

Central Warwickshire Villages LEADER
Local Action Group

Terms of Reference- LEADER Forum

1. Background

Central Warwickshire Villages LEADER will create a strong sense of place within the Rural Villages of Central Warwickshire. It aims to create sustainable and inclusive communities, bringing together those who have always lived in the area and incomers or migrants; young and old, to create, celebrate and redefine their rural culture and heritage.

The programme will support projects under three main strands:

- Community Growing Projects
- Community Arts Projects and Events
- Activities that bring together villagers and the land based rural industries that surround them and that create and shape the environment in which people live.

The **Central Warwickshire Villages LEADER programme** area comprises the parished villages and rural areas in Central Warwickshire, encompassing the rural wards of Rugby Borough and Warwick District. It covers 55 parishes over an area of 211 square miles, with a total population of 52,000. The project area excludes the urban settlements of Rugby, Kenilworth, Warwick, Whitnash and Leamington Spa.

2. Structure

The **Local Action Group (LAG)** is the steering group and decision-making body for the programme with representation from the target rural communities and a range of other stakeholders active in the area. It will serve to ensure that the Central Warwickshire LEADER programme delivers the local development strategy (LDS) and its themes, which arose from the community consultation process, in the programme area. The LAG will develop the annual work plan for the programme for the year.

The LAG will also be the body responsible for making grant awards for the programme.

Membership of the LAG will be approved or elected by the **Central Warwickshire Villages LEADER Forum**, an open broad-based and inclusive group of interested parties from across the programme area. The LAG will report to the Forum at open public meetings twice annually. The Forum will hold the LAG to account for the delivery of the programme and has the power to elect up to five individual representatives onto the LAG at the AGM of the Central Warwickshire Villages LEADER programme.

The LAG will be serviced by a **programme team** and **support services** will be provided by Warwickshire County Council acting as the accountable body and taking responsibility for project assurance, auditing and monitoring project processes. The LAG will be further supported by independent (**Technical**) **Appraisal Groups** responsible for establishing the technical viability of applications for funding and evaluating them against the published Local Development Strategy (LDS).

3. Purpose of the LEADER Forum

The function of the LEADER Forum will be to:

- approve/ elect membership of the Local Action Group (LAG) as applicable
- oversee the management of the LEADER project including the LAG, the appropriateness of whose membership it will keep under review.
- provide a safeguard ensuring that the LEADER Project is operating within the scope of the Local Development Strategy and business plan as lodged with Advantage West Midlands.
- provide a forum for discussion of rural development in the programme area.
- draw together the five rural Localities/ Locality Forums and other stakeholders from Rugby Borough and Warwick District.

4. Forum Working Arrangements

1. The LEADER Forum will meet twice annually – one meeting of which will constitute the Annual General Meeting. Responsibility for arranging the meetings of the Forum rests with the Local Action Group and LEADER programme staff team.
2. The Chairperson of the LEADER Forum will be elected at the Annual General Meeting and will not be a member of the LAG.
3. The programme staff team will undertake the administrative and financial arrangements for the LEADER Forum meetings
4. The programme staff will circulate the agenda and papers seven days before each meeting, and will record decisions and issue minutes for approval at the next meeting. Papers and minutes will be made available on the programme website.
5. Views and decisions of the LEADER Forum will be recorded by the staff team and signed by the Chair at the beginning of the following meeting.
6. The LEADER Forum Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually by the LAG, and they may suggest amendments to these Terms of Reference for consideration by the Forum's AGM.