THE HIGHLANDS – THE HIGHLAND LEADER PROGRAMME 2007-2013

Sutherland Partnership
Sutherland Development Plan
£3,374.94

Tain & Easter Ross Steering Local Area Partnership (LAP)
Tain & Easter Ross Local Development Plan
£2,878.41

The Highland Council
Tourism Business Development Workshops
£6,000.00

The Highland Council
Community Transport Scheme
£11,086.29

The Highland Council
Community Development Support Scheme
£13,263.91

The Highland Council
Highland Biodiversity Groups: Capacity Building Programme
£45,000.00

The Highland Council
Highland Network Implementation Programme
£350,000.00

Venture Trust
Living Wild - Chance for Change Highlands
£83,049.54

Wester Ross Alliance
Wester Ross, Strathpeffer & Lochalsh Development Plan
£3,500.00

Youth Highland
Quality Youth Work Training Initiative
£11,801.77

Number of Strategic Projects: 51
LEADER funding approved for Strategic Projects: £3,039,672.92

Cooperation Projects

Name of Group Project Name Funding Approved
Moray Firth Partnership Moray Firth Ganseys £13,000.00
North Highland Tourism International Wild Flower Festival Phase 1: Learning/Development Journey to Slovenia £7,569.42

The Highland Council Red Fox Trail £3,150.00
Ullapool High School Tillidh Mi Dhachaidh (I Will Return) - Phase 2 £8,464.12
West Highland College UHI JOQER £1,485.12
West Highland College UHI LARA: Landscape Approaches to Develop Rural Areas £88,209.00

Number of Cooperation Projects: 6
LEADER funding approved for Cooperation Projects: £121,877.66
Revitalising Communities in the Highlands
Ag Ath-bheothachadh Coimhearsnachdan na Gàidhealtachd

The Highland LEADER Programme 2007-2013
Prògram LEADER na Gàidhealtachd 2007-2013

For further information about the 2007-13 Highland LEADER Programme, contact

The Highland LEADER Team
Planning and Development
The Highland Council
Glenurquhart Road
Inverness IV3 5NX
Tel 01463 702524
http://www.highlandleader.com

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