

LEADER INNSE GALL NEWSLETTER

OUTER HEBRIDES LEADER PROGRAMME

LEADER Innse Gall is a European funded Community Programme which exists to help assist the sustainability of local Communities. The Programme has been in operation since March 2009 and since then it has approved 42 local projects and awarded approximately £1.5m towards local community projects.

As this is LEADER's first Newsletter, it was thought that it would be beneficial to start at the beginning and briefly outline the main objectives of the Programme, along with providing information on recent updates, to ensure everyone is aware of exactly what LEADER is.

Issue 1, Spring/ Summer 2011



An Lanntair's 'Willow Woman' erected in the Castle Grounds, assisted by LEADER

WHAT IS LEADER?

LEADER - Liason Entre Actions de Développement Économique Rurale or Links between Activities Developing Rural Communities.

LEADER is part of the SRDP (Scottish Rural Development Programme) allocation and is a bottom-up method of delivering support for rural development. Support is primarily aimed at small-scale, community-driven projects that are pilot and innovative in nature. Vitally the benefits and participation of the local community in the project is fundamental to the LEADER ethos.

Funding is awarded by the LEADER Innse Gall Local Action Group (LAG) who take decisions on projects that assist in increasing the capacity of the local rural community and business networks by building knowledge and skills, and encouraging innovation and co-operation to tackle local development priorities.

The LEADER Innse Gall programme strives to create sustainable economic activities that will generate demand and open opportunities to attract and retain the population. Innovative and ambitious projects will be encouraged, especially those that stimulate the creation of new jobs and the growth of the resident working age. Particular areas such as renewable energy and remote telecommunications, where the Outer Hebrides have a specific natural advantage, will be assisted and in sectors where it has a unique selling point such as Harris Tweed, the Gaelic language and culture.

Who Can Apply?

We can accept applications from the following groups provided that **the projects main aim is to benefit the Outer Hebrides rural community** through demonstrating economic, environmental, social and sustainable development:

- Properly Constituted Organisations
- Social Enterprises
- Voluntary Organisations
- Public Sector Bodies

Private individuals, business partnerships and capital companies where sponsored financially by public bodies, clubs and societies thus ensuring a wider community benefit rather than a pure economic benefit.



What are the Target Groups?

LEADER Innse Gall have identified target groups and the submission of applications for projects focussing on these groups will be prioritised. This is because the LAG aims to reduce out-migration, provide better support networks, facilities, amenities and activities for the following key groups:

- Young People (up to 34 years of age)
- Women
- Older People (over 65 years of age)

INSIDE:

- £1.5M funded awarded throughout the Outer Hebrides
- Broadband Upgrades for Island Communities

and much more, including personal experiences from approved applicants!



Europe and Scotland
Making it **work together**



What is the aim of the LEADER Innse Gall Programme?

The LEADER Innse Gall LAG were awarded 1.28m in LEADER funding and an additional £1.98m Convergence Funding in recognition of its status as a disadvantaged and remote area. Public consultation identified a number of key local issues and priorities which resulted in the overall strategic aim of the LEADER Innes Gall Programme 2007—2013 being to **REVITALISE COMMUNITIES** by addressing:

- Geographical handicap, remoteness and peripherality
- Economic fragility and job creation
- Population decline, out-migration of young people
- Empowering women
- Inadequate community infrastructure and facilities
- Gaelic language and culture
- A sustainable natural environment, Agriculture and Crofting
- Social inclusion and supporting vulnerable groups

What financial assistance is available?

LOCAL PROJECTS - (projects based within the Outer Hebrides)

- The maximum LEADER Innse Gall grant contribution will be up to 50% of the total eligible project costs

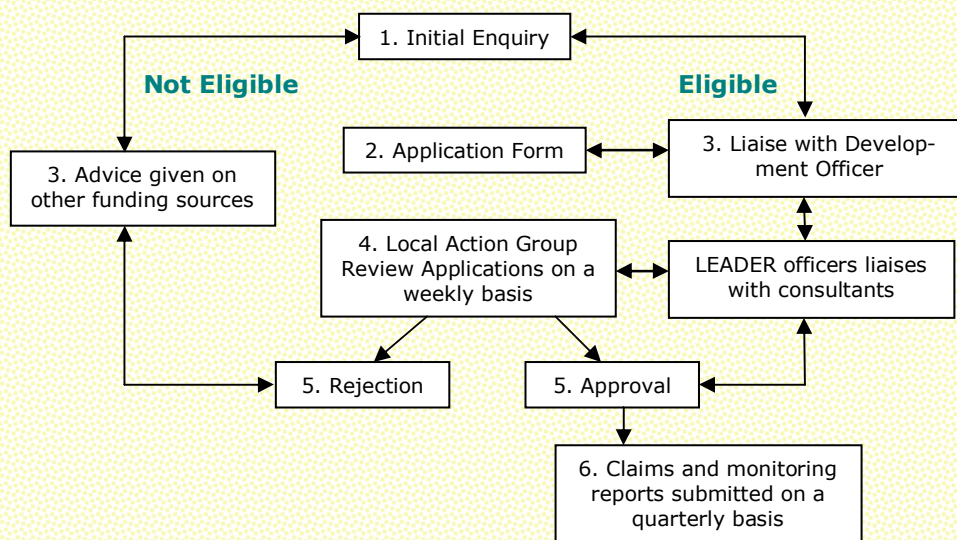
CO-OPERATION PROJECTS - (implementing joint projects in partnership with other LEADER areas in Scotland, UK or EU):

- These co-operation projects are eligible for a higher LEADER grant contribution rate of up to 70% of the total eligible costs.



The communities of Barra & Vatersay were assisted by LEADER to develop a community owned and led Local Radio Station

How to access LEADER funding - Application Process



1. Initial enquiries are to be made to the LEADER Innse Gall Officers or through completing an online Enquiry Form which can be obtained from our website www.outerhebridesleader.co.uk
2. After assessing your enquiry form and if your project appears eligible for funding, you will be invited to complete an application form.
3. The Officers will assist potential applicants to understand the scope of the Programme and to develop eligible applications. Where projects do not receive funding or are ineligible, feedback will be provided and where appropriate, offer advice to redevelop the project, or advise on other possible funding sources.
4. The LEADER Innse Gall Local Action Group (LAG) will then assess your application and you will be notified of the decision as soon as it is confirmed.
5. Successful applicants will then be provided with a Claims Pack and guidance notes on its quarterly completion, Claim Training workshops are also available. Projects will be regularly monitored from the date of the first claim and will continue for the period of the current LEADER programme.
6. Claims must be made within 2 years of the project approval and evidence must be provided that the project has commenced within 3 months of approval.

What is the LAG?

The Local Action Group (LAG) oversees the LEADER Innse Gall Programme and consists of representatives from the public, private and voluntary sectors. The LAG have the responsibility of implementing and taking forward the Outer Hebrides LEADER Strategy and Business Plan and also appraising prospective projects seeking LEADER grant funding.

The Outer Hebrides LAG Consists of the following Representatives:

Outer Hebrides LEADER LAG Chair person	Cllr. Archie K. Campbell
Association of Western Isles Councils of Voluntary Services	Jessie MacNeil (Vice Chair)
Bord na Gaidhlig	Alasdair Macleod
Highlands and Islands Enterprise	Anne Macaulay
Scottish Crofting Foundation	Neil Macleod
Scotland's Environmental and Rural Services	Roddy MacMinn
Lewis and Harris Sports Council	Manus McGee
Western Isles Fisherman's Association	Duncan MacInnes
Older Persons Partnership	Ella MacBain
Community Land Scotland	David Cameron
Cothrom Ltd (Women's Representative)	Barbara Macdonald
Youth Representative	Vacant
Private Sector	Vacant

Meet the LAG: *Ella MacBain*

As one of the LAG's more recent additions, Ella MacBain describes the benefits she has experienced so far:

“ As Chair of the Older Peoples Partnership, I was invited on to the Outer Hebrides Local Action Group, to represent one of the target groups— Older People. I became a member of the Group in August 2010.

All our Future — the National Strategy for Older People seeks to *'improve opportunities for older people, to remove barriers and to create more chances for older people to participate and be involved in their Community.'*

For me it has been a privilege to represent the older person and to be informed of a variety of local initiatives — projects that are interesting and varied, promote communities, target unmet need, provide local employment opportunities and enhance lives. Several of the projects have promoted intergenerational interaction and have recognized the meaningful contribution the older person in our community can make.

“ it is encouraging and rewarding to be involved in the LAG”

Membership of the LAG involves attendance at meetings and scoring projects against a prescribed appraisal assessment. In spite of the economic challenges we face it is encouraging and rewarding to be involved in the LAG— the comprehensive completion of each application reflects the commitment and enthusiasm behind each project plan.”

Ella MacBain

Word from the LAG Chairperson

Cllr. Archie K Campbell, Chairperson of the LEADER Innse Gall LAG, has been involved with the Outer Hebrides LEADER 2007-2013 programme since its inception.

“LEADER Innse Gall strives to assist community-led and innovative projects that are based throughout the Outer Hebrides and knowing the commitment and effort that community groups put towards their projects it is great when we hear of their successes and see the outcomes of their hard work.

The recent award of the Rural Broadband Challenge Funding gave a welcome boost to the four successful communities who currently do not have any access to broadband services and we are keen to see the infrastructure in place as soon as possible.

All communities are welcome to attend the LEADER Innse Gall Community event on the 12th April to meet with the LAG and learn more about completing applications and progressing your community projects and we all look forward to seeing you there. It is inspiring to see communities coming together in such innovative ways and I would urge any groups or organisations in the Outer Hebrides who feel they could benefit from LEADER grant funding to come along to the event or make contact with our staff.”

LEADER INNSE GALL PROGRAMME COMMITS OVER £1.5 MILLION TO PROJECTS IN THE OUTER HEBRIDES!

Since the local LEADER Innse Gall Programme began it has committed over £1.5m of grant funding to various community projects based throughout the Outer Hebrides and which contribute to various community needs.

As a European community grant funding programme, LEADER supports small-scale innovative and community led projects that will provide economic benefits to the local area and contribute to the sustainable development of communities. The local programme has put this into practice through supporting a variety of projects including Carthannas Nis, who have now successfully expanded and developed their recycling and laundrette business. Through grant funding, Barra Watersports have developed their community programme which also supported the training of local instructors and purchasing boats to allow more to enjoy water sports on the island.

The assisted projects vary in the benefits that they offer from supporting renewable projects, such as assisting to provide electric community transport to supporting educational and training opportunities like Cothrom's 'Re-Store' project on South Uist. The Crofting Connections project, which is a Scotland-wide project, encourage young people in schools to learn about and become involved in crafting and horticulture, also benefited from LEADER funding.



Children from Sgoil na Loch learn about the importance of organic growing

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LEADER has assisted in:

- Safeguarding over 250 jobs
- Advising/ assisting over 100 community groups
- Training over 1000 people
- Supported nearly 20 environmental enhancement initiatives
- Improving over 15 community facilities
- 5 innovative community renewable projects
- Undertaking approximately 30 Gaelic/ bilingual projects
- Helping over 100 young people into employment, education or training

The £1.5m of grant funding that the LEADER Innse Gall Local Action Group have awarded to projects has been match funded by over £1m extra being allocated from other local and national grant funding sources. This has resulted in projects amounting to over £2.5m being developed by communities throughout the Islands.

The Programme continues to attract further investment and grants to the Outer Hebrides with the most recent being the award of £310,300 from the Rural Broadband Challenge Fund.

The fund still has over £1.1m remaining and the LEADER Innse Gall Local Action Group are inviting communities to contact their local LEADER officer, either in Uist or Stornoway to find out more or visit the website at www.outerhebridesleader.co.uk .

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OUTER HEBRIDES LEADER AWARDED £310K TOWARDS COMMUNITY BROADBAND ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

The Summer of 2010, it was announced that LEADER Local Action Groups would be allowed to submit a funding bid to the Scottish Government Broadband Challenge Fund. Local communities were invited to submit applications to their LAG to receive 100% funding for upgrading their Broadband connections. LAGs would then assess the areas in most need based on the assessment and applications Communities provided, and then submit a bid for there area to the Scottish Government.

In December 2010 Cabinet Secretary Richard Lohead announced that the bid submitted by the Outer Hebrides LEADER Local Action Group for £310,300 to the Rural Broadband Challenge Fund had been successful.

Only 5 Scottish LEADER Local Action Groups received a portion of the funding €1 million (£800,000) grant available, with the Outer Hebrides being one of these. The Scottish Government reported that the 4 Outer Hebridean communities that were included within the bid will benefit from positive impacts on their areas through the innovative technology that will be used to provide the broadband infrastructure. Other resulting benefits within the communities are the impacts on jobs and businesses in the villages of Tolsta and Dalmore on the Isle of Lewis, North Harris Trust on the Isle of Harris and Grimsay on the Isle of North Uist where there is currently no broadband provision.

The funding will provide much needed broadband access to all four communities. Tolsta will utilise the funding to provide access to broadband services in the townships of Glen Tolsta, North Tolsta, & New Tolsta. Tolsta Community Council applied to LEADER with the aim of seeking funding for the provision of 2 broadband relay sites, to enable the extension of the Connected Communities Broadband network to these various households in Tolsta.

The North Harris Trust (NHT) aim to create a small network of community relay sites to provide a broadband service to the geographically isolated and socially excluded townships between Tolmachan and Huisinis in North Harris and this takes into account a total of 8 villages.

Due to the terrain of the area surrounding the Dalmore village, currently none of the homes in the lower area of the village are able to access broadband. Therefore the aim of this project is to provide broadband connectivity to the village of Dalmore through laying fibre-optic cables.

Grimsay Community Association aim to establish a relay site in the Kallin Township where there is currently no existing Broadband provision for the surrounding properties and six businesses located at Kallin harbour.

Cllr Archie Campbell, Chairperson of the Outer Hebrides LEADER Local Action Group, commented that:

“The Local Action Group are delighted with the news and very impressed with the standard of projects that the communities brought forward and were included within the bid. This was also thanks to the both Outer Hebrides LEADER team in Lewis and Uist and the assistance and advice provided by the Highlands and Islands Enterprise team in Stornoway.

Through the Scottish Governments analysis of the submitted bids the Outer Hebrides received the largest portion of the available funding and we are thrilled that this will go towards providing broadband access to these four communities.”



APPROVED PROJECTS

Approved applicants describe their LEADER experience

BARRA WATERSPORTS CLUB, managed by volunteers, provides water based activities to the communities of Barra and Vatersay. LEADER has contributed towards funding for a fleet of Royal Yachting Association (RYA) sailing boats, windsurfing and kayak equipment as well as RYA Sailing Instructor fees and Windsurfing Instructor fees. The boats and equipment have been a huge success in enabling the club to develop its existing water based activities offered in the local community.

Katie Denehy of Barra Watersports Club said:

“The support and assistance provided by LEADER Innse Gall has been instrumental in the development of the Barra Watersports Club. We are looking forward to a busy summer season. The new boats and equipment will provide an excellent new facility for tourists and islanders alike and will give people the opportunity to enjoy the beautiful coastline which surrounds our islands”.



The children are taught yachting skills on the new equipment purchased with the help of LEADER

Barra Watersports continues to be successful with the young residents of the area, also the introduction of a membership scheme has encouraged new members to join and with plans of expansion in the pipeline the future looks bright for this community club.

CARTHANNAS NIS is an already established village Charity shop. They had recently received funding to erect new premises for their shop, however they approached LEADER to help fund their business into a new direction – a local laundrette.

LEADER Innse Gall approved funding for Carthannas Nis to help: Install a new commercial laundrette; fit out new building with shop space, workshop, storage areas; increase recycling of textiles; provide part or full time work in laundrette.

LEADER have now fully processed Carthannas' full award amount. The initial claim was used to help set up the premises, plumbing etc and the second claim was used to help purchase equipment and complete furnishings. In the Summer of 2010 Carthannas Nis Laundrette held it's Official Opening day which was well attended by many throughout the Island.

The Chair of Carthannas Nis, Iain MacSween said:

“ I would like to thank LEADER Innse Gall for their support and assistance in bringing this project to fruition . We are confident that the laundrette will be a useful facility for the local community, businesses and holiday makers alike.



The dedicated volunteers of Carthannas Nis at the unofficial opening of the Laundrette.

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We are fortunate to have a large bank of volunteers who contribute their time to operating and managing Carthannas Nis and I would like to pay tribute to their work."

The laundrette has now officially been open for business since June 2010 and is a great addition not just to the local community, but to the Island.

Installation of the laundrette was only an interim phase in the grand plan of Carthannas Nis, the ambitious local community run organisation hopefully plan to eventually erect a 6Kw wind turbine to assist with running costs whilst allowing the facility to contribute to environmental policies.

Community driven, innovative projects such as demonstrated by this particular project is exactly the initiative that LEADER strives to assist, to help empower communities.

LEWIS & HARRIS HORTICULTURAL PRODUCERS concentrates on the promotion of commercial horticultural in the areas of Lewis and Harris. Development Officer Brendon Harty comments that:

"The support of LEADER for the Lewis and Harris Horticultural Producers Group market has been gratefully appreciated. The market had been running for a number of years for the benefit of local producers who are members of the group. The funding has been used to buy some new equipment for the market and to enable additional markets to be run. A Development post is part funded by LEADER and has resulted in a significant increase of total sales around 35% in 2010 based on previous years.

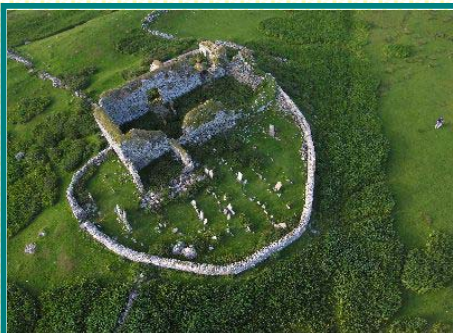


Just a small sample of the array of local produce available for purchase at the Farmers Market

This benefits both local producers who can use income generated to grow more produce, and also local seasonal produce not available in the shops.

Feedback from customers, young and old alike, is always very good. Most customers apart from Tourists visit, visit every week. Seasonal local fresh vegetables (most are tasty varieties not grown commercially) fresh eggs, home baking, preserves and a range of other produce are welcomed by discerning customers."

TEAMPULL NA TRIONAID ASSOCIATION aims to advance local heritage, environmental protection and education through the preservation of the historical site known as Teampull na Trionaid, located in Carinish, North Uist.



Aerial view of the Teampull na Trionaid Site

Margaret MacQuarrie, the Secretary/ Treasure of Teampull na Trionaid comments:

"Teampull na Trionaid was formed in December 2008 with its main objective being to conserve a 13th century temple in Carinish, North Uist.

The Group applied to LEADER Innse Gall to enable us to carry out a feasibility study (phase 1). Our Claim was processed and approved by LEADER. The feasibility study involved appointing an accredited architect to complete the planning of the conservation required. Historic Scotland gave their consent and backing to the project."

Based on the outcome of the feasibility study funded by LEADER, Teampull na Trionaid have now recently received approval from SRDP for Phase 2 of their project; to have all necessary repair and restoration works carried out to enable the successful conservation of the Temple for many more centuries to come.



LEADER COMMUNITY DAY

**LEADER Innse Gall Local Action Group is holding a
Community day.**

Individuals and Community Groups are invited to attend an afternoon with the LAG!

Gain further information and assistance on LEADER and other available funding opportunities; hear experiences from existing Community projects and seek advice on developing your local plans.

A welcome is extended to all throughout the Outer Hebrides, to be held at

BAYS COMMUNITY CENTRE

LEAC A' LI, HARRIS

1.00 – 4.00pm

TUESDAY, 12th APRIL 2011

