

Rural Development Programme

LAG Newsletter

**THE RURAL
ENTERPRISE HUB**Working together to help farms and rural businesses
prepare for the future

At Easton College

New RDP Team in place

With a strong full time team now in place, the RDP will be increasing its existing links in Norfolk and north Suffolk through its delivery of the "leader approach". Working with the three Local Action Groups covering The Brecks, Waveney Valley, the Norfolk Coast and Broads the programme will improve the competitiveness of the agricultural sector and safeguard and enhance sustainable rural businesses. With funding from Europe and Defra the programme will deliver projects that meet a range of objectives from diversification and renewable energy projects to more efficient water use and new take up of technology.



Events

The RDP joined forces with Easton College and LandSkills East at the Suffolk Show at the end of May. Visitors to the stand had the opportunity to meet with the new facilitators and discuss project ideas.

The new RDP team is made up of:

Bonnie Robinson: RDP Manager. Originally from Norfolk, Bonnie has a background in the management of large scale European funded projects and programmes for a variety of sectors.

Stephen Howard: RDP Facilitator. Brecks. Originally from Nottinghamshire, Steve has worked in management on an arable farm and most recently as a manager on a rural leisure estate both within Norfolk, he has also worked in Australia.

Carol Allen: RDP Facilitator - Norfolk Coast & Broads. Carol was previously working for the RSPB as a regional development officer for Eastern England. She has experience in managing project applications for reserves in the Fens, North Norfolk and the Lincs Wash area.

Sarah McPherson: RDP Facilitator - Waveney Valley. Sarah comes to the RDP team with over 20 years experience of economic development, EU funding and business development gained mostly in the Shetland Islands and Norfolk.

Lindsey Tyas: RDP Administrator - From an administrative background, Lindsey has experience of both Norfolk and Suffolk, having worked for teams of surveyors in these areas. She has also previously worked for a renewable energy company.

The new team has been ably assisted by the interim team; Rosemary Hoskins and Paul Seggons during their induction and many thanks must go to Paul and Rosemary for their assistance during the interim period.

If you are looking to submit a project idea and would like discuss your ideas informally with an RDP facilitator, please contact one of the following:

- **The Brecks - Stephen Howard** - 07760751300
showard@easton-college.ac.uk
- **Norfolk Coast & Broads - Carol Allen** - 01328 850530 or 07760 751 301
callen@easton-college.ac.uk
- **Waveney Valley - Sarah McPherson** - 07733889031
smcpherson@easton-college.ac.uk



**Visit us at
the Royal
Norfolk Show
(July 1 / 2)
Stand 255
Avenue 9**

**& join us on
Wednesday 1st July
from 5.15-6.15 for the
Spirit of Enterprise
Reception**

Local Action Groups

Following the submission of the delivery plans at the end of January, the Local Action Groups for each area have now held several meetings.

At the start of the year there was an immediate need to submit project ideas for inclusion in the delivery plans, however the door remains open for applicants wishing to submit a project and LAGs would welcome ideas that meet the Local Development Strategy priorities. The expression of interest form is now available for download from the website and is also accompanied by a set of guidelines to assist applicants. <http://www.ruraladvice.co.uk/lag/>

The types of project ideas discussed at LAG meetings has varied considerably. Prospective ideas have ranged from creating a co-operative organisation to develop local food initiatives, to working with micro organisations to develop the tourism offer within the LAG areas.



RDP not only encourages collaborative and innovative projects but also welcomes project ideas from individual businesses providing they can demonstrate the wider impact that the project will have on the regional economy.

Working Groups

Working Groups have now been set up in each of the three LAG areas under different objectives. Each Working Group will integrate their activities to promote the area and generate project ideas and will be holding meetings in the next few months. The objectives for each area include:

Brecks

- Natural Resources (conserving natural resources, particularly water and energy)
- Adding Local Value (developing supply chains in local food and wood products)
- Developing Sustainable Tourism (long-term sustainability for tourism in the Brecks)

Norfolk Coast & Broads

- Growing Sustainable Businesses (farm diversification; development of micro-enterprises, especially those making sustainable use of the natural environment)
- Developing Efficiencies and Adding Value (e.g. efficient use of water and energy; adding value to local supply chains of sustainably-produced food and wood)
- Tourism and Heritage - Developing Best Practice (encouraging tourism activities, conservation and up-grading of rural heritage)

Waveney Valley

- Developing a clear identity for promoting the Waveney Valley (involving tourism and heritage projects)
- Increase added value and supply chain opportunities (linking together businesses producing, processing, packaging, promoting and selling food and other rural products).
- Support for micro-business creation and development (developing projects for supporting micro-enterprises to link rural areas and market towns)

Working Groups are key to developing project ideas, if you would like to join one of these please contact the RDP Administrator Lindsey Tyas on 01603 748844

Upcoming Meetings - Dates to Remember

In accordance with the Local Development Strategy the next phase of Local Action Group meetings will be held during June and July:

Brecks LAG - 13:30 on 25th June at BTO, Chapel Room, The Old Chapel, The Nunnery, Thetford, IP24 2PU. Management meeting to follow.

Norfolk Coast & Broads LAG - 13:30 on 13th July at The Old Courthouse, Baron's Close in Fakenham, NR21 8BE. Management meeting to follow.

Waveney Valley LAG - 18:00 on 15th July at the Upper Waveney Project Offices, at the Thornham Walks site, Thornham Magna, Nr Eye. Management meeting will take place before the LAG meeting.



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