

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

28 JANUARY 2016

Report by Director of Environment

GREATER RENFREWSHIRE AND INVERCLYDE LEADER PROGRAMME 2014-2020

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Cabinet on progress with the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Leader Programme for the period 2014 to 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. The Cabinet is asked to:
- (a) Note the collaborative position with the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Leader Programme 2014-2020; and
 - (b) Welcome the proposed LEADER Programme, Local Development Strategy and Business Plan which will cover the next 5 years.

BACKGROUND AND REPORT

3. The Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) 2014 to 2020 is a £1.2 billion programme which delivers Pillar 2 of the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and funds economic, environmental and social measures for the benefit of rural Scotland. The key purpose of the SRDP programme is to help achieve sustainable economic growth in Scotland's rural areas and the priorities remain broadly the same as the previous programme: The main priorities are:

- Enhancing the rural economy
- Supporting agricultural and forestry businesses
- Protecting and improving the natural environment
- Addressing the impact of climate change

4. The SRDP includes measures to support and encourage rural communities and delivers the LEADER initiative for local innovation in rural areas. After extensive negotiations, the SRDP 2014 - 2020 was formally approved by the European Commission on 26 May 2015.

5. Approximately 83% of the land area of East Renfrewshire is classed as being rural. The population of rural East Renfrewshire of 16,400, represents 19% of the total population of East Renfrewshire. The settlements that are clearly located within rural East Renfrewshire include:

- Eaglesham;
- Waterfoot;
- Uplawmoor; and
- Neilston.

6. LEADER is a European Commission initiative which aims to encourage bottom-up development, cooperation, networking and innovation in rural areas. It started in 1991 and is co-funded under the European Agricultural Fund for rural development and is an integral part of the Scottish Rural Development Programme.

7. The Cabinet will recall that East Renfrewshire Council operated a separate LEADER programmes for the 2007-2013 period. For the new 2014 to 2020 programme period, East Renfrewshire, Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Councils agreed to work together on a joint approach for the new LEADER programme. It was agreed with the Scottish Government that there could be considerable benefits in coming together as one programme area to deliver and implement the LEADER programme. This includes achieving economies of scale in operational and organisational aspects and being able to adopt a more strategic approach.

8. A proposed Local Development Strategy [LDS] (Appendix 1) and Business Plan (Appendix 2) for the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde L Action Group were submitted to the Scottish Government for review in summer 2015, and were approved in late November 2015.

9. The programme will seek to support activities and investments across three complementary action areas;

- Enabling new and enhancing existing visitor/tourist amenities, services, environmental improvements and access.
- Animation and enterprise capacity building and releasing to support rural SMEs, social enterprises and local communities.
- General environmental improvements and further development of community access

10. Following discussions between the three local authorities, it was agreed that Renfrewshire Council should assume the role of Accountable Body for the new Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde 2014 to 2020 LEADER Programme. This was agreed on the basis that:

- The Council has built up substantial management, financial and operational experience and has a successful track record in the delivery and implementation of the previous LEADER Programme,
- It still has a LEADER Coordinator in post,
- It has the necessary systems in place and the capacity to effectively manage and monitor the financial and regulatory aspects of LEADER,
- It was willing to undertake this responsibility

11. Renfrewshire Council will enter into the prescribed Service Level Agreement with the Scottish Government in its role of guiding and regulating the operation of LEADER in Scotland.

12. This is an excellent example of collaboration between Councils.
13. It is assumed that eligibility will be standardised throughout Scotland and that new guidance will be issued by the Scottish Government. For the present, it is assumed that the following will be eligible to apply for LEADER funding:
- Constituted community groups
 - Social enterprises
 - Micro businesses and SMEs
 - Voluntary organisations
 - Public sector bodies with projects that will benefit the rural area/community
 - Business groupings
 - Farmers seeking to diversify
14. To be eligible for funding, projects should:
- Be based within the designated rural areas of East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde or Renfrewshire (n.b. if the applicant is based outside of the rural areas but the project beneficiaries are within the rural areas, then the project may still be eligible.)
 - Contribute to one or more of the main themes and priorities in the LDS
 - Seek to secure local social, economic and/or environmental benefits
 - Assist at least one of the LEADER target groups
15. The new Local Action Group (LAG) will award LEADER funding of up to 50% of the project costs. Firm evidence of match funding will be required before the grant award is confirmed. However, the LAG will retain discretion to award grant of more than 50% if this is warranted, e.g. for strategic projects and/or those demonstrating significant impact.
16. The Scottish Government had confirmed an indicative funding amount of £2.3m. The minimum grant to be awarded will be £5,000 and the maximum will be £125,000. These parameters have been set on the basis of the relative complexity of the application process but also due to the need to ensure that a small number of very large applications do not dominate the LEADER Programme. However, the LAG will retain discretion to award grant of less than £5,000 if this is required to enable a project to proceed and exceptionally the LAG may decide to award grant of more than £125,000 for strategic projects and/or those demonstrating significant impact.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

17. There is no direct financial implication to the Council. Spend on new activity will be funded directly through LEADER funding and other match funding sources.

CONSULTATION

18. Extensive consultation on the LEADER Programme has taken place from February 2014 to October 2015. Consultations have taken place with internal Council Departments, the Scottish Government, Chamber of Commerce, rural Community Councils and a variety of representatives from the rural community.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

19. The Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER Programme and associated Business Plan and Local Development Strategy documents have been developed in partnership with the Local Action Group (LAG) which is made of representatives from East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde and Renfrewshire Councils, and representation from local business people, third sector organisations and local community interest groups.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL

20. There are no implications on staffing, property, legal, IT, equalities or sustainable implications.

CONCLUSIONS

21. The new LEADER Programme and Local Development Strategy provide the Council and its partners with a framework to ensure the delivery of a wide range of activity and support to help create sustainable economic development within our rural communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

22. The Cabinet is asked to:

- (a) Note the collaborative position with the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Leader Programme 2014-2020; and
- (b) Welcome the proposed LEADER Programme, Local Development Strategy and Business Plan which will cover the next 5 years.

Director of Environment

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KEY WORDS

LEADER Programme, rural development, European funding, Scottish Government

Appendix 1

**GREATER RENFREWSHIRE AND INVERCLYDE
LEADER
LOCAL ACTION GROUP**

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
2014 - 2020**



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1. INTRODUCTION

This Local Development Strategy (LDS) for the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER Local Action Group (LAG) outlines the LAG's plans for an exciting new phase of programme delivery in the period 2014 - 2020. It is a joint strategy for LEADER eligible communities in the three local authority areas of Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire and Inverclyde - building upon and strengthening well developed partnership working arrangements across these boundaries.

The LDS has an accompanying Business Plan which sets out the detailed mechanisms and procedures through which the LAG will deliver the LDS.

Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire operated separate LEADER programmes between 2007 and 2013, but these two areas will join and rural areas in Inverclyde will participate in LEADER for the first time, creating the 'Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde' LAG programme.

The LDS has been developed through extensive consultation across all eligible communities, being wide-ranging in scope and consistent with the 'bottom-up' community development aspirations of LEADER. Our vision and objectives have been revised to reflect the consultation process, what we learned from the 2007 – 13 programmes and from a SWOT analysis. Feedback from the Scottish Government on the draft LDS and Business Plan has also been incorporated in this submission.

The LDS is designed as an accessible document, understandable to a wide range of audiences, and signalling our ambition for LEADER to be an engaging, 'two-way' and innovative process throughout the new programme period. Consequently, it is written in simple language and is relatively short. We believe this style will support further consultation and ensure that the strategy is used as a 'living' document - guiding future actions and supporting ongoing review processes.

The LAG considers the structure of the document as flexible, and anticipates that changes may be made as circumstances change. Throughout the document we have included a number of comments and project examples to further clarify the thinking behind the LDS. Although only examples of potential projects, we anticipate that these will demonstrate how the LAG hopes to add value to existing services and to make the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER programme as 'inclusive' as possible.

The revised vision of the 2014-2020 Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER programme is:

'To improve the quality of life in our rural areas by supporting local people and local businesses to realise the social, economic and environmental potential of their communities'.

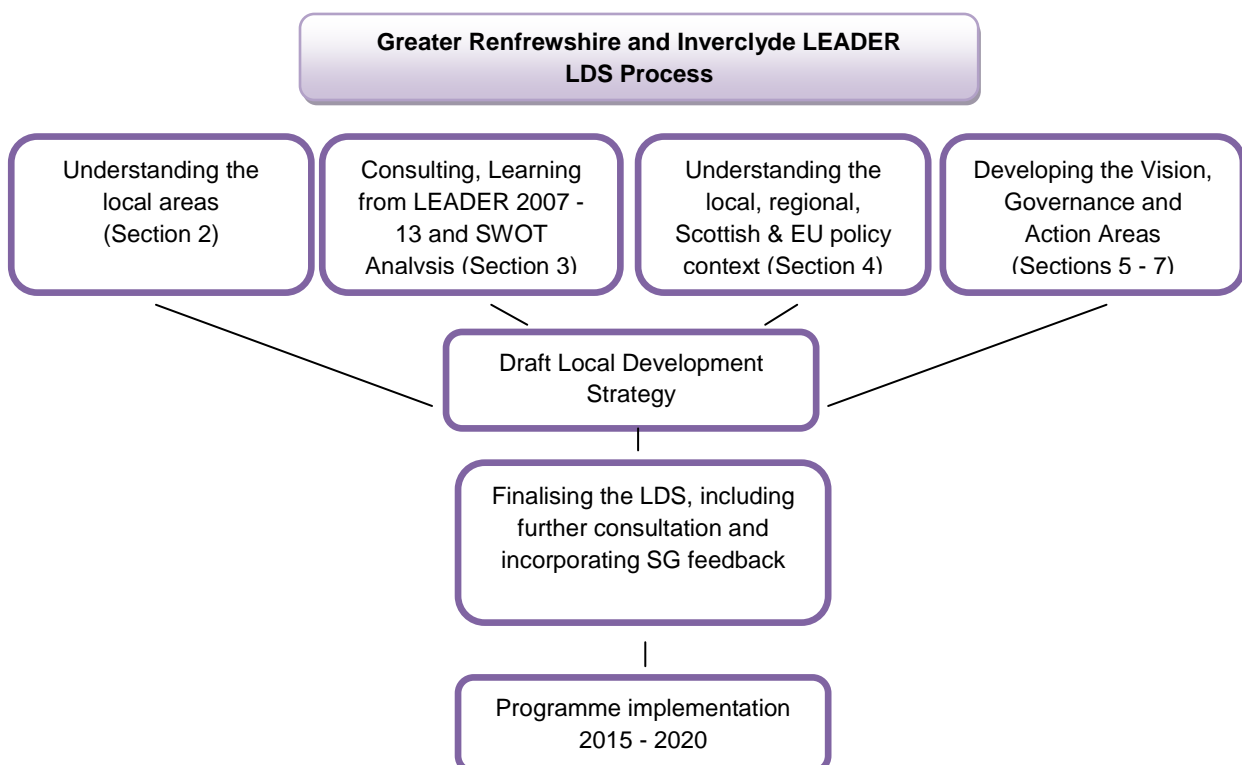
The programme will seek to support activities and investments across three complementary action areas:

1. Enabling new and enhancing existing visitor/tourist amenities, services, environmental improvements and access.
2. Animation and enterprise capacity building and releasing to support rural SMEs, social enterprises and local communities.
3. General environmental improvements and further development of community access.

Community consultations across all areas highlighted the need to encourage additional day visitors and tourists into the area. Visit Scotland largely promotes Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde attractions as part of the wider Glasgow and the Clyde Valley region. Smaller Renfrewshire attractions and businesses may benefit from LEADER in relation to small scale improvements and promotional activities.

Direct input from the LAG focused on the need to utilise LEADER to support local businesses and community organisations as their importance to rural communities is much greater than for similar organisations in an urban setting. In addition, the environmental agenda and new 'green technologies' offer rural communities a new area of opportunity for economic growth.

The process by which the LDS was prepared, and how it has become a finalised document, is summarised in the diagram below:



In implementing the strategy we will embrace the concept of animation in sharing knowledge, experience and best practice with other LAGs in Scotland/UK and indeed in Europe.

The LDS is presented in the following order:

Section 2 provides an area profile with an analysis of key social, economic and environmental data and other information.

Section 3 outlines the consultation processes used in developing the new LDS, the key learning we have taken from local and Scottish-wide evaluations of LEADER 2007-2013 and an analysis of the LEADER areas' strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT).

Sections 2 and 3 provide the evidence base for the strategic direction we outline in Sections 4 - 7.

Section 4 indicates how the LDS is rooted in, and will advance, a range of related policies and strategies at the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde, Scottish and EU levels.

Section 5 sets out the future vision and strategic objectives for the 2014-2020 programme.

Section 6 outlines how Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER will operate in practice, and how we will promote community engagement and communication throughout the implementation period. Full details on the practical implementation of the LDS are contained within the Business Plan.

Section 7 presents the themes and the proposed three action areas for LEADER 2014-2020, as well as the headline performance indicators associated with these.

Appendix 1 shows the detailed information available at data zone level for the rural areas of the three local authorities.

We look forward to working with the Scottish Government - and other LEADER initiatives - in implementing the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER 2014 – 20 programme.

2. AREA PROFILE

This section describes the LEADER area in terms of its social, economic and environmental characteristics.

Area Profile

The focus of the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG area for LEADER 2014-2020 is the rural communities of Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire and Inverclyde. The area includes key communities of natural interest such as Clyde Muirshiel Park, (e.g. Castle Semple Loch, the Greenock Cut and Lunderston Bay) and the Dams to Darnley Country Park.

It is unlikely that any new supported projects will be from communities with a population in excess of 10,000. The only possible exception could be an application from a community adjoining and including parts of Gourock, given the town's population of nearly 10,000.

Renfrewshire

Renfrewshire is situated west of Glasgow, lying on the south bank of the River Clyde. It is the 10th largest populated council area in Scotland, at 173,900 in 2013 (National Records of Scotland, 'Council Area Profiles - Renfrewshire Council Area Demographic Factsheet'). Many of Renfrewshire's villages and towns serve as commuter settlements to Glasgow, or the area's largest settlement, Paisley. The LEADER area lies to the south-west and north-west of the urban core of Paisley, Renfrew and Johnstone and includes a number of key rural settlements:

- Lochwinnoch
- Kilbarchan
- Howwood
- Brookfield
- Linwood
- Houston
- Bridge of Weir
- Bishopton
- Langbank

East Renfrewshire

Located south and south-west of Glasgow, East Renfrewshire is widely considered to be one of the most attractive places to live in Scotland. It has good transportation links, a high quality education system, a skilled labour force, and offers a friendly and healthy

environment. It has a population of 91,500 (NRS for 2013). Among the key settlements within rural East Renfrewshire are:

- Eaglesham
- Uplawmoor
- Neilston

Inverclyde

Located in the west central lowlands, Inverclyde borders Renfrewshire to the east and North Ayrshire to the south. The Firth of Clyde lies to the north and west. It is one of the smallest local authorities in Scotland in terms of both area and population (fifth smallest at 80,310 in 2013, NRS). Key settlements within rural Inverclyde are:

- Kilmacolm
- Quarriers Village
- Gourock
- Inverkip
- Wemyss Bay

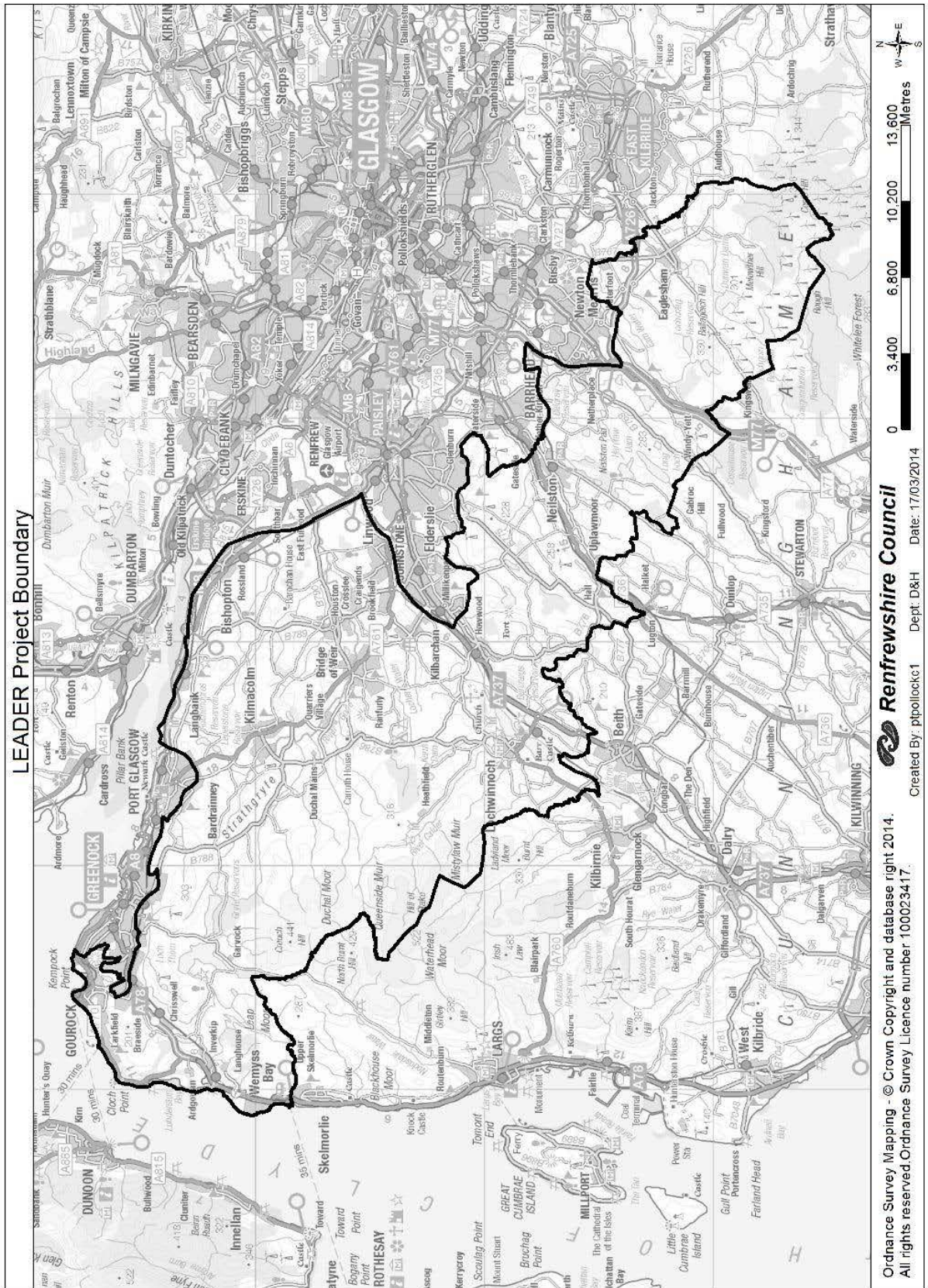
Landscape

The landscape of the LAG area is varied in character, ranging from the Inverclyde coastal communities of Gourock, Inverkip and Wemyss Bay to the hilly landscapes around the Renfrewshire villages of Langbank, Kilbarchan and Bridge of Weir. The lands around Houston and the Black and White Cart waters present an open, flat and low-lying alluvial plain which supports good quality agriculture. East Renfrewshire has a variety of landscapes including moorland and woodland which offer an attractive suburban location for settlements such as Neilston, Eaglesham and Uplawmoor and economic opportunities in farming, forestry and renewable energy production.

Map of Rural Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde

The map overleaf presents the delineated LEADER rural areas of Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde.

LEADER Project Boundary



LEADER Project Boundary

 Renfrewshire Council

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Created By: pipilock1 Dept: D&H Date: 17/03/2014

Demographics

This demographic analysis for the LAG area is based on data zones which are compiled by the Scottish Government. Data zones constitute the main geography for disseminating government statistics; therefore, a wide range of information is available on population and the labour market.

There are 6,505 data zones in Scotland of which 111 are located in rural Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde. The data zones suggest that there is a population of 83,343 residents of which 61% are of working age. This rural population represents 24% of the combined population of the three council areas. However, it should be noted that a number of rural data zones lie on the proposed LAG boundary. Although the majority of these data zones will be mainly rural in nature, a proportion of the population may live within the small urban area of the data zone outside the LAG boundary. This is due to the fact that data zones are commonly required to have between 500 and 1,000 residents.

Appendix 1 presents the detailed breakdown for these 111 data zones. In summary, this indicates:

- There are 49 data zones in Renfrewshire which include rural areas with a total population of 37,511. The most deprived of these are within and around Linwood.
- There are 20 data zones in East Renfrewshire which include rural areas with a total population of 14,772: only 1 of these is in the top 1,000 most deprived areas of Scotland.
- There are 42 data zones in Inverclyde which include rural areas with a total population of 31,060.
- The distribution of the data zones by number is therefore Renfrewshire 44%, Inverclyde 38% and East Renfrewshire 18%.
- By population, the distribution is almost the same with Renfrewshire at 45%, Inverclyde 37% and East Renfrewshire 18%.
- Compared to their council area populations, the percentages living in rural areas range from 39% in Inverclyde, to 22% in Renfrewshire and 16% in East Renfrewshire.

Further detailed analysis of populations and datazones will be carried out during the new programme as new data is released, as part of community consultation and strategy development processes.

Deprivation

Overall, the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) indicates that the LAG area is relatively affluent with 37 (33% of the 111 data zones) of rural Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde data zones classified as being within the 20% least deprived in Scotland. However, 14 data zones (13%) are within the 20% most deprived in Scotland. This indicates very significant disparities within the LAG area.

An analysis of income and employment deprivation identified that 8,185 residents of the LAG area are income deprived and 5,235 residents are employment deprived - representing 16% and 10% of the working age population respectively.

The data zone analysis also reveals that geographic access to services is a major issue in many of the LAG areas - reflecting generally poor public transport service provision.

Social and Economic Analysis

Employment

The LAG area has a varied employment base as can be seen from the table below which identifies the LAG area by industry. The largest proportion of people (16.5%) are employed within human health and social work activities, followed by wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles at 13.9%. Other notable industries are education, manufacturing and public administration.

Employment of 16-74 years old by Industry in the LAG Area

Industry	LAG Area		Scotland
	Estimated no.	%	%
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	381	1.0	2.0
Mining and quarrying	125	0.3	1.3
Manufacturing	2,294	8.5	7.7
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	280	0.7	0.8
Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	243	0.6	0.8
Construction	2,808	7.0	8.0
Wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	5,590	14.0	15.0
Transport and storage	2,236	5.6	5.0
Accommodation and food service activities	1,777	4.4	6.3
Information and communication	1,551	3.8	2.7
Financial and insurance activities	1,976	4.9	4.5
Real estate activities	567	1.4	1.2
Professional, scientific and technical activities	2,213	5.5	5.2
Administrative and support service activities	1,596	4.0	4.3

Public administration and defence, compulsory social security	2,887	7.2	7.0
Education	3,900	9.7	8.4
Human health and social work activities	6,610	16.5	15.0
Other	1,906	4.8	4.9
All people aged 16 to 74 in employment	40,040	100.0	100.0

Source: 2011 Census

Business Base

Information from Scottish Enterprise provides the following further information on the business base in the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER area. This indicates the number of companies account managed by Scottish Enterprise within the LAG boundaries. The LEADER programme will seek to engage with these companies to advance shared priorities, and encourage more direct business inputs to the work of the LAG.

Scottish Enterprise Account Managed Companies

Primary Key Sector	No. of Companies	No. of SMEs	No. of Large Enterprises
Chemical Sciences	1	1	0
Construction	1	1	0
Enabling Technologies/ICT	7	5	2
Energy - Low Carbon/Renewables	1	1	0
Financial Services	2	1	1
Food and Drink	3	3	0
Textiles	2	2	0
Total	17	14	3

The business base of the Greater Renfrewshire & Inverclyde LEADER area has a higher proportion of smaller businesses than the neighbouring urban areas. The business base is characterised by small and medium sized businesses, predominantly those defined as small (up to 50 employees), with a high proportion of those being micro (up to 10 employees). There is also a higher representation of family owned and managed business.

Business sectors are wide ranging, including agriculture/horticulture, food & drink, accommodation providers, tourism attractions, manufacturing/fabrication, construction trades, business services, personal services and general retail. Businesses operate from small, commercial and industrial premises as well as domestic premises and community facilities.

Given the sectors in which they operate and the scale of operation, some of these businesses are currently not eligible to apply for the mainstream financial support schemes offered by the three local authorities in this area, for example retailers focused on the local market and personal services businesses. In addition, Business Gateway support is focused on businesses with projected growth in turnover of between £50K and £200K over a 3 year

period. Many SMEs and micro businesses can rarely predict sufficient growth to qualify for support. The support provided through LEADER is intended to complement this service by supporting smaller rural businesses to achieve steady growth. LEADER will also complement the grant funding already on offer and will be promoted alongside existing support by the three Council's Economic Development Teams. The three Councils will promote LEADER both internally and with local partners, e.g. Business Gateway, Chambers of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, Third Sector Interface organisations, local Community Councils and community groups.

The LAG anticipates that LEADER funding may be used to support the development of newly established and existing businesses, with the overall aim of creating sustainable economic growth and job creation within the rural area. Grant funding will be available to support feasibility studies, market/product development, investment in capital equipment and development of information and communication technologies. Funding may also support minor improvements to business premises. LEADER funding will not operate in isolation and will engage with Business Gateway and Council Business teams to ensure advisory support is in place for all projects.

Agriculture

An estimated 381 people are employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing within the LAG area, most of whom are employed by farms. While the number employed in this industry is relatively low (0.95%), farming remains of great importance to the economy of many of the villages/towns across Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde.

Feedback indicated that funding focused on farm diversification may be used for the development of enterprises established to contribute to the financial viability of local farms. For example, the refurbishment of disused outbuildings as stables, farm shops, workshops etc.

Tourism and Recreation

Relatively few people from the LAG area work within the accommodation and food service industry. Visit Scotland and other listings suggest there are 29 places to stay located within the LAG boundary, including hotels, guest houses, inns and bed & breakfasts. If accommodation in adjacent urban areas is included this figure more than doubles.

Recreational facilities within the LAG area include 12 golf courses, and a number of parks including Clyde Muirshiel Park, Dams to Darnley Country Park, Whitelee Wind Farm, the Greenock Cut and Loch Thom. There also many areas to fish, and a good network of cycle and walking routes.

The LDS offers opportunities for small local businesses in the hospitality sector to participate in joint promotional activities for the area. For example, the Inverclyde Tourist Group, a community led organisation already provides free Inverclyde Tours to cruise ship visitors

docking at Greenock, thereby keeping potential spend in Inverclyde. The LAG is keen to support this type of local initiative.

In addition, the potential for a food and drink focused Business Improvement District (BID) is currently the subject of a feasibility study being pursued by the three local authorities in the area.

Travel

The most common method by which people travel to work or study in the LAG area is by car or van. The table below provides information on all travel to work or study methods for the LAG area(s) as well as the Scottish average. Given the rural location of the area it is of no great surprise that this is 6% higher than the Scottish average of 41%. Conversely, a lower proportion travel by foot. As can be seen, the second most common method in the LAG area is by bus, minibus or coach while large proportions also work or study mainly at or from their home.

Method of Travel to Work or Study

Method	Rural Renfrewshire	Rural East Renfrewshire	Rural Inverclyde	Total LAG area (average)	Scotland
Work or study mainly at or from home	9.9%	11.3%	10.6%	10.6%	11.3%
Underground, metro, light rail or tram	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.39%
Train	5.8%	9.2%	5.5%	6.8%	3.5%
Bus, minibus or coach	12.4%	12.4%	12.6%	12.5%	13.4%
Taxi or minicab	0.7%	0.6%	0.9%	0.7%	0.7%
Driving a car or van	47.6%	46.9%	45.9%	46.8%	40.9%
Passenger in a car or van	9.8%	10.2%	11.4%	10.5%	9.0%
Motorcycle, scooter or moped	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%
Bicycle	0.5%	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%	1.3%
On foot	12.2%	8.1%	11.3%	10.5%	18.5%
Other	0.9%	0.7%	1.3%	0.9%	0.9%

Source: 2011 Census

Natural Heritage

Rural Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde contains an abundance of high quality natural heritage sites. Key features located either partly or completely within the LAG area are as follows:

- Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park
- Gleniffer Braes
- Muirshiel
- Castle Semple
- Dams to Darnley
- Lunderston Bay
- Greenock Cut
- Loch Thom

The natural heritage within the LAG area is exceptional and includes several popular destinations for walkers, cyclists and those engaged in water sports or other outdoor pursuits. The potential for a promotional campaign to encourage greater use of these areas by local residents, particularly those from deprived communities has been noted by the LAG. In addition, tourism was highlighted at the community consultation events as an area to be exploited to support the local economy and local businesses.

Access to facilities and outdoor attractions is a key area of interest. Improvements to tourist attractions to increase the level of access for people with disabilities or the older people may be supported. LEADER would not support statutory access projects but more innovative approaches, for example a project related to mobility scooters to increase the range of access to external parks and gardens would be encouraged by the LAG.

Built Heritage

Conservation Areas

The LAG area contains 8 conservation areas, 4 of which are designated 'outstanding':

- Houston
- Kilbarchan (outstanding)
- Lochwinnoch
- Ranfurly (outstanding)
- Eaglesham (outstanding)
- Inverkip
- Kilmacolm
- Quarriers Homes (outstanding)

Listed Buildings

The Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG area contains around 437 listed buildings, of which 17 are A-listed.

Gardens and Designed Landscapes

The LAG area is fortunate to contain 4 areas of historically significant landscapes;

- Formakin Estate, lying between Bishopton, Houston and Langbank, in Renfrewshire
- Finlaystone House Estate, home of Clan MacMillan, near Langbank, in Renfrewshire
- Ardgowan Estate, near Inverkip, in Inverclyde
- Duchal House Estate, near Kilmacolm, in Inverclyde

Local Area Profile - Key Conclusions

The area analysis contains a number of key messages that have informed our strategic approach. These are reflected in the SWOT analysis in Section 3 and include:

- The area is varied in character and includes 17 main settlements. Many of these are located close to urban communities, presenting significant opportunities for day visits.
- Although the LAG area consists of comparatively affluent communities, there are still notable pockets of deprivation.
- The area has a very strong infrastructure of natural and built heritage, alongside conservation areas and estates. This is a platform from which to increase day visitors and resident visits to tourist attractions.
- There is a very high reliance on the use of private transport.

3. NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITY ANALYSIS

This Section outlines:

- The full and open consultation process undertaken in 2014 to inform the development of the LDS
- The major lessons identified from a review of the 2007 – 13 Programme
- The SWOT Analysis emerging from the consultation and Area Profile Analysis

Consulting the Wider Community in Informing the New LDS

A comprehensive community engagement and listening programme was undertaken to inform the development of this strategy. This process also provided an early opportunity to promote the new LEADER programme. Activities included:

- Production of a draft strategy summary, with an associated set of consultative questions, inviting responses from all relevant organisations and individuals living in the LEADER communities.
- Consultative discussions with a range of identified community groups and organisations based within or operating in the LEADER areas including: Engage Renfrewshire (the Third Sector Interface or TSI for Renfrewshire); the Creative Renfrewshire Network; Local Area Tourism Partnerships; Community Councils; Inverclyde Tourist Group; Voluntary Action East Renfrewshire (TSI); Discover Inverclyde; and Inverclyde CVS (TSI).
- Engagement with local businesses in the LEADER areas with support and guidance from the three Chambers of Commerce in the area, alongside further direct discussions with each Chamber and the Federation of Small Businesses.
- Ensuring the consultative process and associated support documents were available through the LEADER website and the websites of all key LEADER partner agencies, and working with community and voluntary sector intermediaries to raise awareness of LEADER generally and the consultation process in particular.
- Issuing a formal press release on the consultation process to the local media in each area to encourage participation.
- Hosting community consultation sessions and events in local LEADER areas. The Inverclyde consultations combined awareness-raising with the consultation process for the new LEADER programme as Inverclyde had not previously had a LEADER programme. Third Sector Interfaces supported the promotion of community consultations.

The LAG is keen to maintain and to develop further links to the community in the delivery of the new LEADER programme in 2015-20. This will be achieved by engaging with the target communities to carry out baseline research in the form of community surveys. This will be particularly helpful in bringing forward ideas from our more deprived communities and ensuring projects meet local identified needs.

For example, Linwood is new to LEADER and an area subject to pockets of deprivation. To engage this area the first Renfrewshire consultation session was held in the local community hall. As the new programme is launched we anticipate that this is the type of area where additional capacity building work will be focused.

Learning from LEADER 2007-13

To further assist the process of developing the new LEADER LDS, we reflected upon the key messages from local and Scottish wide reviews of the 2007 - 2013 programmes. A full external evaluation of the Renfrewshire LEADER programme was completed in March 2014¹, and an internal review of the East Renfrewshire programme was also undertaken. In addition, we have incorporated lessons identified from the SRDP 2014-2020 LEADER Working Group report².

Five overriding issues have been identified as the most significant learning we will take into the next programme:

- The need to base the future local strategy around a clear and focused **vision**, with more distinct priorities
- The need for increased clarity and simpler processes to encourage and support meaningful **community involvement**
- Less of a focus on LEADER as a 'grant distributing' initiative and more on its **animation** and **capacity building** and releasing roles
- a more **diverse LAG membership base** - with increased participation from young people, women and businesses
- an increased focus on **economic impacts**

These five key issues are reflected in the detail of our strategic approach presented in the next sections of the LDS.

¹ Evaluation of the Renfrewshire LEADER Programme 2007-13 - draft report by EKOS (March 2014)

² SRDP 2014 -2020 LEADER working group report for SRDP Programme Manager (August 2012)

SWOT analysis

The following, focused SWOT analysis is drawn from:

- The area profile analysis contained in Section 2
- The comprehensive consultation process outlined above
- Reflections on the LEADER 2007 - 13 programmes in Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire

The SWOT analysis presents the evidence base for the strategic direction and key activities we outline in Sections 4 – 7.

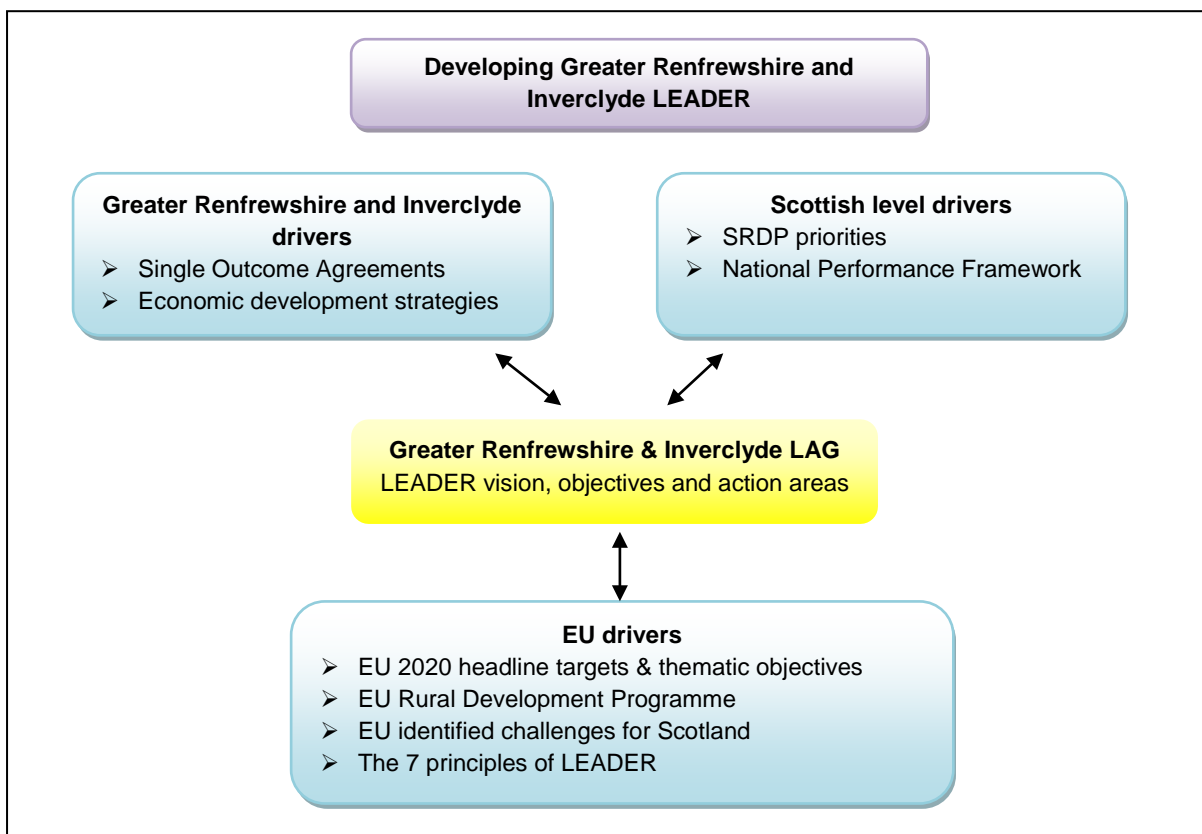
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<p>Proximity and good transport links of many LEADER areas to large population centres</p> <p>Generally high quality living environment</p> <p>High quality natural heritage and built environment</p> <p>Strong and unique cultural and industrial heritage</p> <p>Strong, well developed community groups already active in many communities</p> <p>Higher than average rates of self employment and educational achievement</p> <p>Commitment to and track record of partnership working</p> <p>Legacy of / learning from LEADER 2007-13</p>	<p>Large outbound commuting – limited local employment opportunities</p> <p>Current limited focus on ‘rural’ areas</p> <p>No developed or cohesive profile as a visitor destination and limited visitor accommodation</p> <p>Ageing populations in some communities</p> <p>Limited facilities and options for young people</p> <p>Limited community activity and infrastructure in some communities</p> <p>Limited public transport provision for some communities and restricted opportunities to use sustainable transport (walking and cycling)</p>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p>Key flagship tourism and leisure facilities with further development potential</p> <p>Potential to develop tourism, attract more day trippers and residents to enjoy local leisure activities</p> <p>The potential of the areas’ natural, built and cultural heritage assets.</p> <p>Support small businesses – possibly in conjunction with a rural Business Improvement District</p> <p>Business creation via entrepreneurs and social enterprises including new food production and local sourcing initiatives</p> <p>Digital connectivity projects to support the economy and reduce the impact of physical isolation.</p> <p>Rural transport initiatives to improve service access and access to jobs</p> <p>Potential to work with other LEADER programmes in developing innovative cross-border, cooperation projects</p>	<p>Lack of credibility/perception as a visitor and tourist destination</p> <p>Development pressure on both natural and built heritage and failure to respect and properly maintain heritage assets</p> <p>The impact of outward commuting and ease of accessibility to non-LAG areas – on communities, services and activities</p> <p>Depopulation and ongoing out-migration of young people - leading to an ageing and less economically active population</p> <p>Inertia and a lack of belief in the potential of some communities</p> <p>Ongoing cuts in public sector funding negatively impacting further on rural service provision</p>

4. STRATEGIC LINKAGES

The Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LDS has also been informed by - and will advance - a range of local, Scottish and European level priorities, strategies and investment agendas. Understanding these, and how they relate to each other, has been critical in shaping LAG thinking for LEADER 2014-2020.

We are keen to maintain a level of simplicity within this necessarily complex and multi-dimensional agenda, and ensure that a distinct, community-led LEADER initiative is maintained within this context. However, the LAG is seeking to maximise the impact of the new LEADER programme and as such is anxious to align the activities of the LEADER programme with existing strategic priorities, particularly those related to economic impacts and social inclusion.

The diagram below summarises our approach to understanding wider strategic frameworks:



We now consider the key messages from each level of context that has shaped our approach to the new LEADER programme.

EU level drivers

EU 2020 Headline Targets and Thematic Objectives

The work of the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER programme will cut across and advance many of the EU 2020 thematic objectives and headline targets, but the most relevant are:

Target	Thematic objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased employment rates• Reduced levels of poverty and social inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competitiveness of SMEs• Low carbon economy• Sustainable transport and infrastructures• Employment and labour mobility• Social inclusion and combating poverty• Education, skills and lifelong learning

EU Rural Development Priorities

Our future activities will be strongly focused on Priority 6 - 'addressing social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development'.

We are more than aware that limited capacity within more economically deprived areas will impact on the number of projects coming forward from these areas. Each of the participating local authorities has committed to provide support to applicants through funding and business support staff. The level of capacity building support will be tailored to the needs of the applicant community to ensure a level playing field for community driven LEADER supported projects.

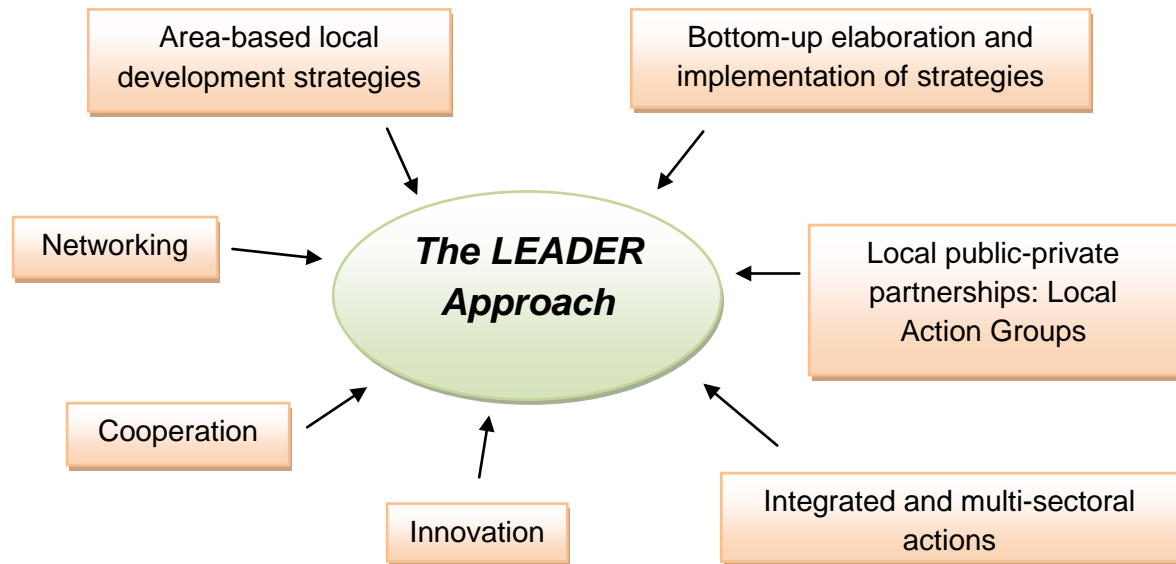
The EU/Scottish Government Partnership Statement

LEADER activity will also address the specific challenges set out in the November 2012 'Partnership Agreement Position Paper' between the European Commission and the Scottish Government. This identified three areas where Scotland should seek to make measurable progress in the period to 2020 through the use of EU funds:

- Increasing labour market participation, promoting business competitiveness and research and development investment
- Addressing social exclusion and unemployment
- Developing an environmentally friendly and resource efficient economy

The LEADER Approach

Underpinning all the new LDS is a commitment to the 7 principles of the LEADER approach identified in the following diagram:



Integration with Other EU Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)

The Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER approach 2014 - 2020 will fit closely with the overall themes and indicative interventions of wider ESIF - as articulated in the current consultation paper. The actions detailed in Section 7 sit well with the overall aspirations to support 'smart, sustainable and inclusive growth'. Under the three proposed action areas outlined in Section 7, we envisage complementing the following ESIF themes:

- 'Smart growth' - business competitiveness and new generation broadband investment
- 'Inclusive growth' - poverty and social inclusion, and green infrastructure

Support for SMEs is a key priority for the LAG. During the previous programme one of the most successful examples of community driven projects was a new social enterprise to maintain a village postal service, shop and local community hub.

Digital connectivity is also an area of interest, however as there are existing national infrastructure projects planned (potentially ERDF funded) and ongoing strategies in the LAG area to enhance connectivity (e.g. Digital Renfrewshire), LEADER would be focused on complementary small scale projects supporting individual enterprises to make the most of new broadband opportunities.

We will continue to track the finalisation of the ESIF programme for 2014-2020, and ensure close working relationships with relevant investments through strengthening our links with local Community Planning Partnerships.

Scottish Drivers

Scottish Rural Development Programme priorities

Our strategy will be further informed by the outcomes of the Stage 2 consultations on the Scotland Rural Development Programme. At this point it is framed to support the three key Scottish Government priorities of:

- Sustainable economic growth
- Environmental sustainability
- Vibrant rural communities

The National Performance Framework

The LDS will also align with a number of the 15 outcomes within the Scottish Government National Performance Framework, most notably:

- We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people
- We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others
- We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations
- Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors, and responsible citizens
- We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production
- We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society

Local Drivers

The LEADER LDS will support and add value to key local strategic objectives. This will be achieved by ensuring a strategic fit with the priorities of the 3 local authority-wide Community Planning Partnerships. To enable local consistency in reporting LEADER progress, the LDS has identified relevant indicators within the three related Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs), particularly as they cross reference to the EU rural development priority 6 of 'addressing social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development'.

Relevant indicators by each area's SOA are as follows:

Renfrewshire

- Children and young people: ensure that they live in a positive and inclusive environment, have the best start in life, are confident, healthy and free from disadvantage.
- By 2023, Renfrewshire will be recognised for its diverse, enterprising and thriving business base – creating new jobs and businesses within a growing local economy and supported by inclusive and sustainable communities and workforce.
- Communities are enterprising, resilient and inclusive. Citizens are active in the development of personalised public services and participate in local decision making.
- Communities fully utilise the assets at their disposal, using their own knowledge, experience and skills to achieve their goals and aspirations.

East Renfrewshire

- All children in East Renfrewshire experience a stable and secure start to their lives and are supported to succeed.
- East Renfrewshire is a thriving, attractive and sustainable place for residents and businesses to grow.
- Older people in East Renfrewshire are valued; their voices are heard and they are supported to enjoy full and positive lives for longer.

Inverclyde

- Communities are stronger, responsible and more able to identify, articulate and take action on their needs and aspirations to bring about an improvement in the quality of community life.

- The area's economic regeneration is secured, economic activity in Inverclyde is increased, and skills development enables both those in work and those furthest from the labour market to realise their full potential.
- A nurturing Inverclyde gives all young people and children the best possible start in life.
- All children, citizens and communities in Inverclyde play an active role in nurturing the environment to make the area sustainable and a desirable place to live and visit.

Common Local Strategic Themes Relevant to LEADER

Reflected in the SOAs and supporting economic development and tourism strategies are a number of consistent and recurrent local themes across the LEADER area which are central to our future approach. These are:

- To promote tourism and increase the number of day visitors
- To ensure and maintain a high quality environment for residents and visitors
- To support tourism related businesses, including food and drink
- To support SMEs, micro-businesses and social enterprises in the rural area
- To increase employment opportunities
- To build stronger, more self reliant and inclusive rural communities

These strategic themes inform our vision and objectives as presented in Section 5.

5. 2020 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Vision

The revised vision of the 2014-2020 Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER programme is:

'To improve the quality of life in our rural areas by supporting local people and local businesses to realise the social, economic and environmental potential of their communities'

Strategic Objectives

The strategic objectives of the LDS are:

- To promote **tourism** and increase the number of day visitors, encompassing support for tourism-related businesses, including food and drink enterprises
- To secure a high quality **environment** for residents and visitors
- To support **SMEs, micro-businesses and social enterprises**
- To increase **employment opportunities**
- To build **stronger, more self reliant and inclusive rural communities**
- To incorporate **sustainability** in the application of all LEADER funds and in all ongoing monitoring and support processes and procedures

Operational Objectives

The vision and strategic objectives will be supported by the following operational objectives:

1. To ensure the LDS is delivered based on wide and ongoing community engagement and feedback.
2. To develop robust, inclusive, multi partner and accessible LAG governance structures from the commencement of the new LEADER programme.
3. To stimulate interest in, invite applications to, and allocate LEADER resources in a professional and fair manner across the eligible communities.
4. To design and apply a robust performance framework to maximise the realisation of LEADER outcome objectives from programme commencement.
5. To ensure the work of LEADER identifies, complements and adds value to the strategies and investment streams of the three councils and partner agencies.

6. To learn from and share learning with other LAGs - both within Scotland and beyond – embracing and enhancing the networking, cooperation and innovation principles of LEADER.
7. To promote the LEADER programme on an ongoing basis, and to communicate and celebrate its success using all available communication methods.

Target Groups

The principal target groups for the new programme are:

- Young people
- Older People
- Women
- The under-employed
- Micro enterprises – existing and new start
- SMEs – existing and new start
- Social enterprises – existing and new start

The Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG is well balanced and largely representative of the target communities. Community feedback indicated that LEADER should support the younger and older members of the community, with the focus for young people on employability and training opportunities and for older people on addressing social isolation and increasing opportunities for participation.

Equalities and Diversity

The Business Plan contains a comprehensive Equalities Statement committing the LAG to promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination in all aspects of its operation. This includes:

- Increasing the representation of women and young people on the LAG
- Mainstreaming equalities and diversity principles into the work of the LAG
- Providing induction training on equalities and diversity for all LAG members
- Monitoring all LEADER funded projects to ensure they have and maintain effective equalities policies
- Taking corrective action if any LEADER activity is having a detrimental effect on any equalities group

6. GOVERNANCE, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Local Action Group

Full details on all aspects of the LAG's governance role are outlined in the Business Plan. Summary details are presented below:

The LDS will be actioned and managed by a single Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Local Action Group (LAG) which will be responsible for all implementation tasks and decisions including:

- Building the capacity of local partners and communities to develop and implement projects
- Drawing up appropriate guidelines and selection criteria for applications for LEADER support
- Ensuring the work of LEADER aligns with and complements other relevant local strategies
- Publicising and marketing the local LEADER programme
- Assessing applications for LEADER support, and making recommendations for support
- Monitoring the implementation of the LDS and carrying out relevant evaluative work
- Promoting cooperative approaches with, and sharing/implementing learning and identified best practice from neighbouring/other Scottish/UK LEADER programmes
- Working closely with the Scottish Government in the implementation and development of the programme

The new LAG will be established as a multi-sector body with participation from a wide range of: public agencies; the private sector; voluntary and community sector organisations; local businesses; and local people. Public sector bodies will supply no more than 49% of voting members. Opportunities to join the LAG will be publicised through widespread marketing through a variety of local media outlets, partner engagement mechanisms, and the use of voluntary and community sector intermediary bodies and their networks. Here, as elsewhere, we will apply identified best practice from other Scottish/UK LAGs in recruitment, retention and refreshment processes.

It is anticipated that some continuity of LAG membership will be sought through the ongoing participation of some members of the existing two LAGS for Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire. This core will be augmented by activity to add appropriate representation from Inverclyde. In addition, specific efforts will be made to ensure the LAG has participation from constituencies that have been under represented in the 2007–13 programme – especially women, young people and local businesses – and broader involvement of grassroots level community organisations and individuals .

The new LAG will appoint a Chair and other office bearers from among its membership at the first meeting of 2015, and a programme of training/induction for LAG members will be designed and delivered.

Administration and Financial Governance

The Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER programme will be administered by Renfrewshire Council. This will be on the basis of a shared service approach which will enable economies of scale in local programme delivery and governance. Staff to support these functions will be employed and line managed by Renfrewshire Council, but they will also have direct reporting responsibilities to the LAG. A draft Memorandum of Understanding among the three councils and a draft Partnership Agreement between the LAG and the Accountable Body have been drawn up to detail respective roles and expectations within these arrangements (see the Business Plan for more detail).

Community Engagement and Animation

Effective community engagement is essential to the development and implementation of the LDS. The new LAG will be continuously developed and improved through an extensive programme of community engagement following the full range of consultation processes described at the start of Section 3, plus others such as frequent use of social media and networking. A key ongoing role will be to ensure local communities are kept informed and consulted on all relevant LEADER timescales, processes and developments.

Our approach will include incorporating identified best practice examples of successful community engagement processes in rural economic development and regeneration from elsewhere in Scotland and the UK – particularly those utilising new and innovative bottom-up approaches. We look forward to cooperating closely with other LEADER programmes and the Scottish and UK Governments in identifying and implementing learning and excellence in community engagement.

Communication Plan

Allied to the community engagement processes, the LAG will also implement an ongoing communication plan throughout the LEADER 2014 - 2020 programme period. This will be supported by the dedicated LEADER support team based in Renfrewshire Council. Full details are set out in the Business Plan. The plan includes:

- Leaflets and posters publicising the programme
- A dedicated website including up to date news, developments, identified best practice locally/elsewhere in project implementation - and providing the open opportunity for local people to engage with the programme by commenting and/or submitting their views on any LEADER-related issue. We hope this 'open channel' approach will promote a dynamic, two way approach to community engagement and communication
- The provision of updated information on the programme on LAG members' and relevant other agency websites
- The preparation and circulation of a short LEADER annual report
- An annual conference
- Road shows
- Case studies
- Inputs on LEADER at relevant area events
- Regular press releases on LEADER progress, showcasing good practice and impacts which might be able to be replicated elsewhere
- Extensive use of social media and networking opportunities to widen the communication base

7. THEMES, PRIORITY ACTION AREAS AND IMPACTS

The table below summarises the priority themes and messages emerging from Sections 2 – 4. In turn, these inform our proposed three action area priorities (also presented below).

Strengths	Opportunities	Learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A network of strong and well developed community groups already active in many LEADER communities • A strong and unique cultural and industrial heritage • The proximity and good transport links of many LEADER areas to large population centres such as Paisley, Greenock and Glasgow • Higher than average rates of self employment • Higher than average rates of educational achievement • A wide range of leisure pursuits across the communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The existence of key flagship tourism and leisure facilities with further amenity development potential e.g. Clyde Muirshiel Park, Dams to Darnley, Loch Thom, the Greenock Cut etc. • The potential of a consistent ‘water’ theme across the LEADER areas including the Clyde estuary at Inverclyde, and dams, reservoirs and nature reserves in Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire • Considerable potential to further develop tourism and day trips to the areas • Further potential to support small local businesses • Business creation potential via entrepreneurs and social enterprises • Specific opportunities to develop new food production and sourcing businesses • The significant, consistent and increasing influx in cruise ships visitors at Greenock with the potential to increase their options to stay in local area • The potential of the areas’ natural, built and cultural heritage assets including further improvements to the local environment • Digital connectivity projects to support social and economic life, and reduce the impact of physical isolation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to base the future local strategy around a clear and focused vision, with more distinct priorities • The need for increased clarity and simpler processes to encourage and support meaningful community involvement • Less of a focus on LEADER as a ‘grant distributing’ initiative and more on its animation and capacity releasing role • An increased focus on economic impacts

Layered across these is our commitment to focus on the EU Rural Development Priority 6 ‘addressing social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development’.

Leading from this analysis, and our intention to operate a more focused approach, the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER programme will seek to support activities and investments across three complementary thematic action areas:

- 1. Enabling new and enhancing existing visitor/tourist amenities, services, environmental improvements and access.**
- 2. Animation and enterprise capacity building and releasing to support rural SMEs, social enterprises and local communities.**
- 3. General environmental improvements and further development of community access.**

The following three tables summarise for each theme:

- Indicative action areas
- Performance indicators
- Wider strategic objectives enhanced

We look forward to working with the Scottish Government – and other LEADER programmes - in implementing the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER 2014 – 20 programme.

ACTION AREA 1: ENABLING NEW AND ENHANCING EXISTING VISITOR/TOURIST AMENITIES, SERVICES, ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS AND ACCESS

Indicative Action Areas	Performance Indicators	Wider Strategic Objectives Enhanced
Support to existing local businesses and social enterprises seeking to enhance or create visitor attractions and amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses supported • Jobs created or safeguarded • Training opportunities created • Visitor use of new facilities • Visitor numbers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to tourism • Support to SMEs and social enterprises
Support to new businesses and social enterprises seeking to enhance or create visitor attractions and amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses supported • New businesses created • Jobs created or safeguarded • Training opportunities created • Visitor use of new facilities • Visitor numbers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to tourism • Support to SMEs and social enterprises
Improvements to access routes, pathways and cycle routes (including community transport initiatives)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of projects completed • Number of gaps filled to link routes • Usage numbers • Length of route created/improved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access and communications • Support to tourism
Improvements to and preservation of the built environment in visitor areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of improvements completed • Improved feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable infrastructures • Environmental sustainability
Information provision/multi-media materials and promotional activities promoting rural Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde as a visitor destination – possibly linking to the anticipated development of a Rural Business Improvement District in Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature, scale and usage of information/materials created • Increased awareness of rural Greater Renfrewshire as visitor attraction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to tourism • Support to SMEs and social enterprises • Support to tourism • Increased use of digital technology
Support to employment and training initiatives for excluded groups enhancing existing visitor attractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobs and training opportunities created • Profiles of targeted groups supported • Jobs sustained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment creation • Social inclusion, tackling inequalities and addressing poverty
Specific improvements to facilities for people experiencing economic or physical/mental health barriers to accessing visitor attractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature and scale of improvements made • Increased usage of visitor attractions by targeted groups using the service • References in associated promotional materials to improved access arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social inclusion, tackling inequalities and addressing poverty • Support to tourism

ACTION AREA 2: ANIMATION AND ENTERPRISE CAPACITY BUILDING AND RELEASING TO SUPPORT RURAL SMEs, SOCIAL ENTERPRISES AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Indicative Action Areas	Performance Indicators	Wider Strategic Objectives Enhanced
We will complement Business Gateway by support such as business planning, financial management, marketing, shared administrative support, tendering, funding and applications, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and range of new services • Businesses supported • New businesses supported • Feedback on value from user businesses • Jobs created/sustained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to SMEs and social enterprises • Economic development • Building sustainable economies • Vibrant rural communities
Support to the engagement of 'enterprise and community cohesion animateurs' in targeted communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animateurs engaged • Employment opportunities developed • Volunteer opportunities developed • Assessment of individual animateur impact reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vibrant local communities • Employment creation
Support to the production of community economic development action plans in targeted communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Action Plans produced • Assessment of progress in actions identified within the plans • Subsequent LEADER and other investment in communities triggered through the Action Plans • Number of social enterprises assisted or created 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vibrant local communities • Employment creation • Social inclusion, tackling inequalities and addressing poverty
The development or creation of enterprises and activities linked to the creation of new job, training and volunteering opportunities in the food and drink and green tourism sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New enterprises developed in key sectors • Jobs created or sustained • Training opportunities provided • Volunteering opportunities created or/sustained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to SMEs and social enterprises • Economic development • Building sustainable economies

ACTION AREA 3: GENERAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY ACCESS IN LAG AREA		
Indicative Action Areas	Performance Indicators	Wider Strategic Objectives Enhanced
Improvements to village centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of improvements made • Increased use of the local facilities • Local community satisfaction levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vibrant rural communities • Support to tourism • Developing an environmentally friendly and resource efficient economy
Initiatives to increase the cleanliness and maintenance of the rural environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiatives undertaken • Increased usage of local facilities • Local community satisfaction levels • Volunteering opportunities created 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vibrant rural communities • Support to tourism • Developing an environmentally friendly and resource efficient economy
Improved signage initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of additional signage created/improved • Local community satisfaction levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vibrant rural communities • Access and communications • Support to tourism • Developing an environmentally friendly and resource efficient economy
Action to improve public access to nature and heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiatives completed/improved • Local community/targeted group satisfaction levels • Use – if it can be measured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vibrant local communities • Support to tourism
Improved access initiatives for older and disabled people – in the broadest sense – including physical access and targeted activities for the client group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiatives completed/improved • Local community /targeted group satisfaction levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vibrant local communities • Support to tourism • Social inclusion, tackling inequalities and addressing poverty
Development of new or improved facilities to increase access to families with young children e.g. ramps, baby changing facilities, play areas, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiatives completed/improved • Increased local community/family/disabled people usage and satisfaction levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vibrant local communities • Support to tourism • Social inclusion, tackling inequalities and addressing poverty

APPENDIX 1 - DATA ZONES IN RURAL GREATER RENFREWSHIRE AND INVERCLYDE

Rural data zones in Renfrewshire

Data Zone	Ward	Total Population (SAPE 2010)	Overall SIMD 2012 Rank	SIMD 2014 Rank (%)	Total Number Income Deprived 2012	Income domain 2012 Rank (%)	Total Number Employment Deprived 2012	Employment domain 2012 Rank (%)	Health domain 2012 Rank (%)	Education, Skills and Training domain 2012 Rank (%)	Housing domain rank 2004, 2006, 2009 & 2012 (%)	Geographic Access domain 2012 Rank (%)	SIMD Crime 2012 Rank (%)
S01005260	Linwood South	572	349	5%	210	3%	120	2%	14%	26%	27%	87%	64%
S01005259	Linwood South	556	434	7%	180	5%	110	4%	17%	19%	10%	74%	5%
S01005252	Linwood South	448	755	12%	110	15%	75	8%	7%	24%	10%	57%	18%
S01005276	Linwood North	643	1,016	16%	175	12%	80	17%	11%	27%	21%	61%	37%
S01005266	Linwood South	835	1,175	18%	200	17%	115	12%	23%	26%	22%	79%	26%
S01005278	Linwood South	726	1,776	27%	150	23%	85	21%	27%	46%	27%	58%	50%
S01005264	Linwood South	610	1,837	28%	125	23%	60	24%	35%	28%	23%	85%	49%
S01005267	Linwood North	982	1,856	29%	205	22%	100	27%	32%	33%	23%	71%	37%
S01005295	Bridge of Weir	664	2,136	33%	120	29%	70	31%	37%	31%	28%	80%	22%
S01005281	Linwood North	710	2,345	36%	120	32%	70	31%	44%	35%	19%	74%	45%
S01005290	Bridge of Weir	583	2,882	44%	90	38%	45	40%	48%	56%	15%	47%	52%
S01005151	Lochwinnoch	689	3,011	46%	90	45%	55	41%	68%	53%	45%	18%	59%
S01005303	Bridge of Weir	838	3,282	50%	115	43%	75	36%	58%	50%	54%	85%	76%
S01005358	Bishopton	853	3,298	51%	95	51%	55	54%	51%	63%	44%	15%	59%
S01005238	Kilbarchan	762	3,349	51%	90	48%	55	47%	52%	52%	48%	31%	93%
S01005351	Renfrewshire Rural North and Langbank	1,227	3,356	52%	90	67%	55	64%	39%	73%	49%	9%	20%
S01005150	Lochwinnoch	673	3,441	53%	65	56%	45	48%	63%	51%	36%	23%	63%
S01005277	Linwood North	598	3,511	54%	60	54%	30	60%	38%	44%	57%	50%	43%
S01005230	Kilbarchan	794	3,560	55%	105	44%	60	47%	64%	65%	30%	45%	74%
S01005149	Lochwinnoch	604	3,595	55%	65	52%	40	51%	45%	92%	45%	24%	57%
S01005285	Linwood North	624	3,609	55%	50	62%	40	56%	58%	39%	45%	21%	87%
S01005320	Houston North	632	4,012	62%	60	57%	40	57%	45%	71%	45%	44%	67%
S01005152	Renfrewshire Rural South & Howwood	1,438	4,035	62%	95	71%	45	79%	38%	74%	74%	11%	43%
S01005329	Renfrewshire Rural North and Langbank	633	4,118	63%	50	63%	20	79%	69%	88%	62%	11%	16%
S01005213	Kilbarchan	875	4,247	65%	70	63%	50	57%	48%	67%	59%	54%	65%
S01005273	Linwood North	760	4,257	65%	55	67%	45	55%	50%	65%	32%	46%	90%
S01005155	Renfrewshire Rural South & Howwood	767	4,653	72%	60	64%	50	54%	70%	69%	63%	78%	56%
S01005154	Renfrewshire Rural South & Howwood	614	4,665	72%	30	79%	25	75%	85%	96%	76%	6%	55%
S01005228	Renfrewshire Rural North and Langbank	1,198	4,783	74%	35	91%	35	89%	70%	62%	87%	11%	27%
S01005148	Lochwinnoch	876	4,835	74%	55	71%	35	67%	64%	75%	52%	40%	70%
S01005298	Houston North	1,035	5,206	80%	45	84%	30	84%	75%	91%	84%	12%	83%
S01005198	Kilbarchan	820	5,219	80%	45	78%	40	69%	78%	78%	83%	42%	71%
S01005153	Renfrewshire Rural South & Howwood	851	5,258	81%	55	72%	35	71%	76%	78%	90%	46%	94%
S01005291	Houston South	667	5,275	81%	20	93%	25	79%	81%	80%	84%	13%	92%
S01005283	Bridge of Weir	796	5,479	84%	25	89%	25	81%	85%	96%	93%	13%	98%
S01005361	Renfrewshire Rural North and Langbank	918	5,645	87%	30	92%	25	90%	87%	95%	96%	12%	93%
S01005300	Houston South	929	5,657	87%	35	88%	20	94%	97%	90%	94%	11%	100%
S01005360	Bishopton	730	5,696	88%	10	98%	25	75%	90%	92%	96%	19%	100%
S01005279	Bridge of Weir	511	5,781	89%	15	92%	10	93%	94%	86%	89%	17%	75%
S01005301	Houston South	900	5,819	89%	20	97%	20	91%	96%	97%	97%	11%	90%
S01005356	Bishopton	654	5,840	90%	20	92%	20	79%	87%	92%	85%	28%	99%
S01005359	Bishopton	787	5,842	90%	25	92%	25	85%	94%	91%	90%	20%	98%
S01005354	Bishopton	893	5,936	91%	30	90%	30	84%	87%	90%	94%	31%	95%
S01005296	Houston South	847	5,938	91%	10	99%	15	97%	99%	94%	96%	11%	99%
S01005286	Bridge of Weir	743	6,048	93%	20	94%	15	92%	94%	97%	98%	20%	90%
S01005294	Bridge of Weir	543	6,111	94%	20	90%	15	88%	97%	94%	98%	42%	53%
S01005350	Bishopton	719	6,139	94%	25	88%	15	92%	84%	89%	89%	48%	74%
S01005307	Houston North	918	6,149	95%	10	99%	15	97%	92%	99%	97%	18%	90%
S01005314	Houston North	466	6,378	98%	15	89%	10	93%	89%	96%	100%	65%	73%
Total		37,511			3495		2200						

Source: SIMD, 2012

Rural data zones in East Renfrewshire

Data Zone	Ward	Total Population (SAPE 2010)	Overall SIMD 2012 Rank	SIMD 2014 Rank (%)	Total Number Income Deprived 2012	Income domain 2012 Rank (%)	Total Number Employment Deprived 2012	Employment domain 2012 Rank (%)	Health domain 2012 Rank (%)	Education, Skills & Training domain 2012 Rank (%)	Housing domain 2004, 2006, 2009 & 2012 Rank (%)	Geographic Access domain 2012 Rank (%)	SIMD Crime 2012 Rank (%)
S01001724	Neilston, Uplawmoor & North Newton Mearns	734	617	9%	215	9%	125	5%	9%	23%	20%	97%	14%
S01001716	Neilston, Uplawmoor & North Newton Mearns	819	2,361	36%	140	32%	80	32%	42%	52%	30%	83%	11%
S01001725	Neilston, Uplawmoor & North Newton Mearns	731	2,540	39%	130	30%	65	34%	26%	61%	35%	95%	46%
S01001674	Busby, Clarkston & Eaglesham	663	3,460	53%	95	41%	45	45%	41%	73%	48%	82%	70%
S01001672	Busby, Clarkston & Eaglesham	618	3,493	54%	75	47%	35	53%	34%	72%	26%	63%	49%
S01001740	Neilston, Uplawmoor & North Newton Mearns	755	4,033	62%	55	66%	50	51%	58%	77%	28%	27%	71%
S01001733	Barrhead	1,114	4,888	75%	85	66%	50	64%	72%	71%	34%	78%	53%
S01001720	Neilston, Uplawmoor & North Newton Mearns	791	5,082	78%	45	75%	30	81%	92%	95%	71%	20%	27%
S01001678	Neilston, Uplawmoor & North Newton Mearns	935	5,102	78%	40	83%	50	68%	76%	86%	74%	24%	73%
S01001676	Newton Mearns South	1,341	5,133	79%	55	86%	30	89%	64%	93%	72%	11%	72%
S01001682	Neilston, Uplawmoor & North Newton Mearns	619	5,256	81%	25	85%	25	75%	68%	93%	54%	22%	97%
S01001732	Barrhead	543	5,344	82%	30	78%	20	69%	90%	80%	90%	40%	70%
S01001712	Neilston, Uplawmoor & North Newton Mearns	491	5,395	83%	25	79%	25	67%	80%	65%	68%	70%	87%
S01001673	Busby, Clarkston & Eaglesham	609	5,433	84%	35	75%	15	84%	89%	97%	63%	22%	80%
S01001684	Neilston, Uplawmoor & North Newton Mearns	607	5,465	84%	20	88%	10	96%	88%	93%	87%	11%	70%
S01001671	Busby, Clarkston & Eaglesham	541	5,636	87%	20	86%	15	87%	96%	96%	85%	14%	96%
S01001689	Newton Mearns South	683	6,040	93%	20	92%	20	84%	91%	91%	85%	47%	57%
S01001670	Busby, Clarkston & Eaglesham	690	6,107	94%	30	85%	10	95%	93%	94%	75%	36%	80%
S01001675	Busby, Clarkston & Eaglesham	637	6,120	94%	25	85%	20	80%	85%	94%	79%	67%	91%
S01001677	Busby, Clarkston & Eaglesham	851	6,124	94%	15	97%	15	92%	93%	98%	93%	23%	85%
Total		14,772			1180		735						

Rural data zones in Inverclyde (source: SIMD, 2012)

Data Zone	Ward	Total Population (SAPE 2010)	Overall SIMD 2012 Rank	SIMD 2014 Rank (%)	Total Number Income Deprived 2012	Income domain 2012 Rank (%)	Total Number Employment Deprived 2012	Employment domain 2012 Rank (%)	Health domain 2012 Rank (%)	Education, Skills & Training domain 2012 Rank (%)	Housing domain 2004, 2006, 2009 & 2012 Rank (%)	Geographic Access domain 2012 Rank (%)	SIMD Crime 2012 Rank (%)
S01004074	Braeside, Branchton, Lower Larkfield and Ravenscra	837	160	2%	270	5%	155	3%	3%	4%	11%	14%	14%
S01004090	Lower Bow & Larkfield, Fancy Farm, Mallard Bowl	316	148	2%	115	3%	60	4%	1%	9%	14%	27%	11%
S01004087	Braeside, Branchton, Lower Larkfield and Ravenscra	499	309	5%	155	6%	85	6%	8%	6%	14%	16%	12%
S01004032	Port Glasgow Mid, East and Central	462	411	6%	135	8%	80	9%	6%	5%	14%	14%	31%
S01004073	Braeside, Branchton, Lower Larkfield and Ravenscra	679	380	6%	240	4%	110	9%	9%	12%	20%	17%	23%
S01004058	Braeside, Branchton, Lower Larkfield and Ravenscra	781	524	8%	210	12%	140	8%	6%	13%	12%	18%	43%
S01004088	Braeside, Branchton, Lower Larkfield and Ravenscra	517	588	9%	155	8%	60	23%	7%	7%	21%	10%	21%
S01004066	Braeside, Branchton, Lower Larkfield and Ravenscra	569	1,101	17%	130	18%	80	19%	15%	27%	16%	30%	7%
S01004118	Gourock Central, Upper East and IRH	920	1,355	21%	205	19%	125	16%	11%	55%	9%	93%	25%
S01004056	West Braeside, East Inverkip and West Gourock	676	1,512	23%	110	33%	80	25%	25%	17%	17%	13%	52%
S01004100	Gourock Central, Upper East and IRH	772	1,751	27%	135	31%	100	25%	25%	32%	25%	25%	50%
S01004054	West Braeside, East Inverkip and West Gourock	893	1,889	29%	115	44%	100	29%	14%	38%	26%	23%	35%
S01004114	Gourock Central, Upper East and IRH	684	2,272	35%	120	30%	60	35%	28%	53%	11%	58%	38%
S01004024	Kilmacolm, Quarriers, Greenock Upper	1,035	2,502	38%	110	54%	90	45%	28%	51%	26%	9%	40%
S01004105	Gourock Upper and West Central & Upper Larkfield	789	3,287	51%	85	53%	50	51%	44%	64%	25%	30%	32%
S01004043	West Braeside, East Inverkip and West Gourock	747	3,462	53%	45	73%	60	52%	41%	55%	27%	12%	90%
S01004119	Gourock Upper and West Central & Upper Larkfield	522	3,420	53%	60	49%	45	41%	62%	56%	19%	65%	51%
S01004020	Kilmacolm, Quarriers, Greenock Upper	742	3,568	55%	80	53%	40	52%	45%	56%	54%	39%	65%
S01004103	Gourock Upper and West Central & Upper Larkfield	697	3,705	57%	75	52%	45	49%	72%	64%	44%	24%	80%
S01004098	Gourock Central, Upper East and IRH	593	3,812	58%	40	71%	40	44%	56%	89%	50%	20%	43%
S01004023	Inverkip and Wemyss Bay	577	3,889	60%	50	61%	35	63%	58%	67%	36%	14%	78%
S01004113	Gourock Upper and West Central & Upper Larkfield	708	3,971	61%	65	59%	40	57%	49%	72%	21%	46%	48%
S01004108	Gourock East, Greenock West and Lyle Road	794	4,217	65%	70	62%	35	65%	53%	71%	61%	25%	78%
S01004011	Kilmacolm, Quarriers, Greenock Upper	1,285	4,276	66%	85	70%	65	59%	71%	84%	93%	10%	96%
S01004012	Inverkip and Wemyss Bay	768	4,324	66%	55	67%	35	73%	61%	69%	75%	17%	46%
S01004022	Inverkip and Wemyss Bay	830	4,553	70%	65	66%	45	57%	72%	79%	64%	32%	83%
S01004013	Kilmacolm, Quarriers, Greenock Upper	601	4,683	72%	25	85%	25	65%	84%	69%	86%	12%	69%
S01004117	Gourock Upper and West Central & Upper Larkfield	739	4,669	72%	65	61%	40	60%	61%	72%	27%	81%	76%
S01004111	Gourock Upper and West Central & Upper Larkfield	827	4,845	74%	55	71%	40	68%	58%	88%	78%	31%	79%
S01004016	Inverkip and Wemyss Bay	510	4,859	75%	25	82%	30	60%	67%	76%	83%	25%	96%
S01004107	Gourock Central, Upper East and IRH	625	5,030	77%	40	74%	30	70%	60%	90%	80%	45%	48%
S01004018	Inverkip and Wemyss Bay	867	5,193	80%	40	83%	40	68%	83%	75%	93%	26%	96%
S01004099	West Braeside, East Inverkip and West Gourock	737	5,279	81%	25	90%	25	81%	81%	90%	87%	10%	93%
S01004017	Kilmacolm Central	934	5,397	83%	70	68%	35	71%	65%	93%	73%	76%	84%
S01004096	West Braeside, East Inverkip and West Gourock	715	5,425	83%	10	99%	20	85%	77%	90%	99%	13%	50%
S01004109	Gourock East, Greenock West and Lyle Road	609	5,373	83%	25	84%	25	73%	87%	90%	75%	22%	96%
S01004019	Inverkip and Wemyss Bay	883	5,493	84%	20	95%	20	90%	88%	79%	86%	10%	96%
S01004120	Gourock East, Greenock West and Lyle Road	701	5,457	84%	30	85%	20	84%	60%	97%	80%	27%	76%
S01004015	Kilmacolm Central	821	5,605	86%	30	87%	25	78%	66%	92%	96%	39%	69%
S01004082	West Braeside, East Inverkip and West Gourock	1,016	5,577	86%	20	97%	25	88%	95%	96%	82%	8%	91%
S01004021	Inverkip and Wemyss Bay	1,147	5,632	87%	15	99%	25	95%	85%	90%	98%	8%	95%
S01004014	Kilmacolm Central	636	5,934	91%	35	79%	15	89%	66%	94%	90%	78%	56%
Total		31,060			3510		2300						

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- To promote tourism and increase the number of day visitors, encompassing support for tourism related business, including food and drink enterprises.
- To secure high quality environment for residents and visitors.
- To support SMEs, micro-businesses and social enterprises.
- To increase employment opportunities.
- To build stronger, more self-reliant and inclusive communities.
- To incorporate sustainability in the application of LEADER funds and in all ongoing monitoring and support processes and procedures

ACTION AREA 1
 Enabling new and enhancing existing visitors / Tourist amenities, services, environmental improvements and access.

ACTION AREA 2
 Animation and enterprise capacity and releasing to support rural SMEs social enterprises and local communities.

ACTION AREA 3
 General environmental improvements and further development of the local area / LEADER areas.

----- PERFORMANCE INDICATORS -----

Businesses supported/New businesses created
 Jobs created or safeguarded/Training opportunities created
 Visitor numbers & use of new facilities
 Number of projects completed

Increased use of local facilities
 Number of improvements made
 Community satisfaction levels
 Number of initiatives undertaken and completed
 Volunteer opportunities

Increased awareness of the rural area as a visitor attraction
 Nature & scale of improvements made

Development & range of new services
 Number of social enterprises assisted or created

**Greater Renfrewshire
and Inverclyde Leader
Local Action Group**

Business Plan 2014 - 20

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Section 1: Introduction

This Business Plan is a companion document to the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Local Action Group's (LAG) Local Development Strategy (LDS) 2014 – 20. The two documents are being submitted together to the Scottish Government as an overall package.

The Business Plan sets out the detailed mechanisms and procedures through which the LAG will deliver the LDS, following the Scottish Government Guidance Notes, and is presented in the following order:

- Section 2 – Key Responsibilities and Legal Basis
- Section 3 – Governance Structure
- Section 4 – Monitoring and Evaluation
- Section 5 – Financial Arrangements
- Section 6 – Communications Plan
- Section 7 – Equalities Statement

The Business Plan is intended as a 'living' document: it will be continuously monitored, reviewed and, where necessary, amended during the course of the 2014 – 20 programme.

Section 2 Key Responsibilities and Legal Basis

Procedures for Delivering the Local Development Strategy

This section provides details on the roles and responsibilities within the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020 to ensure the effective delivery of the LEADER Programme.

The main strands of Programme delivery and implementation are:

- The Local Action Group (LAG)
- The Accountable Body
- LEADER Programme Staff

The Local Action Group

An Outline LAG Governing Constitution is provided in **Appendix 1**. Full details of the LAG recruitment and proposed membership and its legal identity are provided in Section 3. Other details about the LAG, including its role and responsibilities, and its relationship with the Accountable Body, are included below.

The Accountable Body

Following discussions between the three local authorities and the former Renfrewshire LAG, it was agreed by the LAG that Renfrewshire Council should assume the role of Accountable Body for the new Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER Programme 2014 - 2020. This was agreed on the basis that:

- The Council has built up substantial management, financial and operational experience and has a successful track record in the delivery and implementation of the previous LEADER Programme
- It still has a LEADER Coordinator in post
- It has the necessary systems in place and the capacity to effectively manage and monitor the financial and regulatory aspects of LEADER
- It was willing to undertake this responsibility

Renfrewshire Council will enter into the prescribed Service Level Agreement with Scottish Government which has responsibility for guiding and regulating the operation of LEADER in Scotland.

In accordance with Scottish Government guidance, it is confirmed that the LAG Chair will **not** come from the Accountable Body, or from any other local authority.

The responsible senior manager within the Accountable Body is:

Ruth Cooper
Economic Development Manager
Development and Housing Services
Renfrewshire Council
Renfrewshire House
Cotton Street
Paisley
PA1 1JD

E-mail ruth.cooper@renfrewshire.gov.uk
Tel: 0141 618 7868

The LEADER LAG is complementary to, but independent of the three Community Planning Partnerships in Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire and Inverclyde.

A draft Memorandum of Understanding has been drawn up between Renfrewshire Council, East Renfrewshire Council and Inverclyde Council to ensure there is clarity regarding the roles of Renfrewshire Council as the Accountable Body and roles of the other two councils – see **Appendix 2**.

The Memorandum will be discussed, and if necessary amended, at the first meeting of the new LAG, following approval of the submitted LDS and Business Plan by the Scottish Government.

The LAG has agreed that the three councils:

- Will all have one representative on the LAG (staff member or a councillor) with voting rights. (Other council staff may be permitted to attend LAG meetings in an advisory capacity, but not as members of the LAG).
- Should ideally nominate representatives that reflect a spectrum of local interests.
- Should nominate women as representatives, if possible, to contribute towards ensuring an inclusive approach and a better gender balance

Outlined below are the role and responsibilities of:

- The LAG
- The LAG Chair
- The Accountable Body
- Leader Staff

The Role and Responsibilities of the LAG

The role of the LAG is to deliver a LEADER Programme as part of the Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP), aimed at promoting local economic and community development.

The main responsibilities of the LAG are to:

- Direct the strategic aims of the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER Programme through developing and implementing a Local Development Strategy and pursuing this as set out in its agreed Business Plan
- Contribute towards increasing the capacity of local rural communities and rural businesses to enable them to develop and implement projects
- Ensure the work of LEADER aligns with and complements other relevant local strategies
- Develop a Communication Plan to create good local awareness of the LEADER Programme and generate interest in seeking LEADER support
- Devise appropriate guidelines and selection criteria for applications for LEADER support
- Assess applications for LEADER support, and make decisions on awarding funding
- Facilitate activities which encourage innovation, cooperation and networking, including ensuring lessons learnt from projects are shared widely
- Monitor and review the implementation of the LDS and Business Plan, including the financial and physical progress
- Evaluate outputs, outcomes and impacts of LEADER locally against targets and review the LAG's approach and activities as appropriate
- Work closely with the Accountable Body to ensure the effective and efficient delivery and implementation of LEADER locally
- Network with other LAGs and stakeholders
- Work closely with the Scottish Government's Rural Directorate as the Managing Authority for the LEADER Programme in Scotland

The Role and Responsibilities of the LAG Chair

The LAG Chair will be elected by and from among the LAG members. The Accountable Body cannot chair the LAG. The LAG Chair has an important and pivotal role in the delivery and implementation of the LEADER Programme. A

successful and effective LAG Chair is involved in far more than just chairing the LAG meeting and is responsible for all matters related to the effective operation of the LAG and staff. The inaugural LAG Chair will remain in post for one year at which time he/she may stand down or seek re-election. Thereafter the Chair will remain in post for three years at which time he/she must stand down but may stand for re-election.

Specific responsibilities of the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG Chair include:

- Managing and controlling LAG meetings
- Liaising with the LEADER Coordinator on the minutes, business/order of business of LAG meetings and the ordering of applications for consideration
- Ensuring that those with an interest in individual applications are not present during the decision making process for those applications
- Ensuring that meetings reach a clear decision and that this is recorded
- Ensuring excellent familiarity with all relevant LEADER documents and procedures, locally and nationally, and being a source of expertise for other LAG members
- Taking part in the induction of new LAG members and supporting/mentoring existing LAG members as appropriate
- Being the main point of contact for the Accountable Body, including in relation to LEADER staffing
- Directing staff in relation to the strategic direction and implementation of the LEADER Programme locally
- Representing the LAG on the Scottish Government's Strategic Board
- Attending networking meetings of Scottish and UK LEADER and encouraging requisite numbers of LAG members to attend
- Representing Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG at other meetings as may be required and appropriate
- Liaising with LAG partners as/when appropriate
- Dealing with any concerns raised by LAG members in an appropriate way
- Dealing with concerns raised by applicants if these cannot be dealt with by the LEADER staff
- Dealing with any concerns from staff promptly and appropriately

- Dealing with any concerns related to staff promptly and appropriately
- Ensuring that relations with other Scottish LAGs are maintained and encouraged
- Encouraging the development of transregional and transnational joint projects

The Role and Responsibilities of the Accountable Body

The general role of the Accountable Body is to provide the back-up systems to ensure that the LEADER Programme complies with Scottish Government guidance, is financially accountable and is administered effectively. The Accountable Body is responsible to the LAG for supporting the operation of the LEADER Programme locally and supporting the successful implementation of the LDS.

The Accountable Body is a member of the LAG and must remain so throughout the Programme, but cannot be the LAG Chair.

Renfrewshire Council is the Accountable Body and will enter into the required Service Level Agreement with the Scottish Government (as the Managing Authority), giving it delegated authority to administer LEADER finances. The Service Level Agreement will set out the obligations of Renfrewshire Council in relation to the administration of LEADER locally. These obligations will include:

- To ensure compliance with the Scottish Rural Development Programme and other relevant regulations
- To ensure the financial accountability of the LEADER Programme locally
- To be responsible for employing and line-managing staff on behalf of the LAG and be reimbursed for this through LEADER funding
- To be the fund-holder for the LAG and use its financial systems to receive funds from the Scottish Government, and use these to pay out grants as directed by the LAG and to reimburse management costs
- To put appropriate arrangements in place to ensure the final monitoring/evaluation of all projects is independent and not undertaken by anyone who has had any previous involvement with the project or whose salary is drawn down in the claims
- To arrange for Renfrewshire Council's Internal Audit staff to audit the LEADER Programme once a year
- To make claims to the Scottish Government for LEADER grants and other expenditure

The risks for Renfrewshire Council being the Accountable Body are set out in

Appendix 3.

The Relationship between the LAG and the Accountable Body

Scottish Government guidance states the Accountable Body should have a formalised Service Level Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding with the LAG to ensure both parties are clear about their roles and responsibilities. As it is proposed that the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG is an unincorporated body, it cannot enter into such agreements, and so a Partnership Agreement is proposed which sets out the roles and responsibilities of both parties. The draft Partnership Agreement between the LAG and Renfrewshire Council as the Accountable Body is included at **Appendix 4**.

The Roles and Responsibilities of LEADER Staff

The proposed staffing structure for the delivery of the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER Programme is outlined below. The proposed staffing structure has been devised taking into account the following factors.

- The LEADER area has been significantly extended. It now comprises two areas (Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire), which has previous experience of LEADER, plus Inverclyde which has no previous experience of LEADER.
- The experience gained during the operation of the previous LEADER Programme and the need to ensure that all administration, including claims and monitoring, is undertaken effectively and efficiently.
- The desire to enable LEADER staff to adopt a more pro-active role in capacity building and project development activity than was possible under the previous administrative arrangements.
- The expressed willingness of the three local authorities to support LEADER staff in their dealings with applicants.

A dedicated, full time LEADER Coordinator will be in post throughout the whole period from Scottish Government approval in 2015 until December 2020 (6 years) on a salary starting at approximately £30,000 (J Grade). The LEADER Coordinator will adopt a more pro-active approach to capacity building and project development than was possible in the previous LEADER Programme, and will have support from a LEADER Development Officer, LEADER Compliance Officer and appropriate staff in all three local authorities and other local bodies. An outline of the Coordinator's job responsibilities is provided in **Appendix 5**.

It is proposed that the current Renfrewshire LEADER Coordinator will assume the role of Coordinator/Programme Manager for the new Programme. This is on the basis that she is already in post, has excellent knowledge and experience of LEADER, is familiar with the local area, has good relationships with LAG partners and other local stakeholders, knows the systems of the Accountable Body and will

provide continuity enabling the new LEADER Programme to operate productively from the outset.

A part-time dedicated LEADER Compliance Officer will be recruited immediately following Scottish Government approval of the new Programme and will be in post from early 2016 until December 2020. The Compliance Officer post will report to and be supervised by the Coordinator. The starting salary will be approximately £28,000 pro-rata for 21 hours a week (I Grade). The Compliance Officer will provide support to the Coordinator and will assume particular responsibility for financial monitoring and processing claims. The Compliance Officer will take on many of the administrative tasks, enabling the Coordinator to devote more time to animation/capacity building and project development. Outline job responsibilities for the Compliance Officer are also set out in **Appendix 5**.

A dedicated Development Officer will also be recruited to assist with the project development and capacity building of the LEADER programme. This post will be a full-time post until December 2020. The starting salary will be approximately £28,000 (I Grade). Outline job responsibilities for the Development Officer are also set out in **Appendix 5**.

Staff from East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde and Renfrewshire Councils will also act to support applicants or potential applicants in their respective specialist areas. For example, external funding staff can help to identify match funding, access staff can support access projects, business development staff can support projects from businesses or groups of businesses. Staff from other local stakeholders, e.g. Business Gateway, Third Sector interface organisations, etc. will also have a similar support role to play. This approach offers a cost effective mechanism for delivering and implementing LEADER locally, rather than having additional, dedicated LEADER staff. Activity will be undertaken through the Communication Plan (see Section 6) to ensure that council staff and staff from other stakeholders have an excellent understanding of LEADER.

The LEADER staffing costs are included as part of the 'Animation and Administration Costs' in **Section 5**. Staff costs include salaries, on costs (pension and NI), travel costs, and other costs such as training. It is understood that these costs will be 100% funded through LEADER funding and there is no requirement for match funding.

LEADER staff will be employed and line managed by Renfrewshire Council acting as the Accountable Body on behalf of the LAG.

LEADER staff will be accountable to the LAG which will set priorities for the LEADER Programme locally, through the LDS and Business Plan. However, the LEADER staff will also report to and be accountable to the Economic Development Manager of Renfrewshire Council. Day to day line management for the Coordinator and Officer posts will be provided by the Funding & Development Assistant Manager of the Economic Development Team.

The recruitment of the two new LEADER Officers will be open and transparent. The post will be new and not a redeployment of current Renfrewshire Council staff. Staff from Renfrewshire Council and the two other local councils will, of course, be able to

apply for the posts through normal channels and Renfrewshire Council will advertise all new LEADER posts on the 'My Job Scotland' website. The LAG Chair, and possibly one other member of the LAG, will be involved in the full recruitment and selection process.

The Proposed Decision Making Process

This section includes consideration of:

- Eligibility and grant funding levels
- Decision-making structure
- The application process
- Claims and monitoring processes

The LAG will base its project assessment and decision making process on the experience gained during the previous LEADER Programme. The decision making process is outlined below and is designed to be straightforward, transparent and non-discriminatory. The LAG is committed to ensuring all applications for support are assessed by LAG members in such a way as to ensure that all decision making is fair, consistent, equitable and transparent. An assessment framework will guide this process and constructive feedback will always be provided to unsuccessful applicants.

Eligibility

It is assumed that eligibility will be standardised throughout Scotland and that new guidance will be issued by the Scottish Government. For the present it is assumed that the following will be eligible to apply for LEADER funding:

- Constituted community groups
- Social enterprises
- Micro businesses and SMEs
- Voluntary organisations
- Public sector bodies with projects that will benefit the rural area/community
- Business groupings
- Farmers seeking to diversify

To be eligible for funding, projects should:

- Be based within the designated rural areas of East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde or Renfrewshire. (Note: if the applicant is based outside of the rural areas but the project beneficiaries are within the rural areas, then the project may still be eligible.)
- Contribute to one or more of the main themes and priorities in the LDS
- Seek to secure local social, economic and/or environmental benefits

- Assist at least one of the LEADER target groups

Grants

The LAG will award LEADER funding of up to 50% of the project costs. Firm evidence of match funding will be required before the grant award is confirmed. However, the LAG will retain discretion to award grant of more than 50% if it feels this is warranted, e.g. for strategic projects and/or those demonstrating significant impact.

The minimum grant to be awarded will be £5,000 and the maximum will be £125,000. These parameters have been set on the basis of the relative complexity of the application process but also due to the need to ensure that a small number of very large applications do not dominate the LEADER Programme. However, the LAG will retain discretion to award grant of less than £5,000 if this is required to enable a project to proceed and exceptionally the LAG may decide to award grant of more than £125,000 for strategic projects and/or those demonstrating significant impact.

No Delegated Authority and No Sub-Groups or Advisory Groups

The LAG has decided that it wishes the full LAG to consider all applications at its quarterly meetings and has no desire to delegate application appraisal or approval to a sub-group or advisory group at this time. Neither is it minded to have a separate process for dealing with small applications. This is on the basis that while the Renfrewshire LAG had a three-tier approval system in place during the previous LEADER Programme, it was rarely, if ever used. However, the new approach will be kept under review and if the volume of applications is high then the LAG may decide to hold meetings more frequently, delegate authority for certain types of applications to a sub-group, or have a less complex process for considering smaller applications. In any event, it is confirmed that any decision making group would consist of LAG members only and adhere to the requirements to have less than 50% public sector membership and an appropriate age and gender balance.

It is anticipated that all applications will go through the same assessment, selection and decision making process and will be considered by the LAG. LAG meetings will be quarterly. Appendix 1 sets out that a quorate LAG meeting will comprise of at least half of the LAG members. The quorum will also take due account of LEADER requirements for public and private sector representation and public sector LAG members will not exceed 49% of the quorum at any decision making LAG meeting. Each LAG member organisation will have only one vote. Other representatives from LAG member organisations may be present at LAG meetings but in a supporting/advisory capacity only and will not have a vote or any decision making role.

Once a decision has been made all LAG members will be responsible for it. All decisions at LAG meetings will be recorded to ensure transparency. The minutes of LAG meetings will be available on the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER website and will provide a record of the collectively agreed reasons for decisions on awarding funding. To take account of confidentiality, the reasons for

approving/refusing applications will be kept brief in the minutes, although the full appraisal process will be kept on file.

In summary, the LAG does not currently anticipate establishing any sub groups or advisory groups and hence all LAG/LEADER business, including project appraisal and approval, will be dealt with by the LAG alone, keeping processes and relationships simple and straight forward.

Call for Project Applications

The LAG has decided that initially its call for project applications will be open to all. However, given the experience in the previous Renfrewshire LAG, where a high number of applications were received from one geographic location, this approach will be kept under review. The LAG could decide to restrict its call for applications to a certain geographic area or sector, particularly if it is proving difficult to generate projects from these areas or sectors. This would not be done in isolation and the LEADER Coordinator would be directed to devote significant attention to that area or sector and to work closely with other agencies to stimulate interest in applying to LEADER.

The LAG is conscious that it is being asked to spend 10% of its funding on rural enterprise projects and another 10% of farm diversification projects. Depending on interest, it may be necessary or appropriate to devote particular attention to these types of projects within the Programme and possibly to have a separate call for such types of applications. Such calls may be in addition to the normal quarterly call for open applications.

Conflicts of Interest

In all LAG decision making, it will be important to ensure there is no conflict of interest, that LAG members act with integrity and that there is transparency in all aspects. To facilitate this, Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG will maintain a Register of Interests.

The purpose of the Register is to provide information for each member about financial and non financial interests which could reasonably be considered by others to influence the activities of the person as a LAG member.

All LAG members must list all organisations, business connections, personal relationships or other circumstances that may influence, directly or indirectly, their contribution and involvement in and decisions made at LAG meetings, or at any stage in project development discussions. The Register will be updated as and when necessary and at least on an annual basis.

A member of the LAG will not be able to vote at a meeting of the LAG on any resolution concerning a matter in which he/she or the organisation that he/she represents has an interest which conflicts (or may conflict) with the interests of the LAG. Further he/she must declare their interest and will not be able to assess the

application and must withdraw from the meeting while the matter is being discussed and determined.

Note: This section will be superseded by Scottish Government national guidance on 'Conflicts of Interest' as soon as this text is issued.

Location and Time of LAG Meetings

The LAG intends to hold its meetings throughout the rural areas of Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde. This will be helpful in engaging with rural communities, raising awareness of LEADER and also increasing the knowledge of LAG members. It has been agreed that meetings will take place in the early evening to ensure members who have daytime commitments can attend.

Project Assessment and Selection Criteria

Having a clear and robust framework for assessing LEADER applications is essential to ensuring that the LAG's decision making process is open and transparent. Feedback from previous LAG members suggests that the assessment framework is kept straightforward and simple.

The proposed assessment framework for the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER area has been discussed, but requires further consideration and development. It is currently anticipated that the LAG will develop a numeric, weighted scoring framework covering 15-20 aspects. The assessment framework will include space for LAG members to record their comments and questions, including whether the project fits well with the LDS, if there are any technical or budget issues needing clarified and if there are any specific conditions of grant that should be imposed.

The LAG proposes to hold a workshop session devoted to developing the detail of the assessment framework (following Scottish Government approval of the programme). However, there are some basic principles that will be integral to the assessment process including the extent to which a project:

- Contributes to the achievement of the objectives within the LDS
- Contributes to the outcomes/outputs of the LDS and Business Plan
- Is appropriate locally, complementing other activity and not displacing the activity of other organisations or businesses in the area
- Is consistent with other local policies and strategies
- Responds to and is consistent with identified need
- Is supported by evidence of actual or prospective demand
- Provides value for money, i.e. taking account of the proposed costs, the amount of requested LEADER support and the outcomes sought

- Demonstrates the added value that LEADER will enable the project to deliver
- Appears to be realistic in terms of its physical and financial deliverability, viability and the applicant's capability and capacity to deliver it
- Recognises the need for longer term sustainability of the project, including a continuation and/or exit strategy when LEADER funding ends
- Recognises the risks associated with the project and potential barriers to success
- Demonstrates compliance with the LAG's Equality Statement
- Demonstrates some level of innovation
- Demonstrates community engagement, whether it be involvement in planning, development or delivery
- Demonstrates due consideration of environmental sustainability principles

The extent to which all of the above principles can be assessed will, to a large extent, be dependent upon the application form and the details and information it seeks to capture. It is understood that the Scottish Government will be developing a standardised application form and this is to be welcomed. It is also understood that the Scottish Government is developing a standardised IT system for LEADER and that there will be a need for LAG assessment frameworks to marry up with this. It is confirmed that the assessment framework developed for Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde will incorporate everything that is required by the new IT system.

It is anticipated that each aspect will be scored on the basis of 0-5, with clearly defined guidance provided to assist LAG members so they fully understand what each number equates to. The assessment framework will be made available to applicants to facilitate their understanding of how their project will be assessed.

LAG members will be sent the complete application form and all supporting appendices, plus the technical assessment and the assessment framework at least two weeks in advance of the LAG meeting. They will be expected to read and digest the application and complete the assessment framework in advance of the LAG meeting.

The assessment framework will form the basis for discussion of the individual applications to be considered at the LAG meeting. Once all discussions have taken place LAG members will be asked to divulge their overall score which they may revise if they wish on the basis of discussion at the LAG meeting. It is anticipated that approval will generally be by consensus, but if voting is necessary, the Chair will have the casting vote in the event of a tie.

LAG members will be required to hand in their completed and signed assessment framework at the end of the LAG meeting to ensure there is a clear audit trail for approvals.

LAG Instigated Projects

The LAG is able to instigate and lead its own projects, although neither East Renfrewshire nor Renfrewshire did this in the previous LEADER Programme. The Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG has indicated that this is something it would wish to consider subject to the following provisos:

- There must be a clear and identified need/demand for the project
- The project must have a strong fit with the LDS and the desired outcomes
- Projects should generally be associated with pump-priming and/or capacity building and should ideally lead to the generation of more LEADER applications and projects
- If there is another body which could more appropriately lead on the project, then efforts must be made to encourage them to do so
- All such projects would be subject to the appropriate tendering arrangements to ensure best value
- All such projects would be subject to the same claims process and monitoring and evaluation as other LEADER projects
- The LAG Coordinator would take responsibility for delivering and managing such projects on behalf of the LAG

It is envisaged that LAG instigated projects are more likely to involve revenue than capital spend, e.g. research associated with specific issues or sectors, deployment of community animators, development of community led action plans, etc.

It is not clear how LAG instigated projects would be assessed and operate, but LAG funding for these projects may be up to 100% funded by the LAG. We will look forward to further Scottish Government guidance on this issue.

Appeals Process

The previous LEADER Programme made no provision for appeals. However, the Scottish Government has indicated that the new LEADER Programme should have a simple appeals process. In the event of an application for LEADER funding being refused the reasons for this will be set out very clearly in the decision letter sent to the unsuccessful applicant. The LEADER Co-ordinator and LAG Chair will also offer to meet with the unsuccessful applicant to discuss their application, the reasons for the refusal and to clarify any issues. However, if applicants remain dissatisfied with

the decision, unsuccessful applicants will be able to appeal the decision and details of how to do this will be provided in the decision letter.

Note: This section will be superseded by Scottish Government national guidance on 'Appeals Process' as soon as this text is issued.

The Application Process

The LAG will ensure that the application process is straightforward for applicants and easy to understand. The following support will be on offer to applicants to help them develop their idea, concept or project:

- The Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER website will provide information and guidance to potential applicants in terms of eligibility, applicant guidance notes, the types of projects LEADER can support, assessment framework, case studies/best examples, etc.
- The LEADER Coordinator, Development Officer and Compliance Officer will be able to answer initial project enquires by telephone and give preliminary advice as to whether the project/project applicant appear to be eligible and fit with the vision, objectives and action areas of the LDS.
- The LEADER Coordinator (and Development Officer) will adopt a hands-on, pro-active approach to supporting applicants to help them ensure that their application is as complete as possible and that their project is developed in such a way as to be able to make the maximum contribution to the objectives of LEADER and the LDS. Assisting applicants in this way will assume a much greater priority than in the previous LEADER Programme. The provision of such support will be made possible due to the fact that the LEADER Coordinator will be supported by the Development and Compliance Officers and staff from the three councils and other local stakeholders.

The LEADER grant funding cycle will be publicised well in advance, meaning applicants will have a clear indication of how long it will take for their application to be considered by the LAG.

The key stages in the LEADER application process are outlined below.

Expression of Interest (Eoi)

The submission of an Eoi is the first step in applying for LEADER funding. It is an opportunity for the applicant to present their initial ideas/needs to the Local Action Group. An Eoi will preferably be submitted via the Scottish Rural Network website (www.ruralnetwork.scot) and will be forwarded to the relevant Local Action Group. Eoi submissions directly to the LEADER Coordinator will also be accepted.

The LEADER Coordinator and Development Officer will act as the first point of contact and advise potential applicants on the development of ideas and eligibility criteria for LEADER support. Business development staff and community

development staff will support applicants, discuss project ideas and screen projects prior to directing them to LEADER and Funding staff. Eol forms may also be fielded by staff in other organisations such as Business Gateway.

The Eol form will be assessed by LEADER staff against a technical check list. Some applicants may be given advice in relation to specific aspects they need to re-consider and explore to make their project more suitable for LEADER support. In the alternative scenario, potential applicants will be advised that their project does not appear to have a good fit with LEADER and/or the Local Development Strategy and is not eligible. If this is the case, LEADER staff will always try to suggest other sources of funds that might be appropriate.

Applicants submitting an Eol for a cooperation project (more than one LAG area) must submit the Eol to the LAG, listing all other LAG areas that are anticipated to be covered by the project.

Consideration of the Expression of Interest Form

The LEADER staff will review all Eol forms to ensure projects appear to be technically eligible and are from eligible applicants. As soon as this is completed the LEADER Coordinator or Development Officer will arrange to meet with the project proposers to discuss the project in detail, assess project development needs and identify information that will be required before a full application can be submitted. Alternatively, it may be appropriate for the project to be supported by staff in one of the three Councils or from another local stakeholder organisation.

Note: If prospective applicants are successful they will be directed to the full application on the LARCS. Full guidance on this will be added when issued by the Scottish Government.

On-going Support to Applicants

The LEADER Coordinator, Development Officer and appropriate identified staff from the Councils and other local stakeholders will provide assistance and mentoring to applicants to help them develop their applications. Depending on the scale of the project, its complexity and state of development, this may require one meeting or several over a period of months and this is part of LEADER's role in building capacity in local communities and businesses. The LEADER staff and other local stakeholders will signpost applicants in the direction of potential match funding, and similar projects (if possible) to learn from their experiences, and generally act as a sounding board and help keep projects on track and progressing.

When the LEADER Coordinator is satisfied that the project has reached the stage whereby it is appropriate for an application to be received, the application form will be issued to the applicant, along with guidance notes. Scottish Government will issue a standard application form.

Submission of Applications

LAG meetings will be held quarterly and the LAG meeting timetable will be available on the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER website and elsewhere. Applications will be required to be submitted to the LEADER Coordinator at least one month in advance of the LAG meeting and applicants will be advised of this date. This is to ensure that there is sufficient time to allow the full technical check and thereafter to allow LAG members sufficient time to read and consider all applications in advance of the meeting, as well as undertaking the assessment process before the LAG meeting

As discussed above, Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG wishes to consider all applications for LEADER funding at its meetings and has no plans to develop an approval sub-group or fast track system for smaller applications at the moment.

Technical Assessment

The technical eligibility and completeness of all applications will be checked by the LEADER staff. Applications will also be checked to ensure they give a clear explanation of the project, what it seeks to achieve and how it seeks to do this and that figures add up arithmetically, etc.

It is anticipated that the technical assessment will cover aspects such as:

- Have all sections of the application form been completed?
- Has the form been signed?
- Has all necessary supporting documentation been received?
- Is the applicant an eligible body?
- Is the project within an eligible area?
- Are there any State Aid issues and have these been addressed?
- Has planning permission, building warrants, etc. been applied for/received (if appropriate)?
- Is match funding confirmed?

It is assumed that Scottish Government will be issuing standardised technical assessment and guidance documents.

Any issues arising from the technical assessment will be clarified with the applicant prior to the application being submitted to the LAG. Applications where there are several outstanding issues may be held over until the application is complete with the necessary supporting information provided. LAG members will receive a summary of the technical assessment for each application. This will confirm the technical aspects of the project are compliant with the LEADER Programme, but make no recommendation or judgement on the project.

Project Assessment

Applications, along with all supporting documents and the summary technical assessment will be sent by e-mail to all LAG members two weeks before the LAG meeting.

As already covered above, to ensure there is no conflict of interest, LAG members with any level of involvement in any application will be excluded from the assessment process.

LEADER staff will have no involvement in the actual project assessment process.

LAG Decision Making Meeting

The LAG will be unable to make decisions unless the meeting is quorate. The LAG have agreed that for a meeting to be quorate there must be at least 50% of members in attendance, of which no more than 49% should be public representatives.

There will be an assumption that LAG members attending the LAG meeting have had the opportunity to read, consider and assess projects and are in a position to have a productive discussion highlighting any issues of concern.

Applicants will be invited to attend LAG meetings to give an overview of their project and to answer questions that LAG members may have.

The LAG will reach a decision on all applications on the day of its meeting. There are four possible outcomes:

- Approved subject to standard terms and conditions
- Approved subject to specific terms and conditions, including the submission of highlighted outstanding information
- Deferred due to lack of supporting information and/or concerns that cannot be resolved quickly
- Refused

Applicants can choose to wait for the decision on the day of the LAG meeting, but in any event all applicants will be informed of the LAG decision by text or e-mail the following day and this will be followed up with a formal grant offer letter. The letter will be drafted by the LEADER Coordinator or Development Officer, approved by the Accountable Body's Assistant Manager for Funding and Development and signed by the Accountable Body's Economic Development Manager. The letter will be sent within two weeks of the LAG meeting.

The grant offer letter will include:

- The name and address of the applicant
- The project name and reference number
- The amount and percentage of grant offered
- All standard terms and conditions attached to the grant offer
- All specific terms and conditions attached to the grant offer

- Any outstanding information that must be provided before the formal grant offer can be made
- The date by which time any outstanding information must be provided. (Note this date will be tailored to each project and will be based upon the project start date information which the applicant will be asked to provide in their application.)
- All information that must be gathered and provided for monitoring purposes
- A list of eligible items of expenditure, along with any specific costs of the project which are ineligible
- The terms and mechanisms for claiming the grant, including clear instructions of the evidence required to claim the grant

Once applicants have provided any outstanding information, a permission to start letter would be issued, along with the terms and conditions of the LEADER grant to be signed and returned within 28 days.

Where the application has been deferred, constructive feedback will be provided detailing what needs to be done before the LAG can re-consider the application. The LEADER Coordinator will arrange to meet with applicants as soon as possible after the LAG decision making meeting to assist the applicant to further develop the project. Deferrals will only be given to projects which have a good chance of securing LEADER funding but are not sufficiently developed, and/or there are factors beyond the control of the applicant that need to be resolved. Deferrals will not be used where the LAG is minded to refuse the application.

Where the application has been refused the reasons for this will be very clearly set out in the decision letter to the unsuccessful applicant. The LEADER Co-ordinator and LAG Chair will offer to meet with unsuccessful applicant to discuss their application, the reasons for the refusal and to clarify any issues. Unsuccessful applicants will be entitled to appeal the decision and details of how to do this will be provided in the decision letter (as set out above). Note applicants cannot re-apply to LEADER for exactly the same project that has been refused.

Note: The above paragraph will be superseded upon issue of the Scottish Government guidance on the Appeals Process.

The Claims and Monitoring Process

Applications will only receive formal approval and the permission to start confirmation once any outstanding issues have been resolved and any outstanding information has been received. The LEADER Development Officer will support applicants in this process to ensure the implementation of projects is not unduly delayed.

At the formal approval stage applicants will be reminded of the information that needs to be collected and collated to support the ongoing monitoring of their project. Once permission to start is received, the LEADER Coordinator and Development Officer will work closely with applicants to ensure claims are complete, compliant and received within a reasonable timeframe.

It is understood that Scottish Government will be developing standardised online claims processes to be used throughout Scotland and this will include sections designed to ensure the collection of required monitoring data.

Applicants will be required to submit quarterly claims or more frequently, as appropriate. All claims must be supported by the required proof of spend. The LEADER Compliance Officer will be responsible for processing all claims and recommending payment. Payment will be approved by senior Economic Development staff within Renfrewshire Council and applicants will be required to invoice Renfrewshire Council after the claim has been approved. Payments will be processed through Renfrewshire Council's normal accounting system and payment to applicants will be by BACS.

The LEADER Compliance Officer will also be responsible for ensuring the monitoring of projects through implementation and post completion stages and for the collection of all relevant monitoring information.

Prior to final claims being paid, a monitoring visit will be made to all projects. Depending on the scale of the project, several monitoring visits may be made by the LEADER Officers during project implementation. The final monitoring visit will be made by an independent Compliance Officer from Renfrewshire Council. This visit will check that the project has been implemented as described, that financial records associated with the project are in order and that publicity arrangements and equality and sustainability policies have been complied with. Standardised '*On The Spot*' forms will be used for project inspection pre-final claim and 'Ex-Post Check' forms will be used to monitor capital projects.

The LEADER Compliance Officer will be responsible for preparing the claims to the Scottish Government for reimbursement. The claims will be checked by the LEADER Coordinator and approved by senior Economic Development staff of Renfrewshire Council.

LEADER will be subject to an annual audit by Renfrewshire Council's Internal Audit staff. This will include an audit of how LEADER is managed, its systems, and whether it is complying with the Service Level Agreement with the Scottish Government. The cost of this will be approximately £4,000 and it will be shared equally between the three councils.

Section 3 Governance Structure

Developing the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG

In accordance with the LEADER requirements the proposed membership of Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG includes representatives from the public sector, the private sector, the third sector and local communities.

The current Chair of the LAG has worked closely with the three local councils and the Renfrewshire LEADER Coordinator to facilitate the development of a new LAG for the 2014 – 2020 LEADER Programme.

The process of developing the new LAG locally has involved:

- Exploring whether the people currently participating in the Renfrewshire LAG wish to continue to be involved with the new LAG covering the extended area
- Exploring whether the people who previously participated in the East Renfrewshire LAG wish to become involved with the new LAG covering the extended area
- Recruiting new members for the new LAG through public consultation events to reflect the extended geographic area and themes of the new LDS
- Incorporating the findings of the Renfrewshire LEADER 2007 – 2013 Evaluation which recommended that the LAG membership needed to be more inclusive, with greater representation from women and young people.

The Legal Entity of the LAG

Discussions have confirmed that the LAG will be governed by a constitution but will not be a formal legal entity. The outline LAG constitution is provided at **Appendix 1**. Any further Scottish Government guidance on constitutions will be incorporated by the LAG.

The Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG does not wish to be the Accountable Body for the LEADER Programme. This is because it is a new organisation with no track record, it does not wish to take on the additional responsibilities that incorporation would bring, and it does not have the systems in place nor the capacity to enable it to assume the role of the Accountable Body. The Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG is therefore satisfied that Renfrewshire Council will assume this role and enter into the required Service Level Agreement with the Scottish Government.

Membership of the LAG

Membership of the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG will encompass local public sector interests, local businesses, voluntary sector interests and local

communities, as well as tourism and environmental interests. LAG membership was finalised in early 2015 and there is a good spread of membership across the LAG area. LAG membership also reflects the three key themes of the LDS – promoting day visitors, securing a high quality environment, supporting businesses, increasing employment opportunities and building stronger communities and this is illustrated in the Table 3a below. The LAG provides an opportunity and a co-ordinating mechanism to bring together the many bodies (public, private and community) that have an interest in rural economic and community development. **See Appendix 1 for further details.**

Table 3a: Links Between LAG Membership and the Local Development Strategy

High Level Objectives of the LDS	LAG Members with a Specific Interest
<p>To support SMEs, micro-businesses and social enterprises</p>	<p>East Renfrewshire Council Inverclyde Council Renfrewshire Council Chamber of Commerce Visit Scotland Scottish Land and Estates A group representing local A group representing young people</p>
<p>To promote tourism and increase the number of day visitors, encompassing support for leisure and hospitality-related businesses</p>	<p>East Renfrewshire Council Inverclyde Council Renfrewshire Council Visit Scotland Scottish Natural Heritage Forestry Commission Scottish Land and Estates A group representing local tourism businesses</p>

<p>To secure a high quality environment for residents and visitors</p>	<p>East Renfrewshire Council Inverclyde Council Renfrewshire Council Scottish Natural Heritage Visit Scotland Forestry Commission Two Community Councils Scottish Land and Estates A group representing local tourism businesses</p>
<p>To build stronger, more self-reliant and inclusive rural communities</p>	<p>East Renfrewshire Council Inverclyde Council Renfrewshire Council Two Community Councils CVS Inverclyde Engage Renfrewshire</p>

Members provide a wide range of experience and expertise, many operate at a senior and strategic level within their respective organisations and several have previous experience of LEADER demonstrating that the LAG has the capacity to implement the LDS. LAG members have been recruited on the basis that they must be able to take a wide ranging and impartial view of the issues and applications presented, with the best interests of rural Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde to the fore at all times, and must not adopt a narrow geographic or sectoral view.

Two new LAG members have put themselves forward to shadow the existing Chair of Renfrewshire LAG, who has assumed the role until the end of 2015. This will allow them time to gain experience in what is involved in being a LAG Chair. Discussion is required to ascertain whether there is a need and/or specific role for other office bearers, including a Vice Chair, and this will also take place at the first full LAG meeting. The outline LAG constitution includes provision for other office bearers, if required.

The make-up of the LAG will continue to evolve over the next few months but it is anticipated that it will be approximately as outlined in the Table 3b.

Table 3b: Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Local Action Group Membership	
Public Sector LAG Members	Private Sector, Third Sector and Community LAG Members
East Renfrewshire Council	Chamber of Commerce – one representing the three areas
Inverclyde Council	Two Community Councils
Renfrewshire Council	Scottish Land and Estates
Scottish Natural Heritage	Ardgowan Estate
Visit Scotland	CVS Inverclyde
	The Scouts
	Ocean Youth Trust
	Engage Renfrewshire

Recruitment to the LAG

Given the limited timeframe available to develop the new LAG, it is anticipated that membership will continue to evolve over the next few months before the new LEADER Programme starts in early 2015. Recruitment to the LAG to date has been informed and supported through the developments and discussions generated at the following consultation events:

- 16th June 2014 – public consultation with local council representatives
- 25th June 2014 – consultation with the existing Renfrewshire LAG
- 30th June 2014 – consultation with East Renfrewshire representatives, supplemented by on-line consultation
- 4th July 2014 – public consultation event at Linwood
- 8th July 2014 – public consultation at The Bridge, Bridge of Weir
- 15th July 2014 – public consultation event and introduction of LEADER in Inverclyde
- 27th August 2014 – attendance at Engage Renfrewshire Funding Fair

Following up expressions of interest and other leads generated by these events, to date recruitment has been on the basis that all volunteers have been accepted onto the LAG representing a wide range of relevant interests. The LAG is still seeking

LAG members to represent young people. The LAG will consider applications for further membership.

Other activity is planned, including press releases and advertisements in local papers, about the new LEADER Programme and the extended LEADER area. The LAG appreciates the need to ensure the recruitment process is inclusive and transparent.

Recruitment to the LAG takes account of the following factors:

- The need to adopt an inclusive approach
- The need to ensure an appropriate and equal balance between social and economic partners
- The need to ensure target groups are represented
- The need for transparency in all selection processes
- The need to ensure the LAG reflects the LDS
- The need to ensure that the LAG is independent and autonomous
- The need to ensure that the LAG will be able to function effectively and efficiently on a practical level

While the intension is that LAG members will commit for some years, it is anticipated that membership of the LAG will almost certainly change over time. Bodies/agencies not currently participating, or new organisations (e.g. the Business Improvement District currently at the feasibility stage) may wish to become involved or existing members may no longer be able/willing to commit time to LEADER and the LAG. Staff within organisations may move on and new incumbents may not have the same interest in LEADER. The LAG will keep membership under review and seek to recruit new members as required to ensure it comprises the right mix and balance of interests and representation to deliver the LDS. The LAG will also be open to approaches from organisations seeking membership and its constitution will include provision for this.

Make-Up of the LAG

Through local consultation, it has been agreed that the LAG should be large enough to ensure flexibility but small enough to ensure it is manageable. It is anticipated that there will be around 15 - 20 members. To ensure effective local engagement, LEADER requires that at least 51% of LAG members must be non-public sector. It is currently anticipated that Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG will have around eight public sector members, thereby complying with the guidance.

Business Gateway and Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park are both council organisations, but representatives could attend certain meetings when invited by the LAG, in an advisory, non-voting capacity. With the inclusion of the rural enterprise and farm diversification funding under LEADER, it is considered particularly important to secure input on the LAG from Business Gateway.

LAG membership takes due account of the need to have a mix of genders, ages and interests and it is anticipated that there will be at least five women on the LAG.

Much discussion has taken place around the challenges associated with securing and retaining a LAG member to represent the interests of young people. A representative of the Scouts participated in both East Renfrewshire and Renfrewshire LAGs during the previous Programme and has indicated he is willing to participate again. Whilst he has a focus in representing young people's interests, it is considered desirable to secure a person under 25 years old to ensure the interests of young people are properly represented on the LAG. Suggestions include securing a representative from the Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs locally, from a local college or from the local Youth Parliaments established in each of the three council areas and all of these will be pursued.

Induction of LAG Members

Taking on-board the experience from previous LEADER Programmes, a high priority will be placed upon developing and delivering a comprehensive induction programme for LAG members. This will be designed to ensure they fully understand their role and responsibilities, the rules and mechanics of how LEADER operates locally and their engagement in the LEADER process. It is envisaged that this induction will be delivered at the start of the new LEADER Programme by an external contractor in a one day session and that it will also contribute to the overall cohesiveness of the LAG. Within the financial projections, an allowance has also been made to deliver a follow-up LAG member training session at a later date. This will help to clarify any issues that have arisen and will also provide an opportunity to review the LAG's processes and procedures to ensure they are appropriate and effective.

A LAG member handbook will also be developed and a copy given to every LAG member – and/or available on-line in a members only area of the website to be developed. The handbook will be based on the current Ayrshire LEADER/LAG handbook which is comprehensive and easy to follow.

Any new LAG members will be required to undertake an induction session with the LAG Chair and LEADER Coordinator to ensure they have a good appreciation of their role and responsibilities.

At the outset of the new Programme, potential LAG members will be made fully aware of their role and responsibilities and the likely commitment LEADER will require. It is hoped that this will contribute to ensuring a stable LAG membership as all members will be fully aware of what is expected of them.

The LAG and the Accountable Body

The relationship between the LAG and the Accountable Body is discussed in Section 2 and the responsibilities are set out in the draft Partnership Agreement at **Appendix 4**.

The LAG and LEADER Staff

The relationship between the LAG and LEADER staff is discussed in Section 2 and the responsibilities of staff, including line management and accountabilities, are set out in Appendix 5.

The Decision Making Process

The LAG selection and decision making process is discussed and set out in Section 2.

Programme of Milestones and Activities

While the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG LEADER area will be new for the 2014 – 2020 Programme, it will not be starting from scratch as development work has been ongoing throughout 2014/15. Table 3c below outlines the anticipated programme of milestones and activities associated with delivering and implementing LEADER locally. This assumes Scottish Government programme approval in September 2015 and an official start in January 2016.

Table 3c: Programme of Milestones and Activities For the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020	
Date	Milestone/Activity
Year 1 2016	
April 2015	First official meeting of the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG to confirm membership, discuss procedures and communications/PR, programme of activity, etc.
Sept – Dec 2015	Further development of the Communication Plan and implementation of website, leaflets, posters, etc.
Sept – Dec 2015	Development of all required administration systems
Sept – Dec 2015	Development of a LAG Member's Handbook
Sept – Dec 2015	Induction of LAG members
Jan 2016	Official start of LEADER 2014 – 2020 Programme – with existing LEADER Coordinator in post
Jan-Feb 2016	Recruitment of LEADER Development Officer & Compliance Officer
Jan 2016	Information and awareness session for Council staff and relevant staff from other organisations
Jan 2016	Official Launch of Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER Programme and call for applications
Mar 2016	LEADER Development Officer and Compliance Officer in post

Mar 2016	First decision making LAG meeting
June 2016	Decision making LAG meeting
Sept 2016	Decision making LAG meeting
December 2016	Decision making LAG meeting
Feb 2016	Output Review
Year 2 2017	
Mar 2017	Production of Annual Report
Mar 2017	Decision making LAG meeting and Strategic Review meeting
Mar 2017	Annual Conference
June 2017	Decision making LAG meeting
Oct 2017	Output Review
Sept 2017	Decision making LAG meeting
Dec 2017	Decision making LAG meeting
Year 3 2018	
Mar 2018	Production of Annual Report
Mar 2018	Decision making LAG meeting and Strategic Review meeting
Mar 2018	Annual Conference
Early 2018	Scottish Government review of allocations and spending with possible revision of allocations
June 2018	Decision making LAG meeting
June 2018	LAG Training Session
June 2018	Information and awareness session for Council staff and relevant staff from other organisations
Oct 2018	Decision making LAG meeting
Oct 2018	Output Review
Dec 2018	Decision making LAG meeting
Dec 2018	Commissioning of an Independent Mid-term Evaluation of the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER Programme
Year 4 2019	
Mar 2019	Production of Annual Report
Mar 2019	Decision making LAG meeting and Strategic Review meeting
Mar 2019	Annual Conference
June 2019	Decision making LAG meeting

Oct 2019	Output Review
Sept 2019	Decision making LAG meeting
Sept 2019	Last call for applications
Dec 2019	Last decision making LAG meeting
Year 6 2020	
Mar 2020	Production of Annual Report
May 2020	LAG meeting and Strategic Review
Mar 2020	Annual Conference
July 2020	Output Review
Aug 2020	LAG meeting
Aug - Oct 2020	Commissioning of an Independent Evaluation of the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER Programme
Oct 2020	Last call for LEADER claims
Dec 2020	All LEADER claims submitted and paid
Dec 2020	Final Annual Conference and LAG meeting
Dec 2020	LEADER Assistant posts cease. All costs reclaimed from Scottish Govt
Mar 2021	Final date for costs to be reclaimed from Scottish Government

Section 4 Monitoring and Evaluation

The Importance of Monitoring and Evaluation

This section outlines the detailed monitoring and evaluation processes developed to ensure delivery and accountability of the new LEADER programme.

It is important to monitor projects and activity to ensure that they have been delivered as envisaged and to capture and measure the resulting outcomes and impacts. It is also important to evaluate projects and activities to learn lessons about what is successful, what is less successful and the reasons for this and to then use this information to inform future projects and activities to make them more effective.

The Scottish Government held a workshop session to provide guidance on the monitoring and evaluation requirements of LEADER. The Scottish Government will be developing standardised application and claim forms to be used by LEADER throughout Scotland and these will be designed to capture the core indicators required for monitoring. The Scottish Government is also developing a LEADER IT system and this will allow additional monitoring information, specific to individual LAGs, to be captured to support their monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

This section describes how the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020 will be monitored and evaluated. There are two main elements of this - **Programme** Monitoring and Evaluation and **Project** Monitoring and Evaluation.

The Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG's approach to monitoring and evaluation is designed to:

- Keep a close check on spend and activity throughout the Programme
- Assist the LAG to develop or modify objectives, delivery mechanisms and funding arrangements as may be required to fully implement the Programme and achieve the LDS objectives
- Identify what has worked well and not so well in the Programme and projects, in terms of what was done (outputs), how it was done (delivery processes) and what has been achieved (outcomes/impacts)
- Record the achievements and lessons learnt
- Feed into the overall Scottish LEADER Programme and SRDP, which in turn will be fed back to Europe

Programme Monitoring and Evaluation

The Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER Programme will be monitored and evaluated in the following ways:

Financial Report to each quarterly LAG meeting – detailing approvals (projects and amounts of grant allocated) and actual spend all broken down by type of activity (LEADER administration, LEADER grant, rural enterprise, farm diversification and cooperation projects), performance against key indicators, etc.

LEADER Coordinator Report to each quarterly LAG meeting – advising the LAG of activity during the quarter, enquiries received, applicants assisted, communication activity undertaken, networking activity undertaken, etc.

These two quarterly reports will not be long or complex but will be designed to give an overview of activity and spend and to act as an early warning system if activity and/or spend is not on course. These reports will also form the basis of the Annual Report and ensure that LEADER staff, the Accountable Body and LAG members are equipped with up to date information. These reports will be forwarded to Scottish Government as the Managing Authority.

Annual Report – which will be produced as close as possible to the calendar end of each year and will provide details of projects approved, LEADER grant allocated, potential impact and spend to date, as well as networking activity undertaken and case studies/good news stories. It will provide an overview of LEADER activities to the LAG, the Accountable Body, local stakeholders, local grant holders, potential applicants, the Scottish Government (as the Managing Authority) and other LEADER groups. The Annual Report will be presented at an annual conference to which all interested parties will be invited. The Annual Report will be prepared by the LEADER Coordinator and will include an Output Review which will assess progress towards targets and whether they are still appropriate.

Strategic Review - each year after the Annual Report has been produced, but in advance of the annual conference, the LAG will take the opportunity to consider its progress against the objectives in the LDS and its performance against the LDS and Business Plan. This will act as a check to ensure that activities and spend are on course. If they are not, then the LAG will decide how best to deal with this and may decide to increase communication/PR activity, may direct the LEADER Coordinator to target a particular geographic area or particular sector, or indeed may decide to instigate projects itself as a way of stimulating more interest in LEADER. The LAG will communicate its deliberations at its annual conference and this should be an effective way of providing information about the strategic direction of LEADER locally over the coming year.

Independent Evaluation – a mid-term independent evaluation of the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020 will be commissioned by the LAG at the end of year 3 and a final independent evaluation will be commissioned in mid-2020. A sum of £20,000 has been allocated for these evaluations from the LEADER Administration budget (£10,000 for each).

Project Monitoring and Evaluation

Information will be recorded by the LEADER Coordinator and Development Officer on behalf of the LAG to monitor individual projects. Grant recipients, as a condition of the grant award, will be required to complete quarterly feedback questionnaires outlining activities and progress, along with recorded outputs and impacts and information on media coverage of the funded project, etc.

All projects will receive a visit from a LEADER staff member within one month of the project start date. All projects will receive at least one monitoring visit from a Renfrewshire Council Compliance Officer and most certainly as soon as a final claim is submitted (as outlined in Section 2).

High Level Objectives

The Scottish Government guidance requires that LAGs set out the indicators (core and specific) to be used to capture data, and information to be used to monitor and evaluate the LDS locally, as well as to feed in to the Scottish and European monitoring and evaluation process.

The LDS for Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde has three key:

- ECONOMY
- ENVIRONMENT
- COMMUNITY

In terms of the related objectives, the LDS seeks to encourage and facilitate projects:

- To support SMEs, micro-businesses and social enterprises
- To promote tourism and increase the number of day visitors, encompassing support for tourism related businesses
- To secure a high quality environment for residents and visitors
- To increase employment opportunities
- To build stronger, more self-reliant and inclusive rural communities
- To incorporate sustainability in the application of all LEADER funds and in all ongoing monitoring and support processes and procedures

For all LEADER funded projects, core and specific indicators will be collected and collated. All data would be collated by year and for the LEADER 2014 – 2020 Programme overall. The LEADER Coordinator and Development Officer will be responsible for collating data and producing the relevant reports.

The Scottish Government, as the Managing Authority of LEADER in Scotland, has indicated that it will continue to collect data related to the ***Community Capacity Impact Indicator***. This seeks to assess the effectiveness of the decision making body, the numbers and types of cooperation projects developed and delivered, as well as gathering case studies to illustrate community capacity building.

Section 5 Financial Arrangements

The Accountable Body

Renfrewshire Council, as the Accountable Body, will be responsible for the financial management of the LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020 in Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde.

Separate accounting codes were set up by Renfrewshire Council during the previous LEADER Programme to ensure clear ring-fencing of LEADER funds and these will be put in place again.

Quarterly updates of spend, commitments and progress will be produced as well as annual reports for the LAG and the Scottish Government.

All monitoring procedures required by the Scottish Government will be adhered to.

It is noted that all projects must be approved by December 2019 and all project claims must be paid out by December 2020, with all costs reclaimed from the Scottish Government by March 2021. It is also understood that the Scottish Government will review the financial commitments of all Scottish LAGs in early 2018, with a potential revision of budget allocations.

In all our current financial projections, it has been assumed that LEADER funding of £2,324,196m will be made available to the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG to deliver the 2014 – 2020 Programme.

In-kind Contributions

Contributions from the Accountable Body will consist of staff time from the Funding and Development Team of Economic Development who will assist in advising applicants on match funding and the writing of applications. The Business Support Team will also provide advice on business plans, financial management, etc.

Overheads - such as office space for the 3 key members of LEADER staff - will be provided in-kind and resources such as support from the Council's Human Resources, IT and Payroll departments will also be provided.

State Aid

The LEADER Programme is covered by State Aid regulations and the LAG and LEADER Coordinator will ensure that all projects are fully compliant. State Aid considerations will be an integral part of the technical appraisal of individual projects. If there are any doubts about whether or not State Aid issues apply, advice will be sought from the Scottish Government State Aid Team.

Transregional and Transnational Projects

During the previous LEADER Programme no transregional or transnational projects were delivered in either East Renfrewshire or Renfrewshire, although both areas explored such cooperation projects. The new LEADER Programme guidance from Scottish Government indicates that at least 10% of the total budget must be allocated to cooperation projects. For the purpose of the financial projections included in Table 5b it is assumed that this will equate to £200,000.

It is appreciated that developing cooperation projects is time consuming and can be complex, however, the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG will strive to develop and deliver such projects. The LAG proposes to adopt a proactive approach to exploring and identifying potential cooperation projects and will do this by:

- Targeting neighbouring LEADER areas, e.g. Ayrshire, where there may be opportunities to develop a joint approach to projects such as countryside access, particularly the coastal route.
- Targeting LEADER areas, in Scotland initially but extending to the rest of the UK and possibly to Europe, that share similar characteristics to Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde, e.g. close proximity to large urban centres, high outward commuting, relatively undeveloped tourism, to ascertain whether it could be appropriate to develop a joint approach to projects.

Animation and Administration Costs

Table 5a provides the overview of the anticipated costs associated with LEADER staff, the LAG, monitoring and evaluation and communication. A full breakdown of anticipated animation and administration costs is included at Appendix 7.

Item	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Staffing	£9,812	£103,601	£104,521	£106,080	£107,878	£82,584	£514,476
LAG	£1,400	£1,260	£1,826	£1,399	£1,478	£1,566	£8,929
Monitoring and Evaluation	£0	£0	£10,000	£0	£0	£10,000	£20,000
Communications, Marketing/PR Activity	£5,550	£10,650	£5,650	£6,650	£5,450	£3,642	£37,592
Total	£16,762	£115,511	£121,997	£114,128	£114,806	£97,792	£580,997

Spend Profile

Table 5b provides a breakdown of anticipated spend over the LEADER Programme by year and type of activity but this will evolve over time. This is based on an assumption that the overall funding allocated from LEADER will be £2.3m.

	2015 (10%)	2016 (12%)	2017 (20%)	2018 (20%)	2019 (20%)	2020 (18%)	Total
LEADER Grant Funding - based on £1.7M							
Grant Funding Awarded and Spent	£0	£243,000	£225,000	£235,887	£180,000	£162,000	£1,045,887
Cooperation Projects	£0	£35,000	£52,420	£30,000	£40,000	£75,000	£232,420
Enterprise Grant Funding awarded and Spent	£0	£54,000	£62,420	£40,000	£40,000	£36,000	£232,420
Farm Diversification Funding Awarded and Spent	£0	£54,000	£50,000	£52,420	£40,000	£36,000	£232,420
Total	£0	£386,000	£389,840	£358,307	£300,000	£309,000	£1,743,147
% of Total	0%	22%	22%	21%	17%	18%	100%

Match Funding

Projects will be required to source at least 50% of their project funding through match funding. Based on the previous experience of LEADER, it is anticipated that much of the match funding required will be sourced from the public sector.

Funding from any other European Union funding source cannot be used to match fund LEADER funding. This includes EFF, ESF, EDF, LIFE, Interreg, Creative Europe Programme, Erasmus and also funding from other strands of the SRDP.

Potential sources of match funding against the LDS objectives are highlighted in Table 5c but this is not an exhaustive list. At this stage, there is no firm indication that match funding will be forthcoming, but from preliminary discussions it is clear that a number of potential LEADER projects could/would be attractive to a variety of other funders.

Table 5c: Potential Sources of Match Funding for LEADER Projects

East Renfrewshire Council	Sport Scotland
Inverclyde Council	Landfill Communities Fund
Renfrewshire Council	Historic Scotland
Visit Scotland (Growth Fund)	Enterprise Funding, Business Gateway
Scottish Natural Heritage	Creative Scotland
Forestry Commission	Scottish Enterprise
Event Scotland (for bigger events)	Social Investment Scotland
Heritage Lottery Fund	Coastal Communities Fund

Awards for All Big Lottery	Grant Making Trusts Private Sector
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Section 6: Communications Plan

The Importance of Good Communication

The Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG recognise that effective communication is essential if the agreed strategic aims set out in the LDS are to be achieved. Further, the LAG also recognises that it will be important to adopt a proactive approach to creating/raising awareness of LEADER locally, especially in Inverclyde which has no previous experience of LEADER.

The LAG will work closely with the LEADER Coordinator and Development Officer to effectively connect with the community at large, businesses, social enterprises and third sector organisations. A good flow of information and networking activity with relevant staff in the three local councils and other local agencies and organisations will be particularly important. These may often be the people having the first contact with potential applicants and hence it will be vital that they have good awareness of LEADER, including how it can potentially assist projects and how it can complement other sources of funding.

This section outlines the Communication Plan which seeks to ensure the LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020 is communicated effectively locally. The Communication Plan includes an overall aim, guiding principles, key objectives, target markets, mechanisms to be used, proposed activities, costs and timing. The LAG will, of course, incorporate into its own activities any further guidance issued by the Scottish Government in relation to the LDS fit with the wider SRDP communications plan/strategy.

Key Messages

The key messages to be disseminated through the Communication Plan will relate to:

- What LEADER is

- How can LEADER help me, my organisation and/or my client group?
- How to get involved
- How to find out more
- What is happening in the LEADER area
- Disseminating good practice.

Aim and Guiding Principles

The key aim of the Communication Plan is:

- *“to support the delivery and implementation of the LDS and Business Plan by creating awareness and stimulating interest in LEADER locally, as well as ensuring transparency in all LEADER/LAG activities.”*

In developing its communication activity the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG has adopted the following guiding principles:

- Communication activity should seek to effectively target and engage with a wide range of external audiences, but also staff from local stakeholder and partner organisations.
- Communication activity should enhance the profile and visibility of LEADER in Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde and support and add value to activities.
- Communication activity should not just focus on the funding available through LEADER but also provide opportunities for networking and learning through best practice locally and further afield.
- All communication should use plain English and avoid the use of jargon or technical terms.
- The Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER website (to be developed) will be an important route through which the LAG will communicate with all of its audiences. It will also be a key source of information about LEADER and all LAG activities locally, thereby contributing towards ensuring the LAG activities are accessible, open and transparent.
- Communication activity will be monitored as part of the annual review of LEADER to gauge its effectiveness.
- In all communications activity there will be clear acknowledgement of EU intervention and LEADER, EAFRD and Scottish Government logos will be used as appropriate on all information, materials and publicity related to all actions funded through the LDS.
- Communication should make use of all types of media, but an inclusive approach must be adopted and care must be taken to ensure no groups are excluded.

Key Objectives

The objectives of Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG's Communication Plan are to:

- Promote LEADER locally, including the role of the LAG and the aspirations of the LDS
- Create/raise awareness of LEADER locally
- Inform, engage and involve key local stakeholders in LEADER
- Encourage interest in and stimulate LEADER projects/applications
- Publicise successful projects approved under the LEADER Programme to reinforce the messages about the LEADER ethos - innovation, community benefits, partnership approach, etc.
- Seek to encourage networking and cooperation, including investigating new ways of communicating for the benefit of the LAG members, and local stakeholders, businesses and communities
- Ensure all activities of the LAG are open and transparent

Target Markets

The LAG will seek to engage and inform the following target groups through its communication activities:

- Community and voluntary groups in the LEADER areas
- Businesses and business groupings in the LEADER areas
- Would be entrepreneurs
- Potential and existing participants (LAG members, grant holders, etc.)
- Relevant staff within the three local authorities
- Staff within other relevant public agencies and organisations, especially those working to promote equality and bodies working to protect and improve the environment
- Economic and social partner organisations
- Professional organisations and business organisations

Mechanism, Activities, Audiences, Cost and Timing

A range of activity will be used to create awareness about LEADER, provide accessible information and publicise good news stories about successful LEADER projects locally. The LEADER Coordinator will be responsible for implementing the agreed Communications Plan on behalf of the LAG and this will include the aspects outlined in the Table 6a below.

The costs associated with the Communications Plan are included as part of the overall animation and administration costs in Section 5.

Table 6a: Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER Communication Plan

Communication Activity	Target Audiences	Estimated Cost	Timing
Official launch of the LEADER 2014 – 2020 Programme – aim to generate good awareness and press coverage.	LAG members Partners and stakeholders Wide range of potential applicants Grant holders General public, community groups and businesses Council staff and councillors External interests including Scottish Government, neighbouring LAGs, transregional and transnational interests	£500	Jan 2016 (or immediately after Scottish Government approval of the programme)
Development of new LEADER website including all applicant information and guidance, selection criteria, LDS, Business Plan and other supporting documents, LAG membership details, LAG minutes, annual reports, plus best practice examples and up to date news.	LAG members Partners and stakeholders Wide range of potential applicants Grant holders General public, community groups and businesses	Based on current Renfrewshire LEADER website Assume £500 development plus £15 a year web hosting = £575	To be in place for the start of the Programme and to be kept refreshed and up to date throughout the Programme
Ensure links to all organisation or	LAG members	No cost	To be in place

group websites represented by LAG members from main LEADER website	Partners and stakeholders Wide range of potential applicants Grant holders General public, community groups and businesses		for the start of the Programme and to be kept up to date throughout the Programme
Ensure there is information about LEADER and a link to the LEADER website on the 3 council websites	General public, community groups and businesses Potential applicants Partners and stakeholders Council staff and councillors	No cost	Ensure this information is kept up to date throughout the Programme and that the web links are maintained
A limited amount of paid advertising in local papers and selected publications or advertisements highlighting successful projects and case studies	General public, community groups and businesses Potential applicants	£500 for 5 years = £2,500	At least once a year
Regular Press Releases – developed and issued by Coordinator to highlight application deadlines, etc Also use Twitter and other social media	General public, community groups and businesses Potential applicants Partners and stakeholders	£1,000 for 6 years = £6,000	Every 4 - 6 months to publicise the call for applications, to publicise the grant funding awarded and good news/case studies
Include information and case	General public,	No separate	As and when

<p>studies about LEADER in the 3 council newsletters (and other LAG member newsletters if appropriate) – hard copy and on-line through news releases</p> <p>Produce an E-bulletin to be distributed to a LEADER database via e-mail and available on the LEADER website</p>	<p>community groups and businesses</p> <p>Potential applicants</p> <p>Partners and stakeholders</p>	<p>cost</p>	<p>produced</p> <p>Quarterly e-bulletin</p>
<p>Leaflets and posters distributed through LAG member organisations and other relevant outlets</p>	<p>General public, community groups and businesses</p> <p>Potential applicants</p> <p>Partners and stakeholders</p>	<p>£1,000 for initial design and print run and £500 for an additional print run part way through the Programme = £1,500</p>	<p>To be available for distribution within 2 months of the start of the Programme</p>
<p>Making sure all relevant advisors (business and community) within the 3 councils and in other local partner and stakeholder organisations have a good awareness of LEADER and how it can assist projects - Business Gateway, local Third Sector Interface's, Chamber of Commerce, etc.</p>	<p>Partner and stakeholder staff</p> <p>Council staff</p>	<p>LEADER Coordinator's time plus room hire and refreshments Say 3 x £100 = £300</p>	<p>Half day session near the start of the Programme plus another 2 updating sessions in later years</p>
<p>Encourage LAG members to act as ambassadors for LEADER and to promote it locally and further afield (networking at LEADER conferences, etc.)</p>	<p>Partners and stakeholders</p> <p>Wide range of potential applicants</p> <p>General public, community groups and businesses</p>	<p>No separate cost</p>	<p>Throughout the Programme</p>
<p>Attend local funding road shows</p>	<p>Partners and stakeholders</p> <p>Wide range of potential applicants</p>	<p>Assume £1,000 to cover the cost of boards and other PR</p>	<p>Throughout the Programme – aim to attend around 2-3 each year</p>

	General public, community groups and businesses	materials at the outset	
Attend selected local community events but only if there is a good opportunity to attract a large audience, e.g. possibly local agricultural shows, etc	General public, community groups and businesses	Use same PR materials as for funding road shows and assume it may cost £100 a year to attend such events = £500	Throughout the Programme – aim to attend around 2-3 each year
Develop and launch an Annual Report at an Annual Conference – half day plus lunch to be held at various venues and locations throughout the area. Annual Report on-line not hard copy. Opportunity to publicise LEADER, highlight successful projects, networking opportunities and to hear how LEADER is operating elsewhere	LAG members Partners and stakeholders Wide range of potential applicants Grant holders General public, community groups and businesses Council staff and councillors Interests external to the local area e.g. Scottish Govt, neighbouring LAGs, transregional and transnational interests	£750 – venue hire, plus lunch 6 x £750 = £4,500	Each year including the last year of the Programme
LEADER Coordinator presenting at LEADER networking events	External interests e.g. Scottish Government,	No separate cost	As required throughout the Programme

	other Scottish LAGs, etc.		
Other communication activity as may be appropriate and required	Various audiences	An allowance of £1,000 a year for 6 years = £6,000	As required throughout the Programme

Reviewing Communication Activity

The success of the various mediums used and activity employed will be monitored to ensure effectiveness and value for money. Success would generally be linked to the number of enquires and/or applications generated. The application form should include a 'check back' question to ascertain how the applicant became aware of LEADER.

The Communication Plan will be reviewed as part of the LAG's overall Annual Review. Activity will be revised if/as required to ensure good awareness of LEADER locally and to generate enquires and applications in line with the LDS from a wide spectrum of applicants.

Section 7 Equalities Statement

This section sets out how the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER LAG will seek to:

- Promote action to reduce inequalities
- Adhere to 2010 Equality Act
- Take action to improve equality and enhance human rights

The LAG is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination in all aspects of its operation; from LAG membership through to the individual projects it supports. All UK and European laws and statutory requirements will be adhered to. In all of its operational aspects the LAG will promote and endeavour to ensure equality of opportunity and to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of sex, age, marital status, race, disability, religion and belief, sexual orientation. Providing and ensuring opportunities to involve women and young people will be integral to all LAG business. The LAG will also seek to engage with ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and other underrepresented groups.

Through its members, the LAG will positively promote and pursue the objectives set out in this Equality Statement to reduce inequality and discrimination and will seek to ensure that this policy is fully implemented.

Equality of opportunity will be promoted and actioned in a number of ways as set out below:

- In all of its activity the LAG will take due account of The Equality Act 2010 which legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society
- Membership of the LAG will take full account of the need to involve under-represented groups
- All LAG members will receive induction training onto the LAG to ensure that they can participate on a full and equal footing
- All LAG members will receive equality and diversity training
- LAG meetings will be held at such times and venues as to encourage and facilitate full participation of all members
- Efforts will be made to ensure that all LAG business and procedures are transparent and the LAG will endeavour to make itself and its decision-making process as open and transparent as possible, whilst respecting the confidential aspects of projects
- The development of customer-led services will be promoted

- The principles of equality and diversity will be mainstreamed into the work of the LAG
- All projects funded by LEADER will be monitored to ensure they adopt and maintain effective equality policies
- Discrimination will be challenged and diversity embraced in all aspects of the LAG's activity
- Opportunities to promote equality and good relations between groups will be pursued by the LAG
- Action will be taken to ensure that any potential negative impacts are minimised or eliminated
- The actual effects of the equal opportunities policy will be monitored and action taken if there are any concerns that the policy is having a detrimental impact on any group

In addition, the LAG will adhere to Renfrewshire Council's comprehensive equality and diversity schemes, which are available on the Council's website, links to which will be made available on the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER website.

Appendix 1: Outline LAG Governing Constitution

It is anticipated that the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Local Action Group (LAG) will be governed by a constitution, but will not be a formal legal entity. This document sets out the main aspects that will be included in its governing document.

Responsibilities of the LAG

The responsibilities of the LAG are to:

- Direct the strategic aims of the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020 through developing and implementing a Local Development Strategy and pursuing this as set out in its agreed Business Plan
- Contribute towards increasing the capacity of local rural communities and businesses to enable them to develop and implement projects
- Ensure the work of LEADER aligns with and complements other relevant local strategies
- Develop a Communication Plan to create good local awareness of the LEADER Programme and generate interest from those seeking LEADER support
- Devise appropriate guidelines and selection criteria for applications for LEADER support
- Assess applications for LEADER support, and make decisions on awarding funding
- Facilitate activities which encourage innovation, cooperation and networking, including ensuring lessons learned from projects are shared widely
- Monitor and review the implementation of the Local Development Strategy and Business Plan, including the financial and physical progress
- Evaluate outputs, outcomes and impacts of LEADER locally against targets and review the LAG approach and activities as appropriate
- Work closely with the Accountable Body to ensure the effective and efficient delivery and implementation of LEADER locally
- Network with other LAGs and stakeholders
- Work closely with the Scottish Government as the Managing Authority for the LEADER scheme in Scotland
- Do anything which may be incidental or conducive to the furtherance of any of the objectives of the LAG

Membership of the LAG

The proposed members of the LAG include representatives of the following:

Private	Third Sector	Public
Scottish Land and Estates	CVS Inverclyde	Renfrewshire Council
Ardgowan Estate	Engage Renfrewshire	East Renfrewshire Council
Finlaystone Country Estate	Belles on Bikes	Inverclyde Council
	Kilbarchan Councils	Visit Scotland
	Neilston Community Council	Scottish Natural Heritage
	West Region Scouts	Forestry Commission

The initial membership of the LAG will be finalised shortly after Scottish Government notification of approval for the 2014-20 programme.

Organisations which are members of the LAG shall be required to take a full and active part in the activities of the LAG. Members of the LAG shall be required to nominate a representative to attend meetings of the LAG and to ensure its nominated representative attends meetings and participates fully on a regular basis.

The LAG will have up to 19 members.

LAG membership must take due account of the LEADER requirements, specifically in ensuring there is a mix of genders and ages and that public sector membership must not exceed 49% of the total.

Membership of the LAG shall be open to local Councils, business groups, other public agencies, constituted voluntary and community groups and individuals.

In the event of new LAG members being required, the recruitment process shall be open and transparent and all applications for membership will be considered and approved by the LAG. The LAG may, at its discretion, refuse to admit any organisation/person to membership.

LAG members will be expected to remain members for the duration of the operation of the LEADER Programme 2014 -2020.

Any organisation which wishes to withdraw from membership of the LAG shall give formal, written notice to that effect; and on receipt of the notice, the organisation shall cease to be a member.

LAG Members' Requirements

All LAG members must take a wide ranging but impartial view of the issues and applications presented, with the best interests of rural Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde to the fore at all times.

The LAG is committed to equality of opportunity as set out in its Equality Statement.

All LAG members will be required to participate in induction training to ensure they fully understand their role and responsibilities and LEADER process.

Any new LAG members will be required to undertake an induction session with the LAG Chair and LEADER Coordinator to ensure they fully understand their role and responsibilities and LEADER processes.

LAG Office Bearers

A Chairperson was elected at the first 2015 meeting of the LAG.

The LAG has elected two Vice Chairpersons to shadow the Chair for a year so that they can gain experience and possibly put themselves forward for Chair at the next election. Other office bearers may be appointed if considered necessary and/or appropriate.

The Chairperson of the LAG cannot be an employee or representative of any of the Councils and/or the Accountable Body

The initial Chairperson will remain in post for one year of operation, after which time he/she may step down or seek re-election. Thereafter the Chairperson will be expected to be in post for three years and then stand down but may seek re-election.

In the event of the Chairperson stepping down at any time, a new Chairperson will be elected from existing LAG members.

Procedures for LAG Meetings

The LAG will meet at least four times per year and more frequently if required to do so due to the volume of funding applications.

No business shall be dealt with at any meeting unless a quorum is present. The quorum shall be half of the LAG members and this will be rounded down in the event of an uneven number of members.

The quorum must also take due account of LEADER requirements for public and private/other sector representation and public sector LAG members should not exceed 49% of the quorum at any LAG meeting.

The Chairperson of the LAG shall preside at each meeting. If the Chairperson is not present within 15 minutes after the time at which the meeting was due to commence, the members of the LAG present at the meeting shall elect from among themselves the person who will act as Chairperson of that meeting. In the event of a Vice Chairperson being elected he/she will assume the role of Chairperson in the Chairperson's absence.

Each member organisation shall have one vote. Questions and decisions arising at a meeting of the LAG shall be decided by a majority of votes, with the Chairperson having the casting vote.

The LAG may, at its discretion, allow any person whom it considers appropriate to attend and speak at any meeting of the LAG. This will include advisors and applicants. However, any such person invited to attend a LAG meeting shall not be entitled to vote.

A member of the LAG shall not vote at a meeting of the LAG on any resolution concerning a matter in which he/she or the organisation that he/she represents has an interest which conflicts (or may conflict) with the interests of the LAG. Further, he/she must declare their interest and withdraw from the meeting while the matter is being discussed and determined.

All decisions at the LAG meetings will be recorded.

Once a decision has been made all LAG members are responsible for it. The minutes of LAG meetings will record the collectively agreed reasons for decisions on funding – either the feedback given on an application which caused the LAG to reject it, or the reasons for an approval.

All applications for support will be assessed by LAG members in such a way to ensure that all decision making is fair, consistent, equitable and transparent. An assessment framework will guide this process. Constructive feedback will always be provided to unsuccessful applicants.

Whilst the minutes of LAG meetings will be publicly available, members will be required to treat discussions and documents related to applications in a confidential manner and LAG members should not disclose such information to which they have access by virtue of their position.

LAG Annual Review

Once a year the LAG will formally review and monitor activities and spend against its Local Development Strategy and Business Plan.

LAG Sub-Groups

The LAG may choose to establish sub-groups to deal with certain matters.

Membership of sub-groups shall be drawn from LAG members.

Any sub-group established to make decisions on the awarding of grant funding shall adhere strictly to the 49% public sector representation rule.

Any sub groups established will report to the LAG.

Accountable Body

Renfrewshire Council is the Accountable Body which is responsible to the LAG for the administration of LEADER and to support the delivery and implementation of the Local Action Group's Local Development Strategy.

The role and activities of the Accountable Body are governed and regulated by a Service Level Agreement with the Scottish Government.

The roles, responsibilities and relationship between Accountable Body and the LAG are set out in a separate partnership agreement.

LEADER Staff

LEADER staff for Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG are employed by Renfrewshire Council on behalf of the LAG. Staff are responsible for delivering the aims of the LAG, as expressed through the Local Development Strategy, the Business Plan, and the decisions made at quorate meetings.

Finance

The financial year of the LAG shall be from 1st January to 31st December. An audited statement of the fund for the financial year shall be submitted to the LAG by an agreed date each year.

Renfrewshire Council as the Accountable Body has responsibility for preparation, compliance and the submission of claims to the Scottish Government.

The LAG shall be required to submit an annual progress report to the Scottish Government each year, including:

- Chairperson's Annual Report
- LEADER Coordinator's report and the up to date financial position.

Appendix 2: Draft Memorandum of Understanding Between East Renfrewshire Council, Inverclyde Council and Renfrewshire Council LEADER Programme 2014 - 20

The LEADER LAG is complementary to, but independent of the three Community Planning Partnerships in Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire and Inverclyde.

All three councils will work in partnership to facilitate the delivery and implementation of the LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020.

All three councils will promote the LEADER Programme locally through appropriate existing channels.

All three councils will be members of the Local Action Group.

The three councils agree that Renfrewshire Council will assume the role of Accountable Body in the delivery and implementation of the LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020 on behalf of the three councils.

As the Accountable Body, Renfrewshire Council will enter into a Service Level Agreement with the Scottish Government which regulates the role and activities of the Accountable Body.

As the Accountable Body, Renfrewshire Council will enter into a partnership agreement with the Local Action Group which sets out the roles and responsibilities of both bodies.

As the Accountable Body, Renfrewshire Council will be responsible for employing and managing dedicated LEADER Programme staff on behalf of the Local Action Group.

As the Accountable Body, Renfrewshire Council will be responsible for ensuring the appropriate financial management and administration of the LEADER Programme funds.

East Renfrewshire Council and Inverclyde Council will provide reasonable and appropriate in-kind support to Renfrewshire Council to ensure the efficient and effective delivery and implementation of the LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020.

This agreement will be in place for the duration of the LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020.

All parties agree to the terms of the above MOU.

Signed East Renfrewshire Council _____

Date: _____

Signed Inverclyde Council _____

Date: _____

Signed Renfrewshire Council _____

Date _____

Appendix 3: Risks Associated for Renfrewshire Council as the Accountable Body

Renfrewshire Council has agreed that it will assume the role of Accountable Body on behalf of the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG. It is also taking the lead role on behalf of the three local councils.

Six main areas of risk associated with Renfrewshire Council taking on the role of the LEADER Programme Accountable Body have been identified and these are outlined in the risk assessment below.

Risk Assessment of Renfrewshire Council as Accountable Body for LEADER in Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde			
Risk	Probability of risk	Impact	How will risk be minimised?
Employing LEADER staff	Low	RC could become embroiled in employment issues such as long term absence, disciplinary issues, unfair dismissal, etc.	RC is a large employer with an experienced HR dept. Any employment issues should be identified at an early stage and dealt with fairly and appropriately to prevent them escalating.
Managing LEADER staff	Medium	A disproportionate amount of RC staff time could be spent on issues related to managing LEADER staff.	RC must be conscious of the additional workload associated with managing LEADER staff and ensure this is undertaken effectively and efficiently. RC should make an accurate assessment of this in-kind assistance as part of the LEADER Programme. Partnering Councils should allocate appropriate in-kind time for support staff.
Underestimating the actual and in-kind cost of being the Accountable Body for LEADER	Medium	LEADER could end up costing RC money which is not reimbursed and/or not recognised as in-kind support through LEADER.	Experience has been built up during the previous LEADER Programme so RC has a much better idea of what is involved with being the Accountable Body. It should ensure that adequate and realistic financial resources are sought from the LEADER Programme at the outset and also ensure all LEADER specific costs are reclaimed from the Scottish Government and that its in-kind contribution is accurately reflected.
Financial LEADER	High	It is assumed that RC	RC and LEADER staff must

claims are made to Scottish Government in arrears		will receive an initial upfront payment from the Scottish Government. This will alleviate the scale of this risk, but there will be times when RC has paid out substantial amounts of money associated with LEADER from its own sources and is awaiting reimbursement from the Scottish Government.	ensure that claims for reimbursement to the Scottish Government are made regularly and promptly and are fully complete to minimise the risk of delays in payment.
Monitoring and audit issues	Medium	RC may not be reimbursed for LEADER claims it has paid out but which the Scottish Government considers to have been paid erroneously for whatever reason.	RC along with the LAG and LEADER staff must ensure that there are robust and transparent processes in place for all LEADER administration costs, but particularly for claims and monitoring. A clear audit trail must be evidenced for all projects. Support staff within partnering Councils should carry out eligibility checks throughout the life of the project.
Renfrewshire Council's reputation	Medium	Issues related to the previous LEADER Programme – and indeed the new Programme – could jeopardise the reputation of RC.	RC must always be clear that it is acting as an agent of both the LAG and the Scottish Government and has no real control over how LEADER operates.
Renfrewshire Council are at risk of substantial fines from the European Commission	Medium	Serious budget issues for Economic Development and the Department it belongs to.	Shared responsibility should be agreed by the three partnering authorities by way of a partnership agreement or MOU. Adequate resources will help minimise the risk of errors occurring.
RC take the full hit of any fine issued by Audit Scotland or EU Commission as they are the Accountable Body.	High	RC and the LEADER Programme receive bad press, jeopardising reputations. RC budget is at risk.	If shared responsibility is required, management have to agree on the terms.

Appendix 4: Draft Partnership Agreement Between Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Local Action Group and Renfrewshire Council

LEADER Programme 2014 - 2020

The Local Action Group (LAG) is responsible for directing the strategic themes of the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER Programme 2014 - 2020 through developing and implementing a Local Development Strategy and pursuing this as set out in its agreed Business Plan.

The LAG is responsible for devising appropriate guidelines and selection criteria for applications for LEADER support.

The LAG is responsible for assessing applications for LEADER support, and making decisions on awarding funding.

Renfrewshire Council will assume the role of Accountable Body in the delivery and implementation of the LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020 in Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde.

Renfrewshire Council, as the Accountable Body, is responsible to the LAG for the administration of LEADER and for supporting the effective delivery and implementation of the LAG's Local Development Strategy.

As the Accountable Body, Renfrewshire Council will enter into a Service Level Agreement with the Scottish Government which regulates the role, responsibilities and activities of the Accountable Body and gives it delegated authority to administer LEADER finances.

Except as may be set out in its Service Level Agreement with the Scottish Government, Renfrewshire Council has no mandate to make decisions on behalf of the LAG.

As the Accountable Body, Renfrewshire Council will be responsible for employing and line-managing LEADER Programme staff on behalf of the LAG. However, all LEADER staff work for and report to the LAG.

The LAG has an important role in directing LEADER staff in relation to the strategic direction and implementation of the LEADER Programme locally.

As the Accountable Body, Renfrewshire Council will be responsible for ensuring the appropriate financial management and administration of the LEADER Programme funds.

Renfrewshire Council, as the Accountable Body, will put appropriate arrangements in place to ensure the final monitoring/evaluation of all projects is independent and not undertaken by anyone who has had any previous involvement with the project.

The staffing structure and administrative procedures through which Renfrewshire Council will act to assist the delivery of LEADER locally must be discussed and

formally agreed with the LAG. Any significant changes to this, e.g. staffing levels, staff salaries, staff responsibilities, staff accommodation, etc. must be formally agreed with the LAG.

Renfrewshire Council will be a member of the LAG and must remain so for the duration of the Programme.

Renfrewshire Council, as the Accountable Body, cannot also assume the role of Chair of the LAG.

Renfrewshire Council will be entitled to have one member and one vote only on the LAG. Other representatives of Renfrewshire Council may attend LAG meetings but in an advisory capacity only and will not be members and neither will they be able to vote.

If the LAG has any concerns about the performance of Renfrewshire Council as the Accountable Body, then the Chair must raise these swiftly with the Economic Development Manager at Renfrewshire Council. If concerns cannot be resolved then they may need to be referred to the Scottish Government as the Managing Authority of the LEADER Programme.

If the LAG has any concerns about LEADER staff or staffing issues, then the Chair must raise these swiftly and confidentially with the Economic Development Manager at Renfrewshire Council.

If Renfrewshire Council in its role of Accountable Body has any concerns about the performance of the LAG in terms of its spend profile, validity of its decisions or any other matter, these should be raised immediately with the LAG Chair. If concerns cannot be resolved then they may need to be referred to the Scottish Government as the Managing Authority of the LEADER Programme.

This agreement will be in place for the duration of the LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020.

Both parties agree to the terms of the above partnership agreement.

Signed Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Local Action Group

Date: _____

Signed Renfrewshire Council _____

Date _____

Appendix 5: LEADER Staff Responsibilities

Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER Programme Coordinator

Job Purpose

To support the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Local Action Group (LAG) and Accountable Body (Renfrewshire Council) in the delivery and successful implementation of LEADER 2014 – 2020 Programme as set out in the adopted Local Development Strategy and agreed Business Plan.

Key Responsibilities

- To ensure the Council secures ongoing LEADER funding for the Renfrewshire rural area, working to establish the tripartite delivery model in conjunction with East Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Councils.
- To help develop the Council's strategic approach to LEADER, establishing performance targets and supporting the evaluation process.
- To ensure LEADER funded activity is appropriate to the priorities defined within the Local Development Strategy
- To act as an adviser on all issues relating to the external funding environment – promoting match funding opportunities and assisting in the development of relevant funding bids.
- To manage the claims process to ensure that LEADER funding is claimed promptly and within appropriate timescales.
- To manage programme/project budgets, as appropriate.
- To support the development of specific external funding bids and to provide advice and guidance to project sponsors in order to build capacity.
- To co-ordinate the activities of the Local Action Group in relation to the appraisal of applications and the promotion of the LEADER programme as a development tool for the rural area.
- To establish and maintain an excellent working relationship with the Scottish Government department responsible for LEADER funding (rural communities team).
- To establish and maintain excellent working relationships with all relevant Council Departments, partners and funding bodies and ensuring external funding opportunities are maximised.

- To develop and implement a monitoring and evaluation framework for approved LEADER projects and, as necessary, carry out monitoring visits and prepare monitoring reports.
- To assist the Council's wider economic development and regeneration activities, as directed by the Economic Development Manager.
- To prepare and present reports relating to LEADER funding and rural development to local Members, Boards/Working Groups and partner agencies.
- To work with the Assistant Manager (Funding and Development), and other senior managers, in promoting alternative forms of service delivery and partnership working in line with the Council's commitment to Best Value.
- To carry out such other appropriate duties and responsibilities as required by the Director or his nominated representatives from time to time.

Reporting

The LEADER Coordinator will be employed and line-managed by Renfrewshire Council which acts as the Accountable Body on behalf of the Local Action Group.

The LEADER Coordinator will be accountable to the Local Action Group which will set priorities for the LEADER Programme locally, through the Local Development Strategy and Business Plan. However, the LEADER Coordinator will also report to and be accountable to the Economic Development Manager, Renfrewshire Council in relation to its activities as the Accountable Body. From a personnel perspective, line management will be provided by the Assistant Manager for Funding and Development within the Economic Development Section of Renfrewshire Council.

Grade and Salary Scale

Grade J, salary starting at approx £30,000

Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER Development Officer

Job Purpose

To provide support and assistance to the LEADER Coordinator in the delivery and implementation of the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020 and in particular to administer applications, process claims and monitor projects.

Key Responsibilities

- Support the programme coordinator in the processing of applications
- Be responsible for providing guidance and support to programme beneficiaries through one-to one visits and telephone enquiries
- Develop and undertake a programme of publicity events/engagement in liaison with Renfrewshire Council, rural groups, associations and individuals for the public, private and voluntary sectors across Inverclyde, Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire
- Carry out regular monitoring of projects to ensure compliance with EU regulations for audit and record keeping to ensure projects are progressing as per approval including monitoring of physical and financial performance and reporting to LAG and Lead Partner
- Engage with applicants to process claims and ensure effective collation of evidence and recording of important financial and impact information at each stage of the programme
- Ensure that the LEADER Programme is properly publicised and promoted.
- Liaison on small business support locally
- Take part in cooperation and networking events locally and nationally
- Create knowledge exchange opportunities and working with local and national press
- Create strong partnerships of private and voluntary sector partners by creating communication channels and opportunities for animation networking including production of publicity materials for dissemination through events workshops liaison etc and oversee the development of a Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER website.

Reporting

The LEADER Development Officer will be employed by Renfrewshire Council which acts as the Accountable Body on behalf of the Local Action Group.

The LEADER Development Officer will be accountable to the Local Action Group which will set priorities for the LEADER Programme locally, through the Local Development Strategy. However, they will report to and be supervised by the LEADER Coordinator and report to the Assistant Manager for Funding and Development within the Economic Development section at Renfrewshire Council.

Salary Scale

Salary scale I, starting salary approx. £28,470.

Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER Officer – Compliance and Monitoring

Job Purpose

To provide financial and administrative support for the LEADER Programme and to assist the development and maintenance of key information and quality systems.

Key Responsibilities

- Be responsible for providing guidance, claims and administrative support to programme beneficiaries.
- Assist in the development and maintenance of key information and quality systems.
- Administer and record project claims, monitoring physical and financial records and project files.
- Collate statistical information.
- Process all financial information relating to the grant programme To manage the claims process to ensure that LEADER funding is claimed promptly and within appropriate timescales.
- To manage programme/project budgets, as appropriate.
- To support the development of specific external funding bids and to provide advice and guidance to project sponsors in order to build capacity.
- To co-ordinate the activities of the Local Action Group in relation to the appraisal of applications and the promotion of the LEADER programme as a development tool for the rural area.
- To establish and maintain an excellent working relationship with the Scottish Government department responsible for LEADER funding (rural communities team).
- To establish and maintain excellent working relationships with all relevant Council Departments, partners and funding bodies and ensuring external funding opportunities are maximised.
- To develop and implement a monitoring and evaluation framework for approved LEADER projects and, as necessary, carry out monitoring visits and prepare monitoring reports.
- To assist the Council's wider economic development and regeneration activities, as directed by the Economic Development Manager.

- To prepare and present reports relating to LEADER funding and rural development to local Members, Boards/Working Groups and partner agencies.
- To work with the Assistant Manager (Funding and Development), and other senior managers, in promoting alternative forms of service delivery and partnership working in line with the Council's commitment to Best Value.
- To carry out such other appropriate duties and responsibilities as required by the Director or his nominated representatives from time to time.

Reporting

The LEADER Officer for Compliance and Monitoring will be employed by Renfrewshire Council which acts as the Accountable Body on behalf of the Local Action Group.

The LEADER Officer will be accountable to the Local Action group which will set priorities for the LEADER Programme locally, through the Local Development Strategy. However, they will report to and be supervised by the LEADER Coordinator and report to the Assistant Manager for Funding and Development within the Economic Development Section at Renfrewshire Council.

Salary

Salary scale I, starting salary approx. £28,470 (pro-rata 21 hours)

Appendix 6: Financial Profile (see the next 4 pages)

Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LEADER Programme 2014-2020 (Costs from October 2015)
Programme Management Resources

Staffing Costs

Item	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Staffing							
LEADER Coordinator Salary starting at £30,240 (J Grade) and increasing	£6,978	£30,751	£31,366	£31,993	£32,633	£33,286	£167,008
LEADER Coordinator NI and Pension - assume 27% of salary	£1,884	£8,303	£8,469	£8,638	£8,811	£8,987	£45,092
LEADER Coordinator Travel Costs - assume 3800 miles per year at 45p	£450	£1,710	£1,710	£1,710	£1,710	£1,710	£9,000
LEADER Coordinator Other Costs (training, etc)	£250	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£5,250
LEADER Compliance Officer Salary starting at £28,470 21 hours pro-rata (I Grade) increasing by 2% a year from Sept 2015	£0	£16,382	£16,710	£17,044	£17,385	£17,732	£85,253
LEADER Compliance Officer NI and Pension - assume 27% of salary	£0	£4,423	£4,512	£4,602	£4,694	£4,788	£23,018
LEADER Compliance Officer Travel Costs - assume 1500 miles per year	£0	£675	£675	£675	£675	£675	£3,375
LEADER Compliance Officer Other Costs (training, etc)	£0	£600	£600	£600	£600	£600	£3,000
LEADER Development Officer Salary starting at £28,470 (I Grade) increasing by 2% a year (temp 4 yr post, full-time)	£0	£28,470	£29,039	£29,620	£30,213	£9,296	£126,638
LEADER Development Officer NI and Pension - assume 27% of salary	£0	£7,687	£7,841	£7,997	£8,157	£2,510	£34,192
LEADER Development Officer Travel Costs - assume 1500 miles per	£0	£1,200	£1,000	£800	£800	£800	£4,600
LEADER Development Officer Other Costs (training, etc)		£400	£600	£400	£200	£200	£1,800
New Staff Recruitment	£0	£1,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£1,000
Other admin expenses - allowance	£250	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£5,250
Annual Audit undertaken by RC staff - approx cost £4,000 annually shared equally by the three councils so no cost for LEADER	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Total	£9,812	£103,601	£104,521	£106,080	£107,878	£82,584	£514,476

LAG Costs

Item	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
LAG							
LAG meetings – assume 4 a year at £150	£300	£600	£600	£600	£600	£600	£3,300
Induction Training – external	£500	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£500
Ongoing LAG members training - external	£0	£0	£500	£0	£0	£0	£500
LAG members expenses associated with attending training, meetings a	£600	£660	£726	£799	£878	£966	£4,629
Total	£1,400	£1,260	£1,826	£1,399	£1,478	£1,566	£8,929

Monitoring and Evaluation

Item	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Monitoring and Evaluation							
Annual Report produced by LEADER Coordinator and Chair	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Mid Term Evaluation - external	£0	£0	£10,000	£0	£0	£0	£10,000
Final Evaluation – external	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£10,000	£10,000
Total	£0	£0	£10,000	£0	£0	£10,000	£20,000

Communications, Marketing and PR Activity

Item	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Communications, Marketing/PR Activity							
Official Launch of LEADER Programme	£0	£3,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£3,000
New LEADER website containing all LEADER guidance and relevant info, plus case studies and good news stories	£500	£500	£500	£500	£500	£500	£3,000
Ensure the website is up to date and keep it refreshed – responsibility of LEADER Assistant	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Limited paid advertising or advertorial in local newspapers	£500	£500	£500	£500	£500	£92	£2,592
Regular press releases - info and case studies – to promote awareness of LEADER - allowance for an external contractor to assist	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£6,000
Presence on three council websites and included in newsletters, etc	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Leaflets and Posters	£0	£1,000	£0	£500	£0	£0	£1,500
Awareness raising activity with relevant funding advisors (business and community)	£200	£200	£200	£200	£0	£0	£800
Using the LAG members as ambassadors to publicise LEADER	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£6,000
Attending funding road shows	£500	£500	£500	£0	£500	£0	£2,000
Attending selected community events	£100	£200	£200	£200	£200	£100	£1,000
Annual Conference	£750	£750	£750	£750	£750	£750	£4,500
Other promotional material/communication activity as may be required or appropriate	£1,000	£2,000	£1,000	£2,000	£1,000	£200	£7,200
Total	£5,550	£10,650	£5,650	£6,650	£5,450	£3,642	£37,592

Cost Summary

	2015 (10%)	2016 (12%)	2017 (20%)	2018 (20%)	2019 (20%)	2020 (18%)	Total
LEADER Grant Funding - based on £1.7M							
Grant Funding Awarded and Spent	£0	£243,000	£225,000	£235,887	£180,000	£162,000	£1,045,887
Cooperation Projects	£0	£35,000	£52,420	£30,000	£40,000	£75,000	£232,420
Enterprise Grant Funding awarded and Spent	£0	£54,000	£62,420	£40,000	£40,000	£36,000	£232,420
Farm Diversification Funding Awarded and Spent	£0	£54,000	£50,000	£52,420	£40,000	£36,000	£232,420
Total	£0	£386,000	£389,840	£358,307	£300,000	£309,000	£1,743,147
% of Total	0%	22%	22%	21%	17%	18%	100%
LEADER Animation and Running Costs - as broken down above	£16,762	£115,511	£121,997	£114,128	£114,806	£97,792	£580,997
Grand Total	£16,762	£501,511	£511,837	£472,435	£414,806	£406,792	£2,324,144
% of Total	1%	22%	22%	20%	18%	18%	100%
% Cumulative Spend	11%	33%	55%	75%	93%	110%	