



BOLSOVER NORTH EAST DERBYSHIRE LEADER

PROGRAMME EVALUATION

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Foreword

The past few years have not been easy for our local rural communities and businesses.

Government cuts and the economic downturn have led to reduced services and difficulties in accessing much needed finance which has resulted in restricted growth for this area.

The £2.4m which the Bolsover North East Derbyshire LEADER Programme has delivered since 2008 into the economies of both Council areas, has played a major part in supporting business, encouraging visitors and creating much needed new jobs.

As Chair of the Local Action Group, I have seen projects develop from the first expression of interest through to the finished article, be that a new piece of equipment, a new business or even a new hotel. All of the LEADER funded projects, from the smallest to the biggest, have contributed to the enhancement of the area and to the growth of the local economy.

This evaluation document explains what the BNED LEADER Programme has achieved and the rationale for doing what it has. I hope you find the document both informative and interesting.

We are now looking forward to submitting a bid for more funding in the next Rural Development Programme which is due to start in 2015 and will run until 2020.

By talking with and listening to local people and businesses, we hope to deliver as much, if not more in the next programme to improve our area and communities.



Cllr Ken Savidge
Chair BNED LEADER

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EVALUATION OF THE BNED LEADER¹ PROGRAMME 2007- 2013

This evaluation reflects on the performance of the BNED LEADER Programme against the vision, key challenges and objectives that were laid out in the Local Development Strategy that formed the Local Action Group Partnership's bid for rural development funding through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.

It looks in detail at each Measure supported and at overall financial and practical performance. It also gives an overview of the role of the Local Action Group.

In short;

The BNED LEADER Programme has...

- Led to total project investment within Bolsover and North East Derbyshire of over £6.4m.
- Created over 70 jobs directly and over 140 indirectly.
- Supported over 150 Derbyshire businesses with investment of £3.7m.
- Assisted over 600 people with business advice.
- Supported 54 tourism events attracting over 70,000 visitors to the area.
- Funded energy efficiency measures, shortened supply chains, healthy eating and the promotion of exercise.
- Conserved and promoted local history and heritage.
- Been recognised as one of the top performing LEADER Programmes nationally.
- Achieved a social return on investment ratio of 16.91:1 (£16.91 of value for each LEADER £1)

Measure	Number of projects funded	LEADER Grant	Estimated total investment	Jobs created	Businesses supported / created
311	1	49,999.85	157,726.53	3	1
312	10	490,500.02	1,539,037.24	27	10
313	15	1,230,374.85	4,567,069.79	45	16
323	3	64,381.46	150,421.07	n/a	3
331	3	68,836.16	115,395.88	141*	121*
	32	1,904,092.34	6,529,650.51	216	151

*Indirectly created jobs / businesses

¹ LEADER - a French acronym, standing for 'Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale', meaning 'Links between the rural economy and development actions'.

The BNED LEADER Programme focused on four objectives

- To support the land-based sector to invest in the economic growth of the area.
- To support local people to develop a culture of enterprise and innovation.
- To develop the potential of tourism and recreation as a key driver within the area's economy.
- To maximise the participation of local people in the growth of the rural economy.

In this programme, LEADER funding was allocated according to criteria that were divided into different Measures. Of the available Axis 3 Measures, five were selected as a route to achieve the objectives.

Measure 311 – Diversification into non agricultural activities.

Measure 312 – Support for the creation and development of Micro-enterprises.

Measure 313 – Encouragement of tourism activities.

Measure 323 – Conservation and upgrading of the rural heritage.

Measure 331 – Training and information for economic actors in Axis 3.

These objectives are contained within the Bolsover North East Derbyshire Local Development Strategy (LDS). The LDS formed part of the application for European funding in 2008. There is more information regarding the LDS on page 22 et seq.

Have the objectives been met?

The objectives were to be met through contracting individual projects that would contribute to the LEADER programme's financial and practical targets in each of the Measures.

This evaluation aims to show the results of this. Each measure is looked at individually below.

Measure 313, Tourism, has been the main strength of the BNED LEADER programme. Measure 311, Farm diversification, appears to be the least successful. Influencing factors include ; a double dip recession, availability of the right sort of match funding (banks reluctant to lend, applicants reluctant to spend), the perceived bureaucracy and timescales of LEADER (most project applications were withdrawn), the need for grant recipients to pay invoices and claim grant in arrears (cash flow difficulties), quality of applications , changing 'goal posts', strict geographical limitations, changing government structures and staffing changes to the LEADER team in the early days of the programme.

How do we determine if the objectives were met?

Project development and selection.

Project monitoring.

Progress reports.

Project impact evaluation interviews.

Focusing not just on the formal outputs and spend but also on the wider impacts.

Assessing social return on investment.

What has worked well / not so well?

As mentioned above, the tourism element of the programme worked particularly well and, in terms of the outputs to be achieved that were contracted with projects, there was most scope within tourism. The tourism measure contained four formal outputs, whilst the other measures had two. This assisted when appraising projects as each output created value.

The micro-enterprise measure relied on the creation of jobs: this could have deterred some applicants as, in a time of recession this was far from easy. Tourism projects also committed to jobs, but these were generally seasonal and part time. Visitor numbers were easy to evidence and were in significant quantities.

The LEADER programme had a two stage application process. The first stage was the submission of an Expression of Interest (EOI). If approved by the Local Action Group (LAG), the applicant was invited to submit a more detailed full application. The full application, including a business plan was independently appraised before a final decision was made by the LAG.

In terms of 'conversion' rate from EOI to contract, tourism was approximately double the overall rate of 22.22%. Micro enterprise success was about half the overall rate despite the number of EOIs submitted under this measure. Only one third of the micro enterprise EOI applicants went on to submit a full application. Half of the tourism EOI applicants went on to submit a full application as did applicants in the heritage and training measures.

Full applications all had a higher 'conversion' rate than EOIs. Most measures doubled their success, but tourism again performed more strongly. Farm diversification ended up with a 100% success rate, but this is skewed by the small number of EOIs and there being only one full application under this measure.

Measuring the success of projects and their impact against the stated objectives was not solely about their performance against financial and outputs targets. It was also about softer outputs and wider impact and this information was gathered through a series of Project Impact Evaluation interviews. This was an informal process, developed in-house to get some idea from the grant recipients as to what their project had achieved beyond the basic output and financial requirements. Some significant elements that applicants commented on include community involvement, use of local suppliers, sustained and significant input into the local economy etc. with much more money invested into the area than contracted or expected.

What can be learned?

- LEADER is a bottom up approach open to rural communities and micro-enterprises, but there is a need for marketing and targeted support for the harder to reach groups.
- A stable and experienced team is highly beneficial.
- Consistent, clear advice, rules and regulations are needed.
- A realistic assessment of what is needed and what can be achieved in the area is necessary.
- Flexibility around cash flow issues would be helpful.
- Looking holistically at the impact of projects when selecting projects for funding would give wider results and benefits.

Measure 311 - Diversification into Non-agricultural Activities

Key Challenges addressed – ‘To raise the profile of the area as being an attractive area for residents, businesses and visitors’ and ‘To develop enterprises based on the area’s environmental and heritage resources and opportunities’.

There was only one successful application from six EOIs processed under M311. Five were withdrawn. Two further applicants submitted EOIs under M311 but the farms involved had already diversified and the applications both proceeded under M312. Issues were;

- a. many farms had already diversified where there was a need to do so
- b. the LEADER process was perceived as very bureaucratic with high volumes of paperwork alongside a need for an effective broadband / IT system and skills
- c. a reluctance to diversify for fear of increased farm rents.

Originally, the expectation was for investment of £860,000 under this measure with an aid intensity (‘intervention rate’) of 50%. This was to result in forty three beneficiaries and create eighty-six jobs. However, only one project has received funding resulting in two beneficiaries and the creation of three jobs.



The project was the creation of a new farm shop and was therefore within the food and drink sector. The investment was contracted at £50,000 grant and £54,954 match funding from the grant recipient (£104,954). This was more than the minimum 50% match expected in this measure and the final intervention rate was 47.64%.

The contracted funding ratio was 1.1:1 - that is each LEADER pound bringing in £1.10 of private investment. However, the total estimated investment in this measure was £157,727 with £107,727 being contributed by the grant recipient. This gave an aid intensity of 31.7% and a ratio of 2.16:1

The single farm diversification project is located in Shirebrook. Other projects located on farms were for two further farm shops and holiday let accommodation.

Measure 312 - Support for the Creation and Development of Micro-Enterprises

Key Challenges addressed – ‘To develop enterprises based on the area’s environmental and heritage resources and opportunities’, ‘To nurture enterprise and raise skill levels of residents’, and ‘To raise the aspirations of residents, particularly in the most disadvantaged communities’.



Ten projects were funded under this measure almost £0.5m in grant and just over £1m total contracted spend.

Seven businesses were supported and three new businesses created.

Over twenty-seven FTE jobs were created.

Overall, twenty nine separate businesses / organisations were supported with LEADER funding.

At least one grant recipient stated that their business would not have survived without the LEADER investment owing to the global financial crisis and double dip recession.

There were seventy-seven EOIs submitted under Measure 312. Of these, forty-seven were withdrawn by the applicant and twenty were rejected by the LAG or before going to the LAG (where the submission was ineligible – such as because of location). Only ten applications (13%) were approved and contracted. Within the original LDS, the target was for forty-eight micro-enterprises to be supported / created and one hundred new jobs. The ten projects contracted equated to around 21% of target and the jobs contracted were 26% of those expected.

The ten successful applicants averaged more jobs each (contracted) than originally thought at almost three jobs per enterprise rather than two.

Total investment into this measure was expected to be £1.14 million at an aid intensity of 50%. That is a ratio of 1:1 – £1 of private match funding for each LEADER £1.

Actual grant awarded was £490,500 with £608,074 in contracted match funding (£1,098,574). The overall intervention rate contracted was therefore 44.65%.

However, the total estimated investment was £1,539,037 with £1,048,537 being contributed by the grant recipients. This gives an intervention rate of 31.87% and a ratio of 2.14:1



The ten projects contracted under Measure 312 are situated in Gladwin's Mark, Bolsover (2), Clay Cross, Kelstedge, Creswell, Killamarsh, Pleasley Vale, Stonedge and Whittington.



Ten of a target of nine (111%) Micro-enterprises created / supported were contracted and all were achieved.

Employment – 26.5 (113%) of a target of 23.5 jobs were contracted and 26.16 (99% of contracted / 111% of target) achieved. It should be noted that the

jobs target was set with the expectation of further micro-enterprises being contracted at the final bidding round in October 2012.

Securing match funding was an issue with this measure. All applicants, by nature of being a micro-enterprise were in the position of having limited human resources. Cash flow was also an issue with the need to spend up front and potentially wait some months for partial reimbursement at a maximum of 50%. There were also some issues around the quality, completeness, eligibility and timeliness of some applications under this measure – as evidenced by the 20 full applications rejected by the LAG.

The demise of Business Link and a national embargo on marketing spend on LEADER programmes were also factors.

Measure 313 - Encouragement of Tourism Activities



Key Challenges addressed - To raise the profile of the area as being an attractive area for residents, businesses and visitors' and 'To develop enterprises based on the area's environmental and heritage resources and opportunities'.

Tourism projects were the major feature of this LEADER programme. Applications had a good success rate and funding and outputs far exceeded initial expectations. Hardwick Hall has a brand new visitor centre and is attracting many more visitors than before it was built. The Peak Edge hotel has had at least 10,000 overnight stays. Weddings and conferences held there have also attracted an un-quantified number of day visitors. Reviews show that the visitors come from far and wide and many are returning. The Bolsover Brass Festival summer school had attendees from outside the UK. Bolsover Castle has increased visitor numbers and the holiday let projects have had smaller numbers of visitors.



Twin Oaks Hotel is a particular example of a project that has created links with the wider tourism offer. The hotel display leaflets advertising many other local attractions and are very proactive in seeking out ways of working with these, especially the nearby Bolsover Castle. As a result of the LEADER funding for the upgrade of the hotel the business has been able to develop other aspects of their offer, such as a new

bistro dining area.

The new Hardwick Hall visitor centre was a part of the wider stableyard complex development. Altogether, seven grant streams were coordinated and reliant upon each other.

Bolsover Brass festival has successfully attracted further funding to continue the project.

All original targets were increased significantly from the 2008 LDS. A slightly higher proportion of jobs were created per action supported than originally expected.

Fifteen of thirty eight applications under this measure were successful (39.5%). Sixteen were withdrawn. Four were turned down at Approval Panel and three at EOI stage. A sixteenth project was dual measure under tourism and heritage. The sixteen contracted projects have achieved much more than was predicted.

Total investment into this measure was expected to be £560,000 at an aid intensity of up to 100%. (£60,000 was expected to be levered in match funding leaving an aid intensity of 89.29%). This is a ratio of 0.12:1. That is, twelve pence in private match funding for every LEADER £1. Actual grant awarded in M313 was £1,230,374.85 with £1,834,039.59 in contracted match funding (£3,064,414.44). Overall intensity contracted was therefore 40.15%.

However, the total estimated investment was £4,567,069.79 with £3,336,694.94 contributed by the grant recipients. This gives an aid intensity of 26.94% and a ratio of 2.71:1.



The sixteen projects produced 54 tourism actions in the following locations; Ashover (2), Renishaw, Bolsover (5), Hardwick, Barlborough (2), Killamarsh (7), Eckington (7), Clay Cross (9), Stone Edge, Holmesfield, Tupton, Wingerworth, Holymoorside, Woolley Moor, Chesterfield (2), Moss Valley, Grassmoor, Shirland and Higham, Brackenfield, Holmewood, Hollin Hill, Cutthorpe, North Wingfield, Creswell, Scarcliffe, Palterton and Two Dales.



Fifty-four of an LDS target of fifty-six Tourism actions (96%) were contracted and 54 (100% of contracted / 96% of target) achieved. Some projects were contracted to do multiple actions, such as Marketing the Markets (21) and Hidden Gems (16).

13,201 (94%) of a target of 14,001 overnight stays were contracted with 11,341 (86% of contracted / 81% of target) achieved.

Day visitors had a target of 121,500 of which 55,887 (46%) were contracted and 70,924 (58% of target / 127% of contract) have been achieved.

41.38 jobs of a target of 49.5 (84%) were contracted. 44.6 (108% of contract, 90% of target) were achieved. The Peak Edge hotel was contracted to create 7.5, but has reported 70 new jobs (53.5 FTE). 18.5 jobs were to be created by Marketing the Markets, but it was recognised that the new stall holders they encouraged were not a perfect fit with the definition of a new job. The project only reported 0.5 jobs (Markets Officer). Other projects over-achieved offsetting this to a degree.

Measure 323 - Conservation and Upgrading of the Rural Heritage

Key challenges addressed – ‘To raise the profile of the area as being an attractive area for residents, businesses and visitors’ and ‘To develop enterprises based on the area’s environmental and heritage resources and opportunities’

Three projects were supported which received £64,381 in grant against £79,258 in contracted costs.

There may have been relatively little take up under this measure, but it resulted in a greater population benefiting than originally expected. There was a reasonable success rate. Eleven EOIs were submitted of which three were contracted (27.3%). Five were withdrawn and three were turned down at Approval Panel. Total investment into this measure was expected to be £380,000 at an aid intensity of up to 100%. (£60,000 was expected to be levered in match funding giving an overall intervention rate of 84.21%). This is a ratio of 0.19:1. That is, nineteen pence in private match funding for every LEADER £1. Actual grant awarded in M323 was £64,381 with £14,877 in contracted match funding (£79,258). Overall intensity was therefore 81.23%.



The three projects are located in Barlborough, Bolsover and Eckington. Three – against an LDS target of two (150%) heritage actions were contracted and all achieved their objective.

No 'population benefitting' figures were formally contracted. However, these were calculated using the population figures for the relevant wards. The total is 18,033 achieved.



Several projects specifically aimed to carry out conservation activity. A grade 2 listed building – Eckington Chapels of Ease - was prevented from further deterioration. Creswell Crags preserved the pre-historic artwork and enhanced the access to the unique Ice Age caves. Even projects that were not under the heritage measure undertook some conservation, such as two holiday lets and a farm shop project, all bringing redundant buildings back into use.

Barlborough Heritage Centre was a project specifically aimed at showcasing local history. Each of the North East Derbyshire Audio Trails explores some element of cultural or natural history enabling thousands of people to discover more about their local area. Twin Oaks Hotel was formerly a row of miners' cottages and the project very deliberately retained links with that heritage, through the addition of false doors to preserve the look of a row of cottages. Hardwick Hall now has a bespoke visitor centre, further promoting and interpreting the history of the Hall which attracts tens of thousands of visitors per year.

Measure 331 - Training and Information

Key challenges addressed – 'To nurture enterprise and raise skill levels of residents' and 'To raise the aspirations of residents, particularly in the most disadvantaged communities'

Clowne Enterprise was the sole grant recipient under this measure. Around 600 individuals benefitted from almost 300 training days through three related projects assisted businesses to start up or develop and have offered a range of business related training courses and forums.



Although there were only three contracted projects under this measure out of twelve EOIs (25%), these resulted in approximately the same number of beneficiaries being contracted as originally envisaged. The training days were originally expected at a rate of four per beneficiary but were contracted at not much more than one per individual. Seven project applications were withdrawn and two were rejected under this measure.



Total investment into this measure was expected to be £250,000 at an aid intensity of up to 100%. (£50,000 was expected to be levered in match funding, giving an aid intensity of 80%). This is a ratio of 0.25:1. That is, twenty five pence in private match funding for every LEADER £1. Actual grant awarded in Measure 331 was £68,836.16 with £46,514.95 in contracted match funding (£115,351.11)). Overall intensity was therefore 59.68%.

However, the total estimated investment was £115,395.88 with £46,559.72 being contributed by the grant recipients. This gives an aid intensity of 59.65% and a ratio of 0.68:1.

The three projects are with the same business located in Clowne but operating in Bolsover, rural North Bolsover and rural North East Derbyshire.

334 of a target of 148 (226%) beneficiaries were contracted and 601 (180% of contract / 406% of target) achieved.

251.5 (157%) of a target of 160 training days were contracted and 284.5 (113% of contract / 178% of target) claimed.

The LEADER Programme Financial progress

The Partnership's bid for £2,376,000 of RDPE funding including Management and Administration (M&A) costs was approved in October 2008. In December 2011, following the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review, there was a variation to contract that reduced the total grant allocation to £2,010,254 (including M&A).

In August 2012 a further variation increased the budget to £2,194,000 (including M&A). This allowed for a final bidding round.

At the end of the 2012/13 financial year Defra advised that a limited amount of extra funding was available for new projects which were approved and ready to start and complete within the programme. BNED LEADER applied for and was allocated an additional £64,477 resulting in total grant awarded of £2,258,477 (including M&A) – all fully committed. £0.35m of this was for M&A costs and £1.9m for projects.

As outlined above, the contracted match funding was much more than anticipated as most projects were contracted at lower grant funding intervention rates than that allowed. The programme's contracted total spend on projects was £4.5m; £1.9m in grant (42%) leveraging in £2.6m of match funding (58%).

If the evidenced total spend is taken into account (spend according to invoices submitted with claims), the total is £5.2m with the £1.9 in grant (37%) and £3.3 in match (63%).

However, total estimated investment as reported in the Project Impact Evaluation interviews is £6.5m with £4.6m of this being private match funding. This gives aid intensity of 29.23% at a ratio of 2.43:1.

Over 250 individual businesses and organisations have benefitted directly from the LEADER project. Some projects activated regular revenue spending which will continue to attract investment into the area.

There are also some projects that were enabled to draw down other funding. Grant recipients have gained experience and confidence in submitting applications for grant. Bolsover Brass Festival and Hardwick Hall are two examples of projects where the LEADER funding has been an important part of leveraging in further funding.

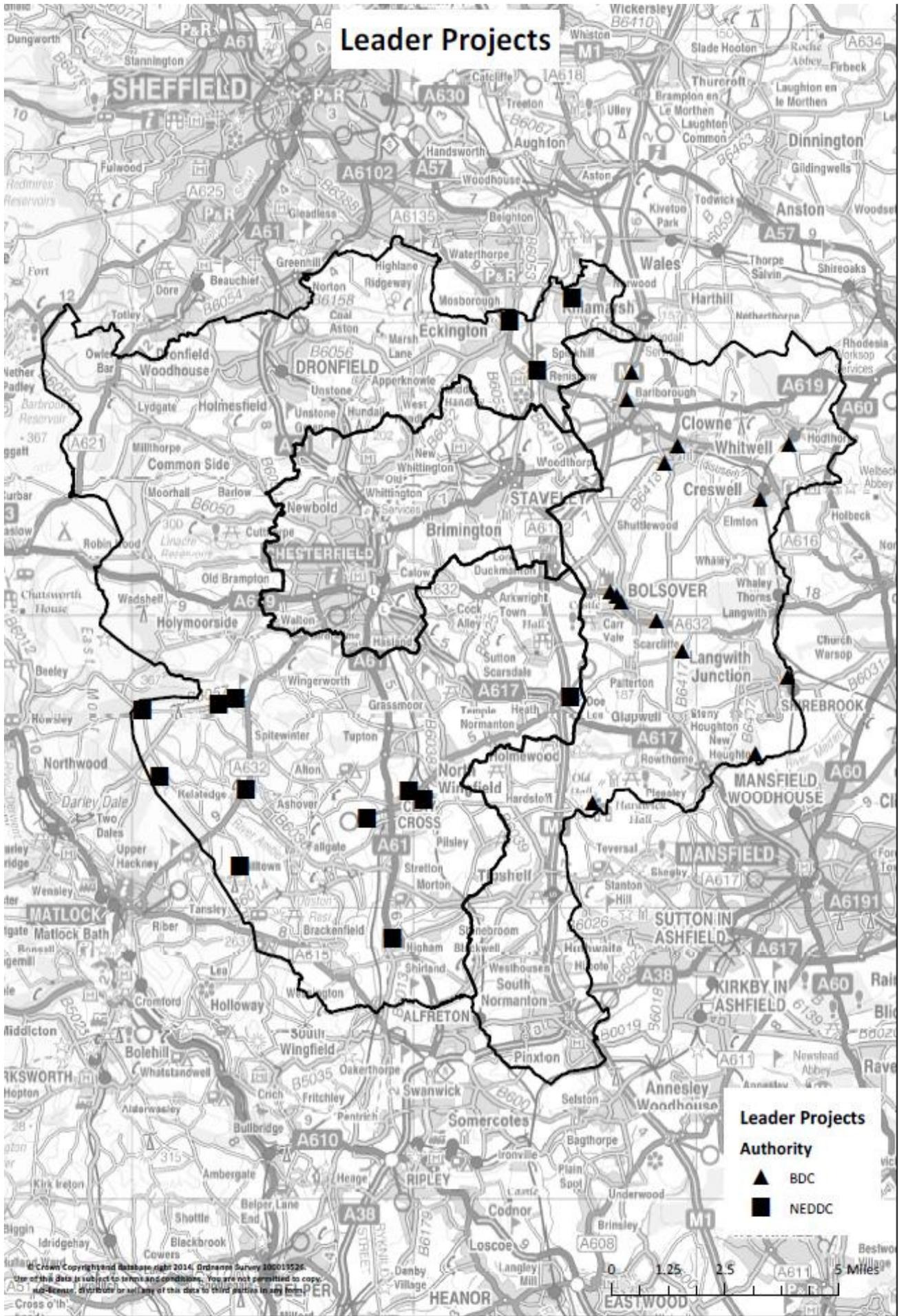
Funded Projects

Thirty two projects have received BNED LEADER funding;

Project Name	Project Ref	Location	LEADER grant	Total contract
M311				
Burrows Meats Farm Shop	BNEDX128	Shirebrook	£49,999.85	£104,953.33
M312				
Canine Country Club	BNEDX019	Gladwin's Mark	£43,211.39	£63,798.63
Coffee Art House	BNEDX050	Bolsover	£14,778.79	£29,557.58
In Control CRM	BNEDX064	Clay Cross	£17,288.75	£34,577.50
Bungalow Farm	BNEDX068	Kelstedge	£173,417.52	£457,807.62
Plastic Works	BNEDX076	Creswell	£40,241.50	£80,483
Ark Vets	BNEDX086	Killamarsh	£82,892.48	£167,945.08
Helping Hands	BNEDX096	Bolsover	£14,999.95	£49,910
Woodland Works	BNEDX125	Pleasley Vale	£6,000	£12,000
Instant Karma	BNEDX131	Clay Cross	£25,345.50	£50,691
Highfield House Farm Coffee Shop	BNEDX138	Stonedge	£70,623.47	£148,368.63
M313				
Holestone Moor Barns	BNEDX002	Ashover	£20,035.49	£50,088.71
Sitwell Arms	BNEDX006	Renishaw	£9,501	£19,002
Bolsover Castle	BNEDX009	Bolsover	£61,338.18	£122,676.36
Hardwick Hall	BNEDX021	Hardwick	£99,999.93	£256,865.85
Barlborough Hall*	BNEDX024	Spinkhill	£13,376	£13,376
Marketing the Markets	BNEDX027	Clay Cross	£120,485.51	£169,721.80
		Killamarsh		
		Eckington		
Peak Edge Hotel	BNEDX031	Stone Edge	£430,799.89	£1,587,000
Hidden Gems	BNEDX035	Ashover	£52,327	£52,327
		Brackenfield		
		Chesterfield Canal		
		Cutthorpe		
		Grassmoor		
		Higham		
		Hollin Hill		
		Holmesfield		
		Holmewood		
		Holymoorside		
		Linacre		

		Reservoir		
		Moss Valley		
		North Wingfield, Pilsley and Tibshelf		
		Shirland and Higham		
		South Chesterfield Way		
		Tupton		
		Wingerworth		
		Woolley Moor		
Creswell Crags	BNEDX039	Creswell	£46,453.73	£76,991.73
Audio Trails	BNEDX040	Clay Cross	£18,540.74	£26,812.35
		Bolsover		
Old Coach House	BNEDX049	Scarcliffe	£27,900	£55,800
Twin Oaks Hotel	BNEDX052	Palterton	£198,906.16	£411,133.80
Barlborough Heritage centre	BNEDX066	Barlborough	£38,928.72	£39,049.78
Pear Tree Farm	BNEDX072	Clay Cross	£33,668.08	£74,039.06
Bolsover Brass Festival	BNEDX099	Barlborough	£9,689.42	£12,680
		Clowne		
Matlock Farm Park	BNEDX107	Two Dales	£48,425	£96,850
M323				
Chapels of Ease	BNEDX010	Eckington	£10,659.46	£12,160
Bolsover Signing the Town	BNEDX023	Bolsover	£31,022	£31,022
Barlborough Hall*	BNEDX024	Spinkhill	£22,700	£22,700
M331				
Clowne 1	BNEDX003	Clowne	£30,496.47	£61,589.58
Clowne 2	BNEDX087	Bolsover Town	£22,302.55	£31,856.48
Clowne 3	BNEDX136	North East Derbyshire	£17,737.81	£25,339.72
			£1,904,092.34	£4,449,174.59

*Barlborough Hall funded under two Measures.



Programme Performance

The table below shows the change between the original and current contracted spend targets with Defra. The figures include expected private match funding.

The “contracted expected total investment” figures have been calculated by examining the actual contracts for each funded project. These amounts do not exactly match the August variation figures as the variation was undertaken before the final bidding round was completed and the final remaining funding allocated.

Original / current spend targets

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Total
Measure 311 Diversification into non-agricultural activities							
Original investment profile (£) (grant+match)	0	100,000	220,000	260,000	220,000	60,000	860,000
(£) Contracted total investment (grant+match)	0	0	0	0	55,583	49,371	104,954
Measure 312 Support for the creation and development of micro-enterprise							
Original investment profile (£) (grant+match)	0	160,000	300,000	320,000	300,000	60,000	1,140,000
(£) Contracted total investment (grant+match)	0	6,655	218,153	513,819	205,579	154,368	1,098,574
Measure 313 Encouragement of tourism activities							
Original investment profile (£) (grant+match)	0	89,600	145,600	156,800	134,400	33,600	560,000
(£) Contracted total investment (grant+match)	0	62,889	1,426,971	1,377,235	110,892	86,428	3,064,415
Measure 323 Conservation and upgrading of rural heritage							
Original investment profile (£) (grant+match)	0	35,640	89,100	118,800	106,920	29,700	380,160
(£) Contracted total investment (grant+match)	0	0	38,905	26,977	0	0	65,882
Measure 331 Training and information related to above activities							
Original investment profile (£) (grant+match)	0	31,250	75,000	75,000	62,500	6,250	250,000
(£) Contracted total investment (grant+match)	0	5,079	20,681	24,289	40,903	26,096	117,048
Original totals	0	416,490	829,700	930,600	823,820	189,550	3,190,160
Contracted totals	0	74,623	1,704,710	1,942,320	412,957	316,263	4,450,873

Tourism has drawn in the most investment – well over five times the anticipated amount. Because of this, the total contracted programme investment was £1.26m (39%) higher than was expected when drawing up the LDS and contracting with Defra.

Total project spend

The above figures are the minimum, contracted total investments by measure. LEADER projects invested much more into the area than the amounts contracted. This was determined by examining all spend by projects as seen on invoices presented with claims. Quite often, total invoiced amounts were higher than the eligible totals contracted. The invoices may have included amounts specific to the projects, but not eligible to be claimed as part of the contracted package (e.g. VAT,

items coming in at a higher price than envisaged, additional items purchased as essential to the project but not part of the contract etc).

The results of checking all invoices, which also identified all business benefitting from LEADER funded spend, showed that £5.2m was spent by LEADER projects for £1.9m of grant. That is over £1.75 of private match funding for each LEADER £1 given in grant. This is against the expectation of £2m in grant drawing down £1.2m in match funding. This would have been £0.65 of private match for each LEADER £1. It should be borne in mind that the total programme budget reduced in 2011 from the original £2.38m to £2.19m then subsequently increased in 2013 to the current £2.26m.

Estimated total project investment

As part of a Project Impact Evaluation interview, grant recipients were asked to estimate the total investment into their project and any directly related spin-off activity. For example, Twin Oaks Hotel went on to develop a Brasserie that would not have been the case without LEADER funding for the upgrade of the hotel. The figures are estimates, not evidenced by invoices or accounts, but by what the grant recipients believe they have additionally contributed / spent in total.

Another example is the Peak Edge Hotel project which was for the construction of the hotel only and was contracted to invest eligible spend of £1.6m. However, invoices showed spend of £1.9m – just on the construction. The grant recipient then had to fit out the hotel. He estimated a total spend of some £2.5m over two years and is now continuing to spend significant amounts with local suppliers for food and drink. He is also employed 70 members of staff and has confirmed a turnover of £2.5m - £3m which is mostly re-invested into the area.

Estimated total programme investment stands at over £6.5m.

Measure	Grant	Estimated total investment	Total Match	Ratio
311	49,999.85	157,726.53	107,726.68	2.15
312	490,500.02	1,539,037.24	1,048,537.22	2.14
313	1,230,374.85	4,567,069.79	3,336,694.94	2.71
323	64,381.46	150,421.07	86,039.61	1.34
331	68,836.16	115,395.88	46,559.72	0.68
	1,904,092.34	6,529,650.51	4,625,558.17	2.43

Overall Programme performance

The programme fully committed and spent the full contracted budget plus the additional £64,477 allocated in June 2013. The profile of spend was closely monitored and kept realistic.

The BNED-LEADER Programme funded thirty two projects. This gave an average of just under £60,000 grant per project whilst the average project total spend was almost £163,000. In terms of estimated total investment, the average per project stands at over £204,000.

Individual project performance against contract with regard to spend was good with an overall under-spend of £21,389 when totalling each project's initial and final contracts (about 1.1% of the total originally contracted.) Under-spend was reallocated

to newer projects as the programme progressed and all the funds have been allocated and spent.

Fifteen projects received grant funding that was within £10 of their original contract – accounted for by the rounding of the intervention rate percentages.

Six projects were within £500 of their spend target. These amounts comprise a mixture of small irregularities, decisions to not go ahead with a particular item or simply coming in slightly under budget.

Eleven projects varied more significantly from their original contracts, six by more than 5%. Two of the eleven were VAT issues, two were due to irregularities, one was capped by time and six came in under budget.

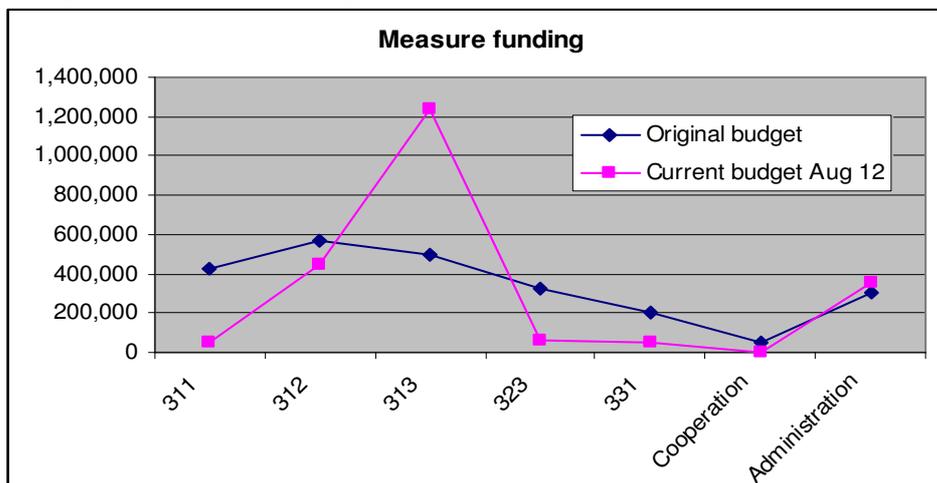
The range of variation from original spend targets is between 0 - 28%. In cash terms, the range is between £0.00 to £5,419.55. The overall average is an under-spend of £668 per project. The overall average percentage slip is 2.4%.

One further financial change to the programme related to Management and Administration costs. This was originally set at £356,000, split between Measure 421 (co-operation activity) and Measure 431 (running costs, skills acquisition, facilitation, animation). In the final variation, just over £352,000 was in Measure 431 and zero in Measure 421. Even with an actual final budget of £354,000 (due to the small project under spend), the programme was actually run on a slightly smaller M&A budget, but with a greater financial impact.

Project grant claims and spend.

Number of claims and spend		
Paid	Number	Amount (£)
2008	0	0.00
2009	3	21,736.16
2010	15	111,326.99
2011	52	1,226,140.02
2012	25	296,414.23
2013	31	248,474.94
	126	1,904,092.34

Original and current budgets per measure;



OUTPUTS

Original / current output targets

With the reduction of the LEADER budget to less than that which had already been contracted with projects, the outputs were re-profiled in line with those already / likely to be contracted.

Measure	Output	Original target contracted Oct 08	Current target LDS August 2012	Original unit cost	Current unit cost as August 12 LDS	Contracted outputs	Current unit cost as actual contract values
311	Beneficiaries	43	1	10,000	50,000	2	25,000
	Jobs	86	5	5,000	10,000	3	16,667
312	Micro-enterprises	48	9	11,875	49,166	10	49,050
	Jobs	100	23.5	5,700	18,830	26.5	18,509
313	Tourism actions	18	56	27,778	22,031	54	22,785
	Night visitors	3,400	14,001	147.06	88.12	13,201	93.20
	Day visitors	21,600	121,500	23.15	10.15	55,887	22.02
	Jobs	14	49.5	35,714	24,924	41.38	29,734
323	Heritage actions	32	2	10,000	32,191	3	21,460
	Population benefiting	300	6,574	1,067	9.79	15,015	4.29
331	Beneficiaries	200	148	1,000	350.05	334	206.10
	Training days	800	160	250	323.79	251.5	273.70

There were a number of variations and revisions between these two sets of figures.

Targets: August 2012 Variation

M311 Beneficiaries 1
Employment 5

M312 Micro-enterprise 9
Employment 23.5

M313 Tourism actions 56
Overnight stays 14,001
Day visitors 121,500
Employment 49.5

M323 Rural heritage actions 2
Population benefiting 6,574

M331 Beneficiaries 148
Training days 160

Outputs contracted and achieved to date. (August 2012 LDS Targets)

	M311			
	Beneficiaries		Jobs Created	
Outputs contracted	2	2	3	3
Targets	1	1	5	5
+/-	1	1	-2	-2
% contracted / achieved of target	200	200	60	60
	Contracted	Actual	Contracted	Actual

	M312			
	Created / Supported		Jobs Created	
Outputs contracted	10	10	26.5	27.16
Targets	9	9	23.5	23.5
+/-	1	1	3	0.66
% contracted / achieved of target	111	111	113	116
	Contracted	Actual	Contracted	Actual

	M313							
	Actions Supported		Additional Night Visitors		Additional Day Visitors		Jobs Created	
Outputs contracted	54	54	13201	11,341	55887	70,924	41.38	44.60
Targets	56	56	14,001	14,001	121,500	121,500	49.5	49.5
+/-	-2	-2	-800	-2,660	-65,613	-50,576	-8.12	-4.9
% contracted / achieved of target	96	96	94	81	46	58	84	90
	Contracted	Actual	Contracted	Actual	Contracted	Actual	Contracted	Actual

	M323			
	Heritage Actions		Population benefitting	
Outputs contracted	3	3	15,015	18,033
Targets	2	2	6,574	6,574
+/-	1	1	8441	11,459
% contracted / achieved of target	150	150	228	274
	Contracted	Actual	Contracted	Actual

	M331			
	Beneficiaries		Training Days	
Outputs contracted	334	612	251.5	284.5
Targets	148	148	160	160
+/-	186	453	91.5	125
% contracted / achieved of target	226	414	157	178
	Contracted	Actual	Contracted	Actual

Unit Costs

Overall, the currently contracted outputs were achieved for £1,904,092 against the original funding of £2,020,000 (a 5.7% reduction).

Unit costs were calculated by dividing the number of units (e.g. jobs, day visitors) into the amount of grant allocated to the measure. Therefore the unit costs changed with each variation and almost with each project contracted.

The original and final unit costs are;

Theme	Budget	Outputs	No	Unit Cost
Diversify Non-Agriculture Up to 50% - private match req'd	430,000	Beneficiaries	43	10,000.00
		Employment	86	5,000.00
Micro-Enterprises Up to 50% - private match req'd	570,000	Micro-enterprises	48	11,875.00
		Employment	100	5,700.00
Tourism Up to 100%	500,000	Tourism actions	18	27,777.78
		Overnight stays	3,400	147.06
		Day visitors	21,600	23.15
		Employment	14	35,714.29
Conservation & Rural Heritage Up to 100%	320,000	Rural heritage actions	32	10,000.00
		Population benefitting	300	1,066.67
Training Up to 70% - private match req'd	200,000	Beneficiaries	200	1,000.00
		Training days	800	250.00

Theme	Budget	Outputs	Contracted	Unit Cost
Diversify Non-Agriculture Up to 50% - private match req'd	50,000	Beneficiaries	2	25,000.00
		Employment	3	16,666.67
Micro-Enterprises Up to 50% Private match req'd	490,500	Micro-enterprises	10	49,050
		Employment	25.5	19,235.29
Tourism Up to 100%	1,230,375	Tourism actions	54	22,784.72
		Overnight stays	13,201	93.20
		Day visitors	55,887	22.02
		Employment	41.38	29,733.57
Conservation & Rural Heritage Up to 100%	64,381	Rural heritage actions	3	21,460.33
		Population benefitting	15015	4.29
Training Up to 70% Private match req'd	68,836	Beneficiaries	334	206.10
		Training days	251.5	273.70

The BNED LEADER Local Development Strategy identified Key Challenges

Key Challenges

From the analysis of the LAG Area, the following four key challenges were identified:

- To raise the profile of the area as being an attractive area for residents, businesses and visitors.
- To develop enterprises based on the area's environmental and heritage resources and opportunities.
- To nurture enterprise and raise skill levels of residents.
- To raise the aspirations of residents, particularly in the most disadvantaged communities.

From the identification of the key challenges the Partnership set a vision ***To develop a vibrant, dynamic and diverse rural economy by engaging local communities in an inclusive rural agenda to increase economic productivity and growth through the sustainable and creative development of rural resources, green infrastructure, the natural environment and heritage assets of the area.***

Engaging local communities in an inclusive local agenda

This is the ethos of the LEADER Approach – “bottom up” rural development. The funding was open to a broad spectrum of eligible activity. Projects such as Twin Oaks Hotel, Bolsover Brass Festival and Peak Edge Hotel have encouraged a sense of pride in the local communities. There was also more direct community involvement. Twin Oaks Hotel is particularly active in their locale including sponsoring a local sports team and hosting a weekly car-boot sale. Sitwell Arms has a strong involvement with the local community as many local groups use the pub as a meeting venue. Other projects enabled people to find out more about their local area, history and heritage, encouraging local involvement and ownership.

The programme funded 19 audio trails which are walks guided by multi-media files downloaded onto a mobile device (smart-phone / tablet etc). The walks vary in length, location, focus and difficulty and over 50,000 downloads have been made of the various trails. These trails involved a great deal of community involvement including research and interviews during development.

Marsh Green Farm Shop is on a walking route and Hardwick Hall offers a range of walks. Hardwick is also exploring links into the cycle ways. Pear Tree Farm is close to walking and cycle routes and offers bikes and horses for riding. Helping Hands riding school broadened its exercise offer to people of all abilities. Beans Coffee Art House offers healthy eating. Barlborough Heritage Centre, provided memory therapy for local Alzheimer's groups.

Economic productivity and growth

This means more than simple monetary increase in turnover. It encompasses questions such as Have customer numbers increased? Is the business more profitable? Has dwell time increased? Are customers more satisfied? Is an improved service offered? Is there a shortened lead time / food chain?

Projects reported good customer satisfaction levels. Even when these were not formally recorded then anecdotally it was clear that new or enhanced customer service / practices / procedures had positive impacts. Hardwick Hall, again, reported

almost double the percentage of visitors recorded their visitor experience at the top of the scale.

Some projects clearly succeeded in their aim to use local produce and shorten the supply chain. Marsh Green Farm Shop and Burrows Meats Farm Shop sell meat reared on site. The InControl CRM project allowed much more effective and efficient tracking of customers enabling more accurate quotes, time planning and thus lead times. Instant Karma brews and sells beer on site - the shortest possible lead time.

LEADER funding created three new businesses. Twenty six other businesses or organisations were directly supported by LEADER grants and many more businesses and suppliers benefitted indirectly. The Project Impact Evaluations (see p6) that were carried out on completed projects demonstrated the “knock-on” effects of those projects on suppliers and contractors. The 32 projects in total spent over £6.5m. All of the funded projects demonstrated increased productivity and some indicated increased turnover and profit, dependant on the nature of the project.

For some projects, turnover increased substantially. Proximity Interpretation reported that turnover and profit have doubled. In some instances, the fact that a business kept going at all was in part due to the LEADER funding.

Some businesses went from a baseline of zero and are now attracting tens of thousands of customers. A clear example of this is the new Peak Edge Hotel which is a completely new construction. Projects like Hardwick Hall report that visitors are staying twice as long as they used to.

In total at least 70 full time jobs have been directly created by LEADER funding. In addition, ad hoc and casual work was created. Despite the economic climate, many projects took on new staff. It is not possible to quantify whether projects led to new jobs elsewhere, but there is a case for arguing that the suppliers used were helped to stay in business. There were several construction projects which utilised sub contracted work e.g. plasterers that may have not been able to find work otherwise.

As well as direct job creation, the training projects impacted on people getting into work. People were assisted in starting up their own business or signposted to further assistance.

A job safeguarded was not a formal output of LEADER projects, but it is without doubt, from anecdotal evidence that jobs would have been lost without the funding. Ark Vets would not have regained its training status and would not have been able to keep on the trainee employees.

As mentioned above, it is very possible that the suppliers used were assisted to maintain turnover and staffing that otherwise may have diminished.

Sustainable and creative development

Innovation is very much part of the EU agenda. Projects were questioned around the following headings; “Has new technology been used? Have new processes and procedures been introduced? Is there new machinery / websites? Has it added value to local resources? Has it been a new response to a rural issue? Have new markets been reached?”

Many of the projects had innovative features. At least eight projects introduced new technology, machinery or were technology based. For example, new and more effective room booking software, CRM software and mobile apps were all funded.

For some projects this led to new and improved ways of doing business. In Control Ltd said they had been failing to charge customers correctly thereby losing income, but the new software eliminated this. Another company bought new machinery for its plastic works business. Several projects introduced new websites including Hidden Gems, Marketing the Markets, and Bolsover Signing the Town.

Most of the projects added value to their resources in some way. Pear Tree Farm amongst others converted disused buildings into businesses. Projects such as Hardwick Hall have attracted many more visitors, adding value to the property.

Projects were developed and contracted as part of the solution to the rural economic and social issues. Businesses were created and supported, jobs were created and safeguarded, people received free business advice and tens of thousands of additional visitors have been attracted into the area.

Businesses spoke of now having wider client bases. Projects such as Ark Vets were enabled to expand the nature of their work, thus reaching a whole new market for a new range of treatments.

Green Infrastructure;

There were a number of projects that specifically included environmental measures. Holestone Moor Barns purchased a wind turbine to mitigate fuel costs and extend their season. Pear Tree Farm installed solar panels. Twin Oaks Hotel made savings through using solar powered energy. Any new or refurbished buildings had to meet current regulations through the planning process and demonstrate compliance with the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology (BREEAM).

Projects, e.g. Audio Trails, enhanced appreciation of the natural environment through the provision of information. Creswell Crags was assisted to preserve ice age caves and pre-historic art work which would have deteriorated without the improved platform access and control of visitor numbers.

The natural environment and heritage assets of the area

Around half the LEADER projects funded involved either new construction or refurbishment of existing and rundown buildings. Chapels of Ease preserved an listed building. Ark Vets, Instant Karma, Twin Oaks, Barlborough Heritage Centre and Coffee Art House refurbished business premises. Pear Tree Farm, Marsh Green, Boarding Kennels and the Old Coach House converted derelict farm buildings. Four other projects – Matlock Farm Park, Hardwick Hall, Peak Edge and Burrows – involved new builds.

All of the above have improved physical appearance and access. Several converted existing buildings and brought them back into use.

A simple thing such as the enclosed and attractive garden at Pear Tree Farm has generated a good deal of positive feedback from visitors.

The Peak Edge Hotel project included landscaping with a bridged lake. Hardwick Hall improved visitor access with a new, specially surfaced car parking area. Visitors are now led to a different part of the site which they may not previously have known existed.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

In 2011 North East Derbyshire District Council and Bolsover District Council entered into a Strategic Alliance. The two Councils now share a Chief Executive and Directors / Assistant Directors and a number of shared services have also been developed.

In March 2012 the newly formed LEADER Exchange Group (LEG) met for the first time and has been meeting quarterly since. This is a forum attended by representatives from Defra, Local Action Groups and other government agencies. Whilst not a decision making body, the LEG forms a conduit for feeding information and best practice into EU policy and BNED LEADER maintains a significant involvement at this national level.

In 2013 the LEPs – Sheffield City Region and D2N2 – called for input into future plans for rural development. The Rural and Farming Networks held a series of nationwide events.

Renishaw Hall hosted elements of the Bolsover Brass Festival Summer School – a LEADER funded project.

Bolsover Castle; English Heritage was represented on the LAG. The Castle received funding for the reinterpretation of the William Cavendish Riding School. The castle also hosted elements of the Bolsover Brass Summer School.

Hardwick Hall; The National Trust was represented on the LAG. Hardwick Hall received funding for a new Visitor Reception Building that formed part of a high profile redevelopment of the Stableyard complex. They also hosted elements of the Bolsover Brass Festival Summer School.

All tourism projects were encouraged to link in with the wider tourism offer. Some, such as Twin Oaks Hotel and Bolsover Castle, worked closely together to their mutual benefit.

GEOGRAPHIC LIMITS

LEADER funding was available for wards within Bolsover and North East Derbyshire Councils areas with the exception of Dronfield North, Dronfield South and Gosforth Valley wards.

The benefit of a geographical limit was one of clarity for eligibility purposes. It ensured that LEADER funded activity was within and benefitted the relevant wards. In practise the strict geographical limits raised some difficulties. Several projects were turned down due to their location. There had to be sufficient evidence that the project activity would take place exclusively in the eligible area, e.g. Marketing the Markets was not allowed to operate in Dronfield, yet in terms of the overall aim of developing the county's market towns this was not necessarily ideal. The way the boundaries fall meant that at least two project submissions 'straddled' the border.

Markham Vale, at J29a of the M1, opened in June 2008. In 2013 a new road was opened that linked the junction more easily to the A632 Chesterfield road. These improvements facilitated the continued development of the Markham Vale site, part of which has been designated as an Enterprise Zone. As the site is a joint venture between the three councils – North East Derbyshire, Bolsover District and

Chesterfield Borough – it has been particularly difficult to determine geographical eligibility. There are opportunities to work more closely with Markham Vale in the future as training and employment needs are identified.

The Local Action Group

The LAG representatives changed over time, but the organisations represented remained broadly as they started although in some instances organisations ceased to exist. The private-sector majority on the LAG and in voting on projects has been maintained. Some organisations used delegation to allow deputies to attend so a greater number of individuals than organisations were present at the LAG meetings. Attendance at LAG meetings varied, but they were always quorate. Individual attendance at LAG meetings and approval panels ranged between 91% and 0% but averaged 44%.

The organisations represented were;

- Bolsover District Council.
- Derbyshire Association of Local Councils.
- Derbyshire County Council.
- Derbyshire Rural Community Council (Rural Action Derbyshire).
- East Midlands Business.
- English Heritage.
- National Farmers Union.
- National Trust.
- North East Derbyshire District Council.
- North Eastern Derbyshire Business Developments Ltd (NEDBD).
- Peak Borders Tourism Forum.
- Visit Peak District & Derbyshire.

NEDBD Ltd, which had responsibilities for contracts and Management & Administration grant claims, was always present at LAG meetings.

LAG members saw and voted on each EOI. They saw 123 EOIs of 140 registered as BNEDX projects. The remainder were withdrawn prior to going to the LAG.

Votes on EOIs;

The average response rate for LAG voting was 51%, the range being between 2% to 93%.

Across the programme lifetime, there were 13 declarations of interest which removed relevant LAG members from that particular vote.

The LAG did not remain totally static in size. Around half the members were on the LAG from the beginning giving stability and consistency.

The LAG members represented Measure 311 Farming, Measure 312 Business, Measure 313 Tourism, Measure 323 Conservation and Heritage and Measure 331 Training.

In 2011 a survey of LAG members was undertaken. One response suggested that greater representation for business and farming would be beneficial.

The survey illustrated that LAG members felt involved and well informed. They felt that the selection process worked well but that a scoring system may have helped in prioritising projects.

The LAG met thirty-three times.

There were three meetings in 2008, four in 2009, three in 2010, five in 2011 and two in 2012.

Fifteen Approval Panels were also held; none in 2008, four in 2009, seven in 2010, two in 2011, one in 2012 and one in 2013.

In addition there was an annual event in 2012.

Totals; 2008 – 3
 2009 – 8
 2010 – 10
 2011 – 7
 2012 – 4
 2013 - 1

There were 144 EOIs registered in total on the database ROD²

Number of EOIs registered on ROD		
2008		2
2009		45
2010		57
2011		11
2012		28
2013		1
Ineligible		4
Rejected by LAG		29
Withdrawn before LAG		17
Invited to full app		110
Withdrawn after invite		53
Taken to contract		33
Rejected		17
Withdrawn		8

Each EOI was considered independently by the LAG with recommendations made for what might need to be seen in the full application.

The projects that were invited to submit a full application were independently appraised and referred to the LAG Approval Panel for a final decision on funding.

Towards the end of the programme, as remaining funding decreased, projects were prioritised at Approval Panel. The vast majority of decisions to approve or reject projects were unanimous.

² ROD – Rural Development Programme Online Database

The LAG saw 50 projects at Approval Panel. 64% of which went on to be funded. There were projects amongst those rejected by the LAG which may well have been funded had there been sufficient budget available. .

	EOIs	Contracts	%	Full apps	Contracts	%
311	6	1	16.67	1	1	100
312	77	10	12.99	25	10	40
313	38	15	39.47	19	15	78.95
323	11	3	27.27	6	3	50
331	12	3	25	6	3	50
	144	32	22.22	57	32	56.14

Key Lessons & Findings

Page 6 of this report refers to observations of what has worked well in the 2007-2013 programme and what has worked not so well.

- LEADER is a bottom up approach open to rural communities and micro-enterprises, but there is a need for marketing and targeted support for the harder to reach groups. Anecdotally, there is little awareness of the LEADER programme and its related funding stream. The profile of the next Rural Development Programme and LEADER needs to be raised to ensure maximum take-up.
- A stable and experienced team is highly beneficial to ensure smooth delivery of the next programme. Whilst some change is almost inevitable, keeping to an established delivery team will foster good relationships with grant recipients.
- Consistent, clear advice, rules and regulations are needed both to the LEADER delivery team and to grant recipients. Everyone concerned with the LEADER programme needs to be fully aware of the expectations placed upon them.
- An assessment of what is needed and what can be achieved in the local area is necessary. The forecasting of outputs needs to be realistic and attainable.
- Flexibility around cash flow issues have presented some difficulties for a few projects. Whilst there is a need for financial controls, other delivery options should be considered.
- Looking holistically at the impact of projects when selecting projects for funding would give wider results and benefits. This would ensure a balanced programme delivery across all areas of activity.

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