



# Added Value of Networking

## Success Story

Success Story title *Day of the Region – Transnational Co-operation*

Theme *Network communications; Knowledge exchange; Training; Cooperation*

NRN *Scottish National Rural  
Network*

Coordinator *Ros Halley, Rural Development Manager, D&G LEADER*

Partners *Dumfries & Galloway LEADER Local Action Group managed the project. Partnerships were established with successful 'Day of the Region' organisers in the Netherlands (Stichting Dag van de Regio) and Germany (Bundesverband der Regionalbewegung e.V.).*

*Across Dumfries & Galloway, community organisations and groups were recruited to deliver the activities and events in the community.*

Period *June 2010 – March 2012*

Resources *£157,500*

### Background

In March 2009, The Programme Manager for LEADER D&G met with members of Groningen LAG (Netherlands) at a EC conference in Lapland. During the cooperation fair, Jan Beekman and Elles Bulder presented their ideas for the further development of their "Dag van de Regio". Given the potential of the initiative to explore community development and rural community cohesion, it was decided that further conversations would be organised between both LAGs following the conference. It was agreed by D&G LEADER LAG that there was scope to develop a region-wide celebration of life in our region and that this would add to the existing portfolio of interesting and worthwhile community events and festivals and other initiatives such as Spring Fling and Doors Open Day. At the December LAG meeting, members were provided with the opportunity to debate the value of developing a Day of the Region in D&G. The LAG was supportive of the concept and wished to see the concept strengthened, partners sought and a funding bid prepared.

### Main activities

The intention was to develop a new and exciting region wide initiative which would pull together groups of different interests, agencies and private businesses. A 'string' of activities and events were organised by community groups with the support of LEADER staff and were coordinated and promoted jointly and extensively as part of a regional celebration which took place the first weekend in October 2011, the same weekend as in Germany and the Netherlands. 5 rural communities from across the region put themselves forward for inclusion in the programme and teams of local volunteers were responsible for the selection, creation and delivery of individual activities held during the celebration.

### Main results/benefits

- To encourage local people to volunteer and engage more within their local communities.
- To strengthen connections between communities in D&G
- To encourage more people to be active.
- To encourage people to continue to learn new skills
- To encourage networking and exchange of knowledge between communities.
- To strengthen links between communities and public sector agencies.
- To raise confidence and encourage a sense of pride in the area.
- To encourage wider networking and cooperation with international partners.





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#### Contribution of the NSU

The Scottish National Rural Network provided promotional opportunities through their website and e-bulletins. There was also an opportunity for Day of the Region to be promoted through a workshop at a local National Rural Networking event held in Moffat where the project was promoted with a view to raising interest in the concept across Scotland.

#### Contribution of the partners

Having vast knowledge and experience in delivering this type of celebration, the partners in the Netherlands and Germany offered support and guidance on developing the concept and in its evaluation. The concept was changed for Dumfries and Galloway and so the partners also learned a new method of delivery whilst fully implementing their own existing methods.

#### Success factors

The co-operation project has led to more local communities coming forward with a desire to be part of Day of the Region in 2012. This is due to the benefits local communities see in celebrating their communities role in the wider regional activity and in making Dumfries and Galloway a special place to live, work and play in! Each participating community has its own successes from better use of village facilities such as the town hall to more community groups working together to benefit the community.

Transnationally, the project has grown to include more countries in 2012 with involvement from Ireland, Finland, Poland and Austria.

#### Additional information

[www.dayoftheregion.co.uk](http://www.dayoftheregion.co.uk)

Over 250 events and activities were delivered as part of the project in Dumfries and Galloway.

It is hoped the transnational partnership will grow during the next 2 years to establish 'Day of the Region' celebrations across Europe and to strengthen the celebration here in Dumfries and Galloway by encouraging more communities to see the benefit in promoting the groups, organisations, businesses, skills and talents which exist in our small rural communities.

