

Update Number 2
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www.ruraldirect.org.uk

0845 838 8598

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### **New contract awarded for Rural Direct service**

In the few months we have been operational we have, with your help, met our annual target of promoting, publicising and demystifying the SRDP for community groups in Scotland's Rural areas.

With the transfer of some functions of the [Crofter's Commission](#) to HIE, a revised contract for the Rural Direct service across Scotland has been offered to [SCVO](#). This new contract will ensure continuity in service delivery for the next two years offering an additional resource at the local level and quality support to potential applicants from the voluntary and community sectors.

Since June 2008, have worked hard to built up and maintain a good working relationships with CsVS and other local support services, running joint events and providing training and briefing on the complexities of the SRDP and Rural Priorities. We will continue to work closely with the CsVS to ensure that, together, we we deliver a high quality and seamless service to current and

potential applicants from within the rural communities.

Having in place a team largely dedicated to this particular complicated funding programme means that we will continue to develop a level of expertise and experience that it would be difficult to resource and replicate at the local level. This service is made freely available to support intermediaries and individual groups in achieving their objectives and delivery of services. We are now in a position to have a Scotland-wide overview of the programme and feed back issues and concerns to the Scottish Government, with a view to influencing the rules and guidance around the community aspects of the programme.

SCVO are working with the Crofter's Commission to ensure a smooth transition. We will shortly be appointing a staff member to join the Rural Direct team and work on the delivery of the service in the Highlands & Islands, and hope to arrange an early meeting each CVS to explore how we can best work together to provide the required levels of support for their work with local community groups.

We are delighted to be able to continue to provide dedicated guidance to community groups on the application processes for a variety of funding programmes. We can support you in developing and writing the best possible funding applications and help you understand and identify the range of other funding opportunities available.

You can contact the service by calling **0845 838 8598**. All calls will be charged at local rate (now inclusive in most calling packages) so give us a ring and let's discuss how we can work together. You can also email your query to [ruraldirect@scvo.org.uk](mailto:ruraldirect@scvo.org.uk).

**Remember**, Rural Direct is a free service available to constituted community groups in rural areas throughout Scotland. We will help you in the ways that best suit you and your group's needs. We offer one-to-one support by phone or in person, surgeries, and information and training workshops. In addition to our own road shows if you are considering a funding event we'd be more than happy to join you and may be able to help with organisation and promotion.

### **New advice for Rural Priorities applicants**

Other than the [Scottish Government website](#), there is no single definitive information source on applying for Rural Priority funding. Production of such guidance in easily digested format will be one of our targets in the coming year. We are working with the Scottish Government and other partners to answer queries as they arise.

Key issues that have recently been resolved are:

- The grant rate for the majority of applications has been set at 50%. The current list of grant levels is available [here](#).

- Applicants may submit more than one application at any one time.

- Local Authority grants and Lottery awards can count as [match funding](#).

- Rural Priorities funding cannot be used to purchase land.

- A "rural community group" means a community group which has a written constitution and which holds a bank account for the benefit of that group

and whose membership is drawn from a rural settlement.

A "[rural settlement](#)" means a settlement which has a population of less than 3000 according to the Scottish Executive Urban Rural Classification 2003-2004

In kind contributions will be treated as eligible expenditure only where they comprise the provision of land or independently valued real estate, provided it is not owned by the applicant or a project partner.

Staff or other costs cannot be considered contributions in kind but may be "eligible project costs".

**Scottish Government [guidance notes](#) are updated here.**

### **Your Rural Priorities Statement of Intent**

The first stage in applying for Rural priorities funding is to (electronically) submit a Statement of Intent. This is the initial who, where, what, why and when relating to your project. We have produced a straightforward guide to explaining your project in the required 250 words which you can download obtain from [info@Rural Direct.org.uk](mailto:info@Rural Direct.org.uk)

### **Rural Priorities assessment model and scoring**

This is an area where we can provide groups with detailed guidance. If you are working on an application the first instance please contact us for advice and support on the approaches to drafting your application with the best chance of achieving the optimum "score" from your case officer/assessor. We will happily give you advice on shaping your application and ensuring that your presentation focuses on the objectives of the SRPB.

### **The Rural Direct team**

**Rural Direct is delivered by SCVO's Rural Team.**

[Barbara Love](#) co-ordinates the service and supports communities in Grampian, Moray and Tayside

[Sheila Fraser](#) supports communities in Fife, Forth Valley, Lothian and Borders

[Ian Mathieson](#) works with communities in the Clyde Valley, Ayrshire and Dumfries & Galloway and has taken on the role of support officer for Argyll

Other team members are Rural Information Officer [Sandra Hogg](#) and Rural Direct Administrator [Liz Syred](#) and the service is managed by SCVO's Head of Rural Policy Norman MacAskill.

### **Match funding or leverage?**

There is a lot of confusing terminology around the SRDP in general, and rural Priorities in particular. We regularly get asked about match funding and leverage. "Are they not the same thing?" - not really.

Rural Priorities offers a grant of (usually) 50% of the eligible costs associated with a project. This is known as the intervention rate. To progress the project this

grant must be matched. There are strict rules on what can and can't be used as match funding. (see above).

Leverage is the additional funds and resources drawn into a project because SRDP funding is making it happen. Whilst the availability of match funding is necessary and the potential for leverage will enhance the "quality" of the Scottish Government's investment so is an important factor in project assessment.

### **Dates for your diary**

The Rural Direct Team will be present throughout the Royal Highland show at Inglishton (June 25th to 28th, 2009). We look forward to seeing many of you there.

### **The key role of your local CVS**



Rural Direct was developed to support rural communities in accessing a range of funding, but with particular emphasis on the new funding streams available under the Scotland Rural Development Programme. It is a national service delivered locally, and is intended to complement and add value to existing sources of funding information, in particular local Councils for Voluntary Service (CV S). The Rural Direct team aim to work closely with local CsVSs to provide the best possible service to rural community groups.

You local CVS should be your first point of contact for general information on funding and other matters relating to running your organisation. You can find your local CVS by using the clickable map on the CVS Network home page.

### **Remember**

#### **- you'll always need a BRN**

Before applying for Rural Priority funding your group will need a Business Registration Number (BRN). Once you have a BRN it remains valid for all time, so if you think you might be applying for any SRDP funding in the future it is worth applying for your BRN now.

The [Land and Business Change Form](#) (the application for a BRN) looks a little daunting but for most community groups the majority of answers are "not applicable" and can be ignored.

We have prepared a step-by step guide to completing the form which is [available here](#).

### **Rural Priorities Funding Training**

#### **Accessing Rural Priorities Funding**

1st May SCVO - Edinburgh Office

9.30 - 12.30 - Maximum 10 places

This training is designed for development staff, who work with community groups, to take them through the process of accessing Rural Priorities funding.

Key objectives :

- \* Consider the difference between LEADER and Rural Priorities funding
- \* Identify the key processes before submitting a SRDP, Rural Priorities application
- \* Analyse a case study application and consider how the assessment criteria

would be relevant to community projects  
To book a place contact [Liz Syred](#)

If you would like us to organise a training session in your area (with a minimum of 5 participants) please contact the Rural Direct team by emailing [ruraldirect@scvo.org.uk](mailto:ruraldirect@scvo.org.uk)

### **Keep up to date**

The key information resource for rural communities is the Rural Community Gateway. The Gateway has been running since 2003, and has built up a strong reputation as a source of accurate, unbiased and comprehensive information on issues relating to Scotland's rural communities. It also includes enlightening and entertaining features like the annual Photo Competition.

You can join the Rural Gateway and sign up for regular email updates here. For a more informal view check out the latest from the Rural Team on the SCVO Rural Blog at [www.scvorural.wordpress.com](http://www.scvorural.wordpress.com)

### **Rural Priorities successes . . .**

The full list of approved projects remains under wraps till the contracts have all been confirmed. Despite the complexities in the application system we know there has been excellent take up with significant onward commitment of available funding under the "Thriving Rural Communities" priorities. As soon as the Scottish Government release the list of approved applications we shall be identifying those from community groups and seeking to identify both good practice and areas where take up might be greater in future rounds.

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