

# **Good Practice in Rural Development**

**No. 1**

## **Effective Partnership Working**

by

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## FOREWORD

The Rural Partnership initiative was announced in the Rural White Paper 'People, Prosperity and Partnership' published in December 1995. Flowing from this the Scottish National Rural Partnership has been established, charged with the task of promoting rural development.

To take forward this task, the Scottish National Rural Partnership is publishing a range of titles in series under the heading Good Practice in Rural Development. These highlight principles of good practice in a number of aspects of rural development. The good practice notes are intended for the attention of all those involved in rural development, particularly local rural partnerships, as guidance which merits careful consideration. Whether or not to follow the guidance in all cases is of course a decision for each local rural partnership or other body to make in their particular circumstances.

This publication is the first of the series, and addresses the issue of effective working of local rural partnerships.

Further *Good Practice in Rural Development* publications are in preparation, as follows:

Community Involvement  
Environment and Heritage

Other *Good Practice in Rural Development* titles will be published in 1997 and 1998.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The partnership approach has been advocated widely as a means of addressing the challenge of social and economic development in rural Scotland. In addition to the obligations laid out in the 1995 Rural White Paper for Scotland, there is widespread recognition in many countries of the usefulness of partnership approaches.

Partnerships are ‘an arrangement in which objectives are shared and a common agenda is developed between different agencies in pursuit of a common goal.’ There is a wide range of potential members, including central government agencies, local authorities, businesses, and voluntary organisations, community groups and individuals.

The Rural White Paper identifies different types of partnership, including Strategic Partnerships, Area-based Partnerships and Topic Partnerships. In all cases, the underlying rationale must be that the partnership approach gives additional impetus to the development process which could not be achieved by individual actors or agencies working alone.

The potential benefits of partnership approaches are many and include the development of shared vision, the collective determination of strategies for development, the stimulus to action, the scope for skill development and sharing within partnerships and giving synergy to development efforts through the pooling of resources.

The way in which a partnership is set up will influence its ability to achieve its goals. A development process is identifiable, which involves a dialogue between the relevant communities of interest. It may be beneficial for local people to audit their strengths and weaknesses and assess their own skills base in preparing the ground for partnership.

All members of the partnership should understand their roles and responsibilities and recognise the collective vision of the group. All partnerships should have agreed and clearly understood aims, which should be translated into a clear plan of action.

Partnerships are legal entities and place obligations on partners, which need to be understood clearly. Within a partnership, the different functions of board members and project officers should be delimited and the key posts of chairman and project officer require careful selection. Partnerships vary greatly in the geographical and subject areas that they cover and it may be beneficial to operate with sub-groups pursuing different tasks.

Partnerships require effective administration, and must be capable of effective financial management with regard to their operating budgets and their spending on projects. Any staff training needs should be addressed early in the life of a project. In particular, the need to train local amateurs or facilitators should be considered.

The effectiveness of partnership actions is enhanced by establishing clear time frames with specific tasks. Evaluation of actions, using performance indicators, is important for the partnership to be able to measure and review its achievements.

Problems may arise in obtaining ongoing funding, maintaining good liaison with all communities of interest and ensuring effective co-operation between members at an

individual and agency level. Effective dialogue amongst members can help in reducing conflict.

Proper management can help partnerships to maintain momentum, implement projects promptly and successfully, and adapt and evolve to meet new challenges. Successful teamwork is fundamental to success in dynamic and effective partnerships.

Partnerships are likely to become more important institutions in rural development, but it must be recognised that success cannot be guaranteed and good practice is essential to realise the multiple opportunities that partnerships offer.

## **Preface**

The traditional dependence of people in rural areas of Scotland on industries such as agriculture, forestry and fishing has been replaced by a wider range of economic activities and an increased variability from one local economy to another. Rural communities are becoming increasingly diverse, comprising groups with a wide range of cultural and social backgrounds.

There have also been changes in the way official organisations work with rural people. Public bodies have been faced in many cases with declining funds to support actions in rural areas. There have also been changes in the way in which these agencies seek to involve other people and organisations in rural development. Local people are seeking and sometimes obtaining a greater say in influencing the shape of rural development and may now have the range of skills to take more control of their affairs. Furthermore, new challenges facing rural areas have forged a growing awareness that successful development actions are often dependent on the pooling of effort and expertise by individuals and agencies with interests in the well-being of rural areas.

New ways of working are being sought to address these challenges, including the 'partnership approach'. The 1995 Rural White Paper for Scotland identifies the partnership approach as a useful means of supporting rural development. Partnerships have been widely acclaimed throughout the western world as means of creating stronger and more vibrant rural economies.

The partnership approach encourages the collaboration of all those involved in rural development to integrate 'top-down' policy by central agencies with 'bottom up' actions by local communities. Partnerships are partly about increasing the well-being of rural people through making development proposals more likely to succeed and partly about the process of breaking down social, economic and cultural barriers and empowering people to take a greater degree of control of their own destinies.

Partnership cannot provide a cure-all to the challenges of rural development in Scotland. It can, however, offer a contribution to the creation of a better living and working environment for rural people.

## **Acknowledgements**

The authors would like to thank the following for their assistance on this project

- the associates for providing valuable insights into the workings of rural development partnerships
- the participants of rural development partnerships who responded generously to requests for information
- the members of the Scottish National Rural Partnership for their useful comments on the draft text

The authors accept final responsibility for the information contained in this booklet.

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February 1997

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Aim of this booklet

This booklet aims to provide practical guidance and information on how to set up and operate rural development partnerships. It is aimed at any group or individual contemplating or already using the partnership approach.

## 1.2 What is a partnership?

A partnership is ‘an arrangement in which objectives are shared and a common agenda (is) developed between the different agencies in pursuit of a common goal.’<sup>1</sup> Partnerships involve formal or informal arrangements for working together towards a common purpose.

Partnerships seek to enhance the quality of life of rural people in various ways. They can have widely differing remits, ranging from economic development to broader social, cultural and environmental issues. The following activities provide some examples of the work that partnerships can undertake:

- assessing the resource and skills levels in a local area and considering how these might be improved
- developing ways for local individuals and groups to become involved in the planning and provision of local services such as transport
- drawing up strategic plans for local economic development and more focused action plans on key issues
- improving development prospects at the same time as protecting or enhancing the environment

## 1.3 Who might be involved?

Partnerships can comprise a wide range of organisations, groups, or individuals. These may include:

- government agencies
- local authorities
- private businesses and commercial organisations
- community groups
- environmental organisations
- voluntary groups
- private individuals.

Partners frequently represent particular **communities of interest** such as landowners, farmers, local businesses, environmental and heritage groups, essential services and disadvantaged groups. In practice, there is not a single community of interest in Scottish rural areas. Recognising the different communities of interest associated with a particular partnership proposal represents an important first step in building effective partnerships.

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<sup>1</sup> Department of the Environment (1995) *Involving Communities in Urban and Rural Regeneration - A Guide for Practitioners*, Department of the Environment

#### 1.4 Types of partnership

Partnerships exist in many forms. The Scottish Office<sup>2</sup> has identified three broad types of partnership:

1. **Strategic partnerships** can cover a large area and address a wide range of issues.

The *Objective 5b Programme* is a European Union (EU) rural development programme that is developed in partnership with local authorities and other bodies including Local Enterprise Companies. In north-west Grampian, for example, it provides matching funding to approved local development schemes within a strategic plan that aims to broaden the range of economic activities, improve skills in the workforce and safeguard the area's heritage and environment. The Scottish Office Development Department provides guidance notes to assist applicants seeking funds from this strategic partnership.

2. **Area-based partnerships** tend to operate over a smaller area, such as a group of villages or a strath, at a level much closer to local communities.

*Groundbase Limited* is a partnership between Dumfries and Galloway Enterprise, Dumfries and Galloway Council, and representatives of the local business and voluntary sectors. Jointly funded by the European Union and public sector partners under the LEADER programme, this area-based partnership assists small-scale economic development projects that contribute to the social and cultural well-being of the Dumfries and Galloway area and supports projects which can be regarded as models for other communities to follow.

3. **Topic-based partnerships** focus on particular issues such as forestry or tourism.

Highland Birchwoods is a topic-based partnership, involving Highland Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, the Forestry Authority and Scottish Natural Heritage, with the principal aim of encouraging economic and environmental gains from the better use of native woodland in the Highlands of Scotland. It offers advice and guidance on all aspects of the conservation, management and use of semi-natural woodlands. For example, it has developed new uses of native woodland products, and has begun commercial shiitake mushroom cultivation on small-diameter birch logs produced from thinnings.

In practice, some partnerships may be difficult to categorise. For example, a topic-based partnership might address strategic issues. Equally, strategic partnerships cover a defined area, although they tend to cover larger areas and are more concerned with broad strategies than are area-based partnerships.

A further distinction may be made between partnerships that deliver development projects and those that enable other groups - perhaps through financial or administrative support - to deliver projects. A partnership can thus be the **delivery agent** of change itself, or the **enabler** of other groups who implement the actions.

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<sup>2</sup> Scottish Office (1996) *Rural Scotland Local Rural Partnerships: Guidance Note*, Edinburgh: Scottish Office

### ***1.5 When are local partnerships appropriate?***

Partnerships are most commonly established where a particular issue or event has created a need for action to improve local development opportunities. Such events can include the withdrawal of local services, such as a bus route or a village shop, or a rise in unemployment due to the closure of a major local business.

In some cases, there may be a general awareness of a need to take greater collective control over adverse changes in the area or region. These might relate to changes in public services or work opportunities or any other factor affecting quality of life. Where other approaches have failed, local partnerships may offer a new way of tackling problems.

Partnerships are appropriate for tackling issues that have a number of dimensions which cannot be addressed adequately by a single individual or organisation. Conversely, it is important to know when a partnership is not a suitable approach. For instance, where a problem affects relatively few communities of interest and is normally associated with one key agency, there is likely to be little benefit from the partnership approach.

In deciding whether to adopt a partnership approach, it is helpful to consider the following questions:

- will the partners be able to achieve more by working together than they would by working separately?
- will the partnership gain access to additional funds that would otherwise have been unavailable?
- will the partnership incorporate the views of sufficient local people who may be affected by its actions (particularly disadvantaged groups) into its work?

### ***1.6 Benefits of partnerships***

Partnerships can offer a variety of benefits, including:

#### **Shared vision**

- opportunities to foster a shared sense of direction at a local level
- a forum for local people to make their views heard, including groups that are often excluded from discussion, such as the young and the elderly
- scope for creating agreements with broad-based support from local communities

#### **Strategic thinking**

- agreement on priorities for action, in order to target resources at specific objectives
- strategic planning for long-term goals
- matching priorities between different members of the partnership

#### **Stimulus**

- co-ordinated action that can influence funding and decision-making bodies
- extra impetus to get ideas off the ground and make things happen
- initiation of other projects

### **Skill Development**

- opportunities for developing new skills for local people
- the sharing of skills between partners, leading to greater efficiency and cost saving

### **Synergy**

- better links between public agencies, the private and business sector and other elements in the local economy
- a forum to discuss, and hopefully resolve, disagreements and conflicts
- wider vision in partner bodies and organisations
- opportunities to tackle all aspects of a problem rather than addressing parts of it

If these benefits can be achieved, there is a greater chance of project **success**, both in obtaining **funding** - including core and project funding (see section 4.3) - and in achieving the partnership's aims.

Benefits will vary from one partnership to another and from one partner to another. Whether or not these benefits arise depends on how a partnership is set up, structured and operated, and whether effective procedures are put in place to evaluate its work.

## **2. Setting up a Partnership**

The way in which a partnership is set up determines how effectively it will be able to operate and achieve its goals. Therefore, great care should be taken during the establishment of a partnership to make decisions, and set procedures in place, that maximise its success at a later stage.

### ***2.1 Seeking advice***

For those individuals and groups setting up a partnership for the first time, it is important to seek advice. There is a wide range of organisations in both the public and private sector that have expertise in this area. Key agencies and organisations include the Scottish Office, local authorities, Local Enterprise Companies, Enterprise Trusts and Rural Forum Scotland (see List of Contacts on page 33 for contact details).

### ***2.2 Existing arrangements and organisations***

A partnership can often build on the actions and structures of organisations that are already in place or that existed previously. For example, Councils and local agencies may already have implemented development programmes or conducted surveys of local resources and issues.

Both the Angus Local Rural Partnership and Perth & Kinross Local Rural Partnership have benefited from the local knowledge and experience in partnership working gained on the earlier Tayside Rural Strategy. The Tayside Rural Strategy addressed a wide variety of development issues - including rural disadvantage and community involvement - and developed work programmes on which both the current Angus and the Perth & Kinross Rural Partnerships have the opportunity to build. Organisations that were represented in both the Strategy and the subsequent Local Rural Partnerships, gained valuable experience in collaborative working with each other as partners.

### **Interim structures**

It is common for a small group of dedicated people to take responsibility for initiating a partnership. This group may often form an interim body - such as a temporary steering committee - and may engage in meetings, workshops and consultations to decide how to establish the partnership. It may be necessary to select, rather than elect, community representatives at this stage.

Where time and resources allow, a pilot initiative may be set up in order to test new ways of working and learn lessons for the subsequent running of the partnership. Where possible, accurate and unbiased records should be taken to enable full evaluation of the pilot project.

### ***2.3 Consultation with relevant groups***

#### **Local community**

Representatives of all relevant sectors of the community, including democratically elected representatives and local authority officers, should be consulted as early as possible. It is very important that all groups that are likely to be affected should be considered in the consultation process. Groups that are likely to be excluded are those which are poorer and

less articulate. Such groups may have much to gain from effective local development schemes.

The Highland Primary and Community Care Local Planning Partnership is a joint venture between the Highland Community Care Forum, Highland Council and Highland Health Board, and extends over a large area of the Scottish Highlands. It aims to assist in the planning of health and community care services through local initiatives, under which providers of services, users and carers identify priorities for action. At a local level, key partners are likely to include representatives of the Highland Council services and NHS Trusts, GPs, Local Community Care Fora, Local Health Councils and other community groups. A previous (and separate) two-year initiative in Skye and Lochalsh - led by Highland Health Board but eventually involving all the current planning partners - has been used by the current partnership for drawing up plans for the provision of services for the elderly and those suffering from mental ill-health.

Consultation in the community can be conducted in various ways, including:

- press releases and written communication - these should be clear, relevant, attractive and accessible
- meetings with invited representatives of identified groups
- public displays and exhibitions (e.g. in a village hall or shop or school)
- face-to-face questionnaires - though care is needed over questionnaire design
- public meetings - these are rarely ideal, often being attended by a vocal minority of residents - and, therefore, should be well publicised and have a clear agenda

The effectiveness of public meetings can be improved through the use of skilled individuals who can encourage responses from the silent majority and divide the audience into workshop groups. This can help to prevent meetings from being dominated by out-spoken individuals.

South Pembrokeshire Partnership for Action with Rural Communities (SPARC) operates over an area of 400 square kilometres in South Pembrokeshire, with a population of about 21 000. Established in 1992 under the 1992 EU LEADER initiative, SPARC evolved from earlier initiatives to encourage community participation in rural development. Its work has focused on strengthening a network of community associations, developing rural tourism, providing support and training to small businesses, and adding value to local products. Involvement of local people from the outset has been seen as a key to ensuring the continuing survival of local development projects. Community consultation and involvement has involved:

- establishing community associations open to all local people
- identifying the needs of individual communities through household questionnaires
- devising strategic plans, from these questionnaires, for community development
- ensuring a strong representation of community residents

### **Other organisations and potential partners**

It is essential to consult at an early stage with organisations and individuals who may have an interest in the work of a partnership. Partnerships need to be aware of all the communities of interest that may be concerned with their work if they are to have a proper understanding of the issues that confront them. Listing potential groups and individuals also helps to avoid overlooking (and offending) people who may have an important contribution to make. The

danger of certain groups and individuals ‘hi-jacking’ the agenda for their own ends must also be recognised.

Locally based partnerships should seek the support and participation of local authorities. The new Councils, for example, have a broad remit of activities and are often crucial in determining the level of financial and political backing for a given project. They may be vital in helping to sustain a partnership if it experiences financial or staffing problems. The involvement of local authorities can increase the accountability of a partnership to the local community and provide fuller integration between partnership initiatives and Council services that impact on local people. Council involvement also ensures consistency with the statutory planning framework and other plans (such as Local Agenda 21). Some of the unsuccessful applicants for Local Rural Partnership funding from the Scottish Office in 1996 failed to develop adequate links with local authorities, and this, in at least one case, was considered as a significant reason for refusing them funding.

### **Local information**

If there is limited or poor information of the local area, a profile of the area should be prepared, indicating relevant communities of interest and particular issues that affect the area. A SWOT analysis - indicating the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the area - can be an effective way of pulling together local information and assessing issues in the area. This ‘local audit’ may be essential for obtaining funding from European Union sources. It is particularly important to have a good knowledge of existing community activity in the area. This will require **networking** with local individuals and bodies and adequate time and resources (staff and money) should be set aside for this purpose. Failure to profile the area accurately can result in inappropriate plans and development schemes.

### **Airing issues**

The ‘local audit’ and consultations with different communities of interest are likely to reveal some (or all) of the key issues facing the partnership. Discussion of such issues is an important part of the process of dialogue amongst partners and local people and is likely to help to clarify objectives and targets that will be set later by the partnership. Interim groups may play a key role in this process.

### **Assessing skills**

Assessing the skills levels both within the community and amongst potential partners is critical. A local skills audit can help to identify ‘hidden’ resources to help the project move forward, and, in itself, may provide an early positive result for the partnership. Identifying skills levels allows training needs to be identified and highlights areas in which the partnership may need to seek outside assistance. It also helps in setting objectives that the partnership can realistically expect to achieve, given the local skills base.

Busy people may only be able to take part in the project over a short period or in a limited way such as providing specific information or suggestions. They should be given specific tasks that allow their particular skills to be used to maximum advantage.

The consultation process is time-consuming and expensive and may be constrained by limited resources. Thus, there is likely to be a trade-off between full consultation and getting on with practical development work. A further consideration is that there may be political pressure both from the funding agencies and the local community for real achievements to be made early in the life of a partnership.

The Community Education Initiative on the Port au Port Peninsula in Newfoundland is a partnership involving the Port au Port Economic Development Association, the local Canada Employment Centre, the Department of Social Services, Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador (a business development agency), local schools and colleges, and local businesses.

Its aim is to “support educational change through an integrated community support system that will, in time, lead to a more highly educated population, and a more economically viable region”<sup>3</sup>.

A youth survey carried out in the 1980s by the port au Port Economic Development Association indicated a high rate of migration of skilled people out of the region. In 1992, the partnership conducted a survey of the educational needs of 2400 adult residents.

The initiative has organised a series of televised community forums, broadcast around the Port au Port Peninsula, which have provided opportunity for direct community involvement.

#### ***2.4 Agreeing on membership***

The key to determining membership of a partnership is the identification of all relevant communities of interest. As indicated above, care should be taken not to exclude relevant interest groups from the partnership. Working groups from the key communities of interest should engage in dialogue, before any formal public launch of the partnership.

In deciding the final number of partners, a balance needs to be struck between a large number of partners, which may render decision-making unwieldy, and a small number of partners, which may result in inadequate representation of different communities of interest. The parties selected should be chosen to match closely the overall aims and objectives of the partnership.

#### **Roles of the members**

Although a genuine partnership involves sharing power and responsibility, it is difficult in practice for all partners to have exactly equal status. Often one agency has more resources to offer a partnership and may seek a greater degree of influence. However, domination by any one organisation should be avoided. It may be necessary for some partners to yield some influence or power in order to place the aims of the partnership before the ambitions of any single partner. It is critically important at the outset for there to be a clear agreement about the respective roles and responsibilities of different partners.

Not all partners necessarily contribute funding to the partnership. Some may contribute ‘work in kind’ or occupy a purely advisory role, perhaps in representing the views of the local community.

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<sup>3</sup> New Economy Development Group (1996) *A Study of Innovative Examples of Local Partnerships* A report to Human Resources Development Canada, July 1996, Ottawa: New Economy Development Group Inc.

## The contribution of different sectors to partnerships

Partner	Examples of contribution to partnership
Publicly-funded bodies	- expertise in particular areas eg. environment, heritage, forestry, agriculture and other rural industries
Local authority	- funding - seconded staff - expertise in a wide range of fields (e.g. planning, social work)
Private sector (including all rural businesses)	- knowledge of local businesses - awareness of development opportunities
Community and voluntary sector	- first-hand knowledge of the area and its problems - a wide range of skills

Adapted from Craig (1995)<sup>4</sup>

In some projects, there will be core partners who initiate and run the partnership, and other partners who participate in specific projects relevant to their area of expertise.

### Working practices

Working within the framework of a partnership may involve significant changes to the normal working practices of the partners. For example:

- participating organisations may have to delegate some authority to the partnership
- compromise may be required concerning attitudes and issues on which partners are used to being partisan
- sharing power may be both uncomfortable and time-consuming for partners
- the aims of a partnership may not fit the more limited remits of some member agencies

Therefore, groundrules must be set so that all partners understand how the partnership will operate. Where appropriate, these should be formally agreed by all partners and included within any written documentation constituting the partnership.

### 2.5 Establishing common aims

At the outset, it is critical for all partners to identify and agree on a set of **common aims**. Realistically, this should depend on the expected outcomes and how they benefit all of the partners. This will help to create a **shared vision** that is acceptable to all partners, and from which specific objectives can be drawn. It will also help to ensure **commitment** from all the partners to achieving objectives.

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<sup>4</sup> Craig, S. (1995) *Making Partnerships Work*, Dublin: Combat Poverty Agency

Huntly Limited is a partnership that brings together representatives of Aberdeenshire Council, Gordon Enterprise Trust, the National Farmers Union for Scotland, three Community Councils, Huntly Traders Association, local businesses and a local secondary school. The aims of the partnership are based on the findings of a study, conducted by consultants and funded by the local authorities and the North-east Scotland Development Association. The study involved a series of public workshops in which local people identified the key issues facing the area. Subsequently, six key aims were agreed by all partners and were formally written into its terms of agreement. These are to:

- (i) prevent economic decline and encourage job creation
- (ii) promote the local economy to provide jobs and retain young people in the area
- (iii) ensure that new developments are appropriate to the area's needs and environment
- (iv) promote civic pride in the area
- (v) educate, advise and inform the public
- (vi) carry out other tasks that are necessary to meeting the above aims.

In practice, there may be strong differences of opinion that need to be reconciled if a partnership is to move forward. Statutory bodies may view particular objectives differently from voluntary groups or from members of the local community. It is essential that partners are open about their own objectives within the partnership and indicate areas where they may find it difficult to agree on aims or particular projects. This approach will encourage the setting of realistic aims and will help avoid hidden agendas which might undermine the later working of the partnership.

### **Targets**

Having agreed aims and objectives, a realistic set of targets should be set, within a clear timeframe. All partners should be essential to achieve the goal(s) that the partnership sets itself. Measurable outputs should be identified which relate to the core purpose of the project and to the priorities of the partners. Both long-term and short-term targets should be set. The latter should be readily achievable to ensure the credibility of the partnership. Ideally, all targets should be SMART - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound.

Although specific objectives of the partnership may change, the shared vision between the partners needs to be sustained throughout the life of the partnership. It is too easy to start with shared vision on paper which, in the words of one project officer in a partnership, then 'goes in all different directions'.

## **2.6 Planning**

### **Timescale**

Adequate time should be allowed to consult with relevant communities of interest, agree on membership and set appropriate objectives for the partnership. A hurried start-up period may result in important groups or individuals being excluded or in critical issues being overlooked. The lifespan of the partnership should be made clear at an early stage, so that potential participants know what their commitment should be. Outlining when a partnership will end should also help the partners to focus on what needs to be done, and by when. Evidently, the time required for a partnership to achieve its objectives varies according to the targets that it sets itself.

As a broad guide, approximately six months should be set aside to identify partners, conduct consultations, hold public meetings, convene a first Board meeting and begin planning the work of the partnership. There may be scope for short-term groups to come together on an as-needed basis to address particular problems.

A plan will be necessary to provide a framework, and a timescale, within which the partnership can achieve its objectives. Typically, it should contain the following information:

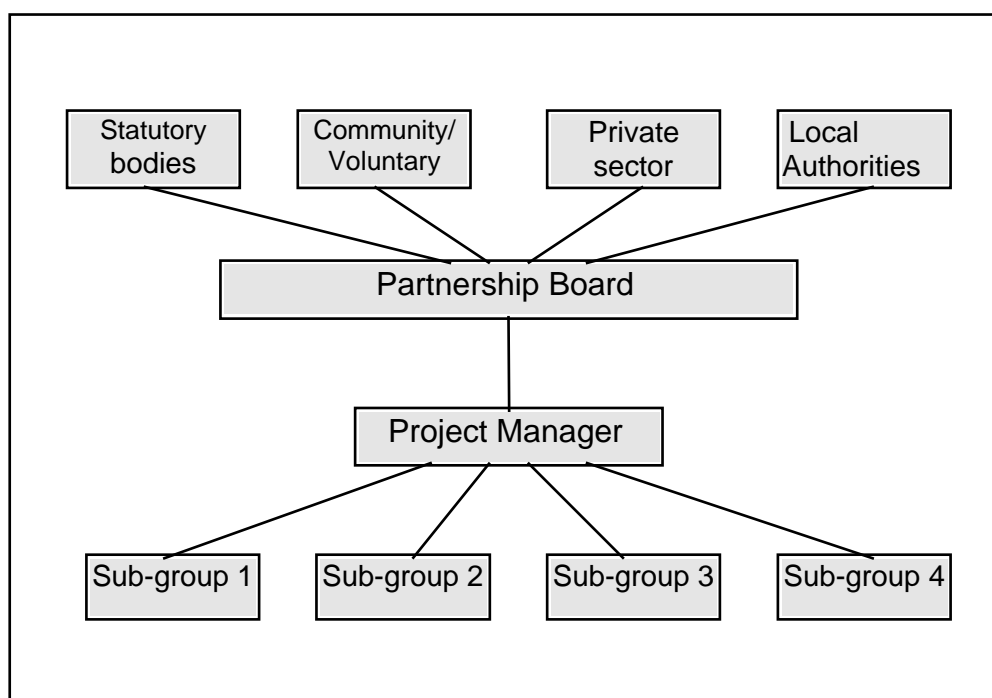
- a profile of the local area, including its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
- an appraisal of the needs of the area, indicating those of any disadvantaged groups
- a description of the structure, activities, targets and expected outcomes of the partnership
- a work programme, stating how and when objectives will be addressed, and by whom
- a clear prioritisation of tasks, with reasons for the priorities selected.

For the first and each subsequent financial year, a business/action plan should be produced, giving detailed information on the goals, work programmes, planned expenditures and sources of funding of the partnership. This is often a requirement of funding bodies and may have to be written into the partnership agreement.

### 3. Structuring a Partnership

The structure of a partnership should enable efficient administration and decision-making, encourage consideration of local views, and ensure effective action through work programmes and projects. While it is necessary to have a clear and organised structure, it is also essential that the operations of the partnership are sufficiently flexible to allow for innovation and the ability to react to particular circumstances. A typical partnership structure is illustrated below.

#### A typical partnership structure



#### 3.1 Legal structure

Most partnerships establish some sort of legal status or constitution which sets out governing rules for the organisation. Some details concerning different forms of legal status are given below. However, this booklet provides guidance only, and is not a substitute for obtaining more detailed information on relevant rules and legislation.

A formal approach is to establish a company, limited by guarantee, under which each partner becomes a director of the company. Such companies do not have shareholders, but their members agree to pay a nominal sum, often £1, if the company fails. The right of the members to appoint a Board of Directors is set out in the company's constitution, known as the Memorandum and Articles of Association. Additional members may be co-opted onto the Board, if necessary. Any surpluses are normally re-invested in the company and, if the Board members are unpaid, the company can seek charitable status which, if successful, can bring tax advantages. A limited company is subject to more controls and bureaucracy than other structures.

It is important to be aware that anyone becoming involved in company structure has the same legal responsibilities as a director in any company. This includes a personal legal liability if the company operates in unsound circumstances (e.g. trading whilst insolvent). Personal liability insurance for directors may be advisable. Further, a company should have professional liability insurance for any staff who provide advice to third parties or who may be involved in potentially risky activities. This may apply irrespective of whether the advice given free or charged.

In some cases, a partnership may be administered in the form of a trust. More restrictions may apply to the management of a trust fund than to the funds of a limited company. A solicitor with experience of non-profit organisations should be consulted if it is intended to form a company or a trust.

Less formal structures include a memorandum of agreement, which is a signed statement by all partners to agree a way of working. Such an arrangement allows partners more freedom than a more formal legal structure and can be modified by mutual agreement. A typical memorandum of agreement identifies the partners, objectives and geographical area of the partnership, indicates any employment of staff (if funding is available), and states how finances will be held and managed.

In situations where the partnership receives money from central government - such as the Rural Challenge Fund - the main funder may prefer a formal structure. With experience gained as more partnerships develop, key funders may well prescribe certain structures in the future, even if they do not do so at present.

### ***3.2 Management Board***

Whether a formal or informal structure is established, partnerships are usually directed by a Management Board, made up of representatives of the partner agencies and, often, members of the local community. The functions of the Board should include:

- formulating plans (including action plans and business plans)
- advising on policy and strategic issues
- linking with parent organisations (i.e. the organisations that they represent)
- overseeing funding arrangements
- monitoring work programmes.

The effectiveness of the Board can be greatly increased if it includes senior officers of partnership organisations, who have the authority to make important decisions. Each partner should contribute particular resources and/or technical expertise to the operation of the partnership.

### ***3.3 Chairperson***

Particularly where there are opposing communities of interest, it is advisable to appoint an independent chair of the Board. This person should not be seen as representing a particular interest and may often be a respected local individual. Chairing a partnership can require strong diplomatic skills to ensure the partners work together and the ability to make things progress if stalemate is reached. Chairpersons should also be trained in the skills of conducting a meeting (as must the secretary in taking minutes). Many community groups

have lost the support of activists due to time wasted by ‘wafflers’ at poorly managed meetings.

### **3.4 Project manager**

Where sufficient resources are available, a project manager - sometimes known as a project director, project officer or project worker - should be appointed to handle the day-to-day running of the partnership. The different terms may reflect differences of responsibility, which should be clearly identified at the outset. This individual is often critical to the success of a partnership. Project managers may have the following roles:

- finance and office administration
- acting as a bridge between community opinion and the Board
- drafting strategies and work plans in consultation with the partnership’s member organisations for consideration by the Board
- identifying and initiating projects (with support from the Board)
- providing progress reports to Board meetings.

Project managers require a broad range of skills and qualities including the following:

- financial and personnel management skills
- enthusiasm and drive
- diplomacy
- patience
- an ability to plan and think strategically
- understanding of how public agencies work
- understanding of the local area/people
- an ability to translate ideas into action
- a ‘thick skin’ and an ability to take criticism!

## Typical job specification for a Manager of a rural partnership

### Local Rural Partnership Manager

A manager is sought to co-ordinate and implement the running of the local rural partnership under the supervision of the Management Board. He/she will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the partnership, for selecting and designing potential development projects and providing regular progress reports and annual business plans to the Management Board.

Successful candidates should have:

- strong planning and analytical skills
- a thorough understanding of rural development issues and related agencies and policies
- a commitment to supporting styles of development that bring benefits to rural areas
- excellent communication and negotiation skills
- sound business management skills
- an ability to motivate a range of agencies and individuals into collective action
- a high degree of personal initiative, backed up by a proven track record of achievement.

The position is for a fixed term of three years. Salary circa £X.

For further details contact .....

Deadline for application: .....

A healthy working relationship between the project officer and the Board members is critical to the success of the partnership. Frequent causes of breakdown can be the caution that characterises some boards or the desire of project officers to chart their own course forward, independently of the Board's wishes.

### **3.5 Community representation**

Community involvement in partnerships can be exercised in two ways:

- community representatives can become Board members and/or
- representative structures can be set up to allow local views to be heard.

There is a spectrum of levels of community involvement, ranging from community control over activity at one end to agency control at the other. The relationship between the initiators of the partnership and the local community should be made clear at the outset. It is important that community interests do not become marginalised.

Most communities contain individuals who are capable of disrupting meetings and generally inhibiting the operation of the partnership. There are powerful reasons for not allowing such people to become community representatives on partnerships, even though they may be articulate individuals, not least because they sometimes tend to represent themselves rather than the wider community.

A guide to the principles of community involvement and mechanisms for how this might be approached will be issued by the Scottish National Rural Partnership.

### **3.6 Disadvantaged groups**

Care is required in order for the views of existing disadvantaged groups to be expressed and integrated into partnership plans. These groups can often be inadvertently ignored. Careful attention should be paid to finding out the views of such groups in ways that do not patronise them. It should be noted that disadvantaged groups may not be immediately obvious. Disadvantage can be geographical, financial, or related to access to information.

The Lumsden Community Project in Aberdeenshire is operated by a management committee comprising representatives of Aberdeenshire Council and local voluntary bodies. Over five months, a local person, with experience in community work, was employed as a community animateur and held meetings with community groups to identify local needs. The partnership subsequently assisted in the establishment and running of a residents' group, a senior youth group, an over-50s club and a junior club, all of which liaise closely with the project officer.

### **3.7 Sub-groups**

Beneath the Board, a series of sub-groups (often topic groups) may be set up to manage individual projects or address particular themes. Such groups should report progress to the Board on a fixed timetable and through agreed procedures. This will help to give them a greater sense of empowerment.

The Hereford and Worcester Rural Strategy Partnership is a partnership between a broad range of organisations. These include local authorities, training and enterprise councils, environmental groups, farming groups, tourist boards, amenity and recreation groups, church groups, the police, and government rural agencies such as the Countryside Commission, the Rural Development Commission, Forest Enterprise and the Forestry Authority. The key aims of the partnership relate to the rural economy, tourism, rural communities, rural housing, rural transport, managing the countryside and recreation. Consequently, four working groups have been set up to address the partnership's priorities for action. These are the:

- rural economy and housing group
- community facilities group
- managing the countryside group
- acceptable tourism and recreation group

Membership on each working group comprises those partners from the Rural Strategy Partnership that are particularly affected by the issues under consideration.

## 4. Operating a Partnership

This section provides guidance on key aspects of operating a partnership. However, individual partnerships should give careful consideration on how to apply these guidelines to their own circumstances and needs.

### 4.1 Administration

Administrative procedures should, where possible, be written into the constitution of the partnership. They should be based on open (and just) decision-making procedures with which all partners agree. All sub-groups within a partnership need clear terms of reference indicating their purpose, membership, powers, funding and decision-making procedures.

The operation of a partnership requires meetings involving the partners, project managers, community representatives, and, on occasion, external agencies and other partnerships. Agendas should be prepared and circulated to all participants in advance of meetings. All agreements and actions to be taken should be recorded in the minutes.

Typically, Board meetings are held every three months, although perhaps every six weeks during the initial stages. Most partnerships also hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) - which may be open to the public - at which a review of the previous year's work is presented for discussion. AGMs are also used to take decisions on constitutional issues, such as the addition of new partners. The Board **must** be prepared to make decisions, otherwise, the community may lose confidence in the partnership.

Informal and *ad hoc* meetings play a central part in partnership working. Such meetings require good channels of communication and good relations between members of the Board, the project manager and the community. It is very important that informal groups do not meet to exclude other partners, and that such meetings should not deviate from the common aims of the partnership.

All meetings must have a clearly defined purpose and should be time-constrained in order to retain the input of busy activists. Efficiency of the administration relies largely on minimising formal bureaucratic procedures in order to allow speedy support to be given where it is needed. Project managers should receive adequate clerical and secretarial support to prevent them becoming tied up in bureaucratic matters.

Where a partnership disburses funds for development projects in response to applications from local groups and individuals, procedures should be put in place to ensure confidentiality of the applicants.

## 4.2 Networking

Networking involves making informal contacts within the partnership and the community and with other agencies and partnerships. It provides various benefits:

- awareness of the issues that people consider important
- identification of the key individuals and organisations in the area
- better understanding of the work of other organisations.

National and even international networking can provide contacts and information on similar projects elsewhere. For example, experience and best practice on EU LEADER projects is exchanged through a European network of local action groups (LAGs) and a LEADER co-ordinating unit based in Brussels. These and other groups can provide new insights into ways of addressing old problems.

Founded in 1989, the Atlantic Arc Commission groups together 26 regions of the European Union along the European Atlantic coastal belt, including the whole of the West Coast and Islands Council areas in Scotland. Jointly funded by the European Commission and local authorities, it aims to provide a development programme for the Atlantic Arc Region by contributing finance for partnership projects. It promotes the transfer of ideas and practice through networking activities (including an annual conference) and focuses its support on infrastructure, communications, tourism and training.

## 4.3 Funding

Partnerships may receive funding from internal and external sources:

- Internal sources include the contributions of the partners and, where applicable, subscriptions from individual members
- External sources are provided primarily by the public sector, including the Rural Challenge Fund of the Scottish Office and the European Union's Objectives 1, 5b and LEADER programmes. Voluntary bodies may also provide funds.

### Securing funding

Forming a partnership is a condition of funding for programmes such as LEADER and the Rural Challenge Fund. **Matching funding** must be obtained from other sources. Some funding programmes are now considering whether to include the value of 'work in kind' in calculating the levels of matching funding. When applying for funding, it may be necessary to anticipate some sources of matching funding before they are formally made available. Care should be taken that the commitment of such sources is genuine. Communities can also engage in fund-raising activities, such as ceilidhs, and seek company donations and money from charities. Where funding is sought for capital projects, careful consideration is required as to how subsequent running costs will be met.

## **Managing finance**

The financial resources of a partnership may be divided into core funding, which covers operational costs, and project funding, which provides for the implementation of development initiatives.

The Pitlochry and District Tourism Management Programme aims to improve the quality of local tourism services without harming the environment, through specific development projects. Core funding is provided by Perth and Kinross Council, Scottish Enterprise Tayside and Perthshire Tourist Board. Project funding is divided into two sections:

- a small projects budget, funded by Scottish Enterprise Tayside, Perth and Kinross Council and a voluntary levy on membership of the tourist board
- other projects have been financed from various sources, including those who also provide core-funding such as Scottish Enterprise Tayside, work 'in kind' from local groups and individuals, and national schemes such as the British Telecom 'Countryside Access for All' project.

Careful planning is required for effective financial management of a partnership to achieve best value for money. The following points may be particularly important:

- the early months of a partnership's funding should focus on administration, planning and design - great care should be taken not to provide too much capital funding until mechanisms have been put in place to ensure that the spending is essential to the central purposes of the partnership
- different partners may operate through different financial procedures and timescales - partners should agree at the outset on how and when individual contributions to the partnership will be made
- some funding sources, such as the European Union, provide monies at pre-determined times of the financial year - the partnership should therefore try to harmonise its financial planning with that of key sources of funding
- advice should be sought from appropriate sources (for example, local authorities and enterprise companies) concerning the requirements and procedures for applying for external funding
- some forms of project funding (e.g. government grants) may be payable only to certain categories of people. Many forestry-related grants, for example, are only payable to landowners.

Financial control is important and full accountability is essential when any public funds are used. However, partnerships should be project-led rather than audit-driven. Of course, all accounts must, by law, be audited independently on an annual basis.

### ***4.4 Training***

Internal training needs - both of paid and unpaid staff - should be identified early in the establishment of a partnership. For example, individual partners may benefit from training in interpersonal and negotiating skills which are important features of multi-agency working. Particular attention should be given at the outset to any training needs of the chairperson and project manager. In some situations, local authorities or other agencies with interests in the partnership may be prepared to second personnel in order for staffing requirements to be met.

There may be a need to train individuals who do not work directly for the partnership, such as **animateurs** who work with community groups. Animateurs that are ‘parachuted in’ can be a liability because they lack local knowledge. Participants in local projects, often local residents, may also require training, for example in administrative and computing skills.

#### **4.5 Problems and obstacles**

In setting up a partnership, it is essential to be aware of the problems and obstacles that might be experienced. The following list suggests some areas in which problems may occur:

##### **Funding**

- Where obtaining funding is the only aim, a partnership may be no more than a 'partnership of convenience'. Even if funding is successfully granted, the partnership is likely to experience conflicts of interest which may limit its success in the longer run
- Where a particular project or scheme involves grant-aid or subsidy to local groups or individuals, careful procedures should be drawn up to prevent abuse of such schemes

An innovative project was set up in 1992 to subsidise driving lessons for unemployed people in remote rural areas of Galloway. Evaluation was carried out through questionnaires sent to participants in the scheme and through feedback from the driving instructors approved to provide lessons. Mis-use of the subsidies by a small number of participants has led to proposals to establish better vetting of applicants to the scheme.

- Difficulties may arise in sustaining sources of funding, particularly after the initial enthusiasm for the partnership scheme has diminished

##### **Understanding and cooperation between partners**

- Where one partner exercises an undue influence, there may be no effective working together to create a shared vision of what to do and how to do it. The other partners should be alert to empire-building by such individuals or groups
- The need to make decisions that are acceptable to all partners can result in compromises and agreements that are substantially ‘watered down’ and thus less ineffective
- Poor communication between individuals and organisations at national and local levels can lead to a limited understanding of the local area by external agencies and inadequate knowledge by local people of national initiatives.
- In some cases, the implementation of a project by a local partnership may ‘tread on the toes’ of statutory authorities
- If there is more than one partnership operating within the same area, there may be potential for the partnerships to duplicate their efforts or work against each other. Mutual understanding of the aims and objectives of each partnership should help to minimise any conflict of interest. An overall strategy for a region, to which all partnerships adhere, may reduce these risks. Networking between partnerships and joint working, where applicable, may also help harmonise their activities.

##### **Staffing**

- Ensuring that all partners remain committed to the aims of the partnership, and willing to make compromises, can consume much time and effort, particularly by the chairperson and the project officer
- Limited resources and funding may place limits on the staffing levels of the partnership

- Over-dependence on the project manager may result in difficulty in sustaining the achievements of the project following his/her departure

A local partnership scheme in northern Scotland has, largely due to the work of its project worker, set up a range of community groups to address the needs of disadvantaged groups. The project worker has developed a strong and trusting relationship with the local community but is only assigned to the post for a temporary period. Consequently, there is concern, both within and outside the community, that the local people have become too dependent on the project worker and that the local groups may be difficult to sustain.

### **Community cooperation**

- The achievements of partnerships may be constrained by frictions between local groups that wish to prevent change and those that seek development
- Key power brokers may 'put a spanner in the works' if they disagree with partnership decisions and actions, for example, by reporting the problems in the local press or by ceasing to co-operate with the partnership

A local nature plan dealing with conservation and informal recreation was drawn up between a number of bodies in an Aberdeenshire village. It contained outline proposals for increasing access onto surrounding farmland but there were no prior discussions with the farmers or their representative bodies before the launch of the idea. At this, the local farming community turned out to block the proposal and in so doing largely undermined many of the good ideas that were contained in the overall scheme. The project was stillborn as a result.

While it is difficult to prescribe ready solutions to such problems, many difficulties - particularly those relating to *understanding and co-operation between partners* and *community co-operation* - can be overcome (or avoided) by maintaining an effective dialogue between all interests involved in the partnership.

### **4.6 Inter-personal relations**

All partners should feel that there is an appropriate distribution of power for the purposes of the partnership, and that all those in the partnership have an identifiable contribution to make. This requires that each partner understands and trusts the role of the other partners.

It is also important to maintain good relations with agencies outside the partnership, particularly where there is potential for joint working on some issues. It is very helpful to have a supportive local press. A critical press can force the partnership into a defensive mode of operation.

## 5. Reviewing and evaluating a Partnership

Mechanisms should be put in place that allow the partnership to review its remit and membership and evaluate progress in achieving objectives.

Partnership agreements usually require the production of an annual review or report of activities. Typically, this is produced by the project manager or by the Board and is considered at Board meetings and the AGM. Sub-group actions will often be evaluated both by the group itself and the partnership Board. In some cases, such as where external bodies provide matching funding, partnership projects must also be evaluated by outside consultants.

Evaluations can be conducted according to a set of performance indicators and/or through consultation within the area, for example, through questionnaires to local organisations, businesses and households.

The three-year Sussex Rural Social Partnership Project was set up in 1991 to improve the provision and accessibility of day care services for frail older people and their carers. Funded by joint Health and Social Service finance and a grant from the Rural Development Commission, the project was overseen by a Steering Group including representatives of Age Concern East Sussex, East Sussex Social Services Department, the South Downs NHS Trust and the FHSA. In 1993, an external evaluation of the project's achievements was carried out, as follows:

- documentary analysis of project records (including minutes of relevant meetings)
- in-depth interviews with the two project workers, to identify the key methods of support and consultation developed by the project
- a questionnaire / interview survey of groups with whom the project has worked - semi-structured interviews were conducted with five representatives of local Care committees which had been established to run Care initiatives in local village halls.

Results indicated that the Care days were well attended and that the Care committees had significant potential to identify the needs of older residents and their preferred means of having these needs met.

### 5.1 Performance indicators

In deciding how to evaluate its work, a partnership should identify performance indicators. These should be linked to the objectives of the partnership and act as markers to show whether targets are being achieved. Examples of indicators are given below:

- economic outcomes, such as the number of jobs created through development projects
- the financial turnover of the partnership
- the amount of matching funding 'levered'
- the number of organisations involved in the joint planning of initiatives
- support through membership subscriptions (where applicable)
- the number of projects implemented, projects underway, and their outcomes
- feedback from the local community, including the media and different communities of interest
- feedback from funding agencies
- the level of 'additionality' in the partnership's work i.e. achievements that otherwise would not have been possible

- the extent to which the partnership's achievements are self-sustaining
- the extent to which local people are better able to take control of their destinies.

### ***5.2 Reviewing membership***

As the partnership evolves, and addresses new issues and objectives, it may be necessary to invite new members to join. Procedures for changes in membership can be written into the partnership's legal agreement, and are normally enacted at AGMs in order that such changes are by general agreement.

Alternatively, the Board may co-opt new members. This can be an effective way of spreading workloads, engaging the views of community representatives, and acquiring additional expertise on particular aspects of the partnership's work.

### ***5.3 Innovation***

Innovative initiatives and actions can contribute to the success of a partnership and provide useful examples to others. Innovation is also viewed favourably by funding agencies, for example under the European Union LEADER programme. Innovation is also a defining feature of many partnerships in other parts of the world.

The Landcare movement in Australia provides a good example of a partnership addressing a widely perceived problem in an innovative way. Years of drought and economic hardship had exposed the fragility of land management practices on marginal land. The problem could not be tackled on an individual farm basis. Instead local groups were established in river catchments to plan with public sector assistance strategies for environmental recovery. There are now over 2000 Landcare groups throughout Australia, founded on the common realisation that the farmers themselves had to recognise the problems facing them and then work with others to address them.

### ***5.4 Sustaining momentum***

Early enthusiasm and commitment amongst partners and the local community can wane after time. The following suggestions may help to sustain interest and action:

**Aims/objectives**

- set realistic objectives that benefit all the partners concerned
- establish a timetable to achieve objectives
- keep looking at the aims and objectives and review actions as necessary

**Action**

- achieve some early successes - “success breeds success”
- act rather than talk - avoid the partnership becoming a ‘talking shop’

**Administration/ management**

- maintain good leadership
- work with willing individuals and allow other participants to follow when successes become evident
- minimise bureaucratic procedures to allow rapid response to development needs
- be conscious of the need to promote the project through local media

**Teamwork**

- cultivate collective ownership of project actions
- avoid project proposals that exacerbate conflicts
- spread the workload beyond the project officer to empower local activists

**Flexibility**

- maintain flexibility of action within a structured approach
- ensure that the partnership can draw in new members and does not become inward looking
- be innovative and look to projects that can sustain the interest and support of the partners and the local community
- develop individual roles and responsibilities to enable project workers to take on new challenges

**5.5 Conclusions**

Partnerships are likely to become more important approaches to rural development projects in a wide range of countries and will tackle a varied set of problems. They are significant in that they offer a new set of approaches, with the potential for creating stronger development projects which are more likely to yield positive results. However, the success of partnerships is not guaranteed and it is vital that those engaged in partnerships are aware of the factors that predispose some partnerships to succeed and others to fail. The challenge of making partnerships effective is considerable, but the possible rewards make this a challenge worth taking on.

## Glossary

- **Community**

is the collective term for all the local individuals, businesses and groups that are resident within the area covered by the partnership.

- **Community animateurs**

are key individuals who encourage and help to maintain community involvement in local development schemes. They usually act as a link between local residents and external agencies, and may be local residents and/or be associated with development agencies.

- **Communities of interest**

refers to different groups within a community, each of which has its own set of values and views concerning policy and practice in rural development.

- **Effectiveness**

refers, in this booklet, to the ability of partnerships to implement their objectives and thereby generate positive results in positive action in the community.

- **Evaluation**

is a process which reviews the effectiveness of a partnership, including its objectives, policies, administration, management and work programmes. Evaluation should review processes in a partnership's operation as well as outcomes. It may reveal unintended (and important) effects of a partnership.

- **Matching funding**

is funding provided by individuals and/or organisations which complements that given by a development programme. Some development programmes only provide grant-aid if matching funding is obtained.

- **LEADER**

is a European Union programme that provides financial support to partnership initiatives launched by local communities. The partners in each initiative - typically representing local public, private and voluntary bodies - form a 'Local Action Group' (LAG) which receives matching funding from LEADER.

- **Leverage**

describes the process whereby funding provided by individuals and/or organisations is used to obtain matching funding through development programmes.

- **Local Agenda 21**

is a local action plan, introduced at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, which aims to harmonise local economic development with protection of the local environments and cultures. It involves co-operation between local public, private and voluntary bodies and is being designed and implemented by local authorities across the country.

- **Local Enterprise Companies**

are government-funded agencies responsible for local economic and business development in Scotland.

- **Local Rural Partnerships**

are groupings of organisations that operate collectively in a particular rural area and that have received support from the Scottish Office Rural Partnership Fund

- **Partners**

are the individuals who are members of the management boards of a partnership, and, at a broader level, the organisations that are represented in a partnership.

- **Performance Indicators**

are criteria chosen to show whether a target has been achieved - for example, the number of jobs created.

- **Strategic Plans**

are formal and structured plans for action, which take a long-term overview of development policies and actions. Short- and medium-term plans, including business plans, can contribute to the strategic plan.

## **Useful contacts**

Scottish National Rural Partnership, The Scottish Office Agriculture, Environment and Fisheries Department (SOAEFD), Pentland House, Edinburgh, EH14 1TY

Councils are too numerous to list but can be found in your local phone book. Community councils may be useful contacts.

There are two Scottish bodies covering support of enterprise. These are Scottish Enterprise, 120 Bothwell Street, Glasgow G2 7JP, Tel. 0141 248 2700 and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Bridge House, Bank Street, Inverness IV1 1QR  
Tel. 01463 234 171

Local Enterprise Companies and Local Enterprise Trusts can both be found in your local phone book. They will be listed under their full title e.g. Dumfries and Galloway Enterprise or Gordon Enterprise Trust

Scottish Tourist Board, 23 Ravelston Terrace, Edinburgh EH4 3EU Tel. 0131 332 2433 and Thistle House, Beechwood Park North, Inverness IV2 3ED  
Tel. 01463 716 996

Scottish Natural Heritage has its head office at Hope Terrace Edinburgh EH9 2AS  
Tel. 0131 447 4784 but for local partnerships the regional offices should be consulted

Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, 18/19 Claremont Street, Edinburgh EH7 4QD  
Tel. 0131 556 3882

Forestry Commission, 231 Corstorphine Road, Edinburgh EH12 7AT  
Tel 0131 334 0303