

Background briefing note to accompany presentation to Regeneration & Development Panel on 25th November 2015

Norfolk Rural Development Strategy

- An economic strategy for Norfolk 2013 – 20, commissioned by Norfolk County Council to focus growth programmes benefiting rural businesses and communities.
- Designed to lever funding and influence policy by providing the evidence base
- But also the response of the private sector, to public sector cuts
- A result of public consultation (200 businesses, individuals and organisations)
 - Published October 2013 (launch event) and update on activity given at conference in January 2015
 - [The full strategy can be found here.](#)
 - [The dataset to accompany the strategy can be found here.](#)
 - [Alternatively, an Executive Summary can be found here.](#)
- Overseen and owned by private sector steering group (see below)

Top 10 Actions

1. Increasing **growth** in the agri-tech, engineering, and manufacturing sectors
2. Increasing the quality and number of **rural jobs**
3. Increasing the number of rural business **start-ups**
4. Delivering superfast **broadband**
5. Improving **mobile phone coverage**
6. Increasing **skills** attainment in rural schools
7. Driving **innovation** by linking research with business development
8. Doubling the rate of build of **affordable housing**
9. Increasing private **water storage** capacity
10. Increasing the area of land in **environmental management**

Funding the strategy

Funding to deliver the strategy will come from:

- Influencing mainstream funding (local authority, NHS)
- Project specific funding from UK & EU funding streams (E.g. LEADER, stewardship schemes)
- Structural Investment Fund allocations held by Local Enterprise Partnerships
- Grant schemes such as Coastal Community Fund
- Commercial investment and community fund raising

NCC (Eliska Cheeseman) supports the group by facilitating the action plan, making links with local authority colleagues, providing a direct route to Local Action Groups, facilitating bid consortium, facilitating bid writing for EU funds.

Achievements to date

1. Secured £9m to run LEADER delegated grant scheme, 100% of rural Norfolk covered
2. Digital Divide group campaigning for broadband and mobile improvements
3. AgriTech sector development

Priorities for next 18 months

- Silver pound / healthy ageing – commercial opportunities
- Green Infrastructure
- Building Communities for the Future

Rural Development Strategy Steering Group

Delivery of the strategy is overseen by the RDS Steering Group who recognise that NCC can't deliver the strategy alone, it has to be done in partnership. Steering group meets quarterly (2 hour meetings, typically at Anglia Farmers, Honingham Thorpe)

Current members:

Chair: Richard Powell OBE (Healthy Ambitions)

Other members:

- Andrew Alston (Broadland Water Abstractors Group & LEADER LAG Chair)
- David Henley (Easton and Otley College)
- Sheila Childerhouse (ex EEDA/NHS, now public health consultant)
- Jonathan Clemo (Community Action Norfolk)
- John Newton (National Farmers Union, Norfolk)
- Alastair Rhind (New Anglia LEP)
- Clarke Willis (Anglia Farmers)

More information:

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LEADER funding programme FAQ's

Norfolk County Council applied to Defra on behalf of West Norfolk Local Action Group ('LAG'), for LEADER funding. The West Norfolk LAG has been awarded £1.9m by Defra, available to 2020. There are 4 other LAGs in Norfolk managed by NCC, with a total award of £9m.

What does this mean for your local area? Below are some FAQ's, and a list of people who can help.

Who can apply for funding?

LEADER funding is available to local businesses, communities, farmers, foresters and land managers contributing to the creation of jobs and economic growth in a Local Action Group (LAG) area.

How long is the funding available for?

The LEADER programme runs from 2015 – 2020. We've been working with potential applicants since January this year, in anticipation of application forms being released in the next couple of weeks.

What is the funding for?

Exactly what the funding can be used for will depend on the local strategy for the Local Action Group area, but all projects must support one or more of the 6 national LEADER priorities.

These are to:

1. support micro and small businesses and farm diversification
2. boost rural tourism
3. increase farm productivity
4. increase forestry productivity
5. provide rural services
6. provide cultural and heritage activities

The strategy for a local area is published here: <http://bit.ly/1AzZb3J>

What will be delivered across Norfolk?

West Norfolk LAG will be expected to deliver the following targets t of the total award

- 79 jobs created
- 69 projects supported

See [Appendix 1](#) for all LAG outputs.

What is LEADER?

LEADER is part of the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE). It's a French acronym which roughly translates as 'Liaison among Actors in Rural Economic Development'. Leader is an established bottom-up approach to community development in rural areas.

What are Local Action Groups (LAGs)?

LAGs decide which projects they will fund in their area. A LAG is made up of people from the local community and the local public and private sector. The West Norfolk LAG is chaired by Lynn Collison (Collison & Associates) and the vice chair is Peter Cousins (Walpole Water Gardens).

Where can I find the Local Action Group or Local Development Strategy (LDS) for my area?

There are five LAGs in Norfolk (and into North Suffolk) and between them they cover all of rural Norfolk.

A map of the Norfolk LAGs and each strategy (an LDS) is published here: www.norfolk.gov.uk (including West Norfolk's).

What grant funding rate can projects apply for?

Businesses can typically be funded up to 40% of the project they are applying for. For community projects and projects of wider benefit, the grant rate can be higher.

The funding rate will depend on the type of activity and the need for the grant.

How much is available in each area?

The amount of grant funding awarded to each area is below (2015-2020).

LAG	Award
Broads	£1.513
Brecks	£1.755
Waveney Valley	£1.764
West Norfolk	£1.921
Wensum & Coast	£2.061
TOTAL	£9.014

What sort of activity can be funded?

The following are just examples of the types of projects that could be funded. Activities must fit with the priorities of the local strategy.

- Farm diversification activities
- Businesses adding value to food
- Projects that extend the tourist season
- Sustainable access to rural services
- Support for businesses that add value to forestry products

Each local strategy contains examples of the types of activity the LAG is looking to support.

What help is there to apply?

The programme funds a facilitator to guide applicants through the application process and develop a project application. The facilitator takes the application through the two-stage process – the outline application and the full application. The Local Action Group decides whether to fund the application. Potential projects can find out more at the website for Norfolk Local Action Groups www.norfolklags.co.uk which also has a downloadable project enquiry form or contact their local facilitator Carol Allen carol.allen@norfolk.gov.uk

Who do I contact?

All initial project enquiries can be made to: leaderteam@norfolk.gov.uk. Tel 01603 222930.

The programme manager is Eliska Cheeseman Tel 01603 228827

Where can I find out more information or direct potential projects to?

www.norfolklags.co.uk

<https://www.gov.uk/rural-development-programme-for-england-leader-funding>

Appendix 1

LEADER Policy Priority	Relevant CMES output indicators for LDS application	Brecks	Broads	Waveney Valley	Wensum and Coast	West Norfolk	End of programme forecast (by December 2020)
Support for increasing farm productivity	Number of projects supported	10	8	9	14	14	55
	Jobs created (FTE)	5	4	5	7	6	27
Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification	Number of projects supported	21	22	30	34	32	139
	Jobs created (FTE)	36	36	51	57	53	233
Support for rural tourism	Number of projects supported	9	8	9	10	10	46
	Jobs created (FTE)	9	8	9	10	10	46
Support for culture and heritage activity	Number of projects supported	5	5	5	3	3	21
	Jobs created (FTE)	2	2	2	1	1	8
Provision of rural services	Number of projects supported	6	6	3	4	4	23
	Jobs created (FTE)	4	4	2	3	3	16
Support for increasing forestry productivity	Number of projects supported	6	3	2	4	4	19
	Jobs created (FTE)	2	1	2	1	1	7
Totals	Number of projects supported	57	52	58	69	67	303
	Jobs created (FTE)	58	55	71	79	74	337