LEADER 2014-2020

FLINTSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

SEPTEMBER 2014

VERSION: 1
DATE: SEPTEMBER 2014

NAME OF LAG AND CONTACT DETAILS

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LOCAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION TIMESCALES

Proposed Start Date (no earlier than 1 January 2015)	1 January 2015
End Date (no later than 31 December 2021)	31 December 2021

Suggested word limits have been provided for each section as a guide however these are not prescriptive

	SECTION 1–STRATEGIC FIT

Description	Explain how the Local Development Strategy (LDS) fits with EU strategies, policies and programmes and the extent to which it aligns with the Focus Areas of the Wales Rural Development Programme (2014-2020) and the five LEADER themes as appropriate to the context of the LDS.
Linked to	Sections 3.1 and 3.5 of the LDS Guidance June 2014

1.1   Definition of the area and population covered by the strategy
(2,000 words)

Overview of the proposed geographical area of the LAG and its population. Population figures to be broken down by rural, service and host wards.

The following table outlines the proposed ward coverage and respective population data:

Brynford	Flintshire	2,154
Buckley Mountain	Flintshire	3,020
Caergwrle	Flintshire	1,617
Caerwys	Flintshire	2,568
Cilcain	Flintshire	1,861
Ffynnongroyw	Flintshire	1,810
Flint Oakenholt	Flintshire	3,063
Flint Trelawny	Flintshire	3,604
Gronant	Flintshire	1,521
Gwernaffield	Flintshire	1,941
Gwernymynydd	Flintshire	1,729
Halkyn	Flintshire	1,778
Higher Kinnerton	Flintshire	1,700
Holywell Central SC	*Flintshire*	*1,993*
Holywell East SC	*Flintshire*	*1,759*

Holywell West SC	*Flintshire*	*2,401*
Hope	Flintshire	2,607
Leeswood	Flintshire	2,138
Llanfynydd	Flintshire	1,854
Mold Broncoed	Flintshire	2,694
Mold East	Flintshire	1,996
Mold South	Flintshire	2,713
Mold West	Flintshire	2,638
Mostyn	Flintshire	1,843
New Brighton	Flintshire	3,004
Northop	Flintshire	3,050
Northop Hall	Flintshire	1,531
Penyffordd	Flintshire	3,877
Saltney Mold Junction	Flintshire	1,378
Sealand	Flintshire	3,008
Trelawnyd and Gwaenysgor	Flintshire	1,837
Treuddyn	Flintshire	1,623
Whitford	Flintshire	2,322

Coherence of the Area
The area has been selected because of its coherence in terms of geographical, economic and social characteristics. The proposed area is entirely within Flintshire Unitary authority.

Geographical Coherence
The area identified has a natural boundary through the Dee Estuary in the north east and the Clwydian Range in the south west. Halkyn Common extends from the historical market town of Holywell and reaches towards the market town of Mold and the foothills of the Clwydian Range. The dominant ridge of the Clwydian Range extends to the limestone high ground of Eryrys and Llanfynydd. Parts of the strategy area are protected by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) on the Clwydian Range and Natura 2000, Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Ramsar status on the Dee Estuary.

Economic Coherence
The area is characterised by the presence of picturesque villages and agricultural dwellings which are visual features of the area. These villages serve as focal points for economic and social activity in the rural areas. In spite of decline in the industry, agriculture continues to be a significant part of the economy, particularly in the south of the county. The inclusion of the Sealand ward, which includes Deeside Industrial Park, in the rural area designation means that there is now a significant number of manufacturing based industries located in the rural area. Deeside Industrial Park is one of the largest industrial parks in Wales with a variety of major companies providing employment for residents of Flintshire and neighbouring areas. The Deeside Enterprise Zone and the Northern Gateways Initiative also present opportunities for Flintshire's rural area.

Rural tourism is a growing industry with Flintshire benefiting from its proximity to large conurbations in the north west of England. The coastal areas of Gronant and Talacre are significant destinations for holiday makers. The high quality landscape and countryside also offers several tourism and leisure opportunities for the rural economy.

Social Coherence
Flintshire's rural area is mainly served by the two market towns of Holywell and Mold. Both of these towns service the rural hinterland for shopping, health facilities, leisure facilities and secondary school education. In general Flintshire's rural communities have a strong connection with and similarity to, the rural areas of its neighbouring counties in particular Denbighshire and rural Wrexham.

Characteristics of the Area and Communities Covered

Population
The designated rural area has a total population of 74632 with a population density of 1.98 persons per hectare. 48.94% of Flintshire's residents reside in the 30 rural wards, with the most populated rural areas including Penyffordd and Flint Trelawny. These wards are adjacent to some of Flintshire's main towns, namely Buckley, Flint and Mold.

Because of its proximity to North West England, some rural wards have experienced a significant amount of in-migration such as Ffynnongroyw, Leeswood, Mold West, Buckley Mountain, Sealand and Saltney Mold Junction. Out migration has affected Sealand and Mold East.

The areas with a low average age tend to be based in the north and east of the county. These tend to be urban areas however three of these wards: Saltney Mol d Junction, Sealand and Flint Oakenholt are in the rural area. The main areas of above average retired populations are mainly in the south and west of the county and eight out of the ten are rural wards. This will have implications for age-related services (such as health, social care and supported housing provision) in the future.

Intentions to work across boundaries

Cadwyn Clwyd has been appointed by the Welsh Government as the administrative body to support the delivery of LEADER in Flintshire, Denbighshire and Wrexham. This offers a unique opportunity to maximise linkages and synergies across these three local authority areas in terms of the local development strategies and the actions to be delivered. The consultation work underpinning the three LDS documents was undertaken as an integrated process and key, strategic opportunities have been identified in terms of working across the three boundaries to deliver similar benefits and outcomes. These are identified clearly in the relevant sections of this LDS document.

A number of strategic opportunities have been identified to collaborate across boundaries with LAGs in other parts of the UK and the EU. These opportunities are linked to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and World Heritage Site (WHS) and again, these opportunities are identified in relevant sections of this LDS

document.

1.2 Description of the Integration	
(2,500 words – to be linked in to the actions described in Section 3.1 – Intervention Logic)	
Complementarity with other structures and initiatives	
Existing Structure	**How LEADER will complement and avoid duplication**
Flintshire County Council (FCC) and the Flintshire Local Service Board (LSB)	LEADER investment in rural Flintshire will complement the work of several of FCC's departments. Planned actions under LEADER themes 1, 2 and 3 will offer significant potential to complement the work of FCC's various departments. In particular, there will be an increased emphasis during the 2014-2020 period on LEADER theme 3 (Exploring new ways of providing non-statutory local services) which will offer significant potential for complementarity with FCC for instance in supporting social enterprises to deliver services in new and innovative ways. Duplication will be avoided by ensuring that FCC members play an active role on the LAG and inform and shape the design of projects to maximise complementarity with FCC's services and activities.
Business Wales	Investments via theme 2 of LEADER (facilitating pre-commercial development, business partnerships and short supply chains) will complement the work of Business Wales. LEADER investments will focus on piloting and testing the feasibility of pre-commercial concepts. Once tested, the entrepreneurs behind these ideas will be referred to Business Wales as appropriate for mainstream start-up support. Duplication will be avoided by ensuring that LEADER actions address specific market failures at the pre-commercial 'proof of concept' stage.
Town and Community Councils in rural Flintshire	Town and community councils have been key stakeholders in the delivery of the current LEADER Programme in rural Flintshire and will continue to be key partners under the new programme. Complementarity will be achieved and duplication avoided by working closely with and supporting town and community councils with community engagement, ensuring that LEADER actions respond to community needs and wherever possible co-invest with town and community councils to maximise value for money and return on investment.
The Flintshire Regeneration Partnership	The LAG and administrative body will ensure regular, on-going dialogue with the Flintshire Regeneration Partnership focusing on integration with other investments and activities and wider regeneration strategies and policies for Flintshire.

The Destination Flintshire Partnership	This is a sub-group of the Flintshire Regeneration Partnership and brings together key stakeholders including businesses, tourism groups, town partnerships and key local authority representatives. There will be on-going dialogue with this group to ensure that LEADER funding is invested in an integrated manner.
Coleg Cambria	LEADER investment will complement the work of Coleg Cambria by focusing on demonstration projects (e.g. relating to agriculture and food skills and employment opportunities). Coleg Cambria has been involved as key stakeholders during the current Programme period and will continue to be actively involved in the 2014-2020 period. Duplication will be avoided by ensuring extensive dialogue with Coleg Cambria in the design and implementation of LEADER projects.
Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB Joint Advisory Committee (JAC)	This is a key body in terms of engaging with the AONB and there is a strong pre-existing relationship between LAG members, the administrative body and the Committee. It is expected that there will be cross-over in membership between the LAGs for Flintshire, Denbighshire and Wrexham and the Advisory Committee and this will be the basis for ensuring a high degree of complementarity, co-operation as well as opportunities for co-investment.
Flintshire Local Voluntary Council (FLVC)	The third sector has been a key partner in the delivery of LEADER in rural Flintshire during the current Programme period. This will continue in the future with an increased emphasis on supporting social enterprise, community asset transfer and facilitating access to and delivery of non-statutory local services (e.g. via community transport schemes). FLVC will be a key partner in the LAG and will be closely involved in ensuring LEADER actions support and maximise the potential of the volunteer base and the third sector more generally in rural Flintshire.
Federation of Small Businesses	The FSB will continue to be key partners under the new Programme. Complementarity will be achieved and duplication avoided by working closely with the FSB to ensure the 'business voice' is heard and to ensure that LEADER actions respond to business needs and wherever possible co-invest with the private sector to maximise value for money and return on investment.
Other RDP Measures including Glastir	LEADER activity will complement other RDP measures as there will be a clear focus on innovation and new approaches. There will be a specific focus on complementing other RDP activities by ensuring that wherever possible, innovative actions piloted by

	LEADER feed into and inform other RDP actions. Duplication will be avoided via the selection of actions under this LDS which take account of other intended RDP measures and focus on themes and areas that would not otherwise be covered or supported. Projects emanating under theme 1 with a direct link to the environment will complement priorities under Glastir; projects participants under theme 2 from the food & agri sectors, will be referred onto PMG and / or Farming Connect where appropriate. Additionally agri-food projects under theme 2 will pilot initiatives under LEADER with a view to mainstreaming under the Supply Chain efficiencies /Cooperation scheme under the RDP. Renewable energy initiatives which may involve the agricultural community will refer to Glastir and Farming Connect in the first instance to avoid any potential duplication.
North Wales Economic Ambition Board	It is anticipated that there will be cross-over in membership between the Flintshire (and Denbighshire and Wrexham) LAG and the NWEAB. Regular dialogue with the board will ensure that LEADER investments fit strategically in the wider sub-regional context. This will also help avoid the potential for duplication as projects are developed in detail.
Visit Wales	Following the abolition of the North Wales Tourism Partnership, it is anticipated that the LAG and administrative body will need to engage directly with Visit Wales to ensure complementarity with tourism policies and initiatives.
The Welsh Language Commissioner's Office	Proactive advice will be sought as appropriate from the Welsh Language Commissioner's office to ensure that all LEADER activities demonstrate complementarity with and where possible exceed the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards being introduced.
Communities First Partnership Clusters	There will be on-going dialogue with the Flintshire West and Flintshire East Communities First clusters. This dialogue will focus on ensuring that the LAG is fully aware of local community needs and opportunities in the rural CF wards which are also eligible under LEADER and will look to commission joint activities and where possible co-investment. This on-going dialogue will also minimise the risk of any potential duplication of effort.
Cadw and Natural Resources Wales	There will be on-going and regular dialogue (both via LAG meetings and bi-lateral meetings) with these organisations to ensure that LEADER activities complement and add value to other initiatives in relation to heritage and the wider rural Flintshire

	environment.
Farming Unions and Country Landowners Association (CLA)	There will be on-going and regular dialogue (both via LAG meetings and bi-lateral meetings) with these organisations to ensure that LEADER activities complement and add value to other initiatives in the farming industry.
The Superfast Cymru Initiative	Investments via theme 5 of (Exploitation of Digital Technology) will complement the Superfast Cymru initiative. LEADER investments will be focused on promoting and encouraging wider use of digital technology, particularly amongst micro and small businesses in the tourism, hospitality and food sectors. This will enable them to maximise the opportunity presented by faster broadband in terms of increasing efficiency, productivity and accessing new markets e.g. via social media. Duplication will be avoided as LEADER will not focus on investing in broadband infrastructure projects in areas where Superfast Cymru roll-out is 'accepting orders', 'planned' or 'coming soon'[1].

Coherence and consistency between local, sub-regional and national strategies

In order to demonstrate coherence and consistency between strategies at various spatial levels, we have grouped relevant strategies together under each of the five LEADER themes. We have then identified the consistent themes and priorities and provide references to support our analysis.

Theme 1 – Adding Value to Local Identity and Natural and Cultural Resources

Local	Sub-regional	National
Flintshire Economic Regeneration Strategy (2009-2020)	Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	Programme for Government (Chapters 10and 11)[3]
Flintshire Open for Business. Regeneration Strategy Review (2011)	Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Action Plan (2015-2020)	Partnership for Growth: The Welsh Government Strategy for Tourism (2013-2020)
Flintshire Destination Management Plan (2013-2015)	The North Wales Tourism Strategy (2010-15)	The Future of our Past – Consultation on proposals for the historic environment of Wales. (2013)
Flintshire Town and Area Plans[2].		

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[1] Source: http://www.superfast-cymru.com/where-and-when

[2] Including the Talacre and Gronant Masterplan .

[3] Programme for Government, Chapter 10 - Rural Communities and Chapter 12 – The Culture and Heritage of Wales. Chapter 10 states the aim of 'ensuring that rural communities remain vibrant and able to offer people an

Local	Sub-regional	National
		Local Souring Action Plan 'Food and Drink for Wales'. (2009)
		The Welsh Language Strategy (2012-2017)
		The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill (2014)
		WG Woodands For Wales (revised 2009)
		Towards Sustainable Growth: An Action Plan for the Food and Drinks Industry 2014-2020

Consistent strategic themes/priorities:

- Developing the tourism potential of Flintshire[4] including improving the availability and co-ordination of visitor information[5] and the 'integration of tourism into wider town centre development'[6].
- Increasing the quality and range of visitor attractions and accommodation[7].
- Sensitively and sustainably exploiting the natural environment for sustainable tourism growth[8] with a specific focus on the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB[9] and the coastal area.
- Increasing the scale and economic impact of events in Flintshire[10] including the Mold Food and Drink Festival.
- Focusing on outdoor tourism, adventure, activity, 'leisure and hospitality' and business tourism as sectors offering growth potential[11].
- Safeguarding the Welsh language, culture and heritage in the context of 'developing a stronger sense of place'[12].

Theme 2 – Facilitating pre-commercial development, business partnerships and short supply chains

Local	Sub-regional	National

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excellent quality of life' (Page 37), while Chapter 12 has the aim of 'enriching the lives of individuals and communities through culture and heritage' (Page 46).

[4] Flintshire Economic Regeneration Strategy (2009-2020) Page 11.
[5] Flintshire Destination Management Plan. Page 4.
[6] Flintshire Economic Regeneration Strategy (2009-2020) Page 23.
[7] Flintshire Destination Management Plan. Page 5.
[8] 'Invest in quality tourism business and more effectively market Wales' visitor attractions, accommodation and food industry. We will seek to deliver a more holistic approach to marketing these opportunities'. Programme for Government. Page 42.
[9] Tourism Strategy North Wales (2010-2015). Page 5.
[10] Flintshire Destination Management Plan. Page 8.
[11] Flintshire Destination Management Plan. Page 7.
[12] Flintshire Economic Regeneration Strategy (2009-2020). Page 31

Flintshire Economic Regeneration Strategy (2009-2020)

Flintshire Open for Business. Regeneration Strategy Review (2011)

Flintshire Town and Area Plans. | Economic Ambition – A Strategy for Change. North Wales Economic Ambition Board (undated)

Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Action Plan (2015-2020) | Programme for Government (Chapter 1)[13]

Welsh Government Sector Priority Strategy[14]

Micro Business Task and Finish Group (2012)

Innovation Wales (2014)

Towards Sustainable Growth: An Action Plan for the Food and Drinks Industry 2014-2020 |

Consistent strategic themes/priorities:

- Improving business competitiveness, supporting an increase in the 'number of rural businesses diversifying to broaden the economic base'[15].
- Supporting social enterprises– enabling growth in jobs and skills provision[16].
- Improving business productivity, competitiveness and growth[17].
- Supporting entrepreneurship[18] and innovation[19].
- Facilitating sub-regional collaboration (i.e. north Wales) on economic development where there is 'added value from joint working and enhanced collaboration'[20].

Theme 3 – Exploring new ways of providing non-statutory local services

Local	Sub-regional	National
Flintshire's Wellbeing Plan. A Single Integrated Plan for Flintshire (2013-2017)

Flintshire Economic Regeneration Strategy | Leading and Learning: The experience of collaboration in North Wales. WLGA. (2008)

Economic Ambition – A Strategy for Change. | Programme for Government (Chapter 2)[21]

Shared Purpose, Shared Delivery: Guidance on Integrating Partnerships |

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[13] Programme for Government, Chapter 1 - Growth and Sustainable Jobs.

[14] Source: http://wales.gov.uk/topics/businessandeconomy/sector/?lang=en The Welsh Government has nine priority sectors which are: Advanced Materials and Manufacturing, Construction, Creative Industries, Energy and Environment, Financial and Professional Services, Food and Farming, ICT, Life Sciences and Tourism.

[15] Flintshire Open for Business. Regeneration Strategy Review 2011. Page 9.

[16] Flintshire Open for Business. Regeneration Strategy Review 2011. Page 11.

[17] 'The principal outcome required is to increase productivity, competitiveness and growth'. Source: Economic Ambition. A Strategy for Change. North Wales Local Authorities. Page 8.

[18] Flintshire Open for Business. Regeneration Strategy Review 2011. Page 12.

[19] The need to 'increase innovation and business start ups, provide effective support to growing companies…' Source: A Strategy for Change. North Wales Local Authorities. Page 8.

[20] 'There are a number of areas of value added which provide an immediate focus for collaboration'. Source: Economic Ambition. A Strategy for Change. North Wales Local Authorities. Page 10.

[21] Programme for Government, Chapter 2 - Public Services in Wales.

Local	Sub-regional	National
(2009-2020) Flintshire Open for Business. Regeneration Strategy Review (2011) Flintshire Town and Area Plans.	North Wales Economic Ambition Board (undated)	and Plans (2012) Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery (2014)[22] Continuity and Change – Refreshing the Relationship Between Welsh Government and the Third Sector (2013)

Consistent strategic themes/priorities:

- Ensuring co-ordinated and integrated approaches to the planning, commissioning and delivery of services[23].
- Simplifying and reducing complexity in the delivery of public services[24].
- Engaging, involving and supporting the third sector and social enterprises in the delivery of public services[25].
- Improving public and community transport to ensure access to basic services[26].

Theme 4 – Renewable Energy at a Community Level

Local	Sub-regional	National
Flintshire County Council Unitary Development Plan (2000-2015) Flintshire Economic Regeneration Strategy (2009-2020) Flintshire Open for Business. Regeneration Strategy Review (2011) Flintshire Town and Area Plans.	Economic Ambition – A Strategy for Change. North Wales Economic Ambition Board (undated)	Programme for Government (Chapter 11)[27] One Wales: OnePlanet: A sustainable development scheme for Wales (2009) Climate Change Strategy for Wales (2010) Fuel Poverty Strategy (2010) Wales Infrastructure

[22] Known as the 'Williams Commission' Report.

[23] Priority 3 of the Single Integrated Plan for Flintshire (2013-2017). Page 35. Also 'public services should be delivered through meaningful collaboration across sectors, organisations and boundaries, with co-production of services being a key feature in the service delivery toolbox. Source: Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery. Full Report. January 2014. Page 19.

[24] 'The complexity of formal relationships and structures is a fundamental problem'. Source: Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery. Full Report. January 2014. Page 27.

[25] Flintshire Open for Business. Regeneration Strategy Review 2011. Page 11.

[26] 'Without improved transport links people cannot attend necessary appointments, maintain links with friends and family and benefit from services and opportunities within communities'. The Single Integrated Plan for Flintshire (2013-2017). Page 36.

[27] Programme for Government, Chapter 11 - Environment and Sustainability.

		Investment Plan (2012)
		Energy Wales: A Low Carbon Transition (2012)
		The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill (2014)

Consistent strategic themes/priorities:
- Developing micro power generation and renewable energy pilots with rural communities and the agriculture sector[28].
- Delivering increased energy efficiency through renewables to offset the use of fossil fuels[29].
- Focusing on community engagement and community benefit in renewable energy developments[30].

Theme 5: Exploitation of Digital Technology

Local	Sub-regional	National
Flintshire Economic Regeneration Strategy (2009-2020)	Economic Ambition – A Strategy for Change. North Wales Economic Ambition Board (undated)	Programme for Government (Chapter 2)[31]
Flintshire Open for Business. Regeneration Strategy Review (2011)		Delivering Digital Inclusion: A Strategic Framework for Wales (2010)
Flintshire's Wellbeing Plan. A Single Integrated Plan for Flintshire (2013-2017)		Digital Inclusion Framework Delivery Plan (2011)

Consistent strategic themes/priorities:
- Supporting the development of a 'North Wales Technology Corridor'[32].
- Maximising the use of technology to support engagement in public services[33].
- Improving digital connectivity and broadband infrastructure[34].

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[28] An objective for 2011-2013. Source: Flintshire Open for Business. Regeneration Strategy Review 2011. Page 9.

[29] Flintshire County Council Unitary Development Plan (2000-2015) Adopted 28th September 2011. Chapter 19 (Energy, Waste and Pollution). Source: http://www.cartogold.co.uk/flintshire/text/english/19.htm

[30] Energy Wales: A Low Carbon Transition. Page 18.

[31] Chapter 2 - Public Services in Wales.

[32] Flintshire Open for Business. Regeneration Strategy Review 2011. Page 4.

[33] Flintshire's Wellbeing Plan. A Single Integrated Plan for Flintshire (2013-2017). Page 69.

[34] 'Ensuring that rural communities have access to faster broadband speeds and new digital services'. Programme for Government. Page 39. Also, 'We will…provide complete broadband coverage'. Source: Flintshire Open for Business. Regeneration Strategy Review 2011. Page 9.

Integration

	How LEADER in Flintshire will integrate
Welsh Government policies and programme areas	Through the strategy and package of proposed actions outlined in this LDS, LEADER investment in rural Flintshire will integrate clearly with and help to deliver the priorities of the Welsh Government's **Programme for Government** in a number of ways. Specifically, it will help deliver growth and sustainable jobs[35] (via the range of actions proposed under Themes 1 and 2), help deliver public services in new and innovative ways[36] (via the range of actions proposed under Theme 3), help promote equality[37] and the Welsh language (as a cross cutting theme across all proposed themes and actions), help tackle poverty[38] and in particular rural poverty, isolation and fuel poverty (via the range of actions proposed under Themes 3, 4 and 5)but above all, it will support rural communities[39] as an over-riding strategic priority for all five themes and related actions. The LDS had also been developed in a way that will ensure LEADER investment in rural Flintshire integrate with a range of other Welsh Government policies and programmes, including: **Policies:** • The Welsh Government's Sustainable Development Scheme . Specifically, the actions proposed under LEADER Theme 4 in this LDS will help deliver a number of policy commitments in **One Wales: One Planet[40]**. • The Welsh Government's **Tourism Strategy**[41]. Specifically, the actions proposed under LEADER Theme 1 in this LDS will help deliver sustainable growth (through promotion[42], product development[43], profitable performance[44] and place building[45]) in the tourism industry in rural Flintshire by maximising its

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[35] Welsh Government, Programme for Government 2011-2016. Chapter 1, Page 2.

[36] Ibid. Chapter 2, Page 7.

[37] Ibid. Chapter 8, Page 29.

[38] Ibid. Chapter 9, Page 32.

[39] Ibid. Chapter 10. Page 37.

[40] For instance: The commitment to develop community renewables which 'is especially useful in rural areas where grid access is limited'. One Wales: One Planet. The Sustainable Development Scheme of the Welsh Government. May 2009. Page 39.

[41]Partnership for Growth: The Welsh Government Strategy for Tourism (2013-2020)

[42] Ibid. Promotion as a Strategic Priority, Page 18.

[43]Ibid. Product Development as a Strategic Priority. Page 19

[44] Ibid. Profitable Performance as a Strategic Priority. Page 23

[45] Ibid. Place building as a Strategic Priority. Page 24

natural, cultural and heritage asset base.

- The **Welsh Language Strategy**[46]. Specifically via the actions proposed under LEADER Themes 1, 2 and 3 in this LDS will promote use of the Welsh language in the community[47], the workplace and in business[48].
- Emerging **policy on the historic environment of Wales**[49]. Specifically via the actions proposed under LEADER Theme 1 in this LDS which will focus on enriching the lives of individuals and communities through culture and heritage[50].
- Policy on targeted **support for micro businesses**[51] and **Innovation Wales**. Specifically, via the range of actions proposed under LEADER Theme 2 in this LDS which will support micro businesses (with an element of sectoral targeting) to become more innovative as a means of improving productivity and job creation in rural Flintshire[52].
- **Food and Drink Strategy**[53] **and The Food And Drink Action Plan**. Specifically, the actions proposed under LEADER Themes 1 and 2 of this LDS will support more localised sourcing of food and drink[54].
- **The Welsh Government's Regeneration Framework**[55].There will be an emphasis throughout the activities proposed in this LDS on integrating activities across programmes as set out in Vibrant and Viable Places[56].

Programmes:
- The **2014-2020 ERDF and ESF Operational Programmes (OPs)** for East Wales and the **Economic Prioritisation Framework (EPF)**.Specifically, the actions proposed under LEADER Theme 2 in this LDS will integrate with project funded under Priority Axis 1 (Research and Innovation) and Priority Axis 2 (SME Competitiveness) of the ERDF OP. For instance support to new and existing micro businesses in rural Flintshire will clearly be focused on pre-commercial exploration and

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[46] A living language: a language for living – Welsh language strategy 2012 to 2017. Welsh Government.
[47] Strategic area 3 of the strategy. Ibid. Page 33.
[48] Strategic area 4 of the strategy. Ibid. Page 37.
[49] As outlined in 'The Future of our Past'. A consultation on proposals for the historic environment of Wales.
[50] Outlined as a specific aim in 'The Future of our Past'. Ibid. Page 3.
[51] Micro-Business Task and Finish Group Report. January 2012.
[52] Ibid. Page 16. The report calls for support to 'become more innovative as a means of improving productivity and job creation'.
[53] Local Souring Action Plan. 'Food and Drink Wales'. Welsh Government. 2009
[54] Ibid. Strategic Aim 1 'To increase the level of local sourcing of food and drink in Wales'. Page 24.
[55] Vibrant and Viable Places. 2013.
[56] Ibid. Page 11 'The RDP in place to address the needs of our rural and semi-rural areas, including the need for regeneration. However, we can and will do more to integrate activities across programmes.

local/sub-regional business partnerships and networks. This will integrate with mainstream new-start, Business Wales and **Finance Wales** Programmes operating nationally. Similarly, the actions proposed under LEADER Theme 3 in this LDS will clearly integrate with initiatives financed under Priority Axis 3 of the ERDF OP – with the emphasis in rural Flintshire being on testing the viability of small scale, community driven renewable technologies.

- **Business Wales.** Specifically, actions proposed under LEADER Theme 2 in this LDS will integrate closely with the provision of start-up and growth business information, advice and guidance via the Business Wales One Stop Shop.
- Flagship **energy efficiency and renewable energy schemes** (e.g. Ynni'r Fro and Arbed). Specifically, actions proposed under LEADER Theme 4 in this LDS will focus on testing the viability and feasibility of local, community renewable technologies to complement the work being done on a national level by these Welsh Government schemes.
- **Communities 2.0.** Specifically, actions proposed under LEADER Theme 5 will integrate closely with the work of Communities 2.0 to promote digital inclusion.

The range of RDP schemes and activities to which LEADER will contribute	The LAG will integrate with mainstream provision and will fill a "niche" because it will develop pilot projects that are too new and innovative for others to back in isolation. It will treat its area as a rural development laboratory and work only on experimental projects as sustainable pilots, which may then be mainstreamed. The policy is to use the LEADER funding as "pump-priming", to attract and lever additional finance for further development and mainstreaming of sustainable pilot projects. On an operational level and as part of its eligibility checks, the Lead Body will ensure that individual project proposals complement and do not duplicate any mainstream provision.
Other initiatives/schemes in rural Flintshire	Other initiatives that LEADER will integrate with during the 2014-2020 include: • The Clwydian Range AONB Tourism Group • The WCVA's Community Investment Fund • Flintshire Community Chest This will be done by ensuring that as actions are designed and developed into projects, full account is taken of these existing initiatives and how LEADER investment can integrate with and add value to them (e.g. through co-investment opportunities). We envisage that representatives from some of these initiatives will be members of the LAG which will add rigour to the process of ensuring that LEADER actions fully integrate.

	Opportunities to integrate with local service providers and initiatives are also expected to emerge from: • Various town and area plans (e.g. the Talacre and Gronant Masterplan). • The Landfill Communities Fund (LCF) in Wales.
Projects and activities of other LAGs	The LDS for Flintshire has been developed alongside (i.e. by the same people and using the same consultation methodology) the LDS documents for rural Denbighshire and rural Wrexham. Having Cadwyn Clwyd as the administrative body for all three areas is a key strategic advantage and the consultation work underpinning these LDS documents revealed a high degree of consistency in terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats as well as proposed actions for LEADER investments. A strategic approach has therefore been taken to 'packaging' similar actions – maximising opportunities for integration across the three counties, maximising efficiency in terms of implementation while also accommodating localised differences in terms of delivery approach. As in the current programme, opportunities to liaise and integrate with the activities of other LAGs in Wales will be maximised via the Wales LEADER Network.
Other funding streams including European Structural and Investment Funds	The LAG will ensure that LEADER investments in rural Flintshire integrate with and add value to projects funded under the ESI funds. It will do this by designing projects that link with and add value to initiatives funded via ERDF and ESF programmes (e.g. around business support and renewable energy sources). In this context, there will be close engagement and dialogue with local Specialist European Teams. There will also be opportunities to integrate with the new Ireland Wales Territorial Co-operation Programme – specifically around culture and heritage and exploration of innovative renewable energy technologies. These integration opportunities will be explored further as the Ireland Wales Programme is finalised. Opportunities to integrate with various Lottery funds will also be explored and where appropriate co-investment will be pursued to maximise value for money and return on investment.

SECTION 2 – FINANCIAL & COMPLIANCE	

Description	Explain how the Local Action Group (LAG) intends to meet its financial and compliance based obligations. LAGs need to demonstrate that they have competent financial planning and will comply with all necessary legal and regulatory requirements.
Linked to	Part of Section 3.11 of the LDS Guidance June 2014 (remainder to be covered under Section 4–Management of Operation)

2.1 Management and Administration
(2,500 words)

The Constitution and Terms of Reference of the Local Action Group

The Constitution and Terms of Reference of the LAG are appended.

Details of the proposed LAG members including the sectors represented
These are contained in the LAG constitution. The LAG will be composed of 12 members drawn on the thirds principle, namely equal representatives of the public sector, private sector and the voluntary sector. An attempt will be made to achieve a gender balance within sectors and to draw members from amongst those engaging with the LDS. It is intended that the LAG will evolve as the LAG develops to its full complement.

Terms of Reference for the LAG
These are attached with the LAG constitution. The LAG's functions are described to closely align with its principal duties of monitoring and sustaining the LDS, selecting operations and monitoring and evaluating performance.

Details of the Administrative Body
The Local Action Group has selected Cadwyn Clwyd to act as the lead partner in administrative and financial matters. It has chosen Cadwyn Clwyd because of its extensive experience in rural development and in the management of European Union programmes and activities.

The Local Action Group is aware that neighbouring LAGs have selected the same lead partner. This is a conscious decision by each LAG in order to reduce management and running costs and to secure a better strategic approach towards rural regeneration in North East Wales.

The Administrative Body will be responsible for the delivery of the programme on behalf of the LAG and its successful conclusion, and will undertake to ensure that financial propriety and compliance is observed in its management and administration of the programme. It will be responsible for the running cost and animation functions.

Cadwyn Clwyd is a not for profit limited company governed by a board of directors which represent a broad cross section of public and private organisations engaged

in rural regeneration in Denbighshire and Flintshire. The Board has agreed to review its memorandum and articles, expand its operating area and will appoint appropriate directors engaged in rural regeneration in Wrexham as well as ensuring that its directors reflect the activities proposed for the new programme.

Cadwyn Clwyd has successfully managed and implemented a range of initiatives under several rural development programmes. It has delivered projects across a number of sectors including agriculture, agri-food, cultural tourism, heritage, green and agri-tourism, village environmental projects, ecological initiatives, forestry & woodland, renewable energy, building conservation and training and digital technology.

It has provided support for numerous pilot projects such as the development of a food distribution social enterprise; support for the development of food festivals.

Cadwyn Clwyd has also supported capacity building measures, innovative flood relief projects and it has pioneered innovative approaches across all its work. It has also engaged in trans-national projects under EU funds

Evaluation and Monitoring Procedures

Cadwyn Clwyd will continue to use its existing monitoring and evaluation methods adopted under the current programming period which have been positively audited and verified by WEFO auditors.

Technical Support
Cadwyn Clwyd's Partnership Technical Advisory Group (PTAG), drawn from the local authorities, the county voluntary services councils and the Specialist European team will provide a focal point for advice and selected members will assist with eligibility procedures and project appraisals.

The relevant corporate policies of Cadwyn Clwyd are contained in the attachments below.

The requirements of the regulations and guidance (Annex 4 of the LDS guidance) will be met as follows:

The LAG will be made up of representatives of businesses, public authorities and the third sector; and will include a representative from the selected administrative body. Public sector membership will be less than 49% but the LAG will make an effort to ensure equal membership from the three sectors and will try to achieve gender equality. A fair representation of specific target groups addressed by the local development strategy, such as young people, disadvantaged groups, vulnerable groups and uplands groups etc will be sought.

The LAG membership will evolve to meet the changing needs of the area and the priorities of the strategy. Its membership will be fixed at 12, 4 from each sector, but, to allow for evolution of its membership, the LAG will not initially recruit to its maximum.

The LAG will hold an annual review process for the appointment of chair. Where there is more than one candidate, appointments should be made by voting.

The principal function of the Local Action Group (LAG) is to develop and ensure the implementation of a Local Development Strategy (LDS) to invest LEADER funds from the Wales Rural Development Programme (RDP} in the local rural area. The LAG has appointed an administration body to provide it with technical support to ensure regulatory compliance and to deliver the programme.

The LAG will ensure the LDS is a 'living' document and will review it ensuring its appropriateness for the LAG area

The LAG will:
- Build the capacity of local actors to develop and implement operations including fostering their project management capabilities.

- Draw up a non-discriminatory and transparent selection procedure and objective criteria for the selection of operations, which avoid conflicts of interest.

- Ensure that at least 51 % of the votes in selection decisions are cast by partners which are not public authorities, and allow selection by written procedure.

- Ensure coherence with the local development strategy when selecting operations by prioritising those operations according to their contribution to meeting that strategy's objectives and targets.

- Prepare and publish calls for proposals or an ongoing project submission procedure, including defining selection criteria.

- Receive and assess applications for support and follow the processes in its project selection and criteria policy.

- Select operations and fix the amount of support and, where relevant, present the proposals to the body responsible for final verification of eligibility before approval and ensure that projects are selected only after satisfying the administration body's compliance tests.

- Monitor the implementation of the local development strategy and the operations supported and carry out specific evaluation activities linked to that strategy.

- Report annually on monitoring and evaluation to the Welsh Government and respond to Welsh Government requests and any requisite corrective action.

- Annually report to the Welsh Government on progress in achieving agreed financial and monitoring targets

Details of compliance procedures and processes demonstrating segregation of duties, reporting systems and capacity to maintain full audit trails for expenditure and indicators.

Cadwyn operates comprehensive compliance processes to meet EU funding rules. These include full project quarterly returns, audit trails for both expenditure and indicators, compliant personnel procedures and segregation of duties between project officers and finance officers in relation to procurement and authorising of payment.

The segregation of duties between the LAG and its administrative body are clear. The LAG has a strategy for which it must select activity and which it is responsible for evaluating and monitoring, and annually report to WG on its achievement of financial and monitoring targets.

Cadwyn as the 'administrative body' is the lead partner in financial and administrative matters and is responsible for the delivery of the programme on behalf of the LAG. Cadwyn is responsible for determining the eligibility of projects, the financial profiling and management of indicative allocations and for the accounting of the income and expenditure of the LAG, keeping detailed records The LAG must build the capacity of local actors to develop and implement operations, develop a non-discriminatory and transparent selection procedure and ensure coherence with the LDS when selecting operations. It must make calls for proposals which should include selection criteria.

Cadwyn is responsible for the running costs and the animation functions Cadwyn must ensure openness and transparency in the development of project proposals and their submission to the partnership for possible approval. Cadwyn must work through eligibility issues with proposed projects before LAG submission including project eligibility, State Aids and other obligatory standards and the reasonableness of the proposed activity.

The LAG must assess applications, and select operations, fixing the amount of resources and where relevant presenting proposals to the 'body responsible for final verification of eligibility' i.e. Cadwyn.

Details of selection, appraisal and approval processes for projects submitted to the LAG

The adopted selection policy of the LAG is appended.

Details of declaration of and management of conflict of interest
The LAG constitution provides the following for managing and recording declarations of interest.

Conflict of Interest:
a) The LAG will establish written procedures dealing with conflicts of interest which will require declarations which will be noted in the minutes of meetings and involve abstention on the vote and written declarations.
b) If a member of the Partnership has a pecuniary interest in any matter under

consideration at a meeting of the Partnership, he/she must declare his/her interest and must withdraw from the meeting during discussion and determination of that item. Non-pecuniary interests should be declared, but the member does not have to withdraw.

Description	Explain how the Local Action Group (LAG) aims to transfer its stated objectives into delivery on the ground. The LAG should have a clear plan that links the result, the outputs that deliver the result, what activities will take place to deliver the outputs, how and when those activities will take place, and who will be responsible for delivering them.
Linked to	Sections 3.4 (including intervention logic table), 3.8, 3.9, 3.10 and 3.12 of the LDS Guidance June 2014

3.1   Description of the strategy and hierarchy of objectives
(2,500 words (narrative) plus up to 10 pages A4 in the form of an Intervention Logic Table (template provided)
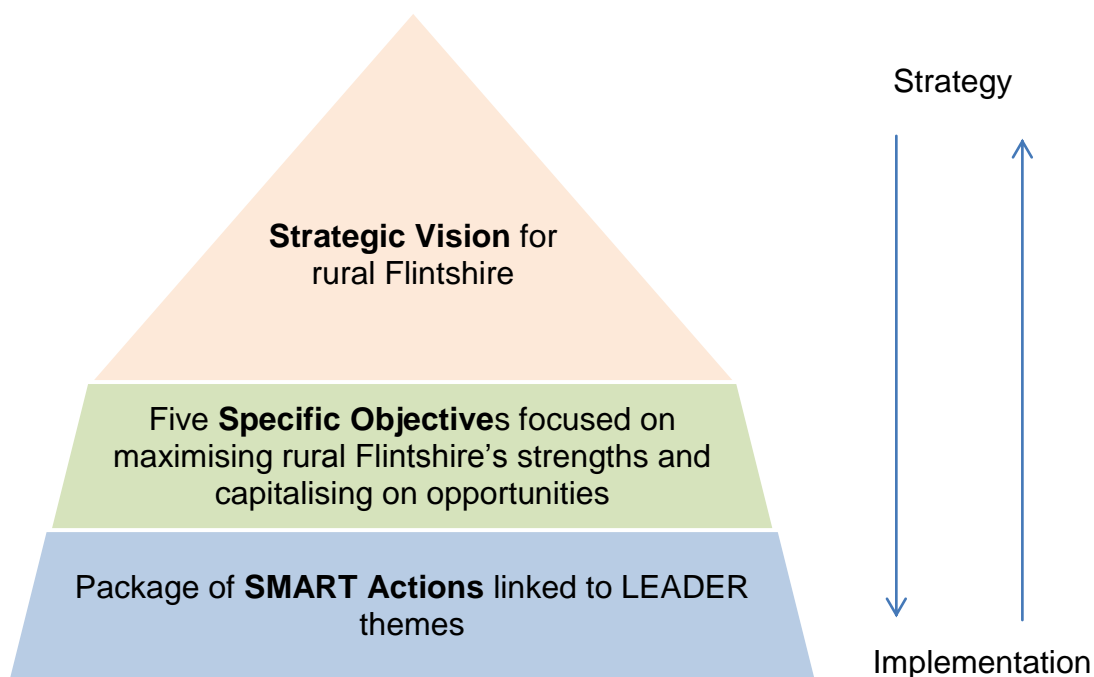
Description of how the LAG can improve the area

The LAG will improve conditions in rural Flintshireby:

- Having a clear understanding of the strengths, assets and opportunities facing the area as evidenced by the extensive consultation process underpinning this LDS.
- Having clear ownership over the strategic vision that sets out what needs to be achieved.
- Being committed to aset of specific objectives that link consistent local, sub-regional and national priorities (the strategic context as outlined in Section 1.2 above) to the needs and opportunities.
- Assessing, selectingand overseeing the implementation of a small number of innovative, community driven and strategically focused (and where appropriate sub-regional) investment actions that will create positive outcomes.
- Bringing together public, private and third sector stakeholders to share knowledge, good practice and expertise.

The Hierarchy of Objectives for LEADER in rural Flintshire

The strategy for the rural Flintshire LAG is based on the hierarchy of objectives set out below, comprising a **strategic vision**, **five specific objectives** and a **package of SMART actions** all driven by and linked to the needs and opportunities identified.

The strategic approach being adopted is based on maximising the potential for sub-regional linkages, synergies and efficiencies between rural Flintshire, rural Denbighshire and rural Wrexham. The extensive consultation work undertaken to prepare the LDS documents in each of these counties revealed a very high degree of consistency in terms of development needs, opportunities and priorities for investing LEADER funding.

During the consultation process, stakeholders were unanimously in support of a strategy that facilitates investment across each of the five LEADER themes to address the needs and opportunities in rural Flintshire identified via the SWOT analysis. The specific objectives set out below are therefore designed to link in to each of the Leader themes.

The accompanying intervention logic table sets 'maps' the actions to be supported and demonstrates how these link to the development needs and opportunities (identified via the SWOT analysis) and the specific objectives outlined below.

Strategic vision for rural Flintshire

Rural Flintshirehas a rich cultural and industrial heritage and a range of distinctive towns and villages. Forming part of a dynamic sub-region with West Cheshire and North East Wales, rural Flintshire is well connected to and benefits from its industrial areas and large employers. Rural Flintshire offers a vibrant, inclusive, highly attractive and sustainable place in which to live, learn, work, and visit.

The **specific objectives** are to invest LEADER funding to build on existing strengths and maximise opportunities so that:

SO1   More people want to visit and stay for longer to enjoy rural Flintshire'sdistinctive towns, its environment, culture and heritage.

SO2   More entrepreneurs in rural Flintshire are trying out new ideas and starting and growing sustainable small businesses that are well supported and communicate with each other effectively.

SO3   High quality, accessible, inclusive and efficient services are available in rural Flintshire with social enterprises and private businesses being empowered to play an active and sustainable role in designing and delivering those services.

SO4   Innovative, sustainable and environmentally sensitive renewable technologies are embraced and explored by communities in rural Flintshire who enjoy the benefits directly.

SO5   Technology enables rather than restricts people and businesses to access services and improve productivity in rural Flintshire.

SMART Actions
Theme 1 – Adding Value to Local Identity and Natural and Cultural Resources

Smart Action	Specific Objective	Outline Description of Action
SA1	SO1	Developing, enhancing and sustainably exploiting the commercial value of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to people, communities and businesses in rural Flintshire. This action would include: • Innovatively promoting and marketing the AONB as a visitor attraction and destination on a sub-regional basis. • Piloting events and activities that promote the AONB to high value niche markets including for cycling, walking and other outdoor pursuits.

		• Piloting innovative support mechanisms that support businesses that rely on the AONB as a key attraction to co-ordinate and network more effectively on a sub-regional basis. • Enhancing and developing aspects of the AONB itself (e.g. trails, tracks, visitor management and interpretation). This would be a territorial co-operation project across Flintshire, Denbighshire and Wrexham and would also offer the potential for wider UK and trans-national co-operation.
SA2	SO1	Developing local identity and natural resources through a co-ordinated and innovative package of investments in sense of place across rural Flintshire. This action would include: • Supporting existing and developing new events, festivals and exhibitions around culture, heritage and food in Flintshire. • Supporting local feasibility studies and plans to explore and commercially exploit heritage, culture and natural resources, including food and forestry. • Investing in innovative interpretation materials and signage. • Enhancing and developing visitor infrastructure (e.g. walking routes and cycle tracks and exploring the re-commissioning of historical water wheels). • Piloting new and collaborative heritage and history projects with local groups and academics. • Investing in eco-system services with a particular focus on upland areas. • Piloting activities that support and develop traditional rural skills.

SMART Actions
Theme 2 – Facilitating pre-commercial development, business partnerships and short supply chains

Smart Action	Specific Objective	Outline Description of Action
SA3	SO2	Providing tailored support (pre-commercial) to help local entrepreneurs 'test' the viability of new business concepts and ideas in a supportive and managed risk environment. This action would include: • Exploring proof of concept and feasibility of new business ideas. • Piloting access to local entrepreneurship 'hubs' offering essential facilities (e.g. high speed broadband access, R&D facilities and 'mobile micro kitchen' facilities for food producers).

Smart Action	Specific Objective	Outline Description of Action
		• Facilitating access to markets (e.g. via 'pop-up shops or space at trade events or festivals) to 'test' demand. • Providing access to mentoring and onward guidance linking entrepreneurs directly to Business Wales. • Enabling young people to help test idea feasibility (pre-commercial) and promote youth entrepreneurship. • Commissioning and piloting the development of new food and non-food products.
SA4	SO2	Providing targeted support for businesses including social enterprises operating in the tourism, agriculture and forestry, leisure, accommodation, retail and food sectors to improve linkages and physical and digital networking. This action would include: • Instigating and facilitating sub-regional (i.e. including Denbighshire and Wrexham) networks to bring businesses in these key priority sectors together with the aim of stimulating an increase in inter-trading and local supply chains including a local 'retail loyalty' scheme. • Building on the success of existing local food fairs and festivals and offering new producers the opportunity to participate in these events to launch new products. • Piloting new co-operative local delivery schemes – enabling local producers to get their produce efficiently and effectively to a wider range of commercial and private consumers. • Trialling the development of a small network of food and drink sector mentors to help young people find work or start a business in the food and drink sector in rural Flintshire. • Providing proactive advice and support on how the Welsh language can bring commercial benefits – encouraging businesses to embrace the benefits of bilingualism through physical and digital networking.

Actions
Theme 3 – Exploring new ways of providing non-statutory local services

Smart Action	Specific Objective	Outline Description of Action
SA5	SO3	Supporting the development and capabilities of local communities, community groups, organisations and social enterprises to take on the delivery of local services. This action would include: • Facilitating the 'matching' of volunteers to needs in innovative ways (e.g. a local volunteering app).

Smart Action	Specific Objective	Outline Description of Action
		- Transferring and embedding knowledge, skills and advice to establish appropriate models (e.g. co-operatives) and support access to appropriate funding. - Advising on Community Asset Transfer (CAT) projects and facilitating the development of these to maintain services and regenerate/re-invigorate disused local buildings and other assets. - Supporting the sustainable development and continuation of community hubs (such as post offices, libraries, shops, cafes and pubs) under innovative social ownership/business models. - Supporting communities and local businesses to take responsibility for and ownership over important local services under threat of withdrawal or centralisation including local child's play facilities. - Facilitating opportunities for young people not in employment, education or training to gain experience and develop skills through volunteering in social enterprises.
SA6	SO3	Supporting the establishment and growth of innovative, low-carbon emission community transport schemes. This action would include: - Advising and supporting local communities on piloting/establishing community transport models and solutions. - Assisting community transport groups to access appropriate finance and investment. - Piloting community transport schemes that tackle social isolation and assist vulnerable people with access to services, schemes that help develop/establish localised delivery networks for local produce (linkages to SA2) and schemes that help young people get to college or work with a particular emphasis on connecting people in rural Flintshire with employers in the more industrial areas of the county.

Actions
Theme 4 –Renewable Energy at a Community Level

Smart Action	Specific Objective	Outline Description of Action
SA7	SO4	Providing specific and tailored support to help communities and social enterprises explore renewable energy sources. This action would include small scale and local interventions which are community led and too risky to be backed in isolation by mainstream schemes such as Farming Connect: Raising awareness and providing expert information, advice and guidance on new forms of renewable technology (e.g. anaerobic digestion in agriculture,

		hydro power and biomass projects), energy efficiency and climate change mitigation initiatives.
		• Supporting initial feasibility and viability studies to explore and pilot the appropriateness and suitability of renewable technologies in specific circumstances/settings.
		• Assisting with proof of concept and trials for community owned renewable technology projects on a micro scale which (if successful) could then be scaled up.

Actions

Theme 5 –Exploitation of Digital Technology

Smart Action	Specific Objective	Outline Description of Action
SA8	SO5	Providing specific and tailored support aimed at improving the way businesses in rural Flintshire use digital technology. This action would include: • Raising awareness and providing training on social media and how this can be used for promotional purposes, to improve competitiveness and to secure more business. • Providing proactive support to encourage businesses in the tourism sector to communicate (via social media and other platforms) their products/services, key events, offers etc… with a view to providing visitors with more choice and encouraging extended stays in rural Flintshire. • Providing information and advice and building capability on how digital technology can improve business efficiency and e-security. • Supporting the development and piloting of specific 'apps' and websites to assist business partnerships, networks and collaboration via digital technology.
SA9	SO5	Developing digital centres of excellence in rural Flintshire. This action would include: • Providing residents, visitors and local micro businesses with access to a fast, reliable broadband connection and space to work. • Piloting new digital inclusion activities – with a particular focus on inter-generational actions which stimulate use of ICT.

How earlier activity and previous experience has influenced the strategy and the approach

Previous delivery of LEADER and wider RDP activity in rural Flintshire has influenced the design of the strategy in three key ways:

Firstly, investments in local plans (e.g. town plans, area strategies and feasibility studies) provide an excellent platform upon which to invest LEADER funding over the next seven year period. The plans are based on extensive community consultation and the actions suggested within them therefore have a high degree of local ownership and commitment attached to them. During the 2007-2013 Programme period, an evaluation of Axis 3 and 4 projects in Flintshire found that 'various feasibility and town centre and area masterplan studies commissioned with the support of RDP funding had provided clear blueprints and highlighted specific opportunities to channel future investment'[57].

Secondly, significant expertise in terms of the LEADER animation role has been built up – both within the Flintshire LAG and within Cadwyn Clwyd as the administrative body. This corporate body of knowledge about 'what works' has been used constructively to inform and critique the development of this strategy at each key stage.

The evaluation of Axis 3 and Axis 4 projects in Flintshire found that 'there are numerous examples of good practice relating to the RDP in Flintshire. Key strengths have been the flexible approaches adopted to project delivery and the expertise built up amongst deliver staff'[58]. The evaluation also found that 'experience and expertise to be built up' during the 2007-2013 period would be a key asset in terms of delivering in the 2014-2020 period[59].

Thirdly, a key lesson which has been incorporated into the design of this LDS and will filter through into the implementation of actions is the need to embed capacity and capability within community groups, social enterprises and businesses to avoid dependence on LEADER or RDP project funding and staff and to encourage self-sufficiency and sustainability.

This LDS also takes account of Recommendation 9 of the evaluation of Axis 3 and 4 activities in Flintshire which focused on embracing the lessons learned during 2007-2013 to shape and inform the approach for 2014-2020:

'The focus for rural Flintshire under the 2014-2020 programmes should be on developing a suite of interventions that continue the focus on generating a mix of positive outcomes for communities, businesses, individuals and the environment. These projects should encourage innovative approaches, but should also be based on solid evidence of need and analysis of demand and up-take. In terms of specific themes, there are key opportunities for the RDP to re-engage in supporting the tourism sector in rural Flintshire, to continue the focus on young people (specifically in terms of entrepreneurship, self-employment and sustainable career opportunities) as well as exploring ways of maximising the economic inter-relationship between rural and industrial Flintshire'[60].

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[57] Evaluation of the Rural Development Plan in Flintshire. Axis 3 and 4 Activities. Final Report. October 2013. Page 65.
[58] Ibid. Pages 34 and 35.
[59] Ibid. Page 52.
[60] Ibid. Page 79.

3.2 Co-Operation and Networking
(1,000 words; up to 500 to be focused on preparatory activities)

LEADER has been operational in Flintshire previously and significant body of experience, knowledge and expertise has been built up – both within the LAG structure and within Cadwyn Clwyd as the administrative body as reflected in the evaluation of Axis 3 and Axis 4 initiatives in the county[61].

The emphasis in terms of co-operation and networking will therefore be on the **transfer of promising practice into a common action**. In this context, a number of specific initiatives are envisaged which will operate across Flintshire, Denbighshire and Wrexham and with other LAGs in parts of the UK and more widely across the EU. These include:

- Transfer of promising actions around the Clwydian Range Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) – (see SA1 above) linking with other AONB areas to share, learn from and develop common actions for the economic, social and environmental benefit of rural areas.

- Identifying LAGs in other areas that aim to focus on providing tailored support (pre-commercial) to help local entrepreneurs 'test' the viability of new business concepts and ideas in a supportive and managed risk environment (se SA4 above).

In terms of preparatory work, this will focus on:

- Consolidating and expanding the excellent working relationship between the LAGs in Flintshire, Denbighshire and Wrexham.

- The further development and expansion of existing sub-regional networks including the North Wales Open Studios Network, the 'Pub is the Hub' and 'Walking with Offa'.

- Participating in and maximising the opportunities presented by the Wales, UK and EU LEADER Networks to secure linkages with LAGs of similar interest and strategic focus.

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[61]There are numerous examples of good practice relating to the RDP inFlintshire. Key strengths have been the flexible approaches adopted to project delivery and the expertise built up amongst delivery staff'. Evaluation of RDP in Flintshire. Axis 3 and Axis 4 Activities. October 2013. Page 35.

3.3   Description of Innovation
(1,000 words – to be linked to the actions described in Section 3.1 above and referring to the bullet point tick headings in Section 3.9 of the LDS guidance document)

The LAG activity will provide a co-ordinated and integrated grass roots mechanism for stimulating an innovative and creative demand from rural communities which will meet the long term needs of the rural area. The creative aspirations of individuals, groups, geographic communities and communities of interest will act as a springboard for developing projects and actions. Entrepreneurial attitudes will be fostered and enhanced through the creative engine of the LEADER process and its methodology. The LAG will encourage innovation – facilitating experimentation, the pre-commercial trialling and piloting of 'new' approaches, 'new' processes and 'new' products. Proactive efforts will be made to encourage participation by individuals not previously involved in the delivery of RDP activities to help stimulate fresh thinking and new ideas. This will build on the consultation process underpinning the development of this LDS.

The development of innovative approaches, processes and products is a key component of this LDS. This will be achieved by:

- Taking innovative and collaborative approaches (via the SMART actions described under Specific Objective 1) to adding value to local produce, fostering local identity and piloting collective actions which make best use of natural and cultural resources.

- Assisting micro businesses and community enterprises to identify and market niche and distinctive elements of their products, services and local area, thereby increasing value added and overall viability; developing business networks to facilitate and enable the piloting of solutions which support local supply chains. This will be achieved by the SMART actions outlined under Specific Objective 2.

- Supporting the piloting of community hubs to provide solutions for local people to gain access to services, developing clusters of micro and social enterprises to pilot the provision of services to local communities. This will be achieved by the SMART actions outlined under Specific Objective 3.

- Trialling new solutions to climate change and sustainable/renewable energy production and accelerating the mainstreaming of these approaches (in commercial, community and domestic applications) in rural areas. This will be achieved by the SMART actions outlined under Specific Objective 4.

- Exploiting digital technology by enabling community groups to make best use of ICT; supporting innovative solutions to connectivity challenges in rural communities. This will be achieved by the SMART actions outlined under Specific Objective 5.

3.4	Action Plan

Please see completed Intervention Logic Table (attached) and Section 3.1 above.

3.5	Promotional Activity
(1,000 words)	

The LAG will disseminate information at the local level through its project officers working on the ground with community groups. In addition project information will be disseminated via the LAGs electronic bulletin.

- The LAG will proactively disseminate information regarding LDS results along the lines of the LEADER ethos of transferability of project concepts and dissemination of results and lessons learnt. This will be done locally within the LAG area, regionally and nationally within Wales and the UK and also on an EU level through EC recognised networks.

- The LAG will publicise information relating to the RDP project to beneficiary groups through direct contact with beneficiary groups, networking activities and through local media. This will be achieved by electronic media and hard copy media.

- A 6-monthly newsletter will be produced and aimed at existing and potential final beneficiaries of the programme. In addition publicity actions will include, regular mail shots to interested groups, promotional material and literature, and features in the local press and media. Full recognition will be given to the RDP support within these actions.

- The LAG Clwyd will also explore regional publicity activities with neighbouring LAGs in order to maximise resources and impact.

- Participation in WG organised thematic working groups will also be a mechanism for disseminating results of this LEADER project and the LEADER process.

- The LAG will ensure acknowledgement of EU funds through inclusion of logos in all publicity, information and promotional material when communicating to the general public and project beneficiaries. Cadwyn Clwyd the lead body will ensure that all publicity will be produced in line with its publicity statements (appended).

- It is proposed that the LAG will seek to support a celebration event around LEADER on the 9th May 2015. The celebration event will focus on either an individual project launch or a general celebration event of the LEADER as the LAG sees appropriate.

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• The LAG and Lead Body confirm that we will liaise with RDP Communications staff and the Wales Rural Network on any proposed launches / press releases to be arranged / issued in relation to LEADER activities.	

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">SECTION 4 – MANAGEMENT OF OPERATION</td></tr>
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Description	Explain how the Local Action Group and its elected Administrative Body has the capacity and resources necessary to successfully deliver on the planned results, output indicators and activities.
Linked to	Part of Section 3.11 of the LDS Guidance June 2014 (remainder to be covered under Section 2 – Financial & Compliance)

4.1   Management and Administration
(2,500 words)

Evidence of an effort to collaborate
All three LAGs in NE Wales (Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham) , have embraced the ethos of collaboration in order to produce the most cost effective management and administrative structure for the area. Details below demonstrate how the LAG is achieving cost effectiveness through sharing the administrative, animation and thematic delivery functions across the three LAGs of Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham. This has resulted in the rationalisation of delivery costs and results in true collaboration and joint-working. Further collaboration will be achieved through joint working with the other independent LAGs in Wales, namely Menter Mon and PLANED in relation to LEADER and LEADER-type activities.

Management and monitoring arrangements of the strategy
Cadwyn Clwyd will continue to use its existing monitoring and evaluation methods adopted under its current programmes which has been positively audited and verified by both WG Due Diligence Tests, WEFO Auditors and WG / RIW Verification checks.

The LAG will have the overall responsibility of monitoring the implementation of the LDS. Cadwyn Clwyd's Partnership Technical Advisory Group (PTAG) and the Board of Directors (BOD) will report to the LAG in terms of monitoring the programme's delivery, its outputs and its implementation in accordance with the Company's policies and the underpinning themes. The LDS delivery will be monitored by the LAG via quarterly reports and presentations at quarterly meetings.

As part of the LDS, the job description of LEADER staff within the Lead Body include the requirement to undertake on-going evaluation of each LEADER project and their outputs. This will provide an evaluation of the programme's impact at the local level. The results of these evaluations will be made available on the Cadwyn Clwyd web-site in order to publicise the impact of the programme and to enable the transfer of good practice.

Details of staff numbers
In line with WG direction for Administrative Bodies to streamline running costs,

Cadwyn Clwyd as the Lead body will operate across 3 LAG areas. Thus administrative and animation costs will be apportioned according to indicative budgets across the 3 LAG areas.

Under the Animation costs, The Lead body will support a 0.92 FTE LAG Manager and 1 FTE Animation Officer whose time will be apportioned against the percentages detailed below.

Under the Admin costs, the Lead body will support 1.6 FTE Finance Officers. Their time will be also apportioned against the
following percentages:

Denbighshire LAG	28.52%
Flintshire LAG	37.34%
Wrexham LAG	34.14%

Additionally, thematic officers are essential for delivery of pilot projects following the animation stage. These will be employed by Cadwyn Clwyd and will support the following job roles across the 3 LAG areas:

Natural Recourses Thematic Officer 1FTE
Business Partnerships Thematic Officer 2 FTE
Rural Services Thematic Officer 1 FTE
Energy Thematic Officer 1 FTE

The thematic officers time will be apportioned as follows in each LAG area:

Denbighshire LAG	28.52%
Flintshire LAG	37.34%
Wrexham LAG	34.14%

This results in:
1.4 FTE thematic officer resource allocated to the Denbighshire LAG
1.9 FTE thematic officer resource allocated to the Flintshire LAG
1.7 FTE thematic officer resource allocated to the Wrexham LAG

There is also Project Support Officer 1.8 FTE to assist the thematic officers apportioned by the above percentages to each of the LAG areas.

Job Specifications are appended.

Evidence of skills and training plans
Each Job specification contains a list of essential and desirable person specification criteria. Cadwyn Clwyd will evaluate applications from its existing pool of staff to be considered for the staff employed by the Administrative body of each LAG. All staff appointed to the 2014-2020 LEADER programme will need to achieve the essential criteria for their relevant posts. If the Admin Body cannot recruit in the first instance from its existing pool of staff, it will then publicly advertise any vacant posts.

Where a training need is identified against a 'desirable' person specification criteria, it will be offered and provided accordingly. Training Needs Analysis will be

undertaken as the programme evolves and will be provided to staff as and when the need is identified and arises.

SECTION 5–VALUE FOR MONEY	

Description	Explain how the proposed actions and expenditure outlined in the Local Development Strategy represent the best use of EU funds. Explain how the costs included are reasonable, such as the cost and number of staff required to deliver the proposed activities.
Linked to	Section 3.4 and 4.0 of the LDS Guidance June 2014 Details of Section 3.4 have already been provided in Section 3 of this template (Intervention Logic)

5.1 Financial Delivery Profiles
Please refer to finance and rationale tables.

SECTION 6 – INDICATORS & OUTCOMES	

Description	Explain how the Local Action Group intends to deliver the result and output indicators identified and all associated targets.
Linked to	Section 4.1of the LDS Guidance June 2014

6.1   Monitoring and Results

The outputs are derived from the consultation process whereby participants were invited to rank their priority areas of intervention. Thus outputs were allocated and apportioned based on the consultees priorities. Additionally, outputs were reviewed against previous knowledge of what is reasonable in the context of knowledge and previous experience dating back to LEADER II, LEADER+ and Axis 4 LEADER 2007-2013.   At this level, it is not possible to be more prescriptive as LEADER outputs will be dictated by projects which come forth from local community groups to the LAG for consideration and possible approval.

Theme 1
It is envisaged under SA1 that outputs will be derived from the following activity:

SA1: Developing, enhancing and sustainably exploiting the commercial
and recreational value of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to people, communities and enterprises in rural Flintshire. This action would include:
  • Innovatively promoting and marketing the AONB as a visitor attraction and destination on a sub-regional basis.
  • Piloting events and activities that promote the AONB to high value niche markets including for cycling, walking and other outdoor pursuits.
  • Piloting innovative support mechanisms that support enterprises that rely on the AONB as a key attraction to co-ordinate and network more effectively on a sub-regional basis.
Enhancing and developing aspects of the AONB itself (e.g. trails, tracks, visitor management and interpretation).

SA2: Developing local identity and natural resources through a coordinated
and innovative package of investments in sense of place across rural Flintshire. This action would include new and innovative ways of:
  • Supporting existing and developing new events, festivals and exhibitions around culture, heritage and food in Flintshire.
  • Supporting local feasibility studies and plans to explore and commercially exploit heritage, culture and natural resources, including food and forestry.
  • Investing in innovative interpretation materials and signage.
  • Enhancing and developing visitor infrastructure (e.g. walking routes and cycle tracks and exploring the recommissioning of historical water wheels).

- Piloting new and collaborative heritage and history projects with local groups and academics.
- Investing in eco-system services with a particular focus on upland areas.
- Piloting activities that support and develop traditional rural skills.

Following the consultation process, it is envisaged that 10 project clusters will be developed under the programme, and outputs will achieved towards the latter part of the programme. Again it is envisaged that 10 communities will benefit from the intervention, these communities may be geographical communities, sectoral communities, thematic communities or communities of interest.

Theme 2

The LAG will work with the business community in its operational area to enable the provision of tailored support (pre-commercial) to help local entrepreneurs 'test' the viability of new business concepts and ideas in a supportive and managed risk environment. Outputs will be derived from the following;

SA3: Providing tailored support (pre-commercial) to help local entrepreneurs 'test' the viability of new business concepts and ideas in a supportive and managed risk environment. This action would include:
- Exploring proof of concept and feasibility of new business ideas.
- Piloting access to local entrepreneurship 'hubs' offering essential facilities (e.g. high speed broadband access, R&D facilities and 'mobile micro kitchen' facilities for food producers).
- Facilitating access to markets (e.g. via 'pop-up shops or space at trade events or festivals) to 'test' demand.
- Providing access to mentoring and onward guidance linking entrepreneurs directly to Business Wales.
- Enabling young people to help test idea feasibility (precommercial) and promote youth entrepreneurship.
- Commissioning and piloting the development of new food and non-food products.

SA4: Providing targeted support for businesses including social enterprises operating in the tourism, agriculture and forestry, leisure, accommodation, retail and food sectors to improve linkages and physical and digital networking. This action would include:
- Instigating and facilitating sub-regional (i.e. including Denbighshire and Wrexham) networks to bring businesses in these key priority sectors together with the aim of stimulating an increase in inter-trading and local supply chains including a local 'retail loyalty' scheme.
- Building on the success of existing local food fairs and festivals and offering new producers the opportunity to participate in these events to launch new products.
- Piloting new co-operative local delivery schemes – enabling local producers to get their produce efficiently and effectively to a wider range of commercial

and private consumers.

- Trialling the development of a small network of food and drink sector mentors to help young people find work or start a business in the food and drink sector in rural Flintshire.
- Providing proactive advice and support on how the Welsh language can bring commercial benefits – encouraging enterprises to embrace the benefits of bilingualism through physical and digital networking

Based on the information gathered during the consultation process, it is anticipated that 15 sub projects will be piloted leading to the outputs of 20 operations achieved. 10 Farm holdings may benefit through participation in pilot projects, again 30 business may benefit through pilot projects which trial initiatives on a group basis. Again it is anticipated that 10 communities (sectoral, geographical thematic, interest) will participate in pilots.

Theme 3

Outputs linked to Theme 3 will be delivered through the following interventions:

SA5: Supporting the development and capabilities of local communities, community groups, organisations and social enterprises to take on the delivery of local services. This action would include:

- Facilitating the 'matching' of volunteers to needs in innovative ways (e.g. a local volunteering app).
- Transferring and embedding knowledge, skills and advice to establish appropriate models (e.g. co-operatives) and support access to appropriate funding.
- Advising on Community Asset Transfer (CAT) projects and facilitating the development of these to maintain services and regenerate/re-invigorate disused local buildings and other assets.
- Supporting the sustainable development and continuation of community hubs (such as post offices, libraries, shops, cafes and pubs) under innovative social ownership/business models.
- Supporting communities and local businesses to take responsibility for and ownership over important local services under threat of withdrawal or centralisation including local child's play facilities.
- Facilitating opportunities for young people not in employment, education or training to gain experience and develop skills through volunteering in social enterprises.

SA6: Supporting the establishment and growth of innovative, low-carbon emission community transport schemes. This action would include:

- Advising and supporting local communities on piloting/establishing community transport models and solutions.
- Assisting community transport groups to access appropriate finance and investment.
- Piloting community transport schemes that tackle social isolation and assist vulnerable people with access to services, schemes that help develop/establish localised delivery networks for local produce (linkages to

SA2) and schemes that help young people get to college or work with a particular emphasis on connecting people in rural Flintshire with employers in the more industrial areas of the county.

Based on the information gathered during the consultation process, it is anticipated that 10 sub projects will be piloted leading to the outputs of 10 operations achieved engaging 10 communities (sectoral, geographical, thematic or interest communities). It is anticipated that 7 businesses will benefit be they social enterprise or rural micro businesses.

Theme 4
Outputs under theme 4 will be delivered through the following:

SA7: Providing specific and tailored support to help communities and social enterprises explore renewable energy sources. This action would include:
- Raising awareness and providing expert information, advice and guidance on new forms of renewable technology (e.g. anaerobic digestion in agriculture, hydro power and biomass projects), energy efficiency and climate change mitigation initiatives.
- Supporting initial feasibility and viability studies to explore and pilot the appropriateness and suitability of renewable technologies in specific circumstances/settings.
- Assisting with proof of concept and trials for community owned renewable technology projects on a micro scale which (if successful) could then be scaled up.

Number of operation sought will be 9 which engages 9 community area resulting in 9 communities benefitting. It is anticipated based on the consultation process that 18 businesses will benefit.

Theme 5
Outputs delivered under Theme 5 will be delivered through the following interventions;

SA8: Providing specific and tailored support aimed at improving the way enterprises in rural Flintshire use digital technology. This action would include:
- Raising awareness and providing training on social media and how this can be used for promotional purposes, to improve competitiveness and to secure more business.
- Providing proactive support to encourage enterprises in the tourism sector to communicate (via social media and other platforms) their products/services, key events, offers etc… with a view to providing visitors with more choice and encouraging extended stays in rural Flintshire.
- Providing information and advice and building capability on how digital technology can improve efficiency and e-security for businesses and social enterprises.

- Supporting the development and piloting of specific 'apps' and websites to assist business partnerships, networks and collaboration via digital technology

SA9: Developing digital centres of excellence in rural Flintshire. This action would include:
- Providing residents, visitors and local micro enterprises with access to a fast, reliable broadband connection and space to work.
- Piloting new digital inclusion activities – with a particular focus on inter-generational actions which stimulate use of ICT.

Based on the information gathered during the consultation process, it is anticipated that 9 sub projects will be piloted leading to the outputs of 9 operations achieved engaging 6 communities (sectoral, geographical, thematic or interest communities). It is anticipated that 20 businesses will benefit be they social enterprise or rural micro businesses.

Cooperation

SA1: Developing, enhancing and sustainably exploiting the commercial and recreational value of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to people, communities and businesses in rural Denbighshire. This action would include:
- Innovatively promoting and marketing the AONB as a visitor attraction and destination on a sub-regional basis.
- Piloting events and activities that promote the AONB to high value niche markets including for cycling, walking and other outdoor pursuits.
- Piloting innovative support mechanisms that support enterprises that rely on the AONB as a key attraction to co-ordinate and network more effectively on a
  sub-regional basis.
  Enhancing and developing aspects of the AONB itself (e.g. trails, tracks, visitor infrastructure, management and interpretation).

It is envisaged that 6 operations will be achieved which entail 6 different interventions based on transnational or interterritorial co-operation with a target number of 8 LAGS involved in the co-operation. 4 of those will be ITC with 2 TNC projects. We will seek to engage 5 communities under the co-operation measure.

6.2	Evaluation Plan

Proposals for evaluating performance against the LDS

The evaluation plan for the Flintshire LDS is based on gaining information and evidence about the efficiency and effectiveness of the strategy and its associated implementation actions and to ensure that any areas for improvement are identified and acted upon.

Given that Cadwyn Clwyd will act as the administrative body for the LAGs of Flintshire, Denbighshire and Wrexham, the evaluation plan will be common to all three areas to ensure maximum efficiency and also to enable a deeper level of analysis contrasting experiences and learning across the different counties.

We outline below our specific methodological proposals and sources of baseline data which will support evaluation activity.

Proposed methodology and justification

Formative Evaluation (during operations)

The formative evaluation activities will include:
- Where possible, setting baseline data for LEADER actions against which progress and outcomes can be measured (e.g. visitor numbers, jobs in certain sectors and population trends).
- Gathering monitoring data against the key performance indicators agreed for each of the SMART actions. Cadwyn Clwyd will oversee the collection, collation and analysis of this monitoring information (via beneficiary forms and databases) and ensure that it is reported to Welsh Government for wider, Programme level analysis in-line with guidance. This includes a commitment to ensuring that monitoring data on equalities (including against the protected characteristic groups set out in the RDP Equality Impact Assessment) is collected and maintained.
- Conducting an on-going self-evaluation work programme comprising:
  - o Interviews and focus groups with stakeholders (e.g. LAG members) and beneficiaries to gather feedback on the LAGs activities, progress and performance.
  - o Producing case study material highlighting good practice and lessons learned with the aim of publishing and proactively disseminating this material to interested stakeholders.
- Commissioning an independent mid-term evaluation (MTE), with a full specification for the work being advertised via Sell2Wales. One, contract (via a combined specification) will be let for the MTE of the three LDS strategies. The focus of the MTE will be to:
  - o Assess the appropriateness of the overall strategy and intervention logic underpinning the LDS.
  - o Assess progress and performance to date in terms of outputs and early-stage outcomes. This will include rigorous quantitative and qualitative approaches to capturing beneficiary and stakeholder perspectives.

- Highlight areas of good practice and demonstrate these via evaluation case studies.
- Identify any sub-optimal aspects of delivery and recommend actions to address the issues identified.
- Assess the extent to which value for money is being achieved.
- Assess the strength of counter-factual arguments (i.e. what the likely scenario would have been without LEADER funding being available / invested).
- Assess the contribution of the LDS and LEADER actions to the cross-cutting themes.
- Assess the extent to which learning around innovative actions is being shared with LAGS in other parts of Wales, the UK and EU.
- Recommend whether any wider strategic or operational changes are needed including assessing the on-going relevance of the LDS itself.

The justification for the selection of this formative evaluation methodology is that:

- It is commensurate with the scale and ambition of the LEADER investment.
- It combines robust quantitative and qualitative social research approaches and where possible will explore the highly challenging area of establishing counterfactual arguments.
- It will enable a sub-regional approach to be taken – securing efficiencies and enabling a deeper level of analysis.
- It combines self-evaluation activity with the rigour of independent contractors at the mid-term stage.

Summative Evaluation (end of operations)

The summative evaluation activities will include:
- Commissioning an end of programme independent evaluation which would:
  - Assess the extent to which recommendations made at the mid-term stage have been implemented.
  - Assess the appropriateness of the overall strategy and intervention logic underpinning the LDS.
  - Assess the summative progress and performance of the outputs and outcomes achieved. This will include rigorous quantitative and qualitative approaches to capturing beneficiary and stakeholder perspectives.
  - Highlight areas of good practice and demonstrate these via evaluation case studies.
  - Identify any sub-optimal aspects of delivery and recommend actions to address the issues identified in future programmes.
  - Assess the extent to which value for money has been achieved.
  - Assess the strength of counter-factual arguments (i.e. what the likely scenario would have been without LEADER funding being available / invested).
  - Assess the extent to which learning around innovative actions has being shared with LAGS in other parts of Wales, the UK and EU.
  - Assess the extent to which mainstreaming of innovative actions has occurred and the extent to which this could potentially occur after the

completion of the Programme.

  o Assess the contribution of the LDS and LEADER actions to the cross-cutting themes.

  o Recommend whether any wider strategic or operational changes are needed in the context of any successor programmes.

The justification for the selection of this summative evaluation methodology is that:

- It is commensurate with the scale and ambition of the LEADER investment.
- It combines robust quantitative and qualitative social research approaches and where possible will explore the highly challenging area of establishing counterfactual arguments.
- It will enable a sub-regional approach to be taken – securing efficiencies and enabling a deeper level of analysis.
- It combines self-evaluation activity with the rigour of independent contractors at the end of Programme stage.

Baseline data

We identify in the table below some of the relevant sources of baseline data of relevance to this LDS.

Source	Available data	Potential relevance and utility
STEAM data	Flintshire County Council takes part in the annual STEAM survey that measures the volume (number of visitors) and value (how much they spend) of tourism in the county.	The data (and any potential successor) will be useful for determining the impact of any tourism-based interventions in the county, under S01. The data may also be useful for relevant actions under S05 that are designed to encourage extended visitor stays in rural Flintshire.
Wales Rural Observatory	The WRO website contains research which is relevant to the Flintshire Local Development Strategy, including: • Rural Services, Business and Household Surveys for 2013 • Analysis of the Socio-Economic Impact of CAP Reforms on Rural Wales • Knowledge Transfer and Innovation	In terms of each of the specific objectives; • S01 – Data on tourism businesses is available in the Rural Business Survey, and also there is more information on employment patterns from the Household Surveys. • S02 – The Rural Business Survey supplies a wide range of baseline data that would be useful to projects funded under this objective, including business support take-up and broadband connectivity. • S03 – The Rural Services Survey contains baseline

	The data available is generally for Wales as a whole, but in some instances is broken down to Local Authority area.	information on retail, healthcare, education, childcare, access to information and welfare, recreation facilities, community cohesion, transport and recycling in a rural context in Wales. • S04 – There is a section in the Rural Household Survey concerning perceptions of change in the natural environment, awareness of relevant policy initiatives and broader environmental concerns. • S05 – The Rural Business Survey provides baseline data for use of ICT by businesses that would be useful in the context of any relevant interventions for SMEs.
InfoBaseFlintshire	InfoBaseFlintshire is a web based information system hosted by the Local Government Data Unit and provides specific information at Flintshire, Ward and Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) level.	This website contains data that will be useful across many themes of the LDS, including; • Economy and employment – available data includes businesses by industry and size, general economic activity, employment by industry, monthly claimant count of job seekers allowance. This will be useful for monitoring interventions under SO2. • Transport and access – available data includes traffic volume, car or van availability, average travel time, concessionary travel. This will be useful for monitoring community transport interventions under SO3. • Environment – available data includes domestic energy consumption. Useful for monitoring interventions under SO4. • Leisure, culture, tourism and Recreation – available data

		includes all STEAM indicators, expenditure by sector, revenue by category of visitor, sectors in which employment is supported. Useful for monitoring interventions under SO1.
Welsh Government – Stats Wales	The Welsh Government regularly releases statistical data via their StatsWales website which are relevant in the context of the Flintshire LDS.	Stats Wales contains data across a very wide range of areas, which can often be filtered by Local Authority area. Topics include: • Agricultural and rural affairs statistics • Business economy and labour market statistics • Environment and countryside • Population and Migration • Tourism • Welsh Language Also available is data from the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) which will be useful for measuring the overall impact of the funding on rural Flintshire. This will be a valuable source of data to relevant to a number of actions across all five of the LEADER themes.
Great British Tourism Survey	The survey is a national consumer survey measuring trends and patterns of British visitors within the UK. It can be broken down to Local Authority level, regional and town level.	The data will be useful for determining the impact of any tourism-based interventions in the county, under S01. The data may also be useful for relevant actions under S05 that are designed to encourage extended visitor stays in rural Flintshire. Information is available on purpose of trips, accommodation used, where visitors come from and what time of the year they visit.
Office of National Statistics	This site has links to reports and data sets on a variety of topics, including the annual Business Survey. The data is often broken down	The Business Survey data would track changes in GVA across different sectors, and would be useful for projects under S02. However, similar to StatsWales, information is available which

	to a regional level, and provides all-Wales data.	could provide evidence for interventions based on all of the specific objectives contained in the LDS.
Welsh Farm Business Survey	The annual survey incorporates physical and financial data from a representative sample of 600 farms in Wales and is conducted by the Institute for Biological, Environmental and Rural Services at Aberystwyth University on behalf of the Welsh Government.	Data is available on outputs, inputs and incomes; land utilisation; tenant's capital; performance indicators, such as average business size and standard man-day availability; various income measures, including net farm income; livestock numbers; and farm liabilities and assets by type of tenure. Such data would be useful for measuring the impact of any on-farm interventions, especially tourism projects funded under SO1and business-based projects funded under SO2.

Evaluation Timetable

The LDS identifies the need for evaluation at key stages. The first being a Formative Evaluation which will be conducted during operations and the other being a Summative Evaluation which will be conducted at the end of operations. The Formative evaluation will entail (i) interview and focus groups with stakeholders (ii) case studies on completed pilot projects and (iii) an externally procured independent mid-term evaluation. The Summative evaluation will include an end of programme externally procured independent evaluation. The three LDS for Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham identify cost saving in procuring external evaluations as one piece of work. Whilst each LDS will have its discrete element in the Evaluation, the exercise will be combined thus potentially achieving value for money. The timetable for delivery is detailed below (however the timings and external evaluations may be subject to change due to current Brexit uncertainty regarding programme end date):

	Commencement Date	Completion Date	Internal or External
Formative Evaluation			
Interview and Focus Groups with Stakeholders	June 2017	December 2021	Internal
Case Study Material	June 2017	December 2021	Internal
Mid Term Evaluation	September 2018	December 2018	External

Summative Evaluation			
End of Programme External Evaluation	September 2021	November 2021	External

SECTION 7 – SUITABILITY OF INVESTMENT	

Description	Explain the need and demand for the Local Action Group and the actions identified in the Local Development Strategy and whether this demand is already being met through existing provision. Explain how the Local Action Group will be able to successfully deliver the proposed activity.
Linked to	Sections 3.2 and 3.3 of the LDS Guidance June 2014

7.1   A description of the community involvement process in the development of the strategy
(1,000 words plus a list of consultee groups and organisations)

The Communications Plan

Consultation during the design phase of the strategy:

In preparing this strategy, Cadwyn Clwyd, with the support of consultants conducted an extensive consultation process. The consultation process has involved:

- On-going dialogue and bi-lateral meetings between Cadwyn Clwyd and key stakeholders since January 2014.
- Launching an on-line consultation which was distributed to key stakeholders on the databases of Cadwyn Clwyd, Flintshire County Council and Flintshire Local Voluntary Council (FLVC). The on-line consultation opened on 29th July 2014. 40 responses were received.
- Conducting two public consultation workshops in Flintshire. A daytime session was held on 22nd August and an evening session was held on 20th August 2014. Direct invitations were sent to contacts on databases held by Cadwyn Clwyd, Flintshire County Council and FLVC. The public consultation events were also advertised in the local and regional press and secured national internet attention
- Conducting a consultation workshop with members and officials of Flintshire County Council on 3rdSeptember 2014.
- In all 34 people attended the various consultation workshop sessions.
- Conducting a number of bi-lateral consultation interviews with individuals who could not attend consultation workshops but wished to participate.
- Attending the Flint and Denbigh agricultural show on the 21st August 2014 and making available paper copy versions of the on-line consultation.

If required, the following supplementary evidence can also be provided:
- A full list of those who attended the various consultation workshops.
- A more detailed breakdown of the categories/sectors of respondents to the consultation.
- Annotated agendas and accompanying PowerPoint presentation slides for the

consultation workshops.
- Notes (and accompanying photographs) of the consultation workshops capturing the points discussed.

In addition, during the preparation of the LDS, Cadwyn Clwyd undertook the opportunity to engage with stakeholders who were consulted as part of the AONB Tourism Strategy.

Focus of the consultation dialogue:

The focus of the consultation work undertaken in preparing this strategy has been:

- Communicating the purpose of LEADER, how much money there is to be invested, where it can be invested and in what it can be invested (i.e. the five LEADER themes).
- Gathering evidence and views about the current situation in rural Flintshire, focusing in particular on Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats and exploring the justification and rationale for the views presented.
- Gathering views and ideas as to the types of actions that might be supported and in which LEADER might invest.
- Gathering evidence and views on how the development opportunities and proposed actions identified will link with and potentially help deliver local (i.e. Flintshire), sub regional (i.e. North Wales), national (i.e. Wales) and EU policies and strategies.

Significant emphasis was placed on prioritising the development needs and opportunities and the types of actions to be supported during the consultation process. Participants in the process were challenged to think carefully about and to identify which development needs and opportunities are the most important and which potential actions to be funded by LEADER are essential as contrasted those that might be desirable but less strategically important. This has been a key part of the process in developing the hierarchy of objectives for rural Flintshire.

How consultation material has been used/incorporated into strategy design

Following the consultation stage (outlined above) detailed notes of each consultation workshops were prepared and the responses to the on-line and paper consultation were analysed using SNAP Survey software.

The material gathered was then synthesised and has been used to inform the SWOT analysis, Section 3.1 of this strategy and the accompanying Intervention Logic Table for rural Flintshire.

Information sharing, communication and engagement during delivery

Cadwyn Clwyd will facilitate and support LAG engagement and communication during the implementation phase. This will include:

- Further development and constant up-dating of the Cadwyn Clwyd website with notifications, news stories, articles and case study materials.

- Regular production and distribution of the Cadwyn Clwyd e-newsletter.

- Producing and disseminating case study material promoting the work of LEADER and positive outcomes achieved.

- Facilitating meetings and conferences to disseminate feasibility studies, research reports and publications as well as regular press releases.

7.2 SWOT Analysis to show development needs and potential of the proposed area
(No word limit – table format)

The following SWOT analysis has been prepared on the basis of consultation with stakeholders in rural Flintshire and an analysis of relevant policy, strategy and research documents.

The material has been 'grouped' according to the five LEADER themes.

Theme 1 – Adding Value to Local Identity and Natural and Cultural Resources

Strengths	Weaknesses
The natural and historic environment including the start of the Wales Coastal Path, mountain ranges, ancient monuments and a beautiful landscape[62] are key assets for rural Flintshire. Flintshire has a number of important cultural Assets including Clwyd Theatr Cymru and Gladstone's Library[63]. Tourism and the value of the visitor economy is a key strength to rural Flintshire[64]. There are well established events in Rural Flintshire (e.g. Mold Food Festival and the Flint Festival). These generate a good level of community and local business engagement and draw visitors to rural Flintshire[65].	A perception that Flintshire still suffers from an 'out dated image' linked to heavy industry[66]. Rural Flintshire's town centres suffer from 'varying levels of decline'[67]. Tourists tend to 'pass through' Flintshire without stopping on their way to other iconic destinations (e.g. Snowdonia)[68]

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[62] Evidence: 'The area is characterised by the presence of picturesque villages and agricultural dwellings forming a high quality landscape and natural features such as the Clwydian Range, Dee Estuary and Halkyn Mountain. Source: Source: Flintshire Regeneration Strategy (2009-2020) Page 20.

[63] Evidence: Flintshire has many strengths as a destination – including a high quality landscape, a rich heritage and culture (in particular Clwyd Theatr Cymru in Mold). Source: Flintshire Regeneration Strategy (2009-2020) Page 22.

[64] The tourism sector is currently estimated to support 3,138direct jobs in Flintshire. It is estimated to generate £200m annually from 3.5mstaying visitors and 2.4mday visitors. Source: STEAM 2011.

[65] Evidence: Flintshire Open for Business: Regeneration Strategy Review (2011) emphasised the important role of events in 'boosting the local economy'. Page 7.

[66] Evidence: 'Out dated image as purely heavy industrial area'. Highlighted as a limitation in the Flintshire Regeneration Strategy (2009-2020) Page 9.

[67] Evidence: 'Town centres suffering varying levels of decline'.Highlighted as a limitation in the Flintshire Regeneration Strategy (2009-2020) Page 9.

[68] Evidence' Generally, there are no truly iconic attractions in Flintshire'. Source: Flintshire Destination Management Plan (20130) Page 5.

Opportunities	Threats
Adopting a more co-ordinated, cross-county approach to tourism marketing, specifically around the Clwydian range AONB. This would result in a stronger return on investment and would raise the profile of this key asset in terms of generating higher visitor numbers and spend in rural Flintshire[69].	The lack of a strong, cohesive identity for rural Flintshire – perceived by some participants in the consultation as being 'over-shadowed' by the appeal of Chester[72].
Enhancing the skills of people in rural communities to make more of the natural and cultural assets of rural Flintshire[70].	The abolition of Tourism Partnership North Wales and a reduction in tourism specific capacity within Flintshire County Council could result in a reduced emphasis on sub-regional promotion[73].
To build on and deliver priorities identified in town and community plans commissioned via the 2007-2013 RDP Programme[71].	

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[69] Evidence: The Destination Management Plan for Flintshire states as its first strategic objective to: 'Improve the availability and coordination of visitor information' (Page 4) while Objective 1 of the Clwydian Range AONB Tourism Strategy is to 'raise awareness of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley and all that it has to offer to visitors, encouraging more and longer stays year round' (Page 30).

[70] Evidence: The Flintshire Regeneration Strategy emphasises the need to 'enhance the skills of the rural workforce'. Source: Source: Flintshire Regeneration Strategy (2009-2020). Page 21.

[71] Evidence: An Evaluation of Flintshire's Axis 3 and Axis 4 RDP Projects found that 'Various feasibility and town centre and area masterplan studies commissioned with the support of RDP funding have provided clear 'blueprints' and highlighted specific opportunities to channel future investment. Key studies commissioned by the RDP include a Sense of Place Feasibility Study for Mold and a Masterplan for Talacre and Gronant'. Source: Evaluation of the RDP in Flintshire. Final Report. October 2013. Old Bell 3 Ltd. Page 65.

[72]The Flintshire Regeneration Strategy identified as a 'threat': 'Increased commuting by car between lower priced housing in Flintshire and employment centres in West Cheshire and Chester'. Page 9.

[73] Evidence: Stakeholder views provided in public consultation workshops.

Theme 2 – Facilitating pre-commercial development, business partnerships and short supply chains

Strengths	Weaknesses
Rural Flintshire's location, its proximity to large urban conurbations and its functional role as part of a broader sub-regional economy in North Wales[74] is a key strength. A strong manufacturing base, the Deeside Enterprise Zone and particular strengths in the advanced sectors of aerospace, pharmaceuticals and automotive engineering[75]. Coleg Cambria is an important local employer but is also a strength in terms of equipping young people with key skills to meet the needs of local employers[76].	There is a disconnection between rural and industrial Flintshire with different socio-economic characteristics in the two areas meaning that overall, the county does not feel as cohesive as it might. Pockets of poverty and deprivation in rural Flintshire are sometimes 'masked'[77]. A potential over-reliance within the Flintshire economy on a small number of very large employers[78]. The 'voice' of business groups, particularly those representing small and micro businesses is not particularly well heard in rural Flintshire[79].
Opportunities	**Threats**
To build on existing strengths such as Flintshire Business week and encourage more people to start businesses and behave entrepreneurially in rural Flintshire[80]. Improving co-operation between local	The distinctiveness, future vitality and viability of rural Flintshire's towns is under threat from the potential displacement effects of large supermarkets opening stores locally[84]. A gap between the skills required by

[74] Evidence: 'Well located, serving UK markets with excellent access to the national highway and rail infrastructure. Part of a dynamic sub-region (west Cheshire and North East Wales). Source: Flintshire Regeneration Strategy (2009-2020) Page 9.

[75] Evidence: 'Flintshire has great strength in manufacturing particularly the advanced sectors of aerospace, pharmaceuticals and automotive engineering'. Source: Flintshire Open for Business: Regeneration Strategy Review (2011). Page 4.

[76] Evidence: The Flintshire Regeneration Strategy (2009-2020) emphasised the importance of businesses and the Further Education College (then called Deeside College prior to the merger with Coleg Cambria) working in partnership including to 'raise the attractiveness of self-employment'. Page 13.

[77] Evidence: 'Within the rural areas, deprivation tends to be concentrated in isolated pockets and because there is often a perception of idyllic rural lifestyles, this deprivation can be masked'. Source: Flintshire Regeneration Strategy (2009-2020) Page 20.

[78] Evidence: The Flintshire Regeneration Strategy identifies Airbus UK, Toyota, Corus, UPM Kymmene, Warwick International and Convatec' as key international companies employing people in the county. Page 37.

[79] Evidence: 'Success in attracting major employers has not been matched by the development of 'home grown' local small businesses. There are 2685 businesses in Flintshire employing between 2 - 49 people, these offer potential for growth in the future. It is important that the needs of this group are met in terms of skills, business support, premises and procurement'. Source: Flintshire Regeneration Strategy (2009-2020) Page 13.

[80] Evidence: 'Flintshire Business Week, first run in 2007 has become our showpiece business networking event attended by 1,600 delegates and supported by 90 sponsors in 2009'. Source: Flintshire Open for Business: Regeneration Strategy Review (2011). Page 4.

| businesses in rural Flintshire – taking more of a 'team' approach to promoting the county, specifically to visitors[81].

The Deeside Enterprise Zone provides a supportive environment for new and existing businesses (e.g. via availability of public funding and superfast broadband)[82].

To build on the success of Mold Food Festival and further develop the food and drink sector in rural Flintshire[83].

The potential development of Hawarden airport for wider commercial and passenger use.	employers and the skills possessed by job applicants in rural Flintshire[85].

Theme 3 – Exploring new ways of providing non-statutory local services

Strengths	Weaknesses
Rural Flintshire has a strong volunteer base and in general, there is a good degree of engagement in local community events and activities[86].	Poor public transport (not particularly well integrated) limits connectivity with industrial and larger urban areas – particularly in terms of commuting for work purposes[87].
Opportunities	Threats

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[84] Evidence: The Flintshire UDP (2000-2015) states that 'the vitality and viability of many town centres is under significant pressure. The ability of existing centres to continue to serve the interests of the whole community in the long term must not be undermined by new retail developments elsewhere. However there is now growing evidence that larger out of town shopping centres, dependent predominantly upon access by car, are having a damaging impact on traditional shopping centres. This has resulted in the closure of shops and the consequent deterioration in the physical condition of buildings and the street scene. Para 12.2. Source: http://www.cartogold.co.uk/flintshire/text/english/12.htm

[81] Evidence: The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Action Plan (2015-2020) outlines the need for 'creating an effective model to ensure a coordinated approach to destination management'. Page 22. Also: 'The approach to destination management will need to include action to support visitor facing businesses to raise their quality and to work together to develop new ways to market the County and provide new products to customers'. Flintshire Destination management Plan (2013). Page 9.

[82] Evidence: 'Deeside Enterprise Zone is in Flintshire, North West Wales, one of the most modern, high skills driven manufacturing areas in the UK. The ambition is to secure and continue the process of transformation to make Deeside acknowledged as a centre for advanced manufacturing and technology on a world scale'. Source: Business Wales.

[83] 'Flintshire can boast a number of high quality food producers and a growing agri-food sector'. Source: Flintshire Open for Business: Regeneration Strategy Review (2011). Page 9

[85] '39% of companies in Flintshire believed there is a significant gap between the generic skills needed for business and those of applicants'. Source: Flintshire Regeneration Strategy (2009-2020) Page 26.

[86] Evidence: Flintshire's Wellbeing Plan. A Single Integrated Plan for Flintshire (2013-2017) outlines the 'Importance of 'protecting and promoting the wellbeing of volunteers and communities'. (Page 21).

[87] Evidence: The Flintshire Regeneration Strategy identifies as a priority the need to 'improve transport links to rural communities, particularly sustainable transport provision. Page 21.

Improving transport links to rural communities, particularly sustainable transport provision facilitating access to services and the movement of people to get to employment and training opportunities[88]. Regenerating and re-commissioning vacant, sometimes derelict buildings in rural areas to act as community 'hubs' providing access to basic services and enhancing community cohesion[89]. Creating new and supporting the sustainable growth of existing social enterprises to help deliver important rural services in Flintshire[90]. Engaging and involving older people in volunteering to help deliver important services, helping to limit loneliness and 'ageing well'[91].	The uncertainty created by the potential re-organisation of local government is perceived as a threat in terms of planning services and the sustainability of important basic services to rural communities in Flintshire[92]. On-going austerity measures resulting in the withdrawal or centralisation of important rural services[93]. An ageing population is adding increasing pressure to certain public services in Flintshire[94].

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[88] Evidence: 'Improve transport links to rural communities, particularly sustainable transport solutions'. Source: Flintshire Regeneration Strategy (2009-2020) Page 21.

[89] Evidence: 'Facilitate the development and improvement of village facilities and services, such as community buildings, ICT capacity and the 'Pub in the Hub' scheme. Also, develop innovative and sustainable community transport initiatives around key village and town hubs'. Source: Flintshire Open for Business: Regeneration Strategy Review (2011). Page 9.

[90] Evidence: The Flintshire Economic Regeneration Strategy sets the goal of 'support[ing] the development of social enterprise solutions to the provision of rural services'. Page 21.

[91] Evidence: 'Older people are particularly vulnerable to social isolation or loneliness owing to loss of friends or family, mobility or income. As the proportion of older people in the population increases, so too will the importance of ensuring that they "age well". Source: Flintshire's Well Being Plan (SIP). Page 48.

[92] Evidence: The Williams Commission Report recommends that Flintshire and Wrexham Councils should merge. Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery. Full Report. January 2014. Page 100.

[93] Evidence: 'It is inevitable that the Council will have to review the costs of all services and make difficult choices for the future. There is no respite as the year which will follow is likely to pose a similar budget challenge. Throughout this period we are working to protect local services particularly education, services to the vulnerable, housing and support for the local economy, whilst meeting the aims of our top priorities set out in the Improvement Plan'. Statement by Leader of Flintshire County Council. 19th November 2013. Source: www.flintshire.gov.uk

[94] Evidence: 'As the proportionof older people in the population increases, so too will the importance of ensuring that they "age well".Flintshire's Wellbeing Plan. A Single Integrated Plan for Flintshire (2013-2017) Page 48.

Theme 4 – Renewable Energy at a Community Level

Strengths	Weaknesses
The topography and landscape conditions of rural Flintshire lend themselves to renewable power generation[95].	Restrictions (e.g. high costs) of connecting micro renewable power generation schemes to the National Grid. This can have a negative impact on the viability of micro schemes and concerns also that over-head cabling leads to a negative impact on the quality of the natural landscape[96].
Opportunities	**Threats**
To strengthen the renewable energy base in rural Flintshire (via micro generation and renewable energy pilots within rural communities) to offset the use of finite resources and reduce greenhouse gas emissions[97].	The potential (negative) impact of wind turbines of the rural Flintshire landscape[98].

Theme 5 – Exploitation of Digital Technology

Strengths	Weaknesses
Broadband coverage in comparison to other parts of rural Wales is a relative strength in rural Flintshire with relatively few 'not-spots'[99]. However, participants in the consultation felt that broadband and mobile coverage still represents a weakness in certain parts of rural Flintshire.	A lack of advanced digital and IT skills and capabilities amongst people who own/run micro and small businesses in rural Flintshire[100].

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[95] Evidence: 'Wind turbines utilise the natural movements of the atmosphere to generate cheap and clean electricity. This method of energy generation is sustainable and presents an infinite supply of energy for Flintshire's population, its businesses and ultimately to the benefit of its economy'. Source: Flintshire UDP. Under Policy EWP4, Para 19.20

[96] Evidence: The cost of a hydro installation is highly site specific and depends on civil engineering and grid connection issues as well as the turbine type and size. Source: Factsheet 9: Small-scale hydro for businesses. Live and Work Rural. Page 2.

[97] Evidence: Section 19.2 of the Flintshire UDP sets out 'policies designed both to encourage energy conservation by supporting proposals which incorporate energy efficient layouts and designs and to encourage the development of renewable energy generation'.

[98] Evidence: The Flintshire UDP under policy (EWP4) sets specific criteria which individual wind turbines or wind farms will be required to meet.

[99] Evidence: Most of Flintshire is classified as 'accepting orders' or 'coming soon' on the Superfast Cymru website. Source: http://www.superfast-cymru.com/where-and-when

[100] Evidence: The Flintshire Regeneration Strategy outlines the importance of a 'well trained workforce supported by modern technology'. Page 11.

Opportunities	Threats
Opportunities to strengthen the extent to which businesses in rural Flintshire exploit technology and in particular social media for commercial purposes[101]. Investing in actions that support and derive benefits to the rural Flintshire economy from the 'North Wales Technology Corridor'[102].	Flintshire's businesses (micro businesses in particular) potentially risk falling behind in terms of utilisation of digital technology[103].

The LDS situational analysis also recognises the European Commission Guidance Document of the Commission services: Possibilities within the Rural Development programming to address the humanitarian crisis faced by refugees accessing the EU" Summer 2016 in terms of EAFRD / LEADER's role in support of refugees where applicable.

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[101] Evidence: The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Action Plan cites that 'Social media can be used more effectively to raise awareness, strengthen loyalty and facilitate cross-promotion'. Page 18.

[102] Evidence: 'Supporting the development of a North Wales Technology Corridor'. Source: Source: Flintshire Open for Business. Page 4.

[103] Evidence: Views expressed by stakeholders (in particular business representatives) at the public consultation workshops held.

Description	Explain how the Local Action Group will maximise its contribution towards the Cross Cutting themes of Equal Opportunities, Sustainable Development and Tackling Poverty.
Linked to	Sections 3.6 and 3.7 of the LDS Guidance June 2014

8.1 Cross-Cutting Themes
(1,500 words)

Equal Opportunities and the Welsh Language

The LAG and Cadwyn Clwyd as the administrative body will ensure that a proactive approach is taken to maximising opportunities in terms of the contribution of the LDS to each of the protected characteristic groups as set out in the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) of the 2014-2020 Rural Development Plan for Wales[104] and forming part of the Equality Act 2010.

In this context, LAG members and Cadwyn Clwyd staff will be fully briefed on the protected characteristics at the outset of the Programme and consideration as to how each LEADER funded activity can make a positive contribution to the protected characteristic groups will be undertaken. This process will also involve careful consideration by Cadwyn Clwyd (in technically appraising actions/projects) and thereafter LAG members to ensure that no disproportionate negative effects occur to the protected characteristic groups via any of the LEADER funded actions as part of this LDS.

Consideration of the potential effects and impacts of LEADER funded actions on the protected characteristic groups will therefore be a key consideration for the LAG in its role of approving specific actions. The protected characteristic groups are:

- The Welsh language and Welsh speakers.

- Age (covering all age groups, being particularly aware of children aged under 16, younger people aged 16-24, and older people aged 65 and over).

- Disability (which may include people with sensory impairments, mobility impairments, learning disabilities and mental wellbeing disabilities).

- Gender reassignment (including persons who are at any stage of gender reassignment therapy).

- Marriage and civil partnership (with a focus purely on discrimination on the

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[104] Consultation Document: Equality Impact Assessment of the 2014-2020 Rural Development Plan for Wales. May 2013. Prepared by Mott Macdonald and Old Bell 3 Ltd. for Welsh Government.

basis of whether someone is married or in a civil partnership – single people are not covered by this characteristic).

- Pregnancy and maternity(including pregnant women and nursing mothers);

- Race and ethnicity (which may include ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality).

- Religion or belief (which may include all religion, faith or belief groups, including lack of belief).

- Sex / gender (including both women and men).

- Sexual orientation (including heterosexuals, and lesbians, gay men and bisexual (LGB) people).

In preparing this strategy, we have taken particular note of the recommendations outlined in the EIA document concerning implementation of the RDP[105]. As a result, the LAG will:

- Consider and implement where appropriate the tailoring of LEADER funded actions to accommodate the access needs of protected characteristic groups.

- Develop rigorous monitoring processes which include specific equality indicators.

- Ensure that the effectiveness of the LDS and LEADER actions is considered as a key element of both the Mid Term (formative) and end of Programme (summative) evaluation specifications.

- Proactively encourage LAG members and other stakeholders (particularly those benefitting from LEADER investment) to develop, enhance and strengthen their own equality credentials.

- Actively engage with equality organisations and groups representing those with protected characteristics to ensure that the benefits of the LDS and LEADER investment is maximised for those groups.

- Follow the "European Commission Guidance Document of the Commission services: Possibilities within the Rural Development programming to address the humanitarian crisis faced by refugees accessing the EU" Summer 2016 – the LAG Equal Opportunity cross cutting theme will take account of the Commission's Guidance and integrate support and actions to vulnerable Refugee Groups where relevant.

- Indicators Contributing to the Cross Cutting themes - The LAG will consider the following relevant indicators where appropriate:

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[105] Ibid. Page 52.

- Number of participants receiving in work training (NVQ 2 and above)
- Number of community transport schemes
- Number of advice/support surgeries in community facilities
- Number of community ICT hubs

  - Service Level Agreements - Any service level Agreements used for deliverers of activity will include Cross Cutting Themes (CCT) requirements.

  - **Equal Opportunity -** The LAG will take on board the recommendations below where appropriate:

SO1 – SA1: It has been identified that this activity will 'improve access and interpretation for people with sensory or mobility impairments'. A recommendation would be to include a specific action that would show how this would be achieved.

SO1 – SA2: It has been identified that this activity will 'improve access and interpretation for people with sensory or mobility impairments'. A recommendation would be to include a specific action that would show how this would be achieved.

In terms of satisfying the requirements laid out in the **Welsh Language Commissioner's Advice Document on Grants, loans and sponsorship**[106], the LAG and Cadwyn Clwyd as the administrative body commit to:

- Ensuring that all LAG members and relevant Cadwyn Clwyd officers are familiar with the Commissioner's guidance note.

- Ensuring that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language in all activity and that the Welsh language is proactively promoted and facilitated in the context of all LDS activity.

- Ensuring that all who apply for LEADER funding or assistance from any of the actions which fall under this LDS are given clear information about the Welsh language including language requirements and how these will be considered within the assessment for LEADER funding.

- Ensuring that all applications (including project application forms and related materials) for LEADER funding request details of how use will be made of the Welsh language within the specified action or intervention.

- Ensuring that all offer letters confirming allocation of LEADDR funding set out clearly the conditions and expectations in relation to the Welsh language as part of the offer.

- Ensuring that applicants and stakeholders are given proactive advice to help them understand the requirements in terms of using and promoting Welsh within their LEADER funded activity.

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[106] Grants, loans and sponsorship: Welsh language considerations. Comisiynydd y Gymraeg. 2 April 2012.

- Ensuring that the impact of the LDS and LEADER funded activity is monitored and analysed as part of on-going monitoring and is incorporated fully into both formative and summative evaluation methodologies.

- Ensuring that where additional guidance or advice is necessary, the Commissioner's office is consulted.

Tacking Poverty and Social Exclusion

In terms of tackling poverty, deprivation and exclusion, we note that the Welsh Government's approach as outlined in the Wales Rural Development Programme is to 'take targeted measures to help those people living in poverty and those that have limited scope to change their circumstances'[107]. In this context, the LAG recognises that it will not be able to eradicate poverty alone (i.e. via the investment of LEADER funding). This must be part of a broader package of measures and interventions.

This LDS and the investment of LEADER funding will therefore make a positive contribution to tackling some of the underlying causes of poverty, deprivation and exclusion in rural communities (as identified in the Wales RDP[108]). It will do this by:

- Investing in actions that help tackle **fuel poverty amongst vulnerable older and disabled people** as highlighted by the Equality Impact Assessment for the RDP[109]. There will be specific opportunities to contribute positive outcomes to this via Specific Objective 4 and SMART Action 7 of this LDS (see section 3.1).
- Investing in actions that **create opportunities for young people not in employment or learning** (NEET). There will be specific opportunities to contribute positive outcomes to this via Specific Objective 2 and SMART Actions 3 and 5 of this LDS (see section 3.1).

- Investing in actions that **maintain and enhance equitable access to basic services** to help tackle financial and social exclusion. There will be specific opportunities to contribute positive outcomes to this via Specific Objective 3 and SMART Actions 6 and 7 of this LDS (see section 3.1).

- Investing in actions that **tackle digital exclusion**. There will be specific opportunities to contribute positive outcomes to this via Specific Objective 5 and SMART Actions 8 and 9 of this LDS (see section 3.1).

- The LAG will take on board the recommendations below where appropriate:

SO4 – SA8: To maximise the contribution to this CCT, a recommendation would be to ensure that all information dissemination to individuals is accessible and fit for purpose.

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[107] Common Agricultural Policy Reform: Wales Rural Development programme 2014-2020 Final proposals. February 2014. Welsh Government. Page 53.
[108] Ibid. Page 51.
[109] Consultation Document: Equality Impact Assessment of the 2014-2020 Rural Development Plan for Wales. May 2013. Page 20 and again on Page 25.

Sustainable Development

The LAG and Cadwyn Clwyd as the administrative body will ensure that a proactive approach is taken to maximising opportunities in terms of the contribution of the LDS to sustainable development as set out in the Wales Rural Development Programme[110].

In preparing this LDS, we have taken account of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Report for the 2014-2020 RDP[111] and note the conclusion that there is 'potential to protect and enhance ecosystem services and biodiversity values, culture and heritage and climate issues'[112]

In this context, LAG members and Cadwyn Clwyd staff will be fully briefed on sustainable development at the outset of the Programme and consideration as to how each LEADER funded activity can make a positive contribution to sustainable development will be undertaken. This process will also involve careful consideration by Cadwyn Clwyd (in technically appraising actions/projects) and thereafter LAG members to ensure that no disproportionate negative effects occur in terms of sustainable development and environmental considerations.

This LDS and the investment of LEADER funding will make a positive contribution to sustainable development by:

- Investing in actions that support **management conservation, sustainable use and enjoyment of the natural landscape and enhancements to the environment**. There will be specific opportunities to contribute positive outcomes to this via Specific Objective 1 and SMART actions 1 and 2 of this LDS (see section 3.1).

- Investing in pre-commercial concepts and piloting new businesses that **enhance the environment, promote local produce and promote the natural environment as a positive commercial asset.** There will be specific opportunities to contribute positive outcomes to this via Specific Objective 2 and SMART Actions 3 and 4 of this LDS (see section 3.1).

- Investing in actions which **support sustainable and low carbon community transport schemes, the transfer of assets and engagement of volunteers in social enterprises to help deliver physical and natural improvements.** There will be specific opportunities to contribute positive outcomes to this via

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[110]Common Agricultural Policy Reform: Wales Rural Development programme 2014-2020 Final proposals. February 2014. Welsh Government. Page 28 – Cross Cutting Themes, Sustainable Development.
[111] Consultation Document. Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report, 2014-2020. Rural Development Plan. March 2013. Bangor University and Old Bell 3 Ltd. for Welsh Government.
[112] Ibid. Page 130.

Specific Objective 3 and SMART actions 5 and 6 (see section 3.1).

- Investing in actions which **support, advise and test/pilot community driven renewable energy technologies, disseminate information and intelligence on renewables at a community level and assist with sustainable re-investment of revenues generated from renewables.** There will be specific opportunities to contribute positive outcomes to this via Specific Objective 4 and SMART action 7 (see section 3.1)

- Investing in actions which encourage the procurement and use of **highly efficient Energy Star ICT hardware and which use re-cycled and re-used equipment where appropriate.** There will be specific opportunities to contribute positive outcomes to this via Specific Objective 5 and SMART actions 8 and 9.

- The Admin body, on behalf of the LAG, will ensure that it will adhere to the guidance document that was issued by the Cross Cutting Themes Team at the LEADER Workshop on 03/08/2016.

8.2   Supporting the Uplands
(1,000 words)

The LAG will target the following upland areas which are defined as Severely Disadvantaged Areas in rural Flintshire, namely Clwydian Range and Halkyn Mountain.

The Unlocking the Potential of the Uplands report (December 2012) recommends the following areas of intervention on Wales's Uplands:

The focus of the research and evidence gathering covered five main areas:

- Optimising productivity in the Uplands
- Optimising land use in the Uplands
- Economic development
- Access to Services
- Enabling vibrant Uplands

The LDS will contribute towards the following interventions:

Land Use
- Pilot actions which contribute towards improving the management of peat soils to promote carbon storage and sequestration.

- Promoting the use of land management techniques to benefit water quality and water regulation.

- Enabling sectoral communities to collective exploit biomass and wood fuel production as a renewable energy source.

- Supporting landscape scale and cooperative actions for nature, renewable energy and access.

- Exploring the potential of wind farm gain payments to further benefit upland communities.

Economic Development
- Piloting actions which contribute towards improving access to internet and mobile technology.

- Supporting the development of business mentoring and developing business clusters and supporting short supply chains.

- Piloting of "Uplands branded" tourism and food & craft products

Access to Services
- Support for innovative community based, demand responsive transport schemes which link into rural transport hubs, outreach, mobile or technological solutions.

- Piloting and nurturing of social enterprise as a potential delivery mechanism for community services.

- The piloting of innovative community-based projects which seek to overcome locally identified gaps in services.

Description	Explain the potential of the Local Action Group to continue the proposed activity beyond the lifetime of the Programme.
Linked to	Section 5.0 of the LDS Guidance June 2014

9.1 Mainstreaming Plan

Dissemination

The following table sets out our mainstreaming and dissemination plan. It outlines who we envisage will be our main stakeholder groups, what key messages and learning themes they are likely to be interested in and how we will go about disseminating information and intelligence to them.

Stakeholder (Who)	Key messages and learning themes to be disseminated (What)	Dissemination methods (How)
Citizens, community groups and businesses, of rural Flintshire	Awareness of LEADER actions and the opportunities available. The effectiveness of LEADER approaches. Evidence of key outcomes to individuals, communities and businesses.	Communications strategy including press releases, regular website updates, newsletters, events etc… Case study material.
Flintshire LAG Members	Performance against specific objectives and indicators. The effectiveness of LEADER approaches. Specific approaches, good practice or ways of working that could potentially be replicated or mainstreamed. Evidence of key outcomes to individuals, communities and businesses.	Regular update reports to LAG meetings. Case study materials. Evaluation reports.
Local authority members and officials	Performance against specific objectives and indicators. The effectiveness of LEADER approaches. Specific approaches, good practice or	Reports and presentations to key committees. Regular bi-lateral meetings/briefings with officials.

| | ways of working that could potentially be replicated or mainstreamed.

Evidence of key outcomes to individuals, communities and businesses. | Evaluation reports. |
|---|---|---|
| Key partner agencies (e.g. FLVC, AONB, WHS, Cadw) | The effectiveness of LEADER approaches.

Specific approaches, good practice or ways of working that could potentially be replicated or mainstreamed.

Evidence of key outcomes to individuals, communities and businesses. | Case study materials.

Evaluation reports.

Newsletter and occasional briefings.

Project visits. |
| Welsh Government | Progress and performance against specific LDS objectives and key performance indicators.

The effectiveness of LEADER approaches and actions.

Specific approaches, good practice or ways of working that could potentially be replicated or mainstreamed.

Evidence of key outcomes to individuals, communities and businesses. | Regular monitoring information, data and reports.

Evaluation reports.

Case study materials.

Participation in meetings, events and conferences.

Project visits. |
| The Cadwyn Clwyd Board of Directors | Progress and performance against specific LDS objectives and key performance indicators.

The effectiveness of LEADER approaches and actions.

Specific approaches, good practice or ways of working that could potentially be replicated or mainstreamed.

Evidence of key outcomes to individuals, communities and businesses. | Regular monitoring information, data and reports.

Evaluation reports.

Case study materials.

Participation in meetings, events and conferences.

Project visits. |
| Other LAGs in Wales and beyond | The effectiveness of LEADER approaches and actions.

Specific approaches, good practice or ways of working that could potentially be | Participation in meetings, events and conferences.

Evaluation reports. |

replicated or mainstreamed. Evidence of key outcomes to individuals, communities and businesses.	Case study materials. Project visits.

The LAG as part of its on-going responsibility to ensure the relevance of the LDS will regularly review and update this dissemination plan.

Mainstreaming successful actions

The approach to mainstreaming successful actions will be based on a five stage process:

- **Stage 1: Piloting actions** – experimenting with and trialling new processes and approaches via the range of SMART actions set out in this LDS.

- **Stage 2: Evaluating actions** – proving concept validity and rigorously testing the feasibility of actions as they evolve.

- **Stage 3: Disseminating intelligence** – publishing and sharing results, findings and lessons learned.

- **Stage 4: Scaling up** – exploring opportunities to roll-out proven and successful actions on a broader scale e.g. via ESI funds or other co-investment opportunities.

- **Stage 5: Embedding actions** – full exploitation, commercialisation or embedding of actions into mainstream markets or usage.

SECTION 10 – DECLARATION AND SIGNATURE

I am acting with the authority of the Local Action Group and certify to the best of my knowledge and belief the information provided in this Local Development Strategy application and supporting documentation are true and correct and the application for financial assistance is for the minimum required to enable the project to proceed.

I undertake to notify the Welsh Government in advance of carrying out any changes to the nature of this project.

I also confirm that I am not aware of any reason why the project may not proceed and that the commitments and activities can be achieved within the timescales indicated.

Local Action Group (LAG) Representative

Signed:	
Name:	
Chair/Deputy Chair LAG:	
Date:	

Administrative Body Representative

Signed:	
Name:	Lowri Owain
Position in Administrative Body:	Chief Executive, Cadwyn Clwyd
Date:	

A signed hard copy of the Local Development Strategy must be received at the address below no later than **30 September 2014**

Scheme Management Unit, Welsh Government, Rhodfa Padarn, Llanbadarn Fawr, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion. SY23 3UR

Please submit an electronic copy to: LEADER2014-2020@wales.gsi.gov.uk