

## **Local Action Groups (LAG)**

**Releasing  
Innovative Resourcing Solutions  
To Realize Challenging Objectives**



**As A LAG Board or Staff:**

**What would you do if asked to take on a challenge which you cannot solve based on conventional sources of funds, involving a range of stakeholders ?**

**Run?**

**Hide?**

**Avoid?**

**Challenge: Develop a One-Stop-Rural-Development Resource Centre through a LEADER-Private Sector Partnership**

**Challenge: Develop a Multi-Functional, Multi-Dimensional and Multi-Sectoral Support Team**

**Challenge: Develop the Natural Environment as a catalyst for new Social, Educational and Economic as well as Conservation Objectives**

**Challenge: Develop a Business-Led Peer-Support Network, Fostering The Continued Development of Rural Enterprise**

<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Develop a Business-Led Peer-Support Network, Fostering The Continued Development of Rural Enterprise</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	Local Research indicated that LEADER Supported Enterprises would see benefit from Business Led Peer-Support Network
<b>Approach (Evolution 1)</b> 1996 +	LEADER Enterprise Focus on Local Artisan Foods, Crafts and Tourism Products and Services. Increasing numbers of these businesses year-on-year across the LAG Territory
<b>Approach (Evolution 2)</b> 2001-2011	Develop from a small base separate ‘network’ plans for Local Foods, Crafts and Tourism. Introduce the position that ‘membership’ was fee-based; Private sector fees can at times also lever public funds. LAG is the Facilitator
<b>Approach (Evolution 3)</b> 2012 +	Merge the separate ‘networks’ into Peer-Support Group; Fee Paying Members Share Marketing Platforms, Commit to quarterly increased business-to-business interactions, showcases and local trade links. Businesses cover costs of all materials, expertise, logistics, marketing investment’s etc. LAG provides management and facilitation support (budget, commissioning, logistics, web and social media management etc.)
2013 +...	<b>Launch of ‘Ring of Cork’ Brand - 100+ Fee Paying Members</b>

Launch Attracted 10,000 Visitors on 18.05.2013& Media Coverage to over 1.3m people...Membership Fees from over 100 businesses underpins the sustainability of the Network...



# Ring of Cork Festival



Challenge	Develop Natural Environment as a catalyst for new Social, Educational and Economic as well as Conservation Objectives
Rationale	LAG recognised through early trans-national LEADER Project (IE-IT) with case work involving RSPB in UK that Natural Environment offered social, environmental and economic opportunities (2000).
Approach (Evolution 1) 2001 + <b>No Lead Developer...</b>	Variety of stakeholders e.g. landowners with differing agenda's... Local Authorities with 'Policies' but little Resource or Focus... Environment NGO's small and focused geographically elsewhere...
Approach (Evolution 2) 2001-2009	SECAD <b>Cork Harbour CSR Concept</b> (2003) to contribute funding and staff support to develop first eco-trail, education handbooks for schools, interpretative signage, associated marketing materials and more... in 2006/08 with 19 habitats and 120km driving trail.
Approach (Evolution 3) 2009 +	Major wetlands and beach management programme initiated in 2010 resulting in formation of 31 volunteer habitat management groups. Associated eco-trails strategy developed by LAG (2011+) involving 22 separate projects . In-land habitat regeneration/invasive species management programme initiated(2013)... And support from new Labour Market Activation Programme contracted to the LAG.
2013 +...	<b>Developing 19 new habitats in Cork Harbour...</b>



## SECAD ECO-Trails Programme Supported through Cork Harbour CSR Initiative



Challenge	Develop a Multi-Functional, Multi-Dimensional and Multi-Sectoral Support Team
Rationale	From the earliest stages of the formation of the LAG it was clear that the un-met needs of local communities spread beyond the scope of the Rural Development (LEADER) Programmes.
Approach (Evolution 1) 1996 +	LAG developed a programme of activity specially focused on providing supports for the most disadvantaged people funded from national/ESF programmes from 1997.
Approach (Evolution 2) 2002+	From 2002 the LAG developed overall Local Development Strategy from which separate operational programmes for <b>Rural Development and Social Inclusion</b> were drawn. The LAG successfully attracts new forms of finance from a range of sources including INTERREG Funds.
Approach (Evolution 3) 2007 +	From 2009 the Local Development Strategy further expanded to include Local Integrated <b>Community Transport &amp; Labour Market Activation</b> – SECAD awarded new employment programme 2010
2013...	<b>Multi-disciplinary</b> team in place offering mentoring, training, advice and guidance on financial management, auditing, business planning, community development, social inclusion, logistics etc.



## Training & Mentoring

Business Skills

Volunteer Management

Health & Safety Skills

## Animation

Economic Diversification

Quality of Life

Social Inclusion

## Planning

Business Planning

Community Planning

Project Planning

Heritage & Accessibility

SECAD Support  
Team – Direct  
Guidance

## Personal Development

Job Preparation

Motivation & Placement

Pre-education/training  
preparation



Challenge	Develop a One-Stop-Rural-Development Resource Centre & Innovation Hub
Rationale	The LAG aimed to develop a hub for innovation and enablement - early research identified <b>lack of incubation space</b> for micro and growing enterprise. Services supports geographically spread.
Approach (Evolution 1) 1998	Establish a business working group of small businesses aiming to expand and without access to appropriate infrastructure. Negotiate the development of 7 hectare site with Local Authority.
Approach (Evolution 2) 1998-2001	Negotiate with local authority to provide 0.5 hectares free in lieu of facilitating the sale of remaining sites. The new businesses to form legal structure to jointly develop the 0.5 acres into an Enterprise & Community Incubation Centre together with the LAG
Approach (Evolution 3) 2001-2012	<b>First Incubation and training centre</b> established in 2001 providing <b>base for LAG</b> and location for 15 new /expanding enterprise. Further 20 hectares developed nearby in following years for <b>growing business, social enterprise and retail.</b>
2012+	<b>LAG One-Stop-Services Centre</b> expanded from 2000sq/ft to 6000sq/ft offering training, IT and mentoring rooms, employment activation services and a social enterprise investment bank



**SECAD Resource Centre  
also facilitates external  
complementary Disability  
and Employment Services  
& also a Social Innovation  
Investment Group**



**Expanded One-Stop  
Rural Development  
Resource Centre  
Open by Minister of  
Agriculture,  
Simon Coveney TD  
November 9<sup>th</sup> 2012**



**Average of 300 people  
Per month visiting,  
training or receiving  
mentoring support...  
over 85% of SECAD's  
activities now delivered  
through the Centre**



**Development Costs for  
Centre shared with local  
Business Community &  
Rental Costs are reduced  
By circa 25%**



**For Local Action Groups (LAG)  
Attempting to realise challenging objectives it  
often requires;**

**Long Term Planning**

**Capacity to 'share' and 'sell' your Vision**

**Manage inputs from a range of stakeholders**

**Patience and Belief in  
Your Values and in  
Yourself**