

RDC Annual Report 2003-2004

“ Realising potential and opportunity
in rural Northern Ireland ”

THE NORTHERN IRELAND RURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE AND NOT HAVING A SHARE CAPITAL)
ANNUAL REPORT 2003 - 2004

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General Information

Chair	Caroline Breakey
Vice Chair	Leslie Craig
Secretary	Brian Howe
Registered office	17 Loy Street Cookstown BT80 8PZ
Bankers	First Trust Bank 2/4 James Street Cookstown BT80 8LW
Auditors	Finegan Gibson Highbridge House 23/25 High Street Belfast BT1 2AA

Foreword

History

The Rural Development Council (RDC) was established in 1991 as an independent organisation under The Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Programme for Northern Ireland. As a key element of that programme the RDC exists to address the needs of rural society through ensuring that rural Northern Ireland makes a full and balanced contribution to the development of the region. The Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development approved the RDC's strategy for the period 2001-2006 in November 2001.

The RDC is a company limited by guarantee and has a current membership of 15. These company directors represent a broad sectoral and geographical mix of rural interest groups including rural communities, agricultural sector, Leader groups, local government, environmental interests, community banking and the private sector. The Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development appoints eight of these members.

Under the 2001-2006 Rural Development Programme (RDP), the RDC has evolved from being a deliverer of capacity building and support services to local people involved in rural regeneration to a deliverer of three distinct programmes:

- Local Regeneration projects and programmes for the community based not-for-profit sector
- A Rural Peace Programme
- A Policy and Rural Proofing/Baselining Programme

In addition to RDP funding, the RDC has received funding from the Special European Union Programmes Body (SEUPB), the International Fund for Ireland (IFI), The Community Fund and DARD public expenditure.

Statutory Background

The Northern Ireland Rural Development Council is a company limited by guarantee, without a share capital and reports to DARD under Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) guidelines for Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs).

The accounts have been prepared under the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 and in accordance with the Accounts Direction issued by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development with the approval of the Department of Finance and Personnel.

Directors

The following acted as directors of the Company during the year ended 31 March 2004.

Caroline Breakey (Chairman) (Appointed 1/12/03)

Joanna McVey (Chairman) (Retired 30/11/03)

Brain Howe (Secretary)

Leslie Craig (Deputy Chairman)

Sidney Anderson

Monica Coyle

John Dallat

Issac Hanna

Jenny Irvine

Kenneth Rankin

Arthur Mitchell

Stephen Huggett

Gerard McGuckin (Retired 15/10/03)

Ian Buchanan

Gerard Lynch

Glen Moore

Eileen McAuley (Retired 18/12/03)

Alison McCullagh

Stephen Nicholl (Retired 8/3/04)

Each of the members has guaranteed to contribute to the assets of the company in the event of the same being wound up to the extent of £1.

Principal activity

The delivery of support services to organisations that are involving people locally in planning regeneration projects that will meet real needs in disadvantaged rural communities.

Results

The surplus for the year was £25,884 (2003 deficit £44,564) and this amount has been added to reserves.

Future developments

The Northern Ireland Rural Development Council will continue with the delivery of support services to organisations that are involving people locally in planning regeneration projects that will meet the real needs in disadvantaged rural communities.

Post balance sheet events

There were no important events affecting the company which happened after the balance sheet date.

Research and development

The company is not involved in research and development activities.

Charitable donations

The company did not make any charitable donations during the year.

Disabled persons

The company's policy is to give full and fair consideration to applications for employment made by disabled persons, having regard to their particular aptitudes and abilities.

Fixed assets

Changes in fixed assets are set out in note 8 to the financial statements. The directors do not consider the historical cost of these fixed assets to be materially different from the current valuation.

Prompt payment policy

The Northern Ireland Rural Development Council is committed to the prompt payment of bills for goods and services received in accordance with the Confederation of British Industry's Prompt Payers Code. Unless otherwise stated in the contract, payment is due within 30 days of the receipt of the goods or services, or presentation of a valid invoice or similar demand, whichever is later.

Employee involvement

Northern Ireland Rural Development Council implements its business strategy through its staff. In achieving business objectives the involvement of staff in planning and decision-making processes is key. Staff involvement is maximised through the combined use of, for example, organisation-wide briefings, directorate staff meetings, one to one staff meetings, project/improvement teams, and the operation of standard consultation processes.

Auditors

The Auditors, Finegan Gibson, have signified their willingness to continue in office.

Approved by the Board on 22nd June 2004

Brian Howe Secretary

Martin McDonald Accounting Officer

Foreword

Chairman's Foreword



This is my first year as Chair of The Northern Ireland Rural Development Council (RDC) and I would particularly like to pay tribute to Joanna McVey who retired as Chair in November 2003. Joanna served as a member of RDC since 1996 and was Chair of Council from 1998 until 2003. She led Council and staff through some very significant changes in strategic direction during her tenure and left behind a strong and highly motivated organisation.

The RDC is a strong partnership based organisation representing a wide range of rural stakeholders and the voluntary effort of Board members combined with a very strong staff team has managed to deliver significant support – both financial and practical – to rural areas over the last year. Parallel to this has been the evidence-based analysis provided by the RDC Research and Policy unit to a wide range of interest groups. The 'Picture of Rural Change' reports developed by RDC have taken statistical data and converted this into meaningful trends and analysis, easily understood by our stakeholders. The learning from both the delivery and research sides of the organisation have combined to effect significant changes to what we do and will continue to shape how we move forward in the months and years ahead.

As Chair of Council I have had the pleasure of engaging with colleagues within both government and social partnership based groupings. On the government side I have seen the major changes to the agricultural support system within Northern Ireland being debated fully within the Ministerial Stakeholder Forum. It is to the credit of those who participated within that Forum that constructive dialogue has led to the emergence of 'The Single Farm Payment' agreement. The impact of those changes will take some time to work through but we should not underestimate the likely impact and the need for continued support to farm families and the wider rural community. Rural development has now been placed centre stage and will, I firmly believe, become one of the key drivers for sustaining rural areas into the next decade. The Rural Development Programme must now move beyond the narrow focus of European funding regimes to become a key player in overall regional policy within Northern Ireland.

RDC has been calling for some time for government to commit to a Rural White Paper for rural areas in Northern Ireland. We were therefore particularly pleased that during our Rural Affairs Summit in October 2003 the major political parties within Northern Ireland agreed to 'pledge' their support for integrated government action for rural Northern Ireland through a Rural White Paper. Unfortunately the political momentum for such an approach has been somewhat diluted by the suspension of devolved government. Although at the time of writing this foreword I see increased optimism in that regard.

The issues facing rural areas are complex and varied although the asset base provided by rural Northern Ireland in terms of economic potential, landscape resource, social capital and community and cultural assets provide an excellent launch pad to devise a new approach to rural policy within Northern Ireland. The Ministerial Stakeholder Forum in February 2004 moved to initiate the recruitment of consultants to review rural policy and while this fell short of a commitment to a Rural White Paper, RDC fully endorsed the review on the basis that it would take a broad and holistic look at rural affairs rather than have a single focus on any one rural sector.

We await with interest the outcome of that review and indeed the return to devolved administration. The combination of both these things can only serve to put the rural affairs agenda at the forefront of the political map and the Programme for Government.

The newsletter, published in conjunction with this year's Annual Report serves to both summarise how RDC has met its targets over the last year while showcasing many of the issues faced by rural communities. It also shows how rural communities have used RDC support to pathfind solutions to problems and realise the potential afforded by Northern Ireland's positive asset base.

Finally the newsletter brings together some of the key policy issues affecting rural life today and most likely in the years ahead. As Chair of Council I pledge my commitment and that of my fellow Council members to work closely with Government and everyone interested in rural areas to ensure integrated government action and sustainable outputs that help rural Northern Ireland make a significant contribution to the development of the region.



Caroline Breakey
Chair
Northern Ireland Rural Development Council

Review

Chief Executive's Review



Having reached mid-term in our strategy 2001-2006 we can look back on the past year with pride in our achievements and the focus of our work. The mid-term point is an important milestone in any strategy. It provides an opportunity to review and take stock of progress.

It was therefore appropriate and timely that our parent Department, the Department of Agriculture & Rural Development (DARD) should undertake an independent review of Council, its form, function and performance. PA Consultancy were appointed with work beginning in January and I am pleased to report that the Review Team concluded that RDC should 'consolidate its current position' within the rural development family.

This endorsement of Council, their performance and achievements were welcomed. Council and staff have embraced the positive recommendations made by the Review Team and the Department, which will effect continuous improvement in the years ahead.

Our role as key delivery agent in the DARD Rural Development Programme is firmly recognised within rural development as both funding programmes (EU Building Sustainable Prosperity and Peace II) are well advanced and on target.

Reporting under the strategic priority of 'A Diverse and Prosperous Countryside' we believe the results of our delivery speak for themselves. You can see the level of jobs created and sustained, the number of projects supported and the extent to which our funding is committed.

Our work on delivery however doesn't just end at the contract stage. We believe in providing practical support and guidance to applicant groups and promoters. We also believe this should be accessible to our clients and build on the wealth of good practice and knowledge of communities themselves. This development and learning process has left embedded a system of best practice, which is encapsulated within a series of workbooks and online materials.

The Special European Union Programmes Body (SEUPB) as Managing Authority for the Peace II Programme has worked closely with RDC and the Rural Community Network (RCN) as partner to the Rural Implementing Body, over the past year to ensure achievement against programme objectives. In February 2004 'A Picture of Rural Peace' was launched by RDC and RCN celebrating awards of some £3.65 million to 148 projects and support for 62 retailers. The event successfully

showed that rural communities were willing to play their part in contributing to a more peaceful and prosperous rural society.

Delivery of public monies requires strong and effective governance and risk management together with financial and human administrative procedures. RDC Corporate Services Directorate reporting under the strategic priority of 'A Efficient and Effective Organisation' has over the past year met its targets in this respect and this has been verified by independent audit and assurance statement by DARD Internal Audit Division.

The delivery and corporate services functions meet only part of our corporate strategy. The strategic circle is only closed through the outputs from the Policy and Development Research Unit. As a learning organisation both the delivery and research functions combine to effect policy change and new programme delivery.

The 'Picture of Rural Change' reports published by RDC in 2002 and 2003 analysed available secondary data to examine 'rural change' across a range of suitable indicators. The outcome of this work manifested itself in two important ways during the past year. The research indicated that access to services in general and transport in particular were significant barriers to rural regeneration. Rural services in general (rural shops, post offices, pharmacies, ATM provision and community halls) and rural transport in particular have benefited from RDC investment over the last year.

Over the year RDC has also used its research and development function to inform government, politicians and interested parties on rural policy and programmes.

In June 2003 RDC launched its 'Picture of Rural Change' report and brought rural affairs to the heart of government in Westminster. The launch within Parliament Buildings, London saw the chairman of the Countryside Agency Sir Ewan Cameron endorse the RDC call for integrated government action at both a UK and NI level to tackle the broad and complex range of rural issues. The message was received by an invited selection of NI Westminster MPs.

In October 2003 RDC hosted a major Rural Affairs summit in Fermanagh where Lord Haskins, the UK governments rural advocate addressed a large gathering of rural stakeholders and left the key message of 'local solutions to local problems'.

Later that month RDC achieved a major breakthrough when the four main political parties – SDLP, Sinn Fein, DUP and UUP backed RDC's call for a NI Rural White Paper. The culmination of this effort resulted in the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development Ian Pearson MP initiating a major review of rural policy in Northern Ireland in Spring 2004 and we await eagerly the outcome of that study.

In writing this review of progress it strikes me as Chief Executive that rural development and rural policy have now moved to centre. We must expect and hope that this ministerial review of rural policy builds upon the effects of the past to ensure the positive asset base of rural areas is both protected and enhanced for future generations.

In conclusion I would like to take this opportunity to thank both Council and staff for their continued support over the last year. The European Union, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and the International Fund for Ireland have enabled us and many other stakeholders to make significant progress and we look forward to their continued support in the year ahead.



Martin McDonald
Accounting Officer & Chief Executive
Northern Ireland Rural Development Council

WHAT WE ACHIEVED...

A Centre of Rural Expertise

RDC achievements against this priority are facilitated through the Policy and Regional Development Directorate. This Directorate has continued to seek better ways to understand and support the sustainable development of rural Northern Ireland, to promote its interests in policy submissions, and to build its capacity to help others through mapping, primary and action research, better evaluation, and a growing information library.

The Directorate (now known as the Policy and Innovation Research Unit) comprised a staff team of Nigel Flynn (Director), Julie Gilpin, Anne Marie Loughran, Nick Mack, Ruairi Maguire and Sharon McFlynn.

This year has been an important one for policy consultations in which we have invested considerable effort. During the year two key pieces of work completed were the Picture of Rural Change Report 2003 and the Access to Services Report in association with QUB. The launch of the Rural Change Report at Westminster saw RDC bring the issues affecting rural Northern Ireland to the centre of government in London. The Chairman of the Countryside Agency Sir Ewan Cameron assured the invited audience, which included many of Northern Ireland's Westminster MP's that the issues of concern to Northern Ireland's rural communities were in many ways similar to those being raised at a UK level. These issues were further examined in public when RDC hosted a major rural affairs summit in Fermanagh in the Autumn of 2003 when Lord Haskins delivered a keynote speech on the future of rural development and agriculture within the UK.

We continue to explore better ways to understand and support the sustainable development of rural Northern Ireland and to build its capacity to help others through mapping, primary and action research, better evaluation and a growing information library.

Objectives

- To increase the RDC's influence in integrating rural development principles and values into regional policy and decision making through a process of Rural Proofing
- To consider and promote strategies for rural development through the establishment of a rural baseline initiative
- To strengthen rural development partnerships by the provision of strategic support

Achievements & Progress in 2003-2004

- Completion of an EQIA on the methodology for appointing members to RDC Council
- Completed Annual Review Report for submission to Equality Commission
- Preparation of case study report and third Picture of Rural Change report (2004)
- Rural Affairs Summit Oct 2003
- Launch of Services in Rural Northern Ireland Report 2003
- 49 internal GIS mapping exercises completed
- 54 external GIS mapping exercise completed
- Research and evaluation support to 5 partnerships or organisations
- Participation in 12 forums /steering groups, and a wide range of conferences and seminars
- 18 policy submissions
- Addition of 600 items to the RDC information library

An Efficient & Effective Organisation

RDC achievements against this priority are facilitated through Corporate Services, finance, audit and administrative systems. The Directorate continues to implement a system of internal control based on the principles of Cadbury, Turnbull, and Nolan to identify the principal risks to the achievement of the strategy, to evaluate the nature and extent of those risks and to manage them effectively, efficiently and economically.

RDC's internal control is based on a framework of regular management information, administrative procedures including the segregation of duties, and a system of delegation and accountability.

This Directorate is comprised of Joy Hadden (Director Corporate Services), Leigh Brown, Kirsty Burton, Esme Charles, Ruth Dallas, Alison Frizzelle, Dawn Gregg, Canice Mallaghan, Anne O'Neill, Marian Teague and Jane Thom.

It is refreshing to be able to report such positive news with regards to the financial situation of the Programmes within RDC. With continued hard work, tight controls, and a focus on objectives at all levels, such a healthy report should prove to be the norm rather than the exception.

Staff are recognised as a critical resource within the organisation and the most important aspect of the RDC's approach to this is its commitment towards achieving the Investors in People (IIP) standard. The organisation has also introduced a mechanism to manage and guide continuous improvement. This has been initiated through a formal benchmarking exercise completed by the Centre for Competitiveness.

Objectives

- To integrate the principles of quality, best value, equality and TSN into the planning and delivery of all activities
- To ensure a sustainable financial base for the organisation
- To manage and develop staff as a key organisational resource
- To ensure the highest standards of corporate governance and public accountability
- To disseminate information about the principles plans and performance of the RDC to all stakeholders
- To develop and implement an appropriate Corporate ICT strategy

Achievements and Progress in 2003/2004

- Grants committed £5,538,841
- Grants payments of £1,979,370
- Annual Statement re: Equality/TSN produced
- Implementation of Financial Procedural Manual
- Implementation of Financial MIS
- Deliverance of Finance Matters Training to recipient funded groups (63)
- Participation of CIPFA regional Northern Ireland Committee
- Implementation of Internal Human Resources Manual
- Commitment to Investors in People standard
- Staff/Council Residential
- 12 Council/Executive Sub-Committee Meetings held
- Council Members training against the Cadbury & Nolan Principles
- Audit Control Manual approved & implemented
- Implementation of Corporate Governance Manual
- Implementation of a Risk Assessment Management Programme
- Implementation of Audit Service Level Agreement Level
- Series of Press Releases
- Updating of Website
- Implementation of corporate ICT Strategy

THE YEAR IN PHOTOS



...AND HOW WE PROGRESSED

A Diverse and Prosperous Countryside

RDC achievements against this priority are facilitated through the delivery and implementation of programmes and projects supported by the EU Building Sustainable Prosperity, Peace II and International Fund for Ireland Programmes.

A combined staff team of 14 working across the Programmes and Operations Directorates have helped to meet the objectives under this priority. They are:

Programmes – Teresa Canavan (Director of Programmes), Martin Delaney, Oliver Donnelly, Olga Gallagher, Albert Hunter, Joyce McMullan Helen Ryan and Robert Shaw.

Operations – Tracey McNally (Director of Operations), Aileen Donnelly, Eamon Gallogly, Michael Kelly, Gail Lees, Eamon McMullan and Valerie Stewart.

As we approach the end of the current funding commitments under EU Peace II and reach the half way mark of the Building Sustainable Prosperity Programme we begin to witness the results and impact of the work of the many rural communities across Northern Ireland, examples of which are featured in this newsletter.

The overwhelming response for funding from rural communities and retailers for a wide variety of projects continues to encourage us. We believe that in many ways this endorses the effectiveness and approach of RDC in delivering funds to rural communities.

Our partnership with the International Fund for Ireland has strengthened over the period providing much needed financial support and assistance in helping rural communities turn project plans into reality. We look forward to continuing our work with rural communities across Northern Ireland and in helping these communities to realise their potential.



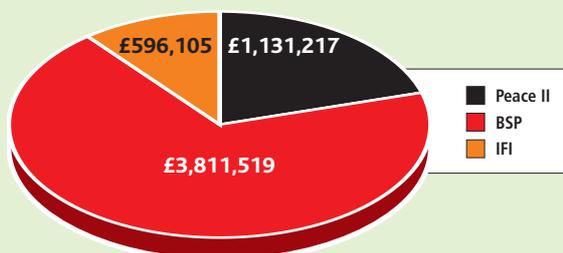
Objectives

- To contribute towards the development of a vibrant rural economy
- To increase capacity of local organisations to engage in rural regeneration
- To sustain the employability of disadvantage groups
- To promote peace and reconciliation in rural areas
- To contribute to enhancement of rural tourism

Achievements & Progress in 2003-2004

- 3 new Measures opened (rural retail, tourism and economic infrastructure)
- 200 applications received
- 109 applications to full assessment
- 200 groups assisted to develop & implement projects
- 59 Contracts issued
- 62 Retailers supported under the Rural Retail Support Programme
- 40.5 jobs created/sustained
- 63 groups attending Induction Day Training, Drawdown & Finance Matters
- Nominated Delivery Agent for the International Fund for Ireland's Rural Development Programme April 2003
- 1 Peace II Annual Implementation Report completed Feb 2004
- 1 Peace II Distinctiveness Report completed February 2004
- Celebratory conference and 'Picture of Rural Peace' report published February 2004
- 8 Best Practice Guides commenced
- Development of a rural communications platform (e-rural)
- 2 new programmes developed (Vibrant Villages, Rural Employability)
- 29 Project launches & associated press coverage
- TV and Radio coverage

Committed Grant Aid 2003/04 Grants committed during the period



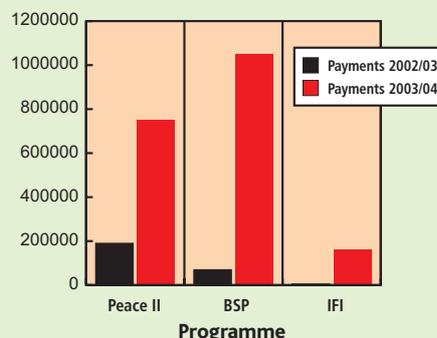
Building New Relationships

In April 2003 the International Fund for Ireland (The Fund) teamed up with RDC in an unique partnership aimed at benefiting the rural community of Northern Ireland.

Working together this partnership aims to support projects and programmes which contribute to the social, physical and economic regeneration of rural areas.

Speaking on behalf of The Fund, Mr William McCarter

RDC Grant Payments Grant payments during the period



Chairman said:

"The Fund is very pleased to be working in partnership with the Northern Ireland Rural Development Council, a partnership which is to our mutual benefit in that we can not only pool our resources in terms

of finance, but also in terms of the expertise of our staff. The real beneficiaries, of course, are the local communities who work with us to develop projects which bring long term social and economic benefits to disadvantaged rural areas".

Grants

Peace II Grants

This list of projects represent the projects supported under EU Peace II, EU Buildings Sustainable Prosperity and International Fund for Ireland during the period 2003/04

Organisation Name	Project Description	Grant Approved	Spend
Measure 1.10a Rural Retail			
Wholesale & Retail Training Council (WRTC)	The delivery of a retail support programme within the rural community.	53,086.00	15,925.80
Brilliant Red Consulting	The delivery of a retail support programme within the rural community.	78,274.98	49,927.51
Measure 1.7b Rural ICT			
RAPID	To stimulate awareness of part-time job opportunities and in doing so enhance individual and private business capacity to respond positively to the new economic challenges now present in rural areas.	105,319.00	23,269.64
Measure 1.10b Rural ICT			
Armagh Confederation of Voluntary Groups	Ruralink is an ICT out-reach programme through which ICT training will be delivered in rural areas in the Armagh district. A Community Network website will be developed as part of the programme and participants will be trained in the use of the internet and email.	0.00	13,673.40
Banbridge Connect Partnership	The project aims to use existing IT facilities to train individuals in basic IT skills. The project will involve the recruitment of one full-time Project Co-ordinator for a 1-year period.	49,875.00	14962.5
Belleek and District Community	To train individuals in accredited and non-accredited IT training using existing IT facilities. The project will also establish a community website to assist in ease of information from the partnership.	48,769.61	11,095.83
Carntogher Community Association	This project seeks to create a community internet communication platform across Tyrone and Londonderry.	48,450.00	2,964
Claudy Rural Development Ltd	Provision of a user point for Learndirect, electronic library for public access point for internet and IT training with support from North West Institute and Western Education Library Board.	39,000.00	22,712
Confederation Of Community Groups	The Start I.T. for Rural Communities project aims to provide ICT training in support of local community development in rural areas of South Armagh and South Down. This will be achieved through the provision of a tutor and laptop computers and the integration of IT into the work of local community organisations.	0.00	6319.33
Dooneen Community Association	Provision of IT training via Fermanagh College in Dooneen targeting women, farmers and young people.	15,587.37	13,219.09
East Down Institute of Further & Higher Education	The Upper Ards Historical Project aims to enhance the ICT skills and increase the active participation of the rural community in the Upper Ards area. This will be achieved through working in partnership on a local history project.	0.00	4834.99
Families Acting for Innocent Relatives (FAIR)	The FAIR ICT project aims to provide ICT training to victims of violence in the South and Mid Armagh areas, in an existing ECDL accredited centre.	27,589.00	10,555.15
Fermanagh Rural Community Network	This project will establish 4 Learndirect access points across rural Fermanagh link to the Learndirect Centre In Enniskillen.	0.00	18,819.85
Milestone Training Initiative	To provide introductory IT training (email, internet and word processing) utilising existing IT suite.	42,480.00	9,103.36
Network Personnel	The SPARK Project aims to provide IT training and access to on-line services and will be delivered using a suite of laptops in community venues across Magherafelt.	50,000.00	22876.84
North Antrim Community Network	To extend eNetworking across North Antrim Network area targeting 10 new participating groups.	0.00	2,946.09
Omagh Forum for Rural Associations	Delivery of Learndirect to 4 rural areas within Omagh, maximising existing IT facilities, training volunteers as support staff and delivering OCN course in peace & reconciliation.	0.00	27,430.04
South Tyrone Empowerment Programme	Log on and learn more aims to ensure that rural communities in South Tyrone are given access to the benefits of the Learndirect initiative. Through the Learndirect approach, local people will be trained in the ICT skills required to support learners and provide technical guidance to others.	0.00	16,523.57
TADA Rural Network	The provision of training in ECDL and CLAIT in 8 community centres in the Craigavon area.	47,098.00	9,014.52

The Fermanagh Trust	Establishment of a countrywide intranet facility providing training and support 38 groups.	0.00	9,651.20
The Rural College	The Rural College will establish an ICT based student support facility that will enable College students to further extend their knowledge terrain and horizons via a web based learning grid and electronic library information system.	0.00	4,390
Waterside Development Trust	The GLENED project aims to establish a rural ICT centre through which individuals living locally in disadvantaged and marginalised communities will gain access to skills that will increase their chances of finding employment.	0.00	298.80
Rural Development Council	A support programme focused on community relations and sustainability provided to groups receiving grant aid.	0.00	40,059.86

Measure 2.9b Peaceful Environment

Ballylaw Farmers	Group The Ballylaw Farmers Twinning Programme aims to develop links with farmers in other parts of Europe to find out how they are tackling some of the problems that are also prevalent in the sector in Northern Ireland. Through exchange visits, the farmers will investigate a variety of environmental and farming issues.	0.00	6,997
Cashel Community Association	The Project will develop a small outdoor park facility to provide a meeting place for the local community and local schools to become more aware of the natural environment surrounding them.	17,431.00	0.00
County Down Fishing Villages Network	The project proposes transeuropean twinning between fishing villages to exchange information on physical, social and economic regeneration.	0.00	10,904.48
Discovering Kids Playgroup	Early Learning in the Outdoor Environment aims to develop an attractive and stimulating outdoor environment which will bring together parents and children from both sections of the community. It will be used an environmental education resource for children attending the pre-school playgroup.	0.00	0.00
Granville Development Association	The Granville Community Nature Area project aims to develop an environmental education area at the local school where schoolchildren would be able to study local habitat and the plant and animal life attracted to it.	0.00	0.00
Groundwork NI	The project aims to take forward the initial Developing the Groundwork in Rural Areas. the second phase will engage with 4 additional communities and an additional rural community network, sustain contact and ensure implementation of capital projects developed to date.	0.00	28,885.85
Groundwork Northern Ireland	Groundwork NI will work in partnership with eight rural communities to promote a positive approach to the development of community relations through involvement in environmental regeneration projects.	9,250.00	0.00
Killyfole & District Development Association	The development of an environmental field study park to facilitate environmental awareness education at primary school level and facilitate cross community exchange at primary school level.	0.00	45,000.00
Mossfield Community Association	MCA wish to create a community park on the site of a former local rubbish tip incorporating an educational dimension in relation to the natural environment and local history of the Glennane area.	0.00	0.00
Mosside & District Community Association	To replace and refurbish an existing dilapidated play park that will provide a toddler unit, junior activity play unit, senior activity play unit and an environmental scheme.	36,000.00	0.00
Moyola & District Angling Club	Creation of a wildlife and game angling habitat from disused gravel extraction ponds.	0.00	28,865.50
Mullaghbawn Community Association	The Townlands Project aims to restore townland pride and identity. Phase 1 of the project will involve erecting a granite stone at each townland road boundary in the Forkhill area. In the second phase of the project a book containing the history, mythology and community culture of each townland will be published.	0.00	13,037.93
Newbuildings Community & Environmental Assoc.	To develop an existing 6 acre site to incorporate a dog walking trail in the Newbuildings area.	7,500.00	0.00
Owenkillew Community Development Association	To improve the visual appearance of Gortin Main Street by way of an Environmental Improvement Scheme.	47,600.00	0.00
Owenkillew Community Development Association	Erection of signage to promote Cairn Sunday and add to tourism in the Gortin & Mountfield areas.	0.00	15,148.66
SEARCH	To create a garden that will provide learning facilities for the local schools.	29,866.00	0.00
The Cullville & District Community Association	'Pathways Through Time' is an environmental historical project which aims to balance the natural beauty of the area with its historical past. The project will create a series of features outlining the history of the Cullville area, reflecting themes such as transport, farming, fishing, industry and culture.	0.00	16358.77
The Villages Together	A programme of developing environmental projects along with community relations training and development.	50,000.00	31962.08

Measure 2.10 Local Identity Culture & Heritage

Altnaveigh Trust	The establishment of the Ulster Scots and Gaelic School aims to restore mutual understanding through shared music and cultural experiences. The school will provide training and tuition and facilitate a range of culture related projects.	0.00	8,433.21
Armagh & City District Council/ROSA	To employ a co-ordinator to work with the Community Halls Arts Partnership to promote arts and culture within rural communities, utilising community halls for the activities.	37,763.00	0.00
Aughakillymaude Community Association	Strawcraft workshops specialising in the creation of mumming characters, which will be exhibited at a mumming exhibition. The production of a video on the folk history of the mumming tradition will also form part of the project.	0.00	7,275.89
Belleek Developmental Community Arts Network	To organise a Community Arts and Cultural Festival in Belleek District.	19,527.00	0.00
Brocagh & District Regeneration Group	A cross community, cross border marching band competition, festival and heritage exhibition.	0.00	1,041.31
Camowen Partnership Ltd	The Ancient Tyrone Highway project proposes to research and identify the exact route of an historic highway from Dublin to Derry, which passed through the Camowen area. The highway was in use for some 5,000 years, until the present road system was laid down at the beginning of the 19th century.	0.00	6,041.35
Derrygannon Craft & Heritage Society	The Creel Project aims to revive traditional crafts especially those associated with the rural areas of Fermanagh. Craft workshops will be established and training sessions undertaken culminating in a permanent exhibition in the area which will generate income from visitors.	0.00	17,016.09
Drumquin Development Association	Pathways to Peace aims to develop a series of walking routes and a tour guide for the Drumquin area.	0.00	8,642.03
Drumquin Wolfe Tones Gaelic Football Club	A cross community festival based on a townland theme involving culture, heritage, music, drama and sport.	28,644.00	5,136.27
Flavour of Tyrone	A Cultural Crossroads aims to build understanding between and within communities and assist in the development and co-ordination of a variety of cultural events in the rural areas of South Tyrone.	0.00	7,824.89
Kinawley Community Partnership	The Kinawley Community Festival, which will be held in Summer 2002, will include events that are aimed at increasing social interaction between different identities and different age groups.	0.00	1,474.95
The Music Workshop	A music programme focusing on four rural areas for participants aged between 16 and 25.	47,009.00	14,103.34
Markethill District Enterprises Ltd	To develop greater awareness and increased use of multi media project facilities.	0.00	0.00
Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association (NI Branch)	To bring together an ensemble of young musicians and dancers under the leadership of experienced tutors and advisors and produce a dynamic traditional show.	37,025.00	0.00
Rural Development Council	A support programme focused on community relations and sustainability will be provided to groups receiving grant aid.	0.00	16,740.50
Share Arts	A creative activity programme for schools encompassing music, dance, drama, set and prop design and will focus on the local folklore and history of the area.	33,403.00	0.00
South Lough Neagh Regeneration Association	The South Lough Neagh Cultural Awareness Programme aims to promote awareness of local culture and heritage of the South Lough Neagh area through the organisation of seminars and social events and the production of literature and collection of song, poem and story.	0.00	9,886.87
Stewartstown Community Festival	The Crieve Conflicts is a re enactment of the story of the O'Neill and Mountjoy conflict in and around Stewartstown and the Crieve lake from 1601 to 1640. The production, which will be cross-community, will have a high level of local involvement via music, drama and crafts.	0.00	25,141.74
The Music Workshop	The Rural Music Workshop is a one week music workshop that will be held at a rural location in each of the six counties of Northern Ireland.	0.00	9,716.15
The Nerve Centre	The project aims to document and record the storytelling traditions of rural areas in counties Armagh, Fermanagh, Tyrone and Down using animation.	0.00	10,792.62
The Nerve Centre/The Linen Hall Library	www.culturenorthernireland.org aims to create a cultural atlas of Northern Ireland which will be accessible via the internet. The atlas will provide detailed information on the culture of over 300 localities throughout Northern Ireland.	30,150.00	9,035.03
Traditions Meet	To bring together 4 partner groups to design a cultural showcase production on a cross-community basis.	47,500.00	0.00
Tyrone Orange Vision 2000	Pilot programme aimed at building an understanding of Orangesim in County Tyrone.	47,022.00	10,221.23
YouthAction NI	Kaleidoscope is a community arts project for rural young people aged 14 to 25 years. It aims to create opportunities for interaction for young people from different cultural backgrounds.	0.00	8,642.67

Peace II Non-financial Project Development Support

Moree Community Association - Crossdemott Bogland Project

Drumquin Wolfe Tones Gaelic Football Club -
The Hills Above Drumquin Townlands Festival

Grants

Local Regeneration Programme (BSP)

Measure 4.6 Access to Services

Accessible Community Travel Services (ACTS)	Provision of a door-to-door, dial-a-ride transport service, through an 8 seater MPV minibus, and 2 part time drivers, providing a more accessible service to disabled and elderly.	58,869.00	19,007.20
Armagh Rural Transport	Provision of a door to door, dial a ride transport service, through an 8 seater MPV minibus and part time driver providing a more accessible service to individuals.	53,968.00	25,267.32
Belleek Cross Border Childcare Company Ltd	To build an adventure playground to include themed play equipment, timber play equipment, picnic tables and benches catering for the 60 -70 children using the centre daily.	42,590.00	0.00
Brackaghreilly & District Community Association	To replace an existing hall with a new building to provide a community facility focusing on childcare, health and fitness services, training and community space.	150,000.00	0.00
Cookstown Rural Community Transport	Provision of a door to door, dial a ride transport service, through an 8 seater MPV minibus, part time driver and part time administrator, providing a more accessible service to individuals.	53,968.00	23,461.13
Crossmaglen Community Association	Provision of a community transport service for local voluntary and community groups and disadvantaged individuals through the replacement of an existing 15 seater minibus and continued employment of a full time driver.	86,392.00	41,086.14
Down District Accessible Transport	Provision of a more rurally based transport service, through the provision of a 16 seater minibus at one site and the relocation of an existing one to another site; and locally based drivers and volunteers.	60,776.00	30,120.55
Dungannon & District Community Transport	Provision of a door-to-door, dial-a-ride transport service through an 8 seater minibus and part time driver providing a more accessible service to individuals.	53,968.00	25,869.84
Eskra Community Association	To refurbish and extend an existing community hall providing accommodation for advice and financial services, training, commercial and social space.	150,000.00	0.00
F.A.S.T Rural Transport Ltd	Provision of a door-to-door, dial a ride transport service for individuals and small groups. An 8 seater MPV minibus, and full time driver will provide a more flexible and sustainable service.	60,173.00	29,089.39
Kesh Enterprise Company Ltd	To hire out a unit within the newly constructed Mantlin enterprise Centre as a community facility, focusing on health, childcare, advice and training. Space will be provided for a doctor, chiropodist and speech therapist.	94,832.25	85,349.03
Knockmore Regeneration Group	The provision of mains water to households & farmsteads on Knockmore mountain between Derrygonnelly & Garrison.	52,512.00	0.00
Largy Community Association	Provision of a community services facility.	38,500.00	0.00
Mid Ulster Community Services	Provision of a door to door, dial a ride transport service through an 8 seater MPV minibus and part time driver providing a more accessible service to individuals.	55,350.00	26,980.18
Muintir na Mointeach	The construction of a community facility focusing on healthy living, providing space for private health practitioners; traditional cure clinics; a bicycle hire business; community cafe and space for health & social welfare information and advice.	115,746.00	0.00
North Antrim Community Transport	Provision of a door to door, dial a ride transport service for individuals and small groups. An 8 seater MPV minibus and two part time drivers will provide a more flexible and sustainable service.	41,400.00	21,063.26
Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health	To support children with emotional and behavioural problems, who have received residential treatment to become integrated again into family and community life, by providing 2 part time non professional but trained child & parent support workers in the Magherafelt District Council Area for three years.	60,349.00	12,358.18
Poyntzpass Community Regeneration Company Ltd	To use the site of the two derelict buildings within the village to construct a neutral community facility focusing on childcare, lifelong learning and provision of lettable units to encourage the expansion and sustainability of local businesses.	150,000.00	0.00
Rural Health Partnership	A programme of support that will run for a period of 18 months to aid the regeneration of people who have suffered mental ill health, back into their home and community life.	57,200.00	14,853.30
Rural Supported Housing Programme (CWSAN)	To employ a project co-ordinator to establish housing information and advice clinics in the Cookstown & Western Shores Area Network (CWSAN) catchment area.	14,928.21	8,008.96
Strangford & District Playgroup & After School Club	To provide safer and more appropriate accommodation for the Strangford & District playgroup and Mother & Toddler Group, through the provision of a new mobile, which will also house a new after schools club and training facility.	65,986.00	0.00
Strathfoyle Women's Activity Group	To provide safer and more appropriate accommodation for Strathfoyle Women's Activity Group through the extension and renovation of their current centre, to expand their training and crèche facilities, provide space for outreach health clinics, office space, a computer suite and meeting space for a childminder's network and associated toy and equipment library.	76,956.00	68,879.70

Measure 4.7 Local Economy

Glenshane Community Development Limited	Aims to provide viable, sustainable job creation workspace units within a rural area.	150,000.00	0.00
Mary Gray Farm Services Limited	To expand our existing farm business which includes hire of equipment, employ a worker to co-ordinate pool of skilled agriculture workers and oversee hire business.	35,367.50	0.00
Mourne Activity Breaks	Development of new, innovative activity breaks in the Mourne area.	0.00	64,284.84
Loughgiel Community Association Ltd	To establish four business units at the Loughgiel Millennium centre which will provide 12 new jobs.	150,000.00	54,858.97
Bardic Educational Arts and Media	To support rural people to develop skills and to access opportunities in recognised growth sectors i.e., creative industries/new media and facilitate the establishment of rural based full and part time enterprises in the sector.	132,367.00	0.00
Share Discovery 80 Ltd	The project seeks to develop an external climbing wall to extend activity tourism opportunities, create employment and to offer personal development opportunities to local organisations using the facility for personnel development programmes.	0.00	45,544.00
Altnaveigh Trust	To establish a community business in south Down for a minimum of 12 employees making and manufacturing kilts/band uniforms and full highland dress.	150,000.00	0.00
Ballymoney Borough Council	The Rural Enterprise Awareness and Business Start up Programme is designed to help rural communities and individuals evaluate self employment.	0.00	7,260
Ivinestown Trustee Enterprise Company (ITEC)	ITEC plan to redevelop a redundant, semi-derelict textile factory which closed in 1999 with the loss of 130 jobs. The plan is to acquire ownership of the premises and surrounding site and sub divide existing structure into 3 separate enterprise units to let.	0.00	135,000
Ulster Agricultural Organisation Society Limited	To establish an economic, equality and environmental baseline for rural co-operatives within Northern Ireland.	62,860.00	9,541.50
Moygashel Community Development Association Ltd	The acquisition and renovation of derelict industrial premises providing self contained workspace unit.	150,000.00	0.00
Gilford Community Regeneration Company	The renovation of derelict premises in the village centre to provide vital space for a cafe, childcare business and community facility.	119,279.00	0.00
Greysteel Community Enterprise	To develop 15,000 sq ft of industrial space at the Vale centre in Greysteel to be rented or let for the private sector, in order to ensure the sustainability of the centre in providing community activities.	0.00	94,994.80
Castledawson Development Association	The project includes the conversion and extension of Castledawson House (a landmark listed building at 47 Main St.) to create a 12 bedroom visitor accommodation block & a restaurant.	108,750.00	55,825.07
Sixmilecross Enterprise Ltd	To redevelop the site of the former co-op building which will provide an environmental enhancement, retail and office space and a community centre.	103,000.00	0.00

Measure 4.11 Prosperous Environment

Acorn Women's Group	This environment project aims to improve the quality of the physical environment by creating an Eco-Adventure Playground made almost entirely out of recycled materials by using recycled aluminum, plastic and rubber. The children benefiting will learn at an early age the invaluable lesson of recycling.	19,477.00	0.00
Carntogher Community Association	The project will reinforce and extend the bio-diversity of a number of highly valuable natural habitats and promote environmentally sensitive and sustainable natural ecosystem for other rural communities throughout Europe and beyond.	88,041.00	7308.65
Fivemiletown Play Facility Initiative	To regenerate a disused site in the town centre to enhance the village, address the need for access to outdoor play provision for children and their families, and raise environmental awareness.	52,035.00	0.00
Glenravel Environmental Improvement Association	The project comprises Phase II of a Community Recreation Area involving the regeneration of an unsightly area of disused marshland.	139,887.00	0.00
Killesher Community Development Association	To improve water quality and conservation of valuable water resources.	110,062.00	5,400
Learmount Community Development Group Ltd	Implementation of a community environmental initiative including Phase II village enhancements and the development of cycle trails/walkways through the local forest.	64,704.00	0.00
MED Partnership Group	The project represents an innovative approach to farm waste management which will contribute to sustaining the natural environment by reducing risks of pollution to inland waterways by animal waste.	52,500.00	0.00
Mid-Ulster Community Arts Trust	To improve the physical environment of the village through the environmentally sensitive renovation of a forty year old dilapidated community hall as part of a wider village revitalisation plan.	150,000.00	0.00
Mourne Heritage Trust	To restore the settings of 11 derelict traditional dwellings as key features of the Mourne rural landscape.	124,510.00	0.00
Newbuildings Community & Environment Association	To provide safe park facilities for the young and mother of the area which will include the upgrade of a derelict park.	58,383.00	0.00
South Lough Neagh Regeneration Association	To employ a Project Officer to raise awareness of the contribution of each farm to the landscape, the opportunities to maximise environmental improvement, resources and knowledge, and to establish a forum for contact between individual landowners, statutory agencies and community organisations.	59,745.00	18,208.19
Tempo Farmers Group	The aim of the project is to assist enhancement work on farms in order to improve water quality in the catchment area and to improve the appearance of the catchment through a package of measures designed to make it more attractive place to live and work and visit.	142,120.00	0.00
The Village Garden (Broughshane) Ltd	Purchase of a wind and water turbine and refurbishment of the existing water turbine.	37,200.00	0.00
Ulster Wildlife Trust T	o help prevent further decreases to biodiversity in Northern Ireland by ensuring that habitats and species are protected, conserved and enhanced through appropriate management facilitated via the establishment of a Wildlife Guardians Network.	51,673.00	13780.64
Whitecross Community Association	The project aims to provide a recreational play area for the village.	67,500.00	0.00

Support

Local Regeneration Programme (EU BSP) Financial Project Development Support

Organisation Name	Project Development Support Programme	Grant Approved	Grant Paid
Kinawley Community Partnership	A community business which will specialise in the cleaning of local farm premises and commercial and domestic establishments.	5,000.00	1,950
Fivemiletown Play Facility Initiative	To regenerate a disused site in the town centre to enhance the village and address the need for access to outdoor play provision for children and their families.	5,000.00	1,741.00
Benefit Uptake Campaign	To employ 2 welfare rights advisors and 1 administration assistant to continue the delivery of the benefit uptake campaign service which provides advice and assistance on social security and other related benefits to rural dwellers.	5,000.00	4,500
Dromboughil Community Association	To renovate and extend a derelict 19th century school house as a community facility focusing on social activities, training, health awareness, office and meeting space.	5,000.00	3,524.89
Loughgiel Community Association Ltd	To establish four business units at the Loughgiel Millennium centre which will provide 12 new jobs.	5,000.00	0.00
Aughakillymaude Community Association	Ireland's first dedicated centre of Irish Mummung traditions comprising live displays of Mummung interpretative panels, life sized models, archive facility, costume library and video presentation. The centre both captures the living traditions of strawcraft and explains the origins and European linkages.	5,000.00	1,700
Altnaveigh Trust	To establish a community business in south Down for a minimum of 12 employees making and manufacturing kilts/band uniforms and full highland dress.	5,000.00	2,445
Knockmore Regeneration Group	The provision of an essential basic service (mains water) to households & farmsteads on Knockmore mountain between Derrygonnelly & Garrison.	5,000.00	2,402
Moneymore Manufacturing Ltd	To purchase new machinery to allow Moneymore manufacturing to enter new markets.	5,000.00	2,500
Spamount & District Cross Community Association	To extend an existing community hall by refurbishing the adjoining workshop to provide a spacious stage, additional toilets, changing and shower facilities and extra storage space & workspace units.	5,000.00	0.00
Your Event Ltd	Purchase of additional bouncy castle, equipment for transport of bouncy castles & small marquees; provision of training/reskilling of staff; provision of I.T. equipment and develop web site.	5,000.00	4,935.62
Sperrin Knitwear	The group produce high quality hand knit wear garments in wool, cotton and linen. The group would like to progress and develop pure linen.	5,000.00	2,500
Whitecross Community Association	To carry out a physical environmental improvement scheme, that provides lighting, signage, planting, street furniture, and a general facelift to a village that has had no substantial investment. This will be a kickstart to future development plans for the village.	5,000.00	2,937.50
Rock & District Development Association	To enhance the physical and social environment of Rock village by landscaping the village green, refurbishing the historic water pump, renew stone walling, improving footpath provision and enhancing the quality of life of all residents of the village and district who use the village space.	5,000.00	2,355.31
Learmount Community Development Group Ltd	Phase II of an environmental improvements scheme and an environmental education programme to complement a council recycling site being developed in the village.	5,000.00	4,500
Newbuildings Community & Environment Association	To upgrade a derelict park to provide safe park facilities for the young and mothers of the area which will encourage social interaction.	5,000.00	2,166.32
Laganside Rural Development Ltd	This programme will be designed to encourage enhancement of the rural physical environment for the appreciation of all and presentation of agriculture in a more positive light.	5,000.00	2,494.75
Rural Health Partnership	To deliver an expanded programme of support that will aid the reintegration of people who have suffered mental ill health, back into their home & community life. This will be achieved by the employment of two staff to identify social, training and placement opportunities for these individuals for a period of 3 years.	5,000.00	2,335.31
Castlewellan Regeneration Ltd	Redevelopment of a listed mansion house into a community project incorporating a music and cultural centre and provision of a small business/office space for rental.	5,000.00	1,129.46
Muintir na Mointeach	Project Development Support Programme	5,000.00	2,038.63
The Village Garden (Broughshane) Ltd	Project Development Support Programme.	5,000.00	1,000

Grants

International Fund for Ireland Grants

Project Grants		Grant Approved	Grant Paid
Altnaveigh Trust	To establish a community business in south Down for a minimum of 12 employees making and manufacturing kilts/band uniforms and full highland dress.	130,892.00	0.00
Broughderg Area Dev Association	To provide a combined community and business centre by refurbishing Broughderg Chapel to include 5 commercial office units, a community room and meeting room.	0.00	86,811.00
Eskra Community Association	To refurbish and extend an existing community hall providing accommodation for advice and financial services, training, commercial and social space.	128,000.00	0.00
Loughgiel Community Association	To establish four business units at the Loughgiel Millennium centre which will provide 12 new jobs.	205,000.00	43,523.84
Munitir na Mointeach	The construction of a community facility focusing on healthy living, providing space for private health practitioners; traditional cure clinics; a bicycle hire business; community cafe and space for health & social welfare information and advice.	83,452.00	0.00
RDC Rural Baseline (Nov-Mar 03)		0.00	28,174.92
Rural Retail Support Programme (Pilot)	Towards the Development & Support phase of the Rural Retail Support Programme. This Programme is designed to support the retention of retail services in rural areas	79,803.00	31,770.65

Technical Assistance – Economic Appraisal and Business Plan

Altnaveigh Trust	0.00	1,700.00
Aughakillymaude Community Association	0.00	0.00
Bready & District Ulster Scots Association	0.00	0.00
Dromboughil Community Association	3,000.00	0.00
Eskra Community Association	0.00	0.00
Kinawley Community Partnership	0.00	1,950.00
Loughgiel Community Association	0.00	0.00
Mary Gray Farm Services	0.00	0.00
Muintir Na Muinteach	0.00	0.00
Rural Retail Support Programme	0.00	2,640.81
RDC Sectoral Programme	0.00	0.00
Rock & District Community Association	5,000.00	0.00
Spamount & District Cross-Community	0.00	0.00

Statement

Statement of Chief Executive and Directors' Responsibilities

Company law requires the Chief Executive and directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company at the year end and of its income and expenditure, total recognised gains and losses and cash flows for the financial year. Additionally these accounts have to be in a form and on the basis determined by Department of Agriculture and Rural Development with the approval of the Department of Finance and Personnel including being on an accruals basis.

In preparing these financial statements, the Chief Executive and directors are required to:

- Observe the Accounts Direction issued by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements
- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether the applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements, and
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in operation

The Chief Executive and directors are also responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986. The Chief Executive and directors have a general responsibility to take steps that are reasonably available to safeguard the assets of the company and to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

In addition, in appointing the Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Rural Development Council as Accounting Officer for the company, the Accounting Officer of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development has placed on the Chief Executive a responsibility for ensuring the regularity and propriety of the public finances, a requirement which is set out in the company's financial memorandum.

Statement

Statement on Internal Control

As Accounting Officer, I acknowledge my responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of the Northern Ireland Rural Development Council's (RDC) Strategy approved by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, whilst safeguarding the public funds and the company's assets for which I am personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me in the Financial Memorandum.

The system of internal control is designed to manage rather than eliminate the risk of failure to achieve the strategy and relating aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The company's internal control is based on a framework of regular management information, administrative procedures including the segregation of duties, and a system of delegation and accountability. In particular it includes:

- Comprehensive budgeting systems with an annual budget that is reviewed and agreed by members of the Executive and Audit Committee and Council
- Regular reviews by the members of periodic and annual financial reports that indicate financial performance against the forecasts
- Setting targets to measure financial and other performance
- Clearly defined capital investment and control guidelines
- As appropriate, formal project management disciplines
- An Internal Audit Officer within the RDC provides an independent and objective opinion regularly to the Executive and Audit Committee on the Company's control and corporate governance

The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify the principal risks to the achievement of the strategy and relating aims and objectives, to evaluate the nature and extent of those risks and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

We have carried out appropriate procedures to ensure that we have identified the company's objectives and risks. As a result, risk ownership has been allocated to the appropriate staff and the company has set out its attitude to risk and the achievement of the company's strategy.

The Executive and Audit Committee has ensured that procedures are in place for verifying that aspects of risk management and internal control are regularly reviewed and reported on. A full risk and control assessment report has been in place for the year ended 31 March 2004.

In addition to the actions mentioned above, the following processes have been applied in reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control:

- Completed Risk Assessment Workshops with the Senior Management Team and the Executive and Audit Committee.
- Developed a company Audit Plan, based on Risk identification and priority.
- Actioned and monitor company Audit Plan.

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development has an internal audit unit, which, through a service level agreement, provides the RDC with an internal audit service. This internal audit unit operates to standards defined in the Government Internal Audit Manual.

The work of the internal audit unit is informed by an analysis of the risk to which the RDC is exposed, and annual internal audit plans are based on this analysis. At least annually the Head of Internal Audit provides me with a report on internal audit activity in the RDC. The report includes the Head of Internal Audit's independent opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the RDC's system of control.

My review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of the internal auditors, the Executive and Audit Committee which oversees the work of the internal auditor, the executive managers within the RDC who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework, and comments made by the external auditors in their management letter and other reports.

Martin McDonald
Accounting Officer
22nd June 2004

Report

Report Of The Auditors

We have audited the financial statements on pages 14 to 24 which have been prepared under the historical cost convention and the accounting policies set out on page 17.

This report is made solely to the company's members as a body in accordance with article 243 of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company and the company's members as a body for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of the Chief Executive, directors and auditors

As described on page 9, the Chief Executive and directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and the regularity and propriety of the public finances. It is our responsibility to form an independent opinion, based on our audit on those statements and, in accordance with our instructions, on the regularity of the financial transactions included in them and to report our opinion to you.

Basis of opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with the Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the directors in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Company's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error and that, in all material respects, the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions are in conformity with the authorities which govern them. In forming our opinion, we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of the information in the financial statements.

Opinion

With respect to the Accounting Officer's statement on financial control on pages 10 and 11, in our opinion the Accounting Officer has provided the disclosures required by DAO/DFP 5/01 and the statement is not inconsistent with the information of which we are aware from our audit work on the financial statements.

In our opinion, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the Company's affairs at 31 March 2004 and of the excess of its income over expenditure for the year then ended, and comply with the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 and in all material respects the income and expenditure have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

Finegan Gibson

Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors
Highbridge House
23/25 High Street
Belfast BT1 2AA

22nd June 2004

Income

Income And Expenditure

Income And Expenditure Account For Year Ended 31 March 2004

	Note	2004 £	2003 £
Income			
Grants receivable	2	2,412,072	1,162,581
Other income		1,018	5,806
		2,413,090	1,168,387

Expenditure

Grants paid		1,090,713	130,947
Administration costs	5	1,298,698	1,082,315
Total expenditure		2,389,411	1,213,262

Operating surplus/(deficit)	23,679	(44,875)
Interest receivable	2,205	311
	25,884	(44,564)
Tax charge on ordinary activities	-	-
Surplus/(deficit) for the financial year	25,884	(44,564)
Cost of capital charge	939	(2,845)
Balance at start of year	92,491	139,900
Balance at the end of the year	14	92,491

There were no recognised gains or losses other than those included in the income and expenditure account above.

All of the activities of the company are classed as continuing.

The notes on pages 17 to 24 form part of these financial statements

Balance Sheet

Balance Sheet As At 31 March 2004

	Note	2004 £	2003 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	8	7,868	19,703
Current assets			
Debtors	9	1,379,675	270,189
Cash at bank and in hand	10	81,476	188,999
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		1,461,151	459,188

Creditors

Amount falling due within one year	11	(1,349,705)	(386,400)
Net current assets		111,446	72,788

Total assets less all liabilities

119,314	92,491
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Funds

14	119,314	92,491
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Approved on 22nd June 2004

Caroline Braekey Chairman

Brian Howe Secretary

Martin McDonald Accounting Officer

The notes on pages 17 to 24 form part of these financial statements

Cash Flow Statement

Cash Flow Statement For Year Ended 31 March 2003

	Note	2004 £	2003 £
Net cash (outflow)/inflow			
before returns on investments	10	(97,927)	92,410
Returns on investments			
Interest received		2,205	311
Net cash inflow			
from returns on investments		2,205	311

Investing activities

Payments to acquire tangible fixed assets	8	(11,801)	
Net cash outflow from investing activities		(11,801)	-
Decrease/(increase) in cash and cash equivalents	10	(107,523)	92,721

The notes on pages 17 to 24 form part of these financial statements

Notes

Notes To The Financial Statements

Notes To The Financial Statements For Year Ended 31 March 2004

1. Accounting policies

Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention as modified by the revaluation of fixed assets to current costs. The directors do not consider the current cost of any of the year's transactions or closing balances to be materially different from the historical cost.

Basis of accounting

Income and expenditure are treated on the accruals basis of accounting.

Without limiting the information given, the accounts meet the accounting and disclosure requirements of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 and Accounting Standards issued or adopted by the Accounting Standards Board and accounting and disclosure requirements issued by the Department of Finance and Personnel.

Grants paid

Grants are treated as paid if they have been authorised for payment by the members and paid prior to the year end.

Pension scheme

The Company operates a defined benefit pension scheme for its employees. Scheme funds are administered by independent trustees and are completely separate of the Company's finances.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rate in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Fixtures and fittings	20% straight line basis
Computer equipment	33.3% straight line basis

Taxation

The Council, as a corporate body, is liable to corporation tax on its investment income. Provision is made for such a liability in any year where it arises.

Value added tax

The company is not VAT registered and as such the figures in these accounts are inclusive of value added tax where charged.

Funds

The Company operates the following types of funds:

• Restricted funds

For funds which were given to the Council for spending on specific purposes which are within the overall aims of the Council, over a period of more than one year.

• Core funds

For all other funds which are expendable by the members at their discretion in furtherance of the objectives of the Council, within the financial year.

2. Grant Income

	2004	2003
	£	£
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD)		
- Public expenditure monies	325,000	330,000
- Local regeneration	323,776	354,093
- Policy and regional development	262,932	108,905
- BSP grants	1,124,741	67,310
	2,036,449	860,308
International Fund for Ireland		
Policy and regional development	(1,889)	9,906
Administration	54,506	-
Rural retail	25,199	-
The Community Fund - policy and regional development	-	25,285
Peace 2 Programme	297,807	267,082
	2,412,072	1,162,581

Notes

Notes To The Financial Statements

Grant-in-aid is received from DARD under Vote 2 line I.

3. Staff costs

The average number employed by the company, including directors, was:

	No.	No.
Corporate Services	13	13
Operations	8	7
Policy and regional development Programmes	5	3
	6	6
Total number employed	32	29

The costs incurred in respect of these employees were:

	2004	2003
	£	£
Wages and salaries	673,429	601,667
National insurance	54,440	42,622
Pension costs	33,474	22,885
Secondment and agency staff	70,050	87,621
	831,393	754,795

4. Directors and Chief Executive

The remuneration of the Chairman and Chief Executive was £8,705 (2003 £9,325) and £57,519 (2003 £55,243) respectively. The Chief Executive is on secondment from DARD and as a consequence the company paid a further £7,312 (2003 £7,997) in contributions to the Northern Ireland Civil Service pension scheme.

No remuneration was paid to the other Directors during the year.

Directly incurred expenses are reimbursed, if claimed.

5. Analysis of expenses

	2004	2003
	£	£
Wages and salaries	831,393	754,795
Consultancy fees	35,529	34,740
Programme promotional costs	62,318	54,370
Travel and subsistence	56,420	42,638
Staff training and development	40,495	28,067
Printing, publishing and stationery	34,115	9,833
Legal and professional fees	6,761	6,537
Feasibility studies, business plans and economic appraisals	81,635	-

Training for beneficiaries	4,426	-
Auditors' remuneration	14,500	4,500
Telephone and postage	21,240	17,010
Rent and rates	54,733	44,295
Light and heat	4,251	4,287
Insurances	10,008	10,953
Cleaning	4,430	3,899
Repairs and maintenance	13,042	11,611
Sundry expenses	6,733	7,980
Depreciation	23,636	31,636
Cost of capital charge	939	(2,845)
Interest repaid to DARD	2,094	18,009

1,298,698 **1,082,315**

6. Related party transactions

The NI Rural Development Council is treated as a Non-Departmental Public Body sponsored by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. During the year, there were various material transactions at open market value with the Department which is regarded as a related party.

None of the board members, members of the key management staff or other related parties has undertaken any material transactions with the NI Rural Development Council during the year.

7. Pension scheme

The company operates a defined benefit scheme providing benefits based on final pensionable pay. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company, being invested in Northern Ireland Local Government Scheme, NILGOSC. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable by the fund and amounted to £33,474 (2003: £22,885).

8. Tangible fixed assets

	Building improvements	Fixtures & Fittings	Total
Cost:	£	£	£
As at 1 April 2003	63,524	397,060	460,584
Additions	-	11,801	11,801
As at 31 March 2004	63,524	408,861	472,385

Notes

Notes To The Financial Statements

Depreciation:

As at 1 April 2003	63,524	377,357	440,881
Charge for year	-	23,636	23,636
As at 31 March 2004	63,524	400,993	464,517

Net Book Value:

As at 1 April 2003	-	19,703	19,703
As at 31 March 2004	-	7,868	7,868

The directors do not consider the current values of fixed assets to be materially different from the net book values as shown above.

9. Debtors

	2004	2003
	£	£
Grants receivable	1,379,675	270,189

10. Notes to the cash flow statement

Reconciliation of income and expenditure to net cash (outflow)/inflow:

Operating surplus/(deficit)	23,679	(44,875)
Non cash transactions		
-Depreciation	23,636	31,636
-Cost of capital	939	(2,845)
Movement in working capital		
-Increase in creditors	963,305	378,683
-Increase in debtors	(1,109,486)	(270,189)
Net cash (outflow)/inflow from operating activities	(97,927)	92,410

Analysis of changes in cash and cash equivalents during the year:

Balance at 1 April 2003	188,999	96,278
(Decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents	(107,523)	92,721
Balance at 31 March 2004	81,476	188,999
Cash at bank and in hand at 31 March 2004	81,476	188,999

11. Creditors (amounts due within one year)

Bank overdrafts	101,610	-
Accruals	7,050	7,050
Grants received in advance	1,241,045	379,350
	1,349,705	386,400

12. Guarantee

The Council is a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital.

13. Losses and special payments

There were no losses or special payments in the year (2003: £0.00).

14. Funds

Balance as at 1st April 2003	92,491
Surplus for year	25,884
Cost of capital charge	939
Balance as at 31st March 2004	119,314

15. Contingent liabilities

As at 31 March 2004 the Company had contractual obligations arising through offers of grant, which will be paid directly by the relevant funders, as follows:

	£
Operations	3,993,866
Peace programme	1,272,824
International fund for Ireland	1,011,444
	6,278,134

Notes

Notes To The Financial Statements

16. Pension Scheme

The Northern Ireland Rural Development Council participates in The Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee (NILGOSC) Scheme (the "Scheme"). The Scheme is a multi-employer defined scheme. The Scheme is funded and is contracted out of the State scheme.

The last formal valuation of the Scheme was performed at 31st March 2001 by a professionally qualified actuary.

During the accounting period The Northern Ireland Rural Development Council paid contributions at the rate of 4.6%. Member contributions were at the rate of 6%.

It is not possible to identify the share of underlying assets and liabilities belonging to individual participating employers.

Due to the nature of the Scheme, the profit and loss account charge for the period under both SSAP24 and FRS17 represents the employer contribution payable.

The financial assumptions underlying the valuation were as follows:

	% pa
- Investment return in future contributions	6.55
- Investment return on accumulated assets	6.30
- Rate of salary increases	3.80
- Rate of pension increases	2.30

The valuation demonstrated that the smoothed market value of the assets represented 121% of the liabilities for employees' service up to the valuation date.

The surplus has enabled the employer contribution rate for the Northern Ireland Rural Development Council to remain at the rate of 4.6% of pensionable pay, subject to review at future valuations.

The valuation also showed that, on the assumptions adopted, the value of the assets of the fund at the valuation date exceeded the value of the accrued benefits at that date. For this purpose, accrued benefits means:

- Benefits for preserved and current pensioners, and
- Preserved benefits for contributing members based on completed service and pay at 31 March 2001, with allowance for pension increases after that date

The next valuation of the fund was due at 31st March 2004 but has been deferred until 31st March 2005.

17. Key corporate financial targets

The key corporate financial targets as agreed with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for the new programmes are a comparison of actual expenditure against budgeted expenditure during the year.

The results achieved in the year to 31 March 2004 were as follows:

	Budgeted expenditure to 31/03/04 £	Actual expenditure to 31/03/04 £	Variance £
Corporate Services			
Core Costs	325,000	325,031	(31)
Programmes	28,560	25,858	2,702
Building Sustainable Prosperity (BSP)	83,288	80,824	2,464
	436,848	431,713	5,135
Operations			
Administration	143,287	142,950	337
Technical Support	130,724	113,798	16,926
Grants	1,182,263	1,034,436	147,827
	1,456,274	1,291,184	165,090
Policy and Regional Development			
	229,680	207,662	22,018
Peace II			
Administration	226,620	212,175	14,445
Technical assistance	176,327	90,348	85,979
	402,947	302,523	100,424
IFI			
Administration	60,000	54,506	5,494
Rural Retail	47,700	30,199	17,501
	107,700	84,705	22,995
Total expenditure	2,633,449	2,317,787	315,662

The above figures will not match those reported in the Income and Expenditure account as they have been prepared on a cash basis rather than the accruals basis of accounting.

Notes



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