

PRIDE IN THE VALE

THE
CREATIVE RURAL
COMMUNITIES
NEWSLETTER
2015

INSIDE: INVESTING IN THE GLAMORGAN HERITAGE COAST • DISCOVER THE ALL NEW VALE TRAILS
NEW HERITAGE PROJECTS • LOOKING TO THE FUTURE



ABOVE LEFT: Chair of the Vale of Glamorgan Rural Partnership, local farmer Norman Jenkins
ABOVE RIGHT: Chair of the Creative Rural Communities Local Action Group, Mandy Davies - Vale of Glamorgan Tourism Association

Welcome...

Established in 2004, Creative Rural Communities is the Vale of Glamorgan Council's rural regeneration initiative. It works with communities to develop innovative projects and ideas that will create long term social and economic benefits for the Vale.

The Rural Development Plan in the Vale is overseen by a Rural Partnership and Local Action Group.

Membership of these boards comes from the Private, Public, Voluntary and Community Sectors of the Vale - it is truly a bottom up approach to regeneration.

These boards are responsible for both strategy development and project delivery and none of this work could have taken place without their unending support and hard work.

This newsletter will give you a taste of the projects that have been supported by Creative Rural Communities between 2011 and 2014, in what has been the second phase of a six year £7.7m programme of investment.

Projects are primarily funded by the Welsh Government, the Vale of Glamorgan Council and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.

This investment may take the form of a pilot project or of a grant scheme under a particular theme.

THE FOCUS OF THIS PROGRAMME HAS BEEN

- Improved services for the rural economy and population
- Village renewal
- Tourism activities
- The conservation and upgrading of our rural heritage
- The diversification of farming families into non-agricultural activities
- The creation and development of micro-enterprises

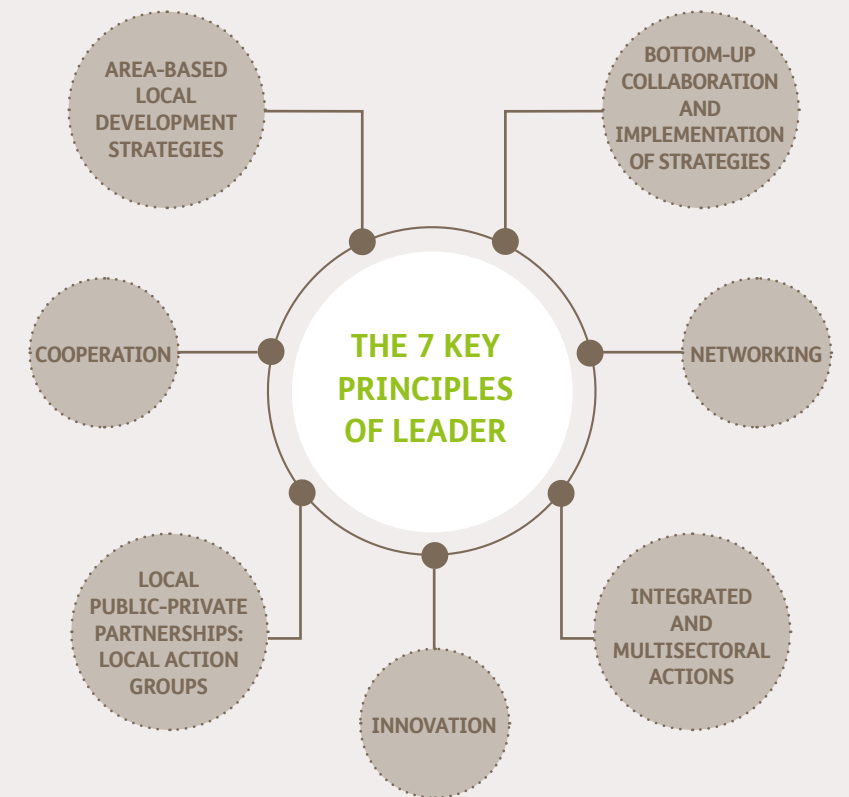
THE LEADER APPROACH

In addition to the grants that Creative Rural Communities have issued over the years, the LEADER approach to regeneration remains at the core of its day to day work.

What is the LEADER approach?

LEADER is a French acronym meaning links between actions for the development of the rural economy.

It is a method of harnessing local knowledge to enable a "bottom up" community led approach to rural development and is a Europe-wide programme.



Vale of Glamorgan Local Action Group

The Local Action Group (LAG) will continue to support and oversee Creative Rural Communities during the next phase of their work in 2014-2020, the membership organisations are as follows:

VOLUNTARY

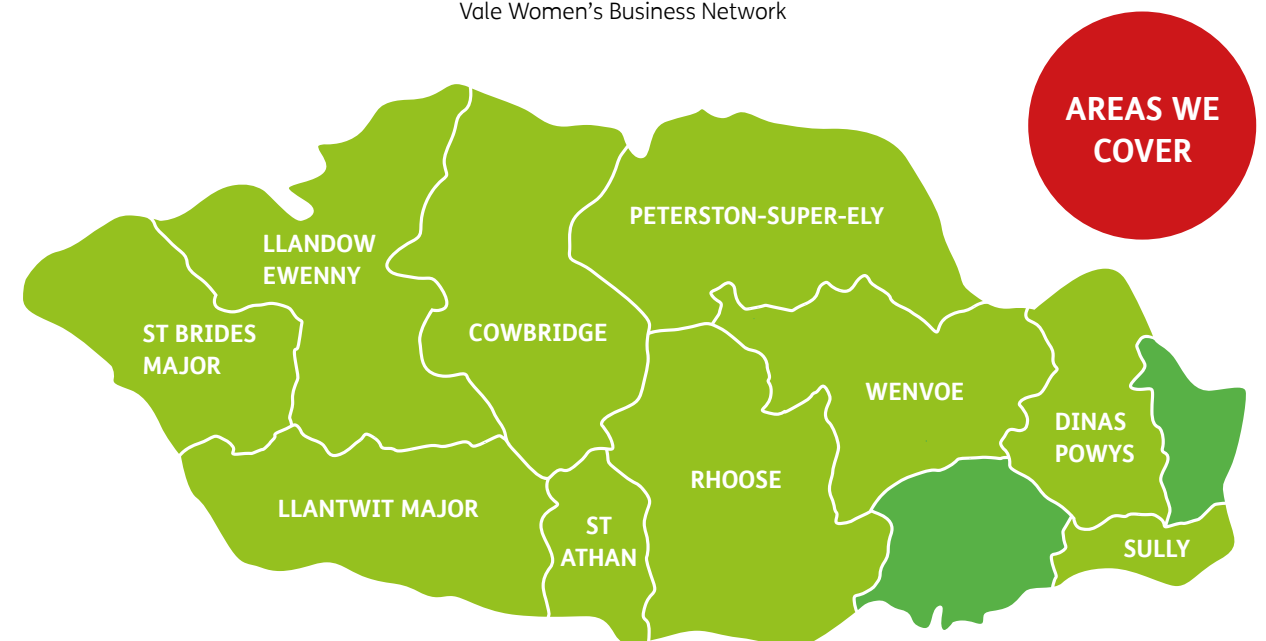
Vale Centre for Voluntary Services (Chair)
 Vale of Glamorgan Tourism Association (Vice Chair)
 Cynnal Cymru
 Vale Volunteer Bureau
 Cowbridge Food & Drink Festival
 St Donats Arts Centre

PRIVATE

Farmer's Union of Wales
 Vale of Glamorgan Farmers Market
 NFU Cymru
 Task Force Paintball (Vice Chair)
 Waitrose
 Slade Farm Organics
 Penllyn Farm Estate
 Vale Women's Business Network

PUBLIC

Vale of Glamorgan Council
 Natural Resources Wales
 Capital Region Tourism
 Cowbridge Town Council
 Llantwit Major Town Council





Making the most of the heritage coast



THE PERFECT PITCH

It's the last few months of 2011, the Vale of Glamorgan is gearing up to host the National Eisteddfod and the launch of the Wales Coast Path is just a few short months away – the demand for budget accommodation is at an all time high.

To take advantage, CRC launched the Coastal Camping pilot scheme to provide landowners with everything needed to set up trial campsites.

The project saw the creation of five new sites that welcomed more than 600 campers throughout the Summer of 2012.

All 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 developments and received

assistance with planning permission requirements.

Two established sites were also supported as part of the project.

Glyn George, co-owner of the Heritage Coast Campsite with his wife Philippa, said: The support from Creative Rural Communities really gave us a kick start to set up a campsite for families and couples.

“We've been given some expert advice through the initiative from licensing, planning, and health and safety to marketing and grading.”

CRC have continued to advise all sites and new potential campsites in the area since the trial.

Discover more:
perfectpitchcamping.co.uk/news

Participating Campsites

- Farmers' Fields Campsite**
Llantwit Major
- Lougher Moor Campsite**
Llantwit Major
- Heritage Coast Campsite**
Monknash
- Pool Farm Campsite**
St.Brides Major
- Three Golden Cups Campsite**
Southerndown
- Happy Jake's Campsite**
Flemingston (existing campsite)
- Llandow Park Campsite**
Llandow (existing campsite)



BRINGING MORE TO THE SHORE

During the summer of 2014, six exciting coastal activities were established at the coast in a bid to increase the area's appeal as a tourist destination.

The activities, that ranged from artistic workshops to photography sessions, were launched as part of CRC's Glamorgan Heritage Coast Pilot Activities Programme.

The programme was launched to inspire those passionate about the coast to provide new attractions for visitors.

Each pilot activity organiser received support from CRC throughout the project including familiarisation visits, networking opportunities, marketing and media advice, skills development and one-to-one business support.

Dylan Jones, who launched Ffoto Ramble, offering photography lessons during coastal walks, said: "I felt that the support I received was relaxed but appropriately formal."

"It was good to have a timetable to work to. This helped me to move my project idea forward but was not too daunting."

“CRC were available when I needed advice and found their feedback very helpful.”

All participants hope to continue offering their individual activities in the future.

Discover more: moretothevale.com/coastal-activities

Supported coastal activities

- 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**
Bespoke, chauffeur driven tours around the coast
- Introduction to Willow**
Willow weaving taster sessions in woodland
- Beach Wild Food Foraging**
A taster session in foraging and cooking on the beach

PROMOTING THE PAST WITH THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY

The vast and beautiful Glamorgan Heritage Coast is the Vale of Glamorgan's best kept secret!

Research commissioned by the Local Action Group revealed that visitors, and local residents alike, struggled to identify the Glamorgan Heritage Coast, where it is, or what makes it so unique. As a result, a steering group was formed and agreed to make a number of improvements including a series of welcome, orientation and interpretation points along the coast along with a new website www.visitglamorganheritagecoast.com

In collaboration with other projects by Creative Rural Communities, a number of tourism information points have been set up along the coast, a series of coastal walks have been developed, and many local volunteers and businesses have become Vale Ambassadors helping to promote both the Vale and the Glamorgan Heritage Coast.

Despite being thousands of years old, the coast is also benefitting from the latest technology. Several new apps have been commissioned to compliment the work already undertaken to promote the coast.

The new Glamorgan Heritage Coast App will house useful content such as walks and other useful information for visitors. Key sites such as Dunraven and Nash Point have also been chosen to pilot Augmented Reality (AR) as a way of bringing history to life.



Augmented Reality in action at Dunraven hill fort

“It has been great to have someone to talk to through these early stages; especially someone that gets you, understands you and can see where your business needs to go.” – Shan Eastwood of Oakwood's Bespoke Journeys



THE FACES OF THE VALE

Sixteen people have officially become ambassadors for the county as part of a project that aims to increase tourism by harnessing the passion people have for the Vale.

The Vale Ambassador Programme was set up to find residents who could share their love and knowledge of the area with visitors, to encourage them to stay longer, return and encourage others to visit.

The successful Vale Ambassadors volunteered their time to attend workshops and excursions. They enjoyed talks from expert guest speakers and received information packs covering themes from people and history to culture, crafts and cuisine.

Ambassadors will all contribute at varying levels from actually meeting and welcoming visitors to writing blog posts and volunteering at events.

Ambassador information will be published on the Visit the Vale and More to the Vale websites including pictures, contact details and individual subject areas.

Audio recordings featuring the Ambassadors recounting tales from the Vale, expert speakers and traditional music will also be added to the websites.



SPREADING THE WORD

It's never been easier for visitors to discover the secrets of the Vale thanks to more than 50 new Tourist Information Point outlets that have been installed across the borough.

The outlets have been set up through the Information Provision Project to assist visitors to the Vale following the closure of the regional Tourist Information Centres.

The project has created greater links between local attractions and venues so visitors are encouraged to spend more of their time exploring the Vale.

The project is supported by the Tourism Department to ensure the outlets provide accurate, up to date, relevant information.



WORKING TOGETHER MAKES SENSE

How do visitors know that they have arrived in Wales, or more specifically, the Glamorgan Heritage Coast? How can they enjoy a unique holiday experience, and return home talking about what makes this area so special? This is the challenge that Creative Rural Communities were responding to when they launched the Sense of Place scheme.

'Sense of Place' is a way of communicating to visitors, all that the Vale has to offer through the promotion of food, heritage, language, the great outdoors, arts, crafts and culture.

The scheme helped local tourism operators, and visitor facing organisations, develop their own sense of place, enhance their local knowledge and increase the effectiveness of communicating this to their visitors.

The scheme was launched with a series of workshops which were attended by a cross section of the community including local tourism operators, historians, artists and community members.

The workshops resulted in the creation of a 'Heritage Coast Palette' which is a resource to promote the coast.

In May 2013 a 'Sense of Place' event was held at St Donat's Arts Centre.

More than 50 local businesses, organisations and individuals attended the event where they enjoyed talks from local speakers ranging from brewers to lighthouse keepers.

In support of this event, CRC also hosted a month-long arts exhibition showcasing the work of more than 50 local artists inspired by the Glamorgan Heritage Coast.

Following the event, CRC has also offered familiarisation visits and one-to-one support to organisations and businesses.

50
BUSINESSES,
ORGANISATIONS
AND INDIVIDUALS
ENCOURAGED TO
SUPPORT
TOURISM

IMPROVING OUR TOWNS

Detailed reviews have been carried out at both Llantwit Major and Cowbridge as part of a nationwide exercise seeking best practice from more than 120 town centres.

The exercise involved capturing data on 12 key factors including retail offering, footfall, car parking and the views of shoppers.

Following the benchmarking exercise, a comprehensive report was compiled that highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of both towns and recommendations of how the centres could be improved.

To take these recommendations forward, 'Town Teams' have been established in both areas with the support of the council's Town Centres Development Officer and CRC.

The Town Teams are now working together on creating interpretation within each town.

Early examples of improvements from this project include the installation of oak framed units on the heritage coast and the creation of three modern designs focusing on orientation and history at Cowbridge.

Discover the all new Vale Trails

Ten new walking trails have been launched to inspire people to learn more about the Vale while keeping active.

The Vale Trails, a series of five coastal and five inland walks, have been developed by Creative Rural Communities in conjunction with walking stakeholders, including Vale of Glamorgan Ramblers and Valeways.

Leaflets for each of the ten walks, which often include an easy and a more challenging route for differing abilities, places of interest, and even the number of calories burned, are available to download online.

Hard copies are also available from 50 tourism information points across the Vale.

Walking in the Vale of Glamorgan combines a fascinating 60km stretch of the Wales Coast Path with the picturesque, historic beauty of inland Vale.

Along its rugged coastline walkers can discover the last manned lighthouse in Wales (automated as recently as 1998) and the 16th Century walled gardens at Dunraven Bay.

Inland, walkers will find the historic market towns of Cowbridge and Llantwit Major, as well as idyllic villages such as St Nicholas and St Brides Major.

Discover more:
www.visitthevale.com

The Vale Trails

COASTAL WALKS

Ogmore By Sea Walk
 St. Brides Major

Coast and Lighthouse Walk
 Llantwit Major / Nash Point

Celtic Crosses and Coast Walk
 Llantwit Major

Park and Seaside Walk
 St. Athan / Rhose / Barry

Coast and Pier Walk
 Sully / Penarth

INLAND WALKS

Salmon Leaps Walk
 Dinas Powys

Haunted Field Walk
 St Nicholas

Magical Forest Walk
 Peterston-Super-Ely

Iolo Morganwg Heritage Walk
 Cowbridge

Ewenny and Spring Flowers Walk
 Llandow / Ewenny

RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

If you've ever tasted food or drink fresh from the Vale then you'll know why it's so important to support local producers.

CRC set up the Local Food Champions project to increase awareness of, access to and use of local produce.

The thousands of people who attended this year's Vale Show will have no doubt visited the Local Food Champions at the new food court area that was set up as part of a joint venture between CRC, Cywain and Vale of Glamorgan Farmers' Market.

In addition to supporting events that bring together producers across the Vale, the project also provides marketing assistance to new producers, pilots new food tours and supports community ventures.

Grants of up to £2k were available to support Local Food Champion projects and nine initiatives benefited from the scheme. Tomas a Lilford brewery was one business to benefit from the project

The new brewers were successful in a bid for £2,000 from CRC to spend with an ad agency on brand development.

"We found the whole experience with CRC to be very rewarding and would say that, as a new business, even the very process of grant application is positive because it forces you into new levels of planning and consideration"

Rob Lilford



THOUSANDS FLOCKED TO THE FARMERS' MARKET AT THE 2013 VALE SHOW

- Tomos Lilford Brewery
- Cowbridge Food Fringe Festival
- Cob Oven
- Fresh Wheatgrass
- Bara Birth
- Welsh Food Safari
- Food Adventures
- Llanblethian Orchard
- Vale Farmers Market Expo

£13k

INVESTED IN LOCAL FOOD CHAMPIONS.



OUR 'FABLAS' FARMING FAMILIES



"We've been able to grow the business steadily by attending food markets and outdoor shows." – Rhian Rees, Fablas Icecream

More than half a million pounds has been invested in rural Vale's farming community through the 'Pride in our Farming Families' project.

The project aims to support the farming community in looking to introduce non-agricultural initiatives to help sustain farms, provide additional income streams and ensure the future of the farming family.

In total 13 initiatives have been supported, some of which had a strong tourism influence. One example of a new business supported through

the project is Fablas Ice Cream founded by dairy farmers David and Rhian Rees and their three sons.

A grant allowed them to purchase the necessary equipment to showcase their produce at some of Wales' top events.

All applicants were encouraged to seek assistance from organisations including Business Wales, Farming Connect, Lantra and Cywain in developing business plans to support their applications.

Projects supported

- Phil Dando Racing
- Stable Cottage Rug Wash
- Cowbridge Cabins
- AJT Equestrian
- Picket Pods
- Vale Carriages
- Hendrewennol Fruit Farm
- Warren Mill Bunkhouse
- 3 Golden Cups Campsite
- Fablas Ice Cream
- Sutton Newydd Barns
- Brambles Tea Room at Meadowvale Garden Centre
- Lilypot Farm

£577K
 INVESTED IN FARM DIVERSIFICATION

Taking pride in our heritage

There is a wealth of heritage to be discovered within the Vale and over the last three years more than £356,305 has been spent to protect these historic assets for future generations.

The funding was issued through the 'Pride in our Heritage' grant scheme which was developed to support and celebrate the Vale's cultural, natural and built heritage.

Creative Rural Communities has worked with applicants from the voluntary, private and public sector to fund 21 projects.

Built Heritage projects have included the restoration of the Old Place in Llantwit Major, Galilee Chapel, the historic town walls of Cowbridge and Dunraven Garden Walls at Southerndown.

Cultural Heritage projects have included developing and promoting the traditional tune group Alawon Llanilltud Fawr and interpretation of world class wall paintings at St Cadoc's Church in Llanancarfan.

Funding has enabled both Cowbridge and Llantwit History Societies to digitise their collections, supported storytelling at Hendrewennol and was used to create a Llanblethian village history walk and activity books for children.

Natural Heritage projects have included interpretation boards at Rhoose Point, Old Hall Gardens, the Heritage Coast and at Glyndwr Vineyard.

Awarded Heritage Grants

- Historic Wall Restoration, Old Hall Cowbridge
- Cowbridge Story Telling Circle, Old Hall Cowbridge
- Galilee Chapel Project, Llantwit Major
- Old Place Restoration, Llantwit Major
- Bonvilston Community History, exhibition at St Mary's Church
- Interpretation at Cosmeston Medieval Village, Sully
- Dunraven Gardens Wall Restoration
- Wildlife Interpretation, Rhoose Point
- Conservation of Records at Cowbridge Museum
- Bee Hotel and Wildlife habitat, Wenvoe Orchard and Pond
- Interpretation of Medieval Wall Paintings at Llanancarfan Church
- Interpretation for the Heritage Coast, across western Vale
- Digitalisation of records at Llantwit Major History Society
- Digitalisation of records at Cowbridge History Society
- New Halloween Event at Hendrewennol, Welsh St Donat's
- Self Guided Tours at Glyndwr Vineyard, Llanblethian
- New Harvest Festival, Cowbridge
- Creation of Llanblethian History Trail
- Tudor Gardens, Dunraven Walled Gardens
- Children's Activities, Bio Diversity and Iolo Trail, Cowbridge Charter Trust
- Dinas Powys Heritage Interpretation Boards
- Clwb Alawon Llanilltud Fawr Development
- Iolo Board at Llanancarfan Church

£356k
INVESTED IN
HERITAGE
ASSETS



MAKING HISTORY FUN

A series of activities have been created to engage the Glamorgan Heritage Coast's younger visitors.

Activity packs, an interactive game and audio recordings all encourage young people to have fun while learning about the fascinating landscape.

Five activity packs have been produced with each focusing on a particular geographical area.

The packs are being trailed at each location and PDFs are 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' is a digital experience developed to help younger audiences engage and learn more about the heritage of the coastline.

Players are tasked with guiding a boat along the choppy seas while dodging the extreme tides and sand banks, avoiding wreckers and steering away danger – they must also collect precious cargo and take care to avoid barrels of dynamite! The game is based on real life stories from the coastline.

The 'not for adults' audio channels have been installed at various locations along the coast.

The recordings feature children taking the roles of historical characters as they tell the story of the coast in a way suitable for younger visitors.



CONNECTING THE VALE

Greenlinks, the Vale's Rural Community Transport service, was launched in 2010 with one 13 seater bus.

Four years later, the service now operates with four vehicles and is used by more than 1,000 passengers each month.

As well as door to door service, there is a weekday operation that serves Llantwit Major, Cowbridge, Bridgend and the surrounding villages.

There is also a weekly service that runs between Llantwit Major and Cardiff.

Greenlinks has been supported by 30 volunteer drivers since its launch.

The service will continue beyond December 2014, with the Vale of Glamorgan providing financial support.

In the New Year, the service will be receiving two new vehicles, an accessible car and a new 12 seater bus, bringing the fleet number to five.



ON THE RIGHT TRACK

Creative Rural Communities has invested more than £700,000 into Capital Improvements to the NCN88 Cycle Network which runs the length of the Vale.

This challenging network is a favourite of road cyclists and it is hoped that this newly established route could be used as a springboard for the future development of cycling as a tourism activity in the area.



RURAL EVENTS NETWORK

Further investment has been made into the Rural Events Network - a resource for organisers of rural events.

Coordinated by the Vale of Glamorgan Council Network Events Officer, the network has a stock of equipment available for use and is open to anyone interested in the development and delivery of quality events in the rural Vale of Glamorgan.

Discover more:
www.ruraleventsnetwork.com.



LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION

Bringing the big screen to small venues has been the aim of Creative Rural Communities' Vale Rural Cinema project.

Following the success of Cowbridge Big Screen, CRC identified a demand for local film screenings across rural Vale.

CRC launched a trial that involved training film-loving volunteers in the use of newly purchased mobile film screening equipment.

Following the trial, several communities bid for their own set of equipment and were successful in receiving Axis 3 funding.

All venues hold regular community film screenings and Llanccarfan Community Cinema even won Best New Film Society at the Cinema for All 2013 Film Society of the Year Awards!



Venues supported

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

£124k
INVESTED IN
COMMUNITY
SERVICES AND
HUBS



SHOP WHILE YOU SUP

Has there ever been a better excuse to visit your local?

Four Vale pubs are now doubling up as convenience stores thanks to funding through Creative Rural Communities Rural Hubs scheme.

The grant scheme aims to diversify existing services, such as local pubs and community spaces, in order to offer new and improved amenities across rural Vale.

One pub to benefit from the scheme is The Cross Inn in Llanblethian where regulars are now able to 'shop while they sup'.

Arthur O'Leary and his son, Liam, received funding to carry out necessary renovations to launch a convenience-store service in the popular local.

"Having worked in the industry for a number of years, Liam and I recognised the increasing demand for services which make life easier for members of the community," Arthur said.

"In addition to financial support, the advice and guidance from the team at CRC was invaluable throughout the whole process."

£117k
SPENT LINKING
COMMUNITIES

- Ewenny Corntown Footpath
- Cowbridge footpath improvements
- Twyn Yr Odyn
- St Mary Church - St Athan
- Hensol Bridle Path
- Nash Point
- Cross Common Bridleway
- Nash Point Bridge
- St Andrews Major F/P improvements
- Penllyn Bridleway
- Llangan-Colwinston

YOUR SAY MATTERS

What do you like about your community? What would you like to see improved? What changes would you make?

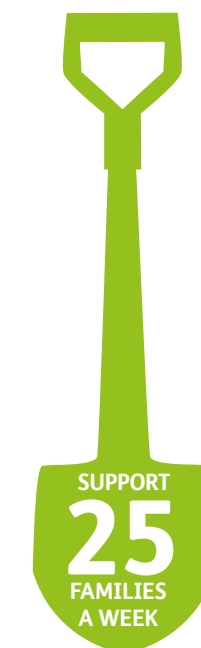
These were just some of the questions asked at 25 rural Vale community consultation events organised by Creative Rural Communities.

Feedback from these events was then distributed within communities and later used to identify and develop future community projects with support from CRC.

Following the consultation, communities across rural Vale benefited from the 'Pride in our Villages' scheme which funded 12 projects including a variety of improvements from the installation of new benches to the creation of new play areas.

Some villages have the revisited their community consultation to see what projects have been achieved and add further ideas for future projects in their villages.

£264k
INVESTED IN
VILLAGE
RENEWAL



COMMUNITY FOODIE PROJECT REAPS REWARDS

The Community Foodie project was launched in 2011 to support the rising demand for space to grow food, and as a direct response to the Welsh Government's Community Grown Action Plan.

Since it was launched the project has helped a number of neglected or underused sites to transform into thriving gardens, orchards and growing plots, as well as supporting a number of schools and community groups with small scale growing beds.

The Community Foodie project aimed to support healthy lifestyles, introduce valuable skills and bring people of all ages together while raising awareness of the wider benefits of growing locally produced food, whilst helping to bring

together landowners and communities, sharing skills and identifying suitable growing models.

Nightingale Community Garden in Dinas Powys now boasts growing plots for all abilities, raised beds for easy access and a community gathering area for sharing produce and hosting workshops and events. The derelict play area was transformed into a community garden that has become so successful it now provides the three local food banks with surplus produce.

Mike Grove, Treasurer for the Vale Food Bank, said: "We have two food banks in Barry and one in Dinas Powys that benefit from Nightingale Community Garden.

"We support around 25 families a week so it can get very busy and we really appreciate the extra produce.

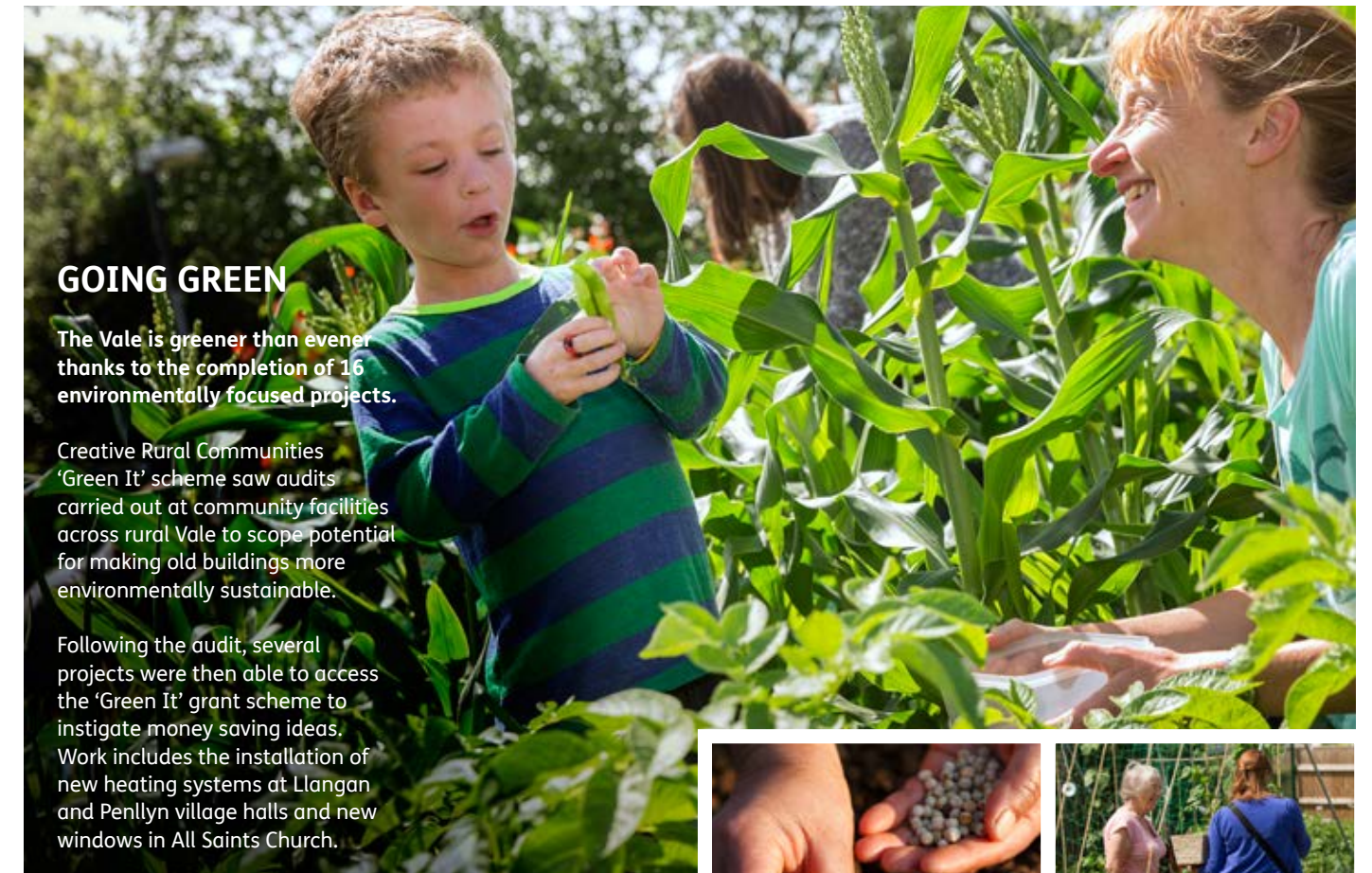
"When you're on a low income, you notice that it's the fresh produce that costs more so it's great being able to deliver vegetables to our clients that were harvested that same day – you can't get better than that."

Community Foodie was a pioneering cooperative project with the neighbouring counties of Bridgend and Torfaen.

While each county was supported by their own project officer, a number of opportunities were created to share knowledge and skills across the counties. These included events, talks and study trips.

"We support around 25 families a week so it can get very busy and we really appreciate the extra produce."

– Mike Grove



GOING GREEN

The Vale is greener than ever thanks to the completion of 16 environmentally focused projects.

Creative Rural Communities 'Green It' scheme saw audits carried out at community facilities across rural Vale to scope potential for making old buildings more environmentally sustainable.

Following the audit, several projects were then able to access the 'Green It' grant scheme to instigate money saving ideas. Work includes the installation of new heating systems at Llangan and Penllyn village halls and new windows in All Saints Church.



Looking to the future

(2014-2020)

A NEW STRATEGY

To build on the many excellent initiatives in the existing programme, a new Local Development Strategy for 2014-2020 was submitted in September 2014 to the Welsh Government for approval.

It was developed in 2014 by the Local Action Group who will also oversee its implementation.

It identifies the most important things that need to be done to secure a stronger economy, to maintain the natural environment and to support resilient communities.

The 4 Priorities of the Local Development Strategy

Aim: Grow the Economy of the Rural Vale



PRIORITY 1
Create more economic value from the natural and historic environment



PRIORITY 2
Maximise the benefit of being part of the Cardiff City Region



PRIORITY 3
Encourage local businesses and community enterprises to provide local services



PRIORITY 4
Improve digital usage within local businesses and communities

A SHIFT IN FOCUS

A new Rural Development Programme would bring inevitable changes to the way in which Creative Rural Communities approaches Rural Development.

The Rural Partnership and Local Action Group will be replaced by a single Local Action Group (LAG).

If the strategy is approved, Creative Rural Communities will be focusing on its LEADER programme of around £2m.

It will no longer be in a position to issue Grants. Instead, the Welsh Government will administer a Rural Community Development Fund into which Vale organisations can bid - it is hoped the Vale will secure approximately £2m for the 2014-2020 period.

MAKING IT A SUCCESS

The important part of any strategy is to ensure it is delivered.

The Local Development Strategy (LDS) for the rural Vale identifies more than 70 actions that could be supported by the LEADER programme.

The LDS also makes a clear commitment to working with neighbouring rural areas, to making links with other funding schemes, in Wales and the EU, and to demonstrating innovation and creativity on the ground.

Although the programme will be supported by an experienced team of officers, it is ultimately about the

communities and businesses within the rural Vale.

To be truly successful, the programme needs enterprising, hardworking and creative people to make things happen.

This is a chance to ensure that the future of the rural Vale is stronger and that its rural communities seize opportunities by making the most of its assets - both its places and its people.

Want to get in touch with Creative Rural Communities?

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www.creativeruralcommunities.co.uk