

Peninsular Tourism Cooperation Project

Final Report

Background to the Project

The project was first discussed at a Co-operation Workshop in Glasgow arranged by Scottish Rural Network in the Spring of 2019. Vale of Glamorgan and North Kerry LEADER Programmes were interested in co-operating on coastal footpaths and the tourism offering. Dumfries and Galloway Council Countryside Team and Ward Officer, Dumfries and Galloway Outdoor Access Forum, Dumfries and Galloway Outdoor Access Trust and The Rhins of Galloway Coast Path Steering Group all gave their approval. (Links are provided to participating organisations' websites later in the document).

The project is in conjunction with a Dumfries and Galloway Council Project to construct a 5-day coastal walking route in The Rhins of Galloway. This route uses the existing Core Paths from the Mull of Galloway to Stranraer via Corsewall and Milleur Points. The Peninsular Cooperation project seeks to enhance and add value to the tourist offering through cooperation with two other existing and similar projects in the Vale of Glamorgan and the Dingle Peninsular while helping to build community capacity to improve the long-term sustainability and marketability of the route.

These two projects, due to the similarity of subject matter and geography, offered opportunities for shared learning and stimulation of the South West Coastal Path Steering Group Members as the construction of the path gets underway to develop their thinking and actions to make the long-term sustainability and its subsequent economic benefits a success.

The aim of the project was to undertake Study tours to learn and gain experience from the partners, to learn about their activities and processes in relation to enhancing the tourist attractions of their area.

The project was funded by Dumfries and Galloway LEADER programme who awarded us £5,000 to undertake the whole project.

The Project Experience

The project started on the 5th of October 2019 and ended on the 30th of September. The Partner Study visits to The Vale of Glamorgan (photos group 1) and The Dingle Peninsular (photos group 2) hosted by the respective LEADER Team members and a workshop to construct a medium-term Sustainability Plan

based of The Theory of Change model took place from November 2019 to March 2020 until it was interrupted by COVID-19 restrictions.

The Vale of Glamorgan in collaboration with their Local Authority and National Partners, whom we met, had used their LEADER money to put together a great deal of strategy documents. It was evident that their main preoccupation was all about people control and how they could maximise the economic benefit for the resident population while offering large numbers of visitors a good experience on a well-designed and maintained path which was part of the national coast path of Wales.

Shared Learning Links:

Coastal Interpretation Strategy

Heritage Coast Palette

Ambassadors Project

Sense of Place workshops

Camping Evaluation

Camping Toolkit

Planning Guidance

Vale School Trips

Coastal Activities

Links are given at the end of this report.

Dingle, we found, was the other way around. The path itself was not up to the high physical standard of Glamorgan and the effort was concentrated on mobilising the local businesses and communities to be involved in not only the path but also the marketing and peripheral attractions particularly around heritage, this was a useful learning point for us. They had a dedicated, well qualified Marketing CEO for the peninsular of Dingle whose job was to galvanise and guide the local organisations into action and to attract North Americans of Irish descent to visit the area as part of a national strategy and investment. Something we should think about for the long-term future. There was a similarity about Dingle that may resonate with The Rhins and the possibility of a long -term collaboration is worth bearing in mind.

The project principally addresses the following elements within the LEADER Local Development Strategy, Theme 1 and its associated outcomes. To make sure that the asset i.e. The 93-mile-long distance walking route and its nature and heritage round the coast of The Rhins of Galloway is an engine for economic growth in the area by attracting visitors and, in these days of public funding restraints, spearheading approaches of new ways to raise funds to support the future use and maintenance of being a net contributor to the local economy. In turn as contained in the Sustainability Plan there will be actions that contribute both to Sustainable Settlements and Land, Coast & Marine Environments outcomes through an integrated approach to delivery.

The project was managed on a day-to-day basis by Peter Ross, Chair of DGOAT and Chair of the Rhins of Galloway Coast Path Steering Group. It was overseen by the Treasurer/Secretary of DGOAT and reports provided to DG Outdoor Access Forum at their quarterly meetings.

The project was delivered by Dumfries and Galloway Outdoor Access Trust by inviting 31 members Rhins of Galloway Coast Path Steering Group to volunteer to join the study tours. It proved difficult to attract volunteers however, both Project Officers, Wigtownshire West Area Ward Officer and the Steering Group Chair managed either one or both visits. Due to anxiety about COVID-19 our partners in Wales and Ireland could not travel to visit The Rhins but 10 people from the Steering Group did manage to meet, on 16th

March (prior to COVID-19 restrictions) to put the Sustainability Plan together which was distributed to the whole group. Plans to hold a public awareness raising seminar in Stranraer did not happen again due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The people undertaking the visits benefitted from the knowledge they obtained and with ideas that they bought back with them, hopefully the groups we visited will have benefitted from our visits as well.

The final budget ended up being underspent by £2,926.65 due to activities being truncated by COVID-19. This makes the total spend £2,073.35.

Accommodation booked was adequate. Hotels generally were beyond the budget for overnight stays in both Wales and Ireland. We stayed in a 'Shepherd's Hut in Wales and a Bed and Breakfast in Dingle. Given the nature of people and separate organisations involved some more time to 'tee up' participants would have helped. The learning acquired from two differing approaches to coastal tourism is invaluable contribution to our thinking when the future development of RGCP resumes after Covid.

This project was only ever meant to be a learning opportunity that would feed into the work that Dumfries and Galloway Outdoor Access Trust are undertaking and at the moment they are actively seeking funding to implement the 3-year Sustainability Plan.

Links to information.

Kerry LEADER programme

<http://nekd.net/rural-development-programme-leader/>

Glamorgan Heritage Coast Website

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/enjoying/Coast-and-Countryside/Heritage-Coast/Glamorgan-Heritage-Coast.aspx>

Glamorgan heritage Coast Interpretation Strategy

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Working/Regeneration/Rural%20Regeneration/Heritage-Coast-Interpretation-Strategy.pdf>

Visit the Vale Website – Their Ambassadors

<https://www.visitthevale.com/en/Vale-Ambassadors/Vale-Ambassadors.aspx>

Visit the Vale Website - Guides

<https://www.visitthevale.com/en/Be-Inspired/Alternative/Vale-of-Glamorgan-Guides.aspx>

Vale of Glamorgan - Pitch Perfect Evaluation document

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Working/Regeneration/Rural%20Regeneration/Slow-Tourism-Coastal-Camping-Evaluation-Final-Report.pdf>

Vale of Glamorgan – The Campsite Toolkit

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Working/Regeneration/Rural%20Regeneration/Business%20Plan%202/Slow%20Tourism%20-%20Coastal%20Camping%20-%20Toolkit%20Bilingual%20version.pdf>

Vale of Glamorgan – Local Development Plan 2011 – 2026, Tourism & Leisure Development

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Living/Planning/Policy/SPG/Tourism-and-Development-SPG-March-2019.pdf>

Vale of Glamorgan – Attractive Vale

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/working/Rural-Communities/Attractive-Vale.aspx>

Targets

One project supporting the development of tourism businesses across the region - Despite corona virus restrictions the project has supported the development of tourism activities in Dumfries and Galloway. The project managed to develop a Theory of Change Plan to support the implementation of this target when the path construction project is completed.

One project supporting the development of environmental, nature-based, cultural, activity and experiential tourism - This project has supported the development of nature-based tourism. The project managed to develop a Theory of Change Plan to support the implementation of this target when the path construction project is completed.

One project supporting the development of the arts and culture sectors - This project has supported the development of links between nature based tourism and the arts/culture sectors. The project managed to develop a Theory of Change Plan to support the implementation of this target when the path construction project is completed.

One project that: Enhance these environments. Support the sustainable use of any of these environments. Demonstrate the value of these environments to the lives of the people of Dumfries & Galloway - This project has supported the development of ideas to sustainable use of natural assets. The project managed to develop a Theory of Change Plan to support the implementation of this target when the path construction project is completed.

One project that is supporting nature based tourism initiatives - Nature based tourism is a key driver of this project. The project managed to develop a Theory of Change Plan to support the implementation of this target when the path construction project is completed.

One project developing initiatives to raise awareness of the diverse landscapes, habitats and species of Dumfries & Galloway - This project raises awareness of the natural environment of Dumfries and Galloway.

The project managed to develop a Theory of Change Plan to support the implementation of this target when the path construction project is completed.

Photographs - Vale of Glamorgan



Photographs-- Dingle Peninsula

