



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

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A National Delivery Framework for LEADER 2014-2020

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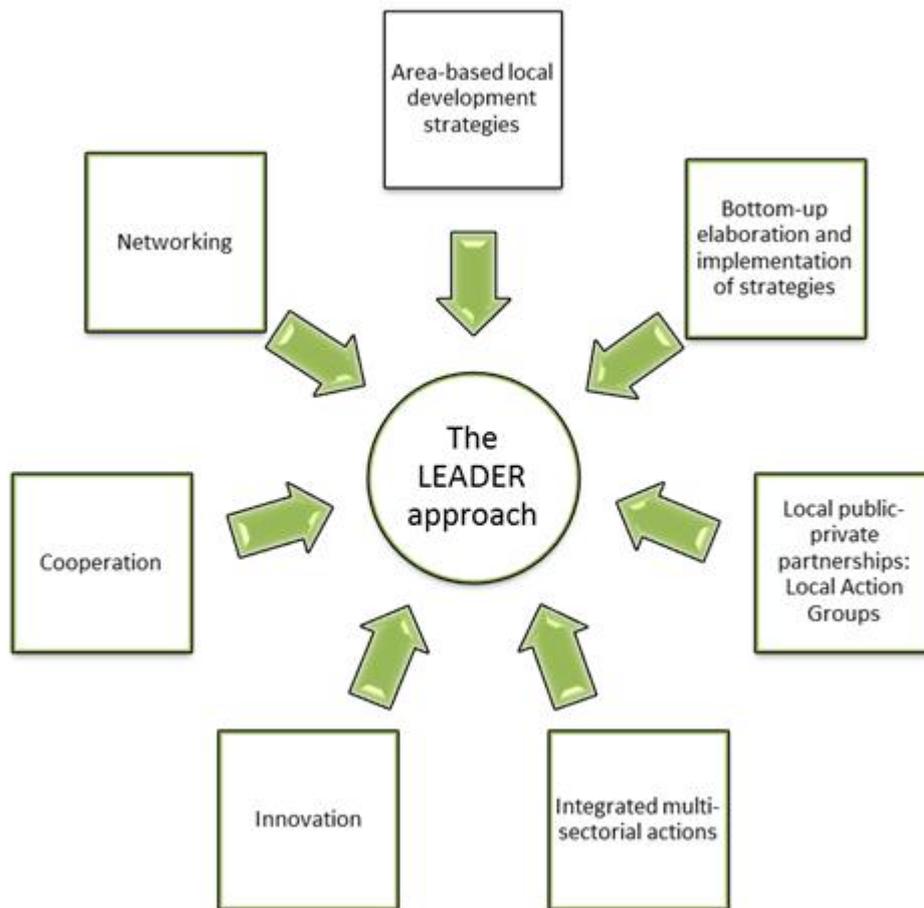
1 Introduction

What is LEADER?

1. LEADER is a well-established method of providing Rural Development Programme (RDP) funding at the local level. LEADER is a (French) acronym which roughly translates as 'Liaison among Actors in Rural Economic Development'.
2. The RDP is how European funding under Pillar 2 of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)¹ is delivered. It provides support for economic, social and environmental development in the countryside.
3. Defra is the Managing Authority for the Rural Development Programme in England. A Managing Authority is responsible for the overall management and implementation of European Programmes in a Member State.
4. A LEADER Local Action Group (LAG) is made up of local public, private and civil society representatives that have delegated powers to bring forward and fund projects in line with their Local Development Strategy (LDS) and RDP objectives.
5. An LDS is a document which is created by the LAG for a given area. This document will be assessed by Defra as part of the open and competitive LEADER application process. The LDS describes what the LAG aims to achieve based on locally identified priorities and actions.
6. LEADER groups address their local priorities in an innovative, inclusive and locally specific way through planning and implementing their LDS.
7. LEADER is based on 7 principles – all of which must come together for it to be successful.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/reforming-the-common-agricultural-policy-to-ensure-a-fair-deal-for-farmers-consumers-and-taxpayers>

Figure 1 – The 7 principles of LEADER



8. The main advantages of the LEADER approach are that:
- Local people have a better knowledge of local challenges that need to be addressed.
 - A LAG is able to mobilise local resources for the development process in a way that does not happen with traditional ‘top-down’ approaches.
 - Local people have a greater sense of ownership and commitment to locally relevant projects, which in turn allows them to make the best of their assets and development opportunities.
 - It can help develop trust and positive working relationships amongst the local community and businesses.
9. This National Delivery Framework sets out the requirements and expectations for the next programming period (2014 to 2020), so that prospective LEADER Local Action Groups can understand:
- what LEADER is and what makes it successful
 - the national policy objectives to be reflected in their LDS
 - how to prepare a LEADER application and what the selection process will involve

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- how to develop and deliver projects that address local priorities
- the roles and responsibilities of those involved with LEADER
- the relevant regulatory and operational requirements
- where to go for further information and help

2 LEADER 2014 to 2020

What's new for LEADER in the Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014 to 2020?

10. A new Rural Development Regulation, 1305/2013,² provides the legal framework for what the new Rural Development Programme for England can support.
11. A new 'Horizontal' Regulation sets out important rules for how the CAP (including Rural Development Programmes) should be managed, financed and controlled.³
12. A new common monitoring and evaluation system (CMES) will assess the performance of the CAP and the ways in which it is implemented, including rural development measures. It defines a series of output targets for each measure and promotes the use of monitoring and evaluation tools. It will help to assess the progress, efficiency and effectiveness of programmes in meeting their objectives.
13. The new Rural Development Programme prioritises:
- encouraging strong rural economic growth
 - improving the environment (this includes helping to ensure that, by 2021, the natural environment is improved as set out in the Natural Environment White Paper⁴)
 - improving the productivity and competitiveness of farming and forestry businesses
 - reducing the reliance of farmers and land managers on subsidies
14. The LEADER approach will be a mandatory component of the new RDP, with a 5% minimum EU programme fund allocation as required by the Commission Regulation 1305/2013.⁵ It will keep its current purpose as a mechanism by which LAGs plan and implement an LDS.

² <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:347:0487:0548:EN:PDF>

³ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:347:0549:0607:EN:PDF>

⁴ <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmenvfru/492/492.pdf>

⁵ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:347:0487:0548:EN:PDF>

3 A National Delivery Framework for LEADER

How the RDP budget will be allocated

15. The overall RDP budget allocated to LEADER for 2014 to 2020 is £138M. This figure is subject to fluctuations, either due to exchange rates or any changes in the RDP total budget. The allocation of funding to individual LEADER groups, based on your proposed geography (see paragraph 91), will be a two-stage process:

- a pre-application indicative budget allocation for all prospective LEADER groups in early June 2014
- an adjusted programme budget allocation for approved LEADER groups in November/December 2014

16. The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) provides the European funding component of the RDP, co-financed with a domestic funding component from Defra.

17. EAFRD funding can only be applied to rural areas as defined in the RDP. In the case of LEADER groups, this will depend on having a clearly defined eligible area. Before applications are made, we will make an indicative allocation of funds. For this, we will incorporate the same allocation methodology used for allocating EAFRD funding to Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). This initial allocation will be made up of two components:

- A minimum budget allocation for every prospective group
- An additional 'top up' using the LEP EAFRD allocation methodology

18. Rural population will be used as the underlying basis for 'top up' allocation. Funding is broadly on a per rural head basis, but with some adjustments. 15% of the funding is allocated simply on a per rural head basis. The remaining 85%, while still based on rural population, is allocated on the basis of adjusted components of population density, sparsity and productivity using Gross Value Added (GVA) data.

19. In allocating the funds we will have due regard to the objectives listed in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010⁶ (the public sector equality duty). LEADER groups and Accountable Bodies must also comply with the public sector equality duty throughout the process of application, selection and implementation.

20. Only those LEADER groups who are approved by the selection panel will receive an adjusted programme allocation. This adjustment will be informed by their agreed LDS.

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance>

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This programme allocation can be subject to further adjustments over the course of the programme period.

Policy priorities for LEADER in the next RDP

21. This National Delivery Framework (NDF) set outs the policy priorities and measures and includes examples of the types of projects we expect Local Development Strategies to be based on to achieve the required focus on jobs and growth.

22. In terms of the overall expenditure for LEADER, we expect that 70% of all projects must directly support the rural economy (eg through creating and developing micro and small sized rural businesses). The remaining 30% of projects will also need to demonstrate that they are contributing to improving the local rural economy by, for example, increasing visitors to a particular area or providing an essential rural service.

23. Table 1 sets out our policy priorities

Table 1 - LEADER Policy Priorities (2014 to 2020)

Policy Priority
Support for increasing farm productivity
Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification
Support for rural tourism
Provision of rural services
Support for cultural and heritage activity
Support for increasing forestry productivity

How priorities will be linked to programme measures, projects and outputs

24. In developing the RDP, Defra is required to map activity against the relevant programme measure or measures. Each programme measure will be accompanied by a 'measure fiche'. Published by the EU Commission, these will present the justification, corresponding common indicators and more detail on the requirements for each measure.

25. The measure fiches are currently in development. Final versions will be sent to you in due course, including further information on project eligibility.

26. The RDP Common Monitoring and Evaluation System (CMES) includes a range of relevant output indicators which will measure the success of programme activities and will need to be linked to the priorities and actions in your LDS. This information is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 – Policy priorities, programme measures and output indicators

Measure	Example Project Types	CMES Output Indicators
Support for increasing farm productivity		
Measure 4: Investments in physical assets Measure 6: farm and business productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the overall performance and sustainability of the agricultural holding • Investments to support animal health and welfare improvements • Processing, marketing and/or development of agricultural products • Modernisation or adaptation of agriculture and forestry, including access to farm and forest land and the supply and saving of energy and water 	Total amount of investment No. of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • projects • holdings benefitting • businesses benefitting • individuals benefitting • jobs created • jobs safeguarded
Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification		
Measure 4: Investments in physical assets Measure 6: farm and business productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business start-up aid • Construction or establishment of workshops, factories, premises and facilities • Purchase of equipment (not consumables) • Processing and marketing of products 	Total amount of investment No. of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • projects • holdings benefitting • businesses benefitting • individuals benefitting • jobs created • jobs safeguarded
Support for rural tourism		
Measure 4: Investments in physical assets Measure 6: farm and business productivity Measure 7: basic services and village renewal in rural areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodation upgrades – limited to 4 star and above and for serviced accommodation only • Use of IT and e-booking systems • Shops, Catering services, Restaurants & Cafes • Investments in green infrastructure – cycle ways • Signage and interpretation – linked with local food and drink and the natural / built environment • Visitor attractions, destination marketing and promotion • Support for events and festivals 	Total amount of investment No. of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • projects • existing tourism activities supported • new tourism activities supported • potential additional overnight stays

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Measure	Example Project Types	CMES Output Indicators
Provision of rural services		
Measure 4: Investments in physical assets Measure 7: basic services and village renewal in rural areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans for the development of municipalities, and villages in rural areas and their rural services • Creation, improvement or expansion of all types of small scale infrastructure, including investments in renewable energy • Setting-up, improvement or expansion of essential rural services for the local community 	Total amount of investment No. of projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • businesses benefitting • villages/communities benefitting • jobs created • jobs safeguarded Population benefitting
Support for cultural and heritage activity		
Measure 7: basic services and village renewal in rural areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancement, restoration and upgrading of the cultural and natural heritage of villages, and rural landscapes and high nature value sites • Conservation of small scale built heritage • Enhancement of cultural and community activities and investments to enhance venues providing cultural and heritage activity • Support for events linked to cultural activity 	Total amount of investment No. of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • projects • facilities benefitting • jobs created • jobs safeguarded Population benefitting
Support for increasing forestry productivity		
Measure 4: Investments in physical assets Measure 6: farm and business productivity Measure 8: Investments in forest area development and improvement of the viability of forests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New forestry technologies, processing, mobilising & marketing of products • Enhancing forestry potential or relating to processing, mobilising & marketing adding value to forest products • Supporting the development of wood fuel supply chains • Provision of woodland advisory services to forest owners – to put in place management plans 	Total amount of investment No. of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • projects • forests/woodlands/holdings benefitting • jobs created • jobs safeguarded

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27. A database with example LEADER projects from the RDP (2007-13) is available on the Rural Development Programme England (RDPE) Network website [here](#). The RDPE Network is managed by Defra. The aim of the RDPE Network is to help improve the overall quality of how the RDP is implemented. It provides tools and opportunities for those involved in RDPE to share their ideas, practice and experience. In addition, a series of project case studies is presented at Annex D. These case studies will show you how other LEADER groups have made a real change in their area through innovative, high quality projects that address local priorities.

How rural areas for LEADER are defined

28. You will need to define your LEADER area and submit your map to Defra to then receive an indicative budget allocation. The deadline for submitting this map is Friday 23 May. Section 6 explains how this needs to be done. The following paragraphs outline how rural areas are defined to determine eligibility. They will be based on the following criteria:

29. Firstly, rural areas and their populations are as defined in the 2011 rural-urban classification, based on the 2011 Census. Settlements with populations above 10,000 are defined as urban areas. Rural areas are the remainder, consisting of smaller towns, villages, hamlets or isolated dwellings. Populations are based on a classification for Census Output Areas (which are the smallest area for which Census data are available).

See www.gov.uk/government/collections/rural-urban-definition for more information

30. Secondly, the way Census Output Areas are defined can result in those on the edge of urban areas being classed as urban (since the majority of the population is within an urban built-up area) even though they include areas that are more rural in character (beyond the built-up area). To avoid these areas from being seen as ineligible for LEADER, boundaries can be drawn up to but not including the urban built up area, rather than being restricted by the Census Output Area boundaries. However, in such cases the population within the Census Output Area will be still classed as urban. The built-up area boundaries will be based on Office for National Statistics / Ordnance Survey mapping, available from the ONS Geoportal.

See <https://geoportal.statistics.gov.uk/geoportal/catalog/main/home.page> for more information.

31. Thirdly, in addition to the standard rural-urban classification, new research is being carried out to classify local authority and other geographies in terms of the degree to which they are urban and rural. As part of this process, some settlements with a population over 10,000 may be identified as service and business 'rural hub towns' for their rural hinterland. This would update the previous classification of 'larger market towns' with a population of 10,000 to 30,000, which was used in the previous local authority classification. This information is due to be published at the end of April 2014.

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We intend for urban settlements that are identified as 'rural hub towns' to then be regarded as eligible for inclusion in a LEADER area.

32. With this information, we intend to then create an additional scheme-specific rural definition for LEADER which uses both the standard rural definition and the revised map. Subject to European Commission approval, this would give LEADER groups more scope in where they carry out their activity, particularly in support of the focus on rural jobs and growth.
33. A further guidance note on defining your LEADER area, incorporating all of this information and online resources, will be published in advance of the deadline for submitting outline maps on 23 May 2014.

4 Guidance for Accountable Bodies and Local Action Groups

34. For all LEADER groups who are approved for the England RDP 2014 to 2020 there will be a National Operational Manual. This will include the regulatory key and ancillary controls which must be performed. It will be developed during 2014, and will be published before LEADER delivery starts in January 2015. It will be subject to change throughout the programme period, because of changes to regulations, process improvements and audit findings etc. All groups will be informed of any changes.
35. For support and guidance for all aspects of their activity, LEADER groups can also call upon their local Defra Rural Development Team (Defra RDT). Contact details can be found at Annex A.
36. Every LDS will need to identify an Accountable Body and a Local Action Group. Both have specific roles and functions as defined below.

The Accountable Body's functions

37. The Accountable Body (usually a Local Authority) is responsible for delivery of the programme on behalf of the LAG, holds itself responsible for successful conclusion of the programme, and undertakes to ensure that financial propriety and compliance is observed in its management and administration of the programme. It is also responsible for the tasks set out in the following paragraphs.
38. As an Accountable Body, you must carry out your responsibilities in accordance with the National Operational Manual.

The Accountable Body's role in project development

39. You will need to ensure that as many sectors of the community can participate in the delivery of the strategy through developing project proposals and using animation measures. 'Animation' refers to LEADER groups stimulating local interest in rural development, bringing forward ideas and projects. It includes informing, supporting and coordinating the activities of stakeholders that make up the local community and is an important means by which under-represented groups can benefit.
40. You will need to have a communications strategy, which should align, as appropriate, with the wider national strategy for promoting the Programme. Further details on the publicity requirements of a LEADER group will be set out in the National Operational Manual.

The Accountable Body's role in project assessment

41. Through the LAG and under the guidance of Defra RDT, you are responsible for selecting projects which meet the objectives of the Local Development Strategy and the RDP Programme Document. You will need to ensure that there is openness and transparency in the design of project selection criteria, the analyses of project proposals and the selection of projects.
42. You can only approve applications after sufficient checks have been carried out, including:
- eligibility of the proposed investment
 - selection criteria set out in the RDPE
 - state aid and other obligatory standards
 - reasonableness of proposed activity
 - reliability of the applicant
43. You will need an internal audit section that will check that the correct procedures are being carried out by all the parties involved in the programme, including examination of a representative sample of the projects themselves. These checks will include the appraisal and approval or refusal of projects, and the management of conflicts of interest within the Accountable Body and the Local Action Group.
44. You will be responsible for issuing letters offering grants to project deliverers or applicants in accordance with the decisions of the Local Action Group and Defra RDT.

The Accountable Body's role in project monitoring

45. You will need to undertake monitoring to identify possible weaknesses or risks in the operation of projects and provide for corrective measures to be taken to eliminate weaknesses. This may include checking claims and progress reports, undertaking routine and targeted inspections and monitoring the projects' progress by any other means. Project managers must supply a progress report with each grant claim. This will provide detail on the progress made against the forecasts in the application and contract. Larger and longer-term projects may need to supply a progress report every quarter.
46. You will have the right to seek information regarding any project or any procedure carried out by the LEADER group, an executive group or any project deliverer where you believe that the correct procedure has not been carried out and/or where you believe that there has been financial impropriety. You may also seek information regarding projects selected by random sampling or any other method to satisfy yourself that the procedures are being carried out correctly. You should refer projects to Defra or RPA for further investigation, if required.

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47. You must not agree any variations over a fixed value, or commit any expenditure on such variations, without obtaining the prior approval of Defra RDT. You must also notify to Defra RDT all variations below the fixed value within a prescribed period. Additionally, you must notify Defra RDT within a prescribed period of:
- any changes in the ownership of the business that applied for grant aid
 - any changes in the ownership of the grant aided items
 - if any grant aided assets are sold during the period up to 5 years after the final grant payment
 - if the business ceases trading
48. You must inform Defra RDT of all irregularities that have taken place and seek guidance on how to proceed. You must also assess the seriousness of irregularity against criteria set out in the National Operational Manual. You will be responsible for applying financial penalties to projects and recovering funds from them if it is required by the programme Regulations.
49. You will be required to monitor and report on all approved projects until each of them is complete and, where appropriate, up until any later time specified in the contract. However, projects can be selected for compliance inspection and other audit up to 5 years from the date of the final payment of grant. The requirements against which projects will be monitored will be included in the National Operational Manual.

The Accountable Body's role in processing grants

50. You must undertake the calculations and checks of grants due to be paid to projects. You must ensure that projects maintain a register of assets, in a format approved by Defra, including items funded or part-funded by monies received from the programme. You must also perform management checks and inspections as laid out in the National Operational Manual.
51. You will need to process grant payments for the programme using the new IT system that is being developed to support the new CAP schemes (known as the CAP-D IT system). It is scheduled to be launched in 2015. This will ensure that the payments are eligible and evidenced by scrutinising the financial claims submitted by project deliverers and you must only recommend payment where satisfactory progress of the project has been confirmed. Defra RDT will assess these payment recommendations and successful claims will be paid through the CAP-D IT system. The project beneficiary will receive the payment directly. There is no need for Accountable Bodies to bank roll expenditure as some have done in the 2007 to 2013 programme.
52. You must not submit a payment recommendation for any applicant or project deliverer where you believe that a project is not being delivered in a satisfactory way, or where you have reason to believe that the correct procedures have not been carried out. You must advise the LAG when you do this and give reasons for the decision. The LAG or

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anybody acting under their authority cannot overturn its decision. You must then refer the project to Defra for investigation.

Records that Accountable Bodies must keep

Accounts

53. You must be able to account for the income and expenditure of the Local Action Group. You will be required to make project and running costs (management and administration) documents available for inspection or audit, as required by Defra, RPA or any audit body empowered by the regulations.

54. You must provide evidence of all payments (to bank statement level) with all project claims (including your management and administration claims) and you must therefore consider how all projects will do this in accordance with regulatory requirements.

Other records

55. You must supply Defra with a copy of your IT information systems policy. Defra will need to see and understand the retention period for data (hard copy and IT), financial transaction processes and the payment process for any Accountable Body transactions that are associated with RDP grant funding.

56. You must hold project-specific information, including claims, inspections and irregularities and copies of all project related information (application, appraisal, offer letters plus any variations, claims and inspections) for a minimum of 7 years from the end date of the project, or 10 years if state aid applies.

57. You will be responsible for archiving electronic records and hardcopy documents associated with LEADER. You must hold copies of all management and administration claims, including HR policies for absence and redundancy, job descriptions, timesheets, travel and subsistence and any other claimed expenditure for a minimum of 7 years from the end date of each project.

Annual checks and inspections

58. Defra will perform an annual re-performance check of the Accountable Body, which will include a sample of management and administration (M&A) claims as well as project activity. In addition, Defra reserves the right to inspect Accountable Bodies at any time, or to request project file documentation for review.

59. As an Accountable Body, you will be responsible for ensuring that the operational guidance, supplied by Defra, is implemented in full. Failure to do this will put the programme at risk of disallowance. Auditors from or on behalf of the European Commission may determine that your activities on behalf of a LAG fail to meet the

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regulatory requirements governing the funds. Defra will take any non-compliance seriously but will initially support you to rectify the situation as quickly as possible. However, ongoing persistent failures (depending on the severity) could lead to one or a combination of:

- suspension of M&A payments
- a reduction in programme budgets
- premature closure of the group's activities (in extreme cases)

The Local Action Group (LAG) functions

60. The Common Provisions Regulation (article 34) sets out minimum Local Action Group (LAG) functions as follows:

- Building the capacity of local people to develop and implement operations
- Drawing up a non-discriminatory and transparent selection procedure and objective criteria for the selection of operations, which avoids conflicts of interest, that shall ensure that at least 50% of the votes in selection decisions are (from) partners which are not public authorities and shall allow selection by written procedure
- Selecting and prioritising operations according to their contribution to meeting the LDS objectives and targets
- Preparing and publishing calls for proposals or an on-going project submission procedure, including definition of selection criteria
- Receiving applications for support and assessing them
- Selecting operations and fixing the amount of support and presenting the proposals to the Accountable Body and the RDT for final verification of eligibility before approval
- Monitoring the implementation of the strategy⁷

61. The Local Action Group is the responsible partnership for the LDS under the authority of The Accountable Body. It is responsible for the overall management and the strategic direction of the LDS. It will monitor the progress of the programme by examining the reports it receives on individual projects and the LDS as a whole.

⁷ <http://new.eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32013R1303>

Operation of LAG partnerships: who should be included

Partners

62. The LAG partnership is the driving force behind the design and the implementation of the strategy. The group of potential partners in a given area coming together is usually the starting point for work on the strategy. As they develop their analysis of the development needs and potential of the area, the LAG partnership will usually include further members from different sections of the local community.
63. The LDS and the LAG partnership are usually built in an iterative (or incremental) process. Any integration and inclusion of new sectors and dimensions in the LDS needs to be matched by the inclusion of representatives of new sectors, communities and areas. This iterative process should not stop when the strategy is submitted to Defra. The LAG should be seen as a dynamic body, which adapts itself to local needs.
64. To be considered truly 'bottom up', the local partnership must include partners from different sections of the local community: public sector, private sector and civil society, as well as important sectors such as farming and forestry, reflecting the nature and focus of the strategy. Given the focus for LEADER activity on jobs and growth and the need to join up with other activity locally, we expect that the relevant LEPs will also be represented on the LAG. LAGs must have the right mix of public/private and socio-economic interests, with no single interest group having more than 49% of voting rights.
65. The LAG, as a decision making body, should aim at being gender balanced and have a fair representation of the specific target groups addressed by the LDS, such as young people, ethnic minorities, disadvantaged people, vulnerable groups. You will need to include in your LDS application details of how you will comply with the public sector equality duty – more information on which is available [here](#)
66. LAG members must also have the appropriate competencies and skills to generate and support development activity.
67. The LAG must also appoint a Chair who will conduct the meetings of the Local Action Group, and the executive group where one exists, and act as an important point of contact with the Accountable Body. The LAG should hold an annual review process for the appointment of Chair. Where there is more than one candidate, appointments should be made by voting.

LAG staff

68. LAG staff, usually employed by the Accountable Body, must have the appropriate competencies, skills and resources to generate and manage development processes on a local level. The staff must also be qualified and/or have experience in the administrative management of local projects and experience in financial management.

69. Animation and project facilitation requires staff with specific communication and organisational skills. Their task is to encourage, in particular, the less active members and areas of the community to participate in the local development process, helping local project holders to develop their ideas into projects eligible for financial support.

70. Generally, the minimum number of staff required for the basic functions is two – a LAG manager and an administrative assistant. The number of staff has to be proportionate to the complexity of the strategy and the partnership.

Executive groups within the partnership

71. Depending on the size (in terms of membership), a LAG may choose to appoint an executive group, made up of a subset of the LAG membership. They will be able to make executive decisions on applications on behalf of and mandated by the full LAG and thereby help to speed up the approval of applications for project funding.

LAG processes

72. Your working procedures, rules and structures for decision-making should be based on the following principles:

- being consistent with the objectives of your Local Development Strategy
- undertaken in a non-discriminatory and transparent manner
- avoiding any risk of conflict of interest

You should establish written procedures explaining how you intend to deal with the risk of conflicts of interest (for example in minutes of meetings, abstention on the vote, written declarations of interest).

73. The increased focus on jobs and growth requires all LEADER projects to contribute to the local rural economy. When you are developing and approving projects you will need to ensure this is achieved. For guidance on good practice when appraising proposals before committing funds to a policy programme or project, you can consult the HM treasury publication '[Managing Public Money](#)'.

74. Alongside your Accountable Body, you should ensure the necessary separation of duties for project appraisal, project approval, claim authorisation, post payment supervisory checks and project inspections. The National Operational Manual will provide more detail on these functions.

Behavioural Code of Conduct – working well together

75. As government, we are expected to carry out our roles with dedication and a commitment to the Civil Service and its core values: integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality. If you become a LEADER group in the next RDP, we will expect you to carry out your roles – whether as an employee of the Accountable Body or as a member of a Local Action Group – with a similar commitment to these values. This means that:

- ✓ We want to see Defra and LEADER groups working effectively together. We believe that the quality and cost effectiveness of services can be improved significantly when organisations work well together.
- ✓ We expect LEADER groups to be productive in how you work with Defra. The way in which we challenge each other should be professional, respectful and avoiding grievances. Any disputes you have with Defra must be dealt with professionally and privately and must not be aired with applicants and grant recipients. You are expected to create a good impression with customers, representing the programme, Defra and the LAG.
- ✓ We expect you to co-operate with us and respond positively to the challenges of LEADER delivery. We have a common goal which is to use LEADER to secure benefits to your local communities. We will work with you to solve policy and operational problems around LEADER delivery.
- ✓ We need to share information with each other to help improve our approach and ensure delivery of a co-ordinated and compliant programme.
- ✓ We will expect you to have a flexible approach and be open to new ways of thinking, helping us find new solutions to delivery/policy and operational problems. With new policy priorities, changes to the delivery landscape and the introduction of the new CAP payments system, those that have been involved in LEADER in the past won't be able to do things as you've always done them.
- ✓ Once an issue has been resolved, accepting this may mean a compromise has been made; all parties will ensure that this is explained to relevant parties in a measured and reasoned way, explaining the rationale for the collective decision that has been taken.

76. If you are successful in your application, part of the contractual arrangements will be to set out a clear framework of responsibilities and accountability for all parties. Activity against these requirements, including the effectiveness of the implementation of the behavioural code of conduct, will be monitored regularly. Results and conclusions of the monitoring process will form part of the LEADER section in the RDPE annual report

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undertaken by Defra and will also be used to determine any local action that needs to be taken.

77. As part of the on-going support, there will be an annual review date set with your Defra RDT lead to discuss progress with your LDS and to resolve any operational issues. Financial performance will form a critical part of that review. The purpose of these reviews is initially to support the LAG in identifying any underperformance and jointly (Defra and the Accountable Body / LAG) attempting to address those issues locally. In the event that isn't possible, the second purpose of this process is to ensure that we remain able to deliver against our regulatory target to ensure 5% of the EU contribution to the programme by redistributing under-utilised resource to those groups best placed to benefit.

5 The LEADER application process

79. All prospective LAGs wishing to apply for LEADER in the next programme will be subject to a competitive application and selection process. Any previous LEADER activity or funding award does not afford preferential status – all bids will be assessed on their merits. The application process can be split into 4 phases

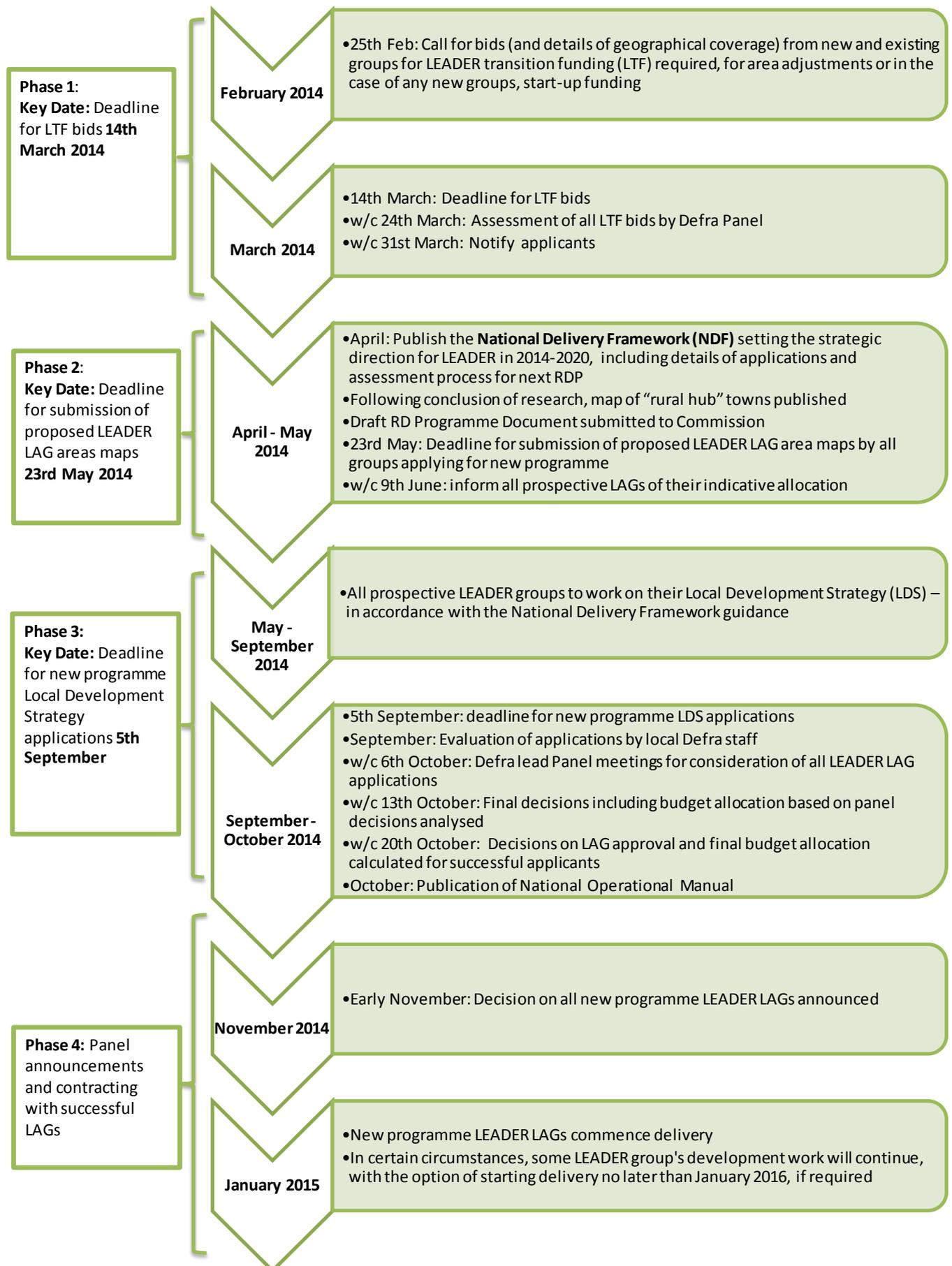
LEADER application timeline

- **Phase 1** - A call for proposals for prospective new LEADER groups to bid for preparatory support (this excludes the previous programme groups that have already been awarded transition funding)– **deadline 14th March 2014**
- **Phase 2** – **All** prospective new programme LEADER groups to define their geographic coverage and submit a map to Defra, so that they can then receive an indicative budget allocation – **deadline 23rd May 2014**
- **Phase 3** – All prospective new programme LEADER groups to develop and submit a full Local Development Strategy application, which will then be assessed by the national selection panel – **deadline 5th September 2014**
- **Phase 4** – Those successful LEADER groups approved by the selection panel are then informed, a programme budget agreed and contracting arrangements put into place by **31st December 2014**

80. **Please note you can discuss any aspect of the application process, at any time with your local Defra RDT contact.** Contacts are provided in Annex A.

81. A more detailed LEADER application timeline is presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2 – LEADER Application Timeline



How to structure your Local Development Strategy (LDS)

82. This section sets out what you need to consider when you are developing your application for LEADER funding in the next programme. Please note that you will need to fully address all of the sections. Failure to do so may result in your application being rejected. We have purposefully not provided you with a standard application form. However, the application should be a maximum of 30 pages of A4 in length, including annexes, using Arial font 11 point.

83. We will expect all the information to be presented in your application in the form of a Local Development Strategy. An application structure is set out below, with headings for the information you need to cover.

1. The Local Action Group Partnership (refer to Section 4 of this document)
 - Membership
 - Structure and decision making process
 - Local Action Group staff, numbers and job descriptions
 - Equal opportunities statement (the public sector equality duty)
 - Involvement of the community and consultation activity undertaken
 - Training requirements
2. The LAG Area (refer to Sections 3 and 6)
 - Map of the area
 - Rural population covered
3. The Strategy (refer to Section 6)
 - A 'SWOT' analysis of the local area
 - Evidence of alignment with LEP activity
 - Your local priorities
 - Programmes of activity
 - Targets, results and outputs
 - Sustainability appraisal
 - Proposed co-operation activity
4. Management and Administration (refer to Sections 4 and 6)
 - Accountable Body
 - Project development and assessment procedures
 - Claims and payments
 - Communications and publicity
5. Financial Plan (refer to Section 6 - *a template will be provided with your indicative budget allocation*)
 - Expenditure for each year, by measure
 - Overall funding profile
 - Use of grants, procurement or other type of financial support

The Approval Panel and selection criteria

84. A Defra led Panel will be responsible for assessing and approving all related LEADER applications and bids in 2014. It will be chaired by the Rural Development Team Deputy Director and will include Policy, Programme Management and Rural Payments Agency (RPA) representatives. For the final approval of full LDS applications, there will also be invited representation from the other Departments responsible for European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) funding and Community Led Local Development (CLLD).

85. The local Defra Rural Development Teams will also be providing the panel with a standardised preliminary assessment of full applications to support the selection process.

86. Outline selection criteria will look to assess:

- Does the strategy reflect the development needs of the area?
- Is the area sufficiently coherent, with sufficient critical mass and within prescribed population limits?
- Is the strategy relevant in terms of its priorities and objectives?
- Is there evidence that the local stakeholders were involved in the development of the strategy?
- Is the budget spread commensurate with the proposed activities and does it reflect the strategy?
- Are the financial resources provided sufficient to implement the strategy in a controlled way?
- Does the strategy complement other economic interventions in the area, especially with LEPs?
- Is there clear evidence of LEP involvement and endorsement?
- What is the experience and capacity of the LAG and Accountable Body in terms of administrative and financial management?
- Is there reassurance that the LAG and Accountable Body will develop an understanding of the regulatory control requirements and implement these?
- Are the LAG's working and decision making procedures clear and transparent and non-discriminatory?

87. Finalised selection criteria and weightings will be published in advance of the deadline for applications.

6 How to Write your LDS

88. An LDS will need to set out a coherent set of operations that meet the local objectives and needs you have identified.

89. In planning Local Development Strategies for 2014 to 2020, LEADER groups will need to show a clear division of responsibilities between LAGs, Managing Authorities and Paying Agencies, and avoid any duplication of roles.

90. The Strategy section will need to present the following elements:

- a 'SWOT' or similar analysis of the local area setting out the development needs and potential of the area under consideration
- evidence of alignment with LEP activity, explaining how your rural economic activity compliments that of the LEP and how every project will contribute to rural growth
- priorities and programmes of activity, including a description of the integrated and innovative character of the strategy and a hierarchy of objectives
- an 'action plan' demonstrating how priorities will be translated into activity
- clear and measureable targets, results and outputs, in accordance with RDP requirements and also incorporating any local approaches
- a sustainability appraisal of how these actions interrelate
- initial proposals for any co-operation activity, setting out the need, opportunity and expected outcomes

How to define and map your LEADER area

91. To help you initially map your LEADER area we will be establishing a standardised approach based on Census Output Areas. Ideally, LEADER areas will be defined using whole Census Output Areas. However, if this is not possible then Census Output Areas will be identified as a 'best fit'. We intend to provide you with support to help you define your area in digital form. This will allow you to submit an accurate statistical map for calculating your indicative budget allocation. It should also help you with any data gathering, analysis and engagement.

92. Following the indicative allocation process, you can refine your LEADER mapped area up until the application submission stage. More information on the additional, inclusive mapping requirements and resources available will be published in a separate guidance note shortly.

93. There are two important factors to consider when defining your area: size and coherence. The area should be of appropriate scale to offer sufficient human, financial and economic resources to support a viable development strategy, and it also needs to be sufficiently defined to allow local interaction.

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94. “The population of the LEADER area shall be not less than 10,000 and not more than 150,000 inhabitants. By way of derogation, the Commission may adopt or amend these population limits for a Member State in the Partnership Agreement, in duly justified cases and on the basis of a proposal by a Member State in order to take account of sparsely or densely populated areas or in order to ensure the territorial coherence of area covered by the local development strategies.”⁸
95. Since the start of the last RDP, there has been significant population growth in some parts of England, including in rural areas. Following the recent 2011 population census, previously ‘rural’ areas in some parts of the country have now become classed as ‘urban’. To help achieve coherent LEADER areas where population density is an issue, and to make further administrative savings, we are seeking permission for an increase in the upper limit to 200,000 inhabitants. We will inform you of the Commission’s decision as soon as it has been made.
96. If this is granted, it will only be used in extreme cases, for example, where an important rural hub town identified in our research would be excluded. This is not a licence for expansion up to a new maximum figure. Any increase above the 150,000 limit will need to be fully justified and agreed in all cases. We are encouraging all prospective LEADER groups to think carefully how they might maximise their coverage up to the 150,000 limit.
97. The territory must also form a coherent unit in geographical, economic and social terms. Areas that are coherent from a physical point of view, like an estuary or mountain range, may not be the right shape or size for dealing with rural economic challenges concerning the labour market or the problems facing certain clusters of business activity.
98. As a result, the area you define may not necessarily coincide with local administrative boundaries. While acceptable in principle, this can lead to additional administrative complexities which need to be properly considered before finalising your area.
99. The selection panel will not ultimately approve more than one LEADER group operating in an area. Although overlapping applications may be submitted, you should try to resolve any problems at a local level before you get to the application stage. If this may be an issue for you then please contact your local RDT for further advice.

Developing objectives and priorities

100. You should draw up the strategy based on a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) or some similar technique or approach for the identification of local needs. A list of rural data sources you can use to identify local

⁸ <http://new.eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32013R1303>

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needs is presented at Annex E. Additional data and evidence on forestry is presented at Annex F.

101. The objectives of your strategy should address the needs you have identified and set concrete, measurable outcomes, focusing on long-term development to solve specific development challenges in the area. You should ensure community involvement and ownership of the strategy by carrying out the SWOT and the development of the strategy in a participative way.
102. Your LDS sets the framework for how you will encourage links between local development actions, providing integration between actions or projects based on clearly identified needs or opportunities. If approved, you should select local projects that contribute to the objectives of the local development strategy and complement each other without having contradictory aims.
103. Local development strategies should be 'integrated and multi-sectoral'. Links can be 'horizontal' ie between different rural areas, or 'vertical' in cases where the strategy focuses on integration, for example, through the development of a supply chain.
104. Strategies should detail where innovation is taking place. They should aim at introducing new ideas or approaches to the area and not simply defend 'business as usual'. Innovation can take many different forms and may include new services, new products, new methods of organisation, social innovation.
105. Innovation should be assessed in reference to the local situation and in terms of its effectiveness compared to existing methods and solutions applied in the territory: an action which is innovative in a certain place may already have been used somewhere else.

Cooperation activities

106. Cooperation and networking with other areas can be an important component of the strategy. Cooperation starts at local level between the different sectors represented in the partnership. It can evolve in stages from exchange of experience, to the transfer of promising practice to a common action. Cooperation with other territories implementing LEADER can also be a strategic tool the local group can use to reach the critical mass needed for some projects or to pool complementary resources and expertise. We anticipate the balance of co-operation activities will also follow the '70% direct and 30% indirect' growth profile of overall LEADER expenditure.
107. A LAG can develop 'Inter-Territorial' Cooperation (ITC) with another partnership located in the same region or the devolved administrations in the UK. Trans-National cooperation (TNC) projects can also be carried out between one or more Local Action Groups, from at least two Member States.

108. Later in 2014, we will publish a UK-wide approach to co-ordinating LEADER co-operation activities in the next programme. This will include the RDPE Network working in conjunction with the Defra RDT, who will make bi-annual calls for all co-operation activities, assess proposals and offer financial support from a central co-operation funding pot. The RDPE Network will also act as a broker with other National Rural Networks in the UK and across other Member States through the European Network for Rural Development contact point. All LEADER groups will be encouraged to participate in at least one co-operation visit during the programme.

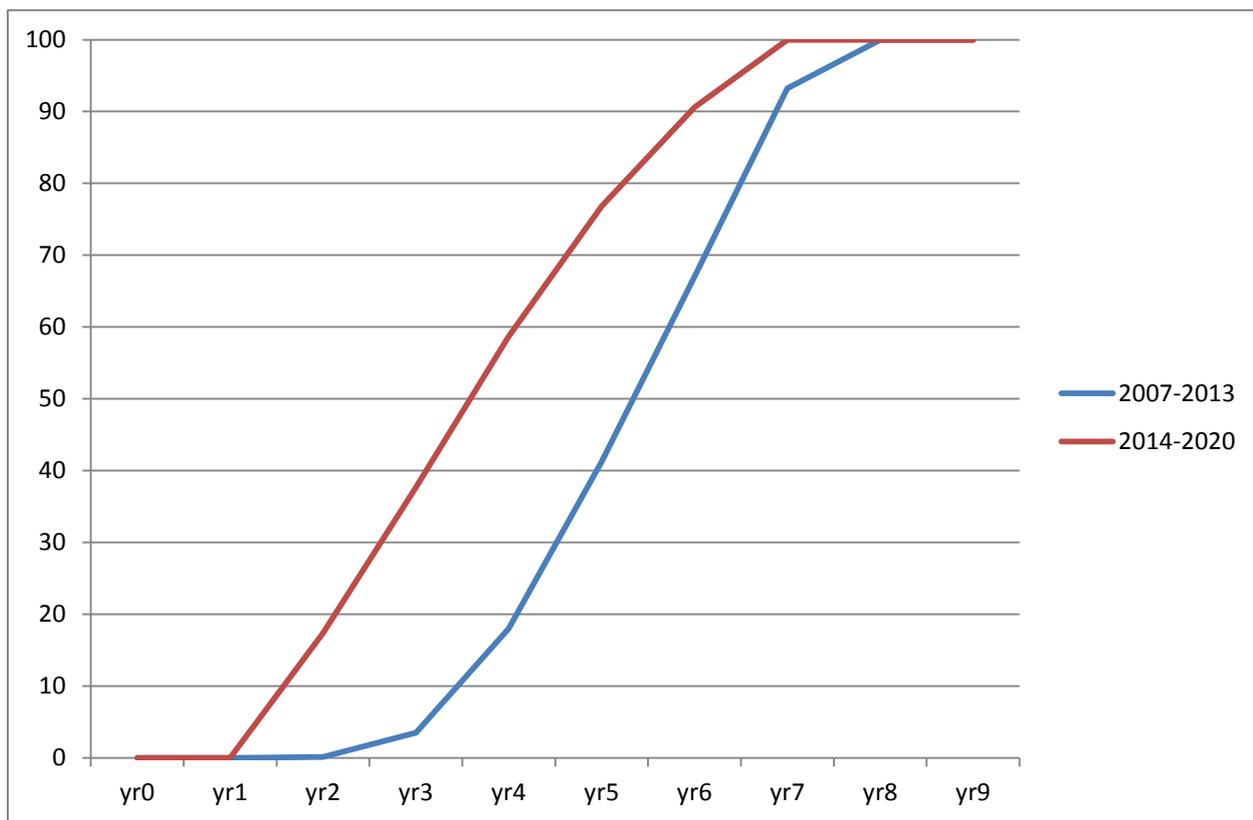
Financial arrangements

109. You will be required to profile your annual expenditure against each RDP measure that is relevant to the projects you intend to deliver in the LDS. A financial profile should also be included in your application as part of your financial plan.

110. The financial profile of LEADER in RDP 2007-13 had the majority of expenditure taking place in the second half of the programme. This led to numerous 'delivery' challenges associated with achieving the 5% spending target. For the next RDP 2014 to 2020 we have profiled our LEADER expenditure more evenly across the programme. There will be the possibility of 'in programme' financial adjustments to overall and individual LAG budgets (eg for performance management reasons) or an increase to the overall Pillar 2 budget resulting from changes to inter-pillar transfer rates, if enacted.

111. Figure 3, below, shows the financial profiles for RDP 2007-13 (actual) and RDP 2014 to 2020 (proposed). It is important that you reflect this new 'red' (left) financial profile when presenting your own local expenditure.

Figure 3 – RDPE LEADER expenditure profiles



112. LEADER is co-financed as necessary at programme level, where the EAFRD funding component is matched with Exchequer contribution. At the project level, match funding is required where the amount of 'grant' contribution available is below 100%. Project level match funding can come from different sources – the main source being private sector match funding, usually provided by the applicant. Other public sources of match funding, such as heritage lottery fund, can be used. However, these can come with additional administrative requirements which need to be properly considered. Your local Defra RDT office can advise on the right types of match funding for individual projects at the appropriate time.

113. The aid intensity rates for programme measures and state aid coverage are currently being finalised. We will provide more information on both of these in due course, along with the finalised measure fiches referred to earlier.

114. We recommend that you do identify projects early so you can get off to a good start if your LDS is approved.

Running costs and animation

115. The new Common Provisions regulation allows for up to 25% of a LAG's allocation to be spent on M&A costs (including facilitation/animation activity).⁹ However, in the current programme, applications allocating more than 18% to M&A will not be accepted. This will enable a greater proportion of LEADER funds to reach projects.
116. The regulation requires that, at programme level, we provide an indicative estimate of expenditure to be used for running costs and animation for LEADER. The actual split between those two types of support will be left to the discretion of Member States/regions and LAGs. This information will therefore need to be recorded at LAG level. We are therefore proposing a 75/25 running costs/animation split for recording purposes, but still allowing for some local variation. Examples of animation include:
- direct engagement with applicants
 - support given to a project's development up to the application stage
 - improving the capacity of a LAG, its members and processes through training and development
117. The support for running costs and animation starts with the implementation of the Local Development Strategy (ie when you receive an offer letter in the event that your LDS application is successful). All support incurred before the implementation of a Local Development Strategy falls under preparatory support and is therefore not eligible for support under the new Programme and must be claimed for through development support in 2014.
118. As a minimum, approved LEADER groups will be supported for the following M&A costs:
- overheads which relate to the implementation of the operation and which are allocated pro rata to the operation
 - personnel/staff costs
 - training costs for LAG staff and members (training for project promoters is not to be financed through the running costs)
 - costs linked to promotion (including networking costs, such as participation of LAG staff and members in networking meetings with other LAGs)
 - costs incurred for monitoring and evaluation of the local development strategy (on LAG level) and for updating it
119. From the start of the program, all LAGs will be able to offer support through the normal grant funding and procured activity routes. We are also considering including the use of simplified cost options especially for small projects and some aspects of running

⁹ <http://new.eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32013R1303>

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costs and animation. We will also work with individual LAGs to further scope ideas for a small-scale grant or 'umbrella project' type proposals. The regulatory requirements still demand the same level of compliance; therefore, we would need to assess local arrangements for improving access to small scale funding. The same applies for those LAGs who are considering using advanced payments. Further developments of verification, control and CAP-D IT systems will determine precisely how this can work. Additional financial arrangements such as this can be added once the programme has started.

Monitoring and evaluation

120. You will need to describe the management and monitoring arrangements of your strategy, including a description of specific arrangements for evaluation. Monitoring and evaluation activity should be based upon (as the minimum requirement) the Common Monitoring and Evaluation System programme measures and output indicators as set out in Section 2. You will also be required to input data directly into the new CAP-D system, when launched.

121. Throughout the programme, the RDPE network will be providing additional advice, guidance and support on approaches to local monitoring and evaluation, in support of programme and regulatory requirements.

Involving Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)

122. Local Enterprise Partnerships are partnerships between local authorities and businesses. They decide on economic priorities in their area, including priorities for investment in roads, buildings and other infrastructure, supported by a combination of European and Government funding. There are 39 LEPs in England. A full list and maps of LEPs can be found [here](#).

123. Rural economic activity in an LDS must be complementary to that of the relevant LEP(s). You will need to show evidence of co-operation and the development of complimentary priorities and actions that best support the rural economy. We will encourage and support continued joint representation and working between LEPs and LAGs during the programme.

124. The LEP(s) will need to endorse your application, in the form of a supporting letter. Please contact your local RDT who can provide advice on how best to work with your LEP and help to address any issues.

Further resources

125. Additional information to help with the formation of your Local Development Strategy, including evidence and research reports, is available on the European Network for Rural Development website [here](#)

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126. Forestry Commission (FC) staff are able to help LEADER groups develop forestry proposals in their Local Development Strategy, providing expert forestry advice and working with landowners and businesses. Local FC contact details are available at Annex B.
127. Local NFU county advisors are also able to help LEADER groups develop farming contacts and proposals in their Local Development Strategy, providing expert technical advice and facilitating joint working. Local NFU county advisor contact details are available at Annex C.
128. Related EU schemes, the European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF) Growth Programme and the Farming and Forestry Productivity Scheme (FFPS), are likely to be operating in LEADER areas and to have similar objectives. It is important that you align and coordinate your plans with them. Further information is provided in Section 7 (below).

7 Related EU Schemes and Programmes

The European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF) Growth Programme

129. Under the 2014-2020 RDP funding proposals, the ESIF, the EAFRD and other funds will be brought under the control of a single strategy named the Common Strategic Framework (CSF).
130. The UK Partnership Agreement sets out how CSF funds will be used and is scheduled for submission in Spring 2014. Once it has been agreed with the European Commission, it will then set the direction of the funding programmes. England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will each have their own sections of the UK Partnership Agreement.
131. The 2014 to 2020 European programmes require a greater alignment of £5bn of funding and activity. This will be expressed through the UK Partnership Agreement. In parallel with the RDP, in England there will be a growth programme encompassing ERDF, ESF and 5% of rural development (EAFRD) funding. LEPs have produced ESIF strategies for funding via the growth programme that also consider how local-level needs are best addressed.

ESIF Community Led Local Development

132. Community Led Local Development (CLLD) is a newly-defined, community-based approach to territorial development. It is based on the principles of LEADER and is a way to mobilise and involve local communities and organisations in contributing to the Europe 2020 strategy goals: achieving sustainable and inclusive growth, fostering territorial cohesion and reaching specific policy objectives. Member States have the option to use different EU funds for projects that respond to an area's needs and to improve strategic local development.
133. In the next round of ESIF programmes, the Commission have provided Member States the option of adopting a CLLD approach across all of the structural funds. This approach is based on over 20 years of delivering LEADER in rural areas, but can also now operate in urban areas if deemed appropriate. In addition, LEADER can also benefit from a 'multi fund' approach, where, subject to Managing Authority approval, a LEADER group can receive additional structural fund support, on top of its EAFRD allocation.
134. In England, this optional CLLD approach is being developed by LEPs and proposals have been submitted as part of their final ESIF strategies. While this is separate from the direct RDP funded LEADER approach for rural England, regulations require all permutations of groups to be approved using a consistent process.

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135. We are working closely with the other government departments responsible for structural funds to ensure that where a LEP wants to build on and provide funding to the existing LEADER expertise in their area it is able to do so. Also, where a LEP would like a new CLLD proposal in a non-LEADER rural area, it is able to do so without encroaching on separate RDP-funded LEADER proposals.
136. To ensure synergy between these different approaches, we have agreed in principle with the other government departments that the development and approval of RDP LEADER and LEP CLLD proposals should be sequenced. This agreement involves RDP LEADER groups and their geographic coverage being established first, followed by a call for any additional or new LEP CLLD proposals, including those involving rural areas.
137. All LEADER and CLLD proposals will be subject to Defra approval. More information on this sequenced approach will be published shortly, including an indicative timetable and process map.

The Farming and Forestry Productivity Scheme (FFPS)

138. The new Farming and Forestry Productivity scheme will bring about long-term productivity improvements by focussing expenditure on improving:
- the rate of innovation, technology diffusion, and knowledge exchange
 - business competitiveness and supply chain relationships
 - resource efficiency and management
 - animal health and welfare
139. At the national level, we are working with RDP colleagues to ensure all of the schemes are as complementary as possible. However, because of the expected local variation in Growth Programme and LEADER delivery, co-ordination with the national schemes like FFPS may well be best achieved at the local level, where the LAG and LEP can work together as a signposting service for interested parties.

Annex A – Defra Rural Development Team contacts

East of England:

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South East:

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Yorkshire & Humber:

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Annex B – Forestry Commission contacts

Area	FC Contact Details
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<p>North East</p>	<p>Crispin Thorn: Area Director, Yorkshire, North East Crispin.Thorn@forestry.gsi.gov.uk Tel: 01904 382301 Mob: 07788 917158</p> <p>Richard Pow: Partnership and Expertise Manager, Yorkshire, North East Richard.Pow@forestry.gsi.gov.uk Tel: 01670 381005 Mob: 07831 216024</p> <p>Kate Hawley: Local Partnership Advisor, Yorkshire, North East Kate.Hawley@forestry.gsi.gov.uk Tel: 01904 382321 Mob: 07767 418659</p>
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South West	<p>Bruce Rothnie: Area Director South West England</p> <p>Bruce.Rothnie@forestry.gsi.gov.uk</p> <p>Tel: 01392 834258 Mob: 07770 647293</p> <p>Mark Prior: Partnerships and Expertise Manager, South West England</p> <p>Mark.Prior@forestry.gsi.gov.uk</p> <p>Tel: 01392 834260 Mob: 07836607029</p> <p>Deborah Elton: Local Partnership Advisor, South West England</p> <p>deborah.elton@forestry.gsi.gov.uk</p> <p>Tel: 01392 834262</p>
East Midlands	<p>Steve Scott: Area Director, East and East Midlands</p> <p>steve.scott@forestry.gsi.gov.uk</p> <p>Tel: 01223 773061 Mob: 07810 636722</p> <p>Dave Bole: Partnership and Expertise Manager, East and East Midlands</p>

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West Midlands	<p>Keith Jones: Area Director, North West and W Midlands</p> <p>Keith.jones@forestry.gsi.gov.uk</p> <p>Tel: 01524 565800 Mob: 07831451490</p> <p>Simon West: Partnership and Expertise Manager, North West and W Midlands</p> <p>Simon.West@forestry.gsi.gov.uk</p> <p>Tel: 01905 532212 Mob: 07769 881346</p>
Yorkshire and the Humber	<p>Crispin Thorn: Area Director, Yorkshire, North East</p> <p>Crispin.Thorn@forestry.gsi.gov.uk</p> <p>Tel: 01904 382301 Mob: 07788 917158</p> <p>Richard Pow: Partnership and Expertise Manager, Yorkshire, North East</p> <p>Richard.Pow@forestry.gsi.gov.uk</p> <p>Tel: 01670 381005 Mob: 07831 216024</p> <p>Kate Hawley: Local Partnership Advisor, Yorkshire, North East</p> <p>Kate.Hawley@forestry.gsi.gov.uk</p> <p>Tel: 01904 382321 Mob: 07767 418659</p>

Annex C – NFU county advisor contacts

Area	NFU county advisor contact details
<p>North East</p> <p>Northumberland</p> <p>North Riding and Durham</p> <p>Yorkshire (West)</p> <p>Yorkshire (East)</p>	<p>Regional office address: NFU North East, Agriculture House, 207 Tadcaster Road, York, YO24 1UD</p> <p>Richard Potts Tel: 07799 715 153 Email: Richard.Potts@nfu.org.uk</p> <p>Laurie Norris Tel: 07778 489311 Email: Laurie.Norris@nfu.org.uk</p> <p>Chris Dickinson Tel: 07824 875471 Email: Chris.Dickinson@nfu.org.uk</p> <p>Lucinda Douglas Tel: 07912 519871 Email: Lucinda.Douglas@nfu.org.uk</p>
<p>North West</p> <p>Cumbria</p> <p>Lancashire</p> <p>Cheshire</p>	<p>Regional office address: NFU North West, Agriculture House, 1 Moss Lane View, Skelmersdale, Lancashire, WN8 9TL</p> <p>Helen Forrester Tel: 07551 151329 Email: Helen.Forrester@nfu.org.uk</p> <p>Mike Sanderson Tel: 07817 726133 Email: Mike.Sanderson@nfu.org.uk</p> <p>Adam Briggs Tel: 07831 434886 Email: Adam.Briggs@nfu.org.uk</p> <p>Aarun Naik Tel: 07966 203790 Email: Aarun.Naik@nfu.org.uk</p>
<p>East Midlands</p> <p>Lincolnshire & Holland</p>	<p>Regional office address: NFU East Midlands, Agriculture House, North Gate, Uppingham, Rutland, LE15 9NX</p> <p>Andrew Wilson Tel: 07771 626081 Email: Andrew.Wilson@nfu.org.uk</p>

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Nottinghamshire	Simon Fisher Tel: 07803 204507 Email: Simon.Fisher@nfu.org.uk
Derbyshire	Andrew Critchlow Tel: 07880 385685 Email: Andrew.Critchlow@nfu.org.uk
Leicestershire, Northants & Rutland	Carol Puddephatt Tel: 07860 324208 Email: Carol.Puddephatt@nfu.org.uk
West Midlands	Regional office address: NFU West Midlands, Agriculture House, Southwater Way, Telford, Shropshire, TF3 4NR
Warwickshire & Worcestershire	Luke Ryder Tel: 07766 745495 Email: Luke.Ryder@nfu.org.uk
Herefordshire	Clare Greener Tel: 07771 626080 Email: Clare.Greener@nfu.org.uk
Shropshire	Helen Cork Tel: 07909 838804 Email: Helen.Cork@nfu.org.uk
Staffordshire	Jeremy Lowe Tel: 07584 025777 Email: Jeremy.Lowe@nfu.org.uk
East Anglia	Regional office address: NFU East Anglia, Agriculture House, Willie Snaith Road, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 7SN
Norfolk	Alex Dinsdale Tel: 07501 017704 Email: Alex.Dinsdale@nfu.org.uk
Suffolk	Rachel Carrington Tel: 07747 756533 Email: Rachel.Carrington@nfu.org.uk
Cambridgeshire	Hannah Padfield Tel: 07817 726094 Email: Hannah.Padfield@nfu.org.uk
Beds/Hunts & Herts	Diane Armitage Tel: 07880 385683 Email: Diane.Armitage@nfu.org.uk

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Essex	Adam Scott Tel: 07966 783023 Email: Adam.Scott@nfu.org.uk
South West	Regional office address: NFU South West, Agriculture House, Pynes Hill, Rydon Lane, Exeter, Devon, EX2 5ST
Cornwall	Patrick Aubrey-Fletcher Tel: 07876 896576 Email: Patrick.Aubrey-Fletcher@nfu.org.uk
Devon	Andrew Butler Tel: 07773 398394 Email: Andrew.Butler@nfu.org.uk
Dorset	Matt Uren Tel: 07831 589805 Email: Matthew.Uren@nfu.org.uk
Gloucestershire	Colin Downey Tel: 07968 321834 Email: Colin.Downey@nfu.org.uk
Somerset	Alex Stevens Tel: 07774 626341 Email: Alex.Stevens@nfu.org.uk
Wiltshire	Andi Witcombe Tel: 07971 451770 Email: Andrea.Witcombe@nfu.org.uk
South East	Regional office address: NFU South East, Unit 8 Ground Floor, Rotherbrook Court, Bedford Road, Petersfield, Hampshire, GU32 3QG
Kent	Catherine Langrish Tel: 07831 692140 Email: Catherine.Langrish@nfu.org.uk
Essex & West Sussex & Isle of Wight	James Osman Tel: 07796 835730 Email: James.Osman@nfu.org.uk
Hampshire and Surrey	Sandra Nichols Tel: 07778 240965 Email: Sandra.Nichols@nfu.org.uk
Berkshire, Bucks and Oxfordshire	Annie Vernon Tel: 07974 227395 Email: Annie.Vernon@nfu.org.uk

Annex D – LEADER case studies

LEADER projects have already successfully transformed the prospects of thousands of businesses, farmers and forests, creating thousands of rural jobs across the country in the process. Below are some case studies of projects funded under LEADER.

Peak Edge Boutique Hotel

This project was for the construction of a 27 room 4 star boutique hotel set on the edge of the Peak District National Park. The hotel adjoins the Red Lion Pub and Bistro, fabled to be at the centre of England, and caters for weddings, conferences and accommodation for tourists. The project has created 29 new jobs.

LEADER funds allocated: approx. £430,000

Other funds allocated: approx. £1,156,000

The Gillick Atelier

This project was for the extension and alterations to an existing artist studio at The Workshop, Cinder Lane, Louth. Five internships to young artists aged 18-25 have been created per year, each offering an eleven month period of training and work.

LEADER funds allocated: approx. £28,000

Other funds allocated: approx. £28,000

R Fiddlers Lancashire Crisps

LEADER funding contributed to a Lancashire potato farmer's creation of a purpose built factory and specialist equipment to produce crisps using potatoes grown on his farm. The farm now produces 25,000 packets of crisps per day. This created 6 new jobs and provided a second income to the farm.

LEADER funds allocated: approx. £75,000

Other funds allocated: approx. £155,000

Lakes Free Range Eggs

The Lakes Free Range Egg Co Ltd produces and packs free range and organic eggs sourced from 46 family farm suppliers located throughout Cumbria. The LEADER grant helped to fund equipping their new factory with the latest automated egg packing and grading technology, installing energy saving systems, and providing site infrastructure and access. The project has created 11 jobs.

LEADER funds allocated: approx. £785,000

Other funds allocated: approx. £760,000

Stopham Vineyard

This project was for the conversion of Manor Farm Barn to a winery to be used by Stopham Vineyard for both the production of wine and the education and display of the wine making process for both tourists and local customers.

LEADER funds allocated: approx. £50,000

Other funds allocated: approx. £149,000

Fenny Castle Tea Rooms and Bike Hire

This project developed a tea room and bike hire business in Fenny Castle. The tea rooms aim to compliment the bike hire business and bring more families into the area. Most produce is home cooked/locally sourced from suppliers within 20 miles. The project created 3 local jobs and increased local food turnover.

LEADER funds allocated: approx. £28,000.

Chalke Valley Community Hub

This project has established a community hub for the rural communities through the Chalke Valley. It has preserved vital local amenities by transforming the interior of an underused URC chapel to provide a community run shop and Post Office, a café area and meeting place and space for outpost services for other vital community services. The hub also houses the village archives and still incorporates a small place of worship. The project has created 1 full time job and 22 businesses within a 15-mile radius are benefiting from the hub.

LEADER funds allocated: approx. £92,000 representing 74% of total project costs.

Kentdowns Woodfuel Pathfinder

Through business planning and technical advisory support to farmers and local landowners, large areas of woodland have been brought back into management to help farms develop woodfuel systems to supply their energy needs from their own woods. This has been a great complement to capital support to farmers/woodland businesses that have made capital purchases through LEADER and RDPE. Contact the South East and London team for more details.

Working our Woodlands - Blackdown Hills and East Devon AONB

The LEADER programme supported this project to build a network of woodland owners, contractors and timber processors locally to share data on their businesses and improve knowledge of the local supply chain for wood products. It has established collaborative networks and wood fuel management groups working to agreed standards. A membership Woodland Association had formed and aims to be self-sustaining. Contact the South West team for further details.

SW Pilot Forestry Apprenticeship

Through the pilot scheme, the 4 apprentices achieved a Level 2 Forestry NVQ combined with lots of experience in the workplace, resulting in offers of employment in the sector once they were fully qualified. Almost 200 specific training days were undertaken with training provided by Bicton College and other local providers supplying specialist short-courses. The programme was funded by the Forestry Commission and Making it Local, incorporating funding from the EU, Defra and LEADER. A new scheme, the Forestry Skills Initiative, is building on the experience of the pilot programme and aims to support forestry employers with the training costs of apprentices. Contact the South West team for further details.

Annex E – Rural data sources

Dataset	Variables	Rural / urban split	Address
Office for National Statistics Labour Market Profiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resident population Employment & unemployment Economic inactivity Employment by occupation Qualifications Out-of-work benefits Jobs (total jobs / employee jobs) Jobcentre plus vacancies VAT registered businesses 	No	https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/imp/lep/contents.aspx
2011 Census – Key statistics (via NOMIS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usual resident population Age structure Marital and civil partnership status Living arrangements Household composition Adults not in employment and dependent children and persons with long-term health problems or disability for all households Lone parent households with dependent children Ethnic group National identity Country of birth Passports held Household language Religion Health and provision of unpaid care Dwellings, household spaces and accommodation type Tenure Rooms, bedrooms and central heating Car or van availability Communal establishment residents Qualifications and students Economic activity by sex Hours worked Industry by sex Occupation by sex NS-SeC by sex 	Yes	https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/
2011 Census – Quick Statistics (via NOMIS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residence type Population density Age by single year Sex Schoolchildren and full-time students at their none term-time address Second address Living arrangements Adult lifestage (alternative adult definition) Household lifestage Household composition - People 	Yes	https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household composition - Households • Household composition (alternative child and adult definition) - People • Household composition (alternative child and adult definition) - Households • Household type • People aged 18 to 64 living in a 1 adult household • Families with dependent children • Households by deprivation dimensions • Armed Forces • Ethnic group • Multiple ethnic groups • Country of birth (detailed) • Main language (detailed) • Proficiency in English • Religion • Religion (detailed) • Ethnic group (detailed) • Passports held • Country of birth (expanded) • Provision of unpaid care • General health • Long-term health problem or disability • Accommodation type - People • Accommodation type - Households • Tenure - People • Tenure - Household Reference Person aged 65 and over • Tenure - Households • Household size • Number of rooms • Occupancy rating (rooms) • Persons per room - Households • Persons per room - People • Number of bedrooms • Occupancy rating (bedrooms) • Persons per bedroom - Households • Persons per bedroom - People • Central heating • Car or van availability • Household spaces • Dwellings • Position in communal establishment • Communal establishment management and type - Communal establishments • Communal establishment management and type - People • Highest level of qualification • Qualifications gained • Economic activity • Economic activity of Household Reference Person • Economic activity - Full-time students • Hours worked • Industry • Occupation (Minor Groups) 		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NS-SeC • NS-SeC of Household Reference Person - People aged under 65 • NS-SeC of Household Reference Person - People • NS-SeC of Household Reference Person (HRP) - HRP Aged under 65 • Approximated Social Grade • Year last worked • Method of travel to work • Year of arrival in the UK • Age of arrival in the UK • Length of residence in the UK 		
Defra Rural Statistics local level data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population • Claimant counts • Insolvency rates • Business numbers by industry and size • Average house prices 	Yes	https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/rural-statistics-local-level-data-sets
Office for National Statistics Neighbourhood Statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demography • Crime • Economic deprivation • Education and skills • Health • Housing • Incomes 	No	http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/
Public Health England Local Health Profiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide range of health statistics 	No	http://www.localhealth.org.uk

Defra takes no responsibility for the reliability of third party sources.

Defra Rural Statistics

Rural.Statistics@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Annex F – Forestry data and evidence

The following evidence gives a good overview of forestry and the issues/opportunities faced by the sector. Please approach your local Forestry Commission contact for further details.

Overview of Forestry/Forest Policy

Forest Policy

The January 2013 policy statement

Forestry Commission corporate plan priorities

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-7t9b67>

Forest sector Vision and recommendations for the future

Information and evidence on forestry in England is compiled under 3 headings:

- Trees and woods good for people
- Trees and woods good for nature
- Trees and woods good for the green economy

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-panel-on-forestry-final-report>

A Wood Industry Action Plan - Grown in Britain

- increasing wood culture
- creating market pull for wood products
- bringing new finance into woodlands

<http://www.growninbritain.org/documents/Final-Report.pdf>

Data on distribution of woods and their relative productivity

Forestry Facts and Figures

Annually collated data on woodland area, new planting, wood production, imports and exports, employment and international forestry

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-7aqf6j>

The National Forest Inventory is only available at the national level, but this link takes you to county level reports that were produced in 2002. The change in woodland cover between 2002 and 2014 is moderate, so these reports at the county level could give leader groups a good picture of the area of woodland. These reports show:

- distribution of woodland over 2 ha
- the split between FC and non FC ownership

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- distribution of broadleaves, conifer and other woodland types
- area by size class, woodland size, principal species and length of linear features

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/hcou-54pg9u>

Estimating Potential for Timber Production

Timber volume and potential production estimates. For the first time, production data is now available for broadleaved as well as conifer woodlands. The data is only broken down to Regional level (former 8 RDA regional boundaries). Further interpretation of data may be available through the contact details given on this web page or via your local Forest Services office.

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-935MSY>

Woodfuel Potential

Woodfuel sector explained

Links to further data including

- contacts for local woodfuel suppliers
- Model template contracts and procurement guidance
- Initial assessment tools and decision support tools for developing biomass heating schemes

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-7wmft4>

Woodland Enterprise Zone Development

Building the evidence base for a Woodland Enterprise Zone in the Marches LEP area – an in-depth assessment of the available timber resource

[http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/MarchesTimberStudy.pdf/\\$FILE/MarchesTimberStudy.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/MarchesTimberStudy.pdf/$FILE/MarchesTimberStudy.pdf)

Forestry and its contribution to green growth

Demonstrating the potential for forestry to contribute to green growth, including data on the correlation between rural deprivation and privately-owned woodland

http://www.confor.org.uk/Upload/Documents/22_Forestry7000greenjobsandlowcarbongrowthJune2012.pdf

Forestry workforce and learning and development

The Forestry Skills Action Plan

Highlighting skills issues facing the sector and identifying actions to address them.

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[http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/ForestryActionPlan_web.pdf/\\$FILE/ForestryActionPlan_web.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/ForestryActionPlan_web.pdf/$FILE/ForestryActionPlan_web.pdf)

LANTRA Trees and Timber factsheet 2010-11

Workforce demographics and skills gap information.

[http://www.lantra.co.uk/Downloads/research/skills-assessment/trees-and-timber-v2-\(2010-2011\).aspx](http://www.lantra.co.uk/Downloads/research/skills-assessment/trees-and-timber-v2-(2010-2011).aspx)

Other aspects of woods and their management

Tree Pests and Diseases

For detail on individual pests and diseases and their effects:

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-6ABL5V>

Woodland Owner Attitudes

Study of how owners view their woods.

<http://www.rics.org/uk/knowledge/research/research-reports/british-woodlands-2012/>

Indicative summary of forest activity in an area

In-Leaf: East England's forestry and woodlands newsletter

<http://www.suffolkbiodiversity.org/content/suffolkbiodiversity.org/PDFs/Newsletters/In-Leaf%20%20March-2013%20Final%20Version.pdf>

Be inspired by the potential for using wood

Series of sound bites, killer facts to support the benefits of using wood

<http://www.woodforgood.com/why-choose-wood>

TRADA – the leading authority on wood – some free on-line resources for the more technically interested in wood and wood products – timber framing, green oak construction etc <http://www.trada.co.uk/>