

THE LEADER APPROACH

The key concept behind the LEADER approach is that rural development is more effective and efficient if decided at the local level by local people. The funding available from LEADER will help our region to become a more competitive place to live and work.

Key features of the LEADER approach

Focus LEADER allows local people to clearly focus on a set of specific issues and tailor solutions to suit their needs thereby increasing local competitive advantage. LEADER does not constitute a general fund where no other funding is available. The proposed actions must be in line with the needs of the local area.

Innovation In terms of the LEADER approach, innovation can mean the sharing of know-how with other groups or adaptation of ideas that have been successful elsewhere. Innovation can be the introduction of a new product, process, technology, organisation or market. The intention of the LEADER approach is not to sustain existing projects.

Integration The **Local Development Strategy** must demonstrate links between benefits to the economy, the community and the environment and include all sectors of the communities.

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Collaboration Co-operation is a key feature of the LEADER approach. It involves Local Action Groups (LAGs) undertaking a joint project with another LEADER group, or similar, in the UK, Europe or a third country.

Sustainability It is important that projects supported via the LEADER approach produce sustainable outcomes that last after the grant comes to an end. Projects that bring benefits to multiple beneficiaries will be encouraged over those supporting one business or community group.

“**The LEADER approach - A Basic Guide**” is a useful European Commission document giving more information about the LEADER approach. Download it here: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rur/leaderplus/pdf/factsheet_en.pdf