

++++++ IT ALL ADDS UP ++++++

A CELEBRATION OF 20 YEARS OF EUROPEAN FUNDS IN WESTERN SCOTLAND

Project Title East Ayrshire Coalfield Social Inclusion Partnership
Environmental Restoration Works 2001
Project Sponsor East Ayrshire Council

PROJECT ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

Developed by East Ayrshire Woodlands, a co-operation of six environmental and economic development organisations, in partnership with opencast coal operators and landowners/developers.

Following a review of the activities of East Ayrshire Woodlands in 2000 a new strategy and action plan was agreed by the co-operating partners. Targeting vacant and derelict land for native woodland expansion and optimising benefits for communities affected by opencast mining were seen as key areas to be pursued.

Between 1997 and 2001 East Ayrshire Woodlands was supported through the Millennium Forest and now needed to be more imaginative in attracting resources. Communities in Drongan, Skares and Sorn were already showing active interest in trying to reverse the decline of their environment.

PROJECT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Reduce the negative impact of derelict land in the landscape
- Enhance the image of the area as a place to live and work
- Create improved and expanded wildlife habitats
- Develop opportunities for recreational access
- Contribute to local employment prospects
- Enhance the marketability of potential business development site.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

- Creation of 'soil' by mixing 50,000 tonnes of sewage sludge filter cake with coal spoil
- 44.3 hectares of land reclaimed to sustainable semi-natural habitats
- Community consultation extended to include design and ongoing management
- 4000m of constructed public access plus grass routes
- Intermediate Labour Market employment and training places for 24 local unemployed support each year
- Nine FTE jobs created in land remediation using sewage.

PROJECT STRUCTURE

- Management Group drawn from six core partner organisations guide and monitor the project Lead Authority, East Ayrshire Council, acts as employer for staff and guarantor for the ERDF application. It facilitates cashflow and fiscal monitoring arrangements
- Staff within East Ayrshire Woodlands provide design input and secure resources
- ILM beneficiaries fully integrated into organisation and sites used to deliver SVQ,

- FASTCO, LANTRA and NPTC qualifications
- Tendering and contract administration under EAC Standing Orders
- Forestry Sub-group of Community Council's at Drongan and Sorn being developed to retain full interest in management and development for community benefit.

PROJECT FINANCE

Funding Partners	Portcullis Developments Onyx Environmental Ltd Forestry Commission Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire Coalfield SIP
Eligible Costs (£)	£1.4 million
ERDF/ESF Support (£)	£571,782
Priority/Measure	Western Scotland Objective 2 Programme - Measure 3:1 Community Based regeneration

PROJECT PERFORMANCE

- Three sites but then managed as one project. Some grants are site specific and some contribute to the whole package.
- Establishment costs met through second instalment of WGS grant in year 5. EAC carry the cost until then.
- Long-term management cost is responsibility of landowner.

At the time of writing, June 2007 this project was on-going.

Indicator	Target	Achievement	% Target Achieved
Hectares of environmental improvements	44.3	47.1	106.32%
Total hectares of serviced land occupied by December 2008	78.4	48.9	62.37%
Total no of gross new jobs created	9	9	100.00%