



## **BUSINESS PLAN 2011/12**

### **Foreword from the Chair of the LAG Paul Tolley**

Welcome to our new Business Plan for Central Warwickshire LEADER for the period covering 2011 to 2012. This Plan guides the way the Forum, and through it the Local Action Group, disseminates funds and utilises its resources over the coming year. Our guiding principle is to ensure we achieve a real and sustainable impact at a community level.

Like most recipients of government funding, we have faced and continue to face some significant challenges and will need to take a number of tough decisions in the year. Our overall funding allocation has already been significantly reduced. Consequently, it is even more important that we are clear on the priorities and the areas where we need to make changes so that we can deliver services within our available resources.

A strategic review was carried out in the Spring by the LAG that is encompassed within this Plan. Above all we use this Plan to set our course and chart our progress so that we achieve our contracted targets.

Through the delivery of this plan we will continue to ensure that our three themes are resourced to meet the needs of our rural communities within Central Warwickshire.

## **1. Our programme**

The Central Warwickshire Villages LEADER programme was contracted in September 2009 and continues until September 2013. It aims to promote community cohesion and create a strong sense of place in the rural parishes of Warwick District and Rugby Borough. It promotes projects that bring people together within these rural communities and stimulates demand for services as well as promoting a sustainable economic base to community activities. The primary themes are community growing projects, community arts projects and events and projects that bring communities and the land based rural industries together across the area. The programme aims to be flexible, accessible and accountable to community groups in the targeted parishes and villages.

Our programme covers 55 parishes with a total population of 52,000. The original contracted programme allowed for £1.2 million on projects or £21.82 per person. The Government's Comprehensive Spending Review last autumn reduced this by £190,000.

Our programme seeks to overcome the social and economic inequalities within rural areas. To achieve this on a day-to-day basis the LAG is supported by the Programme Management Team who, amongst many other responsibilities, facilitate project development by working with community groups and organisations. Warwickshire County Council as the Accountable Body also contributes a considerable amount of support.

## **2. Our Ambitions**

We aim to:

- create a strong sense of place within the rural villages of central Warwickshire;
- encourage sustainable and inclusive communities, bringing together those who have always lived in the area and incomers, old and young, in the rural parishes of Warwick District and Rugby Borough;
- celebrate our rural culture and heritage;
- contribute to developing a positive culture of enterprises and economic purpose;
- develop and maintain sustainable voluntary groups & activities;
- bring people together to implement a programme of community-based projects providing social, health and economic benefits to residents;
- support community groups through capacity building to develop & deliver projects successfully;
- encourage co-operation with other LEADER Local Action groups elsewhere in the UK or EU to learn from the experience of others and to encourage the sharing of best practice.

Our outcomes:

- a stronger sense of place and identity;
- stronger communities with a shared future vision and sense of belonging, focussing on what communities have in common;
- strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds.”

### **3. Building on Success**

Ours is a relatively young LAG. Despite our inexperience of running a programme like this before, we believe we have now built strong foundations on which to build and achieve our ambitions. This is demonstrated by a number of key successes:

#### **3.1 Strategic Review**

Given the late start to the Programme, in 2010/11 the LAG was naturally anxious to approve as many good applications as possible in order to start spending the available funds. Now that a number of projects are underway and some completed it is time to take stock of where the Programme is in terms of the type of projects already approved and the geographical spread across the LEADER area and to set these considerations against the targets for each theme and Measure.

The LAG has completed a strategic review of the Programme, informed by the conclusions of the Mid-Term Evaluation conducted by an independent consultant. The LAG has decided that for 2011/12 we should concentrate on the Community Arts and Links with the Land-Based Industries themes, though not to the complete exclusion of applications in other themes. We will also favour applications: from parishes that have not currently benefited from LEADER funding; which show community engagement; are ready to start and spend funds in the year. We will also encourage service projects to focus on those parishes that have not yet benefited from the Programme. The projects that have the greatest potential to meet the Programme's targets are the service projects, which extend over several years. Therefore, we have formally reviewed their performance and taken decisions as to whether to allocate them additional funds for 2011/12 and/ or 2012/13.

In order to ensure that we meet our spending targets, by which we will be judged by the UK Government, we have decided to over commit the Programme by 10% in each Measure. We consider that this is only a very slight theoretical risk, since projects tend to under spend on their allocated funding. If we were only to commit up to the limits of the budget, the Programme as a whole would probably not spend all its available funds.

#### **3.2 Programme Delivery**

The LAG has worked tirelessly over the last 18 months to ensure that funding reaches the communities of Central Warwickshire as speedily as possible. This has always been within the LEADER ethos of delivering a programme that is very much "bottom up" and driven by all of the community so as to improve social cohesion and make a lasting difference in rural areas. Nearly 20 projects have now been approved across the area and many others considered. These take the form of individual projects for communities, or "Service projects" where an organisation takes a role of delivering similar projects to a number of different communities.

#### **3.3 Sustainability of Projects**

The LAG, and in particular the Appraisal Panels, are very well aware that this programme of funding ends in 2013. The LAG is particularly anxious that it should leave a lasting legacy behind it and each project must satisfactorily complete a sustainability form as part of the Full Application.

#### 4. Resources

The estimates for the financial year 2011/12 and beyond are shown in Appendix 1. They have been based on approved projects to date but are constrained by Defra requirements. These do not allow for the programme to vire funds between years and all programmes had their allocation reduced by 20% in March. Under review our LAG has received half of that funding back. It is however possible to vire between Measures and if this proves necessary to achieve our goals in this year then it is recommended we do that, whilst at the same time taking account of our overall targets per Measure

Matched funding in excess of what is required has not been included at this stage. The lifetime figure required is very modest (£175,000) and it is likely and desirable that considerably more than that is achieved.

#### 5. Planned Programme of Activity 2011–2012

When	Planned Activity	Lead responsibility
April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restart project commissioning process and manage application process</li> <li>• Quarterly Newsletter</li> <li>• Review Multi-Annual Projects to ensure they remain 'fit for purpose' and best value.</li> <li>• LAG Meeting</li> </ul>	PMT, LAG, Appraisal sub-group  PMT LAG  LAG
May 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update Local Development Strategy</li> <li>• Prepare Business Plan</li> <li>• Carry out Strategic Review to determine priorities for 2011/12</li> <li>• Set applications calls and deadlines for first 6 months</li> <li>• Appraisal Panel</li> <li>• LAG Meeting</li> </ul>	LAG PMT, WCC, LAG PMT, WCC, LAG PMT, LAG Appraisal Panel LAG
June 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing Sub Group Meeting</li> <li>• Develop and manage new applications</li> <li>• Commission new projects</li> <li>• Manage and Monitor existing projects</li> <li>• Strategic Working Party Meeting</li> <li>• Appraisal Panel</li> <li>• LAG Meeting</li> </ul>	Mktg Group PMT PMT, WCC, LAG PMT SWP Appraisal Panel LAG

July 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AGM</li> <li>• Forum Event</li> <li>• Quarterly Newsletter</li> <li>• Cooperation Sub Group Meeting</li> <li>• Develop and manage new applications</li> <li>• Commission new projects</li> <li>• Manage and Monitor existing projects</li> <li>• Appraisal Panel</li> <li>• LAG Meeting</li> </ul>	PMT, LAG, Forum PMT, LAG, Forum PMT Co-op PMT WCC,LAG PMT, WCC, LAG PMT, WCC, LAG LAG
Aug 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing Sub Group Meeting</li> <li>• Develop and manage new applications</li> <li>• Manage and Monitor existing projects</li> </ul>	Mrktg Group PMT PMT, WCC, LAG
Sept 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperation Sub Group Meeting</li> <li>• Strategic Working Party Meeting</li> <li>• Develop and manage new applications</li> <li>• Commission new projects</li> <li>• Manage and Monitor existing projects</li> <li>• Appraisal Panel</li> <li>• LAG Meeting</li> </ul>	Co-op SWP PMT PMT, WCC, LAG PMT, WCC, LAG LAG LAG
Oct 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarterly Newsletter</li> <li>• Marketing Sub Group Meeting</li> <li>• Develop and manage new applications</li> <li>• Commission new projects</li> <li>• Manage and Monitor existing projects</li> <li>• Appraisal Panel</li> <li>• LAG Meeting</li> </ul>	PMT Mrktg Group PMT PMT,WCC,LAG PMT, WCC,LAG LAG LAG
Nov 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperation Sub Group Meeting</li> <li>• Develop and manage new applications</li> <li>• Commission new projects</li> <li>• Manage and Monitor existing projects</li> <li>• Appraisal Panel</li> <li>• LAG Meeting</li> </ul>	Co-op Group PMT PMT,WCC,LAG PMT,WCC,LAG LAG LAG
Dec 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing Sub Group Meeting</li> <li>• Strategic Working Party Meeting</li> <li>• Develop and manage new applications</li> <li>• Commission new projects</li> <li>• Manage and Monitor existing projects</li> <li>• Appraisal Panel</li> <li>• LAG Meeting</li> </ul>	Mrktg Group SWP Group PMT PMT,WCC,LAG PMT,WCC,LAG LAG LAG

Jan 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarterly Newsletter</li> <li>• Forum Meeting/Event</li> <li>• Cooperation Sub Group Meeting</li> <li>• Develop and manage new applications</li> <li>• Commission new projects</li> <li>• Manage and Monitor existing projects</li> <li>• Appraisal Panel</li> <li>• LAG Meeting</li> </ul>	PMT Mrktg Group,PMT Co-op Group PMT PMT,WCC,LAG PMT,WCC,LAG LAG LAG
Feb 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing Sub Group Meeting</li> <li>• Appraisal Panel</li> <li>• Develop and manage new applications</li> <li>• Commission new projects</li> <li>• Manage and Monitor existing projects</li> <li>• LAG Meeting</li> </ul>	Mrktg Group LAG PMT PMT,WCC,LAG PMT,WCC,LAG LAG
Mar 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperation Sub Group Meeting</li> <li>• Strategic Working Party Meeting</li> <li>• Develop and manage new applications</li> <li>• Commission new projects</li> <li>• Manage and Monitor existing projects</li> <li>• Appraisal Panel</li> <li>• LAG Meeting</li> </ul>	Co-op Group SWP Group PMT PMT,WCC,LAG PMT,WCC,LAG LAG LAG

## 6. Conclusion

The Central Warwickshire Villages Local Action Group will continue to work with, develop and commission projects that contribute to the aims and objectives of the programme. They will actively encourage applications from under-represented groups and parishes across the eligible area in order to ensure that the beneficiaries and geographical reach of the programme is maximised. They will also continue to review and monitor existing projects to ensure that they are good value for money and remain fit for purpose.