

A Local Development Strategy

Broads Local Action Group

2014 – 2020



Picture: Courtesy Broads Authority

***Creating resilient communities, growing businesses and enriching
the environmental heritage of the Broads to build a thriving
sustainable economy***

The Broads: Local Development Strategy 2014-2020

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Foreword

“We have a wonderful and precious landscape within the Broads, and have written our strategy to reflect the fine balance between development and protection of this sensitive environment. This has been developed as a cross-cutting theme for all projects coming forward, because it is just as relevant for a farmer as it is for a boat-hire company or manufacturer.

Planning to develop this strategy began over a year ago, and our aim is to build on our success in the previous programme. This area was included in the Norfolk Coast and Broads LAG during the last round of LEADER, and we are proud to have been part of a programme that funded 57 projects, created 105 jobs, and safeguarded a further 78 jobs in the rural economy. Although the original area was split to accommodate more rural areas within Norfolk coming into the programme, the Broads remains a strong landscape with a robust identity.

We would like to see more visitors and locals enjoying the area and benefitting from more high quality rural services, so that the whole landscape of the Broads becomes recognised and treasured as a considerable national asset. Significantly for the Broads, water is a major resource, underpinning the leisure and agriculture sectors, generating income and making it a nice place to live and to work, so we must take care to protect it for future generations.

LEADER stands for Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Economie Rurale, when translated means ‘Connection between Actions of development of the Rural Economy’, and is a bottom-up approach, putting local people at the heart of rural development, while complementing top-down activities through New Anglia LEP and Norfolk County Council.

We are lucky to have many new faces who have given up their time to become members of the steering group and the interim LAG membership to guide the content of this strategy. The approach to writing this LDS has been in the planning for quite a few months, and has built in the time required to (re)build a strong LAG, who feel that they have ownership of the LDS.

Continuity through retaining experienced staff and LAG members through transition planning and funding has been at the heart of this process. Early programme workshops and consultation has truly demonstrated the bottom-up approach, resulting in quality partnership working, and we are beginning to see a response through the generation of prospective projects which could feed into a healthy project pipeline for the Broads.

We have an ideal opportunity for our new, revived local action group to build on successes gained in the past programme. People are at the centre of LEADER, and we always need more to become members, and encourage people, especially from the private sector, to get involved and guide where funding can do the most good, and help build a thriving “l'Economie Rurale in the “Broads”.

*Andrew Alston
Interim LAG Chair*

Submitted and signed on behalf of the Broads Local Action Group by:	
Andrew Alston, Chair of the Interim LAG	
Eliska Cheeseman, Norfolk County Council	

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The Local Action Group Partnership: Membership

Name and organisation	Sector	Private or public
Andrew Alston (Chair), Catfield Farm	Agriculture	Non-public*
John Ash – Wherry Charter Charitable Trust	Conservation and Heritage	Non-public
Chris Bidgood – Lees Chartered Accountants	Accountants	Non-public
Charles Bracey – W.J. Bracey	Agriculture	Non-public
Jason Cantrill – Strutt and Parker	Property consultant	Non-public
Christopher Cator – Broads Trust	Conservation, Access	Non-public
Jon Clemo –Norfolk Rural Community Council	Community	Non-public
Alex Dinsdale – NFU	Agriculture	Non-public
Bruce Hanson – Broads Authority	Local Authority	Public*
Peter Howe – Broadland Cycle Hire	Tourism	Non-public
Tony Howes – Broads Boat Hire	Tourism, Boating	Non-public
Rob Manning	Boat yard	Non-public
Linda Matthews	Artist	Non-public
Helen Mitchell – inthefields	Arts and Heritage consultant	Non-public
Andrew Morton – Whitwell Hall Farm	Agriculture, diversification	Non-public
Greg Munford – Richardsons Boats	Tourism, Boating	Non-public
Emily Norton - Dairy	Dairy farming	Non-public
Emma Punchard – Mill Farm Eco Barn	Environment, Sustainability	Non-public
Louise Rout – Fairhaven Garden Trust	Tourism	Non-public
Veronica Savage – Broadland DC	Local Authority	Public*
Philip Search – Inspired Youth	Youth education/social media	Non-public
Jose Socao – North Norfolk DC	Local Authority	Public
Philip Wakley – Cotenham Barn	Tourism	Non-public
Paul Williams – Wood turner	Small business, boat building	Non-public

*Members of previous Norfolk Coast and Broads LAG

Structure and Decision Making Process

The Interim Broads Local Action Group (LAG), and especially the Steering Group, has driven the development of this Local Development Strategy (LDS) over the past few months. People have been recruited onto the LAG since the launch of the Norfolk Rural Development Strategy last October, and we will continue to seek more members to build an even stronger representative group. Agriculture, arts and heritage, tourism, aspirations of young people, and small businesses are all key delivery areas within our strategy, and are well reflected in the LAG make-up.

The LAG and the AB are well aware of the private/public sector balance and the need to maintain this balance throughout the programme. It will be the role of the LAG Co-ordinator and Facilitator to ensure this balance is met when decisions are taken. The LAG also endeavours to be gender balanced, but we recognise that organisations nominating a LAG representative remains outside of our control. The LAG will aim to be as inclusive and diverse as possible, to ensure wider involvement and ownership of the LAG by those living and

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working in the area. Given the focus on Leader activity on jobs and growth, we have made significant effort to ensure a wide representation from the private sector – typically small business owners from the local area and members that represent business organisations. Members of the LAG represent a range of organisations and will feedback to their organisations on the progress of the programme. They will also bring information to the LAG from their own organisations and help shape the direction and projects of the LAG to fit with the requirements of the Broads. We consider the LAG to be developed now with the right balance of public and non-public sector, gender, sector and geographic representation. New members will be considered by the LAG and inducted by the Facilitator and AB.

The LAG endeavours to be a diverse group while representing the area, and every effort will be made to create a balance, but when organisations nominate representatives to sit on our LAG it falls outside of our control. However, we will continue to aim to be as inclusive and diverse as possible, to ensure involvement and ownership of the LAG happens by those living and working in the area.

Given the focus of Leader activity on jobs and growth, we have made a significant effort to secure a wide representation from the private sector – with 21 private members representing small businesses, tourism, farming and arts and heritage. Some members of the LAG represent an organisation, such as the NFU, or Norfolk Rural Community Council, and will feedback to their organisations on the progress of the programme. They have also brought information into the LAG from their various organisations to help shape the direction of the LDS and resulting projects to fit with the wider requirements of the Broads. In addition, we have met with many stakeholders external to the LAG membership who have provided valuable feedback and contributions to this LDS (Pgs 6 & 7). We are also in receipt of letters from the Norfolk Wildlife Trust, RSPB and Natural England supporting the aims and priorities of the Broads LAG.

New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP) is fully engaged with our LAG and has provided a letter of endorsement submitted with this LDS. Whilst NALEP is not able to fully resource membership of each LAG in their area, it is committed to engaging with, and supporting our work. The LAG has discussed their governance and ambitions with the LEP and agreed the point of contact and reporting requirements back to the LEP Board. Both sides recognise the close working relationship needed to make best use of the funds available, avoid duplicating activity and deliver the aspiration of structural investment funds via the LAG using the Community Led Local Development (CLLD) approach

Based on experience from the previous programme, the LAG will operate a single tier group, meeting at least 4 times a year. Sub-groups or task-focused groups have proven useful in the past programme and could be used again where relevant, for example to take forward a sector-wide issue such as boating or tourism collaboration, or development of a strategic LAG project, for example reviewing branding in the Broads.

An Annual Review will take place when all LAG members from the five Norfolk/Suffolk LAGs will be invited. This is the time for the action groups to test the relevancy and success of the LDS, the performance of the partnership and its direction for the future, as well as reviewing training and developmental needs. More broadly, by bringing LAGs together, the Annual Review day will provide the opportunity for members to share best practice, exchange experiences and project ideas and network with each other. We are also discussing the opportunity to extend this invitation to neighbouring LAGs within the NALEP and Greater

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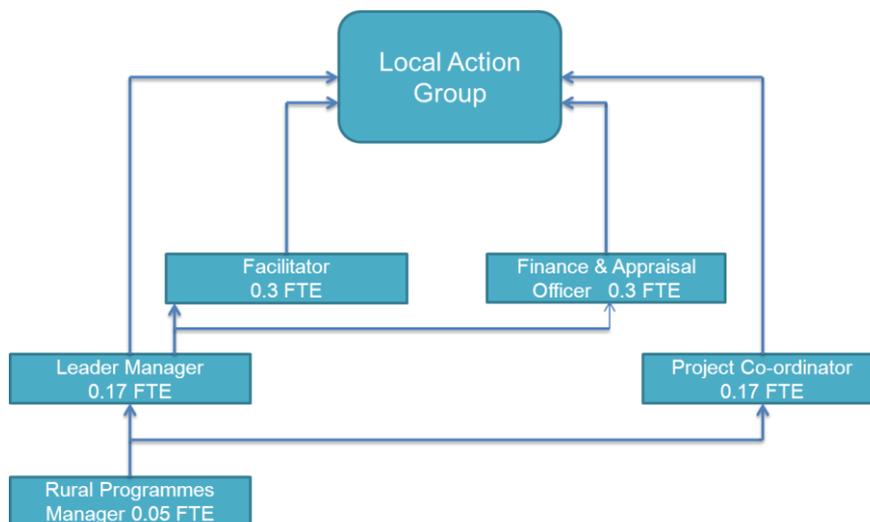
Cambridge Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership (GCGP) areas to broaden the opportunity for LAGs to share knowledge and network.

The Broads area set up an Interim LAG and Steering Group early in 2014 to manage the development of the LDS up until its submission. The steering group has been managed along the lines of a LAG structure required by EU legislation so a Chair from the private sector has been elected by the group. If successful in their application for funding, the LAG will formally constitute itself and elect a new Chair and a Vice-Chair at the end of 2014. These positions will be held for a maximum of three years at which point the AB will hold an election.

To ensure transparency, clarity and non-discrimination, the formal constitution of the LAG will require LAG members to agree and sign the following: Terms of Reference (based on previous programme), Behavioural Code of Conduct (as issued by Defra in the NDF), and Register of Interest (based on the public sector Register of Interest used by NCC, available on request). LAG meetings will be recorded and issues as written minutes. The AB will establish written procedures to manage the risk of conflict of interest in accordance with the National Operations Manual (NOM) which will include LAG members being invited to declare any conflict of interest at a LAG meeting, the results of which will be recorded. LAG members will be required to respect the confidentiality of applications and the selection process until Defra have formally approved the decision.

Once in formal operation, the LAG will be responsible for the overall management and the strategic direction of the LDS and monitor the progress of the programme. The LAG is responsible for the functions set out in Article 34 of the Common Provisions Regulation, including the selection and assessment of projects and these procedures will be established in accordance with the NOM. The AB will give training and direction to the LAG to ensure the partnership is clear and transparent when assessing and selecting projects. Where uncertainty or disputes arise, it will seek advice or guidance from Defra and the RPA.

Local Action Group staff, numbers and Job Descriptions



The staffing structure is based on the high point indicative allocation of RDPE funds. We envisage further economies of scale in the back office function should the LAG be successful in managing other funds, such as NALEP allocated ESF, ERDF or EAFRD. However we recognise the complexities that managing multi-funds will bring, particularly in terms of

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compliance. Working with the Broads Local Action Group will be a Facilitator, LAG Manager, Finance and Appraisal Officer and Project Coordinator, employed by Norfolk County Council (NCC). The Facilitator post is pivotal to animating projects in the LAG area and will encourage participation by different sectors of the community, using the available measures and LAG members to broaden the opportunity for project development. This is supported by the communications strategy. The Facilitator will be the equivalent of 0.3 FTE.

The LAG Manager is responsible for managing five LAGs and their operational relationship with the Managing Authority (MA) as well as setting performance targets and managing the performance framework and control systems. S/he will be supported by a Project Coordinator who will provide secretariat support to the LAG, co-ordinate submission of reporting requirements and Annual Implementation Plans (AIPs) and maintain the MA database. Both posts will be shared between five proposed LAGs and line managed by the Rural Programmes Manager, who will provide the LAG with strategic and operational links to the LEP, the MA and other relevant external partners and stakeholders. Project appraisals, claim checking and project monitoring will be carried out by Finance & Appraisal officers on behalf of the LAG. This post will be the equivalent of 0.3 FTE. All LAG staff will have the appropriate skills described in paragraph 68 of the National Delivery Framework (NDF) included in their job descriptions (available on request).

Management and Administration costs will be a maximum of 18% of which we are proposing approximately 75/25 split running costs /animation. The staffing structure is based on the presumption that all LAGs share some back office functions creating efficiency savings. The final structure and staffing numbers is dependent upon which LAGs in the County are successful, but the AB will always manage staffing to ensure projects are supported through the application and claim process. If necessary, the AB will utilise other staff at its disposal.

Equal Opportunities statement

The LAG is committed to ensuring that in our approach to and the delivery of our work, it maximises the opportunities for marginalised or disadvantaged groups in our area to benefit from the investment and development that the work of the LAG will realise. Norfolk County Council as the AB will ensure that its Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) responsibilities are delivered in the approach it takes to supporting the LAG to work, and it has published a statement about how it is complying with the PSED <http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/view/NCC136494>. However, we see our commitment as extending further than the groups specifically identified in the PSED. We will seek to fund projects which as well as meeting our key criteria, also tackle rural isolation, poverty and unemployment amongst all groups.

Involvement of the community and consultation activity undertaken

LAG Activity		
Date	Activity	Purpose
May-Sep 13	Development of Norfolk Rural Development Strategy	Set strategic objectives for economic growth in rural areas from 2014-20. The RDS provides private sector consultation and collates the rural evidence base
1 Sep 13	Rural Development Strategy Launch	Launched by MP George Freeman, Leader of the council George Nobbs and the chair of the strategy group Richard Powell. The event set the wider rural context for Norfolk and began to generate interest in Leader

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6 Nov 13	LEADER launch	Raise awareness of future opportunities – speakers from Norfolk, Suffolk, Cumbria and Northumberland LAGS and Defra RDT highlighting best practice from the previous programme
11 Dec 13	Broads Workshop	Introduction to LAGs and funding opportunities, propose geography, workshop SWOT and priorities with local individuals
7Jan–28 Feb	Online consultation	Opportunity to comment on SWOT / priorities to enable the widest possible consultation on the priorities
12 Mar 14	Broads Workshop	Refine geography and priorities, discuss terms of reference, training needs and co-operation
1 May 14	Steering Group Mtg	Review National Delivery Framework, agree geography and priority headlines
17 Jun 14	Steering Group Mtg	Review Draft LDS
31 Jul 14	Full Interim LAG mtg	Review Draft LDS, feed in comments. LAG timetable and funding update.
15 Aug 14	LDS sent to Interim LAG	Final draft sent for LAG endorsement prior to sign off by Chair and submission
18 Aug 14	LDS sent to LEP	Opportunity for NALEP to comment
5 Sep 14	Sent to Defra	Deadline for submission to Defra
Stakeholder Consultation		
11 Dec 13	Broads Consultation event	Initial event to gauge interest in a Broads LAG. Attended by 34 people, some which became LAG members. Groups represented include: Norfolk Wildlife Trust, RSPB, NALC, FSB, Angling, Broads Tourism.
23 Jan 14	Rights of Way D.Yates and K. Webber-Walton	Discuss opportunities for potential access/tourism projects
31 Jan 14	Wild Anglia H. Bishop	Raise awareness of programme, discuss potential projects
20 Feb 14	Farming Conference	Networking event to promote LAG membership
23 Apr 14	NNDC – John Mullen and Jose Socao	Review priorities for area to ensure synergy. Review opportunities for projects.
24 Apr 14	Broadland DC – V. Savage , K Hughes	Review priorities for area to ensure synergy. Review opportunities for projects.
13 May 14	David Martin and Kate Wilde	Discussion about business advice and support, where the LAG can add to existing provision.
29 May 14	Terry Stork – Pub is the Hub	Investigate match funding opportunities for pubs diversifying into other activities
1 Jun 14	M. Perry, Development and Policy, Plunkett	Review opportunities for joint working on funding community owned businesses.
10 Jun 14	Jan Cockburn, NWES	Discuss programme activities regarding school/business interaction
11 Jun 14	Norfolk & Suffolk Woodland Wkg Group	Inform about LEADER/LAG's gain insight into projects which may come forward
23 Jun 14	DEFRA LAG Workshop	Programme Update
25/26 Jun 14	Norfolk Show	Networking event to promote opportunities for LAG membership and projects
25 Jun 14	Federation of Small Businesses	Discuss programme and opportunities for members to apply. Agreed to publicise in their newsletter.
15 Jul 14	Inspired Youth, Philip Search.	Discuss programme regarding inclusion of activities for young people, as mentioned within LDS
26 Aug 14	Andrea Kelly, Senior Ecologist, Broads Authority	Review of LDS to ensure Broads water strategy is in conformance with Broads Authority ecological aims.
18 Aug 14	Natural England	Consultation on environmental sustainability

In addition letters of support have been received from the Rural Development Steering Group, RSPB and the Norfolk Wildlife Trust.

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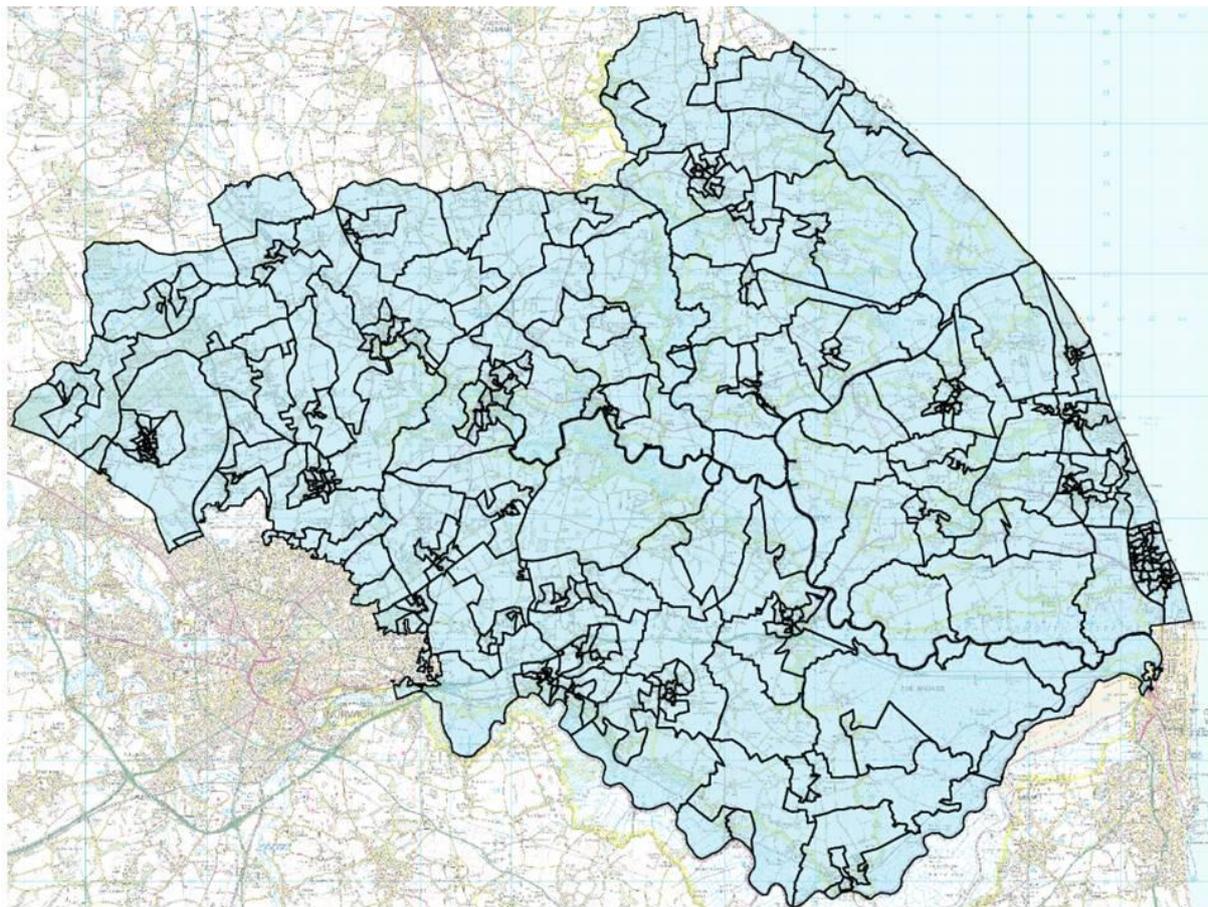
Training Requirements

LAG members considered their training needs as part of workshop activity in February 2014. If the LAG is successful in its bid to oversee the distribution of grant funding, it is important to consider what might be expected of a LAG member in order to identify potential training needs. The information the group fed back, along with lessons learnt from Norfolk County Council's experience as the Accountable Body from the previous programme, have formed the basis of the LAG member training plan below. It is acknowledged that not all members will require all of the training.

Action	Timetable
<p>Induction day with a members pack to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic and funding context: refresher on the LAG LDS; LEP overview on the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and Norfolk RDS. • Role of LAG member and sign-up form to allow mapping of skills • LAG expenses allowable and exclusions • LAG governance: constitution and Terms of Reference, LAG protocol, role of Chair, confidentiality, legal accountability, and glossary of acronyms, conflict of interest register and declarations, behaviour code of conduct. • Process – application process from idea through to funding, overview of record keeping required. • Measures, outputs, eligibility and funding criteria • Specific information on other funding programmes in simple terms (LEP, Defra etc.) and options to deliver (e.g. sub groups) <p>Key messages briefing sheet to support programme advocacy</p>	Jan 2015
<p>Project development and appraisal training – looking at a case study and following it through all aspects of the appraisal form, giving the chance to ask questions and understand the Appraisers rationale. Particular attention to be paid to the financial appraisal.</p>	Jan 2015
<p>Annual invitation to all LAG members to review the future direction of the LDS and the performance of the partnership; review training and developmental needs and produce Annual Implementation Plan. Opportunity for members to share best practice, exchange experiences and project ideas and network with each other. Potential to extend annual review to include neighbouring LAGs within NALEP and GCGP area.</p>	Sept Review
<p>Internal Management Reports - agree process to report project pipeline, commitment, spend, outputs, and issues by exception.</p>	1st meeting
<p>Induction for new members in the LAGs lifetime prior to them attending a meeting</p>	One to one with facilitator, plus induction pack
<p>Staff training requirements are noted in the Action Plan on page 22.</p>	

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The Broads LAG Area: Total Population: 95,568 Rural: 88,163 Urban: 7,405



The Broads LAG area was almost totally included in the previous Norfolk Coast and Broads boundary in the previous programme. Four LAG members from the previous programme have remained on the group, and four previously funded businesses have joined, providing continuity and experience for the revised area.

The area is one of contrast, with wetland wildlife havens and grazing marshes to the east, and gentle rolling farmland and country estates to the west. The area includes three local authority districts – Broadland, North Norfolk and a small part of Great Yarmouth and lies totally within Norfolk. Only 7% of this area is classified as urban, around the fringes of Norwich, and include landscape or economic centres (Broadland and Rackheath) which are of significance to the area. Other than this, there are no towns large enough to be considered as hub towns. This level of rurality may be why the area was voted the ‘Most Peaceful Place to live in the UK’ in 2013.

Acle, Wroxham and Stalham are market towns lying within the area, and substantial villages of Martham, Blofield, and Brundall act as service centres for the smaller surrounding hamlets. Acle also lies within the Broadland District (BDC) area, and has produced a town regeneration plan with active town teams that include representatives from the community¹. In addition to this, BDC are supporting Brundall businesses to operate a local business forum which is identifying solutions for local issues. The former RAF Coltishall is considered to be a major economic and regeneration asset.

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Economic: Tourism is a primary sector underpinning the economic income of the area and benefiting mainly UK tourists and the regional day tripper market. More than 7 million people visit the Broads each year, contributing £469m to the local economyⁱⁱ. There are strong links between tourism and food and drink, accounting for 35% of visitor spending.

5.5% of UK agriculture is based in Norfolk, and it is estimated that 12,300 people are employed in this sector across the county. In the Broads and surrounding area, it accounts for 87% of land use and employs approximately 8,500 people and supports many more jobs in food processing, haulage, farm equipment suppliers and business advice. Livestock farming is vital to the Broads, with one third of East Anglia's cattle grazing land within the area. Grazing supports the right habitat and wetland, and is important for nationally significant birds, woodlands, invertebrates and plants.ⁱⁱⁱ

From 2005-07, business start-up rates fell (Broadland -25%, North Norfolk -41%), and the majority of businesses in Norfolk (78%) employ 5 or less people, with the majority of small business being in rural areasⁱ. However, BDC area has a strong business sector, and sees that small and medium sized businesses are likely to be the main source of job growth potential.^{iv} With significant housing growth planned within and adjacent to the area, construction is a major growth sector, and the aim is for the region to become a centre for sustainable and low energy new build.

IT and communications infrastructure within Norfolk is lagging behind the UK as a whole. The high cost of delivering commercially sustainable broadband in rural locations has resulted in large parts of Norfolk having poor or no broadband capability, and a mobile phone signal is unreliable in 'not spots' around the area. The Better Broadband for Norfolk (BBfN) scheme run jointly by Norfolk County Council and BT is rolling out basic level broadband to the county by the end of 2015.^v New Anglia LEP has included broadband in their Structural and Investment Fund Strategy for Norfolk and Suffolk, which will cover small scale enhancements.

Environmental: The area is split into two Natural Character Areas: The Broads and North East Norfolk and Flegg. The majority of tourism businesses rely on the natural environment and waterways of the Broads, a low lying area of river valleys, flood and coastal grazing marsh and reed beds of national significance. Areas are designated under RAMSAR, SPA, SAC and the area hosts 10 NNR's, and 28 sites of special scientific interest. The Broads is the UK's only water-based national park, derived from years of peat extraction, which flooded, creating 10 broads, each with their own particular character. There are pockets of woodland dotted around the area, such as Horsford Woods, Snowdrop Acre and The Dell at Buxton, and significant stretches of Carr woodland fringing river banks and broads.

The remaining areas within the boundary of the LAG are made up from rich agricultural land, prominent large churches, and small isolated villages and farmsteads, linked by a network of lanes plus over 1,000 hectares of the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This landscape includes copses and large woodland blocks around Blofield Heath and East Ruston and small intricate field systems. Coastal dunes at Winterton-Horsey form a natural and stable flood defence, as well as important habitat for wildlife and are designated a Special Area of Conservation. The south east coastal area includes Caister-on-Sea, a busy tourist centre which abuts urban Great Yarmouth.

The area is at threat from coastal flooding and saline incursion. Climate change predictions are of warmer wetter winters and hotter drier summers plus an increase in flood risk through sea level rise and extreme weather events. Much of the area is at or below sea level, so flood defence maintenance is crucial to protect productive farmland, fresh water habitat and local communities. Influxes of tourists to holiday camps on the coast coincide with high demand for agricultural water, in one of the driest areas in the country creating a seasonally increased pressure on water resources. Soil erosion is exacerbated where organic matter levels are low

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after continuous arable cultivation, or where soils are compacted. There is potential for wind erosion, particularly near the coast^{vi}.

Social: The projected population growth for Broadland is +15%^{vii} (2026), and one of the highest in Norfolk. North Norfolk is one the most rural (88%) districts in Norfolk. The population is aging, with an increase in the percentage of over 65's by 2026, bringing pressure onto the working population, and increasing demand for social care.

District	Broad demographic structure by district (%)					
	0-24		25-64		65+	
	2011	2026	2011	2026	2011	2026
Broadland	25.7	21.6	52.0	49.1	22.3	29.3
North Norfolk	23.0	20.3	48.3	42.9	28.8	36.9

Qualification Level	Broadland	North Norfolk	Norfolk
No qualifications	23%	27%	26%
Level 1	15%	14%	14%
Level 2	17%	16%	16%
Apprenticeship	5%	5%	4%
Level 3	12%	11%	12%
Level 4 & above	23%	22%	22%
Other quals	4%	5%	5%

Although Broadland and North Norfolk districts are in the top third for school performance in Norfolk, the county actually scores badly when compared to the rest of the UK. 25% of people have no qualifications across the area with a small percentage (5%) taking up opportunities of apprenticeships.

SWOT Analysis: The content of this SWOT was collated during a consultation session held in the area, when 34 representatives from across business, community, agricultural, environmental and public sectors brainstormed their SWOT's for the proposed LAG area.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Economic: Whitlingham Broads is a successful model for water based tourism. A technically savvy entrepreneurial workforce to support ICT development Excellent soils providing opportunity for good production Good rail infrastructure and transport links, especially in relation to the proximity of Norwich to the area Quality historical sites to appeal to visitors Accessible from mainland Europe via Norwich airport</p> <p>Environmental: Stunning landscape, wildlife and rare habitats, a beautiful and nice place to live and work National park status Remote (get away from it all) location</p> <p>Social: Growing skills from an ageing population New people continually moving into the area Low crime rate Lessons learnt from current programme and the knowledge of funding streams Broadland District Council Community support and contacts providing links for potential projects</p>	<p>Economic: Poor broadband and mobile signal curtailing growth opportunities for businesses Poor promotion of villages/ inland areas for tourists. Too many 'Broads tourism' websites confusing and diluting the offer for visitors Planning short-termism resulting in poor quality new builds Lack of food processing facilities for local produce</p> <p>Environmental: Poor environmental status of SSSI's Loss of permissive access through closing ESS payments Disconnect between land and people over time Land speculation and development</p> <p>Social: Low aspiration 16+, lack of suitably qualified agricultural trainees/graduates/school leavers Lack of health related facilities ie swimming pool, cycle tracks Public health inequalities and isolation Transport for rural villages. Ageing population Poor play areas for children</p>

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Opportunities	Threats
<p>Economic: One stop website for tourists, offer historically themed tours, co-ordination between farming and tourism, i.e. camping Develop the Bure valley and NE coastal offer New walking/cycling routes Sustainable tourism using train from London Transport linking rivers and broads Interest in food and short supply chains Use staithe to market firewood, using water borne trail for biomass. County council farm – supporting new entrants On-farm processing adding value to local food Food / art trail or development of public art Boat building as a potential growth sector Increase competitiveness, efficiency, productivity for farm businesses through technology</p> <p>Environmental: Improved water security Apprenticeship schemes for biodiversity/land management and farming</p> <p>Social: Develop a business forum Increasing public – farmer engagement Community apple pressing Rural kids getting to school safely and cycle routes/walk routes</p>	<p>Economic: Not enough moorings and access Loss of public transport Agricultural modernisation, knowledge transfer and poor technology adoption.</p> <p>Environmental: Climate change, Sea level rise, saline intrusion Ecological threats from alien species Poor farm biodiversity, impact on broads Poor water quality and security for food, domestic and environment Impact of Norwich growth area on fragile landscape Oil and gas industry –temper need by factoring in sensitive environment/tourism area Disconnection of people with the countryside and wildlife</p> <p>Social: Young people jobs threat, move out of area Local skills dying out – reedcutters, millwrights Closure of shops in town centres</p>

Evidence of Alignment with LEP activity

Strategic fit with the evidence base

New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership’s (NALEP) Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and European Structural Investment Fund (ESIF) plan have informed the high level evidence base and SWOT analysis of this LDS. In these documents NALEP has taken a rural mainstreaming approach, where issues are generic across sectors or geographies (for example access to finance, business planning and management training). This approach is balanced by a rural premium, planned under the social inclusion thematic objective, which recognises that the delivery in rural areas will be more expensive.

In Norfolk, the NALEP strategic plans and this LDS have been informed in part by Norfolk’s Rural Development Strategy (RDS), produced in consultation with over 200 private businesses, organisations and individuals to present the view of the private sector on what is required to deliver a sustainable rural economy in the county. The Norfolk Rural Development Strategy sets out some of the key investment requirements for rural parts of the county to enable them to make a contribution to future growth, and feeds into the developing Norfolk Growth Prospectus and the NALEP strategic plans. Indeed, much of the rural chapter of NALEP’s ESIF plan was informed by the Norfolk RDS.

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The Norfolk RDS highlighted the important contribution LAGs can make to the rural economy at a local level and provided the statistical and evidence base to inform the LDS. LAG members and their support staff have tested the LEP and county evidence base at the area-level.

The RDS was commissioned to serve two key objectives

1. Provide the framework for sustainable business growth in rural areas in Norfolk
2. Providing a comprehensive evidence base to support the framework for growth

By consulting with over 200 businesses and individuals from the private and public sector, as well as key stakeholder in the rural economy, the RDS has built a consensus on the key challenges facing the Norfolk's rural areas. Through targeted interventions, the Norfolk community can ensure the continued vitality and development of its rural areas.

The RDS focuses on growth in employment in four inter-related sectors. These sectors have a high GVA per job where Norfolk has globally competitive advantages:

1. **Agriculture and the food chain** deliver innovation; add value to food by processing and marketing; technology to increase agricultural productivity
2. **Energy** the largest offshore investment in the World is expected in the Southern North Sea creating thousands of new jobs offshore and onshore. Potential to utilise agri-food waste streams, solar and small scale wind power on land to generate further renewable energy
3. **Manufacturing and engineering** food processing, agri-tech and energy equipment
4. **The knowledge economy** using Norwich Research Park (NRP) research to support growth in the agri-food, energy, manufacturing, engineering sectors. Requires improved broadband, new skills and improved links between rural businesses and the research base

To **deliver growth** in these sectors of the economy a number of areas need to be addressed to help rural communities fulfil their potential, including:

- The creation of **Vibrant Rural Communities** is the ultimate aim of the strategy and calls for specific actions at the community level. Local Action Groups utilising Leader funding to deliver jobs and business growth are key to delivering these actions.
- **Meeting the skills challenge** - help schools raise attainment, address skills gaps, transport and remote access solutions.
- **Embracing an enabling planning system** which supports jobs growth in rural Norfolk.
- **Improved connectivity** - the Better Broadband for Norfolk (BBfN), mobile access, transport connectivity.
- **Green infrastructure** to support the natural environment and attract visitors. Working with private landowners, building green space and infrastructure into new developments.

NALEP's ESIF plan (chapter 15) champions the significant experience of the previous Leader programme in the county and the local support for the approach. In recognition of this, NALEP intends to allocate 7.5% (£6m) of the total notional EU allocation for the New Anglia LEP area

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to a similar bottom-up approach. Therefore there is an opportunity for the LAG to manage European Social Fund (ESF) and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) on behalf of the LEP. The LAG welcomes the opportunity to manage a wider range of funds for our local area and would suggest setting up a sub-group of the wider LAG with a specific responsibility to oversee a particular funding stream. But we also recognise the complexities of managing multi-funds and have asked the AB to consider in particular the impact on project applicants and compliance.

We will work closely with the LEP to ensure our activities add value to their activity and not duplicate, and ensure we make businesses aware of LEP and LAG activities most relevant to them.

Fit with LEP delivery

Our Local Enterprise Partnership will lead the wider business growth agenda in our LAG area, delivering the investment and activity set out in the SEP and ESIF strategies. An independent review by Lincoln University describes Local Action Groups as “a vital mechanism that provides the kind of support most needed to grow and sustain small rural businesses and communities” and highlights how Leader complements regional and ‘top-down’ interventions, such as those led by the LEP. Previous programme experience in Norfolk shows that Leader can deliver effective, well-targeted projects which are ‘owned’ by the local community, in the LEP area, complementing the large-scale interventions of the SEP and ESIF.

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Local Priorities:

The LAG is covering all 6 Defra priorities in the LDS (see matrix mapping Defra priorities to that of the LAG on page 29). The partnership will make a minimum of 70% direct contribution to the rural economy. This is reflected in the outputs we anticipate in delivering (see outputs table page 23) and the percentage split of the budget (page 29).

Vision:

Creating resilient communities, growing businesses and enriching the environmental heritage of the Broads to build a thriving sustainable economy

Mission:

To promote the Broads LAG area as a significant national asset, by connecting and improving our rural services through local business growth to enrich our communities and enhance our unique environmental and cultural heritage.

Cross Cutting themes:

Encouraging sympathetic, innovative and sustainable business growth in a sensitive landscape

The Broads countryside, coastline and the biodiversity it supports are unique nationally, and sympathetic activity should be a pre-requisite for all who live and work here. In times gone past, people worked on the land daily, and were well versed in its uses and needs. Things have changed, so we now need to find ways to reconnect local people and our visitors back to the countryside.

Inciting pride and responsibility in the area is important and projects should encourage interaction between people and a sense of place, working with and for the good of our natural assets. There are opportunities for businesses to engage with the landscape, and there is room for quality projects to come forward to improve the economy and help more people to enjoy it sustainably.

Future Proofing against climate change:

Proposals need to consider the impacts of climate change, to ensure investments and any impacts arising from them are sustainable in the longer term. For example, a new venture relying on fossil fuel is unsustainable long term because of its contribution to global warming, and susceptibility to soaring fuel costs. Or, projects aiming to develop in a high risk tidal or fluvial flood risk area must demonstrate that mitigation is or will be in place, to demonstrate long term viability and sustainability^{viii}.

Building thriving vibrant rural communities:

The over-riding aim and ambition for the LAG is to achieve resilience in our rural communities to offer a better quality of life. Projects that support and deliver much needed services to rural

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communities will be particularly attractive to the LAG. Creating employment through supporting new or existing business growth can help stimulate spending in the local economy, serving as a catalyst for other businesses and improving service provision, to benefit the whole community.

Priorities for funding:

Objective 1: Growing sustainable tourism to appreciate and protect our greatest natural asset

The Broads is internationally known as a tourism destination that offers a unique proposition for visitors. The area is famous for its network of broads and rivers and the landscape and wildlife that surround and inhabit it. The important natural balances that exist require projects to be environmentally sensitive; however there is an opportunity to focus on some of the positive aspects that together make up the powerful Broads brand in order to unlock the areas' full potential and extend this potential to other locations within the LAG. The area has benefitted from investment over recent years^{ix}, so future investments should take care not to duplicate or revise efforts, but expand upon previously funded activities^x.

1.1 The Broads: an inspirational destination:

It is reported that the 'stay-cation' is growing the local tourist economy. Two-thirds of us in the UK holidayed at home last year, and evidence from increased bookings supports this^{xi}. We have an ideal opportunity to capture an increasing London market, as dualling of the A11 will deliver people directly into Norwich, within striking distance of the area.^{xii} Good rail links to Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, and Bedfordshire, and connections through to the Midlands and further afield, also provides growth opportunities.

The LAG wish to see the Broads promoted as an aspirational destination and suggests strategic joined-up promotion to combine fragmented offers into a cohesive package. This may be achieved through improved communications or better connectivity and use of ICT to reach the potential market, spreading a wider "sense of place" of the area using public and private sector collaboration. Developing themed tourism around a number of local places, such as river valleys, a particular habitat or areas outside of the wetland area could improve and focus the visitor experience through exploring areas of different character.

Good quality venues and tourist communications should be central to the Broads tourism offer, to improve footfall and generate repeat trade. Investment in developing new and upgrading existing attractions to a high level will support growth and provide new jobs^{xiii}. Projects seeking capital funding should demonstrate due consideration for the environment, and aim to have a positive bearing for the local community, perhaps through providing additional local services. The Norfolk Rural Strategy 2013 highlights low wages as an issue in the tourism sector, so projects that create higher skilled jobs will be an aspiration of the LAG and will strengthen the tourism sector.

The impact of ICT on holiday selection through the quality of websites, through to referrals and recommendations, i.e. trip advisor, is growing and businesses need to embrace this technology to remain competitive and promote their business. NALEP and 'Cool Tourism' activities may be able to address these issues for the Broads area, so the LAG will only seek to address any gaps that exist in provision.

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1.2 Sustainable enjoyment of the great outdoors:

Themed walking routes, bridle ways and cycle routes can bring a greater connection with nature, not only for tourists but also for residents. As well as walkers and riders, this also applies to angling, canoeing or wildlife watching on the river and wetlands. Many trails around the area are already in place, so the LAG will consider inventive ideas for connecting bus and train services to cycling and walking routes (e.g. Bittern Line^{xiv}, National Cycle Network Route 30), that reduce the impact of cars on small rural roads or create safer access for people. Increasing quality opportunities for volunteering to manage natural assets such as trails or habitat can encourage visitors or local people to help care for the natural environment or help interpret it for others, or generate new opportunities for nature-based holidays.

1.3 Experiential tourism founded on arts and culture:

There is a real opportunity to generate income through an increased business focus on arts, crafts and music to promote the historical heritage, landscape and wildlife of the area for local people, day trippers and long-stay visitors. This attention could open up opportunities for the less-busy areas, and to a potential new audience seeking a different kind of experience to the traditional holiday-maker. Better information and interpretation of the surroundings at a truly local level, plus events promotion and investment in new and existing events such as farmers markets, exhibitions, musical gigs or regattas, can help improve visitor engagement and lengthen their stay.

Using art in public spaces, such as along trails way markers, can increase photo opportunities and generate further interest in the outdoors from a potentially different market.

1.4 Increase out of season activity and improve employment prospects:

Few attractions in the area offer activities outside of the busy summer season^{xv} so projects that promote out of season activity will be of significance for the LAG. Extending the tourism season will have positive impacts on supply chain businesses such as food and accommodation providers and offer year round employment opportunities. The exceptionally dark winter nights offer great opportunities for star-gazing, and the arts and food festivals are not tied in to the main summer season, but can be celebrated all year round.

Objective 2: Promoting competitive agriculture and high quality local produce

The Broads landscape is distinctive and those farming within it have a unique set of challenges and opportunities. Adopting or developing new technologies will aid many aspects of agriculture and build in efficiency in terms of growing and processing crops while reducing environmental impacts.

2.1 Supporting Young People to enter food and farming

With 59 being the average age of a UK farmer^{xvi}, support for the next generation and new entrants to farming are critical to sustain the industry in the future. The Edge apprenticeship scheme^{xvii} is in place until March 15; to develop people aged 16-24. Not all apprentices will necessarily acquire or accept a job with their employer, so the LAG will offer funding to aid new start-ups in the sector, who aim to set themselves up in the food or farming industry as a new business. This is to encourage young people to introduce new technology and ideas to the farm, and will not support normal farming practice.

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2.2 Encourage the uptake and use of Agricultural Technology

Engineering and technology in farming is advancing to meet the challenges of climate change and environmental protection^{xviii} and can enable farmers to protect their businesses against these challenges while securing food production for the future. Projects that bring new agri-tech solutions onto the farm while reducing pollution and environmental impact will be valuable additions, increasing productivity and beneficial efficiencies to the area. Examples include: precision farming, rain water harvesting, advancements in soil and water management, improvements in animal health and welfare or enhancements in crop production.

2.3 Adding value to local products:

An efficient supply chain for locally produced food is an ambition for the area, and the LAG would be supportive of collaborative projects which can produce a model for an economically viable solution to food distribution around the area.

Production of local food and drink can support the promotion of the wider area through shared branding, for example creating a “produced in Broadland” type label that represents good quality and connects people back to the area. The unique growing status of the Broads and its grazing marshes supports the production of high value crops, such as prime beef, salads, rush, sedge and reed, and there could be opportunities for processing and development of new products and markets.

2.4 Protecting water as a resource:

Water security and quality is a very real issue in the Broads not only for food production, but because good quality water underpins much of the economy. Solutions are required to protect delicate balances across environmental, tourism, community and farming needs. Changing weather predictions suggest a pattern of less summer rainfall and sudden heavy downpours, which bring an increased demand for water and higher risk of flooding, causing run off and soil erosion and resulting in a reduction in water quality^{xix}. Most of the rivers and broads in the area are classified as moderate for ecological health, and the River Bure is currently failing when assessed for chemical quality^{xx}.

This status of the water courses in the area needs to be improved, and projects that improve soil structures and reduce compaction to aid recharge and infiltration of water into the soil system and groundwater, eliminating or reducing run off and protecting the downstream economy will be encouraged, especially if they are within close proximity to a broad or fen. Farm businesses which make use of innovative techniques and tools to improve the efficiency of their water supply and distribution and reduce their energy use will be eligible for support.

2.5 Farm Diversification to sustain farming businesses:

Farm diversification can realise additional income for both current and future generations within an agricultural business. Support will be available for start-ups of micro or small rural businesses that provide a good ratio of job creation and value for money and provide additional income for a farm business.

2.6 Generate income from woodland management:

Forestry provides opportunities for growth and employment in rural areas, and there are approximately 6000 hectares of woodland in the area, with an estimated 66% unmanaged^{xxi}. Much of this is wet or Carr woodland, growing along rivers and streams and

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is not heavily managed because it may be inaccessible. It is valuable for conservation as it stabilises riverbanks and provides habitats for nature, but encroachment of scrub requires regular maintenance to keep it in check. There is evidence to show that a concentration on the needs for the local area such as an increase in processing facilities such as a wood drying kiln or milling machinery can improve productivity and employment in the sector, as well as manage the woodland habitat efficiently^{xxii}. Woodland development projects which fall eligible under the New Environmental Land Management Scheme cannot be funded under this programme.

Objective 3: Engendering growth from new and existing small businesses

3.1 Build resilience into the business community by fostering networking and knowledge sharing

A network approach is a good way to share experience, gain support, access advice and lobby on issues affecting small businesses. Advice and mentoring is important for small businesses, and especially for start-ups. RDPE cannot fund business advice or skills training, but NALEP and local authorities provide supportive services for new and growing businesses, so projects will be signposted to the relevant organisation. However, capital projects developing workshops or business centres that support activity in rural areas could be supported. Providing quality facilities and services, such as quality broadband and mobile access in rural centres, can attract businesses and lead to networking and knowledge sharing, supporting jobs and increased local spend to support further activity in rural areas.

3.2 Supporting small and micro businesses creation and growth:

A priority is to fund new start-ups and growing businesses to create new jobs, promote entrepreneurship and improve the economic competitiveness of the LAG area. Assisting businesses across service, retail, processing and manufacturing sectors will be an ambition particularly with an aim of improving the quality of jobs and assisting business start-ups. Opportunities for projects coming forward exist at the former RAF Coltishall site, owned by NCC, which has a vision to 'create an environment where businesses will flourish'^{xxiii} and will provide areas to promote employment. The LAG aims to complement NALEPs' objective to enhance the competitiveness of SME's with large scale interventions by delivering local smaller scale projects funded through a bottom-up community approach.

Boat manufacturing has a long association in the Broads and boating as a leisure pursuit is growing steadily in the UK^{xxiv}. Latest reports show demand is at 'pre-recession' levels and growth of 23% across all boating activity in the UK market between 2012 -13^{xxv}.

Opportunities exist for inventive projects that can minimise the impact of boating on the waterways through creative design or processing or adaptation to low-emission fuels for example. Support for new or existing businesses practicing traditional boat building skills through the building or maintenance of classic wooden boats will protect and enhance the culture and heritage of the Broads into the future.

Planning constraints and a shortage of suitable premises and appropriate technology are issues specific to rural businesses^{xxvi}, and can be a barrier for those working at home or wishing to expand and take on staff. Taking redundant rural premises back into use, conversion of existing buildings, and use of community premises or generating provision on farms could be a way to provide workshops, premises or facilities to support fledgling

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businesses or growing established organisations and create or sustain employment in a rural area. Only those projects with full planning permission in place can be funded.

Objective 4: Fostering Sustainable Vibrant Communities

Rural Norfolk faces many issues that affect all aspects of community life. An ageing population, low aspirations, poor qualifications, lack of affordable housing, fuel poverty, low incomes, isolation, loss of and poor access to services are all challenges within Broads communities that can limit growth opportunities^{xxvii}. While RDPE will not be the common funder to address all these issues, they are interlinked and efforts should be made for a co-ordinated and sustained approach across funds.

4.1 Widening the aspirations of young people to local employment opportunities

Rural areas are comparatively weak in generating business and professional services jobs which is a sector predicted to grow the most strongly^{xxviii}. Currently there is a perception that students have few or the wrong skills when leaving education, and there is a need to connect and inspire young people about employment opportunities in the rural economy.

This has been identified as an issue by NALEP and addressed in their Structural Investment Fund strategy by improved engagement between young people and businesses, and creating a workforce which is 'fit for purpose'. This activity will primarily be aimed at 16-24 age groups, so the LAG will concentrate any activity on pre-16, by facilitating contact between employers and schools to build awareness of local opportunities and create an engaged pipeline of young people.

4.2 Reducing isolation through improved access to services:

The 'silver pound' is increasingly important as over-50's account for more than half UK household expenditure on food, health and recreation and culture^{xxix}. The EU prediction for 2060 is that age-related expenditure will increase to almost 30% of GDP^{xxx}.

Elderly care is a growing sector as this demographic is predicted to increase in the future. The aging local population will increase demand for health and care services creating opportunities for the third sector or rural business start-ups or growth. Businesses looking to provide support for this growing market will be considered, particularly if they can help the elderly to remain within their community.

Poor public transport links and diminishing local services can increase the sense of isolation in rural areas. Rural Norfolk is very dependent on private transport but approximately 16% of households in rural Norfolk have no private transport^{xxxi} creating a gap in provision. A way of filling this gap is to improve digital skills and connectivity in isolated areas^{xxxii} and bring services and facilities back into the community.

This could be achieved through new business or social enterprise creation, perhaps collaborating with an existing facility such as a village hall or local pub, to provide needed services. Such projects can help build self-reliant communities creating excellent places to live, work and visit. Capital funding will be available to support the introduction of new services into rural communities, and especially for those aiming to 'future proof' their investments against climate change through investment in renewable technology.

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Programmes of Activity

1.1 The Broads: an inspirational destination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative projects across tourism providers to offer connected packages of activity. • Encourage tourism businesses to exploit the rail link to and from London by including it in their tourism marketing strategy. • Promotion of the benefits of a 'staycation', versus holidaying abroad. • Upgrade of existing or creation of new tourism venues to offer good quality attractions and increase repeat business. • Tourism projects that offer services for the local community.
1.2 Sustainable enjoyment of the great outdoors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build connections between transport and leisure, for example Water Tours and Christmas rail trips, Bittern and Wherry Lines Sunday guided walks programme. • Creation and promotion of new cycle routes. • Environmental activities encouraging low impact interaction with habitats, such as wildlife tours or conservation holidays.
1.3 Experiential tourism benefiting from arts and culture:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating new or linking existing arts and crafts events and festivals. • Connecting the sense of place with creativity through poetry or art. • Promotion/building new improved venues to encourage cultural festivals to the area (i.e. Norfolk and Norwich Festival).
1.4 Increase out of season activity and improve employment prospects:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An example of out of season events could include winter star-gazing, a food festival or a gallery trail. Possibility of a 'dark sky reserve'. • Open studios are not seasonally dependant and could be a good way to promote out of season activity, while supporting the priority to promote arts and crafts. • There is an opportunity for businesses to improve holiday play provision for young children, for example through adventure playgrounds or indoor play areas which can generate income outside of the traditional peak season, and cannot be funded through other existing schemes.
2.1 Supporting Young People into food and farming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples include a new contracting business, working together with an older farmer to maintain the farm and learn from their experience.
2.2 Encourage uptake of Agri-Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introducing soil conditioning products from converted biomass, or taken from waste materials. • Precision technology to better manage crop production while protecting the environment. • Introducing technology to improve animal health and welfare. • Reducing soil compaction through new innovative tools
2.3 Adding value to local products:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that sell products under a generic Broadland brand, such as "Broads Beef". • Bringing communities together to grow and sell produce, for example community cider. • Projects that can bring multiple producers together to create sustainable employment and add value to the area. • Processing and development of new products and markets to take advantage of growing conditions, such as cranberries for example. • Improving the supply chain to reduce food miles of local food.
2.4 Protecting water as a resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of smart irrigation systems that use low or renewable energy inputs, irrigate when evaporation is minimised, and can include technology such as moisture sensors and water meters. • Clusters of projects that focus collectively on one area where improvements in water efficiency could make a difference in water availability.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of rainwater harvesting from farm buildings for washing down or topping up reservoirs.
2.5 Farm Diversification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farms starting a new business in another sector such as tourism or retail, or developing redundant buildings into workshops for example.
2.6 Generate income from woodland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for woodland businesses that add value by extracting, processing, transporting or storing forestry products to generating growth in income. • Collaboration projects sharing processing, storage and drying facilities could bring greater benefits to businesses. • Innovative projects that can use waterways to support extraction and transportation will be welcomed by the LAG.
3.1 Build resilience into business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a new Broads Business Forum, or build on forum(s) already in place.
3.2 Supporting small and micro businesses creation and growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New business start-ups and growing businesses. • Innovative approach to boating in the Broads, for example introducing green technology. • Use of traditional skills to promote the culture and heritage of the Broads. • New community-based businesses, for example helping the elderly to remain within the community and reduce isolation. • Provision of suitable small start-up units with improved connectivity. • Conversion of redundant buildings, or community premises to support fledgling businesses and sustain rural employment.
4.1 Widening aspirations of young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private sector led information / open days, links with colleges and schools, or businesses working with educators to develop or sponsor skills and vocational training.
4.2 Reducing isolation through improved access to services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New businesses or social enterprises working to provide services within rural communities. • Innovative ideas for different uses of rural buildings, for example a Church, pub or village hall doubles up as a community store or internet café. This could also offer as 'hot desk' space, for small local businesses to increase daytime use and income. • 'The pub is the hub' model can be supported to bring convenience stores, farm shops, retail or other services onto rural pub premises.

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Action Plan

Assuming successful selection by Defra, the following action plan will ensure the commencement of the delivery of the programme. The plan takes account of key dates, but further details are contained within the 'Training Requirements' and 'Communications Plan' sections of this strategy.

Action	By when
Notification by Defra	November
Sign contract with Defra	December 2014
-AB to recruit initial staff to meet needs of successful LAGs in Norfolk -Deliver staff training (application, appraisal, and financial training in Leader context, state aid, measures and fiches)	December 2014
Begin promoting funding opportunity	December 2014
LAG induction day, to include governance process, expenses, application process. See 'Training Requirements' section for full detail.	December 2014
LAG training (project application and appraisal)	January 2015
Launch marketing and promotion of funding opportunity to potential applicants / stakeholders / networks including website and promotional material. See 'Communications Plan' for full detail.	January 2015
Facilitate development of project enquiries (or signpost to other opportunities)	On-going
Hold LAG meetings to assess and select projects and Expressions of Interest; receive reports on programme performance, induct new LAG members	Quarterly
Recruitment of new LAG members to meet needs of programme. Induction by LAG Facilitator/ Chair/AB.	On-going
Recruitment of new staff to meet needs of programme	As required
LAG Annual Review day (date can change depending on needs of programme)	Annually, in September
Defra training	As offered

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Targets, Results and Outputs

LEADER Policy Priority	RDPE expenditure per FTE job created (£)	Average RDPE grant size (£)	Relevant CMES output indicators for LDS application	End of programme forecast (by December 2020)
Support for increasing farm productivity	61,011	29,884	Total RDPE expenditure Number of projects supported Jobs created (FTE)	£306,680 10 5
Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification	11,931	19,951	Total RDPE expenditure Number of projects supported Jobs created (FTE)	£536,690 27 45
Support for rural tourism	32,477	31,764	Total RDPE expenditure Number of projects supported Jobs created (FTE)	£306,680 10 10
Support for culture and heritage activity	55,991	28,165	Total RDPE expenditure Number of projects supported Jobs created (FTE)	£153,340 6 3
Provision of rural services	33,272	23,378	Total RDPE expenditure Number of projects supported Jobs created (FTE)	£153,340 7 5
Support for increasing forestry productivity	77,045	21,788	Total RDPE expenditure Number of projects supported Jobs created (FTE)	£76,670 4 1

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Sustainability appraisal

Sustainable development is at the core of the Broads Local Development Strategy. Promoting growth of rural business while simultaneously protecting and enhancing the sensitive landscape, mitigating against climate change and building sustainable rural communities cut across all the priorities for the area and will be a major consideration in the funding of individual projects.

The environmental landscape is a key component of the area, linking businesses, communities and leisure together through their reliance on this resource. Water is crucial to the sustainability of the area, which is why lessening its use and preventing pollution from agriculture and impacts from boating is an important priority (Priorities 2.4; 3.2). Encouraging innovative ideas and technological change by farms, businesses and communities can help reduce energy consumption and environmental impacts while protecting income generation and improving the resilience of society against climate change. (Priorities 1.2; 1.3; 2.2; 2.3; 2.6; 3.2; 4.2).

Promoting services into rural villages and hamlets which can be shared by small businesses and local residents will aim to reduce travel and address issues around isolation through increased interaction and communication.

Sustainability Objectives ^{xxxiii} & xxxiv	Programme and Projects
Sustainable procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchasing services and goods supplied from the local economy to support local supply chains. • Purchasing better quality longer-lasting goods over cheaper/disposable/poor environmental options.
Energy Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise energy consumption through use of renewable energy or improved processes. • Improve resilience towards climate change
Resource efficiency and waste reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce water consumption and maximise efficiency of use • Reduce waste creation by encouraging reuse, recycling and recovery of waste materials.
Sustainable Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise car use through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ improved access to broadband/mobile services ○ improved use of ICT to minimise travel ○ bringing the work place into the community ○ increasing the use of public transport ○ creating opportunities for cycling or walking to work or amenities
Biodiversity and Nature:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce impacts on biodiversity through introduction of agricultural technology on farm • Minimise risks of water pollution and flooding • Encourage 'out of season' activity to reduce pressures on environmentally sensitive areas. • Ensure activities do not impact on biodiversity or local environment • Educate visitors about the sensitive nature of the landscape.
Historic and Culture:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the built environment by redeveloping unused buildings into sustainable community /business assets • Support new arts, crafts and food festivals to promote the culture of the Broads
Communities and Social:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage new ventures in rural communities to improve communication and reduce isolation • Improved services for rural villages and hamlets
Economy and Employment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support existing and encourage new investment opportunities in the rural environment where it will result in new employment

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Proposed Co-operation Activity

Partners within the LAG have experience and knowledge of co-operation activities with a number of EU partners. For example, Sustainable Tourism in Estuary Parks project (Interreg IV A 2 Seas^{xxxv}) saw the Broads Authority working with partners from the Netherlands and Belgium to promote green tourism in their respective areas. Co-operation activity can build on existing relationships, to investigate similar opportunities.

Discussions with Plunkett indicate opportunities could exist for co-operation across the UK to facilitate LAG projects aiming to set up community owned businesses, and learn from successful projects. The White Horse at Upton is a community-owned pub which gained support from Plunkett and could be a useful model for future projects.

The Broads shares a common landscape with neighbouring Waveney Valley and both LAGs envisage many opportunities for cross-border co-operation across several priority areas. An agreement has been reached to work together for joint promotion and activity which can bring advantages for both areas. Successes and lessons learnt in the previous RDPE programme about facilitation, processing, monitoring and management, as well as specific project ideas, will be shared across borders, to strengthen delivery of projects leading to an efficient process across all areas.

During consultation sessions when preparing this strategy, members suggested a number of opportunities for co-operation with other Local Action Group areas:

- Build on the 'Love the Broads' visitor giving initiative, funded in the last round of LEADER, by working with other active schemes in the UK and member states (i.e. Black Forest, Italian Lakes, New Forest), to investigate ways of working together for the benefit of all partners.
- The Broads is a member of the national park family, and could benefit from working with other National Parks within the UK, to explore opportunities for marketing and developing 'out of season' activities.
- Explore farming seasonality and commonalities across crops produced in the Broads and elsewhere in the EU, to assess the possible synchronisation of resources and knowledge. This could enable a review of prospects for the introduction of alternate crops into the area which could withstand changing environmental conditions and future proof production.

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Management and Administration

Accountable Body (AB)

NCC will fulfil all the functions of the AB on behalf of the LAG and ensure financial propriety and compliance. NCC will carry out the roles and responsibilities described in the National Delivery Framework (NDF) paragraphs 39-59 and in accordance with the National Operations Manual (NOM), and ensure the operational guidance is implemented in full. NCC will ensure the LAG and its operations meet the regulatory requirements of the funds and are compliant.

NCC will ensure the LAG undertakes the functions described in paragraph 60 of the NDF (Article 34) but go beyond the minimum requirements by delivering training and development to LAG members, facilitate the sharing of best practice and project experiences, and provide opportunities to network in order to develop the capacity of the LAG in its own right.

NCC has a good track record in managing funding programmes and complying with EU programmes; it was the AB for three LAGs in the previous RDPE programme, the AB for the RDPE project Landskills East, and managed Regional Development Agency funds. The Authority currently manages a number of European funded programmes and NCC's Finance, HR and Audit departments work within the compliance requirements for a number of European funded programmes we currently manage. NCC is also the new Managing Authority for the France Channel England (FCE) programme with a direct relationship to the European Commission. Senior management will regularly review and share best practice between Leader, FCE and other EU funded programmes for which the Authority is responsible, to improve programme compliance.

Project Development and Assessment Procedures

These procedures will be delivered in accordance with the NOM and paragraphs 39 to 44 of the NDF. We anticipate that the LAG Facilitator will be responsible for project development and the Finance and Appraisal Officer responsible for project assessment. This ensures 'chinese walls' between the two functions. Programme staff responsible for developing and appraising the projects will be required to sign a declaration to confirm they have no conflict of interest with the project being assessed. LAG members will have to declare any conflict of interest they may have at the LAG meeting, and a pecuniary interest will prevent any member of staff taking any part in a project assessment.

Our communications strategy will ensure that as many sectors of the community can participate as possible and a key role of the Facilitator, LAG and AB is to stimulate local interest to bring forward ideas and projects. Through the LAG and under guidance from Defra, the AB will be responsible for selecting projects which meet the LDS. The AB will ensure openness, transparency in the project selection criteria, the analyses of proposals and selection of projects.

The AB will use its internal audit service to check that the correct procedures are being carried out and examine a representative sample of the projects themselves. This service worked well in the previous programme, giving reassurance to the LAG and the AB that procedures were being followed and grant was not at risk.

Claims and Payments

As the AB for three LAGs in the last programme, NCC gained considerable experience in the application of European Union regulations to this funding programme, particularly as the AB processed and paid project claims before seeking re-imburement from the Rural Payments Agency (RPA). The AB sought to continually improve procedures to comply with programme requirements following feedback from the local Defra team and the RPA. The AB contracted the service of Norfolk Audit Services to provide independent assurance that the terms of the grant were complied with, and the AB intends to do the same in the next programme

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The AB will undertake the calculations and grant checks due to be paid to projects, including maintenance of an asset register. The AB will also perform the management checks and inspections in accordance with the NOM and the NDF. The AB will process grant payments for the programme using the new CAP-D IT system.

LAG Communications Strategy: 2015 –2020

1. Overall Outcome

A LAG programme able to demonstrate it is delivering against targets, communicating to stakeholders and ensures that The Broads is a sustainable and vibrant place for its businesses and communities.

2. Objectives

- Raise awareness of the funding programme and attract quality projects to apply
- Deliver consistent, accessible and quality communications
- Provide visibility of processes to ensure efficient and transparent decision making.

3. Methods

Target Audiences:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents and businesses within the LAG area • Sector groups and organisations • Local authority officers and delivery partners • MP's, MEP's, County, District and Parish Councillors • Staff and members of organisations represented on the LAG • NCC departments and key staff
Key Messages:	<p>What RDP can deliver</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priorities for the area; examples of projects to support these priorities. • Funding is available; advice on how to apply; contacts; access to expression of interest; <p>What RDP has achieved so far;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates about funded projects through case studies and press releases • Towards end of programme, an overall summation of LAG achievements focussed on outputs of funded projects.
Tools:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face to face communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events (Launch), one to ones, workshops • Electronic communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newsletter, social media, website • Printed materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prospectus, flyers, banners, cards • Advertising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote attendance at shows • Call for projects
News Releases:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector specific publications • Local and regional press • Partner newsletters

4. Resources

Resources (budget and time) needed for event space, website costs and electronic communication, which can be shared across the five Norfolk/Suffolk, saving costs for each respective LAG. Budget will be required for printing LAG specific promotional materials.

5. Action Plan

What needs to be done	Action to be Taken	Timescale
1. Communication Strategy agreed and signed off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission to LAG and LEP as part of LDS 	Aug 14
2. Norfolk/Suffolk LAG website, with specific space for each LAG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission new website Up and running Add funded project case studies to website as they complete Deliver LAG papers through secure area Link e-newsletters and press releases 	Jan 15 Feb 15 On-going Each LAG meeting when released
3. Electronic Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop e-newsletter and update distribution list Send out e-newsletter 	Jan 15 Bi-Monthly or as needed
4. LAG Summary Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop quarterly summary report to keep external stakeholders informed 	4 x a year
5. Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broads LEADER launch event Attendance at relevant rural shows Attendance at relevant business events LAG Annual Review and workshops 	Spring 15 Annually
6. Advertising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take paid-for space to reach stakeholders and support attendance at shows 	1-2 in first 2-3 years
7. Press Releases (PR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant milestones: i.e. 1st project funded, 50th project funded, First £100,000 spent Showcasing project case studies Quarterly review 	On-going
8. Monitoring and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of press releases issued (tracking of coverage) LAG Annual Review Day Number of newsletters delivered Number of case studies prepared 	Minimum of 4 per year Annually Minimum 6 per year 20 minimum for programme

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Financial Plan: The high point from the indicative allocation has been applied to this strategy based on this being part of an existing LAG area which spent £2.45m in the last programme, and was 96% spent against budget. The LAG believes that with this early start and an opportunity to start building a project pipeline in 2014, we can spend the high point as a minimum. This is reinforced by the number of enquiries already being received, and the growing engaged and representative LAG membership who are acting as advocates for the programme and the area.

Measures	LEP Thematic Objectives	DEFRA priorities	Broads priorities	Budget Split %	Budget Split £
M 4: Investments in physical assets M 6: Farm and business productivity	T06 Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency T04 Promoting the shift towards a low carbon economy	Support for increasing farm productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young People enter farming Uptake of Agricultural Technology Protecting water as a resource Adding value to local products 	20%	£306,680
M 4: Investments in physical assets M6: Farm and business productivity	T03 Enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises T04 Promoting the shift towards a low carbon economy	Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build business community resilience Support small and micro business Farm Diversification to sustain farming businesses 	35%	£536,690
M4: Investments in physical assets M6: Farm/ business productivity M7: Basic services and village renewal in rural areas	T03 Enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises T06 Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency	Support for rural tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An inspirational destination Sustainable enjoyment of outdoors Out of season activity and improve employment prospects 	20%	£306,680
M 4: Investments in physical assets M 7: Basic services and village renewal in rural areas	T02 Enhancing access to, and use and quality of, ICT T04 Promoting the shift towards a low carbon economy	Provision of rural services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Widening aspirations of young people Reducing isolation through improved access to services 	10%	£153,340
M 7: Basic services and village renewal in rural areas	T03 Enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises T04 Promoting the shift towards a low carbon economy	Support for cultural and heritage activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiential tourism 	10%	£153,340
M 4: Investments in physical assets M 6: Farm and business productivity M 8: Investments in forest area development and improvement of viability of forests	T03 Enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises T04 Promoting the shift towards a low carbon economy	Support for increasing forestry productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generate income from woodland management 	5%	£76,670
M&A					£336,600
Total					£1,870,000

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Expenditure Forecast:

Policy Priority	Expenditure Forecast (£)							Total Programme
	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	
		10%	20%	20%	20%	20%	10%	
Support for Increasing Farm productivity		£30,668	£61,336	£61,336	£61,336	£61,336	£30,668	£306,680
Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification		£53,669	£107,338	£107,338	£107,338	£107,338	£53,669	£536,690
Support for rural tourism		£30,668	£61,336	£61,336	£61,336	£61,336	£30,668	£306,680
Provision of rural services		£15,334	£15,334	£38,335	£38,335	£30,668	£15,334	£153,340
Support for cultural and heritage activity		£15,334	£15,334	£38,335	£38,335	£30,668	£15,334	£153,340
Support for increasing forestry productivity		£7,667	£15,334	£15,334	£15,334	315,334	£7,667	£76,670
Running Costs and Facilitation	£12,444	£54,026	£54,026	£54,026	£54,026	£54,026	£54,026	£336,600
	£12,444	£207,366	£330,038	£376,040	£376,040	£360,706	£207,366	£1,870,000

Use of grants, procurement and other types of financial support

The LAG does not currently have any intention to procure projects to achieve delivery of this programme, but would like to reserve the right to do so in future years should the case arise. This strategy has been written to focus on the jobs and growth agenda which is best met through market forces.

The LAG would like to request an option to run a delegated small grant scheme should they become allowable through this programme, as some elements of delivery may demand very small grants which can often be the only way to achieve good output/investment ratios.

Match funding for projects will be sought primarily from private sector businesses and social enterprises. Projects coming forward will be designed to fulfil the requirements of this LDS, and fit policy priorities and align with NALEP strategy. Benefits and value for money of projects will be investigated during appraisal, and projects will be expected to have carried out a business plan, so the private sector can demonstrate the expected return for their investment.

The average funding level is set at 40% based on experience gained in the previous programme and set below minimum rates estimated to be 50% for a commercial project. The LAG will challenge funding requests to achieve a lower intervention where possible to ensure the funding is leveraged across the maximum number of projects.

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By e-mail

26th August 2014

To whomever this may concern,

**LEADER 2015-2020 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY – The Broads LAG
Letter of Endorsement from New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership**

In accordance with the stated requirements of Defra, I am writing to you on behalf of New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP) to confirm our support and endorsement of the above Local Development Strategy for the delivery of the LEADER Programme between 2015 and 2020 for the area.

We have worked with the Local Action Group to ensure that LEADER activities are in alignment with NALEP's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and European Structural and Investment Fund Strategy (ESIFS).

In reviewing the Local Development Strategy (LDS) we have taken care to ensure that the LDS has been developed in the context of the wider strategic growth agenda of the LEP, whilst recognising and respecting that locally determined strategies reflect the desires and priorities of the LAG and wider stakeholders, as established through considerable engagement and consultation over recent months. We are very aware that LAGs fulfil a unique role within targeted local rural communities which the LEP, given its wider remit, cannot undertake as effectively.

We believe that the LDS is complementary to our SEP and the EAFRD investment priorities stated within our ESIFS, and will jointly make a valuable contribution to developing the rural economy and making it a sustainable place to live and work providing opportunities for growth across all sectors. This is a well-established LAG which delivered strong performance (and could have achieved even more with greater investment) in the previous LEADER programme and has the benefit of continuity with an experienced Accountable Body.

We are committed, where resources permit, to continue to help to develop and deliver the Local Development Strategy for this area, and will consider the most appropriate mechanism to contributing to the LAG meetings. We have a shared aspiration to join up activity, knowledge and awareness in the future to ensure the most appropriate use of public funds to benefit rural communities.

New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership
Walpole Suite | Ketteringham Hall | Church Lane | Ketteringham | Norwich | Norfolk | NR18 9RS
Company number: 07685830

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New Anglia LEP strongly supports the ambition of the Broads LAG in its efforts to attract LEADER status and I hope this letter is helpful with that aim. We look forward to working closely with the LAG and to hearing about a positive outcome in the near future.

Yours sincerely



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European Programmes Manager

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