



Waveney Valley

“Growing business, supporting people, inspiring pride”

The Waveney Valley Local Action Group 2014 – 2020

Local Development Strategy

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Foreword

The Waveney Valley Local Action Group (LAG) delivered successfully in the last programme period and we achieved our objectives. In the interim period it has been especially nice to act in the true spirit of LEADER and host several trips and events for other LAGs, NALEP (New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership) and other groups to learn from our experiences. It is important to look back in order to move forward and the evaluation of the last programme clearly identifies what went well, what didn't go so well and importantly how we can do things better. In the last programme we contributed positively to the local economy and this experience puts us in a strong position to deliver against the jobs and growth agenda going forward.

The interim LAG has highlighted a need for a shift of emphasis away from a focus on establishing area identity and towards creating the type of jobs and growth that will help to evolve the local economy, moving towards a rural environment where all generations can thrive. Central to this is the theme of innovation and the aspiration to create jobs that pay above the minimum wage. Our Identity also remains a theme and is certain to be an ingredient of many future projects but its ownership has rightly passed on to the people and businesses of the area to take forward. Creating jobs and growth in rural areas is a challenge and this strategy will enable us to deliver because it is broad enough to allow good projects to stand out while at the same time containing the elements of focus required to address priority areas.

This strategy, in planning terms began in the spring of 2013 and reflects a clear progression from the 2007-13 Local Development Strategy (LDS) for the communities and businesses of the Waveney Valley. The interim LAG membership is very healthy with lots of new faces keen to be involved. I feel this very much reflects the participative approach to writing the LDS which has been well planned and delivered and has built in the time required for the LAG to truly own the document. Transition planning has been the backbone, enabling experienced staff to support the process. Locally, the programme of workshops and communication has re-enforced what LEADER is all about and this is evidenced further by a fast emerging project pipeline.

LAGs in other areas, particularly in Europe have been established for a long time. In the Waveney Valley we would like to explore how the LAG can be more than just a funding delivery mechanism for RDPE, adding increased value to the area. The LAG is asking projects to be innovative; we would like to adopt this approach too by looking for new opportunities and new ways of working. We intend to set up a "LAG Development" working group to investigate the possibilities.

I sincerely believe the Waveney Valley LAG will deliver strongly in the future and that this Local Development Strategy will contribute real and measurable benefits.

Submitted and signed on behalf of the Waveney Valley Local Action Group by:

Pat Holtom, Chair of the Interim LAG



Eliska Cheeseman, Norfolk County Council

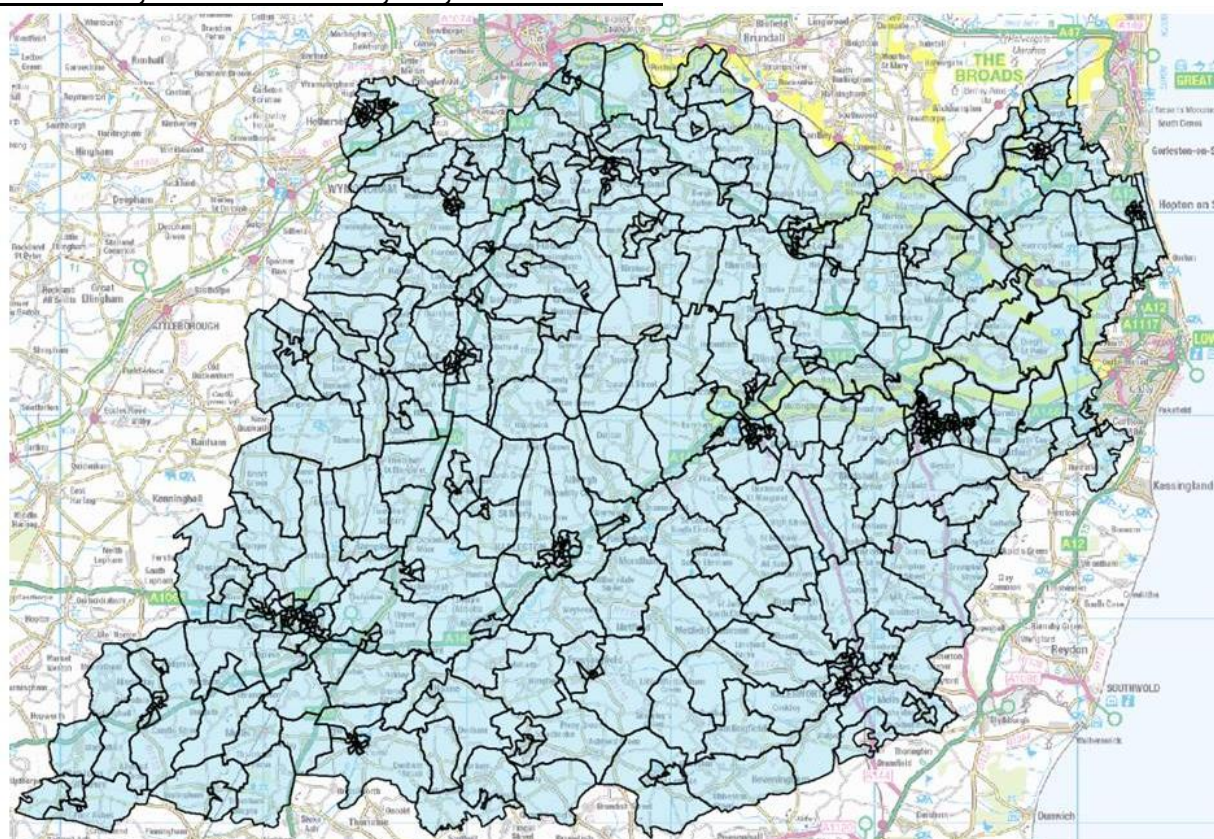


LAG Membership

All those in the partnership have signed up to be interim LAG members. All were given the opportunity to put themselves forward as Interim Chair; had more than one person come forward there would have been a vote. A vote was not required. All members were given the opportunity to be on the LDS Steering Group.

Interim Member	Organisation/Business/Interest	LDS Steering Group	Chair	Sector
Pat Holtom	Social/Community	✓	✓	Non Public
Robin Twigge	National Vice-Chair, Federation of Small Businesses	✓		Non Public
Keith Moore	Dickleburgh and Rushall Parish Council	✓		Public
Geoff Doggett	River Waveney Trust			Non Public
Lydia Smith	Waveney Valley Tourism Businesses Forum			Non Public
Simon Hooton	Broads Authority			Public
Mikey Bentley	South Norfolk Council	✓		Public
Andy Cuthbertson	Suffolk County Council			Public
Julie Helsby	Harleston Information Plus			Non Public
Benjamin Porter	Waveney District Council			Public
Helen Sibley	Thornham Walks			Public
Sarah Potterton	Waveney Gallery			Non Public
Steven Falvey	The Old Bakery			Non Public
Simon Thompson	Sotterley Farms	✓		Non Public
Norman John Hart	Waveney Valley Market Towns Group	✓		Non Public
David Strachan	Marybelle Dairies	✓		Non Public
John Yale	Norfolk Farmers Market CIC	✓		Non Public
Gillian Artis	Small Business			Non Public
Clive Attwood	Harleston and District Business Forum	✓		Non Public
Ben Potterton	Shorelands Wildlife Gardens	✓		Non Public
Doeke Dobma	Clinks Care Farm Ltd	✓		Non Public
Christine Pinsent	Beccles Business and Tourism Assoc.	✓		Non Public
Rachel Carrington	NFU			Non Public
Florence Ellis	South Norfolk Council	✓		Public
Simon Raven	Waveney and Blyth Arts	✓		Non Public
Richard Rampton	Rural Business Advice			Non Public
John Clemo	Norfolk Rural Community Council	✓		Non Public
Jonathan Crickmore	Fen Farm Dairies			Non Public
Ben Watts	Kite Consulting	✓		Non Public
Jeremy Savage	Grain buyer			Non Public
Ruth Knight	Waveney River Centre			Non Public
Janet Peachy	Peachy Preserves			Non Public
Mike Ryder	Woodland Trust			Non Public
Edwin Jones	Business Advice			Non Public
Samantha Jones	Waveney District Council			Public

The LAG Area:
Total 147,614. Rural: 118,031, Urban: 29783



The LAG

The Waveney Valley area is almost identical to the LAG area that operated in the 2007-13 programme. The south eastern and northern boundary has changed slightly after discussion with proposed neighbouring LAGs and has done so based on socio-economic cohesiveness and market town hinterlands, that all play a similar role in this part of Norfolk and Suffolk. The area encompasses 7 district authorities and the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk. The concept of a LAG is now well embedded in the area at all levels and, importantly, has private sector engagement and support.

One important change to the LAG area is the new classifications of Diss and Beccles as hub towns¹. There is sound justification for including these areas. The last programme saw significant investment in the Waveney Valley Identity project that included Diss and Beccles as part of the market town offer and key strategic points in the area with Diss marketed as “gateway to the Waveney Valley” and Beccles providing a branding link to the Broads. They both carry out vital socio economic roles in supporting the rural hinterland and are locally perceived as rural in their own right. The LAG has chosen to include these hub towns in the

¹ 2011 Rural-urban statistical classification for Local Authorities, interim results – hub towns

LAG area because their inclusion will enable a cohesive geography, stronger brand evolution and fully engaged partnerships.

Economy

The Waveney Valley is split geographically almost equally between South Norfolk and North Suffolk. In light of this, the characteristics of the LAG are well covered by NALEP analysis. Earnings in Norfolk and Suffolk are at levels below the national average². Despite this unemployment is recovering faster than the national average and economic activity is high in the NALEP area³. One key issue is a need to target localised business start-up support embedding long term sustainable employment which will cumulatively support the delivery of the local and NALEP objectives. South Norfolk has the second worst situation of the Norfolk districts with a 34% decrease in business start-ups from the 2005/7 average to 2010⁴ and the Suffolk district of Waveney has a predicted fall of 1000 in the working age population between 2011 and 2021⁵ while the district of Mid Suffolk is only expected to see marginal growth in the group. Helping new businesses start up and grow is important to the LAG. It is also important to highlight the opportunity of closing the productivity gap which has widened from the national average since the recession⁶. The Waveney Valley has a very mixed sector representation, with a landscape linked focus on agriculture, food and tourism. There is scope to encourage diversification of rurally located businesses into the creative sector, ICT and greater home based working.

Environment

The LAG area has a special landscape combining features of two National Character Areas (NCA), the Broads and the South Norfolk and High Suffolk Claylands⁷. The River Waveney runs the length of the LAG area with traditional livestock grazing management in the flood plain, moving to an arable focus as the distance from the river increases. Grazing is important to help maintain the functioning flood plain, without it, scrub would encroach. The balance between people and place is a sensitive one, the relationship between the environment and its contribution to sustaining and maintaining the local economy is understood, this is reflected in business approach and values; this was a key consideration in the development of the Waveney Valley Identity⁸. On-going environmental pressures and challenges and the impact on the economy is something the LAG will consider in its approach.

² NALEP – EU Investment Strategy – January 2014

³ NALEP – EU Investment Strategy – January 2014

⁴ Norfolk Rural Development Strategy Dataset

⁵ NALEP – EU Investment Strategy – January 2014

⁶ NALEP – EU Investment Strategy – January 2014

⁷ <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/587130>

⁸ The Waveney Valley Identity Report 2010

Social

Community is strong in the Waveney Valley. The LAG has helped this situation, proving to be the catalyst in the formation of independent groups; a tourism forum, a market towns' group, a food group and greater public sector co-operation under the umbrella of Waveney Valley. A genuine spirit is growing but there are continuing issues; house prices are high, particularly in South Norfolk where average prices are the second highest of the Norfolk districts and there is significant growth predicted in the over 65 age group for Waveney, Mid Suffolk and South Norfolk⁹. Growth in jobs, earnings, community capacity and the further development of partnership working are key to the social progression of the LAG area.

Involvement of the community and consultation activity undertaken

Date	Activity	Purpose
May – Sep 13	Develop Norfolk Rural Development Strategy (RDS)	Set strategic objectives for economic growth in rural areas from 2013-20. The RDS provides private sector consultation and collates the rural evidence base.
01-Sep-13	Launch Rural Development Strategy	Launched by MP George Freeman, Leader of the council George Nobbs and Chair of the strategy group Richard Powell. The event set the wider rural context for Norfolk and began to generate interest in Leader
06/11/2013	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
05/12/2013	Waveney Valley Workshop	Introduction to LAGs and funding opportunities, propose geography, workshop SWOT and Priorities with local individuals
07/01/14-28/02/14	Online Consultation	Survey Monkey on SWOT and Priorities available to enable the widest possible consultation to inform the LDS
28/02/2014	Waveney Valley Workshop	Workshops to refine geography, SWOT and priorities. Suffolk County Council rural context. EU funding update. Interim LAG Terms of Reference made available for sign up with steering group and Chair proposal options.
28/04/2014	Steering Group Meeting	Focus on the National Delivery Framework and the refinement of geography and priorities
19/06/2014	Steering Group Meeting	Full Draft LDS Review
18/08/2014	LDS to NALEP for comment	Opportunity for NALEP comment

⁹ NALEP – EU Investment Strategy – January 2014

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29/07/2014	Interim LAG Meeting	Opportunity for LDS Draft comment. LAG timetable update
15/08/2014	E-mailed Final LDS	LAG endorsement prior to Chair and AB sign off

Partner Consultation		
Date	Activity	Purpose
14/01/2014	Halesworth Tourism Group meeting	Halesworth LAG boundary discussion in light of a developing Suffolk Coast LAG (in Waveney Valley at present)
20/02/2014	Norfolk Farming Conference	Networking and raising awareness of LAG opportunity
04/03/2014	Meeting with Norfolk County Council and NALEP	The Business Support offer in Norfolk and where LAGs can enhance and fill gaps
07/03/2014	Meeting with Suffolk County Council	Discuss boundary issues and how to make sure decisions are "bottom up"
08/05/2014	Meeting with South Norfolk District Council	Update on LDS development
13/05/2014	Meeting with Suffolk County Council, LAG Chair and representatives from Halesworth area	To agree minor re-alignment of the boundary between the Waveney Valley and Suffolk Heritage Coast LAG.
13/05/2014	David Martin and Kate Wilde	Discussion about business advice and support within the region, and where the LAG can add to what is already being provided.
16/05/2014	Meeting with Professor Henrik Haltier and Dr Laura James	Local Food and Tourism research study - opening discussion toward Collaboration with a Danish LAG
21/05/2014	Meeting with Waveney District Council	Update on LDS development
23/05/2014	Norfolk and Suffolk Care Farm Conference	To gain insight into the current position of Care Farming with a view to evolving the concept in the Waveney Valley
29/05/2014	Terry Stork – Pub is the Hub	Meeting to investigate match funding opportunities for pubs diversifying into other activities
01/06/2014	Mike Perry, Head of Development and Policy, Plunkett	Discussion to review opportunities for joint working on funding community owned businesses.
10/06/2014	Jan Cockburn, NWES	Discuss programme activities regarding school/business interaction
11/06/2014	Meeting with the Norfolk and Suffolk Woodlands Working Group	To understand the opportunity for forestry in the LAG area (facilitated by the Forestry Commission)
23/06/2014	DEFRA LAG Workshop	Programme update
25/26 06/2014	Norfolk Show	Networking and stand raising awareness of the LAG and possible future funding opportunities

06/08/2014	NALEP Chair, Mark Pendlington visit	Interim LAG Chair hosted visit to the Waveney Valley to see projects funded through the 2007-13 LAG and learn about LAG plans for the future
18/08/2014	Natural England	Consultation on environmental sustainability

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

The Strategy

SWOT Analysis

The SWOT was developed through a LAG workshop and supported by an on-line survey. This section reflects the input with particular relevance to RDPE. Evidence bases are linked through references in the priorities section.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p><u>Economic</u> Market towns with small independent businesses Waveney Valley Market Towns Group Waveney Valley Identity/Branding Centrally placed in NALEP geography Employment capacity in villages Farms with experience of diversification Established LAG with a positive internal and external reputation Quality local food Diverse employment sectors Strengthening infrastructure helping an environment for micro enterprises to grow Good market town industrial/innovation parks Co-ordinated, vibrant Arts movement Proximity to the Broads Agri-economy</p> <p><u>Social</u> Good walking and cycling offer for all Strong communities Concentration of culture and heritage hubs Rich history Feeling of good work/life balance Motivated, highly skilled retired population</p> <p><u>Environmental</u> Quality of the environment Diverse landscape use Quality of the built environment The River Waveney Easy access public sites with good facilities</p>	<p><u>Economic</u> Poor road system and public transport Planning system Lack of bed space and hotels Tourism promotion outside the area Waveney Valley product not clearly enough defined Work opportunities – skills the labour market needs are not addressed Public sector boundaries Connectivity (mobile signal, broadband) Economic difficulties of livestock farming and the need to graze the valley landscape Lack of funding for voluntary groups that support other spheres of the economy The “red tape” businesses face Not many large employers Supply chains are not integrated well enough Signage to tourist attractions is poor</p> <p><u>Social</u> Ageing population Lack of basic technology skills Isolated deprivation is hidden Lack of facilities for young people Poor awareness of the natural environment Poor publicity about our natural assets – e.g. the River Blyth Green tourism offer not joined up</p> <p><u>Environmental</u> Decline in species and habitats Water management issues (abstraction, low flows, flood risk, sedimentation and diffuse pollution)</p>

Opportunities	Threats
<p><u>Economic</u> Build on branding – still relatively unknown Focus on the development and promotion of the local attraction network Help market towns’ businesses to evolve Take training to the people Address the skills and training gaps Destination Marketing Organisation Public transport improvement – bus and rail Increase visitor numbers and spend Support rural business hubs Growth of short supply chains – local sourcing River based projects A rural craft centre Business networking to aid growth Develop arts and tourism links Increase home based businesses Develop cross political border working further Improve connectivity and attract business re-location Improve the overall tourism offer On-line trading Multi-beneficiary farm diversification Employment growth potential; nano and micro businesses creating employment Evolve the care farm model Promote innovative approaches and technologies to solve problems Look at the potential of social enterprises to deliver growth Learn from other LAGs View demographic changes positively</p> <p><u>Social</u> Communication and networking for all groups A growing, skilled non-employed population Better access to services for communities Address the issues of an ageing population Help young people develop</p> <p><u>Environmental</u> Carbon policy and cost of fuel Communicate good land management Mutually beneficial link with business and the natural environment Educate all about this special valley system Manage water better Links between high quality business and high quality environment</p>	<p><u>Economic</u> Established tourism area competition Recession The “large supermarket” scenario threatening business and image CAP Reform Transport connectivity – east to west Cuts to county and local government taking away support systems Internet shopping Money only goes to population centres Lack of public and private coordination Labour market skills shortage Poor Connectivity County politics Reduced infrastructure and investment Land taken away from food production Tourism businesses not collaborating Public sector cuts increasing unemployment More not less bureaucracy for SMEs NALEP activity misses Waveney Valley National election causes uncertainty</p> <p><u>Social</u> Rural isolation Bus routes diminish further Losing the “community feel” of the area with increasing visitors and population Not engaging young people Perceived as a reasonably affluent area but the reality is very mixed Too much pressure and reliance on volunteers creating serious voids Technological revolution skills shortage</p> <p><u>Environmental</u> Climate Change Green Belt development Impacts on water as a resource Energy demands Tourism and business pressure</p>

Local Priorities

The LAG is covering all 6 Defra priorities in the LDS (see matrix mapping Defra priorities to that of the LAG on pages 23 and 24). 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 31) and the percentage split of the budget (pages 23 and 24).

Vision: *“Growing business, supporting people, inspiring pride”*

Strategic Themes

(We expect all projects to address these overall themes where applicable as well as meeting other priorities)

Waveney Valley Identity

The LAG would like to see the identity (established in the 2007-13 funding period) enhanced and strengthened by elements within projects where possible and appropriate. This will both protect the sustainability of past investments and add value to future investments.

Environmental Sustainability

We expect all projects to help environmental sustainability taking opportunities to enhance it as it underpins so much of the existing economic value and could do more, as well as supporting quality of life improvements.

Innovation

Innovation will be a key theme within projects. It might be found in developing new ideas and enhancing existing ways of working, methods or technology but in essence projects delivering innovation are seen as demonstrating progression for the business or applicant group.

Priorities:

Support businesses to establish and grow

The people of rural Norfolk and Suffolk have been deeply affected by the recent recession; productivity gaps have widened and wages are below the national average^{10 11}. Start up business activity has decreased, down 34% in the district of South Norfolk from the 2005-7 average to 2010¹². Business survival rates in Norfolk and Suffolk are lower since the recession¹³ and smaller and medium sized businesses have found it difficult because of restricted access to finance¹⁴. There are now optimistic signs but the effect on a rural area

¹⁰ NALEP Strategic Economic Plan 2014, 3.28 & 3.29

¹¹ Annual survey of hours and earnings

¹² Norfolk Insight 2013

¹³ NALEP – EU Investment Strategy – January 2014

¹⁴ NALEP Strategic Economic Plan 2014, 7.8

can be prolonged because of the lasting impact of factors such as fuel prices relative to a period of wage stagnation.

Experience from the last programme period in the Waveney Valley has shown the benefits of rural business clusters; networking, shared skills and mutual footfall can add vital strength to businesses in these environments. Key to success will be connectivity in rural areas and it may be that facilitating links to local solutions through other funding can aid projects in the short term, allowing for national connectivity standards in rural areas to catch up.

The LAG acknowledges the need for micro enterprise creation and growth as particularly important. Nano enterprises (1 or 2 employed) are a sub group within micro enterprises and as important to jobs and growth as the first time buyer is to the housing market, as the self-employed alone make up 15% of the workforce in the East of England¹⁵. Critically, not all small businesses can or want to grow; research has shown that it is the age of a business that influences a propensity to grow – younger businesses grow more than older businesses¹⁶. In theoretical terms, innovative businesses are those most likely to reallocate wealth, add higher value jobs and secure a dynamic future focus¹⁷ and the LAG will support these principles through projects as they dovetail with addressing issues of low pay and housing affordability in rural areas¹⁸.

It is an advantage for projects to have local supply chains and support networks. There is a distinct lack of the advice and support services that businesses have access to and the LAG would like to see these important services addressed specifically in rural locations. It is very likely that other avenues like NALEP funded business advisors will be meeting this need; but the LAG will ensure businesses are made aware of the options available through their Facilitator. The Waveney Valley LAG would like to go further by recommending the services of advisors to businesses, whether NALEP Growth Hub Advisors or other advice services such as the Growth Accelerator Programme, UKTI or MAS, in advance of receiving funding applications whenever appropriate. Small businesses are often very good at their core activity but overlook elements of business that they are less comfortable with and need help in some areas¹⁹ – more confident investment decisions can be made when a business is truly addressing all its issues.

The social enterprise is one business model that has shown resilience through the recession. From 2009 to 2013 median turnover of social enterprises increased from £175,000 to £240,000, they are also likely to create more jobs relative to turnover. There has been some interest in the potential of social enterprises to deliver LEP growth objectives in rural areas and Defra has set up a forum to meet regularly with a LEP grouping²⁰.

Help farming businesses to improve, innovate and develop

Agriculture is very important in the LAG area; we have a landscape that needs sensitive management and the sector links strongly into the local economy. The ability of a farm business to invest and adapt to the market place, increase efficiencies and add new income

¹⁵ <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcm%3A77-295472>

¹⁶ <http://www.nesta.org.uk/blog/if-we-want-more-jobs-we-need-rethink-focus-small-businesses>

¹⁷ <http://www.business.uconn.edu/finance/seminars/papers/Kogan-tech%20innovation.pdf>

¹⁸ <http://suffolkcf.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Hidden-Needs-Report.pdf>

¹⁹ <http://www.fsb.org.uk/rle-concerns>

²⁰ <http://www.rsnonline.org.uk/opinion/way-forward-for-rural-social-enterprise>

streams whilst respecting environmental responsibility has never been more important as the sector prepares for less reliance on subsidies. An ageing farming community needs to be addressed and activity outside of core farming can be one way to enable younger farmers to make their mark on the business; diversification and adding value to primary products are examples²¹. Forestry activity presents an opportunity with around 50% of the woodland in Norfolk and Suffolk currently undermanaged²²; the scale of available woodland in the LAG area is limited but supply chain businesses represent an opportunity.

Smaller farms are often unable to make even modest investments that can create efficiencies. In the past the LAG has funded small livestock businesses to improve and innovate; small investments that have made a real difference²³. The LAG will support innovation in the livestock sector as grazing management is essential to our landscape²⁴.

The LAG will prioritise “smart growth”²⁵ in supporting agricultural development. Farmers’ working together, sharing innovative equipment and resources to solve problems is one way forward and it may be possible to link with organised initiatives like the Duchy Originals Future Farming Programme run by the Soil Association²⁶ to build on R&D and put innovation into practice. Tackling strategic infrastructure issues like water resource availability or transportation of product are scenarios that lend themselves to partnership working. Technology has a clear part to play in farming smarter and creating efficiency for economic and environmental benefit²⁷. The latest precision farming advancements can have real impacts both on cost savings and environmental impact. The agri-tech movement is strong in the vicinity of the Waveney Valley. Norfolk is home to the EU’s largest concentration of agri-food research at Norwich Research Park; joining up this key area with local farming will present investment opportunities for the LAG area²⁸.

Increase tourism activity, making the best use of local assets – infrastructure, natural environment, market towns, historic landscape, culture and people

The Waveney Valley LAG 2007-13 saw progress in establishing its identity as part of everyday life. Some elements of future activity will take place without the need for outside funding interventions but there are also projects that will require support to add to the expansion of the Waveney Valley Identity. The LAG area has a dispersed network of rural attractions which need to develop connectivity to maximise footfall and visitor spend. LAG workshop events have highlighted the need for targeted promotion and the need to continue partnership working across political boundaries such as with the well embedded Broads brand; the recently formed private sector Waveney Valley Tourism Businesses Forum, born out of the last programme, is one group that can help to facilitate this.

Out of season activity is an area the LAG would like to see developed through projects that add length to our tourist season in order to reduce the pattern of seasonal employment and

²¹ <http://www.farmersguardian.com/home/young-farmers/image-problem-is-holding-agriculture-back/34986.article>

²² Forestry Commission Core Script 2014

²³ <http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/view/ncc1267220>

²⁴ Broadland Rivers Catchment Plan 2014

²⁵ Norfolk Rural Development Strategy 2013

²⁶ <http://www.soilassociation.org/innovativefarming/duchyoriginalsfuturefarmingprogramme/abouttheprogramme>

²⁷ Broadland Rivers Catchment Plan 2014

²⁸ <http://www.farmingfutures.org.uk/>

seasonal economic activity in primary and supply chain businesses. New employment here and in other tourism activity will be viewed positively. The Waveney Valley has natural outdoor assets that could be utilised for longer; the river and low light-polluted skies for example. The River Waveney Trust, for example, is a new organisation operating on many fronts but with the potential to play an important role in linking tourism, education, business and the environment. Indoor attractions would help too as these are not governed by weather and temperature; proposals for quality and innovative additions to the tourism business offer will be a priority.

There is an opportunity to support projects that look to link and utilise multiple assets. Rural activity/arts/crafts/environmental projects and education could co-exist symbiotically, using the expertise of skilled people to create multi-purpose hubs. This type of venture will increase employment as well as offer valuable additions to the attraction infrastructure of the LAG area. Jobs in the tourism sector in rural Norfolk typically attract low wages²⁹ and given that average workplace earnings are lower in Suffolk³⁰ it is fair to assume this is a common factor. This identifies a need to support projects which might have the effect of raising tourism sector wage levels.

The outdoor activities of the Valley are also important. Activities that increase numbers participating in walking, cycling, angling and canoeing boost the economic benefit to the area as a whole, as well as making a significant contribution to health and wellbeing. It is important to understand current and potential future markets³¹. More could be made of managing the environment with recreation and tourism in mind – but recognising that the under-pinning quality of the environment is paramount³².

Shorten, innovate improve the quality of supply chains and for local food and drink

The LAG realises the importance of quality local food and drink and the part it can play in creating employment, tourism and evolving an area identity³³. Local residents can often be unaware of the quality of products being produced only a few miles away and these should be better promoted locally. There is also an opportunity to create and develop new markets that shorten supply chains and increase business resilience, particularly when businesses work together to reduce costs and create efficiencies.

The area has a farmer's market presence and an evolving annual food festival. In Stalham, outside the LAG area, a farmers' market shop exists that gives its local producers a permanent presence on the high street; this type of model could add value to the Waveney Valley. Our producers are typically small scale and have a need to network, share knowledge and services to survive. Expansion to a business with an integrated local supply chain will inevitably bring jobs and growth benefits to other parts of the economy.

²⁹ Norfolk Rural Development Strategy Dataset (NCC 2012)

³⁰ NALEP – EU Investment Strategy – January 2014

³¹ <http://mediafiles.thedms.co.uk/Publication/ee-nor/cms/pdf/Hot%20Gossip.pdf>

³² <http://www.businessandbiodiversity.org/tourism.html>

³³ <http://www.cumbriatourism.org/business-support/food-tourism.aspx>

Support Market Towns to maintain and evolve their role as socio-economic centres

The Waveney Valley is fortunate to have a good mix of market towns. Diss, Eye, Harleston, Bungay, Beccles, Halesworth and Loddon are key towns that serve their rural hinterlands. Market towns generally face some very real issues: reduced footfall; changing shopping trends; parking charges; business rates; and loss of services are all part of a plethora of factors³⁴. It is important to realise that all towns will not have all of the same issues but some will be common. It is also important to realise that simply seeking to restore all the facets of a town to those of a past era is unlikely to be a solution because very many of the ingredients of trade, people and place have changed.

The market towns of the area have shown that they understand the issues and are able to work together. The LAG developed a market town sub group in the last programme; this group now meets and operates independently with representatives from each town. At district level in South Norfolk and Waveney, market town initiatives that acknowledge and complement the Waveney Valley Identity are in operation; the LAG is keen to dovetail with this work and not duplicate. More can be done to look strategically at new market opportunities³⁵. Increasing market town resilience is the focus. It is well documented that a holistic approach has advantages³⁶. There is a valuable role here for the facilitator in bringing groups together to avoid competition and build on clusters.

Festivals and events are often very good ways to increase footfall and most importantly raise the profile of what a town has to offer. Bungay in the Waveney Valley has used this strategy very well over a number of years. Now that the Valley has a Tourism Forum and a Market Towns Group there is an opportunity for a complementary events programme; the Waveney Valley Food Festival is one such example.

To foster co-operation between communities to embrace change

The Waveney Valley is seen as a “good” place to live and work but because of this perception many serious issues are overlooked. The problems of our rural communities are real and in many ways are hidden but threaten the whole area.

Norfolk Rural Community Council has highlighted cost of living as the major issue identified by rural communities³⁷. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation estimates that people in rural areas typically spend between 10-20% more to meet their everyday requirements than those living in urban areas.³⁸ Work as part of the New Anglia SIF development highlighted the rural premium associated with service delivery as creating an estimated 35% in additional costs.

One key strand for the LAG of the service access issue is the government’s digital by default agenda. This disadvantages rural areas that are unable to access online services easily. However, where appropriate infrastructure, equipment and training are available, online services have the potential to improve rural service access³⁹. Access to physical services

³⁴ Towns’ biggest challenges, 2014 (Towns Alive national survey)

³⁵ The changing face of UK retail in today’s multi-channel world (Experion White Paper 2011)

³⁶ Understanding and supporting the resilience of market towns (Final Report prepared by CLES and amt-I presented to the Commission for Rural Communities)

³⁷ Norfolk RCC community needs research in Norfolk 2014

³⁸ <http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/minimum-income-rural-households>

³⁹ Norfolk RCC community needs research in Norfolk 2014

like post offices and GPs are a particular problem and some of the LAG area in Suffolk is among the most challenged in England⁴⁰.

Care farming is important to the Waveney Valley LAG and has potential to realise many outputs and outcomes⁴¹. Care farming is primarily about improving the wellbeing of people but there are significant wider benefits; direct employment, preparing people for employment and the marketability of local food. Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils have backed care farming through their county farm estates but the referral systems to give care farms a critical mass are inconsistent.

The LAG area will see an increasing ageing population in future years with a 54% increase predicted for South Norfolk between 2010 and 2026 – the largest increase for any Norfolk council district⁴². The situation is consistent with Mid Suffolk and Waveney District where there are similar increases predicted⁴³. An ageing population has a mix of requirements and how we approach them needs to be thought through, co-ordinated and delivered in a way that is not open to duplication⁴⁴. There are many potential business opportunities here as this group may have disposable income and a need for a variety of services; ageing populations are both a market and a resource⁴⁵. Wellbeing can be promoted through an active lifestyle and the eating of locally produced food.

Programmes of Activity

Priority	Activity
Support businesses to establish and grow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen projects by connecting businesses with advice services in advance of applications to make projects stronger • Encourage the hub approach where businesses can demonstrate the mutual benefits of working closely with business neighbours. • The LAG will focus on job creation and not on turnover and profit growth in isolation. • Support for micro and nano enterprises that focus on innovation within projects will be a priority. • The LAG will support the social enterprise approach through good projects when appropriate.
Help farming businesses to improve, innovate and develop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support livestock farming through projects that modernise the business • Accessing advancements in the New Anglia Agritech cluster represents a real opportunity to take test bed initiatives to market. • Priority will be given to projects that support young people in farming and demonstrate direct links to jobs and growth

⁴⁰ <http://suffolkcf.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Hidden-Needs-Report.pdf>

⁴¹ <http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/view/ncc1267220>

⁴² Norfolk Rural Development Strategy Dataset (NCC 2012)

⁴³ NALEP – EU Investment Strategy – January 2014

⁴⁴ Interventions “that reduce or delay, *sustain or enhance quality of life (compared to what it would otherwise have been)* and reduce or delay the need for more intrusive services that may be more costly for the benefit of an individual, their network and their community.” Norfolk Proving Prevention Project.

⁴⁵ Department for Business Innovation and Skills – Economic opportunities and the challenges of ageing 2011

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversification projects that demonstrate wide economic multiplier effects like converting redundant buildings to business start-up units or new forestry related businesses. • Adding value to food projects that create jobs • Support the use of technology in improving efficiency and quality in farming • Embrace environmental and green growth – healthy environment for a healthy society and economy: preparing for climate change so that improving rural life also helps growth and the environment.
Increase tourism activity, making the best use of local assets – infrastructure, natural environment, market towns, historic landscape, culture and people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support projects that add to and strengthen the visitor attractions of the area • Support projects that extend the shoulder season within the LAG area and with neighbouring LAGs to create a joined up approach • Projects that look to create higher skilled jobs will be a priority for the LAG and will form part of a strengthening of the tourism sector although all job creation will carry weight. • Projects that link outdoor activity to the landscape • Education based tourism that provides interaction and innovation • Promotion activity will be holistic and linked strongly to measurable growth indicators
Shorten, innovate improve the quality of supply chains and for local food and drink	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that bring artisan producers together to share facilities or touring services to help them move between markets – examples might be a mobile bottling unit to serve brewers and juice producers or a shared kitchen to allow new artisan producers time to develop products before they make the next step. • The LAG recognises that a mix of producer types and target markets needs to exist and will look to support those businesses creating jobs and growth in the area and operating in more diverse quality focussed markets too; taking quality Waveney Valley products to wider consumer markets is a way to raise awareness of the area. • Projects that look to increase and co-ordinate activities and offer ways for a more permanent customer facing presence will be supported.
Support Market Towns to maintain and evolve their role as socio-economic centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LAG will give priority to projects that look to future-proof market towns. New market opportunities exist through internet shopping, targeting consumer groups that have different shopping needs and who would choose local suppliers if the service was available. Delivery represents an opportunity for partnership working between businesses. • The LAG would like to see multiple faceted projects which will help insulate investments and provide the best protection from one off factors like recession.
To foster co-operation between communities to embrace change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects addressing community and business costs through innovative approaches. • Sustainable access to rural services. • Key areas are: plugging the gaps in the provision of equipment and training to allow access to online services, awareness

	<p>promotion around potential benefits; and demand stimulation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LAG will support care farms to strengthen, develop and evolve through projects focussed on quality service and economic growth; to support this development of a quality standard for care farms will be a priority. • The LAG would like to see projects that support ageing population issues where specified activity is backed by research, need and a sustainable business/delivery model.
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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

Proposed Co-operation Activity

There is a natural link between the Broads LAG area and the Waveney Valley LAG because there is a shared landscape and a crossing of boundaries by the Broads National Park. An agreement has been reached to work together for joint promotion and activity which can bring advantages for both areas. Opportunities also exist to co-operate with bordering proposed LAGs of the Brecks and Suffolk Heritage Coast. 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 the delivery of projects leading to an efficient process across all areas.

The LAG would like to evolve the care farm model after helping to establish it as part of the last programme. To understand better how the model can link to re-integration and employment it would be good to partner with those who have the mechanism embedded; a Dutch LAG is one option. The landscape of Waveney Valley offers further activity opportunities. The tourism, farming and market town businesses of the Valley could seek significant added value from the experience of others operating in similar situations with the promotion of local food as one area of focus. A connection with a Danish area has been tentatively explored and LAGs in France are also of interest.

Co-operation on the same issue is unlikely to have the same impact for all partners so one innovative approach may be for each partner to have a slightly different agenda; potentially complicated to set up but the benefits for all would be far greater.

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) plans have all informed the high level evidence base and SWOT analysis of the LAGs LDS. In these documents the LEP 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 delivery in rural areas will be more expensive.

In Norfolk, the LEP strategic plans and LAG LDS plans 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 LEP strategic plans. Indeed, much of the rural chapter of NALEP's ESIF plan was informed by the Norfolk RDS.

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

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 focusses 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 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 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. However 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.

Fit with LEP delivery

Our Local Economic 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 (LAGs) 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. We will work closely with the LEP to ensure our activities add value to their activity and not duplicate. This knowledge and awareness of the support landscape will enable our businesses to be made aware of LEP and LAG activities most relevant to them.

LAG Structure and Decision Making Process

The LAG has driven the development of this document, the Local Development Strategy. Membership to date has been naturally evolving around the desire to tackle the needs of the local area holistically, from the original launch of Norfolk’s Rural Development Strategy in October 2013 to the present day LAG. Membership has been (and will continue to be) reviewed regularly to ensure it reflects the key priorities in the LDS as well as the right mix of public/private and socio economic interests.

The LAG and the AB are well aware of the private / public sector balance and need to maintain this 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 and will seek female members to meet this balance, but recognise that organisations nominating representatives is outside of our control. The LAG will aim to be as inclusive and diverse as possible, to ensure wider involvement and ownership by those living and 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 to help shape the direction and projects to fit with the requirements of the Waveney Valley. 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.

NALEP is fully engaged with our LAG partnership and we have submitted a letter of endorsement with this LDS. Whilst the LEP is not able to resource full membership of each LAG in their area, it is committed to engaging with the LAGs and supporting their work. The LAG has discussed the governance and ambition of the LAG with the LEP and agreed the point of contact and reporting requirements back through 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.

The LAG is one group, meeting at least 4 times a year. In the previous programme the LAG was initially split into two tiers, a management group taking funding decisions, supported by the wider LAG whose role was to determine the strategic direction for the programme. However as a result of the two tier structure, the wider LAG group felt distanced from the decision-making process and stopped attending and the two groups became one. Therefore in this programme period just one LAG group will meet, the attendance at which will have to be managed to ensure it is not too unwieldy. Sub-groups or task and finish groups have

proven useful in the past programme and will be used again where relevant, for example to take forward a sector-wide issue or development of a strategic LAG project.

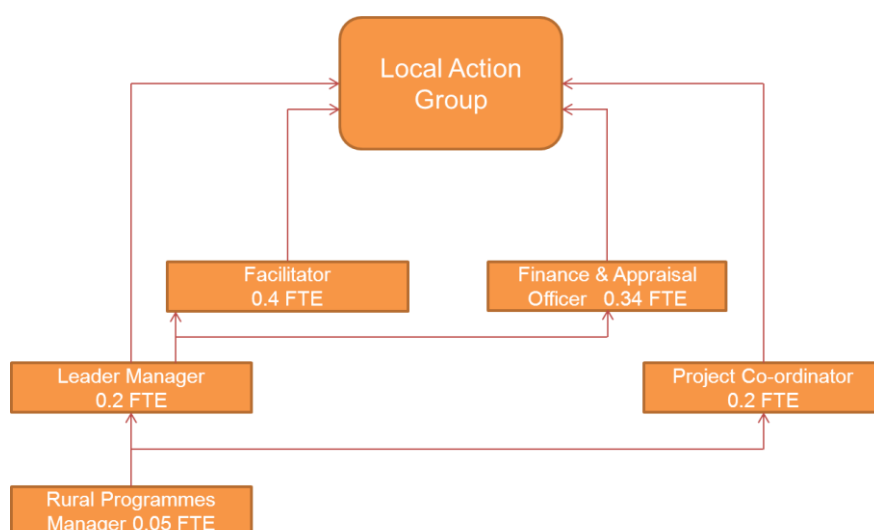
An Annual Review will take place once a year to which all LAG members in the NCC managed LAGs will be invited. This is the time for the LAG to test the relevancy and success of the LDS, the performance of the partnership and its direction for the future, as well as reviewing training and developmental 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 Cambridge Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership (GCGP LEP) to broaden the opportunity for LAGs to share knowledge and network.

The Waveney Valley LAG set up an Interim Steering Group early in 2014 to manage the development of the LDS and its submission. The group has met several times and has taken the LDS back to the wider interim LAG for comment. The steering group has been managed along the lines of the 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 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 minuted. 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, for planning purposes, based on the high-point indicative allocation of RDPE funds only. We envisage further economies of scale in the back office function should LAGs be successful in managing other funds, such as LEP allocated ESF, ERDF or EAFRD. However we recognise the complexities that managing multi-funds will bring, particularly in terms of compliance.

Working with the 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 key to animating projects in the LAG area and will encourage participation by different sectors of the community, using animation 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 0.4 FTE.

The LAG Manager is responsible for managing all 5 LAGs in Norfolk 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 the Project Coordinator who will provide secretariat support to the LAG, co-ordinate the submission of reporting requirements and Annual Implementation Plans (AIPs) and maintain the MA database. Both posts will be shared between the 5 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 (0.05 FTE). 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 0.34 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 an approximate 75/25 split between running costs /animation. The staffing structure is based on the presumption that all LAGs share some back office functions which will create 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 public sector equality duty)

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.

Financial Plan

Overall Funding Profile

NALEP Thematic Objectives	Measures	DEFRA priorities	Waveney Valley priorities	Budget Split
T06 Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency T04 Promoting the shift towards a low carbon economy	Measure 4: Investments in physical assets Measure 6: Farm and business productivity	Support for increasing farm productivity	Help farming businesses to improve, innovate and develop	20% £371,788
T03 Enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises T04 Promoting the shift towards a low carbon economy	Measure 4: Investments in physical assets Measure 6: Farm and business productivity	Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification	Support businesses to establish and grow Supporting market towns to maintain and evolve their role as socio-economic centres To foster co-operation between communities to embrace change Shorten, innovate, improve the quality of supply chains and for local food and drink	42% £780,755
T03 Enhancing the competitiveness of small and	Measure 4: Investments in physical assets	Support for rural tourism	Increase tourism activity, making the best use of local assets – infrastructure, natural	20% £371,788

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medium enterprises T06 Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency	Measure 6: Farm and business productivity Measure 7: Basic services and village renewal in rural areas		environment, market towns, historic landscape, culture and people	
T02 Enhancing access to, and use and quality of, ICT T06 Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency	Measure 4: Investments in physical assets Measure 7: Basic services and village renewal in rural areas	Provision of rural services	Supporting market towns to maintain and evolve their role as socio-economic centres To foster co-operation between communities to embrace change	10% £185,894
T03 Enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises T04 Promoting the shift towards a low carbon economy	Measure 7: Basic services and village renewal in rural areas	Support for cultural and heritage activity	Increase tourism activity, making the best use of local assets – infrastructure, natural environment, market towns, historic landscape, culture and people	5% £92,947
T03 Enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises T04 Promoting the shift towards a low carbon economy	Measure 4: Investments in physical assets Measure 6: Farm and business productivity Measure 8: Investments in forest area development and improvement of the viability of forests	Support for increasing forestry productivity	Help farming businesses to improve, innovate and develop Support businesses to establish and grow	3% £55,768
MA Costs				£408,060

Expenditure (by year, for each measure)

The high point from the indicative allocation has been used. The justification is this LAG area contracted £2 million on projects with a 96% spend achievement in the last programme which is more than the high point project budget in the indicative allocation. This was in the context of the Waveney Valley LAG having a very late start after the first facilitator left making this a bigger achievement. There was also a project pipeline at the end of the last programme waiting to mop up spare monies.

We are confident we can spend the high point as a minimum because we spent more last time, the delivery of the programme will start one year earlier compared to last time resulting in longer to spend, we have a large, engaged and representative LAG membership to act as advocates, we have used transition funding to retain experienced staff and we have a project pipeline already building.

Use of grants, procurement or other types of finance

The LAG does not have an intention to procure projects but would like to reserve the right to do so. This strategy will allow the focus on the jobs and growth agenda to be met best through market actions. The LAG would like to explore options for a delegated small grant scheme should they become allowable as very small grants can often give good output/investment ratios.

Sustainability Appraisal

Sustainable development is important to the Waveney Valley LAG. Promoting the growth of rural business while simultaneously protecting, enhancing and investing in 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.

Sustainability Objectives	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 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 ○ bringing the workplace 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
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 festivals to promote the culture of the Waveney Valley
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 wherever it results in new employment • Encourage local business links and support networks through project funding to add strength to investments and businesses going forward.

Management and Administration

Accountable Body

Norfolk County Council (NCC) will be the Accountable Body (AB) for this LAG and the others in Norfolk, providing economies of scale across the LAGs. 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 LAG 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 and transparency in the project selection criteria, the analysis 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 that grants were 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-imbursment 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. 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 and existing systems in the interim period.

Communications and Publicity

This is the first draft of the Communications Strategy and will be developed further when the LAG formally constitutes. The strategy will be reviewed and evaluated on an annual basis.

1. Overall Outcome

A LAG programme able to demonstrate it is delivering against targets, communicating to stakeholders and ensures that The Waveney Valley delivers on "Growing business, supporting people, inspiring pride".

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 • Staff and members of organisations represented on the LAG • LEP • Local authority officers and delivery partners • MPs, MEPs, County and District Councillors • NCC departments and key staff • SCC departments and key staff
Key Messages:	<p>What RDP can deliver in the LAG area?</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 in the LAG area;</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, 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
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. Preliminary Communication Strategy agreed and signed off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission to LAG as part of LDS 	Aug 14
2. Norfolk/Suffolk LAG website, with specific space for each LAG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission designer to develop 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 Ongoing 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 pa
5. Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance at relevant rural shows Attendance at relevant business events LAG Annual Review and workshops 	Annually
6. Advertising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take paid for space in relevant publications 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 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

Training requirements

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

Action	Timetable
Induction day with a members pack: to cover <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 the mapping of skills • LAG expenses allowable and exclusions • LAG governance: constitution and Terms of Reference, LAG protocol, role of Chair, confidentiality, legal accountability, 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) • Key messages briefing sheet to support programme advocacy 	January 2015
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 Appraiser's rationale. Particular attention to be paid to the financial appraisal.	January 2015
Annual invitation to all LAGs in the county 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 outside of county, within NALEP and GCGP area.	September Annual Review day
Internal Management Reports - agree process to report project pipeline, commitment, spend, outputs, and issues by exception.	First full meeting
Induction for new members in the LAG's lifetime, prior to them attending a meeting	Facilitator, supported by the induction pack
Staff Training requirements is detailed in the Action Plan on page 17.	

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)	371,788 12 7
Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification	11,931	19,951	Total RDPE expenditure Number of projects supported Jobs created (FTE)	780,755 39 65
Support for rural tourism	32,477	31,764	Total RDPE expenditure Number of projects supported Jobs created (FTE)	371,788 12 12
Support for culture and heritage activity	55,991	28,165	Total RDPE expenditure Number of projects supported Jobs created (FTE)	185,894 6 3
Provision of rural services	33,272	23,378	Total RDPE expenditure Number of projects supported Jobs created (FTE)	92,947 4 2.5
Support for increasing forestry productivity	77,045	21,788	Total RDPE expenditure Number of projects supported Jobs created (FTE)	55,768 2 2



**LEADER 2014-2020
Local Development Strategy Application
Financial Profile**

1. Applicant Details

Local Action Group:	Waveney Valley
Accountable Body:	Norfolk County Council

2. Financial Profile

	Expenditure Forecast (£)							Total programme
	Financial Year							
Policy Priority	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	
Support for increasing farm productivity		37178	74358	74358	74358	74358	37178	371788
Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification		78075	156151	156151	156151	156151	78076	780755
Support for rural tourism		37178	74358	74358	74358	74358	37178	371788
Provision of rural services		18589	37179	37179	37179	37179	18589	185894
Support for cultural and heritage activity		9,295	18590	18590	18590	18590	9292	92947
Support for increasing forestry productivity		5576	11154	11154	11154	11154	5576	55768
Running costs and animation	16,320	65290	65290	65290	65290	65290	65290	408060
Grand Total	16320	251181	437080	437080	437080	437080	251179	2267000

By e-mail

26th August 2014

To whomever this may concern,

**LEADER 2015-2020 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY – The Waveney Valley 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 the previous LEADER programme and has the benefit of continuity with an experienced Accountable Body. The LAG is well respected locally and has been at the forefront of showcasing the difference that LEADER can make to local communities, including arranging a number of events and tours for LEP Board Members who have been very impressed with the work undertaken.

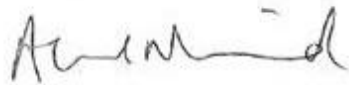
We are committed, where resources permit, to continue to help to develop and deliver the Local Development Strategy for this area, and will consider the most appropriate mechanism to contributing to the LAG meetings. We have a shared

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

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 LEP strongly supports the ambition of the Waveney Valley 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



Alastair Rhind
European Programmes Manager

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