

LEADER funding for local projects

08 December 2016

Six local projects have secured support from the latest rounds of LEADER funding.

All six projects will take forward works and activities which will benefit Orkney's communities and economy.

The six projects are:

- Birsay Community Association has secured funding to create a community play park in the site surrounding the Birsay Hall. The park, which will be installed by volunteers, will see traditional play equipment blended with natural imaginative play opportunities, and will include a sensory garden and picnic area.
- Stromness Community Council has secured funding for a new multi-purpose community space in the grounds of the Stromness Town House, which will be used by festivals and events, as well as being open to the public as a space to relax in the town centre.
- Digital Media Orkney will provide a platform for enhanced digital communications activity, promoting Orkney's tourism, food & drink, creative industries and energy sectors, coupled with promotion of Orkney's communities and activities, demonstrating to the wider world that Orkney it is an excellent place to live, work, study, do business and visit.
- The Ness of Brodgar Development project will see the appointment of a full time Manager for the Ness, to concentrate on developing the full potential of the site as an excavation of world importance, as an educational resource and to explore the potential to be a sustainable visitor attraction for the benefit of the Orkney economy.
- Orkney Historic Boat Society gained funding to complete feasibility study to help determine the viability of establishing a Boat Haven, which it is hoped would incorporate interpretation of Orkney's maritime heritage and would serve as a base for a boat building training programme and boat restoration.
- Westray Development Trust's community growing project will provide professional greenhouse structures, built specifically to withstand the local weather, to enable the growing of a small but experimental range of produce to sell to the local community, creating two jobs in tending the produce.

To date, over three funding rounds, the current Orkney LEADER programme has awarded grant funding of over £460,000 to eight community driven, innovative projects, with a total value of over £1 million of project investment.

Councillor James Stockan, Chair of the Development and Infrastructure Committee said: 'I'm delighted to once again see the commitment within our communities to developing projects that will have widespread benefits. The energy and enthusiasm shown by these groups is incredible and I congratulate them on their success.'

Phyllis Harvey, Vice-Chair of the LEADER Local Action Group said: "I am pleased to see a variety of projects coming forward now for LEADER funding, which will benefit the Orkney community. Due to the uncertainty over the spend period of the current LEADER Programme, I would like to encourage anyone thinking about LEADER funding to contact the LEADER team as early as possible to discuss their project ideas."

The Orkney Islands £2.5million LEADER Programme offers funding for small scale, pilot projects led by the local community, or that are in the local community's interest, with the aim to promote economic and community development within Orkney.

The programme remains open to applications, with projects for Round 4 currently being considered. The deadline for Round 5 is 22 March 2017.

For more information on the programme visit the Orkney LEADER website. You can also contact the LEADER team direct at Orkney Islands Council on 01856 873535 ext 2811.

LEADER (Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Economie Rurale - links between actions for the development of the rural economy) is part of the Scotland Rural Development Programme, which funds economic, environmental and social measures for the benefit of rural Scotland.

LEADER is a bottom-up method of delivering support for rural development, aimed at increasing the capacity of the local rural community and business networks by building knowledge and skills, encouraging innovation and co-operation, and attempting to tackle local development objectives.

Funded by the European Union and Scottish Government, the 2014 - 2020 LEADER Programme will be delivered in Scotland by 21 Local Action Groups implementing Local Development Strategies for their area.