

# Rural Development Programme for England

Updated December 2018

As funding is less certain post-2020, now is the time to make the most of the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE). This funding channel is one of the government's main programmes of grants and support for rural businesses, community groups and the environment, with a budget of over £1bn.

It is made up of five main schemes, which we expect to remain available until 2019 – 2020.

The small grant scheme (£3,000 to £12,000) is currently closed but scheduled to re-open early in 2019. LEADER funding is still open to applications and can provide grant support for a range of rural projects. Despite countryside stewardship being closed for 2018, now is a good time to start planning applications for 2019.

Our local teams have considerable experience working with businesses to develop ideas and successfully make applications to the RDPE, do give them a call – even if it is just an acorn of an idea... This document will be updated as schemes open or change. For more information, view [Defra's rural grants and payments pages](#).



## COUNTRYSIDE PRODUCTIVITY SCHEME

Status	Purpose	Organising body
<i>Small grant scheme:</i> <b>Reopening in 2019.</b>	Grants are available for <b>animal productivity</b> , health and welfare, <b>remote crop sensing</b> , <b>slurry management</b> , recycling emissions, <b>robotics</b> , <b>atmospheric storage</b> and <b>precision equipment</b> .	Rural Payments Agency 03000 200 301 <a href="mailto:ruralpayments@defra.gsi.gov.uk">ruralpayments@defra.gsi.gov.uk</a>
<i>Large capital grants:</i> <b>Closed.</b>	The Countryside Productivity Scheme offers grants for buying equipment or machinery, <b>up to 40% of eligible costs</b> , for both small and large projects: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Small grants:</b> £3,000 - £12,000</li> <li><b>Large grants:</b> £35,000 - £1m</li> </ol> We have had a number of successful small grant scheme applications, which have enabled farmers to identify and invest in equipment that improves farm productivity.	
<i>European Innovation Partnership:</i> <b>Closed</b>	The <b>European Innovation Partnership</b> for Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability (EIP-Agri) provides support to projects which show innovation in linking research with farming or forestry practices to improve productivity and sustainability. This grant is currently closed, with applications assessed on a rolling-timetable.  Budget: £141m	

## GROWTH PROGRAMME

Status	Purpose	Organising body
<p><i>All priorities: <b>Closed</b></i> for expressions of interest.</p> <p>Approved projects should be finished, paid for and grant claims submitted by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020.</p>	<p>Growth Programme grants are for projects which create jobs and economic growth in rural areas. The three priorities are about growing businesses and diversification in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Business development</b></li> <li><b>2. Food processing</b></li> <li><b>3. Tourism infrastructure</b></li> </ol> <p>Eligible costs are buying new or improving buildings, equipment and machinery.</p> <p>Minimum grant £35,000 - £1m, covering up to 40% of eligible costs<sup>1</sup>.</p> <p>Applications should ideally show that they are creating one full-time job per £30,000 of grant.</p> <p>Most of the grants are available to farmers and other rural businesses.</p> <p>The application process has been simplified. It is a two stage process:</p> <p><b>Stage 1:</b> Expression of interest, which is now streamlined and with a quicker response from the RPA (30 days).</p> <p><b>Stage 2:</b> Application in full (lengthy and detailed).</p> <p>This grant can get confusing as calls for applications for different types of project happen in different areas at different times and different amounts of grant are available.</p> <p>The RPA will publish <a href="#">calls for applications</a>. These calls invite applications for grants in specific LEP areas. This link takes you to a page on the Gov.uk website where you can select your region and view grants that are open for applications (select fund state open).</p> <p>The government has confirmed that it will honour existing grants after the UK leaves the EU, subject to some conditions (value-for-money and fit with current policy).</p> <p>Budget: £177m; this includes the £120m announced in January 2017.</p>	<p>The 39 Local Enterprise Partnerships in England set local priorities</p> <p><a href="http://lepnetwork.org.uk/leps">lepnetwork.org.uk/leps</a></p> <p>The Rural Payments Agency assesses and administers the scheme</p> <p>03000 200 301</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:GPEnquiries@rpa.gsi.gov.uk">GPEnquiries@rpa.gsi.gov.uk</a></p>

## CATCHMENT SENSITIVE FARMING

Status	Purpose	Organising body
<p><b>Open</b></p>	<p>Provides free <b>training and advice</b> to farmers in <b>High Priority Areas</b> in England to <b>reduce water and air pollution</b> from farming.</p> <p>The advice can also be linked to Countryside Stewardship grants for management and capital works to reduce pollution in high priority areas. Capital works include concrete yard renewals, sprayer wash-down areas and hard bases for livestock water troughs. Specific items of equipment that reduce air pollution, such as shallow injection slurry systems, can also be funded through the small grant scheme.</p>	<p>Natural England 020 8026 2018</p> <p><a href="mailto:catchmentsensitivefarming@naturalengland.org.uk">catchmentsensitivefarming@naturalengland.org.uk</a></p>

<sup>1</sup> Up to 50% in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

## COUNTRYSIDE STEWARDSHIP

Status	Purpose	Organising body
<p><i>New CS Offers for Wildlife:</i> <b>Reopening in 2019.</b></p> <p><i>Mid Tier:</i> <b>Reopening in 2019.</b></p> <p><i>Higher Tier:</i> <b>Reopening in 2019.</b></p> <p><i>Capital grants (for hedgerows and boundaries):</i> <b>Reopening in 2019.</b></p> <p><i>Capital grants (for woodland management plans):</i> <b>Always open.</b></p> <p><i>Woodland creation:</i> <b>Always open.</b></p> <p><i>Tree health:</i> <b>Always open.</b></p> <p><i>Woodland improvement:</i> <b>Reopening in 2019.</b></p>	<p>England's main agri-environment scheme. There are four main elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>New CS Offers for Wildlife</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Arable Offer – applicants choose a minimum of 3 options from a total of 11.</li> <li>- Lowland Grazing Offer – applicants choose a minimum of 2 options from a total of 7.</li> <li>- The Mixed Farming Offer – applicants choose a minimum of 3 options from a total of 14.</li> <li>- The Upland Offer – applicants choose from a total of 8 options/supplements</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Mid Tier</b> – for supporting farm wildlife and wild pollinators, improving water quality and reducing water pollution (linked to Catchment Sensitive Farming), and reducing flood risk.</li> <li>• <b>Higher Tier</b> – for priority habitats, woodland planting and management, and educational access.</li> <li>• <b>Capital grants</b> – for hedgerows and boundaries, woodland management plans, woodland creation and tree health.</li> </ul> <p>The New CS Offers for Wildlife are not competitive. The applicant must simply meet a set of minimum criteria.</p> <p>There is a good success rate (70%+) for Mid Tier and Higher Tier applications that meet <a href="#">local priorities</a>, support wild pollinators, improve water quality or reduce flood risk.</p> <p>Budget: £925m, plus £2.2bn of existing commitments.</p>	<p>Natural England</p> <p>0300 060 3900</p> <p><a href="mailto:enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk">enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk</a></p>

## LEADER

Status	Purpose	Organising body
<p><b>Open</b></p>	<p>LEADER provides grants to local businesses, communities, farmers, foresters and land managers for <b>locally valuable projects</b> that focus on the priorities of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supporting micro and small businesses and <b>farm diversification</b></li> <li>• boosting <b>rural tourism</b></li> <li>• increasing <b>farm productivity</b></li> <li>• increasing <b>forestry productivity</b></li> <li>• providing <b>rural services</b></li> <li>• providing <b>cultural and heritage activities</b></li> </ul> <p>LEADER is a French acronym (<i>Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale</i>), roughly translated as 'liaison among actors in rural economic development'.</p> <p>The local priorities are identified by Local Action Groups (LAGs), which are made up of the public and private sectors and communities.</p> <p>Budget: £138m (2015 – 2020)</p>	<p><a href="#">Your Local Action Group (LAG)</a></p>

# GET IN TOUCH

## Offices

Head Office (London City)	020 7338 4000
Ascot	01344 876 363
Banbury	01295 273 592
Banchory	01330 824 888
Cambridge	01223 459 500
Canterbury	01227 451 123
Chelmsford	01245 258 201
Chester	01244 354 888
Chichester	01273 832 602
Cirencester	01285 659 661
Edinburgh	0131 226 2500
Exeter	01392 215 631
Farnham	01252 821 102
Gerrards Cross	01753 891 188
Guildford	01483 306 565
Haddenham	01844 291384
Harpندن	01582 764 343
Harrogate	01423 561 274
Haslemere	01428 661 077
Horsham	01403 246 790
Inverness	01463 719 171
Ipswich	01473 214 841
Lewes	01273 475 411
Ludlow	01584 873 711
Market Harborough	01858 433 123
Mayfair	020 7629 7282
Moreton-in-Marsh	01608 650 502
Morpeth	01670 516 123
Newbury	01635 521 707
Northallerton	01609 780 306
Norwich	01603 617 431
Odiham	01256 702 892
Oxford	01865 366 700
Pangbourne	0118 984 575
Perth	01738 567 892
Salisbury	01722 328 741
Sevenoaks	01732 459 900
Shrewsbury	01743 284 204
St Albans	01727 738 280
Stamford	01780 484 040
Sunningdale	01344 623411
Winchester	01962 869999
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