



Evaluation of the RDP Programme in the Vale of Glamorgan 2011-2014

Final Report July 2015



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1. Introduction

Introduction

This report is the final evaluation of the Vale of Glamorgan's Rural Development Programme Business Plan 2 which delivers activities through Axis 3 and Axis 4.

The Rural Development Plan for Wales (RDPW) has four areas of activity, two of which (Axis 1 and 2) are delivered at national level and two of which are delivered by Rural Partnerships and Local Action Groups (LAGs) at local level (Axis 3 and 4):

- Axis 1: Competitiveness of agriculture and forestry (14% of total budget)
- Axis 2: Environment and Countryside (70% of budget)
- Axis 3: Quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy (10% of budget)
- Axis 4: The LEADER approach - locally led approaches to rural development based on seven LEADER principles¹ (6% of budget)

Axis 3 of the RDPW seeks to improve the quality of rural life and promote diversification of the rural economy through promoting village renewal and development, encouraging tourism, supporting micro-enterprises and improving basic rural services. Axis 4 specifically focuses on the LEADER approach in order to get communities involved in developing their local area.

The Brief

Creative Rural Communities is the Local Action Group (LAG) in the Vale of Glamorgan (VoG) and has commissioned this evaluation with the aim to *'to measure the overall success, or otherwise, of the various Axis 3 and Axis 4 activities and to assess the contribution that the RDP programme has made to sustaining Vale of Glamorgan's rural communities'*.

The brief for the evaluation is focused on the period 2011 – 2014 covered by Business Plan 2. It sets out six key questions. The first three of these are interlinked and form the core of the evaluation related to assessing impact:

- **Ascertain** whether the projects within Axis 3 and 4 have achieved their aims and objectives, as set out in their project applications.
- **Measure** how the projects have delivered against the priorities of the Local Development Strategy for the rural Vale of Glamorgan (RVoG)
- **Assess** whether the various projects were well integrated and delivered collective benefits

Two further questions requested feedback to help frame future work:

- Identify examples of best practice that could be replicated or modified for future regeneration initiatives
- Draw conclusions from the implementation of the programme and make appropriate recommendations for the next Leader Programme in 2014-2020

The final question related to practical methods to be used in the evaluation:

¹ Area based local strategies, locally led Local Development Strategies, local public-private partnerships (Local Action Groups), integrated multi-sectoral actions, innovation, co-operation and networking

- Select a random sample of grant recipients from each grant scheme for surveys (recognising it is impossible to survey all funding recipients given the value of the contract)

Approach to the Evaluation

The evaluation takes a logic chain approach looking at inputs, activities, outputs and impacts using a combination of methods covering

- Desk research, including review of monitoring and Project information held by Creative Rural Communities (CRC), and review of baseline contextual information
- Online surveys – to all Project recipients in Axis 3 and participants in Axis 4
- Interviews with Project participants and stakeholders
- Focus groups (4 in total) with CRC staff, LAG members, Axis 3 and 4 participants
- Short case studies drawn from Projects to illustrate different aspects of impact and benefit
- Analysis against an evaluation framework setting out key questions and areas for investigation

Further detail on the evaluation methodology is given in Annex One

The Report

The evaluation report is set out in eight further sections:

- **Section Two** provides a short introduction to the VoG Local Development Strategy (LDS), gives a brief description of the first Business Plan which covered the period 2007 – 2010, and the second Business Plan and its five Projects (the subject of this evaluation) for the period 2011-2014
- **Section Three** is a very short section reviewing the wider economic context over the period 2011 – 2014 and its relevance to Business Plan 2 (BP2) activities; and is supported by a review of relevant economic indicators and trends over time, in Annex 3
- **Section Four** reviews achievement of financial and performance indicator targets for BP2, which are part of the Welsh Government approval requirements for the VoG RDP Axis 3 and 4 activities
- **Section Five**, which is quite a substantial section, then reviews how sub-projects and activities supported by BP2 with RDP funding through Axis 3 and Axis 4 have collectively delivered against the objectives of the five Projects which make up BP2, four in Axis 3 (Pride in our Villages, Pride in our Services, Pride in our Heritage and Pride in our Farming Families) and one in Axis 4 (Pride in the Vale). It also reviews other aspects of BP2 including learning from participation and the role of CRC staff team facilitation and support
- **Section Six** then reflects on how the activities of the five Projects have collectively delivered against the vision, mission, aims and themes of the LDS itself, also looking at other aspects such as integration across Axis 3 and 4
- **Section Seven** looks at the extent to which BP2 has been additional, both in project and impact terms. It also looks at contributions to leadership, leverage and influence – wider strategic added value questions
- **Section Eight** draws together the conclusions in terms of answering the evaluation questions posed in the brief and the evaluation framework developed for this evaluation

- **Section Nine** sets out ideas and opportunities arising from the evaluation analysis that could be relevant to taking forward the activities begun in BP2 through the next iteration of the LEADER programme, as well as drawing out learning from the BP2 experience which could help the development and delivery of other policies and programmes for/relevant to the area

The evaluation report is supported by a number of Annexes.

We would like to thank all the people who assisted in this report. In particular, we would like to thank all the staff of CRC; the members of the LAG and those people who attended a focus group, agreed to an interview, or completed the online survey.

2. RDP - Business Plan Two

The Local Development Strategy and delivery through Business Plans 1 and 2

Delivery of Axis 3 and Axis 4 activity through the RDP in Wales is set within the context of a Local Development Strategy, setting out the overall aims and objectives of a local Rural Partnership. The Local Development Strategy (LDS) for the rural VoG provides the strategic direction for Axis 3 and 4 activities (and also for RDP funded Rural Community Action Programme projects, outside the scope of this evaluation). It sets out the following vision and themes:

Local Development Strategy 2009

Vision:

The Rural Vale is an area where rural communities actively and fully participate and therefore benefit fully from the growing prosperity of the region as a whole

Mission:

to play a leading role in the development and sustaining of communities with the rural Vale, where people can live, work and meet their ambitions

Aims:

The LDS will seek to lead the development of communities within which:

- all sectors of the community are involved in community regeneration activities
- people can identify the challenges that their community faces
- people are actively involved in the development and implementation of projects that address the challenges that their community faces
- people have access to all services that a modern and vibrant community requires
- people and especially young people can realise their ambitions and be successful within their local community
- Rural Vale derives maximum sustainable benefit from local resources including physical and human resources

Themes (or Objectives)

- Community capacity building – building the capacity of existing groups and establishing new groups
- Women and young people – developing the role of young people and women in community regeneration and enterprise in the Rural Vale
- Business networking and co-operation – encouraging business in the rural Vale to co-operate and develop new and innovative products and services
- Access to and improvement of services – allowing individuals and businesses in the rural Vale to have access to all the services they require
- Making the best use of local resources – allowing the rural Vale to make full use and derive the maximum benefit from its local resources.

Delivery of Axis 3 and 4 through the LDS has then been implemented through two Business Plans. The first covered the period 2008 – 2011 and the second 2011 – 2014.

Business Plan 1 delivered 11 projects at a total cost (RDP and matched funding) of £2.6m, summarised in the table below. It was the subject of an evaluation in 2012², which concluded that it had been delivered effectively, with most outputs and results met or exceeded. Recommendations from the Business Plan 1 report were:

- Ensuring a dedicated project manager for all projects
- Giving a clear limit on the scale of support to participants
- Putting in place a target for 'new to RDP' participants – to avoid repeat participants
- Ensuring robust data collection systems are in place

² Vale of Glamorgan Business Plan Round 1 Evaluation. Wavehill Ltd, September 2012

Bus. Plan 1 Project	Brief Description	Total Cost
Axis 3 Projects		
Tourism Matters grant scheme	Grant scheme aimed to improve sustainability of the tourism industry	£350,000
Inspire grant scheme	Split into two parts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enterprising community buildings (grants for community buildings to help them become more sustainable) • Village renewal and development (support to improve and develop access to basic services) 	£979,416
Places for young people	Grants to support development of facilities for young people (requiring young people to be involved in project development)	£279,765
Greenlinks	Community transport project	£232,158
Rural footpath and stiles	Refurbishment and rebuilding of historic stone stiles	£101,722
Rural bridleways	Development of bridleways around the Llansannor area	£51,722
Rural events network	Establishment of a network of events organisers and a stock of equipment needed by rural events organisers	£55,901
Business networking	Promoting linkages between businesses in the area	£54,977
Axis 4 activities		
Heritage tourism	A project to brand, improve and market a group of heritage tourism locations	£171,067
Inspire the Vale bursary scheme	A bursary scheme for young people to implement their ideas for a business or community enterprise	£147,977
Visit Vale+ Grant scheme	Grants to support new and innovative tourism products / services	£176,161
TOTAL COSTS		£2,600,866

Business Plan 2, which is the subject of this evaluation, was built on the experience of Business Plan 1 but took a different approach, intended to be more coordinated and for Axis 4, to be more in line with LEADER principles. It identified 'Projects' or themes within which activity would fit. Five 'Projects' were finally agreed³, four in Axis 3 and one for Axis 4.

The five Projects fitted within the Measures of the RDPW:

RDP Measure	BP2 Project
311: Diversification into non agricultural activities	Pride in our Farming Families
312: Support for business creation and development	Pride in our Farming Families Pride in our Heritage Pride in the Vale
313: Encouragement of tourism activities	Pride in our Farming Families Pride in our Heritage Pride in the Vale
321 – Basic Services for the Economy & Rural Population	Pride in our Services
322 – Village Renewal & Development	Pride in our Villages
323 – Conservation and Upgrading of the Rural Heritage	Pride in our Heritage
41 – Implementing Local Development Strategies	Pride in the Vale

³ Initial application to the Welsh Assembly Government for Business Plan 2 included two further 'Projects'; Pride in our Businesses and Pride in our Destination. These were not however approved and were taken out of the Business Plan.

The 'Projects' in Business Plan 2 set out the following objectives⁴:

Business Plan 2: Five Project Objectives
Pride in the Vale The aim was identified as to maximise the direct contribution of the people of the Rural Vale to enhance the quality of life and the rural economy, by securing meaningful involvement of individuals, communities, social enterprises and micro-businesses in a range of activities to build 'Pride in the Vale'.
Pride in our Services <ul style="list-style-type: none">• to identify opportunities to combine services in new ways, so that they will remain viable (as community facilities, social enterprises or micro-businesses, or amalgamations of these);• to develop practical exemplar projects that illustrate the potential for multi-use facilities and services;• to build on current good practice to ensure flexible on-demand local transport to access services of all kinds; and• to develop the links between villages in order to provide safe accessibility to services in neighbouring villages, to support community cohesion and to improve the quality of life of local residents
Pride in our Villages: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• improve the quality of the local environment, by supporting the implementation of practical physical developments within a whole-village community context• improve facilities generally, including the financial and environmental sustainability of key buildings• support facilities for specific target groups, including young people, children, women and older people, in order to enable them to play a full part in local communities
Pride in our Heritage: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investing in the sustainable refurbishment of the rural Vale's built heritage• Delivering activity that helps to conserve, promote and celebrate the natural and cultural heritage within the Vale• Increasing the scale of coordination and collaboration amongst the Vale's heritage features to achieve greater integration and to improve their long term viability
Pride in our Farming Families <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To increase the number of farming families and intermediaries that are engaged with and are able to identify and implement diversification opportunities through both capital and revenues grant aid support;• To add value to the tourism offer within the Vale by investing in diversification projects that broaden the range of accommodation available or through developing other service related tourism businesses;• To increase the turnover of the farming businesses supported through additional non-agricultural income generation within the new activity / venture

Axis 3 Projects were then implemented, largely through grant schemes. Axis 4 focused on pilot projects and trialling new approaches. Some pilot project outcomes were then taken into Axis 3 for further development and mainstreaming. The diagram at the start of Annex 2 summarises the five 'Projects' of Business Plan 2 and gives a description of all the pilot activities in Axis 4 and the grant schemes and recipients of the four Projects in Axis 3.

Role of VoG Rural Partnership and Local Action Group

Axis 3 and 4 activities through Business Plan 2 are managed by the VoG Rural Partnership and, specifically for Axis 4, by the Creative Rural Communities Local Action Group. Management arrangements for delivery of Axis 3 and 4 activities involved three organisations, with arrangements set out in a Memorandum of Understanding:

⁴ Taken from the Project Completion Reports, CRC, 2014

We are advised that objectives stated in the Closure Report for Pride in the Vale are incorrect. The Project's Aim has therefore been used for the purposes of evaluation.

- The Rural Partnership of the VoG; has a responsibility and a role to develop and oversee delivery of the LDS. It has a membership of around 30 organisations, on a broadly equal 25% split of public, private, community and voluntary sector partners
- VoG Council as the lead body who;
 - Host Creative Rural Communities (CRC); the rural regeneration arm of the VoG Council with its staff leading on delivery of Axis 3 and 4 activity
 - Act as the accountable body, managing the finance and administration of Axis 3 and 4 and employing the CRC staff delivering it, with all attendant employer responsibilities
- CRC Local Action Group; CRC is overseen by the CRC Local Action Group. The LAG has a membership of around 20⁵ organisations and was chaired by the Vale Tourism Association representative. The Rural Partnership Chair also sat on the LAG, ensuring a management link. CRC staff work with the LAG in delivery of Axis 4 activity specifically. The LAG also has a remit for Axis 3. It has delegated powers from the Partnership for operational decision making:

Decision making on Axis 3 grants was undertaken by 'Project' panels of at least 5 members including at least 2 LAG members and also bringing in some additional external expertise outside of LAG/Rural Partnership members. There were four panels, one for each of the four Axis 3 Projects.

In addition, steering groups were set up for some activities in Axis 4 and scoring criteria established for the activities supported with grant.

⁵ Numbers provided by CRC Team

3. The changing economic context

Before discussing the projects in detail, it is useful to review the changing economic context in which Business Plan 2 (BP2) has been taking place.

This section summarises a review of some of the primary economic indicators that are available in the area to understand whether there have been any significant changes over the Programme period. We have focused on those issues that we consider to be the most relevant to the objectives and activities of the Programme. The review and analysis of the data is set out in Annex 3.

Associating, or attributing, any change in headline indicators with the supported activities of the Programme is always a difficult exercise to undertake. Linking project/programme level activity to changes in macro-economic conditions is rarely achieved successfully. In the case of the evaluation there are five factors that make 'association/attribution' a particularly difficult exercise:

- A. the *scale* of the Programme – in terms of total aggregate investment – was relatively minor in the context of *whole* economic activity in the Rural Vale. The level of expected influence of the Programme at a macro level would be commensurate.
- B. the Programme investments were spread over a relatively wide spread of activities i.e. support for the agricultural community, tourism based interventions, promotion of heritage assets. The benefits of the Programme would also be spread over a number of sectors – making it more difficult to identify any macro-level impacts.
- C. the continued effects of the recession that started in 2008 continued through the early part of the Programme delivery. The macro impact of the difficult trading conditions could have 'dampened' the benefits of the supported activities, or at least made it more difficult to spot those benefits in the macro-level data.
- D. For some issues that are most relevant to the Programme activities, available data only exists at a geographical level wider than the Rural Vale. A lot of data only exists at a Vale level and we have been unable to specifically analyse changes in socio economic conditions at a 'Rural Vale' level. Where we have been able to, we have principally sourced data from the 2011 Census. However, this then means that we are analysing data from very early in the Programme delivery period – we would not have expected any major benefits to have begun to materialise this early in the Programme period. There is a mis-match between data availability at a 'Rural Vale' level and timeliness of that data. This was also a problem that faced the baseline activity for the 2009 LDS – much of the data used was from the 2001 Census.
- E. The final factor is the same for all evaluations, and related to the above. Evaluations consistently find that benefits tend to be lagged i.e. benefits may only materialise some time after the support has been completed. For some of the supported projects in the latter part of the Programme delivery period, benefits may only just be occurring and will certainly not be captured in any macro-level data. We have attempted to address this problem through our beneficiary survey (analysis shown elsewhere).

These factors mean that it is very difficult to associate Programme activities with any changes in the data that is available.

Nevertheless, we have undertaken a relatively concise analysis, focusing on a number of primary and relevant socioeconomic indicators.

Our analysis shows that the broad issues that were identified in the 2009 LDS, and which provided much of the focus for the Programme activities, still remain. Rural Vale is still a place where well-qualified and skilled people tend to live, but not work; the local labour market remains relatively robust but there is still a question about whether the available resource is being fully *utilised*; and attracting tourists to stay and spend in the area remains difficult.

Factors that were expected when the 2009 LDS was being formulated but, perhaps, did not occur were that population growth in the area was slower than envisaged; the business community has actually tended to perform relatively robustly in the face of the difficult trading conditions (although we don't know how many of them are 'treading water'); and levels of employment have remained higher than would be expected in such a severe recession (with productivity falling instead).

4. Meeting RDP Targets

Business Plan P2 was approved with financial allocations made to Projects together with targets for Performance Indicators (PIs). This section briefly reviews how it as delivered against these targets, which are important in setting the context for the scale of BP2.

Financial Spend

The Business Plan 2 submission to Welsh Government proposed a total spend of £4.55m, of which £3.6m would be from the RDP for Wales. Following negotiations and revisions to the submission, Business Plan 2 was approved at a total spend of £3.54m. Subsequently some reallocation of funding was made, with additional RDP funding secured through underspends in other Business Plans elsewhere in Wales, and some additional leverage of matched funding. Final spend came to £3.97m, of which £2.88m was RDP funding and £1.1m matched funding. A summary breakdown by Project is given in the table below. Annex 4 provides further detail.

	Original Approval	Final outturn		
	Total	RDP	Matched	Total
Pride in the Vale	£720,000	£609,056	£155,902	£764,958
Pride in our Services	£1,332,000	£999,223	£470,439	£1,469,662
Pride in our Villages	£405,000	£268,511	£86,795	£355,306
Pride in our Heritage	£649,000	£513,326	£157,418	£670,744
Pride in our Farming Families	£430,000	£489,157	£220,048	£709,205
TOTAL	£3,536,000	£2,879,273	£1,090,602	£3,969,875

The only Project where final total spend was less than anticipated was Pride in our Villages. The reason given is that the schemes coming forward into Axis 3 as a result of community consultations and green audits were smaller capital spend projects than expected. This meant that some capital funding could be transferred to Pride in our Farming Families as part of the budget enhancement process. It did not diminish the outputs and results expected from the Project – these were not changed.

Output and Results

The RDPW set out a number of output and result indicators by measure and projects had to deliver some measurable benefit in relation to these. This applies to the expenditure through Axis 3 by Rural Partnerships. At the RDPW level, Axis 4 targets relate to the overall number of LAGs and programmes established in Wales. At the individual LAG level there are no specific Axis 4 indicators and projects are reporting against appropriate output and result indicators for Axis 1, 2 or 3.

Further indicators were also established by Welsh Government and added to the performance framework. LAGs could choose these as performance indicators too, which the VoG LAG did when it revised its Project budgets through 'enhancement'⁶ processes.

RDP Output Indicators	Number of Indicators	Exceeded	Met exactly	Did not reach
Pride in the Vale	11	7	1	3
Pride in our Services	1	1		
Pride in our Villages	2		2	
Pride in our Heritage	1	1		
Pride in our Farming Families	1	1		
	16	10	3	3

RDP Result Indicators	Number of Indicators	Exceeded	Met exactly	Did not reach
Pride in the Vale	4	1	2	1
Pride in our Services	1	1		
Pride in our Villages	1			1
Pride in our Heritage	1			1
Pride in our Farming Families	1	1		
	8	3	2	3

Welsh Government Output Indicators	Number of Indicators	Exceeded	Met exactly	Did not reach
Pride in the Vale	15	12		3
Pride in our Services	3			3
Pride in our Villages	2	1		1
Pride in our Heritage	4	1		3
Pride in our Farming Families	2	1		1
	26	15	0	11

Welsh Government Result Indicators	Number of Indicators	Exceeded	Met exactly	Did not reach
Pride in the Vale	5	2		3
Pride in our Services	8	7		1
Pride in our Villages	11	8		3
Pride in our Heritage	10	8		2
Pride in our Farming Families	6	5		1
	40	30	0	10

⁶ A formal process for securing Welsh Government approval for moving money between Projects and for bidding for additional resources (underspends from other LAG areas)

The tables above indicate that across both RDP and Welsh Government indicators used, in the majority of cases the indicators have been met or exceeded. However, they do not give any indication of the type of indicators involved. Annex 4 provides this detail. Further analysis of performance against indicators is discussed in Section 5, in relation to each of the five Projects

Performance Indicators are very descriptive of activity but not of impact. They do not give any real feel for impact, something which this evaluation is seeking to identify. Feedback to the LAG from the PIs alone is not therefore very helpful in really understanding how projects are having an impact.

It is apparent from our online survey of BP2 participants, that they are collecting other information which is not being reported to CRC LAG.

Have you collected evidence about your project?		
Answer Options	Axis 3	Axis 4
Customer / user surveys	53.3%	22.2%
Monitoring information required by CRC	60.0%	55.6%
Take up of services (i.e. increased numbers of customers / users)	46.7%	11.1%
Anecdotal or informal feedback	66.7%	77.8%
Financial data (i.e. increased turnover)	20.0%	22.2%
Total number of respondents	15	9

Respondents note that monitoring has been helpful in support of managing and developing projects.

"I have realised the need for restricting what I let learners undertake and I am putting more work into promotion."

"Customer reviews have helped us to identify aspects of the business we could alter or improve upon."

"We continually monitor each film screening to make sure we're getting it right. We use different methods of promotion (Facebook, web, community newsletter, emails) to try and increase the audience base."

Customer and user surveys also provide valuable feedback. At St Illtud's Church and the Galilee Chapel, a visitor survey between January – August 2014 provided valuable feedback on where visitors were coming from and why they are visiting. Visiting the Galilee Chapel itself was the prime purpose of the visit for about 33% of visitors, indicating that it is acting as a visitor draw in its own right. For others it was a wider interest in history, churches, simply passing by or showing people round their local area. The church also has a list of groups visiting or booked to visit in 2015. There had been 19 groups so far, who have either visited or are booked to visit through to September, totalling around 400 visitors, and representing church groups, history groups and others – and even one group from Australia.

There have been some specific evaluations undertaken of sub-projects and activities e.g. the coastal camping pilot was externally evaluated, the tourism ambassadors project had a final report write up from the external trainer, and CRC itself has prepared a number of end of activity 'evaluation' videos with feedback from participants, all of which are available through

CRC's youtube channel and via its website. These videos do seem a very useful and quite innovative way to report back on projects and one which can be much more easily accessed and digested than a written report. They could have the potential for further development and use in promoting local activities.

It is fortunate that CRC team members, LAG and RP members are well connected into projects as it means there is a lot of discussion and feedback on an informal basis. However, and as discussed with some participants during interviews and group discussions, having a more structured approach to monitoring and evaluating impact would be extremely valuable, both for individual projects to show their worth and in terms of more helpful feedback to the LAG.

Conclusion

Although BP2 was approved with a budget less than was bid for, financial spend has exceeded expectations with additional RDP and matched funding resources secured for BP2. Final spend was £3.97m

Helping small start up businesses:

Tomos Lilford Brewery

The Local Food Champions pilot project has been able to help small scale food and drink producers access the market with a really strong product. The Tomos Lilford Brewery puts its small grant of £1920 from Axis 4 to good use, through creating a brand and labelling for its products and developing its website.

'The important thing is to take your product and show it in a light that is serious. This is a proper, serious, professionally made product'.

The branding is noted as invaluable in helping the business to grow. The brewery supplies some local pubs and restaurants and will also make commissions for special events. It is part of the Slow Food Movement in South East Wales

<http://www.tomosalilford.com/>

RDPW and Welsh Government PIs were met or exceeded in the majority of cases. Section 5 discusses where and why some targets may have been missed. As an overview however, and given the further discussion in Section 5, there are some good reasons why some targets were not achieved, which do not seem to reflect any inability to achieve the level of activity, but rather the way in which some activity developed differently to initial expectations.

Performance Indicators are generally quantitative and focused on quantum of activity not on impact. Participants in Axis 3 and 4 have also collected other information, both helpful to themselves in planning and taking forward their activities and in showing a wider dimension of

impact. Some evaluation work has been done including some innovative video reports available on youtube. Devising ways of improving monitoring and evaluation which is not just meeting reporting targets but is useful to evidence local impacts could be valuable for future programmes and projects.

5. Meeting the Project Objectives

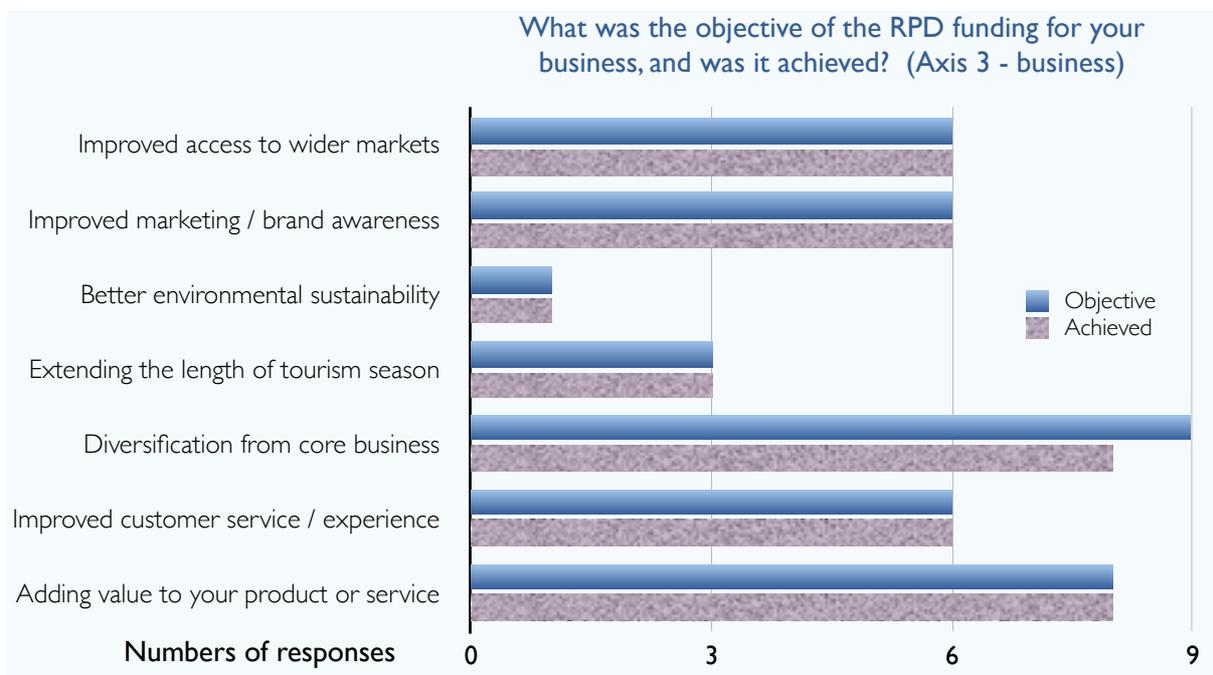
As Section 2 has set out, each of the five Projects in Business Plan 2 had its own objectives. This section reviews how sub projects in the four Axis 3 Projects and activities within the Axis 4 Project have been contributing towards these objectives. It looks at both the collective experience and at each of the five Projects in turn.

What is also valuable to note is that each of the four Projects in Axis 3 had its own scoring Panel, comprising LAG and other members, with scoring criteria and structure. This was done to ensure that projects coming forward were in line with the Project’s objectives. The scoring criteria for each of the four Projects is given in Annex 5.

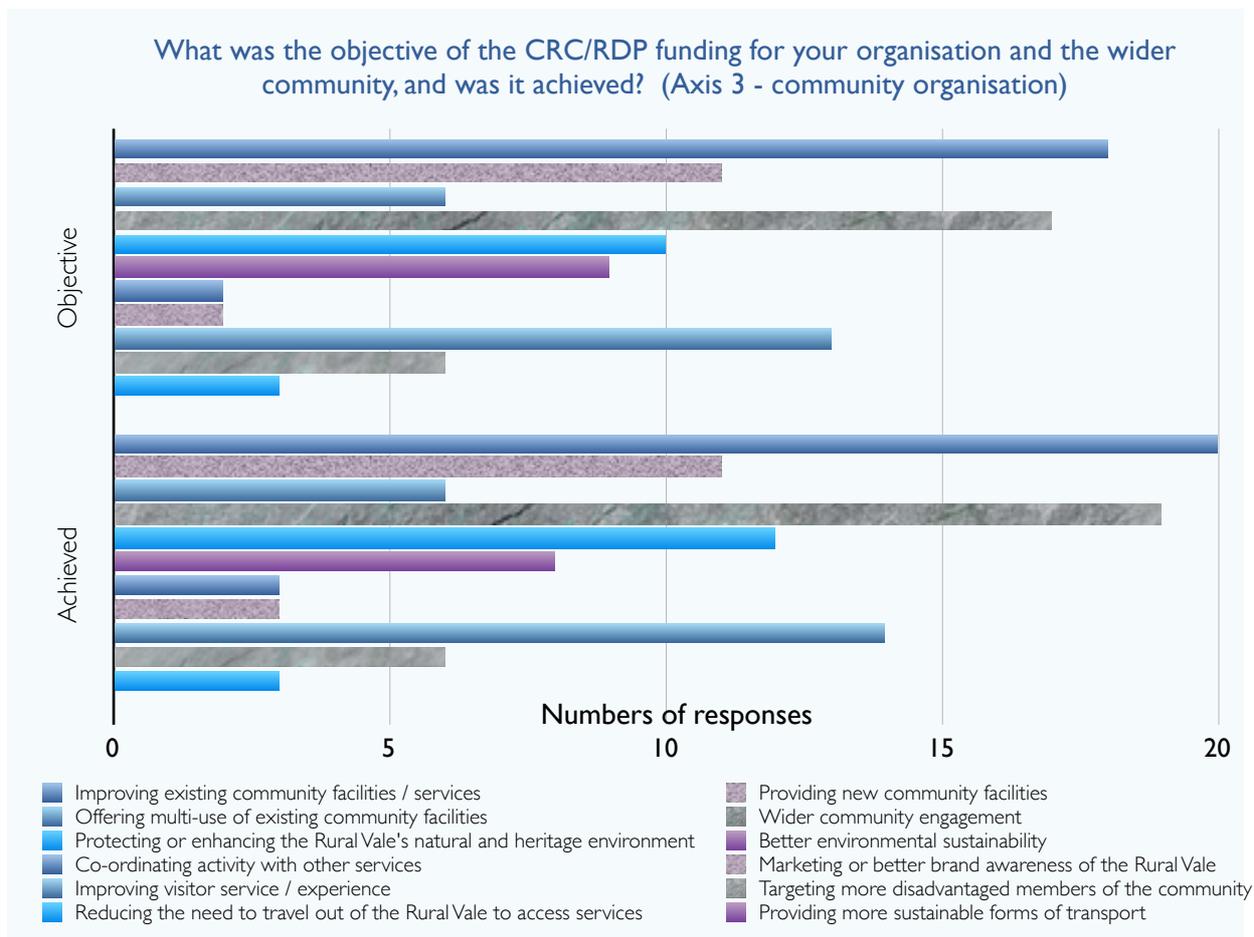
For Axis 4 Pride in the Vale, scoring criteria related to those elements of the activities where funding support was given to people through an open invitation to participate process – such as the coastal camping pilot and the outdoor activity pilots (see Annex 5). The food champions had no scoring criteria but, in our view, should have done to ensure consistency of approach,

Axis 3: Overview

Collectively, it is clear from the responses to the online survey and the feedback from our consultations that the majority of **business** projects funded through Axis 3 felt they had met their objectives. The chart below, taken from the online survey, indicates this. The main objectives of businesses that sought RDP support were to diversify away from their core business, and to improve and add value to the customer experience and the service offered. These are all important to long-term sustainability of the business.



For **community** and public sector organisations funded through Axis 3, the majority of project objectives were met (indeed some projects seemed to suggest that they had ‘achieved’ an outcome even if it wasn’t necessarily an ‘objective’ at the outset of the project). Examples included ‘coordinating activity with other services’ and improving the marketing and brand awareness of the Rural Vale’. In only one instance did a community organisation not feel the original objective was met – ‘better environmental sustainability’.



Pride in our Farming Families

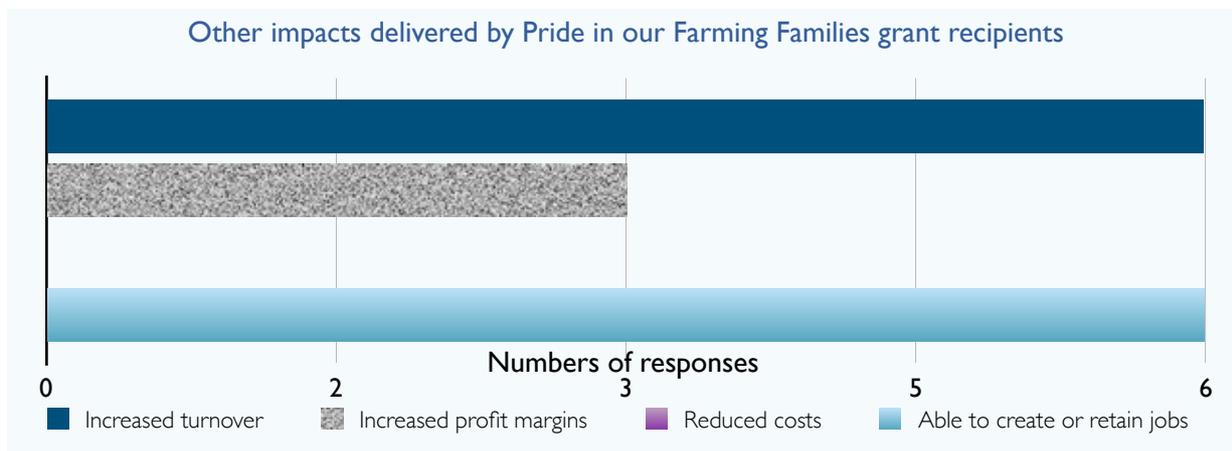
Objectives:

- To increase the number of farming families and intermediaries that are engaged with and are able to identify and implement diversification opportunities through both capital and revenues grant aid support;
- To add value to the tourism offer within the Vale by investing in diversification projects that broadens the range of accommodation available or through developing other service related tourism businesses;
- To increase the turnover of the farming businesses supported through additional non-agricultural income generation within the new activity / venture

This has been the most overtly business focused Axis 3 Project with jobs created as part of its scoring criteria and increasing turnover one of its objectives. Its focus has been on diversification into tourism activities and the 13 schemes that have been taken forward achieve this:

- Six provide holiday accommodation
- Four have diversified into equine related activities supporting visitor use
- Three have added other visitor facilities to build their tourism offer

It has delivered important economic benefits as the following graph shows, based on 7 responses to the online survey (50% of beneficiaries).



The extent of the economic benefits is variable. For three businesses who went on to answer further detailed questions, two identified turnover changes as marginal, one as moderate; two identified ability to create or retain jobs as marginal, one as substantial; whilst ability to increase customer or visitor numbers was mixed at marginal, moderate and substantial. Despite variation of impact, all value the project achievements and attribute at least 30 – 50% of the impact to the CRC/RDP funding received (and in one case more than 50%). All three expect the business benefits to last more than 5 years. The economic benefit is reinforced in end of project video reports shot by CRC for each of the 13 recipients:

- Three specifically noted that the income from diversification was important to making the overall farming enterprise viable and enabling owners and their children to continue farming into the future
- One noted the importance of having another source of income in giving resilience to farming, spreading the income risk
- One business noted that it had planned for 50% occupancy of holiday accommodation and was already nearing 100%
- Another business providing a local service noted a growing number of repeat customers by the third year, with intentions to now expand

Interviews for this evaluation make the same points;

- Seeking to diversify their farm business to provide another income stream and negate effects of price volatility and falling subsidies
- Ability to carry on the farming business as consequence of greater combined revenue from two businesses (the farm and accommodation)

Attracting visitors to the rural Vale:

Cowbridge Cabins

Cowbridge Cabins is a new development on a large mixed farm on the edge of Cowbridge, within walking distance of the town. The idea of the development is that it provides low cost accommodation, targeted at families and active visitors who can eat and drink in the town and use the cabins as somewhere to sleep. It is on a public footpath. The development was supported with a £40,000 grant through the Pride in our Farming Families’ Axis 3 Project. The development has already exceeded its occupancy targets of 50%.

“It is in fact almost all occupied all of the time which is incredible”

<http://www.cowbridgecabins.co.uk/>

Outputs reported for this Project include 23.5 gross jobs created, 13 new products or services launched and 12 new markets accessed, for a total spend (RDP and matched funding) of c£709,000. The only indicator not to be achieved for this Project was that related to holding events to encourage diversification projects. That was because the available funding was oversubscribed so events to market the Project opportunity were not needed. Additional funding was moved from other budgets and underspends elsewhere in Wales, to bring the budget to the size it achieved. Discussion with CRC staff suggests that if more funding had been available, there were more farming families who wanted to participate.

In conclusion, this Project has made good achievements in relation to its objectives. It has delivered activities contributing to all three of its objectives, which are beginning to show economic benefits. This is quite an achievement given the relatively short timescale over which the Project has operated. What is also gratifying to note is that grant beneficiaries see the diversification routes taken as ones that will have long lasting benefits and on which future development can be built.

Pride in our Villages

Objectives:

- *improve the quality of the local environment, by supporting the implementation of practical physical developments within a whole-village community context*
- *improve facilities generally, including the financial and environmental sustainability of key buildings*
- *support facilities for specific target groups, including young people, children, women and older people, in order to enable them to play a full part in local communities*

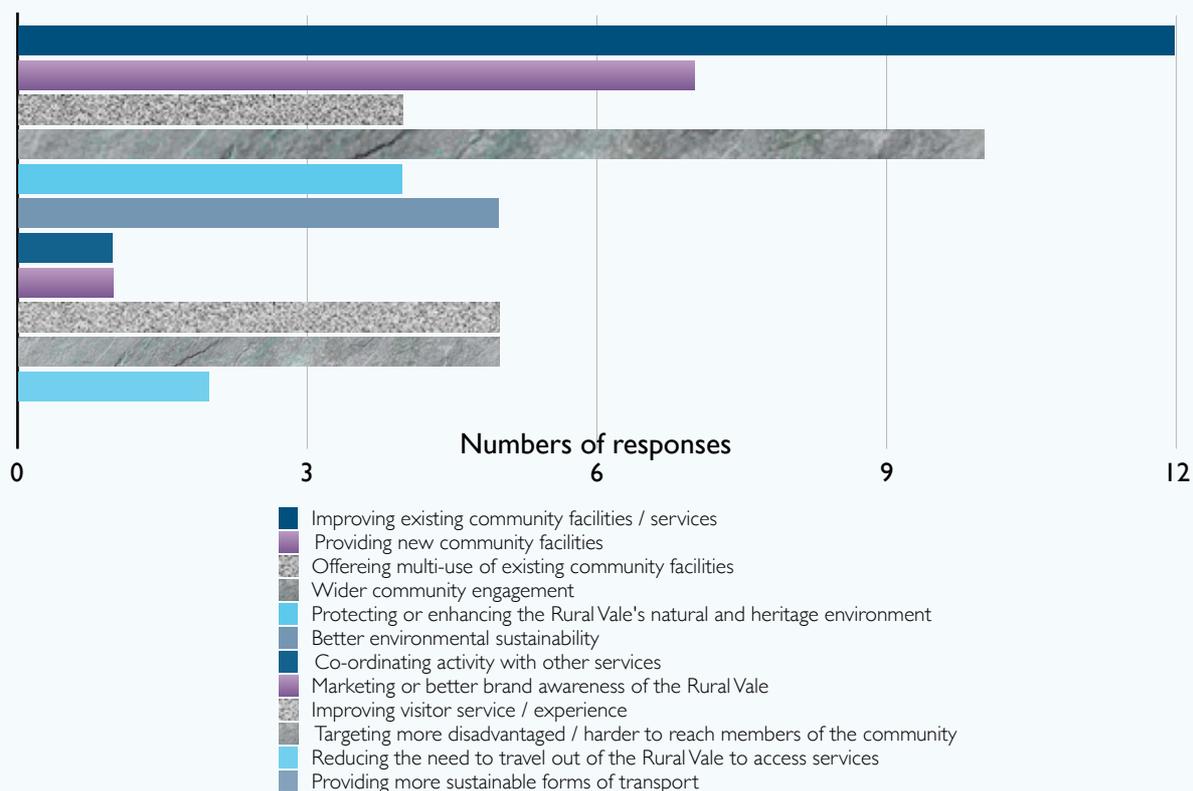
Sub projects coming forward in the Pride in our Villages Project had to come through one of two routes; a community consultation which then showed the proposed project as a priority of the village, or a green energy audit which then showed the village hall improvement as one appropriate to the hall. Both the community consultations and green audits were initiatives through the Axis 4 Pride in the Vale Project.

The community consultation put in place a process to ensure that sub-projects coming forward had been identified in a whole village context. Although the community consultation could be said to be a relatively limited process in that one or two events were held and this was not a full community plan process, they did provide a route for all people in a local community to have say about their priorities and give a mandate to the community group taking forward applications into Axis 3.

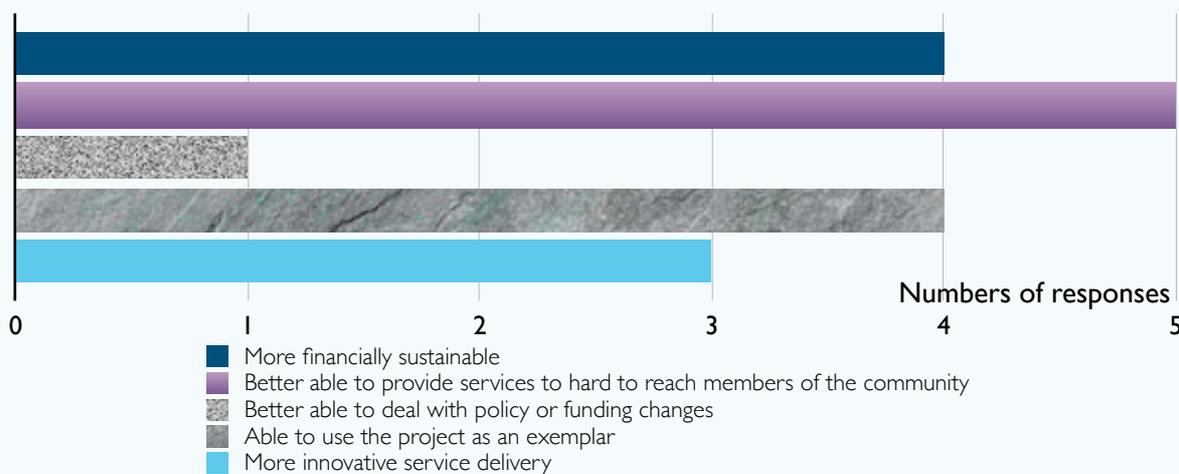
The green audits were intended to provide advice to villages wanting to improve the energy efficiency of their buildings but not knowing what the appropriate solutions might be. Applications through Axis 3 should therefore be for improvements suited to the village hall.

Sub-projects coming forward were for a variety of different groups within the community. Performance indicators asked for reports of number of users and the targets for numbers in relation to young people, elderly people and women benefitting from projects have all been exceeded.

Achieved Objectives of Pride in our Village grant recipients



Other impacts delivered by Pride in our Village grant recipients



The online survey indicated a wide range of objectives achieved by grant recipients including those of improving facilities and services which all 12 of the survey respondents identified. All those who identified an objective also said that it had been achieved. Importantly wider community engagement was noted as an achievement by the majority of respondents.

The online survey also identified other benefits including improved financial sustainability, one of the objectives of the Pride in the Village Project, although not all projects identified this as an outcome.

Further discussions in interviews, focus groups and reported in a CRC end of project video, emphasise the local benefits. In Peterston Super Ely, the re-development of the playground was the highest priority arising from the community consultation and is now a well used facility meeting current standards. The community consultation seems to have been an

important catalyst as it gave a mandate for taking on the playground project, following which there have been other projects in the village, some with CRC support through another Project. People now believe things can be done in the village. In Dinas Powys, improvements to a hall kitchen enabled a luncheon club for old people to run, the most important aspect of which is the social element, helping to combat isolation.

One aspect that is hard to draw out from sub-project reporting is the extent to which new and improved facilities and services have been able to interact with other village facilities e.g. has an improved playground with more local use led to more people using the village shop. In one interview, the point was made that direct cause and effect could not be made, but it is likely there have been effects. In the absence of any specific monitoring requirements and given that these are all voluntary led local projects, then building wider associations might be a step too far. However, looking to the future and the need for community groups to be more self sustaining, being able to prove community contribution and benefits in different ways could be advantageous.

What is also apparent from focus groups and interviews is that the knowledge of activity in this Project is very localised. Although community groups do talk to each other across community council areas, there is no specific structure for this e.g. no regular forum for Community Councils or village hall committees to meet. Learning and sharing of experience is therefore very adhoc, although interviews and discussions indicate that it is happening.

In conclusion, Pride in our Villages has clearly had local benefits in line with its objectives, and putting it on a footing of requiring the consultation/audit work to support and evidence grant support seems to have been of benefit. Although CRC staff may have wished to take community consultations further towards a community plan, what has been done seems a fair compromise between the 'plan' ideal and the pragmatics of delivering both a consultation/audit and a project within the BP2 timescale. This approach is one that could have potential for further development.

Pride in our Services

Objectives:

- *to identify opportunities to combine services in new ways, so that they will remain viable (as community facilities, social enterprises or micro-businesses, or amalgamations of these);*
- *to develop practical exemplar projects that illustrate the potential for multi-use facilities and services;*
- *to build on current good practice to ensure flexible on-demand local transport to access services of all kinds; and*
- *to develop the links between villages in order to provide safe accessibility to services in neighbouring villages, to support community cohesion and to improve the quality of life of local residents*

Pride in our Services has had different elements to it; footpath enhancements, the cycleway project, the Rural Hubs and Greenlinks community transport. Each of these contributes to the Project's services in different ways.

Greenlinks very obviously supports the local transport objective and accessibility to services elsewhere and is a continuation of an initiative begun in BP1. BP2 has continued to support it with revenue funding. The loss of some public service rural routes during the lifetime of BP2

has greatly strengthened the rationale for Greenlinks which has been able to fill a gap, albeit on a smaller scale. There is quite a large membership to Greenlinks of around 1,600 people although of these, it is suggested that about 3-400 use it on a regular basis. VoG Council has no qualitative evaluation information for Greenlinks and this evaluation has not been able to do this due to limitations of time and resources. The Greenlinks coordinator at Vale of Glamorgan Council and the end of project report CRC video indicate its value to regular users in terms of getting to the shops, health related visits and out to community venues and events. The vehicles are also available for hire by member not for profit groups. The importance and value of the service is evidenced by the Vale of Glamorgan Council who have resolved to continue to support Greenlinks through use of S106 (Planning Agreement) funding and have also extended the service into the Vale's urban areas. However, we are not aware from any of our discussions, that other community groups have particularly linked into Greenlinks, to bring groups or support events or activities.

Support for footpaths and the cycle route also support accessibility and links between villages. Our understanding is that the original intention for footpaths was to create new routes. However, it ended up more as improvements, suggested as a response to the practicalities and legalities of footpath creation and maintenance which reside with the Council. In practice, of the 11 footpath schemes grant supported, only 2 are listed as coming from other than the VoG Council.

The cycleway project was also a Council led initiative, supporting development of the NCN88 national cycle route through the rural Vale. The route is for leisure and travel to work and is a mix of on and off road. No specific evaluation of the route has been undertaken by the Council and this evaluation has not been able to do anything specifically on cycleway (or footpath) users for the reasons mentioned earlier. However discussion with the Vale of Glamorgan Council indicates they are keen to promote walking and cycling as alternatives to car use, are working with a number of schools on cycling as well as through the Local Transport Plan on active travel plans (for travel to work). The cycleway project appears to have been opportunistic, in fitting within this general framework of sustainable travel and leisure use and providing an opportunity to make significant improvements which would otherwise have happened in a much more piecemeal way, if at all.

The remainder of Pride in our Services projects relate to development of Rural Hubs. A number of the grants went to development of community cinemas. A community cinema equipment trial was set up through Axis 4, enabling villages to borrow some centralised equipment at no cost to test out the idea of a community cinema which, if they wanted to pursue, they could then seek grant support for setting up through Pride in our Services Rural Hubs. Six communities went down this route. Other sub-projects supported through the Rural Hubs element were five 'Pub is the Hub' co-operation project schemes for community facilities (largely some sort of retail service) and other small community projects.

The sub-projects for combining services and providing exemplars are very much the community cinemas and the Pub is the Hub schemes. Discussion in relation to community cinemas, together with the end of project CRC video identifies this as quite an innovative approach to drawing new people into community life and creating local social occasions. It is not just about seeing a film, it is about the whole experience of going out, meeting friends, having a drink, socialising across the generations. The community cinema brings new users to community halls. The quality of the experience and the quality of film is clearly important to attract and keep an audience and those involved are still developing ways forward with provision of the facility/service. However it clearly has local benefits and appears to have been a very successful experiment.

Community facilities in pubs has been part of a wider Co-operation project with 8 partners in Wales and based on the Pub is the Hub approach. A final evaluation undertaken for the co-operation project⁷ identified that, at the local individual pub level, the most successful projects were in the LAG areas where local grant funds were available, of which VoG was one. At the level of developing a pilot model of delivery, the evaluation noted success in part – dependent on the ability to develop sound local working relationships between public, private and voluntary sectors. Of 20 pubs receiving advice on diversification projects noted in the final evaluation report, five were in the VoG, of which four involved diversification into some element of retail and one added a community room. All received funding for this through Pride in our Services Rural Hubs. Although the work in the VoG through this co-operation project was a small element of a wider project which had its own organisational issues, there has been a local benefit, albeit small scale.

The RDP Programme output target for the Pride in our Services Project has been met. However additional Welsh Office output targets related to number of enterprises, numbers of individuals and numbers of groups advised or assisted to develop projects, have not been met. Our understanding is that this is a result of the way in which the Project progressed, with fewer local groups involved in the footpaths element and fewer businesses directly involved in sub-projects than anticipated.

In conclusion, sub-projects supported through this Project have delivered against all the objectives. However we find it more difficult to comment on the impact of the footpaths and cycleway projects in particular, because these have not had any specific user counts or surveys, no information has come out through our discussions as part of this evaluation and limitations on how far we could take consultations has meant we could not contact ultimate beneficiaries. Cycleways has been a major capital investment in the context of RDP project spend and it would be valuable to now explore its use for leisure and work travel in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

Overall, this Project may have suffered from having a slightly less clear focus to some of its strands of activity and less interlinkage between its different strands.

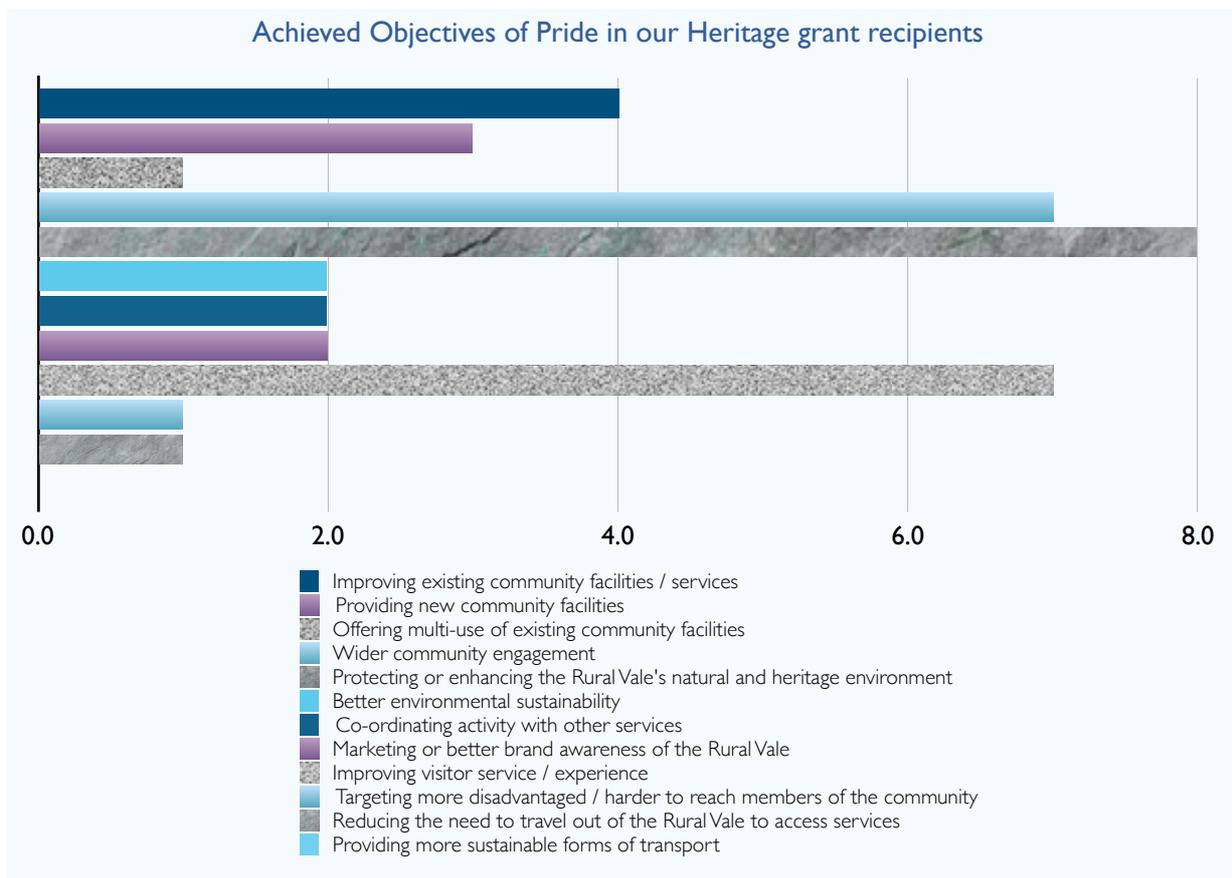
Pride in our Heritage

Objectives:

- *Investing in the sustainable refurbishment of the rural Vale's built heritage*
- *Delivering activity that helps to conserve, promote and celebrate the natural and cultural heritage within the Vale*
- *Increasing the scale of coordination and collaboration amongst the Vale's heritage features to achieve greater integration and to improve their long term viability*

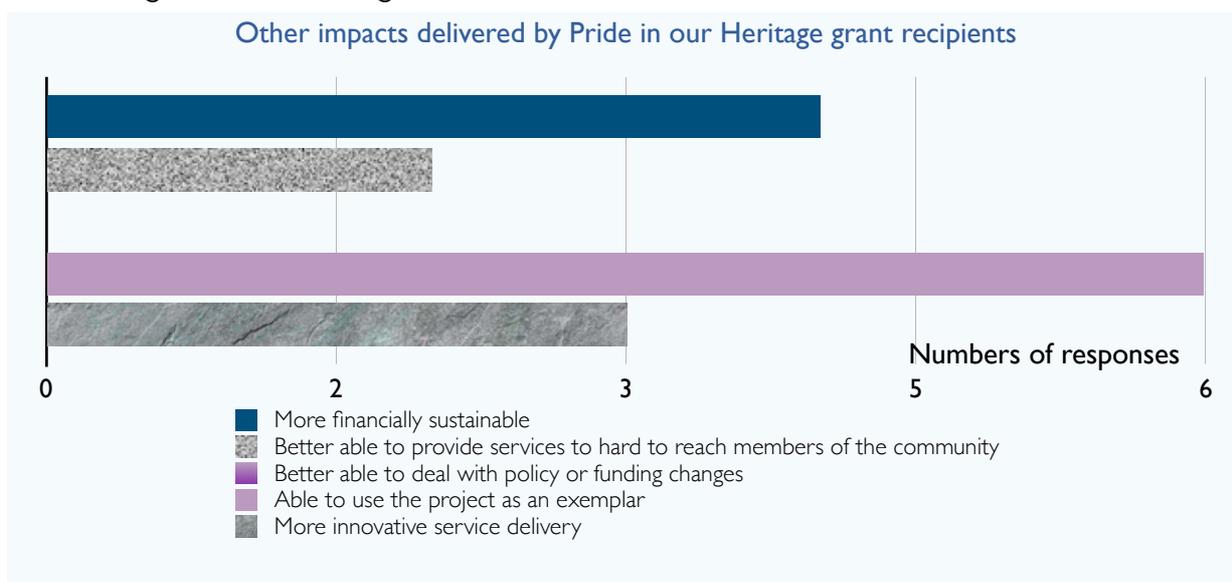
This Project supported built, cultural and natural heritage projects, some quite large scale and others much smaller. For the most part the sub-projects have come directly from organisations and individuals. This Project also provided some funding to take forward some Heritage Coast Interpretation Strategy recommendations from Axis 4, notably some experimental tourism apps for use on mobile phones when out and about along the Heritage Coast and for use in conjunction with visitor leaflets, together with some tourism apps targeted at children. A small part of funding was also used to provide ongoing support to the Rural Events Network, a BP1 initiative and where BP2 funding provided ongoing

⁷ Pub is the Hub Independent Evaluation, December 2014, Consultancy.coop members Jane Riyall and Brian Roberts



equipment and revenue support to it. It is not entirely clear why this was supported from Pride in our Heritage specifically.

Of the nine Pride in our Heritage respondents to the online survey, protecting or enhancing the heritage, generating community engagement and improving visitor experience are all prime objectives of sub projects which have been achieved. It is valuable to note the linking of heritage with tourism in this context as the two are inextricably linked. Links with community engagement are also very important and all combine for promoting and celebrating the Vale's heritage.



Interviews and discussion for this evaluation identifies the important built heritage assets that are being conserved and made accessible through this Project – such as the Galilee Chapel in Llantwit Major and the medieval paintings in St Cadoc's Church, Llancafán. It also

identifies the steps local groups are taking to document and make available historic information through digital archiving – work in progress that will be publicly available in due course. There is a wealth of built heritage resource although discussion suggests that as yet, the individual projects supported are not networked. There is ad-hoc discussion between projects and support in sharing some experiences but no formal networking. In some cases e.g. archive digitisation work, it is too early for projects to be networked and promoted – this might be a later development. For the churches, our understanding is that there is an intention to prepare a Pilgrims Trail leaflet based from St Illtud's and the Galilee chapel that may incorporate other churches around the Vale.

What is also clear from these discussions is the tourism value of these assets. A visitor survey undertaken from January – August 2014 at St Illtud's Church indicated 33% of visitors to the church had come specifically to see the Galilee Chapel. A review of the visitor book at St Cadoc's Church shows visitors from across the UK and internationally. There are visitors coming into the Old Hall Gardens in Cowbridge. This is not information that is being captured in reporting back to the CRC LAG. The extent to which local businesses are or can capitalise on this in capturing economic benefits is also not yet clear – although initiatives such as town centre management in Cowbridge and Llantwit Major (see in Axis 4) should help.

The one area where there is much stronger networking is in relation to the heritage coast and where the initiatives have linked with Axis 4 work on the Heritage Coast Interpretation Strategy and the activities that have spun out of that and carried over into Axis 3. It is also apparent that participants in Axis 3 heritage projects have also become involved in some Axis 4 initiatives such as Tourism Ambassadors.

In terms of reporting Performance Indicators, the RDP output target has been met although other Welsh Government indicators have not - a reflection of where applications have come from (more community groups rather than individuals or businesses) rather than a lack of activity. The RDP result indicator has not quite been met (population benefiting). Our understanding is that not all of the rural Vale was covered by a sub-project hence total population coverage not achieved. This could be arguable as the reach of some sub-projects is not just limited to their immediate locality. Other Welsh Government indicators in terms of numbers of different types of users have been met.

Enjoying the Heritage of the rural Vale:

Old Hall Gardens

Old Hall Gardens lie behind the main road in Cowbridge – the former gardens of Old Hall, now in use by the Vale of Glamorgan Council. Restoration of the Gardens is being undertaken by Cowbridge Charter Trust in partnership with the Vale of Glamorgan Council. They have already worked on restoration of the Town Walls surrounding the Gardens and are now restoring the gardens for their biodiversity value and for the enjoyment of local people and visitors. Supported by a grant of £7,400 through the Axis 3 Pride in our Villages Project, Cowbridge Charter Trust has developed a group of 10 active volunteers who meet weekly to do garden maintenance work.

'We didn't know each other before. Its created a new community with different tendrils into the community as a result.'

Old Hall Gardens Nature Trail and History Workbook and Iolo Trail booklets have been produced for children as have biodiversity and history leaflets for general use. The Charter Trust has also used matched funding from Biffa Awards (landfill tax) to create a children's outdoor storytelling area in the Garden, outside the library.

<http://www.oldhallgardens.org/>

In conclusion there has been a considerable investment in built heritage refurbishment with some quite large scale projects supported. There has also been investment in more soft end activities such as the archive digitisation projects supported, as well as projects related to the natural and cultural heritage.

In some cases, the sub-projects supported are still very much work in progress and there is more to be done before their full benefits as heritage resources are likely to be realised. In other cases, it is now a case of developing appropriate marketing and publicity and other support materials to enable visitors and users to make the most of the heritage resource. What is evident is that this Project has made some valuable investments in the heritage resource. However developing the collaboration and integration implied in the third objective of the Project has been more mixed and was quite ambitious within the timescale anyway. Nevertheless there remains great potential for this in the future, including in linking this into the tourism offer and wider business potential e.g. in support of town and village shops and other facilities.

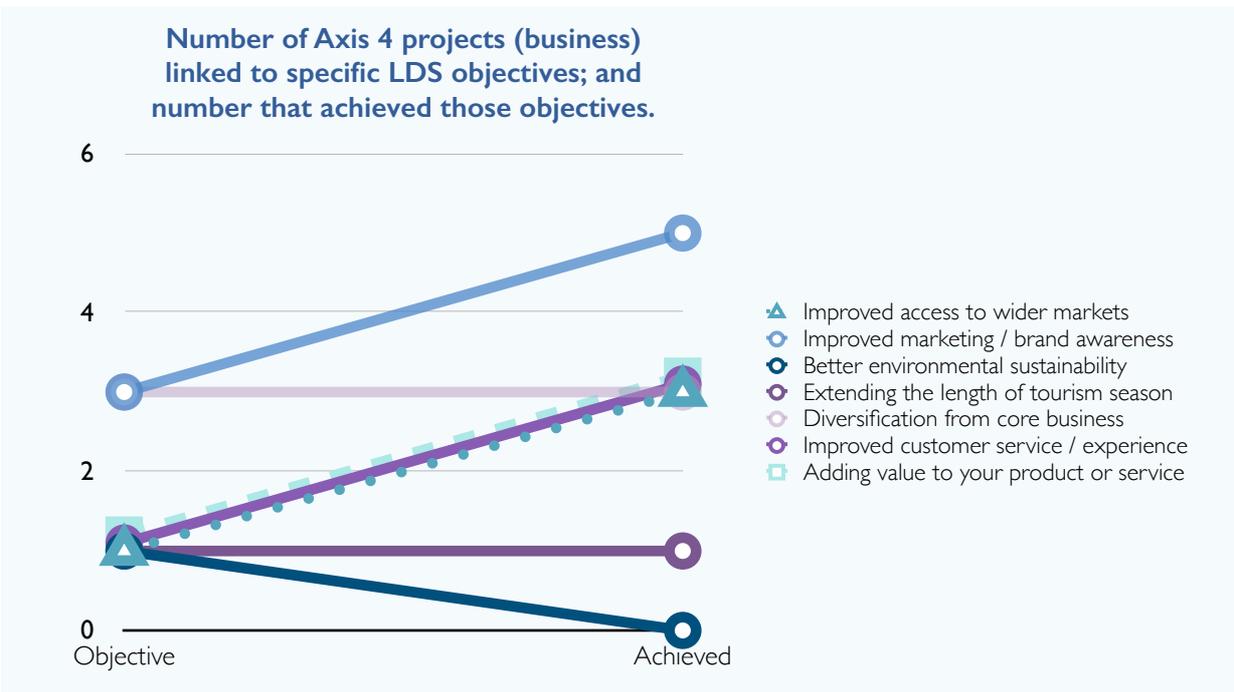
Axis 4: Pride in our Vale

Aim

to maximise the direct contribution of the people of the Rural Vale to enhance the quality of life and the rural economy, by securing meaningful involvement of individuals, communities, social enterprises and micro-businesses in a range of activities to build 'Pride in the Vale'.

Pride in the Vale is evaluated against the aim of the Project as set out in its application and Closure Report and stated above. No specific objectives were identified for this Project.

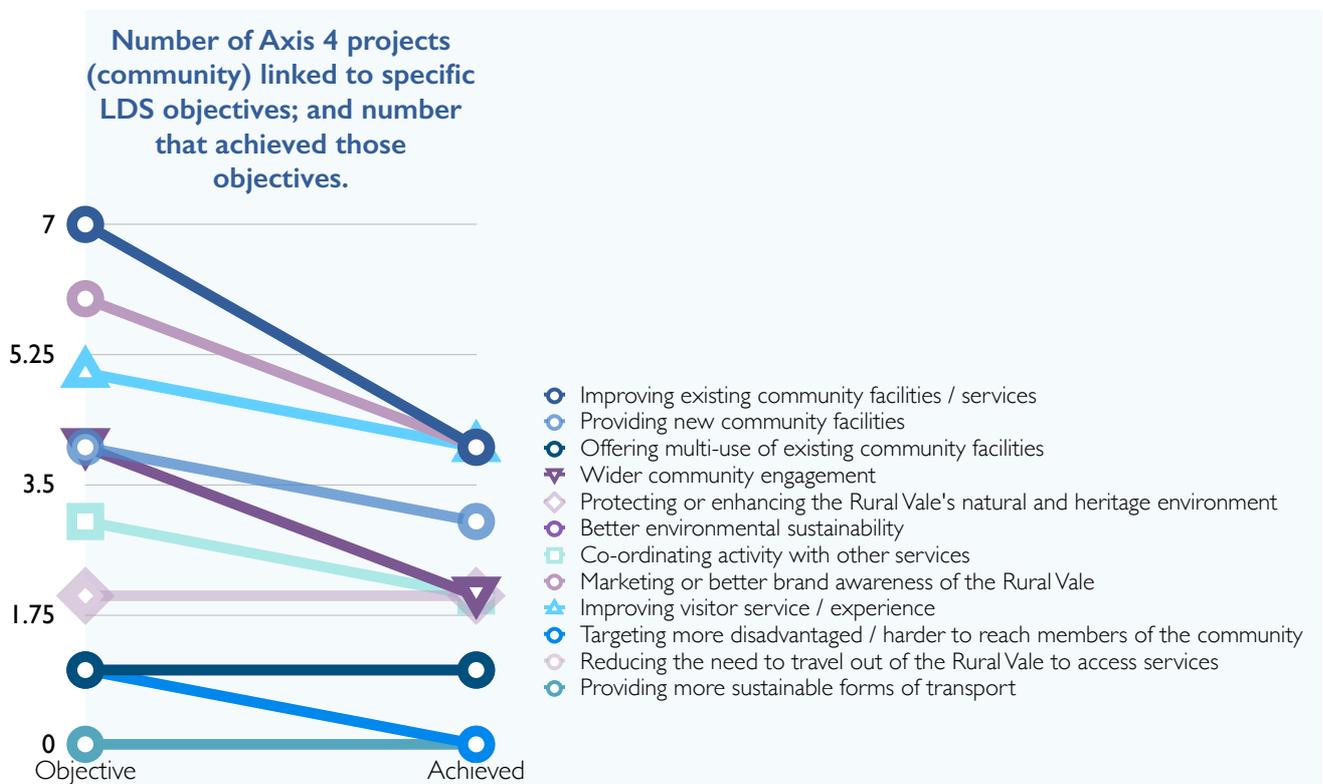
Pride in our Vale has supported an array of different pilot activities and trials under the two broad headings of Slow Tourism and Community Engagement. Although there has been a number of different elements to it, having the two overarching themes has given it a valuable focus. Community engagement has linked back to locally available community facilities and services, and slow tourism to that of the local economy and the historic, built and natural environment (and particularly the heritage coast). A range of different people, communities and businesses have been involved in the pilot activities and trials that Pride in the Vale has supported.



What is also important with Axis 4 is the links from some of the Axis 4 pilot work into Axis 3 delivery – as it is the combination of both of these that has helped to deliver activities in support of the Axis 4 aim.

For those businesses that were supported through Axis 4 (5 respondents) the consistent message from the online survey responses was that objectives for the activity they were involved in were met. As with Axis 3, some businesses felt they had improved aspects of their business that weren't necessarily a stated objective at the outset of the project (although we need to be wary that this may also be an outcome of the functionality of the online survey).

The evidence from the responses of the community organisations supported through Axis 4 (9 respondents) is more mixed. Not all respondents felt that they had met the objective of 'improving existing communities or services' and improving 'wider community engagement'. In addition, not all felt that they had been able to improve the 'marketing or brand awareness of the Rural Vale'. This may be because some activities have yet to realise their full potential.



It is difficult to summarise the wealth and diversity of activities that have taken place in Axis 4. Discussions and interviews for this evaluation indicate a very positive response from participants, who identify a wide range of benefits arising from their participation

"Reinvigoration of interest in the coastal offer for visitors"

"It has helped in developing my new business and has put me in touch with other local businesses and projects which is leading to mutual promotion and being able to widen the tourism appeal of the Heritage Coast by providing an additional activity to visitors"

"The scope of the project: it has already extended beyond our local community"

A number of activities were pilot and experimental and it is clear from discussions that they are still working through and the full impacts/benefits are yet to be realised. For example the outdoor activity pilots have given some business (and non business) people the opportunity

to try out an idea which could lead to new markets for them and provide visitor and resident benefits by opening up activities linked to the heritage coast. The tourism ambassadors initiative has built a network of local people from a variety of backgrounds with local knowledge and interest and willing to share this with visitors to the area.

In this way Axis 4 activities have laid the foundations for ongoing work – and what is important is to now ensure that it does continue. Our discussions show very strongly that participants are all keen to maintain and build on what has been started with Axis 4 support.

“Our project is still ongoing - not yet finalised”

“Visual enhancement in the Town and hopefully attraction for visitors”

“We haven't had time to promote the project as it deserves”

To some extent the timescale of BP2 and the approach to trial or pilot an activity with the follow up then taken on by participants has been a challenge on how far some of the pilot work could be taken within the time available. The Coastal camping pilot project was an early pilot in BP2, taking place in 2012. It was the subject of its own evaluation after the pilot stage, which was a 28 day trial in 2012 with the evaluation report providing some valuable feedback

- Total spend (direct and secondary) per booking £247.47 - leading to a total of £60,870 over the five sites in just a 28 day trial.
- Campsites did not reach capacity or significant surpluses - but the pilot gave a steer of product potential and market appeal

From those that responded to a Perfect Pitch visitor survey:

- 91% would recommend Perfect Pitch to a friend
- 100% felt that the campsite was either excellent, very good or good value for money
- 20.8% of participants would not have visited the Vale of Glamorgan if they could not have stayed on a Perfect Pitch campsite
- 95.8% of guests would use Perfect Pitch in the future. The same percentage of guests would visit the Vale of Glamorgan even if Perfect Pitch was not used

However Perfect Pitch was not without its issues; e.g. resolving planning issues, some poor weather – some of which CRC could help with (e.g. working with planning colleagues and ensuring selection of pilot participants only where sites would have a realistic chance of securing planning permission if they wanted to take forward camping after the pilot). Nevertheless it showed the potential and three of the five participants have developed their camping activities more permanently, one securing some financial support through Axis 3 Pride in our Farming Families.

Another pilot – the outdoor activities – happened later in the BP2 period with the pilot activities happening over a 3 month period in the summer of 2014. This has given much less time for the pilot activity participants to consolidate and grow their activities following that pilot period. Discussion with some participants for this evaluation indicates a desire to continue and some confidence given through the pilot to support that, but also some lack of support which a longer pilot period and stronger follow up work to consolidate the experience could have avoided. There is perhaps some follow up missing to later pilots which are effectively still work in progress and where ongoing support will be important to keep people inspired and involved.

What is also apparent from consultations is the diversity of individuals, organisations and businesses that have been involved in pilots and trials, and some of whom may not have been involved in rural development work before. In some cases their involvement has led

them from one activity into another. This is particularly noticeable with some of the tourism ambassadors, who have been involved in other activities in both Axis 4 and Axis 3.

“CRC were throughout alert to community initiatives, and took the opportunity to foster interest and skills when identified. So through developing relationships with officers, I ultimately ended up as a member of a funding panel, a random panellist on their Vale Trail team, and currently as a Vale ambassador.”

The way in which pilot projects and trials have been developed has been to provide support and training/skills development in different ways and to provide some legacy tools. For example, the outdoor activities pilot included marketing support for the participating businesses as well as heritage coast familiarisation visits; the Perfect Pitch project developed a ‘Coastal Camping Toolkit – A rough Guide to setting up a new campsite’ as a legacy tool; the community cinema trial produced a Community Cinema toolkit as a legacy tool; the Heritage Coast Sense of Place pilot included familiarisation visits and a Sense of Place event attended by 68 organisations and people including tourism businesses learning more about their Heritage Coast. Consultations indicate that this support has been valuable in engaging with participants and keeping them interested and involved. In our view this principle of providing the various building blocks to support people’s involvement in pilot projects has been very positive, notwithstanding some of the late timing of pilot activities noted earlier. It is a principle which can be taken forward into future LAG work and into other initiatives.

“The training has been a great experience, now the excitement is how and when I can put it to good use to a wider audience.....”

Small amounts of funding can have big impacts:

Bara Brith - Baked by Mel

The Local Food Champions pilot project has been able to give small grants to embryonic food producers to help with market development. Bara Brith - baked by Mel is a small online business. With a grant of £2000 from Creative Rural Communities, from Axis 4, the business was able to develop a strong brand image through packaging created to post the product. The packaging had *‘to say exactly what it is with no frills but (I want it to be) appealing’* and has helped the business present itself as a professional product. It has since gone on to be approved as a supplier to Fortnum and Masons.

<http://www.barabrith.co/product/classic-bara-brith/>

Pride in the Vale had a whole raft of performance indicators, a number of which we understand were added at the time of revising financial allocations to measures during the BP2 period. Of the 27 output indicators (RDP and Welsh Government), targets for six were not met. These principally related to village renewal and rural services, as the balance of work through Axis 4 has been geared more towards Slow Tourism. Of the nine results indicators, targets for four were not fully achieved – two again community related, one related

to jobs created and one to new/improved processes introduced by a supported enterprise. On these latter two, Axis 4 has supported a number of businesses, in some cases quite directly like the Local Food Champions pilot, but others more indirectly like the work through the Heritage Coast sense of place activities in which a number of tourism accommodation providers were involved. Whilst actual target figures may not have been achieved, our evaluation would suggest that there is potential for jobs growth as some of the supported

activities continue to grow in the future and, more broadly, for stronger business development, marketing and profile.

In conclusion, Pride in our Vale has been something of an experimental journey for CRC LAG, intended to be much more in line with LEADER principles with activities initiated by the LAG and a novel approach of testing and trialling activities with the potential for growth and development. In our view that has paid off. Giving the Axis 4 two themes under which activities could be developed has given it some strength and cohesion and the links established between Axis 4 and Axis 3 have been very positive. It is also clear that the way in which activities have been commissioned/procured has been a valuable one, drawing in new people who might not otherwise have got involved or considered the ideas being developed.

Even though the community engagement strand might have been a smaller element of activity in Axis 4, this has been a beneficial one in support of Axis 3 work. To some extent this is also an artificial divide as the work in Slow Tourism also has considerable community development aspects. What is also important is that both these strands will make positive contributions to enhancing quality of life and the rural economy which is part of the aim of Pride in the Vale, and enhanced by the potential for greater delivery through the links into Axis 3.

In terms of delivering its aim, Pride in the Vale seems to have done well in engaging with a variety of different organisations and individuals delivering both community and economic activities. It is apparent that the Project has worked with individuals, community organisations and businesses (although we don't specifically know whether any of these are social enterprises). The construction of the pilots and trials, with support through the CRC team and others and appropriate training and skills development, has helped to make that engagement meaningful and there is evidence to indicate it is leading to tangible outcomes which will have quality of life and economic benefits.. The opportunity to learn more about the rural Vale has been an important component in activities e.g. familiarisation visits, building the knowledge and pride for the rural Vale. In our view, Pride in the Vale has performed well in relation to its aim.

Finally, Axis 4 has managed to deliver a number of pilots and trials in quite a limited time period. Those involved are keen to maintain and build on what has been started. Those which are longer established within the BP2 period have a solid base from which to build, whilst some, such as the Destination Management initiatives, can now benefit from ongoing support from the Council's Town Centre Development Officer. Others such as Tourism Ambassadors and Outdoor Activity pilots are still finding their way forward. Finding ways to help build on these foundations is important.

The unexpected outcomes

Our discussions have also identified some unexpected outcomes from activities. Whilst not major, it is useful to note these as they could be an incentive or an opportunity to others too, and part of building up the body of experience and expertise in the rural Vale. For example one online survey response notes the cohesion of the group of volunteers involved in a project, which doubled in size. Another noted some unexpected users of the community cinema such as the village After School club. The tourism ambassador pilot has drawn people with some unexpected backgrounds, not necessarily in tourism at all.

The Challenges

Finding match funding and dealing with funding issues has been a challenge, for Axis 3 participants in particular (see also Section Seven, Leverage). This has included practical issues such as obtaining three quotes to support the funding application when a project consisted of a lot of small elements; and the problem of cashflow as payment is only made retrospectively⁸.

"Having to spend money in advance of receiving the promised grant when we had few resources"

The general economic climate was viewed as a challenge – although not as highly as might have been expected.

What were the main barriers, or challenges, in meeting the objectives of the project?		
Answer Options	Axis 3	Axis 4
General economic climate	7	4
Difficulty in engaging with the target audience	8	4
Other funding constraints	17	4
Demand for services/products not as strong as expected	4	1
Competition from other similar activities or services	1	0
Other (please specify)	9	4
Number of respondents	33	13

A number of challenges related to issues of bureaucracy and practical matters about siting of facilities, managing refurbishment works around users, finding contractors/suppliers, working to timescales, obtaining planning and other permissions and other project management issues. Some challenges related to lack of local support, e.g. in relation to town centre projects, and to challenges of engaging with the customer.

A number of the challenges carry through to lessons learnt (see later subsection). We are aware that CRC has sought to mitigate some of these issues where it can e.g. through liaison with planning colleagues as happened in the coastal camping pilot project. What might be valuable for the future is some element of project management training alongside project development, particularly for community groups and volunteers involved; and which could be allied to a toolkit.

CRC Team Support and Facilitation

Costs were built into all five Projects to provide facilitation and support through CRC team members. It is clear from all consultations that the role of the CRC team has been absolutely critical to the success of BP2 delivery. Consultees identify the quality of the staff, their positive attitude and enthusiasm, ability to deal with the bureaucracy of paperwork and to provide ongoing support as mainly very good.

The grant application process in Axis 3 has been a standard process, with a system developed by CRC/VoG Council based on Welsh Government guidance and paperwork. We are aware that the offer letters are accompanied by a range of annexes setting out information that includes publicity, state aid, and monitoring and reporting requirements. It

⁸ Some upfront payments were made but only in exceptional circumstances.

is clear that some businesses and organisations have struggled with the bureaucracy and the paperwork, which does seem quite onerous where smaller levels of grant are concerned.

The CRC team has played an important role in helping people to understand the paperwork and what is required. 89% of respondents in Axis 3 thought the level of CRC support received during the application process was very good – and the remainder that it was fairly good; and 68% that the level of support from CRC after funding was received was very good (again with the remainder saying it was fairly good). In Axis 4 78% thought CRC support received when getting involved was very good with 85% saying it was very good during the pilot activity. Just one response was received saying it was fairly poor at that stage. These views on the importance and value of CRC support was echoed in interviews and discussions too.

“The quality of support has been outstanding, both on a form-filling admin-type level and on an intellectual/cultural level”

“As a retired executive with residual skills, working with the CRC team has been an amiable and successful mechanism for evolving an instinct for community service into delivering practical funded outcomes”

What has also been important is their planning and facilitation of activities, particularly in Axis 4, building the Axis 3 and 4 links, monitoring and maintaining the paperwork in good order (as we have reviewed a number of files in the course of the evaluation) and financial management⁹.

The CRC team is seen as very proactive and held in good regard.

“CRC have passionate and imaginative staff. They understand what businesses need to succeed and how they should best develop in the Vale of Glamorgan. The staff are knowledgeable and go the extra mile to help”

“I believe CRC played an important catalytic role in increasing the profile and services of many initiatives and places of interest in the Vale of Glamorgan. The working collaboration with all CRC officers was excellent and supportive, and the tedious (if appropriate) bureaucracy was always mitigated by a collaborative intention to deliver the end objective”

Networking and working with other organisations

A number of those interviewed had highlighted the role that CRC had played in promoting links between projects and participants. Relationships had been instigated by CRC and it's clear that they were alert to the importance of links between community initiatives. A further positive benefit that was highlighted through the consultations and the online survey has been that for some, involvement with CRC has been the start of a process leading to greater involvement in wider initiatives.

“So through developing relationships with officers, I ultimately ended up as a member of a funding panel, a panellist on their Vale Trail team, and currently act as a Vale ambassador”

“There were a lot of networking opportunities”

Our focus group discussions, surveys and interviews identify that some participants are exchanging experience and are working with other organisations, both at the very local level

⁹ An Internal Audit Report by Bridgend and Vale Internal Audit Shared Service for 2014/15 concluded that the effectiveness of the 'internal audit environment' is one of 'substantial assurance'. Three risk areas were identified, each not substantial in its own right but noted as ones that could compromise the control environment; grants need to be assessed and scored in line with the agreed procedure document (including follow on phases to an existing project, a point specifically noted in the audit); procedure documentation needs to be updated to reflect current staffing and procedural practice (noted as some CRC staff had left at the point of audit); appointment of contractors should be periodically subject to competition

e.g. the establishment of a parish pastoral care team in one small area, or working with the organisations contiguous to a project, through to wider working e.g. liaison between some community cinema groups. As noted earlier, though, this does tend to be on an ad-hoc basis and not as a result of any overall planned approach to networking.

Another example is those involved in food related activities, who have forged links and understand the mutual benefit that can be created through joint working. Whilst there was limited evidence that these links had extended into initiatives such as joint marketing, some early development has taken place.

"I have been given lots of opportunities to network and work closer with local businesses to both of our advantage. I have been able to promote and market my business"

Equally our discussions suggest there are now opportunities to build up the networking and develop exchange of experience into joint working opportunities, building on the work done in BP2; for example in joint marketing of community cinema showings on a Vale wide basis, to draw in wider audiences including visitors.

We also note a point made in discussion that, for some, confidence is needed to get involved in networking activities especially if relatively formalised. This is something to bear in mind, although it would seem that the way the CRC team have approached Axis 4 activities, which are perhaps those with stronger networking elements, has been to make them relatively informal and fun as far as possible. For example the external trainer working with the tourism ambassadors is noted as taking a very interesting and informative approach to the training sessions.

"...the presentation at St Donat's was really top drawer – informative but presented in such a way that we did not realise that we were learning facts or to put it another way that we were being taught. We have been so lucky to have such able people in Angharad and Branwen"

Our view is that CRC played an important role in facilitating linkages between projects that were funded through the RDP programme. CRC officers played a key function in developing links and relationships with businesses and organisations supported and these efforts have been rewarded on occasion. It is unlikely that the same links between projects and businesses would have occurred without the intervention and support of CRC. The opportunity is now to build on these early links and develop stronger collaborations and co-operative working for the benefit of the rural Vale's economy and communities.

Learning from Participation

Participants have identified a diversity of learning from their sub-projects and activities in BP2. A number of these are general, which are useful to identify for future programmes:

Attitude:

- Perseverance and determination is important – including when disappointments and unexpected challenges occur: *"Sometimes things don't go to plan and this is not necessarily a bad thing, but that a new way is evolving"*
- Being bold: *"The importance of going for a bold design with consequential greater impact"*
- Being realistic is important, including realising it might take longer than you expect

Engaging with others:

- Building partnerships wherever possible
- Ensuring community involvement at a very early stage
- Community Consultation works well

Project design and development

- Having/developing the appropriate skills – where customer relations, information technology, financial management and social media skills have all been mentioned
- Building experience in grant application processes
- Consulting expert advisors and gathering other knowledge at a very early stage
- Making sure options for the project are properly considered
- Realising the extent of voluntary effort/input needed and the skills volunteers might need to mount a project and that this can be challenging e.g. in meeting deadlines
- Remaining focused and following the business plan

Project delivery

- Information is still required even after the project has been completed
- Knowing about different types of marketing and publicity, what works and what does not, is most important.
- Making sure enough emphasis is given to marketing and promotion

(what would you have done differently?) "Kept my head down and suppressed my enthusiasm. But no, it's all been far too exciting!"

Conclusions

On the whole it appears that most funded sub-projects and activities through both Axis 3 and Axis 4 have met their original objectives. Businesses that have received RDP support were content that they were able to achieve objectives which are important to the long-term sustainability of their business. Factors such as diversifying from their core business, improving the customer experience and adding value to their product/service were cited as being met. This should be viewed as a significant positive outcome for the programme. Community and public sector organisations were also largely of the view that their original objectives had been achieved, including those of achieving wider community engagement and improving community services and facilities.

In terms of how these have then helped to deliver the objectives of the five Projects in BP2, our conclusions are that:

- **Pride in our Farming Families** has made good achievements towards its objectives, within what is a relatively short timescale, and with evidence that the achievements have longer term sustainability
- **Pride in our Villages** has achieved local benefits in line with its objectives, taking a pragmatic approach to what could be achieved within the timescale in terms of the progression from Axis 4 to Axis 3
- **Pride in our Services** has delivered some valuable achievements towards objectives, notably in relation to Rural Hubs and multi use of facilities through the community cinemas activities. Other strands (footpaths, cycle routes and Greenlinks) also appear to provide valuable local services and infrastructure. However we are less clear about the inter-linkage with the rest of the Project (and other Projects) and the impacts of the footpaths and cycleways sub projects (as there is no user information and our evaluation was unable to extend to contacting beneficiaries)
- **Pride in our Heritage** has made some valuable investments in the heritage resource in line with objectives. However developing the collaboration and integration implied in the third objective of the Project has been more mixed, although the potential for this remains
- **Pride in the Vale** has contributed well to its aim in terms of engaging with a wide range of individuals, organisations and businesses through its various pilot projects and trials,

and its ability to link into Axis 3 for wider delivery of some of the activities begun through it. In turn it is apparent that its outcomes are contributing to quality of life and rural economic benefits, even though some of this may be at early stages with some outcomes still in the future. Pride in the Vale has been very valuable in developing commissioning/procuring processes in support of pilot activities which engage and enthuse people, as well as successfully delivering a number of pilots and trials in quite a limited time period. It is particularly apparent with Axis 4, that the full impacts of the pilots are still to come, hopefully through support to roll out these successful beginnings.

The role of CRC has been central to the achievements across all the Projects. The quality of the staff team is recognised across the board as critical to the success of BP2 delivery. In terms of integration between supported projects it is clear that CRC played an important role in promoting linkages and exchange of experience. Participants have cited some referrals and networking opportunities provided by CRC, and some longer-term relationships that have formed between organisations as a consequence. Our interviews and focus groups also indicate that there is still plenty of scope to build up networking and linkages between sub-projects, activities and participants.

In terms of lessons for the future from participants, much of these relate to the practical aspect of project development and delivery, suggesting that project management skills development could be a valuable skill to provide, to facilitate the growth of local development initiatives in the future.



Out and about on the Heritage Coast:
Coastal Activities Pilot Project

The coastal activities pilot project, funded through Axis 4, supported six different ‘slow tourism’ pilot activities aimed at generating more visitor understanding and greater use of the Rural Vale’s Heritage Coast. It allowed existing and new businesses with an idea for tourism activities based on the Heritage Coast to have a go at running their proposed activity, before making any long term commitment, or investment. One example is ‘Out to Learn Willow’, an established business for willow weaving, who ran workshops in Monks Wood. Another offered beach-based, wild food foraging workshops - culminating in a beach buffet.

6. Delivering the LDS

This section reviews how the Projects and the sub-projects/activities within them have contributed to the LDS vision, mission, aims and themes. In doing this, it is important to bear in mind that this evaluation is in the context of BP2. Other projects through BP1 will also have made a contribution to its delivery but are not carried through into BP2; for example the new business start-up bursaries for young people started in BP1 and continued with funding independently from the RDP.

Contribution to LDS Vision, Mission and Aims

The LDS set out vision and mission as below, focused on active participation by communities in living and working in the Rural Vale for local benefit:

Vision:

The Rural Vale is an area where rural communities actively and fully participate and therefore benefit fully from the growing prosperity of the region as a whole

Mission:

to play a leading role in the development and sustaining of communities with the rural Vale, where people can live, work and meet their ambitions

The LDS aims are community focused. None explicitly focus on business development although this is implicit, as community issues will include work as well living and leisure.

Aims:

The LDS will seek to lead the development of communities within which:

- all sectors of the community are involved in community regeneration activities
- people can identify the challenges that their community faces
- people are actively involved in the development and implementation of projects that address the challenges that their community faces
- people have access to all services that a modern and vibrant community requires
- people and especially young people can realise their ambitions and be successful within their local community
- Rural Vale derives maximum sustainable benefit from local resources including physical and human resources

Section 5 (and Annex 2) has already highlighted the wide range of initiatives that have been supported through BP2 and its five Projects, all of which have encouraged people living and working to get involved in them. Interviews, focus groups and the surveys have highlighted the way in which CRC staff and LAG activities have inspired and enthused people to be involved.

Discussion with stakeholders also highlights the way in which BP2 activities have collectively led to a more positive attitude within the rural Vale and greater networking, exchange of experience, mutual working and support than was felt to exist previously. It is also clear from discussions that the RDP programme has been one of very few external programmes focused on rural support and the rural Vale and people have therefore valued it because of this – and where its activities have been a significant factor in building the greater confidence in the rural Vale.

“What has changed is the internal attitude in the Vale. There are things to offer, there is more confidence – and it is the confidence which probably the biggest benefit”

“It has been a slow burn but as people have done things for themselves or seen others get benefit then they are becoming more open to doing things too”

Contribution to LDS themes

The LDS set out five themes or objectives. It identified that the vision, mission and aims had been ‘channelled’ into these five themes for the purposes of delivering the LDS. They are the most relevant for the purposes of reviewing progress through BP2:

Themes (or Objectives)

- Community capacity building – building the capacity of existing groups and establishing new groups
- Women and young people – developing the role of young people and women in community regeneration and enterprise in the Rural Vale
- Business networking and co-operation – encouraging business in the rural Vale to co-operate and develop new and innovative products and services
- Access to and improvement of services – allowing individuals and businesses in the rural Vale to have access to all the services they require
- Making the best use of local resources – allowing the rural Vale to make full use and derive the maximum benefit from its local resources.

The online surveys asked how respondents felt their sub-projects/activities had contributed to LDS themes. Although not all respondents answered this question as it was part of the optional second part of the online survey, those that did indicate contributions across all five themes. Both community capacity building and access to/provision of services are identified strongly. What is also noticeable is that Axis 4 respondents consider they have contributed well to the business networking and co-operation (more so than Axis 3) something that subsequent discussion and interviews confirm.

	Axis 3	Axis 4
Community capacity building	5	5
Women and young people	1	4
Business networking and co-operation	3	5
Access to, and provision of, services	8	6
Making the best use of local services	2	4
Total respondents	13	9

Of the five themes, the one least represented in responses is that of developing the role of young people and women in community regeneration and enterprise in the rural Vale. There are examples of activities targeted at young people which could have community regeneration consequences. For example there have been various examples of interpretation literature and apps for use by young people – the Heritage Coast tourism apps and Wreckers Games or the Cowbridge History workbook and lolo trail – and discussion indicates a desire to develop tools and materials to engage young people more with natural and built environment assets. As noted earlier BP1 included a specific initiative for young people with a business idea.

There is not the same sub-project focus on women. However we understand that the Pride in our Businesses Project which was originally submitted as part of BP2 but was not approved, would have been the Project in which appropriate sub-projects would have been brought forward. Even though the explicit focus on women was therefore apparently lost, it is evident from interviews and discussions, that some sub-projects and activities have supported women and men and both have been active participants. The performance indicators that relate to participation by women have significantly overachieved (in Pride in our Villages and Pride in our Heritage). We do not have any information to be able to say to what extent grant recipients and participants have given particular consideration to the involvement of women in development and delivery of activities. The issue of a positive focus on women has not arisen in any consultations for this evaluation. We therefore find it difficult to comment on the theme as it relates to developing the role of women in community regeneration and enterprise in the rural Vale.

Looking at objectives and activity, the five Projects can be mapped against the LDS themes:

LDS Themes	BP2 Projects
Community capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride in the Vale – e.g. community consultations, Tourism ambassadors, destination management, community cinema trials • Pride in our Rural Services; establishing community cinemas as Rural Hubs • Pride in our Heritage e.g. use of volunteers in projects • Pride in our Villages e.g. village improvement projects
Women and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride in the Vale e.g. youth heritage initiatives • Pride in our Heritage e.g. youth heritage initiatives
Business networking and co-operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride in the Vale e.g. tourism ambassadors, Heritage Coast Sense of Place, Destination management
Access to and provision of services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride in the Vale e.g. community cinema trials, green energy audits • Pride in our Services, Rural Hubs, Greenlinks, footpaths and cycleroutes • Pride in our Villages, e.g. village hall improvements, playing areas
Making the best use of local resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride in the Vale e.g. Heritage Coast Interpretation strategy, Local Food Champions • Pride in our Heritage • Pride in our Farming Families • Pride in our Services • Pride in our Villages

Our understanding is that the LDS has been more of an internal document to the Rural Partnership and LAG than it has been a document which participants in projects would have been aware of. Whilst the logic should be that LDS aims and objectives should carry through into Project objectives we are also aware that the LDS is relatively historic, although revised in 2009, and inevitably there is some disjunct between all the layers. The logic chain between the LDS themes and its vision, mission and aims could, in our view, have been stronger, particularly in relation to the more business focused activities. In turn this would have helped a stronger flow through into the BP2 Project objectives and activities. Whilst we can see that BP2 is contributing to LDS vision, mission, aims and themes, it needed a clearer logic link cascading downwards. Ensuring clear aims and objectives across all projects in BP2 would also have been beneficial.

Integrating Axis 3 and 4

Discussion with LAG and Rural Partnership members indicate that one of the strengths of BP2 has been the LAG ability to manage a programme linking Axis 3 and 4 and enabling a progression between the two. The grants of Axis 3 have provided a valuable 'carrot' to engage with businesses and communities whilst Axis 4 has been the opportunity to experiment, test and trial new approaches, including the community consultations and green audits leading directly in Axis 3 sub-projects.

The success of this approach is due in no small part to the enthusiasm, positive attitude and support of the CRC team and the calibre of the staff it has employed, and we note that stakeholders comment on the very proactive approach taken by the CRC team.

“...overall impression is that CRC LAG is in the top ranks of LAGs (in Wales)”

The importance of the facilitation role and that it needs to be effectively resourced in order to make progress is vital. LEADER is about locally led and community initiated development to meet local needs – but relying solely or significantly on voluntary effort would limit progress. Our discussions indicate the large amount of time and effort that many participants have put in to developing projects and activities and, alongside that, the support provided by the CRC team which has helped to smooth and expedite the development path. The CRC LAG chose to put a significant level of resources into its staffing of facilitation and support, at quite a high grading. In our view this spend has been value for money as more projects have been more successful.

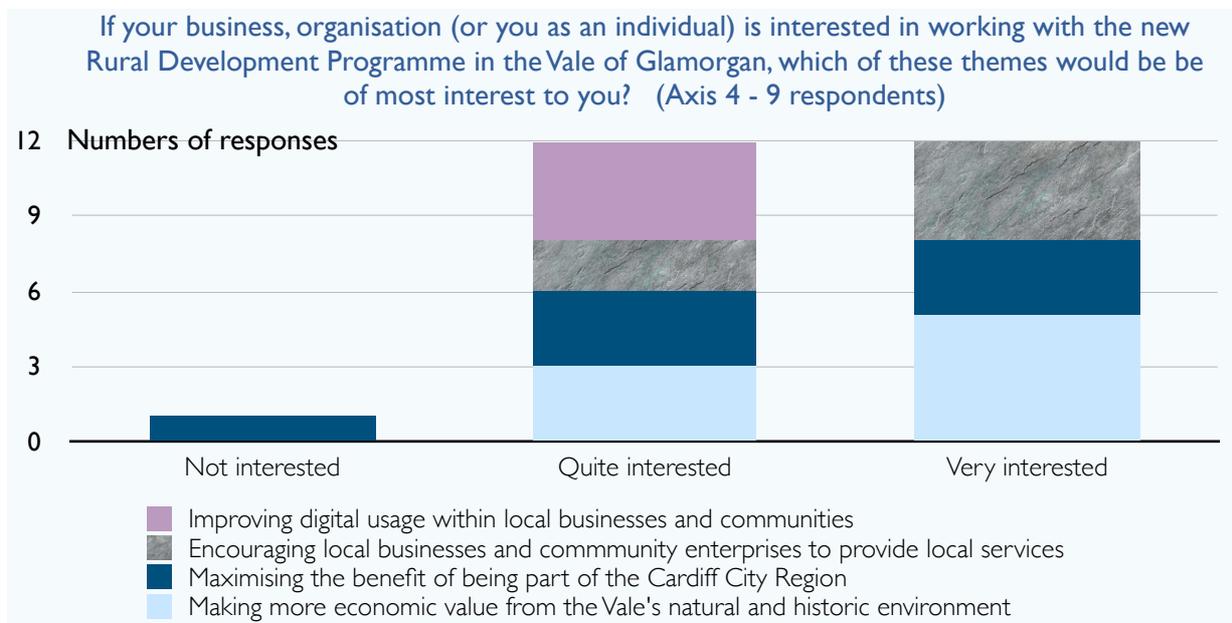
The CRC LAG and team have been creative in the way in which pilot projects have been designed, to lead into a next stage of delivery, be left with legacy tools, or some other aspect of planning how they might progress after the pilot period. Although this did not happen every case, notably those that came later in the BP2 period, our overall conclusion is that CRC has been very successful in integrating Axis 3 and Axis 4 through their BP2 work.

What is also important to note is the role of the Rural Partnership and CRC LAG. Although most participants in sub-projects and activities may not be entirely aware of the management behind the activities they are involved in, the Rural Partnership and the LAG (in particular) have been shaping the direction of travel with the CRC staff team. The Rural Partnership is identified by stakeholders as proactive, with a wide membership and good attendance at meetings. The LAG is perceived as a good and active partnership with a range of representation. Although LAG members have different viewpoints, members identify that people have listened to each other and have been able to see the bigger picture.

Looking to the Future

We are aware of the themes now being developed in the 2014 – 2020 approved LEADER Programme and where the LDS is expected to be a much more dynamic tool in guiding activities. Creating more economic value from the Vale’s natural and historic environment, one of the four themes in the new programme, is the one theme of most interest to participants in BP2, responding to a question in the online survey.





This very much chimes with our evaluation perspective, in that a lot of progress has been made, in all sorts of ways, on building up the value, importance and use of the rural Vale’s natural, cultural and heritage resources but not always having fully made the links between them or building on their economic (and community development) potential. Activities through Axis 3 and 4 have shown the potential for doing this, and there are a number of Axis 4 activities still at early stages, with the potential to grow economic value for the rural Vale.

Conclusions

Our conclusion is that BP2 has contributed well to most of the LDS themes, with the possible exception of explicit support for activities related to women. However we know from consultations and interviews that women have participated actively in some sub-projects and activities. Performance indicators report on use of facilities and services created/improved through RDP support in terms of women and young people – although this is in terms of quantity only, not impact.

LDS themes in turn link back to LDS vision, mission and aims although we feel the logic chain is not as strong as it could be. We therefore find it harder to make direct comment back on all of these in specific terms, and are also aware that they are slightly historic. However in general terms we are clear that BP2 has made positive contributions to local communities and led to more people being involved in activities at the local level and a stronger local capacity within the rural Vale.

What is now important is to capitalise on that through the further opportunities for support.

7. Delivering additional and wider benefits

In this section we review the question of additionality, together with wider points of value for money, leadership, leverage and influence.

Additionality

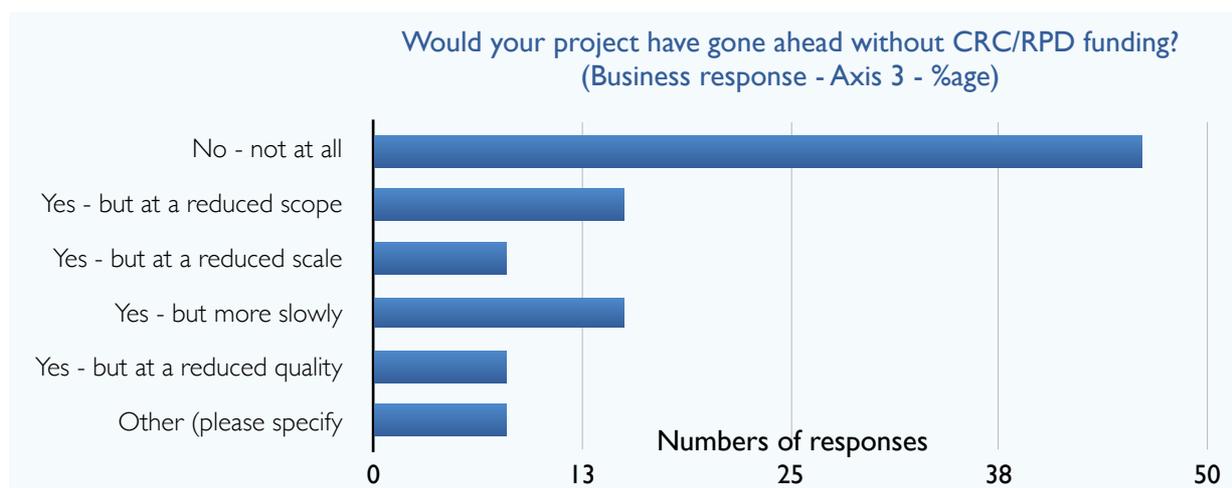
A key characteristic of any publicly-funded scheme is that it delivers 'additional' activities and impact. That is, the support has allowed businesses and organisations to undertake activities that would not have occurred (or much more slowly if it had) in the absence of that support. There are broadly two different forms of additionality:

- At a project level – the project, or activity, would not have occurred – or been in a significantly different form - without the financial support provided
- At an impact level – the positive benefit that the activity has produced would not have occurred without the support provided.

It is not always the case that both will happen; the 'additional' activity could occur but with no impact. Our evaluation focus in the online survey and through our further consultations has been to understand whether either/both types of 'additionality' have occurred as a consequence of the RDP support.

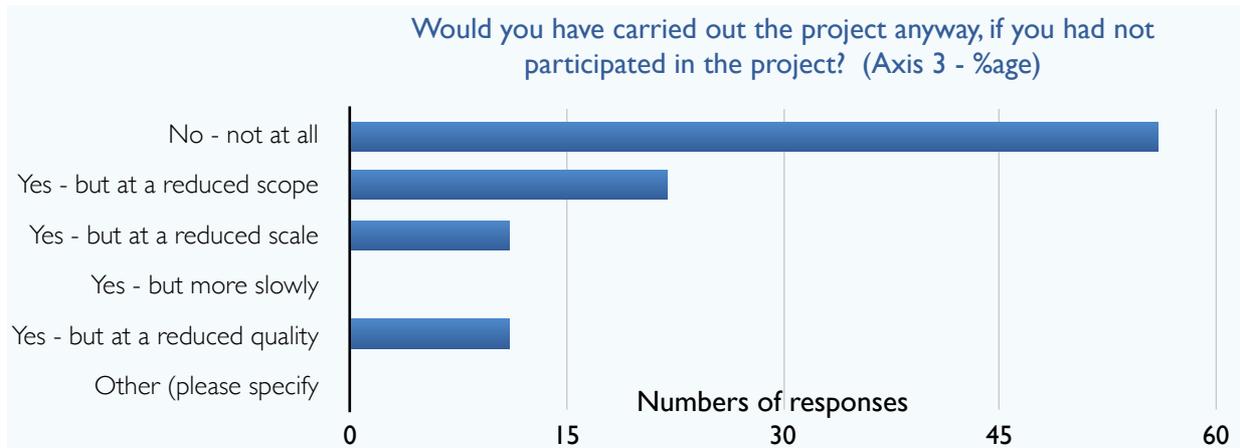
Project Level Additionality

At a project level, it is clear that the RDP support has been able to support a large proportion of new activities for supported **businesses** in the Vale. Of those that responded to the online survey, broadly two-thirds of projects supported through Axis 3 (62%) did not exist before the RDP support. Nearly half of respondents to Axis 3 (13) stated that their project would not have gone ahead at all without RDP support, whilst others stated the project would have had a reduced scope, scale, quality or would have occurred more slowly.



For Axis 3 **community organisations** that were supported, a lower proportion of respondents felt that the projects would not have gone ahead at all without RDP support (one-third of the 24 responses), but 50% felt that the project would either have progressed at a small scale or more slowly. Whilst this may indicate that 'total' additionality was slightly lower for community-based projects, it does show that RDP support had a significant effect in increasing scale and quickening the implementation of those projects.

Axis 4 respondents showed an even higher level of total additionality in that 55% of respondents (business and community) would not have gone ahead at all. This is perhaps unsurprising given that the more experimental nature of Axis 4 and the way in which activities were commissioned/procured is to put ideas in front of people that might otherwise not have come up.



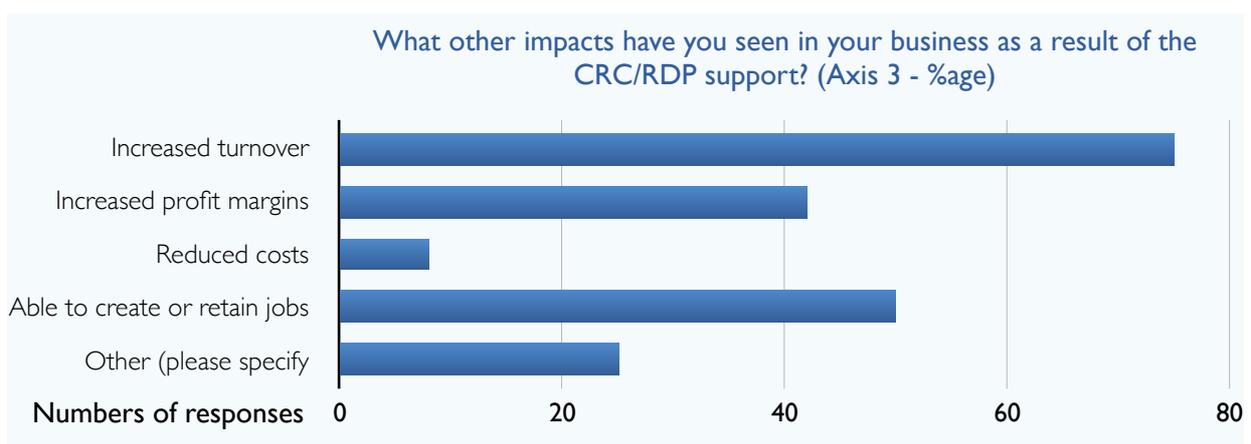
Further feedback from the consultations also confirms that the RDP support allowed businesses and community organisations to undertake activities that would not have occurred anyway. Some businesses did not have the resources to support what they regard as important activities in their business development. For those start-ups interviewed, they have tended to be 'cash poor' and therefore the assistance was invaluable. For more established businesses, the financial support from RDP has taken some 'risk burden' from projects, allowing them to diversify from their core business, or at least test the market to do so.

We feel that there is good evidence that additionality at a project-level was strong. This may have been as a consequence of the comprehensive application process that was applied.

Impact Additionality

Businesses

In terms of business impact, the online survey has produced some encouraging results. The businesses were specifically asked what business impacts had been seen as a consequence of the RDP support. Although the response level was relatively low (12 – and therefore is not necessarily representative of all businesses that have been supported), of those that did respond 75% said they had increased turnover and 50% had been able to create or retain jobs. The impact for Axis 4 projects was lower (based on a very limited response rate), with 40% stating a positive impact on turnover and 20% able to create or retain jobs.



Further analysis of the online survey data (albeit with relatively few responses) shows that the extent of impact on the short-term business performance was generally described as 'marginal' (i.e. increasing turnover and/or jobs by less than 10%¹⁰). Nevertheless, for start-up businesses, and those looking to create a more diversified income, marginal improvements can be crucial to ongoing sustainability. It should be remembered that RDP financial support tended to be relatively small-scale at an individual project-level and therefore it would be unreasonable to expect 'transformational' change as a consequence of the support.

"Developed an online business and brand awareness that has attracted customers I wouldn't have had otherwise"

"Increase income and enabled us to employ staff to help with the project whilst also helping with duties in the original business"

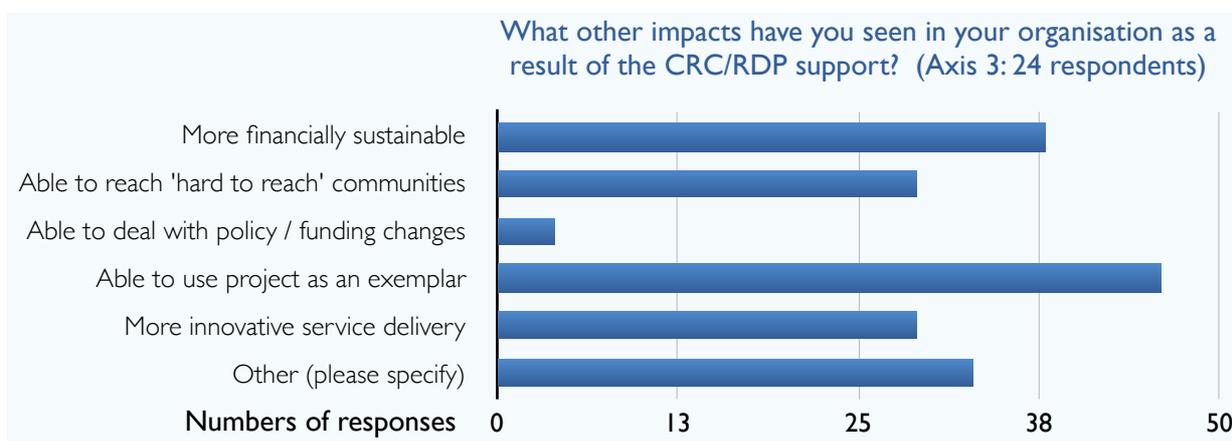
Feedback from the consultations though suggests that the RDP support has been relatively successful in making interventions at an important strategic time for many businesses. For Axis 4, where the interventions were more pilot in nature, it is unsurprising that direct business impacts are more limited but it is clear from discussions that there is potential for greater impacts in the future if businesses are able to build on the pilot initiatives.

These short-term benefits have manifested themselves into longer-term impacts. Nearly 40% of those that responded to the online survey stated that they were now more financially sustainable as a consequence of the RDP support. This was reinforced by feedback from the consultations, particularly for those businesses where the RDP support had allowed them to diversify from their core business. Several businesses felt that having more than one income stream was important and that reducing the seasonality of their business was an important outcome.

Interestingly, nearly a half of businesses respondents felt that they were now able to use the project as an exemplar. There could clearly be knock-on benefits from this in terms of other businesses in the Vale offering similar (or slightly differentiated) services that could complement the RDP supported project.

Communities

As with businesses, community and public sector respondents to the online survey were asked for their views on impacts of their projects. Being able to use the project as an exemplar was identified as important by nearly half of organisation respondents in Axis 3, with achieving greater financial sustainability being the second most important impact indicated.



¹⁰ Although answers to another question suggested that some businesses attributed more than 50% in their business performance to the RDP support. This question had relatively few responses and therefore not included in our main analysis.

Respondents also added their own statements on impact which include comments on additional users in relation to community initiatives, attracting visitors to an area, and support for volunteers involved in sub-projects and activities.

"It has provided a much needed facility which has been well used. Since the cinema installation in November 2014 we have had 11 film screenings, and 330 guests. Our audiences continue to grow"

"All of the projects have been welcomed by the community. The play equipment and adult equipmenthas brought people and children of all ages together....The refurbishment of the Halls has resulted in an increase in hiring"

Axis 4 yielded similar results, with projects as exemplars and greater financial sustainability both having most responses – however, this is on the basis of a limited response of 6 organisations so results need to be treated with caution. Again other impacts are also noted such as visitor benefits.

"Improved destination offer for visitors"

Longer term

Looking at the impact of the RDP support in the longer-term, it is important to understand whether the supported activities were sustainable. The feedback from the online survey and through our consultations was that this was a categorically positive picture. Every business or community organisation that responded to the online survey, and that was supported through Axis 3, stated that their project would continue after the RDP funding had finished. A large majority of those felt the benefits of project will last for more than 5 years. Clearly, this suggests there will be a long-term legacy of the RDP support. In Axis 4, a small number of projects had a little more uncertainty regarding whether the project would continue beyond the funding period (85% of respondents would continue).

Value for money

As previously stated, given that RDP support tended to involve financial assistance at a relatively small-scale the feedback from the online survey and consultations are encouraging. Evidence suggests that the 'return' on that RDP support has been relatively high, with positive impacts being felt in the majority of supported businesses or organisations.

For example, for one business who received assistance of £2,000 it was felt that the support was delivered at a crucial stage in their business development. In that respect, the timing of the support as much as the level of assistance played a crucial role. Without that support, the growth trajectory of that business would have been different and it has given it a better chance to be sustainable in the longer-term. Given that the financial support was relatively limited, then this suggests that the value for money for RDP support has been good.

The response data we have received from the online survey suggests this scale of impact has been seen across a number of other businesses or organisations. As we have not sought to quantify the impact across the whole programme then we cannot undertake standard value-for-money measurements (such as cost-benefit analysis). Nevertheless, we are confident that the evidence compiled through a variety of different avenues suggests that value-for-money has been good and it has primarily been driven by the timing and strategic nature of that support.

"The whole experience has been most enjoyable, uncomplicated and very helpful leaving us with a successful addition to our farming business which will continue to run for many years"

Leadership

We have looked at leadership in the context of drawing out participants at the local level in the rural Vale, to take a lead in developing activities through BP2. The activities and sub-projects prompted through BP2 have engaged with a wide range of people who might otherwise not have got involved in locally initiated projects of this type. It is clear from discussions and interviews that there is a considerable amount of skills and expertise amongst people living and working in the rural Vale, including amongst the retired population, a number of whom we have found leading projects at their local community level. The ability of BP2 to tap into and enthuse people has been a valuable one that has led to successful delivery of activities across the rural Vale.

“This is a very good scheme, it changes behaviour and encourages collaboration for the greater good. Also the grants were generous enough to get you to do things you would not otherwise have considered. A 10% grant is neither here nor there, 40% is a real incentive”

Conversely, discussion with CRC staff and others also suggests there have been some geographic gaps where fewer community services and facilities activities have taken place which in part could be due to less local leaders – or at least people willing to come forward to take that role. Sharing experience and providing the toolkits to help others, which has happened on an informal basis for some pilot activities eg the community cinema, could help here – although the demise of the village hall forum and no collective meetings of Community Councils does not help. We appreciate it is not CRC’s role to provide the secretariat to such groups but exploring alternative ways in which support could be provided e.g. a shared resource, could help to disseminate experience and provide mutual support more broadly within the rural Vale.

Leverage

We looked at leverage in the context of matched funding secured for BP2 activities. Our conclusion is that BP2 has also exerted reasonable levels of leverage.

Many of the businesses consulted had combined RDP support with their own (limited) resources and the success of the project supported by RDP meant that further funds would now be invested into that activity. For example, one business consulted had plans for more capital investment as a consequence of the success of the initial project. It was envisaged that this would be financed through their own resources; the second phase of the investment would not have occurred without demand for services being proven through the RDP supported activity. This ‘proving demand’, or ‘proving concept’ is seen to have been an important element of the RDP support. As with much business investment, reducing the risk of entering new markets is seen as crucial by many businesses. Leverage from the perspective of ‘private match’ has been good.

“Grant complemented other funding sources in sharing understanding of remarkable wall painting finds of international significance”

A number of businesses or organisations also felt that an important outcome of the RDP support had been that they are able to use their project as an exemplar. The lessons learned from the project could be used by other similar organisations and, as such, potentially have a longer-term influence within the Vale. By helping to reduce the exposure to risk, RDP support may have a legacy through encouraging a wider service offering beyond that of the supported project. It is perhaps too early to tell whether this will materialise, but the evidence from our work suggests that it has the potential to do so.

However securing matched funding and other funding constraints has also been a challenge, often raised in consultations. The online survey responses report it as the main challenge by 50% of respondents in Axis 3 where matched funding is essential. It is less of a challenge in Axis 4 where matched funding is not a requirement across the board – reported at 31%, and equal to other challenges of the general economic climate and difficulties of engaging with the target audience. Although leverage has therefore been quite good, we are aware that it has not been without its difficulties.

“Securing sufficient funding (main barrier or challenge)”

“The process of getting three quotes for everything”

Influence

Whilst our survey work has not specifically asked about influence, it is evident from some of our discussions in interviews and focus groups that the different ways of working that have been fostered through BP2 are beginning to have some influence in encouraging others to get involved, and in opening eyes to different and perhaps more collaborative ways of working. We are also aware that there are now steps to take some of this thinking back into VoG Council activities in relation to Council services.

There has also been comment in interviews and focus group discussion, that whilst there may now be greater capacity within the rural Vale, what has yet to happen is for the rural Vale to have any greater external influence. There is a perception that the rural Vale remains a forgotten area and that people pass it by as a visitor destination.

Whilst we can do no more than comment on this in the evaluation, as our evidence is not extensive on this point, we feel there is more to be done with the experience of BP2 in terms of its use in influencing policy and programmes; from the very practical ideas such as those around commissioning and procurement processes that can support local activity, to the broader questions of raising the profile of the rural Vale beyond the Vale.

One further aspect of influence, at the more strategic level, is the role and membership of the VoG Rural Partnership and the CRC LAG that have been part of the management of the VoG RDP Programme. The Rural Partnership in particular has had a broad spectrum of membership from national, regional and local organisations. Interviews with members of both the Rural Partnership and the CRC LAG note that the activities of BP2 are regularly reported and may be cascaded back through relevant organisations. Some organisations that sit on more than one LAG also comment on the ability to compare approaches. It is clear, anecdotally at least, that there is some element of influence as a result, at this strategic level. However our evaluation has not had the time or resources to explore in detail what the extent of influence might have been.

Conclusions

The evidence from our contact with businesses and organisations suggests that the RDP programme has delivered ‘additionality’ both in terms of promoting new projects/activities to the Vale that would not otherwise have happened, and *impact* to those supported businesses or community organisations.

Importantly, feedback suggests that there will be a longer-term legacy for the funding with all of those responding believing that their project will continue over the next five years. This is an encouraging finding and suggests that the RDP support was well-targeted; many publicly-supported projects tend to have a short lifespan limited to the timescale of the

funding. It may also suggest that the application process worked well in terms of drawing out those organisations where financial assistance was truly going to have a positive impact.

From a business perspective, whilst it is important to positively affect short-term business performance by boosting revenue or improving margins, the fact that the majority of businesses felt the RDP support allowed them to be more sustainable in the future is, perhaps more important from a programme perspective. Certainly, some of those businesses consulted – particularly start-ups – suggested that the rigour and process required to access the RDP support had a knock-on benefit of making them improve their business and long-term planning. Whilst not strictly financial support, this was seen as a positive outcome.

Our overall conclusion in terms of additionality and value-for-money is that BP2 has led to activity that would not otherwise have happened and has been value for money. It has been relatively successful in using the limited scale of assistance at an individual project-level to make a difference to supported organisations.

A first class experience in all aspects. The CRC team is to be congratulated on its professionalism.

In terms of leadership, our conclusion is that there has been a positive impact on drawing out people who can take forward activities at the local level – although we would also comment that at the community level, there seems to be quite an element of retired people with a good skills base involved. As for leverage, our conclusion is that BP2 has also exerted reasonable levels of leverage. In terms of influence, for which we have more limited evidence, our conclusion is that there are examples of where influence is happening but there is potential to look at this in a more holistic way and now use the results from BP2 to exert greater influence both within and beyond the rural Vale.

8. Evaluation conclusions

Delivering the targets

BP2 has met (and exceeded) its overall financial targets. It has delivered more matched funding and was able to use additional RDP resources through budget enhancements. Had there been even more funding, this too could have been used in some Projects, notably Pride in our Farming Families. The one Project which underspent was that of Pride in our Villages – but this was not due to lack of activity, rather to the nature of the activity.

BP2 has collectively met the majority of its outputs and results PIs although the picture is slightly more mixed when looking across the different Projects. In some cases the under achievement has been due to the timing of activities, especially in Axis 4, which went on right up to the end of the Programme in December 2014. The realism of achieving all outputs and results within the Programme period was limited just by practicalities of timing. In some cases the nature of the activity evolved from that originally planned e.g. in relation to footpaths sub-projects. Not all events programmed to promote Projects were needed if demand was high eg as for Pride in our Farming Families. It would therefore seem that underachieving on some outputs and results PIs is not a reflection of difficulty to deliver, rather a reflection of the evolution of some activities, questions of timing and how far some activities could be progressed.

However both outputs and results PIs are very factual and are not related to impacts. Evaluation identified a wide range of impacts that have come out of BP2 Projects across Axis 3 and 4. Some of this has been collected in specific pieces of evaluation or report back – but a lot of this is not collected and shared in any structured way, which would be beneficial to both individual participants and all participants collectively if it were. We know that the CRC team has sought to share as much as possible through newsletters, end of project videos, and all available documents are now accessible through its website. However there is a missed opportunity here to shout about the successes and the challenges of BP 2 and to further share, inspire, network and link within the rural Vale – and perhaps this could be a starting point for the next LEADER programme.

It is also evident that there is still a lot of impact to come. Some of activities supported are still at early stages e.g. tourism ambassadors, outdoor activity providers, whilst others are still developing their best way forward e.g. community cinemas, farm diversification, food champions. If the impact from BP2 is to be maximised, it is important maintain links and engagement with the activities that BP2 has initiated.

Delivering the aims and objectives at Project level

All five Projects have largely met their objectives:

- Pride in our Farming Families has made good achievements towards its objectives, within what is a relatively short timescale, and with evidence that the achievements have longer term sustainability
- Pride in our Villages has achieved local benefits in line with its objectives, taking a pragmatic approach to what could be achieved within the timescale in terms of the progression from Axis 4 to Axis 3
- Pride in our Services has delivered some valuable achievements towards objectives, notably in relation to Rural Hubs. We are less clear about impacts of the footpaths and cycleway sub projects as there is no user information and our evaluation was unable to

extend to contacting people using this infrastructure given limitations to its timetable and budget

- Pride in our Heritage has made some valuable investments in the heritage resource in line with objectives. However developing the collaboration and integration implied in the third objective of the Project has been more mixed, although the potential for this remains
- Pride in the Vale has contributed well to enhancing its assets and contributing to a sustainable local economy, and to support for community facilities and services. What is less clear is the contribution to the objective of reducing the need for Vale residents to travel to meet their daily needs

What is also apparent from the evidence is that the role of the CRC team has been critical in the success of developing and delivering the five Projects; both in terms of facilitation e.g. taking a lead on facilitating the Axis 4 pilot projects and developing some of the innovative approaches to procurement and commissioning, and in terms of support given to participants e.g. in terms of helping them to understand the grant application process in Axis 3. Without the CRC team and the quality of the staff involved, it seems highly unlikely that the same level and quality of activity would have taken place.

Delivering the aims and objectives at Local Development Strategy level

All five Projects have broadly contributed well to the LDS themes although we have one area of reservation. For the theme related to women and young people, there have been various initiatives related to young people in BP2. Sub-projects have not specifically targeted women – although a number of the activities and sub-projects have been as relevant to women as to anyone else, we are aware of a diversity of women participants and it is evident women have benefitted from them given the over-achievement of the relevant performance indicator.

We consider BP2 has made positive contributions to local communities and led to more people being involved in activities at the local level, in line with the intentions of the LDS vision and aims and building a stronger local capacity within the rural Vale. However we find it difficult to trace the logic chain directly back between the themes, aims and vision/mission and feel there is some disjointedness in the cascade from vision downwards, through LDS themes to Project objectives.

Delivering integration and collective benefits

In our view the integration of Axis 3 and 4 has been very successful. The CRC LAG and team has been very creative in the way in which routes through Axis 4 could then lead into Axis 3 and vice versa, and the 'carrot' of grant support in Axis 3 seems to have been a valuable tool which has helped draw people into the programme. The CRC team has then been critical to successful delivery of Axis 3 and Axis 4 and their integration. Axis 4 in particular has required a large amount of organisation and facilitation. Participants have praised the CRC team for their can do attitude, open door approach and extensive support.

Other benefits

Additionality

In terms of both project and impact additionality, the evidence is that this has been good.

At the project level, a number of sub-projects and participation in activities would not have happened at all, or if they had, it would have been at a smaller scale, over a longer timescale

or at a lesser quality. The relatively small levels of funding available through the various Projects therefore seem to have achieved a high level of additionality in terms of activity.

The extent of impact additionality also seems high. The sub-projects and activities are leading to activity which has some longevity as all participants expect to continue their activities and often with the expectation that benefits will last for five years or more.

Leadership

There has been a positive impact on drawing out people who can take forward activities at the local level and who might otherwise not have got involved at the local level. We note that there seems to be quite an element of retired people with a good skills base becoming involved in sub-projects and activities and this has been to the benefit of their development and delivery. Equally there are entrepreneurial businesses becoming involved and seeing potential business opportunities, which is also encouraging for building the business base and the potential for business growth. Building up the opportunities for networking and collaboration could help build the capacity and potential for leadership at the local level.

Leverage

BP2 has exerted good levels of leverage and matched funding levels have been achieved, if not exceeded in some cases. Although there have been issues around practicalities of securing matched funding, evidencing quotes, spend etc, the level of grant available through Axis 3 is noted as sufficient to be a real incentive and, for businesses, to help de-risk the prospect of taking forward a new activity or business development.

Influence

We have more limited evidence on this point specifically but do note that there is some local influence which is encouraging others to get involved and opening eyes of organisations to different and perhaps more collaborative ways of working. Whilst there are examples of where influence is perhaps happening locally, the concern now voiced is the need to extend this beyond the rural Vale and raise the profile of the rural Vale beyond its boundaries.

9. Looking forward

Building on experience

This final section makes recommendations for the next round of LEADER and for other regeneration initiatives, in line with the questions in the brief:

- Identify examples of best practice that could be replicated or modified for future regeneration initiatives
- Draw evident conclusions from the implementation of the programme and make appropriate recommendations for the next LEADER Programme in 2014-2020
- Identify any gaps in support, areas of weakness or potential project opportunities that could be addressed by future regeneration initiatives

Examples of Good Practice for the future¹¹

We have identified six examples which illustrate both good practice and areas where there might be room for improvement in future programmes. These are written up separately and have been referred to in earlier sections. Of these, the examples of good practice include:

- CRC team facilitation
- Axis 3 and 4 links – which, in the wider context, would extend to planning progression between different funding streams, including the proposed Rural Communities Fund in the next RDP programme; and planning the building blocks and legacy tools to support progression. We understand LAGs will be asked for comments in relation to fit with LDS aims and objectives. Although it is not known how LAG comments will be used, it would be very useful to try and build the threads of activities in the next LEADER programme with other routes for delivery such as the RCF
- Pre-commercial testing of an idea e.g. Food Champion or outdoor activity provider; continue to find ways to de-risk the very early stages of product/service development
- Evidencing the impacts eg St Illtuds Visitor survey; develop fit for purpose and easy monitoring and evaluation – to provide both the project with better and structured impact information which could be useful to support future funding requests and to evidence achievements and ability to deliver; and in reporting back to funders a stronger message on impact
- The commissioning and open tendering processes used by CRC in Axis 4.

Developing activities, themes and sectors in LEADER 2014 – 2020

We are aware that the next iteration of LEADER will not operate in the same way as that for 2007-2013, and in particular that it is not going to offer the same opportunities for grant assistance as has happened through the current programme. We are also aware that there is ambiguity around how funding could be used to support the type of pilot projects that have taken place through Axis 4 now and which, in our view, have been very valuable building blocks. We hope that de minimis rules will apply so that small scale pilots modelled on Local Food Champions or Outdoor Activities can take place. In our view small scale funding has been vital to support project activity in BP2, including the Axis 4 work, and this approach should continue. During consultations people have expressed their concerns with the possible funding rules of the new programme. In particular they are concerned that it could

¹¹ See Annex 6

lead to a loss of impetus and the momentum that has now been built up, and that people who have come out and got involved in the current programme, could become disinterested and disengaged if direct activities cannot be supported .

Notwithstanding these concerns, it is important to seek to make as best use as possible of the funding and also build on the point we have made above, about linking across programmes to create some opportunities for progression of activities.

Sharing experience

From our interviews and group discussions, we are conscious that, whilst there has been exchange of experience and the building of networks in different situations and on ad-hoc bases, there has been no structured shared exchange of experience programme.

Our suggestion, if this is feasible within the rules, is to start the 2014 – 2020 programme with ‘what we have done and can build on’ event(s), in the form of visits to different projects and discussion to share the experiences and identify potential development opportunities – which could be for the next iteration of LEADER or other programmes. This helps to consolidate the outcome of the current programme as well as plan for the next.

Building on what already done

It is important to build on what has already begun and there are a number of Axis 4 pilots which need to consolidate and develop. We have identified some below which in our view still need support and have the potential to grow:

- Tourism ambassadors - We are aware that the Vale Tourism Association has taken on the hosting of the ambassadors and a bid for funding has been made to provide support to the ambassadors network made. If this bid is successful it could act as matched funding for a development initiative supported with RDP funding, to do networking events with VTA, set up a trade/ambassador link scheme, do visits to other areas with an ambassador scheme. If there is anything similar in Cardiff or Bridgend, it is possible that this could create a co-operation project with potential to link with adjacent areas, to draw in more visitors. This would be under Theme 1 of the new programme
- Outdoor activities pilots – we are aware that this could depend on how the minimis rules are applied, but in principle the outdoor activities pilot would benefit from further development in terms of a longer pilot period and some legacy tools (we know there is a communications toolkit); as would the local food champions pilot which is another successful pilot approach. This could be both through Theme 1 or 2 of the new programme
- There is still considerable more work that can be done to build up the work on the Heritage Coast work and link this in with building up its economic potential. We are aware that VoG Council now has a Coastal Communities Development Officer in post, funded through the Coastal Communities Lottery grant funding received, to do just this. Working with this officer should have great potential to now build on the work already achieved through Axis 3 and 4. This would be through Theme 1 of the new programme
- Destination management – we know that this work in the two towns of Cowbridge and Llantwit Major will continue, supported through the Council’s Town Centre officer. It is important that this work revisits the town centre benchmarking reports and surveys undertaken with the Axis 4 funding, so that change can be measured over time. There is also potential to explore how some of the principles behind town centre management can be rolled out to smaller communities, to encourage them to make the most of local assets. This might be through Themes 1 or 3 of the new programme

- We think there is opportunity to make more use of Greenlinks, which is bookable by not for profit groups and can go out of county when booked by groups as well as providing its regular services. It should be more thoroughly linked into other activities to make it a more widely known and valued resource in the rural Vale e.g. it could be linked into bringing community groups to community events. This would be under Theme 3 of the new programme
- Development of marketing materials such as the Valeways leaflets and tourism apps, which needs to include consideration of how these can be funded and maintained in the longer term. We are aware that the CRC team are investigating ways in which marketing material can be sustained e.g. if adopted by a 'champion'. This is also important for tourism apps which will require maintenance and updating as well as having further potential for development. This could be through Themes 1, 3 and 5 of the new programme
- Networking and marketing of historic assets – we are aware that there is a wealth of historic assets in the rural Vale including those which have been developed with RDP support, both built assets such as St Cadoc's Church and the historic archive digitisation projects still in development. There is potential for greater networking and joint marketing of these assets as a visitor resource, as part of Theme 1 of the new programme

New activities

Networking

The current programme has facilitated some networking opportunities and there are examples of exchange of experience taking place. However there has not been a specific structure in the current programme for this. Given that networking and exchange of experience may be an element of activities that could be supported in the new programme, we think greater consideration should be given to facilitating and supporting networking in the next programme in a more structured way. That will allow shared experience and knowledge to be documented (and possibly developed into tools or case studies for others to use), and foster more collaboration and co-operative working.

Monitoring and evaluation

There is more that can be done to draw out the impacts of projects in a more systematic way with some simple evaluation methods. The new programme could be used to develop a simple evaluation tool for impacts that would help local partners identify the worth of their activities in support of making others aware of that value and to underpin funding requests, whether to LEADER or other programmes. This has been a missing element in the current programme, in part because time constraints did not allow this to happen for all subprojects/activities – but more fundamentally because the performance indicators which were required for reporting are not related to impact. Routes such as social return on investment could be looked at, as opportunities.

Planning co-operation projects

The rural Vale participated in two co-operation projects one of which was not initiated by the CRC LAG at all and the other being a joint project with adjacent LAGs. Both have provided some local benefit although both seem to have been carried out in relative isolation to other local activities.

This time round, there is an opportunity to take a much more planned and strategic approach to co-operation projects. We have suggested the Jurassic/Triassic coast as a possible theme e.g. engaging with Dorset, North Yorkshire and the Asturias in Northern

Spain. The 'Walking with Offa' co-operation project which has taken place as a joint initiative of LAGs on each side of Offa's Dyke, is an example of the type of co-operation that could move the work in the Heritage Coast forward.

Adapting bureaucratic processes

We are aware of the bureaucracy of the current programme and the processes put in place through the VoG Council and with the CRC team to devise the necessary paperwork and financial audit trails to manage the requirements. The bureaucracy/paperwork is a part of programmes that will not go away – and indeed there have been aspects of it such as writing a business plan that some applicants have found helpful. We also know that the CRC team have worked very hard to try and manage/diminish the complexities of the paperwork for the people they are working with.

Our recommendation here is to suggest that the Council take an objective look at the opportunity costs of the different aspects of the system, paperwork and financial management in relation to the risk, to see whether there are changes that would make it easier in the future e.g. we know that payment is largely retrospective but in very exceptional circumstances there has been some leeway on this. However experience may now indicate that the risk of default is very limited and, given the effort needed to deal with the paperwork, it may be more time and cost effective to consider more flexible payments system which could ease the cash flow for projects¹².

Pointers for other programmes and policies

Importance of the facilitation resource

The facilitation resource has been an absolutely critical part of the success of the current RDP programme in the rural Vale. The learning from this for future programmes is to acknowledge the importance of adequate facilitation and at a quality and level that can deliver what is needed

Planning the routes to progression

The RDP programme has shown the success of building linkages between Axis 3 and 4 activities. Although it has obviously been easier to do this in the context of the RDP Programme which is responsible for both Axis 3 and 4, it is possible that a similar approach could be extended to linking across funding opportunities and programmes not just within them. Whilst it is more difficult and funding success could not be guaranteed, it would provide a potential progression structure. As noted earlier in this evaluation report, the potential to do this with the Rural Communities Fund in the next RDP is one opportunity.

Having tools that can encourage participation

One of the benefits of the combined Axis 3 and 4 approach has been the availability of grants, that are an encouragement to people to participate. It may not always be possible to have grants as that 'incentive' in every programme – but finding something that can be an encouragement will help. Trying to plot a progression within and between programmes is also part of creating the incentives to participation, so that even if the route is not within that programme, there is some awareness of where the next steps could be.

Open procurement approach

¹² For example Cornwall Council established a cash flow loan facility for applicants. The cash flow was for the duration of the project based on cash flow projections and was repaid after the applicant has received their final grant payment. See their final evaluation report Section 3. <http://www.localactioncornwall.info/uploads/ricks/clld-and-leader/evaluation-of-leader-lags-in-cornwall-17022014-final.pdf>

The way in which the CRC team have approached open tendering of participation in a local development programme seems to provide a very valuable tool that other local development programmes could adopt. Making the initial process open but then, being able to focus activity on those that have been selected through a transparent process of assessment, seems to have worked well for involving people who might otherwise not have come forward.

Evaluation and monitoring

The same points made in relation to monitoring and evaluation made earlier should apply to other local development programmes and initiatives – and the tools that could be developed related to LEADER could equally be valuable for others to use.

Brokering table

Our final suggestion is developing a VoG 'brokering table'. The concept of brokering tables was used in the South West of England Market and Coastal Towns Initiative¹³ as a means of bringing together a number of potential funding partners to one meeting, where a local community could present its plans once, to one group of funders, who could then respond as to whether any of the proposals would be eligible under their respective programmes. It was intended as a means of reducing the amount of time spent approaching different organisations for funding by communities with a community plan. Even if the brokering table in the first instance involved various VoG departments who could support community activity, this might be a means of helping communities discuss and negotiate proposals with prospective funders.

¹³ <http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/resourcebook-planning-your-community>. See page 22 and 173



**Evaluation
of the RDP
Programme
in the Vale of
Glamorgan
2011-2014**

Annexes

Evaluation Methodology

The brief sets out a number of evaluation questions. The first three relate to the effectiveness and impact of Business Plan 2 and were central to the evaluation:

- Ascertain whether the projects within Axis 3 and 4 have achieved their aims and objectives as set out in their project applications
- Measure how the projects have delivered against the priorities of the LDS Strategy for the rural VoG
- Assess whether the various projects were well integrated and delivered collective benefits

Three further questions sought strategy/project related recommendations based on the evaluation findings:

- Identify examples of best practice that could be replicated or modified for future regeneration initiatives
- Identify any gaps in support, areas of weakness or potential project opportunities that could be addressed by future regeneration initiatives
- Draw evident conclusions from the implementation of the programme and make appropriate recommendations for the next LEADER Programme in 2014-2020

The final question was specific to the evaluation methodology:

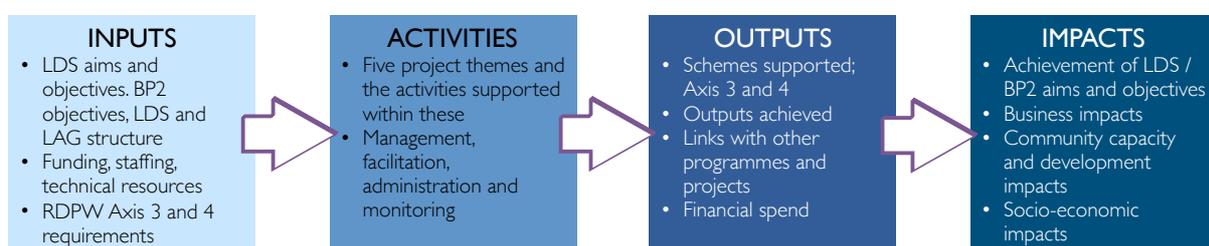
- Select a random sample of grant recipients from each grant scheme for surveys (recognising it is impossible to survey all funding recipients given the value of the contract)

Our Consultant proposals added three further areas to the evaluation:

- Value for money and timeliness – relevant to efficiency of Business Plan 2
- Leadership, leverage and influence – relevant to strategic added value and important in relation to capacity building and (community) institutional strengthening
- Additionality – relevant to efficiency and impact of Business Plan 2 and the extent to which it has stimulated new or more activity

Our overall approach to this evaluation has been to make use of the logic chain approach, set out below, to explore how BP2 objectives and resulting activities are contributing/leading to outputs and impacts

The logic chain enables a structured approach to the evaluation that allows the connections between inputs and achievements to be fully assessed. An evaluation framework was devised as a first step of the evaluation, to ensure that all stages of the logic chain were addressed in the method and tasks.



Our methodology then covered a number of tasks. The table below identifies the different tasks that the evaluation used to obtain information, scoped against the evaluation questions, with subsequent paragraphs providing further detail:

	Project Reports	Economic context review	Online surveys	CRC staff focus group	LAG Focus Group	Stakeholder interviews	Project Interviews	Project Focus groups
Achieving project aims/objectives	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Delivering LDS strategy	X	X		X	X	X		
Project integration and collective benefits	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Examples of best practice	X			X	X	X		X
Gaps and opportunities	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Value for money and timeliness	X		X	X	X		X	
Leadership, leverage and influence	X			X	X	X	X	X
Additionality	X		X	X	X	X	X	X

Project Reports

A sample of project reports held by CRC were reviewed, in association with interviews with Project beneficiaries, principally to identify further information that could support write up of some activities/sub projects as case studies to illustrate some key evaluation points arising from Project participant survey work. This also provided an opportunity for a brief review of how paperwork was held – although reviewing processes such as file management was not a core part of the evaluation.

Surveys and Questionnaires

As the evaluation is focused on impact, the evaluation used several tools to make contact with Project participants, as set out below :

- Online surveys:
 - **Funding recipients (mainly Axis 3);** a two part online survey was set up using SurveyMonkey, each part following similar format of 4 sections; respondent information/administrative, application and management process/impacts/additional benefits (additionality). Respondents were asked to complete Part 1 and could then opt to complete Part 2 (which had more detailed questions) as well. The survey link was sent to 66 grant recipients and 39 responses were made - a 59% response. It was however noted that this included some Axis 4 recipients – those who had received a grant directly (Food Champions, Outdoor Activity Pilots).
 - **Other project participants (mainly Axis 4);** as above, appropriately adapted. The survey link was sent by CRC staff to their various contacts across a range of activities – to 170 contacts in total. However this only elicited 15 responses, a response rate of under 10%

Aggregated responses from both surveys and the survey forms are available as separate documents.

- Focus Groups: Four focus groups were held
 - **LAG:** covering effectiveness of project themes, grant/subprojects, balance, contributory factors; what would have changed, done more or less of; effectiveness of resources put in (people, money), strength of networking and collaboration; effectiveness in influencing other programmes and funding; delivering community or business leaders
 - **CRC:** covering which projects worked well and what were the contributory factors to this; what did not work as well and why; what would have been done differently, more or less of; what has been innovative and transferable; were the resource inputs (finance, people, systems) effective; greatest successes and challenges
 - **Two focus groups for project participants:** Questions to prompt discussion on economic and community impacts now or to come, what went well and not so well, lesson learnt and to pass on, challenges, networking and collaboration
- Interviews were held with:
 - **Stakeholders:** mainly LAG and Rural Partnership members, covering areas similar to the LAG focus group
 - **Funding recipients/project participants:** more detail around impacts, what went well and not so well, additionality, extent of business and community impacts, what were the factors that enabled the project to achieve what it did, and what were the barriers/hurdles that prevented it or impacted on its potential to achieve; and lessons learnt and to pass on

Economic Context

The evaluation has not included a full counterfactual case assessment as this was beyond the time and resources available for the evaluation. However, a brief review of key socio economic indicators from the Local Development Strategy also relevant to the activities of BP2 was undertaken, using published data such as Census data.

Analysis and reporting

The final task was analysis of the findings, referring back to the evaluation framework set up at the start and the evaluation questions from the brief and our own additions.

As well as undertaking the analysis, we also produced six case studies, based on sub-projects/activities reviewed and feedback from participants. The case studies are intended to illustrate some key evaluation findings, related to good practice and opportunities to learn from Programme experience for the future. We should emphasise that these represent our views as evaluators and are not intended to represent the views of the participants.

The following is a list of those interviewed or attending focus groups. We were not able to contact everyone we had hoped to, due to the limited time in which our work had to be completed.

Project Participants

Alison Gibbons	Enfys Griffiths
Alun Williams	Ian Pierce
Arthur O’Leary	Ingrid Walker
Brian Acott	Paul Fisher
Carolyn Mackenzie	Peter Cole
Clare Cameron	Rob Lilford
Derek Osborn	Sam Edwards
Dylan Jones	David Fernie
Jill Needham	Ian Fell
Linda Osborn	

LAG/Rural Partnership members/Stakeholders

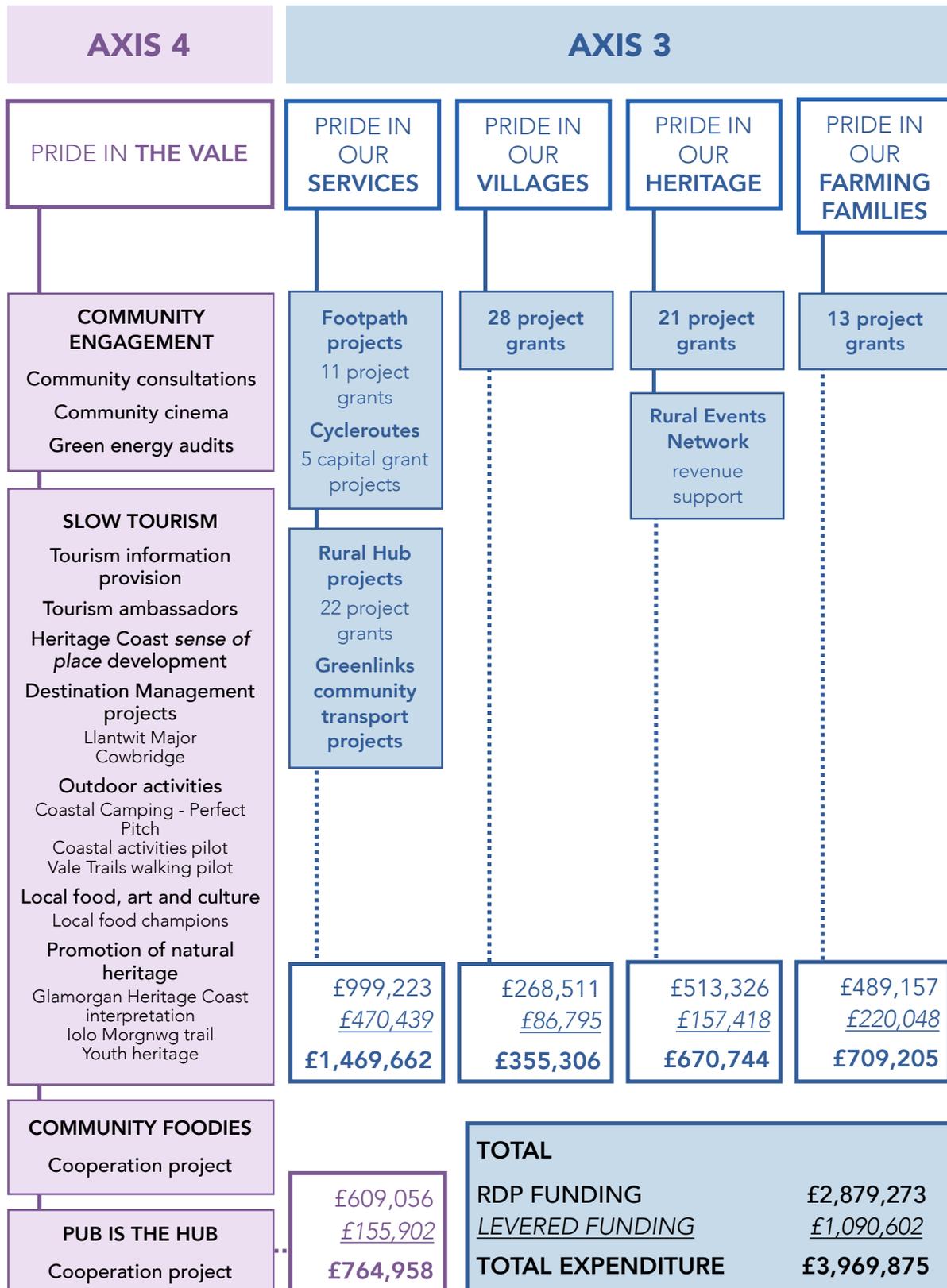
Rachel Connor	Helen Fletcher
Peter Cole	Eira Edwards
Bob Guy	Gareth Bray
Norman Jenkins	Mandy Davies
Steve Jackson	

CRC Team

Helen Blackmore	Rebecca Haves
Nicola Sumner-Smith	Mari-Wyn Elias Jones
Nia Hollins	Phil Chappell

Project Summaries

The following summarises the Axis 3 and 4 activities carried out in Business Plan 2 of the Vale of Glamorgan Rural Development Programme. Axis 3 and 4 activities are summarised in the following diagram:



Axis 4: Pride in the Vale

Pride in the Vale focused on pilot projects and activities, in line with the LEADER principles and delivered through the Local Action Group.

Two themes were identified for development under Pride in the Vale (community engagement and slow tourism), each of which delivered several strands of activity. Two co-operation projects with partners outside the VoG were also carried out.

Slow Tourism

Coastal Camping – Perfect Pitch

Perfect Pitch was a trial to assist landowners in the coastal region of the Vale of Glamorgan with the legal, practical and financial support to develop and try out a campsite for low key sustainable camping on their land for a limited period of time. This trial provided an opportunity to see if this type of business is something that any of the participating farmers and landowners would like to embark on long term. The trial took place over the summer months in 2012. Five farmers and landowners were selected to participate in the scheme following an open procurement invitation to participate and subsequent assessment process. They were then joined by two existing campsites in the Vale of Glamorgan (out of the three which are located in the Vale). The seven sites participating in the project were:

- Farmers Fields Campsite, Llantwit Major
- Lougher Moor Campsite, Llantwit Major
- Heritage Coast Campsite, Monkash
- Pool Farm Campsite, St.Brides Major
- Three Golden Cups Campsite, Southerndown
- Happy Jakes Campsite, Flemingston (existing campsite)
- Llandow Park Campsite, Llandow (existing campsite)

All of the participating landowners were invited to take part in a joint marketing campaign, networking and information sharing events, study visits, received one-to-one support in relation to their specific campsite developments and received assistance with regards to their particular planning permission and licence requirements.

CRC has continued to advise these sites and all new potential campsites in the area since the trial and are pleased to see the development of at least four new seasonal and permanent campsites.

Total pilot project costs were **£60,370** ¹⁴

Heritage Coast – Sense of Place

Support to visitor facing organisations to develop their 'Sense of Place' so that they can support their visitors understanding and appreciation of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast area.



¹⁴ The costs given, for individual sub-projects or activities, are the direct costs of delivery and do not include any Creative Rural Community staff facilitation and support costs.

The scheme was launched with a series of workshops which were attended by a great cross section of the community including local tourism operators, historians, artists and community members. The workshops resulted in the development of a Glamorgan Heritage Coast Palette, a collection of stories and information about the local area.

A Sense of Place event was held at St Donats Arts Centre in May 2013, to showcase the Heritage Coast to the tourism trade and help them to develop their knowledge of the area. Over fifty local businesses organisations and individuals attended, with a range of speakers from local brewers, to trekking centres, to lighthouse keepers.

In support of this event, an exhibition at the St Donats Arts Centre was held during May 2013. The exhibition showcased over fifty artists who were exhibiting a range of work from paintings, to sculpture and jewellery all inspired by the Glamorgan Heritage Coast.

CRC also supported organisations and businesses to develop their Sense of Place by offering one-to-one support and conducting an audit with them. This helped to highlight many opportunities to utilise local food, arts and literature and sign post to local attractions and activities.

A series of familiarisation visits to a number of attractions and activities available in the Heritage Coast were run in Spring 2014, attended by a cross section of the tourism community.

Total project costs c£7,600

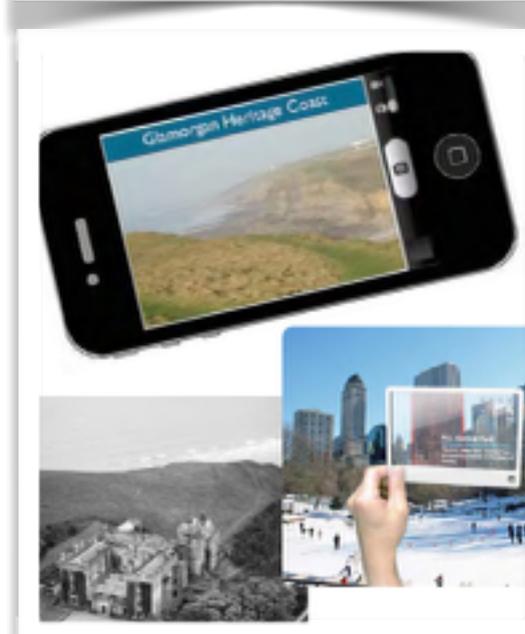
Glamorgan Heritage Coast – Interpretation

A local steering group was established, which commissioned some initial visitor research confirming that generally visitors to the area were largely locals, and most struggled to identify the Glamorgan Heritage Coast. An Interpretation Strategy was then commissioned to help steer the direction of interpretation along the coast.

The initial strategy was developed by PLB Ltd in 2013 and was done so in close consultation with the steering group. The Strategy set out a three tier proposal:

Tier One – Was a basic proposal up to the value of £70k
Outcomes from this stage have now included:

- A new GHC web site
- Branded info point leaflet holders for local businesses (See Tourism Information Project)
- Training for Heritage Coast Ambassadors (See Ambassadors Project)
- A series of Welcome and Orientation and Interpretation Points along the coast
- Internal developments and new interpretation at the Heritage Coast Centre



Tier Two - Was to offer a range of innovative interpretation solutions to pilot. Outcomes from this stage have now included Augmented Reality Apps to showcase the Dunraven Hillfort and Castle, and the Nash Point Lighthouses and the Frolic Ship.

Tier Three – Was a Blue Sky proposal (money no object!) There were no immediate outcomes from this phase.

Total costs c£62,000 (with further funding for the Interpretation outcomes provided through an Axis 3 Heritage Grant of some £75,000).

Youth Heritage

Heritage Coast Activity Packs:

A series of Family Activity Packs were produced to encourage family groups, or groups including young people aged approximately 6-12, to discover the Glamorgan Heritage Coast and engage and learn about the local area and its heritage in fun and engaging ways. A series of five packs have been produced each focussing on a particular geographical area. The packs have also been produced as series of PDFs which can be available to download from www.visitthevale.com. Some of the activities within the packs have also been reproduced as 'Family Fun' panels along the Heritage Coast.

Wreckers Game:

A digital game was developed to help younger audiences engage with the heritage of the coastline. Players are invited to guide a boat along the choppy seas whilst dodging the extreme tides and sand banks, avoiding wreckers and steering away from danger – they must also collect precious cargo along the way, avoid the barrels of dynamite and steer safely to port! Based on real life stories from the coastline, players are inadvertently learning as they play!

U-Turn Youth Channels:

Recordings of children talking as characters from history in effect summarising elements of what's included in U turn channels in an appropriate way for children/young people. Heritage Coast Interpretation panels will have QR codes linking to them, so that should the u-turn units be damaged, the audio can still be accessed.

CRC staff costs taken from Axis 4. Budget for creating the products is within the Axis 3 Pride in our Heritage - Heritage Coast Interpretation grant project



Coastal Activities Pilot Project

Launched in n spring 2014, this was an initiative to inspire those who were passionate about the coast and the area and had an idea for a new activity. The activities had to be based directly on the Glamorgan Heritage Coast, or the surrounding area and could even be based indoors or out (or both)

CRC supported six new activity providers to pilot or 'trial' their activity during the months of July-September 2014. Piloting their idea meant that they could have a go at running their activity, trial run their ideas, have a good practice and evaluate their plans before deciding to make any investment or long term commitment to their activity.

The six new pilot activities we supported were:

- Ffoto Ramble (Photography tuition during a walk along the coast.)
- Through the Looking Glass (Stained glass workshops inspired by the coast)
- Heritage Coast Photography (Photography tuition on a horse drawn carriage)
- Oakwood Bespoke Journeys (Chauffeur driven tours around the coast.)
- Introduction to Willow (Willow weaving taster sessions in a woodland)
- Beach Wild Food Foraging (Foraging and cooking on the beach)

Activity providers took part in a series of familiarisation visits, networking opportunities, a group marketing campaign with media opportunities, skills development such as Social Media and Building WordPress Websites as well as receiving one-to-one business support.

All of the participants claimed to find the scheme of great value, learnt a lot from the process and hope to continue offering their activities in the future.

Total costs c£15,700

Local Food Champions

The Local Food Champion pilot project supported producers at very early stages of development to get to the market with their products, through marketing and brand development support. It also supported initiatives to increase awareness of, access to and use of local produce. This included showcasing local produce for the first time at the Vale of Glamorgan Agricultural Show in 2014, a joint venture between CRC, Cywain and Vale of Glamorgan Farmers Market. In addition to providing marketing assistance for new producers, piloting new food tours and supporting community ventures, the Local Food Champion project supported joint ventures bringing together producers across the Vale.

Total costs, c£21,000



Tourism Information provision

Over 50 new Tourist Information Point (TIP) outlets including the development of 5 new Tourist Information 'Hubs' have been set up through the Information Provision project, plugging the gap created following the closure of the regional Tourist Information Centres. The project aimed to create greater links between local attractions and venues hosting or attracting visitors to the Vale, with the end goal being to inspire visitors to explore our own region as opposed to venturing further afield. The project was supported by the Tourism Department to ensure the future sustainability of the outlets, and the assurance that the TIPs and Hubs created will provide, accurate, up to date relevant information to our visitors. As well as purpose built wooden information stands, each venue also had the option to display a large wall mounted visitor information board to inform and inspire their visitors. The Tourism and Marketing Coordinator will now take the lead on this project to ensure that information is up to date. Further development will be needed with the trade to ensure that sufficient local print is produced for these information points.

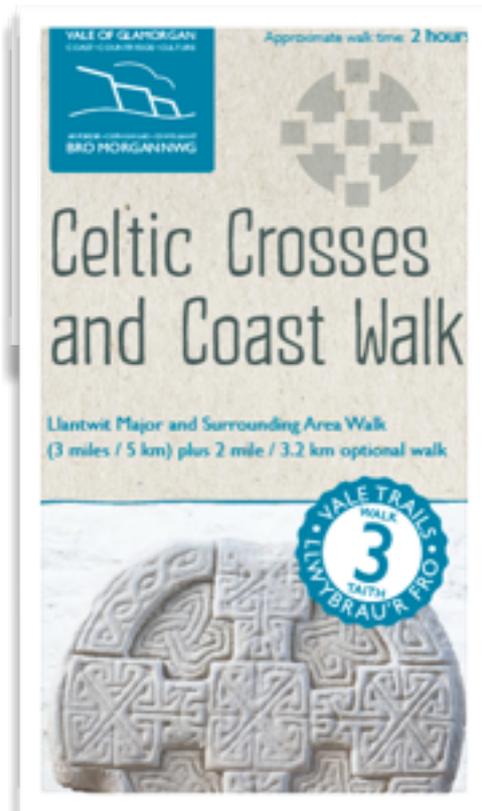
Total costs £10,000

Vale Trails

Raising the profile of walking in the Vale was agreed as a priority by LAG. A steering group was set up with representatives of local Walks organisers (Valeways & Ramblers) the Council's Tourism & Rights of Way teams and the Vale Tourism Group. Members of the Local Access Group and NHS Health Promotion team were also on board to ensure the project addressed local needs. The Steering group recognised a number of key areas that should be addressed including, promoting the best the Vale has to offer in terms of walking, marketing and communication (in particular the need for a new central resource that built on an existing website and linked all related services), helping businesses to provide for the needs of walkers, improving interpretation and infrastructure and attracting a range of walkers of varied ability.

Accommodation providers were asked how they currently cater for walkers and the kind of support they would like to help them better meet the needs of walkers. Interim packs including local maps, reference material, leaflets for self-guided walks and information on guided walks were distributed in the summer 2013 to fifteen businesses that requested this type of support.

The focus of 2014 was then on developing a series of 'Vale Trails' – 10 self-guided walks which showcase the best the Vale has to offer and which are intended to appeal to a wide range of visitors to the Vale. Three of the Trails are within the Glamorgan Heritage Coast area and the Walking project is linked closely with the Heritage Coast Interpretation project. Panels giving a flavour of the walks are integrated with Heritage Coast interpretation at strategic locations along the coast. Visitors will be able to gain a clearer understanding of this unique environment from the interpretation panels and at the same time be encouraged to immerse themselves further by taking a way marked walk in the area.



Trail leaflets are available at all Tourist Information Points and many of the pubs and other attractions along the routes who asked for a supply for their customers. Digital versions are available online through the Council's website.

Total costs £59,000

Lolo Morganwg Trail

The LAG identified the opportunity to promote Lolo Morganwg, a historical figure in the Vale. The National Eisteddfod was coming to the Vale and one of his legacies, is the Gorsedd, an integral part of the Eisteddfod.

A walking trail consisting of a circular walking route and a wider trail to associated sites was agreed as the best way to do this. CRC were fortunate that Geraint Jenkins who had led on the University of Wales' Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies, 7 year research project through his papers, and published several books on Lolo, volunteered his time to help develop the trail and provide the narrative.



A booklet with a pull out OS map was produced which linked sites to different themes in Lolo's life to help guide people. It was distributed to accommodation providers labelled as a reference book which visitors may borrow. The book was sent out to Merched y Wawr branches and is regularly walked by groups. Guided walks by expert speakers as part of the Valeways walking festival have also proved popular. The publishers are now interested in printing booklet on a commercial basis.

The second part of the project included interpretation board and a children's activity book focusing on the Cowbridge sites undertaken by the Cowbridge Charter Trust, a celebratory concert at St Cadocs church and an interpretation board at the Church to celebrate Lolo's connections to the area.

Total cost £24,300

Vale Ambassador Programme

This pilot project sought to harness people's passion for the Vale, share and build on their knowledge of the area to communicate it to visitors to encourage them to stay longer, return and encourage others to visit.

Ambassadors volunteered their time to attend workshops and excursions, which included expert speakers and information packs on the following themes:

- People, History and Mystery
- Cuisine and Crafts
- Heart, Mind and Soul
- Culture and Colloquialism
- Naturally Glamorgan
- Events



The Ambassadors have chosen what level of activity and interaction with visitors they want which varies from being meeters and greeters (by mail or phone or in person), to those

happy to contribute via social media / bloggers or to volunteer at events. All the ambassadors and contacts details are listed on the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Visit the Vale website.

The Vale Tourism Association will take on the training and networking elements of the Ambassadors programme to ensure it continues to recruit and engage Ambassadors, and has applied to Visit Wales for funding for this purpose.

Total costs c£17,300

Cowbridge & Llantwit Major Town Teams – Destination Management

Benchmarking involves capturing data on 12 Key Performance Indicators within the town centre such as retail offering, footfall, car parking, business confidence, shopper origin and town centre user views.

Two towns worked with the Association of Market Towns to benchmark their towns. A comprehensive report highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of both towns, how the town centres could be improved, examples of good practice and how the towns fare against other towns from across England and Wales and towns of a similar type was produced for each. As a result of this work 'Town Teams' were set up in both towns to take this work forward with the support of the council's Town Centres Development Officer and CRC.

The Town teams worked on the implementation of interpretation within each town, coming up with different solutions. Llantwit Major has chosen to use the oak framed units being installed on the heritage coast. This echoes its desire to be seen as the gateway town to the heritage coast. Cowbridge has opted for three modern designs focusing on orientation and history.

Total cost £44,800

Community Engagement

Rural Cinema Trials

The Vale Rural Cinema Trial gives communities a chance to access cinema showings in local venues.

A set of mobile equipment was transported by volunteers within communities to various locations around the rural Vale to show films to the local community. Training was also provided to all of those wishing to participate in the trial.

Rural communities in the Vale have to travel far to access the big multiplexes, plus travel and refreshments can make the experience very expensive! However, it's difficult for local cinema showings to compete with these large multiplexes...the key to their success is offering something different to viewers, something more sociable, relaxed and affordable.



Following the trial several communities bid for their own set of equipment and were successful in receiving grant from Axis 3 Pride in our Services for this:

- Llancarfan Community Cinema
- Big Screen Cowbridge
- Peterston Super Ely Community Cinema
- The Murchfield Cinema – Dinas Powys
- Colwinston Community Cinema
- St Donats Arts Centre



An informal network of cinemas has now been established and it is hoped that this will continue. Further support is being offered by film hub Cymru such as audience development.

Total costs £7,800

Community Consultations

During the first half of Business Plan 2 there was a high level of interest from communities in the offer to have community consultations. In order to access grant funding through Axis 3, this was deemed to be a must have. It allowed communities to look at the priorities within a village. Every resident of the village was supplied with a copy of the findings. It was then up to villages as to whether they used the document to apply for funding. Some communities have chosen to revisit their documents.

The following halls all had energy audits carried out:

- Ogmore by Sea
- Bonvilston
- Peterston Super Ely
- Ewenny
- Dinas Powys
- Cowbridge
- Colwinston
- Llandow
- Michaelston-le-Pit & Leckwith

Total costs c£11,000

Green Energy Audits – Community Facilities

Community facilities in the Vale were offered the opportunity to have an energy audit carried out. CRC held an open tendering process to appoint a suitable external consultancy able to provide the appropriate expertise and then commissioned the green audits on behalf of community groups wanting to participate. Recommendations within the audits could then be put forward for funding from the Axis 3 Pride in our Villages fund. Several halls applied for funding from Axis 3.

The following halls all had energy audits carried out:

- Aberthin Village Hall
- All Saints Church, Southerndown
- Bonvilston Reading Room
- Cowbridge Town Hall
- Colwinston Community Hall
- Dinas Powys Parish & Lee Hall
- Ewenny Village Hall
- The Gathering Place, St Athan
- Jubilee Hall, Sully
- Llanblethian Village Hall
- Llancarfan Community Centre
- Llandow Village Hall
- Llangan Village Hall
- Llanmaes Village Hall
- Llantonian Hall
- Llantwit Major Town Hall
- Murchfield Community Centre
- Old School, Llantwit Major
- The Old School, Sully
- Old School Hall Community Centre
- Penllyn Village Hall
- Penmark Village Hall
- Pendoylan War Memorial Hall
- Peterston Super Ely Church Community Hall
- St Brides Major Village Hall
- Treoes Village Hall
- Welsh St Donats Village Hall
- Wenvoe Community Centre

Total costs £5,400

Axis 3 Grant Schemes – Summary of supported projects

Pride in our Villages Grants

The aim of this project is to enhance local pride and distinctiveness in villages / communities by implementing a holistic approach to physical regeneration. It provided:

- Grants to address physical development needs identified by communities - to secure small-scale capital investment in buildings and other capital improvements to the public realm within villages.
- “Green it” grants to make existing community buildings more environmentally sustainable. This could include energy waste reduction or the generation of renewable energy.

Recipient	Project	Total Project Cost
Cyswllt Peterston Connect	Park Benches	£2,975.76
Penllyn Village Hall	Windows and doors	£5,700.00
Colwinston Village Hall	Heating Upgrade	£3,103.20
Pendoylan war memorial hall	Heating Upgrade	£9,175.54
All Saints church	New Windows	£3,884.32
Murchfield Community Centre	Lighting	£2,394.00
St Brides Church Hall	New windows and doors	£1,873.01
Peterston S/ Ely Community council	Play area	£60,329.00
Llangan Village hall (1)	New heating	£4,250.00
Penllyn Village Hall	New heating	£1,310.00
Pendoylan War Memorial Hall	New lighting	£1,773.97
Llangan Village Hall (2)	Lighting	£8,423.00
Michaelston Le Pit Community Council	Improve park facilities	£2,075.99
St Athan Community Council	Loft insulation	£2,200.00

Dinas Powys Community Council	Play area	£54,856.47
Treoes Community Council	community growing	£17,181.55
Llandow village hall committee	Outdoor improvements	£5,276.40
Llanblethian Community Group	Improving Verges	£920.33
Vale of Glamorgan Council / Colwinston	MUGA	£43,250.00
Dinas Powys CC Lee Hall	Insulation	£1,653.40
Sully Jubilee Hall	Heating system	£3,930.00
Sully CC Pavillion	Heating System	£2,080.00
Cowbridge Charter Trust	Access and seating	£7,421.80
Sully CC Jubilee Hall	New lighting	£3,194.00
Sully CC - Pavillion	New lighting	£1,934.00
Cowbridge in Bloom	Water bowser	£1,236.00
Wenvoe CC	Play area	£5,259.41
Cowbridge Play Equipment	Twt Park Play Equipment	£7,143.75
		£264,804.90

Pride in our Farming Families Grants

'Pride in our Farming Families' was developed to support the farming community to introduce non-agricultural farm diversification initiatives which would help sustain the farm, provide additional income streams and ensure the future sustainability of the farming family. In total 13 initiatives were supported, each one with a strong tourism influence. All applicants were encouraged to seek assistance from organisations such as Business Wales, Farming Connect, Lantra, Cywain etc. in developing well rounded, well researched, sound Business Plans to support their applications.

Recipient	Project	Total Project Cost
Phil & Cath Dando	Phil Dando Racing	£59,690.90
Susan Bater	Stable Cottage Rug Wash	£8,934.00
Jo Homfray	Penllyn Estate Bunkhouse	£99,800.00
David and Alison Thomas	AJT Equestrian	£58,916.00
Mike Gibbons	Pickett Pods	£58,324.00
Mr & Mrs Davies	St Brides Trekking	£14,949.00
The Keen Family	Hendrewennol Maze	£62,209.00
Warren Mill	Bunkhouse	£35,082.00
Polly and Peter Davies	3 Cups Campsite	£13,614.25
Fablas	Outdoor catering	£30,580.00
Lilypot farm	Nature log cabins	£45,346.39
Meadowvale	Café and shop	£61,130.94
Sutton Newydd	Nature Self catering	£29,000.00
		£577,576.48

Pride in our Services Grant

The aim of this project was to ensure the provision of and access to local services through support to both retain and enhance services in rural villages and increasing connectivity between villages and key locations throughout the rural Vale.

Capital and revenue grant aid supported the conversion/diversification of existing service facilities, including shared uses for the community based on the "Pub is the Hub" model but determined by the local community; and investment following on from the pilot community cinema project in Axis 4.

Applicant	Project	Total Project Cost
HUBS		
The Gathering Place	Blackout blinds	£1,239.36
St Brides Church	Noticeboards / IT	£1,726.78
Murchfield Centre	Blackout blinds	£705.60
Sully Community Proj	Boiler, CCTV and IT	£2,745.83
The Cross Inn	Shop	£5,031.94
Llancarfan Cinema	Blackout Blinds	£640.00
The Gathering PLace	Laptop	£723.93
Fox and Hounds	Shop	£3,125.53
Wenvoe Community Council	Blackout blinds	£826.66
St Donats Art Centre	Cinema Equipment	£15,080.83
St Peters Play Group	Outdoor Play Area	£2,920.00
Three Horse Shoes	Village shop	£6,621.29
Cowbridge Town Hall	Sound and Lighting	£4,665.00
Golden Mile	Shop and Meeting area	£15,918.75
Llancarfan Cinema	Equipment	£2,083.46
The Den, Sully	Equipment	£1,684.78
3 Golden Cups	Village Shop	£5,786.88
Llancarfan Cinema	Cinema equipment	£5,913.78
Cowbridge Town Council	Cinema Equipment	£9,521.52
Peterston Super Ely	Cinema Equipment	£11,887.16
Colwinston Cinema	Cinema Equipment	£12,464.74
Murchfield Centre	Cinema Equipment	£13,765.27
TOTAL		£250,782.06

A grant scheme supported new public rights of way to provide the missing links within the rights of way network from villages and existing paths to and from coastal and other key land based assets within the Vale.

£401,000 of RDP funding was also put into development of the NCN88 Cycleways project to provide off-road sections of the route through the rural Vale of Glamorgan. The overall investment in the cycleway (including matched funding) was £723,000. The work involved 5 capital junction improvement schemes as well as signage across the route.

Applicant	Project	Total Project Cost
FOOTPATHS		
Vale of Glamorgan Council	Ewenny Corntown Footpath	£8,820.00
Vale of Glamorgan Council	Cowbridge footpath improvements	£24,507.80
VoG Council	Twyn Yr Odyn	£5,506.93
VoG Council	St Mary Church - St Athan	£11,996.84
VoG Council	Hensol Bridle Path	£16,951.25
VoG Council	Nash Point	£9,714.50
Dinas Powys Comm. Council	Cross Common Bridleway	£11,049.81
VoG Council	Nash Point Bridge	£6,114.70
Dinas Powys Comm Council	St Andrews Major F/P improvements	£10,346.80
PROW	Penllyn Bridleway	£16,074.34
PROW	Llangan-Colwinston	£3,856.25

This Project also supported the development of Greenlinks, the community transport scheme, following on from the pilot activities in BP1. Community transport membership grew to c1200 with a total of 4 vehicles. In 2014 the service was carrying on average 950 passenger journeys each month. 30 volunteers have driven for Greenlinks over the course of the project. Total costs c£143,380.

Pride in our Heritage

This was developed to support and celebrate the Vale's cultural, natural and built heritage, and has supported 21 projects on different aspects of heritage

- **Built Heritage** restoration projects include the herculean restoration of the Old Place Llantwit Major, the beautiful Galilee Chapel and the historic town walls of Cowbridge and Dunraven Garden Walls at Southerndown.
- **Cultural Heritage** projects include developing and promoting the traditional tune group Alawon Llanilltud Fawr, interpretation at St Cadoc's Church Llancafarn of their world class wall paintings, interpretation at Cosmeston Medieval Village, Dinas Powys, Old Hall Gardens and along the Heritage Coast, digitalise both Cowbridge and Llantwit History Society's collections, supporting Hendrewennol to promote the stories of the Vale at their well-attended Halloween event, Bonvilston village history project, Iolo Morganwg interpretation boards, Llanblethian village history walk and activity books for children.
- **Natural Heritage** projects have included interpretation boards at Rhoose Point, Old Hall Gardens Cowbridge, Heritage Coast and Glyndwr Vineyard which also developed their self-guided vineyard tour and the bee hotel at Wenvoe Orchard and development of Old Hall Gardens and the Dunraven Walled Garden.

This Project also provided ongoing support to the Rural Events Network, established in BP1 and given further support in BP2 through the purchase of equipment and revenue support for activities. Total capital and revenue cost spend c£28,000.

Applicant	Project	Total Project Cost
Cowbridge Charter Trust	Historic walls/ storytelling space	£4,920.00
Cowbridge Charter Trust	Historic walls/ storytelling space	£16,781.62
St Illtyd's Church	Galilee Chapel Project	£101,204.97
Anton Jones	Old Place Restoration	£98,436.90
Mr Paul Fisher	Bonvilston Village history	£2,005.00
Mr Paul Fisher	Bonvilston Village history	£9,701.05
Mr Steve Pickering	Cosmeston ME Village	£12,250.20
Dunraven Gardens	Wall restoration	£94,556.01
Dunraven Gardens	Wall restoration 13/14	£4,723.80
Rhose Point	Interpretation	£7,483.57
Cowbridge Museum	Conservation of records	£2,554.74
Wenvoe Orchard and Pond	Shrubs & bee hotel	£2,126.27
Llancarfan Church Paintings	Interpretation	£7,084.60
Heritage Coast Sense of Place	Interpretation	£63,603.39
Llantwit Major History Society	Digitisation	£997.97
Cowbridge History Society	Digitisation	£2,554.74
Hendrewennol	Halloween Event	£3,250.00
Glyndwr Vineyard	Self guided tours	£2,744.45
Harvest Cowbridge	Apple/orchard events	£1,253.79
Llanblethian History Trail	history trail	£3,301.35
Tudor Garden, Dunraven Gardens	Tudor Garden & Uturn	£2,614.49
Cowbridge Charter Trust	Children's Heritage Project	£2,430.00
Dinas Powys Heritage Interpretation Boards	2 x interpretation boards	£2,219.00
Clwb Alawon Llanilltud Fawr Development	Folk Music Project	£1,392.86
Anton Jones	Old Place Restoration Phase 2	£17,124.00
Cowbridge Charter Trust	Gardens of the Vale Leaflet	£2,508.00
Llancarfan Church Paintings	Iolo Board, Llancarfan	£1,400.40
Heritage Coast Interpretation	Heritage Coast Interpretation	£11,470.24
		£357,232.08

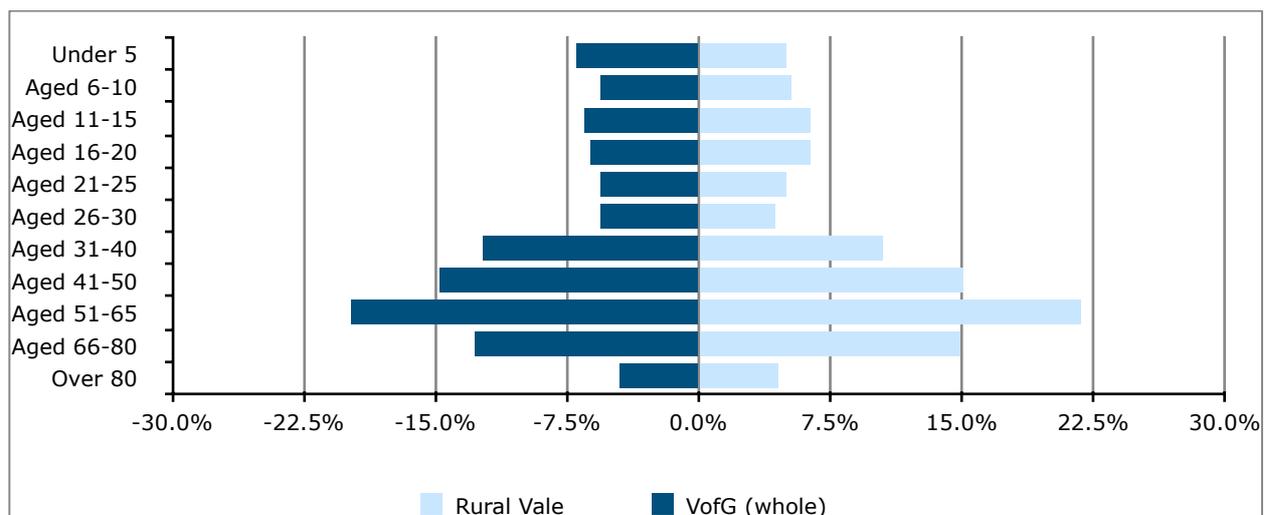
Economic Context Review

Population Change

Firstly, in terms of changes in overall population, Rural Vale's population grew between 2001 & 2011 from 49,117 to 50,774 (growth of 3.4%). Population growth over the decade was slower than in the Vale as a whole (5.9%) and in Wales (5.5%). This could obviously be due to a number of factors such as demographic profile (the population of Rural Vale is older and we would expect birth rates to have been lower), local housing policy (concentration of developments in Barry and Penarth) and/or differences in migration flows.

Interestingly, population growth has been much lower than envisaged in the 2009 LDS, where expectations of 7%-8% growth were referenced. Population growth would have been affected over the 10 years by the impact of the recession, which had a major impact upon the movement of people within the UK and demand for new housing.

In terms of demographic profile, it is highly unlikely that this will have changed significantly over the Programme period. Analysis of the population data shows that Rural Vale still tends to be slightly 'older' in profile than the Vale as a whole, with marginally lower levels of working-age population.

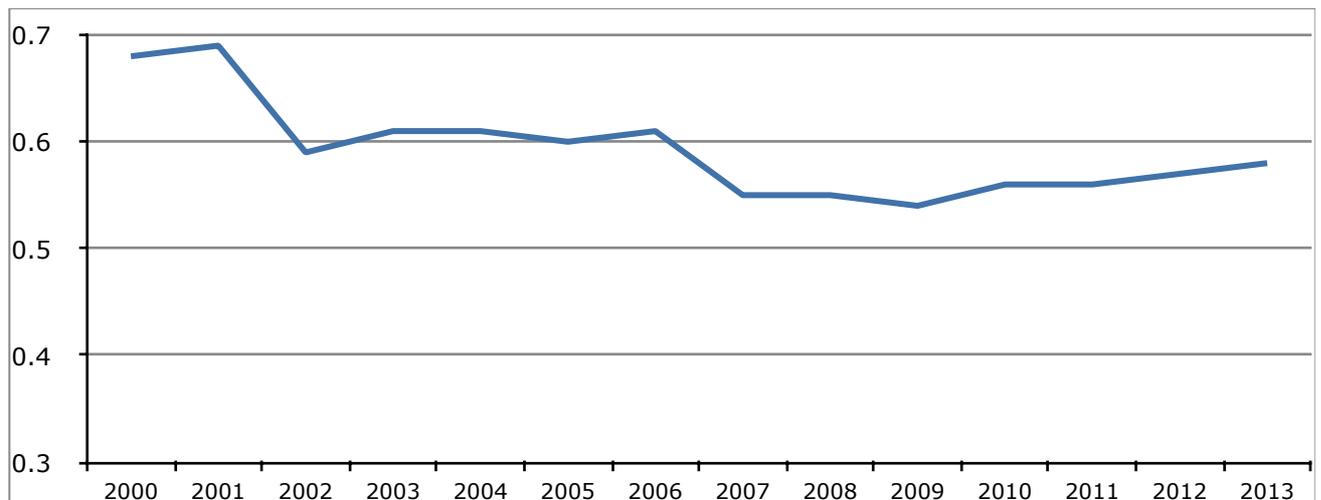


Source: (2011 Census)

Out Commuting

A key characteristic of the Vale economy identified in the 2009 LDS was the high level of outward commuting from the area. The Vale has traditionally been one of the areas where the level of 'self-containment' i.e. the proportion of local residents who are employed in the local area, is lowest. Reducing the level of out-commuting was identified as an important issue in the 2009 LDS – it was cited as 25% when considered on a net basis (outward commuting net of inward commuting). Latest data seems to indicate the level of net out-commuting in the Vale has actually increased, the 2011 Census shows that 29,900 people of working-age commuted out of the Vale for employment (over half of all those in employment), whilst 11,500 commuted in – a net outflow of 18,400. As a proportion of total working-age residents in employment – this equated to approximately 33% and remains the highest of any local authority in Wales.

Related to this point – in effect measuring this issue a different way – the Vale has a lower jobs density than other areas; in 2013 there were 0.58 jobs per resident aged 16-6415, compared to 0.71 for Wales and 0.78 in the UK16.



Source: (ONS – Job density)

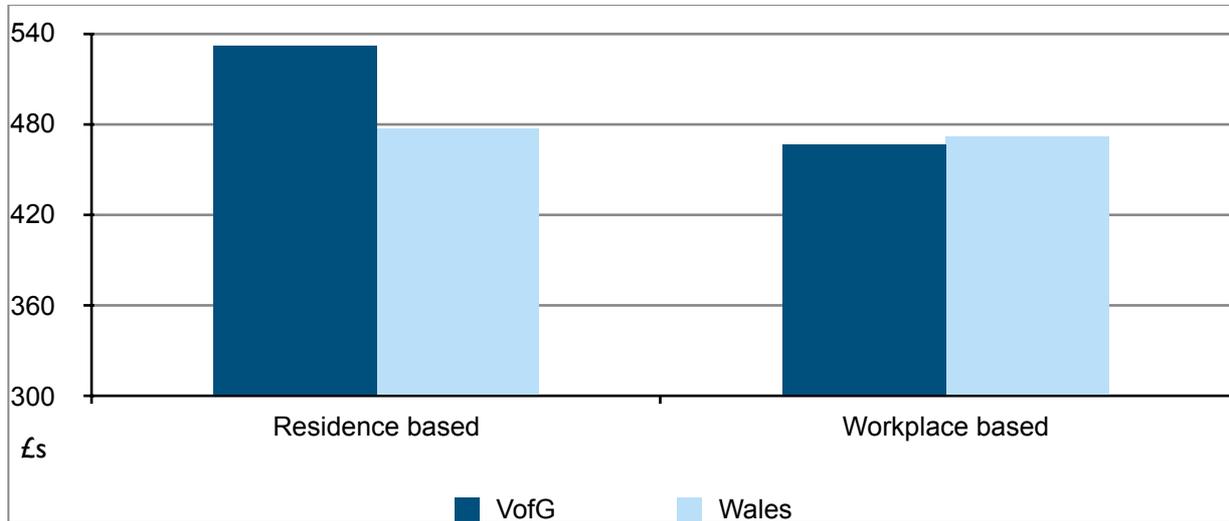
Clearly, out-commuting is significant and remains an issue to be addressed (high levels of out-commuting tends to have an adverse effect on the economic ‘vibrancy’ of an area, affecting demand for local services). The 2009 LDS identified that increased use of ICT could be an important tool to improve retention in an area, allowing more people to work flexibly from home. Census data shows that 10% of all working people now work primarily from home. However, comparison with 2001 Census data shows that this has remained static over time – in 2001 the proportion was also just over 10%. The natural conclusion to draw is that despite the increased availability of technology there has not been a significant increase in home-working in the Vale, or indeed many other places.

Earnings and Occupations

As would be expected in an area where there are high levels of out-commuting, there remains a differential between the earnings level of those people that live in the Vale and those that work in the area. The Vale – and particularly the Rural Vale – is a place where many skilled and people employed in technical and managerial positions choose to live (see below). On average (median) the average gross weekly wage for full-time workers for those people who live in the Vale is £531, compared to £466 for the workplace-placed measurement. The below chart shows this differential is much greater in the Vale than in Wales as a whole. Again, we would expect this differential to narrow if the Vale was able to ‘attract and retain’ higher value employment opportunities.

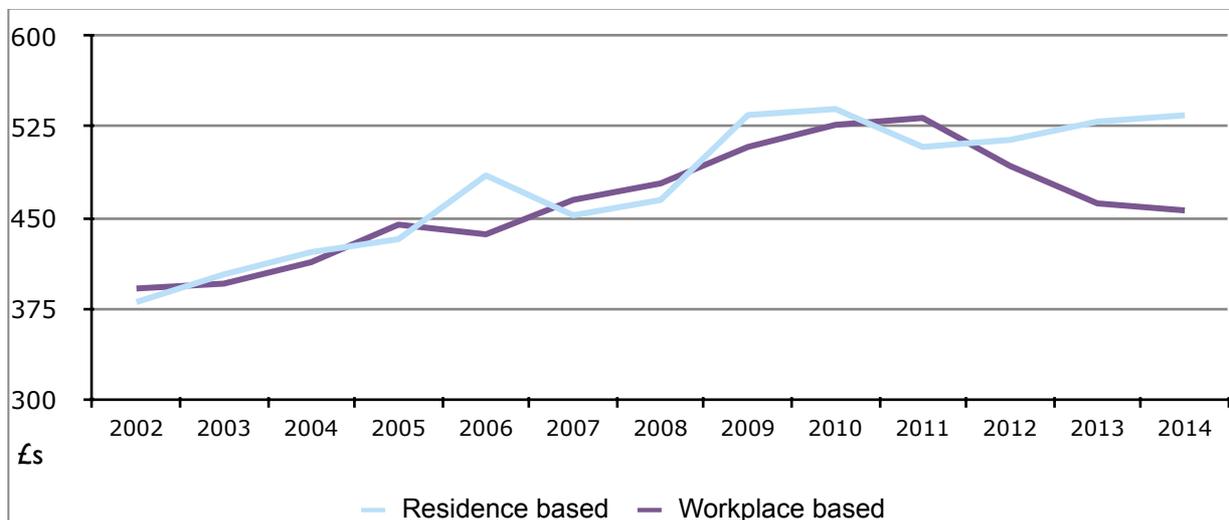
¹⁵ It is important to note that not all residents will be looking and/or available for work.

¹⁶ Although inevitably this figure will increase as the geography becomes larger as people are less likely to commute out of that geographical unit.



Source: (ONS - Annual Survey Hours and earnings - 2013)

Interestingly, the relationship between the earnings of Vale residents and those that work in the district has changed over time. The below chart shows that it is only recently where residence based earnings have begun to exceed workplace earnings on a consistent basis. It should be noted that care should be used when interpreting this data though, it is a survey-based measurement and as such there are relatively wide confidence intervals associated with the data (potentially reversing the relationship for certain years) – making interpretation difficult. Nevertheless, we present the time series below. What is of particular concern is that the data seems to suggest that the average earnings of those who work in Vale has fallen since 2011 in nominal terms (in real terms they would have fallen even further). Again, caution is urged in the interpretation¹⁷.



Source: (ONS - Annual Survey Hours and earnings - 2014)

This measurement is affected by the occupational profile of the Vale’s working-age residents. Data shows that the Vale – and particularly the Rural Vale – has a higher proportion of higher-earning occupations, compared with nationally. For example, near 11% of the working population in Wales was (self) classified as ‘associate professional, technical’, whilst this figure for the Rural Vale was much higher at near 21%. It is likely that the Programme has had little influence in attracting these occupations to the Rural Vale but the data does reinforce the

¹⁷ For example, for 2014 the average workplace gross weekly earnings for full-time workers was estimated to be £456. However, the confidence interval associated with this estimate was 11% i.e. actual average wage could be anywhere in a range of circa £410-£500.

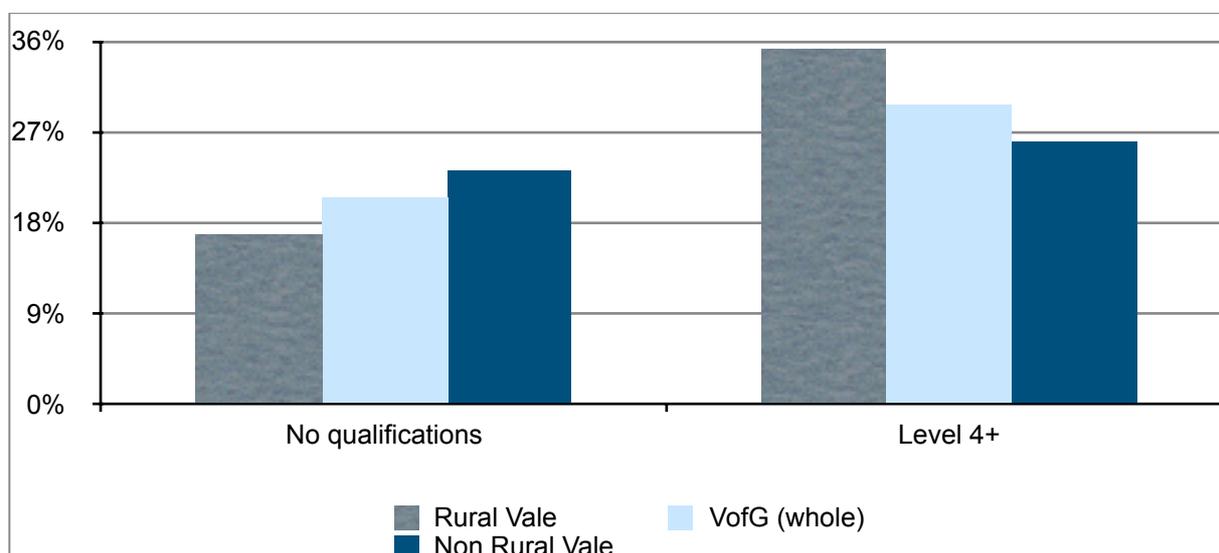
continuing objective that even influencing a small proportion of these higher earning and skilled people to remain more local for their employment would have significant benefits to the locality.

Self-employment levels still tend to be higher in the Rural Vale, 17% of those who are economically active work as self-employed traders. Higher levels of self-employment are a normal characteristic of more rural areas; partially reflecting the sector make-up with greater representation of industries such as agriculture and small-scale construction. In part this is also illustrated by the fact that proportionally more people in the Rural Vale tend to work longer hours, with 16% working 49 or more hours per week¹⁸.

Qualifications

As highlighted in the 2009 LDS, the qualification levels of people living in the Rural Vale tend to be higher than elsewhere. This links to the above occupational profile of residents. The data does suggest that the resident population is becoming more highly qualified in relative terms. 2001 Census data shows that approximately 20% of residents of the Rural Vale aged over 16 held no qualifications, whilst approximately 27% held qualifications at NVQ Level 4 equivalent and above. These indicators improved markedly over the following 10 years – with no qualifications reducing to 17% and the proportion of higher qualified people increasing to 35%. Again, there were significant macro-level factors which have driven these changes (across all areas) - not least the significant increase in the number of people going to university over that period.

The below chart shows that residents of the Rural Vale are typically much more qualified than elsewhere in the district. Again, a key objective remains the greater *utilisation* of these skills within the Rural Vale – rather than it simply being a place where people live but apply these skills elsewhere.



Source: (2011 Census)

Deprivation

Analysis of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2011 shows that, overall, no part of the Rural Vale is classified as being in the most deprived 700 lower super output areas in Wales. As expected, given its relative rurality, the 'domain' where the Rural Vale performs most

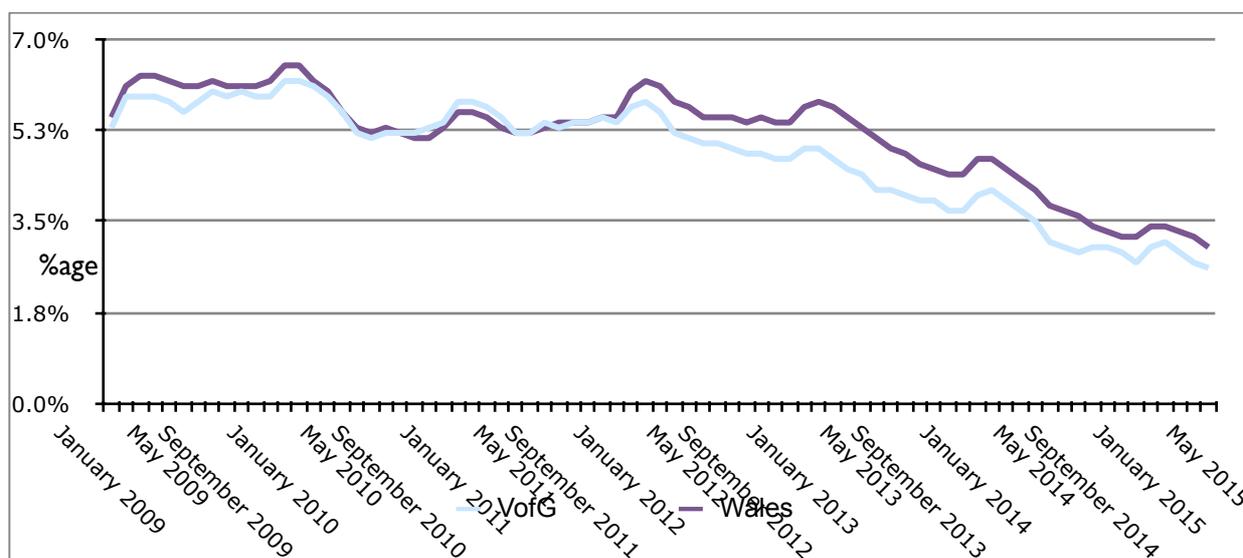
¹⁸ Annual Population Survey - ONS

poorly in relative terms is access to services. Parts of Cowbridge, Peterston-Super-Ely, Rhoose and Wenvoe are all classified as being in the 'most deprived 200 areas'¹⁹ in Wales on this measurement. Overall, the most deprived areas of the Rural Vale are parts of Llantwit Major and St Athan.

The Labour Market

As with many of areas, labour market conditions in the Vale are relatively robust at present. Economic activity rate (the number of people who are either in employment or available for work) currently stands at 78.4% (Dec 14), significantly higher than the rate for Wales as a whole 74.7%²⁰. Estimates of unemployment shows that it tends to track higher than the national average though. The latest estimate of 7.3% of those economically active (Dec 14) is higher than the Wales average of 6.1%. The ILO measurement is a survey-based estimate and is therefore subject to variability and certainly the Vale time series tends to fluctuate somewhat.

Looking at unemployment using the narrower measure of claimant count (those who are unemployed and are claiming Jobseekers Allowance benefits), the below chart shows that – as with most other areas – the number of claimants has decreased over recent years. Using January 2009 as starting point – relevant to the operation of the Programme – we can see that the proportion of claimants fell, which was broadly consistent with the Welsh average. However, from 2012 onwards the proportion of claimant rate has fallen more quickly in the Vale, and as such it could be argued there has been a relative improvement in labour market conditions based on this indicator.



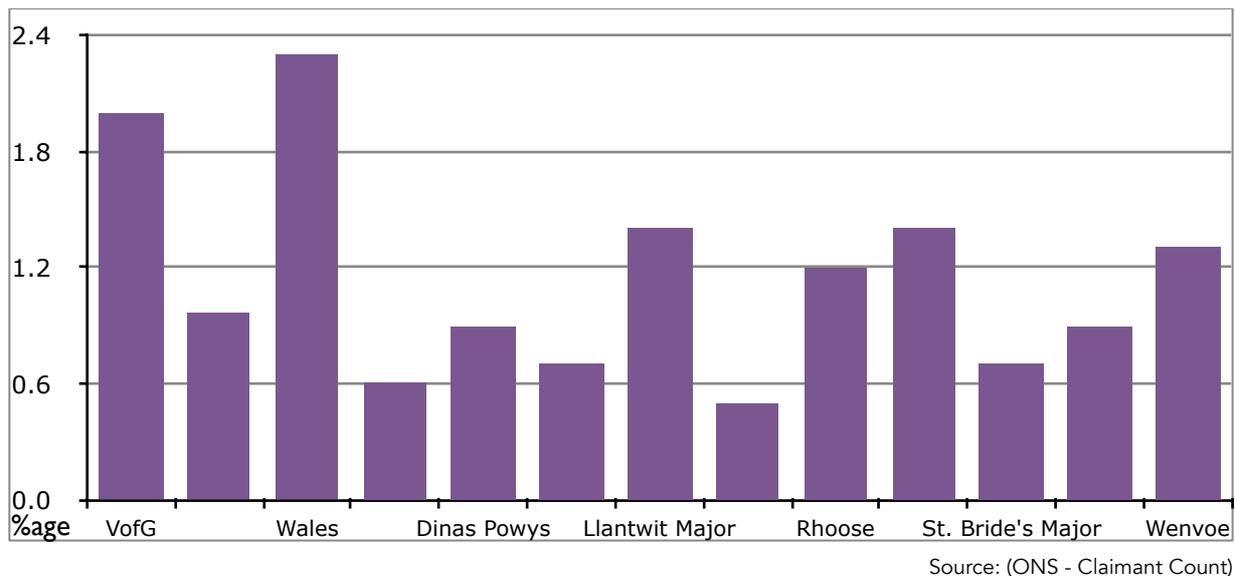
Source: (ONS - Claimant Count)

Claimant count data is now available at a ward level – allowing us to look at current relative levels – but has only been so since September 2014, therefore making it difficult to look at trends relevant to the Programme period. Rates of claimants do tend to be lower in the Rural Vale than elsewhere. The below chart shows that the latest figure (May 15) the average claimant count in the Rural Vale is just 1% - significantly below the Wales average of 2.3%,

¹⁹ The Index is produced as a set of ranks, with a rank of 1 assigned to the most deprived area. Ranks are a relative system of measurement; it shows which areas are more (or less) deprived than others, but not by how much. The ranks of the Index are calculated for each of the 1896 lower layer super output areas (LSOAs) of Wales.

²⁰ Annual Population Survey - ONS

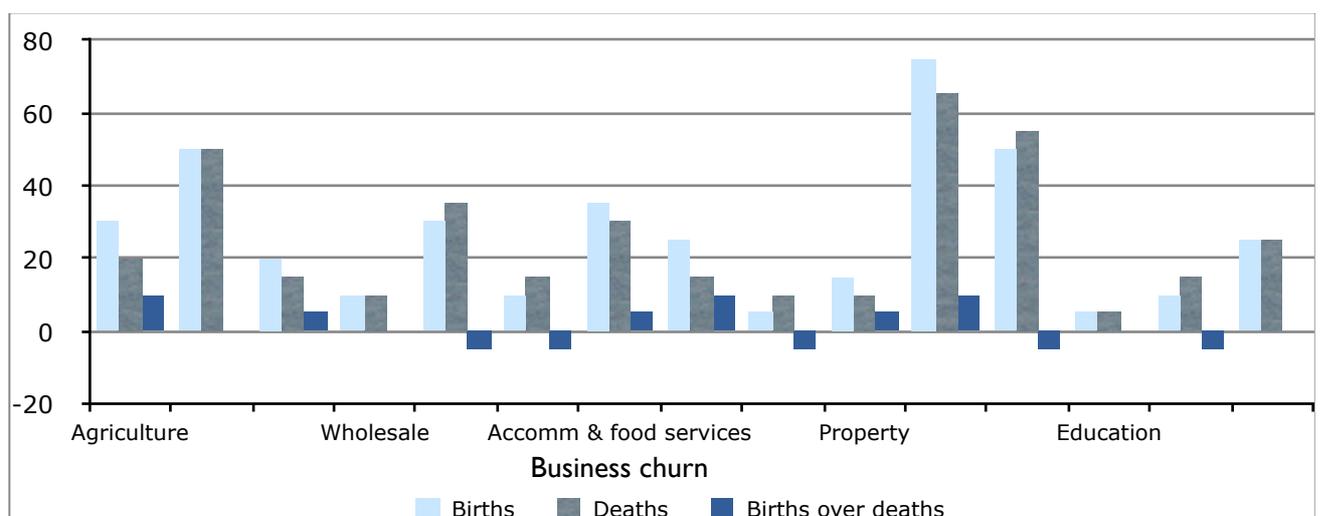
and reasonably below the 2% average in the Vale as whole – meaning that the claimant rate in Barry and Penarth would be greater than this level²¹.



Business Stock

In terms of changes in business stock, again the level of business churn i.e. the number of businesses being set up (births) and those ceasing trading (deaths), will have inevitably been affected by the recession. The difficult trading conditions set the context for any changes in the business stock of a given area. With this in mind, the latest data does indicate that for those industries that were targeted for support through the Programme i.e. agriculture, tourism etc. that business numbers are holding up reasonably well. For example, between 2012 & 2013 30 additional agricultural businesses were established in the Vale (we assume located in the Rural Vale), whilst 20 ceased trading – a net increase of 10 new businesses.

Similarly, 5 net new businesses in accommodation and food services (much of which will be dependent upon tourism – although we recognise that not wholly and also that some will be located outside of the Rural Vale).

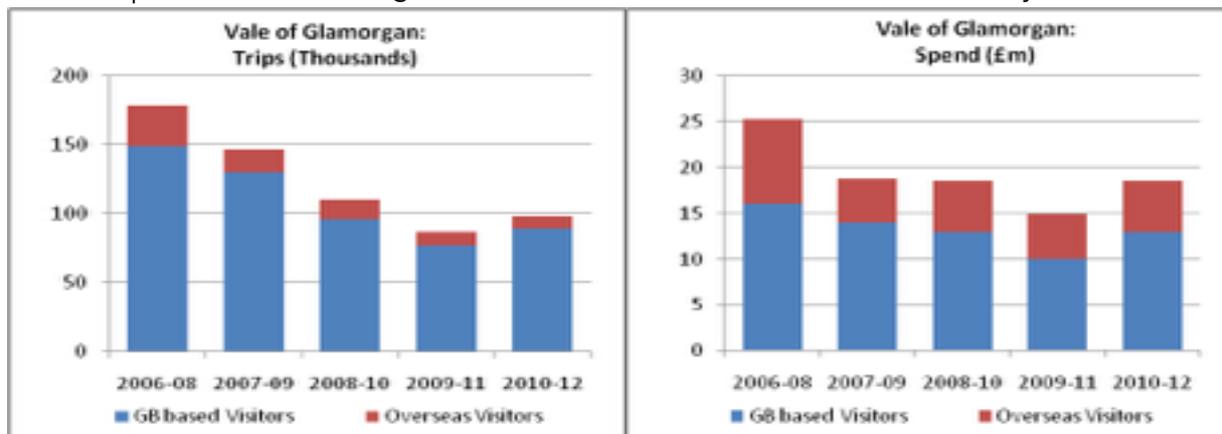


Source: (ONS – Business demography)

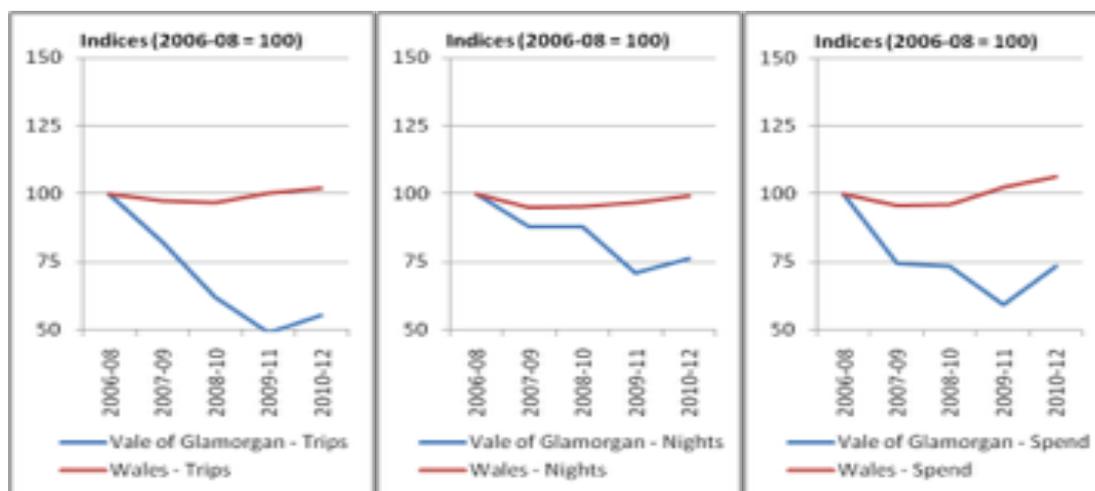
²¹ It's important to note that claimant count rate is not survey-based. Therefore, in that sense, could be seen as a truly representative measurement, rather than a survey-based measurement which will always have a confidence interval associated with such an estimate.

Tourism

Finally, in terms of tourism – a target sector for the Programme through investments in heritage assets, farm diversification etc. – the available data (which is lagged to 2012) seems to indicate that overall tourism volumes in the Vale – for both trips and nights - have fallen over the past decade, although the most recent data does indicate a recovery of sorts²².



Comparisons of trends in the Vale with those of Wales as a whole can be made by converting the data to indices with totals on the starting date reset to 100. As the below chart shows, this method highlights how in particular the numbers of overnight trips, nights and amount of related spend have fallen at a faster rate in the Vale since 2006-08 than across Wales in total. This analysis is useful because, whereas the above charts capture *absolute* performance – which during the period 2007-2011 would implicitly partly reflect the impact of the recession – the below shows *relative* performance. Given that the whole of the Welsh tourism economy would have also been impacted by the recession, the data suggests that the Vale was affected more severely.



²² Some of this analysis was included in the baseline analysis for the Local Development Strategy for 2014-2020.

Financial and output tables

Pride in the Vale

PRIDE IN THE VALE							
Financial Summary	Original approved		Latest approved		Final outturn 1st March 2011 To 31st December 2014		
Timescales	01/03/2011 to 31/12/2014		01/03/2011 to 31/12/2014				
	Original approved		Latest approved		Final outturn		
	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Total
Total Project costs	£76,000	£644,000	£66,000	£695,319	£65,024	£699,933	£764,958
RDP funding	Not broken down	Not Broken down	£0.00	£609,056	£0.00	£609,056	£609,056
Levered funding	Not broken Down	Not broken down	£66,000	£86,264	£65,024	£90,878	£155,902

Additional Performance Indicators	Achievement to end of Project
WR.124.1 Gross number of jobs created	0.58
WR.41.6 Number of groups engaged	13
WAO.MEASURE.7 Number of young people participating in the project	3
WAO.MEASURE.8 Number of women participating in the project	44
WAO.MEASURE.10 Number of Welsh speakers participating in the project	11

Pride in the Vale: Performance Indicators	TARGETS: 01/03/2011 to 31/12/2014		Achievement to end of Project
	Original Target	Approved Target <i>(as in current Funding Letter)</i>	
OUTPUTS			
ECO.124.1 Number of enterprises advised or assisted to develop a cooperation initiative	12	11	23
ECO.124.2 Number of individuals advised or assisted to develop a cooperation initiative	50	5	5
ECO.124.3 Number of groups advised or assisted to develop a cooperation initiative	12	3	1
ECO.124.4 Number of cooperation initiative financially supported	6	6	15
ECO.313.1 Number of small scale tourism infrastructure projects financially supported	5	13	45
ECO.313.2 Number of local recreational infrastructure projects financially supported	5	14	40
ECO.313.3 Number of projects to develop and/or market a rural tourism product or service financially supported	5	16	41
ECO.321.1 Number of projects relating to basic services for the economy and the rural population financially supported	15	15	6
ECO.322.1 Number of projects relating to village renewal and development financially supported	0	34	42
ECO.322.2 Number of villages where renewal and development projects have taken place	10	31	26
ECO.323.1 Number of projects in support of maintaining, restoring or upgrading the rural heritage financially supported	5	7	12
WO.313.1 Number of enterprises advised or assisted to develop and/or market a tourism project	0	37	50
WO.313.2 Number of individuals advised or assisted to develop and/or market tourism projects	0	10	17
WO.313.3 Number of groups advised or assisted to develop and/or market tourism projects	0	6	11
WO.321.1 Number of enterprises advised or assisted to develop projects relating to basic services for the economy and the rural population	0	3	4
WO.321.2 Number of individuals advised or assisted to develop projects relating to basic services for the economy and the rural population	0	3	15
WO.321.3 Number of groups advised or assisted to develop projects relating to basic services for the economy and the rural population	0	13	4
WO.322.1 Number of enterprises advised or assisted to develop projects relating to village renewal and development	0	3	27
WO.322.3 Number of individuals advised or assisted to develop projects relating to village renewal and development	0	3	0
WO.322.2 Number of groups assisted or assisted to develop project relating to village renewal and development	0	3	16
WO.323.3 Number of enterprises advised or assisted to develop projects in support of maintaining, restoring or upgrading the rural heritage	0	12	16

WO.323.4 Number of individuals advised or assisted to develop projects in support of maintaining, restoring or upgrading the rural heritage	0	6	33
WO.323.5 Number of groups advised or assisted to develop projects in support of maintaining, restoring or upgrading the rural heritage	0	6	9
WAO.MEASURE.1 Number of awareness raising events held	0	13	13
WAO.MEASURE.4 Number of interpretive materials produced	0	20	27
WAO.MEASURE.5 Number of marketing & promotional activities undertaken	0	175	212
WO.41.3 Number of community mapping exercises undertaken	0	21	18
RESULTS			
ECR.124.2 Number of new or improved processes introduced by supported enterprises	6	6	1
ECR.124.3 Number of new products launched	6	6	6
ECR.313.1 Gross number of jobs created	1	2	5.82
ECR.321.1 Population in rural area benefiting from improved services	50712	50712	50712
WR.41.1 Number of enterprises potentially created	0	11	17
WR.41.2 Gross number of jobs potentially created	0	10	7.15
WR.41.4 Number of communities engaged	0	33	25
WR.41.5 Number of community groups formed	0	3	1
WR.41.7 Number of individuals engaged	0	74	200

Pride in our Services

PRIDE IN OUR SERVICES							
Financial Summary	Original approved		Latest approved		Final outturn 1st March 2011 To 31st December 2014		
Timescales	01/03/2011 to 31/12/2014		01/03/2011 to 31/12/2014				
	Original approved		Latest approved		Final outturn		
	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Total
Total Project costs	£845,000	£487,000	£926,564	£542,915	£926,393	£543,269	£1,469,662
RDP funding	Not broken down	Not broken down	£559,080	£458,600	£540,623	£458,600	£999,223
Levered funding	Not broken down	Not broken down	£367,484	£84,315	£385,770	£84,669	£470,439

Pride in our Services: Performance indicators	TARGETS		Achievement to end of Project
	Original target	Approved target <i>(as per current Funding Letter)</i>	
OUTPUTS			
ECO.321.1 Number of projects relating to basic services for the economy and the rural population financially supported	15	21	32
WO.321.1 Number of enterprises advised or assisted to develop projects relating to basic services for the economy and the rural population	23	25	13
WO.321.2 Number of individuals advised or assisted to develop projects relating to basic services for the economy and the rural population	18	18	1
WO.321.3 Number of groups advised or assisted to develop projects relating to basic services for the economy and the rural population	N/A	15	6
RESULTS			
ECR.321.1 Population in rural area benefiting from improved services	50712	50712	51135
WR.321.1 Number of new products or services launched	5	9	21
WR.321.2 Number of new services & facilities available to the rural population	10	12	22
WR.321.3 Number of existing services & facilities sustained	2	8	15
WR.321.4 Number of individuals accessing services & facilities	2250	2750	34851
WAO.MEASURE.1 Number of awareness raising events held	6	7	1
WAO.MEASURE.4 Number of interpretive materials produced	4	5	7
WAO.MEASURE.5 Number of marketing & promotional activities undertaken	12	27	62
WAO.MEASURE.15 Number of activities that actively encourages or promotes action to address environmental sustainability	2	3	15

Pride in our Villages

PRIDE IN OUR VILLAGES							
	Original approved		Latest approved		1/3/2011 – 31/12/2014		
Timescales	01/03/2011 - 31/12/2014		01/3/2011 – 31/12/2014		Final outturn		
	Original approved		Latest approved		Final outturn		
	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Total
Total Project costs	£305,000	£100,000	£205,000	£144,538	£210,615	£144,691	£355,306
RDP funding	Not Broken Down	On original letter	£143,500	£125,107	£143,404	£125,107	£268,511
Levered funding	Not Broken Down	On original Letter	£61,500	£19,431	£67,211	£19,584	£86,795

Pride in our Villages: Performance indicators	TARGETS		Achievement to end of Project
	Original target	Approved target (as per current Funding Letter)	
OUTPUTS			
ECO.322.1 Number of projects relating to village renewal and development financially supported	10	26	26
ECO.322.2 Number of villages where renewal and development projects have taken place	10	16	16
WO.322.1 Number of enterprises advised or assisted to develop projects relating to village renewal and development	0	13	16
WO.322.2 Number of groups assisted or assisted to develop project relating to village renewal and development	10	15	6
RESULTS			
ECR.322.1 Population in rural area benefiting from improved services	50712	50712	33246
WR.322.2 Number of new services & facilities available to the rural population	4	10	6
WR.322.3 Number of existing services & facilities sustained	6	16	18
WR.322.6 Number of young people benefiting from new or improved services & facilities	130	205	10900
WR.322.7 Number of elderly people benefiting from new or improved services & facilities	125	200	12747
WR.322.8 Number of Woman benefiting from new or improved services & facilities	125	200	13824
WR.322.9 Number of Welsh speakers benefiting from new or improved services & facilities	50	70	1143
WAO.MEASURE.1 Number of awareness raising events held	6	7	1
WAO.MEASURE.2 Number of consultation exercises undertaken	5	10	16
WAO.MEASURE.4 Number of interpretive materials produced	4	5	7
WAO.MEASURE.5 Number of marketing & promotional activities undertaken	12	16	11
WAO.MEASURE.15 Number of activities that actively encourages or promotes action to address environmental sustainability	2	15	17

Pride in our Heritage

PRIDE IN OUR HERITAGE							
Financial Summary	Original approved		Latest approved		Final outturn 1st March 2011 To 31st December 2014		
Timescales	01/03/2011 to 31/12/2014		01/03/2011 to 31/12/2014				
	Original approved		Latest approved		Final outturn		
	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Total
Total Project costs	£420,000	£229,000	£413,631	£244,527	£427,413	£243,331	£670,744
RDP funding	Not broken down	Not broken down	£293,000	£220,326	£293,000	£220,326	£513,326
Levered funding	Not broken down	Not broken down	£120,631	£24,201	£134,413	£23,005	£157,418

Pride in our Heritage: Performance indicators	TARGETS		Achievement to end of Project
	Original target	Approved target (as per current Funding Letter)	
OUTPUTS			
ECO.323.1 Number of projects in support of maintaining, restoring or upgrading the rural heritage financially supported	10	18	21
WO.323.2 Number of protection and management plans developed relating to the rural heritage	2	4	3
WO.323.3 Number of enterprises advised or assisted to develop projects in support of maintaining, restoring or upgrading the rural heritage	10	12	9
WO.323.4 Number of individuals advised or assisted to develop projects in support of maintaining, restoring or upgrading the rural heritage	2	7	3
WO.323.5 Number of groups advised or assisted to develop projects in support of maintaining, restoring or upgrading the rural heritage	5	12	16
RESULTS			
ECR.323.1 Population in rural area benefiting from improved services	50712	50712	43636
WR.323.2 No. of new services & facilities available to the rural population	5	10	42
WR.323.6 Number of young people benefiting from new or improved services & facilities	85	110	553
WR.323.7 Number of elderly people benefiting from new or improved services & facilities	85	110	1742
WR.323.8 No. of women benefiting from new or improved services/facilities	85	110	1445
WR.323.9 Number of Welsh speakers benefiting from new or improved services & facilities	50	70	565
WAO.MEASURE.1 Number of awareness raising events held	6	8	6
WAO.MEASURE.2 Number of consultation exercises undertaken	10	13	3
WAO.MEASURE.4 Number of interpretive materials produced	10	12	22
WAO.MEASURE.5 Number of marketing & promotional activities	8	15	46
WAO.MEASURE.19 Number of projects aimed at environmental enhancement/sustainability	3	4	5

Pride in our Farming Families

PRIDE IN OUR HERITAGE							
Financial Summary	Original approved		Latest approved		Final outturn 1st March 2011 To 31st December 2014		
Timescales	01/03/2011 to 31/12/2014		01/03/2011 to 31/12/2014				
	Original approved		Latest approved		Final outturn		
	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Total
Total Project costs	£270,000	£160,000	£547,835	£151,143	£563,511	£145,694	£709,205
RDP funding	£209,721	£124,279	£350,600	£138,800	£350,357	£138,800	£489,157
Levered funding	£60,279	£35,721	£197,235	£12,343	£213,154	£6,894	£220,048

Pride in our Farming Families: Performance indicators	TARGETS		Achievement to end of Project
	Original target	Approved target (as per current Funding Letter)	
OUTPUTS			
ECO.311.1 Number of farming household members financially supported to diversify into non-agricultural activities	12	20	24
WO.311.1 Number of farming household members advised or assisted to diversify into non-agricultural activities	25	30	32
WO.311.2 Number of events, seminars, workshops & conferences attended by farming household members to encourage diversification into non-agricultural activities	6	8	2
RESULTS			
ECR.311.1 Gross number of jobs created	4	8	23.51
WR.311.1 Number of new non-agricultural products or services launched by a farming household member	6	10	13
WR.311.2 Number of new markets accessed by supported farming household members	6	6	12
WAO.MEASURE.1 Number of awareness raising events held	6	4	2
WAO.MEASURE.4 Number of interpretive materials produced	4	2	17
WAO.MEASURE.5 Number of marketing & promotional activities undertaken	2	23	55
WAO.MEASURE.15 Number of activities that actively encourages or promotes action to address environmental sustainability	2	7	13
ECR.311.2 Increase in non-agricultural gross value added in supported farming households	252700	0	

Scoring Criteria for Projects

Pride in our Farming Families

1. Does the project fit with the aims and objectives of Pride in our farming families
2. Does the project application demonstrate value for money in terms of number of job(s) created?
3. Does the project demonstrate how it financially benefits the farm?
4. Does the project application demonstrate how it will add value to the area, existing services/facilities?
5. Does the project demonstrate a marketing plan appropriate to the scale of the project?
6. Does the application demonstrate how the project will be sustainable after the funding ends?
7. Has the applicant demonstrated
 - Use of the Welsh language?
 - Integration of ICT?
 - A commitment to equal opportunities?
 - An environmental policy?

Pride in our Heritage

1. Does the project fit with aims and objectives of Pride in our Heritage
2. Does the application demonstrate the site or subject matters heritage value?
3. Does the project application demonstrate the need and/or demand for the project?
4. Does the project demonstrate how it will offer an opportunity for the community and/or visitors to learn more about the heritage of the site or the subject matter?
5. Does the project application demonstrate how the long term conservation and/or financial sustainability of the project will be addressed?
6. Does the project demonstrate a marketing plan appropriate to the scale of the project?
7. Has the applicant demonstrated
 - Use of the Welsh language?
 - Integration of ICT?
 - A commitment to equal opportunities?
 - An environmental policy?

Pride in our Villages

1. Does the project fit with aims and objectives of Pride in our villages?
2. Does the application demonstrate community support for the project?
3. Does the project application demonstrate how the project will enhance/benefit the village?
4. Does the project demonstrate how it will be sustainable after the funding ends?
5. Are the project outputs appropriate to the scale/value of project?
6. Has the applicant demonstrated
 - Use of the Welsh language?
 - Integration of ICT?
 - A commitment to equal opportunities?
 - An environmental policy?

Pride in our Rural Services

Footpaths

1. How well does the project fit with aims and objectives of rural footpaths?
2. Does the application demonstrate community support for the project?
3. Does the project application demonstrate how it will be sustainable after funding ends?
4. Are the project outputs appropriate to the scale/value of project?
5. Has the applicant demonstrated
 - Use of the Welsh language?
 - Integration of ICT?
 - A commitment to equal opportunities?
 - An environmental policy?

Rural Hubs

1. Does the project fit with aims and objectives of Rural Hubs grant scheme?
2. Does the project application demonstrate the need and/or demand for the project?
3. Does the project application demonstrate how the project will enhance/benefit the village?
4. Does the project application demonstrate how the long term financial sustainability of the project will be addressed?
5. Does the project application demonstrate value for money?
6. Has the applicant demonstrated
 - Use of the Welsh language?
 - Integration of ICT?
 - A commitment to equal opportunities?
 - An environmental policy?

Pride in our Vale

Coastal Camping pilot

1. Does the applicant demonstrate aspirations to develop a long term campsite?
2. Does the applicant demonstrate satisfactory skills, experience and provisions for managing a trial camp site?
3. Does the applicant demonstrate how the site will link to public access routes/access to the Wales Coastal Path & public transport links?
4. Does the applicant demonstrate a Unique Selling Point and/or a commitment to linking with existing services/facilities to add value to the site?
5. Does the applicant demonstrate a commitment to partnership working with the other campsites, and to learning through support?
6. Does the project application demonstrate value for money?

Coastal Activities Pilot

1. Does the proposed activity fit well with the 'Slow Tourism' ethos?
2. Will the activity help participants to appreciate and understand the areas distinct local qualities?
3. Will the activity add value to the area and /or complement existing activities and does not duplicate existing activity?
4. Does the applicant demonstrate a basic understanding of managing their activity?
5. Does the applicant demonstrate a good level of relevant experience associated with their proposed activity?
6. Is the proposed activity viable in the GHC? (Given your understanding of the area, the visitor profile, the proposal, and the scores above?)

Case Studies

Title	Facilitating Activities in the Vale of Glamorgan RDP Programme
Project Theme/ Subproject or grant;	The CRC LAG put in place a staff resource to support facilitation of activities in Axis 3 and 4. The staff resource has varied in number over the course of the BP2 period with some staff specific to projects such as the Community Foodie Co-ordinator and other more core staff taking on responsibilities to facilitate different activities, particularly in Axis 4 where the LAG and the team have had much more of a proactive development role. Staff have also been appointed at relatively high grades and this has secured good skills, and people able to work on their own initiative within the structure of the BP2 and its Projects. The CRC team has also included a monitoring and finance officer and administrative support, both also crucial posts.
Activity Lead	Staff are employed by the VoG Council, who are the lead body for the RDP in the rural Vale utilising funding from the RDP and the Council.
What worked well and why	<p>The CRC team is located in the rural Vale in a very accessible location and people view it as having a very open door policy – people can pop in to discuss issues and seek advice and staff are noted as having a very positive and can-do approach. In terms of Axis 3, staff have provided an essential role in helping applicants for funding to understand what the Projects are looking for; how the grant application process works and what is required for it and what will be required thereafter in terms of monitoring and reporting. In Axis 4 they have been proactive in developing the pilot activities and trials that the LAG has chosen to pursue, putting in place a range of procedures, procurements, steering groups, training, legacy tools and providing other support activities. Across both Axes they have sought to facilitate links between individuals and activities and create networking opportunities, albeit as adhoc activities – although some have been planned.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“All members of the CRC team were extremely helpful and knowledgeable and gave excellent guidance and advice. They were extremely friendly and approachable at all times.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“although the forms were formidable, there was always help at hand from CRC: explaining just what was required even when the questions seemed impenetrable”</p> <p>Without this significant level of facilitation and support it seems highly unlikely that the scale of RDP activity would have developed as it has, and with the impacts it has achieved. The CRC team has been fundamental to its success and the amount of achievements within the timescale of the Programme.</p> <p>The fact that the CRC team is well supported and valued is evidenced by the commitment of the VoG Council to maintain a core team in the inter-regnum between Programmes so that their experience and skills are not lost to the rural Vale. In fact the Council should benefit from this arrangement as CRC team members are undertaking work for the Council to transfer some of their experience into delivery of other Council services. One CRC staff member has also secured the post of Tourism Officer for the Council and the next LEADER Programme should benefit from this link.</p>
Challenges	<p>Even despite the level of CRC team support, discussion with the staff team suggests that there have been pressures on time and it has been hard to keep all the varied activities of all the Projects progressing speedily. Meeting the timetable to deliver activities in Axis 4 has been particularly challenging and some activities have not progressed until the final year of the Programme.</p> <p>What is also important, which the CRC team have been aware of, is that they are not doing the development work for others – rather they are supporting and facilitating others to develop and do. This is important so that the reliance is not on the CRC team to deliver projects as this is not a long term sustainable approach. Nevertheless the evaluation shows that some activities are not quite at the point of readiness to be fully unsupported – those that only began in the last year of BP2. It is to be hoped that the forthcoming Programme, or another route, will be able to consolidate some late pilot activities in Axis 4.</p>
Learning for future programmes or projects	The key learning point from this is the importance of the facilitation resource, particularly in this type of locally led programme where there is a large reliance on voluntary effort and not everyone has the skills, knowledge and experience to either deal with the systems involved, or even consider getting involved at all. The CRC team appear to have made the opportunities for engagement very welcoming and well supported- as far as this is possible within the parameters of the Programme.

Title	Evidencing the Impacts: Galilee Chapel at St Illtud's Church
Project Theme/ Subproject or grant;	<p>The site of St Illtud's is believed to be the earliest place of learning in Britain – the place of a celtic monastery. The project has been an ambitious one to renew this centre of learning by rebuilding the roofless Galilee Chapel to provide access, exhibition space and interpretation for a nationally important collection of celtic stones dating from the 9th and 10th century (the surviving remnants of the celtic centre of learning), an education centre for celtic studies and interpretation for St Illtud's Church itself. It also brought a Grade I listed, but ruined, building back into productive use.</p> <p>"The Vale of Glamorgan is rich with churches in fine settings but the mother of them all is Llantwit – few churches in Wales can make greater claims' (T.J. Hughes in his 'Wales Best One Hundred Churches' book, published in 2007)."</p>
Activity Lead	St Illtud's Church
Funding: grant and total	<p>The project received a £70,000 grant from Pride in our Heritage, and was part of much larger funding package including significant support from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The overall project cost was in the order of £700,000, with the RDP grant supporting the early stages of site preparation, foundations and roofing work, whilst also contributing to interpretation work as a condition of grant, to bring synergies with other activities.</p>
Evidencing the Impacts	<p>The RDP grant support set out performance indicators for the project, related to young people, older people, women and welsh speakers. These were to be met principally from local use of the chapel e.g. working with the school and local history society. There were no specific indicators set out in relation to visitor use, which could be a significant tourism benefit of the chapel, as these are not a performance indicator for the RDP Programme. The value of the project in this wider economic context is not therefore being reported back to the CRC LAG although the LDS is seeking to support rural economic development.</p> <p>Fortunately the Church has put in place measures to capture, at least in part, its visitor use. It has a team of 'Welcomers' – people who volunteer at the Chapel to welcome visitors and provide some information. Welcomers are generally on hand to meet and greet visitors for two hours each morning and afternoon during weekdays and on Saturdays – although the Chapel is still open to visitors when Welcomers are not there. Welcomers keep a tally of visitor numbers and where they are from. The tally for January – December 2014 indicates 2430 visitors. Actual numbers will be greater than this as this is by no means a comprehensive count across all opening times.</p> <p>Usefully the Church also carried out a visitor survey, to find out more about where visitors were coming from and what they thought of the Chapel and the information available. It was done principally to help the Church plan for marketing and promotion, and for managing the Chapel. Whilst not statistically robust, it provides a valuable snapshot in time of who is visiting. Visitors were asked to complete a survey form, between January and August 2014. 386 people completed a survey. Of these, 35% came from the UK outside Wales, 26% from South Wales, 16% from Llantwit and 13% from overseas. Visiting the Galilee Chapel itself was the prime purpose of the visit for c33% of visitors, indicating that it is acting as a visitor draw in its own right and some of the visitors are truly new visitors to Llantwit Major and/or the Church. For others it was a wider interest in history, churches, simply passing by or showing people round their local area – and these are people who might have come to the rural Vale and Llantwit Major anyway.</p> <p>The church also has a list of groups visiting or booked to visit the in 2015 so far – 19 groups so far, through to September, totalling around 400 visitors and representing church groups, history groups and others – and even one group from Australia.</p> <p>The data collected by the Welcomers provides gross information about visitors and is only a partial picture of visitor numbers. But having a system which collects this information is very valuable as it helps to build up a profile of who is visiting the Church. There does however need to be a recognition that this type of data collection is gathering information about total (gross) numbers, some of whom would have come anyway regardless of the new Galilee Chapel. Some account needs to be taken of those who would have come anyway, and those attracted by the new facility (the net new visitors).</p>
Learning for future programmes or projects	<p>Putting in place these types of impact measures is very valuable as it helps to demonstrate the wider impacts. Looking forward, identifying easy to use tools for measuring impacts such as visitor numbers would be very valuable, with projects encouraged to use these to contribute to understanding the wider economic impacts and the reasons for visits.</p> <p>The valuable next step from the work already done by the church would be to look at whether visitors to the church are then exploring the rest of Llantwit, going to the local cafes and shops, and to the Tourist Information Point. It is likely these connections are made informally eg Welcomers signpost visitors to places within the town, a local hotel signposts visitors to the Galilee Chapel. With the Llantwit Major Destination Management project that has taken place and working with the Vale of Glamorgan Town Centre Development Officer, there is now the opportunity to build the town's visitor profile linking across all that it has to offer.</p>

Title	Laying the Foundations for the Longer Term
Project Theme/ Subproject or grant;	<p>Much of the pilot activity through Axis 4 has been laying the foundations for longer term development. One of the activities piloted through Axis 4 has been that of Destination Management. The concept of destination management is not innovative in principle and neither are the tools that have been used. However it has been a new activity for the rural Vale and this is the important innovative element.</p> <p>The work on destination management through Axis 4 has comprised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The carrying out of a benchmarking study for each town, undertaken using the Towns Alive (Action for Market Towns) benchmarking toolkit and with results analysed by them. The benchmarking study looks at 12 performance indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commercial Units; Use Class - Commercial Units; Comparison/Convenience - Commercial Units; Trader Type - Commercial Units; Vacancy Rates - Markets - Zone A Retail Rents and Prime Retail Property Yields - Footfall - Car Parking - Business Confidence Surveys - Town Centre Users Surveys - Shoppers Origin Surveys • The benchmarking study combines research and survey work. For example the shoppers origin survey for Llantwit Major indicated 75% of users were locals, 18% visitors within a 30 minute drive time and 7% visitors from more than 30 minutes drive away. This is a higher % of local use when compared to small towns in the south west generally which is a 52%/33%/15% split over the same three headings. Given the historic assets of Llantwit and its close proximity to the coast, the potential for more visitor use and its associated spend is one area for discussion that this type of information can usefully flag up • Establishment of a town team for each of Cowbridge and Llantwit Major as the two pilots, bringing together business, town council and other interests in each town to take forward actions from the benchmarking study • Both Cowbridge and Llantwit Major town teams took forward one action which was that of signing and interpretation around the towns, to make them more welcoming to visitors. Llantwit Major chose to use the oak framed units being installed on the heritage coast. This echoes its desire to be seen as the gateway town to the heritage coast. Cowbridge opted for three modern designs focusing on orientation and history. Both town teams had their own budget with which to decide their signage and interpretation and managed their own selection of contractors to work with.
Activity Lead	The approach built up a town team in each of Cowbridge and Llantwit Major who have led on implementing activities to date.
What worked well and why	<p>What is important with this initiative is that it has laid an evidenced foundation on which to build. The benchmarking exercise provides a factual statement on the current position of a town in terms of its retail offer; surveys on use and an opportunity for different types of users to express their opinions. It is also a comparison with a relevant benchmark. The benchmarks are derived as averages of all towns who have made use of the Towns Alive benchmarking toolkit with the regional benchmark against which Cowbridge and Llantwit are assessed being that for South West England, which has a number of participating market towns, largely from Somerset and Wiltshire. What this means is that there is a base of information which can be revisited to assess change. It also means that there is data to inform debate about what might be key issues and challenges, as well as information/evidence to underpin applications for grant support.</p> <p>There is also a direct opportunity to continue the momentum built up in the pilot project in Axis 4, through the Town Centre Development Officer post created in the VoG Council. This means both Cowbridge and Llantwit Major are well placed to continue the work begun through Axis 4 – there is ongoing support. We understand that the VoG Council has also extended the town centre development work to its main urban centres of Barry and Penarth as well.</p> <p>What was also reported by CRC staff as working well was the delegation of action and budget to the town teams – so it was for the town teams to tender and commission interpretation works etc. This has significant community capacity building potential as well as being a very practical way of giving people an incentive to participate. Our evaluation did not manage to make direct contact with either town teams (a time constraint principally) so we do not have a town team perception on this.</p>
Challenges	The destination management work has sparked off activity that has potential to grow and to be linked with other activities e.g. Llantwit Major has also had various road/pavement improvements associated with the cycleways initiative and this could be linked with destination management, as could building on the historic assets such as St Illtud's Church and the Galilee Chapel and linking this with local facilities such as cafes. However, to do this, it needs to continue to be locally led. There is a challenge to maintain the momentum of these projects, which are not the direct responsibility of any one organisation but have collective benefits. Re-visiting the benchmarking data at regular intervals is important to check progress – allowing for time for impacts to develop.

Learning for future programmes or projects	<p>For a major initiative such as town centre developments, where there is no one organisation responsible but a need to take activities forward in partnership, something like the Benchmarking studies can be a very helpful starting point because they provide an impartial and objective starting point, to help articulate issues and opportunities.</p> <p>Whilst the full benchmarking approach would not be applicable at the small village level, some of the tools used e.g. visitor surveys, shopper surveys, could be ones that could be usefully adapted to smaller village use, perhaps combined with community consultation activities.</p>
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Title	Small scale funding for pre-commercial testing of business ideas
Project Theme/ Subproject or grant;	<p>Two initiatives in Axis 4 have supported very early stages of business development, allowing embryonic businesses to pilot new ideas and support business growth and development by helping to de-risk very early stage business activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Local Food Champions initiative was intended to raise awareness, access to and use of local produce. As part of that it supported several businesses with small scale grants of under £2,000, to help them develop a professional brand image which could give the product credibility in the marketplace. In total nine initiatives were supported of which two were food festivals • The outdoor activities pilot encouraged development of some pilot activities that would both provide new activities for visitors to the Heritage Coast to do and which helped visitors to appreciate the coast's local qualities. Six new pilot activities were supported, some of which also opened up the potential of new business ideas to existing or prospective local businesses
Activity Lead	<p>CRC LAG team, who held an open procurement process for both pilots to invite participation and ask people to put forward proposals. Applications to participate were scored by a local panel for each pilot, using an agreed set of criteria. The CRC team then worked with those selected to participate. Some Local Food Champions received small grants to appoint someone to work with them on marketing/branding. Outdoor Activity pilot providers received some training on communications and marketing, plus small amounts of funding to cover costs of delivery of the pilots e.g. hire of venues, costs of materials - and were supported by the CRC team in the overall marketing and promotion of the pilot activities.</p>
Funding: grant and total	<p>Total costs of the Local Food Champions £21,000. Total costs of the Outdoor Activities Pilot £15,700. Both these exclude CRC team facilitation costs.</p>
What worked well and why	<p>The process of open calls for participants to both initiatives seems to have been a valuable way of drawing out people who might otherwise not have become involved in this sort of programme and putting new ideas/opportunities in front of people.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“It was good to test the idea – the business would not have thought of it, it was prompted by the CRC invitation to participate”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“The business was at a very early stage of development (pre-production) and required additional resource to help with brand development”</p> <p>The support of the CRC team in facilitating the pilots was vital</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“Saw the advert...was spurred on and inspired and then supported by CRC to carry the idea through”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CRC facilitated contact with other 'food champions' which the business has continued a close relationship with</p> <p>Small amounts of grant support have made a considerable impact and put in place building blocks for future business growth. For example one Local Food Champion identified that the brand development work has been absolutely invaluable to the development of the business as it shows the product in a professional light, and has allowed the business to grow. It has a planned business trajectory to ultimately employ three people, has made links with the Slow Food movement in South East Wales and is planning to forge more linkages with local food producers for mutual benefit. One outdoor activities pilot provider has now gone on to run more workshops since the pilot, having found these a useful addition to the business, targeting these more at local people rather than visitors and extending their reach beyond the Heritage Coast.</p> <p>Another, and perhaps unexpected, benefit identified in one interview has been the value of writing a business plan to support the funding application to CRC. This made the applicant think more about its business, bringing more clarity to its thinking and where there were real business planning benefits which are still being reaped. In this regard, the Local Food Champions pilot project also brought a closer working relationship between the CRC team and Cywain, enabling shared visits to participants and mutual signposting.</p>

<p>What did not work as expected</p>	<p>The outdoor activity pilots were intended to provide new activities for visitors to the Heritage Coast to do. The experience of two providers interviewed was that it was more local people rather than visitors who attended the activities run. In one instance this has led the business to continue planning workshops, but targeted more at local residents. This need not be a bad outcome - as local residents enjoying local outdoor activities will signpost others to them, as well as build their own knowledge and connections with the Heritage Coast. However it also highlights the opportunity to develop stronger networks from the pilot activities into other tourism initiatives e.g. Vale Walks, Heritage Coast sense of place work, tourism ambassadors (we note that some outdoor activity pilots providers have become tourism ambassadors). However, as the pilots took place late in the Programme period, the lack of time to consolidate the experience of the pilots may be a factor here. Feedback in interviews also suggests that time for further consolidation would have been welcomed.</p> <p>This is perhaps in contrast to the Local Food Champions pilot project which took place earlier in the Programme and where there is some evidence that participants have been able to build on the work carried out and have kept in contact with the CRC team which has facilitated contacts and networking.</p>
<p>Learning for future programmes or projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • De-risking the very early stages of exploring a new business idea can be very valuable. What these two pilot projects appear to have very successfully done, is combine a business incentive/benefit with CRC LAG's aspirations for new outdoor activities and more local produce, producing a win win situation – the CRC LAG gains some new products and services in line with its objectives whilst the businesses can try out and find new market opportunities in a more de-risked situation • Small amounts of funding at the right time can make a significant difference. The timeliness of the funding can be as important as the amount; and it is valuable to be able to trial a new idea with relatively small levels of investment, especially if a small or embryonic business with limited financial resources. The small amounts of funding can support a valuable step up the business ladder • Supporting/signposting pilot activities with skills development e.g. in relation to business planning, marketing and promotion, could be a valuable benefit. Small and embryonic businesses may not all the skills or expertise, or simply not have thought to do business planning, or have had their business planning tested by others • Thinking about the timing of pilot projects is important, to try and maximise the opportunities to consolidate on pilot projects and find a secure way forward for participants

<p>Title</p>	<p>Building a Network: the Vale of Glamorgan Tourism Ambassadors</p>
<p>Project Theme/ Subproject or grant;</p>	<p>Visit Wales has been pushing the development of tourism ambassadors – local people who can become a welcome host and source of local information for visitors. CRC LAG used Axis 4 to introduce the development of a tourism ambassadors scheme for the rural Vale, to connect the Vale with visitors from outside the area and help build its profile as a visitor destination.</p> <p>AIM: To ensure the visitor experience is such that they want to stay in the area, revisit and recommend it as a destination to others, so raising the profile of the region'.</p> <p>CRC advertised for people to come forward through various means, to join a training programme led by a tourism ambassador trainer. The training took place through workshops, visits and sharing of events and experience. Packs of information were developed by the ambassadors for themselves and for visitors and other tools are in place to support the Ambassadors.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">"I am proud of living in the Vale so thought I could learn something from it and also promote the Vale"</p> <p>Tourism Ambassadors can fulfil different functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a local contact point for visitors and group organisers to help them plan a visit to the Vale • Meet and greet visitors to the Vale, spending time on a voluntary basis with them to share their knowledge and interests in the Vale. This is done on a Code of Conduct based on the Global Greeters guidelines • Be an events greeter to support local events organisers and be a point of information • Provide other support eg researching content to help promote the Vale as a destination; or develop employees/colleagues knowledge of the Vale <p>The pilot project 'trained' 35 tourism ambassadors initially and more are reported as now on board bringing the number to nearer 50.</p>
<p>Activity Lead</p>	<p>The pilot project was launched by the LAG and CRC, to address the issue of raising the profile of the rural Vale as a visitor destination. It began in May 2014 with training starting in June and a planned programme of workshops and visits through to November 2014. It was supported by an external trainer - Angharad Wynne Marketing and Communications.</p>

<p>What worked well and why</p>	<p>The approach to the 'training' has been welcomed by participants. The combination of visits, and sharing of knowledge and information through focused workshops amongst a group of enthusiastic volunteers coming from a variety of different backgrounds has clearly been very successful</p> <p><i>"The ambassadors programme was a delightful way of learning about our local heritage, music and folklore as well as enjoying excellent tours of some of the lead visitor attractions and little known secrets of the Vale of Glamorgan. Angharad tells history in an amusing and comprehensive way and I was one of many who successfully 'graduated' as a result"</i></p> <p>Not only has the tourism ambassadors pilot project led to quite a diversity of successful 'graduates' but those who went through the programme have formed sound bonds and have wanted to maintain that contact as a network.</p> <p><i>"Not only have we learnt so much about the Vale but we have also developed a really strong little community of people with a common aim, which is to take every opportunity to promote this special piece of Wales"</i></p> <p>The ambassadors programme is very much in its early stages. Now that the training is complete through the pilot project, the ambassadors need to take hold of the project, build up their role and connections with tourists and the tourism industry locally. Not everyone involved comes from a tourism background. So they are working to build those connections; the Vale Tourism Association is now providing a 'home' for the Ambassadors who are holding a 'speed dating' evening with Vale Tourism Association members, to mutually introduce themselves. They have a presence on tourism websites for the Vale. They are listed on the More to the Vale website, (where they also have a private site to share information and experience): http://www.moretothevale.com/ambassadors/</p> <p>The same website hosts a number of 'factsheets' created by the ambassadors pilot project and downloadable by anyone. (ADD A COVER) These reference other materials produced through RDP supported projects e.g the Walk the Vale leaflets, the Wreckers Game. The ambassadors are also featured on www.lovethevale.com and www.visitthevale.com</p> <p>One person has taken on being chair of the Ambassadors network and is developing a programme to maintain ambassadors interest and enthusiasm whilst the programme establishes itself. A programme of visits is being arranged and a funding bid has been made to Visit Wales to provide some administrative support for the network, which is entirely voluntarily run. The network also has three small subgroups who are planning for the next 12 months - on social media, training and ambassador/trade links.</p> <p><i>"It all takes time – to move from a profile of zero to being used on a regular basis.now actively planning to keep the network together especially in the interim whilst waiting to hear the outcome of the funding application"</i></p>
<p>Issues that arose</p>	<p>Whilst participants have very much welcomed and valued the training and networking aspects of the ambassadors pilot project, there was nevertheless some confusion over the pilot project's objective. There was perhaps an initial expectation that the ambassadors would be business people as in other areas in Wales e.g. Carmarthenshire. But once it was apparent that this was not the case there needed to be some thought given to how to take the pilot forward with this different group of people and what their role would be. Participants commented that once training had started, it was clear that people didn't necessarily know what their role should be and there was no defined structure once the training had completed. So the Network is now developing as a means of establishing their role and a development path.</p> <p>To some extent this is the nature of a pilot project and given the late timing of the pilot in the BP2 timescale, planning its progression took it beyond the timescale for the RDP funding. Nevertheless it clearly has a future and participants want it to have one. It will require some ongoing support to ensure that happens and help is being given through the Vale of Glamorgan Tourism Officer and Vale Tourism Association.</p> <p>As Angharad Wynne says in her final report of the pilot project 'the ambassadors scheme must maintain its visibility, become active and engaged within the tourism sector in order for the scheme to realise its potential'</p>
<p>Learning for future programmes or projects</p>	<p>The Tourism Ambassador Scheme was a later pilot in Axis 4 and has perhaps suffered from a lack of time between the end of the training activities and the end of the RDP Programme, meaning that it has been difficult to consolidate the work through any further phase of supported activity. It is clear that every effort has been made to make sure that there is a future for the Tourism Ambassadors and it is to the credit of the Vale Tourism Association, and a logical link, that they are providing a home for the Ambassadors.</p> <p>What is important for future programmes, learning from this experience, is to think about the progression path from the pilot at an early stage, so that where the project is involving people who might have a future role in an activity, there is some clarity of direction and sufficient time is given to consolidating the pilot project activities. This might mean starting pilot projects early enough in a programme period to make sure it has adequate time.</p>

Title	Integrating Axis 4 innovative and pilot project approaches with Axis 3 business and community grant support
Project Theme/ Subproject or grant;	<p>Rural Partnerships and LAGs are supposed to be working together to deliver activity through Axis 3 and 4 that is mutually supportive and integrated and which in turn will deliver the objectives of the Local Development Strategy.</p> <p>CRC LAG has taken a very proactive and carefully planned approach to making the links between pilot actions in Axis 4 through the LEADER approach and potential for further development from pilot actions in Axis 3.</p> <p>Three examples of this are community consultations, community cinema trial and green energy audits piloted through Axis 4, with subsequent projects supported through Axis 3. Two villages who participated in these pilots and who went on to implement several community development projects are Colwinston and Peterston Super Ely.</p>
Activity Lead	<p>The pilots in Axis 4 were initiated through the LAG with CRC staff , working with communities, to develop and deliver the activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The community consultations arose from a LAG view that funding for community services/ facilities should be supported by evidence of community needs. Although the initial discussion started around development community plans, the pilot evolved into a community consultation activity, which CRC helped to facilitate working with local community groups. At first consultation events were held specifically as just that. However experience then showed that it would be productive and more responses would be obtained, if they were linked to a local event e.g. a fete day. CRC staff helped arrange the consultation events and wrote up a short report of the feedback obtained which valuably, also included a brief resume of other RDP/ CRC supported projects in the same area, and where further sources of information and advice could be found to help take forward priorities for community services/facilities highlighted in the consultations. Communities could then progress to the Axis 3 Pride in our Services or Pride in our Villages Projects for grant support for projects (and financial support would not be given without the consultation evidence) - The green energy audits arose from experience of Business Plan 1 which showed that whilst community groups were interested in the potential for energy efficiency in relation to community facilities, they did not know what might be appropriate/useful. The green energy audits, which were undertaken by an independent company, appointed following an open tender procurement process run by the CRC team, were a means of bringing in some initial expertise to help such groups understand what the options might be and what benefits would arise. Community groups could then take forward capital investment projects through the Pride in our Villages Project - The community cinema trial was an opportunity to explore the potential of community cinema as a community development tool. The trial element enabled communities to try out hosting a community cinema, borrowing equipment at no charge from a centrally held resource with CRC and obtaining various technical and legal advice around how to establish a community cinema. Having trialled the equipment and if communities wanted to, they could then seek grant support to help purchase their own equipment in support of establishing their own community cinemas, through the Axis 3 Pride in our Rural Services Project. The opportunity of the trial was proactively promoted to village hall committees through presentations by CRC staff

<p>What worked well and why</p>	<p>Peterston Super Ely's experience of the community consultation has been very positive in that the top priority highlighted in the consultation – the need to upgrade the children's playground – is now a successfully completed project supported by Axis 3 money. Peterston's consultation was held in February 2012 during one of its monthly community markets, which helped to increase numbers to the market and a higher response to the consultation. The playground is well used and has even brought in users from other villages because of the quality of its equipment – Peterston are now talking to a neighbouring Community Council keen to do something similar; to share experience. One hard to reach group is grandparents – who are now coming to the play area with their grandchildren. Community groups in Peterston have gone on to do further projects including village hall improvements and a community cinema. Whilst it would be wrong to attribute direct cause and effect to CRC funding being 'the' stimulus to activity, the community consultation and subsequent work on first the play area and subsequently other projects, plus changes within the Community Council, seem to have brought a number of community benefits by way of new/improved facilities and services in the village. The community consultation seems to have been an important catalyst, 'a helpful exercise'. It gave the mandate for taking on the playground project. The CRC commitment to financial support is also noted as making it much easier to draw in other funding and do fundraising as it gave an incentive to fundraisers and a lever to other funders.</p> <p>Colwinston heard about the opportunity of the community cinema trial following a visit to the village hall committee from the CRC staff member leading on the trial. They would never have thought of the idea if Mari- Wyn from CRC had not done a presentation to the village hall committee. They thought this would be great to try out and one person took on its organisation. He borrowed the equipment and got advice from Llancarfan and Dinas Powys community cinema organisers. He also did a SurveyMonkey questionnaire to find out local community interest. The village hall committee agreed to part fund purchase of equipment and a grant from Axis 3 was secured. They now have a thriving community cinema with two screenings monthly in winter, one a month in summer and other film related uses associated with a MPLC (Motion Picture Licensing Corporation) Licence which they hold. The community cinema is a catalyst for bringing different parts of the community together – it becomes a social occasion. The cinema is laid out with tables and chairs, there are drinks available and a short film shown before the main feature. People are welcomed to the cinema and their feedback sought. The venture is making a profit and rewarding the investment made faster than expected. But importantly, the purpose was never to make money – it was to provide a facility for community use.</p> <p>Colwinston Village Hall Committee had an energy audit undertaken by Fairbrook Associates Ltd, the appointed green audit consultants. Following a site visit, the consultant set out four potential recommendations for energy efficiency and energy management, based on the type of users and level of use of the village hall – which he views as 'large, well maintained and much used'. The top priority, and related to energy efficiency and management, was to instigate a monitoring and targeting programme, to understand how energy is being used and opportunities for improvement which can lead to cost savings. Relocation of the space heating boiler was also recommended whilst, in the longer term, opportunities for solar roof panels and a wind turbine were also flagged up. Colwinston Village Hall subsequently went on to secure Axis 3 funding for a heating upgrade to the village hall.</p>
<p>Issues</p>	<p>Peterston Super Ely and Colwinston have both successfully developed a range of community projects moving from early pilot work in Axis 4 into more mainstream support in Axis 3. Whilst not identifying issues with the processes as such, both flag up the point that much of this work relies on some dedicated volunteers prepared to put time and effort into the development work – often retired people with the time available. This is not an issue unique to the rural Vale – and the rural Vale may have some advantages in that it has some very talented retired people amongst its population mix. However the importance of people prepared to take on these tasks cannot be under-estimated; and the need to plan for succession to avoid over reliance on one or two people is vital. One way could be do more inter-generational work so there is more trickle down and more legacy – and this is where community cinemas could be good as they attract people across the generations.</p>
<p>Learning for future programmes or projects</p>	<p>At the programme level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being able to test and trial something before starting on a full scale project is extremely valuable. It helps to determine whether it is right for the community and whether there is likely to be a demand/need for it. • Having the evidence of need/demand to underpin a proposed community development activity that has come from community consultation, is also very valuable. It helps to give a local mandate to proposed action. What is important is to make the community consultation open to all so that it is as reflective as possible of local community needs. <p>At the project level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at community development opportunities which can engage people across the ages in a shared activity could be valuable community development and capacity building initiatives. • Perseverance is essential. Projects won't always proceed as planned and could take longer than expected. Don't be put off • Getting the right partners e.g. the Community Council on side is important • Recognise the value of the volunteer effort – and there are ways to place a proxy value on volunteer time inputs which can help to give it a real value and demonstrate to others the valuable volunteer investment of time and effort that has been made • Be careful not to rely too heavily and for too long on one or two key people – or if this does happen, start to plan for how