An evaluation of LEADER in Wales (summary)

A final evaluation report of the implementation of the LEADER scheme as part of the Rural Communities: Rural Development Programme 2014 to 2020.

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Introduction

The acronym 'LEADER' derives from the French phrase 'Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale', which means 'links between activities for the development of the rural economy'. The approach includes seven specific features and, importantly, is dependent on all of these being employed together. It is these seven features, and their integration, that define LEADER as a specific approach to rural development and community-led local development (or 'CLLD') more generally.

The seven features of the LEADER approach:

1. Area-based development strategies
2. Bottom-up elaboration and implementation of strategies
3. Local public-private partnerships: Local Action Groups
4. Integrated and multi-sector actions
5. Innovation
6. Cooperation
7. Networking

European Network for Rural Development - The LEADER approach

LEADER was devised in the 1990s in response to what was perceived by the European Commission to be the failure of traditional top-down policies to address problems faced by many rural areas. LEADER has been active in Wales since the 1990s. The current iteration is one of a number of schemes within the Welsh Government Rural Communities – Rural Development Programme 2014 to 2020 ('the RDP'), a Wales-wide programme supporting a wide range of activities designed to increase the sustainability and resilience of Wales' natural environment, land-based sector, food businesses, and rural communities.

The current LEADER scheme in Wales consists of 18 Local Action Groups (LAGs) covering eligible wards (i.e. rural areas) in 21 of the 22 local authority areas across Wales. This makes it the largest-ever version of the scheme in Wales. The total value of the 2014 to 2020 RDP scheme in Wales is just above £47 million, which funds each element of LEADER in each area (including administrative and implementation costs).

The term 'bottom-up' is used when discussing the LEADER approach and this means that the local community and local stakeholders are central to the approach, defining the priorities for their area. European Commission guidance specifies that CLLD should be carried out through integrated and multi-sectoral area-based local development strategies. In Wales, each LEADER LAG is required to develop a Local Development Strategy (LDS) which is then updated annually by the LAG.

'Animation' activities are used to support the delivery of the LEADER scheme in each area. As the term suggests, this activity is designed to help 'make things happen' and can encompass a range of activities including empowering or supporting local groups and organisations to develop and implement activities which include projects, feasibility studies, and pilots (in line with the LDS) or more general activities focused on the local area (such as raising awareness of the scheme or specific sectors).

The activities supported by the LAG are identified in several ways, depending on the approach being employed by the LAG in question. An 'open call' approach is used in many areas, wherein local organisations are invited to submit their ideas and project proposals to the LAG, guided by the LDS and with the support of animation activities. Thereafter, those proposals are assessed by the LAG. In other instances, the LAG will also work with the animation team to develop and then implement its own ideas and projects with the local community and key stakeholders. There is a particular emphasis on developing and supporting new and innovative ideas.

Cooperation between LAGs is a key feature of LEADER, with LAGs being allocated a budget specifically to support projects delivered in cooperation either with other groups in Wales or elsewhere in the EU. The rationale behind this is that LAGs can share ideas and learn from one another. Networking is also a key feature of the scheme, with the **Wales Rural Network** collecting and sharing information relating to LAG activities within Wales and the **European Network for Rural Development** undertaking that role at a European level.

The activities under the current Welsh LEADER scheme (RDP 2014 to 2020) are required to focus on at least one of five themes. The table below shows how the 700+ projects supported by the scheme to date, via the LAGs, are distributed between those themes.

Table 1: Number and percentage of LEADER projects per theme

Scheme Themes	Number	% of Total
1) Adding value to local identity and natural and cultural resources	233	32.4
2) Facilitating pre-commercial development, business partnerships, and short supply chains	152	21.1
3) Exploring new ways of providing non-statutory local services	179	24.9
4) Renewable energy at a community level	86	11.9
5) Exploitation of digital technology	70	9.7

Source: Analysis of data held on the WRN database

Whilst the RDP period is 2014 to 2020, expenditure can continue until the end of 2023. The Welsh Government approved LEADER projects for an initial implementation period of seven years but offered opportunities to LAGs to revise their delivery profiles during implementation. As a result, some LAGs will cease implementation earlier than others, with activity in some areas ending in March 2022 and others continuing until June 2023.

Evaluation aims, objectives and methodology

The evaluation had two overarching objectives.

1. Assess the implementation of LEADER in Wales in the current RDP programming period (2014 to 2020).
2. Assess the contribution of LEADER to local development in rural areas since it has been applied in Wales.

The evaluation has, however, in part, also examined CLLD more broadly.

A mixed-method approach was used to undertake the evaluation. A review of literature relating to LEADER in Wales, including both academic and grey literature (the term 'grey literature' is used to describe a wide range of different information that is produced outside of traditional publishing and distribution channels), was undertaken which included evaluations commissioned by the individual LAGs. Furthermore, there was an analysis of the monitoring information for the scheme as held by the Welsh Government (expenditure, performance indicators, and so on), as well as additional monitoring information collected directly from the LAG administrative bodies (including data on the number of LAG meetings and attendance at those meetings).

The primary research included online questionnaires distributed via the administrative bodies working with the LAGs. A survey of LAG members collected supplementary data on the types of people who are members of the groups, including gender, ethnicity, and age group; 125 responses were received. An online survey of stakeholders and participants received 214 responses with follow-up interviews with a sub-sample of respondents (44 interviews). Moreover, there were qualitative interviews with LAG chairs and administrative body managers (25 interviews) and with a range of other stakeholders involved in rural development in Wales in different capacities (16 interviews).

It is important to be aware that our sample of those that have been involved with LEADER in Wales is largely self-selecting. The online survey was distributed by the LAG administrative bodies, with the respondents then choosing whether or not they would like to participate in the research. This is likely to lead to a degree of self-selection bias. This risk is, however, controlled by the mixed-method approach being used, which also takes into account a range of other sources of evidence (including monitoring data, the findings of the literature reviews, and so on).

Main findings and recommendations

It should be noted that, in line with the brief for the evaluation, some of the recommendations noted below apply to the management and delivery of the current scheme, while others are more forward-looking. For ease of reference, those that apply to the current scheme are recommendations 9, 11, 12 and 13.

It should also be noted that, at the time of writing, there is no commitment to any continuation of a LEADER scheme in Wales beyond the lifetime of the current Rural Development Programme (2014 to 2020), i.e. the end of 2023. Where recommendations are being made as to how any future scheme could be

designed or managed, they are made to inform discussions on any such developments or future activity. They should not be read as an indication that there will be a new LEADER scheme in Wales when the current programming period comes to an end.

Assessing the added value of LEADER

European Commission guidance on the evaluation of LEADER/CLLD identifies three main 'components' when discussing the added value of LEADER. These effectively merge the seven aspects of the LEADER approach into three main outputs/activities.

1. The implementation of the scheme/strategy, i.e. the projects and the results and impacts that they produce.
2. The scheme/LAG delivery mechanism, i.e. the set of rules, procedures, and administrative arrangements which ensure that strategic objectives become concrete actions on the ground.
3. Capacity-building support/animation: The support that managing authorities provide to encourage and enable the beneficiaries, directly or via the Wales Rural Network, as well as the LAG capacity to animate (i.e. all of its operations which are not directly project-related, aiming to raise the awareness, readiness, cooperation, and networking capabilities of local people to contribute to developing their area).

Importantly, all three of these 'components' are described as being 'intimately intertwined' and 'forming an inseparable whole'. Essentially, the guidance is stating that the added value/outcomes of LEADER come from the implementation of the whole approach, including its management and delivery, not merely from the projects that it funds, which is an essential point in respect of understanding LEADER and the added value of the approach.

Also important is that EC guidance defines 'the added value of LEADER' more

broadly than what the projects will achieve, with an emphasis on the LEADER method "the benefits are obtained through the proper application of the LEADER method, compared to those benefits obtained without applying this method".

That added value is said to manifest itself as the following outcomes.

- Improved social capital: described as a multidimensional concept which includes features of social organisations (such as networks, norms, and social trust) that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit.
- Improved governance: the institutions, processes and mechanisms through which public, economic and civil society stakeholders articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations, and mediate their differences to manage public affairs at all levels in a collaborative manner.
- Enhanced results and impacts of scheme/strategy implementation, as compared to performance without the LEADER method.

Finding

LEADER activity in Wales will have already ended in some areas by the time of publication and will do so relatively soon across Wales. The lack of clarity as to future plans is causing some issues and a loss of 'momentum', which means that the longer-term outcomes of the investment in CLLD/LEADER that have been made as part of the current scheme may not be realised.

Recommendation 1

The Welsh Government should make a decision on the future of LEADER/CLLD in Wales as quickly as possible.

Finding

The number and range of performance indicators being used for LEADER in Wales are small, in response to criticism of the complex monitoring system in place for the previous programme period. Whilst the system is certainly simpler, the narrow list of indicators limits the usefulness of the data as a means of judging the performance of LEADER as a scheme and method.

Recommendation 2

A more comprehensive list of performance indicators should be considered as part of any future scheme, but still considering the need to avoid a monitoring system which is overly complicated.

Finding

LAGs (via their administrative body) have more financial control as part of the current LEADER scheme. In addition, they have greater certainty as to their budget due to the move away from the competitive process used for the allocation of funding in previous LEADER schemes in Wales. These are generally regarded as positive developments. There remains, however, some criticism from LAGs regarding the administrative burden within the financial management process. Furthermore, there is some concern from within the Welsh Government with regard to poor financial management on the part of the LAGs, with a number having failed to meet their expenditure profiles, although the COVID-19 pandemic at least contributed to this during 2020 to 2021. The concerns expressed should, however, be noted.

Although not in place throughout the lifetime of the scheme (due to resource constraints within the Welsh Government), the role of the Rural Relationship

Manager as a single point of contact between LAGs/administrative bodies and the Welsh Government was considered to be an effective approach which facilitated communication between both parties.

Recommendation 3

The non-competitive approach and simplified financial management approaches have been effective and should be maintained as part of any future scheme that has LAGs and CLLD as the main delivery mechanism. Any financial monitoring processes in place should be as simple as possible and complemented by an effective means of communication between the funder and the delivery body. Having a Relationship Manager in place for the LAG/administrative body should be considered part of any potential future scheme, possibly with an increased emphasis on facilitating networking and cooperative activities (see later recommendations).

Finding

State aid restrictions have (until May 2021) been in place for the LEADER scheme in Wales, in response to concerns surrounding the overlap with other business support interventions and the need to return to LEADER principles of piloting new and innovative approaches. These restrictions have been a frustration for LAGs who argue that they have restricted their ability to build on progress made during previous programme periods. Our conclusion is that there were more effective ways of addressing the risks that had been identified that would have provided LAGs with more flexibility to progress with activities undertaken as part of the previous programme period in respect of supporting local micro-businesses. No recommendation is, however, made here, in light of the UK's exit from the European Union, which means that state aid restrictions are no longer applicable.

Finding

In most cases, the LAG administrative function is carried out by a local authority. A third of the LAGs in Wales, however, receive administrative support from independent third sector organisations. Evaluations have found that there are advantages and disadvantages to both the local authority and the independent 'models', as they are often referred to by stakeholders. Of more consequence than the debate surrounding which 'model' is most effective, we would argue, is the fact that there are clear 'characteristics' that can be identified as being present when the administration of LEADER is most effective:

- being recognised as an LAG-led, independent scheme/approach (i.e. not 'delivered by' or run as part of the local authority)
- being seen to be open (and responsive) to new ideas and suggestions from any source (i.e. not a 'closed shop')
- having strong networks in place and being able to effectively cooperate with other schemes and draw on the knowledge and expertise of a range of sources in the area (including within the local authority)

It has also been found that the attitude, skills and abilities of the administrative body staff are critical to the success of LEADER, perhaps even more so than the characteristics noted above.

Recommendation 4

There are a number of characteristics that are associated with the effective administration of LAGs and the delivery of the LEADER/CLLD approach. The potential to provide further guidance, drawing on those findings, as to how the administrative body for an LAG should be set up (inside and outside of any future LEADER scheme, they are applicable to any approach that includes LAGs) should be considered when going forward, emphasising the key

characteristics identified.

Finding

A feature of the current LEADER scheme is that the 18 LAGs are supported by 15 administrative bodies, with both Menter Môn and Cadwyn Clwyd supporting multiple LAGs. Moreover, there are examples of LAGs crossing local authority area boundaries, e.g. the Vale of Usk LAG (which covers Monmouthshire and rural Newport). The evaluation has found that there are clear advantages where the administrative support is provided to multiple LAGs by the same organisation, including economies of scale and the ability to share resources across multiple areas (including project staff).

Recommendation 5

Opportunities for the same organisation to provide administrative support to multiple LAGs (or to perform specific functions on behalf of multiple LAGs) should be explored as part of the design of any future LEADER/CLLD scheme in Wales.

Finding

The Local Development Strategy (LDS) is presented in LEADER/CLLD guidelines as a key part of the approach. In Wales, the LDS has two functions: (a) to set out how LEADER will be managed and delivered, and (b) to set out priorities for LEADER in the area. The LDSs prepared by the LAGs present very broad strategies with an emphasis often on ensuring that no potential activity is excluded, rather than guiding what activity should be undertaken.

There is, we believe, an argument that the role played by the LDS in the current

programme (specifically function 'b') could be achieved by a much simpler set of values and principles (based on the LEADER approach) that guide the activities/priorities of the LAG, with the strategy being set out in other documents that already exist for the area or region.

Recommendation 6

If a new CLLD scheme is developed, the potential to replace the need for LAGs to develop and deliver an LDS with a set of values and principles that guide how LEADER/CLLD funding is utilised by an LAG should be considered, with the 'local strategy' being provided by other strategies that exist within the local authority areas and/or regions in which the LAGs are active.

Finding

LAGs are central to the LEADER/CLLD approach and consistent and regular attendance by members at meetings is essential to providing continuity in decision making, understanding of ongoing activities, and so on. The contribution that volunteers make as members of LAGs across Wales is also important to recognise - LEADER/CLLD cannot operate effectively without these contributions. However, the challenges of attracting a balance of members as well as new members, particularly from the private sector and younger age groups, continue to be apparent.

Recommendation 7

New ways of attracting LAG members from the private sector and younger age groups should be explored. These should include ways in which those groups could be engaged without having to become 'full' members of the LAG, for example, having an LAG specifically for young people looking at the local issues

that are important to them. The potential to use new technologies and engagement platforms as part of the process should also be explored.

Finding

LAGs include a mix of members with considerable experience and relatively new members. A survey of LAG members for this evaluation (125 responses) found that most members were 45+ years old, but the age range is broader than may have been expected, given some concern that stakeholders expressed regarding the diversity of members. There is an even split between male and female members. LAG members are, however, almost entirely white (97 per cent), which means that there is little diversity in terms of ethnicity, although this reflects the population in most rural areas in Wales. However, it could be argued that increased diversity is needed and would be a positive development.

Recommendation 8

There should be an emphasis on engaging a more ethnically diverse group of people in LEADER/CLLD activities and LAGs in the future.

Finding

Whilst views were generally favourable, there was some concern surrounding how the local community was engaged/consulted with as part of LEADER and how representative the LAG was of the local community. When considering this, it is, however, important to recognise that LAG members are volunteers and, as such, they inevitably have limited time that they have available to commit to meetings and LEADER activities.

This is an issue that needs to be considered alongside the need to explore how

LAG members are attracted to the groups. The evaluation has found that LAG members benefit from their involvement with LEADER, particularly in terms of learning as a result of their involvement and the networking opportunities that it provides. Maximising (and promoting) that benefit is potentially an important part of attracting and maintaining LAG members and creating value for the time that members need to commit to the process. Moreover, it is potentially a means of amplifying the outcomes generated by the CLLD process/scheme, as the host organisations/employers/businesses of LAG members would benefit as a result.

Recommendation 9

Ways of increasing the benefit derived by LAG members as a result of their participation in the scheme should be explored and then used as a basis for attracting new members to the groups. These could include a greater emphasis on training/learning activities for LAG members (and staff), which we would argue is something that can potentially start now, as the current scheme draws to a close. For example, training could be provided on creative problem-solving methods and/or community engagement practices. In addition, we would suggest that such training/learning could potentially be extended beyond those directly involved in LEADER and across those involved in rural development in Wales as a means of encouraging networking and the sharing of learning.

Finding

The approach to the 'animation of the local area' varies across Wales, with some concern that there is a 'grant scheme' approach in some areas. Some variance in approach is, however, not unexpected, influenced by the amount of resources and staff available (which vary between LAGs across Wales).

Being able to win and then maintain the trust of the local community is essential to an effective animation process. This can take time to develop (it is also linked

to the characteristics identified for an effective administrative body; see Recommendation 4). Differences in the levels of experience within delivery teams (and organisations as a whole) also need to be considered. Such knowledge and experience are, however, at risk as we approach the end of the current programme, with no clear plan in place for any succession to the LEADER scheme in Wales (see Recommendation 1).

The evaluation has also found that limited training activities related to LEADER/ CLLD seem to be taking place across Wales. For example, little training has been provided on methods with which to effectively engage with the local community or support the development of innovative thinking in communities. Such training could also be provided in a way which facilitates networking amongst the LEADER teams from different parts of Wales.

Recommendation 10

The potential to introduce training (and mentoring) for those involved in the delivery of LEADER/CLLD activities in Wales should be explored with an emphasis on the effective delivery of animation activities and developing new and innovative approaches to rural development. Any such training should be part of networking activities undertaken with an emphasis on creating opportunities for staff and LAG members involved in CLLD to share their experiences and learn from one another. Again, we would also suggest that there is potential to broaden any training/mentoring introduced beyond the LEADER scheme to those involved in rural development more generally.

Finding

Networking and cooperation are both key features of LEADER and methods with which to encourage innovation in general. There has been some cooperation with 71 cooperation projects supported (around 10 per cent of all projects). Only

four of those projects have, however, been with transnational partners, which is an opportunity available to LAGs as part of the LEADER scheme.

Opportunities for networking and the sharing of knowledge and experience within LEADER delivery teams across Wales have generally not been realised, which is a missed opportunity and could have helped to address some of the inconsistency in approach identified. Levels of awareness of the activities of other LAGs across Wales, the UK, and Europe were also found to be extremely low amongst LAG members in Wales.

The sharing of information and lessons learnt should be a key objective for the LEADER scheme during the remainder of its lifetime to ensure that the 'lessons learnt' from the vast range of projects and activities piloted as part of the scheme are effectively disseminated.

Recommendation 11

There should be an increased emphasis on networking and cooperation in the future (including over the remaining lifetime of the current LEADER scheme). This should include a greater emphasis on sharing the learning from the projects supported by LEADER both within the LEADER structure and with others involved in rural development in Wales.

Finding

More than 700 projects have been supported by the current LEADER scheme in Wales. The range of projects and activities is substantial, with several innovative ideas being piloted amongst what could be described as more 'traditional' local development projects.

One of the challenges of evaluating the LEADER scheme is the substantial

range of projects that have been funded. The technical report includes a list of project examples for each theme across Wales. They have been selected by the evaluation team to reflect the range of activities undertaken and supported. Whilst the list is long, the only way in which to truly appreciate the range of activities being supported by LEADER is to review such a list and we would encourage readers to take the time to read the list in full in order to appreciate the scope of the activities undertaken.

A review of the projects supported finds that activities have been undertaken that deliver against each of the Welsh Government and European Commission Cross Cutting Themes and Cross Cutting Objectives.

- Equal Opportunities, Gender Mainstreaming, and the Welsh Language
- Sustainable Development
- Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion
- Innovation
- Environment
- Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation

Projects also deliver a number of the objectives set out within the Programme for Government in Wales demonstrating the potential role of a LEADER/CLLD scheme in delivering national strategic objectives.

Opportunities for further cooperation amongst LAGs have, however, been missed, with very similar projects being delivered by LAGs in different areas. This also suggests that the potential for economies of scale and greater efficiency via more cooperation has been missed.

Whilst there are examples of new and innovative projects supported by LEADER in Wales, there is also an argument that there should be a greater focus on innovation within LAG activities, with more support being provided to help communities and local organisations to think creatively and develop new and innovative ideas. This issue is linked to the findings regarding animation

activities and training as noted earlier. Furthermore, it is important to recognise that innovation is a process, and learning from pilot projects is only effective if it is captured, shared and then acted upon. This includes having a clear process in place for 'mainstreaming' successful LEADER-funded activities.

Recommendation 12

LAGs should ensure that they effectively capture learning from projects that have been funded as part of the current programme period. A process should also be put in place to collate and share such learning with those involved in rural development across Wales (not restricted to LEADER), with a view to supporting/encouraging the 'mainstreaming' of successful activities, avoiding the duplication of activities in rural areas, and highlighting lessons learnt. One potential approach would be to set up a 'knowledge hub' for LEADER projects which could then be utilised when going forward and sustained beyond the end of the current scheme.

Finding

Linked to the above, LAGs were found to, on average, be spending most of their time to date on assessing applications for funding/support and discussing the needs and priorities in the local area which are central to their role. Limited time was spent to date on reviewing and discussing what had been achieved. Whilst the timing of the evaluation may have influenced this, we would expect more time to be spent on this when going forward, given the focus on new and innovative approaches to rural development.

Recommendation 13

LAGs should ensure that they have sufficient focus on reviewing the projects

that have been supported and capturing the lessons learnt for the remainder of the lifetime of the current LEADER scheme. Collecting and sharing this information should be a priority.

Finding

The combination of local consultation with resources to realise the ideas being put forward was considered to be key to the success of LEADER and CLLD more generally, as was the long-term nature of the support being provided, which has existed in Wales since the 1990s. European Commission guidance describes the 'components' of the approach as being 'intimately intertwined' and forming 'an inseparable whole'. There are several examples in Wales of other schemes and projects that implement elements of the LEADER approach (most often in terms of community engagement) but not the whole approach. Furthermore, the added value of LEADER is generated by the implementation of the approach as a whole and cannot be replicated by the implementation of individual elements of the approach.

Literature suggests that the added value of LEADER manifests itself in (a) improved social capital, (b) improved governance, and (c) enhanced results (i.e. better projects). The evaluation has found evidence of each of these outcomes generated by LEADER in Wales. For example.

Improved social capital

- 75% (n=64) of LAG members said that working relationships with other organisations in the local area were improved.
- 37% (n=174) of survey respondents stated that their organisation had developed new skills as a result of their involvement with LEADER.
- 52% (n=174) stated that they personally had developed new skills as a result of their involvement.

Improved governance

- 83% (n=92) of respondents stated that LEADER had a positive impact on local governance (48% 'definitely yes' and 35% 'probably yes').
- The most common improvements identified were enabling local and consensus decision making, and Networking/sharing information.

Enhanced results

- 36% of respondents stated that the project or activity was 'much better', with 46% 'somewhat' better, as a result of the advice (n=50).
- 56 respondents had received financial support, of whom 43% stated that the project would not have happened in any way without that support. A further 45% stated that it would have progressed but at a smaller scale or only some elements of it.
- LEADER also had an impact via the projects and activities that the LEADER approach tested and/or initiated which have subsequently been funded by other sources (often referred to as being 'mainstreamed'). Those projects/ activities may not exist (or would have taken longer to develop, not be as effective, etc.) without the support provided to them by LEADER during the pilot/prototype stage.

The impact of the individual projects and the scheme is, however, always local and hardly ever what could be described as 'spectacular'; that is not the purpose of LEADER. The outcomes of LEADER also need to be considered with an understanding of the role that the scheme was designed to have within the Wales RDP, wherein it is described as being positioned 'at the heart of the RDP journey' and designed as a route into the RDP for communities and stakeholders who may not access the programme via other routes.

Case studies for projects and activities funded during previous programme

periods in the main and technical reports, however, demonstrate the longer-term outcomes that LEADER activities can generate. The benefits of continuity in respect of the organisation delivering LEADER over a long period are also apparent.

As noted earlier, projects delivered as part of the LEADER scheme directly address the RDP and Welsh Government Cross Cutting Themes and Objectives, with several projects, for example, supporting the development of the Welsh language. This demonstrates the role that LEADER can play in achieving programme/national-level objectives and, importantly, drawing local communities directly into the development and delivery of such projects. Moreover, there is activity within LEADER that delivers each of the Welsh Government's well-being objectives, and the way in which LEADER is delivered is completely aligned with the 'ways of working' as set out in the **Well-being of Future Generations Act**: long-term, integration, involvement, collaboration, and prevention.

Recommendation 14

LEADER should be seen as an approach to CLLD more broadly and not as a standalone programme or scheme. LEADER/CLLD should also be considered a mechanism/method for delivering governmental priorities in Wales, including those within the Well-being of Future Generations Act, going forward at a broader level than merely as part of any future rural development programme for Wales. The LEADER approach should, however, be delivered 'in its entirety' and not diluted. This includes a commitment to the provision of long-term funding to LAGs to deliver LEADER/CLLD activities.

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Views expressed in this report are those of the researchers and not necessarily those of the Welsh Government.

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