



Leader 4 Torrige & North Devon

WWW.LEADER4.ORG

2012 PROGRAMME UPDATE

LEADER 4 OBJECTIVES:

- 1 To Raise and Support Growth Aspirations of Rural Micro Businesses
- 2 To Improve Access to Services and Employment in Deprived Rural Communities
- 3 To Develop the Assets & Resources of the High Quality Environment as an Economic Driver
- 4 To Improve the Environmental Performance of Communities and Businesses to Create a Low Carbon Economy

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Programme summary

Leader 4 Torrige and North Devon is a programme with a £3.156 million grant to provide project funding and development support to improve the economy, environment and quality of life in rural areas.

Since its launch in 2008, the Leader 4 Local Action Group has approved funding for 35 wide-ranging projects, the progress of some of these are included in this update.

In addition to the main programme projects, 108 small grants were approved for local businesses across Torrige and North

Devon, to help them take the next steps to grow. The Business Growth Small Grant Scheme has now completed, but its legacy is that around £1.065 million has been invested into our local economy, with new jobs being created and turnover and profit increasing at a time of great financial challenges.

To respond to the environmental priorities of the programme, a Green Business Exemplars project was launched in December 2011.

The Leader 4 funding is now close to being fully allocated.

North Devon Surf Cycle Bus

Project Name: North Devon Surf Cycle Bus

Total Project Costs: £173,587

Leader 4 contribution: £105,234 (60%)

This is an innovative project looking at moving surfers and cyclists with their equipment around the region without the need for a car. It is a first for the UK to have the bottom deck of a double decker bus converted to take anything from surfboards to bicycles and kayaks.

The aim is to reduce the negative impact that cars have on the region accessing beaches and cycle routes. It also gives youngsters and non car owners more freedom to practise their sport, which has obvious community health benefits. No other local transport company allows large sporting equipment on their buses.



The bus will run as a pilot for 2 years, with funding from Leader 4 as well as North Devon Council, North Devon AONB and the Devon County Council Cycle Fund.

The bus runs through the extended summer period, coinciding with the main beaches having life guard cover.

The total number of passengers carried by the bus over 15 weeks in year 1 was 7185. Of those, 1002 passengers carried a surfboard or bicycle. This number is predicted to rise in 2012 as awareness of the service spreads and more marketing is undertaken.

Project Officer Isabelle Bromham said "considering that this is a brand new service, the figures for year 1 are very promising. We are tweaking the service and predict many more passengers in year 2."



High Bickington Community Property Trust



Above: Boiler room and workshops under construction

Project Name: Little Bickington Farm Phase 1
Total Project Cost: £683,960
Leader 4 contribution: £193,000 (28%)

In November 2000 a community-based group was founded in High Bickington to assess local needs and to develop proposals for the area's regeneration. Out of this group, the High Bickington Community Property Trust was formed in 2004 to develop an ambitious project to provide affordable housing and services.

The Trust is a model of community ownership, and is a not for profit organisation owned and managed by local people. As of 2009 there were over 200

shareholding members.

The overall project is looking to provide 39 houses (a mix of social rented housing, shared equity and private sale), 6 workshop units, community facilities and environmental features. A further building will house a biomass (woodchip) boiler and back up boiler to provide heating and hot water for the whole project.

Leader 4 funding is targeted at the biomass boiler, back up gas boiler, wood store and buildings to house the boilers as well as two adjacent workshops for rent to local businesses.

All the buildings are timber framed with external timber cladding and are well insulated. The woodchips for the boiler will be sourced locally in Devon.

“This ambitious project closely meets the Leader 4 priority for environmental sustainability,” said project officer Jenny Carey-Wood. “It is generating heat from local wood, meeting local needs and creating opportunities for new jobs. The interest and enthusiasm demonstrated by the community at the recent AGM suggests this will be a very successful project”.



Above: The finished workshops and boiler house showing the raised chimneys.

Below: Biomass boiler being fitted



The High Bickington scheme project aims to provide:

- houses for people in need, on terms appropriate to their means
- workspace to meet training and employment needs
- health facilities and child care
- facilities for recreation
- woodland and other environmental improvements
- facilities for the provision of statutory learning for young people.

More information about the scheme can be found at www.highbickington.org

Bishops Nympton New Parish Hall

Project Name: Bishops Nympton New Parish Hall

Total Project Cost: £630,000

Leader 4 Contribution: £159,990 (25%)

www.bishopsnymptonparishhall.org.uk

After two decades of planning and fundraising by local residents, Bishops Nympton now has a brand new, multi purpose community hall.

The existing hall was becoming a maintenance liability, and in many ways was not fit for purpose. Careful design coupled with quality materials and skilled local builders will make the new hall easy to maintain for years to come.

Environmental features such as solar panels and excellent insulation will also make the building cheaper to run.

The new site is well placed within the village and has much improved accessibility and parking. The heart of the new building is the local shop and post office which have relocated there and which will continue to serve the

area.

The hall is truly multi purpose with facilities for sports and recreation, IT station, local clubs, school and learning facilities, outreach centre for services as well as being available to hire for weddings and functions or to local businesses.

The project's aims of combating rural isolation by providing a community hub as well improving community self sufficiency by retaining essential services has resulted in this project attracting the funding. In addition to Leader 4 funding, money also came from:

Sale of the old hall and land, section 106 agreement, Parish Council Grant, North Devon District Council, Devon Community Council, significant local fundraising and donations.



Above: The finished hall in early summer 2011

Project name: Confluence
Total project cost: £72,500
LEADER 4 contribution: £37,500 (52%)



Ecoids (above), collect environmental data. This data can be shared real time (below) and interpreted for science or for art.



Confluence

This project is led by a partnership of organisations including Beaford Arts, University of Plymouth's i-DAT (Institute of Digital Arts and Technology), the North Devon Biosphere Foundation and Appledore Arts.

The word 'confluence' means the meeting or joining of two bodies of water, such as at the Taw Torridge Estuary!

The confluence project is a new arts, technology and environment project to pilot the use of familiar and digital art styles to inform local communities about their own interactions and impact on the local environment. The geographical focus of the project is the River Torridge and its catchment area.

Artists will work with schools and communities in Torridge to take this raw data and transform it into art. The aim is to get people living near the river Torridge to interact and understand their special environment and to see it in new and innovative ways.

It is fascinating to think that a vast number of '0's and '1's can represent a snapshot, or indeed a running commentary on the environment around us. Data collected can be interpreted and presented in many different and exciting ways, combining with more traditional methods to compliment the effect.

www.appledorearts.org/confluence



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Green Business Exemplars Scheme

The aim of this competition is to stimulate innovation and good practice activity within the business sector to meet the Leader 4 programmes' low carbon and environmental sustainability priorities.

The scheme launched on the 9th December 2011 and invites Expressions of Interest forms, which can be found at www.leader4.org to be submitted by the **16th January 2012**

The competition will help to fund at least 5 micro businesses to help enhance environmental performance through improvements to:

- Low carbon / eco friendly product or service development
- Waste reduction or recycling
- Carbon impact reduction and/or energy efficiency
- Introduction of a new sustainable technology
- Improving biodiversity
- Implementing green building practices

The grant will provide **up to 50%** of eligible project costs up to a maximum of **£10,000** (with a minimum grant of £1,000).

All details, competition rules, forms and guidance can be found at www.leader4.org or contact GBE@northdevonplus.co.uk

