



ABERDEENSHIRE LOCAL RURAL PARTNERSHIP FUNDING

REPORT FOR 2009-2010

Submission: 24th February 2010

Rod Gunson
Development Officer,
Formartine Partnership Ltd,
29 Bridge Street,
ELLON, AB41 9AA.

Tel: 01358-726452
Mob 07979-843158
rod.gunson@formartine.org.uk

ABERDEENSHIRE LOCAL RURAL PARTNERSHIP FUNDING REPORT FOR 2009-2010

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Formartine Partnership was formed in 1997. Since 25th April 2006 the Formartine Partnership has been a private company, limited by Guarantee, (SC 301273). It is not a registered charity. Currently there are eleven directors on its Board including a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman and a Company Secretary. The Board meets approximately every six weeks.

The Formartine Partnership employs one full-time employee, a Development Officer, who started on July 14th 2008. The Development Officer submits a regular report and plan of work to the Board at each Board meeting.

The Partnership members include:

All twelve Community Councils in Formartine:

Auchterless, Inverkeithny & Fisherford; Belhelvie; Collieston & Slains; Ellon; Foveran; Fyvie, Rothienorman & Monquhitter; Meldrum, Bourtie & Daviot; Methlick; Tarves; Turriff and District; Udny, and Ythan;

The following (mainly) voluntary groups:

Aberdeenshire Care and Repair Project; Aberdeenshire Council; Aberdeenshire Environmental Forum; Balmedie Christmas Lights Group; Collieston Amenities Committee; Ellon Biodiversity Action Group; Ellon Can-Do Community Recycling; Ellon Civic Pride; Formartine Oral History Project Group; Foveran Partnership; Friends of Haddo Country Park, Gordon Park Development Group; Gordon Rural Action; Methlick Community Garden Project; National Farmers Union of Scotland; Royal Society for the Protection of Birds; Scottish Agricultural College; Scottish Rural Property and Business Association; Scottish Natural Heritage; Tarts and Crafts Limited, Balmedie; Tarves Heritage Centre; Turriff & District Ltd.; Turriff and District Heritage Society; Turriff Town Pride; Woodhead and Windyhills Community Trust; Ythan District Fishery Board; Ythan Project Volunteers Group and Ythanbank Community Association.

and

Any resident of Formartine may also become a member.

The latest AGM was held on 25th November 2009. All current Directors and office bearers were re-elected and the audited accounts for 2008-9 were approved.

ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: the Partnership will need to help groups in their area with information, implementation, and community engagement, to build inclusive and sustainable projects.

Formartine in Bloom 2009



Formartine in Bloom 2009: Decorated bicycle at Cuminestown.

Formartine in Bloom 2009.

Formartine in Bloom 2009 was completed successfully. Sixteen communities participated this year, including four primary schools, and, as usual, it is very clear how much care, skill and effort is put into this competition each year and over several weeks and months. It is also clear how much these efforts enhance the appearance of the particular community and, hopefully, its community spirit and identity. Over sixty people attended the Awards Ceremony at Udny Station on what turned out to be a very dangerous evening in which to drive because of the appalling weather and flooded roads.



Formartine in Bloom 2009 Awards Ceremony (photo by Ted Bartlett)

The judges were so impressed by the standard of the Primary Schools' entries that they awarded a special prize to the two best ones, and The Formartine Partnership are intending to establish a new category just for Primary Schools in the 2010 competition. It is hoped that this will increase the range of community involvement and encourage youth to appreciate the appearance and effort put into the appearance of their community. The Formartine Partnership organised the judging, Awards ceremony, certificates, press and notification of results. The competition attracted £1000 sponsorship from local businesses.

.Review meeting of the Formartine in Bloom competition.

A meeting to review the competition was held on 7th December 2009 at Fyvie, attended by ten participating communities. There was a wide ranging discussion about the marking criteria but in the end it was proposed and accepted that the current marking criteria should continue unchanged. There was unanimous support for an additional new category for Primary schools and unanimous agreement to change the judging date to the later part of August, which makes it easier for schools to participate, for judging is no longer in the school holidays. There were also decisions to change the judges every two years and to review the competition every two to three years

Launch of the New Formartine Tourist Map designed for Satellite Navigation.

The Formartine Tourist Map has been completed and was formally launched at a press release at Windyhills and Woodhead Community Centre on 25th August. This map was initiated by Lorna Harris and nearly all the Formartine Development Officers have contributed to it. The map aims to facilitate tourism in the area and it should be useful to tourists and residents alike. It gives information on attractions and activities in Formartine including Nature, Heritage, Family History, Sport, Local Heritage, Events and Walking/cycling. An innovation is that post codes have been included so that satellite navigation equipment can be used to locate the attractions, and web sites have been incorporated for more detailed information. It is available free from Formartine Libraries and has been well received by tourism-related businesses and communities.



Launch of the Formartine Tourist Map

Formartine Partnership E-Bulletin.

A first issue of the Formartine Partnership E-Bulletin was produced and distributed at the end of October. It informs the various community groups in Formartine about the activities and aspirations of the Partnership and of fellow Formartine Groups, and provides general information from the wider sector which they may find helpful. The intention behind this approach is to develop group involvement and build a support network within Formartine. The second issue is being drafted.

Climate Challenge Fund: Aberdeenshire Rural Communities Carbon Reduction Project.

The Formartine Partnership, together with other Rural Partnerships and partners, Macaulay Institute, Aberdeenshire Council and Scarf, have been working on a proposal to apply for funding to the Climate Challenge Fund (CCF) to employ a Development Officer to support a combination of Community Groups with their individual Carbon Reduction Projects. Altogether, twenty-three Groups came forward from across Aberdeenshire, including six from Formartine. Two meetings of interested Groups were organised, at Inverurie on 6th May and Udny Green on 2nd July, the latter with CCF. However, it became clear that such a Project was not feasible because the Groups that are well advanced are intending to go it alone and apply directly to CCF, and there are too few other Groups, and they are at too disparate levels of development, to warrant a Project Officer at this time. The Rural Partnerships decided not to proceed further with the grant application, but they will continue to support these groups and help them develop their projects and access appropriate funding as needed. Also, a Mutual Support Network has been established to facilitate contact and information circulation between the groups.

Formartine Partnership AGM.

The Formartine Partnership AGM was held on 25th November 2009 at the New Inn, Ellon. Presentations were made by Eric Wells, (Renewable Energy Development Co-ordinator, Aberdeenshire Council): "*Aberdeenshire Sustainable Community Halls Initiative - next steps*"; and Ian Cowe, (Biomass Development Officer, Forestry Commission Scotland): "*Biomass Support and Financial Incentives*". Copies of these presentations have been lodged with the Formartine Partnership.

Updating and upgrading the Formartine Partnership web site.

The Formartine Partnership has set up a sub-committee to upgrade the web site. This sub-committee has reviewed other web sites, produced an outline of requirements and identified web designers who may be interested in contracting for this project. It is intended to have initial meetings with potential contractors during March.

Oral Heritage Project.

There are still problems of public access to the 96 CDs of this project. To address this problem, the Development Officer and Alistair Sinclair met with Claire Petty, the new Director of Gordon Highlanders Museum on 7th December 2009, to discuss uploading the material onto our new web page. Claire Petty suggested that the Partnership apply to Heritage Lottery Fund for a grant to do this on grounds that the technology has changed significantly and this will be followed through once the Partnership's new web site is commissioned.

Oral Heritage Project successor.

At the same meeting we discussed whether the Gordon Highlanders Museum would be interested in a joint project publishing a book of reminiscences about the Gordon Highlander's campaigns in World War II and using this as a basis for a further Oral History Project. Unfortunately, the museum declined to take part in a joint project but offered to help in other ways, should we decide to take this further.

Village Halls Manual.

Produced by our colleagues on the Marr Area Partnership, the Formartine Partnership has publicised and distributed this very useful manual to Village Hall Committees in the Formartine Area.

Aberdeenshire Council's Sustainable Community Halls Initiative.

The Formartine Partnership has continued to work with Aberdeenshire Council's Economic Development Service to support and develop its Sustainable Community Halls Initiative within Formartine. The aim is to make community buildings more sustainable through energy efficiency and renewables. The project was publicised further at the Formartine Partnership AGM.

Grants: Village and Town Enhancement Grants and Rural Youth Transport Grants.

During 2009-10, the Formartine Partnership administered the above two grant schemes on behalf of the Formartine Area Committee of Aberdeenshire Council. The administration of these grants fosters community engagement by allowing the Partnership to develop positive relationships with the community and youth groups in Formartine. In cases where the proposed community activities do not fit with the Village Enhancement Grant or the youth group are travelling outwith Aberdeenshire, the Partnership can help in identifying alternative funding for the group's project.

Community Transport.

The Formartine Partnership has continued to liase with the Aberdeenshire Community Transport Forum.

COMMUNITY ACTION PLANS

Ellon Town Centre Planning for Real® (PfR) Consultation.

By invitation, the Development Officer has made presentations to the Ellon Strategy Group and to Ellon CC regarding the possibility of using a Planning for Real consultation to establish the community's views concerning the future development of Ellon Town Centre. The proposed consultation has received a positive response from both bodies.

Potterton Planning for Real® (PfR) Consultation.

Belhelvie CC are considering carrying out a Planning for Real Consultation in Potterton to establish the community's views there.

Balmedie Planning for Real (PfR) Consultation.

A Planning for Real exercise was carried out in Balmedie in 2008 prior to Development Officer taking up position. The new Belhelvie CC have taken ownership, analysed it, and decided their priorities, which need endorsing by the community and linking with the Balmedie Views Community Action Survey. A Making it Real Community Action Plan will follow.

Balmedie Views: Community Action Survey.

This was an comprehensive survey funded by CL&D. It employed three Balmedie-based researchers for three months to establish residents' views regarding Balmedie as a place to live. It achieved much in a very short time, engaging successfully, highlighting gaps which residents identified, producing supportive, quantitative evidence and publishing a Report, Balmedie Views, which is available on the CPP website. It also successfully identified and helped initiate community groups: Better Balmedie, Christmas Lights, and a Community Newsletter.

The Formartine Partnership played an active part in this project by offering advice and training, monitoring the results and participating in the steering group.

Better Balmedie.

The Better Balmedie Group has been involved in litter clean-ups and planting spring bulbs and is intending to create plant beds for bedding plants at appropriate places. It also hopes to establish allotments, improve woodlands and develop coastal and woodland paths.

Balmedie Christmas Lights.

The Christmas Lights Group energised the community and raised £6,500 in a couple of months to mark the festive season. It is now addressing the organization of the village gala. The Formartine Partnership accessed £2,000 towards this total from Planning Gain and the Town and Village Enhancement Fund for lamppost connections.



Balmedie Christmas Lights Group at the Switch-on Parade.

Balmedie Development Officer.

The Formartine Partnership has applied to Awards for All for a project grant of £10,000. This project will contract a sessional worker to work part-time over a year with the residents of Balmedie to consolidate advances made by the Planning for Real exercise in 2008, and the Community Action Survey in 2009 to build up Balmedie's community identity and social cohesion. It has already received £2,500 from the Formartine LCPG as match funding.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES: Provide a local advice service to groups seeking to develop community assets and facilities.

Rothienorman Community Facility: Rothienorman Bowling Club and Community Association.

Construction of this Community Facility proceeds apace with a big voluntary involvement from members working most nights and weekends. The Project started in March 2009 with the demolition of an old, prefabricated, concrete building to be replaced by a new building to create a community resource and meeting room for use by the Bowling Club and a wide range of other local groups. The Group have already raised £246,000. Currently, the project is on time and on budget. Completion is projected for the end of March 2010, in time for the new bowling season which starts in mid-April. It is at fitting-out stage:- installing plasterboard, electrics, kitchen, toilets and biomass heating.



The new Rothienorman Community Facility.

The group have received a further award from LEADER of £11,881 for the fitting out, with match-funding of £3,000 from AC Education, Learning and Leisure, £3,000 from Planning Gain, and £5,000 from their own funds. They are already receiving enquiries from groups interested in hiring the facilities for meetings and conferences.

Methlick: Beaton Hall.

The Formartine Partnership has been working closely with this group in their project to upgrade the Hall, a decision taken at the Hall's Centenary AGM in September 2008, A sub-committee has been established and this has set up a newsletter and a web page to keep the community informed, produced a prospectus and drawn up a brief for a feasibility study. This is currently nearing completion after a successful application to Awards for All for £8,726.

Daviot Community Hall.

Daviot Community Hall Group has drawn up detailed plans for upgrading the hall at a cost of £450,000-£500,000, consulted with the community, received planning permission and have obtained £75,000 from Planning Gain for match funding. The Formartine Partnership is supporting an application to SRDP for the rest. They have successfully completed the SOI (Statement of Intent) stage and are now moving on to a detailed application. They are currently awaiting quotations from builders and will be submitting in June 2010. They will be eligible for the new 90% intervention rate.

Woodhead and Windyhills Community Trust.

WWCT completed the improved visitor information boards and leaflets, funded by last year's grants and launched them at the same meeting as the Formartine Partnership's Tourist Map on 25th August.

Tipperty School Parent Council.

This group have installed new equipment in the play park after receiving £8,900 from Awards for All. The Formartine Partnership supported a successful application to the Formartine Area Top-up Fund for £819 for safety fencing to complete the project.

Oldmeldrum Play Park.

This group have been working closely with the Formartine Partnership and AC Landscape services in a £75,000 project to upgrade the Park at Oldmeldrum. Together, the group and Landscape Services have developed a layout plan and decided on the play equipment to be installed. AC will also maintain the equipment, an important consideration for grant awarding bodies. The Formartine Partnership has been advising on the overall approach, advising on a business plan and exploring suitable grants. It is hoped that AC Landscape Services will be able to invest £25,000 from their 2010-11 budget and this will match fund £45,000 worth of applications to LEADER, Awards for All and Tesco. The group has already raised £1550 in donations from Making Meldrum Better, Formartine LCPG and Grampian Police and have plans for fundraising events.

Turriff Pre-School Playgroup.

Turriff Playgroup wants to develop a stand-alone facility though they are willing to share with non-conflicting groups (ie ones which meet evenings, weekends or school holidays). It is a go-ahead group. It is already talking to other potential sharing groups and has commissioned architectural plans, costings and discussed a possible site with Stephen Brown, CL&D. The Formartine Partnership has been giving support to find funding.

The project has been put on hold, meantime, pending clarification of the suitability of other Turriff community developments because similar, competing projects in one community may weaken them all in the eyes of grant awarding bodies, while cooperating ones strengthen an application. The Group is working closely with the Baden Powell Centre and considering a combined project.

Turriff: Baden Powell Centre.

The group are exploring the feasibility of doubling the size of current hall as it is too small for current usage and have commissioned an energy audit. The Development Officer is a member of the working group.

The Turriff Pre-school Playgroup is working closely with this group and the initial plans have been modified to suit the Playgroup's requirements. An open night has been held for public viewing and discussion of the proposals before planning permission is applied for and funding is sought.

Cuminestown: James Tennant Playing Fields.

The Formartine Partnership is supporting this group on various projects to upgrade the playing field facilities. They have been successful in obtaining £2,991 from the Formartine Area Top-up Fund to purchase a specialised new mower for the bowling green. Currently, they are exploring possible grants to upgrade the tennis courts.

Cuminestown: Play Park.

This group are newer than the Oldmeldrum Group and are not as far advanced. They have been working closely with AC Landscape services in a project to upgrade the Play Park at Cuminestown. Together they are developing a layout plan and deciding on the play equipment to be installed and its cost. AC will also maintain the equipment. The Formartine Partnership is advising on the overall approach, advising on a business plan and exploring suitable grants.

Cuminestown Youth Active Football Club

Cuminestown Youth Active Football Club has obtained a grant of £2,820 from Awards for All to buy training equipment to allow the group to attract more members. This grant will fund 30 footballs, cones, hurdles, poles, agility ladders, first aid kit, large goals, small goals, 4 mannequins, 30 training bibs and a storage shed.

Foveran Sports Facility.

Foveran CC is in the early stages of exploring the possibility of building an indoor sports facility.

Ythan Project Volunteers.

The Development Officer has continued to attend committee meetings. On 25th April 2009, YPV held a formal opening of the Tanglandford Bridge Bird Hide which was partly funded by the Horace Gillman Trust.

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: provide basic, initial business and administrative advice to community and social enterprises seeking to develop economic opportunities.

Udny Community Wind Turbine Group.

This project goes from strength to strength. On December 8th 2009 the group received planning permission for their community-owned 80m high single turbine rated at 800kw. When complete it is expected to produce £50,000 a year for the first ten years of operation, rising to £150,000 after that, all to be used for community benefit.

Since the last Annual Report, legal structures have been formalised, thus protecting the Community Council from the liabilities involved in developing a turbine. A limited company has been incorporated, Udny Community Wind Turbine Company Ltd, to build and operate the turbine and a planning consultant's report has been commissioned, grid access has been obtained and loans and grants for its construction are being negotiated. The community has been systematically consulted by a hand-delivered questionnaire to every household in Udny parish: 54% of the questionnaires were returned and of these 91% were in favour, 49% of the total number of households!

The group has also established the Udny Community Trust Ltd., a company limited by guarantee, to manage the surplus generated by the turbine for community benefit. All Udny residents will be members of this trust. The income will be used to develop a new community hall in Pitmedden and upgrade Udny Green Hall, to support community groups in the area, to employ a Development Officer to increase available activities, and to make the community greener by improving rural footpaths and bridleways, establishing allotments and increasing the energy efficiency of community buildings and private houses which in turn will diminish fuel poverty.

The group are awaiting notification of the result of an application to BigLottery for £249,000 to cover projected expenditure until the turbine is operational and producing an income. The Formartine Partnership reviewed the application and acted as referee.

Pitmedden: Pitmedden, Udny and Tarves (Put) Community Coop turbine.

The Formartine Partnership have been advising Put, a community composting cooperative, on grant sources and consultants to develop a small-scale wind turbine, in order to diversify their income sources and reduce their carbon footprint. They are now exploring a second small turbine for the landowner.

Birds of Prey Centre, Kelly Sawmill, Methlick.

This project is in abeyance for the time being because of the stalemate with SEPA over the Flood Risk Assessment. It is still intended to reapply for planning permission next year.

Balmedie, Tarts and Crafts Community Café and Craft Gallery.

The Formartine Partnership helped this group to obtain £900 from Formartine LCPG towards architect's costs in drawing up development plans.

Collieston Shop.

This shop has now closed on the owners' retirement. The Formartine Partnership has been supporting Collieston and Slains CC in discussions to take it over as a community business but this has now fallen through. However, they are actively exploring the possibility of obtaining a mobile shop, as a community business, to provide a substitute service to the community.

FUTURE CORE FUNDING AND REVENUE GENERATING: Investigate possible sources of future core funding and undertake revenue generating activities, to ensure the long term viability of Formartine Partnership Ltd

Wagglehill Forest, Cuminestown.

The Formartine Partnership investigated the potential of purchasing Wagglehill Forest through the National Forest Land Scheme in order to provide a secure, alternative, funding stream for the Partnership. Following assessment, it became clear that procedures for community consultation were not well-defined for an area-wide body such as the Partnership, and it was concluded that it would be extremely unlikely that the envisaged use of the land for production of sustainable, renewable, biomass energy would be viable at the current time. Accordingly, the Formartine Partnership withdrew its notification of interest.

Aberdeenshire Wingen Rural Consortia.

Aberdeenshire Rural Partnership Federation has held a meeting with Maitland Mackie to discuss his proposal to establish rural consortia to develop wind turbines/wind farms and keep the benefits locally. The consortia would consist of farmers, landowners, local businesses, residents and community groups and would thus provide a very welcome sustainable income source for the Rural Partnerships themselves, and community groups. The Formartine Partnership will liaise with Maitland Mackie and actively progress the idea.

Balmedie Development Officer.

The Formartine Partnership is applying to Awards for All for £10,000, and has received £2,500 from Formartine LCPG, for a Project to contract a sessional worker, hosted by the Partnership, to work part-time over a year with the residents of Balmedie. The Project will build up Balmedie's community identity and social cohesion and consolidate advances made in this regard by the Planning for Real exercise in 2008, and the Balmedie Views Community Action Survey (CAS) in 2009. A steering group has been appointed to oversee the Project.

Tourism Projects.

The Formartine Partnership continues to promote the '*Walking in Formartine*' walks packs, describing 16 walks across Formartine. These packs are available widely across Formartine.

INFORMATION FLOW: Act as an intermediary between Aberdeenshire Council, Community Planning Partners the Local Community Group and the wider community ensuring a two-way flow of information relating to needs and priorities as one of the voluntary sector partners.

CED Meetings.

The Formartine Partnership participate in the Bi-annual meetings between the Aberdeenshire Rural Partnerships, senior representatives of Aberdeenshire Council (including the Leader, the Chairman of the ISC Committee, the Director of Transportation and Infrastructure) and the Scottish Government.

Community Council Forum.

The Development Officer regularly attends Formartine Area Community Council Forum.

Community Planning Partnership.

The Aberdeenshire Rural Partnerships are a partner on the CPP Board and Executive and the Development Officer is substitute representative on the CPP Executive. He also receives minutes, agendas and other communications from the CCP Board and Executive via the Rural Partnerships representatives on these bodies.

The Formartine Partnership is a partner on the Formartine Local Community Planning Group and its sub-groups for Balmedie, Turriff and District and autism. The Development Officer regularly attends these and the Community Planning Forum. He was a member of the steering group for the Balmedie Views Community Action Survey. He co-ordinates regularly with Mark Mitchell, the Community Planning Officer.

Formartine LCPG has awarded the Formartine Partnership £2,500 towards the project to contract a Development Officer for Balmedie and it was further agreed that the balance of 2009-10 would be transferred to the Formartine Partnership to establish a Community Development Projects fund.

Community Profiles.

The Formartine Partnership has worked closely with the local CL&D Officers in producing Community Profiles for Balmedie, Pitmedden and Tarves. Balmedie is complete; Pitmedden is almost complete having been reviewed by Udney CC; and a draft for Tarves has been started. Oldmeldrum will follow. They will be combined with Planning for Real Reports to develop a series of Community Action Plans.

Core Paths Consultation.

With the aim of supporting tourism in Formartine, the Partnership submitted the following proposals:

- Construction of cycle ways focussing on a hub at Haddo House Country Park, and linking it to the other key Formartine (and Aberdeenshire) tourist attractions of Fyvie Castle- Pitmedden Gardens- Sands of Forvie NNR;
- Development of the Ythan Way, a continuous long distance footpath along the Ythan Valley;
- Development of circular routes and more continuous local systems between villages; and
- Construction of more links to the Formartine and Buchan Way.

These proposals were rejected meantime because, "A wider network of integrated paths is not deliverable with the financial resources available. It should be noted that the core path process is an evolving one and it is hoped that the aspirations of the partnership will be met in future years."

BUILDING COMMUNITY CAPACITY

This year, community groups supported by the Formartine Partnership have displayed a very wide range of capacity. At one extreme is Udney Community Wind Turbine Company Ltd. directing a very professional, bold, self-sufficient and independent £1.5 million project with relatively little recourse to Partnership resources. Tippetty School Parent Council successfully applied to Awards for All with no Partnership support too, though it needed support to complete the project. Last year Rothienorman Bowling Club Community Facility accepted support with grant sources and forms but this year they completed their Phase 2 application to LEADER entirely independently, presumably having absorbed last year's experience. At the other extreme are newly formed groups such as the Balmedie Christmas Lights Group who carried out a lightning campaign to enthusiastically fund-raise £6,500 with minimal recourse to formal grant applications. Oldmeldrum Play Park and Turriff Pre-School Playgroup have developed strongly designed projects but have still to move on towards grant applications. Methlick, Beaton Hall lies in-between, building up a systematic, step-by-step approach and absorbing the experience as they go along.

LEVERAGE

The total grants awarded to Projects supported by the Formartine Partnership in 2009-10 is:

£61,416.

This is a substantial reduction on 2008-9 (£291,556), largely because the lead time for large projects is longer than one accounting year. Thus Rothienorman Community Facility successfully achieved its main funding (£246,000) in 2008-9 and has been constructing this year; Daviot Community Hall (c£500,000 project) will be applying to SRDP in June 2010 and Meldrum Play Park (£75,000 project) will be applying in the next financial year too; while both Methlick, Beaton Hall (c£450,000 project) and Turriff, Baden Powell Centre will be applying in due course.

At the time of writing, Udney Community Wind Turbine Company Ltd. is awaiting notification from BigLottery on a £249,000 grant to cover projected expenditure over the construction period 2010-11 until the turbine is operational and producing an income.

Leverage 2009-10

Methlick, Beaton Hall	£8,726
Awards for All: £8,726	
Balmedie, Tarts and Crafts Community Café	£900
Formartine LCPG: £900	
Tipperty School Parent Council	£9,717
Awards for All: £9,000; AC Area Top-up Fund: £817	
Cuminestown, James Tennant Playing Fields	£2,991
AC Area Top-up Fund: £2,991	
Formartine Partnership: Formartine in Bloom	£1,000
Sponsorship	
Rothienorman Bowling Club Community Facility	£23,762
LEADER: £11,881; AC ELL: £3,000, Planning Gain: £3,000	
Fundraising: £5,881	
Cuminestown Youth Active Football Club	£2,820
Awards for All: £2,820	
Balmedie Christmas Lights Group	£6,500
Planning Gain: £1,000; T&V Enhancement: Fund £1,000;	
Fundraising and donations: £4,500	
Formartine Partnership: Balmedie Development Officer	£2,500
Formartine LCPG: £2,500:	
Formartine Partnership: Community Development Projects fund	£2,500
Formartine LCPG: c£2,500	
TOTAL	£61,416
Udney Community Wind Turbine Company Ltd.	£249,000
BigLottery: £249,000 (awaiting notification)	

NETWORKING AND COLLABORATION

Aberdeenshire Rural Partnerships Federation.

The Formartine Partnership continues to be actively involved in the Aberdeenshire Rural Partnerships Federation and both the Chairman and the Development Officer regularly attend their meetings.

Also, the Chairman and Development Officer were actively involved in meetings with other Aberdeenshire Rural Partnerships, Scarf, Macaulay Institute, Aberdeenshire Council, and the Scottish Climate Challenge Fund regarding the Aberdeenshire Rural Communities Carbon Reduction Project. The Development Officer took joint leadership in this for the Aberdeenshire Rural Partnership Federation and leadership in the Aberdeenshire Wingen Rural Consortia Project.

In addition, the Chairman and Development Officer were actively involved in meetings regarding the Scottish Government's Third Sector Funding initiative between Scottish Government, Community Planning, CL&D, CVSs and Volunteer Centres. Again the Development Officer took joint leadership in this for the Aberdeenshire Rural Partnership Federation.

Formartine Community Council Forum.

The Development Officer regularly attends this monthly forum.

Development Trust Association Scotland (DTAS).

The Formartine Partnership has joined the Development Trusts Association Scotland and the Development Officer and a Director attended its annual meeting in Dunblane, receiving a bursary from DTAS towards this.

Community Profiles.

As reported above, the Formartine Partnership has worked closely with the local CL&D Officers in producing Community Profiles for Balmedie, Pitmedden and Tarves and is about to start on Oldmeldrum.

Aberdeen University.

The Development Officer gave his regular lecture to Geography Honours students of Aberdeen University on the activities of the Formartine Partnership.

Rural Aberdeenshire LEADER.

The Formartine Partnership was represented at this seminar, organised for the Scottish Government. In addition, five projects from Formartine took stalls to advertise their activities.

EXPLAIN THE MAIN CHANGES AND CHALLENGES TO BOTH THE ORGANISATION AND THE COMMUNITIES

FUNDING.

Become more Self-sustaining.

The Partnership has explored two projects to increase its sustainable income with a view towards it becoming more self-sustaining and less dependent on grants: Wagglehill Forest and Aberdeenshire Wingen Rural Consortia.

Third Sector Funding.

By April 2011, The Scottish Government in its localism initiative is intending to fund the Third Sector directly within each local authority area by developing a Service Level Agreement between the Third Sector and the Community Planning Partnership through an interface, which will meet a minimum set of functions, likely to be:

- ❖ Support to voluntary organisations operating in the area, both local and those national organisations that deliver services at the local level;
- ❖ Support to and promotion of volunteering;
- ❖ Support and development of social enterprise;
- ❖ Connection between the CPP and the third sector.

Formartine Partnership Annual Report 2009-10

However, Aberdeenshire is different. It had three CVSs (though two have now merged together) and six to eight Rural Partnerships, which deliver these functions, and the latter are funded largely by Aberdeenshire Council. Most Local Authorities have one CVS, one Volunteer Centre and no Rural Partnerships. Rural Partnerships only occur in one other local authority. The Scottish Government has asked that the Aberdeenshire groups come up with plan for a system to administer the grant. At a meeting with Scottish Government on February 13th 2009, the Third Sector in Aberdeenshire decided to investigate the option of formalising a new partnership body to draw down funding and to help the sector plan more effectively. It was decided to commission a small, representative, short-life working group to undertake the short term tasks 1 and 2 below:

1. Stakeholder engagement on the potential for a new formalised partnership;
2. Modelling how the new interface could work.

The working group proposed the establishment of a Third Sector Infrastructure Network to formalise relationships between Third Sector Infrastructure Organisations- those that support the Third Sector (i.e. support other organisations individually and the needs of the Sector as a whole). This would typically be through such services as business advice and training, lobbying, consultation, representation, publicity and capacity building.

The proposed initial members of the Network are:- Aberdeenshire CVS Central and South, Bridge CVS, Volunteer Centre Aberdeenshire, Formartine Partnership, Kincardine and Mearns Area Partnership, Buchan Development Partnership, Banffshire Partnership and Marr Area Partnership.

However when this went before the CPP Board it became confused with the requirement to set up a Third Sector Interface to transmit the funding from Scottish Government to CVS and Volunteer Centres. CPP initially recognised that "Aberdeenshire Third Sector Interface is **THE** official point of contact between CP Partners and the Third Sector." This was amended to "Aberdeenshire Third Sector Interface is **ONE** of the official points of contact between CP Partners and Third Sector. This is because ATSI comprises CVSs and the Volunteer Centre (as stipulated by the Scottish Government) but doesn't incorporate other third sector bodies in Aberdeenshire who are part of a more informal infrastructure network."

One cannot help but feel that the Rural Partnerships in Aberdeenshire have been circumvented!

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS.

Walking the Talk Community Consultation.

In late 2008 the Formartine Partnership received a consultant's report commissioned to advise on the way forward for the Partnership. This noted that the Partnership had a low public profile and that it should increase this in part by publishing an E-bulletin and upgrading its website. It also considered that a purely facilitating role had limited value in terms of meeting the expectations of the wider community. It recommended that practical delivery of projects should continue to be part of the Formartine Partnership's function and suggested that the following types of projects could be appropriate:-

1. Planning for Real™ –delivery of spin-off projects;
2. Community paths;
3. Tree planting / wood fuel project;
4. Renewable energy;
5. History (understanding and developing);
6. Community composting.

During this reporting year, the Formartine Partnership has resumed production of the E-bulletin and has started work on updating and upgrading the Website. Also, several of the above project types have been/are being actively explored:- Planning for Real™ (the Balmedie Development Officer), Tree planting / wood fuel project (Wagglehill Forest); Renewable energy (Aberdeenshire Wingen Rural Consortia); and History (Oral Heritage Project and its successor).

The Formartine Partnership needs to decide how its resources are to be applied between these two aspects:- practical delivery of in-house projects or Community Capacity Building and facilitating. However, its core income is for the latter and is governed by a Service Level Agreement with Aberdeenshire Council.

INCOME, EXPENDITURE AND RESERVES

Profit and Loss Account for year to April 30th 2009

Turnover	£	£
Sales of Walk leaflets	228	
Formartine in Bloom	1,750	
T & V Enhancement Grant	2,998	
Oral History	3,270	
Core Funding	36,500	
Rural Youth Transport Grant	2,500	
Other Income	75	
Total		47,321
Cost of Sales		
Rural Youth Transport Scheme	2,555	
T & V Enhancement Scheme	5,416	
Miscellaneous expenditure	4,116	
Oral History Project	892	
Formartine in Bloom	1,336	
Employee expenses	757	
Wages	19,066	
Total		34,138
GROSS PROFIT (LOSS)		13,183
Other income		
Deposit account interest		1,083
		14,266
Expenditure		
Insurance	497	
Advertising	543	
Sundry expenses	17	
Accountancy	1,374	
		2,431
		11,385
Finance costs		
bank charges		66
NET PROFIT (LOSS)		11,769
RESERVES		54,846