



# Scottish Borders LEADER

Developing Enterprising Communities

## LEADER PRINCIPLES

### What is LEADER?

LEADER is a European Union and Scottish Government funded programme which aims to promote economic and community development in rural areas. The funds are managed locally by local partnerships (known as Local Action Groups) in rural areas to support **innovative** and **sustainable** local rural development projects.

**“LEADER encourages rural territories to explore new ways to become or remain competitive, to make the most of their assets, and to overcome the challenges they face.”** (European Commission, 2006)

### LEADER in the Scottish Borders

Following a Borders wide community lead local development consultation during 2014 the overall strategic aim of the Scottish Borders LEADER Local Development Strategy (LDS) focusses on **Enterprising Communities**. From this overall theme four development themes have been adopted:

**1) A focus on enterprise, including revenue generation and sustainability.**

Scottish Borders LEADER is keen to hear from any individual, entity or venture wishing to develop and undertake innovative projects that will create an income stream resulting in lasting benefits such as employment and growth opportunities for rural areas

**2) A focus on support for small and micro rural businesses, farm diversification projects and social enterprises, including the following key rural sectors:**

- **Tourism** – including raising standards.  
Projects which involve activities, holidays and attractions that will increase the number of tourists visiting the Borders and its development as a preferred tourist destination nationally and internationally with an emphasis on quality, high standard services.
- **Food and Drink** – supply chain development.  
The Scottish Borders is a source of excellent produce, providing a starting point for the development of high quality food and drink creation projects or those involved in the supply chain – the sequence of processes involved in their production and distribution – thus contributing to the further enhancement of this area’s reputation.
- **Creative industries** – including arts, culture and events.  
Projects which develop cultural activities, products and services including arts, craft, design, fashion, etc. as well as marketing, promotional and PR services.
- **Renewables** – supporting the development of the low carbon economy and reducing energy bills.  
Projects utilising a natural resource or source of energy that is not depleted by use, such as

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water, wind or solar power or any combination of these including the use of biomass technologies which will help to reduce carbon emissions and energy bills.

### 3) A focus on developing people:

- Supporting projects that create employment.  
Projects that will create or result in the creation of jobs, contributing to the improvement of the Borders economy.
- Developing community capacity and leadership.  
Projects that improve community networks and services (see more information below), making them better places to live and work, as well as identifying and developing leaders to further grow this infrastructure.
- Supporting employability and youth employment.  
Projects that create and develop job opportunities particularly for young people in the Borders.
- Supporting skills development and training opportunities.  
Projects that provide training and skills development to enhance employability and/or quality of life.

### 4) Geographic focus on areas of rural deprivation.

Rural areas face different issues from large towns and cities, including generally poor or fewer public transport links, fewer job opportunities, lower paid jobs, less opportunity for social interaction, poor technology links, higher energy costs, etc. Scottish Borders LEADER is therefore keen to hear from projects that help to address these areas, with the purpose of improving life for people in rural areas, enhancing social inclusion and reducing poverty.

The underpinning principles of **innovation** and **capacity building** are fundamental to the strategic aim of the Scottish Borders LDS and its objectives.

One of the main principles of LEADER is to encourage **Innovative** projects to address local needs. This could include introducing a pilot project which tests a brand new concept or sharing best practice by launching a new development opportunity to the Scottish Borders which has been tested in other areas.

Community **Capacity Building** is a significant part of the Scottish Borders LEADER Programme 2014-2020. We are actively looking for projects which:

- Develop people and groups within local communities
- Support employment in rural areas
- Are managed community and volunteer groups
- Involve active retired residents and encourage projects which benefit from the enthusiasm, knowledge and skills transfer from these people
- Develop skills of young people including youth entrepreneurship
- Develop leadership and skills in local communities
- Support the development of sustainable third sector, not for profit organisations.

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Projects should also focus on developing sustainable revenue streams and have a long term plan to ensure continuation after the funding period ends.

Each LEADER project proposal should demonstrate how it will deliver against the development themes and how it aligns with the Local Development Strategy.

For further information on who can apply please see the individual information sheets on:

- **The LEADER Fund** - the majority of LEADER funding supporting innovative Community group enterprises and Public Sector projects. This fund also encompasses the **Co-operation Fund** – for collaborative ventures with other groups in the region, UK or transnational, across Europe.
- **Rural Enterprise Fund** - the portion of LEADER funding that supports the development of small/micro rural businesses either through farm business diversification or non-agricultural rural enterprises.

(Version 1 – 15/01/16)

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