



Securing the Future of the Forest of Dean

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUNDING



Supported by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas



What is it?

Local Action is one of the mechanisms for delivering the **Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE)**. This funding comes from Europe through the **South West of England Regional Development Agency**. The Forest of Dean Local Strategic Partnership was recently successful in securing £2.6 million worth of funding, which will now be used for delivering rural development projects in the Forest of Dean, up until the end of 2013. The funding programme is now open and we are looking for partners to deliver valuable projects and services.



Your project proposal must meet at least one and preferably more of the following themes that have been identified by the Forest of Dean Local Action.

Enabling Communities

Empower communities to enhance existing services, identify gaps in provision and broker innovative solutions to their social, economic and environmental needs.

1. *Communities enabled to have a greater influence in shaping their local area*
2. *Communities equipped with the skills and capacity to turn their ideas into action*
3. *Better use made of community facilities*
4. *Improved community participation and partnership working*

Intelligent Economic Growth

Create a vibrant economy by identifying innovative solutions which sustainably maximise local resources to harness landscape, heritage, culture and local products, utilising the area's special qualities.

1. *Support the development/expansion/diversification of micro businesses*
2. *Improve usage of land for food production, timber, energy and other economic products*
3. *Promote sustainable tourism*
4. *Promote environmentally friendly approaches to development*

Re-Vitalising the Local Economy

Create innovative solutions to enable individuals and businesses to make a wider range of products and services available locally, which will increase local spend and reduce the need to commute.

1. *Improve the local supply chain*
2. *Enable communities and businesses to become more environmentally and economically sustainable*
3. *Maintain and enhance the area's landscape, biodiversity, heritage and environment, and utilise them as a sustainable economic resource*
4. *Promote economic growth through skills development and training*

Who can apply for funding?

Funding is available for different kinds of organisations, including private businesses, farm households, sole traders, social enterprise, parish and town councils, voluntary sector and local community groups and charities.

How much money can I apply for?

The Local Action Group (LAG) are able to make funding contributions of up to £100,000. There may be a few exceptional circumstances where larger grants are given.

Please contact the Programme Coordinator (Neil Batt) to discuss further, if you feel this may be the case.

Location

Projects must provide benefits to some or all of the Forest of Dean District. Preference will be given to delivery organisations based within the target area, though outside organisations are welcome to apply.

Match Funding

Forest of Dean Local Action will fund up to 60% for local businesses and up to 80% for not for profit and statutory groups. The level of match funding required will often be more than this and depend on which of the programme priorities are being addressed. You will need to speak to the Programme Coordinator about your project idea who will then be able to provide further guidance.



For more information and how to apply

If you meet all of the requirements and believe that your project is suitable for LAG funding then please contact the Local Action Programme Coordinator who will be able to advise further. If your organisation and project is eligible then you will be invited to complete an Expression of Interest (EOI) Form.



For further details please contact:

NEIL BATT

Local Action Programme Coordinator

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What happens next?

When we receive your Expression of Interest Form, your project will be checked further against the eligibility criteria and programme priorities. You will then be contacted and if it is eligible for consideration you will receive further guidance and a full application form. Local Action staff will be available to provide assistance throughout the process.

Completed applications will be first assessed and then presented to a local panel, which is made up of representatives from different sections of the local community including members of the LAG with relevant expertise.

The LAG will then consider the proposal and make a recommendation as to whether or not funding should be allocated. As well as a detailed assessment of your application, decisions will depend upon the availability of funding. You can expect the whole process to take around 2-3 months.

Please note that any expenditure incurred before receiving a written offer of grant will not be eligible for grant aid.

