

Helping rural communities  
to access funding

RuralDirect»

**Update Number 3  
June 2009**

**0845 838 8598**

**[www.ruraldirect.org.uk](http://www.ruraldirect.org.uk)**

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### **Rural Direct at the The Royal Highland Show**

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Members of the Rural Direct team will be attending this year's [Royal Highland Show](#), and will be available for consultation or general chat at the SEARS tent, along with representatives of the [Scottish Rural Network](#) and LEADER.

If you're going to the Show - and if you've never been, you're really missing out on one of Scotland's great events - do come along and see us.

There will be games, quizzes and wordsearches for the kids, and a chance to meet some of the people involved in this and many other rural initiatives. More information - including links to information about some other important visitors to the show - can be found [here](#).



### **SCVO delivering Scotland-wide Rural Direct service**

Rural Direct began a year ago as a partnership between SCVO and the Crofters Commission. Because of changes in the Commission's remit, SCVO have now taken on responsibility for delivering the service to rural communities across the whole of Scotland.

We are in the process of recruiting staff and developing the mechanisms for the delivery of the service, but we will aim to develop the same close working relationships with local CVSs and other support organisations as we have in other parts of Scotland. We have already come to working arrangements with Voluntary Action Orkney and (the newly renamed)

Voluntary Action Shetland. And we have been working closely with the Crofters Commission to make sure we're up to speed on specific issues affecting crofting communities.

The new set-up means that we are in an even stronger 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.

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).

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, we'd be more than happy to come along to any events related to rural funding that you are organising anywhere in Scotland, and we may even be able to help with organisation and promotion.

## **Cook review of the SRDP**

Peter Cook's First Stage Review of the Scotland Rural Development Programme has now been published and has been widely welcomed by rural organisations. You can find a copy and more information about it [here](#).

At the same time, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Richard Lochhead announced some changes to the programme and other aspects of rural development funding and agricultural support, including improvements to the online application process for Rural Priorities and an increased rate of support for community applications. This has been covered in some detail on the [Rural Network website](#)

Rural Direct will be issuing more detailed briefings on the changes as soon as we have clarified what all the implications will be for community groups, so watch this space.

## **The Rural Direct team**

[Barbara Love](#) co-ordinates the service and is responsible for Grampian, Highlands and Islands, Moray and Tayside, and will shortly be joined by a new full-time member of staff to help cover those areas

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

[Ian Mathieson](#) works with communities in the Argyll, Ayrshire, Clyde Valley, and Dumfries & Galloway

[Barbara Robertson](#) at Voluntary Action Orkney and [Wendy Hand](#) at Voluntary Action Shetland are the local contacts in the Northern Isles.

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

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**Next time**

**An update on eligibility rules, timescales and grant rates for community groups and more on the Rural Direct service in the Highlands & Islands**

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