



The European
Agricultural Fund for
Rural Development:
Europe investing in
rural areas

The Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) is funded by Defra and the EU

The Sussex Downs and Low Weald LEADER Programme

Open for Business!

The South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) has awarded £29 million of the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) funds to 14 LEADER Local Action Groups in the South East region. West Sussex has successfully secured just under £4 million of this funding for allocation to farmers, growers, foresters, rural businesses and community organisations over a five year period, 2008 – 2013.

To be eligible for the Sussex Downs and Low Weald programme, your business or organisation must be situated in the area. You can use the list of parishes overleaf as a guide to check whether you might be eligible. You can also look at the SEEDA website to check for other LEADER areas within the region. www.seeda.co.uk/rdpe

Funding:

The funding is aimed at rural development that will generate new and additional income to support the rural economy, or provide facilities that benefit rural communities. The Sussex Downs and Low Weald Local Action Group will have responsibility for determining where their share of the money goes and ensuring that it meets local priorities. A Local Development Strategy sets out the key objectives, priorities and likely areas of activity for the programme. Your project proposal must support at least one of the following themes:

1. Diverse and competitive farming that meets new demand and new opportunities
2. Revitalised woodlands that add value to local timber
3. New businesses supporting local food and produce
4. Diverse and successful micro-businesses and a thriving visitor economy
5. Sustainable community hubs that bring together a range of services

LEADER can provide grants of up to £50,000 if the project is exceptional, although there is a preference to support more businesses with grants well below this level. Where there is a commercial return, projects may be eligible for 40% or sometimes 50% of the total costs, the exact proportion depending on the nature of the project. Projects that benefit local communities could be eligible for up to 80% of the total costs.

For more information:

Go to the West Sussex website www.westsussex.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/environment/rdpe-leader-funding

Ring the LEADER Programme Team on 01243 756755 for an informal discussion