Moray Local Action Group

LEADER 2007-2013

Development Strategy

May 2008

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

This document sets out the strategy for the Moray LEADER Local Action Group (LAG). The strategy was finalised following discussion, agreement and amendment of the draft strategy by the Local Action Group at their meeting on 30th April 2008.

The partnership intends to build on the strong basis of community capacity development which was undertaken by the previous LEADER+ LAG. This will involve a particular focus on building direct engagement between communities and agencies and developing local community and business links to the Community Planning process and structures.

1.2 The Moray LEADER Area

The proposed LAG area falls within and is defined by the boundaries of the Moray Council. The proposed area excludes all the SNS Data Zones covering Elgin (which is ineligible on the basis of its population of 21,000) and a single data zone of 383km^2 which falls within the boundary of the Cairngorm National Park (population 725 including Tomintoul village, population 322). The Cairngorm National Park Authority (CNPA) led the preparation of the successful LEADER bid for the Park area. This followed consultations between the Moray Rural Development Task Group, the CNPA, community associations in the affected area and local elected Council Members who agreed to the inclusion of this data zone within the Cairngorm LEADER programme area.

On this basis the total eligible population falling within the proposed Moray LEADER programme area is 65,370 (ONS 2001 data) covering an area of 1858.21 km^2. Within this there is a split between the area to the West of the County which falls within the Highlands and Islands Convergence area and the area outwith this designation. The Convergence area extends to some 1044.88 km^2 representing 56% of the proposed LEADER area and has a population of 21,799 representing 33% of the proposed LEADER population.

This area is eligible for funding under the Convergence programme and it is the intention that additional activity be undertaken here under the operational themes of the strategy.

The area is diverse in character in terms of its landscape, environment, economy and social structures. It ranges from the remote upland areas adjacent to the National Park to coastal areas with distinctive communities and habitats; it includes notable river catchments of national importance. Agriculture ranges from intensive arable production in the lowlands to extensive livestock in the hills. Economic activity includes large scale and modern operations such as the RAF bases and food processing business and the traditional whisky distilling of Speyside and the angling and sporting activity with its high profile and value but relatively small employment scale.

A characteristic of the area is the network of small market towns which it includes, Buckie (population 8,172) and Keith (population 5,597) in the North of the area and Forres (population 9,174) in the West. These towns are all within 15 km of Elgin the main service centre. The upland part of Moray has a network of smaller towns around the Spey river system; these include Rothes (population 1,209), Aberlour (population 965) and Dufftown (population 1,546).

1.3 The Moray Local Action Group Partnership

The proposed LAG partnership comprises the Rural Development Task Group which has acted as the shadow LAG progressing the development of the LEADER bid in Moray, this group will form the basis of the initial LAG. The balance of membership of this group meets the required LEADER criteria. This group has agreed that further local community representation be sought and this was pursued through a programme of community consultations completed in March 2008.

1. The Moray Council

Contact: John Ferguson, john.ferguson@moray.gov.uk

Skills and experience: The Moray Council is the Local Authority for the LAG area established in 1996 during Local Government reorganisation. It has its headquarters in Elgin and there are area offices at Forres, Buckie, Keith, Dufftown and Lossiemouth. The council has been providing a range of essential services to the public including Housing, Social Work, Education, Economic Development, Planning, Roads, Leisure and Environmental protection. It has the lead role in community planning and locality planning. It has extensive experience in leading, working with and coordinating a range of Partnerships. The Council has a wide range of skills and experience in project planning, management, legal, human resources, public relations, community development, and a wide range other technical skills. It has developed close working links with the voluntary sector and with local communities and their organisations.

Role: Will be the lead agency and it aims to "improve the quality of life for all people in Moray". It has responsibility for Community and locality planning in Moray and for the delivery of a range of statutory and discretionary services.

Commitment: The Moray Council commits to participation and providing strategic direction through active LAG membership. Match funding contributions to programme management costs and project costs will be provided both in cash and in kind. The Council will act as the locally accountable body for LEADER and will employ, support and provide day to day management of programme staff on behalf of the LAG.

2. **Scottish Natural Heritage**

   Contact: Paul Timms, paul.timms@snh.gov.uk

   Skills and experience: 15 years of experience in sustaining the wildlife, habitats, rocks, landscapes and natural beauty that make up the natural heritage of Scotland. SNH have project management and appraisal skills and experience.

   SNH was established in 1992 through the Natural Heritage (Scotland) Act 1991. SNH is a Government body responsible to Scottish Executive Ministers and through them to the Scottish Parliament.

   Role: It is SNH's policy to secure the conservation and enhancement of Scotland's natural heritage; foster understanding and facilitate enjoyment of it; and encourage its sustainable use.

   Commitment: Commitment to participation and providing strategic direction through active LAG membership. SNH will provide support for projects as appropriate.

3. **Forestry Commission Scotland**

   Contact: Phil Whitfield, phil.whitfield@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

   Skills and experience: The Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) was created on 1 April 2003 as a result of the Forestry Devolution Review. We serve as the forestry department of the Scottish Executive, advising on and implementing forestry policy and managing the national forest estate. The FCS work with the Scottish Government, particularly the Environment and Rural Affairs Department (formerly SEERAD), to deliver the Scottish Forestry Strategy. Forestry Commission Scotland contributes to many aspects of wider Scottish Executive policy such as energy, environment and climate change, biodiversity, healthy living, rural transport, tourism and education.

   The Forestry Commission's origins are in the First World War, and difficulties Britain had meeting wartime demands on timber. There has been some form of forestry control since then.

   Role: The Forestry Commission Scotland's mission is to protect and expand Scotland's forests and woodlands and increase their value to society and the environment**.**

   Commitment: Commitment to participation and providing strategic direction through active LAG membership. Match funding projects as appropriate.

4. **NHS Grampian, (Moray Community Health and Social Care Partnership)**

   Contact: Elaine Brown elaine.brown2@nhs.net

   Skills and experience Experience of population needs assessment, community development, community capacity building, delivering services in rural communities.

NHS Grampian has project management, epidemiology and appraisal skills and experience.NHS Grampian responsible to Scottish Government Ministers and through them to the Scottish Parliament.

Role: The purpose of NHS Grampian is to:
- Improve the health of the people of Grampian (in comparison with the rest of Europe); and
- Provide safe, high-quality treatment, based on clinical need in comfortable, accessible surroundings and within available resources.

This will only be achieved through working in partnership with our staff, patients, carers, communities, community planning partners and organisations/groups - in Grampian, in the North of Scotland and nationally.

Commitment: Commitment to participation and providing strategic direction through active LAG membership. NHS Grampian will provide support for projects as appropriate.

5. **HIE Moray**

Contact: Franziska Smith, franziska.smith@hient.co.uk

Skills and experience:

Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) is the Highland's main economic development agency, funded by the Scottish Government and works with 9 Local Enterprise Companies in the Highlands & Islands network. HIE helps the people and businesses of the Highlands succeed and in doing so, build a world-class economy by making industries more competitive. They have extensive experience of working with companies and individuals, universities, colleges, local authorities and other public sector bodies. They also have specific project planning, management and appraisal skills.

Role: It is Highland's and Islands Enterprise's policy to help new businesses get underway; support and develop existing businesses; help people gain the knowledge and skills they will need for tomorrow's jobs; and help Scottish businesses develop a strong presence in the global economy. This remit extends from empowering communities to individual training and nurturing innovation through to global networking via e-business. HIE Moray has a strong commitment to rural based business competitiveness'.

Commitment: Commitment to participation and providing strategic direction through active LAG membership. The LEC have also indicated that they will provide match funding for projects as appropriate, in particular projects which meet their Strengthening Communities priorities.

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6. **Moray College**

    Contact: Edna Cameron, edna.cameron@moray.uhi.ac.uk

    Skills and experience:

    Moray College, based in Elgin, is the area's primary further education establishment. In 1997 the college became an active partner in the University of the Highlands & Islands Project and increased its provision of higher education programmes. Moray College became part of UHI Millennium Institute, a designated higher education institution, in 2001. With over 7000 students, Moray College provides a wide range of courses, both full and part time, on subjects such as Hospitality Management to Fine Art, from Computing to Environment and Heritage, from Rural Development to Communication. The rich landscape and energetic community of the surrounding area form a key component of many courses, through study tours and work placements.

    Role: Moray College offers vocational and professional courses and training to school-leavers, professionals and international students. Moray College has a commitment to serving all of Moray including isolated and rural communities. It has an inclusive education and training policy and welcomes people of all ages, background and abilities to help them realise their ambitions across a wide range of subjects and disciplines.

    Commitment: Commitment to participation and providing strategic direction through active LAG membership.

7. **Grampian Police**

    Contact: Inspector Jim Masson, jim.masson@grampian.pnn.police.uk

    Skills and experience: Over the last year the Grampian Police Force has developed a 'Total Community' ethos which draws together Community Planning, community safety, community policing and community wellbeing in order to address the needs of communities. By working together with partners from other public services such as local councils (particularly housing, social work, planning) and the NHS, they aim to listen to the needs of residents and address their concerns jointly with other organisations to make communities safer to live and work in.

    Role: The main focus of the Moray Division of Grampian Police is on continuous improvement with a real emphasis on working with partners, and raising the profile of community policing, in order to promote meaningful engagement with the community we serve and address quality of life issues.

    Commitment: Commitment to participation and providing strategic direction through active LAG membership.

Social and Economic Partners

8. **Scottish Rural Property and Business Association (SRPBA)**

   Contact: Drew McFarlane-Slack, dmcslack@aol.com

   Skills and experience: SRPBA embody a proactive approach to property, business and enterprise in rural Scotland, builds upon 100 years of experience. They bringing together those whose homes, interests and businesses are found within the countryside and rural settlements. They have long experience of representing their members' interests at the highest level in a professional and responsive manner.

   Role: The Scottish Rural Property and Business Association (SRPBA) represent the interests of their members involved with rural property and businesses connected with the land. They contribute to formulation of rural policy and promote rural enterprise and rural development in Scotland.

   Commitment: Commitment to participation and providing strategic direction through active LAG membership, particularly in respect to governance.

9. **National Farmers Union of Scotland**

   Contact: Martin Bridges, mjb@medco.co.uk

   Skills and experience: NFUS provides its members with regular and accurate information on all major policy and legislative matters to help members keep on top of the main issues which affect their businesses. It has excellent links to the farming community in Moray and provides advice and support on all matters agricultural.

   Role: The purpose of NFU Scotland is to promote and protect the interests of its membership, by influencing Government, the public and consumers, and assisting its members to develop profitable and sustainable businesses.

   Commitment: Commitment to participation and providing strategic direction through active LAG membership.

10. **Moray Voluntary Services Organisation (MVSO)**

    Contact: Eileen Bush, eileen.bush@mvso.org.uk

    Skills and experience: There are an estimated 1400 voluntary organisations in Moray and MVSO currently supports around 400 member groups and the wider voluntary community by providing advice, information and direct practical support. It also has a strategic role and is a partner in a number of partnerships within Moray including The Community Planning Partnership, Community Health Partnership and The Social Inclusion Partnership.

    Role: MVSO is one of the 57 Councils for Voluntary Service (CVS) operating across Scotland. The CVS Network covers every local authority area in Scotland, providing services in urban, rural and island environments. MVSO is a Company Limited by

Guarantee with charitable status was established in 1995 and its role is to support and facilitate the development and representation of the voluntary sector within Moray.

Commitment: Commitment to participation and providing strategic direction through active LAG membership.

11. Rural and Environmental Action Project

Contact: Rod Lovie, rod@reapscotland.org.uk

Skills and experience: With 10 years of working in the voluntary sector in the North East of Scotland, REAP has an extensive network of contacts and experience of working with groups and agencies in a wide range of projects. REAP has experience of working with community groups and voluntary organisations in taking forward projects and offering training and capacity building. REAP administer the Community Grant scheme in Moray on behalf of HIE Moray.

Role: REAP is a local sustainable development charity based in Keith which works to promote sustainable development through supporting social enterprise and environmental activities. REAP works with local groups and agencies to encourage social enterprise, promote sustainable development and raise environmental awareness."

Commitment: Commitment to participation and providing strategic direction through active LAG membership.

12. Moray Federation of Community Halls and Associations (MFCHA)

Contact: Rosella Smith, Vice Convener, MFCHA, rosella.smith@hotmail.co.uk

Skills and experience: Moray Federation of Community Halls and Associations works on a voluntary basis to provide relevant information and support to community halls and associations throughout Moray. The MFCHA also co-ordinates responses to government policy, etc and provides a joint representation for hall committees and community associations. These organisations have a combined goal to upgrade and maintain local provision of community facilities and enhance the range of activities on offer to all age groups. In addition the MFCHA aims to co-ordinate and offer additional services such as training to support community facilities.

Role: Moray Federation of Community Halls and Associations works to support hall committees and community associations and promote the use and improvement of community facilities in the Moray area.

Commitment: Commitment to participation and providing strategic direction through active LAG membership. They offer Access to Community Halls for use by LAG.

13. Moray Youth Council

Contact: Nicolle Cordell, nikkinjc@tiscali.co.uk

Skills and experience: Established in late 2006 as a result of the Moray Youth Strategy 2006 the Moray Youth Council is made up of representatives from all the school councils and youth forums from across Moray. There are also a number of representatives from voluntary organisations. The role of the Youth Council is to develop effective ways of working with these forums and groups, and represent those interests on the partnership. The Youth Council provides a voice for young people within the partnership structure and demonstrates the partners' commitment to young people and youth issues.

Role: The Moray Youth Council will provide the essential link to the young people of Moray. Once the LAG is established the Youth Council will seek to develop its role further and ensure a voice for young people in rural Moray.

Commitment: The Youth Council will commit to full LAG membership and responsibilities and representatives will attend as many of the meetings as possible. The timing of the LAG meetings will be key to enabling this involvement.

14. The Moray Forum

Contact: Eddie Brewster Chairperson eddiebrewster@aol.com

Skills and experience: The Moray Forum brings together the chairs of 8 area forums from across Moray six of these are in the LAG area. The chairs are experienced community activists from a range of community organisations. The Moray Forum has been meeting for over a year.

Role: The Moray Forum provides a direct link between the 8 area forums and the Moray Community Planning Partnership. It represents the views of the Forums on the Community Planning Partnership through its representative, provides collective feedback from local communities to the Partnership and its various thematic groups. It allows for the exchange of ideas, information and good practice amongst the area forums.

Commitment: Commitment to participation and providing strategic direction through active LAG membership. The Moray forum will encourage the promotion of LEADER through the individual fora. They will be consulted in the project appraisal process as to the local needs, opportunities, demand and appropriateness of project applications in their area. They will also provide a direct link with the Community Planning Structure.

15. The Moray Joint Community Council

Contact: Alastair Kennedy (Chair) - a.kennedy@talktalk.net

Skills and experience: The Joint Community Councils of Moray brings together representatives of all 15 currently active Community Councils in Moray. It has been

represented on the Moray Community Planning Partnership since its launch in 1999 and was an active member of the previous LEADER + LAG.

Role: The Joint Community Councils of Moray is a forum of all the Community Councils in the Moray area. This Committee hold quarterly meetings to discuss matters of local interest and to update each other on what is happening in their own areas.

Commitment: Commitment to participation and providing strategic direction through active LAG membership.

17. **Moray Business Women**

Contact: Karen Wiles, karen.wiles@moray.gov.uk

Skills and experience: Moray Business Women (MBW) is an association at a fledgling stage in its development having formed in 2006. MBW aims to provide networking opportunities for Business and Professional Women in the Moray area. Its membership ranges from 60 to 90 individuals from the business and professional community who bring diverse experiences and interests.

Role: The purpose of Moray Business Women is to promote the advancement of women in the professional and business world; enable members to share knowledge, skills and experience; and provide a forum for discussion, development and networking.

Commitment: MBW is committed to participation through active LAG membership to ensure that the views, aspirations and interests of women in the business and professional community in Moray are reflected.

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1.4 Strategy Development Methodology

1.4.1 <u>General</u>

As part of the Scottish Rural Development Plan the Scottish Government issued an invitation to Moray to establish a new LEADER Local Action Group and to bid for a share of the funding. Moray Community Planning Partnership responded to this by inviting a number of organisations to work with them to develop a rural development framework and to prepare a bid for future LEADER funding. From this a rural development task group was formed which comprises the key strategic partners and organisations involved in rural development in the Moray area. The task group also includes partners from the previous LEADER+ LAG. The task group agreed to establish a new LEADER LAG from the membership of the task group and to broaden it by inviting other interested parties, particularly community representatives to join.

The development of the strategy for Moray LEADER on behalf of the proposed LAG has been facilitated by the consultants the Rural Development Company in association with Fraser Associates. Development of the strategy has taken account of the national guidance prepared by the Scottish Government.

The development of the strategy involved a number of different stages of and approaches to research and consultation to ensure as relevant and inclusive a range of views and experiences as possible were built in. A detailed review was carried out of the social and economic context in which the LEADER strategy will sit. This provides baseline information on social and economic circumstances in rural Moray which will inform the priorities for the new LEADER strategy.

Coupled with the review of the social and economic context was a review of the environmental context in which the new LEADER strategy will sit. This ensures that the priorities of the natural and cultural environment of the area are recognised and incorporated into the new LEADER strategy.

The role of Community Planning was in its infancy when the LEADER+ strategy and business plan was launched in 2001. There have been a number of changes in the policy context since then and Moray Community Planning Partnership is now spearheading the LEADER bid. There is also a much greater awareness of rural regeneration needs and this was recognised by making rural one of the 8 key priorities addressed by the Community Plan in Moray. A review of a number of relevant local strategies was carried out to ensure strong complementarity and additionality. This includes the Moray 2020 Strategy Report and the evidence from the consultations which underpinned it.

The LAG therefore wished to employ a strong consultative approach to build on the community engagement developed through LEADER+ which is also one of the priorities of the Community Planning Process in Moray.

1.4.2 Consultations

A programme of seventeen consultation interviews involving twenty-one individuals was carried out with the public sector and social and economic partner members of the task group and other key stakeholders. Consultation interviews were also conducted with the potential neighbouring LEADER LAGs, the Cairngorms National Park and Aberdeenshire. Ten of these consultations were carried out by face to face interview with the remainder taking place by telephone. All the interviews were conducted using semi structured questionnaires or topic guides. These are provided together with a list of those consulted at Annex 1 and Annex 2.

1.4.3 Community Workshops

Three community workshops were carried out on the evenings of 19th, 20th and 27th February in Forres, Fochabers and Rothes. The venues used were well known community facilities consideration having been given to the accessibility of venues and to making use of local facilities. Invitations were issued to 231 individuals and representatives of local community groups and the workshops were advertised on the 'Your Moray' web site. Use was made of existing community networks to encourage as wide an attendance as possible. A total of 60 individuals attended the three workshops with all being well attended. A full list of attendees can be seen in Annex 3.

The workshops were highly participative and designed to ensure that participants were involved through out the process. The workshop sessions were structured around three aims:

- To provide a short information giving session on the LEADER Programme in general and to highlight points specifically relevant to the rural Moray area;
- To develop feed back on what the participants consider to be the assets, needs and opportunities in the rural Moray area; and
- To prioritise these findings to help develop a clear understanding of the absolute and relative importance of each of the points raised.

The methodology employed encouraged participants to air individual views and then through discussion develop consensus within their group. This led to some lively debate involving experienced community representatives who, as well being engaged members of their community, were aware of the challenges and opportunities from their first hand experience. The workshop findings were agreed by the participants themselves and the consultants collated the outcomes after each event. The findings from across the range of consultation are presented at Chapter 3.

2 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

2.1 Socio Economic Analysis

This section presents a summary socio-economic analysis of the LEADER (rural Moray) area, with data benchmarked against Moray as a whole and Scotland. Where possible the data has been sourced at datazone level via www.sns.gov.uk and NOMIS in the case of employment and VAT data.

There is limited reliable statistical data available at the LEADER area level. In these cases, Moray level data represent a reasonably good surrogate, insofar as the LEADER area accounts for 77% of the Moray population.

The analysis is based on the following indicators:

- population / working population.
- access to services.
- employment.
- qualifications.
- the business base.
- unemployment and worklessness.
- deprivation.

2.1.1 Population

Between 2001 and 2005, the population of rural Moray increased at a faster rate than in Moray as a whole and in Scotland.

Over this period, the population of Rural Moray increased by 2,068, equivalent to 3.1%, and five times faster than population growth at the Scottish level. Overall population growth in rural Moray was gender neutral although, among the working age population, the increase was faster for males than females.

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TABLE 2.1: POPULATION CHANGE							
	Total Population				Working Age Population		
	2001	**2005**	**Ch**	**% Ch**	**Ch 01-05**	**% Ch**	**% of Total Popn. 2005**
Males							
Moray Ldr	33238	34285	1047	3.2	693	3.1	65.6
Moray	43469	44031	562	1.3	363	1.0	65.6
Scotland	2433733	2456109	22376	0.9	25538	1.0	66.6
Females							
Moray Ldr	32985	34006	1021	3.1	530	2.7	55.9
Moray	43531	44089	558	1.3	322	1.3	56.2
Scotland	2630467	2638691	8224	0.3	15599	1.0	59.0
All							
Moray Ldr	66223	68291	2068	3.1	1223	2.9	60.8
Moray	87000	88120	1120	1.3	685	1.3	60.1
Scotland	5064200	5094800	30600	0.6	41137	1.3	62.6
Source: www.sns.gov.uk							

While the working age population in rural Moray grew at a faster rate than at the Moray and Scotland levels, in 2005, people of working age represented a lower proportion of the population than in Scotland as a whole. This appears to reflect a larger aged population and, greater longevity among females in particular.

There are important trends in Moray across the population age range.

There is a net outflow of 16-20 year olds from Moray, mainly to the main Scottish cities, as young people move into further and higher education. The Royal Air Force bases also influence trends affecting this age group. Although Moray has a net outflow of young people, there are significant flows in both directions, with strong inflows when the RAF bases are expanding recruitment.

The net outflow of young people is counterbalanced by net in-migration of people in their thirties, many with children, and a net inflow of over-50s.

The trends in population change in Moray will have corresponding implications for the realisation of economic opportunities and the provision of public and private services to meet the demands of the different age groups.

2.1.2 Access to Services

An indication of accessibility of key rural services is available in data on average drive time to service points.

Table 2.2 shows the average drive times (in minutes) for households to key services: post office, GP, petrol, shopping, primary and secondary schools. The data indicate little significant difference in drive time to access services between the rural and more urban parts of Moray. However, average drive times to access petrol services, shopping and secondary schools are notably longer than the Scottish average.

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TABLE 2.2: DRIVE TIMES TO KEY SERVICES, 2003 AND 2006											
	Post Office		GP		Petrol		Shopping		Primary School		Secondary School	
Area / Year	03	06	03	06	03	06	03	06	03	06	03	06
Moray Ldr	3.5	2.6	5	4.3	5.6	4.5	7.8	7.6	3.7	2.7	-	7.5
Moray	3.3	2.4	4.6	4.1	5	4	6.5	6.6	3.4	2.6	-	6.9
Scotland	2.9	2.2	3.8	3.4	4.8	3.7	4.9	5.6	2.9	2.2	-	5.6
Source: www.sns.gov.uk Shopping 03 is drive time to a supermarket.											

While the differences in drive times for most services between rural Moray and Moray as a whole are not great, the difference will impinge particularly upon those who do not have access to a car or van and are reliant upon public transport.

2.1.3 Employment

Sustained economic growth since the mid-1990s has been reflected in increased numbers of jobs and higher levels of labour market participation across Scotland and this trend has been reflected in Moray.

The data in Table 2.3 show an additional 1,245 jobs in Moray in 2005 compared with 2001. Employment in Moray grew in line with trend in Scotland as a whole in this period.

TABLE 2.3: EMPLOYMENT CHANGE 2001-2005				
	2001	2005	Change	% Change
Moray	31520	32764	1244	3.9
Scotland	2299821	2391448	91627	4.0
Source: ABI				

The key sectoral changes for Moray in comparison with Scotland are shown below in Table 2.4. While the overall employment trend in Moray is similar to that at the Scottish level, the trends at sectoral level are in some cases markedly different. On the positive side, manufacturing employment in Moray grew between 2001 and 2005 (8.7% increase compared to a reduction of 19.4% at the Scottish level). A significant component of manufacturing in Moray is the food and drink industry, more specifically the manufacture of whisky.

However, over the same period, employment in construction and in banking and finance in Moray lost ground against the national trend.

The public sector - defined as public administration, education and the health sectors - has a significant role in providing job opportunities in Moray and accounted for a growth of 1,376 jobs between 2001 and 2005.

Tourism related jobs represent a significant component of employment in Moray, with heritage tourism and outdoor activities particularly strong. However, the number of tourism-related jobs in Moray remained almost static between 2001 and 2005 whereas, in Scotland as a whole, employment in the sector increased by 6.7%.

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The land-based industries - agriculture and forestry - accounted for approximately 2,400 jobs in Moray in 2005. Although the overall number of farming jobs has reduced in recent years, a different pattern has emerged in Moray compared to Scotland, which has seen an increase in jobs that are part-time, seasonal and casual.

TABLE 2.4: MAIN SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT TRENDS 2001-05				
	2001	2005	Change	% Change
Moray				
Public admin, education & health	9967	11343	1376	13.8
Banking, finance and insurance	2575	2538	-37	-1.4
Construction	2212	2106	-106	-4.8
Manufacturing	4610	5009	399	8.7
Distribution, hotels & restaurants	8231	8243	12	0.1
Scotland				
Public admin, education & health	617937	725056	107119	17.3
Banking, finance and insurance	394244	443022	48778	12.4
Construction	120131	130043	9912	8.3
Manufacturing	285020	229695	-55325	-19.4
Distribution, hotels & restaurants	11300	12060	760	6.7
Energy and water	44356	35070	-9286	-20.9
Source: ABI				

2.1.4 Qualifications

Access to a skilled workforce is fundamental to the competitiveness of rural businesses and for their ability to adapt to changing market needs.

Tables 2.5 and 2.6 provide an indication of the skills base in Moray, based on a sample of the working age population. This data set is available at local authority and national levels only. Some caution is required in interpreting these data; SNS has conceded that they contain anomalies.

In terms of the number of people in with known qualifications, Moray has a slightly better qualified workforce than the Scottish average. In 2005, 85% of the working age population was in possession of academic or work-related qualifications, compared with 83% at national level.

Similarly, Moray also demonstrated a lower than average working age population with no qualifications (15%) compared with the Scottish average (17%) in 2005.

TABLE 2.5: BASIC QUALIFICATIONS				
Total Working Age Population with Known Qualifications				
	2001		2005	
	No.	%	No.	%
Moray	48000	84	43000	85
Scotland	2593400	82	2646000	83
Total Working Age Population with No Qualifications				
	2001		2005	
Moray	8000	16	6000	15
Scotland	530300	20	459700	17
Source: www.sns.gov.uk				

Moray performs less well in relation to higher-level qualifications compared with the national level. In 2005, the SNS data suggest that 13% of the population were educated to degree level compared with 21% for Scotland.

TABLE 2.6: HIGHER LEVEL QUALIFICATIONS				
Total Working Age Population with 3 Highers or More				
	2001		2005	
	No.	%	No.	%
Moray	21000	70	25000	58
Scotland	1785800	69	1607600	61
Total Working Age Population with Degree Level Qualification				
	2001		2005	
Moray	7000	30	6000	13
Scotland	850400	33	553000	21
Source: www.sns.gov.uk				

2.1.5 The Business Base

In common with many other rural economies, enterprise is relatively strong in Moray. There is a relatively high business density, 286 businesses per 10,000 population in 2005 compared with 253 at the Scottish level. However, within the business base, self-employment and micro-businesses have a greater representation. Some 8.2% of working age population self-employed, compared with 7.6% at the Scottish level.

The business base in Moray, as measured by VAT registered businesses, grew little between 2001 and 2005, a period when there was modest growth across Scotland as a whole. However, the experience at the Scottish level was significantly shaped by a sharp reduction in de-registrations, a trend which was not shared in Moray.

TABLE 2.7: CHANGE BUSINESS STOCKS 2001-05							
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Ch	%Ch
Registrations							
Moray	155	140	180	170	165	10	6.5
Scotland	10980	11130	11975	11975	11525	545	5.0
Deregistrations							
Moray	160	150	165	175	165	5	3.1
Scotland	10960	10820	10935	10925	10160	-800	-7.3
Stocks at End of Year							
Moray	2515	2510	2520	2515	2520	5	0.2
Scotland	125405	125695	126750	127815	129180	3,775	3.0
Source: NOMIS							

In Moray the main areas where there has been an increase in the number of businesses between 2001 and 2005 (real estate, construction and hotels and restaurants) have grown at roughly the same rate as Scotland as a whole. Public administration has experienced growth in Moray, compared to a decline in Scotland. The district has experienced some consolidation in manufacturing, but overall manufacturing employment has grown over the period.

TABLE 2.8: MAIN CHANGES IN STOCK BY SECTOR, 2001-2005				
	2001	2005	Ch	%Ch
Moray				
Construction	315	345	30	9.5
Real estate, renting etc.	300	340	40	13.3
Hotels and restaurants	215	230	15	7.0
Public administration etc.	125	130	5	4.0
Manufacturing	150	140	-10	-6.6
Scotland				
Construction	13,110	14,370	1,260	9.6
Real estate, renting etc.	27,750	31,790	4,040	14.6
Hotels and restaurants	11,300	12,060	760	6.7
Manufacturing	8,725	8,330	-395	-4.5
Public administration etc.	9,665	8,785	-880	-9.1
Source: ABI				

2.1.6 Unemployment and Worklessness

Generally buoyant economic conditions in Scotland since the mid-1990s have seen a sustained reduction in the number of jobless, which historically has been more concentrated in urban areas.

Table 2.9 shows that, between the spring quarters of 2002 and 2006, male unemployment fell in Moray, rural Moray, and for Scotland as a whole. However, the absolute numbers involved are small – there were 855 JSA claimants in Moray during the second quarter of 2006.

When male unemployment is analysed as a proportion of the working age population, Moray and rural Moray, are performing better than Scotland as a whole,

with 3.8% of the male working age population in Scotland being unemployed, while the figure for Moray is 3.0% and 2.8%.in rural areas.

TABLE 2.9: MALE UNEMPLOYMENT, 2002 AND 2006						
	2002 (q.2)	2006 (q.2)	Change	% Change	Male working age population, 2006	% 2006 Male working age population
Moray Ldr	680	635	-45	-6.6	22485	2.8
Moray	860	855	-5	-0.6	28803	3.0
Scotland	77090	63000	-14090	-18.3	1648753	3.8
Source: www.sns.gov.uk; q2 = second quarter data used.						

Persistent unemployment is also an issue for females in rural Moray, although, again, the absolute numbers are small. Unemployment amongst women in both rural Moray and Moray as a whole has actually increased between 2002 and 2006, in comparison with a reduction in Scotland. However, there is not a great difference in female unemployment as a proportion of the female working age population in Moray 1.6% (or rural Moray) compared to 1.3% for Scotland.

TABLE 2.10: FEMALE UNEMPLOYMENT						
	2002 (q. 2)	2006 (q.2)	Ch	% Ch	Female working age population, 2006	% 2006 Female working age population
Moray Ldr	220	300	80	36.4	18603	1.6
Moray	280	375	95	33.9	24069	1.6
Scotland	21885	20540	-1345	-6.1	1563804	1.3
Source: www.sns.gov.uk						

Total unemployment has increased slightly in both rural Moray and Moray as a whole between 2002 and 2006, in contrast with a decrease in unemployment in Scotland. However, the proportion of claimants in Moray is almost the same as the proportion in Scotland when compared against the working age population for the areas - both rural Moray and the rest of Moray are at 2.3% of the total population, while it is 2.6% for Scotland.

TABLE 2.11: ALL UNEMPLOYMENT						
	2002 (q.2)	2006 (q.2)	Ch	% Ch	Total working age population, 2006	% 2006 total population
Moray Ldr	900	965	65	7.2	41088	2.3
Moray	1140	1245	105	9.2	52872	2.4
Scotland	98975	83540	-15435	-15.6	3212557	2.6
Source: www.sns.gov.uk						

Analysis by age range reveals some resilience in unemployment in Moray amongst the 16-24 age group; where there was a considerable increase between 2002 and 2006 in a period when unemployment among young people was in decline at the Scottish level. However, there is very little difference between the proportions in this age range claiming Job-seekers Allowance (JSA), with 3.9% of 16-24 year olds in rural Moray claiming JSA compared to 4.3% in Moray and 4.2% in Scotland. This age

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group has the highest proportion of claimants relative to the total population, but there is little difference between Scotland, and urban and rural Moray.

Although small numbers are involved, the rural area of Moray has experienced some reduction in the number of claimants' aged 25-49. This was in line with trends for Moray and for Scotland where claimant numbers in this age range fell. When examined relative to the total population for that age range, it is clear that there is little difference between urban and rural Moray, and they are both consistent with the pattern for Scotland.

The number of JSA claimants in the 50+ age group reduced across all three areas - rural Moray, Moray and Scotland between 2002 and 2006. However, when examined relative to the total population for that age range it is clear that the proportions of unemployed in the 50+ age range is approximately the same for rural Moray, Moray and Scotland.

TABLE 2.12: ALL JSA CLAIMANTS BY AGE						
	2002 (q.2)	2006 (q.2)	Ch	% Ch	Total Working age population, in area in respective age range 2006	% 2006 total population in respective age range
16-24 yrs						
Moray Ldr	190	270	80	42.1	6964	3.9
Moray	260	385	125	48.1	8857	4.3
Scotland	26105	25330	-775	-3.0	602021	4.2
25-49 yrs						
Moray Ldr	455	440	-15	-3.3	22618	1.9
Moray	590	565	-25	-4.2	29425	1.9
Scotland	55130	44030	-11100	-20.1	1795324	2.5
50+ yrs						
Moray Ldr	255	215	-40	-15.7	13636	1.6
Moray	285	270	-15	-5.3	17243	1.6
Scotland	17615	13950	-3665	-20.8	959754	1.5
Source: www.sns.gov.uk						

While the numbers of claimant unemployed has reduced markedly, there has been a trend at national level for the long-term unemployed to migrate off of the unemployment register and into an alternative form of benefit, particularly invalidity benefit. Re-integrating such benefit claimants with the labour market has become a key focus for action tackling economic exclusion.

Within rural Moray, the proportion of the working age population claiming Invalidity Benefit (IB) and Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA) is lower than for Moray and markedly lower than for all of Scotland. This is particularly the case among males, where the claimant is more that 50% greater at the Scottish level than in rural Moray. Nevertheless, while the number of male claimants reduced in Moray between 2002 and 2006, the claim rate among females has increased, against the trend at national level.

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TABLE 2.13: IB/SDA CLAIMANTS						
	2002 (q.2)	2006 (q.2)	Change	% Change	Working age population, 2006	% 2006 working age population
Male						
Moray Ldr	1575	1510	-65	-4.1	22485	6.7
Moray	2130	2060	-70	-3.3	28803	7.2
Scotland	193830	175540	-18290	-9.4	1648753	10.6
Female						
Moray Ldr	1070	1170	100	9.3	18603	6.3
Moray	1490	1645	155	10.4	24069	6.8
Scotland	144210	137710	-6500	-4.5	1563804	8.8
All						
Moray Ldr	2645	2680	35	1.3	41088	6.5
Moray	3620	3705	85	2.3	52872	7.0
Scotland	337640	313240	-24400	-7.2	3212557	9.8
Source: www.sns.gov.uk						

The data in Table 2.14 suggest that there is a resilient core of IB/SDA claimants in Moray, and this is apparent across both the urban and rural areas. The number of long-term claimants (2+ years) increased by 10% between 2002 and 2006 in contrast with the position at national level where there was a decrease of 1% amongst this claimant group.

TABLE 2.14: IB/SDA LONG TERM CLAIMANTS						
	2002 (Q.2)	2006 (Q.2)	Change	% Change	Working age population, 2006	% 2006 working age population
Moray Ldr	1820	2000	180	9.9	41088	4.9
Moray	2505	2755	250	10.0	52872	5.2
Scotland	244670	242350	-2320	-0.9	3212557	7.5
Source: www.sns.gov.uk						

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2.1.7 **Deprivation**

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is produced at data zone level. Table 2.14 summarises the percentage of data zones in the Moray area and the rural Moray LEADER area within the 'worst' 10% and 'worst' 20% of zones across Scotland.   Under this analysis, it may be seen, for example, that in the Moray LEADER area in 2006, 39% of data zones were in the worst 10% of data zones in Scotland for access to services.

The Index suggests that rural Moray and Moray overall have relatively low levels of deprivation overall. There are no data zones in Moray that fall in the worst 10% of Scottish data zones there the overall index is concerned. Only 2% of data zones in Moray feature in the worst 20% of Scottish data zones, but these occur within urban Moray.

TABLE 2.15: PROPORTION OF DATAZONES IN WORST 10% AND 20%				
	Moray LEADER		Moray All	
	Percentage of DZs in worst 10% in 2006	Percentage of DZs in worst 20% in 2006	Percentage of DZs in worst 10% in 2006	Percentage of DZs in worst 20% in 2006
Services	29	39	22	31
Transport	27	37	21	30
Pub trans	31	45	26	41
Crime	3	12	7	16
Education	0	0	2	2
Employment	0	2	0	3
Health	0	0	0	1
Housing	0	2	0	3
Income	0	1	0	1
Overall	0	0	0	2
Source: www.sns.gov.uk				

More detailed analysis of the variables making up the overall index reveals a clear pattern to the forms of deprivation that are present in Moray and in its rural areas. Access to services, to transport and to public transport are highlighted as social and economic challenges for Moray as a whole, and to be a little more extensive in the rural areas of Moray.

Crime is well below the Scottish average in rural Moray, and still markedly less for Moray as a whole.

Other forms of disadvantage - access to economic opportunity, housing and health - are relatively low level and / or dispersed in Moray.

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Key Issues
• Both the overall and working age populations in rural Moray have grown faster than the Scottish trend in recent years. Moray generally is subject to loss of young people leaving the area for education and early career jobs. However, this is compensated by an inflow of early-middle and older age groups. This distinctive demographic pattern has implications for local service needs.   • Access to services is notably inferior for Moray as a whole than for Scotland and the position in rural Moray is particularly poor. Along with access to transport and public transport, access to services are notable sources of social and economic disadvantage in an otherwise relatively privileged area.   • Employment in Moray has been growing in line with Scottish trends, although there are notable sectoral differences. Many job opportunities have been created in the public sector, while manufacturing employment has demonstrated strong growth against the national trend.   • There is a strong enterprise culture in Moray, but a larger proportion of small and one-person businesses. Moray experienced slow growth in the overall number of businesses in recent years while the position in Scotland has been moving forward quite quickly. This may reflect the high level of labour market participation.   • A skilled workforce is essential if rural businesses are to compete in increasingly open markets. Moray's skills base is slightly stronger than the national average where low to intermediate qualifications are concerned, but weaker in terms of higher level skills.   • Male unemployment has been falling across the rural area and Moray as a whole, but female unemployment has been increasing. Persistent unemployment amongst the 16-24 age group suggests constraints in opportunities for young people and that a minority are not engaging with the labour market after completing their secondary education.

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2.2   Environmental Context

2.2.1   Introduction

Rich in semi-natural habitats, Moray includes part of the Cairngorms National Park and the Moray Firth's rich marine ecosystem. There is an impressive diversity of often iconic species, such as capercaillie and wildcat, and habitats such as threatened peat bog. Though dominated by intensive farming and forestry, the lowlands host much nature-based recreation, renowned geological sites, and the largely undeveloped coast. Further inland the mix of moorland, river straths, farming, forestry and tourism make semi-natural habitats and landscape critical to the local economy. Sporting estates carry challenges such as managing for red deer and birds of prey, and the benefits of diversified native woodland and plantation management are increasing. Moray gives locals and visitors exceptional opportunities to enjoy the natural heritage and there is great potential for increasing countryside access and education, especially in the less-frequented uplands.

2.2.2   Statutory Designations

Moray's high quality natural heritage is recognised at the European level through designations such as the Cairngorms National Nature Reserve, Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs).

Moray contains a wide range of international, national and local nature conservation sites which are show at **Table 2.16** below. The Special Protections Areas are to be found in the Cairngorms, Loch Spynie, the Moray and Nairn Coast, Tips of Coresemaul and Tomore and Darnaway and Lethen.

Further local sites important to nature conservation include the non-statutory Spey Bay Nature Reserve, the Local Nature Reserve at Findhorn Bay, Sites of Interest to Natural Science, Wildlife sites and Biodiversity Action Plan areas.

TABLE 2.16: NATURE CONSERVATION DESIGNATIONS IN MORAY						
Designation	International	National	Local	No. in Moray	Total Land area (ha)	Proportion of Moray (%)
Special Protection Area	✓			5	11,321	5.02
Candidate Special Areas of Conservation	✓			10	61,614	27.3
Ramsar Sites	✓			3	2,561	1.13
Sites of Special Scientific Interest		✓		43	12,2256	5.43
Sites of Interest to Natural Science			✓	42	100,570	44.57
National Nature Reserves		✓		1	2,117	0.94
Local Nature Reserves			✓	1	842	.037
Wildlife Sites			✓	7	12	0.01
Tree Preservation Orders			✓	28	84	0.04

Source: SNH, The Moray Council

2.2.3 Landscapes

Moray is noted for its diverse range of landscapes from the foothills of the Cairngorms to the moorlands and river valleys leading down to the fertile plains of the Moray Coast.   Within this large areas of Moray are protected through international designations such as the Cairngorms National Park and Cairngorms National Scenic Area.

In order to offer protection against inappropriate development a number of local scenic designations have been identified including seven Areas of Great landscape Value (AGLVs), a Coastal Protection Zone and seven Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes. Priority is given to scenic quality within these areas to protect against development and preserve the peoples' ability to organise these finite resources in the future.

2.2.3 Coastlines

The coast is a valuable resource in Moray in terms of its landscape, nature conservation, recreation and tourism benefits. The coast line in Moray, while fragile, does not fit within the National Guidance for isolated coastlines. It is therefore safeguarded from inappropriate development through the identification of a Coastal Protection Zone. This Protection Zone covers the whole of the coastline in Moray. One of SNH's key objectives for Moray is to restore and maintain coastal habitats.

2.2.4 **Woodlands**

Moray is rich in trees, woods and forests, a vital resource providing a range of goods for local communities, the environment and the economy. Moray is one of the most wooded areas in Scotland with 30% of the land covered in trees. The type of forestry being promoted has changed over recent years towards planting native species, promoting natural regeneration and continuous cover forestry.

Wood is a sustainable and renewable local fuel resource which can be regenerated through replanting. Products made from locally sourced wood also provide a vital market for timber encouraging regeneration of woodlands and sustaining local employment. The Forestry Commission encourage the creation and management of woods and forests to provide economic, environmental and social benefits now and in the future. Forest Enterprise manage national forests and also undertake forestry education through their Ranger Service. The Council and Forestry Commission are guided by The Moray Forestry Strategy which aims to promote woodland planting on appropriate sites and to promote the expansion of native woodland in Moray.

Community woodlands provide significant benefits in Moray to local communities and beyond, these include the Quarrelwood Woodland Park Association, the Cottage Woods Community Woodland Association and the Forres Community Woodlands Trust.

2.2.5 **Built Heritage**

Moray has a rich and varied history of human habitation. The area's built heritage includes 2,681 archaeological sites, 79 scheduled monuments, 1,665 listed buildings, 17 conservation areas, 7 Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes, townscapes and vernacular (local) buildings. Collectively, this heritage contributes greatly to the Moray character and sense of place. Significantly there has been a large increase in the number of archaeological sites which rose by 470 (21%) between 2000 and 2006.

2.2.6 **Organisational Involvement**

The main organisations involved in the promotion and protection of natural heritage are in the Moray area are Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), The Moray Council and the Forestry Commission (FC).

SNH have four key objectives for the Moray area. These are set out in their Natural Heritage Futures document, which helps build up a vision for Scotland's natural heritage for the next two decades and beyond. SNH's objectives are:

- to restore, enhance and manage native and commercial woodland for multi-purpose use:

- to maintain the integrity and full potential range of characteristic terrestrial species, including osprey, red kite, capercaillie, pine marten, red squirrel, wildcat and badger;

- to restore and maintain coastal habitats; and

- to maintain and improve the quality of freshwater habitats.

The Moray Council, SNH, RSPB, SEPA, Forestry Commission etc are partners in the North East Scotland Local Biodiversity Action Plan Project which promotes and implements Action Plans for a range of nationally and locally important habitats and species. In Moray the Wards Wildlife Site is managed as a biodiversity project with The Moray Council providing management and interpretation of the site.

The Cairngorms National Park officially opened on the 1st September 2003 and is Scotland's second National Park and the largest in the United Kingdom. The Cairngorms National Park Authority has powers over some planning issues and has incorporated biodiversity guidance into any future developments in the area.

2.2.7 Community Involvement

HIE Moray assist communities able to take responsibility for their local environment and natural resources through community land initiatives like the Community Land Unit and Scottish Land Fund. SNH is helping communities improve their quality of life through working with partners on projects with an urban or urban-fringe focus. Throughout Moray, Community Councils and community organisations are involved in projects to enhance their local area.

2.3 Community Assets and Facilities

2.3.1 Community Facilities

HIE Moray commissioned an audit of community assets in Moray which reported in November 2006. The audit provides a very comprehensive description of the assets and their uses. It includes of information on:

Village & Community Halls: There are 22 such halls in the Moray LEADER area and information was collected on their capacity, activities they are used for, availability, costs, facilities, condition of venue, indication of operating income and their use of renewable energy. The audit found that almost half the halls reported to be in need of repair or upgrading in the next three years. The only hall that used any form of renewable energy was Dufftown, Mortlach Memorial Hall that used solar energy for heating.

Learning & Training facilities: There were 24 learning and training facilities recorded in the audit in the Moray LEADER area. These facilities are in general used by the local population of the town or of the county, they are not national centres. It was found that in addition a number of village halls, community centres and libraries provide training and learning facilities. Moray College, based in Elgin, is the largest provider of Higher education, training and learning facilities in the area. Although based in Elgin it also supports a range of activities in community centres and village halls though out the area.

Libraries: There are 13 libraries in the Moray LEADER area which provide a wide range of services, including use as learning and training centres.

Sports Facilities – There are 61 sporting facilities identified in the Moray audit excluding those in Elgin. There is a wide range of indoor and out door facilities including leisure centres, swimming pools, bowling, golf, football, rugby, cricket and gymnastics clubs. There is also a fly fishing club and a gliding club.

Other community facilities in the Moray LEADER area include 7 recycling centres and 34 recycling points.

TABLE 2.17: NUMBER AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES IN LEADER AREA	
Facility	**Number**
Primary School	28
Secondary School	6
Dentist	6
GP	14
Hospital	5
Opticians	5
Pharmacies	18
Access Points	5
Community Halls	22
Libraries	14
Museum	5
Post offices	32
Recycling Centers	7
Recycling Points	34
Registrars	3
Swimming Pools	5
Town Halls	8
Shops (excl P.O.)	443

Source: The Moray Council

2.3.2 Community Enterprise

A recent study for HIE Moray investigated the social economy of Moray with a view to developing a centre of excellence in the area; the rural element of this is not discretely addressed. In order to be recognised as an established social enterprise the DTI identify that there needs to be a trading income of at least 50% of overall income. This figure drops to 25% for new social enterprises. The DTI define the trading element as "the direct exchange of goods or services". In the context of the Scottish Executive consultation this was broadened out to include contracts and Service Level Agreements. This formed the basis of the definition in the study.

The HIE research revealed the sector to be of some significance and scale in Moray as expected. It found that there were 57 organisations already trading or planning to trade which could be considered to be social enterprises in Moray. The majority of these are membership organisations; almost half of them involve paid staff. Accounting for almost half of all activity training, retail and care are the three main groups of activities in which these organisations are involved.

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61% of the organisations concerned own property whilst 46% own other assets. Those currently trading at the time of the research had a cumulative annual turnover of some £2.25m. This was expected to grow amongst the group of such organisations interviewed by the researchers.

The researchers investigated the support needs and issues which these groups faced; this found that over 50% sought help with;

- business planning;
- financial planning;
- winning contracts;
- product development;
- pricing;
- leadership;
- board training;
- legal matters; and
- backroom services.

The Moray Social Enterprise Network has subsequently been established and has made progress in beginning to address some of these issues however significant further scope and potential for development remains.

3. FINDINGS FROM CONSULTATIONS

3.1 Introduction: Perceptions on Assets, Needs and Opportunities

This section is structured around two main subsections drawing on those relevant elements from the consultation process which contribute to the development of the strategy. The first section relates to assets, needs and opportunities and is drawn from the findings of the programme of stakeholder interviews and from the programme of consultative workshops. The second relating to the proposed themes draws mainly on the stakeholder interview findings as confirmed through the workshop discussions with communities.

The analysis established that the findings from the two main forms of consultation showed a very high degree of consistency amongst those consulted. There were few significant differences in the focus of the three area based workshops other than a more direct focus on community needs in the Forres and Fochabers sessions than was evident +in Rothes.

The strengths and assets of the area as perceived by those consulted can readily be assimilated into four main groupings; these pertain to

- People, place and quality of life;
- The natural and managed environment;
- Tourism and heritage; and
- Business.

3.1.1 People, place and quality of life

This is the most strongly identified group of assets and was prioritised as such in the community consultation workshops. The importance of this and the feeling that more could be made of such community strength, spirit and diversity is also reflected in the opportunities which are perceived.

There is a general perception that rural Moray offers the majority of its residents a good quality of life, this depends on the interaction of the numerous social and community factors identified here as well as with the economic and environmental characteristics of the area which are addressed separately.

There is a strong identification with a traditional community base which, although on occasion taken for granted by some residents and service providers is highly valued. The communities are generally seen to be friendly with strong community spirit and identification with those communities and the area.

Although traditional the communities are nevertheless diverse in their composition and nature, their population and cultural mix. Communities themselves identified strongly with this and highlighted the extent of integration across this diversity and in the way they function as entities.

Reflecting this Rural Moray is perceived to offer a safe environment for those who live and work there. There is said to be a low crime rate and in particular a lack of serious crime.

The young people of the area are seen as a valuable asset to the community, there is seen to be potential for a strong contribution to the well being of community from this group. The importance of this group is further highlighted by the concerns expressed over their needs for support and opportunity to help them remain in and contribute to the community.

Rural services

The feedback from the consultations highlights the importance and value which is placed on the services and infrastructure which Moray's rural communities enjoy. The small towns which are characteristic of the area are thought to be in relatively good heart with a good variety of shops, a range of services and good parking provision.

The main services highlighted as representing assets to the area were the education and health services. The provision of rural schools, their high quality and the opportunities offered are all valued assets, educational opportunity extends beyond school through valued life long learning provision. The adequacy of rural transport services is subject to greater debate however the areas external transport links are thought to be a strong asset to the rural area.

Active communities

Within the discussion of this group of assets there is a further very strong subset which can be identified. The strong community identity and spirit translates into a strong and active volunteering culture identified across the area. This is not restricted to any one type of group or activity, there is however a strong interest and involvement in community facilities and services, particularly village halls. This provides a strong basis of civic involvement which has been recognised in the approach to Community Planning through community involvement with public sector partners in area for a. This provides a strong basis of community engagement upon which to build through LEADER.

3.1.2 **The natural and managed environment**

The high quality of the natural and managed environment of the area is recognised as a key contributor to the quality of life and strength of community which the people of rural Moray possess and value. Principal amongst the strengths is the sheer diversity of the area in terms of land use, topography, habitats and landscapes.

This diversity covers a range of landscapes and types of environment from mountain top to coast, from river source and catchment to river mouth and estuary, National Park and coastal zones. There are a variety of land management practices evident which affect the environment and landscape in particular with for example the range from extensive and sporting management in the upland areas to intensive agriculture in the low ground. This management of the land is generally perceived to have been sympathetic to the environment although there is scope for improvement in the more intensively managed areas.

It is not just the individual features themselves that constitute the assets. The interconnection of these features, their proximity to each other and to the communities of the area and their perceived accessibility are all seen to contribute to the overall value of the environment as an asset to the area. The links to the National Park are seen to be of particular value here.

Whilst the intrinsic qualities of the environment are valued and appreciated a significant part of the perceived asset value lies in the multifunctionality of the environment and its use for tourism, outdoor recreation, agriculture, forestry, field sports and biomass production.

3.1.3 Tourism and heritage

Perhaps the most surprising aspect of the identification of the tourism and heritage assets of the area was the relative lack of focus on whisky production, Speyside and the distilleries. Whilst this was highlighted as an asset this was principally discussed in the context of, 'here we have a mainstay of our tourism sector, how do we build around this?' In that respect it is not unlike the environment, valued as an intrinsic asset and for the wider potential it offers, if anything the value of the environment was ranked more highly as a tourism asset.

The compact nature of Moray and the proximity and connectivity of its leisure, environmental, sporting, cultural and other tourism resources is thought to represent a considerable asset in itself. The most strongly identified area within Moray was the River Spey, its catchment and the associated tourism related activities which it supports or offers potential for.

The two main strands of tourism activity identified where Moray was seen to possess strong assets were in outdoor activities including field sports and recreation and in relation to heritage, history and culture, there are strengths in genealogy related tourism. The area is thought to have strong tourism businesses and managed attractions which utilise these other assets well. In the case of both these tourism strands there is thought to be significant scope for further development.

3.1.4 Business assets

Rural Moray is seen to possess significant business assets which offer substantial development potential. The area has businesses ranging from small high quality artisans, distinctive local products and brands through to large scale national companies with world markets.

Rural Moray is home to a number of strong large scale local manufacturing businesses who are significant employers and who have a strong local identity and undertake a degree of their sourcing locally. These businesses, including Baxters, Walkers and many whisky distillers operate on a large scale and are prominent brands in the international market. This market profile and the (actual and potential) exposure and access it offers is seen as a major asset to the local rural area.

The importance of the whisky industry to rural Moray cannot be overstated but again it seems almost to be regarded as so intrinsic or core to the economy and culture of the area it was almost overlooked.

The agricultural fundamentals are thought to be strong; the industry in the area is considered to be in relatively good heart. Agriculture in Moray is diverse and has very considerable scope in its resource base for further diversification or expansion of existing diversified enterprises and potential in its markets and location. The industry benefits from a skilled workforce but is challenged by competition from other sectors for those skills and by the ageing workforce. There is a relatively strong agriculture support sector, in particular the industry places great value on the strong machinery ring and the labour supply service it provides.

The other core industries identified as assets are forestry, fishing and the military bases.

In more general terms Moray is seen to offer resources for business growth or for new business development. The area is regarded as having a good quality workforce and, by comparison with neighbouring areas; there is considerable space available for business expansion.

3.2   Weaknesses and Needs

The findings of the consultation processes in relation to the perceived areas of weakness and need fit within four thematic areas; these are

- Inclusion;
- The economy;
- Access to services (including transport); and
- The environment.

3.2.1 Inclusion

Two main aspects of inclusion emerge from those consulted through the interviews and workshops undertaken;

- The social and demographic elements; and
- Disadvantage.

Social and demographic issues
Despite the initiatives already taken e.g. through Community Planning and the MAC programme there is seen to be a need for a stronger, more effective and common basis of rural community engagement with the public sector. Although this applies across the spectrum of the rural community there are thought to be particular needs in relation to certain target groups.

The population of rural Moray is seen to be in a state of flux with a net outflow of young people and an inflow of older people. Those older people coming into the area are mainly a mix of commuters and retirees. Given the changes that are occurring some of those consulted suggest a need to undertake a reappraisal of the

rural community before seeking to work on its development. LEADER, with its inclusive and empowered partnership principle and focus on developing rural community engagement, involvement in governance and in development activity is seen to offer strong potential here.

The main social problems and needs identified relate to the young and the means of encouraging them to remain in or return to the community to play an active role now and in the future. This was given very high priority across the range of consultation. There are two main needs identified which it is thought would contribute to improvements in this regard. If the needs of the young are to be addressed fuller and more effective engagement and involvement of them in the process is essential. This implies a need for a more positive and proactive attitude and approach to the young and how they may contribute. Helping the younger age groups to become involved is a specific priority need identified. Addressing these needs is thought to require the provision of support services, for example in relation to employment, training and social activity.

Consideration should also be given to the means of attracting new younger people into the community.

Further specific issues were highlighted relating to countering specific elements of young people's social deprivation e.g. with regard to drug and alcohol misuse.

The geographical areas in which there are thought to be significant challenges are the more peripheral areas. There are specific considerations required in relation to some of the more discreet groups and communities within the rural population; these include the Findhorn Community and the concentration of service personnel.

Disadvantage
There is a strong perception of significant pockets or groups who are disadvantaged in the rural area of Moray. Those highlighted included older men, women and those dwelling in remote or peripheral areas. The prevalent factors identified as contributing to disadvantage were poverty (including fuel poverty), age and the ability to engage with support services within rural areas. A lack of focus and service provision from service providers in the more peripheral areas was identified. Service providers are thought to face considerable challenges in sustaining the existing community and sustaining existing services coupled with meeting expectations.

Housing is identified as a critical issue in the rural area of Moray by communities, businesses and the public sector partners consulted. There are problems both in terms of gross availability and in relation to affordability of housing to rent or buy. Causal factors most commonly identified included commuter pressures and planning constraints. Addressing this issue is thought to be critical to maintaining the rural workforce and community although it is recognised that there are limitations on what can be achieved through LEADER here.

The other major issue identified by those who were consulted was low pay. Moray is thought to have a relatively low wage economy (a view confirmed by the economic analysis) and this is a key contributor to disadvantage in the rural area.

3.2.2 The rural economy

Four main areas of need emerge specifically in relation to the rural economy in Moray from the consultations;

- Addressing wider challenges;
- Local business development;
- The core sectors; and
- Barriers to employment and progression.

Addressing wider challenges
The rural economy of Moray is seen to be less localised and self contained than it used to be. As elsewhere it is affected by wider economic pressures and influences but here there is seen to be a very direct change as a result of the growth which Inverness is experiencing. This is seen as both a competitive threat and a market opportunity. This growth is thought to have resulted in the rural economy of Moray being driven towards the provision of goods and services for Inverness, its residents and the commuter residents of Moray. There are concerns that this sees profit to go outside the area and that local business needs are not considered sufficiently in the local community context. From the businesses perspective it was thought more could be done to make the most of the market and development opportunities within the community such as the large RAF community, the Findhorn Community and the increasing incomer and commuter presence.

Local business development
There is a strongly identified need for greater encouragement for existing and new localised businesses and enterprises. Two main elements were identified within this, the promotion of local production and sourcing and business development support.

It is suggested that there is a need to focus more on the production and utilisation of goods and services that can be used locally. There is strong support for positive discrimination in favour of local enterprises both in terms of local purchasing and in service provision and support. There were strongly voiced requests for reductions in red tape to reduce small business barriers but these were not specific. This is consistent with the concepts of transition or sustainable towns where a number of pilot projects are underway.

There were particular needs identified around new business start ups, generally it was felt that more help was needed in this area to create more business opportunity locally. Fundamentally it was thought that the spirit of entrepreneurship in the area is lacking and that more could be done to stimulate this. Physical support could be provided through the provision of affordable and accessible small industrial and business units. There are particular needs here in relation to women and young people in business.

Core business sectors
There is strong local awareness of core rural business sectors and the way in which they interact. Agriculture is thought to be an integral contributor in providing employment, providing produce for local processors and in recycling money within the local community. It is facing challenges however over manpower and skills

availability as it cannot compete with other sectors which require similar skills e.g. construction in and around Inverness. As land managers farmers are facing challenges over land use and access particularly involving both local people and visitors. Despite some processing businesses of considerable scale local processing capability is nevertheless limited as are markets for primary produce. This is leading to the export of these products without value adding.

Reflecting this more widely there is a general need identified for businesses and those supporting them to work more closely together across the sectors building on the existing links to strengthen the local economy. A key element within this is building links between the community and business. Specifically such action was thought to be required to;

- Regenerate high streets;
- Revitalise tourism; and
- Re-stimulate fisheries and agriculture.

Barriers to employment

The community workshops particularly highlighted the need to work towards removing or reducing barriers to employment, career progression and improvements in the quality of employment. This is thought likely to contribute effectively in addressing low wage issues. Women and young people were key target groups identified here with significant potential to contribute to the retention of young people in the community. Specific action was thought to be required in relation to the provision of affordable and accessible childcare, a noted barrier for women. Enhanced local training provision in relation to nationally recognised training and retraining opportunities and the main trades was highlighted as a priority need. This included access to higher level qualifications e.g. through local access to universities.

3.2.3 Access to services

Access to services and the associated access to transport is identified as a critical economic factor here which also has wider social and economic implications e.g. in terms of access to NHS services and those services identified at 3.2.2 which act to mitigate barriers to employment. Transport difficulties are seen to impact on business in terms of delivery times and transport costs and on service provision and the ability to access them.

There are seen to be particular problems over intra rural transport i.e. travel between rural communities. These arise in terms of the actual level of provision, higher rural costs and the greater time demands of such provision as is available. This places significant limitations on access to e.g. training provision and childcare places which compromises rural resident's ability to improve their skills. Similar limitations arise in relation to employment and the associated opportunities for progression and development.

3.2.4 Social enterprise and community infrastructure

There was considerable consensus on the need to maintain community infrastructure, facilities and services, particularly local schools and village halls.

Within this the potential for the development of multiple uses for facilities improving local access to services and helping to ensure their sustainability was highlighted.

The wider use of social enterprise approaches was given very considerable priority as an area of need and of opportunity and is seen to represent one potential approach to the priority of sustainable local delivery of community services. Such approaches could contribute significantly to maintaining important and highly valued existing projects and initiatives which LEADER could not otherwise address thus effectively mainstreaming some of the successes under the LEADER+ initiative.

This was an area where it was thought that existing capacity developed through LEADER+ could be brought to bear and further developed (particularly in relation to working with the young). This would also help address the identified need for decentralisation of resources and decision making. This is expected to contribute to the further priority need of expanding community horizons and growing the confidence of the community to act, again consistent with LEADER principles and objectives. Implementing this is thought to require that some project management capacity be provided to support communities.

In considering the uses to which such facilities may be put a range of further priority needs were identified.

- The use of such facilities to further develop volunteering;
- Recreation and leisure facilities for the rural young; and
- Enhanced local tourism and leisure facilities.

3.2.5 <u>The environment</u>

Although there were few specific needs identified in relation to the environment it is clear that needs will arise in relation to other aspects of the rural community and economy. It is evident that this very multi functionality of the natural heritage and environment exposes it to a wide spectrum of challenges; these are both positive and negative.

The negative factors relate principally to the need to protect the assets and minimise the risks associated with current and future exploitation of the resource. On the positive side there are two principal areas of need identified here. The first of these is optimising the range of benefits which are derived from the natural environment, these relate to the economy, recreation, countryside access and health improvement. The second relates to the benefits to be gained through community engagement in working with, improving and taking advantage of the environment. There are associated issues of social inclusion in securing wider involvement in countryside and addressing issues around wildlife crime. Within this involving young people with their natural heritage is seen as a priority.

There are a range of natural heritage priority areas and needs identified grouped into four main areas;

- The coastal and marine habitat e.g. re dolphins etc;
- Promotion of outdoor recreation in the uplands;

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- Coastal interpretation, access and paths; and
- Increasing the natural heritage activity in the intensive agricultural area in mid Moray.

3. 3   Opportunities for Development.

In considering the opportunities for development in rural Moray it is important to be realistic as to what LEADER can address and what more appropriately lies with other development instruments. There are five main areas of opportunity which emerge from the consultations as priorities which LEADER may address. These are;

- An inclusive and connected approach;
- Making more of rural Moray;
- Rural tourism development;
- Improving access to opportunities; and
- Developing rural social enterprise.

The first two sets of opportunities may be regarded as horizontal priorities which link with the other three more specific areas of opportunity. Delivery against these will require to be firmly reinforced by the procedures and criteria through which the strategy is implemented and performance monitored.

3.3.1   Inclusive and connected

LEADER presents an opportunity to further develop inclusion and connectivity within the rural community and economy of Moray. The link between the LEADER LAG, the Community Planning Partnership and Local Area Fora provides a strong basis upon which to build and develop the strengths of an integrated approach to rural Moray. Clear potential for greater and more effective public, private and voluntary partnerships is identified.   There is an opportunity to secure buy in to the development of the rural area from the large employers located there. LEADER can provide a resource through which rural communities and organisations may act; the way in which LEADER will be delivered will provide a basis for wider engagement and involvement of the rural community linking sectors, activities and actors.

3.3.2   Making more of rural Moray

Making more of rural Moray links two main elements of the opportunity identified as a further cross cutting or horizontal area of opportunity by promoting the area;

- developing the focus on rural Moray as a good place in which to live and work; and
- making more of the range of resources which the area possesses.

Developing the focus on the area as a good place in which to live and work involves building on the areas strengths in terms of community spirit and engagement, a core objective for LEADER. Looking at the factors which influence the provision of opportunities for well qualified people to remain, come to or return to work in the area can also be addressed through LEADER. There is scope to build on those strong elements of service provision such as education and address those issues

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such as transport and service provision which help to develop and retain people within the rural area and communities. Innovative ways of addressing service provision can help communities to develop opportunities for affordable housing and other infrastructure.

Making more of the resources of the area involves the human, economic and natural resources and assets of the area, those consulted frequently considered these to be underutilised. The settlement pattern, culture and history of settlement is diverse, attractive, interesting and strongly characteristic of the area. The natural heritage, land based and environmental assets of the area are thought significant as are the benefits these offer to businesses, residents, newcomers and visitors to the area. Initiatives such as SNH's environmental inclusion work offer a basis of interaction which can inform such approaches and involvement.

The Findhorn Foundation has a reputation which extends well beyond the local, regional and national boundaries and provides a vehicle for extending Morays profile to advantage. The large employers and the strong brands in the area have worldwide profiles with clearly established local identities linking them to Moray. This has significant potential to offer benefits through association and links to opportunities and wider markets through their market connections. This may offer an immediate opportunity by developing links through the Year of Homecoming in 2009.

3.3.3 Rural tourism

Rural tourism is widely recognised as a development opportunity for Moray which is currently underexploited. It is suggested that the big brands in Moray (Gordonstoun School, Baxters, Walkers, Findhorn, the whisky industry and angling and field sports are relatively self contained and currently offer little benefit to the wider community. There is perceived to be considerable potential for tourism businesses and the area generally in closer integration of these brands with other elements of the local economy and community to develop added value through association. This is most particularly the case with the whisky industry where opportunities to build on this unique resource are thought to exist.

Existing outdoor activities such as golf, angling and field sports represent considerable strengths in the areas tourism offer. There are seen to be opportunities to further strengthen this through modernisation and diversification to the benefit of the local community and economy. Extending the reach of existing activities and initiatives such as the Speyside Way and developing and exploiting new outdoor activities such as off-roading, cyclepaths, mountain biking etc are all seen to offer opportunity. Coastal areas and activities are seen to offer development opportunity, the communities and harbours of the area are distinctive and in some cases their potential is underdeveloped.

There is scope to develop greater diversity based around traditional activity e.g. textiles as in the case of Knockando Mill. Community involvement in regenerating assets such as harbours can add considerably to the tourism offer. Similarly community level initiatives on a small scale such as cafes, facilities for walkers, cyclists and other visitors can enhance the quality of the product and experience.

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Providing local healthy produce to visitors is thought to have the potential to both provide a new market opportunity and improve the product.

3.3.4 Improving access to opportunities

Successfully addressing the identified barriers to education, training, employment and advancement will lead directly to greater opportunity for the people and communities of rural Moray. The opportunities identified here arise through;

- Improving access to, support for and provision of training to increase uptake;
- Supporting access to education – particularly life long learning;
- Encouraging the development of accessible and affordable child care facilities;
- Working with young people involving them in the community, the workplace and the natural heritage of the area;
- Providing career opportunities for the young e.g. through intermediary initiatives bringing businesses and young people together particularly in the agricultural and food sectors;
- Building the involvement of business in the community, involving businesses in developing the area;
- Provision of incentives to start new rural businesses;
- Adding value locally to primary products; and
- Supporting the development of new products and services by rural business for residents and visitors.

One fundamental of development and improving access to opportunity is acting to address the difficulties which rural transport presents. There is clear scope under LEADER for community driven action to address this and to contribute to more integrated transport networks.

3.3.5 Rural social enterprise

The extent and scope of opportunity perceived in developing social enterprise is consistent with both the identified community assets and the needs identified. There is seen to be a strong basis of community enterprise, activity and engagement on which to build. This is consistent with the approach to LEADER and Community Planning in Moray. Activity supported under the previous LEADER+ programme has contributed significantly to this. This can be further enhanced however through ongoing development of community networks and their associated capacity. The following specific areas of community involvement and forms of social enterprise were identified as real opportunities for rural Moray.

- Social enterprise initiatives focused on making the best use of available resources and community facilities especially rural schools and community halls in providing services to rural communities. If these are improved, grow or are kept maintained a wide spectrum of services and activities can be sustained across the age groups tackling identified needs and priorities. Examples here include provision of training, childcare, business mentoring, IT provision for young and old and healthcare services.

- There is an opportunity to extend this approach further and enhance its sustainability through community ownership of the facilities and the services provided for example through multifunctional village halls to support village needs. These could be developed as self sustaining projects in their own right or as groups of such projects. Such community owned facilities would address environmental sustainability alongside their other activities through e.g. more use of sustainable and renewable energy, materials and technologies in facilities and through extending local waste minimisation and recycling.

- Although housing and large scale infrastructure is out of scale and scope for LEADER there are key needs here which could be addressed through the development of social enterprise initiatives. LEADER provides an opportunity to develop these vehicles and facilitate this activity.

- There are opportunities for social enterprise initiatives which capitalise on the characteristic and local products of the area such as food and crafts.

- Opportunities exist to develop social enterprise approaches linking health, activities and local produce e.g. through local food projects including extending local production and allotments.

- There are opportunities to address social issues at the micro economic level through approaches such as LETS schemes and credit Unions.

If these opportunities are to be addressed effectively and sustainably then there is a need and associated opportunity in developing the skills and approaches to make such social initiatives and their management sustainable. This is an area where there is considerable scope for benefit through business involvement, the involvement of the young and building the links between the two.

Support for these approaches will further enhance the level of opportunity and sustainability achieved. Key contributors to this identified by those consulted included, streamlined funding streams enhancing local access to funding, a community business grant scheme and capacity provision providing project manager or project workers to build on and support volunteer involvement.

3.4   Perceptions on Thematic Priorities for Moray LEADER

The consultations explored the five themes proposed for LEADER with each of those interviewed asking them to identify their two priorities and explain why the other themes were discounted. The table below, Table 3.1 provides an analysis of these responses and indicates strong support for the **Revitalising Rural Communities** and **Progressive Rural Economy** themes. Although there was strong support for these themes there was also clear recognition of valuable and complementary elements within the other themes which could influence activity under the chosen themes.

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TABLE 3.1: PREFERRED THEMES	
LEADER Theme	Weighting
Rural community capacity	7
Revitalising communities	13
Progressive rural economy	13
New markets and products	4
Conservation of the rural environment	4

The rural community capacity theme is seen to be close to the type of activity which Moray concentrated on under LEADER+. Although this activity remains important it is felt that it is important to move on, build on this capacity and involve people more directly in development activity. Consideration of this theme highlighted that some gaps in engagement remain and that more effective approaches are required, particularly in relation to the young. The need to move on to new skills and new approaches was highlighted, particularly the development of more entrepreneurial approaches and business oriented practices in the management of community enterprises and facilities.

The principal reasons for discounting the new markets and products theme was the extent to which it was felt that this could be covered by other SRDP strands by comparison with the other themes. Stakeholders were confident that elements of this theme thought to be relevant to rural Moray could be addressed through the revitalising rural communities theme. Priorities identified here are in helping farmers to cooperate with the wider community and in developing direct marketing.

Conservation of the rural environment was thought best addressed through the two selected themes rather than a direct thematic focus. There was a clear perspective that this should be developed through complementarity with many of the actions supported that involve or depend on the rural environment. The integrative potential of suggested projects was clear. There was a clear view that actions supported under the chosen two themes should seek to also achieve environmental benefits by integrating environmentally positive approaches and taking full account of potential environmental risks and conflicts.

Revitalising rural communities was enthusiastically met by those consulted who particularly favoured the scope and breadth of this theme and the integrative potential which it offers. This theme was seen to offer the greatest scope to link social, economic and environmental actions. There was strong support for the scope to invest in the potential of the area and its people through an active communities approach. This could help communities to identify and capitalise on their assets to produce an income or sustain an asset or service. The social economy scope and ability to engage the young were particularly valued here. The theme clearly complements existing activity from potential funding partners and as such offers significant potential for added value and for effective delivery.

The progressive rural economy theme was again strongly supported with any concerns expressed relating to the breadth of scope and lack of definition within that; this was viewed positively from an enabling perspective by others. The theme is seen to possess significant scope for innovation and learning from wider experience. There is strong potential to stimulate social enterprise e.g. through the

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development of entrepreneurial approaches, this can contribute significantly to the sustainability of such actions. The theme was felt to have strongly integrative potential which would allow partners, communities, businesses and target groups to work well together. This would afford forms of integration which could not otherwise be achieved but these would need a strong lead from the LAG. It is thought that this will help to further develop and mobilise the partnership and those with whom it works.

The themes are seen to be equally relevant across rural Moray, a view supported through the workshop discussions. It is therefore proposed that these themes cover both the Convergence and non Convergence areas with the differentiation principally being in the level of activity supported.

4 STRATEGY

4.1 Derivation of Strategy

Not all of the economic development needs of the Moray LEADER area can be met through the LEADER Programme by virtue of the limited resources available. Accordingly, it is necessary to focus on those aspects of rural development that most reflect the interest and capability of the partnership organisations.

The strategic themes for Moray LEADER have been selected taking into account:

- the experience and capacity developed through the LEADER + Programme.
- the findings of the socio-economic and environmental analyses.
- stakeholders' appraisal of the area's strengths, weaknesses and opportunities.
- stakeholders' views on the most relevant themes and their priorities for action.

The selected themes for Moray LEADER are:

- Theme 1: Revitalising Communities.
- Theme 2: Progressive Rural Economy.

4.2 Global Objective

The Global Objective for the Moray Local Development Strategy is:

> *by 2015, to enhance engagement and cohesion among communities and to strengthen innovation and adaptability in businesses within the Moray LEADER area, through actions leading to a 40% improvement in rural community capacity and 250 gross jobs being created or safeguarded.*

4.3 Consistency of Strategy with the Policy Context

The investments proposed under Themes 1 and 2 are demonstrably compatible with and will make a significant contribution to Scottish and local policy orientations. The linkage between Scottish policy, local policy and the actions proposed under Moray LEADER are highlighted in Table 5.1

TABLE 4.1: COHERENCE WITH NATIONAL AND LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT		
Policy / Strategy	**Key Provisions**	**Reflection in Moray LEADER Actions**
Scottish Rural Development Programme	Themes: • Underpinning performance and quality in the agriculture, food processing and forestry sectors. • Enhancing rural landscapes. • Promoting a more diverse rural economy and thriving rural communities. Outcomes: • A strong and diverse economy. • A decent quality of life for all, including young people. • Quality, accessibility and choice of public services. • A flourishing natural and cultural heritage.	Theme 1: Revitalising Communities • Reinforcing and applying capacity for community benefits including raising awareness and participation of young, old, women and disadvantaged groups. • Enabling groups to address rural development needs more strategically (including assistance, training, feasibility studies, networking and exchange of practice). • Strengthen community facilities (incl. conversion and refurbishment) for multiple uses including local service delivery and by a range of providers including social enterprises. • Develop local transport solutions, especially to meet needs of the young. • Improve participation by and develop activities for young people. Theme 2: Progressive Rural Economy • Increase value-added in local enterprises. • Strengthen local services not provided by the private sector. • Improve economic participation by young and older people including work experience, training and access to life–long learning. • Support economic and environmental actions (and mitigation measures) linked to tourism and leisure and local food.

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Scottish Rural Development Programme - Grampian Region Rural Priorities	Relevant Themes:	Theme 1: Revitalising Communities
	• Business Viability and Competitiveness - improve business practices including; production, distribution, meeting standards, market expansion, education/training and quality. • Biodiversity Priorities – focus on halting loss of biodiversity and reversal of previous loss. • Landscape priorities – focusing on enhancement of the rural landscape and woods. • Built and Cultural Heritage Priorities – focus on the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. • Water and Soils Priorities – focus on improvements of habitats/water quality through various means. • Adaptations to mitigate climate change priorities - focus on reducing emissions of greenhouse gasses and improving efficiency. • Public Access Priorities with an emphasis on creation, improvement and promotion. • Diversification of Rural Enterprise - focus on innovation, strengthened links between primary producers and other sectors, improved environmental performance, career development opportunities and maximisation of tourism. • Thriving Rural Communities - focus on empowering and encouraging rural communities to take a positive role in addressing the issues which affect them. Support for community led initiatives, improvement of skills, knowledge and capacity as well as access to sustainable rural buildings.	• Reinforcing and applying capacity for community benefits including raising awareness and participation of young, old, women and disadvantaged groups. • Enabling groups to address rural development needs more strategically (including assistance, training, feasibility studies, networking and exchange of practice). • Strengthen community facilities (incl. conversion and refurbishment) for multiple uses including local service delivery and by a range of providers including social enterprises. • Develop local transport solutions, especially to meet needs of the young. • Improve participation by and develop activities for young people. Theme 2: Progressive Rural Economy • Increase value-added in local enterprises. • Strengthen local services not provided by the private sector. • Improve economic participation by young and older people including work experience, training and access to life–long learning. • Support economic and environmental actions (and mitigation measures) linked to tourism and leisure and local food. Other: • Horizontal integration of environmental sustainability.

Rural Scotland, Better Still Naturally	• Broaden and strengthen the rural economy, including the skills base. • Protect, maintain and develop the natural and cultural assets. • Improve the accessibility and quality of services people and businesses depend on. • Address the challenges and opportunities of population change. • Promote social and economic inclusion. • Help to build resilient, sustainable rural communities.	Theme 1: Revitalising Communities • Reinforcing and applying capacity for community benefits including raising awareness and participation of young, old, women and disadvantaged groups. • Enabling groups to address rural development needs more strategically (including assistance, training, feasibility studies, networking and exchange of practice). • Strengthen community facilities (incl. conversion and refurbishment) for multiple uses including local service delivery and by a range of providers including social enterprises. • Develop local transport solutions, especially to meet needs of the young. • Improve participation by and develop activities for young people. Theme 2: Progressive Rural Economy • Increase value-added in local enterprises. • Strengthen local services not provided by the private sector. • Improve economic participation by young and older people including work experience, training and access to life–long learning. • Support economic and environmental actions (and mitigation measures) linked to tourism and leisure and local food.

| Scottish Government Economic Strategy | Aims to make Scotland wealthier and fairer; smarter; healthier; safer and stronger; and greener.
Key objective is to generate increased and sustainable economic growth by focusing on:
• Learning, Skills and Well-being.
• Supportive Business Environment.
• Infrastructure Development and Place.
• Effective Government.
• Equity. | Theme 1: Revitalising Communities
• Reinforcing and applying capacity for community benefits including raising awareness and participation of young, old, women and disadvantaged groups.
• Enabling groups to address rural development needs more strategically (including assistance, training, feasibility studies, networking and exchange of practice).
• Strengthen community facilities (incl. conversion and refurbishment) for multiple uses including local service delivery and by a range of providers including social enterprises.
• Develop local transport solutions, especially to meet needs of the young.
• Improve participation by and develop activities for young people.

Theme 2: Progressive Rural Economy
• Increase value-added in local enterprises.
• Strengthen local services not provided by the private sector.
• Improve economic participation by young and older people including work experience, training and access to life–long learning.
• Support economic and environmental actions (and mitigation measures) linked to tourism and leisure and local food. |

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Better Business: A strategy and action plan for social enterprise in Scotland	Aims: • Raising the profile and proving the value of social enterprise • Opening up markets to social enterprise • Increasing the range of finance available to develop social enterprise • Developing the trading capacity of social enterprises by providing better business support	Theme 1: Revitalising Communities • Strengthen community facilities (incl. conversion and refurbishment) for multiple uses including local service delivery and by a range of providers including social enterprises. Theme 2: Progressive Rural Economy • Increase value-added in local enterprises. • Strengthen local services not provided by the private sector. • Improve economic participation by young and older people including work experience, training and access to life–long learning. • Support economic and environmental actions (and mitigation measures) linked to tourism and leisure and local food.
Forward Strategy for Scottish Agriculture	Aims to establish a prosperous farming industry that: • focuses on producing food and other products that customers want. • plays a role in sustainable rural development to help maintain the prosperity of rural communities. • is a leading player in protecting and enhancing the environment. • embraces change and new opportunities.	Theme 2: Progressive Rural Economy • Increase value-added in local enterprises. • Improve economic participation by young and older people including work experience, training and access to life–long learning. • Support economic and environmental actions (and mitigation measures) linked to tourism and leisure and local food. Other: • Horizontal integration of environmental sustainability.

| A Natural Perspective: Scottish Natural Heritage Corporate Strategy. | Aims to have a countryside and coast which:
• is productive.
• supports thriving rural areas.
• provides benefits and services for people living in towns.
• is ecologically healthy and rich in biodiversity.
• is varied in character and visually attractive
• is accessible. | Theme 1: Revitalising Communities
• Strengthen community facilities (incl. conversion and refurbishment) for multiple uses including local service delivery and by a range of providers including social enterprises.
• Develop local transport solutions, especially to meet needs of the young.

Theme 2: Progressive Rural Economy
• Increase value-added in local enterprises.
• Improve economic participation by young and older people including work experience, training and access to life–long learning.
• Support economic and environmental actions (and mitigation measures) linked to tourism and leisure and local food.

Other:
• Horizontal integration of environmental sustainability. |

| Highlands & Islands Scotland ERDF/ESF Programmes 2007-13 | Most Relevant Provisions:
ERDF
Objective 1 – Enhance business competitiveness, commercialisation and innovation (include barriers to incentives to entrepreneurs, technological developments in key sectors and increasing innovation; and increase business development in fragile communities).
Objective 2 – Enhance regional and sectoral drivers (including RTD resources, higher/further education and UHI; and sustainable use of the region's natural, built and cultural environment).
Objective 3 – enhance sustainable growth of peripheral and fragile communities (including improving sustainable community infrastructure; bottlenecks in transport and communications).

ESF
Objective 1 - Increasing the workforce (including targeted groups, women returners and under employment).
Objective 2 - Investing in workforce (including low waged/low skilled, gender pay gap, increasing business and entrepreneurial skills and social enterprise skills).
Objective 3 – Improving access to lifelong learning (including access for most vulnerable and UHIs capacity). | **Theme 1: Revitalising Communities**
• Reinforcing and applying capacity for community benefits including raising awareness and participation of young, old, women and disadvantaged groups.
• Develop local transport solutions, especially to meet needs of the young.
• Improve participation by and develop activities for young people.

Theme 2: Progressive Rural Economy
• Increase value-added in local enterprises.
• Strengthen local services not provided by the private sector.
• Improve economic participation by young and older people including work experience, training and access to life–long learning.
• Support economic and environmental actions (and mitigation measures) linked to tourism and leisure and local food. |

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| Lowlands and Uplands Scotland ERDF / ESF Programmes 2007-13 | Most Relevant Provisions
ERDF
Priority 2. Enterprise Growth.
Priority 4 Rural Development.

ERDF Priority 4 key objectives are
• strengthen rural industries and diversification by supporting sector-wide diversification strategies, and the development of new sources of supply and production processes.
• support development of key shared services to underpin rural diversification by developing local ICT and learning facilities, improving educational access; and facilitating community transport initiatives.

ESF
Priority 1: Progressing into employment
Priority 3: Improving access to lifelong learning | Theme 1: Revitalising Communities
• Strengthen community facilities (incl. conversion and refurbishment) for multiple uses including local service delivery and by a range of providers including social enterprises.
• Develop local transport solutions, especially to meet needs of the young.
• Improve participation by and develop activities for young people.

Theme 2: Progressive Rural Economy
• Increase value-added in local enterprises.
• Strengthen local services not provided by the private sector.
• Improve economic participation by young and older people including work experience, training and access to life–long learning. |

Moray Community Plan 2006-2010	Objectives: • Achieving a healthy and caring community. • Achieving a safer community. • Building stronger communities. • Improving travel facilities, choices and safety. • Investing in children and young people. • Protecting and enhancing the environment.	Theme 1: Revitalising Communities • Reinforcing and applying capacity for community benefits including raising awareness and participation of young, old, women and disadvantaged groups. • Enabling groups to address rural development needs more strategically (including assistance, training, feasibility studies, networking and exchange of practice). • Strengthen community facilities (incl. conversion and refurbishment) for multiple uses including local service delivery and by a range of providers including social enterprises. • Develop local transport solutions, especially to meet needs of the young. • Improve participation by and develop activities for young people. Theme 2: Progressive Rural Economy • Increase value-added in local enterprises. • Strengthen local services not provided by the private sector. • Improve economic participation by young and older people including work experience, training and access to life–long learning. • Support economic and environmental actions (and mitigation measures) linked to tourism and leisure and local food. Other: • Horizontal integration of environmental sustainability.

Moray Community Planning Partnership Single Outcome Agreement - Draft	Relevant Priorities for 2008-11: • Educational attainment. • Care of older people. • Community safety. • Economic development and tourism.	Theme 2: Progressive Rural Economy • Increase value-added in local enterprises. • Strengthen local services not provided by the private sector. • Improve economic participation by young and older people including work experience, training and access to life–long learning. • Support economic and environmental actions (and mitigation measures) linked to tourism and leisure and local food.

4.4 LEADER +: Lessons from Evaluation

The LEADER + Programme in Moray was delivered through the Moray Action for Communities Project (MAC). With a budget of just nearly £571,000 LEADER + funding, it was the smallest Programme in Scotland. The Programme focused on three main areas:

1. The Gateway Resource: An Internet based information resource;
2. A Training and Skills Transfer Programme: A range of training courses aimed specifically at the Voluntary Sector; and
3. A Grant Award Scheme: Direct grant assistance to purchase equipment or training, or meet staff costs.

The Programme mainly focused its resources on small scale interventions, primarily with community groups, developing community capacity thus laying the foundations from which the new LEADER Programme can move forward.

The in house evaluation of the MAC LEADER+ Programme highlights a number of lessons which have been learned and which will be incorporated into the new strategy.

The new LEADER Programme will work very closely with the Community Planning Partnership and be informed by an extensive programme of community consultations and an overarching strategic approach to rural development.

The membership of the LAG in LEADER + was focused mainly on public sector agencies and community and voluntary groups. In the new LEADER Programme the LAG will be broadened to include representation from the agriculture and forestry sector and the business community. This follows on from rural regeneration being designated as one of 8 key priorities to be addressed within Community Planning over the next five years.

One of the difficulties faced by the LEADER + Programme was the limited resources it had with respect to running costs, as these are capped at 15% of total budget. Experience gained regarding financial and operating procedures will be valuable in the new Programme and close attention will be paid to making best use of the staff resource.

Findings from a series of consultations with local stakeholders suggest that the new LEADER Programme should focus on delivering a smaller number of larger scale projects than the LEADER + Programme. It is suggested that this will enable the Programme to move forward and develop more economically focused projects making use of the capacity in the community built during LEADER +.

4.5   The Programme Themes

4.5.1 Theme 1: Revitalising Communities

Specific Objectives

By 2015, to enhance social cohesion among communities within the Moray LEADER area through actions involving 200 communities participating and leading to 25% improvement in community capacity.

Rationale

The Moray LEADER + Programme provided considerable support to extend and develop new community capacity in Moray. The consultations highlighted aspirations to put this capacity to work under the 2007-13 LEADER Programme and a view that further capacity development should be focused on people and skills.

The consultations highlighted the role of community facilities, particularly village halls, meeting spaces and sports facilities in supporting a broad range of community activity, including activities for young people. It was reported that a legacy of under investment represents an obstacle to the delivery of activities that underpin community vibrancy and cohesion.

The socio-economic analysis noted the existence of a minority of young people who have not made a successful transition from school to the world of work and that, in proportional terms, this is the largest group among the unemployed. Others are distanced from social activities, a situation exacerbated in some cases by drug and alcohol misuse.

Deprivation statistics and the consultations highlight barriers of access as the defining disadvantage in rural economy and society and that this is a particular problem for young and older people who do not have the use of private transport.

Scope of Action

The strategy for the Revitalising Communities theme reflects the need to concentrate limited resources if they are to produce an appreciable impact. Accordingly, LEADER funding will be focused on integrated packages of action addressing three areas:

- Making the most of community capacity.
- Strengthening community facilities.
- Improving social participation by young people.

In relation to community capacity, the emphasis will be reinforcing and applying capacity developed under LEADER + for community benefit. Eligible activities include:

- the raising of awareness of opportunities from the LEADER Programme and to encourage participation by community-based organisations and resident groups, including young people, older people, women and other disadvantaged groups.
- co-ordination of community-based organisations and raising their capacity to address the rural development needs of the area in a strategic fashion.
- training of members of community-based organisations, including training in leadership, training in project management, training in accounting and other aspects of administration.
- assistance, including professional assistance, where appropriate, in assessing the feasibility of projects and in developing projects to the point where they can be considered for funding by the LAG.
- feasibility studies in developing community responses to rural development issues (which may or may not be appropriate for funding through LEADER in their implementation stage).
- actions that help networking and exchange of good practice among community-based organisations and other community groups.
- actions to engage large and small enterprises in local development.

The eligible scope for action directed at strengthening community facilities comprises support for:

- conversion and refurbishment of premises for multiple uses including community and sports activities, the delivery of local services such as training, learning and childcare including use by social enterprises for these purposes.
- establishment costs and short-term revenue support associated with the development of innovative, community-based solutions to local transport needs, including the transport needs of young people.

The eligible scope for action directed at improving social participation by young people comprises support for:

- the consolidation of the youth council and other mechanisms for involving young people in local decision-making and in identifying their development needs.
- actions to promote opportunities for social participation by young people.
- establishment costs, including purchase of equipment, and short-term revenue support associated with the development of activities for young people.

Complementarity

Table 4.1 highlights the broad scope for Moray LEADER to complement national, regional and local policies and strategies. In the context of the Revitalising Communities theme, examples include the Scottish Government Economic Strategy provisions on Governance and Equity and the Highlands and Islands Convergence ERDF objectives in relation to sustainable community infrastructure.

Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate clear links to and / or integration with complementary actions supported under relevant policies.

Final Beneficiaries

Agencies in the voluntary sector, including community groups, and other public and private bodies involved in local regeneration.

Target Beneficiaries, including Equality of Opportunity

Residents of the Moray LEADER area.

Priority will be given to projects which contribute to equality of opportunity by engaging and addressing the needs of young people, older people, women and disabled people, in particular.

Integration of Sustainability

Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate clear prospects for sustaining capacity created beyond the life of the project and / or demonstrate a contribution to environmental sustainability from their operation.

Integration of Innovation

Priority will be given to projects that involve innovative ways of working that are expected to improve the quality of outcomes and / or the value for money over conventional approaches.

Resources and Weighting

The indicative financial allocation to Theme 1 is 50%.

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Outcomes

THEME 1: REVITALISING COMMUNITIES: PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS	
Indicator	**Target**
Outputs	
Number of projects financed	175
Number of beneficiaries supported	5,000
Number of participants in training	500
Number of training days received	1,000
Total volume of investment	≥ 50% LEADER spend
Number of supported actions (services)	20
Number of communities receiving support for improved service provision	200
Total volume of investments (services)	≥ 35% LEADER spend
Total volume of investments (heritage)	≥15% LEADER spend
Number of public-private partnerships supported	17
Number of cooperation initiatives supported	5
Results	
Number of participants that successfully ended a training activity	340
Gross number of jobs created/safeguarded	50
Number of communities participating	250
Number of new innovations (products or processes) developed	80
Population in rural areas benefiting from improved services	25,000
Number of best practice models transferred	12
Satisfaction with services	85%
Impacts	
Employment creation and jobs safeguarded	30
Improvement in rural community capacity	25%
The above are SRDP core indicators most relevant to scope of Theme 1. This will require revision in line with forthcoming guidance on targets and indicators from the Scottish Government, targets provided are therefore indicative at this stage.	

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4.5.2 Theme 2: Progressive Rural Economy

Specific Objectives

By 2015, to improve the economic performance of the Moray LEADER area through actions leading to 340 participants that successfully ended a training activity, 200 gross jobs created or safeguarded and a significant number of additional tourists (this to be quantified on completion of a baseline study).

Rationale

Although the socio-economic analysis reveals a relatively well developed enterprise culture, a relative dependence upon small-scale and one-person businesses is also apparent. Consultees associated these factors with lower value-added and low wages in the Moray economy. In addition, it was anticipated that under the re-organisation of local business support, assistance for investment in and expansion of smaller scale businesses would not be a priority.

Deprivation statistics highlight weaknesses in service accessibility for the whole of Moray, but with a more extreme version of these problems in the rural areas. The consultations also revealed aspirations to take local responsibility for delivery, including through community-owned business and social enterprises. Such an approach was perceived as an opportunity to address the leakage of benefits that consultees associated with centralisation of public services in Inverness.

The socio-economic analysis reveals a deficit in higher-level skills that consultees associated low wages in the Moray economy. Competition for skills from Aberdeen and Inverness was also noted. Accordingly a need was perceived to extend access to life-long learning and to provide greater opportunities for older workers to re-train.

Tourism is well established in Moray with whisky, golf, angling and field sports being important parts of the brand. However, the socio-economic analysis highlighted that tourism growth has been slower in Moray than at the Scottish level and consultees echoed that its potential was under-exploited. Scope was seen to engage visitors who come to Moray for in a wider range of activities, particularly those associated with a high quality environment and outdoor activities, such as walking, cycling, and eco-tourism.

Scope of Action

The strategy for the Progressive Rural Economy theme reflects the need to concentrate limited resources if they are to produce an appreciable impact. It also takes into account the provision of small business support through the Business Gateway and HIE. Accordingly, LEADER funding will be focused on integrated packages of action addressing four areas:

- Increasing value-added in local enterprise.
- Strengthening local services.
- Improving economic participation by young and older people.
- Supporting economic and environmental actions linked to tourism and leisure.

The eligible scope for action directed at increasing value-added in local enterprise comprises support for:

- small grants to incentivise businesses investment in soft and hard infrastructure directed at accessing new markets and improving productivity.
- actions to increase the value of sales by local businesses into large business supply chains.
- diversification and secondary processing by local businesses, other than provided for under SRDP.
- projects which contribute to self-containment in rural Moray, including the internalisation of benefits from local recycling.

The eligible scope for action directed at strengthening local services comprises support for:

- establishment costs and short-term revenue support associated with the development of local services that are not provided by the private sector, including through a social enterprise model, potentially including aspects of health/welfare services; childcare; micro-finance.

The eligible scope for action directed at improving economic participation by young and older people comprises support for:

- work experience initiatives, including those delivered through an intermediate labour market model, directed at young people who are subject to barriers to opportunity in the mainstream labour market.
- training and re-training initiatives linked to employment opportunities created with support from Moray LEADER, notably those connected with local services, tourism and leisure development and environmental stewardship.
- initiatives which enhance local access to life-long learning, including access to higher level qualifications.

The eligible scope of economic and environmental actions linked to tourism and leisure comprises support for:

- the construction and conversion of premises for use as visitor facilities.
- the development of small scale visitor support infrastructure.
- small-scale environmental improvements linked to tourism and leisure use.

- community management of environmental assets used for tourism and leisure purposes.
- advice, consultancy and small-scale financial support for investment by businesses and social enterprises involved in delivering or in supporting tourism and leisure activities, including local food producers.
- the establishment and piloting of collective marketing activities.
- actions designed to mitigate the environmental impacts of tourism and leisure activity, including support to improve the environmental performance of tourism and leisure businesses.

Complementarity

Table 4.1 highlights the broad scope for Moray LEADER to complement national, regional and local policies and strategies. In the context of the Progressive Rural Economy theme, examples include the Scottish Government Rural Scotland objectives on broadening and strengthening the rural economy, including the skills base and the Moray Community Planning Partnership Single Outcome Agreement 2008-11 priority on economic development and tourism.

Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate clear links to and / or integration with complementary actions supported under relevant policies.

Final Beneficiaries

Agencies in the voluntary sector, including community groups, and other public and private bodies involved in local regeneration.

Target Beneficiaries, including Equality of Opportunity

Residents of and businesses located in the Moray LEADER area.

Priority will be given to projects which contribute to equality of opportunity by engaging and addressing the needs of young people, older people, women and disabled people, in particular.

Integration of Sustainability

Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate clear prospects for sustaining capacity created beyond the life of the project and / or demonstrate a contribution to environmental sustainability from their operation.

Integration of Innovation

Priority will be given to projects that involve innovative ways of working that are expected to improve the quality of outcomes and / or the value for money over conventional approaches.

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Resources and Weighting

The indicative financial allocation to Theme 2 is 50%.

Outcomes

THEME 2: PROGRESSIVE RURAL ECONOMY: PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS	
Indicator	**Target**
Outputs	
Number of projects financed	70
Number of beneficiaries supported	2,500
Number of participants in training	500
Number of training days received	2,500
Number of enterprises supported	350
Total volume of investment	≥ 50% LEADER spend
Number of micro-enterprises supported/created	250
Number of new tourism actions supported	60
Total volume of investments (tourism)	≥ 25% LEADER spend
Number of supported actions (services)	30
Number of communities receiving support for improved service provision	45
Total volume of investments (services)	≥ 12.5 % LEADER spend
Number of heritage actions supported	15
Total volume of investments (heritage)	≥ 12.5 % LEADER spend
Number of public-private partnerships supported	20
Number of cooperation initiatives supported	8
Results	
Number of participants that successfully ended a training activity	340
Gross number of jobs created/safeguarded	200
Number of communities participating	50
Number of new innovations (products or processes) developed	70
Additional number of tourists	No Baseline
Population in rural areas benefiting from improved services	25,000
Number of new micro-enterprises supported remaining in business	60%
Number of people becoming self-employed	200
Number of best practice models transferred	12
Satisfaction with services	85%
Impacts	
Employment creation – jobs safeguarded	120
Improvement in rural community capacity	15%
The above are SRDP core indicators most relevant to the scope of Theme 2. This will require revision in line with forthcoming guidance on targets and indicators from the Scottish Government, targets provided are therefore indicative at this stage.	

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5 SUPPORTING POLICIES

5.1 Equal Opportunities

The Moray Local Action Group has adopted The Moray Council's policies in relation to discrimination, diversity, disability and equality. Through its membership, strategy, business plan and approaches the LAG will promote equality of opportunity within the LAG area irrespective of sex, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religious beliefs or age. The LAG and DMB will respect these principles in so far as is practicable and will involve those with specific knowledge and expertise in equal opportunities in its membership.

Training will be provided for all staff and LAG members with regard to equal opportunities to help ensure that these are fully considered in the decision making process. Such training will also be made available to groups promoting projects and, where appropriate, may be required as a condition of award of grant. Guidance relating to equal opportunities will be developed and provided for all project applicants.

Project assessment and audit procedures will specifically include consideration of whether equal opportunities have been effectively addressed, all LAG members, staff and the DMB are all charged with responsibilities in this regard. Where particular examples of good practice are identified this will be recorded and highlighted in local publicity and to the LEADER Network.

5.2 Innovation

Stimulating rural innovation is retained as a key objective for LEADER under the Regulations for 2007-2013. The focus on innovation is founded on the belief that doing "more of the same" is unlikely to enable rural areas to reach their full potential. It is also based upon an appreciation that in the vast amount of activity supported through LEADER Programmes across Europe since 1991, there is a wealth of experience and good practice developed that has potential for wider application.

Innovation is often poorly understood in LEADER, however. Approaches and aspirations may lack realism or ambition. Mis-applied, innovation can become a barrier (the project is not innovative enough) rather than being pursued as a strategic objective. The Moray approach here is therefore the search for innovation, encouraging new, forward looking and entrepreneurial approaches and solutions. Experience suggests that the most successful LAGs are those that have a clear understanding of innovation, the potential benefits and set out to actively pursue innovation, e.g. through innovation subgroups or the structures they employ and it is intended to explore these approaches. Transferring best practice, sharing and learning from others allows access to a huge range of

experience and innovation which this LAG intends to take full advantage of. Examples of forms of innovation which we expect to encourage include:

- the way a project is developed or managed.
- who is involved in the project and how they are involved.
- how the project is resourced.
- how the results or lessons are identified, used, disseminated or communicated.
- how the project becomes self sustaining.
- how the project links to other initiatives.

5.3   Environmental Sustainability

The whole approach to LEADER in Moray is predicated on maintaining and developing sustainable capacity, involvement and mechanisms to address the real needs and opportunities which the area faces. The LAG has adopted and is committed to the 'Moray a Sustainable Future' Strategy, part of Moray's Local Agenda 21 Strategy.

Sustainable communities

Sustainable development is about ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come. It is about protecting and where possible enhancing the environment not just for its own sake but because a poor environment will restrict economic development opportunities and subsequently lower the quality of life. It is about seeking to satisfy people's basic needs, such as providing warm homes and safe streets and giving people the opportunity to achieve their potential through education, participation and a healthy lifestyle. Everyone benefits from sustainable lifestyles e.g. reduced bills through energy saving. To achieve sustainable development we need to change the way we live, work and think. For example sustainable development means considering how to reduce the amount of waste produced rather than having recycling targets or reducing the need to travel rather than just making less polluting cars. The Agenda 21 process provides a framework for the changes that need to happen. The issues and many of the actions identified in this strategy are not new. What is new is the recognition of the links between economic, environmental and social concerns. There is no simple overnight solution it will take time and action on a number of key issues to make Moray more sustainable.

5.4   Co-operation

The Moray Local Action Group recognises the potential benefits of formal and informal cooperation at local, regional, national and transnational levels and the approach to this will develop progressively through then implementation of the programme. Cooperation will jointly focus on strengthening links within the communities in Moray to build cohesion and with the neighbouring LAGs, particularly Cairngorm National Park and Aberdeenshire.

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Connections with the neighbouring LAGs, Cairngorms National Park and Aberdeenshire, have been explored with a view to developing joint projects and sharing best practice. There are natural synergies within these areas particularly around tourism, access and the Spey catchment area. The benefits of this will be actively promoted by the LAG to potential project promoters and LAG staff and members will actively support the development of such approaches. The Moray LAG will set to establish a regular basis of liaison with neighbouring LAGs to explore and monitor cooperation potential. Projects emerging through this work will be submitted to the Managing Authority for approval as required.

Scope for cooperation with other LAGs within the same RPAC may emerge from the RPAC priorities. Other locations, sectors or organisations facing similar challenges elsewhere in the UK and overseas may be identified as offering cooperation potential. Initial contacts have been established with the proposed South Hams LAG on the South coast of Devon, an area with strong geographical, environmental, economic and social similarities to Moray.

5.5   Networking

All information and materials will be prepared with a view to enhancing the role of the Moray LAG in cooperating with other LAGs and areas and in participating in LEADER Networks.

The Moray LAG see that the main benefits of networking arise through the opportunities presented to exchange information, experience and best practice and to discuss and explore the wider body of experience. In the LEADER+ Programme peer support was seen as a particularly important benefit by LAG members and LAG staff who may have otherwise felt somewhat isolated.

The Moray LAG will also work to facilitate networking at the local level. Experience suggests that this is where many of the most significant networking effects occur; this will be particularly so given the focus of the programme in Moray. This will be done through building on the connections made through LEADER involvement e.g. between projects linking together and adding value or through connections between communities or organisations.

5.6   Sustaining Capacity

The Moray LAG has the benefit of having worked in two previous LEADER programmes and is now able to build on the strong base of capacity established over this period. The previous LAG has developed capacity of the partners involved and this will be vital in moving forward. The new LEADER programme will see the LAG become much broader in membership and develop its capacity further. The aim is to concentrate on, make better use of and add value to existing approaches, assets, facilities and resources where possible. There is an opportunity to optimise the use of partners' resources integrating and cooperating where possible to achieve more sustainable benefits and outcomes.

Annex 1

TABLE 1: FACE TO FACE INTERVIEWS		
Organisation	**Designation**	**Name**
The Moray Council	Business Projects Officer	Pierre Masson
The Moray Council	Community Planning & Development Mgr	John Ferguson
The Moray Council	Community Planning Officer	Roy Anderson
The Moray Council	MAC Project Officer	Tony Bowmer
The Moray Council	Chief Executive	Alastair Keddie
HIE Moray	Projects Manager	Franziska Smith
HIE Moray	Director	Martin Johnson
SRPBA	Managing Director	Drew McFarlane-Slack
SNH	Operational Manager Grampian Area	Paul Timms
NFUS		Ian Wilson and Colin Manson
Volunteer Centre Moray	Chief Officer	Mark McClelland Jones
REAP	Outreach Officer	Rod Lovie

TABLE 2: TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS		
Name of Organisation	**Designation**	**Name**
Moray College,	Project Leader	Edna Cameron
NHS Grampian	Planning Manager	Elaine Brown
Forest Enterprise	Forest District Manager	Phil Whitfield
Moray Federation of Halls	Vice Convenor	Rosella Smith
Community Woodland Association	Chief Executive	Jon Hollingdale
SAC	Regional Manager	Alister Laing
Aberdeenshire LAG	Rural Development Officer	Vicki Thomson
Cairngorms LAG/CNPA	Head of Economic & Social Development	Andrew Harper

Annex 2

Stakeholder Questionnaire

1. Key Regeneration Issues in Rural Moray

1.1 What would you identify as the **priority** rural regeneration issues affecting rural Moray, or the areas or aspects within rural Moray with which you are familiar?   What locations, sectors and social groups are most affected?   Are there any specific issues in relation to the West Moray Convergence area?
1.2 What do you regard as the **main** assets of rural Moray?   *Natural, environmental, cultural, physical, built, human, economic etc.*   Are there any distinctive assets which relate to the West Moray Convergence area?
1.3 What do you perceive to be the **main** development opportunities for the rural area?   Are there any distinctive opportunities in the West Moray Convergence area?
1.4 What scope do you see for complementarity with wider SRDP activity?

2. Involvement in Rural Development Actions

In each case probe any distinctive activity in the Convergence area in the west.

2.1 Please describe any rural development activity or interventions that your organisation has been involved with over the past two years, and any associated funding you have committed.
Non specific
Leader+
2.2 What has been achieved? What has worked well and what less well? *identify any effects directly attributable to Leader+)*
2.3 To what extent have any rural development actions your organisation has been involved with have been community-led / community inspired? What has been the effect of Leader+ on this? *(probe extent of complementarity with other policy and activity)*
2.4 What advantages, if any, do you perceive arising from involvement of local people and businesses in leading or shaping development initiatives?
2.5 What barriers, if any, do you perceive to securing such involvement, (e.g. time, funding, skills)?

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3. Scope of Leader Strategy

It is useful to do a first quick overview to highlight the two priorities before going in to the detail. NB One of the first two themes must be adopted.

3.1 The **Rural Community Capacity** theme provides support for community engagement, capacity building and developing skills including a skilled local workforce. It is envisaged that this could link to the development of projects under other themes adopted.

3.1.1 Capacity building activity formed a significant element of the Moray Leader+ Programme and there appears to be strong support for capitalising on this.				
Do you see this remaining as a priority issue?		Yes		No	

3.1.2 If no please explain why not.
Now go to question 3.2

3.1.3 If yes, why? What is likely to be the focus / target groups / locations? *Probe extension to business and West Moray.*

3.1.4 To what extent has this been/is this already addressed by agencies and funding streams in Rural Moray?

3.1.5 What are the aspects that new Leader could address? What might the benefits be? *Probe:* What is the potential for community led activity? How might this add value, complement mainstream efforts, contribute to innovation?

3.1.6 Do you have or are you aware of any projects under this theme which could be implemented early in the process? Please describe, including likely costs and any other resources which may be available.

3.2 **Revitalising Communities** is potentially broadly based and is designed to have potential to include aspects of the other Themes with a strong focus on complementarity, integration and adding value to or otherwise enhancing delivery and actions. It is aimed at developing community services, facilities and assets with a particular emphasis on access e.g. through transport or strengthening the involvement of young people and other target groups.

3.2.1 Do you see this as a priority issue in rural Moray?	Yes		No	

3.2.2 If no please explain why not.
Now go to question 3.3

3.2.3 If yes, why? What is likely to be the focus / target groups / locations? *Probe growing community assets and West Moray.*

3.2.4 To what extent has this been/is this already addressed by agencies and funding streams in Rural Moray?

3.2.5 What are the aspects that new Leader could address? What might the benefits be? *Probe:* What is the potential for community led activity? How might this add value, complement mainstream efforts, contribute to innovation?

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3.2.6 Do you have or are you aware of any projects under this theme which could be implemented early in the process? Please describe, including likely costs and any other resources which may be available.

3.3 **New Markets and Products** is concerned with supporting business diversification by agricultural and other land-based industries developing new, particularly collaborative ways of working, sharing and transferring knowledge, developing new markets and products and adding more value locally to primary produce.

3.3.1 Do you see this as a priority issue in rural Moray?	Yes		No	
3.3.2 If no please explain why not.				
Now go to question 3.4				
3.3.3 If yes, why? What is likely to be the focus / target groups / locations? *Probe West Moray.*				
3.3.4 To what extent has this been/is this already addressed by agencies and funding streams in Rural Moray?				
3.3.5 What are the aspects that new Leader could address? What might the benefits be? *Probe:* What is the potential for community led activity? How might this add value, complement mainstream efforts, contribute to innovation?				
3.3.6 Do you have or are you aware of any projects under this theme which could be implemented early in the process? Please describe, including likely costs and any other resources which may be available.				

3.4 **Conservation of the Rural Environment** is concerned with natural, cultural and heritage projects which capitalise on these resources, are connected with and driven by the community and provide a wider community benefit. *Strong interest in raising the profile of the area and its assets through Moray The Brand HIE led.*

3.4.1 Do you see this as a priority issue in rural Moray?	Yes		No	
3.4.2 If no please explain why not.				
Now go to question 3.5				
3.4.3 If yes, why? What is likely to be the focus / target groups / locations? *Probe growing community assets and West Moray.*				
3.4.4 To what extent has this been/is this already addressed by agencies and funding streams in Rural Moray?				
3.4.5 What are the aspects that new Leader could address? What might the benefits be? *Probe:* What is the potential for community led activity? How might this add value, complement mainstream efforts, contribute to innovation?				

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3.4.6 Do you have or are you aware of any projects under this theme which could be implemented early in the process?
Please describe, including likely costs and any other resources which may be available.

3.5 **Progressive Rural Economy** is concerned with innovative actions to strengthen the economy *other than primary industries* in the Leader area and might involve co-operative investments, developing supply chain, research and other linkages, addressing issues of scale, local tourism initiatives, social enterprise and extending participation in enterprise by target groups. *Strong support here for building business involvement, wider business engagement and working with the young.*

3.5.1 Do you see this as a priority issue in rural Moray?	Yes		No	
3.5.2 If no please explain why not.				
Now go to question 3.6				
3.5.3 If yes, why? What is likely to be the focus / target groups / locations? *Probe West Moray.*				
3.5.4 To what extent has this been/is this already addressed by agencies and funding streams in Rural Moray?				
3.5.5 What are the aspects that new Leader could address? What might the benefits be? *Probe:* What is the potential for community led activity? How might this add value, complement mainstream efforts, contribute to innovation?				
3.5.6 Do you have or are you aware of any projects under this theme which could be implemented early in the process? Please describe, including likely costs and any other resources which may be available.				

4 Co-operation

Co-operation is an essential part of Leader and works best where there is common ground e.g. geography, issues, target groups or sectors or opportunity.

4.1 In what geographical and activity areas do you see any scope for developing cooperation?
4.2 What scope, if any, do you see for innovation in or arising from cooperation?

5 Constitution and Management of the LAG

In each case probe the scope for innovation.

5.1 What is your perspective on the appropriate structure and role of the LAG:
• how many and which organisations should be LAG Members. (inc any key organisations or groups not previously involved in Leader in Moray who you would now wish to see involved)
• how the LAG should be constituted.

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• The extent to which it should take a wider involvement in rural regeneration.
5.2 What is your perspective on where the Moray Leader team should be based geographically? What would be the best host organisation, what is the potential for and benefits of collocation?
5.3 In addition to running the programme should the role of Leader staff extend to: • animation? • support in preparing bids? • Linking with other initiatives/services?
5.4 What then do you consider will be the staffing requirements: • how many staff and in what roles? • how should these be met - recruiting / secondment / part-time responsibilities?

6 Involvement with Leader

A key element in securing Leader funding for rural Moray will be demonstrating the commitment of partners and the leverage which can be achieved.

6.1 What role would your organisation be willing to play in the management and delivery of the programme?
6.2 What contribution would your organisation be able to make in terms of financial and other resources?

Annex 3

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LEADER Workshop Forres, 7 - 9 pm 19th February 2008

In Attendance:
Cath Millar	Burghead Headland Trust
Glen Rorister	
Brian Perkins	Forres Area Credit Union
Wilson Metcalf	Forres Footpaths Trust
Janis Thomson	Kinloss & Findhorn Community Hall
David Sneddon	Forres Angling Association
Heather Shaw	Community Development Moray Council
George Anderson	Forres Community Woodlands Trust
Chris Piper	Forres Community Woodland Trust
Colin Lipscomb	Forres Community Council and FGA (Forres Groups Action)
June Airey	Forres Area Credit Union
Kath Rosie	Forres Youth Café Project
Bill Henderson	Dunland Ltd
Neil Sinclair	Dava Way Association
Bruno Cawley	Dava Way Association
Total	**15**

LEADER Workshop Fochabers, 7 - 9 pm 20th February 2008

In Attendance:
Pamela Winchester	Fleming Hall, Aberlour Community Association
Sandy Henderson	Aberlour Community Association
Robert Croucher	Portknockie Community Association
Bea Shanks	After school knitting club in Cullen
Jude Daymond	After school knitting club in Cullen
Hugh Patience	Buckie fishing heritage
Alan Beresford	Buckie Area Forum
Ian Moir	Buckie Community Council
Barry Taylor	Buckie Area Forum
Claire Tombe	Fochabers Scouts / Friends of Bellie Church Yard
Hugh Kellas	Newmill Hall Committee
Clair Neish	Newmill Hall Committee
Rod Lovie	REAP
Mike Reid	Lennox Councillor
Gordon McDonald	Moray Council
Dianne Mark	Drummuir & Botriphnie Community Trust
James Mark	Drummuir & Botriphnie Community Trust
Kay Griffin	The Lamp Hoose, Portgordon
Sylvia Reid	Fochabers Heritage & Fochaberian
Fiona Rolt	CLD Moray Council
Gillian Bailey	CLD Moray Council
Pam Brain	Moray Scouts
Dougie McPhee	Fochabers Scouts
Jennifer Shaw	Lhanbryde Community Challenge
Anita Milne	Lhanbryde Community Challenge (VC Moray L+ LAG)
Linda Corn	Keith & Strathisla Regeneration Project (KSRP)

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Isobel Eckersley   SWRI Federation Chairman   **Total   28**

LEADER Workshop Rothes, 7 – 9 pm 27th February 2008

In Attendance:
James Hendry   Speyside Community Car Share
D Macdonald   Speyside Community Car Share
Jean Hendry   Speyside Community Car Share
Andrena Taylor   SNF (Speyside Neighbourhood Forum)
Jim Andreson   Speyside Council / Rothes Council
Eddie Brewster   Dufftown Resource Centre/ Speyside Forum
Neil McRae   Cabrach & Mortlach Community Association
Michael McConachie   Councillor (Moray)
Fiona Murdoch   Coucnillor (Moray)
John G Fleming   Memorial Hall Dufftown
Rita Marks   Glenlivet / Inveravon Community Association
Derek Murray   Portgordon Community Harbour Group
Tony Cripps   WRAP – Round- Carron
Sue Holden   WRAP – Rounfd- Carron
Pearl Paul   Rothes Community Council
Robin Weedon   Moray Council Youth Team Speyside
Ann Davidson
Total   17