Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

LEADER 2014-2020

WREXHAM 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:

Bronington	Wrexham	3,179	
Brymbo	Wrexham	4,004	
Bryn Cefn	Wrexham	2,176	
Brynyffynnon	*Wrexham*	*3,472*	*Host*
Cefn	*Wrexham*	*5,067*	*S/Centre*
Chirk North	Wrexham	2,439	
Chirk South	Wrexham	2,035	
Coedpoeth	Wrexham	4,706	
Dyffryn Ceiriog/Ceiriog Valley	Wrexham	2,175	
Esclusham	Wrexham	2,776	
Gresford East and West	Wrexham	2,721	
Grosvenor	*Wrexham*	*2,705*	*Host*
Gwenfro	Wrexham	1,826	
Gwersyllt North	Wrexham	2,875	
Holt	Wrexham	3,605	
Llangollen Rural	Wrexham	2,063	
Llay	Wrexham	4,813	

Maesydre	*Wrexham*	*1,945*	*Host*
Marchwiel	Wrexham	2,369	
Marford and Hoseley	Wrexham	2,281	
Minera	Wrexham	2,467	
Overton	Wrexham	3,312	
Penycae & Ruabon Sth	Wrexham	2,538	
Ponciau	Wrexham	4,840	
Rossett	Wrexham	3,241	
Ruabon	Wrexham	2,925	
Smithfield	*Wrexham*	*2,690*	*Host*
TOTAL		**81,245**	

(Source Census 2011)

Coherence of the Area

This rural area is entirely within one local authority, Wrexham County Borough Council and is diverse in its landscape, geographic, social and economic characteristics. It is characterised by diverse agriculture varying from dairy farms and mixed lowland cattle to upland sheep farming and topography comprised of lowland plain to the east and upland moorland to the west. The area has a dispersed settlement pattern confined mainly to the villages and outlying farms and hamlets, and despite the close proximity of several areas of high population some parts of the bid area suffer from the problems of peripherality.

Geographically the area can be loosely split into four distinct topographical areas:

a) The Ceiriog Valley is an upland area leading to the Berwyn Mountains and rising up to 500m with peaks of up to 780m in some areas. The wards of Chirk North and Chirk South form a natural gateway to the valley. The higher areas are open moorland, and the lower areas contain a mixture of small farms and woodlands, with villages dispersed along the length of the valley floor. The population density is the lowest in the County Borough (0.5 people per hectare) and the area is dominated by hill farming. The Ceiriog Valley has a high number of people employed in primary occupations such as agriculture, mining, forestry and fishing (8.66%). Game shooting is also an important employee in the area. Culturally, the Ceiriog Valley is also distinctive in terms of a higher portion of the population being Welsh speaking (31.22%).

b) The Western Uplands comprise Llangollen Rural, Penycae, Ruabon South, Brymbo, Minera, Coedpoeth and Ponciau Wards. The population density of this area is 2.48 people per hectare, (2011 Census, ONS). This is upland country where agriculture is dominated by hill farming. Villages are set among farmland, wooded valleys and regenerating or restored (former industrial) landscapes. The area is crossed by Offa's Dyke and has a pre-historic hill fort, reflecting Wrexham's history on the border between Wales and England. Ruabon / Esclusham Mountain is an open moorland plateau (rising to 460m and 502m) with remnants of former quarrying and mining. Much of the area is uninhabited, but there are scattered farmsteads on the eastern slopes, and to the north lies Bwlchgwyn, the highest village in Wales

at over 1090ft (333metres).

c) The eastern fringes include the wards of Rosset, Gresford, Marford and Hoseley, Ruabon, Llay, Gwersyllt North, Bryn Cefn, Gwenfro, Esclusham, Holt and the northern part of Marchwiel. This area has mixed land use with pockets of high quality, Grade 2 agricultural land (Agricultural Land Classification, DEFRA), but economic activity is increasingly dominated by industry. Many of these areas are associated with past coal mining. Considerable development pressure for residential uses resulting from the physical expansion of Wrexham and its satellite communities can be seen in this area. The population density stands at 2.32 people per hectare.

d) The lowland Maelor area includes the wards of Bronington and Overton. This is largely rural and agricultural and shares many characteristics of the neighbouring Cheshire and North Shropshire landscape and is dominated by grazing activity, with some arable production. The Maelor area represents over 25% of the area of rural Wrexham. It is an area dominated by agriculture defined by the River Dee flood plain. The low lying terrain has generated a high incidence of water features across the area including mires, mosses and ponds, with the River Dee and its tributaries as the key feature. There are scattered farmsteads, attractive small villages, and historic landscapes features including medieval ridge and furrow and moated sites. Culturally, the area is dependent on agriculture, but quite anglicised, compared to the Western Uplands and the Ceiriog Valley. The area has a population density of 0.54 people per hectare.

Well established communication routes and water corridors, (the River Dee, its tributaries the Ceiriog, Clywedog and Alyn, and the Llangollen Canal) provide links to the above areas. The north – south road linkage is the A483 / A5 Trunk Road linking Rossett to Chirk, whilst the east – west road linkages are the A525 Trunk Road linking Bronington to Minera, and the A539 linking Hanmer to Trefor. All these provide coherence to this historic, rural and border territory whose culture and traditions have been formed by migration, conflict and eventual settled times. Industrial development especially the extraction of natural resources has had a wide impact on the area and the many large settlements add to the coherence of the area and justify its selection.

Intentions to work across boundaries

Cadwyn Clwyd has been appointed by the LAG and subsequently approved by the Welsh Government as the administrative body to support the delivery of LEADER in Wrexham, Denbighshire and Flintshire. 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
Wrexham County Council and Wrexham Local Service Board (LSB)	LEADER investment in rural Wrexham will complement the work of several of Wrexham County Council's 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 Wrexham County Council for instance in supporting social enterprises to deliver services in new and innovative ways. Duplication will be avoided by ensuring that Wrexham County Council members play an active role on the LAG and inform and shape the design of projects to maximise complementarity with council 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 Wrexham	Town and community councils have been key stakeholders in the delivery of the current LEADER Programme in rural Wrexham 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.
Glyndwr University and Coleg Cambria	LEADER investment will complement the work of Coleg Cambria and Glyndwr University 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 Wrexham, Denbighshire and Flintshire and the Advisory Committee and this will be the basis for ensuring a high degree of complementarity and co-operation as well as opportunities for co-investment.
Association of Voluntary Organisations in Wrexham (AVOW)	The third sector has been a key partner in the delivery of LEADER in rural Wrexham 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). AVOW 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 Wrexham.
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 Wrexham (and Denbighshire and Flintshire) 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 Urban Villages Communities First Cluster where there are four wards (Brymbo 2, Gwenfro, Llay 3 and Gwersyllt North) which are also eligible RDP wards. This dialogue will focus on ensuring that the LAG is fully aware of local community needs and opportunities in the rural CF wards 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 Wrexham 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.
Wrexham Destination Management Partnership	There will be on-going dialogue with this group (building on linkages established during the 2007-2013 Programme period) to ensure that LEADER funding is invested in an integrated manner. In particular dialogue will be focused on ensuring that LEADER investment links with the Destination Management Strategy and its associated priority

	actions. This will ensure that duplication is avoided.
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
Wrexham County Borough Economic Prosperity Strategy (2012-2016) Wrexham Destination Management Plan (2012-2017)	Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Action Plan (2015-2020) Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site (WHS) Tourism Development Plan (2011) The North Wales Tourism Strategy (2010-15)	Programme for Government (Chapters 10 and 11) [2] Partnership for Growth: The Welsh Government Strategy for Tourism (2013-2020) The Future of our Past – Consultation on proposals for the historic environment of Wales. (2013) Local Souring Action Plan 'Food and Drink for Wales'. (2009)

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[1] Source: http://www.superfast-cymru.com/where-and-when
[2] 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 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).

		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 Wrexham with a focus on increasing the length of visitor stays[3] and expenditure[4].
- Sensitively and sustainably exploiting the natural environment for sustainable tourism growth[5] with a specific focus on 'key hubs' including the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB[6], the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site[7] and National Trust properties.
- Working across boundaries to strengthen the visitor offer with shared goals and reducing 'unhelpful competition'[8].
- Strengthening the sense of place in Wrexham, 'making more' of food and drink attractions and improving the quality of accommodation[9].
- Promoting the Welsh language and culture[10].

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

Local	Sub-regional	National
Wrexham County Borough Economic Prosperity Strategy (2012-2016)	Economic Ambition – A Strategy for Change. North Wales Economic Ambition Board (undated)	Programme for Government (Chapter 1)[11] Welsh Government

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[3] 'The key challenge for WCBC and the wider tourism and visitor economy is to boost visitor numbers and spend in the area'. WCBC Destination Management Plan (2012-2017). Page 3.

[4] 'We're not capitalising on the potential of the tourism pound. We're not shouting loud enough about the county borough as a place to live, work, visit or invest'. Wrexham Economic Prosperity Strategy. Page 17.

[5] '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.

[6] Tourism Strategy North Wales (2010-2015). Page 5.

[7] 'Bring heritage-led economic regeneration to the WHS corridor and to achieve sustainable economic growth by increasing the value of the tourism sector and conserving the area's heritage assets'. Wrexham Destination Management Plan. Page 8.

[8] Wrexham Destination Management Plan. Page 12. (Para 3.3).

[9] Wrexham Destination Management Plan. Page 16. Project Four: Sense of Place.

[10] Wrexham's Community Strategy. Page 4.

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

		Sector Priority Strategy[12] 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:

- Encouraging entrepreneurship, business start-ups and indigenous growth through tailored packages of support[13].
- Supporting social and community enterprises[14].
- Improving business productivity, competitiveness and growth[15].
- Supporting youth entrepreneurship[16] and promoting innovation[17].
- Facilitating sub-regional collaboration (i.e. north Wales) on economic development where there is 'added value from joint working and enhanced collaboration'[18].

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

Local	Sub-regional	National
Our Wrexham Plan. A Single Integrated Plan for Wrexham (2013-2024) Wrexham's Community Strategy 2009-2020	Leading and Learning: The experience of collaboration in North Wales. WLGA. (2008) Economic Ambition – A Strategy for Change. North Wales Economic Ambition Board (undated)	Programme for Government (Chapter 2)[19] Shared Purpose, Shared Delivery: Guidance on Integrating Partnerships and Plans (2012) Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery (2014)[20]

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[12] 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.

[13] Wrexham Economic Prosperity Strategy. Page 22.

[14] Wrexham Economic Prosperity Strategy. Page 22 and Page 30.

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

[16] Wrexham Economic Prosperity Strategy. Page 28.

[17] Wrexham's Economic Prosperity Strategy outlines the aim of 'positioning the county as a forward-thinking, genetically innovative place'. Page 33. The Micro Business Task and Finish Group underlines the need for 'micro-businesses to become more innovative as a means of improving productivity and job creation'. Page 16.

[18] '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.

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

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

| | | Continuity and Change – Refreshing the Relationship Between Welsh Government and the Third Sector (2013) |

Consistent strategic themes/priorities:
- Ensuring that local citizens are engaged with and involved in the design and delivery of public services[21].
- Ensuring co-ordinated and integrated approaches to the planning, commissioning and delivery of services[22].
- Simplifying and reducing complexity in the delivery of public services[23].
- Engaging, involving and supporting the community in the delivery of public services[24].
- Improving public and community transport to ensure access to basic services[25].

Theme 4 – Renewable Energy at a Community Level

Local	Sub-regional	National
Wrexham Unitary Development Plan (1996-2011)[26] Wrexham County Borough Economic Prosperity Strategy (2012-2016)	Economic Ambition – A Strategy for Change. North Wales Economic Ambition Board (undated)	Programme for Government (Chapter 11)[27] One Wales: One Planet: A sustainable development scheme for Wales (2009) Climate Change Strategy for Wales (2010) Fuel Poverty Strategy (2010) Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan (2012)

[21] 'We commit to ensuring that Wrexham County Borough is a place where people have a say in the services that are delivered to them, and that their views, needs and aspirations are taken into account'. Wrexham's Community Strategy. Page 3.

[22] 'The LSB's aim is to improve joint working across its member organisations so we can provide even better services'. Wrexham Community Strategy. Page 3.

[23] '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.

[24] 'Continuing to develop activities in communities to help people contribute and get involved'. Wrexham Community Strategy. Page 6.

[25] 'Providing access to a safe, efficient and sustainable transport network'. Wrexham Community Strategy. Page 8.

[26] Note that due to fundamental concerns raised by the Planning Inspector, all documents relating to the 2012 Wrexham Local Development Plan have been withdrawn from Wrexham CBC's website.

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

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

Consistent strategic themes/priorities:
- Growing the sustainable energy sector[28].
- Delivering increased energy efficiency through renewables while protecting the countryside and contributing to sustainable communities[29].
- Focusing on community engagement and community benefit in renewable energy developments[30].

Theme 5: Exploitation of Digital Technology

Local	Sub-regional	National
Our Wrexham Plan. A Single Integrated Plan for Wrexham (2013-2024) Wrexham's Community Strategy 2009-2020 Report by Head of Assets and Economic Development to all Council Members 'Broadband Provision in Wrexham'. January 2013.	Economic Ambition – A Strategy for Change. North Wales Economic Ambition Board (undated)	Programme for Government (Chapter 2)[31] Delivering Digital Inclusion: A Strategic Framework for Wales (2010) Digital Inclusion Framework Delivery Plan (2011)

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[28] 'A growing foothold in the sustainable energy sector – one of the industries of the future'. Wrexham Economic Prosperity Strategy. Page 10.

[29] Wrexham County Borough Council. Information Sheet 'Small Scale Renewable Energy Generation and Energy Efficiency 1'. Page 1. January 2006.

[30] Energy Wales: A Low Carbon Transition. Page 18. 'Renewable energy generation sources (wind, waste, water, sun and wood) are preferred'. Policy 2.6 Wrexham UDP. Page 9.

[31] Chapter 2 - Public Services in Wales.

Consistent strategic themes/priorities:	
	• Supporting the development of technology in the context of productivity in the private sector[32].
	• Maximising the use of technology to support engagement in public services[33].
	• Improving digital connectivity[34] and broadband infrastructure[35].

Integration

	How LEADER in Wrexham will integrate
Welsh Government policies and programme areas	Through the strategy and package of proposed actions outlined in this LDS, LEADER investment in rural Wrexham 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[36] (via the range of actions proposed under Themes 1 and 2), help deliver public services in new and innovative ways[37] (via the range of actions proposed under Theme 3), help promote equality[38] and the Welsh language (as a cross cutting theme across all proposed themes and actions), help tackle poverty[39] 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[40] 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 Wrexham 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

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[32] Industry continues to play a vital role in the county borough's success but this has evolved from traditional heavy industry into high-tech manufacturing, technology and service based sectors. Wrexham's Community Strategy. Page 2.

[33] 'We love technology. We'll use it to make Wrexham a place where people can get the information and services they need. When they need them'. Our Wrexham Plan. Page 5.

[34] 'Developing and enhancing connectivity through improved broadband access and key infrastructure projects'. North Wales Local Authorities. Economic ambition: A Strategy for Change. Page 7.

[35] 'Wrexham has a higher percentage of broadband enabled exchanges than many other locations elsewhere in Wales' and Wrexham CBC will 'work with local businesses to ensure that they are both aware and able to optimise the network that is available. Source: Report by Head of Assets and Economic Development. 'Broadband Provision in Wrexham' January 2013.

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

[37] Ibid. Chapter 2, Page 7.

[38] Ibid. Chapter 8, Page 29.

[39] Ibid. Chapter 9, Page 32.

[40] Ibid. Chapter 10. Page 37.

	LEADER Theme 4 in this LDS will help deliver a number of policy commitments in **One Wales: One Planet**[41].
	• The Welsh Government's **Tourism Strategy**[42]. Specifically, the actions proposed under LEADER Theme 1 in this LDS will help deliver sustainable growth (through promotion[43], product development[44], profitable performance[45] and place building[46]) in the tourism industry in rural Wrexham by maximising its natural, cultural and heritage asset base.
	• The **Welsh Language Strategy**[47]. 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[48], the workplace and in business[49].
	• Emerging **policy on the historic environment of Wales**[50]. 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[51].
	• Policy on targeted **support for micro businesses**[52] 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 Wrexham[53].
	• **Food and Drink Strategy**[54] **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[55].
	• **The Welsh Government's Regeneration Framework**[56]. There will be an emphasis throughout the activities proposed in this LDS on integrating

[41] 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.
[42] Partnership for Growth: The Welsh Government Strategy for Tourism (2013-2020)
[43] Ibid. Promotion as a Strategic Priority, Page 18.
[44] Ibid. Product Development as a Strategic Priority. Page 19
[45] Ibid. Profitable Performance as a Strategic Priority. Page 23
[46] Ibid. Place building as a Strategic Priority. Page 24
[47] A living language: a language for living – Welsh language strategy 2012 to 2017. Welsh Government.
[48] Strategic area 3 of the strategy. Ibid. Page 33.
[49] Strategic area 4 of the strategy. Ibid. Page 37.
[50] As outlined in 'The Future of our Past'. A consultation on proposals for the historic environment of Wales.
[51] Outlined as a specific aim in 'The Future of our Past'. Ibid. Page 3.
[52] Micro-Business Task and Finish Group Report. January 2012.
[53] Ibid. Page 16. The report calls for support to 'become more innovative as a means of improving productivity and job creation'.
[54] Local Souring Action Plan. 'Food and Drink Wales'. Welsh Government. 2009
[55] Ibid. Strategic Aim 1 'To increase the level of local sourcing of food and drink in Wales'. Page 24.
[56] Vibrant and Viable Places. 2013.

	activities across programmes as set out in Vibrant and Viable Places[57].
	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 Wrexham will clearly be focused on pre-commercial exploration and 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 Wrexham 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. • **Digital Inclusion.** Specifically, actions proposed under LEADER Theme 5 will integrate closely with the work any successor programme to 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

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[57] 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.

	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 Wrexham	Other initiatives that LEADER will integrate with during the 2014-2020 include: • The Clwydian Range AONB Tourism Group • The WCVA's Community Investment Fund or a similar successor fund 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.
Projects and activities of other LAGs	The LDS for Wrexham has been developed alongside (i.e. by the same people and using the same consultation methodology) the LDS documents for rural Denbighshire and rural Flintshire. 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 Wrexham 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. |
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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 18 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 18, 6 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.

SECTION 3 - DELIVERY

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)
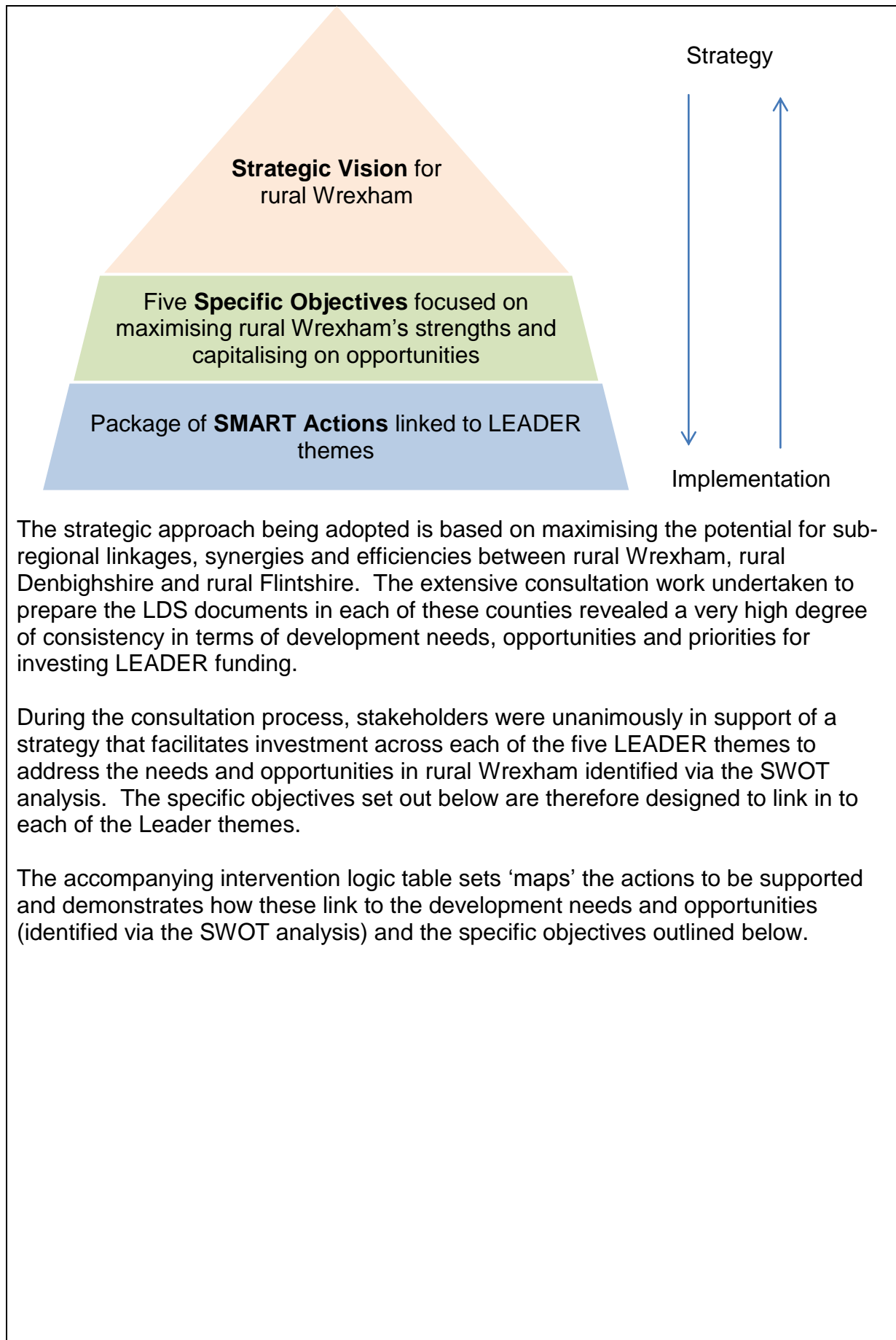
Description of how the LAG can improve the area

The LAG will improve conditions in rural Wrexham by:

- 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 a set 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, selecting and 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 Wrexham

The strategy for the rural Wrexham 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.

Strategy

Strategic Vision for rural Wrexham

Five **Specific Objectives** focused on maximising rural Wrexham's strengths and capitalising on opportunities

Package of **SMART Actions** linked to LEADER themes

Implementation

The strategic approach being adopted is based on maximising the potential for sub-regional linkages, synergies and efficiencies between rural Wrexham, rural Denbighshire and rural Flintshire. 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 Wrexham 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 Wrexham
Rural Wrexham has an iconic industrial and cultural heritage. It boasts outstanding landscapes and its proximity to Cheshire and Shropshire make it a strategic gateway to the wider North Wales sub-region. Rural Wrexham is a well-connected, vibrant, inclusive, highly attractive and sustainable place where people want to live, learn, work, visit and invest.

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 Wrexham's iconic heritage, culture and outstanding environment.
SO2	More entrepreneurs in rural Wrexham 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 Wrexham 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 Wrexham who enjoy the benefits directly.
SO5	Technology enables rather than restricts people and businesses to access services and improve productivity in rural Wrexham.

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 and recreational value of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site (WHS) to people, communities and enterprises in rural Wrexham. This action would include: - Innovatively promoting and marketing the WHS as a visitor attraction and destination on a sub-regional basis. - Trialling innovative events and activities that promote the WHS to potential visitors. - Piloting innovative support mechanisms to

		supporting enterprises that rely on the WHS as a key attraction to co-ordinate and network more effectively on a sub-regional basis. • Enhancing and developing aspects of the WHS itself (e.g. visitor infrastructure, management and interpretation). This would be a territorial co-operation project across Wrexham and Denbighshire and would also offer the potential for wider UK and trans-national co-operation. The interventions under SA1 will also be closely aligned with those proposed under SA2.
SA2	SO1	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 Wrexham. 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). This would be a territorial co-operation project across Wrexham, Denbighshire and Flintshire and would also offer the potential for wider UK and trans-national co-operation.
SA3	SO1	Developing local identity and natural resources through a co-ordinated and innovative package of investments in sense of place across rural Wrexham. This action would include: • Supporting existing and developing new events, festivals and exhibitions around culture, heritage and food (e.g. a Food Trail) in Wrexham including through co-ordinated and professional public relations activities. • Supporting local feasibility studies, 'design statements' 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).
- 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
SA4	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). • 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.
SA5	SO2	Providing targeted support for businesses including social enterprises and groups of 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 Flintshire) networks to bring enterprises 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 Wrexham. • 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.

Actions

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

Smart Action	Specific Objective	Outline Description of Action
SA6	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). • 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 enterprises 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.
SA7	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 Wrexham 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
SA8	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
SA9	SO5	Providing specific and tailored support aimed at improving the way businesses and social enterprises in rural Wrexham 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 Wrexham. • 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.
SA10	SO5	Developing digital centres of excellence in rural Wrexham. This action would include: • Exploring the potential of enabling fast broadband connections to rural schools and libraries to be used for wider community purposes. • Providing residents, visitors and local micro and social 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 particularly amongst older people.

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

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

Firstly, significant expertise in terms of the LEADER animation role has been built up – both within the Wrexham Northern Marches Cymru LAG and within Cadwyn Clwyd as the new administrative body for the area. 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.

Secondly, 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.

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

LEADER has been operational in Wrexham previously and significant body of experience, knowledge and expertise has been built up.

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 Wrexham, Denbighshire and Flintshire 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.

- Transfer of promising actions around the Pontcysyllte World Heritage Site (WHS) – (see SA2 above) linking with other WHS Sites to share, learn from and develop common actions for the economic, social and environmental benefit of rural areas. This applies to Wrexham and Denbighshire.

- 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 Wrexham, Denbighshire and Flintshire.

- 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.

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 spring-board for developing projects and actions. Entrepreneurial attitudes will be fostered and enhanced through the creative engine of the LEADER process and its methodology. The project will encourage innovation – facilitating experimentation, the pre-commercial trialling and piloting of 'new' approaches, 'new' processes and 'new' products.

The development of innovative approaches, processes and products is a key component of this project proposal. 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 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 as 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. The celebration event will focus on either an individual project launch or a general celebration event of the LEADER as the LAG sees appropriate.

- 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.

	SECTION 4 – MANAGEMENT OF OPERATION

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 full time LAG Manager and Animation Officer whose time will be apportioned against the percentages detailed

below.

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.

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

6.1 Monitoring and Results

The delivery number and timetable for the Performance Indicators are included in the appended Financial Indicator documents. Details relating to delivery of outputs against specific actions are contained in the Intervention Logic Framework document.

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 Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site (WHS) to people, communities and enterprises in rural Wrexham. This action would include:

- Innovatively promoting and marketing the WHS as a visitor attraction and destination on a sub-regional basis.
- Trialling innovative events and activities that promote the WHS to potential visitors.
- Piloting innovative support mechanisms to supporting enterprises that rely on the WHS as a key attraction to co-ordinate and network more effectively on a sub-regional basis.
- Enhancing and developing aspects of the WHS itself (e.g. visitor infrastructure, management and interpretation).

The interventions under SA1 will also be closely aligned with those proposed under SA2.

SA2: 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 Wrexham. 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).

SA3: Developing local identity and natural resources through a co-ordinated and innovative package of investments in sense of place across rural Wrexham. This action would include:
- Supporting existing and developing new events, festivals and exhibitions around culture, heritage and food (e.g. a Food Trail) in Wrexham including through co-ordinated and professional public relations activities.
- Supporting local feasibility studies, 'design statements' 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).
- 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 9 project clusters will be developed under the programme, and outputs will achieved towards the latter part of the programme. Again it is envisaged that 9 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;
SA4: 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 (pre-commercial) and promote youth entrepreneurship.

Commissioning and piloting the development of new food and non-food products.

SA5: Providing targeted support for businesses including social enterprises and groups of 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 Flintshire) networks to bring enterprises 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 Wrexham.

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 17 sub projects will be piloted leading to the outputs of 17 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 9 communities (sectoral, geographical thematic, interest) will participate in pilots.

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

SA6: 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 enterprises 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.

SA7: 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 Wrexham with employers in the more industrial areas of the county

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 9 communities (sectoral, geographical, thematic or interest communities). It is anticipated that 9 businesses will benefit be they social enterprise or rural micro businesses.

Theme 4

To deliver theme 4 outputs the following will be achieved;

SA8: 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 7 which engages 7 community area resulting in communities benefitting. It is anticipated based on the consultation process that 14 businesses will benefit.

Theme 5

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

SA9: Providing specific and tailored support aimed at improving the way businesses and social enterprises in rural Wrexham 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 Wrexham.
- 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.

SA10: Developing digital centres of excellence in rural Wrexham. This action would include:

- Exploring the potential of enabling fast broadband connections to rural schools and libraries to be used for wider community purposes.
- Providing residents, visitors and local micro and social 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 particularly amongst older people

Based on the information gathered during the consultation process, it is anticipated that 7 sub projects will be piloted leading to the outputs of 7 operations achieved engaging 7 communities (sectoral, geographical, thematic or interest communities). It is anticipated that 14 businesses will benefit be they social enterprise or rural micro businesses.

Co-operation

Co-operation outputs will be delivered through the following interventions:

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). *This would be a territorial co-operation project across Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham and would also offer the potential for wider UK and trans-national co-operation*

SA2: Developing, enhancing and sustainably exploiting the commercial and recreational value of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site (WHS) to people, communities and enterprises in rural Wrexham. This action would include:
- Innovatively promoting and marketing the WHS as a visitor attraction and destination on a sub-regional basis.
- Trialling innovative events and activities that promote the WHS to potential visitors.
- Piloting innovative support mechanisms to supporting enterprises that rely on the WHS as a key attraction to co-ordinate and network more effectively on a sub-regional basis.
- Enhancing and developing aspects of the WHS itself (e.g. visitor infrastructure, management and interpretation).

It is envisaged that 9 operations will be achieved which entail 9 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 Wrexham 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

Wrexham, Denbighshire and Flintshire, 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.
  o Highlight areas of good practice and demonstrate these via evaluation case studies.
  o Identify any sub-optimal aspects of delivery and recommend actions to address the issues identified.
  o Assess the extent to which value for money is being achieved.
  o Assess the strength of counter-factual arguments (i.e. what the likely scenario would have been without LEADER funding being available/invested).
  o Assess the contribution of the LDS and LEADER actions to the cross-cutting themes.

     o Assess the extent to which learning around innovative actions is being shared with LAGS in other parts of Wales, the UK and EU.
     o 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:
     o Assess the extent to which recommendations made at the mid-term stage have been implemented.
     o Assess the appropriateness of the overall strategy and intervention logic underpinning the LDS.
     o 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.
     o Highlight areas of good practice and demonstrate these via evaluation case studies.
     o Identify any sub-optimal aspects of delivery and recommend actions to address the issues identified in future programmes.
     o Assess the extent to which value for money has been achieved.
     o Assess the strength of counter-factual arguments (i.e. what the likely scenario would have been without LEADER funding being available/invested).
     o Assess the extent to which learning around innovative actions has being shared with LAGS in other parts of Wales, the UK and EU.
     o 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	Wrexham 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 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 Wrexham.
Wales Rural Observatory	The WRO website contains research which is relevant to the Wrexham 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 The data available is generally for Wales as a whole, but in some instances is broken down to	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 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

	Local Authority area.	provides baseline data for use of ICT by businesses that would be useful in the context of any relevant interventions for SMEs.
Wrexham County Borough Council website – The People's Voice	Wrexham County Borough Council uses regular online surveys to gather opinions on the county and of the council services, and the results are published on their website.	The People's Voice is a relatively new project for WCBC, and as such detailed data is only available on quality of life and perception of crime in Wrexham so far – the former data would be useful in providing a baseline against which to measure the impact of the RDP projects. More general demographic data is also available.
Welsh Government – Stats Wales	The Welsh Government regularly releases statistical data via their StatsWales website which are relevant in the context of the Wrexham LDS.	This website contains data across a very wide range of areas, which can often be filtered by Local Authority area. Topics include: • Agricultural and rural affair statistics • Business economy and labour market statistics • Environment and countryside • Population and Migration • Tourism • Welsh Language Information is available from this source which could provide evidence for interventions based on all of the specific objectives contained in the LDS.
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 Wrexham. 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 to a	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 could provide evidence for interventions based on all of the specific objectives contained

	regional level, and provides all-Wales data.	in the LDS.	
Nomis	Nomis is a sub-division of the Office for National Statistics which provides UK labour market statistics from official sources. The data is particularly useful as it can be broken down to ward level (the same level as used in the RDP).	Data is available on resident population, labour supply (including economic inactivity, qualifications and employment by occupation) and benefits claimants. This data would be useful in assessing the impact of interventions funded under S02.	

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, Wrexham County Council and the Association of Voluntary Organisations in Wrexham (AVOW). The on-line consultation opened on 29th July 2014. 60 responses were received.
- Conducting two public consultation workshops in Wrexham. A daytime session was held on 29th August and an evening session was held on 28th August 2014. Direct invitations were sent to contacts on databases held by Cadwyn Clwyd, Wrexham County Council and AVOW. 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 Wrexham County Council on 4th September 2014.
- In all 38 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.

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 Wrexham, 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. Wrexham), 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 Wrexham.

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 Wrexham.

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 Wrexham and an analysis of relevant policy, strategy and research documents.

As per the guidance issued, a table format has been used in-line with that presented in the Wales RDP 'Next Steps' consultation Document. We note that the SWOT analysis presented in that document grouped strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats via each Priority of the RDP. In-line with that model, we present the SWOT analysis underpinning this LDS in a similar grouped format according to the five LEADER themes.

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

Strengths	Weaknesses
Rural Wrexham's rich heritage and cultural background and history. The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site, the Clwydian Range Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Erddig Hall and Chirk Castle (both renowned National Trust properties), Minera quarry and the River Dee and Dee Valley are all examples of key local assets[58]. Tourism is a market sector of key strategic importance to rural Wrexham[59].	Limitations in the overall visitor management and appeal of the Pontcysyllte WHS[60]. Poor networks and connectivity (both transport and collaborative approaches to marketing and promotion) between major attractions[61]. Weak interpretation and signage at key visitor sites[62]. Ad hoc approach to events in Wrexham[63].
Opportunities	**Threats**
Raising the quality of the visitor experience to the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct WHS, the Trevor Basin and the Llangollen canal corridor[64].	Negative perceptions of rural Wrexham based on out-dated views of Wrexham town itself[68]. Lack of funding and investment to

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[58] Evidence: The Wrexham Destination Management Plan lists these as strengths on page 8.

[59] Evidence: The Wrexham Destination management Plan outlines a target to increase the value of tourism in Wrexham from £84m in 2010/11 to £95m by 2015/16 and increasing visitor volume from 1.64m visits in 2010 to 1.9m in 2015/16. Tourism generated expenditure of £84 m and supported 1,300 FTE jobs in 2010. Source: Wrexham Destination Management Plan. Pages 7 and 8.

[60] Evidence: Highlighted as a 'product weakness'. Source: Wrexham Destination Management Plan. Pages 9.

[61] Evidence: Highlighted as a 'product weakness'. Source: Wrexham Destination Management Plan. Pages 9.

[62] Evidence: Highlighted as a 'product weakness'. Source: Wrexham Destination Management Plan. Pages 9.

[63] Evidence: Highlighted as a 'product weakness'. Source: Wrexham Destination Management Plan. Pages 9.

[64] Evidence: Highlighted as an opportunity. Source: Wrexham Destination Management Plan. Pages 11.

	capitalise on culture and heritage related opportunities[69].
Strengthening linkages and co-ordination between different visitor attractions both within rural Wrexham but also in conjunction with Flintshire and Denbighshire[65]. Maximising the potential of the expanded Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB[66]. Strengthening the walking and 'outdoor' visitor offer, particularly in the Ceiriog Valley[67].	

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

Strengths	Weaknesses
Wrexham as a whole enjoys a diverse private sector made up of large employers as well as small and micro enterprises[70]. Wrexham boasts a University and an FE college within the county and has a growing student population[71]. Wrexham benefits from relatively low levels of unemployment[72].	Under-occupancy in commercial property, particularly some retail premises on high streets in rural Wrexham towns[73]. Low levels of self-employment compared with the UK as a whole[74]. Skills gaps between what employers are seeking and what those looking for jobs have to offer[75].
Opportunities	**Threats**

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[68] Evidence: Highlighted as an issue on page 11 of the Wrexham Destination Management Plan.

[65] Evidence: Highlighted as an opportunity on page 11 of the Wrexham Destination Management Plan.

[66] Evidence: Highlighted as an issue on page 11 of the Wrexham Destination Management Plan.

[67] Evidence: Highlighted as an issue on page 11 of the Wrexham Destination Management Plan.

[69] Evidence: Highlighted as an issue on page 11 of the Wrexham Destination Management Plan.

[70] Evidence: Estimated to be 4,585 businesses in Wrexham. Source: Wrexham Economic Prosperity Strategy. Page 21.

[71] Evidence: 'One of the fastest growing student populations in the UK and a university that's pushing the boundaries of business and innovation'. Wrexham Economic Prosperity Strategy. Page 10.

[72] Evidence: Unemployment in Wrexham is falling, but not as quickly as it is elsewhere; as a result unemployment in Wrexham is currently the same as the Wales average of 3.5%'. Wrexham Council Plan 2014-2017. Page 15.

[73] Evidence: '30% of the council's commercial property is empty'. Wrexham Economic Prosperity Strategy. Page 21.

[74] Evidence: 'Just 6.4% of the population is self-employed, compared to 9.4% across the UK'. Source: Wrexham Economic Prosperity Strategy. Page 21.

[75] 'Helping businesses and training partners identify skills gaps and work with colleges to extend the training they offer'. Evidence: Wrexham Council Plan 2014-2017.Page 14.

Developing business networks to encourage dialogue, collaboration and inter-trading between firms[76]. Encouraging entrepreneurship, business start-ups and indigenous business growth.[77] Developing the commercial property offer in rural Wrexham to make it more relevant to the needs of indigenous businesses and new starts[78].	Increasing levels of youth unemployment and welfare reform[79].

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

Strengths	**Weaknesses**
Wrexham's residents are relatively satisfied with their public services[80]. A strong volunteer base and existing community groups[81].	Poor public transport can make it difficult to access services in rural Wrexham[82].
Opportunities	**Threats**
Engaging economically inactive people in community activity, volunteering and the delivery of important local services[83].	Access to important services in rural Wrexham is becoming more challenging as services are withdrawn or centralised due to on-going austerity[85].

[76] Evidence: 'Developing 'business communities' and encourage dialogue between firms so that they work together for mutual benefit and improved competitiveness'. Wrexham Council Plan 2014-2017.Page 14.

[77] Evidence: Wrexham Council Plan 2014-2017.Page 14.

[78] Evidence: Wrexham Council Plan 2014-2017.Page 13.

[79] 'Youth unemployment in Wrexham has been steadily rising and is amongst the highest in North Wales, targeted efforts are needed to reverse this trend'. Wrexham Council Plan 2014-2017.Page 15.

[80] Evidence: Wrexham Council's 'People's Voice Survey' showed that 66 per cent of survey respondents were either very satisfied (7 per cent) or fairly satisfied (59 per cent) with the way Wrexham CBC runs things. Sample size was 314. February 2013. Source: http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/assets/pdfs/consultations/peoples_voice/the_local_council_the_local_area_and_quality_of_life.pdf

[81] '100 community groups, 1,000 volunteers and 2,000 community learners. Wrexham is a place where people can shape the communities they live in and develop their personal skills and experience'. Wrexham Economic Prosperity Strategy. Page 11.

[82] Evidence: 'The availability of jobs or the existence of shopping and cultural opportunities means little if people cannot access them easily and affordably'. Wrexham Council Plan 2014-2017.Page 35.

[83] Evidence: 'Engaging economically inactive people in community activity , volunteering and community learning is a recognised route to improving employability, community spirit and cohesion whilst building resilient, active and prosperous communities'. Wrexham Council Plan 2014-2017.Page 15.

Supporting sustainable community transport solutions to ensure that people can access services[84].	

Theme 4 – Renewable Energy at a Community Level

Strengths	Weaknesses
The development of a mechanical biological treatment (MBT) plant on land adjacent to the Wrexham Eco Recycling Park[86].	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[87].
Opportunities	**Threats**
Supporting community driven renewable energy initiatives[88].	The potential (negative) impact of wind turbines on the rural Wrexham landscape[89].

Theme 5 – Exploitation of Digital Technology

Strengths	Weaknesses
The Superfast Cymru Scheme and the on-going roll-out of superfast broadband cabling within rural Wrexham[90].	Digital connectivity and in particular broadband (both speed and reliability) is perceived as 'patchy' in rural Wrexham. This is a barrier to business creation and growth and also to the adoption of

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[85] Evidence: 'Given the cuts in funding that the Council is faced with we have no choice but to make radical decisions about the range and level of services that we provide'. Wrexham Council Plan 2014-2017.Page 9.

[84] Evidence: 'We will also ensure that public transport remains accessible as running costs increase and Public funding for public transport falls'. Wrexham Council Plan 2014-2017.Page 14.

[86] Evidence: 'The plant will process all of Wrexham's residual household waste…for heat and energy generation'. Wrexham Council Plan 2014-2017.Page 31.

[87] 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.

[88] 'Our aim is to optimise energy efficiency…carrying out our community leadership role to positively influence partners and the public'. Wrexham Council Plan 2014-2017.Page 31.

[89] Evidence: 'There is concern about the negative impact of development…including the effect of wind farms'.

[90] Evidence: 'Wrexham has a higher percentage of broadband enabled exchanges than many other locations elsewhere in Wales'. Report by Head of Assets and Economic Development to Wrexham County Borough Council Members. January 2013. Page 1.

	more modern, flexible working patterns[91].
Opportunities	**Threats**
Supporting local people and businesses to make the most of technology[92]. Improving the quality and availability of broadband[93].	The risk of digital exclusion as more and more services are delivered on-line only and key services (both public and private) are withdrawn from rural Wrexham or are centralised[94].

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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[91] Evidence: 'Wrexham has a higher percentage of broadband enabled exchanges than many other locations elsewhere in Wales' and Wrexham CBC will 'work with local businesses to ensure that they are both aware and able to optimise the network that is available. Source: Report by Head of Assets and Economic Development. 'Broadband Provision in Wrexham' January 2013.

[92] Evidence: 'Wrexham CBC will 'work with local businesses to ensure that they are both aware and able to optimise the network that is available'. Report by Head of Assets and Economic Development to Wrexham County Borough Council Members. January 2013. Page 1.

[93] Evidence: 'We will work to influence providers to improve the quality of local broadband availability, using local businesses to spearhead demand'. Wrexham Council Plan 2014-2017.Page 35.

[94] Evidence: 'Over the next few years, accessibility will continue to become a virtual issue with more and more services available on-line'. Wrexham Council Plan 2014-2017.Page 35.

SECTION 8 – CROSS CUTTING THEMES

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[95] 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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[95] Consultation Document: Equality Impact Assessment of the 2014-2020 Rural Development Plan for Wales. May 2013. Prepared by MottMacdonald 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[96]. 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

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[96] Ibid. Page 52.

the following relevant indicators where appropriate:
- 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**[97], 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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[97] 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'[98]. 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[99]). 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[100]. 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, education or training** (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 t**ackle 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

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

SO5 – SA10: It has been identified that fast, reliable broadband and space to work will be provided to residents. To maximise the contribution to the TP&SE CCT would be to consider this activity to benefit people especially in relation to training and employment.

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[101].

In preparing this LDS, we have taken account of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Report for the 2014-2020 RDP[102] and note the conclusion that there is 'potential to protect and enhance ecosystem services and biodiversity values, culture and heritage and climate issues'[103]

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, 2 and 3 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 4 and 5 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**

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

in social enterprises to help deliver physical and natural improvements. There will be specific opportunities to contribute positive outcomes to this via Specific Objective 3 and SMART actions 6 and 7 (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 8 (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 9 and 10.

- 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 Wrexham, namely part of the Clwydian Range, Esclusham and Mynyddoedd y Berwyn.

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 (via the SMART actions under Specific Objectives SO1 and SO4)
- 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 collectively 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 (via the SMART actions under Specific Objectives SO1, SO2 and SO5)
- 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 (via the SMART actions under Specific Objective SO3)
- 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.

SECTION 9 – LONG TERM SUSTAINABILITY

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 Wrexham	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.
Wrexham 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. AVOW, 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. | Case study materials. |
| | Evidence of key outcomes to individuals, communities and businesses. | 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.
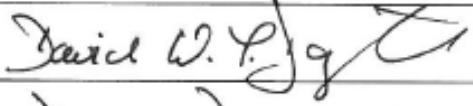
SECTION 10 – DECLARATION AND SIGNATURE

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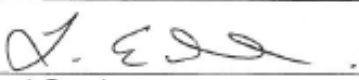
I undertake to notify the Welsh Government in advance of carrying out any changes to the nature of this project.

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:	*David W. P. [signature]*
Name:	DAVID DARLINGTON
Chair/Deputy Chair LAG:	Chair
Date:	25ᵗ September 2014

Administrative Body Representative

Signed:	*[signature]*
Name:	Lowri Owain
Position in Administrative Body:	Chief Executive, Cadwyn Clwyd
Date:	25/Sept 2014,

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