

LEADER in Gwynedd

What is LEADER?

LEADER is the term used to describe a local development approach for rural areas. The name comes from the French abbreviation for 'Liaison Entre Actions pour le Développement de L'Economie Rurale' which roughly translates to 'links between actions for developing the rural economy'

It is an EU and Welsh Government funded project that will support activities in Gwynedd between 2015 and 2021 within five themes. These themes are:

- Adding value to local identity and natural and cultural resources
- Facilitating pre commercial development, business partnerships and short supply chains
- Exploring new ways of providing non statutory services
- Renewable energy at a community level
- Exploitation of digital technology

What are the characteristics of a LEADER project?

The emphasis is on piloting projects in order to learn and share good practice. Generally every LEADER project will include the following characteristics:

- It will be delivered within a predefined timetable.
- It will link with the Gwynedd Local Development Strategy
- It will focus on responding to a challenge or problem with broad relevance.
- It will adopt a new approach not currently being used.
- It will allow lessons to be learnt and the sharing of best practice.
- It will not provide a direct or indirect commercial advantage to any group or individual

What will LEADER do?

LEADER seeks to support innovative responses to opportunities or challenges faced in Gwynedd. Examples of these could include:

- How do we encourage walkers along the Gwynedd Coastal path to spend more in local businesses along the route?
- In the face of public spending cuts can local communities run their own local services?
- Are there opportunities to develop Welsh language products and services?

These should be bottom up community lead activities that involve a broad spectrum of groups, organisations and individuals.

What is the Local Development Strategy (LDS?)

The Local Development Strategy outlines the priorities for Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig (AGW), the name for the LEADER project in Gwynedd, over the 6 year programme.



It was prepared following an extensive consultation exercise and all activities supported by AGW should seek to respond to the aims and objectives detailed within the strategy. However it should be emphasised that complementing the LDS is only one consideration when developing a LEADER project.

What support can Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig offer?

Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig can provide the support required to trial an activity over a defined period. This can include expenditure such as leasing equipment, renting property, purchasing small capital items and supporting specialist support. Ongoing support will also be provided by project officers throughout the project. All costs will be incurred directly by the AGW programme and no grants are awarded.

Who can be involved?

Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig will seek to engage with communities of interest as well as those defined by their geography. Examples of these could include:

- A group of residents and local businesses within a village work in partnership to trial a new approach to running a local service.
- Gwynedd wide outdoor pursuit operators partner with accommodation providers to pilot new holiday packages.

Successful activities will require input from a broad range of participants and success will often be determined by ensuring all interested parties are involved and fully engaged in the process. Projects may include participants from the public, private, community and voluntary sectors.

AGW can cooperate with a broad range of groups and individuals however it is not possible to fund projects for others to deliver outside procurement arrangements. There are several reasons for this:

- It is not possible to award a grant (or anything that looks like a grant)
- AGW must adhere to all procurement rules on all expenditure
- AGW must adhere to State Aid rules and must avoid giving a commercial advantage to a business or organisation.

AGW will own all the intellectual property that's associated with projects to allow all information to be shared widely.

Who runs LEADER in Gwynedd?

The LEADER project will be managed by the Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig Group (LAG) which is made up of 18 representatives from various sectors, including tourism, farming, the third sector, local government and education establishments. It is the AGW group's responsibility to provide strategic direction and ensure that activities align with the Gwynedd Local Development Strategy.



AGW will be delivered by Menter Môn from their offices in Porthmadog. It is a social enterprise with 20 years' experience of delivering rural development projects across North Wales and will also be responsible for LEADER in Anglesey.

How are projects developed?

There is no application process whereby a panel decides either to support or reject a proposal on the basis of an application form. The intention is to adopt a more participative process where the group will work with the AGW team and LAG members to develop a project idea. Approval to proceed will be given in stages thus reducing risks and allowing activities to be amended based on delivery experience.

AGW will also adopt a proactive approach in developing and implementing its own projects to respond to the Local Development Strategy. In these instances AGW will recruit or develop the community of interest to support the delivery of the project.

How will AGW staff accept enquiries?

Enquiries can be submitted using an enquiry form. AGW staff will receive a high number of enquiries and every effort will be made to respond to them. These enquiries will be dealt with in the following ways:

- Ineligible – Explain that the activity is ineligible and refer to alternative sources of support.
- Not a LEADER project – Explain why the activity does not fit with LEADER and refer to alternative sources of support.
- Possessing the ingredients for a LEADER project – Work with the group or individual to develop the project e.g. extend the community of interest, undertake further research.

AGW will not expect projects to be presented in their final form. The staff have an important role in identifying potential projects and adding elements in order to elevate them to become LEADER projects.

What is the timeline and capacity for AGW?

This is a 6 year programme with limited human and financial resources. It is important for AGW to control the resources over the programme period to ensure the quality and impact of the activities. AGW will retain the right to limit the number of projects that are being developed and delivered at any one time.

What funding is available?

The total value of the programme is £5.1 million which will fund each element of the project including staff costs. 80% of the funding is provided 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, with the remainder of the funding coming from the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and Gwynedd Council.



AGW should not be considered as a source of funding and therefore there is no upper or lower limit on the value of projects that can be supported. The emphasis is piloting projects using the available human and financial resources.

What will success look like?

Developing new approaches that can be replicated in other areas in the County will demonstrate the value of LEADER in Gwynedd. The programme should allow for risks to be taken and should tolerate failure as long as lessons are learnt.

Is further information available?

Staff at the Porthmadog office can provide further information on Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig and are happy to meet with interested groups and individuals. A copy of the Gwynedd Local Development Strategy is available for download from www.arloesigwyneddwledig.com which provides the context for the project.

You are also encouraged to follow the Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig programme through our social media channels, which include:



www.facebook.com/arloesigwyneddwledig



@arloesigwynedd



Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig channel.

More general information on the LEADER Programme is also available on the European Network for Rural Development Website (www.enrd.ec.europa.eu/leader).

On the next page you will find AGW's project development flow chart:



AGW PROJECT FLOW CHART

