

## “Innovation is the ability to see change as an opportunity - not a threat”.

Albert Einstein

### Abstract

Collaboration between different areas, countries and local action groups is inspiring. It leads to refreshing views, creativity and generates new momentum. Within this particular context Transnational Cooperation (TNC) has received high priority in the LEADER program when it was approved for the period 2007-2013. It has even become one of the most distinctive features of the program during this period. In this project we combine together our various experiences, skills and knowledge related to different aspects of local produce. The

local product lies at the heart of this project. We believe that through the means of cooperation within the LEADER Programme the process of assisting local producers will be greatly enhanced. It will support them to develop or in some cases to continue to develop competitive products and address wider audiences. It will provide them with a practical tool to exchange know-how, train up and increase their returns. There are (?) partners representing 7 EU countries taking part in this initiative. The main focus of this project is on an internet platform, a web link, which

will centre around the local produce and related themes. The project approach will allow a considerable degree of independence in order to accommodate individual partner's lead themes and objectives while the web link will constitute the linking platform. The outcome of this project will be a tangible measure which will promote partners' regions as good food producers and good food destinations. Hence it will result in creating stronger profiles for each region this in return will be reflected in increased local producers revenue.

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# Introduction

We live in the era of rapid urbanisation and significant people outflow from villages. This is caused by two factors. On the one hand more and more people obtain higher education and migrate into towns and cities seeking relevant employment and a more easy life. To them the village life does not appear as a tempting alternative. It is commonly seen as overloaded with hard work and not bringing a handsome income.

On the other hand many local farm business become not viable due to overwhelming competition from industrialised farmers and cheaper foods import, which force farmers to give up their production and sell their land. Those small and medium sized farms, which manage to stay afloat and continue their production depend invariably on EU subsidies. According to the Defra-funded study, carried out by researchers at the LEI Research Institute, more than half of UK farmers would struggle to stay in business if direct support payments under the CAP were removed.

This results in a situation where our largely urban populations purchase food at a handful of major retailers who source from major processors and manufacturers. This generates conditions under which only large and efficient farms are able to adapt and respond. Whereas small and medium sized business are successively eliminated under these present circumstances and modern market demands.

Both these trends significantly threaten the survival and development of local rural communities, ascertainment of food high quality and sustainability. Farm viability is an issue of major concern. It has a direct or indirect impact on issues such as food security, the socio-economic status of rural areas and on land use. It is therefore of prime importance to counter react to these trends as rural communities have a growing role in the delivery of renewable energy, food and water security for our nations.

Present times are also marked by rapid advances in modern technology. It is therefore justified to envisage that the future of food production will be largely dependant on larger and larger farms, deploying the latest biotechnology and advances in sophisticated and intelligent machinery. Many of these solutions, like the application of GM technology, are a subject of a heated debate and cause serious polarisation amongst many academic and non academic circles. Nevertheless these solutions are more likely to determine the course

towards which the future mass food production will migrate.

So, one may ask what is there to do for smaller farms in order to stay on the market? There are four options:

1. Improvement of efficiency,
2. Adding some value to the products,
3. Bringing more income in from off-farm activities,
4. Relying on additional income from environmental schemes or renewable energy.

Small to medium farm business are unique and significantly different compared to the rest of the economy. They operate at a household level, employ mainly family members or locals and their process of decision making very often does not recognise the stringent constraints of financial profitability.

This may be seen as a drawback and an obstacle in securing business position on the ever more competitive market. However it does not have to be so. On contrary according to our experience this small to medium scope of farm enterprises has a significant potential to be transformed into a substantial business asset.

More and more people grow food conscious. The overall food sensitivity and awareness within the society is on the rise. Following years of food scandals, when the information on bad practices and food contaminations leaked into the public sector, many consumers were impelled to reexamine their food suppliers. An increasing number of people no longer wants to buy food from chain suppliers who source their stock from anonymous producers. According to our expertise, which draws largely on our experience with internet sale of organic food, customers want to identify themselves with the producer. They want to know where the potato they buy was harvested from, how was it grown and who was behind this process. Product must have a face!

In this we recognise a great chance for small and medium sized enterprises. As this businesses owing to their limited size are in a position to produce good quality and trustworthy produce. It is easy to loose customers' trust. To regain it is much harder.

This process of re adaptation is however not easy. It does also involve significant financial cost. Small and medium sized businesses will therefore have to be assisted on this route to securing their viability. This can be achieved through the following ways:

- Cutting out the middleman and selling directly to the customer (online sale, farm shops, farmers markets),

- Community supported agriculture (where a community pledges support to a farm operation so growers and consumers share the risk and benefits of food production),
- Niche products (local, patented, protected products),
- Adding value through processing (flour into bake, milk into butter or cheese),
- Novel markets (vegan, vegetarian, halal foods),
- Organic produce.

In this project we bring together our experiences and expertise on different aspects related to local produce. We believe that through the means of cooperation within the LEADER Programme the process of assisting local producers in developing competitive products and addressing wider audiences will be greatly facilitated.

Transnational cooperation has received high priority in the LEADER program when it was approved for the period 2007-2013. It even became one of the most salient features of the program during this period. Prior to 2007, international collaboration was important too, but the European Commission has improved facilities by adjusting the approach and budgets to the new priorities

for the present phase. These priorities refer to the core objectives of RDP-2:

- improving competitiveness,
- improving the environment
- improving quality of life in rural areas.

Cooperation is considered one of the most powerful means to achieving these objectives. We believe that cooperation between different actors is truly inspirational, creative and brings about new momentum. We share the view, which was expressed once by Mariann Fischer that: "Ideas have the advantage that, if you share them around, their total value increases. They also tend to multiply. Experience helps us to grow ideas into success stories".

We are convinced that through the means of cooperation within the LEADER Programme the outcome of this project will bring about tangible and substantial benefits to our local communities. It will also help emphasise to younger generations that a substantial potential of creativity and viable business, if developed ingeniously, rests within the rural communities.

# Project overview

Co-operating together to promote our regions as good food producers and good food destinations.

**Vision** – Partner regions known as great food regions of Europe.

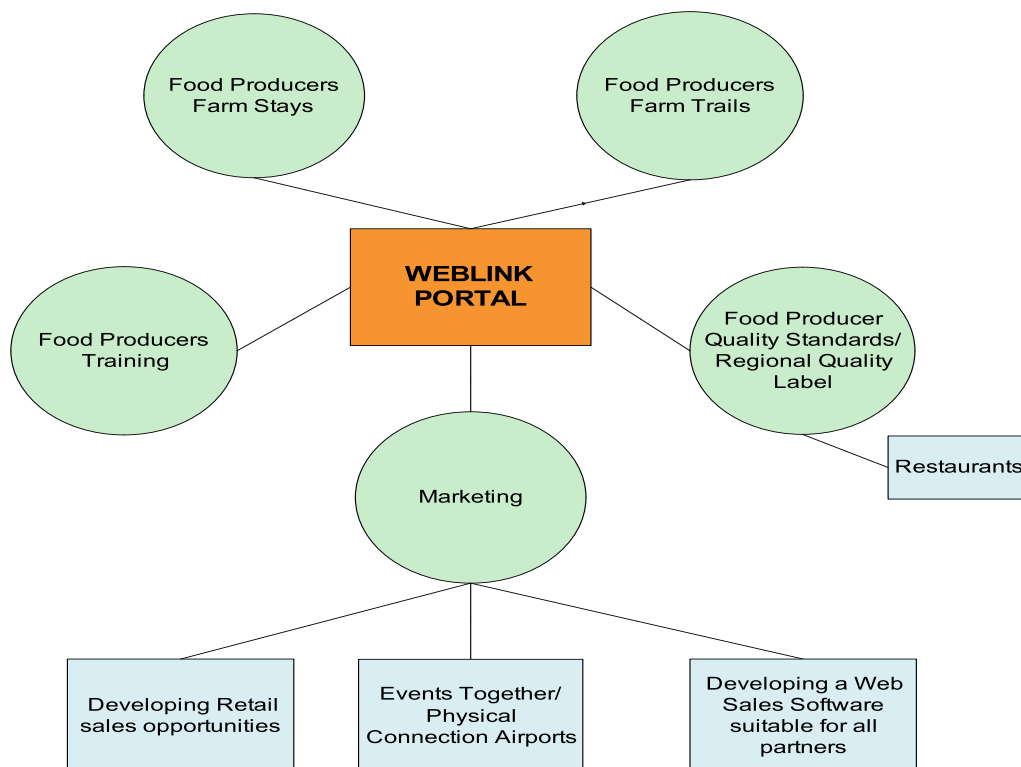
**Aim** – Create a stronger profile for each region generating better returns for food producers in each region.

**Methodology** – Partners are able to take on as many initiatives identified below as is suitable for their region – optional *pick and choose* approach.

Individual partners will take the lead on certain initiatives, while all will be involved with the central web based portal.

Partners will learn from each other on how to develop these initiatives through joint working

and information sharing. The web portal will be managed by the lead partner and will enable sharing of best practice between partners and also have a consumer facing aspect.



Outline detail on key initiativesFood Producers Farm Stays

- Development of high quality farm stay experiences
- Alternative accommodation approach, shepherd's huts, yurts etc

Web Sales

- Develop software that can be part of each region's site
- Link to all partners products selling pages to central portal

Events

- Key event in each region (linked to existing event)- perhaps linked to airline routes
- Market selection of produce from each region

Food Producer Quality Identifier

- Logo - use of label to identify regional products
- Sign-up, costs, enforcements
- How to apply this approach to restaurants as well as producers

Food Producers Farm Trail

- Farm shops, transparent production, farm tours
- Car, cycling, walking, public transport
- New technology to generate the best experience

Food Producers Training

- Quality Standards
- Food Marketing - web
- Tourist management - generating the best experience

Web Portal

- Central point for communication between partners - members login
- Best practice project info shared, management of project
- Customer facing part of site - product sales, events, tours, accommodation etc

## Objectives

- To identify and recruit up to 30 (?) existing/potential producers/service providers (total for each LAG) by February 2011,
- To establish a steering group in each area by March 2011. Representative of each steering group will subsequently become a member of the transnational steering group for this project,
- To develop the web portal by December 2011,
- To Launch the web portal by January - February 2012,
- To deliver training to each of the steering groups by April 2012,
- To deliver training to the transnational steering group by June 2012,
- To host TORE international foods festival by August 2012 ?
- To hand over the running of the web portal in the local area to the appointed steering group by September 2012,
- To hand over the running of the web portal globally to the appointed transnational steering group by October 2012,
- To conclude the project and publish joint results by December 2012.

## Implementation and expected results

The objective of this project is to develop a web portal which will support local food producers and related to food services providers in increasing their returns and enhancing their products through exchange of knowledge and experiences. Establishing reputation for each partner region as a great food region is the second spearhead.

The proposed activities are:

- To identify the logistic arrangements that are required,
- To identify and recruit the local stake holders,
- To establish local steering group in each area,
- To establish a global steering group for the project,
- To prepare a list of prospective participants (producers) per LEADER area,
- To compile a list of products to be involved, information on regions, producers and products,
- To develop methods, which will enable the processes of interactive exchange of knowledge and experience between producers/LAGs,
- To draw and increase attention of international and local media for regional products and the project,
- To prepare an overview of various opportunities for exchange of products and know how between partners,

- To draw up a business plan for the running of the web portal locally and globally,
- To deliver training to respective groups,
- To collect, process and disseminate information among local stake holders, farmers and organisations,
- To evaluate all efforts.

The expected results are:

- The internet platform,
- Increased opportunities for products sale for each partner,
- Increased opportunities for know-how exchange between collaborating LAGs, producers and key actors in the regions involved.

Target groups of the present project are:

- LEADER areas in Europe, which are involved with regional products,
- Producers of regional products in each area and other LEADER areas,
- Prospective buyers of regional products,
- Tourists in the respective LEADER areas.

## Time table

Assuming the cooperating LAGs to start project implementation in January 2011 and a project duration of 2 years, the desired planning of project activities is as follows:

January - March 2011

Introductory meeting of collaborating LAGs and making an inventory of practices. The meeting is to be held in Poland.

During the meeting the following will be decided:

- The web portal interface,
- Content,
- Contractor,
- Communication strategy,
- Plan of operations,
- Divisions of tasks,
- Evaluation methodology.

July - August 2011

- A meeting to evaluate the progress of the project,

- Presentation of the steering groups,
- Establishing of the global steering group.

September - November 2011

- Second evaluation meeting,

December 2011 - January 2012

- Portal launch.

April - June 2012

- Third evaluation meeting,
- Training of the international steering group,
- Preparing the foods festival.

August 2012

- TORE foods festival.

October - December 2012

- Concluding meeting and closing of the project,
- Publishing joint results.

## Budget

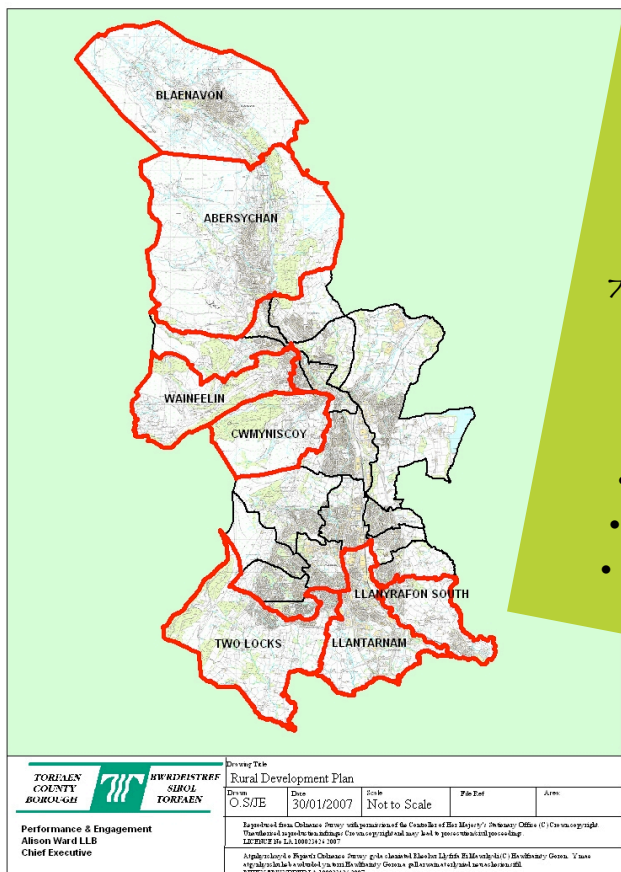
The overall project costs break down as follows:

Cost item	Amount (excl. VAT)	Amount (incl. VAT)
Implementation	€ 00.000,--	
Project management *		
External advise		
Promotion and publicity		
Other		
Total		

\* Includes meetings' costs however does not include travel expenditure to attend meetings. This is to be covered by the respective LAGs.







*Torfaen's Key Themes*

*In 2009, Torfaen Local Action Group conducted a Rural Audit to seek the needs of Torfaen Rural Communities, the results were used to update the aims and objectives set out in the Local Development Strategy.*

*The key themes arising from this were:*

- Developing land based production*
- Conserve local heritage*
- Promote sustainable tourism*
- Business support and advice*
- Enhance skill development*



# PROJECT PARTNERS' PROFILES

## TORFAEN



### Demographic Overview

The county borough of Torfaen is located in the south-east of Wales and borders the city of Newport to the south, the county of Monmouthshire to the east and the county boroughs of Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent to the west and north-west.

Torfaen has an area of 126km<sup>2</sup> and is the 3rd smallest borough in Wales. It has a population of around 91,100. There are three main settlements running from the south to the north, Cwmbran, Pontypool and Blaenafon.

Much of the southern parts of the county borough are now urbanised

around the Cwmbran New Town conurbation which has the most population of around 49,000. Cwmbran Shopping Centre is the main retail area of Torfaen and attracts 17 million customers a year from the wider area of Gwent and the M4 corridor.

The former industrial town of Pontypool with its traditional indoor and outdoor market is the next largest settlement located in the heart of the borough with around 36,000 population.

The World Heritage Site town of Blaenavon has around 6,000 population and is furthest north in

the borough. Blaenavon is famous for the Big Pit coal mining museum and Europe's best preserved 18th century ironworks.

Torfaen has 22 wards, of which 7 gained rural status in 2007, these include:

- Llantrantnam South
- Two Locks and Henllys
- Llantrantnam
- Cwmynyscoy
- Wainfelin
- Abersychan
- Blaenafon.

# TORFAEN

## Local Action Group

The Local Action group is tasked with developing projects to develop land based production. We are currently in the process of securing funding under the RDP to develop a project called "A Taste of Torfaen".

The aim of the Taste of Torfaen project is to build capacity in land based production to help develop the availability and quality of new and existing local produce

The project will develop innovative methods to increase local produce in the following areas:

- Developing food
- Developing art and craft
- Encouraging alternative energy sources
- Encouraging recycling

This will be achieved through delivering the following:

- Building capacity of existing small enterprises offering information and advice on developing their business.
- Offering a small grant scheme will be available to individuals, micro enterprises,

small enterprises and community groups to help them develop their ideas.

- Developing a producer network for Torfaen's rural wards, engaging and co-ordinating all producers and processors in land based production.
- Developing a series of festivals and events to help market Torfaen's producers.

A Taste of Europe will help strengthen this project and widen it aims.



Contact Details

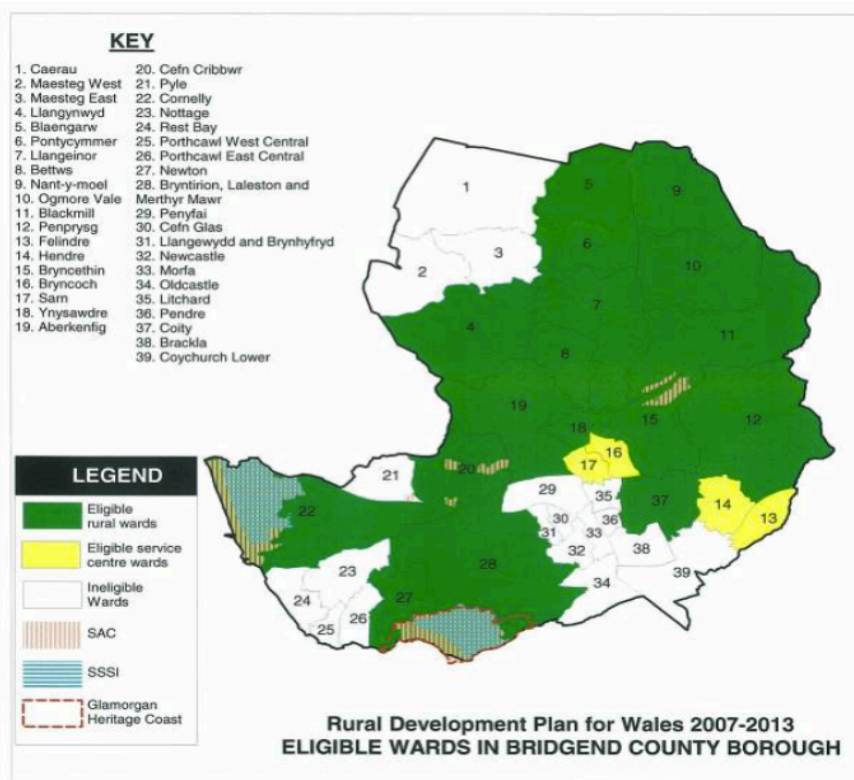
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# BRIDGEND

## Area Coverage and Region

The County Borough of Bridgend is at the geographical heart of South Wales. It covers an area of approximately 25,500 hectares, and in 2001 had a population of 128,650. The County Borough extends approximately 20km from east to west, encompassing the Ogmore, Garw and Llynfi valleys to the north, and bordering the Bristol Channel to the south. The largest settlements are the towns of Bridgend and Maesteg and the seaside resort of Porthcawl. Bridgend is the largest of these settlements and is the administrative centre for the area. The County Borough has an excellent transportation infrastructure with the M4 motorway traversing the southern part of the County Borough in an east-west alignment, providing fast road access to Cardiff, Swansea, the rest of South Wales and beyond. Additionally, an inter-city high speed rail service, linking the area with the whole of the national rail network, provides fast and efficient rail transport, whilst Cardiff-Wales Airport is only 19 kilometres away. Access to the motorway system is facilitated by three motorway junctions at Pencoed, Sarn and Pyle. The locational advantages largely attributed to the motorway have seen the 'M4 Corridor' attracting considerable inward investment, as well as being a focus for out-of-town retail developments. The area has also been the preferred location for most of the major volume house builders. Indeed, the M4 Corridor has seen rapid expansion and major releases of land for development over the past 15 years, with the focus being on Bridgend and its environs. Meanwhile, in contrast to the M4 Corridor, many of the valley communities in the north of the County Borough are experiencing problems of deprivation. These areas, previously dependent upon



the coal and iron industries, have suffered the most in terms of the dramatic shift in the structure of the local economy over the past 30 years or so, and have been starved of new job opportunities and of investment in general. Increasingly, what were once cohesive and viable valley communities are becoming fragmented and excluded from the benefits of economic growth. Although there has been some population growth in recent years, changes in retail patterns and service use, means that some communities, particularly in the Ogmere and Garw valleys, are unable to sustain commercial ventures including essential shops, and increasingly there is a need for community facilities to be heavily subsidised.

The changing fortunes of the communities of the County Borough are closely tied in with the changes which have taken place in the economy. Many of the communities in the County Borough owe their origins to the iron and coal industries which formed the lifeblood of the area for much of the past 100 years. However, since the 1940s these traditional heavy industries have gradually disappeared. New employment opportunities were

created as modern manufacturing enterprises became established, primarily in the southern part of the County Borough along the major road network. This area is now home to many important international manufacturing establishments. Whilst manufacturing remains an important source of jobs in the local economy, the current recession has had a significant impact and there have been some headline closures in the manufacturing sector in particular, contributing to a steep rise in claimant unemployment. Services, particularly Public Services such as the health service and public administration are now the principal source of jobs in the area. Many of the jobs that have been created in this sector have been taken by female workers and women currently account for 59% of the Public Services workforce in the County Borough, a significantly higher proportion than in the rest of Wales. These changes will have had a profound impact on many households in the rural area, with a subsequent effect on community cohesion.



# BRIDGEND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

## DATBLYGU GWLEDIG



**reach** is the Local Action Group for the County Borough of Bridgend, located in South Wales, UK

### **Current activity**

Below is a brief summary of what our current LAG projects are up to:

**Building Rural Communities Fund** – Four grants awarded, a number of groups being supported

**Unlocking Rural Bridgend** – Outdoor pursuits study completed, unlocking rural Bridgend working group, mountain biking and walking sub-groups. Walking festival being planned.

**Real Food Box** – Website developed and launched, on-going awareness raising events, local food workshops held and food journey project complete

**Bridgend Real Food** – Pilot pubs project started, real food working Group supported and planning food festival in October 2010. Organisation appointed to undertake development of local produce/retailer network.

**Virtual Farm Tours** – Website launched and thousands of hits to date, growing number of sessions with schools in line with national curriculum. Awarded Bayer Crop Science & FACE Innovative Learning Award 2010

**Building Rural Communities Training and Information** – Training opportunities to be tied with Grant Fund

### **Future activity**

The planned future activity is as follows:

The main activities focus on **Rural Action Research Programme** which aims to research and assess specific needs of target groups such as young people, women and ethnic minorities, etc in relation to the issues they encounter in living in rural areas and the barriers they face to accessing services and becoming socially included. **Action Planning** will support the development of action plans on both a geographic and thematic basis linking with all rural wards and cutting across all themes of the Local Development Strategy. The **Innovation Fund** will be a strategic resource that the LAG will use to commission specific projects that they consider to be of value both to the group developing the project and also to others.. Each will become a case study and information relating to it will

be disseminated by the LAG through a series of social media, conferences, workshops and seminars. The **Rural Themes Co-ordination Service** will support the development of forums in relation to Tourism, Produce, People, Place and Enterprise. Support provided under each of the themes will include a diverse menu of support options, including, networking, study tours, case study development, conferences, workshops and seminars. The **Learn to Do...** service will support the development of events, showcases and information dissemination and sharing across all rural wards and all themes of the Local Development Strategy. This service is founded on the belief that learning leads to doing and doing leads to learning and is made up of a number of components.

The reach out project provides a suite of activities that works to strengthen effective and inclusive partnership working and improve genuine endogenous engagement within local communities, both spatially and within communities of interest..

Through Rural Action Research, targeted Action Planning work, provision of the Innovation Fund and through accessible learning and dissemination activities, rural practitioners and local amateurs will be encouraged to learn to deliver effective local community SWOT and needs analyses leading to effective local development strategies. This will promote stronger local co-operation amongst potentially disparate local interest groups and develop self-sustainable solutions for the area over the longer term.

A focus on stakeholder partnership activity through thematic and geographic work will link to all Axis 3 project activity and the wider strategic objectives of the LDS. This will encourage on-line communities to disseminate knowledge, exchange good practice and innovation in rural products and services. The forums and thematic co-ordination service will support networking, joint initiatives development and create links for community groups and other partner/sector organisations that dovetails with the Action Planning service. The Innovation Fund will provide an opportunity for emerging actions to be commissioned.





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## Local Action Group "Dunajec-Biała"

The Local Action Group "Dunajec-Biała" was established in 2005. It comprises of four gminas, smaller units of administrative structure. Members belonging to the group recruit from the local inhabitants, representatives of the local authorities, business enterprises and other public sector organisations based within this area.

The LAG is responsible for development and implementation of innovative projects, which aim to promote and utilize the plethora of local geographical and cultural resources together with actions helping to improve the quality of life of the local people. These include two key areas: **tourism and local produce**.

The Local Development Strategy, which was prepared in the process of extensive public consultations and involved the key actors of the local scene, is largely based on the concept of multi-functionality of

agriculture and rural areas. This concept assumes economic strengthening of agricultural holdings and the increase of "agri-food" sector competitiveness as well as the provision of instruments for diversification of economic activities in order to obtain and create alternative sources of income for rural population. This shall contribute to the improvement of life quality in rural areas through the development of sector of basic services for population and will constitute an alternative to presently predominant role of rural areas, which is food production. Therefore the future profile of

this region will be determined in accordance with the four crucial elements of the LDS:

- Development of tourism based on local resources,
- Diversification of economic activities,
- Conservation of the local environment,
- Development of the human capital.



# DUNAJEC-BIAŁA



## Area overview

The LEADER Local Action Group "Dunajec-Biała" area is located in the south of Poland and about 78 km from Cracow, which is the capital of the Little Poland voivodship. It is a geographically contiguous and socio-economically coherent area. It is situated within one larger administrative unit (Powiat Tarnowski) and it encompasses four gminas, smaller units of administrative structure. It covers an area of approximately 38,781 hectares, which accounts for 27,5% of the total Powiat Tarnowski area. Its population is now estimated at 47,854 distributed across four gminas:

Ciężkowice- 11,049

Zakliczyn- 12,249

Wojnicz- 13,015

Pleśna- 11,541

The area is largely of agricultural character, dominated by small and medium sized businesses such as family run farms, farm houses and guest houses. Agriculture has therefore a decisive impact not only on the social and economic situation of this area inhabitants, but also on its environment, landscape structure and biodiversity. Some other non agriculturally orientated enterprises also exist within this area predominantly retail and services in character.

Owing to its natural and historical heritage the area is marked with many valuable resources.

One of the most popular tourist attractions of this region is the



Inanimate Nature Reserve "Skamieniałe Miasto" ("Stone City") offering unique rock formations developed into shapes of buildings, people and animals. Another one is the Wildlife Reserve "Panieńska Góra" with a great many different species of plants.

Among the historical treasures worth indicating is the uniquely equipped Ethnographic Museum „Grociarnia” in Jastrzębia which is a part of the wooden architecture trail, which runs through this region. The trail leads to several others objects including the church of St. Leonard in Wojnicz and to the church in Jastrzębia.

In Kąsna Dolna there is the only preserved estate of Ignacy J. Paderewski in Poland. He was the first Polish Prime Minister as well as the world famous pianist and composer. The place is a thriving cultural centre attracting various artists and classical music lovers. Many classical music concerts and other related events take place here. Those interested in history of architecture will appreciate the XVIII century Palace in Janowice and ruins of the XIV century castle in Melsztyn.

Very picturesque are small towns of Ciężkowice and Zakliczyn, which are characterised by their cloisters.

Many local agricultural enterprises offer farm stays. These farms are usually situated in picturesque locations, surrounded by wildlife. They offer to guests traditional, appetising foods, wines from local vineyards and other local delicacies. Some of the farmers offer presentations on regional customs, folk traditions, work craft, and old fashioned, disappearing farming methods involving manual plough.

Based on its landscape (hills, rivers, significant forestation) this area presents also some substantial potential with respect to active tourism. For instance Jamna with many well developed hiking and mountain biking trails supported by adequate lodging. Jamna is also an important place of commemoration devoted to the II World War martyrdom. It is also a destination of many pilgrimages to the House of St. Jacek, which also houses a unique collection of memorabilia related to John Paul II.

Among many tourist attracting events of this region worth emphasising are the Cross Poland Rally 4x4, "Beans Feast", "Wojnicz's Days" and frequent enriched in local traditions folk fairs accompanied by regional work craft markets. These shows are very popular and are frequented by many tourists from all over the country.

Through the LGD Dunajec Biała Region runs the historical I World War trail with well maintained and renovated cemeteries present in large numbers in this area. Two of those are of particular significance. These are the Cemetery nr 171 in Łowczówek, which is sited in close proximity to Pleśna and the Jewish Cemetery nr 293 in Zakliczyn.

# THE AYRSHIRE



The Ayrshire LEADER Local Action Group Area is a contiguous, geographically and culturally coherent area, comprising the whole of mainland Ayrshire excluding the major urban centres. It extends to some 2,819 square kilometres. It is largely rural in character although many of the settlements in North and East Ayrshire have formerly been the location of industrial activity, including metals, process industries and mining. Its population is now estimated at 148,843, distributed across:

North Ayrshire 47,051

East Ayrshire 69,144

South Ayrshire 32,648

The LEADER Area forms a geographically coherent area influenced by underlying geology, topography and river drainage systems. In summary the area comprises the Ayrshire Basin and the entire Western Coastal Edge of the Midland Valley of Scotland which is bounded by the Highland Boundary Fault to the north and the Southern Upland Fault to the south.

Ayrshire has a natural boundary created by a ridge of hills in a broad arc to the north, east and south which also form the watershed for a series of river catchments draining through the Ayrshire lowlands to the sea (Garnock; Irvine; Ayr; Doon; Girvan and Stinchar). It is these river valleys and lowlands that the main transportation corridors and infrastructure networks utilise and in which the bulk of the settlements and population are found.

Historically, agriculture has been one of the principal influences on the evolution of a distinct character of Ayrshire, shaping land uses, settlement patterns and landscape— much of which still remains, particularly in the lowland areas based around dairying and along the coast, arable. On the higher ground and rougher pasture, sheep farming is the main agricultural activity with forestry and wind energy as the main viable alternatives - raising concerns about potential impacts.

Over the past 80 years the development and expansion of forests has been one of the most significant changes in Ayrshire's landscape and woods and forests now cover approximately 21% of the total land area. Forestry Commission forecasts indicate that Ayrshire will experience a three-fold increase in commercially grown timber available for extraction between now and 2021. This resource provides considerable employment opportunities and potential economic benefits.

Ayrshire already benefits from the presence of major downstream timber processing businesses, including the paper mill at Irvine and the chip-board mill at Auchinleck, but significant potential also exists in tourism and recreation.

The population, character, culture and appearance of large parts of the Ayrshire countryside have been shaped by the growth and subsequent decline of manufacturing and extractive industries over the last 250 years and which despite local variations have provided a unified cultural inheritance associated with manufacturing based on the Ayrshire coalfield.

Initially driven by commercial farming, the growth of mineral exploitation and manufacturing expanded rapidly, based on textiles, particularly wool, cotton and linen. These developments in turn led to the rapid expansion of towns and the establishment of new industrial communities. Ayrshire's coalfield developed initially where the coal was at a shallow depth in East Ayrshire.

The presence of iron ore promoted the development of Ayrshire's iron industry and a related fireclay and coal tar industry all served by a network of railways linking industrial areas to the Ayrshire coastal ports.

The 20th Century saw a steady decline of Ayrshire's heavy industry. The coal extraction industry has seen dramatic changes with shifts away from conventional mining to deep mining then to open cast methods which resulted in geographic shifts in investment, jobs and population and significant landscape changes.

All of Ayrshire's ironworks had closed by the 1920's, leaving only Glengarnock Steelworks and a number of foundries to continue into the 1970's. Engineering industries similarly declined although a number of textile industries do continue. The decline of these 'traditional' industries has removed the economic base of several communities and has left some housing schemes built to house coal workers in unexpected countryside settings.

The causes of disadvantage in Ayrshire are many, but often related to the long-term structural changes in the economy described above. As a result, people are excluded from participating fully in the economic, social and cultural life of the community by virtue of low incomes, poverty, low skills, low levels of educational attainment, bad health and poor housing. This is reflected in relatively low levels of economic activity and high levels of unemployment and benefit claimants throughout large parts of Ayrshire, particularly in North and East Ayrshire which have above average concentrations of communities experiencing the highest and most persistent levels of multiple deprivation.

The Accountable Body (Lead Partner) for the LAG is South Ayrshire Council. The Managing Authority for the LEADER Programme in Scotland is Scottish Government.



# THE AYRSHIRE



## STRATEGY BY THEME

(Extracted from Ayrshire LEADER LAG Local Development Strategy 2007-2013)

### Theme 1: Rural Community Capacity Building

#### Specific Objectives

By 2015, to develop local capacity to confront the Ayrshire LEADER area's development needs through training of 360 community activists across 70 rural communities.

#### Rationale

The rationale for a Rural Community Capacity theme in Ayrshire LEADER lies in the limited experience of community interests in taking part in strategic approaches to rural development. Although consultation found evidence of not insubstantial community activism, the vast majority of projects have been locally focused and piecemeal.

The absence of involvement in any of the previous three generations of LEADER is a notable challenge for the Ayrshire LAG and was reflected in limited understanding of the scope and purpose of LEADER among many of those who were interviewed, or took part in workshops connected with the development of the strategy.

#### Scope of Action

The eligible scope for action includes support for: Employment of animateurs to raise awareness of opportunities from the LEADER programme and to encourage participation by community-based organisations and resident groups, including young people, older people, women and other disadvantaged groups.

Promotional activities to raise awareness of LEADER and to encourage community solidarity with its objectives. Co-ordination of community-based organisations and raising their capacity to address the rural development needs of the area in a strategic fashion.

Support for the formation, growth and development of community-based organisations. Training of members of community-based organisations, including training in leadership, training in project management, training in accounting and other aspects of administration.

Assistance, including professional assistance, where appropriate, in assessing the feasibility of projects and in developing projects to the point where they can be considered for funding by the LAG. Actions that help networking and exchange of good practice among community-based organisations and other community groups.

### Integration of Innovation

Priority will be given to projects that involve innovative ways of working that are expected to improve the quality of outcomes and / or the value for money over conventional approaches.

### Integration of Sustainability

Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate clear prospects for sustaining capacity created beyond the life of the project and / or demonstrate a contribution to environmental sustainability from its operation.

### Final Beneficiaries

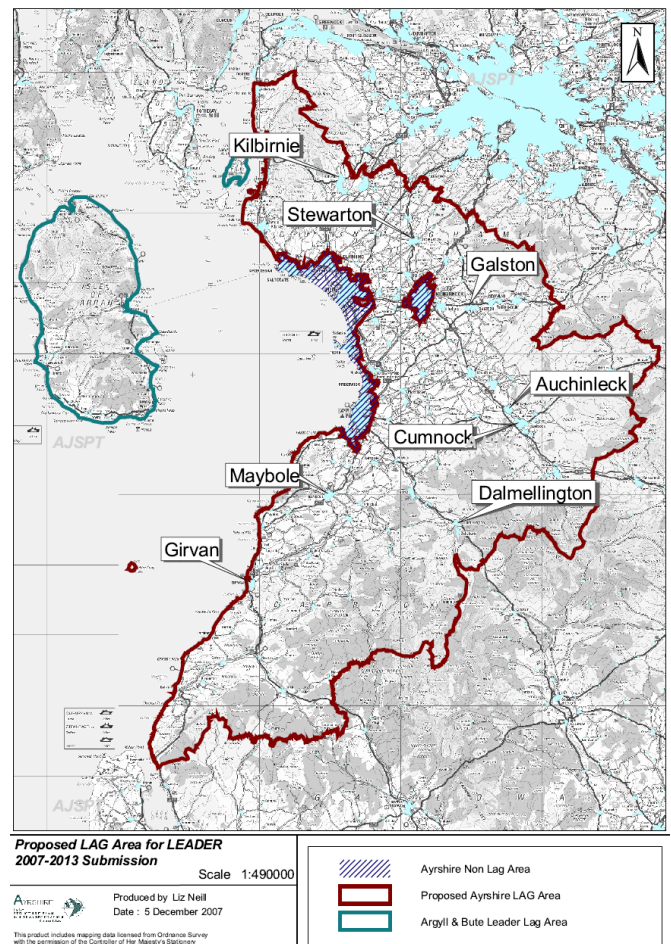
Agencies in the voluntary sector, including community groups, and other public and private bodies involved in local regeneration.

Target Beneficiaries, including Equality of Opportunity Residents of the Ayrshire LEADER area.

Priority will be given to projects which contribute to equality of opportunity by engaging and addressing the needs of young people, older people, women and disabled people, in particular.

### Target Beneficiaries, including Equality of Opportunity

Residents of the Ayrshire LEADER area. Priority will be given to projects which contribute to equality of opportunity by engaging and addressing the needs of young people, older people, women and disabled people, in particular.



## Theme 2: Revitalising Rural Communities

### Specific Objectives

By 2015, to improve the economic performance of and social cohesion within the Ayrshire LEADER area through actions leading to the creation / safeguarding of 200 gross and improved services in 50 rural communities.



### Rationale

The rationale for the Revitalising Rural Communities theme lies in a combination of the socio-economic and environmental analyses.

The socio-economic analysis reveals constraints in access to services by people who do not have access to private transport. The consultations highlight gaps in community facilities and services and limited employment opportunities in delivering services at local level. These weaknesses are held to constrain the attractiveness and sustainability of the rural communities.

The socio-economic analysis reveals persistent high levels of unemployment and weak educational attainment among young people. A trend in out-migration of young people appears to reflect limited employment opportunities in the LEADER area. The consultations highlight disengagement of young people from work and their community. Facilities for young people are relatively sparse and, in some locations, transport represents a barrier to participation in training, the labour market and in social activities.

The socio-economic and environmental analyses highlight the outstanding amenity value of rural Ayrshire and that the principal opportunities for growing the economy lie in tourism and leisure activities linked to environmental and cultural assets and their supply chain.

### Scope of Action

The strategy for the Revitalising Rural Communities theme reflects the need to concentrate limited resources if they are to produce an appreciable impact. Accordingly, LEADER funding will be focused on integrated packages of action addressing three areas:

Strengthening community facilities and services. Improving economic and social participation by young people. Supporting economic and environmental actions linked to tourism and leisure.

The eligible scope for action directed at strengthening community facilities and services comprises support for:

5 Conversion and refurbishment of premises for multiple uses including community and sports activities, the delivery of local services and the delivery of activities such as training. Establishment costs and short-term revenue support associated with the development of local services that are not provided by the private sector, including through a social enterprise model. The eligible scope for action directed at improving economic and

social participation by young people comprises support for:

Formation and operation of a youth council, or similar mechanism for involving young people in local decision-making and in identifying their development needs. Establishment and short-term revenue support for activities that are designed to tackle the transport needs of young people, including activities delivered through a social enterprise model.

Development of sports and social activities for young people, including activities linked to community facilities and activities delivered through a social enterprise model. Training linked to employment opportunities created with support from Ayrshire LEADER, notably those connected with local services, tourism and leisure development and environmental stewardship.

The eligible scope for action directed at supporting economic and environmental actions linked to tourism and leisure comprises support for:

Construction and conversion of premises for use as visitor facilities. Small-scale environmental improvements linked to tourism and leisure use. Construction of footpaths and associated signage. Community management of environmental assets used for tourism and leisure purposes. Advice, consultancy and small-scale financial support for investment by businesses and social enterprises involved in delivering or in supporting tourism and leisure activities, including local food producers. Actions designed to mitigate the environmental impacts of tourism and leisure activity, including support to improve the environmental performance of tourism and leisure businesses.

### Integration of Innovation

Priority will be given to projects that involve innovative ways of working that are expected to improve the quality of outcomes and / or the value for money over conventional approaches.

### Integration of Sustainability

Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate clear prospects for sustaining capacity created beyond the life of the project and / or demonstrate a contribution to environmental sustainability from their operation.

### Final Beneficiaries

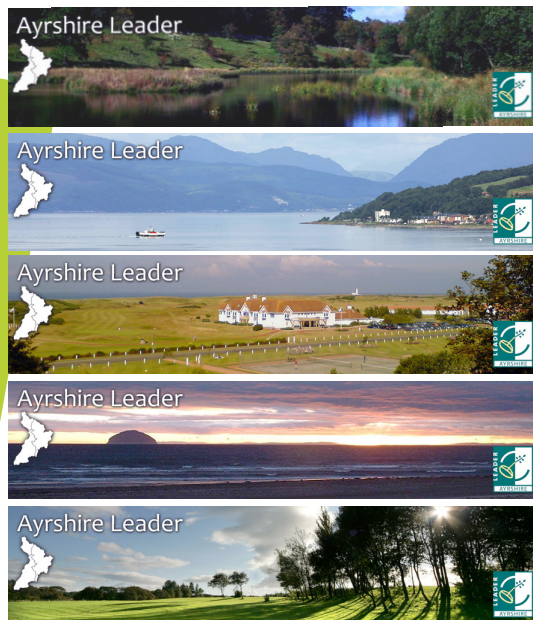
Agencies in the voluntary sector, including community groups, and other public and private bodies involved in local regeneration.

### Target Beneficiaries, including Equality of Opportunity

Residents of and businesses located in the Ayrshire LEADER area. Priority will be given to projects which contribute to equality of opportunity by engaging and addressing the needs of young people, older people, women and disabled people, in particular.

Ayrshire LEADER LAG contact details:  
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**The Farmers' Market in Ayr** was one of the first in Scotland to commence operations. In 1999, its success led to the formation of Ayrshire Farmers' Market Co-operative which has set an exciting and dynamic standard over the subsequent years, working in concert with local colleges and supporters.

Ayrshire Farmers' Market was the outright winner of the Scottish Tourism Thistle Award for Best Small Business Marketing Initiative' in 2003. It has formed the core of the supplier base of the acclaimed Ayrshire Food Network since 2004 and opened a ground breaking Cooperative shop at SAC Auchincruive in March 2006. The market is very committed to giving excellent customer service and has a strong track record in this regard. The quality of food attracts local award winning chefs who can be spotted early in the morning sourcing produce for their lunch time menus.

The current market site is in the car park of the Kyle Centre shopping centre. It is a great location and a customer friendly atmosphere is created by the layout, which invites a walk around the stalls that are set up in an outward facing circular pattern.

The market reflects the farming families that make up the cooperative together with interesting guest and other seasonal producers. Grass-reared Ayrshire lamb, beef, pork and venison are on offer, together with excellent

bacon, good meats and pies. Locally raised chicken and other smoked produce is definitely worth a try!

Game is available according to the seasons, and abundance of west coast seafood is provided by fisheries and smoke houses. The famous range of cow, goat and ewes' cheeses from Dunlop are certainly worthy of attention, together with excellent home baking, tasty soups, award winning free range eggs including, even, duck and quail!



These delights are complimented by farmhouse produced ice-cream, high quality confectionery, amazing local honey, local Ayrshire potatoes and other vegetables. Soft fruits in season and specialities, such as fresh raspberry juice and acclaimed Christmas puddings are very special indeed.

The colourful atmosphere is highlighted by a wonderful stall displaying locally grown plants according to the season. Market themes follow the calendar of festivals in Ayr, including, 'Burns and a' that' and the highly successful summer flower show.

Other community groups join in with the market and include, Fair Trade stalls, crafters and, by invitation, musicians and the occasional choir ..... look out for the roving haggis!

## AYRSHIRE AND ARRAN FOOD NETWORKS

Ayrshire and Arran are renowned worldwide for the quality of their food. The raw materials available within the whole area are exceptional – beef, lamb, bacon, pork and game in season; fish and shellfish; vegetables; and of course the famous Ayrshire ‘Tattie’. Add Dunlop cheeses, eggs, a wide range of smoked delicacies, vegetarian savoury produce, cakes, pudding and homemade ‘sweeties’ and you really are in a gourmet’s paradise. The hotels and restaurants in the network have the award-winning skills to prepare these special raw materials into a menu of culinary delights – and serve them with knowledge, care, skill and attention.

You also have plenty of opportunity to take food home, by buying fresh produce at the weekly Farmers’ Markets ( Thistle Award Winner). You can visit network members who have farm shops or delicatessens specialising in local foods or by calling on one of the artisan food producers who are able to welcome visitors. Food "hampers "are also available.

Founded in november 2002, after the success of the Ayrshire farmers market cooperative, activities commenced with 10 producers and 10 providers of locally sourced food. With encouragement from the local enterprise company, the local authorities, tourism agencies, and Kilmarnock college, the group has developed to its position today, with 67 current members, where 46 Ayrshire based, and 12 Arran based businesses are working together to promote the produce, culinary and food tourism delights of the area

Within the membership of the AFN group we have a geographically spread selection of authentic restaurants and coffee shops, which provide a very interesting range of eating /dining experiences from Michelin Star accolades to acclaimed informal coffee shops.

The quality of primary produced food, such as meat and fish has much to do with the general methods of husbandry, as well land usage, methods of production, weather and climate. Ayrshire & Arran is fortunate to have land which is suited to animal farming, as well as 100 miles of coastline.

The determination, professionalism and experience of the "farmers/producers " who supply meat and fish into The Ayrshire Food Network ensure that both members of the public, and colleagues who are skilled



chefs & hospitality providers, gain access to very high quality, flavoursome food.

The Ayrshire & Arran food networks have have more than 25 producers of regional food in addition to meat or fish. The variety is very significant, ranging from farm house ice creams, non homogenised milk, milk smoothies, an array of cheeses made from cow's, goat or ewe's milk .

Seasonal vegetables, organic produce and herbs, together with soft and autumnal fruits mean that you can source locally and confidently your so called 5 a day portions! The food miles are definitely reduced when you buy from one of this group.

This group form a vital touristic component of the Network by providing regional local food, served with knowledge, care, skill and attention together with discerning accommodation.

With increasing emphasis on authenticity of visitor experience and green credentials, it seems the use of local produce has provided them with an operational and marketing advantage.

Hospitality and accommodation provision should go hand in hand with friendliness and local knowledge. We trust you find that is the case with our award winning members.

Successful Delis and Farm Shops provide very important focal points for the Ayrshire Food Network and its produce/supplier base. Some have been relatively newly established at premises belonging to producers. Others have developed very quickly using the Network as a source of excellent local produce, within a wider food/drink product offering. One thing is clear, reliable sources of distinct, flavoursome, value for money regional food specialities is a key component of this food retail success.

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# ARGYLL

**Argyll** and the Islands is a complex and diverse rural coastal landscape whose principle areas include Arran; Bute; Cowal; Cumbræ; Kintyre; Lomond; Lorn; Mid-Argyll and the Atlantic Islands. With 31 inhabited islands and a highly dispersed population, the area presents significant challenges in terms of accessibility, integration and development for its inhabitants.

## Geography

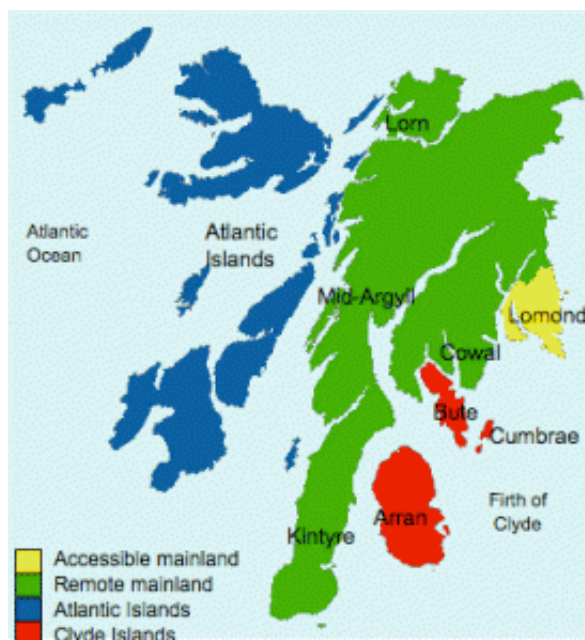
Argyll and the Islands has a land area of approximately 738797 hectares and an average population density of 0.13 persons per hectare. 99.3% of Argyll and the Islands land area is classified as being rural. Arran & the Cumbræ are also classed as remote rural. Travel time within the area is high, compared to other parts of the UK, due to heavily indented coastlines, mountainous terrain, islands, single track roads and generally poor transport links.



**LEADER** has a strong history in Argyll and the Islands and has contributed significantly in the past to enabling rural communities to find their own solutions to development issues.

Innovation has been a central component of this success, with LEADER providing the opportunity for piloting new approaches to rural development. New skills and capacity building were gained as part of project development, local development strategies were created and new services tried out, all contributing to an increased sense of prosperity and independence, with a firm eye on the future.

This LEADER Programme seeks, through close and positive partnership working, to support rural communities throughout the area to respond to some of the many development challenges that are still facing them. The challenges of remoteness, the narrow economic base of the area and structural



**Argyll and the Islands Leader  
'Local Action Group' Area**

## Economy

The main industries are tourism, agriculture, forestry, aquaculture, fishing and service provision. The public sector is a major employer. Whisky production is very important to some local economies within the area. The provision of care is also becoming a significant industry.

## The Environment

The area has an outstanding natural environment, containing mountains, forests, sea lochs, freshwater lochs,

rivers, beaches, islands, glens and moors all with abundant wildlife. A high percentage of these areas have UK or EU protected site status, all of the highest environmental quality, giving the area the highest level of biodiversity of any UK region.

## Population

The population of the LAG area is approx. 83,000. There is a higher proportion of

the population over 45 than the national average and lower proportion of the population in the 16 – 29 age range.

17.4% of the population does not live in a settlement (a cluster of 6 or more households) and 17.4% live on one of the 31 inhabited islands, only one of which is connected to the mainland by a bridge.



economic changes have led to Argyll and the Islands Development Strategy being built around two themes:

Revitalising Communities  
Progressive Rural Economy

These two themes will shape the LEADER programme, enabling communities in the area to respond to new opportunities and challenges, making the most of the outstanding natural environment that they live in and contributing to long term economic sustainability.





### Overall Aim

To support the sustainable, community-based development of rural communities within the Argyll

### Input

Grant funding from Argyll and the Islands LEADER Programme

### Outcomes

1. An increase in the accessibility of information, support and services within the rural community
2. An increase in the sustainability of the voluntary sector
3. An increase in the number of community groups that identify and successfully deliver community priority projects
4. An increase in the number of community-based actions to enhance the rural heritage of Argyll and the Islands
5. An increase in the sustainability of tourism within Argyll and the islands
6. Cooperative initiatives leading to increased confidence within the agricultural community in Argyll and the islands
7. Woodland initiatives leading to increased use of the woodland resource
8. An increase in cooperation between the aquaculture and fishing sectors and the wider rural community.

### Activities

#### Revitalising Communities

Supporting Voluntary Action  
 Improving Access  
 Enhancing Quality of Life  
 Enhancing the Rural Environment

#### Progressive Rural Economy

Strengthening the Rural Economy  
 Building Capacity  
 Improving collaboration  
 Encouraging Research & Development

### Outputs

Community Facilities Created  
 Community Facilities Improved  
 Innovative Method of Local Service Provision  
 Marketing Activity Undertaken  
 New Markets accessed  
 Adding Value to Local Product  
 New Product Developed  
 Best Practice Model Transferred  
 Awareness Raising Event  
 Promotional Activity  
 Feasibility Study

Development Plan  
 Heritage Sites with Interpretation Introduced  
 Amenity Access Improved  
 Training Courses Delivered (Accredited)  
 Training Days Provided (Accredited)  
 Individuals Trained (Accredited)  
 Workshop Held (Unaccredited)  
 Job created  
 Job Safeguarded

### Impact

Community groups, social enterprises, micro businesses, young people, older people, women and unemployed assisted resulting in a more robust rural economy

## Overview Argyll and the Islands LEADER Programme

## ARGYLL & BUTE AGRICULTURAL FORUM

The Forum, chaired by Angus McFadyen is an Industry Group set up in 1999 to raise awareness of



### An Agricultural Strategy for the Argyll Area

After over a year's extensive consultation with the agricultural industry in Argyll, *An Agricultural Strategy for the Argyll Area* has been published.

The strategy has been promoted by the Argyll and Bute Agricultural Forum, an Industry Group set-up to raise awareness of agricultural issues, promote the development of agriculture and crofting and encourage and facilitate co-operation and collaboration between land-based agencies.

The extensive consultation with the industry in the Argyll area allowed identification of the key issues affecting agriculture and crofting and the development of themes and actions necessary to move the industry forward.

Within each of the above themes, the strategy details what needs to be done, how this will be achieved, who

agricultural issues, promote the development of agriculture and crofting whilst encouraging and facilitating co-operation between land-based agencies. The unique body is a robust partnership open to all organisations with an interest in the industry and currently draws a membership from industry and agencies. The combined knowledge and influence of the Forum members has been beneficial in tackling a wide range of significant issues.



has responsibility for the actions and when the action is most needed. Additionally, it outlines how the strategy should be implemented, monitored and evaluated to make sure things happen. The strategy aims to complement rather than duplicate existing strategies and plans and promotes an engagement and partnership approach to aid the development of agriculture and crofting in the Argyll area in a way that best meets its needs and the needs of the communities within which is it interdependent.

The future of agriculture in the Argyll area will be determined by the cumulative actions of the industry itself and not solely this strategy. The consultation process has ensured that the strategy and the actions outlined within it are appropriate for the needs of the industry. Additionally, commitment to implement the strategy has been secured from the industry itself and from the support agencies and industry organisations that make up the forum.

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# Estepa Sierra Sur



The Association for Rural Development Estepa Sierra Sur is a non-profit association constituted in July 2000. Its board of directors and its general assembly is composed of members coming for the public and private sectors, this allows different sectors to work together and make joint decisions about the future of the region Estepa-Sierra Sur.

Its scope of action is over 18 municipalities from the region of Estepa and Osuna, the region known as Estepa-Sierra Sur: Aguadulce(1), Algámitas(2), Badolatosa(3), Casariche(4), El Rubio(5), El Saucejo (6), Estepa(7), Gilena(8), Herrera(9), Lantejuela(10), La Roda de Andalucía(11), Los Corrales(12), Lora de Estepa(13), Marinaleda(14), Martín de la Jara(15), Osuna(16), Pedrera(17) y Villanueva de San Juan (18).

The Association for Rural Development is also in charge of managing funds coming from different programmes, among them are:

Proder-Andalucía (Operative Programme of Development and Economic Diversification of Rural Areas in Andalusia). It funds projects submitted by enterprising people that contribute to structure our rural society by the diversification of its production patterns and encourage a balanced socio-economic development and an increase in income and employment levels. Financed by the Department of Agriculture and Fishing - Regional Government of Andalusia.

Participation in Programmes of Joint Actions for Cooperation within the Framework of the Programme Leader Plus of Andalusia. Financed by the Department of Agriculture and Fishing - Regional Government of Andalusia.

Extraordinary plan for the improvement of employability of people seeking a job. Financed by the Department of Employment - Regional Government of Andalusia.

Support in setting up an innovative business association for industrial confectionery of Estepa: to improve the competitiveness of the



confectionery industry sector in Estepa. Financed by the Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Trade.

Incorporation of Gender and Youth Perspective on Rural Development Actions: to promote the social and economic development in order to favour the economic diversification among young people and women. Financed by the Department of Agriculture and Fishing - Regional Government of Andalusia.

New Development Strategy of Andalucía: to develop the strategic plan of the region Estepa - Sierra Sur for the Framework 2007-2013. Financed by the Department of Agriculture and Fishing - Regional Government of Andalusia.

Management of the Programme LIDER-A: for the creation of employment, new opportunities for women and young people and new services; for the improvement of the competitiveness of the agricultural, forest and agro-industrial sectors, the preservation of environment, the

economy diversification and the improvement of the quality of life in rural territories. Financed by the Department of Agriculture and Fishing - Regional Government of Andalusia and FEADER.

Project of inter-territorial cooperation within the framework of the National Rural Network: an inter-territorial project with three other Spanish LAGs (ADR La Rioja Suroriental (La Rioja), ADR Valle Alagón (Extremadura), ADR Sierra de Alcaraz y Campos de Montiel (Castilla-Mancha). The Objective of this project is to learn together about the incorporation of women to the labour market and to find out solutions such as putting at the public's disposal proximity services to facilitate the conciliation of working, familiar and personal life. At the beginning of November, the project will have a website in which you can find out more details. Financed by the Ministry of Environment and the Rural and Marine Affairs and FEARDER.





The main **objective** of the ADR Estepa – Sierra Sur is to foster, channel and manage any type of initiative which favours the local development of the region of Estepa and the Sierra Sur.



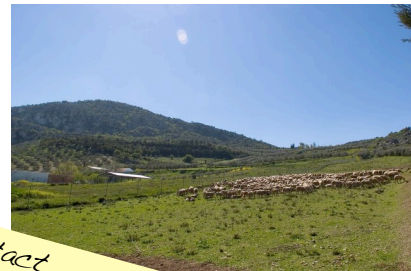
Likewise, other objectives are:

- Promotion and preservation of ethnographic, architectonic, archaeological and environmental heritage.
- Fostering and incorporation and use of new knowledge and technologies in order to increase the competitiveness of products and services.
- Promotion of environment as a development-driver.
- Undertaking necessary initiatives and actions for the recognition of women's rights, especially regarding their working and entrepreneurial activity and in order to remove discriminatory differences.
- Promotion and valuation of endogenous products.
- Favouring of working integration and improvement of life quality of young people.
- Promotion and development of rural tourism.
- Development of training and qualification of workers.
- Training, qualification and integration of underprivileged groups.
- Incorporation of control measures and environmental management of enterprises.
- Provision of services for the preparation and development of new enterprises or modernization of the existing ones.
- Study and establishment of general and/or particular plans to make the most of industries
- Integration of Local and Rural Associations for Development with a provincial, regional, national, community or international scope.

- Defence and promotion of Human Rights and fundamental liberties, peace, democracy and citizens participation in equal conditions for women and men and, in general, non-discrimination because of sex, race, culture or religion and respect to diversity.
- Foster the development of more underprivileged countries through human resources and materials to enable them to achieve economic growth with more equitable sharing of the fruits of development.

### **Strategies of local development for the quality of life and diversification of rural areas:**

- Diversification of rural economy as a whole.
- Promotion of the diversification of rural economy, especially of the agricultural sector.
- Fostering and promoting the creation of rural micro-enterprises.
- Promotion and development of touristic activities in rural regions.
- Improvement of the quality of life in rural areas.
- Improvement of the structural level and promotion of basic services, for both the economy and the rural population.
- Promotion of the renewal and rural development.
- Promotion of the preservation, protection, recovery.



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# TARTU Rural Development Association



TARTU Rural Development Association is a local action group (LAG) in South Estonia. The main aim of the association is to develop a rural living environment in the partnership of three sectors. One important task of the LAG is to implement EU LEADER programme in the region of Tartu. The association is one of the biggest LAGs in Estonia.

## Information on the region:

Area: 2,612 km<sup>2</sup>. Population: 35,422. Density of population: 13.6 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>. The region of Tartu Rural Development

Association surrounds the city of Tartu which is the second largest city in Estonia. The region has diverse nature, developed economy, rich historical and cultural traditions. Tartu County is situated between two big lakes - Lake Peipus and Lake Võrtsjärv. Peipus is a border lake between Estonia and Russia, and Europe's

fifth largest lake. Peipus and Võrtsjärv are connected by River Emajõgi which has a high value for tourists. The villages of the Russian Old Believers on the shore of Lake Peipus are very unique and lend a special cultural value to the area. Alongside farming, fishery is an important activity in the regions near Lake Peipus and Lake Võrtsjärv. Some of the Estonia's most fertile lands and successful farmers can be found in the region of Tartu, which gives around 10 % of the whole of Estonian agricultural production. The main branches of industry are wood and furniture, glass, food and beverages, clothes. The timber industry is the most evenly developed. About one-third of Estonian print production comes from Tartu County. The universities and research institutions located in the city of Tartu offer good opportunities to develop knowledge intensive production.



## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

*Our strategic programme focuses on the quality of life and best use of natural and cultural resources.*

### 5 key areas:

**LOCAL COMMUNITIES:** active and viable communities; **YOUNG PEOPLE:** strong relations between young people and their community; traditions and common values, diversity of activities;

**ENVIRONMENT:** sustainable development of the area, tourism, new natural products;

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP:** promoting new ways to develop the region; new local products and services;

**CO-OPERATION NETWORKS:** thematic co-operation networks and international relations; communication and PR work; training and study trips to improve capacity building; kick-start of necessary development activities.



## Co-operation partners:

Regional development organizations - Tartu Business Advisory Services, Peipsiveere Development Agency, Non-profit Association „Kodukant Tartumaa” (Native Place Tartu County), Tartu County Youth Council, Tartu County Tourism Foundation, Peipsi Centre for Transboundary Co-operation, Association of Local Authorities of Tartu County, Tartu County Government, Tartu City Government; Local action groups in Estonia - Põlvamaa Partnership, Valgamaa

Partnership, Võrumaa Partnership Assembly, Võrtsjärve Development Association, Borderlands Leader, Green Riverland Partnership, etc; Ministry of Agriculture and Estonian Agricultural Registers and Information Board; International co-operation partners – local action groups in Finland, Sweden, Lithuania, Latvia, Italy and the Czech Republic.

**OTHER INFORMATION:**

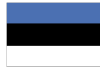
Name of the organization: Tartu Rural Development Association  
Country: Estonia Established: 27.07.2006  
Organization type: NGO  
Membership: 81 (June, 2008)  
Local authorities: 16 (Alatskivi, Haaslava, Kambja, Konguta, Laeva, Luunja, Meeksi, Mäksa, Nõo, Peipsiääre, Puhja, Tähtvere, Vara, Võnnu, Ülenurme and Tartu)  
Entrepreneurs: 26  
Non-profit organizations: 39  
Board: 16 members  
Chairman: Viktor Muuli  
Vice-chairman: Aksel Kivi  
Working languages: Estonian, English, Russian

**COLLABORATION INTERESTS:**

Mutual exchange of experience;  
Development of international co-operation between members;  
Participation in different co-operation projects.

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