



THE HOME OF RUGBY IN THE MACHARS OF GALLOWAY

Newton Stewart Rugby Football Club

Rugby Development Officer Project
2009 – 2011

End of Grant Report
November 2011

RURAL D&G LEADER GRANT PROGRAMME

END OF GRANT REPORT

Project Title - Newton Stewart RFC Rugby Development Officer Project Reference – DG67
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BACKGROUND

The original idea for the project was developed by Newton Stewart Rugby Football Club (NSRFC) during 2008 following discussions with the Scottish Rugby Union (SRU). Subsequent consultation with D&G Council culminated in the Club developing a Development Officer Project to promote the game of Rugby Union in the Newton Stewart area.

The principal aim of the initiative was to encourage participation and involvement in the game by local people of all ages. It was intended that this would be achieved by increasing the number of schools offering rugby as a sport by providing curriculum coaching, developing and delivering training opportunities for coaches, players and volunteers, involving more people in support roles within the club and working in partnership with the Local Authority and other community organisations to offer opportunities to play rugby to the wider community

A 3 year project was devised and costed at £75,000 (£25,000 pa). A funding package put together with contributions from D&G LEADER (36% in Years 1 & 2), The Robertson Trust (36% in Years 1-3) and SRU (28% in Years 1& 2 and 64% in Year 3). A further in kind contribution was made by D&G Council who provided office accommodation at the Merrick Leisure Centre for the Development Officer.

The agreed award from D&G LEADER was £18,000 over the first 2 years of the project and we have subsequently claimed £15,179.87. The reason for this under claim was a slight reduction in the cost of the project from an anticipated cost of £50,000 to an actual cost of £42,166.11. Salary, clothing and administrative costs were the main areas of savings.

PROJECT DELIVERY

The Development Officer (DO) post was recruited over the summer of 2009 with a project start date of 11th September 2009. The project has now operated for 24 months during which time the DO has:

1. Delivered 2 x 6 week blocks of curriculum sessions to 11 local primary schools
2. Organised and run 5 festivals at NSRFC and other local rugby clubs for primary schools involved in blocks of coaching
3. Supported our local secondary school to run extra-curricular rugby at U14, U16 & U18 age groups and acted as liaison with club teams at these age groups
4. Supported our local secondary school to run extra-curricular girls rugby
5. Supported increased membership of Newton Stewart rugby club (since the project began total club membership has increased by 13% and youth membership has increased by 53%)
6. Organised and run 2 touch rugby festival summer schemes at NSRFC (1 each summer)
7. Worked with 16-18 year olds to ensure a smooth transition into senior rugby
8. Recruited, retained and developed 15 coaches /volunteers to support club activities
9. Supported the development of a sustainable club structure to ensure the long term continuation of this project
10. Sourced and /or delivered 11 coaching and other CDP courses (5 Rugby Ready courses, 1 UKCC level 1 Coaching course, 1 Key National Themes course, 1 First Aid course, 1 Child Protection course, 1 Youth Coaching Scheme, 1 Common Sports Injuries & Advice course)

The DO has carried out these activities with the support of players and volunteers from the club and has been managed on a day to day basis by the Club's Senior Youth Coach with input from the SRU Area Development

Officer and D&G Council. Closer links have been established in the final 6 months of the project with increased partnership working between the DO and Leisure & Sport staff from the Merrick Centre and Active Schools Initiative. This has led to a number of joint projects being delivered over the summer and autumn of 2011 including Street Rugby in Whithorn & Minnigaff, After School Rugby Sessions at Penninghame and Rugby Sessions at the Merrick Centre, Newton Stewart as part of the Active Schools October Holiday Programme.

The project was initially marketed through the Primary Schools and local press. As it has evolved we have set up a Club Website (www.newtonstewartrfc.co.uk), updated club playing kit and leisurewear, distributed posters and leaflets and undertaken joint advertising activities with D&G Council such as the recent Autumn Sports Development Activities brochure. Using a variety of communication media has enabled us to reach a very wide target audience and as a result

PROJECT BENEFICIARIES

The agreed target groups for project were Males Under 25, Female Under 25, Male 25 & Over, Micro Businesses and Ethnic Minorities. Our total target number was 193 and we have achieved 329:

TARGET GROUP	TARGET No.	No. ACHIEVED
Male Under 25	100	194
Female Under 25	50	92
Male 25 & Over	30	39
Micro Businesses	3	4
Ethnic Minorities	10	0
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>193</u>	<u>329</u>

We initially aimed to provide up-skilling or training opportunities for 100 individuals over the course of the project. Due to the success of the initiative we have been able to evidence that at least 339 people have gained new skills as a direct result of their involvement in the DO Project. It was anticipated that 10 people from ethnic minorities would participate in the project but this has not been the case. Wigtownshire has very low levels of immigration and as a result, during the two years of the project, no children or adults from minority ethnic groups took part in any recorded activities.

GROUP	No. TRAINED
Primary School Children	200
Secondary School Children	60
Coaches	79
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>339</u>

The number of training courses planned to be delivered was 5 and we have succeeded in **delivering 6**, significantly increasing the knowledge and skills of players and volunteers involved in rugby and as a result increasing the capacity of the local community.

Evidence for these and the other planned outputs for the project is detailed and attached separately.

STRATEGIC FIT – CREATING OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE HEALTH

At the development stage of the project in 2008 a number of strategies and programmes existed, both locally and nationally, which were designed to increase participation in sport at all levels. They aimed to encourage sporting activity and keeping physically active as a way of improving wellbeing and enabling people to enjoy the wider health benefits that participation in sport can bring. The DO project has proved to be an excellent fit with a number of these strategies including:

1. 'Reaching Higher - building on the success of Sport 21' - Scotland's national strategy for sport which aims to deliver:
 - * A country where sport is more widely available to all;
 - * A country where sporting talent is recognised and nurtured; and
 - * A country achieving and sustaining world class performances in sport.
2. The National Physical Activity Strategy ('Let's Make Scotland More Active: A strategy for physical activity') which aims to increase and maintain the proportion of physically active people in Scotland.
3. The SRU Long Term Player Development (LTPD) Programme which is a long term approach to maximising individual potential and involvement in the sport of rugby.
4. Dumfries and Galloway Council's Corporate Plan which aims to create Safe, Healthy and Inclusive communities. This has been enhanced by our developing partnership with D&GC's Education and Leisure & Sport Departments through the Active Schools initiative

This project fits with these strategies by increasing the sports availability, recognising talent and improving standards. The project has increased the number of people in the Wigtownshire area who are physically active and has allowed us to create opportunities for people to take responsibility for and, in the longer term, improve their own health.

CONCLUSION - SUSTAINABILITY AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROJECT

NSRFC has benefited greatly from this project:

- We have learned invaluable knowledge of developing a project plan, seeking external funding, monitoring & evaluation, submitting claims and liaising with funders and other partners
- We have employed our first employee and as a club gained experience of managing staff and working with local school and organisations
- We have increased our membership in junior and seniors sections which will help secure the future of the club in the longer term
- We have provided training to these members and other participants thereby increasing playing ability and skills which makes playing rugby both safer and more enjoyable for all
- We have recruited and trained new volunteers to coach and support players which will improve skill, playing performance and player welfare throughout the club
- We have recruited and trained new volunteers to assist in the wider running and management of the club which will help to make it more sustainable
- We have increased the level of public awareness of NSRFC and our contribution to increasing local peoples' access to sport and as a result improving health, wellbeing and quality of life.

Based upon these experiences it is our intention to continue to deliver the project. We have a further year's funding from our other partners and during this year we will seek further funding to enable the project to continue for a further three year period. The SRU has already committed funding support 2 a second phase of the project and we will be actively seeking match funding over the coming 12 months. We will also be exploring if there are any income generation options where we sell our coaching / training skills to other organisations and groups in order for the project to become partly self financing.

We gratefully acknowledge the invaluable financial support provided by the Rural D&G LEADER Programme, and other funders, without which we would not have been able to take the first steps in developing and implementing this exciting project. We look forward to building upon this in the coming years.

Gillian Vance
Trustee - Newton Stewart RFC
November 2011