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## Mid-term Evaluation of the LEADER programme in Pembrokeshire

March 2020

Please note that this is a **draft version** of the report. It has not been proofread so please ignore any typos – they will be addressed before the report is finalised. Please also ignore any formatting issues as they will also be checked and addressed before the report is finalised.



arwain sir benfro  
LEADER Pembrokeshire



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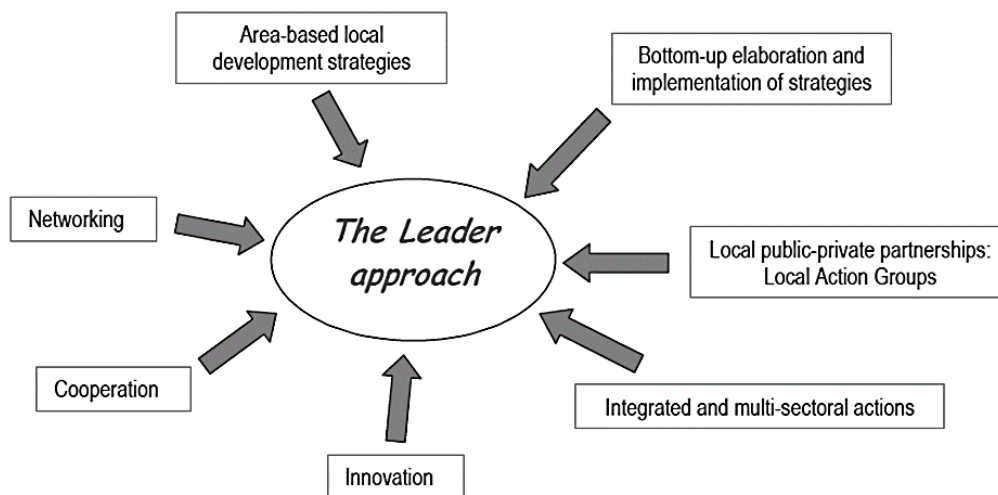
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# Executive summary

## Introduction

This is the mid-term report of an evaluation of the implementation of the LEADER programme in Pembrokeshire for the funding period 2014 to 2020, known as Arwain Sir Benfro.

LEADER is an EU funded local development method which has been used in Wales for over 20 years. As a Community Led Local Development (CLLD) initiative, LEADER is an integrated development process designed to engage, enable, resource and empower local communities in undertaking their own local development. LEADER is built on several specific characteristics often referred to as the 'LEADER approach' as illustrated by the graphic below.



This mid-term evaluation has focused on the delivery of the LEADER approach in Pembrokeshire to date with a view to informing the remaining lifetime of the programme. The emphasis is particularly on the extent to which the LEADER approach has been delivered in Pembrokeshire. The final evaluation report, scheduled for December 2021, will update this report but with a greater focus on assessing the outcomes, impact and added value of the LEADER programme in Pembrokeshire.

In Pembrokeshire, LEADER is being implemented by the Arwain Sir Benfro Local Action Group (LAG) with the local community-led partnership and social enterprise, PLANED undertaking the administrative and financial operations on their behalf. The team delivering the programme are also employed by PLANED.

## The Local Development Strategy

The Local Development Strategy (LDS) is an important element of the LEADER approach described European Commission guidelines as the roadmap for LEADER implementation with the LAG selecting and supporting projects, according to the contribution they make to the goals of the strategy. The LDS for Pembrokeshire is ambitious and broad identifying 13 priorities and 50 specific objectives within those priorities.

The strategy presented within the LDS for rural Pembrokeshire is very broad identifying a wide range of issues that LEADER funding is to be used to try and address. This is not uncommon within the LEADER programme in Wales with the fact that LDSs were prepared at a time when the detail of the programme was unavailable needing to be considered. The fact that LEADER is designed to be a 'bottom up' support mechanism supporting ideas that come from within the community also needs to be acknowledged. In that context, designing a broad LDS which does not restrict the type and range of projects that can be supported is a logical approach. The broadness of the LDS does however mean that its usefulness as a guide or action-plan for how LEADER funds in Pembrokeshire should be utilised is limited - most ideas and project proposals will fit within the LDS given that it is so broad. Whether or not this is a good thing is debatable as discussed within this report. The key is that the LAG needs to be clear about how they want the LEADER funds available to them to be utilised.

We would argue that there is a clear rationale for a narrower, more focused approach from the mid-way point in a LEADER programme, when gaps in activities undertaken to date and clearer priorities emerge. The situation in Pembrokeshire is however different due to the fact that 98% of the funding available has already been committed. This obviously restricts the options of the LAG going forward. The positives of committing funding early (especially in terms of ensuring that the allocation is fully utilised) are important to note. However, the early commitment of almost the whole budget also has implications for the remainder of the lifetime of the programme, when animation activities are ongoing – there is no funding available to implement any projects that may emerge.

Nevertheless, there is still a strong argument for reviewing and updating the LDS at this time with a view to identifying priorities should further funding become available and/or to inform discussions about future funding priorities. As part of that process, the potential to bring together stakeholders within themes or sectors should be considered. Such meetings could be undertaken as part of future networking activities (discussed later in this conclusion) which are used to share information, findings and lessons learnt from LEADER funded projects (from within and outside Pembrokeshire), as well as considering priorities and potential projects going forward.

**Recommendation 1:** There should be a review of the LDS which includes: (a) an update on the needs and opportunities in the area (including wellbeing plans, etc.); (b) a review of other activities, projects and programmes ongoing in the area; and (c) a review of projects supported by LEADER. As part of this review, consideration should be given to bringing together stakeholders within a theme, to discuss activities undertaken to date and potential future priorities and projects.

As would be expected given that the budget available has largely been committed, good progress has been made in respect of the number of projects supported with a relatively high proportion of those projects having already been completed. If further funding becomes available (either in the form of additional funding or if funded projects do not progress as planned), careful consideration needs to be given to how that resource is utilised in light of the review of the LDS recommended above with an 'open-call' for projects probably inappropriate.

One potential alternative approach, should funding be available, would be to undertake thematic rounds of applications. The benefit of this is that it allows ideas and proposals within the same field to be considered (and compared) at the same time. One of the challenges of an 'open call' approach to funding rounds is that it can be difficult to compare the quality of applications within the round (as they can be very different) and there is always a risk that a 'better' application in any given field will be submitted in the next round.

**Recommendation 2:** Whilst allocating funding is clearly important, there is an argument that ensuring that funding continues to be available throughout the lifetime of a programme (especially considering ongoing animation activities) is also important. Should further funding become available, care should be taken when committing that adequate resource with the potential for thematic rounds of applications, focused on priorities identified in the review of the LDS as recommended above, being considered

A key aspect of LEADER is that it is a Europe wide programme which creates the opportunity to share and learn from projects that are being delivered by literally hundreds of LAGs. This is however an aspect of LEADER which is generally under-utilised with LAG members having little knowledge of the activities and projects that are ongoing in other parts of Wales let alone across Europe. In our view, this is a significant missed opportunity.

**Recommendation 3:** The LAG should review the projects supported by LEADER in other parts of Wales and across the EU with a view to considering whether any of those ideas (or elements of them) should be piloted in Pembrokeshire if further funding becomes available for this programme period or as part of any future programmes in Pembrokeshire.

### Project outcomes

This report has only taken a limited look at the outcomes of projects, which will be a greater focus for the final evaluation report. The information that has been reviewed is however positive with the range of projects and activities being supported apparent.

Only a limited number of indicators (and associated targets) are however in place to monitor the performance of the LEADER programme in Pembrokeshire (and in Wales as a whole). Such an approach has benefits from an administrative perspective. However, it means that there is limited data collected on the extent to which the LDS has been delivered and the performance of the programme, especially at an outcome level (most of the indicators that are collected are outputs, i.e. activities). A number of potential additional indicators are proposed for consideration by the LAG within this report.

**Recommendation 4:** Consideration should be given to the introduction of additional performance indicators for the implementation of the LDS in Pembrokeshire including both generic indicators and theme/priority specific indicators.

The limited number of programme level indicators also means that we are dependent to a large extent on the monitoring and evaluation activities being undertaken by the individual projects. It is therefore important to try to make sure that project level evaluation activities are taking place and that the standard is as high as possible.

**Recommendation 5:** The potential to provide additional support to projects to ensure that they are effectively evaluating the outcomes of their activities should be considered.

It is positive that the survey of projects supported found that a large proportion of projects funded were not likely to have progressed without the support that they had received (part of the 'animation' element of LEADER). It is also positive that a very high proportion of respondents to the project survey reported that they had benefited in respects of meeting or working with new people as a result of their involvement with Arwain Sir Benfro. These are positive outcomes of the programme and an example of how the process in place to manage and deliver LEADER can in themselves generate positive outcomes.

#### The Local Action Group

The LAG is a key part of the LEADER approach designed to be a group which represents the local area and its population. It leads the development process with no interest group nor public authorities having a majority in the decision-making process.

It is positive to note that attendance at LAG meetings has been good with positive feedback about the meetings. LAG members also report that they benefit from attending meetings, another positive outcome of the LEADER approach which is often overlooked. Views that the LAG has, to date, been operating too much as a 'grants assessment panel' are important to note; the role of a LAG should be far broader. Its role will however need to change over the remainder of the lifetime of the LEADER programme in light of the fact that it has very limited budget left with which to fund projects. Going forward, the focus of the LAG should move to an increased emphasis on assessing the ongoing needs of the area as well as disseminating the findings of the projects that have been supported and learning from LEADER activities in other parts of Wales, the UK and Europe (key elements of the LEADER approach). The LAG could effectively evolve to operate more as a network for rural stakeholders in the area or a 'think-tank' on rural issues and so on. The LAG also however needs to consider how best to utilise the resource available to undertake animation activities in Pembrokeshire in circumstances where there is no funding available to fund projects, as discussed further below.

**Recommendation 6:** The role of the LAG going forward needs to be considered to ensure that, with the inevitable reduced need to assess applications for support, the group continues to be active and deliver the LEADER approach in full in Pembrokeshire.

## The Lead Body and animation

As previously noted, PLANED are undertaking the administrative and delivery operations on behalf of the LAG Pembrokeshire. As well as the administration of the programme, their role includes the animation (i.e. community engagement and project development support) activities discussed later in this executive summary.

Feedback on the activities of PLANED as the lead body was overwhelmingly positive both from LAG members and respondents to the survey of projects which is clearly positive.

‘Amination of the territory’, or making things happen, is a key part of LEADER. The focus of animation activities going forward also needs to be considered given the limited funding available for projects. Options include a greater focus on promoting networking and lessons learnt across the area and, potentially, supporting the development of innovative ideas for addressing local needs and opportunities that can be funded from other sources or delivered by local people and organisations as part of their ongoing activities or on a voluntary basis.

The fact that a relatively large proportion of the funding available has gone to what could be described as experienced deliverers of local projects does however need to be noted as that can potentially limit the extent to which the programme achieves ‘capacity building’ outcomes amongst those funded. This is important in light of the fact that a key objective of LEADER is to foster local development in rural areas. Engaging groups and individuals in rural development for the first time is a key part of that process, although the fact that LEADER activities have been ongoing in Pembrokeshire since the 1990s (meaning that substantial engagement work has happened over the years) does need to be taken into account.

**Recommendation 7:** The LAG should consider whether more activities could/should have been undertaken to specifically target and engage with less experienced organisations in Pembrokeshire as part of the LEADER programme and whether such activity could form part of any future activities. For example, potentially ring-fencing a proportion of the funding available for less experienced organisations.

## Innovation and networking

Innovation is key element of the LEADER approach and has clearly been a key part of the programme in Pembrokeshire. There is however an argument that, to achieve the ambitions set out within the LDS for Pembrokeshire in respect of innovation, there was a need to introduce a greater degree of ‘disruptive innovation’ into the programme Pembrokeshire.

**Recommendation 8:** Options for increasing the level of innovation within the programme in Pembrokeshire should be explored including a review of approaches for supporting innovation as promoted by organisations such as Nesta, the Innovation Foundation.

There is also a tendency within the LEADER programme (not just in Pembrokeshire) to treat projects being supported as ‘one-off’ pilots, which once completed are either mainstreamed or not. Innovation is however often an ongoing process with ideas going through a number of iterations and pilots before they are mainstreamed.



The potential need to revisit ideas and projects that have already been funded by LEADER to consider the need to support a further iteration of the pilot therefore needs to be considered.

**Recommendation 9:** Some pilot projects warrant a second attempt or further development. Alongside the development of new project ideas, the LAG should, on an ongoing basis, review project evaluation forms with a view to considering whether existing or previous pilot projects should be evolved into new or phase 2 pilots.

The importance of completing the 'innovation cycle' for projects also needs to be emphasised which should include a comprehensive analysis of lessons learnt, etc. as well as the effective dissemination and sharing of that information. Linked to this, there is the potential to enhance the level of networking taking place in Pembrokeshire, a key feature of the LEADER approach, especially during its latter stages as projects are ending and lessons learnt are emerging. As noted previously, this is likely to be a key element of the LEADER programme in Pembrokeshire over the remainder of its lifetime given that there is no funding to support any new projects.

**Recommendation 10:** The 'innovation cycle' should include a review of what has been achieved, lessons learnt, etc. and projects reviewed on that basis as they near completion with a compendium of 'learning' from the programme being developed and shared. This could be done via networking activities within Pembrokeshire which brings together projects and/or stakeholders to share and discuss the findings of projects and priorities going forward (see Recommendation 1).

# 1 Introduction

This is the second and mid-term report of the evaluation of the implementation and outcomes of the LEADER programme in Pembrokeshire as delivered by the Local Action Group for the area, Arwain Sir Benfro<sup>1</sup>.

The first report focused on introducing the LEADER approach, its delivery in Pembrokeshire and setting out how the evaluation will be undertaken. This formative mid-term report assesses the delivery of the programme within the county to date with a view to informing delivery over the remaining lifetime of the programme. The summative final evaluation report, scheduled for December 2021, will have a focus on assessing the outcomes, impact and added value of the programme.

This report has been informed by:

- A review of the monitoring data and other information about projects and programme as held by PLANED, the organisation managing and delivering the programme on behalf of the Local Action Group;
- Telephone interviews with 17 LAG members and three members of staff;
- Telephone interviews with 54 representatives of projects supported by the programme, representing 62 of the 70 projects supported at the time of the research<sup>2</sup>; and
- Discussions following a presentation of the draft findings to the Local Action Group members.

The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 provides context for the discussion that follows with a brief overview of the LEADER approach and its implementation in Pembrokeshire;
- Chapter 3 reviews the Local Development Strategy guiding the delivery of LEADER in Pembrokeshire, expenditure and performance to date;
- Chapter 4 reviews of the implementation of the LEADER approach within the county;
- Chapter 5 provides examples of projects funded by LEADER in Pembrokeshire; and
- Finally, Chapter 6 includes the conclusion and recommendations of this mid-term evaluation report.

The evaluation is being undertaken by the social and economic research company, Wavehill<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.arwainsirbenfro.cymru/>

<sup>2</sup> The higher number of projects that interviews is due to the fact that some of the interviewees were responsible for multiple projects.

<sup>3</sup> [www.wavehill.com](http://www.wavehill.com)

## 2 A brief overview of the LEADER approach and its implementation in Pembrokeshire

### Key points

- LEADER is implemented by applying ‘community-led local development’ and is built on several specific characteristics often referred to as the ‘LEADER approach’.
- The programme in Pembrokeshire is led by the Arwain Sir Benfro Local Action Group with PLANED leading in the delivery of the programme on their behalf.
- The total value of the programme in Pembrokeshire is just over £4.4m with 75% being allocated to funding for projects.

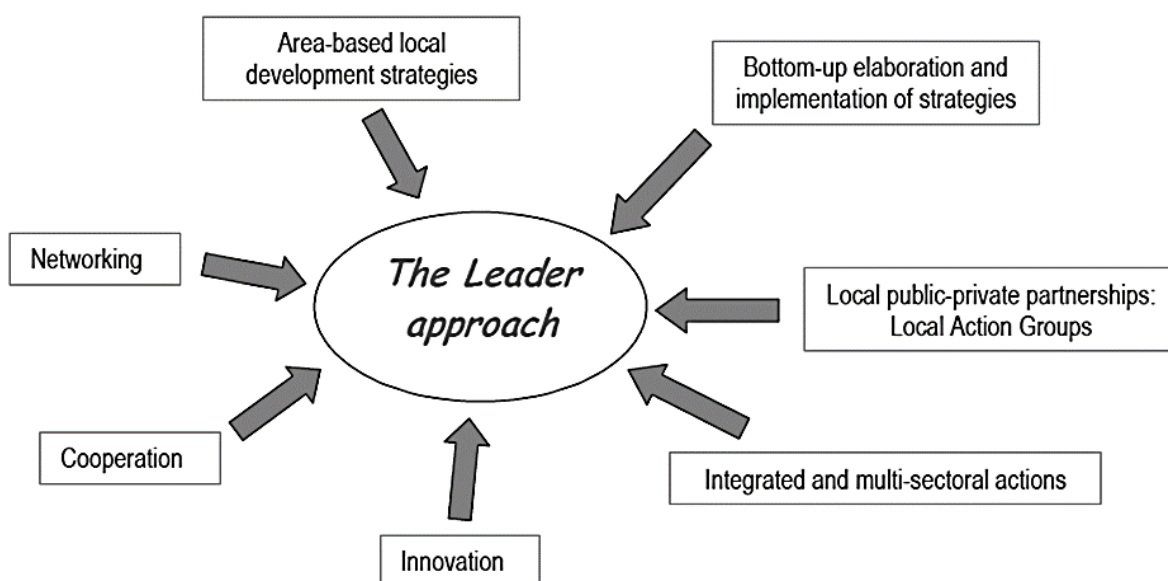
### 2.1 Introduction

For ease of reference and to provide context for the discussion that follows, this chapter provides a brief overview of the LEADER approach and its implementation in Pembrokeshire. For a more detailed description of the approach, please refer to Report 1 of the evaluation.

### 2.2 Overview of the LEADER approach

LEADER is a local development method which has been used for over 20 years to engage local actors in the design and delivery of strategies, decision-making and resource allocation for the development of their rural areas.

Figure 2.1: The LEADER approach



As a **Community Led Local Development (CLLD)** initiative, LEADER is an integrated development process designed to engage, enable, resource and empower local communities in undertaking their own local development. LEADER is built on a number of specific characteristics often referred to as the 'LEADER approach' as illustrated in figure 2.1 above.

LEADER is implemented by **Local Action Group (LAG)** activities, delivering a **Local Development Strategy (LDS)** that they have developed and animation/capacity building activities within the local community.

**Animation** is a key feature of LEADER (specifically the 'bottom up' element of the programme) and can include a range of activities, such as:

- working to 'empower' local people and/or organisations and their willingness to face local challenges or opportunities through the development and implementation of projects (linked to the LDS); and
- (not directly linked with the LDS or a specific project) working more generally in the local area and with the local population to, for example, enhance the awareness of local heritage.

**Innovation** is one of the original and fundamental strategic principles in LEADER. The focus on innovation is based on the argument that doing "more of the same" is unlikely to enable an area to reach its full potential and that new solutions to existing problems should be sought. The objective is to encourage and support new, forward looking and entrepreneurial approaches and solutions to local issues and to share and transfer that experience.

**Cooperation** is also a core LEADER feature. With LAGs across Europe the wealth of LEADER local development experience, knowledge and human capital is potentially substantial, and cooperation offers a means of capitalising on this resource. LAGs can make use of or contribute to this network to develop the group, to undertake joint projects or initiatives, to innovate, or to share or transfer knowledge and experience.

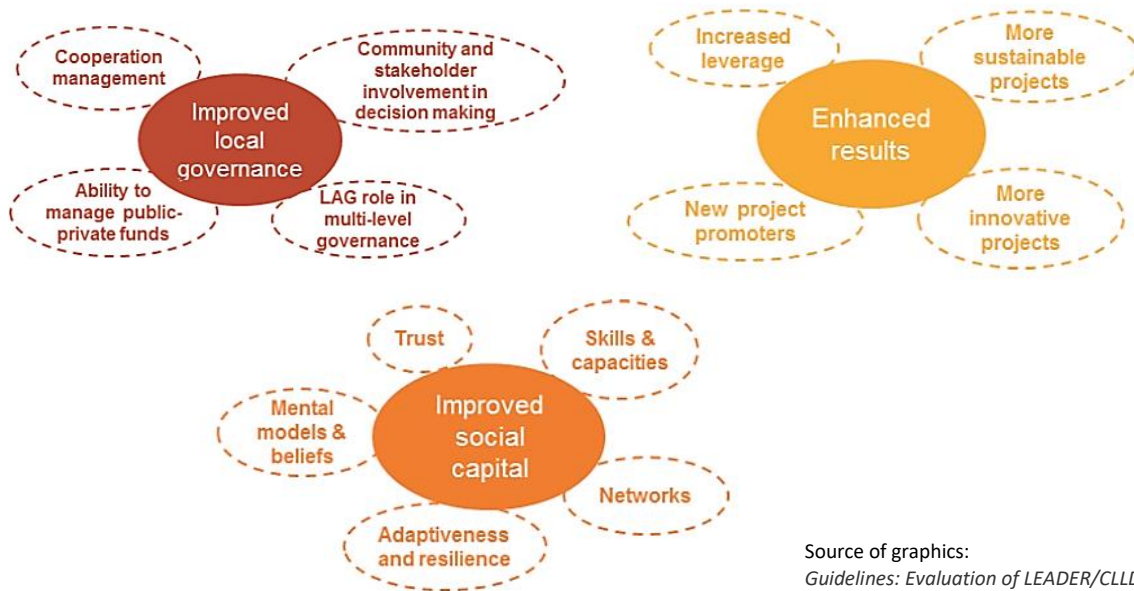
### 2.2.1 Added value of the approach

The LEADER approach is expected to add-value at a local level through:

- (1) **The implementation of the LDS** (i.e. its operationalisation in the form of projects and the results and impacts they produce);
- (2) **The LAG delivery mechanism** (i.e. the set of rules, procedures and administrative arrangements, which ensure that strategy objectives become concrete actions on the ground); and
- (3) **Capacity building support/animation**: The support provided to encourage and enable the beneficiaries (i.e. activities aiming to raise the awareness, readiness, cooperation and networking capabilities of local people to contribute to developing their area).

If correctly applied, the implementation of the LEADER method is anticipated to lead to three groups of outcomes, as illustrated by the graphics below.

Figure 2.2: Anticipated outcomes of the LEADER approach



Source of graphics:  
*Guidelines: Evaluation of LEADER/CLLD (2017)*  
European Network for Rural Development

## 2.3 The approach in Pembrokeshire

In Pembrokeshire, LEADER is being implemented by the Arwain Sir Benfro LAG with PLANED undertaking the administrative and financial operations on their behalf. The team delivering the programme are also employed by PLANED.<sup>4</sup>

Projects are identified through open calls on a two-stage basis. Proposers are supported by Animateurs with the expression of interest (EOI) adapted where appropriate. Proposers then submit a full application that is appraised by the LAG, using a sub-group with experience in the project-related field to initially assess the application before it is presented to the full LAG who decide whether to approve it. These decisions are based on two considerations: (1) an eligibility-criteria to determine the admissibility of the proposal, and (2) a selection-criteria to assess the desirability of the proposal and a qualitative assessment of the fit with the LDS.

<sup>4</sup> PLANED ([www.planed.org.uk](http://www.planed.org.uk)) is a community-led partnership established as a social enterprise, a Development Trust, a charity, and a company limited by guarantee, with its Board members being representatives from communities and from the public and private sectors. The organisation has over 30 years' experience of implementing integrated rural development (including the LEADER programme) through supporting enterprise, sustainable agriculture and tourism, heritage and environmental activities, through community engagement and participation.

### 3 Review of the Local Development Strategy & Expenditure, Outputs and Outcomes to date

#### Key points

- The LDS for Pembrokeshire sets out 13 priorities ('development needs and opportunities') together with 50 'specific objectives' that further define each of those priorities.
- The strategy is therefore very broad identifying a very wide range of issues that LEADER funding is to be used to try and address.
- The key to the 'broad versus focused' LDS debate is that the LAG needs to be clear about what their objective for LEADER in Pembrokeshire is. If the objective to fund good or innovative ideas, whatever they may be, a broad approach is appropriate. If, however the objective is to addressing specific priorities, challenges or opportunities within the county, a narrower, more targeted, approach is necessary.
- At the time of the analysis for this report, the programme had supported 66 projects, 29 (44%) of which had been completed.
- The dominant themes in respects of the number of projects supported to date are Themes 1 (adding value) and 3 (non-statutory services); they are also the themes to which most budget has been allocated.
- The proportion of the budget spent on Theme 2 (pre-commercial dev.) is considerably less than had been anticipated at least partly due to State Aid restrictions on how LEADER funding can be utilised in Wales.
- A large proportion of respondents to the survey of projects supported reported that it was not likely that their project would have progressed without the support that had received.
- Given the limited number of performance indicators being collected at a programme level, the evaluation activities being undertaken at a project level will be vitally important. It is therefore of some concern that a relatively large proportion of projects reported that no evaluation activity was planned.
- Half (27/54) of those interviewed reported that they had previously been involved 'a lot' in other projects delivered in rural Pembrokeshire, with a further 37% (20/54) saying that they had 'some' involvement previously. This support concerns expressed by some interviewees that a relatively large proportion of LEADER funding was being utilised by 'the usual suspects'.
- Despite the previous experience of most, 95% (51/54) of respondents said that their involvement with Arwain Sir Benfro had a positive influence on whether they would be involved in rural development projects in Pembrokeshire in the future.
- The vast majority (79%) said that their involvement with Arwain Sir Benfro meant that they had met and/or were working with different people, for the first time.

## 3.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the LDS for Pembrokeshire. It is important to note that we do not consider the way in which the LDS was developed which is outside the remit of the evaluation. Rather, the focus is on the coherence of the LDS as a strategy for guiding the implementation of LEADER in Pembrokeshire and the extent to which it has been delivered via the projects supported to date. The chapter then moves on to review the figures for expenditure to date and the range of projects that have been supported. The performance indicators recorded are then discussed before finally we consider the evidence of the outcomes of the projects to date. That discussion draws upon data and other information about projects that has been collated by the PLANED team, interviews with LAG members and staff as well as the survey of projects supported.

## 3.2 Review of the Strategy

The LDS is an important element of the LEADER approach described in European Commission guidelines as *'the roadmap for LEADER implementation with the LAG selecting and supporting projects, according to the contribution they make to the goals of the strategy'*.<sup>5</sup>

### **Strategy**

*A plan of action designed to achieve a long-term or overall aim.*

The policy and strategy review within the Pembrokeshire LDS are comprehensive as is the analysis of the key statistical information about the county although both sections require updating on an ongoing basis (the statistical data has been updated as part of Report 1 of the evaluation). It is important to note that the policy context has changed considerably since the LDS was originally written (the most obvious development being Brexit) which needs to be reflected within an updated LDS as these changes can potentially have a significant influence on the priorities for the implementation of LEADER in the area.

The Pembrokeshire LDS is structured in accordance with the five themes for the LEADER programme in Wales with 13 'development needs/opportunities' (also referred to as priorities within the LDS) identified under each theme, as shown in Table 3.1. Fifty 'specific objectives' are also identified which further define those development needs and opportunities which are not shown in the table below for brevity, but which can be found in Appendix 1.

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<sup>5</sup> Guidance produced by the European Network for Rural Development on the development and implementation of the LDS can be found here: [https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/enrd/files/enrd-guidance\\_lsd.pdf](https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/enrd/files/enrd-guidance_lsd.pdf)

Table 3.1: Pembrokeshire LEADER LDS Themes and Priorities

<b>LEADER programme Theme</b>	<b>Budget allocation</b>	<b>Development Needs/Opportunities</b>
Theme 1: Adding value to local identity and natural and cultural resources	£663,759 (21%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority 1.1: Build on a sense of place and community identity</li> <li>• Priority 1.2: Increase sustainable tourism opportunities and take advantage of 'favourable' aspects of climate change</li> <li>• Priority 1.3: Provide access and undertake activities relating to environmental and landscape assets</li> </ul>
Theme 2: Facilitating pre-commercial development, business partnerships and short supply chains	£995,625 (32%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority 2.1: Provide appropriate and relevant support services to businesses</li> <li>• Priority 2.2: Continue to exploit strengthened collaboration between producers, processors and retailers and share practice/experiences from around the world and better co-ordinated /shortened supply chain</li> <li>• Priority 2.3: Develop locally relevant learning opportunities such as mentoring and coworking, create upskilling opportunities and address succession</li> <li>• Priority 2.4: Promote the business benefits of good environmental management</li> </ul>
Theme 3: Exploring new ways of providing non-statutory local services	£995,625 (32%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority 3.1: Continue to support the development of community capacity and skills:</li> <li>• Priority 3.2: Increase ownership of local delivery and develop infrastructure</li> </ul>
Theme 4: Renewable energy at community level	£331,875 (11%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority 4.1: Support communities to take advantage of renewable energy potential from environmental sources – e.g. solar, tidal, marine, hydro and wind</li> <li>• Priority 4.2: Encourage and support communities to adopt energy saving and conservation techniques</li> </ul>
Theme 5: Exploitation of digital technology	£163,258 (5%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority 5.1: Work towards digital inclusion for all – reducing isolation and including social, cultural, and telehealth opportunities and skills development</li> <li>• Priority 5.2: Ensure that best use is made of new and arriving technology</li> </ul>

Source: Pembrokeshire Local Development Strategy



The objectives set out are consistent with the SWOT analysis within the LDS. The strategy is however very broad and seeks to tackle a very wide range of issues. There is an argument that the strategy set out within the LDS is too broad with a lack of clear prioritisation of the key challenges facing the local area; most things are included within the strategy. It could also be argued that this reflects the broad range of challenges facing the area. However, the other side to this argument is that this approach dilutes the potential impact of the LEADER programme by spreading the resources available too thinly.

The fact that the strategy was prepared at a time when the nature of the LEADER funding (including what it could and could not support) was unclear needs to be acknowledged; this encouraged those preparing the LDS to propose a very broad and wide-ranging strategy with an emphasis on ensuring that nothing you may want to do at a later time was excluded. Its usefulness as a 'strategy' which prioritises the challenges and opportunities that LEADER should focus upon and making the best possible use of the limited funding available is however inevitably limited by such an approach<sup>6</sup>.

There is no prioritisation within the SWOT analysis set out within the LDS although specific elements of the analysis are identified within the appended 'intervention logic table' and linked to needs/opportunities and specific objective. It is not however clear which of the weaknesses or opportunities identified are considered by the LAG to be the most pressing or highest priority in respects of the delivery of the LEADER programme. From a strategy perspective, this is important as prioritising the issues being identified would allow a clearer analysis of which of the objectives and potential actions being identified are the most urgent and/or the most relevant to the LEADER programme in Pembrokeshire.

There is however an element of prioritisation within the LDS as shown by the proportion of the 'RDP funds' allocated to each theme, as shown in Table 3.1. Those figures suggest that Theme 2 (pre-commercial development, business partnerships and short supply chains) and Theme 3 (exploring new ways of providing non-statutory local services) are being prioritised with Theme 5 (exploitation of digital technology) deemed to be the lowest priority. But, the rationale for that prioritisation is not clear; on what basis has that decision been made?

LAG members and staff were asked to comment on the LDS during their interviews for this report with the views being expressed being generally positive. There was however also a recognition that the strategy it sets out is broad with respondents noting that, to paraphrase, 'most things will fit'. There were mixed views on whether that was a good thing. The need to prioritise activities from this point onwards in order to address elements of the LDS not achieved to date and to make sure that the limited funds that remained available were used in the best possible way was however generally recognised. There was not however a clear consensus that the LDS was, as the author would suggest, too broad from the beginning that that greater focus and prioritisation would have been appropriate given the relatively small budget available to deliver the LEADER programme in Pembrokeshire.

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<sup>6</sup> If the total funding available to support projects equally distributed across the 13 development needs/opportunities identified by the LDS that would represent a £255,000 each, or approximately £36,000 a year.

The key to the ‘broad versus focused’ LDS debate is that the LAG needs to be clear about what their objective for LEADER in Pembrokeshire is. If the objective to fund good or innovative ideas, whatever they may be, a broad approach is appropriate. If, however the objective is to addressing specific priorities, challenges or opportunities within the county, a narrower, more targeted, approach is necessary.

### 3.3 The range of projects supported to date

At the time of the analysis for this report, the LEADER programme in Pembrokeshire had supported 66 projects, 29 (44%) of which had been completed. Good progress therefore has been made in respects of the implementation of the programme.

Respondents were generally satisfied with the range of projects supported to date. There was however some discussion about the pro’s and con’s of supporting a high number of small projects versus supporting fewer, larger projects; there were mixed views on this matter. Again, arguments for and against this approach can be made which are not set out in detail here for brevity. The key is however, again, that the LAG needs to be clear about the rationale for the approach they are taking.

The table below splits those projects per theme as a total and as a percentage of the total. It also shows the budget committed per theme and as a percentage of the total. The percentage of the budget allocated to each theme within the LDS is also noted for comparison with the actual figures.

**Table 3.2: Approved projects split by theme**

Theme	Number of projects	% of all projects	Budget committed	Average budget per project	% of total budget committed*	% budget allocation within the LDS*
<b>Theme 1: Adding value to local identity and natural and cultural resources</b>	20	30%	£519,717	£25,986	25% (↑)	21% (↓)
<b>Theme 2: Facilitating pre-commercial development, business partnerships and short supply chains</b>	12	18%	£443,344	£36,945	22% (↓)	32% (↑)
<b>Theme 3: Exploring new ways of providing non-statutory local services</b>	19	29%	£674,771	£35,514	33% (↑)	32% (↓)
<b>Theme 4: Renewable energy at community level</b>	7	11%	£378,236	£54,034	19% (↑)	11% (↓)
<b>Theme 5: Exploitation of digital technology</b>	8	12%	£26,162	£3,270	1% (↓)	5% (↑)

Source: PLANED, as prepared for the July 2019 LAG meeting update

\* The arrows indicate whether the proposed allocation within the LDS is higher, lower or equal to the actual allocation of the budget to date.

The table shows that the dominant themes in respects of the number of projects supported to date are Themes 1 (adding value) and 3 (non-statutory services); they are also the themes to which most budget has been allocated. It is interesting to note that, on average, projects have a higher financial value in Theme 4 suggesting that fewer, larger (in financial terms) have been supported under that theme.

A comparison of the actual allocation of the budget to date to that anticipated in the LDS shows a higher proportion of the budget has been allocated to Themes 1 (adding value), 3 (non-statutory services) and 5 (digital) than had been anticipated with the opposite being true for Themes 2 (pre-commercial) and 5 (digital); indeed, the proportion of the budget allocated to Theme 2 is considerably less than had been anticipated.

The restrictions that the state aid rules and the need for match funding place on the implementation of the LEADER programme at a local level are likely to have had a significant impact on this. Funding from the LEADER programme in Wales cannot be used to provide aid or other assistance that would constitute state aid<sup>7</sup> in respect of a 'business', 'enterprise', 'undertaking' or 'economic operator' receiving such support. This means that LAGs cannot provide any kind of assistance that would reduce normal day to day operational running costs; subsidising staff salaries or giving financial support (directly or indirectly) towards rent, rates, energy costs, promotion, publicity, advertising and/or any other running costs or overheads. Further, LEADER in Wales cannot be used to provide capital or revenue grants or other forms of direct or indirect assistance to commercial businesses. The need to source match-funding also restricts a LAGs ability to develop and/or support innovative projects as other sources of funding may not have the same desire to support and develop innovative (and therefore higher risk) projects.

There is some concern that those who have had previous involvement with PLANED, or in similar projects, are more likely to submit applications for support and be successful with funding (the findings of the survey of projects discussed below suggest that this may be the case). Those concerns were however said to be decreasing as the programme progressed (the benefit of animation takes time to become apparent in applications being submitted). They do however need to be noted.

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<sup>7</sup> State aid is any advantage granted by public authorities through state resources on a selective basis to any organisations that could potentially distort competition and trade in the European Union. For further information, see: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/state-aid>

### 3.4 Total expenditure to date

The table below sets out the expenditure figures for LEADER in Pembrokeshire in January 2020 split by the budget allocated to provide financial support for projects (applications for support received) and that allocated for projects which the LAG may wish to commission directly. The tables include provisional figures for a reprofiled budget which includes a transfer of funds from the procurement budget to the financial support pot.

Table 3.3: Budgets vs allocation summary, January 2020

*Financial support fund*

Original budget (all themes)	£1,960,321
Reprofiled budget*	£2,203,323
Total budget allocated	£2,201,541
Budget remaining for allocation	£1,782

*Procurement budget*

Original budget	£311,000
Reprofiled budget*	£143,000
Total budget allocated	£100,000
Budget remaining for allocation	£43,000

*Combined*

Reprofiled budget*	£2,346,323
Total budget allocated	£2,301,541
Budget remaining for allocation	£44,782

Source: PLANED

*\*Subject to Welsh Government approval, £168,000 has been moved from the procurement budget to the financial support fund.*

In total, 98% of the budget available to support LEADER projects in Pembrokeshire had been committed. This is clearly positive in terms of making progress and ensuring that the budget available is fully utilised. It does however also mean that the programme has only a very small amount of funding available to support any new projects (bearing in mind that area animation activities are still ongoing) over the remainder of the programme period, unless projects that have been supported do not progress as planned or additional funding is made available.

## 3.5 Programme level performance indicators

A limited number of key performance indicators (KPIs) are being used for the LEADER programme in Wales which are:

1. Number of jobs created
2. Number of feasibility studies
3. Number of networks established
4. Number of pilot activities undertaken/supported
5. Number of community hubs
6. No of jobs safeguarded
7. Number of information dissemination actions/promotion
8. Number of stakeholders engaged
9. Number of participants

A review of the performance of the programme against these KPIs has not been undertaken for this mid-term review due to an ongoing reassessment of targets at the time of the report. Such an analysis will however be part of the final evaluation.

This limited number of KPIs is in line with the Welsh Government's change of approach for the current LEADER programme in response to criticisms of the previous programme which included a far longer list of performance indicators, leading to a very complex monitoring process. The much more limited number of indicators (most of which are outputs<sup>8</sup>) does however mean that the data available to judge the success of the programme, based on these performance indicators alone, is limited. This increases the reliance of the evaluation on the data collected by the individual projects, as discussed later in this chapter.

### 3.5.1 Potential additional performance indicators

As noted above, the KPIs in place for the LEADER programme (as set by the Welsh Government) are output (activity) focused and relatively narrow. The evaluation has therefore considered the potential to introduce additional indicators to provide further data on the performance of the programme in Pembrokeshire for review as part of the final phase of the evaluation.

A key challenge to the evaluation of a programme such as LEADER is that the projects and activities funded vary substantially. This makes it challenging to develop a set of common indicators that can be used across all projects, especially in respects of capturing the outcomes of activities. Potential generic indicators that could potentially be used however include:

- The number of organisations applying for funding to deliver a regeneration project for the first time
- The number of those new organisations developing other or follow up project proposals (i.e. continuing their involvement in regeneration)

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<sup>8</sup> Illustrating the level of activity undertaken as opposed to results or outcomes of activities.

- The number (or percentage) of participants/stakeholders reporting that they have benefited as a result of their involvement in the project funded by LEADER.
- The number (or percentage) of participants/stakeholders reporting that they are more likely to get involved or continue to be involved in actions within their local community as a result of their involvement with the LEADER programme

The main weakness of these indicators is that they tell you nothing about the nature of the benefit, only that there has been one. It may however be that such an indication is enough with more detailed data and analysis being provided at a project level.

A common theme in discussions with LAG members on this issue was the legacy of projects, whether they continue or evolve once the funding that has been provided by the LEADER programme has come to an end. This was considered by many to be perhaps the key indicator of the success of LEADER and is obviously consistent with the core objective of LEADER as a mechanism for piloting new and innovative approaches to rural development in Pembrokeshire.

Whilst accepting that not all projects will succeed is important (a key part of any intervention in support of new and innovative activities) the logic of indicators relating to legacy for a LEADER programme is clear. Potential indicators include:

- The number of projects still active 12 months post the end of the LEADER funding
- The amount of additional or funding drawn into Pembrokeshire by the project

Sharing of learning is also a key element of the LEADER programme. It may therefore be valuable to capture indicators of activities relating to that process as part of any set of 'legacy' indicators. For example:

- The number of case studies produced and the number of times they have been downloaded from the programme website
- Participants in activities to share learning from the LEADER programme (individuals and/or organisations)

As discussed in Report 1, Common Evaluation Questions (CEQs) are an important element of the EU Common Monitoring and Evaluation System of which the LEADER programme forms part and it is appropriate to consider them here. LAGs are required to report against the CEQs which are relevant to the Focus Areas their activities are aligned to. In Wales, all LAGs should address the CEQ related to Focus Area 6B: *'To what extent has the RDP intervention contributed to fostering local development in rural areas?'* The judgement criteria specified for this question are set out in the table below.

**Table 3.4: Judgement criteria and indicators for Focus Area 6B: fostering local development in rural areas**

Judgement criteria	Indicators
1. Services and local infrastructure in rural areas has improved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of rural population covered by local development strategies</li> <li>• Jobs created in supported projects</li> <li>• % of rural population benefiting from improved services/infrastructures</li> </ul> <p><i>Additional information:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of projects/initiatives supported by the Local Development Strategy</li> <li>• % of RDP expenditure in LEADER measures with respect to total RDP expenditure</li> </ul>
2. Access to services and local infrastructure has increased in rural areas	
3. Rural people have participated in local actions	
4. Rural people have benefited from local actions	
5. Employment opportunities have been created via local development strategies	
6. Rural territory and population covered by LAGs has increased	

The indicators specified for Focus Area 6B are of relatively limited value at a local level in terms of assessing the outcomes of the programme. Many of the indicators suggested above are however relevant to the judgement criteria specified further supporting their potential introduction. The constraints created by the state aid restriction on the programme in Wales on the potential to achieve the ‘jobs created’ result does however need to be noted again here.

It is also important to consider the Well-being of Future Generations Act when considering programme level performance indicators for schemes in Wales. The Act puts in place legislation requiring public bodies in Wales to put long-term sustainability at the forefront of their thinking, and work with each other along with other relevant organisations (such as third sector groups) and the public to prevent and tackle problems<sup>9</sup>. Seven ‘well-being goals’ are set and a series of 46 ‘national indicators’ have been put in place to allow progress towards those goals to be measured. The list is too long to include here<sup>10</sup> but several of the indicators are potentially relevant to the LEADER programme in Pembrokeshire.

These indicators are however (as one would expect from national level indicators) very high level and long-term. Attributing any changes in these indicators to the LEADER programme will therefore be challenging to say the least. Being aware of these high-level indicators and considering them within the revision of the LDS will however be important.

Based on the review in this section, we would propose that the introduction of at least the indicators noted below be considered:

<sup>9</sup> More information about the Act is available here: <https://futuregenerations.wales/about-us/future-generations-act/>

<sup>10</sup> The full list can be found within this document: <https://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/160316-national-indicators-to-be-laid-before-nafw-en.pdf>

- a) The number of organisations applying for funding to deliver a regeneration project for the first time
- b) The number of those new organisations developing other or follow up project proposals (i.e. continuing their involvement in regeneration)
- c) The number (or percentage) of participants/stakeholders reporting that they are more likely to get involved or continue to be involved in actions within their local community as a result of their involvement with the LEADER programme.
- d) The number of projects still active 12 months post the end of the LEADER funding
- e) The amount of additional or funding drawn into Pembrokeshire by the project
- f) Participants in activities to share learning from the LEADER programme (individuals and/or organisations)

These indicators are generic and not priority specific. Based on the review of the LDS previously discussed, the potential to introduce additional priority specific indicators should also be considered.

## 3.6 Findings of the survey of supported projects

As noted in the introduction, telephone interviews were undertaken with 54 representatives of projects supported by the programme, representing 62 of the 66 projects supported at the time of the research. These interviews covered a range of subjects including the outcomes of the activities undertaken by the (anticipated or actual, depending on the progress of the project) and other outcomes generated by the implementation of the project supported by LEADER.

### 3.6.1 Perceived project achievements to date

When respondents were asked to describe what their project had achieved (recognising that the majority of projects were still ongoing), the responses were understandably varied reflecting the range in the projects in question, as illustrated by the project examples included in Chapter 5 of this report. Common themes were however apparent when responses were analysed.

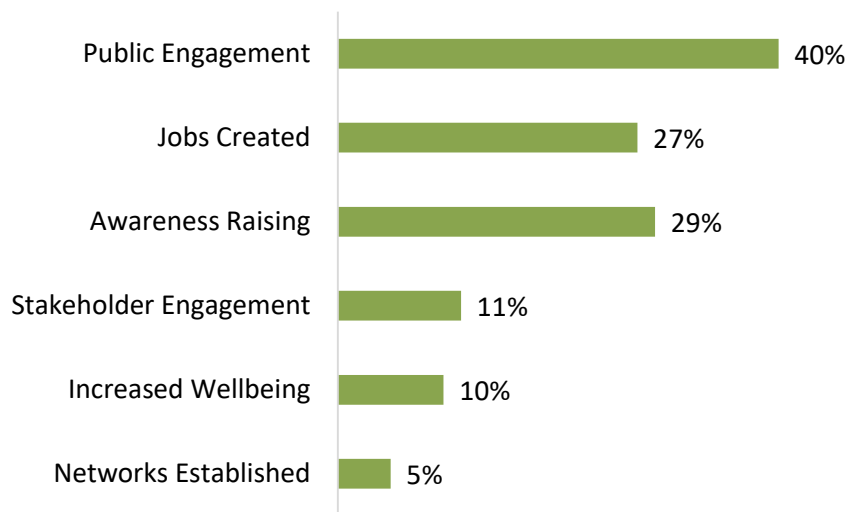
When the responses were coded<sup>11</sup> (Figure 3.X) the most common theme to emerge is 'public engagement' with 'awareness raising' and 'stakeholder engagement' also prominent. These achievements are however *outputs* (activities) as opposed to *outcomes* that will generate a legacy within the communities in question. Outcomes are however also being identified in the form of jobs being created and an increase in wellbeing although it is not possible to quantify such outcomes at this stage. The fact that they are being identified is however obviously positive. It is also important to recognise that, in the majority of cases, projects are still ongoing and so the outcomes may not yet be apparent. Project outcomes will be explored in a lot more detail for the final evaluation report when project activity has come to an end.

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<sup>11</sup> Coding is the process of taking open-end responses to questions and categorising them into groups.



Figure 3.1: Response to the question - how would you summarise what the project has achieved? (coded)



N=54

### 3.6.2 Would the project have happened anyway?

A key question for any evaluation is whether a project that has been funded would have happened anyway, regardless of the support provided by the programme in question. In this instance, 43% (23/54) of respondents said that there was 'no chance' their project(s) would have progressed without the financial support provided by LEADER with a further 22% (12/54) saying it was unlikely (a total of 65%). Whilst the fact that we are reliant on the views of those responsible for the project needs to be considered, and the clear potential for bias that this means, this is an important finding in respect of demonstrating the additionality of LEADER financial support.

Some respondents did however report that it was likely that their project(s) would have happened anyway, with 17% (9/54) said that it was 'likely' or 'very'. Ideally, such projects would not be supported although the fact that projects would have happened anyway does not in itself mean eliminate any added-value as a result of the support provided with projects reporting that the funding allowed them to deliver better projects or undertake activities quicker than they would otherwise have done.

### 3.6.3 Evaluation activities being undertaken by the projects

Given the limited number of programme level performance indicators being collected, the evaluation activities being undertaken at a project level will be very important in terms of demonstrating the achievements of LEADER in Pembrokeshire. Fifty-eight percent of respondents (36/62) said that no evaluation activity had been undertaken on their project. The fact that many projects were still ongoing needs to be considered as does the fact that evaluation may not be necessary for some projects (for example, feasibility studies). The fact that 21 of the 36 (34% of all projects) who reported no evaluation activity also said that none was planned (is however of some concern given the reliance on projects to provide data upon which to evaluate the impact of the LEADER programme in Pembrokeshire).

### 3.6.4 Involvement in rural development projects

Half (27/54) of those interviewed reported that they had previously been involved 'a lot' in other projects delivered in rural Pembrokeshire, with a further 37% (20/54) saying that they had 'some' involvement previously. Only 13% (7/54) saying that they had no previous involvement. This suggests that the programme to date has had limited success in respect of engaging groups in rural development in Pembrokeshire for the first time and supports concerns expressed by some LAG members that much of the support has been provided to organisations with expensive previous experience of delivering rural development projects in the area. Whether or not this is a good thing is again a matter of debate with some arguing that the utilisation of funding by experienced organisations drives up the standard of projects being delivered (as well as minimising the risk of poor delivery). Others highlighted the benefit of drawing in 'new blood' into rural development in Pembrokeshire. Both points of view are valid.

Unsurprisingly given the previous experience of most respondents, 95% (41/54) said that they were 'likely' or 'very likely' to continue to be involved in some capacity with active projects in rural Pembrokeshire in the future (76% saying that it was 'very likely'). There was however a mixed response to this question from the small group of respondents who had no previous involvement in rural development projects with 2 of the 7 saying that it was 'very likely', 3 saying it was 'likely' and 2 saying it was 'unlikely'. This suggests that this small group of first timers may need some persuasion to continue to be involved.

Despite the previous experience of most, 95% (51/54) of respondents said that their involvement with Arwain Sir Benfro had a positive influence on whether they would become involved in rural development projects in Pembrokeshire in the future. Where comments were negative (small minority) it was due to the high level of commitment that they had to give the current project (i.e. they weren't sure they wanted to do that again).

The vast majority (93%, 50/54) said that their involvement with Arwain Sir Benfro meant that they had met and/or were working with different people, for the first time (63% saying 'a lot', 30% saying 'a few'). This is a positive outcome and suggests that, even though most applicants had previous experience of undertaking projects in rural Pembrokeshire, they were still benefiting from their involvement with Arwain Sir Benfro.

### 3.6.5 Net Promoter Score

Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a method used to gauge the views of an organisation's customers, in this case the projects supported by Arwain Sir Benfro. The score is calculated based on responses to a single question: How likely is it that you would recommend company/product/service to a friend or colleague? Scores range from minus 100 (very bad) to plus 100 (very good).

The score for Arwain Sir Benfro was a very positive 55, which is in line with the general positive views expressed by respondents to the survey of projects. It is however important to note that the sample to date only includes respondents whose project had been approved which may bias the response.

### 3.7 Conclusion

The strategy presented within the LDS is very broad identifying a very wide range of issues that LEADER funding is to be used to try and address. Our experience suggests that this is not uncommon within the LEADER programme in Wales with the fact that LDSs were prepared at a time when the detail of the programme was unavailable needing to be considered. The fact that LEADER is designed to be a 'bottom up' support mechanism supporting ideas that come from within the community also needs to be acknowledged. In that context, designing a broad LDS which does not restrict the type and range of projects that can be supported is a logical approach.

The broadness of the LDS does however mean that its usefulness as a guide or action-plan for how LEADER funds in Pembrokeshire should be utilised is limited. The key is however that the LAG needs to be clear about what they how they want the LEADER funds available to them to be utilised. The need for a narrower, more focused approach from this point forward does however need to be carefully considered. However, close to 100% of the funding available to the LAG in Pembrokeshire has already been committed meaning that there isn't an opportunity for a change in approach at this stage.

Good progress has been made in respect of the number of projects supported to date with a relatively high proportion of those projects having already been completed. This is positive in many ways with little if any risk that the funding that has been made available to Pembrokeshire via the LEADER programme not being fully utilised. However, unless projects do not proceed as planned (meaning that funding can be decommitted) or additional funding is made available, the LAG now has no resource available to it to fund any new projects or ideas that may emerge over the remainder of the lifetime of the programme. On that basis, the role of the LAG going forward will need to change, which is a matter we return to in the following chapter.

This report has only taken a limited look at the outcomes of projects, which will be a greater focus for the final evaluation report. The information that has been reviewed is however positive. The limited number of performance indicators being collected at a programme level does however increase the reliance on evaluation at a project level which is obviously a risk.

It is positive that the survey of projects supported found that a large proportion of those projects were not likely to have progressed without the support that had received, although the fact that these were the views of those responsible for applying for support for their project needs to be taken into account. It is also positive that a very high proportion of respondents to the project survey reported that they had benefited in respects of meeting or working with new people as a result of their involvement with Arwain Sir Benfro. These are positive outcomes.

The fact that a relatively large proportion of the funding available has gone to what could be described as experienced deliverers of local project does however need to be noted as that can potentially limited the extent to which the programme achieves 'capacity building' outcomes amongst those funded.

## 4 Review of the implementation of the LEADER approach to date

### Key points

- LAG attendance levels have been good with the private sector, on average, outperforming the public and third sectors in terms of attendance at meetings.
- The views of those interviewed on the performance of the LAG were overwhelmingly positive. Concerns expressed by some that the LAG had, to date, been operating too much as a 'grants assessment panel' should however be noted.
- The important role played by the LAG sub-group was frequently noted during interviews with the importance of the opportunity it provided to review and discuss projects and ideas in detail emphasised.
- LAG members identified several benefits of being members, including the opportunity to network with others working in the area that it provides. This is an important benefit of the LEADER approach.
- LAG members were overwhelmingly positive when asked to comment on the role undertaken by PLANED in their capacity as the Lead Body.
- 'Animation' is largely left to the PLANED team to manage and deliver on behalf of the LAG with only limited guidance or oversight.
- Feedback from projects on the support they received during the application process was very positive as was the feedback on the application process itself although the fact that this was a survey of approved projects needs to be considered.
- The fact that 64% (27/42) of project survey respondents said that it was 'certain' or 'likely' that they would have submitted their application *without* receiving support suggests that, in most cases, support was not essential to the development of the project. This supports the previous finding that most applicants to date are organisations with substantial experience of developing rural development projects.
- There is a clear commitment to innovation within the LDS. The definition of innovation being used (activity that hasn't been seen in Pembrokeshire before) is however broad and there is an argument that it may be appropriate to have a greater focus on activity which is more clearly innovative over the remaining lifetime of the programme.
- The need to ensure that the findings of projects and lessons learned are effectively shared also needs to be emphasised as it is a key part of the innovative process.
- Linked to the above, the potential for further networking and cooperation activities needs to be considered, both of which are key features of the LEADER approach.

## 4.1 Introduction

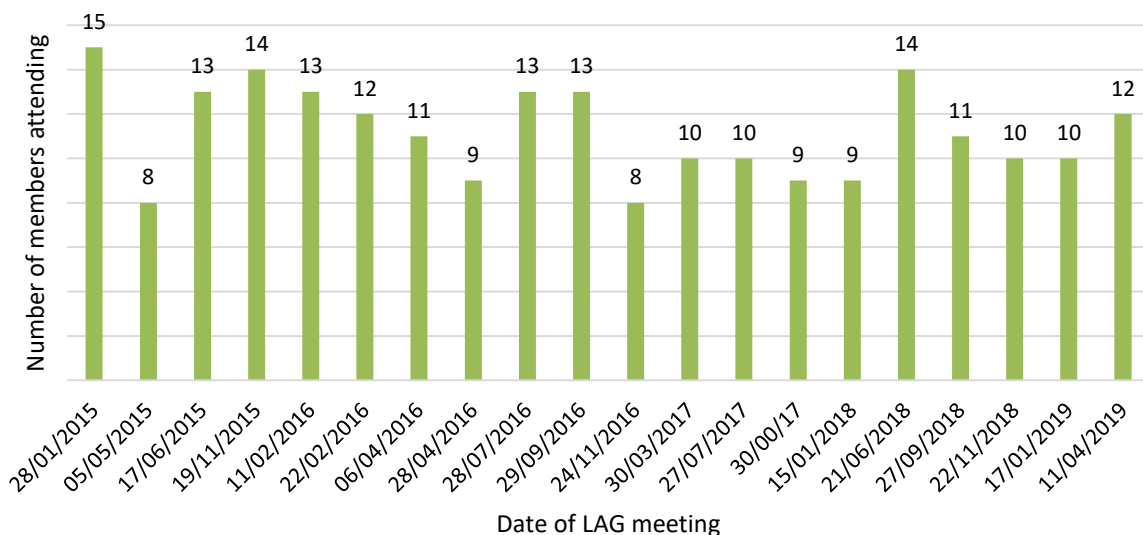
This chapter reviews the implementation of the LEADER approach in Pembrokeshire to date, other than the LDS which has already been discussed in the previous chapter. The discussion draws on management data for activities undertaken, as well as discussions with LAG members and the PLANED LEADER team.

## 4.2 The Local Action Group

The LAG is a key part of the LEADER approach designed to be a group which represents the local area and its population. It leads the delivery of the programme in the area with no interest group nor public authorities having a majority in the decision-making process.

### 4.2.1 Number of meetings and attendance

**Figure 4.1: LAG meetings and attendance (January 2015 to April 2019)**



Source: analysis of data provided by PLANED

The graph above shows the number of LAG members attending meetings between January 2015 and April 2019 (a period of four years and two months) of which there were 20 (an average of a meeting every two and a half months).

Forty-seven individuals attended at last one meeting during that period with the average number of meetings attended by a member being 4.8. The average attendance at meetings has been 11 with a high of 15 for the first meeting in January 2015 and a low of 8 on two separate occasions. The number of attendees has been more than 10 for 15 of the 20 meetings, which is a strong attendance. Seven members have attended more than half the meetings which suggests a relatively strong level of continuity in terms of attendance over the period with four members attending 15 or more of the meetings.

If we look at the split between sectors the average number of LAG meetings attended has been:

- Private sector: 5.7 (with three members attending more than 10 meetings)
- Public sector: 4.3 (with two members attending more than 10 meetings)
- Third sector: 4.4 (with two members attending more than 10 meetings)

In terms of the seven regular attendees (those attending more than half the meetings), three are from the private sector, two are from the public sector and two are from the third sector suggesting that LAG meetings are usually well balanced in terms of the sectors represented.

It is interesting to note that the private sector is outperforming the public and third sectors in terms of attendance at meetings. This is interesting as engaging with the private sector is, in the evaluation teams' experience, frequently identified as a challenging for LAGs. That would not seem to have been the case in Pembrokeshire in this instance.

Some concern was however expressed during interviews with LAG members that some members did not attend meetings regularly enough. This is reflected within the data on meeting attendance with 33 individuals having attended less than five meetings. This figure is somewhat misleading as it does not consider the fact that some of those members have resigned their membership of the group or only recently joined. Nevertheless, the lack of regular attendance by some members is clear and needs to be monitored.

#### 4.2.2 Views on the performance of the LAG

The views of those interviewed on the performance of the LAG were overwhelmingly positive with both staff and LAG members clearly aware and comfortable with their responsibilities as members and the specifics of the LEADER approach.

Views on the LAG meetings were also positive with no significant issues being identified although the length of meetings (especially meeting early in the lifetime of the programme) was frequently noted as being long, although members did not express any significant concerns of this matter. Importantly, the process of assessing applications for support considered to be robust and effective. The quality of the discussion was also considered to be high with all respondents feeling that they were able to contribute and so on.

The concern of some interviewees that the LAG had been operating too much as a 'grants assessment panel' with a focus, to date, largely on assessing applications for support, should however be noted. The risk in such a scenario is that the other elements of the LEADER approach (which are important in terms of the added value of the approach) are not given adequate attention at a LAG level. This is a matter that we will review further as this chapter progresses and other elements of the LEADER approach are discussed. It however worth noting the recognition amongst the members interviewed that there was scope, from this point onwards, with less applications to consider, to explicitly broaden the role of the LAG to include more general discussions about rural development, local priorities, future funding and so on. Effectively, this would see the LAG evolve to operate more as a network for rural stakeholders in the area or a 'think-tank' on rural issues and so on.

The LAG members were happy with the amount of information that was provided to them regarding projects, expenditure and so on and generally complemented the way in which meetings were services by PLANED.

The important role played by the LAG sub-group was frequently noted during interviews with the importance of the opportunity it provided to review and discuss projects and ideas in detail emphasised. The risk of duplicating discussions already undertaken by the sub-group during full LAG meetings were however also recognised. Whilst this needs to be monitored, no LAG members identified this as a significant problem. The added workload for the individuals who were members of both the LAG and the sub-group was also recognised and, again, needs to be carefully monitored as not too over-burden a few key individuals.

#### 4.2.3 Perceived benefits of being a LAG member

A range of things were identified when members were asked to describe how, if at all, they benefited from being a member of the LAG. The most prominent of these was the networking that takes place in the margins of LAG meetings. Other benefits were however also identified including:

- Becoming aware of projects and activities – outside the individuals' usual area of work (*"getting out of the bubble I work in"*)
- Raising awareness about the organisation they represent
- Becoming more strategic in their thinking (due to awareness of other activities)

Such benefits are an important outcome of the LEADER approach and need to be considered alongside any discussion about outcomes achieved by projects funded by the programme.

### 4.3 The role of PLANED

LAG members were overwhelmingly positive when asked to comment on the role undertaken by PLANED in their capacity as the Lead Body, highlighting the benefit derived from the wealth of experience that PLANED have in respect of delivering both the LEADER approach and engaging with communities in Pembrokeshire. There was also reference during discussions to the benefit of being able to build on the contacts and networks that PLANED had in place as a result of their experience. The fact that the LEADER approach was embedded into how the organisation works was also noted.

Changes in personnel within PLANED over the lifetime of the programme were highlighted by several LAG members with some concerns being expressed about its *potential* impact on delivery although no actual negative impact was perceived. Indeed, it was recognised that the organisation seemed to be 'coping well' with the changes that had taken place which is clearly positive and reflects upon the organisation's knowledge and experience as a delivery organisation.



The staff structure within PLANED includes the LEADER Project Coordinator, Project Officers as well as some communications and administrative support. Over the lifetime of the programme to date, there has been a move away from a thematic approach for the allocation of applications and projects between project officers to a more geographic approach. The original thematic approach was linked to the themes within the LDS with the officers responsible for all activities within that theme. This approach led to an imbalance in workload as there was greater demand for support and more applications for funding in some themes. It was decided to therefore move to a more flexible area-based approach with officers working across all themes. This was considered by staff to have been a positive move and is an important lesson learnt. It also demonstrates the challenges in managing a demand-led / community-led programme where the demand can be difficult to predict.

It is interesting to note that project officers do not attend LAG meetings in Pembrokeshire with the team being represented at those meetings by the Coordinator. In the experience of the author, this is different to the approach on other parts of Wales where officers regularly attend LAG meetings to discuss project applications, provide updates and so on. The advantages and disadvantages of this are probably debatable. Potential benefits include the provision of more detailed information about a project or application to the LAG from the officer most closely involved with it and learning for the officer in question who can listen to the discussions of the LAG. The approach can however also add to the length of meeting with more people being involved in the discussion. There is therefore no correct approach, but the strengths and weaknesses of the approach taken need to be considered.

#### 4.4 Animation, engaging with the local community and providing support to applicants and projects

The LEADER approach includes the 'animation' of the local area to engage with the local community. That can include a range of activities including empowering or supporting local groups and organisations to develop and implement projects (in line with the LDS) or more general activities focused on the local area such as, for example, enhancing the awareness of local heritage and associated opportunities. PLANED also provide support to applicants as they develop ideas and then apply for support as well as supporting organisations once funding has been allocated to them.

Generally, LAG members made limited comments on the implementation of 'animation' activities in Pembrokeshire. This seems at least partly due to a lack of awareness and understanding of that terminology with terms such as 'community engagement' or 'project development' more frequently used to describe the activity. But, even when taking this into account, it would also seem clear that animation is seen by LAG members as something that is largely left to the PLANED team to manage and deliver on their behalf with only limited guidance or oversight.

The focus of the LAG to date would very much seem to have been on assessing applications for support as opposed to any of the other aspects of the LEADER approach which is in line with the concern previously noted that the LAG was operating too much as a grants assessment panel at times rather than a more broad 'local action group'.

As previously noted, this is an issue that can potentially be addressed going forward as the pressure to appraise applications for support diminishes.

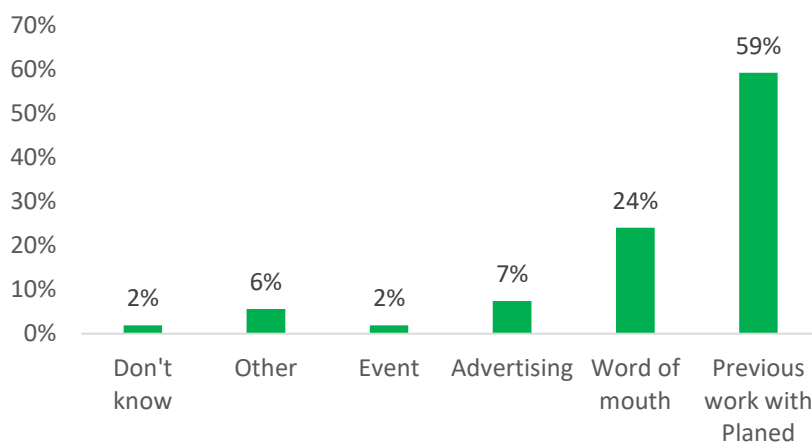
#### 4.4.1 Feedback from projects

The survey organisations supported by the LEADER programme in Pembrokeshire (hereafter referred to as 'project') included a series of questions about the process of applying for funding and the support that they had received from the LEADER team.

##### Finding out about the support available

Respondents were asked how they had found out about the support that was potentially available to them from Arwain Sir Benfro, the majority reported that it was as a result of the fact that they had previously worked with PLANED (Figure 4.2). On the one hand, this demonstrates the value of the contact within PLANED in respects of rolling out a programme of support in Pembrokeshire. However, it potentially also raises some concerns about the ability of the LEADER programme to engage with organisations outside of that network although it is important to note that 41% had found out about the programme from other sources.

Figure 4.2: How organisations found out about support that was available via Arwain Sir Benfro



n=54

##### Developing the project

Most respondents - 78% (42/54) - said that they received support from the PLANED team during the development of their idea or project suggesting a high demand for support. The fact that a high proportion of respondents had an existing working relationship with PLANED does however need to be considered.

Feedback on the usefulness was very positive with the knowledge and experience of the team within PLANED being highlighted. On a scale of 0 (useless) to 4 (very useful), 68% (28/41) of respondents gave a score of 4 and 24% (10/41) gave a score of 3; the average (mean) score was a very positive 3.6 out of 4. The following are examples of the comments made:

*“The Leader team were very good and always available if we didn't understand something or needed something explained again. They made sure that our project had the best chance of success with the LAG panel by making suggestions to improve the project.”*

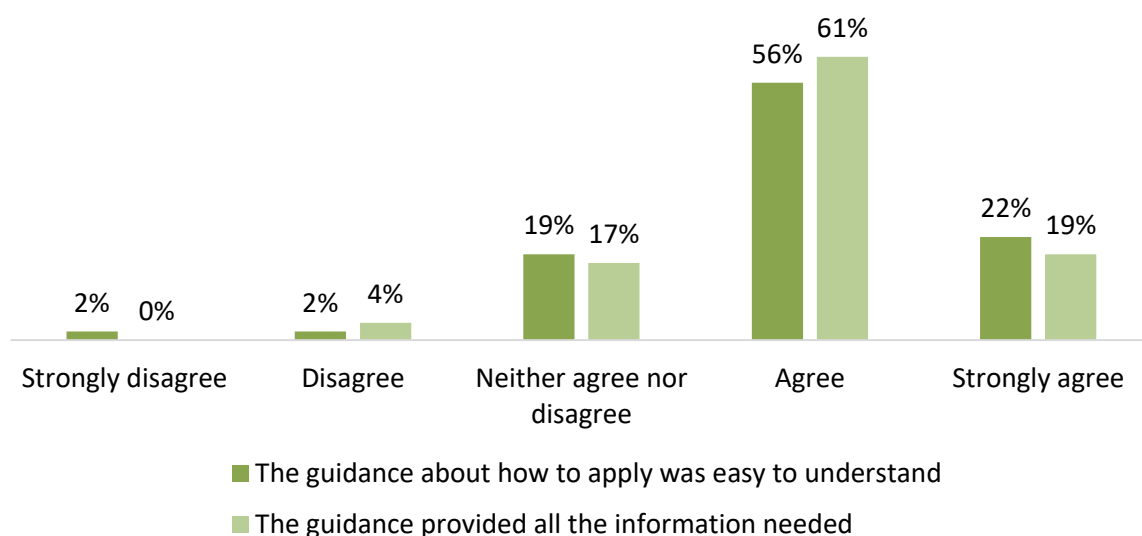
*“The support was very good as unlike other funding you had a point of contact who was easy to reach and would respond quickly to help you.”*

With a view to exploring the outcomes of the support being provided, the survey asked respondents to assess how likely it was that their application for funds from LEADER would have been submitted *without* the support they received. Sixty four percent (27/42) said that it was ‘certain’ or ‘likely’ that they would have submitted their application without receiving support suggesting that, in most cases, support was not essential. However, nearly 1 in 4 (24%) said that it was ‘unlikely’ or ‘certain’ that they would not have submitted their application without the support. This suggests that, in many cases, support from PLANED is supporting organisations to get involved in rural development in ways which they otherwise would not have done. This is important in respects of fostering local economic development, a key objective of LEADER.

### The application process

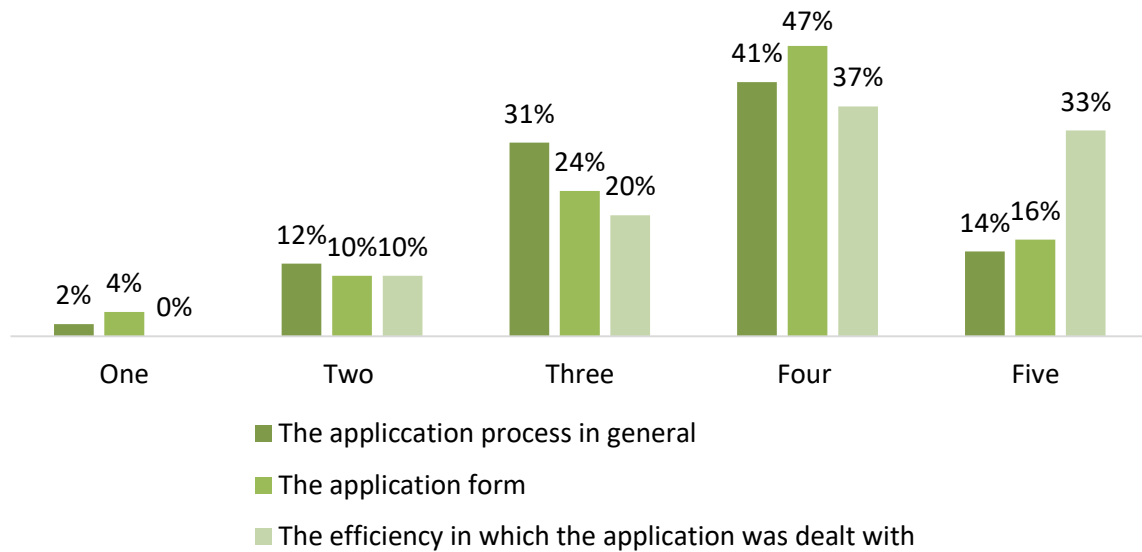
Feedback about the application process and its different elements was, in most cases, again positive as illustrated in the graphs below. The vast majority of respondents agreed that the guidance provided was easy to understand and provided all the information needed. The scores given to rate the application process, form and the efficiency with which the application was dealt with were also, in most cases positive

Figure 4.3: The extent to which respondents agreed or disagreed with the following statements about the guidance they received when preparing their application for financial support from Arwain Sir Benfro



N=54

**Figure 4.4: How respondents rated the application process in general, the application form and the efficiency with which the application was dealt with; on a scale of 1 (very poor) to 5 (very good)**



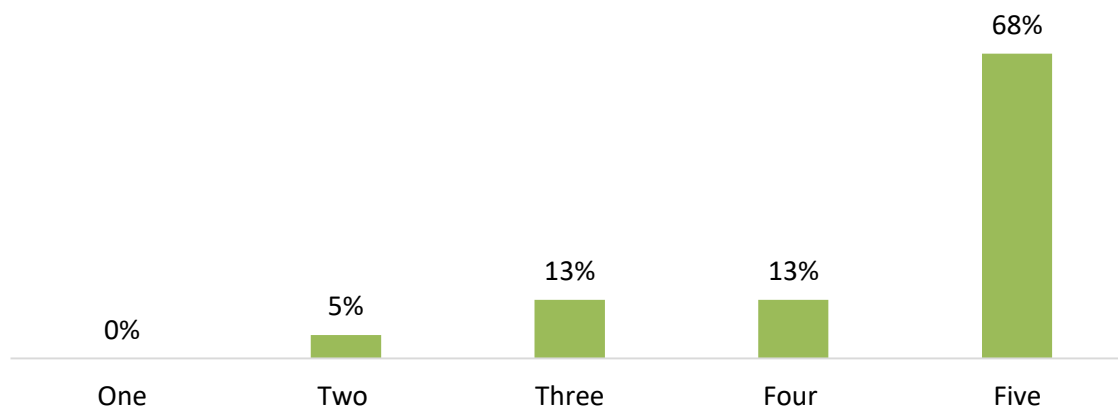
N=51

When respondents were asked to suggest possible improvements to the application process the time which is taken to assess and approve applications (it was too long) was the issue more frequently noted. That suggestion however needs to be considered in the context of the largely very positive feedback about the process.

**Support once applications gave been approved**

Sixty seven percent (36/54) of respondents received support from the PLANED team following approval of their project on issues such as completing their claims, monitoring forms, signposting and help with marketing and publicity. This suggests a high demand for ‘post approval’ support with positive feedback again in most cases as shown in the graph below.

**Figure 4.5: Respondent views on the usefulness of support they have received after their project was approved; on a scale of 1 (useless) to 5 (very useful)**



N=38

As would be expected in light such positive feedback, there were limited comments when respondents were asked what further support, if any, they would like to receive during the delivery of their project. Respondents who had a less positive view of the usefulness of the support they had received asked for more clarity in terms of the advice they received and were critical of the complexity of the claims process; it is important to stress however that such comments were made by a minority of respondents.

The more positive suggestions made were:

- A strategic session at the end of projects to consider the best way forward and/or next stage for the project;
- Facilitation to encourage co-operation between similar types of projects; and
- The provision of further learning events involving different/overlapping projects<sup>12</sup>.

## 4.5 Innovation

Innovation is a cross-cutting priority of the LEADER programme. The focus on innovation is based on the argument that doing more of the same is unlikely to enable an area to reach its full potential and that new solutions to existing problems should be sought. The objective is to encourage and support new, forward looking and entrepreneurial approaches and solutions to local issues and to share and transfer that experience.

Section 3.3 of the LDS is a 'Description of Innovation' (a requirement of the template). The following are extracts from that section included to provide an indication of the commitment to innovation within the strategy:

*To date, Pembrokeshire has had innovation at the heart of rural regeneration through PLANED's overall integrated approach to LEADER and community planning. The LAG is committed to the process of ongoing review and proactively working to identify new approaches that are both appropriate and transferable to Pembrokeshire. In specific terms we plan to build innovation into our processes in a number of ways.*

*At a LAG level, continual emphasis will be placed on assisting new and experimental approaches to local rural development and on testing new ideas that could be mainstreamed on a wider scale in the future. In particular the types of ways the LAG can demonstrate innovation are highlighted below.*

*We see the LAG's role as being much more than project assessment and financial monitoring. We will adopt a proactive approach to the development of new ideas and take a lead role in developing and financing schemes and activities.*

*The strategy and LEADER programme will actively seek out innovation in proposal content, approaches and methodology. We will also proactively seek out transferable experiences and solutions to address key issues identified in the strategy. Use will be*

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<sup>12</sup> There has been once such event already with the request being that more such events are organised for projects funded by LEADER in Pembrokeshire.

*made of existing contacts within the EU, partners' sectoral relationships and by developing links with other rural practitioners including via cooperation activity, in other EU countries.*

*We will use the LEADER animation team as a central knowledge library for rural data and best practice. This will be used in their role as 'animateurs' that will support applicants to develop proposals and build a transferable knowledge base that will be invaluable in assisting applicants shorten their learning curve. Every effort will be made to join proposals together where this can be done effectively and meaningfully.*

*Under each theme there is the opportunity to innovate and at each stage of proposal development and often has a multiplier or snowball effect on the changes that the community wants to bring about. The animation activity will encourage proposals to think about these possibilities:*

- *Can involve new products, services or ways of doing things in a local context;*
- *Can involve one or more small scale actions and prototypes or a larger scale flagship project that mobilises the community;*
- *Finds new ways of mobilising and using the existing resources and assets of the community;*
- *Builds collaboration between different actors and sectors;*
- *Can, but does not necessarily involve universities or other research and development organisations;*
- *Can be a platform for social innovations which can then be scaled up and applied more widely through exchange, cooperation and networking.*

These extracts demonstrate the commitment to innovation within the LDS and hence plans for LEADER in Pembrokeshire. The extent to which the programme to date has been able to deliver on these aspirations is however not easy to judge.

Interviews suggest that LAG members and staff are clearly aware of the emphasis on innovation within the LEADER programme and described how the level of innovation within applications is always discussed which is clearly positive. LAG members and staff were also generally satisfied with the level of innovation within the projects supported to date.

The generally accepted definition of 'innovation' within LEADER in Wales is to pilot or test an activity, service or way of working that had not been seen or tried in the area/sector previously. Whilst this definition is not incorrect, there is an argument that the definition is very broad, especially given that the focus on innovation within the programme is based on the premise that doing "more of the same" isn't enough and that new solutions to existing problems should be sought.

Having a great focus on more 'genuinely' innovative or seeking to encourage innovative ideas in at least part of the programme going forward may therefore be appropriate. As part of this, it may be appropriate to consider how 'innovation' is defined within the programme in Pembrokeshire.

The OECD defines innovation as follows:

*Innovation is production or adoption, assimilation, and exploitation of a value-added novelty in economic and social spheres; renewal and enlargement of products, services, and markets; development of new methods of production; and the establishment of new management systems. It is both a process and an outcome.*

They also identify four types of innovation<sup>13</sup>:

- **Product innovation:** A good or service that is new or significantly improved. This includes significant improvements in technical specifications, components and materials, software in the product, user friendliness or other functional characteristics.
- **Process innovation:** A new or significantly improved production or delivery method. This includes significant changes in techniques, equipment and/or software.
- **Marketing innovation:** A new marketing method involving significant changes in product design or packaging, product placement, product promotion or pricing.
- **Organisational innovation:** A new organisational method in business practices, workplace organisation or external relations.

There is also value in being aware of the differences between disruptive and incremental innovation. **Disruptive innovation** when a new product, service or process is introduced to a market or area, designed to make a significant impact by completely replacing existing technologies and methods. By contrast, **incremental innovation** is usually focused on improving an existing product or service's efficiency, productivity and/or competitive differentiation. It is the latter that is seen in LEADER often and the argument of some LAG members is that a more disruptive approach may be needed.

Various innovation toolkits and guides available via the Nesta website<sup>14</sup>. The potential to explore the potential to cooperate with other programmes and schemes in Wales designed to promote innovation should also be explored<sup>15</sup>.

The need to complete what could be described as the innovation cycle or process also needs to be emphasised. There are many versions of this cycle or process all of which generally conclude with a review of the innovation that has been introduced after which it is either 'mainstreamed', modified for a further pilot or, discarded as not something worth introducing more widely. This final 'review' process is an essential component. To date, there would seem to have been limited emphasis on this within LEADER in Pembrokeshire (which may not be surprising given that the programme is still at its mid-way point). It is however very important that it takes place.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.oecd.org/site/innovationstrategy/defininginnovation.htm>

<sup>14</sup> Nesta (<https://www.nesta.org.uk/>) is an innovation foundation. The organisation acts through a combination of programmes, investment, policy and research, and the formation of partnerships to promote innovation across a broad range of sectors.

<sup>15</sup> See: <https://businesswales.gov.wales/innovation/>



Project closure forms and case study templates provide the mechanism for this review to take place and there is some review of lessons learnt within the forms that have been completed to date. That review is however relatively weak and could be further enhanced.

## 4.6 Networking and Cooperation

Networking among actors inside the LAGs area, among LAGs and other public-private partnerships, in order to establish a stronger foundation for the transfer of knowledge, and exchange of experiences is also a key part of LEADER. Networking includes the exchange of achievements, experiences and know-how between LEADER groups, rural areas, administrations and organisations involved in rural development within the EU, whether or not they are direct LEADER beneficiaries. Networking is a means of transferring good practice, of disseminating innovation and of building on the lessons learned from local rural development.

Cooperation is also a core feature of LEADER. With LAGs across Europe the wealth of LEADER local development experience, knowledge and human capital is potentially substantial, and cooperation offers a means of capitalising on this resource. LAGs can make use of or contribute to this network to develop the group, to undertake joint projects or initiatives, to innovate, or to share or transfer knowledge and experience.

As noted earlier in this chapter, LAG members highlighted that the group itself provided a networking opportunity for member and indeed identified networking as one of the benefits of membership of the group. LAG members have also attended a hand-full of networking events related to LEADER but highlighted time as a major restriction of their ability to participate in such activity, even when they were particularly keen to do so. The PLANED team had also participated in such events including international events which were considered to have been of some benefit. The challenges of building a cooperative project following such activities were however notes with time, again, being identified as the main constraint.

Some networking has taken place at a 'project level' with completed projects having been brought together to present and discuss their projects and further such meetings are planned. The value of such networking at a project level will increase as projects moved further into their delivery stages and come to an end.

Looking outside Pembrokeshire, interviewees reported that some networking was taking place at a LAG chair and officer level with other LAGs within the region with those meetings being described as being valuable, if a little to infrequent.

It seems clear however from interviews that LAG members have limited awareness of activities and projects being undertaken by LAGs in other parts of Wales. This is despite the existence of the Wales Rural Network (WRN) which shares information about projects being supported by LAGs on its website<sup>16</sup>. This is of some concern as an awareness of what projects

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<sup>16</sup> The Wales Rural Network is a forum to promote the exchange of expertise in rural development delivered by the Welsh Government funded by the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020. See: <https://businesswales.gov.wales/walesruralnetwork/local-action-groups-and-projects>



and ideas are being piloted in other areas could be of substantial benefit; for example, it may stimulate the development of ideas for new projects in Pembrokeshire. It also means that an opportunity to learn from the experience in other areas is being lost.

Staff members however highlighted the fact that constraints/pressure on their time limited the amount of attention they could pay to developing cooperative projects (which tend to be resource intensive) highlighting that, when work has to be prioritised, and development and delivery of 'local' projects had been prioritised above cooperative projects.

## 4.7 Conclusion

The LAG plays a key role in LEADER and it is positive to note that attendance at LAG meetings has been good with positive feedback on meetings. LAG members also report that they benefit from attending meeting which is clearly also positive.

Views that the LAG has, to date, been operating too much as a 'grants assessment panel' do however need to be noted. This is important as, according to the LEADER approach, the role of the LAG should be far broader. There is however an opportunity for the other elements of the role of the LAG to be developed during the next stages in the lifetime of the programme as the number of applications for support it is considering reduces.

Feedback on the activities of PLANED as the lead body was overwhelmingly positive both from LAG members and also from respondents to the survey of projects which is clearly positive. The suggestion that the programme has to date had limited success in respects of engaging with groups with less previous experience of developing and implementing rural development projects in Pembrokeshire is however again apparent.

Innovation is another key element of the LEADER approach and there is an argument that there is the potential to introduce a greater degree of 'disruptive innovation' into the programme during its latter stages. The importance of completing the 'innovation cycle' for projects also needs to be emphasised which should include a comprehensive analysis of lessons learnt, etc. as well as the effective dissemination and sharing of that information. Linked to this, there is the potential to enhance the level of networking and cooperation activities taking place, both of which are key features of the LEADER approach especially during its latter stages as projects are ending and lessons learned are emerging.

## 5 Examples of LEADER Projects in Pembrokeshire

This chapter presents examples of projects that have been funded by LEADER in Pembrokeshire. Its purpose is to illustrate the range of projects that are or have been active within the county.

### 5.1 Compassionate Communities

Community Choice and Inclusion discovered the opportunity for LEADER funding via an email from the LEADER team and decided to pilot a project in 10 communities in Pembrokeshire for 12 months. The project held events aimed at bringing people together to explore a community development approach to end of life care, such as film screenings, advanced care planning talks and pop-up compassionate cafes. The aim was to enhance the capacity of the community to support and learn from each other, as well as identify gaps in both people's knowledge and the availability of support.

The project leader found that people are willing to talk openly about life, death and compassion, which defied the belief of many health professionals that there is a general reluctance to speak about such matters. Volunteers came forward, offering to support one another, and there was engagement with local businesses. This led to the development of a further project idea that goes beyond befriending and offers compassionate support to people who are at risk of dying in isolation, entitled No-one Should Die Alone (Nos Da). A steering group has been established and funding has been secured for a part-time project co-ordinator who will recruit and support volunteers.

The project resulted in greater public engagement, as well as the organisation increasing their organisation skills. It's encouraged them to invest time in the community and keep in touch with LEADER to increase awareness of future projects that can continue to link communities together.

### 5.2 Haverhub

Haverhub Community Regeneration & Innovation Hub started Haverhub CIC, a social enterprise, when a suitable building came onto the market, with the idea of testing whether a central hub building could lead to community regeneration. The project created a space that brings people together, to collaborate around social, commercial and cultural activities. The focus was on social engagement and encouraging active citizenship for the benefit of the wider community.

Haverhub have previously work with PLANED and used LEADER funding, matched by Haverfordwest Town Council, to fund a part-time project co-ordinator for four months. Funding was also used to helped Haverhub secure the building and submit a planning application, as well as getting the building firmly placed on the strategic regeneration map for the town.

It is too early to evaluate many of the community outcomes of the project, but partnerships have been developed with an extensive network of individuals and groups who plan to use Haverhub in various ways established including musicians, artists and entrepreneurs. As a result of the project, the organisation has developed both project and business management skills, as well as increase their stakeholder and public engagement activities.

### 5.3 Car Chums

Pembrokeshire Association of Community Transport Organisations (PACTO) help people and groups who don't have access to their own transport and who don't have or can't use conventional public transport services. They successfully applied for LEADER funding to undertake a feasibility study that assessed whether 'lift shares' could be organised. The concept was that people in need of a lift would contact the service with drivers who have registered with the service then being contacted (via text, email or telephone) to ask if they can help. As part of the study they surveyed local groups, individuals, and venues to explore the concept.

The study found that a flexible inclusive lift-sharing scheme is needed in Pembrokeshire and could generate a number of positive outcomes, including building networks and community resilience, reducing social exclusion, supporting community events, and having positive impacts on local carbon emissions.

The findings were used by PACTO to secure a grant in excess of £300,000 from the National Lottery Community Fund for a five- year project that will build a bespoke lift-sharing platform: "Take Me Too" and employ staff to raise awareness and promote the scheme.

### 5.4 Feasibility Studies for Quay Stores and East-West Link

Milford Haven Port Authority is seeking to achieve greater diversity in the range of activities being undertaken at the Port. This includes the redevelopment of the newly branded Milford Waterfront. For this, the Port undertook a feasibility study to look at possibilities for the redevelopment of the semi-derelict, Grade II listed Quay Stores, located at the entrance to Milford Waterfront, funded by LEADER.

Local stakeholders were consulted to explore options that could attract major investment and provide a venue for use by the local community, as well as boosting local tourism. This has increased knowledge as well as gaining an increased understanding of market options through collaboration with partners and community organisations.

Owing to an underspend on the initial feasibility study, Arwain Sir Benfro agreed that the remaining funds could be spent on a second study to look at options for an 'East-West link' which has the potential to resolve the disconnect between the town centre and Waterfront. A range of options were scoped in the study, including a funicular, a glass elevator and an escalator with stairway alongside.

The organisation represents the Port on LAG, and the funding has contributed to the overall Waterfront vision, which aims to develop a stronger connection between the two areas and regenerate the town to the benefit of the community, local businesses and tourists alike. The Port understands the importance of collaborative working, with community at the forefront of any future projects.

## 5.5 Marine Energy Testing Area Feasibility Studies

Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum (PCF) used LEADER funding for two linked feasibility studies that investigated the possibility of developing a Marine Energy Testing Area (META) in Pembroke Dock. The META aims to lease an area of the sea and seabed from the Crown Estate to test small scale innovative devices that will need to be economically viable with low environmental impact and high energy output. It has great potential to support the economy of Pembrokeshire, creating sustainable and highly paid jobs. One study focused on the establishment of a local supply chain and the other looked at possibilities for inward investment and development of new marine technologies. Networking events were held to raise awareness and bring potential suppliers and developers together from all over the world, and more than 50 local suppliers wished to be involved as a result.

The evidence gathered by the feasibility studies gave PCF the confidence to apply for further investment from EU Structural Funds for renewables in Wales, which will expand the staffing at PCF, creating 4.25 FTE jobs in a five-year project. This phase will include work with schools and young people, inspiring them to train in engineering and be part of an innovative large-scale renewable energy solution for the future. It also increased understanding of the local area and increased supply chain knowledge through the networks that were created with everyone from local businesses to academics which they had not previously engaged with.

Working with LEADER increased PCF's awareness of rural development in Pembrokeshire and enabled them to create links between communities which will benefit them should they become involved in more rural development in the future.

## 5.6 Reducing Food Waste

The overall aim of the Reducing Food Waste project, delivered by Transition Bro Gwaun (TBG) was to raise awareness of the impacts of surplus food in the home and teach people how to use their surplus food through cookery sessions, a schools' resource pack, demonstrations at community events and other activities.

A key finding of the project was that delivering cookery classes for an existing group of parents and toddlers is an effective approach. Further, it became apparent that the attraction for people who attended the open cookery course was for social and other reasons beyond learning basic cookery skills.

Project representatives also met with managers from a local tourist attraction to explore how they could make better use of food, resulting in the production of a report with recommendations for updating food waste audits and potential uses of surplus food. This and

other activities improved TBG's community outreach skills, as well as enabling them to create relationships with local businesses and schools.

A key legacy of the project was the development of Fishguard Community Fridge which, although funded separately, which came about when TBG's existing surplus food café had to close since the building it was situated in was being demolished.

The process of setting up and running the community fridge and the learning from this has led to TBG providing mentoring support to the LEADER funded Narberth Community Fridge. TBG have previously been involved with PLANED and feel there should be more funding for these type of projects as they currently have a number in development.

## 5.7 Scoping Study, Tenby Museum

Trustees of Tenby Museum have regular contact with PLANED and wanted to carry out a study to see whether their ideas for the future of the museum were viable, sustainable and wanted. The scoping study commissioned architect's drawings to create realistic outline plans, as well as market research and an audience development plan, all contributing to a larger development plan to fund the museum sustainably, increase visitor numbers and improve the buildings. The audience development report included recommendations for improving the visitor experience, creating more volunteer opportunities, and promoting and developing activities and events for new audiences.

The scoping study led to the trustees securing a grant to employ a Community Engagement and Events Officer, full-time for one year, to build community support and involvement in the museum and strengthen the volunteer base. The trustees have also applied to the Heritage Lottery Fund for funding to engage a project manager and work towards creating a more iconic flagship museum. The study has also found ways to increase footfall and raise awareness.

The architect's drawings have helped them move their ideas from a wish-list to something that now seems achievable, which has brought the trustees together and galvanised their work. The trustees worked with consultants and learned that they needed to improve communications both internally, among trustees and staff, and externally with friends of the museum and the wider body of stakeholders.

Trustees are encouraged to continue involvement with future rural development given their positive experience and stated they would like more funding to be available, enabling them to further develop their relationship with the community.

## 5.8 Inspiring Pathways

Inspiring Pathways was a 15-month project delivered by the Veteran & Community Gallery. The VC Gallery uses art as a vehicle to combat social isolation and supports armed forces veterans and community members who have complex needs. They wanted to expand from their base in Haverfordwest and take their work out into local communities in different parts of the county. They were approached by PLANED about the LEADER programme during a Community Engagement day.

A total of 64 art sessions and workshops were run as part of the project with 200 beneficiaries in small peer-supported groups in eight communities around Pembrokeshire. People found their way to the sessions via the VC Gallery's extensive network of referral organisations, word-of-mouth and wider publicity.

People came together socially, and the therapeutic sessions had both creative and social aspects. They also introduced and referred beneficiaries to a wider network of support agencies. It was found that the project has had therapeutic benefits for people, forming new social connections that help to reduce isolation, as well as providing a means for self-expression and creativity. It also enabled the VC Gallery to engage more with isolated groups and inspired the community to find a voice through art.

During the project, the facilitators developed a new 'mind map' technique with people who have dementia, taking them on a virtual trip 'down memory lane' using Google Maps street view. This new approach was shared by the project at a national NHS Dementia conference and is now being used locally in dementia support services.<sup>17</sup>

The success of the pilot project has enabled the VC Gallery to develop ambassadors, integrate with rural communities and formalise support with them, as well as developing their knowledge on bidding processes. It has also highlighted a shortfall in mental health and social isolation services, which has encouraged the Gallery to continue their relationship with Planed in order to stay aware of resources available that can be used to develop the community.

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<sup>17</sup> Link to YouTube video re 'Memory Lane' project : <https://youtu.be/mwZhb5KQ6sM>

## 6 Conclusion and recommendations

During interviews, LAG members and members of staff were asked to give a score out of 10 for the performance of LEADER in Pembrokeshire to date. The average score was (to paraphrase interviewees comments) a 'positive but with room for improvement', 7.4 out of 10. Our conclusion based on the findings of the research for this report is that this is probably a fair reflection of progress to date.

### The Local Development Strategy

The strategy presented within the LDS for rural Pembrokeshire is very broad identifying a wide range of issues that LEADER funding is to be used to try and address. This is not uncommon within the LEADER programme in Wales with the fact that LDSs were prepared at a time when the detail of the programme was unavailable needing to be considered. The fact that LEADER is designed to be a 'bottom up' support mechanism supporting ideas that come from within the community also needs to be acknowledged. In that context, designing a broad LDS which does not restrict the type and range of projects that can be supported is a logical approach. The broadness of the LDS does however mean that its usefulness as a guide or action-plan for how LEADER funds in Pembrokeshire should be utilised is limited - most ideas and project proposals will fit within the LDS given that it is so broad. Whether or not this is a good thing is debatable as discussed within this report. The key is that the LAG needs to be clear about how they want the LEADER funds available to them to be utilised.

There is a clear rationale for a narrower, more focused approach from the mid-way point in a LEADER programme, when gaps in activities undertaken to date and further priorities emerge. The situation in Pembrokeshire is however different due to the fact that 98% of the funding available has already been committed. This clearly severely restricts the activities of the LAG going forward. The positives of committing funding early (especially in terms of ensuring that the allocation is fully utilised) are important to note. However, the early commitment of almost the whole budget also has implications for the remainder of the lifetime of the programme, when animation activities are ongoing – there is no funding available to implement any projects that may emerge.

Nevertheless, there is still a strong argument for reviewing and updating the LDS at this time with a view to identifying priorities should further funding become available and/or to inform discussions about future funding priorities. As part of that process, the potential to bring together stakeholders within themes or sectors should be considered. Such meetings could be undertaken as part of future networking activities (discussed later in this conclusion) which are used to share information, findings and lessons learnt from LEADER funded projects (from within and outside Pembrokeshire), as well as considering priorities and potential projects going forward.

**Recommendation 1:** There should be a review of the LDS which includes: (a) an update on the needs and opportunities in the area (including wellbeing plans, etc.); (b) a review of other activities, projects and programmes ongoing in the area; and (c) a review of projects supported by LEADER. As part of this review, consideration should be given to bringing



together stakeholders within a theme, to discuss activities undertaken to date and potential future priorities and projects.

As would be expected given that the budget available has largely been committed, good progress has been made in respect of the number of projects supported with a relatively high proportion of those projects having already been completed. If further funding becomes available (either in the form of additional funding or if funded projects do not progress as planned), careful consideration needs to be given to how that resource is utilised in light of the review of the LDS recommended above with an 'open-call' for projects probably inappropriate.

One potential alternative approach, should funding be available, would be to undertake thematic rounds of applications. The benefit of this is that it allows ideas and proposals within the same field to be considered (and compared) at the same time. One of the challenges of an 'open call' approach to funding rounds is that it can be difficult to compare the quality of applications within the round (as they can be very different) and there is always a risk that a 'better' application in any given field will be submitted in the next round.

**Recommendation 2:** Whilst allocating funding is clearly important, there is an argument that ensuring that funding continues to be available throughout the lifetime of a programme (especially considering ongoing animation activities) is also important. Should further funding become available, care should be taken when committing that adequate resource with the potential for thematic rounds of applications, focused on priorities identified in the review of the LDS as recommended above, being considered

A key aspect of LEADER is that it is a Europe wide programme which creates the opportunity to share and learn from projects that are being delivered by literally hundreds of LAGs. This is however an aspect of LEADER which is generally under-utilised with LAG members having little knowledge of the activities and projects that are ongoing in other parts of Wales let alone across Europe. In our view, this is a significant missed opportunity.

**Recommendation 3:** The LAG should review the projects supported by LEADER in other parts of Wales and across the EU with a view to considering whether any of those ideas (or elements of them) should be piloted in Pembrokeshire if further funding becomes available for this programme period or as part of any future programmes in Pembrokeshire.

### Project outcomes

This report has only taken a limited look at the outcomes of projects, which will be a greater focus for the final evaluation report. The information that has been reviewed is however positive with the range of projects and activities being supported apparent.

Only a limited number of indicators (and associated targets) are however in place to monitor the performance of the LEADER programme in Pembrokeshire (and in Wales as a whole). Such an approach has benefits from an administrative perspective. However, it means that there is limited data collected on the extent to which the LDS has been delivered and the performance of the programme, especially at an outcome level (most of the indicators that



are collected are outputs, i.e. activities). A number of potential additional indicators are proposed for consideration by the LAG within this report.

**Recommendation 4:** Consideration should be given to the introduction of additional performance indicators for the implementation of the LDS in Pembrokeshire including both generic indicators and theme/priority specific indicators.

The limited number of programme level indicators also means that we are dependent to a large extent on the monitoring and evaluation activities being undertaken by the individual projects. It is therefore important to try to make sure that project level evaluation activities are taking place and that the standard is as high as possible.

**Recommendation 5:** The potential to provide additional support to projects to ensure that they are effectively evaluating the outcomes of their activities should be considered.

It is positive that the survey of projects supported found that a large proportion of projects funded were not likely to have progressed without the support that they had received (part of the 'animation' element of LEADER). It is also positive that a very high proportion of respondents to the project survey reported that they had benefited in respects of meeting or working with new people as a result of their involvement with Arwain Sir Benfro. These are positive outcomes of the programme and an example of how the process in place to manage and deliver LEADER can in themselves generate positive outcomes.

### The Local Action Group

Turning our attention to the implementation of the other aspects of the LEADER approach in Pembrokeshire, the LAG plays a key role and it is positive to note that attendance at LAG meetings has been good with positive feedback about the meetings. LAG members also report that they benefit from attending meetings, another positive outcome of the LEADER approach which is often overlooked.

Views that the LAG has, to date, been operating too much as a 'grants assessment panel' are important to note; the role of a LAG should be far broader. Its role will however need to change over the remainder of the lifetime of the LEADER programme in light of the fact that it has very limited budget left with which to fund projects. Going forward, the focus of the LAG should move to an increased emphasis on assessing the ongoing needs of the area as well as disseminating the findings of the projects that have been supported and learning from LEADER activities in other parts of Wales, the UK and Europe (key elements of the LEADER approach). The LAG could effectively evolve to operate more as a network for rural stakeholders in the area or a 'think-tank' on rural issues and so on. The LAG also however needs to consider how best to utilise the resource available to undertake animation activities in Pembrokeshire in circumstances where there is no funding available to fund projects, as discussed further below.

**Recommendation 6:** The role of the LAG going forward needs to be considered to ensure that, with the inevitable reduced need to assess applications for support, the group continues to be active and deliver the LEADER approach in full in Pembrokeshire.

### The Lead Body and animation

Feedback on the activities of PLANED as the lead body was overwhelmingly positive both from LAG members and respondents to the survey of projects which is clearly positive.

The fact that a relatively large proportion of the funding available has gone to what could be described as experienced deliverers of local projects does however need to be noted as that can potentially limit the extent to which the programme achieves 'capacity building' outcomes amongst those funded. This is important in light of the fact that a key objective of LEADER is to foster local development in rural areas. Engaging groups and individuals in rural development for the first time is a key part of that process, although the fact that LEADER activities have been ongoing in Pembrokeshire since the 1990s (meaning that substantial engagement work has happened over the years) does need to be taken into account.

**Recommendation 7:** The LAG should consider whether more activities could/should have been undertaken to specifically target and engage with less experienced organisations in Pembrokeshire as part of the LEADER programme and whether such activity could form part of any future activities. For example, potentially ring-fencing a proportion of the funding available for less experienced organisations.

The focus of animation activities going forward also needs to be considered given the limited funding available for projects. Options include a greater focus on promoting networking and lessons learnt across the area and, potentially, supporting the development of innovative ideas for addressing local needs and opportunities that can be funded from other sources or delivered by local people and organisations as part of their ongoing activities or on a voluntary basis.

### Innovation and networking

Innovation is key element of the LEADER approach and has been a key part of the programme in Pembrokeshire. There is however an argument that, to achieve the ambitions set out within the LDS for Pembrokeshire in respect of innovation, there was a need to introduce a greater degree of 'disruptive innovation' into the programme Pembrokeshire.

**Recommendation 8:** Options for increasing the level of innovation within the programme in Pembrokeshire should be explored including a review of approaches for supporting innovation as promoted by organisations such as Nesta, the Innovation Foundation.

There is also a tendency within the LEADER programme (not just in Pembrokeshire) to treat projects being supported as 'one-off' pilots, which once completed are either mainstreamed or not. Innovation is however often an ongoing process with ideas going through a number of iterations and pilots before they are mainstreamed. The potential need to revisit ideas and projects that have already been funded by LEADER to consider the need to support a further iteration of the pilot therefore needs to be considered.

**Recommendation 9:** Some pilot projects warrant a second attempt or further development. Alongside the development of new project ideas, the LAG should, on an ongoing basis, review project evaluation forms with a view to considering whether existing or previous pilot projects should be evolved into new or phase 2 pilots.

The importance of completing the ‘innovation cycle’ for projects also needs to be emphasised which should include a comprehensive analysis of lessons learnt, etc. as well as the effective dissemination and sharing of that information. Linked to this, there is the potential to enhance the level of networking taking place in Pembrokeshire, a key feature of the LEADER approach, especially during its latter stages as projects are ending and lessons learnt are emerging. As noted previously, this is likely to be a key element of the LEADER programme in Pembrokeshire over the remainder of its lifetime given that there is no funding to support any new projects.

**Recommendation 10:** The ‘innovation cycle’ should include a review of what has been achieved, lessons learnt, etc. and projects reviewed on that basis as they near completion with a compendium of ‘learning’ from the programme being developed and shared. This could be done via networking activities within Pembrokeshire which brings together projects and/or stakeholders to share and discuss the findings of projects and priorities going forward (see Recommendation 1).

# Appendix 1: Pembrokeshire LDS themes, priorities and objectives

## PROGRAMME THEME 1: ADDING VALUE TO LOCAL IDENTITY AND NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Extract from the LDS:

*The area has a wealth of built, natural and cultural heritage and although progress has been made through initiatives such as PLANED's 'Adding Value to Community Tourism' Initiative these assets are still under- utilised in terms of providing social, environmental and economic benefit to local communities. Organisations and communities need to be encouraged to maximise these benefits from local assets (historic, natural and cultural) continuing to build on efforts developed through 'Valuing the Environment', 'Sense of Place', 'Experience Pembrokeshire' and the like. This is an approach that looks beyond individual natural and cultural assets such as coastal or woodland landscapes and connects them to wider regeneration efforts.*

*A number of economic opportunities have been identified through this work which could be delivered through future RDP support e.g. providing unique and memorable visitor experiences as identified in the recent Visit Wales consultations and subsequent strategy.*

### **LDS Priority 1.1: Build on a sense of place and community identity**

Specific Objectives:

1. Continue to support networks including well-established community groups, forums and associations.
2. Encourage local involvement and engagement.
3. Encourage intergenerational involvement in local development.
4. Celebrate and add value to heritage & culture, e.g. linking local industries to rural social life.
5. Encourage local ownership of community environmental areas – conservation, protection & enhancement.
6. Encourage the use of local and community natural resources and develop linkages where appropriate

### **LDS Priority 1.2: Increase sustainable tourism opportunities and take advantage of 'favourable' aspects of climate change**

Specific Objectives:

1. Exploit natural attractions (in an appropriate way) and distinct cultural heritage and the public desire for activity / 'experience' based holidays
2. Further develop the tourism offer – beyond peak season, niche products etc such as deep tourism, connections to regional activity to increase productivity.

3. Undertake environmental enhancements.
4. Develop adaptation and mitigation measures.

### **LDS Priority 1.3: Provide access and undertake activities relating to environmental and landscape assets**

#### Specific Objectives:

1. Support initiatives that harness local expertise in crafts, rural skills and traditions
2. Promote wider benefits of activity including community cohesion and health and wellbeing

### **PROGRAMME THEME 2: FACILITATING PRE-COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT, BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS AND SHORT SUPPLY CHAINS**

#### LDS extract:

*Pembrokeshire currently has a number of networks which create an environment within which the above can happen and be supported. 'You start where people are and help them get to where they want to be.' The LEADER approach plays a critical role in mobilising the capacity for enterprise and innovation. This can then lead to examples such as 'Growing the Growers' support for the horticultural sector and 'Sense of Place' tours, that have delivered sustainable community tourism initiatives. LAG activity and PLANED will be engaged in the transfer of knowledge, brokering the gap between 'bottom up' and 'top down' whether through a local initiative or at the other end of the scale through proposed activity of the EIP/Horizon 2020.*

*Agriculture is still an important part of the Pembrokeshire rural economy and whilst there is a package of support from other sources within the RDP, external factors continue to affect the sector. The LAG is committed to working with the sector to create a more sustainable and resilient industry assisting farming families to prepare for the future ahead supporting innovation and stimulating new markets. The ageing profile within the farming and farm owning community raises issues of declining innovation and new thinking, succession (where children often do not wish to follow on the family farm with higher social and quality of life aspirations elsewhere) and new entrant opportunities (with rising land values, farming - especially set-up - costs and the loss of small units and council farms). This impacts on the wider social and community profile, especially in upland and deep rural areas, where the farming community are so integral to community affairs and the whole rural way of life.*

*With a large number of businesses, especially within the agriculture sector, being family partnerships, effective succession planning will continue to be a vital aspect in ensuring that these businesses thrive in the future.*

*There is a need to explore economic opportunity, that is sector specific and which is unique to Pembrokeshire such as a high-quality tourism offer and adding value to the coastal and marine sectors, working in partnership with the Destination Pembrokeshire Partnership (DPP).*

**LDS Priority 2.1: Provide appropriate and relevant support services to businesses**

Specific Objectives:

1. Support to develop market access, access vocational training, meet regulatory requirements and achieve business objectives using, where appropriate and to the extent possible, a coordinated first stop mechanism
2. Increased focus on 'business' (improving profitability and ensuring sustainability - enhancing business skills)

**LDS Priority 2.2: Continue to exploit strengthened collaboration between producers, processors and retailers and share practice/experiences from around the world and better co-ordinated /shortened supply chain**

Specific Objective:

1. Support further opportunities for entrepreneurship and farming diversification to increase productivity.
2. Support and increase the role of social enterprise to increase productivity.
3. Strengthen and further develop collaborative structures e.g. arts and crafts; horticultural, timber and agricultural processing; food processing.

**LDS Priority 2.3: Develop locally relevant learning opportunities such as mentoring and coworking, create upskilling opportunities and address succession**

Specific Objectives:

1. Identify and share good practice to assist better wealth distribution.
2. Pilot initiatives identified through research and knowledge gathering

**LDS Priority 2.4: Promote the business benefits of good environmental management**

Specific Objectives:

1. Adaptation to the changing nature of CAP budget and adaptation/efficiencies
2. Capitalise on the public desire for local, environmentally positive goods and services whether that be stay-cationing, local food with short supply chains, etc
3. Green growth: renewable energy targets and carbon offsetting
4. Utilise eco-systems as an asset – to bring economic value

**PROGRAMME THEME 3: EXPLORING NEW WAYS OF PROVIDING NON-STATUTORY LOCAL SERVICES**

LDS extract:

*As with most rural areas access to services continues to be a community priority and although new initiatives have been established, such as provision of 'drop in' advice or treatment surgeries at community owned facilities there are still challenges in addressing gaps in provision. There are likely to be new challenges as a result of a*

*reduction of services currently provided by the public sector, creating further pressure on rural communities.*

*LDS activity will need to complement and add value to more collaborative, joined up and innovative approaches to service delivery in response to current challenging circumstances, if we are not to see the broader negative effects on the quality of life of children, young and older people and families as a whole.*

### **LDS Priority 3.1: Continue to support the development of community capacity and skills:**

Specific Objectives:

1. Use community development to build a solid foundation for locally based initiatives.
2. Explore new models of volunteering to encourage “active citizenship” for community benefit
3. Encourage local ownership of community environmental areas – enhancement & leisure
4. Work with community associations and community councils to increase community resilience and cohesion
5. Exploration and implementation of community finance initiatives e.g. crowd funding/community share ownership/ asset development to provide local solutions
6. Encourage and support the development of innovative solutions to local needs, for example, affordable housing, transport, digital inclusion, etc.
7. Capitalise on skills, knowledge and experience within the retired population – e.g. mentoring, intergenerational activity etc.

### **LDS Priority 3.2: Increase ownership of local delivery and develop infrastructure**

Specific Objectives:

1. Develop an appropriate infrastructure for local service delivery and ownership of assets to assist better wealth distribution.
2. Explore the potential of a new “localism infrastructure” of community councils, community associations and community assets
3. Build on existing rural transport schemes to provide innovative transport solutions
4. Explore opportunities to develop new community based rural transport opportunities that meet local needs but also contribute to sustainable tourism
5. Support local communities to take charge of local goods and services in their area
6. Explore opportunities for collaboration and encourage the creation of local networks, for instance, to reduce isolation and improve mental well being
7. Support and increase the role of social enterprise particularly linked to public service delivery
8. Exploration and implementation of community finance initiatives e.g. crowd funding/community share ownership/ asset development to provide local solutions
9. Promote safe, healthy and affordable lifestyles

## **PROGRAMME THEME 4: RENEWABLE ENERGY AT COMMUNITY LEVEL**

LDS extract:

*Pembrokeshire's Community Energy Network (CEN) enables an exchange of information, expertise and good practice. Within the county there is working knowledge of community energy schemes/ research which needs to be shared. Experience to date would suggest that actual delivery of infrastructure under this scheme may be limited by external factors globally, nationally and locally. The LAG / CEN will continue to work closely with technical advisors e.g. Pembrokeshire County Council Energy & Planning and Ynni'r Fro and Marine Energy Pembrokeshire.*

*The LAG is also aware of a number of examples of good practice, both within the UK and Europe and would seek opportunities to co-operate with communities who have overcome challenges to deliver community owned renewable technologies and wider energy schemes.*

**LDS Priority 4.1: Support communities to take advantage of renewable energy potential from environmental sources – e.g. solar, tidal, marine, hydro and wind**

Specific Objective:

1. Continue to support community-based network to develop capacity and knowledge
2. Explore community based, off- grid and local grid distribution networks for renewable energy generation
3. Seek local, national and transnational good practice in community owned schemes and transfer good practice to address unequal wealth distribution.

**LDS Priority 4.2: Encourage and support communities to adopt energy saving and conservation techniques**

Specific Objective:

1. Continue to support community-based network to develop capacity and knowledge.

**PROGRAMME THEME 5: EXPLOITATION OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY**

LDS theme:

*This theme offers a number of opportunities and solutions to address rural isolation both in economic and social situations e.g. business, health, young people, communication and delivery of services. Ensuring digital technology is accessible and usable by Pembrokeshire's rural population is also essential if Pembrokeshire's communities are to be attractive and viable places to live in.*

*Local people and businesses need to be supported in their digital technology learning journey in order to take advantage of the opportunities offered. A recent workshop with the private sector not only considered the benefits of future broadband provision but how they might work co-operatively to exploit technology to maximum advantage.*

**LDS Priority 5.1: Work towards digital inclusion for all – reducing isolation and including social, cultural, and telehealth opportunities and skills development**



Specific Objectives:

1. Improve access to infrastructure and adopt new technology in order to improve business efficiency, community life and maximise on R&D.
2. Support technological innovations to reduce waste, reduce costs and increase margins e.g. internet sales.
3. Enhance transferability of knowledge and improve the provision of support for learning and opportunities for improved productivity,

**LDS Priority 5.2: Ensure that best use is made of new and arriving technology**

Specific Objectives:

1. Exploit technology for access to information and interpretation.
2. Promote the benefits of future broadband provision and investigate how businesses might work cooperatively to exploit technology to maximum advantage.
3. Explore opportunities for the development of a community network of Digital Access Points
4. Encourage the development of community-based volunteer initiatives to support digital inclusion, particularly for older people and people with disabilities.

## Appendix 2: Performance indicators definitions

Indicator	Definition
Number of feasibility studies	Number of specific feasibility studies commissioned or undertaken through the programme to provide the background research for a specific problem or issue and the production of a comprehensive written appraisal of the issues, the alternative solutions, the financial costings, a detailed risk analysis and recommendations for the next steps.
Number of networks established	Number of formal networks that have been created as a direct result of the LEADER programme and were not in existence prior to programme involvement. (Each network can be scored only once over the life of the approved programme).
Number of jobs safeguarded through supported projects	Jobs safeguarded are where jobs are known to be at risk over the next 12 months. Jobs should be scored as FTE and permanent (a seasonal job may be scored provided the job is expected to recur indefinitely; the proportion of the year worked should also be recorded). The job itself should be scored, not an estimate of how many people may occupy the job. If the job is not full time then the hours per week will need to be divided by 30 to find the proportion of what FTE represents (e.g. 18 hours per week would be 0.6 FTE).
Number of pilot activities undertaken/supported	Number of pilot activities undertaken/ supported through the capacity building activities, broken down as: new approaches, new products, new processes, new services.
Number of community hubs	The number of new community hubs that were formed as a direct result of the LEADER programme.
Number of information dissemination actions/ promotional and/or marketing activities to raise awareness of the LDS and/or it's projects	The number of actions undertaken by the Local Action Group to raise awareness and explain the aim objectives and activities undertaken via the Local Development Strategy to the rural population. The number of planned and targeted activities undertaken by the Local Action Group that promote the Local Development Strategy and its projects OR the production and distribution of materials aimed at marketing and promoting the Local Development Strategy and its projects.

Indicator	Definition
Number of stakeholders engaged	<p>Stakeholder: Any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the project objectives. These can be people, groups or entities that have a role and interest in the objectives and implementation of a project. They include the community whose situation the project or programme seeks to change.</p> <p>Engagement: Stakeholders who become actively involved in the project's implementation at any stage.</p>
Number of participants supported	<p>Participants: number of people who attend an event to disseminate information, etc. Please note that the number on receipt of any kind of mail-shot associated with the dissemination of information (e.g. the distribution of a report summary) cannot be counted as participants.</p>

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