

Annex 5 - Case Studies

COMBINE

COMBINE
'Developing thriving business networks in East Yorkshire'

COMBINE
Pocklington Business Centre
Pocklington
East Yorkshire YO42 2QA

Give Your Retail Business a Boost through a Specialist Development Programme

with COMBINE and in association with the Pocklington Chamber of Trade and the Market Weighton Area Businesses Ltd.

COMBINE is a rural enterprise support project funded by LEADER+ (an EU and UK Government funded initiative) and East Riding of Yorkshire Council. Our main focus is on developing and promoting rural businesses through supporting business networks. As part of our support to East Riding Market Towns and chambers of trade we have designed a bespoke training programme (details on reverse) for independent retailers in Pocklington and Market Weighton.

This is an excellent one-off opportunity to gain useful tips from a specialist consultant who has a proven track record in improving sales for independent market town retailers facing the pressures posed by supermarket chains. If you want to make a difference to your business, please contact COMBINE for more information and/or complete the attached slip and return it to the Pocklington office.

We are looking forward to working with you.



Issue	Response
<p>Market Failure</p>	<p>The rural East Riding of Yorkshire LEADER+ area suffers from economic and social exclusion. Rural structural industries particularly agriculture and coastal tourism are in decline and continue to shed jobs. This decline is affecting upstream and downstream industries as well as the vibrancy of market and coastal towns of the area.</p> <p>The LEADER+ Development Plan describes a weak business base and lack of capacity in the business sector. The Development Plan identified the decline in agriculture and in coastal tourism as two particular areas of concern.</p> <p>It also identified that the agricultural heritage of the area represented an asset, which if capitalised upon, could bring greater economic vitality.</p>
<p>Rationale</p>	<p>The LEADER+ Development Plan aims to create employment through building capacity, promoting community activity, developing new enterprise, improving skills, enhancing local heritage and supporting village and town services.</p> <p>The rationale for this project was that although there is already some provision for generic business support on a one-to-one basis, there is limited support for groups and networks; an approach specifically designed to build capacity.</p> <p>The approach taken by the COMBINE project to build capacity in the business sector through the development of new business groups and networks was both different and</p>

	<p>innovative. It was also recognised by the East Riding of Yorkshire Local Action Group (LAG) that the COMBINE project could establish a symbiotic relationship with other LEADER+ projects to improve the reach and impact of the LEADER+ Programme. With this in mind the COMBINE project was linked closely with the Market Towns Network, Local Food Sector development and the Enterprise Village project.</p>
<p>Objectives</p>	<p>The COMBINE project supported the primary theme of “Improving the Quality of Life in Rural Areas” and delivered against the following East Riding of Yorkshire LEADER+ programme objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 To build capacity & empower rural communities and encourage collaborative working to exchange best practice; 2 To support and develop new local enterprises, drawing on the potential of the natural and cultural heritage; 3 To develop a skilled & flexile workforce which can respond to local employment opportunities; 4 To enhance and conserve the natural & built heritage so that it meets the economic & social needs of today; and 5 To support the strengthening of market towns as a nucleus for restructuring. <p>The benefit of nesting the COMBINE project within the Rural Team of the East Riding of Yorkshire Council (EYRC) was that it could be managed in a focused way that delivered against the objectives of the LEADER+ Programme as well as the Local Authority strategic priorities for the rural area. The project clearly set out the results it hoped to achieve. It identified the strategic fit with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • England Rural Development Programme - DEFRA; • Regional Economic Strategy of Yorkshire Forward; • Tomorrows Countryside - Countryside Agency; and • East Riding of Yorkshire & North Lincolnshire Rural Development Programmes. <p>In addition, the COMBINE project identified complementary objectives with the Vital Villages programme, working to strengthen local communities and to work on skills development funded through the European Social Programme. The LAG also believed the project could learn from and progress work supported under the Single Regeneration Budget with the regeneration partnerships and an Education Action Zone project in southern Holderness. Similarly, it was recognised that the COMBINE project could work alongside and add-value to the Market Towns Initiatives.</p>
<p>Activity</p>	<p>Originally, the COMBINE project was to fund two officers; a Rural Enterprise and Agricultural Development Officer and a Rural Enterprise and Business Networks Officer. There were difficulties recruiting and retaining the second post and so in effect the</p>

project has funded a series of part time workers, consultants and a full time officer to fulfil the role over the project life.

The issue with recruitment was a key factor why the project was delayed by nearly 2 years. It was placed with the Rural Team at ERYC and managed on a day-to-day basis by the LEADER+ Programme Manager. It was recognised that this was not an ideal situation but it was felt by the LAG that this was a better alternative than the project not happening at all.

We also believe that the COMBINE project would have also benefited from receiving focused support and management from a dedicated 'steering group' made up of key LAG members and other stakeholders.

Over the life of the project the COMBINE officers worked on many group initiatives including:

- Assistance with farm diversification initiatives;
- Conferences and seminars on farm diversification;
- Care farming conference to link farming with healthcare;
- Support to the Driffield Agricultural Society;
- Local food group initiatives including creating a local food guide;
- Support for farmers' /producers' markets and local food festival organisers;
- Support to develop a network of alternative energy growers;
- Establishing a new Women's Business Network;
- Survey and support for rural post offices and shops;
- Development of the independent retail sector in market towns ;
- Support to the Market Towns Network;
- Contribution to the Retail Study in association with East Riding of Yorkshire Council's Regeneration and Planning departments;
- Support for "Enterprise Village" project;
- Support for East Riding Artists and other creative industries networks
- Cycle tourism; and
- Assistance for LEADER+ small initiative fund applicants.

It is clear that this project provided support in a large number of areas offering assistance to businesses across a broad spectrum. Evidence from our consultation with beneficiaries demonstrates areas where capacity within the business sector has been improved as a result of the COMBINE project. However; by the same token there are also key areas where further attention is required, due mainly to limitations of time and resource within the LEADER+ Programme. Specific areas identified by stakeholders as requiring further support include:

- Cycle tourism development (although this is included in the 'Visit Hull & East

	<p>Yorkshire' business plan, there are no immediate plans to develop this area);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local food sector development - this continues to be a priority of the ERYC Economic Development Strategy and more work is needed to strengthen the local food network; and Support for other indigenous business networks such as energy crop growers and an extension of the rural business women network. 																																				
<p>Financial analysis</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Funding Source</th> <th>2005</th> <th>2006</th> <th>2007</th> <th>2008</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>EAGGF</td> <td>£9,215</td> <td>£30,381</td> <td>£56,509</td> <td>£39,257</td> <td>£135,362</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DEFRA</td> <td>£4,884</td> <td>£19,725</td> <td>£32,025</td> <td>£24,811</td> <td>£81,444</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other Public</td> <td>£4,331</td> <td>£19,212</td> <td>£24,242</td> <td>£8,529</td> <td>£56,315</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Private</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£300</td> <td>£300</td> <td>£600</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£18,430</td> <td>£69,319</td> <td>£113,076</td> <td>£72,897</td> <td>£273,721</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Funding Source	2005	2006	2007	2008	Total	EAGGF	£9,215	£30,381	£56,509	£39,257	£135,362	DEFRA	£4,884	£19,725	£32,025	£24,811	£81,444	Other Public	£4,331	£19,212	£24,242	£8,529	£56,315	Private	£0	£0	£300	£300	£600	Total	£18,430	£69,319	£113,076	£72,897	£273,721
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<p>Output and result analysis</p>	<p>On the whole the COMBINE project has delivered its target outputs and results set by the LEADER+ Programme. This is a very good effort considering the issues encountered at the beginning of the project around recruitment.</p> <p>There were only a few areas where outputs are short, and these were typically in areas of hard economic outputs (new products and new businesses) where the evidence is often only available within the individual businesses and can be much more difficult to evidence.</p> <p>Also these economic outputs are more typically claimed from one-to-one business support and the project handed any new start businesses to Business Link to claim under their contract for new enterprises. Similarly, new products have often also been supported and claimed under the Small Initiatives Fund project another LEADER+ project.</p>																																				
<p>Value for money:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economy Efficiency Effectiveness 	<p>Economy</p> <p>The delivery of the project to date has been effectively and efficiently managed by the East Riding LEADER+ Programme Management Team. There is a robust system for reporting and dealing with claims.</p> <p>Efficiency</p> <p>The project has efficiently established a facilitation role to work with a broad range of business groups and to support other initiatives also funded through the LEADER+ Programme. The project has benefited from being nested at the ERYC and its strong relationship with the LAG has enabled it interface with many of the other projects supported through the LEADER+ Programme. Furthermore, communication channels have been short and overheads limited, ensuring the money has been efficiently channelled to support the intended beneficiaries.</p> <p>Effectiveness</p> <p>The project struggled with the ability to recruit and retain some staff mainly due to the short term contracts on offer. The ERYC nevertheless believe that it has proved an</p>																																				

	<p>economic, effective and worthwhile project and one of the posts has been mainstreamed.</p> <p>Not every area has led to successful completion within the timeframe. The project can point to work done with businesses hoping to benefit from cycling initiatives which are awaiting further work from the tourist board (Visit Hull and East Yorkshire).</p> <p>Similarly, work done establishing and supporting a rural Post Offices (PO) and retailer’s network is ongoing. For retailers affected by the current round of PO closures the COMBINE team hope to signpost this network to a new support scheme from Yorkshire Forward to assist rural businesses affected by PO closures with restructuring.</p> <p>Finally, we believe within the timeframe available and taking into account early disruptions the COMBINE project has improved capacity within the business sector. We have identified many instances where the project has worked with and assisted other LEADER+ projects to increase reach and impact of the overall LEADER+ Programme. However, this is not to say that all the work has been done. There are a number of areas particularly local food networks and cycle tourism where further support is required.</p>
<p>Learning for the future</p>	<p>Use momentum from the LEADER+ Programme to increase reach and impact of new network activity.</p> <p>Given that the Rural Enterprise and Agricultural Development Officer post has been mainstreamed by EYRC, and there are new funding streams available through the RDPE Programme it is recommended that specific groups and activities are targeted for further support. It was recognised by stakeholders that some key areas still require attention, namely - cycle tourism development, local food sector development and support for other indigenous business networks. We believe the work delivered through the COMBINE project demonstrates a well established protocol and an effective way of working that would benefit these areas.</p> <p>Consider the support needed to evidence hard economic outputs and write more resource into the programme of support.</p> <p>The Tasking Framework for the new RDPE Programme requires focused delivery and evidencing of hard economic outputs such as jobs created & safeguarded and businesses created & assisted. This will inevitably influence the way in which support is delivered and recorded in the new programme. Therefore, we recommend that consideration is given to resource allocation for recording and monitoring outputs when designing activity.</p>