



ACTion
with communities
in cumbria

Case Study: Orton and Tebay Tourism Group

March 2013

The Tebay and Orton Local Distinctiveness Project, delivered by ACTion with Communities in Cumbria (ACT), worked with the communities of Tebay and Orton to provide training, events, and raise awareness of, and pride in, cultural and environmental heritage.

The villages of Orton and Tebay nestle between the National Parks of the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales. Bounded by the rounded Howgill Fells and fascinating limestone pavements of Orton Scar. There is something for everyone, excellent food, walking, cycling, landscape and heritage. Birdwatchers, fishermen, train and archaeology enthusiasts of all ages will find many reasons to visit the area.

Background

ACT Development Officer, Annie Hamilton-Gibney, arranged a Local Tourism Business Conference at the outset of the Project. This provided a chance for local tourism providers to network, gain more local knowledge to share with visitors, and explore the potential to develop the area as a tourism destination.

Through feedback from this conference, it became clear that although the area has much to offer, local businesses felt they were underrepresented by the Tourist Information Centres and lacked information about the Tebay and Orton area.

The Project

In response, a series of networking days for all the tourism providers from the Tebay and Orton areas were arranged. The first day showcased Tebay, with a tour of the Tebay in Steam exhibition at St James Church and a talk from the Tebay Anglers. This was followed by a day looking at Orton, 'through the eyes of a tourist' and the third day explored the surrounding area.

For the first time many local business owners were able to put faces to names, and visit each others facilities. The next step was for the group to work together to produce information they could use to provide a focus for visitors and to encourage new visitors to the area.



The launch of the Visit Orton & Tebay leaflet

What has been achieved?

ACT worked with the local tourism businesses to produce a 'Visit Orton & Tebay' leaflet, in partnership with Eden Tourism. This provides details about events and attractions, and information about the landscape, wildlife, and farming and transport heritage.

To publicise some of the activities available, a series of Orton & Tebay walking and cycling leaflets were produced, in partnership with Adventure Capital. The leaflets come in packs of four in a water resistant folder.

Each pack has a walking leaflet of round routes from the villages of Tebay and Orton, and a cycling leaflet for each village. Photos taken by the community and promotional phrases about the area, from Tebay Primary School year 4 to 6 pupils are also included.



Some of the group planning routes for the Tebay and Orton walking and cycling leaflets



Steve & Jo with their new Tourist Information Hub in the porch of The Old School Tea Room,

A visitor day for Tourist Information Centre (TIC) staff from across Cumbria was also organised to help promote the area. They toured Tebay and Orton in a vintage coach, visiting tourism attractions and meeting accommodation providers en-route.

It is hoped that now TIC staff have met local providers and visited the facilities, they will have first hand experience to pass on to visitors looking for local attractions and accommodation.

In addition, The Old School Tea Room in Tebay then worked with Eden Tourism to provide a local 'TIC Hub' where visitors can drop in to find information about the area.

Whenever possible throughout the project the area has been promoted in the local media. The TIC visitor day and Roman open day were both covered by BBC Radio Cumbria.

The Old School Tea Room which provides tourist accommodation in Tebay also had their business highlighted at the 2012 Eden Tourism Conference and the networking events and leaflet launches were featured in the local press.

The Learning

Local tourism providers have learnt:

- That it is beneficial for everyone to work together and not act as rivals.
- There is so much more to offer visitors than they had realised.
- To use the local business network to provide a better 'visitor package'.
- Don't be afraid to take opportunities and get involved in projects, you get as much out as you put in.

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ACRE Topic Sheet on 'Rural Tourism' may also be of interest www.acre.org.uk/our-work/community-led-planning/Resources/Community+Led+Planning+Toolkit/Topic+Sheets.htm



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