



NORTH WESSEX DOWNS LEADER

Programme Report 2020

Overview

The LEADER Programme is a community-led grant scheme that provides funding for small businesses and communities in defined rural areas across the EU. In England it was delivered under the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) as part of the Common Agriculture Policy.

There have been two North Wessex Downs LEADER Programmes – the first ran between 2009 and 2013 and the latest ran between 2015 and 2020. Both Programmes were administered by Wiltshire Council and the latest was one of 79 Programmes running across the country.

The North Wessex Downs LEADER area was based on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty but extended beyond its boundaries to ensure as much of the rural area as possible was included. It covered parts of the following local authorities: Wiltshire, Swindon, South Oxfordshire, Vale of the White Horse, Hampshire, Test Valley and West Berkshire. The area was extensive; it covered 769 square miles and a population of over 132,000.

The planning, decision-making and implementation was done at a local level, carried out by a Local Action Group (LAG) made up of private, public and community sector volunteers representing a wide range of experience and knowledge of local rural issues.

With the UK's withdrawal from the EU there will be no further LEADER programmes in England. It is hoped that there will be locally run, rurally-focussed funding programmes in the future, possibly via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, but at the moment this is uncertain.

This report is to summarise the delivery and impact of the 2015-2020 North Wessex Downs LEADER Programme and to provide some lessons learned for future local rural funding programmes. It also provides summary case studies of each of the projects supported by the Local Action Group over the last five years and where they are located.



North Wessex Downs LEADER

2015-2020 Programme

Introduction

The second North Wessex Downs LEADER Programme ran from late 2015 until the autumn of 2020.

There were six national funding priorities set by DEFRA for the Programme:

- **Agricultural productivity**
- **Micro / small business development (including farm diversification)**
- **Rural tourism / the visitor economy**
- **Rural services**
- **Culture and heritage**
- **Forestry**

These were reflected in the North Wessex Downs Local Development Strategy approved by DEFRA in 2015. The strategy set out how the Local Action Group intended to use 2015-20 LEADER funding to help the North Wessex Downs be an area renowned for its:

- thriving and sustainable local businesses – businesses which use the landscape as an economic driver and which value and respect the land and environment,
- quality as a destination for sustainable and responsible tourism,
- well managed farmland and woodland with land managers who look after the natural environment and the wildlife which depends on it and
- vibrant and cohesive communities.

The LAG identified the key issues and objectives under each of the six priorities. It also identified some cross-cutting themes for funding which were: jobs and growth; sustainability; innovation; equal opportunities; and integration (between projects and between other rural funding streams).

There were some significant challenges during the first two years of the Programme following the referendum result to leave the EU and the General Election but by summer 2019 the LAG had allocated its project budget and had diverted significant administration cost savings to fund additional projects.

Key to the smooth running of the Programme were the knowledge and commitment of the LAG. Many thanks are owed to the members who gave their considerable time and enthusiasm to ensure the programme was a success. See **Annex F** for a full list of thanks.

Programme Performance

The 2015-20 Programme delivered **£1.6 million** to **43** projects with **45** organisations directly benefitting from grants. **The project summaries at Annex B** demonstrate these projects were wide and varied and spanned all six national priorities. Combined with match funding the Programme facilitated a total investment in the local rural economy of **£4.3 million**. Grants ranged from £4.3k to almost £100k and averaged **£37k**.

The primary purpose of this LEADER Programme was to grow the rural economy - to develop business, create jobs, improve productivity and competitiveness, and encourage more visitors to visit, stay and spend in the area. We estimate that so far the grants have helped create 44 new jobs and helped increase the number of overnight or day visitors in the area by 4,600.

Annex A shows the Local Development Strategy forecasts made in 2015 for key programme outputs compared to those achieved. Comparisons are made for budget breakdown by priority, the number of projects supported and the number of jobs created to date. Some key changes took place during the programme period which had an impact on the overall project budget, the timeframes to deliver the funding and how the programme was run.

Achievements against national priorities and local objectives:

Agricultural productivity

A quarter (£420k) of the grant funding supported 15 farming businesses, primarily for projects which were to: improve soil health; reduce water run-off and erosion; reduce input costs; improve animal health and welfare; and improve waste and water management. These projects have helped improve farm productivity, competitiveness and sustainability.

Micro / small business development (including farm diversification)

Nearly half of the funding (£765k) was used to support small rurally-based businesses to expand, enter new markets, diversify their income streams or create or improve facilities. It helped a range of key sectors including manufacturing, equine, horse-racing, hospitality, leisure, food and health. It also helped some farmers diversify into tourist accommodation and race-horse facilities helping to improve business profitability and sustainability.

Rural tourism / the visitor economy

£114k was given to projects which provided important upgrades to tourism facilities such as at The Living Rainforest and the cyclepath between Marlborough and Chiseldon or which helped convert redundant buildings into holiday lets.

Rural services

£110k worth of projects were supported which have improved community facilities in three different villages: Ramsbury's new purpose-built pre-school building; the village hall at Hampstead Norreys and the Church at Burghclere. The projects have provided better spaces, helped create social hubs and expanded the range of services provided to the communities.

Culture and heritage

Grant funding of £61k was given to restore three local heritage buildings: Pewsey Heritage Museum; Uffington's Old School Room; and the 1860s Lackham Granary now standing at the Wilton Windmill site. The projects helped secure the future use and enjoyment of these historic and cultural features.

Forestry

Two forestry projects were grant-aided a total of £129k. These and other projects supported will help bring more woodland back in to active management to increase the supply of wood products and wood-fuel to support a low-carbon economy and better bio-diversity as well as help manage the issues arising from ash die-back disease across the LAG area.

Annex C gives details of the organisations supported and levels of grant awarded to each. **Annex D** shows where each project is located.

Economic, Environment and Social Impacts:

Economic Benefits:

The main economic benefits to date from the projects supported are that:

- 45 organisations have directly benefited and many more have benefited indirectly
- 44 new jobs have been created and many others safeguarded
- there has been a wage bill increase to date of £752k
- the number of overnight and day visitors to the area has increased by some 4,600.

In addition:

- Business income has risen and / or diversified via rental income from tourist accommodation or work space;
- More visitors to the area have meant more visitor spend in local shops, pubs and restaurants and
- Business costs have been reduced with the introduction of new technologies and energy efficiency measures.

Social and Community Benefits:

The social benefits from some of the projects have been extensive:

- Educational, leisure and cultural facilities have been created and improved for children, young adults and the elderly, including the dis-advantaged and vulnerable,
- Healthy and sustainable living has been encouraged and
- Community and tourist facilities have been improved to encourage learning, cultural awareness and community support.

From the 8 community / recreational projects supported it is estimated that 21,220 people will directly benefit from improved services and facilities.

Environmental Benefits:

A key consideration for the Local Action Group was to minimise the potentially negative impacts of delivering a programme primarily about delivering jobs and growth. Applicants were encouraged to consider their approach to energy use, water management, waste, materials, transport and the landscape. Projects included those which:

- use new technology to reduce soil disruption, water run-off, pesticide and fertiliser use, and reduce energy and fuel consumption
- store and use rainwater to reduce water consumption
- make better use of animal waste to improve soil health and productivity
- improve animal health and wellbeing and reduce the negative impact they can have on the environment and
- encourage sustainable and healthy living.

Lessons from the LEADER Programme

On the basis that there may be some form of local rural funding scheme in the future, the following are some of the key lessons learned from running the North Wessex Downs 2015-20 LEADER Programme. A summary SWOT analysis of the Programme is shown at **Annex E**.

Decision making and governance:

- The knowledge, expertise and commitment of all those responsible for running the Programme have been key to completing it successfully and distributing the funding within the changing deadlines. There is a wealth of knowledge and experience which could be used for a future Programme. Several LAG members have expressed their interest to continue in the future if the opportunity arises.
- Member representation on the LAG is important and should reflect the area covered, all key sectors and the priorities of the programme.

Objectives and priorities:

- A future programme needs to recognise that how the land is managed and how economic growth takes place are fundamental to the future of the protected landscape. Its quality is central to the continued economic and social prosperity of the people who live in it.
- Although local priorities should be at the fore-front of a new local funding scheme, projects should help address the Climate Emergency and help meet the UK's net-zero emission target by 2050. Working with the farming and forestry sectors and other land-based businesses will be crucial.
- Rural funding should not only be about measurable economic outputs. Some projects in themselves do not create jobs but they do help safeguard others or create new ones indirectly. Community projects add great value in ways which are often unquantifiable.

Geography:

- Although LAGs worked to align the area boundaries, because of Local Authority boundaries and population limits there was one area in the north of Swindon Borough which was not covered by LEADER funding. Funding should be open to all rural businesses and communities.

Management and administration:

- Applicants have really benefited from having someone local "on the ground" to help them through the funding process - someone who can pay them a visit, talk them through the application, appraisal and claim processes.
- A rigorous and high quality appraisal process for all applications is essential to ensure fairness and consistency but that appraisal process should allow room for innovation and reasonable risk-taking.
- Some applicants found the application process complicated and long-winded. Although rigorous processes and checks are necessary when allocating public

funding there needs to be a balance with practicality so as not to deter potential applicants with good projects.

Finances:

- Many things changed during the programme and it proved essential to build in some budget flexibility to accommodate financial, process and political variations.

Partnership and co-operation:

- Engaging key decision makers across the area will be key to ensuring the rural economy and the environment are not forgotten but indeed prioritised. A future scheme should build on the positive links with the Local Enterprise Partnerships, Local Authorities and other key funding players to ensure priorities are co-ordinated and mutually supportive.
- Promotion and marketing are tasks which need to be shared with key stakeholders to ensure all areas, communities and sectors are aware of funding opportunities.

Annexes follow for reference:

- A – Programme Performance – Outputs achieved
- B – Project Summaries
- C – Organisations supported 2015-20
- D – Map of project locations
- E – Summary SWOT analysis
- F – Thanks



The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development:
Europe investing in rural areas



Programme performance

Outputs achieved

The table below shows the Local Development Strategy forecasts made in 2015 for key programme outputs compared to those achieved.

LEADER POLICY PRIORITY	LDS FORECAST FUND BREAKDOWN	ACTUAL FUND BREAKDOWN	OUTPUT INDICATORS	LDS FORECAST	ACTUAL
Support for increasing farm productivity	12%	26.3%	Total expenditure	£167,772.00	£420,164.73
			Number of projects supported	6	15
			Jobs created (FTE)	2.7	2
Support for micro and small enterprises / farm diversification	50%	47.8%	Total expenditure	£699,050.00	£764,164.91
			Number of projects supported	35	17
			Jobs created (FTE)	58.6	33.4
Support for rural tourism	15%	7.1%	Total expenditure	£209,715.00	£114,203.15
			Number of projects supported	7	3
			Jobs created (FTE)	6.5	2.67
Support for cultural and heritage activity	5%	6.9%	Total expenditure	£69,905.00	£61,025.29
			Number of projects supported	2	3
			Jobs created (FTE)	1.2	0
Support for rural services	8%	3.8%	Total expenditure	£111,848.00	£109,968.75
			Number of projects supported	5	3
			Jobs created (FTE)	3.4	5
Support for increasing forestry productivity	10%	8.1%	Total expenditure	£139,810.00	£128,767.76
			Number of projects supported	6	2
			Jobs created (FTE)	1.8	0.83
TOTAL	100%	100.0%	Total expenditure	£1,398,100.00	£1,598,294.59
			Number of projects supported	61	43
			Jobs created (FTE)	74.2	43.9

Key features / main differences:

- The project budget increased due to exchange rate changes, some re-allocation of funds and admin savings
- Fewer projects were funded than forecast due to contracted timeframes to deliver the Programme and an increase in the size of maximum grant
- More agricultural projects were supported than forecast reflecting more interest across the farming sector compared to the previous Programme. It reflects BREXIT uncertainty and better sector promotion. It redresses the funding imbalance from 2009-13.
- Fewer jobs have been created than forecast so far. Under normal circumstances the number of new jobs continues to rise as businesses expand as a result of the new investments.



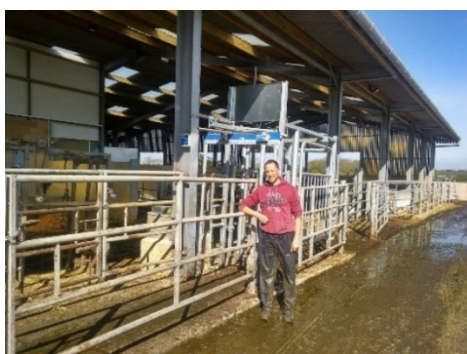
PROJECT SUMMARIES

Farming / agricultural productivity

Berkeley Farm Dairy, Wroughton - Wood Farm Dairy Modernisation

The project was the purchase and installation of equipment to modernise and allow expansion of this long-established dairy. It was part of a wider project which involved the construction of a new milking parlour, a new dairy, new cattle handling facilities and new cow housing.

The aim of the project was to improve the size and economic viability of the dairy herd whilst improving animal welfare and energy use. The equipment included an auto flush cluster system, auto shedding gate, LED lighting, a plate cooler and a variable speed vacuum pump.



The automatic shedding gate

Grove Brothers Limited, Ogbourne St George - Auto-flush cluster

An auto flush cluster system was installed to help prevent the transmission of mastitis between cows in the parlour and to complement the farm's mastitis control strategy.

The Automatic Disinfection and Flushing (ADF) system applies both teat spray and emollients immediately the cow has finished milking and before the teat is exposed to the environment. Every teat cup is then sanitized and rinsed ready for the next cow. Reliable high quality hygiene standards are achieved at every milking. The teat spraying task is one less operation to do manually so reduces milking time.



Broomsgrove Farming, New Mill – Slurry separator

The purchase of slurry separator to improve the management of slurry at Broomsgrove dairy. A slurry separator reduces the volume of slurry by separating it into stackable, drop free solids and easily spreadable nutrient rich liquids. The separator would allow the business to increase cow numbers without it having to increase storage capacity.



Roaming Dairy Limited at Pitt Hall Farm, Ramsdell – Roaming dairy

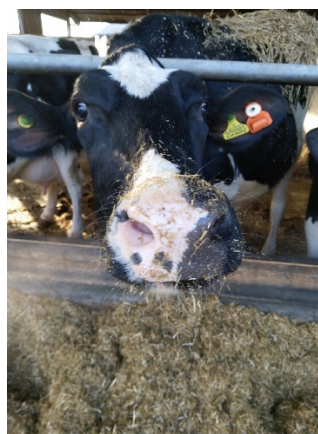
The establishment of a mobile dairy herd which required the purchase of a mobile cattle handling system, a self-levelling cow platform, a mono-ethelene glycol milk cooler, a thermodynamic water heating system and a variable speed vacuum pump.

This is a collaborative project between Roaming Dairy Ltd (a new start-up farming business) and the Kingsclere Estate Ltd which owns the land. The new dairy enterprise takes advantage of the arable and grass ley crop rotation which was implemented on the estate for organic arable production in 2012. The herd are out-wintered on pastures that support both sheep and cattle in the same year to benefit from the differences in grazing styles at different growth stages. Given the large areas of rotational grazing the mobile dairy and associated infrastructure needed to be mobile so that the cows could move around the entire farm.



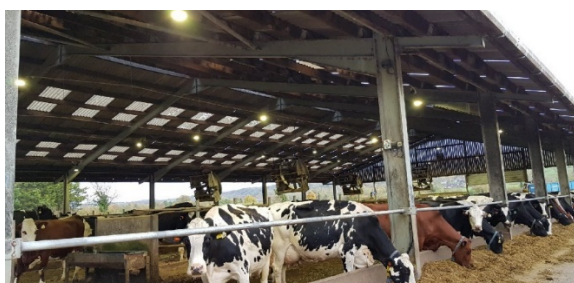
Stowell Farms, Sharcott Pennings, Pewsey – CowManager System

This project was to purchase a CowManager ear tag monitoring system which allows the farm to monitor cow health and activity from an ear tag transponder. The tag monitors cow movement, temperature, rumination and feeding. The combination of these allows best timing for Artificial Insemination and also give early warnings of any health problems much earlier than physical symptoms would be apparent.



Gee Jay Farming Limited, Bushton – LED lighting and CowManager system

This project was to monitor cow health and activity from a CowManager ear tag transponder system and to install LED lighting throughout the various cattle barns and yards to improve energy efficiency and reduce operational costs.



Biddesden House Farm Partnership, Biddesden, Ludgershall

Biddesden House Farm Partnership purchased and installed a slurry separator system to improve slurry management and various rainwater harvesting equipment for reduce water wastage.



Kingsclere Estate Limited, Ramsdell, Tadley

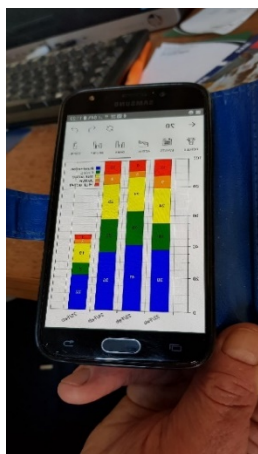
This project was for the purchase of a GPS and specialist all in one seeder and mechanical weeder specially built by Einbock for organic cropping. The Einbock system provides organic farmers the flexibility to perform three tasks, seeding, hoeing and tine weeding independently in multiple or combined as a single pass machine mounted on the back of the tractor. Crops are established in wide row spacings providing an opportunity to mechanically weed before the sown crop has emerged, followed by inter row weeding during in early growth.

The system will allow for an improvement in the way crops are established and weeds controlled within the growing crop and this will improve yields and grain quality.



KJ & CY GOUGH – Westfield Farm, Ogbourne St George.

This project was the introduction of CowManager monitoring technology to improve performance, fertility and the welfare of cattle. The system provides continuous live monitoring of key indicators, which results in better animal welfare, higher fertility rates and better feeding regimes. Improving these factors all act to reduce inputs and increase margins.



The LAG supported six farmers to purchase zero- or min-till drills. Each chose a different make / model to suit the size of their farm, soil and topography.

S W Colliss and Son – SimTech 300AP

The grant helped purchase a zero-till drill, Sim Tech T-sem 300AP, to enable the farm to utilise cover crops effectively. These provide numerous ecological and biological benefits as well as help to prevent nitrate leaching into water sources over the winter months. This reduces the risk of eutrophication of local water courses. Direct drilling itself reduces soil disturbance which prevents

erosion, mycorrhizal disturbance and is a natural method of reducing black grass germination – a weed increasingly difficult to control through chemical means.

Evidence has shown that the establishment of cash crops by conventional methods uses considerably more time, fuel, tyre and metal compared to direct drilling. This amounts to cost savings of typically between 25-50% according to many farm and industry trials. Switching to utilising cover crops and direct drilling should allow the farm to be more sustainable in the long run both environmentally and financially.



C J Stokes and Sons – second hand hybrid Claydon 3M

This project was to invest in a second hand Claydon 3M seed drill for the arable enterprise to enable the direct application of seed and fertiliser into the soils, reducing cultivation costs and machinery passes. There should be an anticipated yield increase in the long term through improved soil health and microbiology.



F C Cummins and Sons - Sumo 6m Grain and Fertiliser DTS

Purchasing the strip-till drill fits with the businesses objectives of fuel saving, cost saving and becoming more efficient with time and improving the overall efficiency in which the business operates both on-farm and contracting. In addition to this the impact of the strip till drill will greatly improve soil structure by reducing soil cultivation and allow the business more opportunity to use more cover crops and compost.



Welford Estates Partnership – Mzuri Pro-Til6T (Grain and Fertiliser) Select Drill

This project was to develop an establishment system focusing primarily on improving the health and biology of the soil. Part of this system requires a drill to be able to cope with increased levels of plant residues on the surface. These surface residues protect the soil and provide important habitat for earthworms and beneficial insects. The decomposing surface residue increases organic matter levels within the soil, acting as a source of nutrients for the beneficial soil organisms and the growing crop.



Ashbury Farms - Horsch Pronto 6M NT direct drill

Ashbury Farms purchased a Horsch Pronto 6M NT direct Drill to allow combinable planting of crops, reduce operating costs and improve soil health.



Jennings and Son - Horsch Avatar Drill (6.16SD)



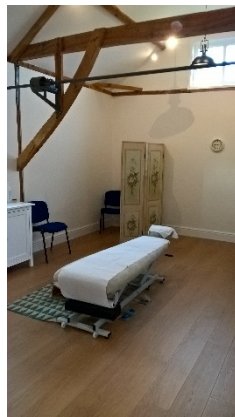
Jennings and Son utilised the opportunity of LEADER funding to establish the direct drilling farming model by purchasing a suitable drill for the reliable and successful establishment of both cover crops and commercial crops. The cover crops were considered key for the recovery of any nutrients that might otherwise be unused or at worst leached out of the system. These will add to soil organic matter, stabilising the soil thus avoiding erosion and creating a more stable and sustainable medium in which to grow crops. They needed a machine of sufficient capability and capacity for the timely establishment of the cover crops. Similarly the main commercial cash generating crops need to be established in a situation

conductive to their maximum output. The intention is that these crops should be drilled through the standing cover crops, which in turn have been planted directly in undisturbed stubbles of previous crops, which where possible have had their straw residues chopped and spread by the combine harvester. This system should have the positive effects of recycling nutrients, raising soil organic matter, improving soil structure and lowering weed burden. Diffuse pollution should be reduced, likewise costs for nutrients and agrochemicals, outputs should be raised over time and thus profitability and sustainability increased.

Micro and Small Businesses and farm diversification

Butler Brothers (Avebury) Limited – Medical Centre Development

The conversion of a disused granary building into a commercial unit to raise additional income for the farm business. The building is used by seven different health related practitioners – chiropractors, an osteopath, yoga teachers and a masseur.



CoCoChemistry Limited – Manufacturing Facility

The project was to relocate home based chocolate manufacturing to a larger facility to provide space to enable the installation of larger more efficient equipment and to provide space for the introduction of expert personnel (in marketing, food photography, web-design, packaging design and development, production and business management). The business has expanded creating 5 new jobs, increasing productivity and has developed many new product lines.



North Farm Stud Limited - Arena extension, viewing gallery and education rooms

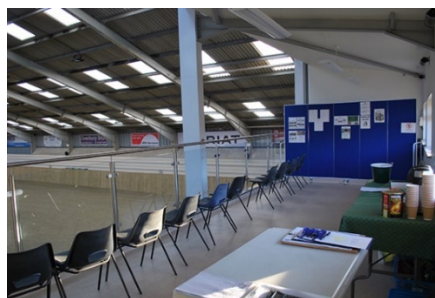
The project was part of a business re-profiling to provide greater emphasis on training for young learners wanting to work in the racing industry where there is a well-known shortage of trained staff. The project was to enlarge and extend the indoor arena by adding a viewing / observation gallery and education rooms that will provide space for up to 40 learners or observers. The project also included provision of an office area, toilets and a standing area for horses.

North Farm Stud also run demonstrations and teaching events in conjunction with RoR and BHS and these will be offered at all levels of competency. This will help to secure the commercial survival of the re-profiled NFS business as it will generate income.

The arena extension has made it possible for North Farm Stud (NFS) to offer training clinics and competitions in show-jumping and all classes of dressage. Since the new arena was formally opened in the Spring of 2018 North Farm Stud has been able to offer many show-jumping, dressage competitions and specialised training clinics. These have been so popular in the locality that numbers have had to be restricted on the day of competitions to 150.

The education hub/teaching room is currently providing formal desk-based teaching for many young learners, including those with special educational needs (SEN) who are disadvantaged in various ways. NFS in partnership with HEROS charity is recognised by the British Horseracing Authority as an approved route to racing. They offer work experience for school leavers, jobcentre placements and other personal learning programmes and are a job centre placement for young people not in education, employment or training (NEET).

North Farm Stud was shortlisted in 2019 by the South and Vale Business Awards team for a Social Responsibility award. One of three on a strong list created from 13,500 nominees.



Castle Piece Stables, Eastbury, Berkshire

The stables were bought by Sam and Ali Stronge in 2009. Initially the facility was used for pre training and as the facilities developed Ali Stronge obtained her full racehorse training license and began training horses alongside the pre training enterprise. LEADER funding was awarded in 2011 for building 10 wooden stables and constructing a ménage. The recent grant has provided an American Barn with capacity for 26 stables will allow the business to expand and become more profitable in the longer term. By the end of 2019, 5 new jobs had been created.



JFF White Partnership - Overtown Racing

JFF White Partnership is a family run farming business based near Wroughton and was looking to diversify to remain viable in an increasingly difficult industry. The project was to help provide pre-training equine facilities that would be rented to a third party providing a monthly rent.

The new facilities, rented by Hetta Stevens Racing Limited, includes an American Barn with twenty four boxes, a horse walker, an all-weather lunge ring and a seven and a half furlong all weather gallop. The gallop is also be available for other trainers in the local area to use on a pro rata basis.



Manor Farm Yard, Coate, Devizes - The Grain Store

Manor Farm Yard sought a grant to convert a 500 square metre grain store in to 6-7 commercial units. The units were designed with maximum flexibility in mind and adapted to meet client requirements. All units have air-conditioning as heating and cooling and disabled toilets and coffee areas.

The building has significantly expanded business potential, has improved the look of the business yard and allows at least 7 businesses to operate from the site. This has improved local business potential, encouraged local trading and boosted local employment.

Before:



After:



Crown Forestry, Ogbourne St Andrew – Mobile sawmill

This project was to facilitate the expansion and diversification of Crown Forestry by grant aiding the purchase of an automated sawmill to process local wood to sell to builders, contractors, carpenters and the general public within the local area.

Crown Forestry aim to become the recognised leader in its targeted market for providing locally grown and sawn timber at a competitive cost. Waste slab wood is sold to the wood fuel industry, either by selling it in bulk bags as firewood or seasoning it and selling it as chip wood for the biomass industry.

Although the sawmill was harder to master than anticipated, the business is now producing some beautiful traditional oak flooring and oak, cedar and larch weatherboard.



Ridgeway Racing Limited, nr Wroughton – new flat gallop

Neil and Clare King have extensively refurbished their training facilities since 2014 and recognised there was considerable scope for further expansion of the business by increasing horse and owner numbers. To do this they applied for a grant to help fund a new 'all weather' surface gallop through a flat then gently inclining valley on the farm. They have created a 7 furlong and 3m wide track using a woodchip surface; woodchip requires less maintenance in dry weather, has an excellent lifespan and its environmental and visual credentials are superior to artificial surfaces. It also provides in Neil's view the safest surface for training racehorses.

The new gallop was completed on 14th September 2018 and was put into use immediately. The season that followed proved to be Neil's most successful season ever, with 40 winners (previous best 34) and a £100k increase in prize money for owners. Whilst there are many factors influencing success, the new gallop played a key part in increasing fitness levels, providing variation to the horses training programme and in reducing the number of injuries in the year. There was an increase in the number of horses in training in the year and a corresponding increase in staff, over and above the forecast.



April's Farm, Upper Enham – Animal Therapy Centre

This is a new venture – to create a safe place for visitors, primarily those with mental health issues, to interact with animals – to investigate, learn and discover about animals and the countryside. Time would be spent in general animal husbandry, fun activities, gardening and horticulture as well as wildlife watching.

The LEADER grant helped to convert a redundant building in to the therapy centre:



David Harber Limited, Upper Ashthorpe – Workshop Extension

David Harber made his first sundial 28 years ago in 1992. His artworks can be found at some of the most prestigious addresses across the world – from public spaces to luxury developments, hotels to private gardens. In 2016, the company was honoured with the Queens Award for International Trade for outstanding overseas growth. The award recognises exceptional achievement in business and represents the highest honour that can be bestowed on a UK company. Prior to the workshop extension, production was at its limit – commissions were restricted by working space.

The project was for the construction of a new manufacturing workshop that would be an insulated steel portal framed building with six new working / welding bays, a dedicated engraving room, tool storage area and additional storage space. An overhead beam crane would allow the business to undertake larger commissions and move equipment around safely and reduce the risk of damage. The project would also enable the business to provide a show area on open days allowing the public and potential customers to view their products.

The new workshop has just been completed and is proving a fantastic addition. Seven new jobs have already been created and more are forecast.

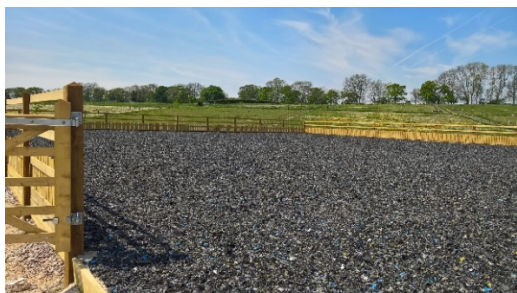


Frenches Farm, Little London – Frenches Farm Livery

Frenches Farm is a mixed farm and a livery which is made up of DIY, full, part and competition horses. The business is run as a sole trader CG White T/A Frenches Farm and also offers bed and breakfast accommodation and a glamping site. The livery had been brought back in house in 2017 and Anna and Charles had plans to expand and develop the facilities to help improve activities for their clients and boost turnover.

The project was to build a new 30m x 60m outdoor arena with a sand base and post and rail fencing – large enough to accommodate four horses according to the Equine Management Regulations. The

arena was completed in 2019 and has been well used since, for clinics, more show jumping, dressage lessons and pony club events.



F Wells and Son, New Mill- Camping Diversification Project

F Wells & Sons is an established family farming partnership based at Totteridge Farm in the Vale of Pewsey. The farm is run by Anthony and Caroline who undertake external contract work, primarily in the equine sector (including hay making and grassland management). The farm has also been a Caravan and Motorhome Club Certified Location (CL) for 35 years, permitted to a maximum of five pitches. They have had a number of excellent reviews, all of which help to generate a modest but essential additional income for the farm.

The project was to diversify the accommodation offer by establishing five wooden camping pods. These would sleep two comfortably but could accommodate up to four and would be available year-round. The project included some site infrastructure work such as: hard standings; electric installation to the site; a unisex ablution facility; a bio-disc small sewage treatment package; mains water installation and water points; and a hard track to the pods to ensure year-round access for guests and deliveries.

Conservative estimates are for 194 additional overnight visitors per annum, the creation of a new job and a turnover increase of over £24k in the first year of operation.



One of the pods and the toilet / shower building – prior to landscaping

Grafton Farm Partnership, Wilton – New Holiday Let

Grafton Farm Partnership is an arable farming business which also provides management expertise, labour and machinery to a number of local farms under Partnership or Contracting Agreements.

The Project was to build a new accessible 3 bedroom holiday cottage on the main farm site which is set at the centre of the village of Wilton. This would provide additional holiday accommodation for tourists coming to the Pewsey Vale and establish an additional income stream for the business.

It would also help footfall and income for the local pub and farm shop close by.



White Horse at Compton Bassett – Skittle Alley

The White Horse Inn is a rural country pub with restaurant and 8 Bed & Breakfast rooms located in Compton Bassett. There are currently 3,600 overnight visitors per annum. Following some recent operational changes the owners realised they needed to expand the business to ensure it remained a viable one.

The project was for the conversion of a redundant skittle alley that sits on the pub site to create a new flexible space - to allow private dining to expand, to create a much needed additional space for bed and breakfast clients as well as a space for other functions and meetings. Since starting the project nearly 6 full time equivalent jobs have been created.



Redcrest Enterprises Ltd – New Pole Tent & Facility Enhancement

Redcrest Enterprises Ltd is a marquee hire company that was acquired in 2013. The business reached its full potential in its current form in 2018. With sales plateauing the directors took the decision to make two significant investments to enable growth: to purchase of a new style of marquee for which they had had numerous requests - a Traditional Pole Tent; and to buy specialist industrial washing and drying equipment. This would improve the longevity of their unique hand block printed marquee linings. They also needed to make improvements to their warehouse security - CCTV and fire and intruder alarm systems.

The project was forecast to increase turnover by over a £100k, create 1 FTE and help to ensure the business remains competitive and viable. Local third party suppliers, such as multiple furniture hire, generator hire, luxury loo hire and carpet hire companies would also benefit from additional business.

The COVID19 pandemic has had a particularly hard impact on this type of business – Redcrest are working hard to survive whilst the social distancing restrictions remain in place.



Universal Networks UK Limited, Hungerford - Manufacturing

Universal Networks UK Ltd supplies multiple industries with connectivity solutions for data, video and audio. This involves predominantly cabling, but also active network hardware. The business has had a lot of success in the Media and Defence industries, especially with portable fibre optic cables. They have their own brand of fibre products and are also resellers/distributors of other leading brands. As the business has increased sales and has become involved in larger projects it became more difficult for their contractors to meet delivery needs and expectations. The business had effectively outgrown their partner's capabilities and to remain competitive the business needed to establish in house/on premise expertise. This would enable the business to develop and manufacture new product lines and offer a range of new services to their clients.

The project included the purchase of a range of 16 separate pieces of equipment and it aimed to increase turnover by over £1.4 million and create 6 new jobs over the first three years. Three new jobs have already been created.



Geoffrey Deacon Training Limited, Compton – Hayloft Development

Geoffrey Deacon Training Ltd is racehorse training business in Compton. Geoffrey Deacon has been a fully-fledged racehorse trainer since 2013, moving to Hamilton Stables in 2014. He has developed the business since then but recognised that to remain viable the business needed to expand. The aim was to grow to train 30-40 horses and to improve the overall quality of the horses in training. This would improve the yard's reputation, increase business turnover, create greater potential for prize-money earnings and greater long-term stability for the business. It needed its own all-weather gallop as well a professional office space and entertainment area.

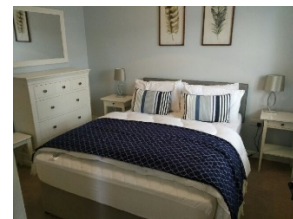
Delays with planning (since completed) meant the LEADER project was just for the conversion of a hayloft. This has provided a dedicated space for offices and a client entertainment area as well as accommodation for a new racing and ownership club, Network Racing.



Tourism / the Visitor Economy

Manor Farm Partnership, East Grafton – Barn conversion

Manor Farm is located in East Grafton, Marlborough. In 2010 part of the redundant stable block was converted to a 3 bedroom / 3 bathroom holiday let (with 4 star grading from Visit England) which has been operating successfully since. Building on this success, the LEADER project was to convert another part of the stable building into a high quality, self-catering unit with 2 en-suite bedrooms. It would provide additional 4/5* tourist accommodation in the Pewsey Vale and increase the farm's diversified income, helping it to remain viable and to safeguard jobs over the longer term.



The Trust for Sustainable Living, Hampstead Norreys - New Sustainable Futures Exhibition at the Living Rainforest

The Trust for Sustainable Living charity aims to further the understanding of sustainable living through high-quality education. It runs the Living Rainforest Centre which attracts 90,000 visitors each year, including 26,000 children attending on school visits. It has been running for 22 years and currently includes three rainforest glasshouses, a 'Human Impact Building' primarily used for school visitors, a shop, a small cafe, and an outside play area.

The LEADER project was part of the wider 2015-2020 development programme to expand facilities and improve the visitor experience, thereby increasing visitors and profitability. The project involved installing new flooring, buying a projector and lens, IT software for touchscreens and the creation and installation of a new permanent exhibition in the Human Impact Building.

The increase in visitor numbers has exceeded forecasts and two new jobs had been created by the end of the second year.



Sustrans Limited - Cyclepath Improvements at Ogbourne St George

Sustrans began life as Cyclebag, a charity set up in 1977, with a vision to improve conditions for people walking and cycling. Their primary objective is to make it easier for people to walk and cycle - leading to healthier and happier people, greener better local environments, and stronger economies and communities. Sustrans achieves their vision by developing high quality routes which are known as the National Cycle Network (NCN). There are over 16,500 miles of NCN in the UK, which have been developed in partnership with many local authorities and landowners.

One of the routes is NCN Route 45, a railway path that serves the communities of the Og Valley between Marlborough and Chiseldon. The project was to upgrade 1,050m of unsurfaced sections of the railway path between Ogbourne St George and Woolmer Drove. It also involved tree work to reduce path deterioration and to open up the views; construction of 120m of new 2m wide compacted stone path at the northern end of the core area; installation of new oak sleeper benches and new green oak picnic benches; removal of restrictive barriers and replacement with new bollards and fences to open up access along the entire route; and the installation of new fingerpost signs along the route to improve legibility and access to the surrounding rights of way network and key destinations.

The project has removed barriers to access and provided a path of consistent standard. Additions, such as stopping points with picnic benches has provided opportunities for locals and visitors to enjoy the landscape and learn about points of interest along the route.



Culture and Heritage

Uffington Parish Council - Restoration of the Old School Room, Uffington

Uffington Parish Council owns a 400 year old Grade 2 Listed chalkstone building, which was gifted to it by the Countess of Craven in 1958. It is the schoolroom that featured in Thomas Hughes' book 'Tom Brown's School Days', and it has housed the Tom Brown's School Museum since 1985.

Surveys of the Old School Room building during 2016 and 2017 identified the need for extensive repairs and the LEADER project was to restore it to a proper state of repair. The work was to ensure that structural and constructional stability of the building was enhanced so as to prevent further rapid deterioration and to ensure the significance of the Old School Room is maintained for future generations.



Wilton Windmill Society - Restoration of 1860s Lackham Granary at Wilton Windmill

This unusual project was for the relocation and restoration of an 1860s Granary. The granary was given to the Wilton Windmill Society by Lackham Agricultural College where it sat for several years and was falling in to disrepair. It had to be completely dismantled before being transported to the

Wilton Windmill site where it was re-built with a new thatched roof and fitted with electricity. It can now be used for storing grain, for milling on site.

Whilst the project was primarily a Culture and Heritage project it has had the added benefit of attracting more visitors to the Windmill.



Pewsey Heritage Centre – External refurbishment of Old Whatley Building

Pewsey Heritage Centre had recently purchased a redundant building known as 'Old Whatley Office' located just off the High Street in Pewsey, Wiltshire. The building is a relatively modern detached workshop of single skin concrete block construction with a slate roof. The second floor has a restricted ceiling height that limits the usable floor area. The Trust wished to refurbish the building and transform it into a fully functional education centre for both schools and adult education with seating and heating for 36 pupils. The building would also be used as a community research centre housing local documents and photographs etc. In addition it would provide environmentally acceptable storage space for bulky items, and workshops for conservation and restoration.

The LEADER project was for the external refurbishment work: an external double skin for energy conservation; new double-glazed windows to retain heat and modern wider doors to facilitate accessibility.



Rural Services

Ramsbury Pre-School - New Build

Ramsbury Pre-School began life 40 years ago as a toddler group based within the existing Methodist Church. It rented non-bespoke rooms and had to clear away all equipment at the end of each session. The external space was cramped and over two levels, reached by a set of steps. Although Ofsted

considered the pre-school “good” they have commented that the facilities were lacking and this was likely to become more of an issue as requirements increased.

The LEADER project was to help fund the building of a new purpose-built pre-school building adjacent to the Primary School. Having a purpose built and dedicated premises has allowed for the pre-school to extend its offer to include longer and more flexible opening hours, after school care and a holiday club. The pre-school has been able to increase capacity for children from Ramsbury and neighbouring villages to attend and five new jobs were created. It provides comfort and security, space, natural light and colour which enhances the well-being of children, staff and visitors and makes learning an enjoyable experience for all.



Burghclere and Newtown PCC – kitchenette and toilet facilities at Burghclere Church to support the popular community café.

Burghclere Church sits in the heart of the rural village and has become a regular venue for the local community and surrounding area. A weekly community café with no religious content was started in 2014 and is run by a team of volunteers. Attendances are regularly 40 – 50 people each week some of whom would be really isolated without it. The café operates a book exchange and produce stall which is well received.

The PCC sought LEADER funding for the installation of a toilet and kitchenette / servery facilities within the Church to enhance and contribute to the wellbeing of the local community for generations to come and help to avoid social isolation. The project has helped ensure existing activities continue and has provided a greater range of activities to take place.



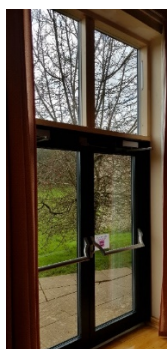
Hampstead Norreys Amenities Trust - Hampstead Norreys Village Hall Development and Refurbishment Project

The Hampstead Norreys Amenities Trust is a Registered Charity whose principal aim is to enhance the quality of life of Hampstead Norreys 1000 residents by providing suitable and appropriate amenities for them to enjoy and to become more cohesive as a community. The Trust's first achievement was to build the current Village Hall over 30 years ago. The village hall sub-committee has provided a range of social and sporting activities in the parish and contributed to Hampstead

Norreys being selected as one of the four finalists in the BBC Channel 4, 2017 UK Village of the year competition.

The Village Hall has been extensively used by the whole community. However, it has been expensive to run as all of the windows and doors had low insulation properties, were ill-fitting and therefore draughty. The heating costs were also very high because the current heating is based on a set of very inefficient infra-red electric heaters and the lighting system was not energy efficient and therefore wasteful.

The project was part of a much larger hall refurbishment and development and involved replacing the existing doors and windows with new well insulated and draught proof ones and installing passive infrared sensor (PIR) operated LED lighting. This will reduce running costs and release funds for the up-keep of the building and ensure the hire charges are kept as low as possible for community users.



Forestry

Wessex Biofuels Limited - Kesla C645T Chipper

Wessex Bio-fuels Ltd was established in 2009 to produce and supply woodchip as a source of heat in and beyond the NWD LAG area. The business received a £48k grant in 2010 under the last LEADER Programme to help with the acquisition of a chipper, trailer, crane and log splitter. That chipper is used for chipping virgin seasoned roundwood but the infeed hopper has no mechanical infeed mechanism on the chute which prevents it being able to chip small diameter round wood and lop and top. The business needed to upgrade the chipper to a version where the infeed chute is fitted with hydraulic infeed belt. This would enable the business to effectively feed hazel coppice and other small diameter lop and top through to the chipper drum.

This LEADER Programme provided support for a new chipper and crane to enable the business to produce a more cost effective chip. As part of the upgrade a larger crane was bought with greater lift and larger grapple to enable lower grade material to be broken apart after seasoning at roadside.

Outputs and return have not been quite as expected yet. Markets over the last couple of years have generally become more competitive as more people have entered the business and there has been a significant increase in round wood prices which has been mainly fuelled by a high demand from some newly commissioned commercial power stations. These higher prices have resulted in Wessex Biofuels having to pay more for the roundwood and although they have increased the sale price on chip, developing their markets in the way they had hoped has been a more difficult than expected.



Sherwood Forestry Limited – New Forwarder and Felling Head

Sherwood Forestry Ltd is an established forestry contracting business that was established by Toby Sherwood in 2010. The business has gradually grown as opportunities have arisen, initially by undertaking contracts for other harvesting companies but more recently working directly for estates and forest management companies. Investments in a forest harvester and forwarder have seen the business go from a being a lone chainsaw operator to a standalone harvesting and extraction unit.

This project involved the purchase of a new John Deere 1210G Forwarder and a Moipu M240 A1 EFI BioEnergy Felling Head. This was to allow the business to expand its operations.

The felling head will be set up so that it can be easily and rapidly mounted and dismounted on the forwarder and will be capable of felling small and medium sized trees. The head cuts with a pair of shears meaning that it is simple to use and maintain, enabling it to fell small trees more rapidly and thus more economically, than a traditional chainsaw head. The head also has an accumulator arm which holds onto a number of felled trees (typically 3 – 6, depending on size) before depositing them into the forwarder unit. The forwarder will collect and extract harvested produce and transport it to roadside where timber will be loaded onto road going transport for haulage to a processor.

The need for this project has arisen partly because of the need to manage woodlands affected by Chalara ash dieback, and partly to fulfil the growing demand for woodfuel and firewood. Much of this demand will be fulfilled by timber from currently un- or under- managed woodlands, which includes those affected by Chalara.

Other outcomes are that more local woodland will be managed with higher value home grown timber being processed into higher value produce.





Annex C

ORGANISATIONS SUPPORTED 2015-2020

Map no	Organisation name	Project name	Total Project value (£)	Grant value (£)
1	Pewsey Heritage Centre	Pewsey Heritage Centre - External refurbishment of Old Whatley Building	£5,053.39	£4,295.38.00
2	F C Cummins and Sons	Striptill Drill	£86,895.00	£34,758.00
3	Grove Brothers Ltd	Auto Flush Cluster System	£24,384.00	£9,753.60.00
4	Manor Farm Partnership	Manor Farm - Barn Conversion	£74,995.00	£29,998.00
5	Berkeley Farm Dairy	Wood Farm Dairy Modernisation	£36,587.60	£14,635.04
6	Wessex Biofuels Ltd	Kesla C645T Chipper	£111,374.00	£31,184.72
7	Butler Brothers (Avebury) Ltd	Butler Brothers (Avebury) Ltd: Medical Centre Development	£40,599.25	£16,239.70
8	The Trust for Sustainable Living	New Sustainable Futures Exhibition at the Living Rainforest	£75,163.84	£60,131.07
9	Ramsbury Pre-School	Ramsbury Pre-School New Build	£178,635.82	£62,004.50
10	North Farm Stud Ltd	Arena extension, viewing gallery and education rooms	£150,712.23	£ 60,284.89
11	Broomsgrove Farming	Slurry Separator	£47,090.00	£18,836.00
12	CoCoChemistry Ltd	CoCoChemistry Manufacturing Facility	£147,125.06	£58,850.03
13	Geoffrey Deacon Training Ltd	Hayloft Development	£115,943.26	£46,377.31
14	Manor Farm Yard	The Grain Store	£308,825.89	£30,882.59
15	JFF White	Overtown Racing	£315,000.00	£99,225.00
16	April's Farm	Animal Therapy Centre	£128,474.48	£51,389.79
17	Crown Forestry	Crown Forestry Sawmill	£37,828.00	£15,131.20
18	F Wells and Sons	F Wells and Sons - Camping diversification project	£103,697.60	£41,479.04
19	Castle Piece Stables	Castle Piece Stables American Barn	£162,731.99	£,65092.80
20	Roaming Dairy Ltd	Roaming Dairy Limited	£176,807.00	£70,722.80
21	Wilton Windmill Society	Restoration of 1860s Lackham Granary at Wilton Windmill	£52,900.80	£44,965.68
22	Gee Jay Farming Ltd	Gee Jay Farming Ltd - LED lighting and Heat Detection Collars	£67,087.80	£26,835.12
23	Burghclere and Newtown PCC	Toilet and Kitchenette project at Burghclere Church	£61,662.00	£17,357.85
24	Uffington Parish Council	Restoration of the Old School Room, Uffington	£39,214.12	£11,764.23
25	Ridgeway Racing Limited	Ridgeway Racing - new flat gallop	£101,232.26	£40,492.90
26	Ashbury Farms	Ashbury Farms Horsch Direct Drill	£87,000.00	£34,800.00
27	Stowell Farms	Cow Manager Ear Tag Monitoring System	£38,922.37	£15,568.95

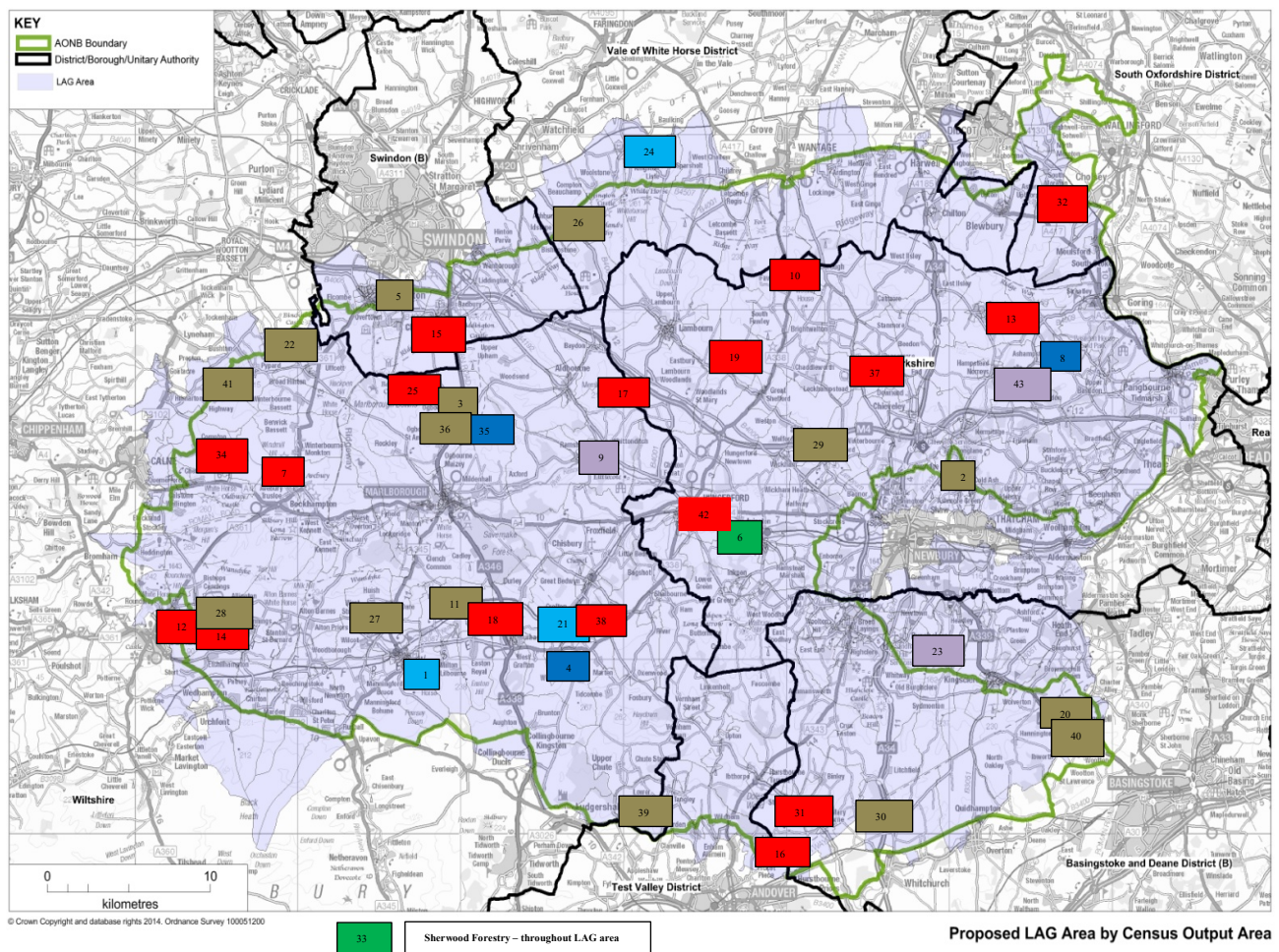
28	C J Stokes and Sons	CJ Stokes Direct Drill	£25,000.00	£10,000.00
29	Welford Estate Partnership	Welford Estate Partnership - New Drill	£123,500.00	£49,400.00
30	S W Colliss and Son	S W Colliss and Son - Purchase of new drill	£29,370.00	£11,748.00
31	Frenches Farm	Frenches Farm Livery	£40,892.50	£16,357.00
32	David Harber Limited	Blewburton Barns Worskhop	£239,315.44	£95,247.55
33	Sherwood Forestry Limited	Sherwood Forestry New Forwarder	£262,320.00	£97,583.04
34	The White Horse (Compton Bassett) Limited	White Horse Skittle Alley	£60,470.38	£24,188.15
35	Sustrans Limited	Cyclepath Improvements at Ogbourne St George	£30,092.60	£24,074.08
36	KJ and CY Gough	Westfield Farm	£21,444.04	£8,577.62
37	Redcrest Enterprises Limited	Facility enhancement and new pole tent	£46,918.00	£16,257.40
38	Grafton Farm Partnership	Holiday Cottage at Manor Farm, Wilton	£225,423.00	£60,187.94
39	Biddesden House Farm Partnership	Biddesden House Farm Partnership: Rainwater and Slurry Management Goods	£100,539.00	£40,215.60
40	Kingsclere Estate Limited	Kingsclere Organic Mechanised (No Chem) Weed Control System	£95,785.00	£38,314.00
41	Jennings and Son	Jennings and Son - Purchase New Horsch Avatar Drill	£90,000.00	£36,000.00
42	Universal Networks Limited	Manufacturing	£66,204.93	£26,481.62
43	Hampstead Norreys Amenities Trust	Hampstead Norreys Village Hall Development and Refurbishment Project	£38,258.00	£30,606.40
		TOTAL	£4,271,475.65	£1,598,294.59



Map of project locations

The blue highlighted area shows the North Wessex Downs LAG area and the shaded boxes show the locations of the projects – each is numbered as shown in the list at Annex C and is colour coded by priority:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Agricultural productivity | Rural Services |
| Micro / small business development | Culture and heritage |
| Rural tourism / the visitor economy | Forestry |





SWOT Analysis

The following is a summary SWOT of the 2015-20 NWD LEADER Programme which may help inform a future local rural funding scheme.

The strengths:

- Using a local decision making “board” to determine the local priorities for funding and for making decisions on individual applications
- Targeting funding to those projects which make a real and significant difference to local businesses and communities
- Focusing on delivering good outcomes – creating and safeguarding jobs, supporting sustainable business expansion, helping communities help themselves.
- Having an experienced and effective LAG and management team keeping admin costs to a minimum to maximise project funding.
- Having a locally based programme manager to visit applicants, see the project sites, help progress applications and advise on claims has been a real benefit to applicants.
- Aligning the LAG area with other surrounding LAG areas to maximise the rural area covered. Local authority boundaries did mean a small area in the north of Swindon Borough was not covered by LEADER funding.
- Using a rigorous, consistent and high-quality appraisal process for all applications.

The weaknesses:

- In determining the Local Development Strategy, the national priorities set by DEFRA took precedence over local priorities.
- The result of the EU referendum put the programme on hold for three months whilst decisions were taken on the future of the programme and deadlines to commit and spend the funding were pulled forward significantly and then more relaxed. This created an urgency to complete the Programme, raised maximum grant levels and had an impact on the number and level of grants awarded. It also created uncertainty for applicants – to invest or not invest and to apply or not to apply.
- Allocated project budget amounts were altered and forms / processes changed constantly during the programme which added to the administration burden of running the programme.
- The single approach to all applications, irrespective of grant size, meant that for small value projects the process was perhaps unnecessarily complex and long-winded.
- Although LAGs were supposed to be the decision-making body for each grant application, it became apparent that the RPA expected all applications which had been positively appraised and had passed the appraisal quality check to be endorsed. (The NWD LAG resisted this

“rubber stamping” which is not in keeping with LEADER principles, making their own decisions on which projects got funding and at what level).

The opportunities:

- Use the principle of maximising rural coverage to include as many rural businesses and communities as possible but at the same time try to maintain some local geographic cohesion and identity
- Revisit local priorities to support projects which help address the Climate Emergency and help meet the UK’s net-zero emission target by 2050.
- Build on the links with the farming and forestry sector representatives to prioritise sustainable land use, improve soil, water and woodland health.
- Revisit the membership of the funding board to ensure good representation of future funding priorities.
- Build on existing networks / contacts to help promote and market any future rural funding scheme to all sectors.
- Recognise the non-quantifiable benefits of LEADER – its “added value” such as supply chain impacts of helping expand a business; increased community cohesion, physical and mental health benefits from a new or improved community facility.

The threats:

- Urban / large infrastructure projects taking precedence over rural ones. Engage key decision makers across the area to ensure the rural economy and the environment are not forgotten but prioritised. Build on the positive links with the Local Enterprise Partnerships and other key funding players to ensure priorities are co-ordinated and mutually supportive.
- No follow-on programme means the momentum and expertise of this scheme will be lost. Use the best bits of the LEADER approach, of the processes and administration and follow-up the offers of help from existing LAG members for any future local rural funding programme.



Thanks

The LAG consisted of up to 20 member places: 5 from the public sector; 15 are from the private, community and voluntary sectors and represented various “constituencies”. Most places were filled by a settled “team” over the course of the programme to ensure consistency and efficiency. Grateful thanks are given to the following for the many hours spent reviewing applications and for their ongoing commitment to ensure the Programme’s successful delivery:

- Lord Carnarvon – Chair
- Andi Witcombe – NFU Wiltshire
- Anne Budd
- Carole Ruse
- Christopher Cannon
- Cllr Fleur de Rhe-Philipe, Wiltshire Council
- George Greenham
- Henry Oliver, NWD AONB
- Cllrs Hilary Cole / Dominic Boeck, West Berkshire Council
- Keith Richards
- Kenneth McDiarmid
- Meg Chambers
- Peter Lemon
- Richard Paget
- Suki Coe
- Tim Parry, Community Council Berkshire

Thanks go to Wiltshire Council for acting as the Accountable Body for both North Wessex Downs LEADER Programmes and to the Compliance Team which ensured contracts and claims were processed in a timely and efficient manner. The Council will have an ongoing commitment to monitor projects over the next few years to ensure the terms of each grant funding agreement are adhered to.

All applications were appraised by an independent external consultant and considered by the LAG at bi-monthly or quarterly meetings. Many thanks go to Chris Jankiewicz of Rural Development Services (UK) Ltd for supporting the LAG so well over the course of the two NWD LEADER Programmes.

Thanks go to the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) in supporting the LAG’s bid for funding and to Swindon and Wiltshire and Thames Valley Berkshire LEPs in particular which encouraged LAG representation on their Rural Economy Sub-Groups.

Finally, many thanks are due to the AONB Council of Partners and the AONB team for hosting and supporting LEADER Programme staff at their offices in Hungerford.



The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development:
Europe investing in rural areas