

# Strategy Aims and Objectives

## Introduction

This section considers the objectives and priorities for the Local Development Strategy and the new LEADER programme within the wider policy context locally, regionally, nationally and transnational.

The objectives for the strategy have been derived from the analysis of the needs and opportunities which in turn have come out of the extensive consultation process with community groups, businesses and stakeholders. They have also taken into account the overall aims of the EU LEADER programme which are to address social inclusion, economic development and poverty.

## Overall Aim

The overall aim for the Local Development Strategy that has evolved during the consultation process is:-

***“To achieve an increase in sustainable employment and incomes, and in social cohesion and quality of life; and to conserve and enhance the high quality of the heritage and environment while maximising the benefits in economic, social and environmentally sustainable terms “.***

This means supporting the local economy and communities to become stronger and more resilient so that they can more easily survive into the future and withstand future changes and challenges. It is also about building capacity within communities.

Many communities within Orkney have an element of social capital (i.e. patterns of interaction, networks, shared values, etc.). However, building community capacity has been a key part of the LEADER Programme in conjunction with LAG partners. This will continue in the new Programme through a sustained commitment from the LAG and other public and voluntary partners of support and working with communities. Many communities in Orkney have the same people involved in the various groups, societies, clubs, etc. that currently exist. Whilst this can be beneficial, encouragement will be provided to ensure all members of communities are encouraged to get involved in potential projects from their area.

## Strategic Priorities

This overall aim will be delivered by giving priority to supporting the following themes :-

1. Support small business and enterprise growth and farm diversification

2. Support for Orkney's tourism, cultural heritage, crafts, and food & drink sectors
3. Support for Orkney's community services and facilities
4. Support for Orkney's natural environment and development and Sustainable Energy
5. Support development of Orkney's fisheries Sector

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The **SMART** objectives to help deliver this overall aim and strategic priorities have also been developed to address the needs and opportunities summarised at the end of the SWOT analysis. SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed. It is intended that the targets will be achieved by the end of the programme period, or in some cases, this could be some time after the end of the period. They have been identified as the following:-

**Strategic priority 1:**

1. To strengthen and increase the sustainability of local businesses
2. To increase income and turnover for local businesses
3. To maintain, and increase where possible, the population level and the age structure especially in the more fragile communities at risk
4. To provide support to specific business sectors in Orkney and inter sector linkages

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**Strategic priority 2:**

5. To support ideas and projects within these sectors, with the potential to innovate
6. To attract more visitors to sites and facilities throughout Orkney
7. To develop new market opportunities and add value for all highlighted sectors
8. To conserve and enhance built heritage sites and facilities

**Strategic priority 3:**

9. To encourage participation and increase capacity in local communities and organisations
10. To support inter-generational activities within local communities
11. To assist groups in becoming sustainable and innovative
12. To enable communities to maintain and, where possible, improve their population and demographic structure
13. To promote increased use of services and facilities through innovative actions

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**Strategic priority 4:**

14. To conserve and enhance natural heritage sites and wildlife
15. To improve access to landscapes, natural features, and habitats throughout Orkney
16. To encourage and support the development and implementation of energy efficiency measures and use of small scale renewables

17. To support ideas and projects within these sectors, with the potential to innovate

**Strategic priority 5:**

18. To facilitate the diversification and sustainable management of the local fisheries sector

19. To develop new market opportunities and added value for fish products

20. To support initiatives for diversification in fisheries-based communities

**Priorities**

Alongside the five high level thematic priorities for delivering the overall aim, there was considerable discussion during the consultation on whether certain groups or areas should be prioritised. The general consensus was that **specific groups** in the population such as women, young people, older people, unemployed etc., should not be prioritised but that instead priority should be given to projects that target all sectors in the population and promote intergroup and intergenerational activities and participation. The reasoning for this was based on the small numbers and dispersed locations of individuals in possible target groups, and the fact that it would result in more social cohesion if projects could show how they benefit most if not all sectors in a community.

Thus the priority should be for projects that show good social cohesion, participation and intergenerational activities.

Orkney has several key income generating **sectors** in the local economy such as agriculture, fisheries, food and drink, tourism, creative industries and renewable energy, education, and R&D, as well as other important sectors such as construction, public services, transport, and other private services. It was considered difficult to suggest some sectors should have priority over others because it can depend on local circumstances and whether there is scope for innovation, connectivity and growth potential as well as positive environmental impacts. Nonetheless it is suggested that priority is given to tourism, cultural heritage, crafts, and food and drink sectors, especially where there is potential for growth, development of skills, scope for innovation and connectivity improvements, and positive environmental impacts.

Priorities in relation to the environment include projects that reduce the carbon footprint, enhance the heritage, and improve access.

**Geographic priorities** were also considered. Some targeting was supported under the last LEADER programme based on some of the key indicators such as population change and structure, unemployment, access to facilities, SIMD status, and community capacity. The islands, outside the Mainland of Orkney, were identified as priority areas. However based on past experience and given some of the changes that have occurred e.g. in population, as well as the small size of the overall Orkney community, it was felt that the case for targeting specific local areas could not be justified this time and was not supported by the data e.g. some of the Mainland areas face similar problems to the islands; and some of the islands which have been supported by LEADER funding may be now in a stronger position and have increased capacity which should enable them to take forward projects they

have identified in their Development Plans to address some of the island issues (see Appendix 4). Nonetheless they still face severe problems and disadvantages.

Under objective 6 from the EU Priorities – “Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development”, the LAG will continue to encourage projects from throughout Orkney in order to help achieve this objective locally as well as create opportunities to encourage social inclusion. As well as all the communities in Orkney, the LEADER team will target areas highlighted in page 3 as being included in The Index of Multiple Deprivation for Scotland through promotion of LEADER to the main groups operating within these areas. This will allow any major factors to be considered and also identify suitable projects to help address them and provide a lasting benefit to these communities.

All the local areas where data is available can demonstrate they have experience of market failures and barriers to employment and growth that need addressing, whether they are an isolated small island, mainland rural parish, or even part of Kirkwall. The small size of Orkney means it does not make sense to create artificial geographic priorities. A project supported in one location can bring wider benefits to other areas.

It is also not considered appropriate for any spatial priority for FLAG funding as the whole of Orkney is a fisheries area with individual fisheries communities held within.

The situation in some communities can change quite quickly either way and the LAG would prefer to retain the flexibility to respond to circumstances as they arise in any community within Orkney. This allows the LAG to accurately reflect the aspirations of local people and allow them to help shape the LEADER Programme’s delivery within their own communities.

It is proposed that projects from all areas should be considered and that part of the assessment process would be to take account of the circumstances in specific communities as well as the benefits and outcomes a project is likely to generate. It is felt that this way is more likely to result in supporting the “best” projects in LEADER terms and thus achieve the greatest outcomes and benefit to the whole Orkney community.

## **Coherence with other Policies and Programmes**

This strategy has not been created in isolation. It has been developed while taking account of the existing policy frameworks in place at the local level, regionally, nationally and at EU level. It also recognises that LEADER will not provide all the necessary resources to tackle the issues raised but will need a coordinated approach between all programmes and funders to achieve the desired outcomes and results.

### **Local Policy Context**

There are several strategies locally that have been taken into account when producing this strategy to ensure complementarity and fit with the overall vision for Orkney.

**Orkney Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement:** The Orkney Community Planning Partnership has recently restructured. The steering group will take on a more formal leadership role as a board in accordance with the requirements of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill, due to be enacted in Spring 2015. There are now likely to be 3 strategic priorities. These are:

- Healthy and sustainable communities
- Positive ageing
- Creating a vibrant economic environment

The Local Development Strategy has taken into consideration relevant Community Plan priorities in relation to the economy, employment, resilient and sustainable communities, our environment and culture, and infrastructure.

**Orkney Economic Strategy 2012-16:** The Strategy sets out 5 strategic objectives :-

1. Growing Orkney's Businesses
2. Connections and Global Markets
3. Developing Innovation, Skills and Learning
4. Community Development, Leadership and Entrepreneurship
5. Towards a Low-Carbon Economy

Under each of the strategic objectives are a number of operational objectives as shown below :-

**1. Growing Orkney's Businesses**

Competitiveness of Orkney Businesses

- encourage business start-ups and expansion, support innovation and diversification, and support business development on fragile islands
- increase levels of e-business
- encourage businesses to use new technologies to improve efficiency and profitability
- enhance workforce development
- harness information and intellectual assets
- Ensure the availability of property and industrial infrastructure for local businesses and inward investors
- Focus on key sectors and encourage cross-sectoral initiatives

**2. Connections and Global Markets**

- Increase recognition of Orkney's brand value in global markets
- Promote transport services that support economic development
- Lobby for essential broadband and electricity grid access
- Continued promotion of Orkney as a unique and attractive location to visit, live, work and invest (based on its culture, heritage, environment and economic opportunities)

**3. Developing Innovation, Skills and Learning**

- Promotion of creativity, innovation and commercialisation

- Identify and provide solutions for skills gaps in key sectors
- Prepare local people for local jobs through learning and training, and promote enhanced workforce learning

#### **4. *Community Development, Leadership and Entrepreneurship***

- Effective community and enterprise development within the fragile communities
- Supporting infrastructure and services in rural and island communities

#### **5. *Towards a Low Carbon Economy***

- The development and testing of innovative low carbon solutions
- Promotion of energy efficiency and carbon reduction
- Increased access to incentives for low carbon initiatives
- Exploit Orkney's emerging position as a centre of excellence in renewable energy

These objectives and priorities have also been used to feed into the Local Development Strategy. Other key local policy documents which have a relevance to the Local Development Strategy include:-

- Orkney Local Development Plan 2013
- Orkney Islands Council Corporate Plan 2013-2018
- Orkney Physical Activity and Sports Strategy 2008-2013
- Orkney Biodiversity Plan 2008-2011
- Arts Development Plan for Orkney 2012-2015
- Sustainable Energy Strategy for Orkney December 2010
- Voluntary Action Orkney Plan 2012-2015
- Orkney Transport Strategy 2007 (under review)
- Orkney Housing Strategy 2011-2016

In addition there are a number of strategies for individual islands which have been consulted such as:- Westray, Papa Westray, Sanday, Shapinsay, Stronsay, Eday, Rousay Egilsay and Wyre, Hoy, and North Ronaldsay; and other Initiatives such as North Isles Landscape Partnership which could generate a demand for support from LEADER.

The Orkney Community Plan brings all these strands together into an integrated and coordinated vision for Orkney. The diagram that follows provides a visual summary of how all the different strategies including LEADER dovetail together within the overall Community Plan:



Rural development is a cross cutting theme that has relevance to most of the themes in the Community Planning Partnership (CPP). The RDS has been drafted to ensure complementarity with the CPP priorities and the most relevant local strategies such as Economic, Social/Community, and Environment Strategies. This will help to make sure that LEADER will add value to what is done through the other strategies.

The LAG currently has linkages with the Orkney CPP. The current LEADER officer sits on the Community Economic Development Orkney Group (CEDOG). Other LAG members are active in their participation of additional CPP sub-groups, which allows them to provide a vital link between the CPP and LAG. Despite there being some inevitable overlaps in such a small region, the LAG operates independently to the CPP with different working practices and modes of operation.

#### 5.4.2. Regional Policy Context

There are also policies at a regional level, e.g. Highlands and Islands Enterprise: Operating Plan 2012 - 2015 - Ambitious for Scotland. The vision is for the Highlands

and Islands to be a highly successful and competitive region, in which increasing numbers of people chose to live, work, study, and invest.

This focuses on 4 key priorities:

- Supporting businesses and social enterprises.
- Strengthen communities and fragile areas.
- Developing growth sectors.

- Creating conditions for a competitive and low carbon region.

### **5.4.3. UK/Scottish National Policy Context**

There are a number of national policy documents and strategies which a local development strategy for Orkney should fit within and thus help to achieve. These include:

National Economic Strategy: The Government Economic Strategy is focused on 6 strategic priorities which aim to drive sustainable economic growth and develop a more resilient and adaptable economy:

- Supportive business environment.
- Transition to a low carbon economy.
- Learning, skills and wellbeing.
- Infrastructure development and place.
- Effective government.
- Equity.

Rural Development Strategy/Programme for Scotland 2014 - 2020: (see EU section below)

Tourism Scotland 2020: This national strategy was launched in 2012 by the Scottish Tourism Alliance and sets out the vision for the industry which is to make Scotland a destination of first choice for a high quality, value for money, and memorable customer experience, delivered by skilled and passionate people.

This is an important strategy for Orkney given the scale of the tourism industry locally and the focus on quality, food and drink, festivals and providing an authentic experience. This ties in well to what Orkney can offer.

This document is complemented by the Tourism Development Plan for Scotland which sets out the framework to assist and promote growth in the visitor economy to 2020 through Visit Scotland along with the other agencies such as HIE and Scottish Enterprise.

Other relevant policy documents include: Forward Strategy for Scottish Agriculture, The Scottish Natural Heritage Strategy and Priorities 2012 - 2015, Food and Drink Strategy – Recipe for Success, and A Low Carbon Economic Strategy for Scotland, and a Strategic Framework for Scottish Aquaculture.

### **5.4.4. EU Policy Context**

It is a requirement of all EU programmes to show integration and the links between them especially the European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF), European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), European Agricultural and Rural Development Fund (EARDF), Interreg programmes, as well as those for the environment and research and development.

Structural and Investment Fund Programme: the new European Structural Fund Programmes (now called ESIFP) have been designed to meet the vision of Europe's

social market economy for the twenty first century as set out in Europe 2020. This has three priorities:

- Smart Growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation.
- Sustainable Growth: promoting a more resource efficient greener and more competitive economy.
- Inclusive Growth: fostering a high employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion.

The Highlands and Islands remain eligible for SF (ERDF, ESF) support under the Transition Objective of the 2014 - 2020 new programme. 172 million euro has been allocated to the Highlands and Islands. The details of the programme have yet to be finalised but the priorities could be:

- Low carbon, resource efficiency and environment.
- Local development and social inclusion.
- SME competitiveness and innovation and jobs.

The measures likely to be supported under the ESIF programme could be larger scale projects which would complement the smaller scale LEADER-type projects.

Common Agriculture Policy; European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development: Scottish Rural Development Programme: the LEADER programme falls within the wider EAFRD fund which is being delivered through several axes and schemes that provide support to the agriculture sector and rural development. LEADER is Axis 4 and has been allocated £66 million across Scotland plus £20 million for business development. The SRDP is the key policy document for Scottish rural areas. A new programme has still to be finalised but some initial priorities are:

- Protecting and enhancing our natural assets.
- Adapting to, mitigating, climate change.
- Sustainable economic growth.
- Vibrant and sustainable rural communities.

A Partnership Agreement between the Scottish Government and the EU will outline how the SRDP will have a joined up approach with the other European Funds (ESF, ERDF, EMFF) in Scotland for economic growth and fisheries, and show how the funds will achieve the EU 2020 Thematic Objectives. These objectives cover the following areas:

- Research and Development, and Innovation.
- Information and Communication Technology.
- Competitiveness.
- Low Carbon.
- Climate Change.
- Environment and Resource Efficiency.
- Sustainable Transport.
- Employment.
- Social Inclusion and Poverty.
- Education and Life Long Learning.
- Institutional Capacity Building.

Common Fisheries Policy: European Maritime and Fisheries Fund: The CFP includes direct support to the industry under different sub programmes of the EMFF to address issues in fish catching, aquaculture, processing and supporting infrastructure. Axis 4 under this programme is targeted at fisheries communities and providing support for diversifying and strengthening the fisheries communities. This Axis 4 programme is to be delivered in close coordination with LEADER through a local action group called a FLAG (fisheries local action group).

Currently, a protocol for funding is being developed by the LEADER team. This document will provide a template for funding options, allowing potential applicants to identify which local funding options will best suit their needs. This logic model will allow LEADER to help identify where it can add value locally by finding its niche.

## **5.5. Proposals for coordination and cooperation**

### **5.5.1. Coordination**

It is expected that the LDS will reinforce territorial cohesion and contribute to long term sustainable development in Orkney. Thus coordination with other local strategies is vital. The LAG coordinator will attend relevant group meetings so that integration happens and LEADER is clearly complementary to the other actions being pursued under other local strategies. With this model there are opportunities for the LAG to maximise efficiency and effectiveness of the LEADER funds where other actions reinforce or strengthen the effects of LEADER support.

Coordination with regional, national, and other EU funded programmes can also be achieved through the CPP vehicle as well as through the Orkney Islands Council (OIC) who is the Lead Partner, e.g. through the ESF supported CPP Employability Pipeline project or the ERDF Business Competitiveness Strategic Intervention through the Business Gateway.

### **5.5.2. Cooperation**

Support is available for preparing, and for carrying out, cooperation projects at inter territorial and transnational levels. Projects should provide the opportunity to foster synergies between local groups as well as exchanging experience and mutual learning.

The Orkney LAG is keen to developing cooperation projects either within Scotland or the UK or at a transnational level and has had some experience in this area before, e.g. willow coppicing project.

There is potential to develop projects in the first instance with the other Scottish LEADER groups and especially the islands as well as with other peripheral communities around Europe who have a similar range of themes and issues, e.g. in relation to tourism, marketing, Nordic culture and heritage, traditional music, renewable energy (especially community based projects), IT connectivity, value added projects, recycling in remote communities, and innovative transport solutions.

Initial exploration amongst sectorial groups (e.g. tourism, renewables, etc.) would be an early priority for the LEADER team in order to ascertain potential for cooperation projects with other regional / national LEADER groups. Also, expanding the use of

existing local networks (e.g. Voluntary Action Orkney) will be explored. This cooperative approach, and subsequent development of cooperative projects, will assist in the achievement of the 5 main themes / priorities identified in section 6. The development of a plan for local, national and transnational cooperative projects will be an early priority for the new LAG. Rural development is a cross cutting theme that has relevance to most of the themes in the CPP. The RDS has been drafted to ensure complementarity with the CPP priorities and the most relevant local strategies such as Economic, Social/Community, and Environment Strategies. This will help to make sure that LEADER will add value to what is done through the other strategies.

The LAG currently has linkages with the Orkney CPP. The current LEADER officer sits on the Community Economic Development Orkney Group (CEDOG). Other LAG members are active in their participation of additional CPP sub-groups, which allows them to provide a vital link between the CPP and LAG. Despite there being some inevitable overlaps in such a small region, the LAG operates independently to the CPP with different working practices and modes of operation.

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2. Information and Communication Technology
3. Competitiveness
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## **Proposals for coordination and cooperation**

### **Coordination**

It is expected that the LDS will reinforce territorial cohesion and contribute to long term sustainable development in Orkney. Thus coordination with other local strategies is vital. The LAG coordinator will attend relevant group meetings so that

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<sup>1</sup> Consultation on Scotland Rural Development Programme, Dec 2013

integration happens and LEADER is clearly complementary to the other actions being pursued under other local strategies. With this model there are opportunities for the LAG to maximise efficiency and effectiveness of the LEADER funds where other actions reinforce or strengthen the effects of LEADER support.

Coordination with regional, national, and other EU funded programmes can also be achieved through the CPP vehicle as well as through the Orkney Islands Council (OIC) who is the Lead Partner e.g. through the ESF supported CPP Employability Pipeline project or the ERDF Business Competitiveness Strategic Intervention through the Business Gateway.

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