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A CELEBRATION OF 20 YEARS OF EUROPEAN FUNDS IN WESTERN SCOTLAND

PROJECT NAME Ayrshire Electronic Community (AEC)

PROJECT SPONSOR East Ayrshire Council

PROJECT ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

The first phase of the AEC programme was granted funding in European Funding in 1999 with staff in place early December. The project evolved from a strong established local partnership whose remit was Information and Advice services in East Ayrshire. The first phase of AEC was completed on 31 December 2001.

The second phase of the project was granted European Funding to 31 December 2004.

PROJECT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To create a sustainable vehicle for SIP area e-community development, ICT capacity support and the uptake of ICT by local SMEs.
2. The continuation and extension of the AEC programme during its transition towards a social enterprise model.
3. To establish a regional management delivery focus for Digital Inclusion and its linkage into the needs of a future Digital Economy.
4. The development and delivery of new and innovative initiatives in support of digital Inclusion and ICT job generation.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The AEC programme provided a focus for the application of ICT in community and business development and facilitates awareness raising and community adoption.

AEC promoted local and national ICT related initiatives, supported community funding applications and 'championed' the adoption of digital inclusion.

AEC presented the opportunity to create added value by establishing a management and delivery vehicle for digital inclusion that links to the needs of a digital economy, that is, ICT jobs, SME support, e-commerce etc.

In this respect AEC developed and piloted innovative approaches to the use of digital inclusion for economic regeneration.

PROJECT STRUCTURE

The AEC Team consisted of 10 staff as follows:

- Programme Manager
- Services Development Manager
- Development Officers, ICT x2
- Network Development Officer
- Web Development Officer

- Development Officers, Communities x3
- Finance and Monitoring Officer

The Programme Manager reported to a Steering Group consisting of partner representatives.

PROJECT FINANCE

Funding Partners East Ayrshire Council; North Ayrshire Council; East Ayrshire Coalfields SIP; North Ayrshire SIP; Ayrshire & Arran NHS Primary Care Trust; and Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire.

Eligible Costs (£) 1,728,742
ERDF/ESF Support (£) 864,371

Priority/Measure Priority 3: Increase the economic and social cohesion of the region.

3.1 Community based regeneration

PROJECT PERFORMANCE

Key Project Outputs/Results	Target	Achievement	% of target achieved
No. of community employment/learning projects supported	230	537	233.48%
No. of existing businesses receiving advice	180	181	100.56%
No. of instances of advice to existing businesses	500	709	141.80%
No. of new businesses receiving advice	40	40	100.00%
Total no. of existing businesses assisted	180	181	100.56%
Total no. of instances of assistance to existing businesses	500	623	124.60%
Total no. of new businesses assisted/created	40	40	100.00%
Total no. of gross new jobs created	17	24	141.18%
Total no. of jobless people securing employment	88	34	38.64%

PROJECT CONTACT

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