

Two community groups benefit from first round of LEADER funding

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Two local organisations have been awarded funding through the Orkney LEADER programme to take their projects forward.

The Programme was allocated over £2.5million funding from the Scottish Government and European Community towards developing small-scale, community driven, innovative projects which will support both the local economy and Orkney communities.

Both applications from the Kirkwall Bowling Club and Burray Community Association met the criteria of the programme's Local Action Group (LAG), who administers the funding, and are now moving forward with their projects.

The Kirkwall Bowling Club will install an artificial outdoor bowling green which will allow assurances of play irrespective of the weather, extending the playing season and increasing the opportunity for members and non-members to use the facility.

Burray Community Association will see an upgrade to the Burray Hall which will enable increased usage to the hall for groups and events and give the community a more modern and energy efficient facility.

Both groups also received funding from the Council's Community Development Fund in support of the projects.

Councillor James Stockan, chair of the Council's Development and Infrastructure Committee said: "LEADER has already brought many benefits to our communities over the last decade and we are very pleased to see that more projects are receiving financial assistance. Facilities such as bowling greens and community halls are central for bringing communities together, and it's essential that we continue to support these developments."

Francesca Couperwhite, chair of the Orkney Local Action Group, said: "The projects awarded funding to date demonstrate the positive benefits and strength of what community groups can do when they come together.

"This was the first round of applications that we reviewed for the 2014 – 2020 LEADER Programme, with the next deadline taking place later in the summer. Many groups have submitted Expressions of Interest with a variety of exciting and innovative projects. Although LEADER is funded by the European Community, at present the programme will continue to operate as normal, so we are very much looking forward to seeing what other applications will be put forward."

A short video about the Kirkwall Bowling Club's application can be watched on [Orkney Islands Council's Youtube Channel](#) .

The next deadline for LEADER funding applications is August 24. If you have a project that you would like to discuss, contact Amy Esslemont, LEADER Development Officer, at the Council on 01856 873 535 or by [email](#).