



RDP LEADER Programme Information

Rural Development Programme

The Rural Development Programme is funded through the Welsh Government Rural Communities - Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, which is funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Welsh Government.

The priorities for the programme **as a whole** are:

- To foster knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry, and rural areas
- Enhance competitiveness of all types of agriculture and enhancing farm viability
- Promote food chain organisation and risk management in agriculture
- Restore, preserve and enhance ecosystems dependent on agriculture and forestry
- Promote resource efficiency and supporting the shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy in agriculture, food and forestry sectors
- Promote social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas.

2014-2020 LEADER

Locally, the Rural Development LEADER programme (a term used to cover the community development aspect of the programme) consists of nine electoral divisions in Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf, collectively called Rural Action Cwm Taf. Rather than projects being submitted in a competitive manner as happened in the last programme, we have been awarded an allocation which the Rural Cwm Taf Local Action Group, a Board of impartial representatives, are responsible for administering under the governance of the Lead Administration Body, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council. Merthyr Tydfil/Rhondda Cynon Taf's total sum to be allocated is **£897,409.50** available for revenue projects between 2015 – 2021.

The electoral divisions eligible for this fund are:

- Bedlinog
- Cyfarthfa
- Maerdy
- Merthyr Vale
- Plymouth (Service Ward)
- Rhigos
- Treharris (Host Ward)
- Vaynor
- Ynysybwl

Please contact the Rural Action Co-ordinator should you be interested in implementing projects in a service or host ward.

Any projects should serve communities in more than one rural ward. They must seek to address the following:

- Rural Poverty
- Health
- Welsh Language/Equalities
- Uplands (for clarification on this we have a map which outlines what these areas are)
- Resilient/Sustainable Rural communities

Projects put forward need to fall under one or more of the following themes:

- Exploration of Digital Technology
- Renewable Energy at a community level
- Adding Value to Local Identity & Natural & Cultural Resources
- Exploring new ways of providing non statutory services
- Facilitating pre commercial development, business partnerships and short supply chains

Projects are not likely to be eligible if they conflict with the schemes that Welsh Government are planning to put in place. They should not duplicate with existing schemes but can complement/add value to them and need to be new interventions, not a continuation of existing projects.

Please note that this is **not a grant scheme** which will provide direct support to organisations/enterprises. The LEADER fund cannot provide support in this way because The Welsh Government are administering a number of programmes directly. If you do require direct business, enterprise or organisational support, please contact the rural development co-ordinator who will be able to give you information on the Welsh Government schemes as well as other potential funding which may be open to you. Please also see The Rural Community Development Fund document within this pack.

The Local Development Strategy

We have submitted a Local Development Strategy to Welsh Government and set up a new Rural Cwm Taf Local Action Group to direct the programme. It will be administered by Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council who will monitor, submit claims and be main contact point for the programme.

A consultation exercise has been undertaken across the joint area and this will continue throughout the length of the programme, with the Local development strategy changing annually to reflect any change in the need identified in our rural community.

Should you be successful in proceeding to application stage, you will need to reference how your project fits with the Local Development strategy. You can view this document at www.merthyr.gov.uk/rdp or request a copy from the Rural Development Co-ordinator (contact details below).

Should you wish to be kept informed of developments or wish to be added to the stakeholder distribution list please email joanne.nicholas@merthyr.gov.uk

