

## Rural Life

**The Rural Development Programme (RDP) aims to improve the quality of life in rural areas by supporting a wide range of projects including:**

### **Diversification into Non-Agricultural Activities**

Through support from the RDP we aim to increase farm household income and create employment opportunities by providing assistance for farm households to diversify into non-agricultural activities on farm.

### **Business Creation and Development**

The RDP aims to develop the economic infrastructure in rural areas through creating employment opportunities and promoting entrepreneurship. The Programme will provide support for existing micro-enterprises and for individuals wishing to set up a new micro-enterprise in a non-agricultural sector.

### **Encouragement of Tourism Activities**

Through support from the RDP we aim to maximise opportunities for tourism development, which make best use of our natural and cultural resources. Through the sustainable development of the rural economy, we aim to attract visitors and create new employment opportunities by providing support to existing rural tourism enterprises and for individuals wishing to develop tourism activities.

### **Basic Services for the Economy and Rural Population**

The RDP aims to increase the attractiveness of rural areas through supporting the improvement of basic services. This will include the improvement of cultural and leisure activities and related small-scale infrastructure. Support will

also be provided towards the costs of identifying needs.

### **Village Renewal and Development**

In order to support integrated village initiatives which promote community development and regeneration, the RDP will support animation and capacity-building within and between villages and their surrounding rural areas. This will include the formulation of integrated action plans to define the role of the village and fully develop the potential of rural areas.

### **Conservation and Upgrading the Rural Heritage**

The RDP aims to use the natural resources in Northern Ireland's rural areas to create new employment opportunities and develop the rural economy. This will be achieved through supporting local village initiatives to preserve and upgrade their rural heritage.

### **How is funding being delivered?**



This element of the RDP is being delivered by seven Council Clusters using the LEADER approach. An EU-wide initiative, LEADER methodology uses local knowledge to enable a "bottom-up", area-based, innovative and integrated community-led approach to the delivery of RDP funding in rural areas.

Council Clusters have facilitated the creation of Local Action Groups (LAG), which cover all sectors of the community. Local Development Strategies have also been developed setting out plans for their areas, including selection criteria for local projects. Each LAG will be responsible for delivering against their Local Development