

## Riverside Outreach Report

### OVERVIEW

The Riverside Day Centre board had been in discussion about how we could get our Day Centre service used more. It was decided to try providing outreach meals for the elderly in more remote villages. This would alleviate social isolation and improve community resilience in the area. It would be administered by the manager, staff and volunteers at the Riverside Day Centre in Newton Stewart. The aim of the project was to provide an outreach service for people who were unable to get to the Centre in Newton Stewart.

Age Concern in 2016 administered a loneliness and social isolation fund on behalf of the Scottish Government. We applied and were successful and used the grant to pilot an Outreach programme. The pilot was a success so we decided to contact LEADER with a view to funding a bus to help us deliver this service. At first, we decided on 5 communities, Kirkcowan, Whauphill, Glentool, Port William and Creetown. We started this with the help of LEADER in 2017. We were contacted by another community during the project, Garlieston, who we quickly added to the list of locations we would visit.

The total costs for the project were projected to be £70,385 with £25,000 from the Riverside Trust, £26,850 from our own funds, and £18,535 from LEADER.

The bus we decided to purchase is a Peugeot Boxer with Wheelchair lift and removable seating. This was selected as we required a wheelchair accessible bus for the service and the price and reliability of the bus seemed to be most suitable for our project.



### DELIVERY

We put out posters, gathered volunteers and helpers from the local communities, arranged hall hire and started the project.

Prior to the outreach, numbers of attendees would be gathered in advance. On the day of an outreach, staff would use the new bus to transport the pre-ordered number of meals to the venue and then serve to the people in attendance, entertainment would also be provided (the meals, staffing and entertainment were not funded through the project).

The project developed fairly quickly and it went from having 1 outreach per month to 2. The communities were delighted to have this forum to meet up and have lunch and a chat and entertainment. The project ran from 25th September 2017 until 31st March 2020. It was overseen by the manager Susan McCalman and carried out by staff and volunteers from the Riverside Centre. The timescale was adhered to apart from at the start of 2018 where we had a staff member off sick, leading us to hold more outreaches in the following months to make up the difference.

This project fits with the “building sustainable settlements” section of the LDS. An outreach service allows elderly people in Wigtownshire, who would otherwise be isolated, to access day centre services as well as benefit from social contact with others in their area.

Over the course of the project we have far exceeded the number of outreaches we had planned to hold, reaching upwards of 100 elderly people at over 30 outreaches around the region. The outreaches were overseen by a mixture of staff and volunteers. Advertising for every outreach was distributed in the appropriate community prior to the event.

#### **FINAL BUDGET**

Final total Eligible project costs - £43,451.17 with match Funding from own funds of £26,850 and LEADER provided £16,601.17.

Unfortunately, the project match funding from the Riverside Trust was withdrawn, leading to us revising the scope of the project.

Further difficulties in the providing the evidence required meant items we were hoping to claim had to be removed. This led to us simplifying the project and only claiming for the bus and its related costs.

#### **LESSONS LEARNED**

The lessons we learned from the project are as follows.

There is a high demand for local provision of social contact and healthy food in all of the communities we visited.

#### **POST PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY**

The project has unfortunately been halted by the Coronavirus outbreak currently but we plan to continue providing outreaches past the LEADER funding period. The project will be sustained from our own income along with the grant we are provided by the Council for provision of Day Centre services in the region. The project will remain in our hands.

#### **TARGETS**

We employed an existing member of staff for an extra day to cover the outreach. 10 volunteers and staff were given updated food hygiene training. 5 members of staff were involved in the delivery of the outreach service. 11+ volunteers from the local area engaged with us over the course of the outreach project. 150+ vulnerable elderly people benefitted from increased socialisation and a balanced home cooked meal. 6 community facilities were improved by the outreach service as they

were previously under-utilised. The outreach project is a community-based food and drink project benefitting isolated elderly people in rural areas. We feel we support leadership in communities which was highlighted when we were contacted by a community of their own accord to ask if the outreach service could be extended to them. Most of the people volunteering to assist us at the outreach had never volunteered in this capacity before.