

Meath Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) is the Local Action Group (LAG) for the delivery of the LEADER Programme in Co. Meath for the programme period 2014-2020. The LCDC consists of both public and private sector partners from within the administration boundary of the County. The LCDC is comprised of 19 members, 10 from the private sector and nine from the public sector. The LCDC as the LAG bring together all the local stakeholders, including the local authority, state agencies, social partners, local development company and representatives from the community and voluntary sector in its role to promote economic and local development through a partnership approach, for the benefit of the citizens of County Meath.

The LAG is responsible for the overseeing the implementation of the LDS which has a total budget of €6,903,124.

The longterm vision for County Meath that underlies the LDS is “a county which fulfils its social and economic potential, that is a preferred location for living and doing business, and one that provides its citizens and communities with the highest standards of living and quality of life.” Therefore in this regard the strategic approach to fulfilling the LDS is one that adopts a relatively small number of local objectives:

1. To drive the integration and enhancement of Meath’s unique combination of historical and contemporary tourist offerings cementing its reputation, identity, and attractiveness facilitating the effective realisation of the county’s exceptional tourism potential
2. To broaden and enhance the enterprise base in the county, and maximise local sustainable economic opportunities in Meath
3. To spearhead the rejuvenation and development of the towns and villages of County Meath
4. To protect, enhance and widen the social and economic benefits of Meath’s natural, build, social and cultural heritage
5. To ensure participation in social, economic and community development and engagement from all groups and people of all backgrounds
6. To promote and progress social, community and economic action supportive of environmental protection, sustainability and good practice

The LDS vision is related to the Local Objectives which are then related to more specific strategic actions.

**Local Objective 1 is to be delivered through 4No. strategic actions:**

- a. Rural ways
  - It is proposed to use cutting edge technology to accurately communicate the authenticity and uniqueness of Meath’s rural tourism experience with a strong focus on antiquities, activities and attractions made accessible and intriguing to visitors in search of an authentic rural experience
  - It is anticipated that there will be 4 new tourism clusters, 16 trails opened, 1 new and innovative ICT based tourist service offering, 2 projects funded, 4No. FTE jobs created, improved identification and marketing of rural tourism product and enhanced inflow of visitors in rural Meath.
- b. Tourism visitor attractions and services
  - It is proposed to invest in the enhancement of iconic sites of visitor interest, development of new and significant visitor attractions and support for investment in the direct provision of activity-based offerings by existing tourism providers.

- The anticipated outputs and targets include 10% increase in visitor numbers and/or bed-nights in rural areas, 10 project funded, 30 providers engaged in accommodation or activity provision and 20 FTE job created
- c. Historic country homes and gardens
  - Implementation of Meath's Historic Country Homes and Gardens Initiatives. This initiative will support actions and operations aimed at increasing the number of homes and gardens open to the public in County Meath and to enhance and upgrade existing properties operating in this tourism sector in order to attract the growing number of visitors to Meath who expressly wish and expect to interact with this tourism product.
  - Anticipated outputs and targets include 5No. properties newly opened to the public, 3No. properties enhances, 2% contribution to increased visitor numbers, 5No. projects funded and 6 FTE jobs created.
- d. Scenic vistas
  - Developing the economic potential of Meath's scenic vistas through the provision of visitor facilities, improving access and interpretation, addressing health and safety and the creation of attractive and interesting sites.
  - Anticipated outputs/targets include 6No. sites developed, 18 community bodies participating, increase in visitors using new facilities and 6 projects funded.

**Local Object 2 is delivered through 4No. strategic Actions:**

- a. Creative sector development
  - To support the future development of the Creative Sector by exploiting opportunities for growth, mitigation of barriers to growth both on the supply and demand side, introduction of supports to enable innovation and business success, the development of sustainable creative clusters, enhanced interaction between cultural and creative entrepreneurs locally, in Ireland and overseas. Support for participation in events and exhibitions concerned with their industry.
  - Anticipated outputs include 10 new enterprises created, 15 projects supported, 10 new FTE jobs created and 15No. enterprises mentored.
- b. Artisan food and craft
  - This action seeks to support the establishment, growth and sustainability of inclusive rural food and speciality produce enterprises.
  - Anticipated outputs include 40No. projects supported, 8No. new businesses created, 5No. collective operations and 20No new employments created
- c. Rural enterprise (innovation and prototypes)
  - Continued support of innovation in the manufacturing and services sectors and to encourage research and development and prototype creation.
  - Anticipated outputs/targets include 6No. projects supported, 3 mainstream manufacturing prototype investments, 10 FTE employments created and 6 innovations demonstrated.
- d. Services to the equine sector
  - To exploit the potential of Meath's sports horse industry to generate employment, support the growth of sustainable service enterprise, grow equine tourism, attract overseas visitors, provide for recreational and leisure activity, support breeding standards and contribute to star rating objectives.
  - Anticipated outputs include 8 projects funded, 4No. new enterprises supported and 4No. existing enterprises enhanced.

**Local objective 3 can be delivered through 3 strategic actions:**

- a. Festivals and events
  - To provide capital assistance to support further growth and development of festival activity in Meath.
  - Anticipated outputs/targets include 15 towns and villages engaged, 15No. of projects supported, 10% increase in visitor numbers and 20No. FTE jobs created or preserved.
- b. Village and town development
  - Strategic actions to support the development of rural villages and town through the enhancement and exploitation of local resources including human capital, the physical environment, historical and heritage based resources and employment generation potential.
  - Anticipated outputs/targets include 5No. villages and towns assisted, 25No. entrepreneurs supported, 7No. historic and heritage operations assisted, 10% increase in visitor numbers
- c. Community capacity
  - To enable specific communities of place in Co. Meath to work in partnership to create more resilient communities, thriving local economies and better places in which to live and work.
  - Anticipated outputs/targets include 8No. area based communities engaged, 6no. hard to reach communities engaged, 16No. collaborative operations or initiatives emerging.

**Local objective 4 can be delivered through 2 strategic actions:**

- a. Antiquities of Meath
  - This strategic action will see the development of inter-connecting mix and match heritage based visitor trails throughout rural Meath built around the hidden and historic antiquities of the County.
  - Anticipated outputs/targets include 5No. trails opened for visitor appreciation, 10No. sites with improved access, 10No. projects funded
- b. Natural, social and cultural heritage
  - This action will support operations designed to support operations designed to support the rural economy through the exploitation of the economic value of Co. Meath's unique natural, social and cultural heritage while simultaneously supporting operations designed to support the preservation, conservation and animation of these valuable resources.
  - Anticipated outputs/targets include 5No. projects funded, 5No. jobs created, 15,000 visitors facilitated

**Local objective 5 can be delivered through 1 strategic action:**

- a. Broadband Utilisation and Access
  - Improving connectivity to enable improved utilisation, service delivery and access
  - Anticipated outputs/targets include 300No. individuals assisted, 10No. facilities engaged in projects, 350 engaged in training to enable effective use

**Local objective 6 can be delivered through 2 strategic actions:**

- a. Community Facility Development
  - Developing community facilities to enhance quality of life, educational opportunity and address local service loss.
  - Anticipated outputs/targets include 10No. community projects funded, 10 buildings restored or enhanced, 10No. services provided or restored

- b. Developing Community Resources (hard to reach)
  - Developing community resources to target the hard to reach
  - Anticipated outputs/targets include 15No. service provision initiatives planned and supported, 1500 people engaged in capacity building, localised support offered to 15 hard to reach communities.

**Local objective 7 can be delivered through 1 strategic action:**

- a. Rural Youth
  - Addressing the needs and advancing the interests of rural youth
  - Anticipated outputs/targets include 15 social enterprises engaged, 250 youths will develop new skills and competencies, 150 youth progressing to employment, self-employment or further education and training

**Local objective 8 can be delivered through 1 strategic action:**

- a. Inland Waters Recreation and Protection
  - To support the sustainable development of Co. Meath's water resources, to improve the recreational use of inland waters, to realise the significant health, economic and environmental benefit arising from such development and to foster a better understanding of the need to care for and protect our environment.
  - Anticipated outputs/targets include 3No. lakeside operations, 2No. coastline developments, 4No. enterprises assisted, 1 inland waterways development plan

**Local objective 9 can be delivered through 1 strategic action:**

- a. Protection and Improvement of Local Diversity
  - To support actions to combat the loss of biodiversity and damage to ecosystems through engagement with agencies, organisations, communities and individuals with specific interest in biodiversity in respect of Co. Meath's farmlands, bogs, lakes, rivers, coastal sites and wildlife habitats
  - Anticipated outputs/targets include 50 farmers engaged in training on application of new conservation technologies, 2 gun clubs engaged in breeding to conserve endangered species, 15 landowners and communities engaged in habitat preservation and improvement

**Local objective 10 can be delivered through 1 strategic action:**

- a. Development of Renewable Energy
  - To drive community engagement with and investment in energy conservation, renewable energy utilisation and new sustainable energy technologies
  - Anticipated outputs/targets include 11 projects funded, 7 facilities engaged in upgrade operations, 4No. facilitates generating sustainable energy