

The New Leader Approach

Northumberland Uplands



Northumberland Upwards

A Local Development Strategy

2008-2013

Coming Summer 2008: www.nuleader.eu

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Think Green – Keep it on the Screen!

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Foreword

The Northumberland Uplands Local Action Group is delighted to introduce our new Local Development Strategy, ***Northumberland Upwards***. This represents an exciting opportunity for the Northumberland Uplands and sets out the direction we need to take over the next five years to help our communities become stronger, and our economy to grow, providing prosperity for local people.

The Northumberland Uplands is a rich historic area with outstanding natural assets. The area plays a vital role in the achievement of sustainable rural development in the region. Local people know it is more important than ever that our resources are channelled into opportunities that will contribute towards a better quality of life for all. It is crucial to get the Local Development Strategy right, by focussing on expanding specific sectors through the New Leader approach, and ensuring that the skills within the area are developed and maintained for the benefit of future generations.

Northumberland Upwards is also important to the regional development framework, and the activities contained within it will make a notable contribution to the achievement of the aims set out in the *Regional Economic Strategy* and the *North East Implementation Plan*. Economic performance has a wide ranging impact on community development, conservation and enhancement of our inherited environment; and equality. The relationship is complex and the four elements (economic performance, community development, environmental enhancement and equality) are often seen as the supporting legs for sustainable economic development. A strong and sustainable economy cannot be achieved without building safe, healthy and inclusive communities, all partners must work together to ensure that the benefits of economic growth reach everyone.



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Director of Corporate Services
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On Behalf of
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Northumberland Uplands



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Figure 1. Northumberland Uplands New Leader approach boundary. Source: Ordnance Survey, 2008.

Introduction

The Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) is England's mechanism for delivering funds allocated to England from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the Exchequer. The aim of the RDPE in the North East is:

'To deliver targeted support to land based businesses and rural communities in line with defra's national strategy within the overall principles of sustainable development.'

The RDPE is specifically required to contribute to three national priorities, set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (defra):

- Making Agriculture and Forestry more Competitive and Sustainable (Axis 1)
- Enhancing the Environment and Countryside (Axis 2)
- Enhancing Opportunity in Rural Areas (Axis 3)

The New Leader approach (Axis 4) spans the three priorities. Further detail on the integration of the Axes is set out in Sections 5 and 7.

The Northumberland Uplands New Leader Local Development Strategy aims to provide a focus for the sustainable rural development of the Northumberland Uplands. The Local Development Strategy will provide direction for the activities that will be undertaken.

The Northumberland Uplands is a very remote and sparsely populated area in which cattle and sheep farming is the dominant business sector. The rich natural environment includes the Northumberland National Park, Kielder Forest and exceptionally clean rivers. This is overlain by a wealth of cultural heritage including the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site, Iron Age Hillforts in the Cheviots, fortified fifteenth to seventeenth century houses in the Border areas and impressive houses built by the benefactors of the industrialisation of the North East at places such as Craggside and Wallington.

The business community consists of many small businesses. In recent years new and existing businesses have grown in the tourism sector. Access to essential services such as training, education and health is difficult and costly. There is a real danger that the trickle-down effect of economic growth in the city region will not only pass by the people and businesses of the Northumberland

Uplands but also indirectly make their livelihoods more difficult for example by making rural housing less affordable.

Vision

Northumberland Upwards aims to facilitate the promotion of innovative thinking and the application of new solutions. We believe in joining-up decision making to benefit the economy, community and environment to reach those often left out in our most rural areas. Northumberland Upwards will build on opportunities and address key rural issues. The principal target is to further progress on promoting sustainable growth.

The definition of *sustainable growth* is economic growth that can be maintained within environmental limits, but also enhances environmental and social welfare. The growth should be achieved in a manner which avoids greater extremes in future economic cycles.

Stimulating Social and Economic Growth: Themes and Performance

The activities required to meet the overall Vision for this strategy have been divided into five themes, and progress against them will be assessed against a number of measurements, as determined by the North East Regional Implementation Plan (2007 – 2013).

Elements of these themes will have significant funding requirements. The New Leader approach will pump-prime initiatives that will work towards sustainable socio-economic development. To achieve this, often complimentary match funding will be required from sources beyond those available through the New Leader approach. Project funding should ideally be used as a vehicle to bring this investment into the area, supporting initiatives that meet the aims and objectives of this Local Development Strategy.

Micro-Enterprise Development

To encourage entrepreneurial activity in rural North East England both within and outside traditional land based industries with the objectives of:

- Increasing business start-ups
- Strengthening existing businesses
- Improving the sustainability of rural businesses
- Creating markets for rural business products and services
- Encouraging young people in business activity

Example outcomes:

- Increasing rural employment opportunities through entrepreneurial activity
- Promoting business start-up as an employment option for rural communities, especially for women and young people
- Supporting existing micro-businesses to promote growth and access to new markets through increased innovation and use of technologies
- Supporting an increase in business start-ups that develop and add value to agricultural and forestry products
- Supporting business people in developing better skills, including traditional land based skills, to strengthen their business and product offer
- Working with rural estates to help them increase and diversify growth, ensuring sympathetic historic and environmental development
- Facilitating better access to and take up of appropriate business support services
- Facilitating increased networking and collaboration of rural micro-enterprise
- Helping more micro enterprises profit from the sustained use of the region's environmental assets

Bioenergy

To increase the production and use of biomass and biofuels in the North East region with the objectives of:

- Developing the commercial user market for biofuels
- Developing the market for biomass products
- Developing the biomass supply chain infrastructure
- Contributing to a reduction in climate change

Example outcomes:

- Developing networks to promote an increased use of wood based bioenergy and to facilitate market growth in areas where fuel poverty can be addressed
- Promoting biomass and biofuels through producer groups, networks and shared infrastructure to increase the number of farmers and foresters diversifying
- Facilitating access to and increased uptake of technical advice services
- Improving the infrastructure to enable increased processing and distribution of biomass and biofuel products such as sawmills and wood pellet production
- Facilitating increased knowledge sharing and skills development in the bioenergy sector

Sustainable Communities

To support rural communities in tackling social disadvantage by creating the conditions for growth to sustain viable communities with the objective of:

- Creating the conditions for innovative rural service design
- Strengthening rural communities through promoting social cohesion and community engagement
- Improving quality of life and equality in rural areas
- Using environmental, cultural and historic heritage assets to enhance quality of life and economic opportunity for rural communities

Example outcomes:

- Facilitating increased access to key services and facilities in rural areas such as health and training
- Facilitating community action through access to relevant professional support
- Encouraging increased collaboration and networking between community groups
- Working with community groups to develop skills and create sustainable models of operation and delivery
- Supporting and developing the increased use of ICT for community, individual and small business benefit
- Supporting the creation and strengthening of social enterprises as deliverers of community services and increased economic activity
- Increased innovation in environmental protection and the use of natural resources for community benefit at Parish and Village Hall level

- Use of the Leader approach to help develop new models of collaborative service delivery in rural communities

Sustainable Farming and Forestry

To support the development of farming and forestry supply chain businesses in order to create a more effective farming and forestry sector with the objectives of:

- Increasing the competitiveness of farming and forestry industries through responsiveness to market signals and shifts in demand
- Creating a farming sector focused on the market, producing food and non-food crops in a more efficient way
- Greater collaboration and co-operation within supply chains
- Farm businesses accessing new markets and producing new added value products such as renewable energy products, non-food crops and high value food products
- Woodland managers and forestry supply chain businesses accessing new markets and developing business opportunities associated with woodland and quality forest products

Example outcomes:

- Enhanced rural business productivity
- Improved connections between producers and their markets
- Increased processing capacity for farm and forestry products, delivering improved local value added to commodity products
- Increased ability to respond to public demand for regional farm and forest products
- Improved revenue streams for primary producers and forest managers, supporting sustainable land management practices
- Improved local marketing
- Stimulate business enterprise/developing skills and learning

Tourism and Recreation

To support tourism and recreation as a driver for sustainable economic development in the North East with objectives of:

- Promoting tourism and recreation (including sport and leisure) as an opportunity for business start up and diversification
- Enhancing the contribution of rural areas to the tourism offer of the North East

- Improving the quality of the rural tourism offer in the North East
- Exploring innovative ways of using rural natural, cultural, geological and historic assets in a sustainable way

Example Outcomes:

- Facilitating increased cohesion between attractions and facilities to enhance the integration of NE tourism offer
- Increasing public access and understanding of countryside
- Improving quality of service and facilities in rural tourism businesses with a focus on small businesses
- To encourage more business start ups that represent high quality, innovative tourism and recreational opportunities
- To support activity based tourism that promotes increased sustainable use of natural assets
- To support the development of more products that enhance the rural tourism offer (food, crafts etc)
- To support the development of higher quality accommodation relevant to local needs and opportunities
- To encourage collaboration and networking between tourism businesses in areas such as joint purchasing, promotion and product development e.g. genealogy

Section 1

Appropriateness of the Partnership

“The line up and profiles of the Local Action Group members are very impressive. This is a strength of the Northumberland Uplands case.”

*Terry Carroll, Northern Rural Network Co-ordinator
Centre for Rural Economy, March 2008.*

The New Leader approach is an opportunity specifically designed for remote rural areas. The Northumberland Uplands Local Action Group (NULAG) aims to target, prioritise, and address a range of problems adversely affecting the quality of life for the people of the area. The ‘bottom-up’ approach of New Leader will allow a level of broad consultation on key issues, providing a deep engagement with the communities and businesses at the heart of the Northumberland Uplands, thereby ensuring that the matters that the people consider to be the most pressing are the ones prioritised.

Northumberland Uplands Local Action Group

NULAG has drawn its membership from targeted sectors, not only to ensure that there is a strong representation from the local people that can influence the success of the New Leader approach, but also to take steps to engage with those that had limited involvement with previous Leader activities in the area. NULAG has been recruited to provide:

- A good range of knowledge and experience across the New Leader themes
- Effective geographical representation across the Northumberland Uplands area
- A balance in favour of the local community, voluntary and private sectors
- A commitment to equal opportunities

A full list of NULAG members, together with their profiles, is set out in Appendix 1.

The principal functions of NULAG are to:

- Provide direction by setting the Local Development Strategy in April 2008 for delivering the New Leader approach in the Northumberland Uplands
- Be responsive to changing circumstances, opportunities and challenges to enable the NULAG to deliver its aims

- Be responsible for selecting projects suitable for financial and partner support
- Help build the capacity of rural communities, so that they can participate in the delivery of the Local Development Strategy
- Ensure that groups that have been historically under-represented through Leader (i.e. land based business, young people, and those socially excluded) are fully included
- Enable the provision of joined-up solutions at the local level
- Comply with European Union regulations, on the delivery of the Rural Development Programme for England

The NULAG will be expected to adhere to high standards of commercial confidentiality and of probity in public office. All members will be required to sign the Nolan Principles of Public Life (Appendix 4) and NULAG will aim to meet the Equality Standard for the provision of services by being committed to equal opportunities (Appendix 5) and action to ensure that its members and the people NULAG serve are not discriminated against on the basis of their:

- Age
- Disability
- Employment status
- Ethnic or national origins, race or colour
- Marital status
- Religious or political beliefs
- Responsibilities for children or dependents
- Gender/gender reassignment
- Sexual orientation
- Social and economic status
- Unrelated criminal convictions

Governance Structure

The success of the Northumberland Uplands New Leader approach depends on establishing a governance structure within the NULAG and by building on existing successful working relationships at the sub-regional level. The Northumberland Uplands New Leader approach will be structured as follows:



Figure 2. Diagram of the proposed bottom up pyramid governance structure for the Northumberland Uplands New Leader approach. This is subject to amendment following further guidance from One NorthEast in 2008.

The governance structure is headed by the NULAG, which sets the Local Development Strategy and overall direction to achieve the stated aims, and which takes all significant decisions. In addition, members of the NULAG will have key roles in raising the profile of the Northumberland Uplands New Leader approach, including reporting to and from key partners and locally organised community structures e.g. belonging community / parish partnerships / development trusts.

NULAG needs to be well connected with links to:

- Lead sectors
- The local community partnerships
- The key public, private and voluntary sector delivery bodies

NULAG has been established in a way which ensures that its members are not “pigeon holed” into specific areas for example dedicated knowledge of a single organisation or area or sector was not the reason for member appointments. The process was more rounded and has identified in NULAG members with interests and expertise in many of the key areas.

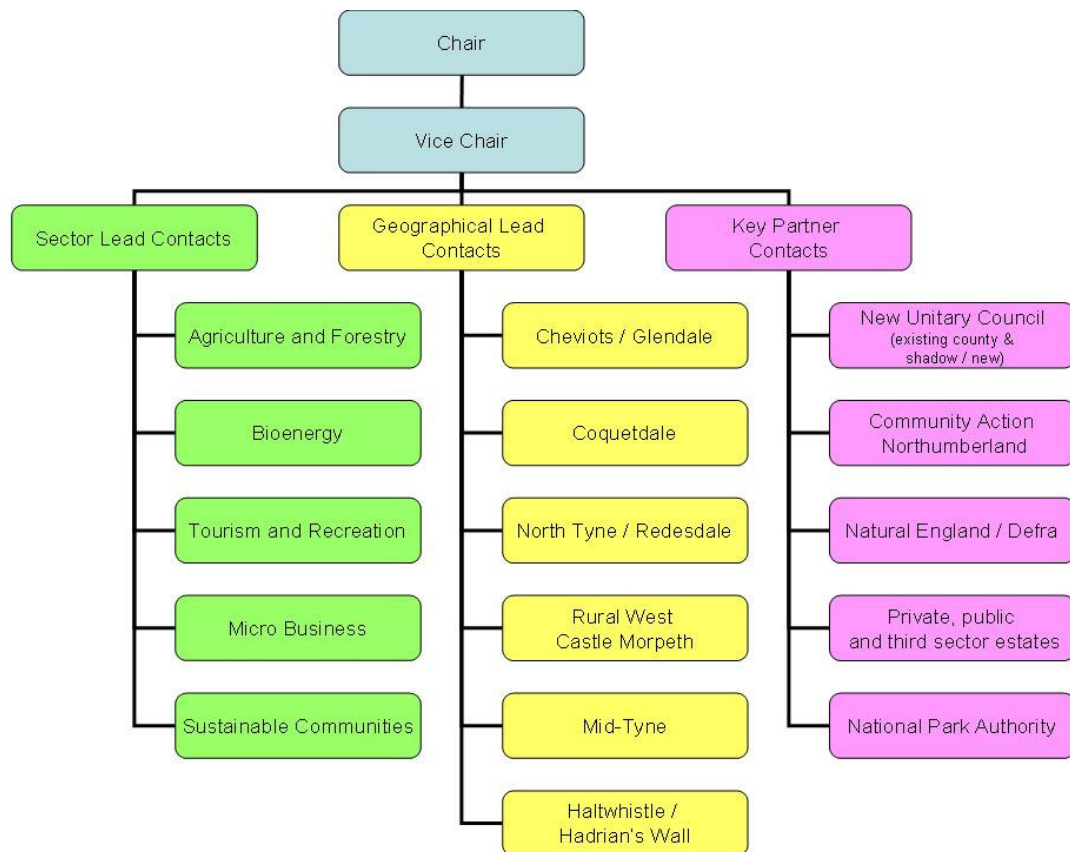


Figure 3. Detailed areas of balance and representation.

NULAG will elect its chair and two vice chairs at its first meeting following approval of the Local Development Strategy. NULAG will be invited to consider the option of appointing a young person to one of the vice-chair positions. The Chair will be elected for a period of two years in order to ensure that the responsibility is shared across the wider membership. Succession planning will be managed by establishing arrangements for the vice-chair to succeed the chair. All members of NULAG are expected to serve two-year terms with a maximum of three terms. This will enable members to move on at intervals whilst ensuring continuity of membership for NULAG. This mechanism will help maintain balanced and active membership throughout the life of NULAG. All members have been recruited in an open manner.

Accountable Body

In November 2007, One NorthEast asked Northumberland National Park Authority to continue with its Expression of Interest and develop a Local Development Strategy for the Northumberland Uplands. The Authority was pleased to do so but did not want to presume it would become the accountable body for NULAG without NULAG's agreement. NULAG asked that Northumberland

National Park Authority act as the accountable body. This decision will ensure that NULAG will be professionally supported. This was endorsed by public consultation in April 2008. The reasons for this decision include:

- Ideally placed geographically
- An existing structure and means of operating which works with the communities and businesses in and around the National Park, including the gateway communities
- The National Park Authority is not part of the restructuring of local government in Northumberland
- Experienced in addressing community and business needs in deep rural areas
- As an independent authority the National Park Authority is able, skilled and experienced in managing geographically based rural regeneration initiatives on behalf of One NorthEast, defra and Government Office North East

NULAG will act with flexibility and freedom: it will be at arms length from the accountable body and have its own constitution and articles of association For example, decisions about how best to administer small grants and how to maximise the impact of new working areas, like bioenergy, will be decided by the NULAG. All key decisions will be taken by NULAG.

Partner Support Group

The NULAG have asked to be supported by a strategic a **Partner Support Group**, which will assist, advise and guide the NULAG as required. The Partner Support Group is not a decision making body. It will be separate from the NULAG and will draw public sector expertise from the fields such as:

- Agricultural Land Management
- Business Support and Training
- Community Development / Regeneration
- Economic Development / Regeneration
- Finance / Grant Management
- Forestry Land Management
- Renewable Energy
- Tourism and Leisure

The Partnership Support Group can help the NULAG by analysing the performance, opportunities and challenges, which will affect delivery of the Local Development Strategy. The Partner Support Group will ensure strategic alignment with regional and sub-regional strategies. The Partnership Support Group will oversee to roll-out of the Local Development Strategy, monitor the achievement of performance targets, and update the priorities as targets are met. The membership and function of the Partnership Support Group will be determined by the NULAG. Key stakeholders who will be very useful contributors to the success of the Partnership Support Group and have pledged their support include Tynedale Council, The Ministry of Defence, Castle Morpeth Local Strategic Partnership, Forestry Commission, Northumberland College, ReAction and Business Link North East.

Integrated Local Delivery

Although the structure of the NULAG and the Partnership Support Group are important, the key delivery mechanism is the **integrated New Leader approach**, which will consist of networked individuals, organisations and staff representing a range of economic, community and environmental interests. The approach is essentially a joined-up way of working to achieve sustainable rural development. It will build on the existing excellent working practices in place between parish partnerships, development trusts, local strategic partnerships and their sector groups, area regeneration frameworks, and the links with the existing public and voluntary sector facilitators.

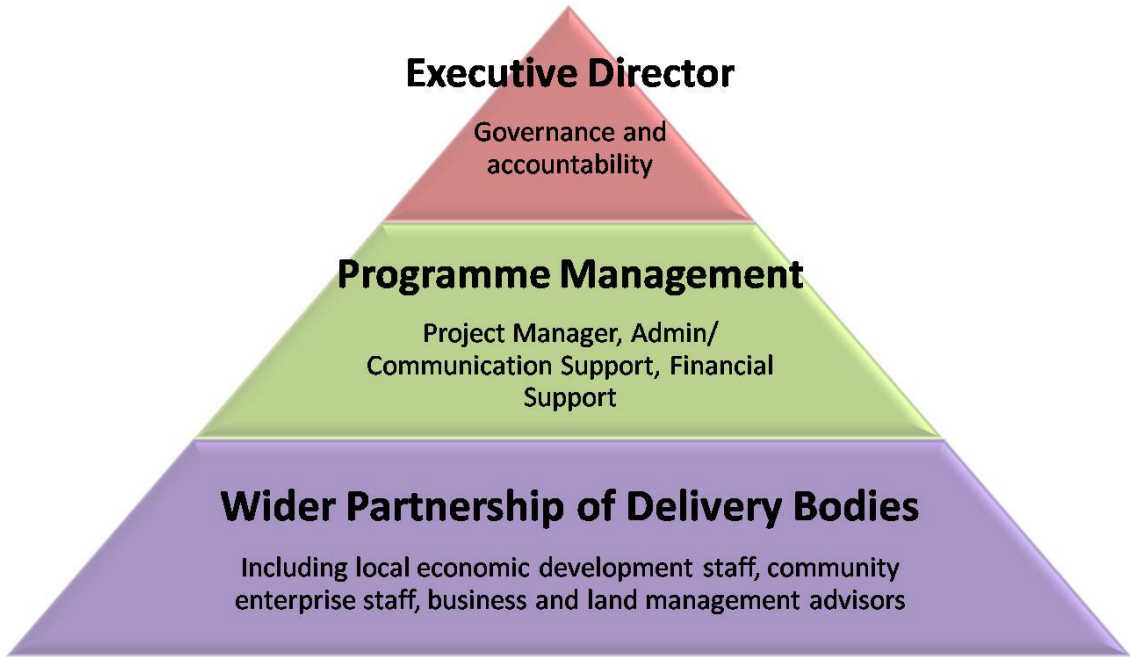


Figure 4. The Organisational structure for the Partnership Support Group and delivery arrangements

The feedback from the Northumberland Uplands Expression of Interest was clear – key delivery partners requested that the NULAG should build upon good working practices at the grassroots level. The Local Development Strategy aims to use local people, working at the centre of the communities, throughout the project development process.

Local Action Group Membership Details

The NULAG members were appointed through an open recruitment process in early 2008. Advertisements were placed in the local press, key partners were informed of the recruitment process. The Application Form covered their representation (public, private, community / voluntary), their knowledge of sustainable development, their background with previous Leader opportunities, and their vision for how the New Leader approach could assist with the socio-economic development of area. All prospective members were invited to the first meeting of the NULAG in March 2008. The appointment process was seen as a two-way process so that people were fully engaged with the New Leader approach. The co-ordination of the first meeting was overseen by Northumberland National Park Authority, Tynedale District Council, and Castle Morpeth Local Strategic Partnership. For the second meeting, Northumberland College and the Forestry Commission also joined in the discussions of the NULAG.

Whilst the initial membership of NULAG is largely established, there will be ongoing opportunities for new members to join the NULAG. While the recruitment process was successful NULAG is aiming to recruit more young people. Key partners, including ReAction, the Northumberland Young Farmers association and Rothbury and Coquetdale Youth Project are working to identify young people to join NULAG to improve representation of people under 30 years.

Although most meetings of NULAG will take place at Otterburn, which is centrally located at the heart of the Northumberland Uplands area, meetings will also take place in the more remote locations throughout the area to help keep local awareness and interactivity as high as possible.

Figure 5 shows geographical location of each NULAG member from the Northumberland Uplands.

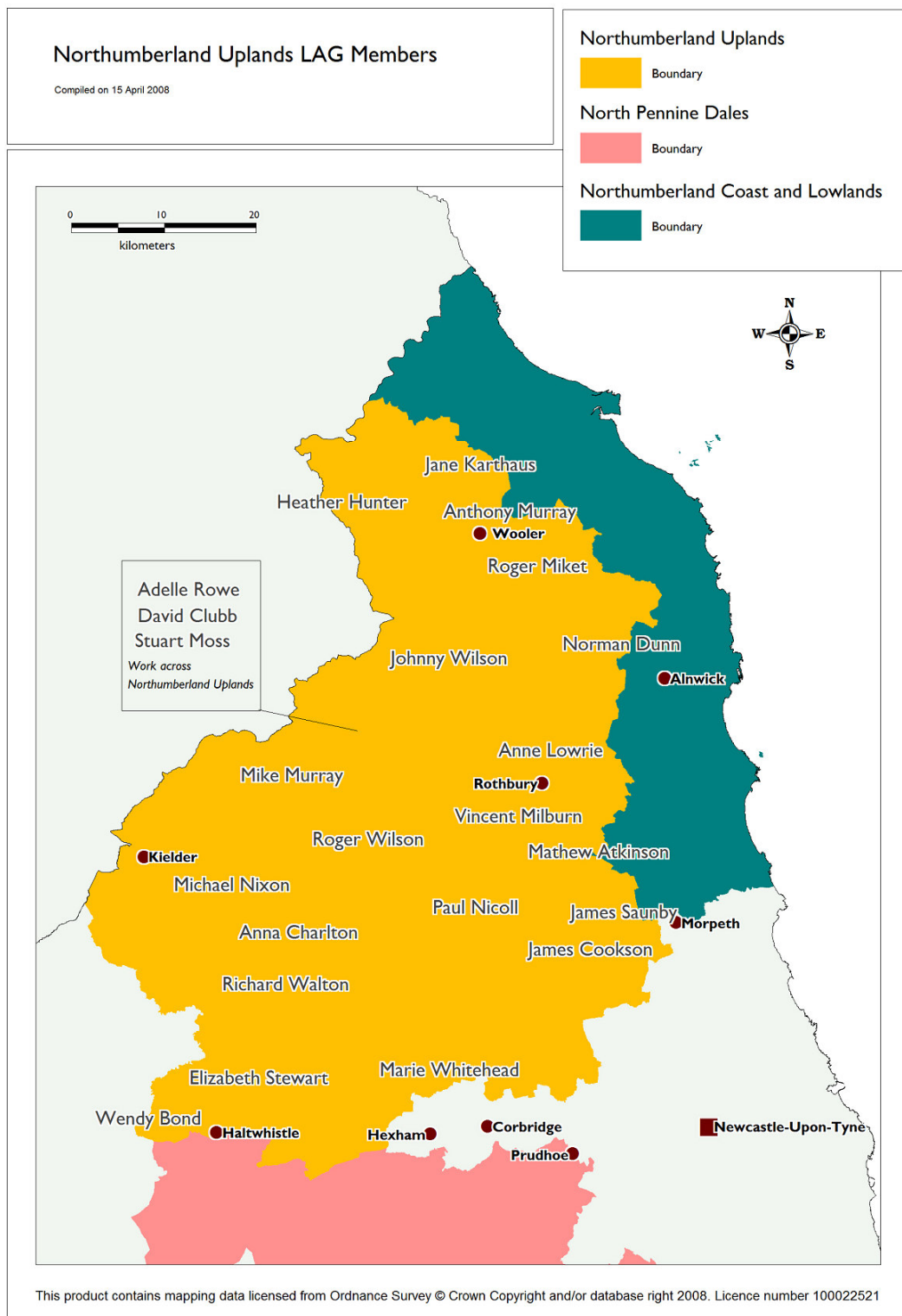


Figure 5. Map of the Northumberland Uplands showing the various locales of the NULAG members.

NULAG Experience of Regeneration Initiatives

Of the 23 NULAG members, 11 have good experience in regeneration initiatives. When recruiting members, there was a strong desire to engage with the missing sectors, and to get people involved who may have limited or no experience in rural development. For these reasons, the NULAG has an excellent balance of background skills in regeneration, and enthusiasm from the 18 others to learn from them as the New Leader approach unfolds.

Prior experience of regeneration initiatives include:

- North Pennines Leader II and Leader+ (Adelle Rowe, Wendy Bond)
- Rural Action Grants, Community Council for Northumberland, Countryside Agency (Anne Lowrie)
- Leader+ mid-Wales (David Clubb)
- Rural apprenticeship schemes (Elizabeth Stewart)
- Senior Manager in Economic and Educational Regeneration (Heather Hunter)
- Director of Operations at Whitehaven Development Company, Chair of Western Lake District Tourism Partnership, various North of England major regeneration initiatives (Marie Whitehead)
- Development programmes in Africa, Tynedale Enterprise Project (Mike Murray)
- North Northumberland Leader+ (Norman Dunn, Vice Chair Community Action Northumberland)
- Director of Tyne Team Limited, Company Secretary of Tarnset 2050, Tynedale Enterprise Project, advisor to Business Link (Roger Wilson)
- Various Local Authorities, the Highland Regional Council, Trustee and Treasurer of The Glendale Gateway Trust (Roger Miket)

Accountable Body Experience of Regeneration Initiatives

Northumberland Upwards will be principally supported by the following staff from Northumberland National Park Authority, in order to ensure its successful delivery.

Tony Gates

Chief Executive. Member of Northumberland Strategic Partnership Executive and Sustaine with nineteen years direct experience in Protected Area management and regeneration including:



- Director of Leader II programme and director of Leader Companies
- Rural Development programme management
- Single Regeneration Budget programme management
- Overseas development programme management

Stuart Evans

Strategic Director and Monitoring Officer. Member of the Institute of Economic Development with nineteen years experience in environmental, economic and community initiatives in Northumberland including:



- Chair of Tynedale Local Strategic Partnership and Board member of Northumberland Strategic Partnership and member of Northumberland Strategic Partnership Rural Group
- Accountable Officer for the £3.5m Single Regeneration Budget initiative Hadrian's Wall Enrichment and Enhancement
- Accountable Officer for the joint £2m ERDF and EAGGF scheme Electricity of Enterprise

Richard Austin

Funding Officer. Over 5 years experience in managing grant programmes in both urban and rural settings, preceded by 6 years training in socio-economic development, including:



- Administrator of the Single Regeneration Budget
- Performance Monitoring for Single Programme and the European Social Fund
- Programme Manager for the Sustainable Development Fund, which targets micro-businesses and community groups
- PhD student (University of Durham), MA student (University of Manchester), Policy and Sustainable Development in National Parks

The Public, Private, Community and Voluntary Sectors

Figure 6 shows the split between the sectors represented on the NULAG, and who will drive the decision making process.

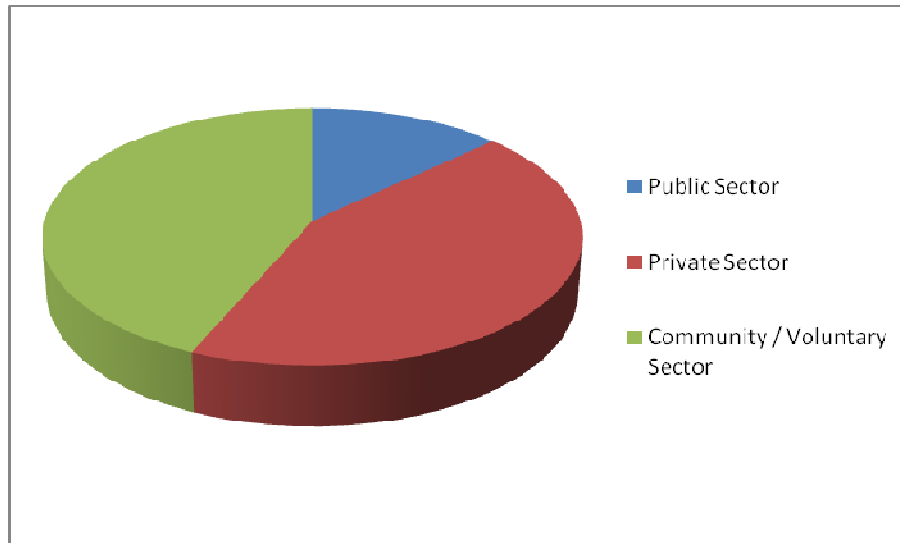


Figure 6. Pie Chart of the Public, Private, Community and Voluntary Sectors Split on the NULAG.

Although there will be Public Sector representatives, it is worth re-emphasising that this sector will be primarily involved in the Partner Support Group, which will operate on an advisory basis to the NULAG.

Skill, Experience and Knowledge Base

The skills and knowledge base has a healthy split between all the themes of the New Leader approach, as shown in Figure 7. Many of the NULAG members are able to offer a range of skills which cut across more than one theme. They will thus provide a broad range of inputs into the discussions.

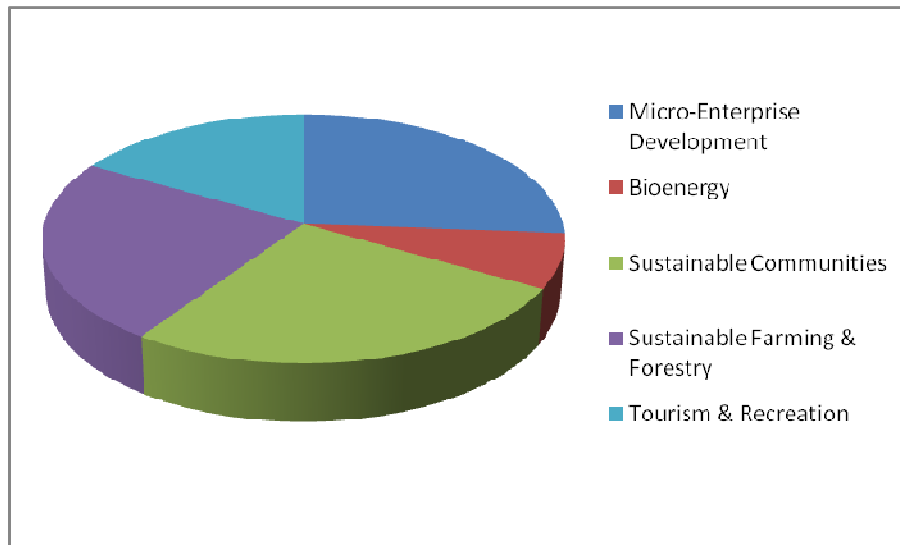


Figure 7. Pie Chart of NULAG members bringing skills and experience to the NULAG, divided by the New Leader approach themes.

The theme that is least represented is Bioenergy. Unlike the other themes, which are more established, this is an emerging field and NULAG is fortunate to have attracted the three representatives with good experience in this field: David Clubb (Northwoods), Jane Karthuas (ConFor), and Anna Charlton (Kielder Calvert Trust).

Evidence of Support

Further details on each NULAG member are in Appendix 1. Letters of support from those involved have also been provided to One NorthEast.

The Northumberland Uplands New Leader approach has been informed by lessons from previous experience of Leader programmes, analytical information, expert rural economic advice, and most importantly, local knowledge from partners in the Northumberland Uplands. The NULAG view the consultation method as a fluid, continuous process, which will run for the duration of the New Leader approach. They believe that local people should always have the chance to make their voices heard. The level of awareness and support for this Local Development Strategy has been a major success in its own right. For instance, the draft Local Development Strategy was downloaded over 500 times in a 4-week consultation period from the National Park Authority website. Over 100 members of the public attended local consultation events in April alone. There were nearly 50 partner meetings and workshops including these public consultation events (see Appendix 2). As a

result of this consultation, over 100 stakeholders and partners wish to be kept engaged with the process (see Appendix 3). The processes have enabled partners to confirm their support for the shared *Vision for **Northumberland Upwards***.

If NULAG membership changes over the course of the New Leader approach, Northumberland National Park Authority is committed to maintaining a Local Action Group that is sufficiently represented with the appropriate skills and knowledge base of the local area.

Equality Standard

The NULAG is committed to promoting equality between men and women, and shall ensure that any discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation is prevented during the entire development and initiation of the New Leader approach. This commitment will be reflected in the constitution for the NULAG, which all prospective members will have to agree to in order to become a member. Failure to practice equal opportunities may lead to a termination of membership on the NULAG. The approved Local Development Strategy will undergo an Equality Impact Assessment to ensure that, where practical, actions are taken to ensure equality of access to the services provided by the NULAG. The NULAG will aim to go beyond the legal minimum requirement, with the objective of becoming a model of good practice.

At a regional level, the NULAG recognise that the achievement of socio-economic success is dependent on the North East being a place where tolerance, diversity and equality are at the heart of the region's economic and social fabric. There are many reasons to embrace equality and diversity, such as:

- Demographic changes mean that employers can look to attract staff from 'non traditional' groups including people over the age of 50, refugees, Black/Minority/Ethnic (BME) groups and disabled people
- A diverse workforce which reflects a diverse customer base helps improve and sustain customer relations
- Long standing BME groups and migrant workers are important entrepreneurial groups
- A larger source of workers will allow greater choice in finding a suitable candidate to deliver higher skilled work
- Legislation obliges employers to deliver good practice
- Places that embrace diversity are typically more attractive, dynamic places to live and work

- Tolerant and open attitudes are major factors in retaining and attracting workers

The NULAG will benefit from the experience of its partnership bodies and the accountable body in respect of equality issues. Northumberland National Park Authority has achieved Level 1 of the Equality Standard and will achieve Level 2 in 2008 and Level 3 in 2009. This learning experience can be transferred to the benefit of NULAG.

Section 2

Northumberland Uplands - Coherence of the Area

“The area: clearly it hangs together as an area. Not only on the basis of issues but also to some degree a culture and history, particularly in the more remote areas that set it apart from other parts of the rural county.”

*Jeff McCloud, Economic Development Officer
Alnwick District Council, March 2008*

Geography, Landscape and Environment

The Northumberland Uplands is 3,042 km² of the North East’s deepest rural area, running from the River South Tyne, and extending north through the upland area of Northumberland to the border with Scotland and the River Till. The area covers the most visited and dramatic parts of the Hadrian’s Wall World Heritage Site and the whole of Northumberland National Park. In landscape terms, the unifying element is in the rounded hills, rolling uplands, foothills, outcrop hills and escarpments and high moorland / forest.

The area is characterised by a predominantly remote, upland topology, consisting of the:

- The moors and grasslands of the Cheviot Hills, with their ancient hillforts and pure rivers to the North
- The Upper Coquetdale Valley with the landmark Simonside Hills and fell sandstone ridges in the East
- The valleys of the North Tyne and Redesdale to the West
- The iconic ridge of the Whin Sill with the Hadrian’s Wall in the South

The area comprises of large estates managed by:

- The private sector such as the Lilburn and the Northumberland estates
- The voluntary sector such as the National Trust at Wallington / Cambo and Cragston
- The public sector such as the Forestry Commission at Kielder and the Ministry of Defence at Otterburn

The semi-natural habitats of the Northumberland Uplands are typically open and treeless moorlands and peatlands. Moorland includes: acid grassland habitats with dominating species such as purple moor-grass and mat grass; heathlands usually dominated by *Calluna* heather and containing other dwarf shrubs such as bilberry. Peatlands include both raised, deep peat mires as found in the Border Mires or extensive areas of thinner blanket bog located in the Cheviots as well as the North Pennines. Often these moorland and peatland habitats occur as mosaics grading into each other. Although lacking in extensive areas of semi-natural native woodland, the uplands contain large plantation forests with the main planted species being sitka spruce with areas of larch, lodgepole and Scots pine.

There is little cultivated land in the Northumberland Uplands with most enclosed land on the moorland edge used for stock rearing and fodder production. These areas contain some of the last remaining upland species rich hay meadows in Britain. Unpolluted rivers and streams are also characteristic of the area, supporting important populations of salmon, sea trout, crayfish, and otters as well as upland birds such as the dipper. The Northumberland Uplands faces several environmental issues which are specific to the area. The area contains a number of peat bogs. These are of international importance for safe-guarding Europe's biodiversity and combating climate change. In essence the peat bogs are the most effective natural form of carbon capture: they are natural carbon sinks in terms of slowing down the onset of climate change. They also store millions of litres of water in the upland hills and when well managed prevent flash floods in times of heavy rainfall.

The Northumberland Uplands area is a rich cultural landscape with features still evident from nearly 400 generations of inhabitants with well preserved shadows of history in the form of iron age hillforts, roman military structures, Christian heritage, border warfare castles and bastles, lime kilns from the agricultural revolution and large manor house from the pioneers of the industrial revolution. Low levels of land management have made it possible for these features to remain. However, the skills to maintain these and other important cultural landscape features such as dry-stone walling, maintenance of traditional buildings and hedge laying are in short supply. As a result the safeguarding of the high quality of the area's cultural landscape is in doubt.

The low levels of land management practice (extensive as opposed to intensive) now play an important role in combating climate change. These farming practices ensure rich soil is not washed away which in turn causes even more carbon to be realised into the atmosphere.

Much of the area is covered in forest. This is still a national strategic wood supply even though it was originally created for virtual extinct industries such as underground mining. These forested areas are now multi-use. The forests provide an asset to be used to combat climate change and prevent water run-off. They are also a key recreational and tourist asset. In recent years a significant amount of native woodland planting has replaced the commercially driven forest plantations and this adds to the area's biodiversity. Meanwhile the commercial forests provide a valuable source of sustainable wood for building materials and for bio-fuel.

In an increasingly busy and urbanised society these remote and tranquil areas provide people with a release from the pressures of modern life. The environment is finely balanced and it offers a huge and unquantifiable natural capital for the area. The maintenance of the environment is no accident and is the product of centuries of sustainable land management practices some often reversing economically driven incentives to make the environment less sustainable.

Northumberland Uplands is of high landscape and cultural heritage value. The area is rich in its natural capital and has much to offer in terms of understanding and celebrating our shared heritage; providing clean water; food produce; biodiversity; natural pollution control; strategic supply of wood; outstanding landscape and tranquillity; and recreation, fitness and tourism opportunities. A large part of the area is designated as a National Park, Northumberland National Park – the North East's National Park.

The Wards and Parishes of the Northumberland Uplands

The boundary of the proposed New Leader area for the Northumberland Uplands has been determined by a sound, coherent, and logical methodology, underpinned by the desire to stimulate sustained progress at the local level. As a first stage the area was defined following socio-economic analysis by the Centre for the Rural Economy at the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne in July 2007. This was enhanced following discussions with key partners who added local knowledge to the intelligence provided by the Centre for the Rural Economy.

Following the success of the Expression of Interest Stage further discussion took place with other Local Action Groups in Northumberland to resolve issues of boundary overlap. The results of this exercise were subject to partner and public consultation in March and April 2008. This information

was provided to NULAG who determined the final area for the Northumberland Uplands. The boundary is constructed from a mix of Parish and Ward boundaries to ensure a coherent fit.

List of Wards and Parishes

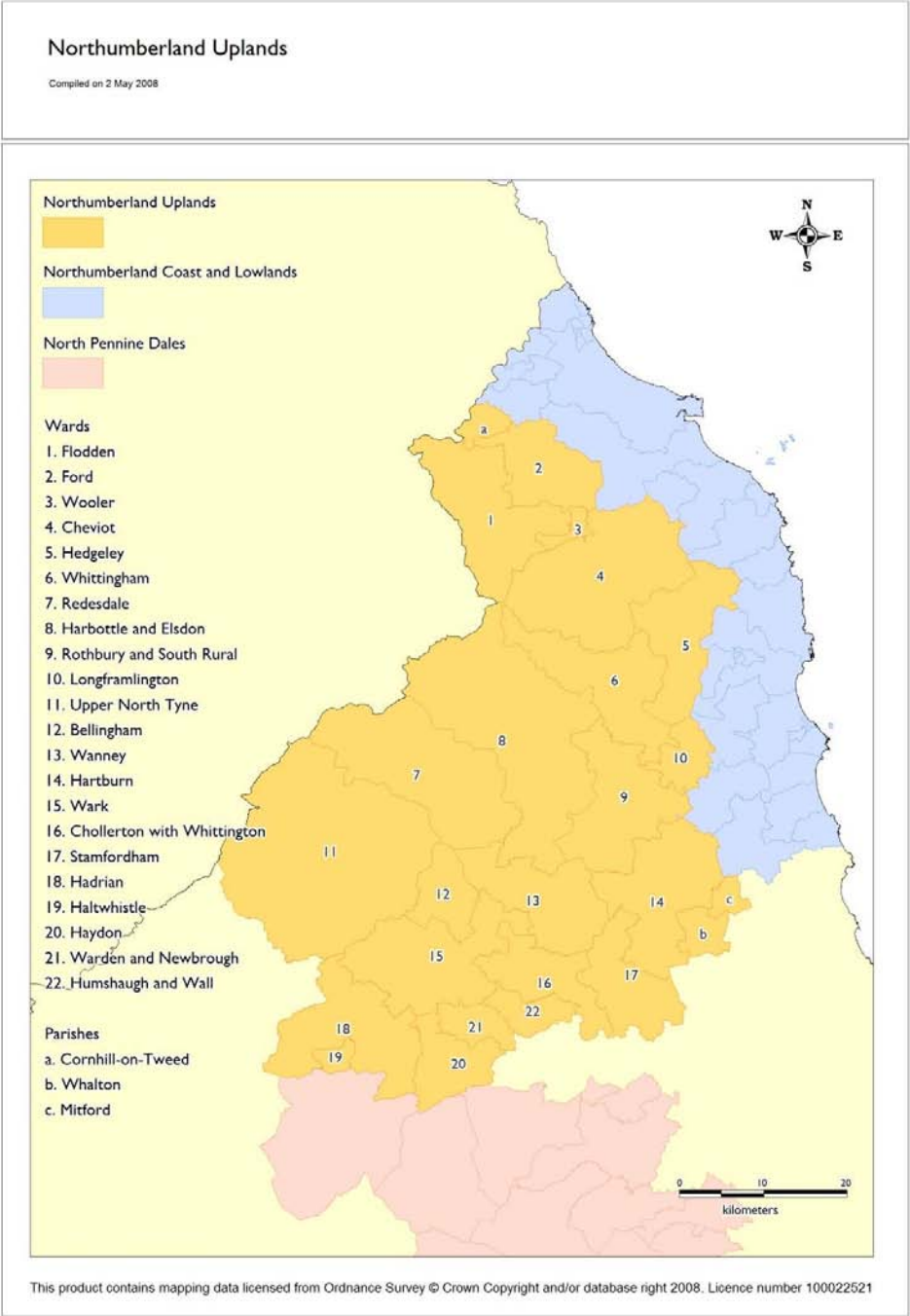


Figure 8. The wards included within the Northumberland Uplands. (Source: Ordnance Survey, 2008).

1. Flodden Ward - Kirknewton, Kilham, Branxton and Akeld
2. Ford Ward - Ewart, Doddington, Milfield
3. Wooler Ward - Wooler
4. Cheviot Ward - Tillside, Cheviotside, Bewick, Ingram
5. Hedgeley Ward - Eglingham, Hedgeley, Edlingham
6. Whittingham Ward - Alnham, Glanton, Whittingham and Callaly, Cartington
7. Redesdale Ward - Rochester and Byrness, Otterburn
8. Harbottle and Elsdon Ward - Alwinton, Netherton with Biddleton, Harbottle, Hepple, Elsdon
9. Rothbury and South Rural Ward - Snitter, Thropton, Rothbury
10. Longframlington Ward - Longframlington, Brinkburn and Hesleyhurst
11. Upper North Tyne Ward - Kielder, Tarsset with Greystead, Falstone
12. Bellingham Ward - Bellingham
13. Wanney Ward - Corenside, Kirkwhelpington, Bavington
14. Hartburn Ward - Wallington Demesne, Netherwitton, Hartburn, Meldon, Belsay
15. Wark Ward - Wark, Birtley, Simonburn
16. Chollerton with Whittington Ward - Chollerton, Whittington
17. Stamfordham Ward - Capheaton, Matfen, Stamfordham
18. Hadrian Ward - Thirlwall, Henshaw, Greenhead, Melkridge
19. Haltwhistle Ward - Haltwhistle
20. Haydon Ward - Haydon
21. Warden and Newbrough Ward - Newbrough and Fourstones, Warden
22. Humshaugh and Wall Ward - Humshaugh, Wall
 - a. Cornhill on Tweed Parish
 - b. Whalton
 - c. Mitford

Norhamshire Ward is made up of five parishes. Cornhill-on-Tweed Parish is in the Northumberland Uplands area. Duddo, Norham, Shoreswood, and Horncliffe are in the Northumberland Coast and Lowlands area. The Stannington and Mitford Ward is made up of four parish councils in total. Both Hepscoth Parish Council and Stannington Parish Council have been excluded from the Northumberland Uplands because neither Parish shares the characteristics of the rest of the area. Hepscoth is part of Castle Morpeth Town, and Stannington is a peri-urban, flat location, suitable for plain farming, rather than upland.

The Northumberland Uplands area is defined in the north and west by the political / administrative boundaries with Scotland and Cumbria. In practice, the principal issues of rural economic life and partnership working are expected to cross these borders. In the south an operational boundary has been established adjacent to the proposed North Pennines New Leader area, where many of the rural issues are similar. The operational boundary is chosen to follow the River South Tyne, because this is where the landscape characteristics change from parallel ridges, commons and upland commons through to moorland ridges and summits, and middle dale. To the east, the boundary is naturally defined by the change in landscape from upland to lowland and semi-urban areas, resulting in noticeable differences in the socio-economic characteristics. For example, the dominant economic sector agriculture changes from predominantly cattle and sheep to one of mixed agriculture and cereal production. Throughout the Alnwick and Berwick-upon-Tweed districts the eastern boundary lies adjacent to the proposed Northumberland Coast and Lowlands New Leader area.

Demography: Remoteness and Population Sparsity

The Northumberland Uplands area is sparsely populated containing approximately 32,600 residents. This is ten times as sparsely populated as the average rural area in the North East.

	Population Density
England	387 per km ²
North East	298 per km ²
North East (Predominantly Rural)	105 per km ²
Northumberland Uplands	11 per km ²

Figure 9. Population Density per km². Source: Office of National Statistics, 2008.

This is an area which is sparse even by rural standards of sparsity. The sparse population issue is compounded by an unbalanced demographic structure. Those over 65 years constitute 19.7% of the Northumberland Uplands population, compared to 17.6% in Northumberland County, and 15.9% nationally (source: Centre for Rural Economy, 2007). The ageing population contributes to a number of socio-economic issues. However, the area's aging population also offers opportunities for high levels of community involvement and vibrant support networks. The economic sustainability of the current level of social services, such as health care, education and welfare, will continue to be adversely affected by the aging population.

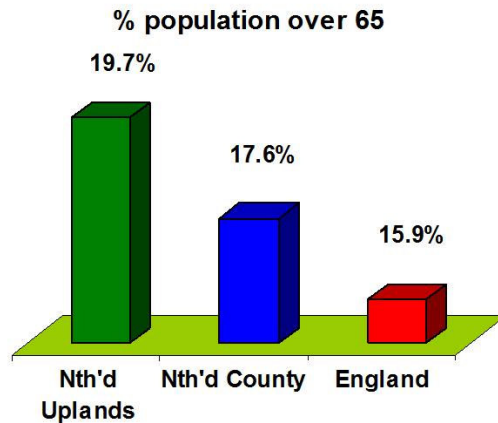


Figure 10. Relative population of elderly people. Source: Office of National Statistics, 2008.

There is some evidence of people migrating into the Northumberland Uplands as they approach retirement age with capital and developed skills. This inward migration brings in people with new ideas for the area, experience and the knowledge of business practices from around the world. Indeed recent research shows that half of the tourism businesses located to the area for reasons not directly connected with economic drivers. However, without retaining and increasing the number of young adults, this further serves to hinder the sustainable development of a strong rural economy. The end result is that without intervention, expenditures levels will have to increase in order to retain the existing levels of social services that are provided.

In order for the population of the Northumberland Uplands to become as balanced as Northumberland County, the number of young adults would need to increase by 22%. To become as balanced as the rest of England, the percentage of the population aged between 20 and 34 years would need to increase by 50%.

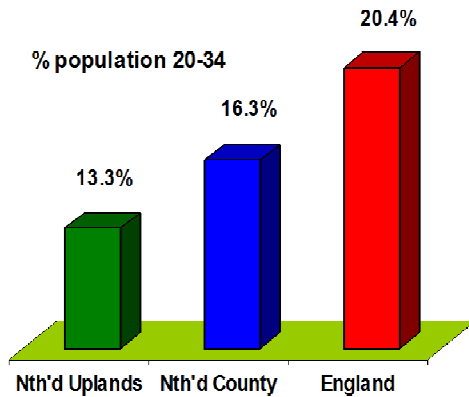


Figure 10. Relative Population of Young People. Source: Office of National Statistics, 2008.

A key challenge is therefore to retain the young adults of those communities, reversing the trend of out-migration. The Local Development Strategy realises that in order to achieve economic growth in the Northumberland Uplands, there must be more targeted grassroots support for the young people aged between 20 and 34 years. By offering more opportunities and encouragement for local people in this age range, it will help to re-balance the population, and therefore to protect the fragile rural economy.

The Need for a New Leader Approach

The New Leader approach is more than a grant programme. It is about creating a new way of life in the Northumberland Uplands, one which can become self-reliant and sustainable, as competitiveness, at national and international levels, is increasing. Research commissioned by One NorthEast from the University of Gloucester concluded that there were a number of key learning lessons from the previous Leader programme in the North East which should be taken into account in developing the New Leader approach.

In particular, the need to:

- Address the significant gaps in terms of projects involving businesses
- Look more favourably upon emerging sectors such as new micro-businesses
- Avoid the tendency to favour socially orientated activity
- Ensure Local Action Groups are of sufficient scale so as not to be too reliant on too few people
- Utilise Local Action Groups to add value to the decision making process
- Provide clear separation of duties between project facilitation and decision making

- Focus on needs, assets and issues and not organisational priorities
- Guard against a Local Action Group becoming too large or too locally focussed (i.e. at the expense of good practice elsewhere)
- Establish multiple routes of linkage with key organisations i.e. not just at the top or bottom
- Address the groups excluded (e.g. land based business, youth and the socially excluded)
- Utilise and enhance strong local project building and networking structures
- Ensure projects embrace the Leader ethos by being very careful when providing low levels of grant intervention and when devolving to grant giving schemes

These findings have informed the approach to rural development through the New Leader for the Northumberland Uplands. The NULAG will build on the successes of the past Leader programmes and implement the learning lessons.

The Rural Economy: Economic Underperformance

Northumberland is one of the worst performing areas in the England according the Treasury's most recent review of regional development (Review of Sub-National Economic Development and Regeneration, HM Treasury 2007). This uses the Gross Value Added method of calculating an area's economic performance. Whilst this measure has limitations it indicates how well businesses based in Northumberland are performing. People living in the county are doing better than this statistic indicates by the fact that many commute to better employment in the city region. This, however, is a more costly option for people living in remote rural areas and is an impossible option for land based rural businesses to realise.

The government's preferred means of measuring regional economic growth is Gross Value Added (GVA). Figure 11 (Left) shows analysis from the Office of National Statistics data which supported the above HM Treasury report. This shows the economy of Northumberland has grown slower than virtually all regions in England over the last ten years Figure 11 (Right).

In addition, the GVA measure shows that people living in Northumberland, who can commute to the city regions, have been able to share in the rapid growth of Tyneside and Wearside. The commuting effect does not alter the fact that household incomes in the Northumberland Uplands lag behind those of the Region (which itself lags behind the rest of the UK).

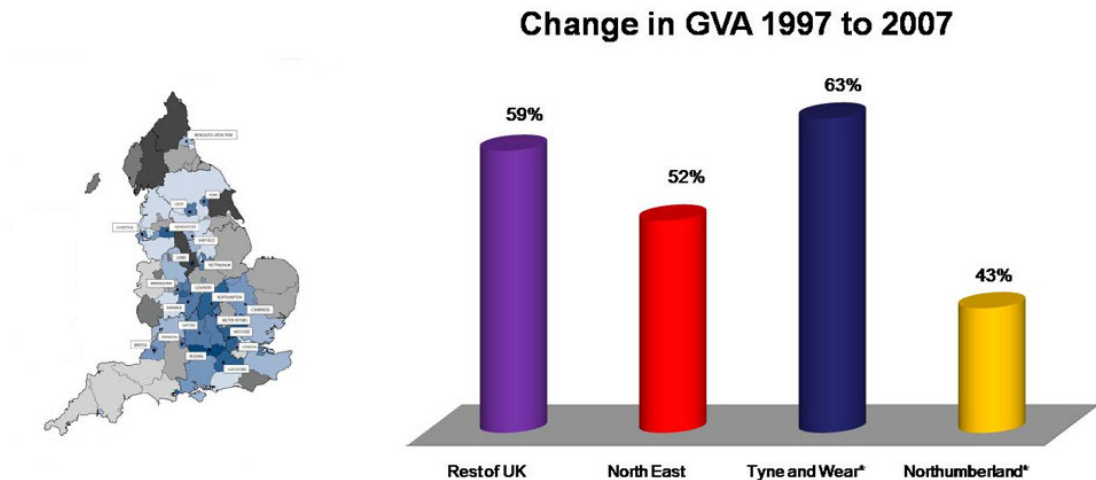


Figure 11. Left. Change in sub-regional Gross Value Added per capita, Source Review of Sub-National Economic Development and Regeneration, HM Treasury 2007. The black areas are the most under-performing, which includes the Northumberland Uplands, whilst the blue areas are excelling, by comparison. Right: Gross Value Added comparison of the North East, Tyne and Wear, Northumberland, and the Rest of the UK. Source: www.statistics.gov.uk, 2007.

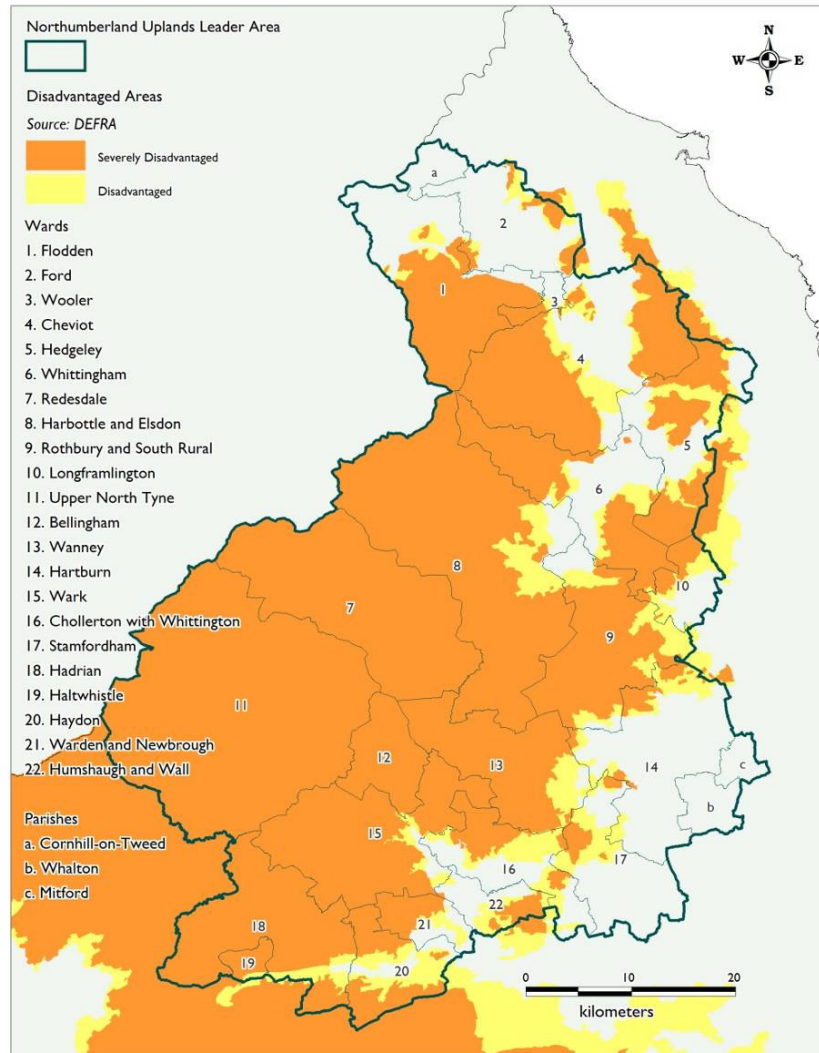
Northumberland Uplands household income is 8% less than that for the North East Region (CACI Household Income Paycheck Data, 2006). However, the Household Income Survey clearly shows that those less able to commute, i.e. living in the least accessible parts of the region are not benefiting from this dominant economic model. For instance, information provided by the Office for National Statistics, confirmed by Berwick Local Strategic Partnership, shows that the district of Berwick-upon-Tweed has the highest proportion of low wage employees in the North East by a considerable margin.

Agriculture

The Northumberland Uplands is dominated by the agriculture and forestry industries with 23.6% of local business employment in this sector (IDBR Local Unit Data 2005). Census data shows that agriculture is over ten times more important to the Northumberland Uplands than the rest of the county and the average for the whole of England.

The Severely Disadvantaged and the Disadvantaged Areas

Compiled on 2 May 2008



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Figure 12. Disadvantaged Areas Map. The dark orange areas are classed as “severely deprived”, and the yellow areas as “deprived”. Source: defra, 2007.

Upland farming, by its very nature, is a challenging proposition for agricultural businesses to operate successfully. According to defra, approximately 70% of the Northumberland Uplands is classed as severely disadvantaged, and a further 10% is classed as disadvantaged. That is, all but 20% of the

Northumberland Uplands is disadvantaged for agricultural businesses to operate within. Research by the Centre for the Rural Economy shows:

- Only one in six farm businesses have diversification plans;
- 80% of the farm businesses are more than 50% reliant on existing support mechanisms for their business income; and
- Most of the farms are tenants.

Analysis of the farming sector shows that the numbers employed; the number of farm businesses and the amount of stock produced have all fallen by about 30% in recent times.

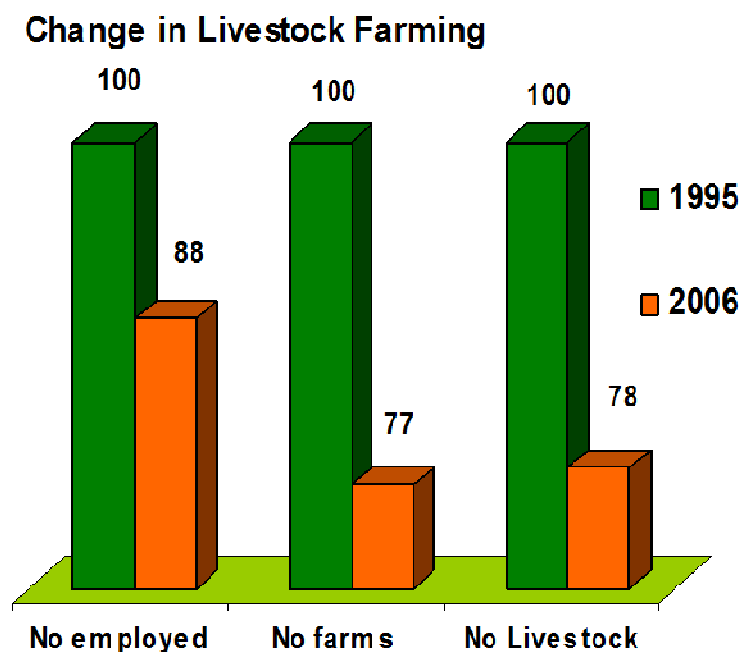


Figure 13. Source: An Evidence Base for Leader in the Northumberland Uplands Area, Centre for the Rural Economy, July 2007

A number of the key solutions for Cattle and Sheep farming require the coherent area to be more than just the areas defined by defra as either disadvantaged or severely disadvantaged. A number of local produce added value initiatives for cattle and sheep products require better agricultural land to finish the product. In addition, a number of the large estates which are so important to the development of integrated solutions straddle the cattle and sheep / disadvantaged area map. Therefore we conclude that the 80% fit of the area to the disadvantaged area map and a near 90%

fit to the cattle and sheep farming map are good evidence of a coherent area for the dominant business sector of agriculture.

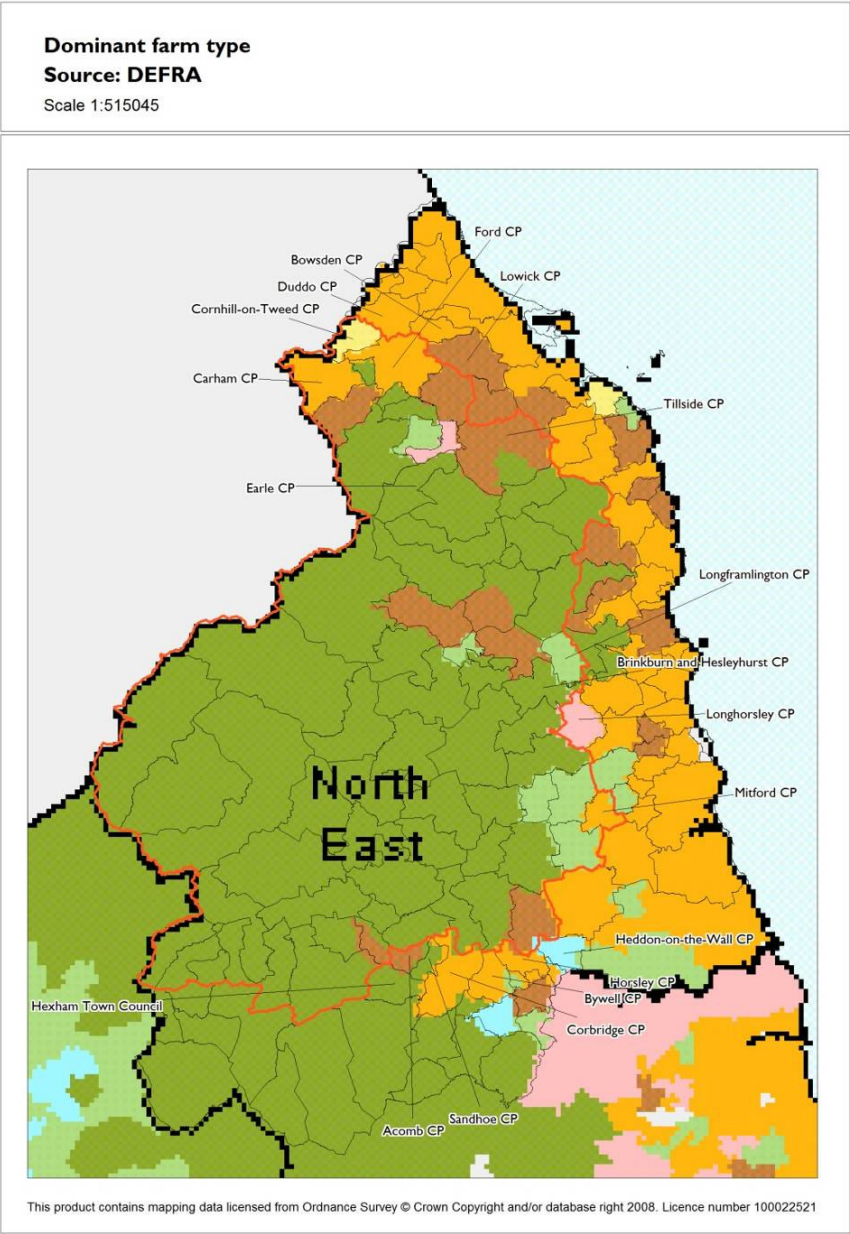


Figure 14. The Dominant Farm Type. (Source: defra, 2008).

Forestry

The Northumberland Uplands includes most of the North East Region’s forested areas. Forestry is a major employer and the forests also provide valuable recreational and biodiversity assets and a largely untapped source of renewable energy. However, the sector suffers from a lack of skilled

contractors, a high cost of entry into the business, an aging workforce and a lack of confidence and appreciation of the new opportunities from wood products amongst a significant number of private sector woodland owners. The New Leader approach will enable the forestry sector to better deliver economic, bio-energy, recreation and natural environmental objectives.

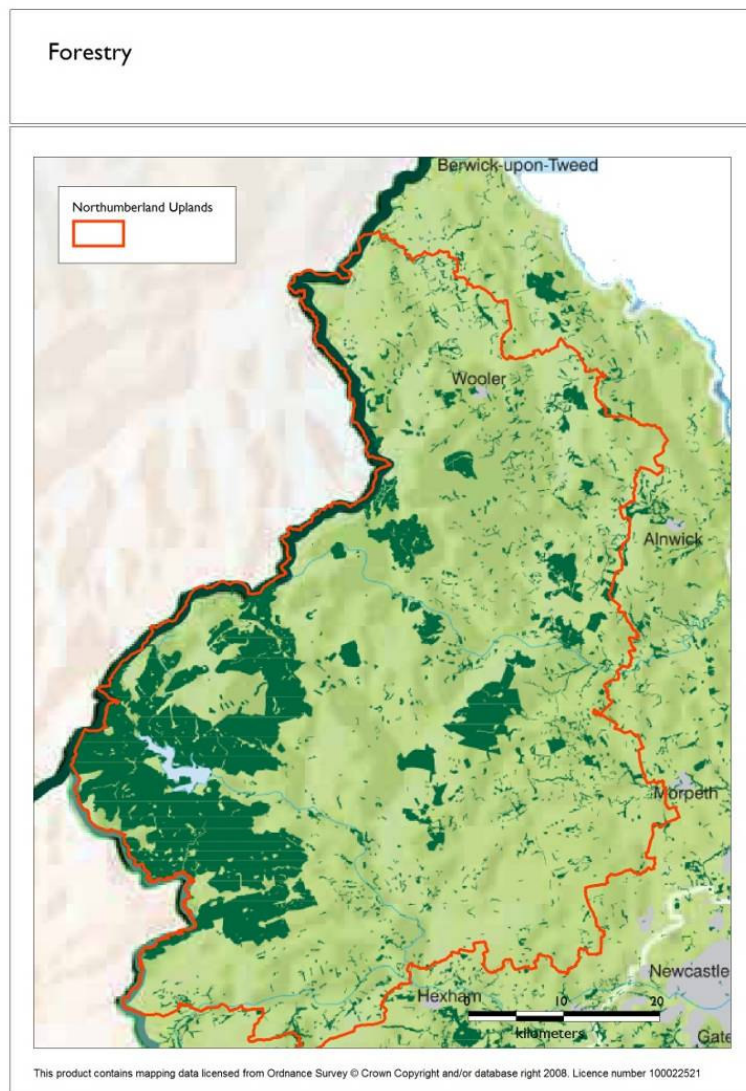


Figure 15. Forestry Cover in the Northumberland Uplands. Source, Forestry Strategy England, 2007.

Research shows that across England wood resources are not being used to their economic or environmental potential. There is huge scope to triple the economic value (England Woodfuel Strategy, 2007) and realise the full environmental benefits in terms of enhanced biodiversity (Kirby et al, 2005, Long term ecological change in Britain's woodland 1971 – 2000", Research Report 655,

English Nature). The Forestry Commission believe the potential in the Northumberland Uplands is similarly unrealised. The Forestry Commission own 50% of the woodland area in the North East of England, but produces 80% of the timber. The other 50% of the woodland area is privately owned, producing the remaining 20 % only. The challenge is to bring these less productive woodlands into greater production.

Egger, one of Europe's leading wood based panel producers, based at Hexham, provides a sizeable reliable local customer for wood products which provides a very sound basis on which to grow new and added value business opportunities. Economic and environmental regeneration of the area's woodlands requires innovative solutions to address issues in the many inaccessible woodlands and the more fragmented privately managed woods and forests.

Tourism and Recreation

Along with the farming, agriculture and forestry sectors, the tourism industry has a significant role to play in the economic development of the Northumberland Uplands. Many of the North East's most popular tourism attractions are located in the Northumberland Uplands, including Hadrian's Wall, Kielder Water and Forest, the Cheviot Hills, Cragside, and Wallington. Tourism in the Northumberland Uplands generates 2.2million visits and the annual value is calculated to be about £94m (source: STEAM 2006 One NorthEast).

There scope to expand the industry and the full potential of the tourism sector has yet to be realised. For instance, although the numbers employed in the sector are significantly higher for the Northumberland Uplands area (9.2% of the workforce) than the rest of the North East (5.2%), and England (4.7%), the New Leader approach can continue to develop and add value to tourism businesses in an environmentally sustainable manner. A large proportion of the Northumberland Uplands has been designated as a National Park, making it vitally important for tourism businesses to maintain a careful balance between preservation and promotion. Indeed, a sound approach to sustainable tourism will offer significant local economic impact with minimal environmental impact.

The Northumberland Uplands has considerable tourism assets:

- Natural heritage, including Northumberland National Park, Kielder Water and Forest Park, open spaces, tranquillity and Geodiversity

- Historic and cultural, including the central sector of the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site, the National Trust properties of Cragside and Wallington, prehistoric landscapes, river history, traditional music, agricultural shows and festivals
- Outdoor activities, like walking and leisure trails, cycling routes, fishing, and nature-based tourism like wildlife watching and conservation
- Market Towns and Villages, including Haltwhistle, Bellingham, Rothbury, Stamfordham, Kirkwhelpington and Wooler

The Northumberland Uplands contain very high quality clean fresh water courses. The rivers are the best in England for salmon fishing and are vital for the Region's biodiversity as they support much wildlife. The area contains strategic water supplies most notably at Kielder where what was originally a strategic industrial water supply now offers the growing region a secure supply of fresh domestic water and a rich recreational resource for tourists and day visitors.

Tourism is pivotal to the sustainable future of the Northumberland Uplands for the following reasons:

- It is a key source of employment and income generation and a vital component of a diverse rural economy
- It has the potential to impact both negatively and positively on the wildlife, landscape and communities of the upland areas
- The tourism industry can increase levels of public enjoyment, understanding and appreciation of the Northumberland Uplands and support for the sustainable management of the uplands and the environment as a whole

Tourism is a gradually developing and increasingly important business sector. However, the tourism sector often pays low wages and many of the jobs are seasonal. Business surveys indicate that most would like to expand which suggests there is spare human and business infrastructure capacity to grow the existing businesses. Northumberland Tourism is a member of Tourism Network North East - a partnership involving One NorthEast Tourism and four Area Tourism Partnerships that is committed to providing a range of integrated services for visitors and tourism businesses.

These three sectors – agriculture, forestry and tourism, are largely based on the area's natural qualities and have opportunities to grow from renewable energy, higher added value for quality

local produce and increasing spend on leisure and recreational activities. These sectors consist of micro-businesses and their development would lead to sustainable endogenous and neo-endogenous growth. These businesses have effectively decided to settle in the Northumberland Uplands and become part of the community.

Skills and Learning

The northern and western parts of the Northumberland Uplands area suffer from high numbers of people who are economically active without any qualifications. These are the areas which are further from the tertiary education opportunities. Where appropriate, the New Leader approach can attempt to help those unqualified people into training, if it will have a sustained economic improvement on their quality of life.

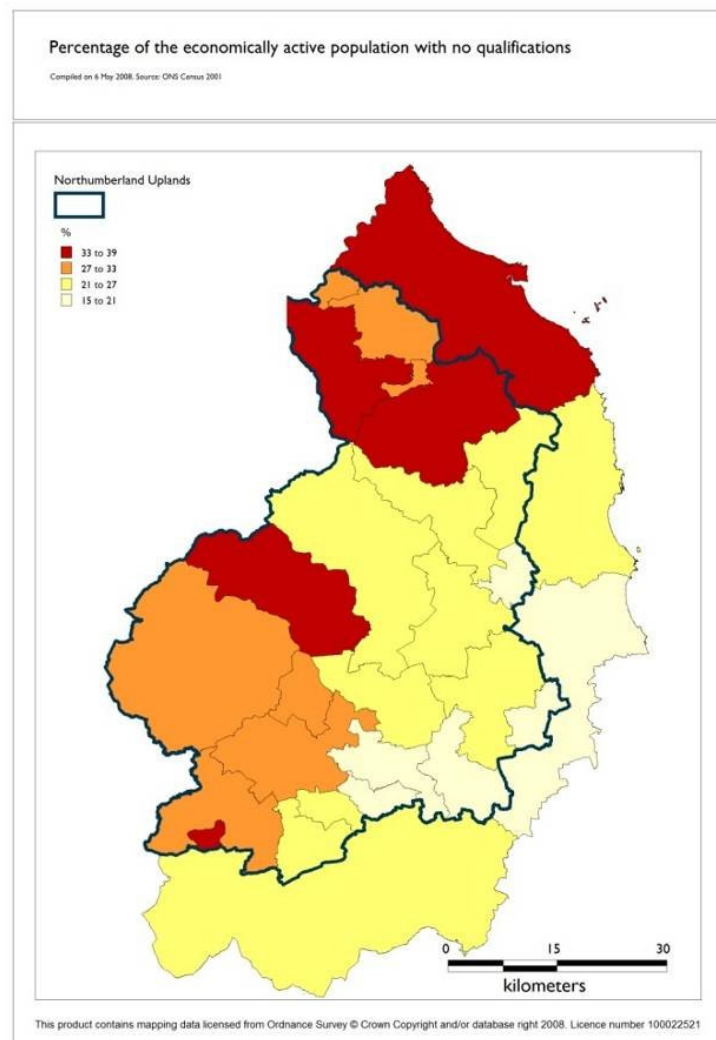


Figure 16. Economically Active Without Qualification Map. Source: National Statistics, 2007.

Further analysis of the opportunities afforded to local people for vocational training at approved North East Business Link providers shows graphically that apprenticeship “train to gain” skills development is not very accessible for people living in many areas of the Northumberland Uplands .

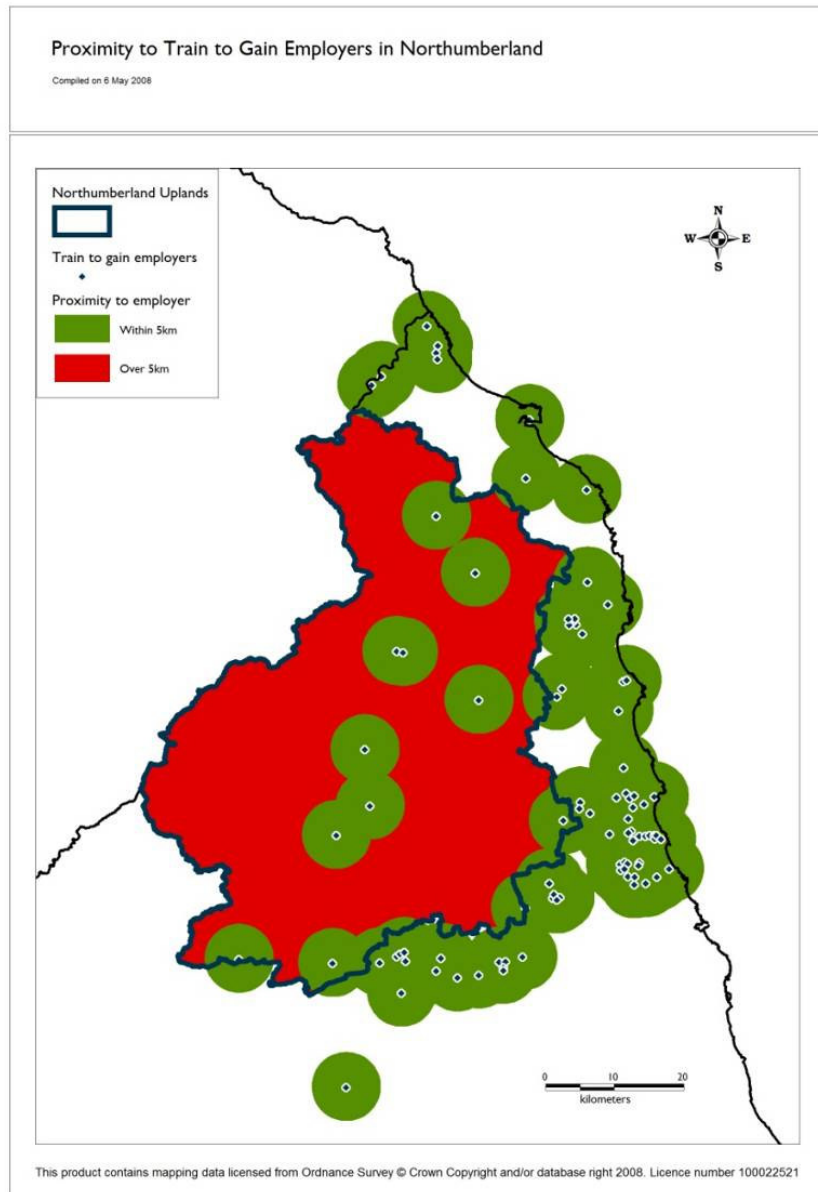


Figure 17. Areas of Northumberland Uplands more than 5km from a Train to Gain Apprenticeship employer, Source Business Link North East, 2008.

The geography of the Northumberland Uplands with its issues of remoteness and accessibility provide a challenge to the traditional form of skills development and will require out-reach solutions from the main training and development providers. Community consultation has revealed that

access to life-long learning is a critical need for the local communities, especially as the area has a high proportion of people who are retired and no longer have access to employer led training and development services

Micro-Enterprise Development

Most of the Northumberland Uplands area and its business needs do not normally benefit from the large public sector economic development programmes including the city region initiative, nor do they benefit from the expansion in key public sector services such as the expansion of the NHS. The move to a more central form of public administration could provide another threat. These public sectors are much larger scale and tend to work with large urban based businesses and communities where economies of scale provide lower cost service provision.

Not only does the Northumberland Uplands area suffer from its remoteness from the city regions but it is dominated by rural based private-sector micro-businesses which require micro-economic solutions. The New Leader approach presents a real opportunity to address issues specific to rural micro-businesses.

Empirical research shows that compared to the North East region and Northumberland county, business registration rates and stock rates are high in all three of the main local authority districts which the Northumberland Uplands overlaps. Tynedale in particular has a high per capita density of businesses and the business stock is growing. Nationally, businesses situated in rural areas have a greater chance of survival. In pure economic terms this provides a sound basis on which to build new micro-business solutions.

More qualitative research shows non-economic factors also provide a good basis for growing the business stock in the Northumberland Uplands. A recent tourism business motivational survey has shown that 49% of the tourism businesses in the area felt that a personal or lifestyle decision was the main reason for locating their business and over 70% described themselves as long-term residents (Source: Business Motivation Survey, QA Research 2008). Similar results have been obtained from motivational surveys of farm businesses, that is the local business community and new businesses are attracted to the area as a result of lifestyle decisions related to factors outside traditional economic modelling e.g. the natural and cultural capital.

The social, economic and environmental health of the Northumberland Uplands is all deeply interlinked. Many businesses are either directly land-based (agriculture, farming, and forestry) or use the high quality landscape and cultural assets as key drivers for their products (tourism, recreation, heritage). The issues of economic under-performance are not just within business sectors they are focussed on age groups. The lack of opportunities for young adults (aged 20 to 34 years) and the aging traditional workforces indicate the need for local socio-economic solutions, which fit to the New Leader approach.

Bioenergy

Micro renewable energy technologies have been rolled-out via a number of pioneering, high-profile, award-winning, schemes in the Northumberland Uplands. This has raised the profile of the benefits micro renewable energy technologies, stimulating an interest amongst local people and businesses. Wood is the principal natural resource for bio energy in the Northumberland Uplands and it exists in abundance. For instance, Kielder Forest and the large privately managed woodland areas offer a huge potential.

Bioenergy is renewable energy produced from organic matter to be used either directly as a fuel or processed into liquids or gases. Biomass is renewable organic matter such as agricultural crops and residue, wood and wood waste, animal waste, aquatic plants and organic components of municipal and industrial wastes.

Biomass falls into two main categories:

- Woody biomass includes forest products, untreated wood products, energy crops and short rotation coppice (SRC), which are quick-growing trees like willow;
- Non-woody biomass includes animal waste, industrial and biodegradable municipal products from food processing and high energy crops e.g. rape, sugar cane, maize.

Through the production of wood fuel (for example, biomass and bio-ethanol) and other products, there is a real opportunity to bring more of the woodlands of the Northumberland Uplands into management by increasing the value of the product thereby making woodland management more economic. Whilst the Northumberland Uplands has opportunities for utilising wood biomass as a reliable source of renewable and local energy, the area's communities suffer from fuel poverty. Without access to mains gas and also in a number of cases electricity households are reliant on

costly forms of heating such as oil whose commodity price is set to be very high for the foreseeable future.

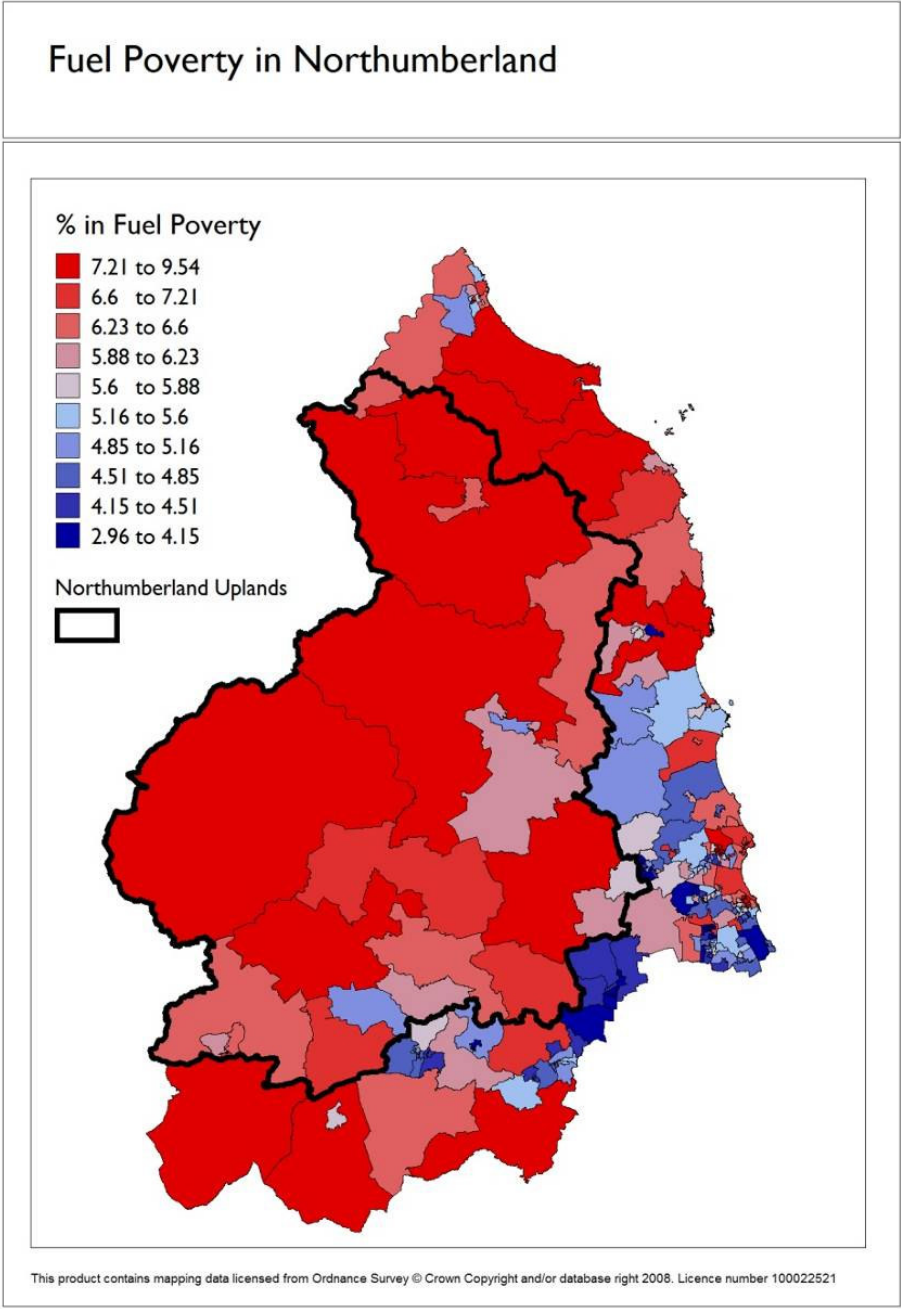


Figure 18. Levels of relative fuel poverty in Northumberland, Source: Office of National Statistics, 2008.

Sustainable Communities

The communities of the Northumberland Uplands suffer from poor access to services. According to the Index of Deprivation (2007), the areas as a whole is in the top deprived 1% of areas in England in terms of access to services. This empirical analysis is reinforced by the district based sustainable community strategies where accessibility to services and the absence of affordable housing are critical issues as identified by the local communities.

Accessibility is a long-standing rural problem in the Northumberland Uplands, and it affects employment and training opportunities. The NULAG understands that the key to unlocking the potential of the area is to be found in addressing accessibility. The issue affects not just those communities living a long way from urban centres of service provision but also communities who are closer yet still isolated. For example, Advancing Castle Morpeth Local Strategic Partnership has identified Mitford as its parish with the highest levels of entrenched rural deprivation.

The Sustainable Community Strategy for Northumberland was published in September 2007 and outlines a long term vision for the communities of Northumberland for 2021. This defines shared priority outcomes. It provides a basis for delivering a fundamental step change to the quality of life in Northumberland.

The vision outlined in the Sustainable Community Strategy is that we work together to release the strength of all our communities so that everyone in Northumberland has the same life opportunities, is broadly satisfied with the quality of their lives and is able to influence decisions that affect them. The Strategy identifies seven key priorities areas of need:

1. We enjoy a good standard of living
2. We live safely and in comfort
3. We lead healthier lifestyles
4. We can readily access the things they need
5. We take part in cultural activity
6. We care about our environment
7. We get involved and bring about change

Whilst Leader could potentially contribute to all priorities, it will specifically contribute to the following objectives from the Sustainable Community Strategy:

We enjoy a good standard of living by:

- a. supporting business to become more competitive, enabling them to take advantage of opportunities for collaboration;
- b. Specifically meeting the need for support to farming and land management businesses;
- c. Addressing accessibility barriers to learning;
- d. Improving the enterprise culture; and
- e. Providing opportunities for people to re-engage with employment.

We lead healthier lifestyles by addressing issues of healthier eating and improved fitness specifically through recreational activities such as walking and cycling in the countryside.

We can readily access the things we need by supporting services within market towns and the viability of village facilities and improving broadband services. Note that the cost of fuel for transport is highest in rural areas and in the areas west of Bellingham there is no petrol station.

We take part in cultural activity by expanding the celebration of the area's distinctiveness and improving the visitor welcome

We care about our environment by protecting and enhancing the quality and character of our countryside and places greater importance on walking, cycling, horse riding, sailing holidays and nature based tourism in promoting the county. The Strategy identifies the need to improve energy efficiency and develop renewable energy sources.

We get involved and bring about change by improving and better managing community buildings, encouraging volunteering nurturing businesses social enterprises and embracing community participation through the on-going development of the New Leader approach.

The Sustainable Community Strategy for Northumberland identified that those individuals who feel excluded are often modest in number and / or geographically dispersed. This makes the sense of isolation all the more acutely felt. The challenge is to have their minority needs understood, valued and properly recognised in community life; the New Leader approach provides an ideal vehicle to address this in the Northumberland Uplands.

SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis for the Northumberland Uplands was produced by a facilitated workshop of the NULAG members in April 2008. This is complimentary to the analyses and local intelligence from consultation contained in the rest of *Northumberland Upwards*.

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coherence of the Area• Natural Unique Landscape• Tranquillity• Tourism Offer• Real Community Spirit Demonstrating a Passionate, Bottom-up Approach to Rural Development• Partnership Working and Communication• Local Knowledge and Skills Base• Established and Diverse range of Businesses• High Number of Entrepreneurs• Strong Forestry Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poor Levels of Academic Attainment• Scarce / Remote / Marginalised / Isolated Population• Poor Infrastructure / Accessibility• Lack of Good Rural Services• High Service Costs• Few Job Opportunities• Low Wage Economy• Out Migration of Young People• High Cost of Living• Lack of Affordable Housing• Limited Funding Opportunities Available• Lack of Rural Diversification
<u>Opportunities</u>	<u>Threats</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Further Develop the Rural Tourism Offer• Further Market the Natural Landscape• Promote the Historic and Cultural Environment• Farming Expansion and Diversification• Development of a Local Produce / Local Consumption Marque for the Northumberland Uplands• Further Community Engagement with the Missing Sectors• Further Develop the Social and Business Networks• Move into Bio-energy as a Viable Business and Community Resource• Real Opportunity to Make a Difference with the New Leader Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LAG Governance Structure has to be Efficient and Effective• High Levels of Bureaucracy in the Grant Making Process• Loss of Natural Assets due to Socio-Economic Development• Inability to Reverse the Aging Population• Continued Out Migration of Young People• External Influences (Foot and Mouth Disease, Blue Tongue, Global Credit Crunch, Affordable Housing, High Fuel Prices etc.)• Restrictive Rural Legislation• Continued High Cost of Living• Competition for Limited Funding• Loss of Focus on Deprived Areas

Section 3

Quality of the Local Development Strategy

“The Removing Barriers to Work Strategic Unit endorses the underpinning aims of the Northumberland Uplands Local Development Strategy in tackling rural poverty and improving economic inclusion, both of which are key aims of the Northumberland Rural Employability Project.”

Sandra Brydon, Partnership Manager

Removing Barriers to Work Strategic Unit, March 2008

No single organisation can achieve the sustainable rural development of the Northumberland Uplands alone. Only by collaborating and adopting a co-ordinated approach can significant progress be made, and value added to the efforts of each organisation. Partnership is at the core of this strategy and progress will be built upon the successful partnership arrangements already in existence in the Northumberland Uplands. The objectives of this strategy will be achieved by improving co-ordination and enhancing commitment to clear and shared priorities. *Northumberland Upwards* has been prepared by involving all stakeholders, by identifying the issues which affect their lives, voicing their needs, identifying solutions or problems, and setting and monitoring targets for the rollout of *Northumberland Upwards*. Since the *Northumberland Uplands Expression of Interest* was approved, staff at the National Park Authority set-up series of small workshops throughout the area, where over 100 individuals from key organisations including representatives of the hard to reach sectors such as micro businesses, forestry, agriculture and the isolated rural communities, where able, to provide feedback and local intelligence on the tone and direction of *Northumberland Upwards* (see Appendix 3 for a list of attendees).

Continuous Consultation

NULAG is representative of the key stakeholders with the community and private sector being very active on the Local Action Group and the public sector and partnerships being active on the Partnership Support Group. The stakeholders will be empowered throughout the decision-making process, so that they fully understand the competing priorities and constraints of the New Leader approach. The emphasis will be one of involvement rather than consultation. Consultation will also take place in the form of public / open meetings, use of the media (including a Northumberland Uplands New Leader website (www.nuleaer.eu) and e-Zine newsletter), focus groups, partnership working (in particular, with the estate owners, the Ministry of Defence, tourism partnerships, and

farming and forestry representatives) and where possible, inclusion of stories in community and business newsletters.

The consultation process was co-ordinated and by Northumberland National Park Authority and in the last three months has focussed primarily on developing the content of *Northumberland Upwards*. This was achieved by producing a draft Local Development Strategy and seeking feedback on its direction and priorities.

The NULAG realise that *Northumberland Upwards* must evolve throughout the life-span of the New Leader approach, as priorities are met, as other strategies are updated, and as a response to unforeseen external influences. The consultation process will therefore be on-going, so that at any given time, local people will have the chance to voice their views on the New Leader approach to the NULAG.

Delivery Capacity

Key delivery stakeholders have been clear that they believe the best way to implement and embed *Northumberland Upwards* is to use existing frontline staff. Administrative, communication, programme management and executive support capacity is covered in Section 4. *Northumberland Upwards* will liaise with One NorthEast to ensure that a reserve of resources is available to enable the delivery partners to target the prioritised implementation of the strategy throughout the lifespan of the New Leader approach. In a number of cases best value will be achieved through shared service delivery with partners such as Scottish Borders, the North Pennine and Dales and the Northumberland Coast and Lowlands New Leader programmes.

The success of *Northumberland Upwards* depends on effective communication. The first actions of NULAG will be to determine and implement an effective communications strategy. The delivery of the consultation and engagement will be from within the wider partnership and the NULAG members. Key partner resources will HELP this communication and engagement, including the Rural Voices web portal (external facing stakeholder communications), the National Park Authority's intranet (secure internal facing stakeholder communications), and a new website www.nuleader.eu (external facing electronic communications).

Engaging with the 'Missing' Sectors

The Countryside and Community Research Unit at the University of Gloucester conducted a study, published in June 2006, entitled an 'Evaluation of Leader Activities within the North East Region'. It indicated that despite the £1.76 million investment on rural development, many of the communities which should have benefited failed to do so, leaving pockets of deprivation in the remote communities of the Northumberland Uplands. In particular:

"North Northumberland was previously defined somewhat pragmatically by administrative boundaries rather than natural, cultural and geographical characteristics. In contrast, the North Pennines was a more coherent entity. Both Local Action Groups had problems in engaging with the farming community and small rural businesses in general. The absence of projects for the land based sector was highlighted as was the low level of business representation on the Local Action Groups. Linkages between the Leader+ programmes and the strategic policy context were weak."

Northumberland Upwards targets those communities through a bottom-up, enterprising, approach, ensuring that the highest priority issues for the deepest rural areas are identified for assistance. Without this level of support, it will be difficult to address the serious issues of economic underperformance in the area.

Engaging with Young People is a challenge that the NULAG will embrace. NULAG has the support of initiatives which have been successful in engaging young people in decision making i.e. Rural Enterprise Action, Northumberland Young Farmers and the Rothbury and Coquetdale Youth programme. Their advice and guidance will ensure decisions on the implementation of the *Northumberland Upwards* will be taken with the inclusion of representatives of the area's young people.

One of the principal delivery mechanisms available in the Northumberland Uplands is the large estates – public, private and voluntary. These bodies are powerful drivers of change due to their size but also in terms of their standing with the local communities and businesses. *Northumberland Upwards* aims to promote the principles of One NorthEast's Rural Estates Strategy to create improvements to the environment, economy and communities. The size of many of the estate scale developments will be outside the scope of Leader but will fall into that of the wider Rural Development Programme England. Therefore *Northumberland Upwards* aims to assist the developments of estate scale solutions and promote the resulting learning lessons. It is likely that

local community based solutions might be developed which would be supported. NULAG will investigate where these larger scale developments could be used to provide complimentary benefits for local businesses and communities.

Micro-Enterprise Development

Northumberland Upwards will build on the existing business advice services offered by organisations such as Business Link North East, Business in the Community, and Business Support Services available through local authorities.

A key need that emerged through the consultation process was for the roll out of broadband to the remote rural areas. Although this requirement is acknowledged by *Northumberland Upwards*, the NULAG realise that the resources needed to address this particular issue are well beyond the scope of the New Leader approach. However, wherever feasible, there is a desire to ensure that the micro-businesses are able to benefit from contracts with larger organisations including the public sector. In addition, the NULAG will investigate the scope for community broadband schemes, perhaps using the latest wifi technology. This approach will make sure that individually businesses are not unfairly supported over one of their local competitors.

NULAG recognises that working with existing recognised business champions will be an effective means of engaging with hard to reach business networks. NULAG aims to establish two-way communication with these business champions to engage as widely as possible on the benefits from new Leader. This will help NULAG to promote its key theme of supporting and encouraging business innovation by sharing knowledge amongst businesses.

The key theme is to extend the participation of young people in business. This theme is supported by the Scottish Borders New Leader area and NULAG will work with key partners including Rural Enterprise Action (RE Action), the Prince's Trusts (England and Scotland), Tynedale Virtual College and Tynedale Enterprise Partnership and others. The development of initiatives focuses on young people in business is likely to build on existing good practice. In particular:

- Expanding ID8 – from its current Tynedale basis (under the Leader Plus) to the rest of the Northumberland Uplands and possibly into the North Pennine and Dales. This will aim to engage local young business people to provide practical support to other young people undertaking a broad range of enterprise activity. Many of the outcomes will be new micro enterprises. The

project will establish new provision beyond the existing boundaries, recruiting and training local panels and developing support services for potential applicants. Existing contacts with young business people, and appropriate agencies in the remainder of the area, will be drawn upon.

- Enterprise Learning Network: - is a new initiative with a number of High Schools which aims to create a unique approach to working with young people to develop businesses. It builds on and expands experience of student run businesses elsewhere in the Northumberland Uplands. Exploratory discussions with Head Teachers and other senior staff have been held to guide a team based approach to harness the talent and energies of young people using the breadth of expertise already available in High Schools.

Traditional and innovative micro businesses will also be supported, like this potential project expansion at Haltwhistle.

Exemplar Activity: The Timber Mediation Business at Haltwhistle



The Timber Mediator micro-enterprise at Haltwhistle focuses on collection and processing woodland waste. The waste is transported from the woodlands in and around the National Park to Haltwhistle, where it is prepared for processing into either fuel or furniture.

The focus of the business is about recycling a natural product in a sustainable way, as a viable alternative to landfill. Steve Billany, Director of Timber Mediators said: "There is a tangible demand for specialist domestic hardwoods for the furniture industry and for fuel material." He continues: "The recycling service offered does not currently exist in the region. The issue is one of changing the mindset of landfill disposal to that of recycling. Indeed, the operational problem envisioned is one of scale – potentially too many enquiries."

The New Leader approach could help this type of innovative business to develop and expand within the Northumberland Uplands to meet the ever growing market demand.

Bioenergy

Wood is the principal natural resource for bio-energy in the Northumberland Uplands and it exists in abundance. For instance, Kielder Forest and the large privately managed woodland areas offer a huge potential.

The production of bioenergy needs to be both environmentally sensitive and sustainable. It is most cost effective when a local fuel source is used, which results in local investment and employment and also minimises transport costs. In the Northumberland Uplands there are opportunities through the New Leader approach to link bio-energy production with the forestry sector. This would have environmental benefits in that it would bring un-managed and under managed woodlands and plantations into more efficient use. *Northumberland Upwards* will seek to support the development of locally sourced sustainable, bio-energy supply chain.

Bioenergy is a developing market and due to increased fuel prices and environmental challenges it is likely to become an increasingly important one. However, there are:

- Barriers to supply development because of limited demand
- Barriers to demand development because of limited supply
- A limited number of intermediaries who have the capacity to develop the market

Wood fuel is an environmentally sound renewable energy source. Compared to fossil fuel heating systems, it can reduce carbon emissions by more than 90%. Wood fuel has the lowest carbon impact of all the existing renewable energy technologies. Much of the work in the development of wood fuel in the North East Region has been carried out by Northwoods through their 'ignite' training programme and through Newfuels, the wood fuel producer group established to provide vital supply chain advice.

The New Leader approach will support the development of the bioenergy (including wood fuel) market in the Northumberland Uplands. This will be achieved by stimulating the growth and building the capacity of: bio-energy supply, demand, market intermediaries, and training to provide the skills and knowledge required to develop the industry.

Potential initiatives to develop the supply of bioenergy include:

- Promoting awareness of opportunities to supply among potential suppliers. This may include working with supply chain businesses e.g. boiler makers, wood chippers etc as well as less obvious, non-traditional, suppliers e.g. estates or community woods as a source of wood fuel
- Develop an improved supply network in the area including the provision of specific forestry harvesting and business skills to increase the supply of wood especially in areas where woodland and forestry management is weak
- Providing funding assistance for feasibility studies to support supply development.
- Assistance for supply implementation e.g. the development of access routes to enable wood to be harvested or funding the purchase of equipment to process, transport or store fuels
- Advice to enable suppliers to gain access to other business services and grant regimes
- Work with other initiatives to establish and promote a quality assurance framework for wood fuel

Potential initiatives to develop the demand for renewable energy include:

- Promoting awareness of opportunities to supply to potential consumers. This may include working with communities, businesses and construction professionals
- Providing funding assistance for feasibility studies to support demand and consumption development
- Addressing localised issues of fuel poverty
- Providing assistance for demand implementation e.g. funding the installation of biomass boilers, community heating schemes
- Establish a network of localised demand centres e.g. focussing in particular clusters in the public, community and estate sectors

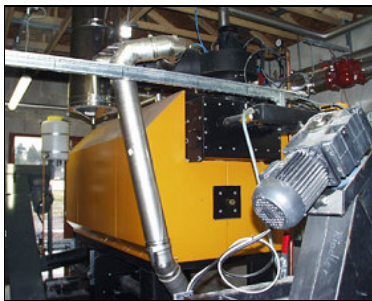
Potential initiatives to develop the capacity of bioenergy intermediaries include:

- Facilitating strategic dialogue. This may include working with relevant local community groups, businesses or energy specialist forums
- Identifying opportunities to develop supply chain intermediaries e.g. the need to train boiler fitters
- Organising and providing funding towards developing supply chain intermediaries

- Conducting appropriate research to support the development of the renewable energy market

The development of New Leader approach initiatives to exploit wood as a biofuel is likely to be undertaken jointly with the Scottish Borders who have shown an interest in collaborating on this priority area.

Exemplar Activity: Learning from Kielder District Demonstration Heating System



Kielder, a village of about 200 people, with a village shop and public house, was an oasis for cyclists, walkers and other visitors before the development of its District Demonstration Heating System. New visitors are now keen to learn about the exemplar renewable energy initiative too. District heating networks are commonplace in Scandinavia, where forestry

residues are often used as fuel, but this is one of the first of its kind in Britain. In the Kielder scheme, locally-grown wood is chipped and stored by Forest Enterprise at a specially designed fuel store in Kielder Village, which is filled up 3-4 times a year. The wood chip fuel is then delivered to the boiler house and is fed to a 300 kilowatt boiler. The hot water is piped to surrounding buildings, where heat exchangers transfer the energy into domestic central heating and hot water systems. A meter measures the amount of energy used by each customer, and the local community company sends them monthly heating bills. Kielder Community Enterprise Ltd. has been established as a community-owned energy service company, providing a permanent source of local employment. Jonty Hall was one of the first tenants to move into one of six new houses in the village that are being warmed by wood. Jonty said: "This is a wonderful place to live and it is good news that we are able to keep the community going through projects like this. These houses are great. With property prices so high I would have found it difficult to live in the village if these affordable homes hadn't been built."

The New Leader approach aims to link up local resources to local people, and in particular to use bioenergy wherever possible throughout the Northumberland Uplands. The example at Kielder has provided useful lessons and these will be used to further grow the knowledge and confidence in this energy sector. Enhancing critical mass can enable lessons to be learned and the sector to move forward locally.

Sustainable Communities

A key result of public and stakeholder consultation was the need to find new ways for people living in remote communities to have better access to services which those in urban areas take for granted. NULAG will look to test innovative solutions to this issue and aim to learn from best practice elsewhere in similar remote rural areas.

Northumberland Uplands has a high number of people who have retired from full-time work. One of the key needs for this group is to have access to life-long learning opportunities. *Northumberland Upwards* aims to work with local communities and service providers to test new ways of meeting the need for life-long learning which has proven benefits to physical and mental health as well as helping build community cohesion.

A number of the other priority actions will, with in an integrated programme such as New Leader approach, help address community issues such as:

- Bio fuel addressing fuel poverty
- Cultural and sustainable tourism providing community celebration events
- Local food initiatives providing seasonal food and better connecting people with knowledge about diet
- Business opportunities for young people should enable a more balanced demographic community
- Woodlands and tranquil areas becoming high quality recreational opportunities

Northumberland Upwards also aims to address other community specific issues such as:

- Building capacity and sharing knowledge on effective management and maintenance of public meeting places (formal and informal)
- Providing mobile crèche facilities to enable people in remote rural areas to gain access to training, development and work opportunities
- Supporting initiatives which enable young people to enjoy and appreciate their area
- Raising educational attainment levels

Exemplar Activity: Skills on Wheels - The Northumberland College Learning Bus



Northumberland College's Learning Bus is a fully equipped mobile classroom which gives workers the chance to brush up their skills without leaving their workplace. A number of employers have taken up the opportunity and encouraged their staff to gain new qualifications. On the bus they learn basic IT skills with literacy embedded, while working on projects related to their job. The training is free to staff and the employer, as it is funded via the Learning and Skills Council.

Ian Simpson, Managing Director at Heighley Gate Garden Centre, said: "This is one bus I'd urge employers not to miss. Despite all best intentions, it would be very difficult to free up staff so they had time to travel to college to study during the working day. But having the college come to you gives you the flexibility to call staff back in at a moment's notice should they be urgently required. And the training our employees have received is invaluable. We're putting our entire workforce through this, including management. We are all sure to benefit and the college deserves congratulation for providing such a useful resource to employers and workers alike."

The New Leader approach embraces innovative solutions to local issues. With the Learning Bus, Northumberland College have found a joined-up solution to a difficult issue – rural isolation. The New Leader approach – possibly in partnership with other LAGs in Northumberland – can help sustainable communities to raise their skills and educational attainment levels by working with the college to ensure that the benefits of the Learning Bus are felt by those most in need of the support.

Sustainable Farming and Forestry

Northumberland Uplands will support initiatives which add value to the local farm products. NULAG will work with Business in the Community, local farmers and key stakeholders to assess the potential for a high value area based marquee. Currently, Business in the Community is undertaking market research to establish the potential for such an initiative. Prince Charles has pledged his commitment should there be value in developing an initiative in the Northumberland Uplands similar to ones in

the Peak District and Dartmoor. This initiative would add value to local produce, create greater cooperation between upland farmers and provide tangible benefits for the environment.

NULAG is committed to generating an ambition for innovation. *Northumberland Upwards* aims to facilitate new thinking in agricultural businesses by sharing the results of learning exercises from the area and from similar agricultural areas such as the North Pennines and Cumbrian Fells and Dales. Northumberland College will use their resources (Kirkley Hall and associated training venues and mobile venues) to help farm managers to increase their knowledge and test new ideas in a supportive environment. Land managers will be encouraged to look at their potential assets such as under-utilised buildings and small woodlands to see where they could contribute to the farm businesses income. Learning the successes and pitfalls of diversification will be a key enabler to make agricultural businesses stronger.

The beautiful landscape of the Northumberland Uplands has been shaped by land management practices of past generations. This inheritance is often thought of as being on loan for us to maintain and enhance for future generations. It provides priceless natural assets for community use, recreation, tourism and biodiversity. Effective maintenance can also protect cultural heritage features such as dry-stones walls, ancient woodlands, traditional hedgerows and historic buildings. The UK's commitment to reducing the effects of climate change can also be effectively assisted by sustainable woodlands and the management of the country's most effective natural carbon sinks – peat bogs. *Northumberland Upwards* is committed to provided training and development opportunities to provide land management skills for the upkeep and enhancement of the high quality environment. This offers:

- New businesses opportunities for existing agricultural businesses and employees
- A means to maximise the benefits to farmers from the growing funding from environmental land management support mechanisms under the Common Agricultural Policy, focussing on the delivery of wider eco-system services
- New pathways for young people to become introduced to land management employment
- Improvements to address the lack of highly-skilled crafts people in key areas including managing ancient woodlands and traditional building skills

NULAG is keen to work with farmers markets to ensure they are effective in supporting rural businesses from the Northumberland Uplands. A number of these markets will be outside the

Northumberland Uplands, however, it is recognised they benefit local businesses. Thus *Northumberland Upwards* will develop effective working relationships with regional farmers markets and also with the principal Market Town Initiatives at Hexham, Morpeth, Alnwick and Berwick-upon-Tweed.

The value of local produce is embedded as a new paradigm when the local population sees real value in purchasing the product. *Northumberland Upwards* will urge the local population to support local produce. Opinion formers such as local restaurant and shops are vital to the success and so working with local trade associations will be critical. The role of the public sector as a purchaser is also critical and their support will be needed to establish purchasing practices which take full account of their wider socio-economic remit including market development and reducing food miles.

Most agricultural businesses are price takers in a very competitive environment where the market can move dramatically in a short time. NULAG aims to support farmers to work together on initiatives which provide better supply chains, enhancing quality, adding value, and improving routes to market.

Northumberland Upwards also aims to build on the existing skills of the forestry sector businesses. Forestry contracting is a skilled occupation in which existing contractors are experienced and have often developed modifications to equipment and created working practices to suit local conditions. Local knowledge indicates that young people are not being attracted to forestry therefore *Northumberland Upwards* will aim to encourage opportunities for young people become involved with the forestry sector through supporting training and apprenticeships. In addition, it is generally recognised that there is potential increase the numbers employed in forestry and NULAG will work the Forestry Commission and business representatives to provide training for people to enter forestry employment.

To improve environment management of the woodlands it is recognised that skills transfer is required to enhance the skills of existing land management practitioners. NULAG will also seek to increase the economic potential of wood as a plentiful commodity in the Uplands. New ways will be sought to add value to wood within the area. Northumberland Uplands will look to provide low impact recreational opportunities for the local community and tourists, in order to enhance the attractiveness of the tourism and recreation economy.

NULAG is keen to provide ways in which the existing forestry sector can share and learn from innovative solutions to the local circumstances in the Northumberland Uplands. *Northumberland Upwards* will aim to capture best practice and disseminate this intelligence amongst the forestry business network.

Exemplar Activity: Traditional Boundaries Traditional Skills across the Northumberland Uplands



The Traditional Boundaries Traditional Skills project started in 2005, with the aim developing a five year pilot rural skills apprenticeship, which will train people in the management and repair of traditional boundaries and associated features such as gates, stiles and fences. Kevin Malone, Project Officer for Traditional Boundaries Traditional Skills, said

“By offering a service to farmers and landowners in boundary conservation and maintenance the project will provide on-site and workshop training to equip 50 apprentices with the necessary skills to enable them to achieve certification in the management and repair of traditional boundaries.”

The New Leader approach could help support rural apprenticeship schemes like this in a practical, effective and innovative way.

Tourism & Recreation

Northumberland Upwards aims to help further develop tourism in the area by working with the existing tourism networks and partnerships. NULAG are keen to support sustainable tourism which is most suitable to the area. The key objectives are to raise tourism business incomes, enhance the skills of staff and business managers, raise the quality and widen the breadth and duration of the tourism product offer.

The areas where Northumberland Uplands is looking to assist include:

- Developing business networks
- Supporting locally distinctive tourist offers
- Assisting the development of product offers which use the area's cultural assets (built heritage, history and traditions)
- Access to recreational opportunities
- Realising the potential of the natural assets such as landscape and excellent quality rivers and also the less obvious assets such as tranquillity and clear night skies

Integration is vital to the success of New Leader initiatives. Adding value to the tourism sector will require links to other priority areas such as promoting local food, sustainable energy initiatives, and community celebration events. NULAG will adopt the process developed through the One NorthEast led EU funded Interreg initiative (ASPECT) which developed a sustainable approach to cultural and environmental tourism. This is a bottom-up approach to community, land management, business and tourism sector joint working. Northumberland Uplands will explore the concept of 'heritage trails' to join-up the tourism product in a meaningful way within this remote rural area.

Northumberland Uplands tourism initiatives will be co-ordinated with the marketing and promotional work of Northumberland Tourism Limited. The sustainable tourism priorities are largely shared with Northumberland Coast and Lowlands and the North Pennine and Dales local action groups and joint activity is envisaged.

Exemplar Activity: Onwards and Upwards - Adding Value to the Cycle Tourism Offer



Cycle tourism is growing rapidly in the UK, in parallel with renewed interest in personal health and fitness, and with mounting concern over the environmental damage caused by road traffic. The development of the National Cycle Network, with 4,000 miles of route opening in June 2000 and 9,000 miles by 2005, provides both a catalyst and an opportunity for local authorities, tourism promoters and other agencies to define cycle route development and marketing strategies to benefit from cycle tourism.

Giles Ingram, Executive Director at Northumberland Tourism Limited, said “In Spring this year a number of destination plans for market towns were produced which recommend better cycle and walking links between towns and the National Park and long distance trails, as well as some new short circular routes from towns. We need to assess these recommendations against other cycle route development requests from elsewhere in the county, but at this early stage the rationale for development based around towns is looking very strong.”

The New Leader approach aims to use the market towns as hubs for sustainable rural development in and around the Northumberland Uplands. Investment in this area will further help to unlock their potential.

Northumberland Upwards is aligned with the aims and objectives of the following associated strategies:

- Leading the Way: Regional Economic Strategy (2006-2016)
- A Secure Future for the Land of the Far Horizons: Northumberland National Park Management Plan (3rd Review)
- Trees, Woodlands, Forests... and People: The Regional Forestry Strategy (2007)
- Releasing the Strength of our Communities: A Sustainable Community Strategy for Northumberland to 2021 (2007)
- Working Together: Local Area Agreement for Northumberland (2006-2009)

- Facing the Future: The Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food (2002)
- North East Tourism Strategy (2005-2010)

Further details can be found in Section 9. The NULAG appreciate that this list is not exhaustive, but will ensure that the links flow through the application process, so project managers can see how their venture can contribute to the delivery of the relevant strategy or strategies.

Exemplar Activity: A Farmers' Marketing Initiative for the Northumberland Uplands



Business in the Community has already commissioned a feasibility study looking at the potential to develop a farmers' marketing initiative in the area. The aim is to help sustain the rural farming community while providing consumers with high-quality, locally-sourced food. The study is looking at both the supply and demand side, and there have been discussions with stakeholders to gauge support and understand how this might work alongside other regional activities. The feasibility study was launched following a visit to the area by The Prince of Wales in 2007.

James Jansen, from Business in the Community said "Local produce and local consumption are key components of sustainable rural development. This initiative is about supporting local farmers, supporting the rural economy, and retaining the natural heritage and character of our countryside. It would be great if we could capitalise on the extremely positive feedback received so far by putting forward proposals through to the New Leader approach to help establish this new initiative in the area."

The New Leader approach could really help initiatives such as this take off, and in doing so, the benefits are likely to be delivered across all the rural development Axes, including everything from micro-enterprise development, sustainable farming and forestry, bioenergy, and sustainable communities, while also helping to enrich and enhance the tourism and recreation offer.

Section 4

Financial & Administrative Capacity

“There are many areas where Business Link North East will be able to work in partnership with Northumberland National Park Authority to help deliver the Local Development Strategy. The reference to the business support and training elements of a Partner Support Group is welcomed, and it is felt that Business Link North East would be able to contribute towards this element.”

Rachel Ford, Head of Policy

Business Link North East, March 2008

The NULAG has the key leadership and decision making role within the Northumberland Uplands. This role involves changing mindsets by intervening in areas of market failure, by providing high quality services efficiently, employing best practice in environmental management, resource allocation, and encouraging sustainable consumption and production. All delivery partners recognise the responsibility to challenge and champion the Northumberland Uplands. The exercise of strong leadership is a means to an end; an improvement in the Northumberland Upland’s socio-economic performance.

Implementing Northumberland Upwards: Financial Capacity

Northumberland National Park Authority will be the accountable body for the New Leader approach because:

- The National Park is ideally placed at the heart of the Northumberland Uplands
- The Authority has experience of being effective accountable officers for external partnerships
- The Authority is able to draw down funds additional from defra, which minimise the bureaucracy in the grant-making process

The National Park Authority has acted as the accountable body for regeneration initiatives which have often operated as much outside the National Park’s boundaries as inside. The Authority’s track record is built upon nationally recognised initiatives such as the EU funded *Electricity for Enterprise* (£2million) and the Single Regeneration Budget Hadrian’s Wall *Enrichment and Enterprise* initiative, which invested £4.5million over a five year period. The National Park Authority will ensure that best practice models, such as the Fells and Dales Leader+, are taken into consideration. This will augment

the Authority's experience and knowledge in operating European Regional Development Funds, European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund and the European Social Fund.

Implementing Northumberland Upwards: Administrative Capacity

Northumberland National Park Authority will employ one new full-time Officer to support the effective delivery of the New Leader approach. This Officer will:

- Be the first point of contact for customers
- Co-ordinate the NULAG enquires
- Help build relationships with a wide range of people and organisations interested in the New Leader approach
- Be responsible for communications, including maintenance of the new website (www.nuleader.eu) and its linkages to the Northumberland Rural Voices Network (www.ruralvoices.org.uk)
- Liaise with local communities to raise awareness of the New Leader approach
- Become competent in community and business consultation techniques and practices
- Understand EU legislation with regards to the technical appraisals
- Present applications for appraisal
- Servicing the decision-making process
- Issue Grant Offer / Funding Allocation Letters
- Oversee grant payment, monitoring, and reviews

Implementing Northumberland Upwards: Delivery Capacity

Project development and delivery will be undertaken by a range of partners across the Northumberland Uplands, for example, tourism partnerships (e.g. Kielder, Hadrian's Wall Heritage, Northumberland), community partnerships (e.g. Haltwhistle, Tarsset 2050 Community Interest Company, Mid-Tyne, North-Tyne and Redesdale, Glendale, Castle Morpeth Rural West), estates (e.g. Northumberland Estates, Lilburn Estates, Defence Estates, the National Trust), and business advisors (e.g. Castle Morpeth Business Forum, Rothbury Business Club, the Prince's Trust, Northwoods, Rural Enterprise Action, Business Link). Community Action Northumberland will contribute three Community Development Officers. Further details of the organisations likely to be involved with the delivery can be found in Section 10.

The public sector will help these delivery partners wherever possible. Northumberland National Park Authority will have at least 27 operational staff contributing in some part to the delivery of the New Leader approach through their ongoing work. This includes:

- Community Enterprise (5)
- Farming and Rural Enterprise (4)
- National Park Rangers (10)
- Area Operations Business Management (2)
- Visitor Development (3)
- Landscape and Recreation (3)

The Forestry Commission will provide at least two woodland advisors. During the first year of the New Leader approach, the local district councils at Tynedale, Alnwick, Morpeth, and Berwick upon Tweed will support the process through their Community and Economic Development staff, supported by the four Local Strategic Partnerships. As soon as Northumberland's Single Unitary Authority is up and running in 2009, their frontline staff will be brought on board with the Northumberland Uplands New Leader approach.

Resources

Northumberland National Park Authority has the skills, experience and resources to help NULAG to operate effectively. As the accountable body the Authority offers:

- An Executive Director experienced in economic regeneration and in governance arrangements to provide strategic support with managing regeneration initiatives and in operating an independent grants giving body for sustainable development
- A professional financial support team and systems which are subject to Audit Commission external auditing and independent ongoing review by auditors Bentley- Jennison. The Authority's systems are assessed as providing significant reassurance

Existing partners are committed to providing facilitation and animation services to ensure an effective roll-out of Northumberland Uplands.

NULAG will see the administrative resources available from the Leader Programme to support:

- Additional capacity for administrative and communication activity
- Develop the Local Action Group
- Engage with hard to reach sectors such as young people
- In a period of significant change NULAG are keen to maintain flexibility to resource gaps in support mechanisms

Working in Partnership

From the 24 NULAG members, 11 have experience in regeneration programmes (Section 1), and 18 have experience at partnership working, in one capacity or another.

Experience of partnership working:

- North Pennines Leader II and Leader+, all North East LAGs (Adelle Rowe)
- Trustee of the Kielder Calvert Trust (Anna Charlton)
- Community Council for Northumberland (Anne Lowrie and Deputy Chair Norman Dunn).
- District Councillor, National Farmers Union (Anthony Murray)
- Northumberland Bioenergy Groups, Leader+ mid-Wales (David Clubb)
- Northumberland Federation of Young Farmers, Rural Apprenticeship Schemes (Elizabeth Stewart)
- Rural Villages Representative (Heather Hunter)
- ConFor Regional Director for North of England, Director of Border Consultants (Forestry) Limited (Jane Karthaus)
- Cheviot Parish Grouping (Johnny Wilson)
- Director of Operations at Whitehaven Development Company, Chair of Western Lake District Tourism Partnership, various North of England major regeneration initiatives (Marie Whitehead)
- Development programmes in Africa, Tynedale Enterprise Project (Mike Murray)
- North Northumberland Leader+ (Norman Dunn)
- Parish Councillor at Wallington Demense (Paul Nicol)
- Highland Regional Council, Trustee and Treasurer of the Glendale Gateway Trust (Roger Miket)
- Director of Tyne Team Limited, Company Secretary of Tarsset 2050, Tynedale Enterprise Project, advisor to Business Link (Roger Wilson)
- Business Advisor with defra, Natural England, the Environment Agency, farmers and local owners (Stuart Moss)

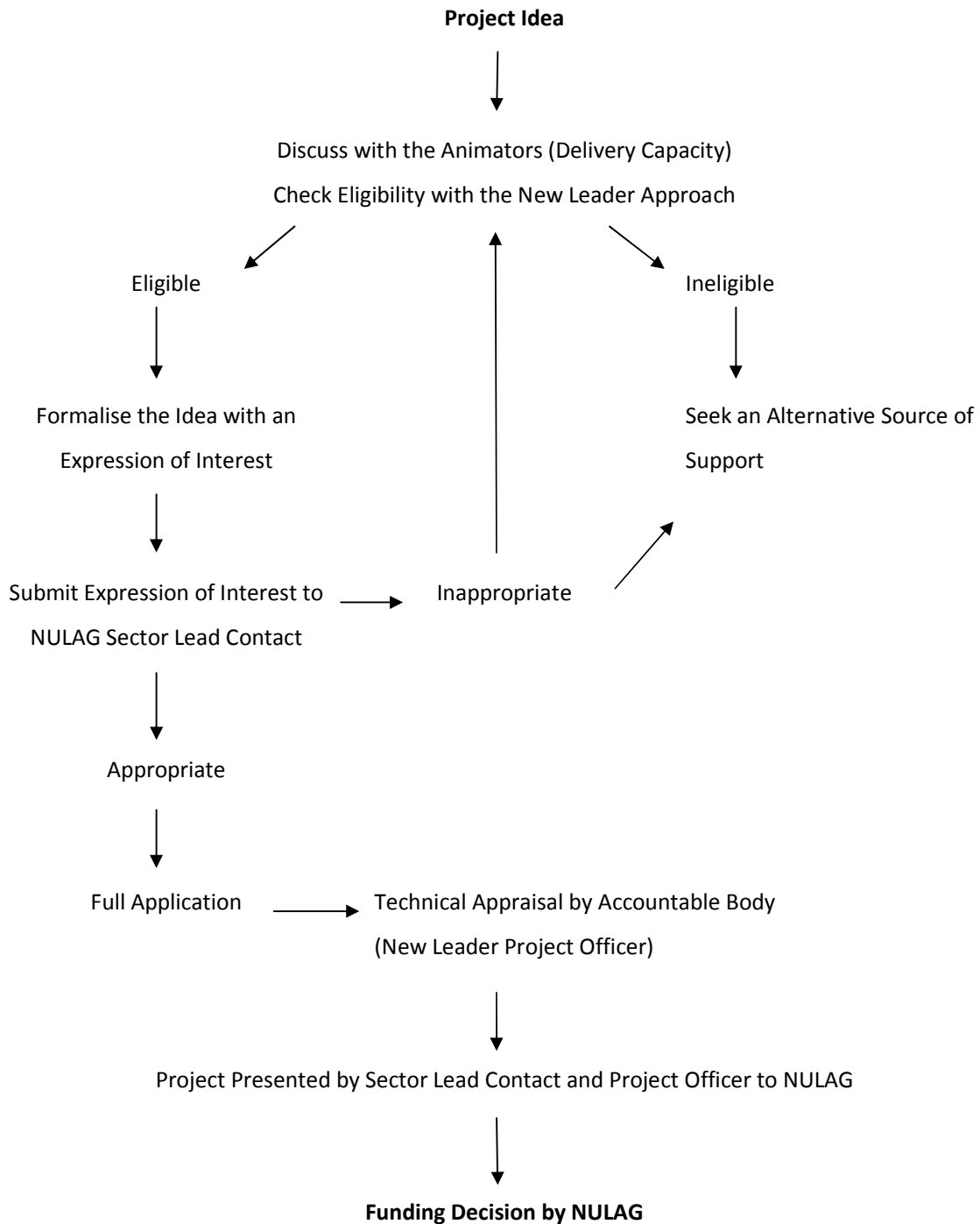
- Parish Councillor, Federation of Northumberland Young Farmers (Vincent Milburn)
- Greenhead Farmers Market, North Pennines Leader II and Leader+ (Wendy Bond)
- Glendale Trust (Anthony Murray and Johnny Wilson).

Funding Large Grants and Small Grants

Learning from previous Leader programmes, the NULAG will aim to minimise bureaucracy, whilst maintaining appropriate audit systems. This means that although the funding decisions for Large Grants and Small Grants will not be identical, both processes will need the same level of accountability. By making the distinction, it will ensure that the main NULAG will concentrate most of their time considering the larger projects put forward, and the Sector Lead Contacts will be empowered to make funding decisions for smaller projects against a pre-determined set of criteria, evidenced by an objective scoring system. The exact funding available under both levels will be determined by NULAG before the New Leader approach starts in 2008.

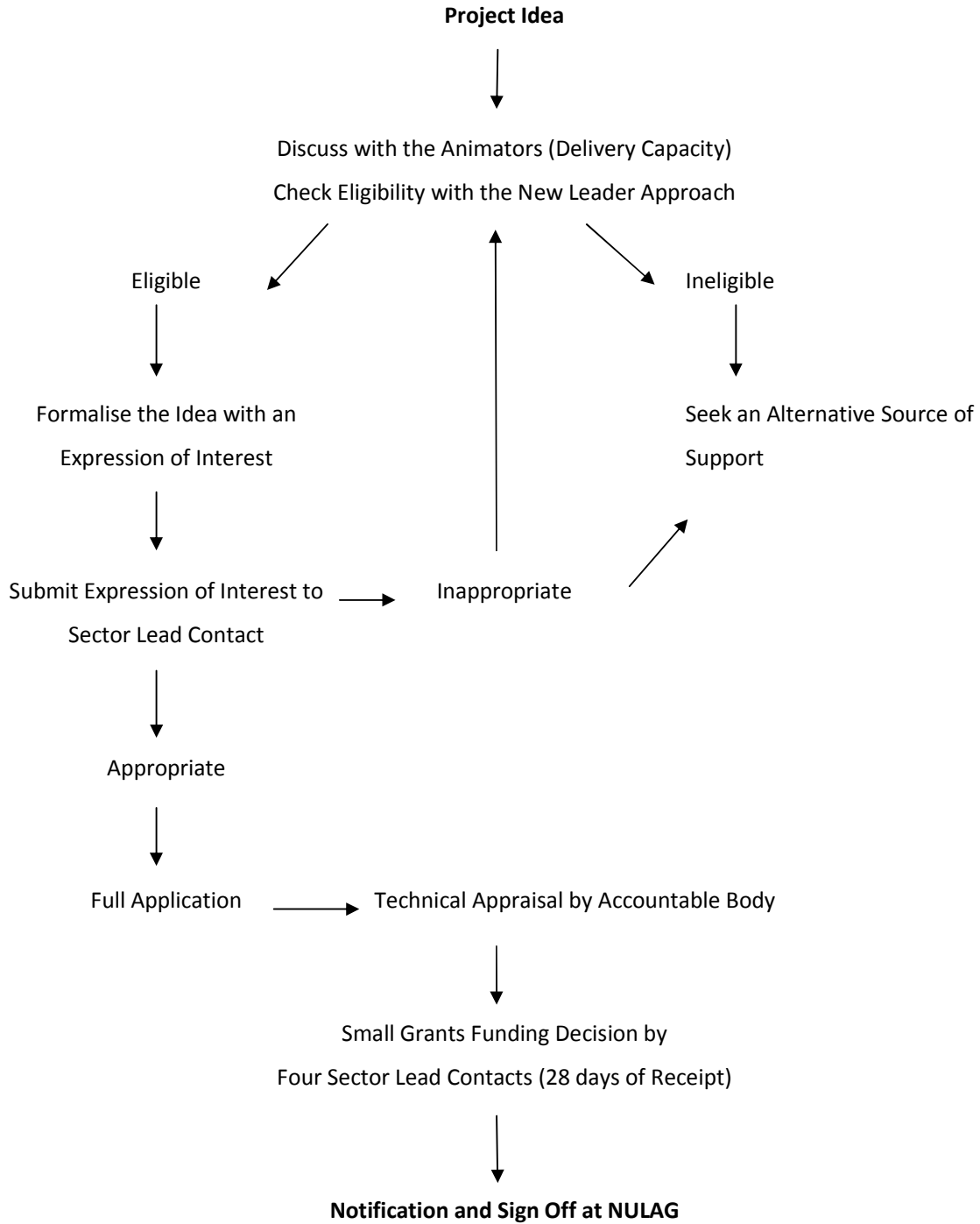
The Project Selection Process (Large Grants)

The following diagram represents how the project selection criteria for Large Grants will work, incorporating the decision-making body. Funding decisions for large grants will be made within 8 to 12 weeks of submission of a funding application.



The Project Selection Process (Small Grants)

The following diagram represents how the project selection criteria for Small Grants will work, incorporating the decision-making body. All funding decisions will aim to be made within 28 days.



Project Selection Criteria

With limited resources available, it is important that there are clear criteria for assessing the relative merits of any project put forward for funding. Every project, regardless of whether it is for a Small or Large Grant, will be assessed against the following core criteria:

- Ability to meet the aims of the New Leader approach
- Whether it represents value for money (cost of outputs and need for Leader funding)
- Whether it levers in funding from other resources (if applicable)
- Whether there is potential to add value to the idea that has come forward

Assessments will be made using an Objective Scoring System. This will directly align to the Application Form and Guidance Notes. The principles of sustainable development will flow through all documentation, to make sure that all projects contribute to this over-riding aim, no matter which theme it may fall under. Further details on how NULAG is going to implement and measure sustainable development can be found in Section 6.

Appeals Panel

Although every effort will be made to ensure that only suitable projects are put forward to the NULAG for a decision, there will be instances where project ideas are rejected. For these reasons, and to give the NULAG full accountability, an Appeals Panel will also form part of the governance structure.

The Appeals Panel will consist of:

- The non-voting Chair of the NULAG (1)
- Two members who were not part of the original decision that was made (2)
- The Executive Director of the Partner Support Group (1)
- An appropriate second member of the Partner Support Group (1)

All members of the Appeals Panel will undertake the appraisal using the Objective Scoring System, and taking into consideration feedback received by the applicant as to why they would like their idea to be reconsidered. The decision of the Appeals Panel will be final.

Section 5

Fit with National Programme Objectives

"I am delighted that One NorthEast has launched its fund to invest in making the North East an even better place for rural people to live and work in, and where rural businesses can prosper and grow. This is part of a record investment of £3.9 billion by the Government in rural development in England between now and 2013. It will help our farming, food and forestry industries to thrive and become more competitive, and enhance opportunity for rural businesses and communities."

Jonathan Shaw, Minister for Rural Affairs

Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) Launch, May, 2008

National Objectives of the RDPE

The Rural Development Programme for England is the mechanism for delivering money allocated to England from the European Union and defra via the European Fund for Rural Development from 2007 until 2013. **Northumberland Upwards** fits directly with the objectives of the Rural Development Programme for England.

The NULAG recognise that **micro-enterprise development** is essential for a healthy rural economy. Through RDPE the North East region encourage entrepreneurial activity both within and outside traditional land based industries.

Key objectives for RDPE are:

- Increasing business start ups
- Strengthening existing businesses
- Improving sustainability of rural businesses
- Creating markets for rural business products and services

The NULAG aims to increase rural employment opportunities through entrepreneurial activity and by helping existing micro-businesses grow using innovation and technology to reach new markets.

RDPE will help entrepreneurs develop skills, including traditional land based skills, to enable them to strengthen their business and product offer.

These objectives contribute to the overall national objectives of Axes 1 and 3 (see Section 7).

The **natural and cultural assets** theme will be principally delivered through:

- Environmental Stewardship (Natural England)
- The Energy Crops Scheme (Natural England)
- English Woodland Grant Scheme (Forestry Commission)

Whilst this will allow New Leader funding to be prioritised at the other themes, it will also challenge the RDPE partners to work as partners to maximise the benefits of projects that span the themes.

The NULAG believe that the quality of the natural and cultural assets directly affect all the other themes, and that opportunities to maximise the assets should be exploited wherever possible.

Bioenergy is the use of plant or animal based products to generate energy. It covers two linked but distinct areas – biomass and biofuels.

- Biomass refers to the use of solid materials such as woodchip for the generation of heat and/or electricity
- Biofuels covers liquid fuels used in engines to provide motive power

In the North East region RDPE funds will be used to increase the production and use of biomass and biofuels.

Key objectives for RDPE:

- Developing the commercial market for biofuels
- Developing the market for biomass products
- Developing the biomass supply chain infrastructure
- Contributing to a reduction in climate change

The RDPE partnership is keen to see, as a result of strategic investment, networks emerging that promote bioenergy and that help increase the numbers of farmers and foresters diversifying into this area.

These bioenergy objectives contribute to the overall national objectives of Axes 1, 2 and 3 (see Section 7).

Rural communities in our region will have support to tackle social disadvantage. Investments through the RDPE will aim to create the conditions for growth to sustain viable communities.

Key objectives for RDPE:

- Creating the conditions for innovative rural service design
- Strengthening rural communities to work together on local solutions to local problems, improving quality of life and equity in rural areas
- Using environmental, cultural and heritage assets to improve quality of life and economic opportunity for rural communities

RDPE aims to work with community groups to increase access to essential services and facilities. Collaboration and networking between community groups is encouraged as well as the creation and strengthening of social enterprises. They can then be used as deliverers of community services and increased economic activity.

These sustainable community objectives contribute to the overall national objectives of Axes 2 and 3 (see Section 7).

To ensure **sustainability of the farming and forestry** industries in our region there is a need to maintain and improve their competitiveness. RDPE can assist by supporting the development of the supply chain.

Key objectives for RDPE:

- Increasing the competitiveness of farming and forestry industries by responding to the market and changes in demand
- Creating a market focused farming sector, producing food and non food crops efficiently;
- Increased collaboration and co-operation within supply chains
- Farm businesses accessing new markets and producing new added value products in areas such as renewable energy, non-food crops and high value food
- Woodland managers and forestry supply chain businesses accessing new markets and developing business opportunities associated with woodland and quality forest products

These sustainable farming and forestry objectives contribute to the overall national objectives of Axes 1, 2 and 3 (see Section 7).

Tourism can drive sustainable economic development and is particularly important in rural areas. Through the RDPE, the NULAG aim to support the tourism and recreation industry in our region.

Key objectives for RDPE:

- Promoting tourism and recreation as an opportunity for business start up and diversification
- Enhancing the contribution of rural areas to the tourism offer of the North East;
- Improving the quality of the rural tourism offer in our region
- Exploring innovative ways of using rural natural, cultural, geological and historic assets in a sustainable way

The NULAG will encourage businesses in our region to work together to improve the tourism offer. By encouraging innovation, collaboration and networking, the region's tourism and recreation industry can continue to build its competitiveness – both nationally and internationally.

These tourism and recreation objectives contribute to the overall national objectives of Axes 2 and 3 (see Section 7).

Northumberland Upwards positively encourages rural businesses and communities to work together to achieve the greatest impact across the Axes. Effectively co-ordinating business and community solutions will be preferred ahead of individual, one-off and isolated interventions. The NULAG will ensure the limited funds make the greatest impact by focussing on the key needs and opportunities. There is a strong drive to promote the sharing of knowledge across and beyond the Northern region's rural areas. This entails both celebrating success, and constructively learning from disappointments.

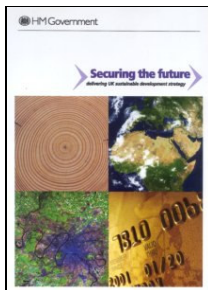
Section 6

Integration of Sustainable Development Principles

“Sustainable development should be the organizing principle of all democratic societies, underpinning all other goals, policies and processes. It provides a framework for integrating economic, social and environmental concerns over time, not through crude trade-offs, but through the pursuit of mutually reinforcing benefits. It promotes good governance, healthy living, innovation, life-long learning and all forms of economic growth which secure the natural capital upon which we depend. It reinforces social harmony and seeks to secure each individual’s prospects of leading a fulfilling life.”

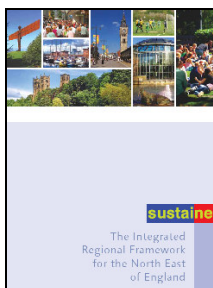
***Jonathon Porritt, Programme Director of Forum for the Future,
Chairman of the UK Sustainable Development Commission, November 2004***

The UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy, *Securing the Future*, was launched by the Prime Minister in March 2005, and builds on the 1999 strategy, *A Better Quality of Life*. It sets out the goal of sustainable development as enabling all people throughout the world to satisfy their own basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations. *Securing the Future* outlined 68 indicators by which to review progress, along with evidence, in four priority areas:



- Sustainable consumption and production
- Climate change and energy
- Natural resource protection and enhancing the environment
- Creating sustainable communities and a fairer world

The NULAG is committed to sustainable development. The long term future of the Northumberland Uplands will depend upon achieving a sustainable balance between the need to create wealth through socio-economic development, and maintaining the high quality environment which will makes wealth creation possible.



Although it is recognised that sustainable development is the responsibility of all regional partners, *Sustaine*, as the regional partnership for sustainable development in the North East, is well placed to provide a leadership role in this area. The Integrated Regional Framework developed by Sustaine and launched in March 2008 provides a basis on which to assess the development of strategies such as *Northumberland Upwards*. This strategy has been developed within this framework.

Beyond this, the NULAG will seek to build links with Sustaine and to use them not only as a resource but as a way of sharing best practice.

Although sustainable development is a sophisticated concept, it is in essence a long-term process, with long-term benefits. Incorporating sustainable development principles requires good planning, management and design techniques, and will ultimately result in a more sustainable lifestyle. Reducing carbon emissions and maximising resource efficiency are particularly important, alongside the development of effective renewable energy systems and environmentally conscious waste reduction.



The NULAG believes that the principles of sustainable development must flow through the entire New Leader approach. By embedding the indicators in the application process, project managers will have to adopt a sustainable development approach at an early stage of the project planning, in order to be considered for support.

The defra publication, *Sustainable Development Indicators in Your Pocket 2007*, is an excellent tool for developing the application process, including the Objective Scoring System (Section 4).

Projects will be assessed on sustainable development against a set of indicators, for example:

Social Sustainability

- Engage local communities and / or volunteers in planning, delivery and operation
- Involve young people
- Engage people from an urban centre with the Northumberland Uplands
- Add value or new dimensions to an existing sustainability project
- Support cultural heritage
- Enhance the visitor experience
- Protect the historic environment
- Provide an event for the public to understand and enjoy the Northumberland Uplands
- Reduce of the fear of crime
- Improve the wellbeing of older people
- Address health inequalities
- Improve access to rural services
- Any other social sustainability factors

Economic Sustainability

- Educate and raise awareness of the need for sustainable development
- Bring different organisations together as partners to tackle rural problems in the
- Support rural diversification
- Contribute to the development of local career structures by providing training
- Use the Internet to promote the project as an example of sustainable development
- Result in an increased level of spend in the local economy
- Create local employment
- Use sustainable transport
- Conserve the energy produced
- Minimises the production of waste
- Use local produce to support local consumption
- Help address rural homelessness
- Any other economic sustainability factors

Environmental Sustainability

- Develop models for sustainable living in the Northumberland Uplands that can be applied elsewhere
- Involve the sustainable management of land
- Involve sustainable organic farming practices
- Improves public access to the Northumberland Uplands
- Conserve and enhance biodiversity
- Reduce the project's carbon footprint and offset carbon
- Provide a new use for an existing site
- Generate energy in a sustainable way
- Use recycling wherever feasible
- Reduce the risk of flooding
- Protect the quality of the waterways in the Northumberland Uplands
- Help to safeguard protected species
- Any other environmental sustainability factors

Although this list is not exhaustive, it indicates how the principles of sustainable development could fit the New Leader approach. As it is unlikely that a single project could deliver every aim and the NULAG would look for a range of projects that can hit these targets over the duration of the New Leader programme.

The NULAG believe that the principles of sustainable development must inform the whole New Leader approach. An excellent way of doing this, and raising awareness of sustainable development, is to celebrate success. Good news stories will be released through the New Leader approach, with a particular emphasis on projects that are innovative, and those which have successfully raised local aspirations.

Sustainable Development Fund and Action Areas

Since 2002, Northumberland National Park Authority has managed the defra financed Sustainable Development Fund. This expertise will be built into the New Leader approach. The Sustainable Development Fund is complimented by the National Park's Action Areas. These four locations, at Hadrian's Wall, North Tyne and Redesdale, the Cheviots Hills, and Coquetdale, divide a fund to

empower, expand, and enhance the localised rural capacity, delivering a joined-up approach to social, economic and environmental development.

Both sources of funding enable local partnerships to develop their own profile, ownership, leadership and legacy arrangements. Both the Sustainable Development Fund and the Action Areas are bottom-up approaches to rural development. All National Park Authorities are subject to the same high level of audit and probity as principal local authorities. Thus Northumberland National Park Authority has robust and transparent arrangements in place to ensure it takes decisions in an efficient and effective manner. This provides a high level of assurance to potential partners, and places the Authority in a sound position to take on responsibility for the New Leader Approach.

With the New Leader approach running until 2013, work will begin in 2011 to determine how the progress achieved will continue beyond the life of the RDPE. Sustainable development does not stop when the funding runs out; it is here forever, and one way or another, it must continue.

The aim is that by the conclusion of this phase of the New Leader approach, the principles of sustainable development will be so embedded across the Northumberland Uplands that they become second nature to anyone carrying out project work, regardless of the source of any funding sought. The New Leader approach, operating alongside the Northumberland National Park Sustainable Development Fund, Action Areas funds, and other funding programmes, will act as a pioneer to every other funding distributor.

Section 7

Integration Across Objectives of the 3 Axes

“Integration across all the axes of the RDPE is a key objective of the Programme. Achieving this will require close working between all relevant bodies. Natural England and the Forestry Commission might, for example, assist in the setting up of LAGs, helping to build their capacity and encouraging their strategies to address environmental as well as socio-economic objectives.”

*Notes on the Implementation of the Leader Approach
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, July 2007*

To make sure that RDPE funding in North East England is invested in the most effective ways, a set of priority themes have been produced, as stated in the **North East Implementation Plan (NEIP)**. These have been developed after consideration of defra’s proposed priorities, the regional evidence base and consultation with stakeholders. The themes cover elements of environmental, social and economic need and opportunity. Each of the themes will be subject to continuous review, evolving over the lifetime of the programme, to ensure that they remain appropriate for the region.

The Leader approach does not need to be tied to the specific measures under Axis 1, 2 or 3. But it is required to contribute to the overall objectives of the other Axes – improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sector; improving the environment and the countryside; improving the quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy. The New Leader approach (Axis 4) therefore spans the programme priorities. Nationally it has been recognised that the New Leader approach is most effective in mobilising the development potential of rural areas by stimulating innovation through projects and in the approach taken towards delivery. This enables new solutions to be found to deep seated problems. Importantly this should also promote the transfer and adaptation of innovations developed elsewhere. The NULAG will ensure sufficient resources are allocated to provide adequate levels of skills acquisition and capacity building. The majority of the funds will be made available for project activity delivering the objectives of the other three axes and thus implementing the Local Development Strategy.

Micro-Enterprise Development

Encouraging entrepreneurial activity in rural North East both within and outside of traditional land based industries

Integration Across the Three Axes

- Axis 1 – Vocational training
- Axis 1 – Use of advisory services
- Axis 1 – Improving economic value of forests
- Axis 1 – Adding value to agric & forestry products
- Axis 1 – Cooperation & development of new products
- Axis 3 – Diversification into non-agricultural activities
- Axis 3 – Micro-enterprise support
- Axis 3 – Encouragement of tourism
- Axis 3 – Basic services
- Axis 3 - Training & information

Bioenergy

To increase the production and use of biomass and biofuels in the North East region

Integration Across the Three Axes

- Axis 1 – Vocational training
- Axis 1 – Use of advisory services
- Axis 1 – Improving economic value of forests
- Axis 1 – Adding value to agric & forestry products
- Axis 1 – Cooperation & development of new products
- Axis 1 – Improve & develop infrastructure
- Axis 2 – Afforestation measures
- Axis 3 – Diversification into non-agricultural activities
- Axis 3 – Micro-enterprise support
- Axis 3 – Encouragement of tourism
- Axis 3 – Basic services
- Axis 3 – Training & information

Sustainable Communities

Supporting rural communities in tackling social disadvantage through creating the conditions for growth to sustain viable communities

Integration Across the Three Axes

- Axis 2 – Agri-Environment payments
- Axis 3 – Basic services
- Axis 3 – Training & information

Sustainable Farming & Forestry

To support the development of farming and forestry supply chain businesses in order to create a more effective farming and forestry sector

Integration Across the Three Axes

- Axis 1 – Vocational training
- Axis 1 – Use of advisory services
- Axis 1 – Improving economic value of forests
- Axis 1 – Adding value to agric & forestry products
- Axis 1 – Cooperation & development of new products
- Axis 1 – Improve & develop infrastructure
- Axis 2 – Agri-Environment payments
- Axis 2 – Afforestation measures
- Axis 3 – Diversification into non-agricultural activities
- Axis 3 – Micro-enterprise support
- Axis 3 – Basic services
- Axis 3 – Training & information

Tourism & Recreation

To support tourism and recreation as a driver for sustainable economic development in the North East

Integration Across the Three Axes

- Axis 2 – Agri-Environment payments
- Axis 3 – Diversification into nonagricultural activities
- Axis 3 – Micro-enterprise support
- Axis 3 – Encouragement of tourism
- Axis 3 – Basic services
- Axis 3 - Training & information

Summary

Whilst the national strategic focus for the Rural Development Programme for England is clearly on the rural economy, *Northumberland Upwards* aspires to include measures aimed at enhancing the quality of life in rural areas. In particular the New Leader approach will:

- Encourage rural businesses and communities to work together to maximise impact. Co-ordinated business and co-ordinated community solutions will be preferred ahead of individual, one-off and often isolated interventions
- Ensure the limited funds make the greatest impact by focussing on key defined areas of need and opportunity
- Promote the sharing of knowledge across and beyond the Region's rural areas. Celebrate success and constructively learn from failures
- Maintain flexibility throughout the lifetime of Leader programme to enable the Northumberland Uplands Leader Partnership to respond to changing circumstances and priorities

Northumberland Upwards aims to promote innovative solutions to improving both technical and business skills by training and helping people adapt to shifts in the policy framework such as responding to agricultural grant reforms, or animal health and welfare legislation. The key principle of the New Leader approach will be applied to encourage greater collaboration and cooperation both between local people and established partners. The NULAG will look for ways for local people to add value to their projects at the local level and develop their capacity and skills to meet market

demands and secure a viable and sustainable activity. Northumberland Uplands is developed in such a way as to enable communities and small businesses to make links with aspects of the RDPE. This will provide those communities with a first step on the ladder to provide connectivity to the wider RDPE.

“Cooperation goes much further than networking. It involves a Local Action Group undertaking a joint project with another Leader group, or with a group taking a similar approach, in another region, Member State, or even third country. Cooperation can help Leader groups to boost their local activities. It can allow them to resolve certain problems or add value to local resources.”

***The Leader Approach Fact Sheet,
European Commission Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development, 2006***

NULAG’s principal aim is to stimulate aspiration for innovation. This aim requires the sharing and learning from best practice from all relevant sources. Thus Northumberland Upland’s commitment to cooperation is more than networking. Cooperation involves the development of joint projects with other New Leader Local Action Groups to further the objectives of the wider rural development strategy. NULAG aim to use cooperation to add value to the New Leader approach by obtaining access to new ideas, learning from other areas, stimulating and supporting innovation, making best use of resources, and improving skills and delivery.

The key aims of the Northumberland Uplands Leader Local Development Strategy are to:

- Stimulate micro-enterprise development including encouraging young people to enter into business
- Create a more prosperous farming sector
- Maximise the potential of the forest assets including developing its full environmental and economic potential including bio energy
- Create more sustainable communities
- Support tourism as a sustainable driver of economic development

The initial focus of the NULAG will build on the links made through the consultation on the Expression of Interest and the consultation on the draft Local Development Strategy with neighbouring areas in the Scottish Borders and the north of England. This will focus on links already made with the Scottish Borders Lothian, Northumberland Coast and Lowlands, and the North Pennines, which share common geographical, economic and social issues. In addition links will be further developed with LAGs in the North West of England and in North Yorkshire where there are

similarities in approach to rural development and good practice in terms of governance arrangements, adding value to local farm produce and using local wood supplies to tackle fuel poverty.

Early cooperation projects are likely to result from areas on synergy with strategic priorities, particularly the South of Scotland Competitiveness Strategy and the Regional Economic Strategy for the North East of England. These strategies provide frameworks for economic development for the period 2007-13. The Strategies aim to ensure there is a dynamic and entrepreneurial attitude within our communities and local businesses, and identifies several key priority areas which are aligned with the strategic aims of the New Leader approach.

NULAG will work across boundaries to help deliver benefits for the Northumberland Uplands. Support has already been gathered from New Leader partners in Scotland, the Coast and Lowlands and the North Pennines, to work across the borders where collaborative working will be mutually beneficial and provide synergy with other rounded business solutions. The results of this collaboration to date are identified in the table below:

Initiative	LAG Partner(s)	Target Groups
Bio-fuel as a driver for new enterprises in the rural area	Scottish Borders	Micro businesses Young People Underemployed / low wage Geographically disadvantaged
Sustainable Tourism Added Value Marque	Northumberland Coast & Lowlands and North Pennine and Dales	Micro businesses Women Young people Underemployed / low wage Farm diversification
Local Wood Supply as a Solution to Rural Fuel Poverty	North Yorkshire	Community groups Micro businesses Geographically disadvantaged

Initiative	LAG Partner(s)	Target Groups
Re-skilling in Traditional Skills for Maintaining and Enhancing the Built, Cultural and Environmental Heritage	North Pennine and Dales	Micro businesses Underemployed / low wage Young People Farm diversification
Young People into Business	Scottish Borders	Micro businesses Underemployed / low wage Young People Geographically disadvantaged
Asset Based Community Development	Northumberland Coast & Lowlands and North Pennines	Community groups Geographically disadvantaged

These are the areas where the NULAG will initially look to develop areas of cooperation. In addition, the delivery of the aims will lead to the identification of priority groups, particularly the development of cooperation projects involving women, young people and micro-enterprises. Cooperation projects will allow the NULAG to resolve specific local problems or add value to local resources by working in partnership with other rural areas in the region and the UK, and in the wider EU. It will provide opportunities to achieve the critical mass necessary to make a project viable or cost-effective, or for encouraging complementary actions, or for sharing specific skills and expertise. Projects examples could include joint marketing of farm products under a nationally recognised “family” brand, or developing a joint sustainable tourism initiative based on a shared cultural heritage (e.g. Christian Heritage) or environmental asset (e.g. the rivers on both sides on the Border).

Northumberland Upwards requires cooperation with existing partners and initiatives to achieve maximum effectiveness. Therefore the following linkages have been made and will be developed by NULAG:

Key Priority	Initiative	Cooperation with Non-Leader Partners
Agriculture	Adding Value to Farm Products	Business in the Community and existing initiatives in Dartmoor and Peak District, Made in Northumberland
Agriculture	Training and Skills development in innovative ideas	Kirkley Hall, Northumberland College
Forestry	Improved Management of environmentally important woodlands	Forest Challenge, Forestry Commission
Bio Energy	Improve the knowledge and skills of land managers and contractors	Ignite initiative, Northwoods
Bio Energy	Improve supply side skills	Newfuels initiative, Northwoods
Tourism	Cycle Hub Development from Market Towns	Northumberland Strategic Partnership and Northumberland Tourism
Tourism	Nature and outdoor tourism activities	The Outdoor Activity Network
Tourism	Green Tourism and business development	One NorthEast / Northumberland Tourism Limited
Micro Business	Young People into Business	Removing Barriers to Work Strategy Unit , Prince's Trust and Rural Enterprise Action, Tynedale Virtual College
Micro Business	Rural Business Advice	Rural Advisors, Business Link North East
Sustainable Communities	Life-long Learning	Northumberland Strategic Partnership
Sustainable Communities	Access to training at development at remote locations	Northumberland College

A principal delivery mechanism is working with the large public, private and voluntary sector estates to drive forward and embed the innovative approaches of the new Leader programme. NULAG and the Partner Support Group include key contacts to enable cooperative work with the principal public sector estates (Forestry Commission and Ministry of Defence); voluntary sector estates (National Trust); and innovative manager from the private sector estates (Hesleyside and Meldon).

At the international level NULAG aims to learn and share experiences with similar remote upland rural areas who are addressing the same international macro-economic issues. For example, similar Northern European areas are looking at innovative to help remote rural areas to catch-up with the benefits produced by the dominant economic framework for city regions (e.g. Newcastle and Edinburgh). The cities are becoming “hot-spots” for economic development whereas the more remote rural areas (Northumberland Uplands, East Cumbria and Scottish Borders) are becoming relative “cold-spots”. Cooperation is therefore based on the economic characteristics of the areas which form the English and Scottish Borders where communities have had much in common for millennia.

Networking

NULAG will actively participate in the national and regional Leader networks. Good use will be made of the sub-regional networks with direct linkages being established with the Northumberland Strategic Partnership and its relevant sector boards. Full use will be made of virtual networking mechanisms such as the Northumberland “Rural Voices” e-Zine.

NULAG will actively participate in national and regional networking events through attendance and in contributing to meetings, field trips, events and seminars, and through the submission and presentation of case studies and project information. It is intended that NULAG will host visits, field trips and events for New Leader networks allowing all interested parties to take part. All supported projects will be required to include for effective facilitation networking activity, both within the UK and where appropriate at a transnational level.

NULAG will make maximum use of the opportunities of new web-based technologies and a dedicated and independent website will be used as the principal means of communication. This will be supported by more traditional means of communicating such as newsletter, annual reports, texting of events and an active presence at local agricultural shows. Practical options for establishing an extranet for NULAG, the Partner Support Group and the Wider Forum will be explored.

Transferability

The Northumberland Uplands Leader structure has been developed to enable local delivery partners to mentor and encourage new projects through the New Leader approach. In providing this support the partners will draw on their own experiences with Leader+ and from similar projects and project proposals taking place and being developed elsewhere.

NULAG will hold a minimum of one event per year in Northumberland for participants and prospective participants to promote best practice using local examples, and examples from elsewhere. NULAG will also work with neighbouring areas such to hold joint best practice events. As part of the New Leader approach, NUAG will also encourage New Leader project groups to visit where appropriate other projects elsewhere in the UK and Europe. These 'learning journeys' would look at examples of best practice as well as promote best practice, and to explore opportunities for the development of joint projects.

Throughout the duration of the New Leader approach for the Northumberland Uplands, resources will be applied to capture key learning lessons and embed this knowledge with partner organisations. This will ensure that the process builds lasting capacity and knowledge with the local communities, businesses and partners. This is seen as a vital tool to ensure that this New Leader initiative is seen as an approach to new ways of working in rural areas and as such the benefits will be sustainable after the programme has concluded.

“The Northumberland Uplands New Leader approach fits closely with many aspects of Tynedale District Council’s Community Strategy. The themes are broad enough to encompass a wide range of activities, like promoting wellbeing, tourism and culture, while building inclusive and stronger communities. This local need is also captured by the wider Sustainable Communities Strategy.”

Richard Powell, Head of Community Regeneration

Tynedale Local Strategic Partnership

Although *Northumberland Upwards* will principally seek to assist with the delivery of the **North East Implementation Plan** and the **Regional Economic Strategy**, there are other strategic documents that will inform the New Leader approach. The delivery of the RDPE in the North East will contribute to a number of national, regional, and sub-regional strategies and will interface with several delivery frameworks. Rural areas and in particular land based and agricultural businesses have much to contribute to the social, environmental and economic capital in the North East Region and the RDPE will help in the development of these sectors as contributors to sustainable rural development.

North East Implementation Plan (2007-2013)



The North East Implementation Plan (NEIP) was developed by a steering group comprising the delivery partners, Natural England, One NorthEast and the Forestry Commission, supported by Government Office for the North East. The NEIP articulates the proposed principles, priorities and delivery arrangements for the RDPE which will be developed over the coming months.

Successful rural development should lead to sustainable rural communities that can work as partners to effectively manage change at a local level to ensure positive developments are pursued and negative impacts diminished. Sustainable communities are places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, well run and offer equality of opportunity. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to the environment and contribute to a high quality of life. The interaction between agriculture, tourism and the environment is complex and although the precise nature of the relationships between rural areas and their physical characteristics are unclear, there is a need for a more integrated approach to delivery. Tourism, for example, is driven by the high quality of the natural environment and the

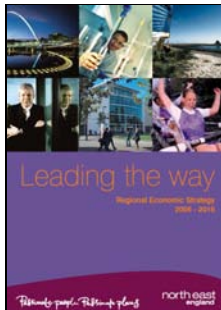
unique natural and historical assets of rural North East England. It is vital to ensure that these are not over exploited and degraded by unsustainable use for tourism and recreational purposes.

A set of cross cutting principles have been identified that will guide the process of identifying priorities for RDPE funding. These are:

- Sustainable development as a key driver for investment
- Innovative pilot projects to challenge areas of defined need
- Building on successful pilots
- A focus on facilitation and networking, animation and enablement
- Cohesion between the socio-economic and environmental elements of the programme
- Community driven, bottom up project development where appropriate

www.defra.gov.uk

Leading the Way: Regional Economic Strategy (2006-2016)



“The North East will be a region where present and future generations have a high quality of life. It will be a vibrant, self-reliant, ambitious and outward looking region featuring a dynamic economy, a healthy environment and a distinctive culture. Everyone will have the opportunity to realise their full potential.”

The North East is the smallest of England’s nine administrative regions in terms of population and, with the exception of London, is the smallest geographically. The size of the region maybe an advantage in that it has the potential to be more flexible and responsive. However, the economy is fragile and there is a need to consolidate and accelerate the restructuring process. Whereas the city region approach, based on thriving urban cores, will be the main growth driver for the region, the rural areas, including the Northumberland Uplands, have a key role to play for both the regional economy and quality of life, contributing towards the identity and cultural distinctiveness of the North East.

An essential part of establishing a sustainable rural economy for the Northumberland Uplands is the recognition that its market towns act as hubs for employment, businesses and services. The settlements in and around these hubs will be affected by their performance. The renaissance of market towns is a key driver for rural growth, employment and service delivery, to their rural hinterlands. An increasing number of businesses find a rural location offers a competitive advantage. Maximising the impact of knowledge based businesses growing and locating in rural areas is a regional priority. This will be achieved by building on current business support, skills, ICT, property and marketing investments.

Business

Northumberland Upwards recognises the importance of enterprise, in both encouraging and promoting start ups. The NULAG will exercise a measured risk-taking approach, which allows individuals and organisations to grow. The NULAG will draw on local expertise to reduce the fear of failure, which is often a barrier to start ups. Those engaged with the New Leader approach will act as catalysts for further growth in their neighbourhood. Self employment and business creation can be viable and rewarding. Rural communities will be encouraged to consider diversifying to become serial entrepreneurs and role models for others.

Target groups will include young people, women, and disadvantaged communities. Particular emphasis will be placed on young people, as the future entrepreneurs of the North East. The New Leader approach will focus on ideas generation, confidence development, networking and support programmes, drawing upon local skills to support entrepreneurs as mentors and champions.

People

The twin drivers of participation and productivity are inextricably linked, particularly in a rural area with a relatively small population. The NULAG will work hard to reduce poverty by tackling rural unemployment and worklessness through a variety of co-ordinated techniques that will help to bring people into employment. Young people have a valuable contribution to make as the region develops, and it is important they are suitably skilled to maximise their contribution to the local economy. If such an approach fails to take place, the Northumberland Uplands will run the risk of young people moving elsewhere for training, and then not returning to the area.

Skills are challenged by the below average earnings, leading to an out migration of workers, low

rates of business formation, an aging and declining population, and accessibility to training. In rural areas, where there is no critical mass to justify large scale provision of training, innovative methods of facilitating access to these opportunities, such as Tynedale Virtual College, will be encouraged. Skills provision, and ultimately skills attainment, is a key way of raising aspirations. *Northumberland Upwards* will aim to create a place where people embrace change, as the area looks to achieve higher standards of health and education, and a strong spiritual engagement with the cultural distinctiveness of the Northumberland Uplands. A high quality environment is fundamental to retaining and attracting new individuals.

Place

The Northumberland Uplands has a great deal to offer in terms of quality of place. The challenge is to ensure that the area continues to have the right mix of natural, recreational, cultural, lifestyle and other assets to help keep local people motivated, maintaining the vitality of the countryside. Efforts must continue to be made to link areas of opportunity with areas of disadvantage, and to work with communities suffering worklessness and deprivation to overcome the barriers they face in participating in economic activity. Rural areas provide significant opportunities for regional economic growth. The NULAG will aim to strategically intervene to maximise the economic potential of rural areas. A diverse and growing rural economy will be a key contributor to the region's overall economic performance

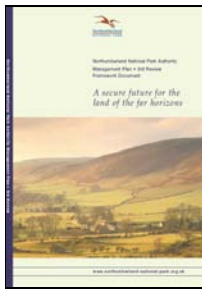
One of the distinctive features of the North East is the high number of relatively large settlements within rural areas on the edges of our city regions, for example Prudhoe. Many face problems similar to deprived urban areas, but these are exacerbated by perceived or actual remoteness from new economic opportunities. Aspirations and confidence levels are typically low. The key to realising success within these areas is joining up activity, ensuring such areas of deprivation can access opportunity, and that people are both enabled and have the confidence to take up economic opportunities.

Some of the problems faced are unique to rural locations. In particular, access to services is more difficult, for example accessing postal/delivery services, financial services, business support, and training and skills opportunities. A priority will therefore be to work with local people to develop innovative approaches to the design and implementation of rural services. The Northumberland Uplands must maximise the economic potential of environmental, heritage and cultural assets, since

they are the defining factors of the tourism offer, image and quality of life. The New Leader approach has the potential to build on such assets as the landscape itself, Hadrian's Wall, medieval castles and stately homes, and rural tranquillity.

www.onenortheast.co.uk

A Secure Future for the Land of the Far Horizons: Northumberland National Park Management Plan (3rd Review) (2003)



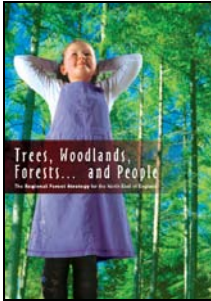
“Northumberland National Park Authority will be proactive, innovative and forward-looking, working towards a National Park with thriving communities and a sustainable local economy grounded in its special qualities, including a richness of cultural heritage and biodiversity, a true sense of tranquillity and a distinct character associated with a living, working landscape, in which everyone has an opportunity to understand, enjoy and contribute to those special qualities.”

Northumberland National Park Authority put the economy at the heart of its Vision in 2003, as the best way to achieve the purposes of a National Park is through working with the local community and other partners in a new form of sustainable rural development. A living landscape needs to be a vibrant community as countryside undergoes social and economic development. The special qualities of the National Park can be a source of new income and security for local communities because of the appeal of the landscape. The National Park is a regional asset, aiding the renaissance of the NorthEast through the promotion of regional distinctiveness and a high quality of life.

The local engagement and delivery structures established by the National Park Authority are ideally suited to the implementation of the New Leader approach.

www.northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk

Trees, Woodlands, Forests... and People: The Regional Forestry Strategy (2007)



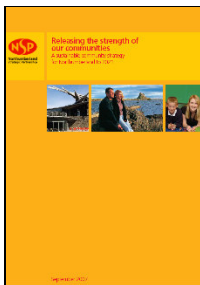
“Our trees, woodlands and forest will help this region become a better place for us all to live, work, visit and do business.”

The trees, woodlands and forests of the North East are renewable natural resources which already make significant contributions to the economic growth of the region. The Vision of the Forestry Strategy is for the trees and woodlands

to play an increasing role in the sustainable development of the region, helping to make the North East a better place for local people to live, work, visit and do business. Through the Regional Forestry Strategy, the aim is to identify where trees, woodlands and forests can deliver public benefits that will greatest contribution to the sustainable development of the North East.

www.forestry.gov.uk

Releasing the Strength of our Communities: A Sustainable Community Strategy for Northumberland to 2021 (2007)



“Our vision is that we work together to release the strength of all our communities so that by 2021 everyone in Northumberland has the same life opportunities, is broadly satisfied with the quality of their lives and is able to influence decisions that affect them.”

This strategy is built around two fundamental principles. The first recognises the importance of place. If local people are to improve their quality of life, they will have to focus on improving whole areas rather just individual services. This strategy provides a county-based policy framework upon which future sub-county work and thematic activity will be founded. The second is working together in partnership. If local people are to improve the local quality of life, they have to bring together and better align all our activity to meet the needs of our communities.

By 2021, all Northumberland residents will feel that they are better able to:

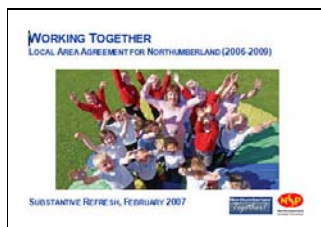
- Enjoy a good standard of living
- Live safely and in comfort
- Take part in cultural activity
- Care about our environment

- Lead healthier lifestyles
- Readily access the things they need
- Get involved and bring about change

This strategy represents the outcome of extensive and ongoing multi-agency collaboration.

www.nsp.org.uk

Working Together: Local Area Agreement for Northumberland (2006-2009)

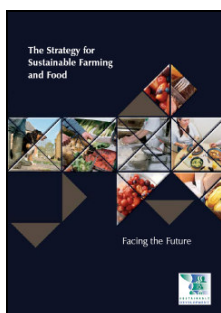


The LAA has been embraced as a mechanism to deliver real improvements for people across Northumberland. It already acts as a catalyst for partners to work together more effectively and to think differently about how local people can achieve lasting solutions and collaborative efficiencies.

The development and delivery of the LAA puts the needs of local people first and aims to bring tangible improvements to those issues that mean the most to them including tackling crime and anti-social behaviour, improving economic prosperity and reducing deprivation and health inequalities. The above Sustainable Community Strategy demonstrates a significant shift in the complexity and relevance of partnership planning. The relationship between the Local Area Agreement and the Sustainable Community Strategy is of shared priorities for Northumberland.

www.northumberlandtogether.org.uk

Facing the Future: The Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food (2002)



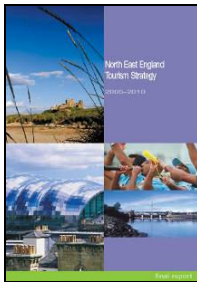
“Our vision of the future is of a world in which climate change and environmental degradation are recognised and addressed by all nations and where low carbon emissions and efficient use of environmental resources are at the heart of our whole way of life; where, here in the UK, rural communities are diverse, economically and environmentally viable, and socially inclusive with high quality public services and real opportunities for all. ...The pursuit of sustainable development, environmental, economic and social, is vital to achieving this vision.”

In the last few years, British food and farming has faced serious difficulties and pressures. Inevitably they have taken their toll on confidence and morale for those who work in the sector. External influences, like disease outbreaks of foot and mouth and blue tongue, have seen some of the worst

traumas the industry has experienced. Born of these traumas is the realisation that planning for a new and sustainable future means planning and implementing change, evolution, diversification, and a new era of partnership working.

www.defra.gov.uk

North East Tourism Strategy (2005-2010)



“The North East of England will become a sought after destination 365 days a year - for leisure and business visitors - with activities, attractions, facilities and accommodation that consistently exceed visitor expectations.”

Tourism is a key component of the region’s economy currently supporting over 10% of jobs. The North East’s Regional Economic Strategy, highlights the key contribution that the tourism sector plays in boosting our prosperity. Given the inter-relationships between the different elements of the tourism economy in the North East (which range from heritage to hospitality) the only way that we will strengthen the sector is if the private and public sectors continue to work very closely together. The growth of the North East’s tourism industry will also bring substantial social benefits to the region. More jobs and wealth in tandem with improved regional pride will bring better prospects for the environment, health, employment, education and social cohesion, resulting in a better quality of life for the resident population of the North East.

www.onenortheast.co.uk

Links with Other Regional and Local Programmes of Activity

The New Leader programme will forge links to other programmes. The following suggest some of the range of complimentary strategies which projects may work on.

- Regional Cultural Strategy (Culture North East)
- Regional Housing Strategy (North East Housing Board)
- Regional Sport Strategy (Sport England)
- Regional Transport Strategy (North East Assembly)
- Regional Skills Strategy (One NorthEast)
- Regional Spatial Strategy (North East Assembly)
- Integrated Regional Framework (Sustaine)
- Northern Informatics “*Avoiding Exclusion: The Challenge of Shaping the Information Society in the Rural North*” (Northern Informatics)

- *“Energy for a New Century – An Energy Strategy for the North East of England”* (Northern Energy Initiative)
- Regional Water Resource Strategy (Environment Agency)
- North East Strategy for the Environment (North East Environment Forum)
- Heritage Counts: The State of the North East’s Historic Environment (English Heritage)
- Economic, Social and Cultural Impact of Heritage in the North East (North East Historic Environment Forum)
- Biodiversity Action Plan (defra)
- Regional Image Strategy (One NorthEast)

“Advancing Castle Morpeth articulates three key priorities for the Borough: Business and Economy; Children and Young People; and Transport. The importance of cross-boundary working is also a key consideration, and Advancing Castle Morpeth would be keen to ensure that the Northumberland Uplands would work closely with all neighbouring New Leader approaches and join up with activity beyond its boundaries.”

*Brenda Fordy Scott, Chair,
Advancing Castle Morpeth Local Strategic Partnership*

The Existing Networks of the Northumberland Uplands

The Northumberland Uplands is approaching a defining moment. Individuals, local groups, and the more formal voluntary and community organisations have the potential to offer a wealth of local action. Even the smallest villages of the Northumberland Uplands are trying to support a wide range of community groups, while also rising to the challenges of the multifaceted problem of rural deprivation. Through the New Leader approach, local people have the chance to influence the rate of progress. This is especially important in those communities that did not benefit from Leader+ funding. Some of the partners operating across the Northumberland Uplands are summarised in this Section. All of these partners have been engaged with the creation of *Northumberland Upwards* in one capacity or another, and it is expected that this input will only increase over time as confidence grows and aspirations become reality.

Public Sector

- The Prince’s Trust
- Northumberland National Park Authority
- Northumberland County Council and Northumberland Strategic Partnership
- Ministry of Defence
- Forestry Commission
- Natural England
- Business Link North East
- Business in the Community
- Northumberland County Council and Northumberland Strategic Partnership
- Centre for Rural Economy, University of Newcastle upon Tyne

- Environment Agency
- The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Until 31 March 2009:

- *Tynedale District Council and Tynedale Local Strategic Partnership*
- *Alnwick District Council and Alnwick Local Strategy Partnership*
- *Berwick upon Tweed District Council and Berwick upon Tweed Local Strategy Partnership*
- *Castle Morpeth District Council and Castle Morpeth Local Strategy Partnership*

Private Sector

- Hadrian's Wall Heritage Limited
- Haltwhistle Chamber of Commerce
- Hadrian's Wall Farmer's Market
- Wild Redesdale Tourism
- Castle Morpeth Business Forum
- Castle Morpeth Rural West Partnership
- Rothbury Business Club
- Upper Coquetdale Tourism
- Glendale Agricultural Society
- Glendale Trust
- The Outdoor Tourism Activities Network
- Northwoods
- Reaction (Rural Enterprise Action)
- Northumberland Tourism
- Northumberland Estates
- Lilburn Estates
- The National Trust Estates
- Hesleyside Estate
- Business in the Community
- Local Farmers

Community Sector

- Over 70 Parish Councils
- Community Action Northumberland
- Haltwhistle Community Partnership
- Hadrian's Wall Action Area Forum
- The North Tyne and Redesdale Community Partnership
- The Mid-Tyne Community Trust
- North Tyne and Redesdale Action Area Forum
- Tarsset 2050 Community Interest Company
- Kielder Partnership
- Coquetdale Action Area Forum
- Cheviot Heritage
- Cheviot Hills Action Area Forum
- The Rothbury and Coquetdale Youth Project

Learning from Other Leader Partnerships

The value of the New Leader approach is demonstrated by the many valuable projects supported in recent years that make a real impact on the daily lives of people living in rural areas. Since the NULAG was newly created in 2008, the group have not yet had a chance to develop their profile and learn from the other Leader Partnerships. *Northumberland Upwards* will therefore draw on some best practice examples give local people a taste of the variety and creativity of Local Development Strategies being implemented by LAGs in various regions of Europe. They also show how LAGs have made good use of the opportunities available under Leader to cooperate at a regional, national and European level and to network in order to share experiences and good practice.

It is hoped that by including these short case-studies in *Northumberland Upwards*, it will help local people to understand the exciting possibilities of the New Leader approach.

Case Study

A Strategy for Quality Products from the Montiferru Region, Sardinia (Italy)

The main aim of the LAG Montiferru had been to revitalise the socio-economic system of the region based on its livestock and its small craft-based enterprises. This was achieved by:

- Adding value to local products and facilitating their access to local markets
- Safeguarding the natural resources which are in danger of disappearing
- Promoting the image of Montiferru
- Recapturing the socio-cultural heritage of the local community (the habits and customs that previously characterised the area's rural life)



The LAG worked on a process of adding value by helping local agro-food reach the market place. The project focused on a typical local cheese, called 'Casizolu', made with milk from a specific breed of cattle — Modicano Sarda.

The cows graze on pasture and produce milk with a distinctive 'wood and leaf' flavour. Investments in Casizolu cheese production have focused on: improving the production process; food safety planning; training courses; funding of processing; marketing assistance; networking with other local quality products (honey, extra virgin olive oil, malvasia wine); strengthening the cheese's presence in the quality catering sector; and helping producers to meet market demand through supply chain management techniques.

Case Study

Safe Future with Due Respect for the Past in South Kymi, Finland

Sepra (meaning friend in Finnish) is a registered association operating in the rural areas of southern Kymi's eight municipalities, promoting independent activity among the local people. The association drew up a development programme for the area, for which Leader+ development funding was applied for. The programme supported small development projects based on the ideas of inhabitants themselves.

The budget is approximately EUR 1.2 million per year, 30% of which comes from the EU, 18% from the Finnish state, 12 % from the eight municipalities, and 40% from the inhabitants of the area. Although there are approximately 57,000 inhabitants in the Sepra area, the population has been steadily decreasing over the past 30 years. Rural districts, housing estates and towns overlap. The majority of the population depends on industry or public services — smaller businesses have

developed at a slow rate. The leading principle of the programme is to further the development of a pleasant and safe environment so that it can also provide a livelihood for local people.

All actions in the programme are based on respect for the area's history, nature and local people. The programme had two major themes: utilising natural and cultural resources, and increasing interaction between rural and urban areas. The programme aimed to reach key goals by:

- Improving internal functions in the villages and other communities
- Developing tourism and other services
- Promoting, marketing and developing new or existing local products
- Supporting new small businesses
- Using the close proximity of Russia and Estonia, as well as developing other international connections
- Organising functions where country people and townspeople can meet.

The development programme focussed on information technology, environmental protection, and engaging young people.

Case Study

Rejuvenating Reed and Sedge Harvesting in the Norfolk Broads (England)

A key feature of the Norfolk Broads' landscape is the large expanse of reed and sedge beds that borders its famous waterways. Conservationists regard such wetlands as an internationally important habitat, home to rare plants and animals. Conservation of these areas is dependent upon periodic cutting of the reed and sedge. This has traditionally been harvested commercially to provide raw materials for thatching, thus ensuring a link between the area's built heritage and its natural environment. Despite modernisation, the Broads' reed and sedge industry has been in severe difficulty, caused in part by imports and consequent low prices. Existing reed and sedge cutters have been unable to replace essential machinery whilst the industry has failed to attract newcomers to replace those who retire. A 2002 study identified no more than 20 commercial cutters, with very few of these under 30 years of age and several approaching (or beyond) retirement age. Morale was low, with several cutters mistrusting conservation organisations for seemingly favouring reed bed management by volunteers.

Leader+ funding provided training and is restoring new areas of neglected reed bed. This creates opportunities for new businesses whilst increasing the efficiency and income of existing ones, for example by providing new machinery, but also by improving LAG members' earning potential outside the reed and sedge cutting seasons. There have been less tangible benefits, such as the formation of an association that has made it easier for conservation organisations and others to seek the views of reed and sedge cutting businesses as a group on issues such as the targeting of reed bed restoration and design of flood alleviation works.



A first project succeeded in halting the decline of the local reed and sedge cutting industry and greatly increased confidence and optimism. A second project addresses the longer term needs of the industry by attracting and supporting new entrants, raising the efficiency and incomes of existing businesses and improving the promotion of the Broads' reed and sedge.

Case Study

Transnational Education for Cultural Guiding and Management of Regional

Museums: Three Alpine Regions Collaborate to Provide a New Perspective, Tirol (Austria), *Regierungsbezirke* Schwaben, and Oberbayern (Germany)

The regions of Außerfern (Austria), Auerbergland (Germany) and Ostallgäu (Germany) have established a transnational training project, involving 104 participants, 25 lecturers and 47 workshops covering 20 different modules. The project sought to exploit the related culture and history of these three areas, which are all located in the Bavarian–Austrian alpine region. The LAGs began with an 'exchange of ideas meeting' between the regions' managing directors. They concluded that the development strategies of the three neighbouring LAGs had many common objectives and would provide many possibilities for future cooperation. Since trans-national cooperation projects are more complex and have greater risks than local ones, the three Leader+ managers looked for a strong basis for cooperation. They already knew that the basis for success of a transnational project is a strong belief that the project will be of benefit for the three LAGs. After a critical and comprehensive project evaluation, they decided to base their cooperation on improving the link of history and culture with tourism and employment. By linking tourism and culture, the

project aimed to create new employment, in particular for women, in order to strengthen the tie between the homeland and its history for young people.

To obtain some ideas about best practice, the three LAG managers got in contact with the Italian LAG, Val Venosta, in South Tyrol which had implemented a similar project under Leader.

Case Study Sources: The Leader Approach Fact Sheet, European Commission

Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development

http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/index_en.htm

The NULAG will prioritise learning from best practice right from the start of the New Leader approach, so that local people and the area receive the maximum benefits from the resources available throughout the lifespan of *Northumberland Upwards*.

The New Leader Approach
Rural Development Programme for England
(2007-2013)



The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
Europe Investing in Rural Areas

www.rdpnortheast.co.uk

Adelle Rowe



Adelle is an external funding specialist at Natural England. Adelle has been working towards the achievement of sustainable communities for over 10 years, and has a good knowledge of the Northumberland Uplands, especially the farming, forestry, and tourism sectors. Adelle has experience of both the North Pennines Leader II and the Leader+ programmes.

- ✓ Public Sector, Experience of Regeneration, Experience of Partnership Working
- ✓ Sustainable Farming and Forestry, Tourism and Recreation

Natural England, The Quadrant, Newburn Riverside, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne & Wear. NE15 8NZ

Anna Charlton



Anna is a resident and estate manager within Northumberland National Park, and is a Senior Management Consultant, with over 10 years of experience in banking, government, and retail industries. Anna has a PhD in Physics, and has spent several years studying and lecturing at Imperial College, London. Anna has a keen interest in renewable energy and is also a Trustee of the Calvert Trust, which is located at Kielder. Anna is also a member of the Northumberland

National Park Sustainable Development Fund Grants Panel, and will help to foster linkages between the two groups.

- ✓ Private Sector, Experience of Partnership Working
- ✓ Micro-Enterprise Development, Bioenergy, Sustainable Communities, Sustainable Farming and Forestry, Tourism and Forestry

Kielder, Hesleyside Estate

Anne Lowrie



Anne has lived and worked in Northumberland for the past 30 years. She is a Parish Councillor for Longframlington and edits a village newsletter for the local community, which helps to inform and involve people in the latest rural developments. Anne previously ran the Rural Action Grant scheme, was a trustee of the Metro Radio Trust, and worked for both the Community Council of Northumberland and the Countryside Agency.

In 2001 she gained a Masters degree at the University of Newcastle in Rural Resource and Countryside Management.

- ✓ Community Sector, Experience of Regeneration, Experience of Partnership Working
- ✓ Sustainable Communities

Resident of Longframlington

Anthony Murray



Anthony is an elected Member of the new Northumberland Council. He has served a number of community posts over the last 40 years. He has been a member of the National Farmers Union, and is a former Northumberland County Chairman. He has also fulfilled a number of roles at Chatton, Bellingham and Wooler, as a District Councillor, Parish Councillor, school governor, and as a church warden. Anthony also runs a garden centre.

- ✓ Community Sector, Experience of Partnership Working
- ✓ Sustainable Communities

Resident of Wooler

David Clubb



David has strong interest in bioenergy, and works towards improving the value to the area of forestry activities, mainly by developing a robust and cost effective fuel supply chain to biomass boilers. In developing sustainable businesses, David believes that the fuel supply chain is crucial to both the confidence of the biomass sector, and the improvement of the forestry sector. David is an active participant in many bioenergy groups in Northumberland, and worked with Leader+ in Mid Wales.

✓ Private Sector, Experience of Regeneration, Experience of Partnership Working ✓ Bioenergy
Northwoods, Cockle Park, Morpeth, Northumberland. NE61 2EB

Elizabeth Stewart



Elizabeth comes from an agricultural background, and works as a farm business advisor, running rural training businesses, as a registered LANTRA Awards provider. Elizabeth also works with the Northumberland Young Farmers, and has been involved with the delivery of NVQs in agriculture, both as an assessor and as a tutor. Elizabeth will help to access and improve the opportunities for young people.

✓ Community Sector, Experience of Regeneration, Experience of Partnership Working
✓ Micro-Enterprise Development, Sustainable Farming and Forestry, Sustainable Communities
Resident of Greenhead

Heather Hunter



Heather has over five years of experience as a senior manager in further education, regeneration, and economic development. Heather has a professional knowledge and understanding of micro-enterprises, and runs her own businesses, in the local tourism sector and economic regeneration throughout the region and Cumbria in the NorthWest. Heather is particularly strong in the field of employment and skills development.

She welcomes the opportunity to become a strong community representative, and to help raise the aspirations of people that are typically suffering from isolation and underemployment. Heather brings a host of European and national funding experience to the Local Action Group.

- ✓ Public Sector, Experience of Regeneration, Experience of Partnership Working
- ✓ Micro-Enterprises Development, Sustainable Communities

Based in Kirknewton

James Cookson



James Cookson is running the Meldon Park Estate in parallel with the Land Agent and team. His experience of marketing helps with the development of these new enterprises on the Estate, having a positive effect on the estate and its surrounding community. Local food and drink is a passion and one which is driving the next new enterprise aiming to link the end consumer with tenant farmers on the estate.

James also manages Flying Fox Sales & Marketing Solutions a consultancy business focused in working within the food and drink industry, dealing with small local producers to larger national manufacturers helping to develop the business through our expertise in a tailored packages meeting the demands of the individual client.

- ✓ Private Sector
- ✓ Sustainable Farming and Forestry

Meldon Park Estate

James Saunby



James is a director of a micro-business based at Castle Morpeth. James is a keen advocate of economic development through enterprise and infrastructure growth, particularly through linking up remote rural businesses by using information technology systems. James' work expands beyond the North East to cover the whole of the United Kingdom, therefore as well as being able to learn from the experiences of other Leader programmes across the country, he is also in a position to share best practice from the Northumberland Uplands area.

- ✓ Private Sector
- ✓ Micro-Enterprises Development

Based in Morpeth

Jane Karthaus



Jane Karthaus's principal role is in communications for the Confederation of Forest Industries (ConFor), but she is also ConFor Regional Director for North England. In addition, she is a Director of Border Consultants (Forestry) Ltd, a Forest Management and Consultancy based in Belford. Jane's interest in the Northumberland Uplands focuses on woodland and forestry, as a land-use and a resource for the region and the wider forest industries, as well as, the many other benefits trees contribute.

Some ConFor members and Border Consultants' clients own woodlands and run businesses in the Northumberland Uplands area.

- ✓ Private Sector, Experience of Partnership Working
- ✓ Bioenergy, Sustainable Farming and Forestry

ConFor, Woodland Place, West Street, Belford, Northumberland. NE70 7QA

Johnny Wilson



Johnny is a staunch advocate of rural and landscape issues, with a particular interest in the Cheviots and Breamish Valley, its communities as well as its archaeology. He has represented the Cheviot Parish Grouping for the last 12 years. He is a tenant farmer on a 750 hectare family run mixed farm, mostly hillfarm but with in-bye and pasture, in the Breamish Valley, recently receiving a Quality Foods award for his black faced lamb.

- ✓ Private Sector
- ✓ Sustainable Communities, Sustainable Farming and Forestry

Resident of the Cheviot Hills

Marie Whitehead



Marie Whitehead joined Hadrian's Wall Heritage Limited in June 2006, and has been working on capital and revenue development projects across the Hadrian's Wall corridor. Marie was previously the Director of Operations for Whitehaven Development Company, and also Chair of the Western Lake District Tourism Partnership. Marie was part of the team that secured £56 million worth of investment into Whitehaven, and has worked with many European funding programmes. After graduating from the University of Manchester,

Marie worked for Kier Regional Ltd across the North of England on major regeneration projects. Marie will also be involved with the Cumbrian Leader Local Action Group, and will therefore help to foster linkages between these two Northern Leader areas.

- ✓ Private Sector, Experience of Regeneration, Experience of Partnership Working
- ✓ Sustainable Communities, Tourism and Recreation

**Hadrian's Wall Heritage Limited, East Peteral Field, Dipton Mill Road, Hexham, Northumberland.
NE46 2JT**

Mathew Atkinson

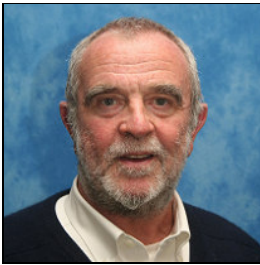


Mathew helps to run a local butchers shop, and over several years has worked closely with suppliers to the business. Mathew is passionate about the revival of local communities, and has an understanding of the importance of the tourism industry. In his spare time, Mathew is a scout leader, and is currently studying to be a town planner.

- ✓ Community Sector
- ✓ Micro-Enterprise Development, Sustainable Communities, Tourism and Recreation

Resident of Ellington

Mike Murray



Although Mike was born and brought up in Northumberland, he spent 15 years running Development Programmes in Africa, which included running various small grant schemes, worth over £250,000 per annum, primarily focussed on improving infrastructure. Mike returned to England in 2006, and is now a member of the Advisory Board of the Tynedale Enterprise Project and the Friends of Bellingham Surgery.

- ✓ Community Sector, Experience of Regeneration, Experience of Partnership Working
- ✓ Micro-Enterprise Development, Sustainable Communities

Resident of Falstone

Michael Nixon



Michael Nixon is a micro-enterprise specialist, and he is a board member of Tynedale Enterprise Project. Michael is an active member of his local community, with a particular interest in sustainable farming practices. Michael firmly believes that local communities can be engaged through Leader, encouraging them to think of their own solutions to their local challenges.

- ✓ Private Sector
- ✓ Micro-Enterprise Development, Sustainable Farming and Forestry

Resident of Tarsset

Norman Dunn



Norman has a wide range of experience covering many fields. Norman is a retired business analyst, with knowledge of business systems, technical implementation, ICT, and the legal requirements of micro enterprises. Norman was Chair of North Northumberland Leader+, and during this time developed an understanding of European funding legislation.

- ✓ Community Sector, Experience of Regeneration, Experience of Partnership Working
- ✓ Micro-Enterprise Development, Sustainable Communities

Resident of Glanton

Paul Nicoll



Paul has almost 40 years of experience in Estate Management, and is now working for the National Trust at Wallington. Although Paul is keen on rural diversification, his main interest is in tourism and recreation. Paul is a Parish Councillor for Wallington Demesne, and assists with council meetings adjoining Rothbury and Hollins Hill Parish.

- ✓ Community Sector, Experience of Partnership Working
- ✓ Tourism and Recreation

National Trust Estate Office, Cambo, Morpeth, Northumberland. NE61 4AR

Richard Walton



Richard has lived and farmed in rural Northumberland all of his life, working alongside local entrepreneurs in food production. Richard used to own and run butchers shops' in Bellingham and Wark, but now concentrates his spare time on point-to-point racing. Richard has developed an extensive social and business network across Northumberland.

- ✓ Private Sector
- ✓ Sustainable Farming and Forestry

Resident of Wark

Roger Miket



Roger has worked for over 30 years in the field of cultural heritage with various local authorities, and for 10 years with the Highland Regional Council as Manager of Culture and Leisure. Roger is Trustee and Treasurer of The Glendale Gateway Trust, and has extensive networks across Northumberland, which will be a significant benefit to the New Leader approach.

- ✓ Community Sector, Experience of Regeneration, Experience of Partnership Working
- ✓ Tourism and Recreation

Resident of Wooler

Roger Wilson



Roger Wilson has lived in Northumberland National Park for over 17 years. Roger is Director of Tyne Team Limited, Company Secretary of Tarsat 2050 Community Interest Company, Vice Chair of the Tynedale Enterprise Project, and a freelance advisor to Business Link Northumberland. Roger helps farms to diversify by branching out their existing business into the tourism, retail, recreation, forestry and renewable energy sectors.

- ✓ Community Sector, Experience of Regeneration, Experience of Partnership Working
- ✓ Micro-Enterprise Development, Sustainable Farming and Forestry, Tourism and Recreation

Resident of Tarsat

Stuart Moss



Stuart works as part of the England Catchment Sensitive Farming Delivery Initiative, which is partnership between defra, Natural England and the Environment Agency. It aims to improve water quality by working with farmers and landowners to reduce pollution, and encourage best practice. Stuart believes that support from communities and partnerships will be instrumental to the success of the New Leader approach.

- ✓ Public Sector, Experience of Partnership Working
- ✓ Micro-Enterprise Development, Sustainable Communities, Sustainable Farming and Forestry

Tyneside House, Skinnerburn Road, Newcastle Upon Tyne. NE4 7AR

Vincent Milburn



Vincent has a sound knowledge of sustainable farming and forestry. Vincent is a partner of a large tenanted farm, and has worked with the Young Farmers. Vincent has been a Parish Councillor for 14 years, and has worked in fundraising for local charities in the Northumberland Uplands. Vincent will raise awareness of the opportunities that New Leader will offer in and around his constituency.

- ✓ Private Sector, Experience of Partnership Working
- ✓ Sustainable Farming and Forestry

Based in and around Rothbury

Wendy Bond



Wendy has worked at the heart of her local community to help transform it into a busy and happy place, by encouraging organisations to expand, and through setting up a regular Farmers Market. Wendy has been a member of the Northumberland Wildlife Trust since 1973, and has a good knowledge of the issues surrounding hill farming. Wendy brings experience of the North Pennines Leader 2 and Leader + programmes.

- ✓ Community Sector, Experience of Regeneration, Experience of Partnership Working
- ✓ Micro-Enterprise Development, Sustainable Communities

Resident of Greenhead

Appendix 2

Stakeholder and Public Consultation Events

Record of External Leader Meetings (1st August 2007 – 9th May 2008)

Date	Organisation
8 th August 2008	Scottish Enterprise and Ministry of Defence
9 th August 2008	Northumberland Strategic Partnership
9 th August 2008	One NorthEast
21 st August 2007	Castle Morpeth Borough Council Leader Programme Meeting
21 st August 2007	Leader Approach Workshop, hosted by Natural England
21 st August 2007	North Pennines AONB
23 rd August 2007	Berwick Borough Council Leader Programme Meeting
30 th August 2007	Tynedale Council Leader Programme Meeting
4 th September 2007	The Prince's Trust
4 th September 2007	Alnwick District Council Leader Programme Meeting
6 th September 2007	Northumberland Strategic Partnership Leader Programme Meeting
7 th September 2007	Tynedale Enterprise Partnership
12 th September 2007	ReAction
14 th September 2007	Northumberland Tourism
14 th September 2007	Castle Morpeth Borough Council, Rural West Partnership, Advancing Castle Morpeth Local Strategic Partnership, Heddon-on-the Wall Parish Council
19 th September 2007	Business Link North East
19 th September 2007	Northwoods

Date	Organisation
	Forestry Commission
23 rd September 2007	Tynedale Local Strategic Partnership
10 th December 2007	Tynedale Local Strategic Partnership
12 th November 2007	ONE North East
12 th November 2007	Tynedale Local Strategic Partnership Executive
22 nd November 2007	Alnwick Local Strategic Partnership
8 th January 2008	“Business Opportunities in Biomass & Forestry” Scottish Enterprise Borders Forestry Commission, Northwoods
8 th January 2008	Rothbury Business Club
16 th January 2008	Berwick Borough Local Strategic Partnership
17 th January 2008	“Young People In Business” The Prince’s Trust England, The Prince’s Trust Scotland), ONE North East ReAction, Tynedale Virtual College Scottish Enterprise Borders
24 th January 2008	One NorthEast
30 th January 2008	“Leader Strategy Consultation” Castle Morpeth Local Strategic Partnership
7 th February 2008	New Leader Liaison Meeting with Northumberland Coast and Lowlands and North Pennine and Dales Plus Tynedale Council, Northumberland County Council, Northumberland Strategic Partnership, Community Action Northumberland, Castle Morpeth District Council, North Sunderland & Seahouses Development Trust, Berwick Borough Council, Alnwick District Council
18 th February 2008	Northumberland College
22 nd February 2008	Business in the Community - The Prince's Rural Action Programme
26 th February 2008	Learning Skills Council

Date	Organisation
3 rd March 2008	Tynedale Council
11 th March 2008	Tarset 2050
11 th March 2008	"Leader Strategy Consultation" Berwick Local Strategic Partnership
13 th March 2008	"Leader Strategy Consultation" Alnwick Local Strategic Partnership
14 th March 2008	"Leader Strategy Consultation" Tynedale Local Strategic Partnership
17 th March 2008	<u>NULAG</u> First Meeting Steer on the brief and issues for public consultation and Leader Local Action Group Interviews
20 th March 2008	New Leader Liaison Meeting with Northumberland Coast and Lowlands and North Pennine and Dales Plus Northumberland County Council, Northumberland Strategic Partnership, Community Action Northumberland, ENRGI, Berwick Borough Council, Centre for Rural Economy
10 th April 2008	"Public Consultation Leader Strategy" Glendale Community
14 th April 2008	ConFor and Northwoods
17 th April 2008	"Public Consultation Leader Strategy" Rothbury & Coquetdale Community
21 st April 2008	"Public Consultation Leader Strategy" Haltwhistle and Hadrian's Wall Communities
23 rd April 2008	"Public Consultation Leader Strategy" North Tyne and Redesdale Communities
24 th April 2008	New Leader Liaison Meeting with Northumberland Coast and Lowlands and North Pennine and Dales Plus Community Action Northumberland, ENRGI, Castle Morpeth District Council
28 th April 2008	<u>NULAG</u> Second Meeting

Date	Organisation
	Steer and final decisions on the Strategy following consultation

Appendix 3

Stakeholder and Interested Parties

People Contacted as part of the Leader Consultation Exercise who wish to Remain Engaged

Name	Company
Adelle Rowe	Natural England
Ailsa Coverdale	Castle Morpeth Borough Council
Alan Charlton	Alnwick Extended Services Partnerships
Alan Fendley	Rothbury Parish Council
Alan Wann	Northumberland County Council
Alasdair Mitchell	Northumberland National Park Authority
Alex Kerr	Tynedale Local Strategic Partnership (Chair)
Alistair Murray	Farmer
Andy Dean	Tynedale Council
Andy Hugman	ReAction
Angela Hallam-Baker	Branxton & Kirknewton Parish Council
Angus Robson	Groundwork Northumberland
Anna Charlton	Hesleyside Estates
Anne Evans	Brinkburn
Anne Hutchinson	Wark Parish Council
Anne Lowrie	Northumberland Uplands Local Action Group
Anne Pender	Corsenside Parish Council
Anthony Murray	Northumberland National Park Authority
Barry Butterworth	Rothbury Parish Council
Bob Scott	Tillside Parish Council
Brian Routledge	Community Safety Partnership
Brenda Fordy-Scott	Advancing Castle Morpeth Local Strategic Partnership (Chair)
Cameron Scott	Tynedale Council
Catriona Mulligan	Northumberland National Park Authority
Chris France	Hepple Parish Council and Business Link North East
Christine Cowans	Castle Morpeth Borough Council
Christine Dixon	Thirlwall Parish Council
Christine Larson	Business in the Community
Clive Hallam-Baker	Berwick Borough Local Strategic Partnership (Chair)
Cllr A Murray	Wooler Ward and Parish Councillor
Cllr Alan Rogerson	Ford Ward and Parish Councillor
Cllr Geoff O' Connell	Belford Ward and Parish Councillor
Cllr John Davidson	Wooler Parish Council
Cllr Clive Hallam-Baker	Branxton Parish Council
Colin Meagre	Scottish Enterprise
David Allen	Bellingham Parish Council
David Buckle	Cornhill Parish Council
David Clubb	Northwoods
David Lodge	Greater Morpeth Development Trust
Debbie English	North Tyne and Redesdale Community Policy
Derek Halden	Derek Halden Consultancy-
Dr. Anna Charlton	Hesleyside Estate
Duncan Wise	Northumberland National Park Authority

Name	Company
Edward Brown	Kirknewton Parish Council
Elaine Hunter	Bryness Village Hall Committee
Elaine Jaggs	Northumberland Biodiversity Partnership
Elizebeth Stewart	Marra Training
Ellen Walton	Haltwhistle Partnership
Gary Reed	Hadrian's Wall, Northumberland Tourism
Gerald Connor	Chair: Health and Wellbeing Sector Board/BBC
Giles Ingram	Northumberland Tourism
Gillian Cowell	Haltwhistle Partnership
Gillian Simmons	Berwick Upon Tweed Borough Local Strategic Partnership
Graham Ridley	Haltwhistle Parish Council
Graham Sinclair	Tynedale Virtual College
Heather Hunter	Economic regeneration Consultant
Helen Edes	Rothbury Parish Council
Hilda Bryden	Berwick Upon Tweed Borough Local Strategic Partnership
Ian Humphreys	Alnwick Local Strategic Partnership
Ian Roberts	Bellingham Parish Council
Jackie Armstrong	Resident
James Cookson	Meldon Park Estate
James Jansen	Business in the Community
James Saunby	Grey Sky
Jane Karthaus	ConFor
Jas M Gavin	Haltwhistle Partnership
Jean Baird	Northumberland Care Trust
Jill Robson	JobCentre Plus
Jo Curtis	Motivate
John Benn	Ford Parish Councillor
John Cooper	Northumberland Strategic Partnership
John Offer	ENRGI
John Walton	Haltwhistle Town Council and Partnership
John Wilson	Farmer/Northumberland National Park Authority
Jonny Wilson	Ingram Parish Council & NULAG
Julia Plinston	Community Action Northumberland
Julie Crocher	Community Action Northumberland
Kami Kundi	Business Link North East
Kate Bagenal-Lowe	Chatton Development Forum
Katherine Oliver	Haltwhistle Partnership
Keith Butler	Butler Haig Associates
Kevin Malloy	Doddington Parish Council
Kim Hobson	Northumberland National Park Authority
Lawrence Thompson	Northumberland County Council , Haltwhistle Partnership and Vindolanda Trust
Linda Ogle	Haltwhistle Partnership
Louise Woodman	Learning Skills Council
Mike Nixon	Tarset 2050
Malcolm Newson	Tyne Rivers Trust
Marc Johnson	Community Action Northumberland
Marc Johnson	Community Action Northumberland
Margaret Davidson	Yoga: Kitchen Yoga

Name	Company
Margaret Golgh	Falstone Parish Council
Marie Whitehead	Hadrian's Wall Heritage Ltd
Mathew Atkinson	Northumberland Uplands Local Action Group
Michael Nixon	Northumberland Uplands Local Action Group
Mike Bell	Ministry of Defence
Mike Murray	Tynedale Enterprise Project, Friends of Bellingham Surgery
Moira Jinks	Northumberland College
Murray Somerville	Kirkwhelpington Parish Council
Neil Harrison	Northwoods
Neil Wilson	Glendale Gateway Trust
Nic Best	Northumberland Credit Union
Norman Dunn	Community Action Northumberland
Paul Jones	BBC-Sports Development Officer
Paul Nicoll	National Trust
Pete Saunders	North Tyne and Redesdale Community Partnership
Peter Samson	North Pennine and Dales
Phil Lindsay	Northumberland Fire & Rescue Services
Phil Biggs	North Tyne and Redesdale Community Partnership (Chair)
Rachel Ford	Business Link North East
Reg Hunter	Rochester / Brynness Parish Council
Richard Pow	Forestry Commission
Richard Powell	Tynedale Council
Richard Walton	Farmer
Robert Wood	Haltwhistle Partnership
Roger Bolam	Elsdon
Roger Miket	Glendale Gateway Trust.
Roger Styring	Chair; Leader of Alnwick District Council
Roger Wilson	Target 2050 CIC
Sandra Brydon	Removing Barriers to Work Partnership
Sara Jenson Boon	Coquet Extended Services Partnership
Sheila Jenkins	Northumberland College
Stephen Beck	Castle Morpeth Borough Council
Steve Revell	Alnwick District Council
Steven Urwin	Business Link North East
Stuart Athey	Rothbury Parish Council
Stuart Moss	Environment Agency
Tim Kirton	Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough Council
Terry Carroll	Centre for Rural Economy
Tony Stephenson	Gov. Office North East
Vee Robinson	Transport in North Northumberland
Victor Flemming	Haltwhistle Town Council and Partnership
Vincent Milburn	Farmer
Wendy Bond	Hadrian's Wall Farmers Market
Willa Story	Unique In Glass

Selflessness

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits to themselves, their family, or their friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be seen as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

NORTHUMBERLAND UPLANDS LEADER ACTION GROUP

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**Draft April 2008****Introduction**

Northumberland Uplands is a remote rural area with a rich cultural and natural heritage. The businesses and communities in this area suffer a number of social and economic problems which the Northumberland Uplands Leader Action Group (NULAG) aims to address through partnership working in delivering “*Northumberland Upwards*”, the local development strategy for the area. Improvements will focus on initiatives which enhance the community, business and the environment and address issues of equality including geographical equality eg in accessing services such as employment training.

Northumberland Upwards sets out not only what actions we and our partners need to take. We need to influence decisions taken elsewhere that affect the Northumberland Uplands and its communities and businesses.

NULAG aims to promote equality of opportunity; and aims, in its provision of service and its enabling role, to be inclusive of all members of society. NULAG’s key role is to promote initiatives and finance projects which improve the economic, social and environmental fabric of the Northumberland Uplands

Equality in Delivery of Services

NULAG aims to ensure that services are accessible to all and appropriate to the differing needs of all sections of the community. This means that we will aim to:

- Provide appropriate, accessible and effective services and facilities to all sections of the community without prejudice or bias
- Provide clear information about our services in a variety of formats on request

- Identify group representatives of local communities and businesses within the
- Northumberland Uplands and strive to work in partnership through consultation with and involvement of these groups in decisions we make
- Ensure reasonable actions are taken where special needs are identified
- Achieve consistency in NULAG's approach to equality in the delivery of our services
- Act promptly and appropriately if we receive any complaints about the way we provide services by ensuring that complaints / appeals are dealt with sensitively and fairly
- Ensure that all members understand what equality in service provision means
- Monitor the provision of services against targets
- Ensure that contractors, suppliers, volunteers and partners are aware of the NULAG's position on equality and understand their obligation to provide services that are in line with that position
- Promote equality of opportunity

Monitoring

The NULAG Vice-Chair is the member champion for equalities to reinforce the message that the NULAG is committed to the equalities agenda and to ensure that other members are engaged.

The Executive Director of Corporate Services will direct the equalities work.

NULAG will review performance on equality in delivery of services.

NULAG will monitor and provide information about provision and use of services. Indicators will measure how the service is being across the equality "strands": age, disability, gender, race, religion/belief and sexual orientation. The use and impact of services will be monitored to:

- Improve service take up
- Identify gaps in services
- Better target resources to meet needs
- Feed equality data analysis into the corporate planning process
- Demonstrate continuous improvement

Equality in Membership / Employment

NULAG is committed to ensuring that we provide equality of opportunity in all employment related issues.

Applicants

We will:

- Only consider applicants for jobs on the basis of their relevant experience, qualifications and skills.
- Aim to employ a workforce that is representative of the population of Northumberland Uplands and its environs
- Consider disabled applicants in line with a guaranteed interview scheme ie shortlist and offer an interview opportunity to all disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria for a post; and consider them on their abilities. We will take all measures possible to make reasonable adjustments where appropriate in order to provide employment / membership to disabled applicants who meet the essential requirements and prove to be the best candidate.

Members of NULAG

We will:

- Ensure that all members receive fair and equal treatment
- Ensure appointments to positions are made and appropriate training offered on the basis of aptitude and ability
- Encourage and help all members to reach their full potential,
- Ensure that NULAG is free from discrimination and harassment and act promptly on any complaints of discrimination or harassment in an appropriate manner
- Wherever possible, make reasonable adjustments and retain, in suitable roles, members who become disabled
- Ensure that NULAG members are aware of their personal responsibility to follow and support the equality policy

Monitoring

NULAG will, where practicable, monitor applications for support and member profiles - age, disability, gender, race, religion/belief and sexual orientation.

Complaints

Any prospective member wishing to raise a complaint about any aspect of the selection procedure should raise their complaint with the Appointing Officer. Any prospective project applicant wishing to raise a complaint in relation to discrimination about grant awarding procedure should raise their complaint with the Executive Director. In both cases they should do so as soon as possible after the circumstances leading to the complaint have arisen, and in any case by not later than 20 days after an appointment has been made. An investigation will then be conducted.

They should do so as soon as possible after the circumstances leading to the complaint have arisen, and in any case by not later than 20 days after an appointment has been made. An investigation will then be conducted.

Note: appeals against the decision NULAG is relation to provision of support are managed under a separate process which looks at the effectiveness of the decision making process and not at issues of discrimination.

Fairness and Equality for All

NULAG is committed to equal opportunities and action to ensure that our members and the people we serve are not discriminated against on the basis of their:

- Age
- Disability
- Employment status
- Ethnic or national origins, race or colour
- Marital status
- Religious or political beliefs
- Responsibilities for children or dependents
- Gender/gender reassignment
- Sexual orientation
- Social and economic status
- Unrelated criminal convictions