

VITAL Herefordshire LEADER



LEADER in Herefordshire
2009-13





LEADER is a European funded community initiative focused on rural development operating throughout the UK and Europe.

The LEADER approach was mainstreamed under the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) and in the West Midlands priorities were focused on social and community issues.

This LEADER programme operated from 2009 until the end of December 2013, and was called VITAL Herefordshire. This name was chosen because the LAG (Local Action Group) recognised that the sustainability of rural services and activity, as well as the rural economy, is vital for Herefordshire to ensure stronger, more inclusive communities. Each letter of the word represents a key theme identified:

Village Services

Improving the environment (cultural, historical, natural)

Training and empowerment

Actioning community plans

Local democracy

To have maximum impact on the issues identified at the start of the programme, the VITAL Herefordshire area has covered the whole of the County of Herefordshire District Council, excluding Hereford City. The intention was that some projects would cover the whole of the area, whilst other projects would deliver benefits in particular localities, parishes or villages. This has proved to be the case as demonstrated by the projects outlined in this booklet.

The area covered 240 parishes with a total population estimated at 2009 as 122,800. The LEADER Programme has supported activity in 150 out of those 240 parishes, see pages 42 and 43 for maps showing the total parishes covered by the outreach worker projects and parishes covered by all other projects. In addition to the direct Herefordshire benefit there is a remit for supporting transnational and co-operation projects. For Herefordshire we have had one overarching co-operation project, see page 41, which has been delivered in conjunction with five other LAGs, on the England side Shropshire Hills LEADER, Northern Marches LEADER, and in Wales with adventa (Monmouthshire), Glasu (Powys) and Cadwyn Clwydd (Denbighshire). Two further projects at county level have contributed to the co-operation activity via Visit Herefordshire and the Wye Valley AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty).

LEADER is not just a funding stream. It's a way of doing things, a particularly exciting way of helping rural areas or communities to help themselves. LEADER encourages and develops networking to stimulate co-operation and exchange of experience both at the local level as well as regionally, nationally and transnationally.



LEADER in the future

Looking ahead there will be another round of LEADER starting in 2015 until 2020. The new programme will have a greater focus on the economy, which is to be welcomed as there is good potential for LEADER to address issues around the local economy in addition to the social, cultural and environmental. The current LEADER programme was part of the West Midlands LEADER region and the regional decision was for LEADER to address social and community priorities only. The next LEADER programme will be aligned with the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Growth Plans and should ensure a joined up approach to the delivery of the EU Structural Funds in the Marches LEP area.

The new programme will still adhere to the LEADER ethos however, where the aim is to provide a flexible and adaptable approach to address often complex problems needing long term solutions.

This can be achieved by enabling local communities to identify local solutions and put them into action by working across different sectors, such as the Third Sector, private business, social enterprise, land-based sector, the Diocese, the public sector and Parish Councils.

The development of the new programme will take place during the Transition year of 2014 between programmes, when widespread community and stakeholder consultations will take place in the rural areas of the county.

For further information, contact:

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The priorities for delivery of LEADER in Herefordshire were defined around the available Rural Development Programme measures and identified through the work of the original shadow Local Action Group, policy makers, stakeholders, local strategies and policies.

Village Services Support local services and facilities, enhance cultural and tourism opportunities.

Thirteen projects, pages 8 to 20.

Improving the environment (cultural, historical, natural)

Increase access to the countryside, support the development of a new woodfuel project, enable local communities to develop sustainable solutions to their areas and community history opportunities. **Eight projects, pages 21 to 28.**

Training and empowerment Support people to have control over the direction of their own lives, increase training and skills

in the Kington area, pilot IT rural skills delivery in the Golden Valley, engage young people in isolated areas and outreach community development and training support.

Eight projects, pages 29 to 36.

Actioning community plans Empower local communities to develop and implement their parish and community plans by identifying and delivering actions in their areas.

Three projects, pages 37 to 39.

Local democracy Encourage local communities to engage in parish councils and local democracy. **One project, page 40.**

Rural Development Programme for England

The Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) supports rural areas and covers a lot of different sectors. It recognises the importance of connections between agricultural and economic development, environmental stewardship and sustainability of rural communities.

- **Axis 1** – Improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sector
- **Axis 2** – Improving the environment and the countryside
- **Axis 3** – Quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy
- **Axis 4** – The LEADER approach

The LEADER approach uses a Local Action Group made up of local organisations with knowledge and experience about the needs and priorities of Herefordshire's rural areas. Projects are developed using a community-led approach to ensure that projects meet the needs of local rural communities.

The VITAL Herefordshire LEADER priorities focused on social and community issues (Axis 3). The RDPE Measures that the Herefordshire LEADER programme delivered under are:

Measure 321 Basic Services for the economy and rural population - £805,125

Measure 322 Village renewal and development - £438,396

Measure 323 Conservation of the rural heritage - £179,206

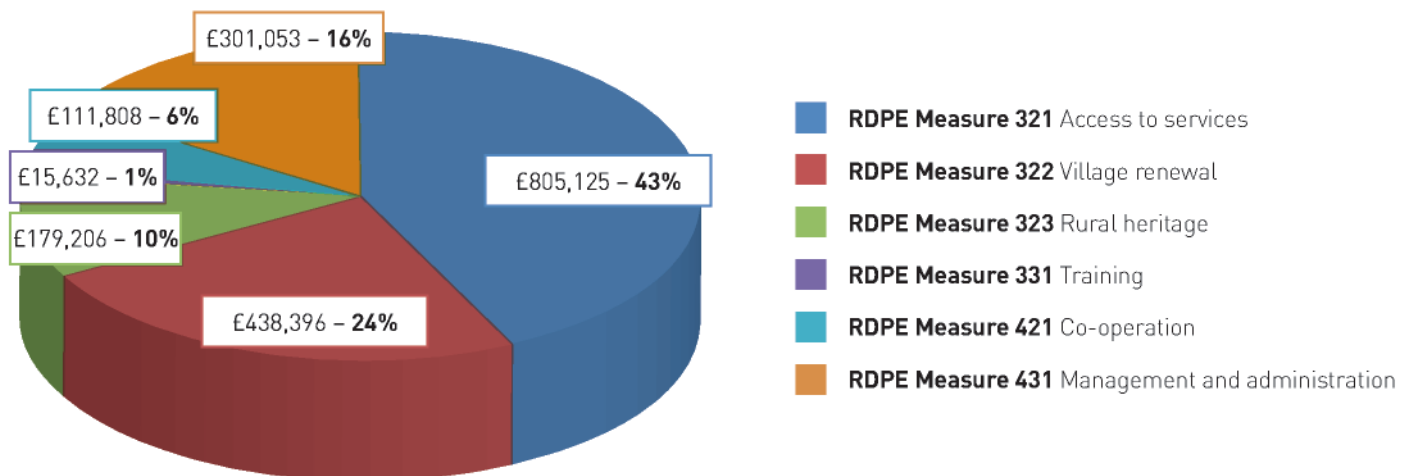
Measure 331 Training and information for economic actors operating in Axis 3 - £15,632

Measure 421 Implementing co-operation projects - £111,808

Measure 431 Management and administration - £301,053

Please note as a result of the Government's Spending Review the total funding available was reduced in April 2011 from £2,550,000 to £1,851,221

Allocation by RDPE Measure



Projected outputs and results as forecasted in the Local Development Strategy

Measure	Objective	Funding allocation	Intervention rate	Outputs	Results	Impacts
321	By 2013, 20 activities will be supported enabling better access to services	1,236,786	Up to 70% with 30% cash or in kind match funding	20 basic service actions	10,500 population benefitting	Economic growth
322	By 2013, 13 village renewal activities will have been supported	335,000	Up to 70% with 30% cash or in kind match funding	13 village renewal actions	3,000 population benefitting	Employment creation
323	By 2013, 6 rural heritage activities will have been supported	354,000	Up to 70% with 30% cash or in kind match funding	8 rural heritage actions	1,500 population benefitting	Economic growth
331	By 2013, 125 training days will have been supported	70,000	Up to 70% with 30% cash match funding	225 training days	127 participants successfully completing training	Employment creation
421	By 2013, 3 co-operation projects will have been developed involving 2 LAGs, including one transnational project	110,000	Up to 100% funding	1 transnational co-operation project, 2 inter territorial co-operating LAGs		Economic growth
431	Management and Administration	444,214	20% or less of total LEADER expenditure			

Actual outputs and results as of 31st March 2013

Measure	Objective	Funding allocation	Intervention rate	Outputs	Results	Impacts
321	By 2013 20 activities will be supported enabling better access to services	805,125	Up to 90% with 10% cash or in kind match funding	15 Jobs created, 3 jobs safeguarded, 20 basic service actions	368,564 population benefitting	Economic growth
322	By 2013 13 village renewal activities will have been supported	438,396	Up to 90% with 10% cash or in kind match funding	13 village renewal actions, 2 jobs safeguarded	76,091 population benefitting	Employment creation
323	By 2013 6 rural heritage activities will have been supported	179,206	Up to 70% with 30% cash or in kind match funding	8 rural heritage actions, 2 jobs created, 1 job safeguarded	20,650 population benefitting	Economic growth
331	By 2013 125 training days will have been supported	15,632	Up to 70% with 30% cash match funding	331 training days	88 participants successfully completing training	Employment creation
421	By 2013, 3 co-operation projects will have been developed involving 2 LAGs, including one transnational project	111,808	Up to 100%	3 co-operation projects, 3 transnational co-operating LAGs, 2 inter-territorial co-operating LAGs	25,967 population benefitting	Economic growth
431	Management and Administration	301,053	16% of total LEADER expenditure			

Dorstone's Front Room

Supporting capital improvements to this vital community hub in the Golden Valley

February 2010 to December 2012

Applicant: Dorstone's Front Room

Project budget: £13,110 of which
£8,460 LEADER

Project summary: Following the closure of the village shop and Post Office, Dorstone Front Room - or DFR as it's known locally - was established as a community hub to provide local services and a meeting place for the village of Dorstone and surrounding hamlets. LEADER funding has helped to extend the range of food products available and services through capital improvements to the building by upgrading the kitchen, insulation and storage facilities.

DFR also provides services in terms of information on local events, businesses, parish council work, bulk buying of heating oil and other products, a lending library, use of a computer and broadband link, as well as many special themed events held.

The project has enabled unused space to be converted into an exhibition gallery to generate more income by having an Artist of the Month.

Project outcomes: Improved insulation and heating has helped to better control energy costs. Kitchen improvements have meant a wider range of snacks and drinks can be prepared on the premises to attract more visitors. The old post office has been converted into a small museum and tourist information for the local area with recent archaeology finds. DFR supports local food producers by selling their goods, and local artists will benefit from the display of their goods and the low cost for exhibiting their work. DFR was honoured in the The Queen's Award for Voluntary Services in 2012 recognising outstanding contributions by groups of volunteers.



“ An exemplary example of how a community can pull together a facility that meets community need. Their business model makes a true living village community and could be replicated across Herefordshire and beyond.

Cllr Phillip Price



Learning points: DFR has been very successful mainly by involving the whole community and their wide range of needs into one location. Usage has been high and still growing with regular customer surveys to help further develop services and stock/offerings.

25 volunteers work a minimum of one four-hour opening at DFR every fortnight, and this means that volunteers do not get over-worked and experience volunteer fatigue!



Project contact details: Karen Usher **Email:** info@dorstonesfrontroom.org.uk
Tel: 01981 550777 **Website:** www.dorstonesfrontroom.org.uk



Tudorville and District Community Centre Phase 1

Supporting essential improvements to Herefordshire's first Capital Asset Transfer

October 2010 to June 2013

Applicant: Tudorville & District Community Centre

Project budget: £63,318 of which £43,846 LEADER

Project summary: Funding has helped to support a series of Phase 1 capital improvements to this former Council-owned youth centre in a deprived area of Herefordshire near to Ross-on-Wye. Ownership of the building was transferred to the local community during 2010 and, whilst the structure and fabric of the building was sound, considerable investment was needed to make the building suitable for hiring out. Works have included replacement of the uneven floor, accessible ramp, new efficient boiler and heating system, wall insulation and redecoration. A second small project replaced doors and windows, while a third carried out essential electrical works prior to Phase 2, which will build a new kitchen and private meeting room facilities.

Project outcomes: Considerable community spirit has been built up as many local people have become involved and taken on volunteer roles fundraising and running committees. Local people have gained new skills and increased confidence levels which, in some cases, has led to new employment opportunities. The building is more comfortable and attractive for hiring for a wide range of activities, training, exercise classes and clubs. Financial sustainability was achieved in the first year since opening, so future fundraising will be used for further improvements to the facility. Other benefits of the project have been lower heating bills and an increase in the number of users and income generated. Further funding has been secured for funding of Phase 2, which will fund the new kitchen and meeting rooms, and enable larger events and functions to be held.



They had the courage to back us with a grant so we could get the old youth centre converted to a community building ready for opening back in 2010.

Colin Gray, Chair of TDCC

Learning points: A very successful project, mainly due to the wide scale commitment and enthusiasm of the local community to take on a project of this scale. It will be important for the long term sustainability to attract more volunteers to the committee as there is a lot of responsibility on a few individuals. A very comprehensive community consultation was done with an excellent response rate, which ensured that there was widespread local support and engagement with the project.



Project contact details: Antony Lowther **Email:** antony.lowther@ajlowther.co.uk
Tel: 01600 890482 **Website:** www.tdcc-online.co.uk

St. Dubricius Church Community Room

Enabling wider community use of
the parish church

July 2010 to December 2011

Applicant: Whitchurch Parochial
Church Council

Project budget: £87,235 of which
£38,069 LEADER

Project summary: The aim of the project was to extend the use of the church in order to provide a range of community activities, which would help to revitalise a very rural area by providing an extra flexible room, toilets and kitchen. The project is working closely in partnership with the village hall and local school to ensure activities are complementary, but there was a specific need identified through local consultation for a smaller space suitable for smaller groups to meet. This project has built on the previously LEADER+ funded refurbished Gwillim Enclosure in the churchyard as a tourist attraction, which attracts over 5,000 tourists a year.

Project outcomes: The space has been well used by many local groups including Age UK, WRVS, toddler groups, local art groups and Heartstart training. Two lunch clubs a month are held which are very well attended. Also, a recent development of a broadband connection has enabled camera and computer classes to be held.

This innovative approach to developing a suitable community space by utilising a part of the church building has been very successful. The opening coffee morning attracted a large turnout with a lot of people who do not usually attend such events. Regular coffee mornings are now held with the offer of transport if needed.

The room will be self-financing in the future through the charges for hiring the space.



“ We have gone from strength to strength and have regular IT classes now. None of us realised how involved we would become! Instead of weekly activity it is now nearly daily.

*Jo Dawson, Secretary to
Whitchurch PCC*



Learning points: It is important to include all the costs prior to starting to apply for grants and ensure you have good community support. Be prepared to be the go-between various professionals and try to use local tradespeople as much as possible.



Project contact details: Jo Dawson, Secretary to Whitchurch PCC
Email: Jodawson04@gmail.com Tel: 01600 890243 Website: www.theaisle.org.uk



Goodrich Village Hall Improvements

Reducing energy costs at Goodrich Village Hall

December 2011 to December 2012

Applicant: Goodrich Village Hall Trust

Project budget: £10,343 of which £7,241 LEADER

Project summary: The first project was to install insulation into the two older rooms in the building, with the long term aim for the building achieving carbon-neutral status.

The second project was to fund the purchase of privacy curtains, which would enhance the use of the hall for various groups using the building for overnight stays and to create a more attractive and comfortable interior.

Project outcomes: The projects have led to a reduction in energy costs, which has meant that other income can be used for the increasing number of community projects. The hall can be kept at a comfortable temperature throughout the year which has attracted more diverse groups of varying ages to hire the hall.

The two older rooms have been transformed into a warm and vibrant space and are being used for many more premium events since the refurbishment. A new 'Book Café' club has been set up and is attracting up to 20 new visitors a week, including from parts of the district that have not traditionally made use of the hall.

The curtains have created privacy for groups such as Brownies and Guides who use the building for overnight stays on a regular basis, as well as creating a more attractive interior. Three wedding receptions have been held at the hall, as well as other larger events, which in turn generates more income for the hall.



“ We are really pleased with the result of this work. The village hall is now a brighter, cleaner, warmer and much nicer environment for village life and all the functions it holds.

*Matthew Constance,
Chairman*

Learning points: The requirement to pay out up front can be a challenge for smaller organisations, and lightening the admin and form filling for small projects would be welcomed!



Project contact details: Andrew Bartle, Project Co-ordinator **Tel:** 01594 810610
Email: Andrew.bartle@acorn-office.co.uk **Website:** www.goodrichvillagehall.co.uk

St Mary's Community Project

Developing architect's plans for a community facility in St. Mary's Church, Pembridge

October 2012 to March 2013

Applicant: Pembridge Parochial Church Council

Project budget: £9,600 of which £5,000 LEADER

Project summary: We have been exploring with our community how we can make our church building more useful and sustainable for the future, and much more user friendly for a range of community activities.

It does not have the facilities you would expect in such a large community building, such as toilets, kitchen, adequate heating and good access.

Consultation has shown that the community can see a need for performance space, heritage centre, exhibitions, provision for refreshments and a space for education and learning.

We wanted to move forward to having fully costed plans drawn up by an architect to RIBA stage D to enable us to move forward with our project. This was the work LEADER part-funded.

Project outcomes: Plans have been drawn up and will help form the basis of successful funding applications, which can then be used to implement our project to provide a facility within the community to meet needs identified in our consultation.



The LEADER funding was the boost we needed to kick start a project which has been discussed for many years. Now we have detailed plans to present to funders.

Reverend Brenda Jacobs



Learning points: We found no problems with the whole process. Instructions were comprehensive. However it was difficult to include as much community consultation as we would have liked due to the timescales of the funding.



Project contact details: Meryl Griffith **Email:** porthcelyn@btinternet.com
Tel: 01544 340381 **Website:** www.arrowvalechurches.org.uk/pembridge/smcp.php



Almeley Village Improvements

Enhancing environmental areas and development of village market

September 2012 to December 2013

Applicant: Almeley Parish Council

Project budget: £2,100 of which £1,470 LEADER

Project summary: Spearmarsh Common is in an area of outstanding natural beauty. Due to a lack of funds, a number of dead and dying trees needed removal, and replacement trees planted.

An ancient village pond has become overgrown, to the detriment of amphibians, plants and bird life.

Almeley is a very rural area, with areas of deprivation. Opportunities for socialising are limited because public transport to local towns is expensive and limited.

Establishing a village market in the Village Hall enabling people to meet, sell goods and providing tea and coffee for those wanting to meet friends, even if not to buy or sell, will benefit all age groups in an environment convenient for residents, with modern facilities and access for people with disabilities.

Project outcomes: Dead and dying trees have been removed from Spearmarsh Common, and replacement trees, appropriate to the area, have been planted. The pond has had weed-growth removed and pond life is returning. Wild flower seeds have been planted on the common, and should be established by next spring.

The Village Market has been very successful; attracting all age groups to meet on a regular basis in the Village Hall, which is in the centre of the village, so easily accessible.



“ A lovely opportunity for me to offer for sale my hand-made items to friends and neighbours in a friendly environment.

Julie Hardwick, Local resident and Village Market seller



Learning points: Restoration of Spearmarsh Common, long overdue, has been a great success. It is in regular use by residents, an established Cricket Club and children from the local school for organised games because the school playground is too small.

If doing a similar project again, I would probably seek help from more people to assist with the work.



Project contact details: Greta Beresford, Almeley Parish Council Clerk
Email: gretaakysheka@aol.com **Tel:** 01544 327703 **Website:** www.almeley.net

Flicks Cinema Network and Training

A network of self-sustaining village hall cinemas

October 2010 to July 2011

Applicant: Arts Alive

Project budget: £97,690 of which £68,920 LEADER

Project summary: The project aimed to develop a network of self-sustaining village hall cinemas, by purchasing cinema equipment to be installed at 12 village halls. This has enabled village halls to take part in the Flicks network by having their own equipment, and the annual Borderlines Film Festival 'Flicks in the Sticks' screenings, when a diverse range of films are screened in rural areas. The Hi Definition projectors and BluRay DVD players along with cinematic sound and electric screens were installed into 11 village halls which were Dorstone, Much Birch, Burghill, Goodrich, Ross-on-Wye, Cawley, Lingen, Brilley, Whitchurch and Ganarew, Ledbury Market Theatre and Garway. A second small project funded marketing and technical training for the village hall promoters, as well as promotional items that could be used by halls to better promote their events.

Project outcomes: This sustainable approach has meant village venues have become 'independent' – i.e. they do not need a technician to tour with the equipment, which is the most costly part of the service which Arts Alive used to provide. The equipment has also been used for other local activities, which has been very popular, and income can be generated for village halls which will help make them more sustainable for the future. This type of project is good at attracting other younger volunteers to help support the technical side of the project. Training has been funded from a further LEADER project and a handbook has been produced for other village halls to use. The project led to increased audiences and more confident and committed promoters.



“ We are overjoyed to be able to give our punters the full cinema experience; in a recent film the audience ducked as a helicopter circled around us!

Village hall committee member, Ross-on-Wye ”



Learning points: Lessons learnt include factoring more funding in for training if running a similar project, especially in marketing and technical aspects. The project found the process for claiming the funding to be quite time consuming initially and would factor in more time for the administration of the project if running again.



Project contact details: Ian Kerry, Director **Email:** ian@artsalive.co.uk
Tel: 01588 620 883 **Website:** www.artsalive.co.uk



Borderlines in the Villages

Supporting tourism in the county through the Borderlines Film Festival

June 2010 to June 2013

Applicant: Borderlines Film Festival

Project budget: £147,175 of which
£103,000 LEADER

Project summary: Expanding the cultural offer and developing links with tourism is at the heart of the Borderlines in the Villages project.

Working with 20 Herefordshire villages Borderlines Film Festival, the UK's largest rural film festival and also the biggest film festival in Central England, worked with local village hall promoters and also at a range of new exciting and unusual venues, to bring an enhanced programme of high profile speakers and special events to the 2011 and 2012 spring Festivals.

In May 2012 an extra Festival with pop-up events such as big outdoor screenings at Berrington Hall and a weekend of flight related screenings in a World War II hangar at Shobdon Airport formed the focus of our tenth anniversary celebrations.

Project outcomes: A new website Borderlines in the Villages linked the tourism offer in 20 villages to the Festival encouraging potential audience members to make the most of their stay when coming to see a film/ special event.
www.borderlinesinthevillages.co.uk

Our national PR programme put Herefordshire on the map in broadsheets and on regional press, TV and radio. Highlights included the first ever BAFTA events in a village hall and a church, and a roster of high profile directors and guests visiting the county.



“ Really enjoyed the outdoor screening of *The Artist* at Berrington Hall. The film was made into a really good event with food, drinks and live music.

*Audience member,
Worcestershire*

Learning points: The project has been a great success and enabled the Festival to deliver imaginative programmes inspiring audiences and promoters alike, as well as garnering national press attention. New venues for cultural activities were initiated through the project while promoters and programmers gained new skills. Our festival audiences continue to grow.



Project contact details: Naomi Vera-Sanso, Festival Director **Email:** naomivs@tiscali.co.uk
Tel: 01547 540159/07983 861138 **Website:** www.borderlinesfilmfestival.co.uk

Live Satellite Screening and Marketing

Bringing new cultural opportunities to Ledbury

October 2012 to October 2013

Applicant: The Market Theatre, Ledbury

Project budget: £5,100 of which £3,500 LEADER

Project summary: The project aims to bring live satellite streamed productions to Ledbury from national venues, such as the Royal Opera House, Stratford and the South Bank, and would include theatre, opera, ballet, rock concerts and major sporting events.

The project was identified through the need to generate more income to maintain the long term costs of running the venue, which is solely run by volunteers. Apart from the Courtyard in Hereford no other venue provides live satellite screenings in the county.

Funding was also used to improve the Theatre's marketing by way of new brochure design and new website.

Project outcomes: The population of Ledbury and its hinterland now has immediate access to live screenings from London and Stratford, at reasonable prices.

The newly designed publicity and website have raised the profile of the Theatre and are bringing new audiences to the Theatre; not just to the live screenings but also to the wide range of films and live performances that are put on at The Market Theatre.



Screening ballet, opera and drama from top class companies has raised our profile, attracting audiences who would never have dreamt of coming through our doors!

*Paul Graham,
Artistic Director, The Market Theatre, Ledbury*



Learning points: I don't think we would have done anything differently other than that we should have appreciated that the new website would take a long time to get right. Fortunately we realised quite early on that our original time estimate was inadequate and put back its completion date. It was a good decision.



Installation of Electricity at Colwall Village Garden

Enhancing the long term sustainability of the community orchard and allotment gardens

January 2012 to July 2013

Applicant: Colwall Orchard Group

Project budget: £13,163 of which
£5,000 LEADER

Project summary: The purpose of this project was to install electricity to Colwall Village Garden, a new community orchard with allotment gardens.

This will allow us to use power tools to restore the Old Apple Packing Shed, which is our base for volunteers, trainees and visitors. The electricity will provide heating, lighting and hot water.

In addition, we can then fit PV panels on the strengthened shed roof to make our activities more sustainable and to provide a small income to fund our ongoing activities. The nearest electricity was some distance away, so this involved laying a new cable along the road and across the site to connect to a new meter box on the Old Apple Packing Shed.

Project outcomes: The electricity is now restored and we are now planning the next phase of work at Colwall Village Garden, which will be the restoration of our Old Apple Packing Shed.



Restoring the Apple Packing Shed will create a fantastic facility for our volunteers – and electric power will make all the difference!

Tim Dixon, Chairman

Learning points: We were pleased that we persuaded Western Power Distribution to drop the VAT charge for our project. We learnt that you need to allow more time for slippage in the timetable when working outdoors – we only just got the on site trenching and meter box fitting done in time.



Project contact details: Helen Stace **Email:** members@colwallorchardgroup.uk
Tel: 01684 540569 **Website:** www.colwallorchardgroup.org

St. Peter's Centre

Supporting the development of a community hub in St. Peter's Church in the Golden Valley

July 2010 to December 2013

Applicant: Peterchurch Parochial Church Council

Project budget: £70,767 of which £49,537 LEADER

Project summary: The St. Peter's Centre provides a community hub and venue for a range of local service providers. Originally developed as a Sure Start Centre, the centre is still used by the Early Years and Health Visitor Services but also now houses a Community Café, lunch clubs for Older People, MIND, Alzheimer's Society, Community Choir and IT Training. It also is used as a venue for a variety of social private hire events including Yoga, Tai Chi, Arts Alive and local band nights.

It is a centre that provides modern, efficient facilities to the community and houses a range of statutory and voluntary services to work in partnership, providing access to vital services in a very ruraly deprived area.

The LEADER project supported dedicated marketing and admin roles to help with developing a programme of income generation to help sustain the Centre in the long term.

Project outcomes:

- To reduce rural isolation
- Improve access to social, cultural and community activities for people within the Golden Valley
- Improve their health and wellbeing by participation in physical and leisure activities.
- Provide opportunities for volunteering within the community



Over the last 18 months St. Peter's Centre has become a beacon for innovation, support, community activity and consultation, and high quality services.

Service User, March 2013



Learning points: The centre has gone from strength to strength but the learning point would be that this takes time!! Do not expect it all to happen at once! A solid, professional, caring and quality approach illustrates to the community that they are valued, cared for and deserve the very best and our centre is very much a reflection of this belief.



Gorsley Village Hall Upgrading Project

Improving the community hall and reducing energy costs

October 2012 to September 2013

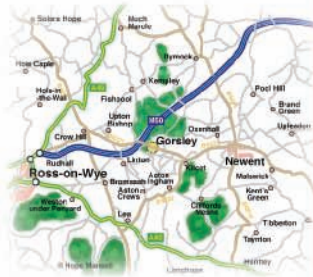
Applicant: Gorsley Village Hall

Project budget: £7,436 of which £5,000 LEADER

Project summary: Replacing the outdated doors and flooring to create a much improved initial impression of the hall by the users and the community. This work will enable us to show how we are keen to develop the hall as a facility for the benefit of the whole community.

The project replaced the heaters in the main hall with modern energy efficient ones. They give an equivalent heat output of 2kW for an input of 1.2kW therefore saving 40% in energy consumption. They are also fitted with timers and accurate thermostats (+/- 0.25 °C) to enable the rooms to be warm before the users arrive and for a comfortable temperature to be maintained.

Project outcomes: The works have definitely had the desired effect with the hall looking much less dated and more welcoming. The main hall is always warm and has led to a much happier environment for all users; no more coats for the first hour!



It's lovely to come into the hall in the morning and to be able to take off your coat and settle straight down to work.

Gorsley Pre-School.

Project contact details: Nigel Poole **Email:** nigel-poole@sky.com
Tel: 07802 334066 **Website:** www.gorsley.com/villagehall.html

Mortimer Country Stores

Improvement of the food preparation and storage facilities for the community shop

January 2013 to Aug 2013

Applicant: Mortimer Country Stores Association

Project budget: £3,234 of which
£2,263 LEADER

Project summary: Mortimer Country Stores is a community shop staffed by local volunteers and a paid part-time manager which services the area around Wigmore.

A village survey indicated that the shop was used regularly and valued highly by local residents, school staff and other regular passing customers. Customers frequently requested a larger range and quantity of freshly prepared foods and local produce but the facilities at the shop were not suitable to achieve this.

The project aimed to improve the existing very limited food preparation facility. This included stainless steel surfaces, freezers, fridges, bake off oven, chiller, hand wash unit and ancillaries.

Project outcomes: The project has led to an increase in sales of locally produced foods, together with increasing and continuing support for local food producers.

Subsequent increase in sales will offset any additional costs arising from any increases in utilities. In addition the new freezer unit will be more energy efficient than the two 15 year old items it is replacing.



“The range of freshly prepared foods including sandwiches, pies, savouries and breads is most welcome and we can be assured that they use local produce”

Regular customer



Learning points: The LEADER process is a challenge for small businesses, and the supporting information required for the application for funding was greatly underestimated! More time was needed to gain a better understanding of EU requirements.

Project contact details: Bryan Casbourne
Email: casbourne@btinternet.com Tel: 01568 770307 (Stores)



Feedback from walkers at the fifth Ross Walking Festival were full of praise for the new gates particularly those around Capler

*David Collin,
Project Manager*

Learning points: This was our second gates project. The major improvement we achieved was to obtain all landowner permissions upfront making purchasing and planning much easier. The first project had been more fragmented and was more drawn out as a result.



Smiles without Stiles

Improving access to the countryside in the Wye Valley

May 2012 to June 2013

Applicant: Ross-on-Wye Walkers are Welcome Group

Project budget: £6,347 of which £4,440 LEADER

Project summary: One of the aims of the Ross-on-Wye Walkers are Welcome Group is to improve access to the countryside for visitors and local residents, particularly for older and less able walkers. Walking forms an important part of tourism to the county bringing visitors throughout the year, but the large number of stiles is often quoted as the main barrier to the extensive footpath network that Herefordshire has to offer.

This project aimed to replace around 12 stiles with gates on two major footpaths in the Ross area, the Wye Valley Walk north from Ross to Fownhope and a popular Bus Walk from Weston-under-Penyard to Ross. Working with landowners, Parish Councils, Amey Herefordshire Rights of Way and EnviroAbility this is a true community project.

Project outcomes: It did not prove possible to secure permission from all the landowners to replace all of the stiles but overall the project is a significant boost to our objective of improved access to public footpaths.

The twelve miles of the Wye Valley Walk from Ross to Fownhope now only has one stile and the Bus Walk from Weston-under-Penyard to Ross is totally stile-free. Reprints of the Group's publications in future years will be highlighting the improved access.

Project contact details: David Collin **Email:** jenny_and_david@hotmail.com
Tel: 01989 563354 **Website:** www.ross-on-wyewalkersarewelcome.co.uk

Herefordshire Orchards Network of Excellence

Supporting the sustainability of Herefordshire cider and perry orchards

October 2010 to March 2012

Applicant: The Bulmer Foundation

Project budget: £83,317 of which £58,322 LEADER

Project summary: A grower network with the aim to discover and develop new techniques for profitable, environmentally sensitive cider apple production, with a reduced need for energy inputs and which respect the social, historical and ecological value of orchards Herefordshire. As well as supporting the trial and application of sustainable growing techniques, the network raised the bar of best practice through training and education.

The network facilitated sharing of research, methods and trial results through an email database, newsletter, networking events and exhibits.

At project end in December 2012, the project was adopted by the cider industry and is now part-funded by its members (growers), the NACM and supported by the Bulmer Foundation.

Project outcomes: Growers have an increased awareness of sustainability issues and opportunities concerning cider fruit production and are more equipped to act on them. Farm businesses have increased their capacity in terms of orcharding skills and knowledge through training and advice. The wider community are more sympathetic to the barriers growers face in terms of key issues such as using sprays, and have greater appreciation of the wider benefits of orchards. Growers are now represented by an independent member's organisation and can utilise this in policy fora and elsewhere.



As a new grower the help that HONE has provided my business is significant. From a practical and sustainability point of view, HONE has been very good in raising awareness of the problems with sprays and new legislation.

Bruce Gilbert, HONE member



Learning points: Bringing farmers together and facilitating focused discussions on the issues at hand has been an extremely successful route to group problem-solving. Workshops and training were always more successful when they took place in an orchard.



Project contact details: Emily Durrant, the Bulmer Foundation
Tel: 01432 378409 Webiste: www.bulmerfoundation.org.uk



Woolhope Woodheat

Supporting development of the UK's first community-owned woodfuel co-operative

March 2012 to March 2013

Applicant: Woolhope Dome Community Woodfuel Co-operative

Project budget: £7,220 of which £5,000 LEADER

Project summary: Woolhope Woodheat is a community-owned co-operative which installs woodchip boilers in hard-to-heat buildings in Herefordshire. The co-op owns the boilers and sells heat to the building users. Wood is sourced from local woodland with an aim to restore management of neglected woodlands locally. LEADER funding supported the project through the share offer stage through recruitment of a Project Manager.

Project outcomes: Woolhope Woodheat has installed its first boiler at Canon Frome Court where it is supplying hot water and space heating to 20 households. The heat is low carbon and low cost – more than 20% cheaper than fossil fuel equivalents.

Woolhope Woodheat is the UK's first renewable heat co-operative.

Learning points: We're proud of our pioneering project which has already led to spin-offs elsewhere in the UK and helped to strengthen the growing co-op sector in Herefordshire. The key elements of success have been:

- Highly motivated, skilled and dedicated volunteers
- The support of the wider community
- The bravery of the clients in signing up for a pioneering idea.

My recommendation to others if considering developing a similar project would be to contact us initially to avoid reinventing the wheel, and not to underestimate the complexity and resource requirements of a project of this sort.



“ The aim of the project is to get Herefordshire on the path to renewable energy and to attempt to swap our unhealthy dependence on fossil fuels for a sustainable alternative. ”

*David Straker,
Board Member*



Project contact details: Jon Halle **Email:** jon@shareenergy.coop
Tel: 01743277119 **Website:** woolhopewoodheat.org.uk

African Garden

Learning how to grow food using African gardening techniques

October 2012 to October 2013

Applicant: Growing Local

Project budget: £6,808 of which
£4,760 LEADER

Project summary: The African Garden is a joint project between Growing Local is Going Local CIC and the charity, Concern Universal, to enable children and families to participate in gardening techniques used by African families to grow their own food. Built at the Growing Local gardens at Court Farm, Tillington, the African Garden has bag gardens, key-hole gardens and table-top gardens that conserve land, soil and water, whilst guarding against flooding. Children also engage in activities that include pounding maize, carrying firewood, cooking nsima and building tippy-taps and learn about life in rural sub-Saharan Africa.

The aim is to inspire communities in Herefordshire to find local solutions to the issues of healthy eating and food security through simple, sustainable farming and gardening techniques.

Project outcomes: In June 2013 the African garden welcomed school groups for gardening workshops using two table top gardens, a key-hole-garden and bag gardens. The African shelter, made from local materials, protected children from the sun whilst harvesting rainwater for the wheelchair accessible raised beds. Through June and July fifteen workshops enabled 180 children to gain confidence in growing their own food. Five schools visited from within a ten mile radius. Another fourteen schools are being offered workshops for next season.



It was a great experience and pitched just right for my children, the talk that was generated by all the activities was extremely valuable

Teacher of a Year 2 class



Learning points: The African garden adds another exciting dimension to the gardening workshops. The weather held the project up creating a lot of intensive activity in late May. There is a lot more to do than just the building of the garden, and ensuring enough time has been allocated to plan and promote the project is important.

Project contact details: Pat Gordon **Email:** info@growinglocal.org.uk
Tel: 07813622890 **Website:** www.growinglocal.org.uk



It would be a fitting legacy for this project if the dedication and experiences of Ecohere communities is shared county wide, so that integration of sustainability is the norm in community planning, and not an 'add on'.

Ecohere Project Team

Learning points: Successes: Providing easy access and direction to help, advice and resources; making sure communities benefitted from other projects via Herefordshire New Leaf and Herefordshire Council.

Differently: Pre-identify participating communities at or before the beginning of the project and "contracting" with them – to give us more ability to challenge & remind.



Ecohere

A partnership project enabling local communities to address sustainability needs

March 2011 to October 2013

Applicant: The Bulmer Foundation

Project budget: £142,243 of which £99,557 LEADER

Project summary: Ecohere was a partnership project between the Bulmer Foundation, Community First, Herefordshire Council and Herefordshire New Leaf. It supported rural Herefordshire communities (via parish councils, community-led planning groups, local sustainability groups and other local interest groups) in identifying and addressing their community's unique sustainability needs, through consultation, local events and sustainability action-planning. The project provided joined-up, specialised local sustainability support and information, linked communities with numerous other local and regional sustainability organisations and demonstrated examples of best practice. An important element was providing beneficial opportunities for participating communities to share experiences and encouraging their involvement in other countywide energy-reduction initiatives.

Project outcomes: Direct community support: supported development of 22 community events, 14 local community sustainability projects and three national funding bids, continuous awareness-raising, direct work with schools.

Improving links/influencing policy: increased community awareness and access to a wide range of service providers and other carbon-reduction initiatives, improved integration of sustainability into County policy and the Community Planning process, developed first Herefordshire Online Sustainable Communities Directory and Poster, hosted a Master of Sustainable Development Advocacy student placement, input into design of future community sustainability projects.

Project contact details: Mary Burton. **Email:** mary@herefordshirenewleaf.org.uk
Tel: 0774 657 5483 **Website:** www.bulmerfoundation.org.uk

Herefordshire Parklands Project

Recording, surveying and managing Herefordshire's historic landscapes

May 2010 to December 2013

Applicant: Herefordshire Nature Trust

Project budget: £184,575 of which LEADER £118,589

Project summary: The Herefordshire Parklands Project has built up a picture of the current condition of the county's parklands, looking at the ecological, historical and archaeological features which still exist. The project has recruited, trained and supported volunteers in key identification and recording skills, allowing them to go out and survey parklands of all shapes, ages and sizes. We have assisted landowners in making management decisions to safeguard their parkland's unique ecology and history. This has been through advice on the basis of our surveys, supporting practical restoration of parkland features, habitat improvements and interpretation.

Project outcomes:

- The project has increased knowledge, understanding and appreciation of our parkland resource by running/promoting, parkland related events, public talks and displays.
- The project run 16 training days for volunteer recorders, who have since surveyed 38 sites for their key biodiversity indicators, history and archaeology.
- 133 volunteers have been active/recording during the project, (including 3 trainees and work-experience placements), surveying over 2,400 trees (including 650 veterans and 23 ancients), 22 ponds, over 400 historic features, and 3 archaeological dig sites.



“ The project has achieved a huge amount for recording the biodiversity and archaeology of Herefordshire's parklands and raising awareness of our county's important historic landscapes.

*Lewis Goldwater,
project manager*



Learning points:

- Involvement/interest of volunteers, landowners and partners as been key to the success of the project.
- Recording and surveys must be as simple as possible initially with advance levels to clearly keen or capable "champion" volunteers.
- A project of this nature would be better managed with a pilot year and then implemented using two full time staff.



Project contact details: Lewis Goldwater **Email:** l.goldwater@herefordshirewt.co.uk
Tel: 01432 356 872



All who returned feedback forms made positive comments about the design of the leaflet and the information contained within it, which they thought would be helpful.

Sue Cooper, project officer

Learning points: The leaflet is a great success. It contains up to date information to support the sensitive care of natural and man-made features in Herefordshire's burial sites and signposting people to who and where to go for further help within the county.

Unlocking the Treasures of the Churchyards in Herefordshire leaflet

Encouraging sensitive management of Herefordshire's churchyards

October 2012 to March 2013

Applicant: Caring for God's Acre

Project budget: £3,250 of which LEADER £2,275

Project summary: The aim of the project was to produce a leaflet with information on the management of churchyards and burial sites in Herefordshire. The leaflet would help to guide, inspire and support communities and individuals to manage their burial sites in a way that enhances them to benefit the local environment, local communities and tourism. Churchyards are steeped in natural, built, cultural and social heritage and are nestled in the heart of communities. These areas have remained virtually unchanged for generations, allowing plants and animals to flourish alongside the historic monuments and memorials, creating valuable 'living sanctuaries'. The enhanced value of the sites will attract schools and special interest groups to use them and will increase visitor enjoyment and interest.

Project outcomes:

- 1,500 people benefiting in some way from the leaflet
- 30 burial sites supported and maintained and upgraded
- 1 new leaflet produced, which raises awareness of the natural, historical and cultural environment and supports conservation

The leaflet includes advice about grassland management, ancient tree care, hedges and shrubs, stonework, dry stone walling and how to go about preparing a site plan. The leaflet can be downloaded from the website:

www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/index.php/national-info/churchyard-leaflets.html



Charity no. 1084504

Project contact details: Caring for God's Acre Email: info@cfga.org.uk Tel: 01588 673041

Bosbury Buildings

A community history project exploring the built heritage of Bosbury parish

March 2012 to December 2012

Applicant: Herefordshire Victoria County History Trust

Project budget: March 2012 to December 2012

Project summary: The project was the first phase of a larger study on the history of Bosbury, undertaken in collaboration with a local group, the Bosbury Chroniclers; it involved the collection of documentary evidence on the history of Bosbury buildings.

The work was carried out in two phases: first a professional historian was employed to search national and local archives for material on Bosbury, and secondly local people were encouraged to make their own papers and photographs available to the study.

The project aimed to raise community awareness of, and to encourage the conservation of, the built heritage of the parish.

Project outcomes: The historian made notes on and copied images from documents in major national archive repositories. She reported to the Bosbury Chroniclers who are now aware of a wide range of source material; several of them are continuing their own research.

At a Local History Day in November 2012, in which children from Bosbury school participated, local people viewed displays on the work of the project, and brought documents and images to be scanned to help with future work.



LEADER funding provided our local history group with guidance from a professional historian. We gained valuable information later displayed at our Bosbury History Day event.

*Chair of the
Bosbury Chroniclers*



Learning points: The Local History Day was most successful, in spite of atrocious weather on the day. This was due largely to widespread local publicity throughout the project. The involvement of the Bosbury Chroniclers was crucial to the success of the project.

Project contact details: Trust for the Victoria County History of Herefordshire **Email:** vchherefordshire@gmail.com
Website: www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/counties/herefordshire



Community Outreach and Gateway Service

Supporting people to have resilience, direction and hope in their lives

April 2011 to June 2013

Applicant: Herefordshire Mind

Project budget: £67,193 of which LEADER £47,035

Project summary: "Supporting People to have resilience, direction and hope in their lives"

The COGS project is part of Herefordshire Mind's Recovery and Wellbeing service and was created to support Herefordshire residents experiencing mental ill health.

The project was specifically designed to tackle the local issues of stigma, fragmented support and isolation exacerbated by the rural nature of Herefordshire. This project was created as a direct response to MIND's existing knowledge of local need and aimed to address these specific issues.

The primary aim of this two year project was to support in excess of 200 adults throughout the county (aged over 17 years) on their mental health recovery journey. Primarily, COGS provided service users with a 'Recovery Gateway' or single access point as well as outreach support and guidance.

COGS also offered support to other professionals and carers.

Project outcomes: The COGS project anticipated the following outcomes:

- For people in Herefordshire to have a 'gateway' or sign posting service that assists them in beginning and sustaining their recovery pathway;
- Sustained support for people with mental health problems where they need it most – where they live and in their own communities;
- An improved commitment to reducing the effects of mental health stigma allowing people to be healthy and active in their communities.



“Outreach has helped me through some major crises in my life, supported me in giving up a lot of bad habits and rebuilt my self-confidence to new levels that I had not thought possible.

Service User

Learning points: Main learning points: Signposting and Gateway service has been very successful; links with existing community provision has been both cost effective and makes use of existing expertise – worth investing time establishing good relationships; needs of clients change over time – projects need to adapt to meet changing need. Much more that could be added, especially regarding the challenges experienced by during the project, but no room – see a full evaluation of the service on our website – due out soon.

Houghton Project

Expanding the training opportunities for woodworking, horticulture and orchard management based on a working farm

September 2010 to September 2013

Applicant: Houghton Project

Project budget: £50,000 of which LEADER £28,056

Project summary: After consultation with the people who used the Project three areas were highlighted for improvement and to provide more space and opportunities for people to be involved. These were the Greenhouse to increase capacity for growing and learning; the Workshop, converting an old barn into a carpentry machine shop to make wood products from timber that was grown in our own woods. Another area of opportunity for engagement in a locally relevant craft was to develop a Cider making business by initially planting a three acre orchard. All of these things have been achieved and have had very positive outcomes.

Project outcomes: Outcomes of the Projects have been:

- Greater involvement from Service Users
- Increased numbers of people and community organisations using the facilities
- Preventing the dilapidation of historic buildings and giving them a new purpose and life
- Improved facilities for Service Users
- Wider range of learning opportunities for those using the facilities
- Improving opportunities and diversifying income possibilities for a community organisation



“The Project is an integral part of my life and the facilities there keep me occupied and out of hospital.

Service user



Learning points: The main lesson learned is to get those who are going to benefit from the Project involved from the beginning, and as much as is practical, in the physical development of the Project.

What I have learned and what I would do differently is:

Always start building work in the spring and source as much of the materials as you can yourself.

Project contact details: Tim James-Moore, Project Manager

Email: tim@houghtonproject.co.uk **Tel:** 01568 797900 **Website:** www.houghtonproject.co.uk



Expanding Horizons

Providing increased skills and learning opportunities in the Kington area

June 2010 to May 2013

Applicant: Marches Access Point

Project budget: £81,600 of which £57,120 LEADER

Project summary: The project was to employ a dedicated Educational Centre Manager to ensure a diverse range of education and training provision to improve confidence, self esteem and skills in the Kington area and put the centre on a sustainable footing for the long term.

The Manager would be responsible for timetabling, seeking appropriate tutors, engaging learners and ensure progression and achievement of the learners. The Manager would also oversee that all paperwork and evidence was collated, recorded and dispatched to relevant funders on time.

They would be responsible for making sustainable networks with organisations such as Herefordshire Council's Adult Community Learning department, Job Centres etc.

Project outcomes: The project outcomes were achieved and included a year on year increase of learner enrolments and courses delivered.

- 1 job created
- 647 (target 600) users
- 50 courses

The Education Centre Manager position remains with a new employee as it was considered at the end of the project that it was an extremely valuable position.



A big thank you to you and all the volunteers for the hard work you do, week in, week out. I have been able to put what I learnt into practice straight away.

Celia Kibblewhite, learner

Learning points: We feel that this project was a great success as we achieved MAP to reach the aims of the project and the whole community has benefited. We were able to prove the need and have now employed a full time Centre Manager. We cannot think of anything we would have done differently.



Project contact details: Emma Phillips, Marches Access Point
Email: ephillips@map-kington.co.uk **Tel:** 01544 231771 **Website:** www.map-kington.co.uk

IT for the Farming Business

A pilot project to address the IT needs of farming businesses in the Golden Valley

January 2012 to April 2013

Applicant: Herefordshire Rural Hub

Project budget: £2,713 of which LEADER £1,117

Project summary: This was a pilot project to deliver a bespoke IT training programme targeted at 10 farmers in the Golden Valley area of Herefordshire. The elements were short training sessions and one-to-one visits to ensure that on line systems were in place and used effectively.

Over the period of the project a number of 'hard to reach' farming businesses have been enabled with the setting up with a computer and internet access, and are now making use of on line systems and using IT successfully in their businesses.

Project outcomes: The programme was delivered over a 15 month time span. This enabled uptake to take place at a steady pace, as and when required within the farming calendar. The numbers of farmers for one to one support was achieved with 10 farming businesses being fully supported particularly with the setting up of backup systems and the management of programmes.

The training sessions were extremely well attended and a total of 21 training days were achieved and a total of 51 individuals participated in the programme.



“As the main deliverer on this project I personally feel that the money could not have been better spent.”
*Anthony Barraclough,
IT Trainer*



Learning points: Success has been the number of people who have attended events and who have engaged with the project. If doing again, we would keep the programme as flexible as possible, in order to be able to react to whatever issues farmers were being challenged with.



Green Woodworking Skills Development and Exhibition

Supporting disadvantaged people through traditional green woodworking skills

November 2012 to July 2013

Applicant: Hereford Community Farm (previously Barton Hill Centre)

Project budget: £5,158 of which LEADER £3,588

Project summary: The LEADER grant provided funding for tutored green woodworking sessions and the purchase of specialist tools and equipment to enable participants to make artisan furniture such as woven seat stools and Windsor chairs. These items were displayed in a hands-on exhibition in the city as part of Herefordshire Positive Disability Week 3rd-8th December 2012, which helped to create awareness of this traditional craft.

After the exhibition a number of tutored follow up sessions helped people to refine their skills level to the point where they are now able to make quality items produced to commission for a Green Woodworking micro-business. The income from the micro-business is used to purchase more specialist tools and source local materials, promoting the long term sustainability of the project.

Project outcomes: As a result of this project, people facing disadvantage in the workplace have been able to have valuable opportunities in skills training in a traditional rural craft. This has taken place in a real work setting and as part of 2 public open events to develop local interest.

A Green Woodworking micro business set up as part of this project continues to go from strength to strength.



I have really enjoyed developing my Green Woodworking Skills and passing on what I have learnt to others. It is great to feel useful and the response from the public at the open events has been marvellous.

Service user

Learning points: Seeing the project continue to thrive and how much people of all abilities get out of it has been brilliant, but to get such a positive response from people who are now commissioning items to be made on the basis of the skill involved is transformative for all involved.

Project contact details: Julie Milsom Email: herefordcommunityfarm@gmail.com Tel: 07971 423817

Arts and Older People Project

Supporting older people through arts activities and events

July 2010 to December 2013

Applicant: The Courtyard Centre for the Arts

Project budget: £212,000 of which
£112,000 LEADER

Project summary: This unique project has enabled local arts practitioners to deliver participatory arts based workshops for older people across the county. Establishing a robust training programme has allowed stronger local communities to be formed who have the skills to support older people to engage in new artistic experiences that encourage social inclusion in rural communities. The project has held many networking events, conferences, and forums which have raised awareness of older people's issues as well as promoting models of best practice, on a local, regional and national level. Our flagship Dementia Poetry Project – Ink the Pink, has provided a creative platform for communication for hundreds of people across the county living with dementia.

Project outcomes: Older people and their carers have reported feeling less isolated within their communities, as well as having an improved quality of life from taking part in arts activities which promote social inclusion, well being and personal independence.

Arts practitioners, health care professionals and care staff have developed their skills to continue this work beyond the life of the project. We have increased awareness of older people's issues and have bridged the gap between the artistic and care community within Herefordshire.



“ The project was an unqualified success and has evolved into regular sessions of poetry, reading aloud and reminiscence sessions which most people here become involved in.

*June Bakewell, The Forbury
Care Manager*



Learning points: Working in partnership with organisations such as The Dementia Action Alliance, Age UK and The Alzheimer's Society has proved vital in creating an effective and sustainable project, which is developed to meet the needs of the local community.



Project contact details: Alice Saunders **Email:** alice.saunders@courtyard.org.uk **Tel:** 01432 346514
Website: www.courtyard.org.uk/get-involved/arts-and-older-people



The Police used to receive numerous calls every week regarding low level anti social behaviour, however following the fortnightly visits by MYLO calls have substantially reduced.

*Sgt Andy Scott,
West Mercia Police*

Learning points:

- Fun positive activities brings everyone together
- Talking to young people over time at their level builds trust and proves crucial to establish their real needs
- Communities with complex issues need professional youth and community to support early intervention work.
- Town and Parish council support crucial for sustainability.

Mobile Youth Led Opportunities (MYLO)

Engaging young people and families in isolated rural communities

September 2010 to December 2013

Applicant: Herefordshire Voluntary Organisation Support Service (HVOSS)

Project budget: £113,062 of which LEADER £85,805

Project summary: MYLO has been set up to offer professional youth and community support to localised communities within Herefordshire. It responds to identified areas where there are needs and gaps in youth work provision such as rural isolation and anti social behaviour. It provides positive fun activities often working with deprived and hard to reach communities, it brings young people, adult volunteers and stakeholders together. Through informal and formal consultation it works to identify and establish the most appropriate youth provision to meet the individual needs, rights, responsibilities and aspirations of young people within their own communities. MYLO supports these community groups and organisations through a combination of mentoring, training, networking to establish the most appropriate sustainable youth provision.

Project outcomes:

- New method of working developed to respond to help rural communities establish the most appropriate sustainable youth provisions which address local youth issues supporting adult and parent volunteers to become youth champions to establish new youth provisions.
- 22 individual communities now support young people to help develop their own activities and include young people in wider community life.
- Sustainability has been established gaining further funding from other sources including early intervention commissioned work, consultation, representation and training.

REACH Project

Providing community development support and training for rural communities

January 2010 until March 2013

Applicant: Herefordshire Voluntary Organisation Support Service (HVOSS)

Project budget: £582,289 of which £135,135 LEADER

Project summary: REACH was a 3 year partnership project between HVOSS as now is, incorporating HVA and HCVYS, Community First, Kairos and CVA Ledbury established January 2010 to support voluntary and community groups in the more rural parts of Herefordshire including Kington and surrounding area, Bromyard and surrounding area, the Golden Valley and Ledbury and surrounding area. As well as general community development support, which ranged from funding advice to the constitutional set up of groups and which was provided by a dedicated Community Development Worker in each of the project areas, the project also provided specialist advice and support for environmental and sustainability projects, young people and youth projects, faith based projects and community buildings.

Project outcomes:

- 312 groups reported increased capacity and skills having attended a REACH provided training course or event and through support from Project Workers.
- £195,131 of external funding secured by the groups that REACH Project supported.
- 243 people attended a REACH provided training course benefitting 142 local groups.
- 281 volunteering opportunities brokered.
- 116 new volunteering opportunities identified and registered.
- A network of 40 Community Contacts identified to support and inform rural groups about the services that are available to them.
- 44 young people attended Young Leader training.



REACH is a great asset to Bromyard. The staff are very approachable and listen to our needs, helping us to find funding and enhancing the life of many of the more needy members of our community.

Gill Churchill, Bromyard Town Councillor



Learning points: A local presence in rurally isolated areas has been greatly valued by communities. Proactive events such as training courses, funding lunches, funding fairs and young leader development have been extremely well received. With hindsight, networking beyond locality and County boundaries could have added a layer of prior learning/best practice to inform project delivery.



The support team have been very helpful, providing ideas and suggestions, especially regarding public engagement, but also mediating when we disagreed on how to proceed!

Beneficiary

Learning points:

Successes:

- Building local skills and expertise – the LEADER-funded team acted as tutors and counsellors.
- Engaging with the “hard to reach” – advice and support on how to engage with minority and under-represented groups
- Getting things done at a local level!

Lessons Learnt:

- More work required on service provider support



Project contact details: Lorna Pearcey **Email:** lornap@comfirst.org.uk
Tel: 01432 371985 **Website:** www.comfirst.org.uk

Community Led Planning – Development Support

Helping parishes to help themselves

June 2010 to December 2013

Applicant: Community First

Project budget: £128,782 of which
 £105,000 LEADER

Project summary: The Vital Herefordshire LEADER programme supported a co-ordinated bid from the third sector, enabling Community First, HALC and HVOSS to deploy specialist development workers to assist Parish Planning groups across the county. Herefordshire Council provided an officer to co-ordinate the work of the partners and also offered financial and research support for the parish groups. As such it was a model of partnership working. Some 40 Parish Plan groups have received detailed support with governance, consultation and engagement, action planning and implementation. The LEADER funding meant that each Parish Plan group had an assigned community development worker, plus access to a specialist Youth Worker and an implementation officer.

Project outcomes:

21 plans have been published during the project, with a further 12 due to be completed. The average volunteer hours generated per plan is valued at £10,000. Each Parish Plan action plan is based on robust research and consultation and, as a result, has attracted, or is likely to attract, further funding.

Specific outcomes have included a new sports pavilion at Lugwardine, the Ross community cinema, a BMX track built by local residents at Weobley, the county's first community pub at Dilwyn as well as new play areas, open spaces and improvements to footpaths.

Community Action Plan Implementation (CAPI)

Empowering local communities to implement parish plans

February 2010 to December 2013

Applicant: Herefordshire Association of Local Councils (HALC)

Project budget: £75,735 of which
£64,586 LEADER

Project summary: Following the Countryside Agency's initial launch of parish planning as a tool to empower local people to participate in coherent co-ordinated planning for their area, the concept was floundering due to a lack of financial and fieldworker support. The CAPI Project was one third of an innovative triple partner LEADER initiative to revitalise parish planning and rejuvenate the rapidly diminishing feel-good factor which came from communities planning their own local futures. The CAPI Officer not only enthused local steering group members to find the stamina to actually implement their parish plans but to do so in the most cost effective and efficient way. Forward planning with officers from the principal authority meant that grassroots dreams became a reality!

Project outcomes:

The CAPI legacy is the 'feel good' factor and wealth of projects initiated within 102 of the 134 parishes across the county of Herefordshire that have taken part in the parish planning process. Youth clubs, speed limit reductions, energy efficiencies, sports equipment and saving the local pub are just some of the examples of people power achieving tangible results through the evidence base of parish planning. A series of practical leaflets which support such initiatives has been widely distributed across the county.



Implementing the initiative is the icing on the cake.

CAPI Project Officer

Learning points:

Involving the public and principal authority at the earliest opportunity and utilising local skills, unlocks the maximum potential of parish plans. The most successful Planning for Real events gave detailed innovative thought to attracting all age groups, such as inviting a reptile zoo to mingle with visitors!

www.youtube.com/watch?v=L3AaorNiJKU



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Community Led Planning

Engaging children and young people in the parish planning process

February 2010 to December 2013

Applicant: Herefordshire Voluntary Organisation Support Service (HVOSS)

Project budget: £110,592 of which £83,661 LEADER

Project summary: To provide specialist support to communities and Parish Councils wishing to engage children and young people in the development of parish plans in the market towns and rural communities of Herefordshire.

To provide support to young people to be involved in the parish planning process and to be involved in the formation and implementation of their action plans.

To support children and young people's champions within the adult community to ensure sustainability of the involvement of children and young people in rural community development and governance structures.

Project outcomes:

Protocol established with Parish Councils, Community Led Planning and Neighbourhood Planning teams the need and distinct benefits of engaging with young people as valued members of the community.

New tool kit for advice and guidance to involving young people has been designed and produced to offer help and support to Parish Planning groups. Methods range from engaging in the formal CLP process but also using informal consultation and focus groups.

26 parishes have been supported in these processes.

I was impressed with the interesting, thorough and comprehensive report addressing the issues that concern me as a resident and councillor, which I have put on our website www.madley.org.uk

*Pat Corcoran,
Parish Councillor*



Learning points: There needs to be a voice for the "hard to reach" young people and positive activities provided locally. This agenda may be too much for the local councils; new ways of working are needed for this silent group of young people if we are to invest in a positive future.

Democracy First

Encouraging local people to engage with parish councils

March 2011 to December 2013

Applicant: Herefordshire Association of Local Councils

Project budget: £71,090 of which
£61,254 LEADER

Project summary: Previous research within Herefordshire had indicated that there was a widespread lack of information about parish/ town councils amongst local residents and an absence of detailed knowledge about their role by parish councillors themselves. In line with Government's 'Big Society' initiative, the Democracy First Project aimed to demystify the almost secretive mantle shrouding local government and encourage more people to take part in local decision making, either by becoming more engaged with their parish council, possibly through parish plan activities or by standing for election or co-option. Furthermore, once engaged in the democratic process, local councillors would be supported to achieve their maximum potential for the benefit of the parish.

Project outcomes: The legacy of the following user-friendly publicity materials will ensure that the essence of the Democracy First Project lives on and will encourage greater participation in future elections: A dedicated telephone information line promoted by an imaginative flyer, a DVD with councillors outlining their roles and achievements enclosed in a fold-out cover containing examples of good practice, a set of social media good practice leaflets to encourage engagement by young persons and an enhanced, interactive local website.



“ There was no interest in our vacancy until the Information Evening when several volunteers came forward and we were able to choose who to co-opt.

Peterchurch Parish Clerk ”

Learning points: The concept of friendly and innovative professionally produced promotional material which would remain valid for several years, has proved beneficial as a tangible resource for the future. Targeted support to encourage contested elections was 100% successful. Information Evenings would be linked to local events in future, rather than stand alone.



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▮▮ The marketing and interpretation training for the Golden Valley and Black Mountain Experience was just fantastic for our group as a whole, and we also got to learn a lot more about our individual businesses for a collective approach.

*Christine Hope,
Hopes of Longtown*



Learning points: It's been a great success to get this project off the ground! Working with so many new partner organisations has been challenging although there has been great enthusiasm from individuals on both sides of the border. The different funding regimes have made cross-border working a challenge at times too.

Walking with Offa

Working with other LEADER groups to promote walking and tourism throughout the English-Welsh border.

August 2011 to December 2013

Applicant: VITAL Herefordshire LEADER Local Action Group

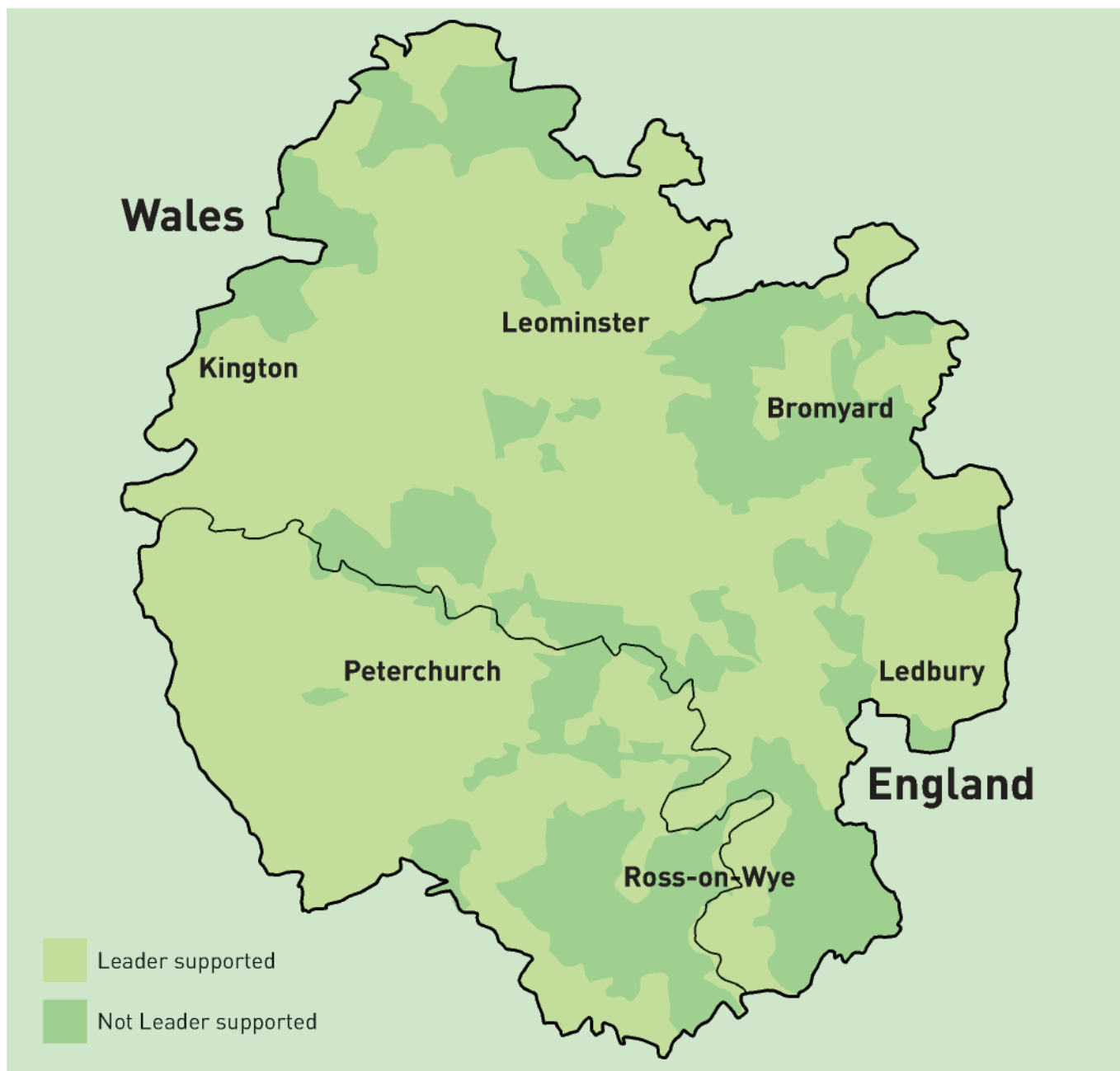
Project budget: Approx £1 million, of which £111,808 LEADER

Project summary: Walking with Offa is a project to promote walking, tourism and sustainable transport along either side of the Offa's Dyke Path National Trail on the English-Welsh border. The partners worked together to develop more circular walks and to improve access across the 177 mile trail, which runs along King Offa's 8th century earthwork border. Walking with Offa will improve the walking product, run business and community engagement training, promote walking, develop and promote sustainable transport options and focus on co-operation and sharing good practice.

Project outcomes:

A range of complementary activity to develop walking is being delivered along the border by all partners, including the Herefordshire Walking Festival and a new Mills, Hills and Manors walks leaflet through the Wye Valley AONB. Other activity includes training in media and marketing for the Golden Valley and Black Mountain Experience, an event for Walkers are Welcome groups to network and share best practice, new Bus Walks brochures to help people access areas of Offa's Country by public transport as well as a series of posters and stickers for promoting the new leaflets at bus stops and on buses. Targeted seasonal PR campaigns have helped to promote many of the hidden gems of Herefordshire and surrounding areas to a wider audience. Walking with Offa also ran Walk Leader Forums to boost walking opportunities in local communities and provided support for local businesses, including accommodation providers, shops, pubs and restaurants, to help boost trade and drive the local economy.

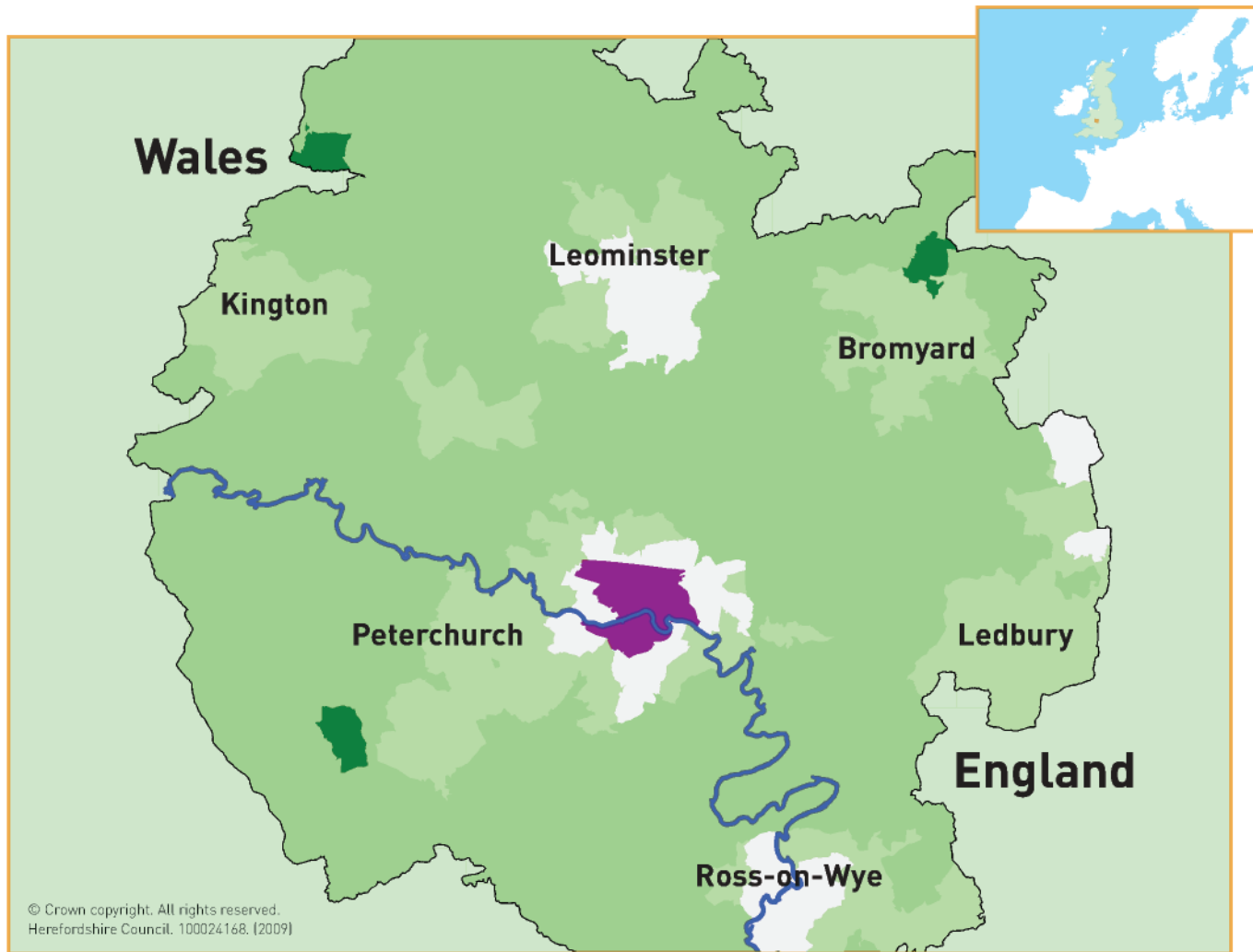
Project contact details: Lucinda James, Walking with Offa Co-ordinator **Email:** LucindaJames@monmouthshire.gov.uk
Tel: 07917 597793 **Website:** www.iafdesign.net/dev/offa/



This map shows the total parishes covered by LEADER outreach projects. These projects involved Project Workers who supported activity in many parishes across the county and refers to projects on pages 25, 26, and 34 - 40.



This map shows the total parishes covered by all other LEADER projects.



LEADER in Herefordshire 2009-13



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