

The PLANED Experience 1987 - 2008

Background

PLANED, (Pembrokeshire Local Action Network for Enterprise and Development) established in 2001 evolved from SPARC (South Pembrokeshire Partnership for Action with Rural Communities) 1991-2001; TCRI (Taf and Cleddau Rural Initiative) 1987 – 2001.

PLANED's role is to engage local people in Pembrokeshire in improving their quality of life - culturally, socially, environmentally and economically.

PLANED's aim is to play a vital role in empowering and enabling local communities to be full and equal partners in the development of their area, through accessing EU programmes, Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) initiatives and other opportunities.

PLANED has

- Strong track record of inclusive, participative and successful community development
- Spanning social, cultural, heritage and environmental activities, community based sustainable tourism, agricultural support and enterprise development
- 20 years experience of working as a partnership organisation, bringing together communities, special interest groups, statutory agencies and local authorities
- Purchased the 17 workshops and the PLANED offices at the Old School, Narberth, thus giving the organisation a valuable asset base
- Successfully managed EU LEADER I, II, and +, Objective 5b, Objective 1, EU Phare and Socrates projects UK and Wales promoted initiatives
- International, UK and Welsh development organisations have highlighted the effectiveness of the organisation's integrated approach.
- PLANED has been selected as the Local Action Group by the partnership "Pembrokeshire Advance", established to oversee the development of a Rural Development Plan Axis 4 strategy for Pembrokeshire.

The PLANED Process

- PLANED achieves its objectives through implementing a number of interrelated strategies which taken together promote sustainable living: -
 - **Supporting local community activities to improve their quality of life**
 - **Sense of Place/Valuing the environment**
 - **Developing a community culture of entrepreneurship**
 - **Encouraging local enterprise**
 - **Developing sustainable tourism**
 - **Supporting sustainable agriculture**

PLANED's process of engagement ensures a very wide-ranging involvement in the development of strategies and projects, with local people and specialist partners feeding into the process.

- Capacity building and training activities are undertaken to give local people the confidence to become more entrepreneurial - socially, economically and environmentally, these underpin all of the organisation's activities.
- PLANED has long experience of introducing and developing pioneering methodologies, tools, techniques and processes for the engagement of communities in local development, including Community Appraisals, Visioning, Future Search, Plugging the Leaks.

Partnerships and Partnership working

PLANED has long experience of partnership working, aiming to bring together local people and key agencies and organisations.

- **Pembrokeshire Rural Community Action**
- **Pembrokeshire Enterprise Network (PEN)**
- **Pembrokeshire Social Economy Network**
- **Business Development for Local Social Enterprises**
- **Strategic Recycling Scheme Partnership**
- **Pembrokeshire Sustainable Agriculture Network**
- **EU Article 6 Programme – Harnessing Rural Capital - Ballyhoura**
- PLANED also has established /helped establish and co-ordinate a number of special interest networks
 - **Festivals and Events Network**
 - **PBe-The Pembrokeshire Bio-Energy Group:**
 - **Pembrokeshire Growers**
 - **Agricultural Shows Network**
 - **Green Tourism Network**
 - **Sense of Place Network**
 - **Community Energy Network**
 - **“Valuing the Environment” Network.**

The Future of PLANED

2006 - wide ranging consultation and review of its 2004-2006 Development Strategy.

PLANED will continue to be a Community led partnership, a charity and a company limited by guarantee, its Board members consist of 50% community sector representatives 50% special interest groups; Tourism, Business and Farming interests and the Public Sector. The Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) and Pembrokeshire Association for Voluntary Services (PAVS) are observers.

Current Projects on-going until 2008

These will support the seamless transition from PLANED's 2004 -2006 strategy to its 2007 -2013 strategy are:-

- **Community Support**
 - Shaping our Futures– Community Action for Sustainable Living
 - Rural Community Action
 - Sense of Place
 - Valuing the Environment
 - Community Enterprise Support
- **Creating a Culture of Entrepreneurship/LEADER +**
 - Business Group Support
 - Energy & Recycling
 - Festivals and Events
 - Heritage Niche Tourism / Sense of Place
- **Agriculture Support**
 - Farming Connect and its successor schemes
 - Harnessing Rural capital/Article 6/Sustainable Agriculture Network
 - Pembrokeshire Growers Association,
 - Agricultural Shows
- **Strategic Recycling Scheme**
- **Social Enterprise Development**
 - In conjunction with The Pembrokeshire Enterprise Network (PEN), Pembrokeshire Business Initiative (PBI) and Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services (PAVS).
- **Co-operation/Transnational Projects**
 - Festivals and Events Action 2 Pan Wales project
 - Developing a Community Enterprise Culture
 - Linking Heritage & Culture to the Development of Tourism
 - EU Article 6 - Sustainable Agriculture

Implementing Innovative Approaches and Transfer of Good Practice

Examples of PLANED piloted projects

- The now well established **“Greenways”** project, linking access to countryside, public and community transport and green tourism.
- First group in Wales to implement **“greening your business” training** for B&B's, and develop **walking holidays linked to luggage transfer utilising public transport.**
- Local people undertaking **Action Planning workshops to develop Local Action Plans**, enabling local people to be fuller partners in the development of their community.
- **The Whole Farm Support Scheme** widely recognised for its success in changing farmers' attitudes, engaging them in an holistic approach to the development of their holdings.
- **Sense of Place community heritage training**
- Encouraging communities and business groups to undertake **“Plugging the Leaks”** in order to make the most of their local economy

PLANED aims to continue to be a 'best practice' example of involving local people in sustainable development of their communities, currently PLANED is piloting three new innovative projects:-

- Carnegie UK Trust funding is helping to develop two projects:-
 - A new community **sustainability engagement tool**, working with partners with expertise e.g. New Economics Foundation, Countryside Council for Wales, The New Economics Foundation (NEF) was commissioned to assist with its design to meet the following objectives:-
 - **Help communities to understand sustainable development**
 - **Inform the planning and development of sustainable community projects.**
 - **Assist key funding partners in their assessment of community projects when allocating funding.**
 - **Be used through incorporation into “Future Search” or “Plugging the Leaks” processes or as a stand alone activity.**The tool has been now used in 20 communities with great success.
 - Identifying how **local people can play a greater role in planning for their futures through engaging in local community planning** linked to the Community Plan statutory process. Partners in this are NEF, groups in Eire, Sweden and Finland and locally Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services and Pembrokeshire County Council..

- With new LEADER+ funding **investigate how environmental and heritage data can be made more user friendly and accessible in order to attract visitors and local people.**

2008 and beyond

PLANED is the Local Action Group for Axis 4 of the Rural Development Plan, The PLANED Strategy is to support “The Community as the Hub – the Heart (social, cultural) and the Pulse (economic, environmental) of Rural Life.”

PLANED aims to continue **to access funding from EU, Wales and other sources:-**

- **£200,000 has been allocated by the Welsh Assembly Government Community Facilities and Activities Programme,**
- Welsh Assembly Government funding has been awarded to PLANED to co-ordinate **Rural Community Action** in Pembrokeshire for one more year.
- **RDP Axis 3 and 4 bids cover the following themes:-**
 - **Communities as the Hub of Rural Life** – assisting local people to analyse and understand the current role of key hub communities and identifying and overcoming obstacles to their providing an enhanced and sustainable role in supporting the quality of life for their surrounding areas
 - **Community and Skills Hubs** – providing a range of short training courses to meet local skills gaps
 - **Developing a Rural Skills Resource** – piloting local mechanisms for people with newly acquired skills to better link to local labour market
 - **Developing, Enhancing and Celebrating Sense of Place** – will encourage local people to value and celebrate local distinctiveness
 - **Adding Value to Heritage and Natural Resources** - will support the safeguarding of local heritage and environmental sites. It will encourage greater participation by local people the celebration of heritage, nature, culture through interpretation and festivals and events

- **Developing Deep Tourism-** the development of year round opportunities linked to sustainable niche tourism and which aims to allow tourists with special interests to become more immersed in their chosen activity
- As the result of the purchase of the Old School site, PLANED is now able to contribute **match funding from its own asset base.**
- PLANED aims to continue to play an important local role in **supporting sustainable agriculture** through the Pembrokeshire Sustainable Agriculture Network and by delivering aspects of emerging WAG agriculture support programmes.

Conclusion

The key aim of PLANED remains to encourage a community culture of enterprise, based on the local people themselves, their skills, knowledge and enthusiasm – helping them to safeguard their future through a local integrated approach to development, helping communities to build on their strengths, making the most of local opportunities, developing local resources - social, cultural, environmental and economic – in the most sustainable way.