

hertfordshire rural forum

Rural Innovation Strategy
2003-2006

April 2003

east of england
space for ideas



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1. Introduction

Purpose of this Strategy

This document has been produced by the Hertfordshire Rural Forum to act as a three year action plan and to secure funding from the East of England Development Agency (EEDA). However, it is hoped that, given the breadth of issues covered in the Strategy, other funding partners will be attracted to supporting the projects set out in this document.

This Strategy has drawn heavily upon the research undertaken as part of Hertfordshire's bid for LEADER+ funding in 2001. In addition, the Rural Forum with funding from EEDA has undertaken a consultation exercise comprising questionnaires and events. In particular, two consultation workshops were held in December 2002, one in Berkhamsted for members of rural communities and the other at Woolmer Green involving representatives of a range of organisations from the public and independent sectors. A report on this consultation exercise is available from the Forum on request.

This strategy contains background information on rural Hertfordshire and a project programme containing details of the projects to be undertaken in 2003-04 and also broader project proposals for years two and three of the strategy.

In addition to provide information on the activities of the Rural Forum, this document should be used by organisations in Hertfordshire to provide inspiration for projects which they would like to undertake and for which funding may be available via the Rural Forum.

Hertfordshire's Rural Area

The Rural Innovation Strategy focuses on issues relating to rural areas close to major metropolitan areas. These "accessible" rural areas are distinct from "peripheral" rural areas that are away from major metropolitan centres. Hertfordshire's rural area is characterised by the "peri-urban", that is the rural area on the periphery of the metropolitan area (including the urban areas of Hertfordshire and Greater London). Thus the strategy aims to improve quality of life in the County by addressing the competing demands for land and the economic pressures that change the social make up of rural settlements, through funding pilot projects that will disseminate their lessons to a wide audience.

Hertfordshire Rural Forum

The Hertfordshire Rural Forum is a partnership of organisations that share a common interest in the wellbeing and sustainability of the county's rural communities and environment. The Forum has been in existence since 1989 and has during this period, produced a series of rural strategies for the county with the support of organisations from the public, voluntary and private sectors.

Underpinning principle

The Strengths and Weaknesses analysis in Appendix 4 shows that Hertfordshire has a strong economy providing a higher than average standard of living for most residents. However, these strong economic factors create social and environmental weaknesses. To this extent the area is

typical of the South West of the region. This Strategy acknowledges the need for co-ordination and collaboration in the complex dynamics of the peri-urban area. Consequently this strategy is built upon a recognition that, “The real key to sustainability lies in community involvement.”¹

Managing the Strategy

This three year strategy is based on improving the quality of life of residents in rural Hertfordshire through focusing work around urban-rural interdependencies, training and networking pilot projects. The strategy will take place over three years and a call for project proposals will take place in each year. Three different groups will be involved in taking the strategy forward:

* **Steering Group**

The strategy will be managed by a Steering Group of the Hertfordshire Rural Forum. This Steering Group’s main work will be to approve the projects referred to it by the Strategy Management Group.

* **Strategy Management Group**

The Strategy Management Group whose work will be to make initial assessments of projects and provide detailed recommendations to the Steering Group. The Steering and SMG will meet once per quarter in selecting projects. They will also meet to discuss monitoring information regarding selected projects. (See Appendix 5, Management of the Implementation of the Strategy). The Strategy Management Group will also oversee the implementation of the Rural Innovation Strategy, its annual review and future development.

* **Wider Reference Group**

This will be formed by the overall membership of the Forum. The reference group will provide a mechanism for on-going consultation with the rural communities in Hertfordshire as well as ensuring accountability.

2. Themes

The strengths, weaknesses and potential of rural Hertfordshire (Appendix 4) provide a clear rationale for the chosen proposed projects. This allows the strategy to maximise the opportunities created by proximity to the urban areas of Hertfordshire and London, particularly in accessing markets and know how, and building capacity for local people to help themselves through training.

The nine broad themes or strands which provide the framework for the year one (2003-04) project programme (Appendix 1) are derived from the Hertfordshire Rural Forum’s overarching strategy document *Agenda for Action 2002-2005* (www.hertsdirect.org/ruralforum), a document developed through extensive consultation and endorsed by a range of organisations in the public and independent sectors. These strands formed the basis of a second consultation exercise in 2002 as part of the development of this Rural Innovation Strategy – consultees were asked to prioritise the ‘strands’ and suggest projects to help address the relevant issues.

In addition to these contextual ‘strands’, below are set out objectives which are derived from the strengths, weaknesses and potential analysis (Appendix 4).

Objective 1: To build capacity in local rural communities to encourage them to think about the longer-term potential of their area and to work together to address, in sustainable ways, the needs and issues identified.

Objective 2: To facilitate the development of competitive and sustainable rural economies that will help to create jobs and increase economic opportunities.

Objective 3: To improve the quality of life for people living or working in rural communities by enhancing access to services and helping everyone to achieve their full potential.

Objective 4: To protect and enhance the natural and historic rural environment, including extending access to the countryside and developing quality rural leisure opportunities.

The Rural Innovation Strategy also helps to meet a further regional objective for the East of England by ensuring that the national aims meet the varying needs of the north and the south of the region. This north-east and south-west division is well documented in the regional annex, and the Rural Innovation Strategy is well placed to implement the national objectives in an area typical of the south west of the region. In this way it will be helping to meet that regional objective.

3. Regional strategy context

The context provided by the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) and the Rural Renaissance programme is of particular relevance to the activities of the HRF where they are supported by EEDA. Developing a competitive and sustainable rural economy is a primary objective of the RES. The strategic RES rural priorities include the following:

- Support for market towns
- Supporting the needs of rural businesses
- Building sustainable rural communities

The Rural Renaissance Key Activity provides the principal focus and support for EEDA's rural policy and delivery responsibilities. The programme will contain sectoral and thematic strands. The aims of the programme include:

- **Developing sustainable and vibrant rural communities:**
 - Improving rural infrastructure
 - Improving access to services in strategic localities (e.g. supporting skills and learning, transport and affordable housing initiatives, business support, service resourcing)
 - Supporting community safety projects and reducing the fear of crime
 - Supporting needs of minority groups in rural areas
- **Encouraging Sustainable Growth of the Rural Economy**
 - Supporting and developing competitive rural business and tourism activity
 - Supporting rural research
 - Addressing the narrow economic base of rural areas through diversification and enterprise development
- **Creating Rural Delivery Structures**
 - Encouraging capacity building and community development

4. Complementing other rural programmes and strategies

The programme complements other rural development programmes in several ways. Firstly by mainstreaming the results small-scale projects, and the lessons and recommendations of these for policy makers. This information can be used in the implementation of wider rural development programmes. Mainstreaming will be supported through the increased incidence of networking.

Secondly, the programme will aim to use the resources available in other rural development programmes. The pilot nature of this will be testing out how different programmes can be brought together to better effect for the beneficiary. Testing out how well this group can access resources compared with individuals would be piloted.

A précis of other rural development programmes is listed below:

The Rural Development Schemes

The Rural Innovation Strategy will complement training measures in the Vocational Training Scheme and support the draw down of grants under the Rural Enterprise Scheme. For example, in the marketing co-operative project above, the finished output of the project (a tested business plan), can then go on to be used to access a marketing and processing grant.

Redundant Buildings Grant Scheme.

Community development project work undertaken through the Rural Innovation Strategy can, for example, access this scheme where the project requires it.

Countryside Agency Schemes

The Rural Innovation Strategy complements the Agency's new Vital Villages programmes, in particular the Community Services Grant and the Parish Plans Grant. Bringing together the responses and evaluations of the Rural Innovation Strategy will also help to shape and develop policy and has the potential to influence Agency initiatives. The Rural Innovation Strategy also complements the Agency's work on improving the health of market towns and their Rural Housing Enabling Project.

Countryside Management Services

Initiatives developed by CMS in the Hertfordshire are wide ranging and many focus on developing rural community involvement and securing environmental benefits.

ESF Objective 3

'Action for Growth in the Rural Economy', funded through Objective 3, currently runs within the Hertfordshire. This programme provides training and support and advice to rural businesses and farmers. Developing new initiatives that can build on the good practice learned under this programme will form part of the Rural Innovation Strategy.

Rural Transport

The Rural Innovation Strategy will link with the Rural Transport Strategy of the Local Transport Plan for Hertfordshire that has been developed through consultation with the Rural Forum. The Rural Innovation Strategy will consider the results of research and "good practice" and the potential for undertaking integrated future work in rural villages, parishes and market towns.

Rural White Paper

The Rural Innovation Strategy will support measure in the RWP to help market towns, tackle social exclusion in rural areas and help agriculture.

EEDAs Skills Development Fund

Learn Direct Learning Centres in Hertfordshire

The Rural Innovation Strategy will assist in the extension of services into the rural community to support lifelong learning through working with local communities to identify their learning needs and encouraging wider access to rural learning opportunities.

HRF Sub-groups

The sub-groups of the Herts Rural Forum will be used as sounding boards and sources of project ideas. These groups include: Rural Issues Group, Nature Conservation Group, Joint-Members Group.

5. Innovation

The Rural Innovation Strategy is innovative as it aims to examine the best means of rural development in rural areas close to major metropolitan centres – the peri urban environment.

Local innovation

In the past Hertfordshire has positioned itself in relation to its major industrial sectors such as pharmaceuticals and defence. It is only recently that public bodies have begun to focus on the needs of the rural areas in the County. The County needs to undertake to meet those needs associated with development pressures from London and the unique position of Hertfordshire on the major development corridors north.

The adoption of a local action planning approach will provide a truly innovative approach that has not previously been adopted in this area.

Local innovation comes, therefore, in getting communities to consider their rurality and what it means for them, and how they want it to develop. For example, new forms of organisation will result from the establishment of forums in the rural areas to discuss issues in common and empowering local people to have more of say in how their local communities develop. Equally, new products and services will appear for example, as a result of market research by farmers on processing locally branded foods.

In assessing each project the applicants will be asked to detail what is new in the way in which their project differs from previous initiatives. Also, to detail what new opportunities the project is offering, the emphasis will be on looking at how traditional services can be delivered in a new way to take account of current social issues in rural areas.

Generic innovation

Innovation in the programme also stems from its organisation. Developing bottom up approaches by adopting the action planning approach for example, and modelling action in order to ease dissemination of results and transferability and mainstreaming of work. Generic innovation will also take place in the testing out of bringing existing provision together by pilot projects. For example, in producing village plans local people will be able to identify what current resources they can tap into to finance the work they have agreed as a community.

6. Networking

Networking is fundamental to the Rural Innovation Strategy, and this is clearly demonstrated in the choice of networking as a sub theme to the programme. Networking is seen as contributing to the quality of life in the area by putting different groups and individuals in touch with one another over dispersed communities to share experiences and good practice. Networking enabled by the Rural Innovation Strategy can be seen at several levels.

Level 1: National networking

It will be the responsibility of the STEERING GROUP to ensure that the outputs of Rural Innovation Strategy is communicated to relevant partners. Sharing ideas and undertaking joint comparative work is core to this work. The STEERING GROUP will use programme monitoring of all the projects in the area to network information, ideas and results.

Level 2: Regional networking

It will also be the responsibility of the STEERING GROUP and its projects to undertake networking at the national level. The Rural Innovation Strategy will network with other rural development agencies and policy makers in sharing lessons and disseminating the results of its work. Individual projects will also be responsible for networking with interested parties within their chosen project area. For example, projects dealing with issues relating to young people will network with organisations with a focus on the needs of young people in rural areas in sharing good practice and disseminating the results of projects. Networking here will also include dissemination work at Regional level through the East of England Rural Affairs Forum and the Six Counties Rural Affairs Network.

Level 3: Local networking

The local focus of the work of the Rural Innovation Strategy will provide opportunities to network with a whole range of local agencies working in the area, for example, local authorities, voluntary and community groups and the like. Local networking will also involve individuals talking to one another and projects identified that underpin networking, such as forums will be required to network as a part of their work and to assist networking in what they produce (for example, directories, results of research).

The focus of networking at all levels will be to share good practice and models of working, stimulate replication of projects in other areas, influence policy makers and inform rural development activities.

7. Transferring good practice through dissemination

The work undertaken through the Rural Innovation Strategy will be fully evaluated from the outset. On going evaluation in this way will develop models of good practice. This modelling of both the generic issues and the specific case studies will provide information that is easily transferable. The evaluation model is comprehensive and has been previously tested out in ADAPT work within the Hertfordshire.

- Modelling
- Case studies

- Comprehensive evaluation framework used by the Strategy Management Group in overall programme evaluation work.
- Creates comparative data
- Dissemination and mainstreaming strategies will enable project results to be widely accessible through web sites, seminars, national conferences, networking events.
- Identification of key project staff for mentoring
- Influencing policy makers in adopting results and devising new policies. (See evaluation framework level 4)

In addition, applications will be expected to include provisions for countywide and regional dissemination of results. This could take the form of the allocation of resources with a project budget to enable to the project leader to attend seminars / conferences to give presentations on the project outcomes.

8. Proposed project selection criteria

The principle in project selection is to allow as much local autonomy as possible.

Projects will be selected on the basis of their “fit” with the strategy as set out above and will be selected at meetings of a selection panel with delegated responsibility from the main Rural Forum membership. Project applicants will need to be submitted on an EEDA Initial Application Form. The Steering Group will offer approval letters and provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants. The Strategy Management Group will offer recommendations on specific applications and will support the application process.

More specific selection criteria will include details of:

- Contribution to Rural Innovation Strategy objectives
- Beneficiary numbers and type
- Location
- Size and range of organisations in the partnership
- Targets
- Fit with strategy in terms of type of activities proposed
- Financial viability of applicant
- Proposed dissemination and marketing work
- Details of formative and summative evaluation arrangements
- Replicability

In the case of Year One (2003-2004), applicants will be made in March 2003 with the deadline for the submission of applications being **1st May 2003**. In future years, the call for applications will be a made in September and the deadline for submissions will be 1st December.

9. Contents of Applications

The Strategy Management Group will advise applications

Applications should include the following information:

1. Information on how the project fits with the Herts Rural Forum’s Agenda for Action and the Rural Innovation Strategy.

2. Skills and experience of project team
3. Timetable for project
4. Detailed budget
5. Detailed project programme
6. Anticipated outputs
7. Proposals for dissemination / publicity
8. Assessment as to whether other sources of funding have been considered.
9. Percentage of project funding being sought and details of any match funding.

10. Communications and Publicity Strategy

The STEERING GROUP will agree a strategy for communicating the programme to local people, potential beneficiaries and applicants and the wider community. The communications strategy will include the following areas:

- Marketing arrangements
- Dissemination
- Use of logos on all literature
- Production of materials such as leaflets
- Ensuring equality of opportunity

Communications will be on official letterheads with an approved logo, and the Press Offices of partners will support this work. The strategy will also identify the range of media to be used and this will include press work, local TV work, mail shots, seminars, open evenings and newsletters, and use of the Internet. At all stages the communications strategy will aim to inform a wide audience, gather intelligence, provide ongoing consultation, and be used to inform ongoing evaluation.

The communications strategy will also aim to encourage those wishing to make applications for project funding. In particular, this will focus on informing potential applicants of the new funding regime and assessing their current work for viability and additionality within the Rural Innovation Strategy programme. Calls for projects will be announced through press releases, seminars and advertisements, as well as through on-the-ground work with those having local knowledge.

11. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

Monitoring of the projects and the programme as a whole will take place quarterly. Projects must supply financial and activity reports against their agreed targets. Monitoring will also contribute to the ongoing evaluation of the programme. Evaluation activity will use the model below to source information upon which the reports are based.

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| Level 1 | Evaluation of Events and Opportunities for Local People |
| - | evaluation sheets of usefulness/effectiveness of events |
| - | skills acquired/useful information gained as a result of events |
| - | evaluation of different methods of training |
| | e.g. of source information – evaluation sheets, tests, NVQ portfolio's |
|
Level 2 |
Evaluation of the Impact on Individuals and organisations |
| - | change in attitude towards learning/training |
| - | effectiveness of transfer of learning into the workplace |

- effectiveness of the different methods or combination of methods
e.g. of source information - NVQ portfolio's, happy sheets, questionnaires on attitude towards training/learning, learning plans, tutors' diaries

Level 3 Evaluation of the Impact of Projects

- changes in attitudes towards business
- adoption of new practices and skills (especially IT)
e.g. of source information - NVQ portfolio's, evaluation sheets on workshops, tutors' diaries, business plans

Level 4 Evaluation of the Impact on Policy

- evaluation of the partnership
- evaluation of the policy impact of the project (including impact on the local economy and environment)
- lessons learned for dissemination
- lessons learned for each partner's organisation
- external/internal audit

Within this framework the following methods will be used to gather source information. Quantitative evaluation against targeted outcomes. Qualitative methods will include the use of beneficiary focus groups, face-to-face interviews and telephone interviews with beneficiaries based on previously agreed questions, evaluation discussions amongst partner organisations.

The above model sets out the different types of level of evaluation and the sources of information that can provide this information. Evaluation points will be at the end of each year. Formative evaluation of this find will also be used to monitor the performance and implementation of the programme. The Rural Innovation Strategy will evaluate against objectives using base line data agreed at the application stage (see above). This model will be adopted consistently for evaluation of all projects and for the STEERING GROUP partnership.

Procedures

Projects must undertake monitoring on a quarterly basis and produce an activity report covering the following areas:

- Achievement towards agreed targets
- Examples of project work
- Lessons learnt
- Good practice
- Innovation

This monitoring will contribute to evaluation as well as assess implementation of the programme against targets.

Financial monitoring

Projects will need to provide quarterly financial monitoring information along with the activity report. This will be used to assess claims for funding.

12. Process of Annual Review / Update of the Strategy

This Section provides the details relating to the process of the Annual Review and Update of the Rural Innovation Strategy.

Initially this Strategy is to cover the financial year 2003 / 2004. However it will be used as the base document to update as part of the process of securing further funding during the financial years 2004 / 2005 and 2005 / 2006.

Wide ownership is one of the cornerstones of the Strategy. The process of Annual Review will involve consultation with many organisations in the both the county and the region with an interest in rural issues. This consultation will include County Council, District Council and Parish Council contacts, other statutory agencies such as the Police, Primary Care Trusts, Colleges, as well as the full range of voluntary organisations involved in enhancing the well being of the rural community. All organisations will be surveyed for their opinion as part of the evaluation of the project, on such issues as the success and impact to date and the opportunities available in the future.

This information will be collated to gauge the success of the project and will be reported to the Steering Group. The Steering Group will organise an Annual Review meeting, which will be held in November / December each year. This Review meeting will have two objectives, to highlight the project work undertaken during that financial year and to enable discussion between the range of interested rural partners on the content of the Strategy for the next financial year.

The Steering Group will consider the views received through the survey and annual meeting and will from these prepare the updated Strategy, which will be circulated in early January each year to all on the database for comment. At the end of January each year the updated Strategy will be forwarded to the East of England Development Agency as part of the application for on-going funding.

13. Financial plan Year 2003-2004

Item	Revenue	Capital	Total
Programme management	£9,000	£1,511	£10,511
Herts Rural Forum conference, stakeholder events and display graphics	£3,000	£1500	£4,500
Market Links Herts (Rural Tourism)	£26,250	£15,000	£41250
Market Links Herts (Local Produce)	£26,250	£12,639	£38,889
Improving Service Delivery Project	£13,500	£1,500	£15,000
Rural Economy Assessment		£15,000	£15,000
Rural Innovation Grant Fund	£12,000	£3,000	£15,000
EEDA rural programme budget total	£90,000	£50,150	£140,150

Appendix 1 Project Programme 2003-2004

Rural Strand: Rural Economy
PROJECT TITLE: MARKET LINK HERTS (LOCAL PRODUCE)
<p>Summary: This initiative will build upon existing good practice in directories and websites that brands Herts produce (e.g. 'Grown in Herts' and 'Chilterns Guide'), and help to market Hertfordshire produce locally, regionally & nationally. The project focuses on supply and demand issues by aiming to increase the numbers of producers as well as increase awareness of their produce amongst potential customers both locally and further afield.</p>
<p>Key Activities:</p> <p>The project will assist farmers and growers to develop local distinctiveness and competitiveness. In turn this will help to tap into Food Processing and Marketing Grants from the ERDP and in undertaking joint market research in order to identify and supply specifically identified markets. However, local produce is recognised as going beyond food and can include crafts, and pilot work to promote & enhance the market for products from sustainably managed woodland, particularly in the Chilterns areas.</p> <p>The projects will also aim to bring together groups of producers to work together for mutual benefit. Developing such networks would include carrying out research to identify suitable markets for selling local produce/goods, developing joint marketing and branding activities, establishing common training requirements or working together to promote diversification.</p> <p>Activities will also include developing and supporting farmers markets, community-based food growing initiatives such as food growing & allotment initiatives, and the marketing & promotion of venison & other game products.</p> <p>An extension of this idea could involve a "road show" of local producers visiting villages and using village halls/other community facilities (playing fields/recreational areas) to set up the market. This has the added benefit of developing access to locally produced food and overcoming some of the difficulties of transport and cost. A "clustered villages" approach may be adopted where community/village size is limited. This approach may serve to increase people's involvement in their community/village life, reduce the barriers involved in reaching a town/parking/finding a bus/getting into town etc.</p>
<p>Outputs:</p> <p>The Projects will have both community and local development benefits. Produce will be sold in local market towns by tapping into existing retail outlets. This could also link into selling through local tourist sites and encouragement of doorstep delivery.</p> <p>The project also has wider development potential. It will aim to enable farmers and growers in Hertfordshire to access the large markets for specialist and locally grown produce. These markets are centred in the towns of the County and in the metropolitan area of London. Many local produce projects in this strategy are</p>

informed by recognising the potential of being situated in a rural area on the periphery of London. Bringing farmers directly to their customer helps to increase the prices farmers can attract and provides customers with a broader range of fresh and locally processed produce.

Example outputs:

- Herts Food Days - Food events to market local produce to local customers.
- Network meeting to spread models of good practice to stimulate more producers.
- Increase in number of farmers markets.
- Increase in take up of allotments
- Increase in number of products from woodland

Lead organisations: EHDC (AGRE) / Herts County Council

Partners: CDAH, Dacorum CVS, Countryside Management Service, Chilterns Conservation Board, Herts Federation of Womens Institutes

Potential **private sector partners** may include BigBarn.com and Tastes of Anglia.

Strategic links:

With regard to the RES, the project compliments the following policies:

Regeneration Plus:

- *Attract new businesses and help existing businesses grow;*
- *Encourage businesses to engage with and meet the needs of the local communities.*

This project contributes towards EEDA's Rural Renaissance Programme, specifically:

Encouraging Sustainable Growth of the Rural Economy

- *Supporting and developing competitive rural business and tourism activity*
- *Supporting rural research*
- *Addressing the narrow economic base of rural areas through diversification and enterprise development.*

:

Rural Strand: Recreation and Tourism

PROJECT TITLE: MARKET LINKS HERTS (TOURISM)

Summary:

This project will focus on increasing the number of tourists to the Market Towns by enhancing their heritage assets and appeal, and also promoting local distinctiveness. It will encourage more visitors to the market towns and support other initiatives to stimulate demand for local produce. Niche branding of local towns as leisure shopping destinations (eg Sawbridgeworth and couture, Hertford and antiques) and for tourism through joint working to promote market towns in the Hertfordshire will also form a part of the project.

Hertfordshire is close to London but has not traditionally been recognised as a leisure visitor destination. Projects in this strand will aim to increase the awareness of tourists to London and Cambridge and residents of London, of the benefits of a short restful rural break close to home.

Projects will tie into other work to market local accommodation in rural areas, Action for Market Towns and countryside agency initiatives. Projects can also tie into the work of town centre management organisations.

Key Activities:

A key output will be the development of Walk Maps linking the market town with its rural hinterland – a package of leaflets distributed through an appropriate network. A website containing similar information will also be developed.

For example, a part of the project will be based on Tring and can link with the work of the Chilterns AONB, the Market Town Initiative and also draw upon support from SEEDA. The aim being to promote the rural economy of Tring and the surrounding villages through the active promotion of the tourist attractions within that area. In addition to the attractions that have national organisation support, i.e. Ashridge (National Trust), Tring Reservoirs (British Waterways), The Walter Rothschild Zoological Museum (Natural History Museum), there are a number of smaller attractions that do not have the marketing resources to properly promote themselves. In addition there are a number of walk leaflets within the area that are individually promoted and the benefits of joint promotion and packaging need to be explored.

There is presently work being undertaken by Dacorum CVS to map current tourist and transport provision in Tring. A total of 30 organisations have responded, with a significant number highlighting the need for greater working together. The project would host a twice annual Forum and would look to work across the County and Regional boundary to provide a co-ordinated package.

The project would look to link the various tourist attractions through joint promotion of the town and the surrounding area. The budget would enable this promotion to be distributed over a wide geographic area. Within the promotion, the publicity would look to draw in the Farmers Market and to link local produce into sales opportunities within the tourist sites.

Outputs: Example outputs

- Journey Maps linking the market town with its rural hinterland and or a package of leaflets distributed through an appropriate network.
- Number of marketing initiatives
- Number of events
- Infrastructure for tourism activities (cycle parks)

Lead organisation: EHDC, Dacorum CVS

Partners: CDAH, CMS, Chilterns AONB, Herts County Council, District Councils.

Strategic links:

With regard to the RES, the project compliments the following policies:

Regeneration Plus:

- *Attract new businesses and help existing businesses grow;*
- *Encourage businesses to engage with and meet the needs of the local communities.*

Under this theme, the EEDA Corporate Plan includes the following activity:

Activity: rural diversification; to assist creation of a forward looking and competitive farming industry and rural economy.

This project contributes towards EEDA's Rural Renaissance Programme, specifically:

Encouraging Sustainable Growth of the Rural Economy

- *Supporting and developing competitive rural business and tourism activity*
- *Supporting rural research*
- *Addressing the narrow economic base of rural areas through diversification and enterprise development.*

:

Rural Strand: Rural Economy
PROJECT TITLE: RURAL ECONOMY STUDY
Summary: This project will comprise a consultancy contract to profile the current state of the rural economy through desk-based assessment, survey and casestudies.
Outputs: The study will result in a report profiling the rural economy in Hertfordshire, across all sectors and include recommendations for further action and research.
Lead organisation: HCC
Potential partners: Herts Economic Officers Officers Group, Business Link.
<p>Strategic links:</p> <p>This project contributes towards EEDA's Rural Renaissance Programme, specifically:</p> <p><i>Encouraging Sustainable Growth of the Rural Economy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Supporting and developing competitive rural business and tourism activity</i> - <i>Supporting rural research</i> - <i>Addressing the narrow economic base of rural areas through diversification and enterprise development.</i> <p>:</p>

Rural Strand: Access to Services

PROJECT TITLE: IMPROVING RURAL SERVICE DELIVERY

Summary:

A three-year project to deliver an integrated advice services to six village locations within Dacorum. This would include CAB advice sessions, supplemented on a rota basis with other agencies from the voluntary sector. In parallel (as a comparison), a dedicated telephone line will be installed within the CAB and promoted in rural locations as a rural CAB helpline.

The two modes of service delivery will be evaluated and the lessons learnt will be disseminated throughout the county.

Key Activities:

The project has two distinct parts, an a CAB outreach advice service delivered in a village setting and a dedicated CAB telephone advice line for use by residents living in rural parts of the Borough. The project will compare the two methods of service delivery and disseminate the recommendations to other service providers throughout the county.

The villages within the project will be Bovington, Flamstead, Kings Langley, Little Gaddesden, Markyate and Long Marston. The venue for the advice surgery, subject to availability will be the Village Hall. Each village will receive two outreach surgeries per month of two hour per session. In addition to CAB advice, each village will receive access to advice from Dacorum CVS and other agencies on a once a month basis, examples of agencies to be approached; Age Concern Dacorum, Dacorum Volunteer Bureau, Druglink, Mind in Dacorum.

The project will work closely with Dacorum Borough Council Housing Department to maximise benefit take up within sheltered housing sites in the rural areas. The project will also work closely with the mobile Library Service, Job Centre Plus, HCC's Money Advice Unit and other agencies to maximise opportunities for joint collaboration.

The telephone advice line will be based within the Dacorum District CAB office in Berkhamsted one day per week.

The main budget item for the project will procure 18 hours per week officer time with Dacorum District CAB, though there will also be other expenses in terms of a laptop computer, recruitment, publicity / marketing, installation of a telephone line, administration, evaluation and dissemination.

Outputs:

Annual output – 200 clients seen in Village Hall settings
(CAB) 400 clients supported through telephone help line
Total number of enquiries - 800
Support benefit take up - £39,000

Annual Output – 12 village groups supported with advice on funding,
(others) governance and networking opportunities
15 volunteers recruited

30 clients supported by other agencies

Lead organisation: Dacorum District CAB

Partners: Dacorum CVS, Herts County Council plus other partners through negotiation, for example Job Centre Plus, HCC's Money Advice Unit and Dacorum Borough Council.

Strategic links:

With regard to the RES, the project compliments the following policies:

Regeneration Plus:

EEDA Corporate Plan - Activity 17: Building capacity in the community, private and voluntary sectors;

This project contributes towards EEDA's **Rural Renaissance Programme**, specifically:

Developing sustainable and vibrant rural communities:

- *Improving rural infrastructure;*
 - *Improving access to services in strategic localities (e.g. supporting skills and learning, transport and affordable housing initiatives, business support, service resourcing);*
 - *Supporting needs of minority groups in rural areas;*
- Creating Rural Delivery Structures*
- *Encouraging capacity building and community development.*

With regards to the **Hertfordshire Prosperity Forum – An Economic Development Strategy for Hertfordshire 2000 – 2005 – Section 4 – Promoting Social Inclusion**

“ Many of the effects of exclusion are linked. For example, health is related to educational achievement, which relates to access to facilities and services. Minimising exclusion of the most marginal groups is not only socially desirable, but also (in an area of virtually full employment) economically imperative.”

Rural Strand: All
PROJECT TITLE: RURAL INNOVATION FUND
<p>Summary:</p> <p>This grant fund will be open to applications from organisations wishing to undertake a significant and innovative project in rural Hertfordshire.</p> <p>Projects will be appraised by the HRF's Strategy Management Group against established criteria and the aims of the Rural Innovation Strategy. Final approval will be given by the HRF's Steering Group.</p> <p>It is envisaged that the fund will sponsor a single significant project annually.</p>
<p>Key Activities:</p> <p>To be decided on an individual project basis.</p>
<p>Outputs:</p> <p>To be decided on an individual project basis.</p>
<p>Lead organisation: Hertfordshire County Council.</p> <p>Partners: HRF Strategy Management Group</p>
<p>Strategic links:</p> <p>Application submitted to this fund will be expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accord with the themes in the HRF's Agenda for Action 2001-2005 • meet the priorities of EEDA's Rural Renaissance Programme and the • fit within the strategic aims of the Regional Economic Strategy.

Appendix 2 Potential Projects 2004-2006

Strand 1: Traffic & Transport
Description of the Project
Research work to understand rural travel patterns.
Investigate rural employment options to minimise work-related travel
Scooter hire/loan to help young people get to their jobs
Research into understanding / overcoming barriers into the use of public transport, walking & cycling
Strand 2: Rural Economy
Description of the Project
Network for generating new business ideas This project encourages local business people to network in order to stimulate new business ideas. Encouraging business people to hold idea generation sessions themselves, particularly farmers and rural business people. These networks would also have information on market needs and best practice presented to them by advisory agencies. An example of how this network could work is in the need to provide more affordable bed spaces for tourists in the Hertfordshire. Encouraging farmers and rural businesses to diversify into B&B could meet this market need and provide another income stream to the business.

<p>Training Development Programme</p> <p>Research by the AGRE partnership² illustrated that women involved in agricultural businesses often lead or initiate business diversification projects; particularly those tapping into the tourism market such as providing accommodation. The research also indicated that there are gaps in skills that are a barrier to business success, such as a lack of business management skills. This project aims to test and evaluate new ways of delivering development to women in rural businesses to support new business ideas and encourage more women to take up learning opportunities.</p>
<p>Job skills training</p> <p>This project will target the economically inactive who are restricted from working because of child-care pressures, age or gender discrimination or young people who have left the job market. It could support access to learning services and help those in relatively isolated communities to undertake open and distance learning. The project would also be an important resource for returners to work, and those who are employed seasonally in agriculture.</p>
<p>Diversification advice</p> <p>Support to enable appropriate & sustainable diversification – advice on grants + sound commercial practice</p>
<p>Renewable energy</p> <p>Pilot work to encourage community take-up of renewable energy schemes</p>
<p>Business support service</p> <p>Contribute to the development of the Herts Rural Hub (Waymark Herts) to provide a service to wider rural businesses/</p>

<p>Strand 3: Biodiversity & Landscape</p>
<p>Description of the Project</p>
<p>Flytipping</p> <p>Co-ordination of activities to address the issue of flytipping - work with police & landowners.</p>

Strand 4: Needs of Young People

Description of the Project

Young people's drop in centre
Consultation with young people has demonstrated the need for more creative provision. Drop in centres help to provide this and allow access to a wider range of services particularly through ICT. This project helps to break down barriers between different age groups and provide facilities for other community groups during the school day. This project would make use of village halls during hours, need to have a good resource of materials, and offer supervision that was appropriate to need the needs of young people.

The potential will be explored to combine these activities with facilities for the elderly – thereby bringing different elements of the community together.

The potential to specifically trial existing facilities (e.g. Rolling Zone / Connexions Bus) in order to develop new client groups.

Volunteer Training
Training to help village groups have volunteers/staff who specialise in work with young people

Mobile facilities for young people.
Mobile skate ramps, cybercafé, mobile cinema/DVD to tour villages.

Strand 5: Housing

Description of the Project

No projects are proposed for this strand at present.

Strand 8: Community Identity / Involvement

Description of the Project

Developing community capacity and social capital

Many residents in the area have higher paid jobs and work in technical and managerial occupations.³ Encouraging these people to use their skills in supporting the organisation of community action and in managing projects for community benefit.

Timebank Volunteering – a LETS type scheme, built on hours of time put into a project which benefits the community

Community capacity building

This project aims to deliver training in order to help community groups in the rural area to encourage them to manage better their organisations and to help them access funding, volunteers and identify and meet objectives. The training also aims to support the development of new community groups. For example, training can also support current provision through befriending initiatives and carer support, mentoring and workshops. Statistical evidence from Dacorum CVS and the Community Development Agency in Hertfordshire's "Priority 4 Programme" illustrates the need for capacity building in the context of rural communities. This is becoming more apparent as the emerging Community Strategic Partnerships come on board. Training will also focus on the needs of young and elderly people who wish to act as volunteers in building their confidence, esteem and pride in their community.

Community Annual of Good Practice (suggested title Community Voice)

Volunteer training

Training to help village groups have volunteers/staff who specialise in work with young people

Village clusters

Research to examine relationship and inter-dependence of villages, hamlets & surrounding areas together.

Strand 9: Recreation / Tourism**Description of the Project****Camping & Caravanning**

Research into the potential to increase number of pitches and increase promotion

Strand 10: Needs of Elderly & Disabled People**Description of the Project**

No specific projects are identified under this strand, however it is considered that many of the issues listed below (identified through the consultation exercise) can be addressed effectively by projects described elsewhere in this programme.

- Events which bring together all sections of the community
- Dedicated transport, or more carefully tailored public transport
- Mobile shops, banks & other services
- ITC & other classes for older people in village halls

Appendix 3 - Proposed Strategy Action Plan 2003-2006

Year	Quarters in the year			
	Quarter 1 April – June	Quarter 2 July – September	Quarter 3 September – December	Quarter 4 January – March
2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STEERING GROUP meets to agree promotion of strategy. • Call for projects through marketing and advertising. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential applicants visited to support their applications and advise on project objectives. • STEERING GROUP sits to consider first batch of applications and make approvals. Reports from Strategy Management Group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First projects underway. • Financial management and activity reporting systems in place for first project monitoring and evaluation point. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STEERING GROUP sits to consider first quarter financial and monitoring report from programme manager. • Formative evaluation point against agreed objectives. Reports from Strategy Management Group. • Second quarter's financial and activity report. • Approval of bid to EEDA for funding for 2004-2005
2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STEERING GROUP sits to consider second call for project applications, and second quarter's financial and activity report. • First year's evaluation report used as basis for reviewing and detailing second year's activity. • Call for projects based on evaluation report and revised objectives. • Financial statement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STEERING GROUP sits to consider the first quarter's financial and activity monitoring report. • Dissemination event of results of first year of operation. • Second set of projects underway. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking event between first set and second set of projects to aid dissemination of good practice and to support project set up. • STEERING GROUP sits to consider second quarter's financial and activity monitoring report. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STEERING GROUP sits to consider third quarter's financial and activity report. • Second year's formative evaluation exercise. Reports from TASK GROUP. • Formal report on progress to EEDA and approval of bid for funding for 2006-2006.

	Quarter 1 April – June	Quarter 2 July – September	Quarter 3 September – December	Quarter 4 January – March
2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dissemination event to policy makers at all levels on lessons learnt so far. STEERING GROUP sits to consider evaluation report and agree detailed plan for the 2005. Fourth quarter's financial and activity report considered. Some of the first set of projects will be drawing to a close at this stage. Financial statement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dissemination and mainstreaming event by those projects that have completed. Third call for projects – road show. Strategy Management Group supporting. STEERING GROUP sits to consider financial and activity report. Strategy Management Group report. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STEERING GROUP sits to consider third set of projects and second quarter's financial and activity monitoring report. All first set of projects must be complete in preparation for mid point evaluation exercise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STEERING GROUP sits to consider third quarter's financial and activity report. Formal mid point formative evaluation plan for third year agreed. Reports from Strategy Management Group. Formal report of progress to EEDA and approval of bid for funding for 2005-2006.
2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STEERING GROUP sits to consider evaluation report and implications for strategy for remainder of programme. Fourth quarter's financial and activity monitoring report. Operational procedures reviewed. Strategy reviewed. Some of the second phase of projects will be ending at this stage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised strategic objectives disseminated through formal mid point evaluation report. Road show and dissemination event. First quarter financial and activity report. Summative evaluation plan agreed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STEERING GROUP sits to consider second quarter's financial and activity report. Strategy Management Group report. All projects from second phase must complete in order to inform evaluation exercise. Summative evaluation report produced to aid local, regional and national dissemination and networking. Policy impact dissemination event at local, regional, national. Modelling of good practice and guidance materials to aid mainstreaming at all levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STEERING GROUP sits to consider third quarter's financial and activity report. Formative evaluation plan agreed. Report from Strategy Management Group. Final report to EEDA. All projects from third round must be complete. STEERING GROUP sits to consider local mainstreaming actions in order to continue the rural development strategy. Key local agencies incorporated. Steering Group approve bid to EEDA for future funding.

Appendix 4

Assessment of the Strengths, Weaknesses and Potential of Hertfordshire's Rural Area

Economic

Strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hertfordshire has higher average earnings for the working population; average of £487 for Hertfordshire compared with £368 for Great Britain⁴. • More people in Hertfordshire work in higher skilled jobs than the average for England. • One of the highest economic growth rates of the six counties in the East of England Region. Hertfordshire's Gross Value Added (GVA) stands at over 3.5% compared to just 2.75% for the East of England overall.⁵ • Tourism is a growing market accounting for £78.6million in 1998 in East Herts alone.⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Hertfordshire there is a strong rural economy with a relatively high percentage of small business activity in the rural area - 20% of all small firms employing less than 50 people and 24% of employment (excluding retail employment)⁷. However, most of these firms are in the service sector and mask a weak agricultural sector.⁸ • Herts employers are more likely to provide training than the regional average and 67% of people state they have received work related training in the last 12 months.⁹ • Proximity to the largest market in the UK (London), whose population has the highest disposable income and earnings¹⁰.
Weaknesses	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The agriculture is suffering and a combination of land use issues and the competing needs of residents and farm businesses are hampering diversification. • The lack of affordable housing has been exacerbated by insufficient development over the last decade. Coupled with significant inflation in the housing market the gap has widened between the 'haves' and 'have-nots'. • Within the Hertfordshire 15% of employers report difficulty in recruiting the skills they need. This compares with a 10% average for Hertfordshire and as little as 2% in the south of the County.¹¹ Equally 19% of Herts firms report that a lack of skilled labour is a limiting factor in increasing output.¹² • Lack of access to training opportunities and the information regarding this is a barrier to training for people in rural areas.¹³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High house prices, especially in the rural areas creates social pressures in villages by increasing the gap between the affluent and deprived.¹⁴ For example, the average price of a 3 bed semi in 1996 in the Hertfordshire was £78,875. By 1999 this had risen to £130,562. In 2000 the average price was £166,000, being a 24% increase in that year alone.¹⁵ • There are significant numbers of economically inactive people in the Hertfordshire. (Up to 25% of those of working age in East Herts¹⁶). That is those who are of working age but are not working or registered as unemployed or on benefits. These include early retirements but also include those excluded from both the benefits system and/or the labour market. This unemployment "Slack" can create a drag on GDP.¹⁷ • Inability of some local producers to access large urban markets locally. For example, in East Hertfordshire, out of 361 registered agricultural holdings in the District, 11 processed food for direct sale to the public.
Potential	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher than average earnings provide a potentially lucrative market for distinctive local produce, goods and services. • Potential to develop tourism in the area which is already a growing market, especially in the provision of affordable bed spaces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great potential to support the diversification of agriculture, particularly into food processing activities for both the Hertfordshire and London markets. • Potential to increase housing densities and amount of affordable housing.

Social

Strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relative prosperity of the area is seen in the higher standards of living enjoyed by residents. For example, the number of households with 2 cars in East Herts is 41%, and 33% in North Herts compared with 24% for England as a whole.¹⁸ • Good access by road and rail into London for services and employment, making Hertfordshire an attractive place to live whilst continuing to work in London. • A very active voluntary and community sector including the rural community council and Rural Action Community Groups such as the 22 rural transport action groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong presence of important industrial sectors providing key knowledge based jobs such as pharmaceuticals, construction and business services. • A rural business and farming community that reacts positively to training and development programmes in the face of very difficult trading conditions.¹⁹ • Very low unemployment in the Hertfordshire averaging at 1.1%.²⁰ • EEDA sees supporting communities and business through “Regeneration Plus” as key to social inclusion²¹
Weaknesses	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are pockets of hidden exclusion in the relative prosperity of the County particularly in rural areas where families do not have access to transport and where there is a lack of public transport infrastructure. • Increased car use has major implications for village services. Those who rely on village services are generally those without a car (22% of households)²² and this is primarily the young and the elderly. This can, as revealed by the St Paul’s Warden Community Project²³, result in elderly people often feeling isolated and vulnerable. • Changes in car use present problems for village services, especially retailers. For example, many new village dwellers (who are generally better off car owners, and in a position to take advantage of higher house prices in villages) take their custom to local larger centres leaving a smaller market for village based services. This has contributed to reductions in village services over the last 20 years. In 1978 56% of villages in Hertfordshire had a general store, but this declined rapidly to 30% by 1998. Mobile general shop services have disappeared completely in the same period.²⁴ In East Hertfordshire, which is typical of the area, 17% of those over 70 live in the villages.²⁵ In North Hertfordshire research shows that the elderly are concerned about the loss of services in the villages, such as the shop and post office. Equally, the number of households in the area with an elderly person in it is higher than the national average at 34%. This rises to 43% in some parts of the District.²⁶ • The high levels of journeys and the complex settlement pattern means that it is difficult to maintain a commercially viable passenger transport that adequately caters for essentially local journeys.²⁷ • Poor public transport infrastructure results in those without access to a car experiencing major difficulties in accessing essential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population and mobility factors have changed the function of villages from employment service centres to dormitory/residential functions³⁰ reducing their social and physical diversity. (However, increased share of employment in rural areas has compensated for this to some extent). This is shown in the decline of “service villages” (see footnote 9) particularly in the Hertfordshire (Northern and eastern Hertfordshire). • Some villages have high percentages of young people that have limited access to services e.g. 25% of Flamstead village is under 18³¹ • Lack of planned recreational activities within villages and limited public transport to larger settlements, results in poor and inadequate services for young people living in rural areas. ‘Concerning North Herts – A Review of Social Need’³² revealed that nearly 20 villages in North Herts did not have a youth club. It also revealed that there was a clear need for more out door recreational activities in rural areas. • The attitudes of young people, and their parents, towards public/community transport needs, to be changed dramatically. Public transport is not “cool” for young people or flexible enough. • High house prices drive young people and those on low incomes out of the villages, as they cannot afford rents or mortgages. • The Hertfordshire as a peri-urban area is characterised by a complex settlement pattern resulting in 4 million journeys per day (35% higher than the shire average and growing at 2% per year) mainly for local trips as no settlement is far from a town.³³ • Lack of motivation and commitment means that it is hard to get volunteers involved in community work, plus many people are professional and do not have the time.

<p>services such as retail services, healthcare (especially GPs and hospitals)²⁸ and leaves the elderly feeling isolated.²⁹</p>	<p>professional and do not have the time.</p>
<p>Potential</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of newcomers and commuters into the local area through community development work. • Potential for new skills development both for enhancing community organisations and businesses. • Potential to increase services for young people, the unemployed and the elderly. • Increase in access to services information for all residents in the area. • Community transport schemes need to be maintained and enhanced in order to ensure that those without access to transport are included. • Increase young people's access to village -based activities and increase the role of parents in helping young people to access towns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The higher than average numbers in higher skilled work provides potential to use their skills in organising and contributing to community projects. • Increase in the range of social services such as childcare. • Increase in the number of village shops and pubs providing local services. • Potential to reduce car journeys by increasing village services and reducing the need to travel e.g. through IT based provision and car sharing initiatives. • Avoiding talking shops and demonstrating real action, with short term as well as long term benefits to the community, can help to recruit volunteers to community projects.

Environmental

Strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Hertfordshire is an attractive area with large areas of metropolitan green belt with successful development control measures since the war preserving much of the built and natural heritage. The good environment and proximity to London make the area attractive to many would be commuters. This is demonstrated by the increase in “residential and service villages” or dormitory villages from 59 in the county in 1978 to 88 in 1999.³⁴ There are positive planning policies towards rural development and employment provision in rural areas.³⁵ This makes for good use of the environment as a resource, especially for tourism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong and growing tourism and leisure market engendered by the outstanding environmental features so close to London, and proximity to other tourist destinations such as Cambridge. For example, in East Herts spend by visitors increased by over £20million between 1996 and 1998³⁶. A lack of budget accommodation for visitors provides a potential market for farm-based bed and breakfast development³⁷. The settlement pattern of the area is typical of the peri –urban with no settlement more than 5 miles from the nearest town with no main centre, the County has many fairly evenly spread sub centres near to the target area.
Weaknesses	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There has been rapid population expansion in Hertfordshire in the post war period. In 1951 the population of the county stood at under half a million, in 1991 this had nearly doubled to just under one million, and today is about 1 million people.³⁸ The rise in population has engendered significant land use pressures particularly for housing and employment where land is not readily available for these purposes.³⁹ Extensive car use in the area creates environmental problems for other users of the highway as well as creating noise and pollution e.g. Buntingford Community Planning Pilot⁴⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Along with land use pressures there is significant environmental pressures on villages in the Hertfordshire in terms of their habitat, built heritage and landscape. These villages are vulnerable to pressures that can upset the environmental balance of habitat, built heritage and landscape that can affect the quality of life for people in these settlements.⁴¹ There is a need to conserve natural resources such as water and ensure that more extensive forms of farming and rural development take precedence over intensive farming encouraged by the old crop subsidy method of CAP.⁴²
Potential	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential to make better use of existing land through the use of brown field sites and the reclamation of wasteland. Increase in community identity through built and natural heritage projects and conservation. Increase awareness of local heritage to improve environment and appeal to tourists and visitors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The increased adoption of environmental management software by farmers and growers in managing inputs and waste. Increase in tourism through the ongoing maintenance and enhancement of the area.

Appendix 5 - Management of the Programme – Roles and Responsibilities

Herts Rural Forum Steering Group

The purpose of the Steering Group will be to:

1. Oversee the implementation of the Rural Innovation Strategy.
2. Receive recommendations from the Strategy Management Group and agree approvals for project applications for funding using agreed criteria
3. Arbitrate in the event of disputes
4. Report to EEDA on the financial and activity progress of the strategy
5. Appoint the members of the Task Group

Steering Group – Membership	
Local	Regional
Herts County Council	East of England Development Agency
District Councils	Countryside Agency
Community Development Agency	Government Office for the East of England
Council for Voluntary Services	Sport England
Herts Prosperity Forum	National Farmers Union
Business Link	Health Sector (PCT)
Countryside Management Service	Learning & Skills Council
Nature Conservation Topic Group (chair)	
Rural Issues Group (chair)	
University of Hertfordshire	

Strategy Management Group

The Task Group shall be made up of a chairperson and 6 other members selected by the Steering Group and including the following:

- 1 x District Council Officer
- 1 x County Council Officer
- 2 x Voluntary Sector Officers

At each meeting a minimum of 4 members of the group will be need for the meeting to be quorum. If needed a members of the SMG can nominate a substitute chosen from the Steering Group.

The Strategy Management Group will act to:

- Support potential applicants with information and guidance
- Assess applications for accuracy and seek clarification from applicants
- Screen applications
- Report on the fit of applications with the strategy
- Report supporting information to Steering Group for approval process

Wider Reference Group

The wider reference group will be made up of the whole membership of the Hertfordshire Rural Forum.

The reference group will meet twice per year to receive reports from the Steering Group on the progress of the Rural Innovation Strategy. The Group will also play a key role in the annual review of the Rural Innovation Strategy.

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- ³⁴ "**Residential Villages**", with high levels of out-commuting, medium or high proportions of white-collar residents and medium or high (but sometimes low) levels of local services. Their main purpose is to provide housing and local services for residents employed elsewhere. Some of them undoubtedly provide local services and possibly some employment for people living in smaller villages nearby.
- "**Service Villages**" generally have medium levels of out-commuting, medium or low proportions of white-collar workers, and medium or high levels of local services. They thus provide local services and some employment for their own residents as well as some residents from nearby village. They may also provide housing for people employed both locally and elsewhere. Taken from "Hertfordshire's Rural Communities 30 years on", Griffiths Environmental Planning, 2000
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