

Local Action Groups have grants for businesses

Six Local Action Groups (LAG) covering Wiltshire have been awarded funding under the new LEADER programme (2015 to 2021). North Wessex Downs based on the AONB, New Forest based on the National Park, Heart of Wessex along the A303 in Wiltshire and Somerset, Plain Action centred on Salisbury Plain, Vale Action along the A350 corridor and Cotswold based on the AONB.

Local Action Groups cover geographical rural areas with a population of less than 150,000. They are managed by a board of local volunteers who decide on the strategy and the awarding of grants. During 2014 extensive consultation with local communities and organisations was undertaken which informed the funding application for this programme.

Grants will be awarded under the priorities below and are required to increase the number of jobs in the area or the economic activity. Projects will be expected to be a capital nature, ongoing revenue costs cannot be funded under this programme.

There will be a two stage application process with an outline application followed by a full application. Applications are expected to come from micro/small business and non-profit making organisations. Applicants will be expected to provide details as to why the proposal is needed, the benefits it will have to the organisation and community and the sources of the match funding. Funding will only be awarded where it can be shown that there is a shortfall in funding available. Grants are expected to be up to 40% of the project costs.

Funding will be awarded under the following categories:

- Support for increasing farm productivity
- Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification
- Support for rural tourism
- Provision of rural services
- Support for cultural and heritage activity
- Support for increasing forestry production

For more information contact the Programme Manager for your Local Action Group listed below. A map showing the LAG areas is attached for information.

LAG	Contact	Email	Tel	Web site	£m
North Wessex	Dawn Hamblin	nwdleaderprogramme@wiltshire.gov.uk	01488 680458	www.northwessexleader.org.uk	£1.705
New Forest	Sally Igra	Sally.Igra@NFDC.gov.uk	02380 285368	www.newforestleader.org.uk/8573	£1.43
Heart Of Wessex	Sarah Dyke-Bracher	sarah@heartofwessex.co.uk	07826 907361	www.heartofwessex.co.uk	£1.738
Plain Action	Alan Truscott	atruscott@communityfirst.org.uk	01380 732814	www.plainaction.org.uk	£1.38
Vale Action	Alan Truscott	atruscott@communityfirst.org.uk	01380 732814	www.valeaction.org.uk	£1.372
Cotswold	Martin Lane	Martin.Lane@cotswoldaonb.org.uk	01451 862000	www.cotswoldaonb.org.uk/leader	£1.998