



This document sets out how the Rural Development Programme for England will be delivered in the South East and London. It was prepared by SEEDA, Natural England and the Forestry Commission, in consultation with regional partners as represented by the South East Rural Partnership and the South East Rural Affairs Forum. There will be further iterations of this plan as regional and national policies develop, and also when the region undertakes periodic reviews of the regional strategy for RDPE.

There are other important sources of information to consider before making an application for RDPE support, and for the latest guidance please go to the SEEDA, Natural England and Forestry Commission websites.

Contents	Page
Regional Objectives and Priorities	5
Regional Balance of Measures and allocation of budgets	16
Other sources of support	19
Demarcation	20
Leader Approach	27
Regional Delivery Strategy	27
Regional communications plan	29
Governance and Reporting	29
Annex A - Analysis of Regional Evidence	30

1. The Rural Development Framework - England

- 1.1. The Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) is England's mechanism for delivering funds allocated from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). The RDPE will run from 2007 to December 2013 and includes the existing Entry Level and Higher Level and Organic Agri-Environment Schemes (ELS, HLS & OLS), the England Woodland Grant Scheme and a new socio-economic programme to replace the earlier project based schemes (Rural Enterprise Scheme, Processing and Marketing Grants, Vocational Training Scheme and the Energy Crops (SRC) Producer Groups Scheme).
- 1.2. The Governments proposals for the new RDPE are based on four core principles to:
 - Focus funding to support Defra strategic priorities and government commitments such as those in the Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food and Rural Strategy 2004.
 - Use this funding to make a distinctive and significant difference. Rural areas and communities benefit from many mainstream services and funding programmes so this Programme should address those challenges that mainstream resources do not meet.
 - Maintain Government commitment to Environmental Stewardship.
 - Within a national framework, regions have the necessary flexibility to respond to regional and local needs and priorities.
- 1.3. The Government priorities for the next Programme are structured around three themes. They focus on specific areas where it is thought the next Programme can make the greatest difference, complementing and not duplicating other initiatives:
 - **Enhancing the environment and countryside** – Environmental Stewardship will be at the heart of this
 - **Making agriculture and forestry more competitive and sustainable** – fostering a more competitive business environment through a focus on skills, knowledge transfer and innovation
 - **Enhancing opportunity in rural areas** – investing in skills, enterprise and innovation, targeting support to those in rural areas that need it most, whether in the farming sector or the broader rural economy.
- 1.4 The RDPE funding streams that address these themes are structured as follows:
 - Axis 1** - 10% of the national budget
Improving competitiveness of the farming and forestry sectors.
 - Axis 2** - 80% of the national budget
Improving the environment and the countryside.

Axis 3 - 10% of the national budget

Rural quality of life and the diversification of the rural economy.

Also, in the RDPE the Leader approach is being mainstreamed as a “bottom-up” approach to delivering objectives across all three Axis – see further details in the associated document “Guidance notes for Leader applicants”. A minimum of 5% of the overall RDPE budget must be delivered using the Leader approach, which involves businesses and rural communities in specified rural areas (with a rural population between 5,000 and 150,000) working together to address local issues – it is in effect a delegated grant scheme that is managed by the local action groups.

1.5 The Rural Strategy 2004 recommended simplification of funding streams and better targeting of resources to areas and people that need them the most. In line with this the next Rural Development Programme will be delivered in the South East region and London as follows:

- **Axis 2.** - Natural England and the Forestry Commission will manage the delivery of funding aimed at enhancing the environment
- **Axes 1 & 3 and Leader** - The South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) will manage the delivery of funding aimed at supporting sustainable social and economic development in rural areas, and will also represent the interests of the London Development Agency (LDA). The RDPE activities are important both to achieve the objectives of the programme, but also through it to feed back intelligence and analysis into SEEDA rural policy-making. The combination of the Leader approach, using its bottom-up approach, and strategic regional level investments in larger collaborative projects will help engage Local Authorities, regional partners and businesses together in tackling rural issues.
- Collectively delivery agencies and responsible officers will seek to identify opportunities for added value around intergration of activities across their the three themes and key objectives.
- The programme will work within the Business Support Simplification Programme (BSSP) which aims to make it easier for companies and entrepreneurs to understand and access government funded grants, subsidies and advice with which to start and grow their businesses.

1.6 This Regional Implementation Plan plan describes how RDPE funds will be distributed in the South East and London in the Rural Development Programme:

- **Consistent** with the themes and priorities described in the RDPE National Strategy;
- **Stakeholder led and evidence based** - The priorities for the plan are drawn from the South East Rural Delivery Framework, the London Plan, the Regional Economic Strategy for the South East, the South East Spatial Plan (the South East Plan), the London Food Strategy, the South East Spatial Plan (the South East Plan) and the Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food. Each of these documents is evidence based and was developed with stakeholder engagement. The RDPE will also take full account of the emerging Single Rural Plan which is being developed by regional partners to provide a framework for all rural strategies in the SE and thereby to permit more focussed and effective action.
- **Focussed** on a smaller number of key areas than the documents above, recognising that RDPE funds are limited and only the Region's highest priorities can be addressed;
- **Flexible** – it is written to avoid constraining innovation and creativity at the local level. There is sufficient flexibility to respond to changing circumstances during the programme period.
- **Cross-cutting** – using Leader and the Joint Character Area approach to encourage joined-up projects that contribute to sustainable rural development. Joined-up between themes of the RDPE and with other, often more sizeable, funding streams.???

2. Regional Objectives and Priorities

Objectives and desirable outcomes

- 2.1. Overall, to protect and enhance the high quality and diverse environmental characteristics and natural resources of the South East region and London by encouraging an innovative and sustainable rural economy which improves everybody's quality of life.
- 2.2. More specifically, to deliver the following outcomes in the region:
 - Maintenance and enhancement of the region's landscapes, biodiversity, heritage and cultural assets, including building their resilience to climate change as part of the regional response to climate change adaptation.
 - Delivery of the Sustainable Farming and Food Strategy to help farmers and growers achieve improved economic and environmental performance.
 - Enhanced skills and "capacity" on farms and in rural and urban fringe communities, enabling people and businesses to respond positively to new market opportunities, new environmental responsibilities (including mitigating and adapting to climate change) and social change.

- Increased numbers of environmentally sustainable and economically viable farming/horticultural, forestry and other micro rural businesses through greater innovation, improved business efficiency and encouragement of a new generation of entrepreneurs (particularly women and young people as these are currently under-represented in rural areas).
- Reduced social exclusion and disadvantage in rural areas. Reduced exclusion because of age, disability, gender, income, race, religion/belief or sexual orientation. Addressing equality and maximising opportunities for the diverse population in rural areas.
- Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation through understanding how to achieve sustainable production and consumption, improved water and soil management, improved energy efficiency and the development of renewable energy supply chains
- Improved access (intellectual and physical) to the countryside leading to greater countryside awareness and improved health and wellbeing. Improved understanding and enjoyment of the countryside leading to increased public support for high quality management of the natural environment.
- Water and waste management in the region addressing the needs of rural businesses and the Water Framework Directive
- The Forestry assets in the region brought back into sustainable management leading to improved biodiversity, renewable energy production and increased use for recreational purposes.

Regional Priorities

2.3 Priorities will evolve during the period of the RDPE but in the short to medium term the following areas of activity appear to offer the greatest potential for delivering the above objectives. Consequently, these activities will receive special focus when considering applications for support under the RDPE:

- **Meeting UK biodiversity targets - Achieving BAP species and habitat targets, achieving favourable condition in 95% of nationally important wildlife sites and reversing the decline in lowland farmland birds** – Including protecting and enhancing landscapes in the region, and improving woodland management in order to enhance biodiversity
- **Mitigating and adapting to climate change** – There are three elements to this:
 - The South East is the most wooded region in England. In London, woodlands within the rural parts of the region could be considered significant as they cover approximately one-third of the undeveloped area of London. In addition, there are estimated to be at least 1.3 million trees in public amenity settings such as at roadsides and in parks which is also a significant resource. Therefore there is a major opportunity for establishing renewable energy supply chains. This will help

achieve both regions commitment to reducing carbon emissions from fossil fuels whilst improving woodland management & biodiversity and providing additional income.

- We need to help land managers minimise the impact of their businesses on the environment
- Land managers need to understand how to adapt their businesses to limit the impact of climate change on their businesses and how to make best use of new opportunities.
- **Quality food sales** – There needs to be a focus on economically and environmentally sustainable food production, product development and collaboration across the food chain, and the establishment of efficient distribution networks. The region also needs to take advantage of opportunities afforded by the London Food Strategy.
- **Adding value to forestry products** – Harvesting, processing and adding-value to primary forestry products, uptake of latest technology, the development of new markets, and the development and marketing of value-added products
- **Rural tourism** – The region's landscapes, heritage and villages are central to much of the tourism in the region but rural businesses could capture more of the tourism spend and help attract higher levels of spend into the region. There is tremendous scope for development of sustainable rural tourism products and services. These should be underpinned by the regions landscapes, biodiversity and access to them but also critically should contribute to their maintenance and enhancement. All applicants for RDPE support will be required to work in accordance with the Regional Tourism Strategy.
- **Skills development** – Farmers, foresters and rural communities need the skills and technology to equip them to react positively to new business opportunities and external pressures. Skills development and technology transfer will enable people to take a lead in developing their own careers, and help businesses and rural communities to be more productive, efficient and sustainable. The region will be seeking a pan-regional programme of training that meets the needs of rural businesses and communities, is coordinated and provides easy access for trainees.
- **Innovation, entrepreneurship and collaboration** – In encouraging diversification of the rural economy we need to invest in people and businesses that can become industry leaders, and make a real difference in the region in terms of developing major new ideas and business opportunities. The region needs larger scale collaborative projects, that are driven by entrepreneurs, and that will have a significant and lasting impact on the region.
- **Assisting the livestock sector** – In particular to help livestock producers to be more efficient and competitive, to achieve high standards of animal welfare and to manage their land within the context of environmental legislation.
- **Leader approach** – Developing an effective Leader programme is highly important. We wish to empower rural businesses and communities to work together to develop innovative local development strategies that will develop the rural economy, target

rural areas of disadvantage, and those under pressure such as in the urban fringe, to create more sustainable, inclusive and thriving communities.

These derive ultimately from the Rural Delivery Framework (RDF), but they have been given greater focus reflecting the parameters of the programme and its national objectives. As a result, whilst the themes support the delivery of the RDF they are narrower in focus; the RDF priorities will need to be advanced through a much broader range of resources than those available through this process. In future the Single Rural Plan will become the reference document.

All of the above will contribute towards the SEEDA Regional Economic Strategy, which has the following key objectives:

Global Competitiveness

1. Global Businesses and Foreign Direct Investment - increase the percentage of businesses located in the South East operating internationally from an estimated 10% in 2003 to 15% by 2016, maximising the South East's share of global Foreign Direct Investment
2. Knowledge Transfer and Business Expenditure on Research and Development - increase the proportion of businesses in the South East reporting R&D links with universities from 11% in 2005 to 15% by 2016, and increase business expenditure on research and development in the South East from 3.2% of Gross Value Added in 2003 to 4% by 2016.
3. Innovation and Creativity - increase the percentage of total South East business turnover attributable to new products from 12% in 2004 to 20% by 2016, and the percentage attributable to significantly improved products from 18% in 2004 to 25% by 2016.
4. Infrastructure – secure investment in infrastructure priorities to maintain economic competitiveness.

Smart Growth

5. Enterprise - increase the business stock by 35% from 35 businesses per 1,000 inhabitants in 2005 to 44 per 1,000 inhabitants by 2016, including 10,000 new businesses run by women by 2010
6. Skills - maximise the number of people ready for employment at all skill levels, and ensure they are continually equipped to progress in the labour market
7. Competition and Business Regulation - increase the level of participation of South East businesses (especially small businesses and social enterprises) in tendering for public sector contracts
8. Transport - reduce road congestion and pollution levels by improving travel choice, promoting public transport, managing demand and facilitating modal shifts.
9. Physical Development - ensure sufficient and affordable housing and employment space of the right quality, type and size to meet the needs of the region and support its competitiveness, and create the climate for long term investment through the efficient use of land resources, including mixed use developments.

10. Employment - improve the productivity of the workforce and increase economic activity from 82% to 85% by bringing 110,000 net additional South East residents of working age into the labour market by 2016 (as a step towards bringing up to 250,000 residents into the labour market by 2026)

Sustainable Prosperity

11. Climate Change and Energy - reduce Carbon Dioxide emissions attributable to the South East by 20% from the 2003 baseline by 2016 as a step towards the national target of achieving a 60% reduction on 1990 levels by 2050, and increase the contribution of renewable energy to at least 10% of energy supply in the South East by 2010 as a step towards achieving 20% by 2020.
12. Sustainable Consumption and Production - reduce per capita water consumption in the South East by 20% from 169 litres per day in 2003/04 to 135 litres per day by 2016, and achieve a 30% increase over the 2003 baseline in GVA generated per tonne of materials entering the waste stream by 2016.
13. Natural Resources and the Environment. Achieve measurable improvements in the quality, bio-diversity and accessibility of green and open space.
14. Sustainable Communities - enable more people to benefit from sustainable prosperity across the region and reduce polarisation between communities.

2.4 SEEDA is actively involved in the development of the PURPLE network in Europe, which focuses on rural areas around major cities and their pressures on land management and the needs of city dwellers. This work will help inform future targeting of funds in the region.

Cross cutting themes

2.5 All projects supported under the RDPE in the region will be expected to proactively implement the following cross-cutting themes:

- Environmental sustainability in terms of their impact on the landscape, biodiversity and adapting to and/or mitigating climate change mitigation
- Addressing opportunity and disadvantage in rural areas
- The skills and confidence needed to deliver good outcomes

South East and London Priorities in relation to the RDPE funding streams

2.6 The following tables summarise the regional priorities in relation to the three RDPE Axes:

Axis 1 - Improving competitiveness of farming and forestry sectors.

Axis 2 - Improving the environment and the countryside.

Axis 3 - Rural quality of life and the diversification of the rural economy.

It is important to note

- This RDPE implementation plan targets agriculture, land based businesses, and rural & urban fringe communities in relation to the following priorities, but it does not address the whole rural development remit. The RDPE is intended to complement not replace other sources of funding and support.
- All of the priorities listed under the three themes are interlinked and some are dependent on each other. For example, priorities under Themes 1 & 2 will contribute (to a greater or lesser extent) to Theme 3 “addressing disadvantage and enhancing opportunity in rural areas.” This is self-evident so this report does not attempt to map the interdependencies and shared outcomes.
- Funds from Axis 2 will not be allocated to Leader, but Leader groups will be expected to deliver against the objectives of Axis 2. Natural England and the Forestry Commission will work closely with SEEDA and the Local Action Groups to develop coordinated and complementary projects.
- Under Axis 1 and 3 the intention is to focus on a smaller number of larger, collaborative projects that will have a significant and lasting impact in the region. By working together smaller and medium sized businesses can increase their potential to grow. There is a specific measure under Axis 1 that will support collaborative product development across supply chains.
- Under each of the Axes there are a series of Measures. These measures describe the activities that are eligible for funding.
- The evidence to support the chosen priorities is shown at Annex A.
- The future role of the proposed Energy Crops Support measure is yet to be determined.

Axis 1 (10% of the funding) - Making agriculture, horticulture and forestry more competitive and sustainable

Priorities	RDPE Measure(s)
<p>Priority 1-1: Improving competitiveness and sustainability through technology transfer and skills development – Support training, mentoring and technology transfer to encourage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation and the uptake of new technology and skills • A new generation of entrepreneurs and leaders, particularly women and young entrepreneurs • Improved environmental management particularly in relation to biodiversity, landscapes, water and waste management, renewable energy and climate change. • The forestry, farming and horticultural sectors to develop the skills and confidence necessary for improving business efficiency, adding value to primary produce, developing new and innovative non-farming business opportunities, running collaborative ventures, achieving improved environmental management, developing entrepreneurial and leadership skills and being compliant with legislation. • Improved animal welfare • Sustainable production and consumption and a focus on climate change mitigation and adaptation. <p>Rationale – Agricultural, horticultural and forestry businesses are experiencing low levels of profitability; this will affect their long term viability and their ability to manage the countryside. Only the most technically/economically efficient and environmentally sustainable businesses, and those that exploit new market opportunities, will be viable in the long term.</p>	111
<p>Priority 1-2: Maintain essential traditional skills and crafts – where these underpin the management of the high priority heritage and landscape assets in the region.</p> <p>Rationale – The region has a large number of important heritage and landscape assets but some of the traditional skills necessary for their maintenance are in decline.</p>	111
<p>Priority 1-3: Stimulate enterprise and innovation - Nurture new and existing farm and forestry diversification enterprises that add-value to primary agricultural produce and forestry products, with an emphasis on investment in larger, collaborative ventures. Support collaboration across supply chains in the development of new products and markets in order to improve business incomes and to diversify the rural economy. Encourage improved management of woodlands particularly for renewable energy supply chains and for recreational purposes. Use of anaerobic digestion as a means of generating energy.</p> <p>Rationale – There is great potential for adding-value to primary agricultural produce and forestry products, and for increased farm business diversification, in order to improve the performance of land based businesses, and to improve the performance of the wider rural economy. The South East region's form the most wooded area in England and some of London's woodland resource can be considered nationally significant in biodiversity terms, however most of the woodland is not adequately managed leading to pressures on biodiversity and reduced economic potential; both regions also have potential for developing</p>	121 122 123 124 115

Deleted: managing waste and g

high volume renewable energy supply chains.	
Priority 1-4: Assisting the livestock sector to improve efficiency, competitiveness and environmental management – In particular to help livestock producers to be more efficient and competitive, to achieve high standards of animal welfare and to manage their land within the context of environmental legislation	111 121 123 124
Priority 1-5: Encourage improved management of water resources – Some agriculture and horticulture businesses need to invest in water reservoirs for crop irrigation where these will deliver economic and environmental benefits. Rationale – The region has water supply shortfalls and this is likely to get worse. Some land based businesses need to invest in improved water management facilities in order to maintain and develop high value crops that are important in the region, whilst delivering environmental benefits through winter abstraction and reservoir management.	125



Axis 2 (80% of the funding) - Enhancing the environment and countryside

The following are broad priorities that are underpinned by very detailed targeting and delivery objectives within the region; partners are actively engaged in these targeting processes.

Priorities	Measure(s)
<p>Priority 2-1: England's natural environment is conserved and enhanced</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserving wildlife and enhancing biodiversity - achieving BAP species and habitat targets, meeting Defra's PSA targets for farmland birds and nationally important wildlife sites. • Maintaining and enhancing landscape quality and character - Supporting delivery of AONB & National Park, and relevant World Heritage Site (both potential and designated) management plans. • Protecting the historic environment - Encouraging land managers to protect historic assets that are under their management. • Protecting natural resources – Contributing to the delivery of Priority Catchment Action Plans. Tackling diffuse pollution by supporting activity over and above cross-compliance standards. 	214
<p>Priority 2-2: More people enjoy, understand and act to improve the natural environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing opportunities for educational access. • Contributing to the delivery of Rights of Way Improvement Plans and meeting Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard. • Providing access in areas where there is a deficit of access close to where people live <p>Rationale – London region contains highest population density within the country. Adding value to the existing access networks within the two regions is vitally important for giving people the maximum opportunity of visiting the countryside.</p>	214
<p>Priority 2-3: Promote forestry management – Contribute to the action plan for the Regional Forestry Framework, support the management of ancient woodlands, and provide improved access to woodlands.</p> <p>Rationale – The South East is the most wooded region in England but most of it is not adequately managed and is losing biodiversity and economic value. RDPE can help bring woodland into better management.</p>	221 222 223 226 227



Axis 3 (10% of the funding) – Quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy

Priorities	Measure(s)
<p>Priority 3-1: Improving competitiveness and sustainability through technology transfer and skills development – Support training and technology transfer to encourage non-agricultural diversification, improved farm business incomes and diversification of the rural economy through encouraging micro-enterprises.</p>	331
<p>Priority 3-2: Stimulate enterprise and innovation - Nurture new and existing farm diversification enterprises that add-value to primary agricultural produce and forestry products, with an emphasis on investment in larger, collaborative ventures. Nurture new and existing non-agricultural farm diversification in order to improve business incomes and to diversify the rural economy. Encourage improved management of woodlands particularly for renewable energy supply chains and for recreational purposes.</p>	311
<p>Priority 3-3 The development of rural tourism activities – Sustainable use of the natural, heritage and cultural assets in the region to develop sustainable rural tourism activities. This will include normal commercial activities and social enterprises.</p> <p>Rationale – The South East and London regions have a thriving tourism industry with great potential for further development. Rural areas can do more to benefit from tourism in ways that will help maintain rural assets and create employment opportunities for disadvantaged people in rural areas.</p>	313
<p>Priority 3-4 Developing an effective Leader programme - Empower rural businesses and communities to work together to develop innovative local development strategies that will target rural areas of disadvantage, and those under pressure, to create more sustainable and thriving communities. This will include the development of micro-enterprises, skills and technology transfer, improved basic services in rural areas, village renewal and development, conservation and upgrading of rural heritage, working with farmers and foresters to diversify the rural economy, fostering cooperation and collaboration, renewable energy projects, and sustainable tourism.</p>	311, 312 313, 321 322, 323 331, 421 431, 111 121, 122 123, 124

3. Regional Balance of Measures

3.1. The proposed balance of Measures in the South East and London have been informed by:

- The strategy produced by Defra, which indicated that 80% of the EAFRD¹ funding available for the next Programme spend should be devoted to Axis 2 and, further, that some Measures would be excluded from the England programme. This is to maintain the Defra commitment to Environmental Stewardship.
- The priorities for programme delivery identified in the South East Rural Delivery Framework set out above.

3.2 Within these overall parameters, the region proposes allocation of resources as shown in the tables overleaf. Please note that all of the proposed budget allocations are draft and subject to further consultation with partners when we know the extent of the Leader applications.

South East & London Budget breakdown - RDPE

Axis 1

Measure Description	Budget allocation 2007 to 2013 exc' VM £	Proposed use of VM money
111 Vocational training and information for agricultural, food or forestry sectors	£2,760,000	£2,031,000
114 Use by farmers and forest holders of advisory services	£0	
115 Setting up of farm management, farm relief and farm advisory services	£247,000	
121 Modernisation of agricultural holdings	£3,640,000	£2,300,000
122 Improving the economic value of forests	£3,500,000	
123 Adding value to agricultural and forestry products	£5,250,000	£2,560,000
124 Co-operation for the development of new products	£1,200,000	£1,700,000
125 Infrastructure	£2,500,000	
126 Restoring agricultural production damaged by natural disasters	£0	
	£19,100,000	£8,590,000

South East & London Budget breakdown - RDPE

Axis 3	Budget allocation 2007 to 2013 exc' VM £	Breakdown of VM money
Measure Description		
311 Diversification into non-agricultural activities	£7,788,000	£7,992,000
312 Support for the creation and development of micro-enterprises	£916,000	£1,237,000
313 Encouragement of tourism	£2,547,000	£2,547,000
321 Basic services	£1,222,000	£1,222,000
322 Village renewal and development	£917,000	£917,000
323 Conservation and upgrading of rural heritage	£916,000	£916,000
331 Training and information for micro-businesses	£611,000	£611,000
341 Skills acquisition for preparation/implementation of local development strategies	£593,000	£593,000
421 Implementing co-operative projects between LAGs	£305,000	£305,000
431 Running the LAG and developing LAG skills for delivery of Leader	£2,292,000	£2,292,000
	£18,107,000	£18,640,000

RDPE funding delivered via the Leader approach will be a minimum of £22m.

Axis 2

Measure Description

	£
211 Ag - natural handicap payments to farmers in mountain areas	National budget
212 Ag - payments to farmers in areas with other handicaps	National budget
214 Ag - Agri-environment Payments	National budget
216 Ag – Support for non productive investment*	National budget
221 For - first afforestation of agricultural land	National budget
222 For - first establishment of agroforestry systems	National budget
223 For – First afforestation of non-agricultural land	National budget
225 For - Forest-environment payments	National budget
226 For - Restoring forestry potential	National budget
227 For - Support for non-productive investments*	National budget
	National budget

Axis 2 budgets will be managed nationally by Natural England and the Forestry Commission, but with indicative budgets for the regions to manage. Both organisations are currently working on this and further information will follow.

4. Other sources of support available in the region

The RDPE funds will be complementary to a wide range of other sources of support in the region including:

SEEDA single pot <http://www.seeda.co.uk> and LDA <http://www.lda.gov.uk/>

- Access to services
- Small Rural Towns
- Redundant Buildings Grant targeted to farmers and areas of need
- Rural Strategic influencing
- Rural Local Produce
- Land based programme
- Rural Protected Landscapes
- Enterprise Hubs
- Business Link

SEEDA managed EU programmes

- European Regional Development Fund ERDF
- European Social Fund ESF

Natural England <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk>

English Heritage <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.1117>

Business Resource Efficiency and Waste <http://www.defra.gov.uk/ENVIRONMENT/WASTE/brew/#now>

Forestry Commission <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-5vgfbu>

Heritage Lottery Fund <http://www.hlf.org.uk/English/>

Big Lottery Fund <http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/>

Learning and Skills council <http://www.lsc.gov.uk/>

Rural Social and Community Fund <http://www.go-se.gov.uk/gose/peopleSusComms/vcs/309053/>

Other sources for rural communities <http://www.defra.gov.uk/rural/communities/halls/funding-sources/default.htm>

Local Authorities (various) <http://www.direct.gov.uk/D11/Directories/LocalCouncils/fs/en>

Defra (various) <http://www.defra.gov.uk/funding/index.htm>

Dti (various) <http://www.dti.gov.uk/>

GLA <http://www.london.gov.uk/>

5. Demarcation between the European Development Fund (ERDF), European Fisheries Fund (EFF) and RDPE

5.1 This section focuses on demarcation with respect to the ERDF (structural funds) and EFF programmes in the South East and London. The following table indicates the demarcation proposals.

Complementarities and Proposed Demarcation Criteria			
Field of activity – (list of measures eligible under another Community support instrument)	Convergence or Competitiveness ERDF	EAFRD	European Fisheries Fund
Support targeting the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sector (Including related training and advisory services)	Promoting Innovation and R&D and supporting and stimulating successful enterprise and on the development of <i>micro</i> enterprises in rural areas Targeted training and advisory service which are integral to the success of a wider project that delivers ERDF objectives.	Adding value to agricultural and forestry products through micro and SME investment in facilities (capital) and marketing Encouraging greater collaboration and co-operation Supporting farm and forestry producers in supply chains Specialist advisory services for the farming and forestry sector	Not possible

		<p>Provision of training, non-accredited, bespoke technical, business efficiency, agricultural/forestry coaching, facilitation for persons engaged in the agricultural, food and forestry sectors</p>	
Renewable Energy	Support for research and development activity in the environmental technologies sector	<p>Provision of training and knowledge transfer activity aimed at the farming and forestry sector</p> <p>Provision of start-up support to rural sector enterprises, where these contribute to the development of new environmental technologies, or are involved in</p>	<p>Engine and gear replacement for less fuel consumption</p> <p>Pilot projects to test less fuel-consuming fishing methods</p> <p>Investment support</p>
As "infrastructure" for energy supply under	Advanced business support services for firms operating in the environmental technologies sector		

Article 30.

Support for the installation of environmentally friendly technologies in businesses excluding the agricultural sector

renewable energy supply chains in producing, processing or end uses.

for aquaculture, production and marketing in environmental technology

Agri-Food products and Agri/forestry non food products for renewable energy (revenue) with a local market

Small scale farm renewable energy investments

Support targeting the Fisheries industries

Not possible



Not possible

Promotion of investment in innovation and technology for the fishing industry

Fish processing

Development of efficient supply chains in the fishing industry, with strong links between fishermen, growers, processors and customers

New markets for fish products

Encouragement of tourism activities

Support for tourism infrastructure – particularly small scale – that contributes directly to economic growth.

Farm diversification into tourism and service industries adding value to the tourist product

Assistance for sustainable rural tourism activity including the development and upgrading of tourism facilities, promotion, and training in quality management systems as well as the development of marketing activity

Support for rural community partnerships

Support for the provision of key services within small, local geographic areas,

Small-scale local tourism initiatives, including eco-tourism, focusing on the fisheries heritage without increasing fishing effort

Basic services for the economy and rural population in rural areas

Support for tackling social and economic exclusion and overcoming barriers to work for those furthest away from the labour market, particularly those in the poorest communities and specific communities of interest

Tackling social exclusion and promoting long term prosperity in communities traditionally dependant on the fishing industry, where this cannot

Village renewal and development

Strengthening public transport and access related links between targeted communities and economic opportunities

Support for delivery of services that overcome barriers to work
Access to finance for key social enterprises
Support for operations covering more than one location or ensuring links between them.

such as rural communities

Provision of rural services through social enterprise to improve quality of life for rural residents

Support for small scale activities in single villages

be provided elsewhere

Small scale local tourism initiatives, including eco-tourism focusing on the fisheries heritage without increasing fishing effort

Conservation and upgrading of the rural heritage

Promotion and marketing of regional assets, including natural and cultural heritage assets. Excludes conservation and upgrading activities.

Support for maintenance, restoration and interpretation (i.e. information signs) of rural and heritage features. NB Through the LEADER approach: grants to improve and capitalise on heritage and cultural assets, in limited rural parts of the region.

Small scale local tourism initiatives, including eco-tourism focusing on the fisheries heritage without increasing fishing effort.

6. Use of the LEADER approach

- 6.1. In the South East region the ambition is to use the Leader approach to deliver into both Axis 1 and Axis 3, with the activities also integrating with the objectives of Axis 2. The level of funding for delivery through the Leader approach is expected to be above the minimum £18m required by the programme. The level of funding for approved bids will depend on the quality of the submissions and the budgetary implications of the bids.

7. Regional Delivery Strategy

Targeting Mechanisms

- 7.1. In delivering RDPE, there is a need for an ongoing targeting process, recognising that within the Themes for the 7 year programme the actual targets will continually be developing. The proposal is to use a similar approach to the current ERDP annual targeting statement/process: partners will work together to update the targeting statement on an annual basis in consultation with a wider regional group of stakeholders. This will be done in the context of the need for a degree of consistency across the years to enable applicants to respond. The regional targeting statement will thus evolve over the lifetime of the programme as some issues become more important or new areas of demand for intervention are identified.
- 7.2. The two key elements of the targeting approach adopted will include:
- Types of projects/activity to be supported e.g. woodfuel, undergrazing;
 - Beneficiary groups e.g. type of business, community, partnerships;
 - Specific geographic areas and locations.
- 7.3 For Axis 2 Natural England will continue to ensure that Environmental Stewardship delivers best value for money by improving the targeting framework using the best available evidence from the full range of regional stakeholders. This will include a focus on evidence relating to biodiversity, landscape, historic environment, natural resources and access. Natural England will also deliver value for money through monitoring and evaluating scheme delivery against outcomes. Natural England expects that the most effective use is made of other policy mechanisms (including cross-compliance and advisory services).
- 7.4 It is recognised that there is little support for targeting on existing sub-regional boundaries for the socio-economic components of the programme. Rather for socio-economic delivery it is proposed to develop appropriate projects with a mix of local, sub regional and regional scale activities which meet the needs of the target communities.

Regional targets

7.5 Work is currently in hand to create a national set of indicators and targets for the RDPE. For axes 1 and 3, these will predominantly be based on the input, output, result and impact indicators set out in the EU's Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (CMEF). However, we will also consider to what extent the CMEF indicators need to be adapted or supplemented to reflect national and regional priorities specific to the RDPE. The information provided in RIPs about funding priorities, beneficiaries and type of activities supported under the Programme will form the basis for this assessment.

In addition, the regional priorities for RDPE will include the SMART targets against which performance can be measured and reported. Example targets are shown below:

- 10% of energy supplied from renewable energy sources.
- Ninety-five per cent by area of SSSIs are in the best possible condition (target condition) by 2010.
- Extent and condition of BAP habitats targeted for support through ES.
- Extent of areas meeting Natural England's ANGSt standards
- Number of social enterprises and micro-enterprise start-ups
- Numbers of people supported in deprived rural areas
- Number of LAG applications and their quality
- Levels of match funding and leverage

7.6 To meet EU and Defra monitoring requirements it is necessary to report outputs in accordance with the common evaluation and monitoring framework. This information will also be used to help evaluate levels of uptake, location of applicants, and the accessibility of the programme, to enable this Regional Implementation Plan to be reviewed and adjusted as necessary.

Delivery Across Programme Themes, Axes and Measures

7.7 The delivery of the RDPE is the responsibility of Natural England, the Forestry Commission and SEEDA, working closely with regional partners as outlined below.

- Environment Agency in particular in relation to its work on waste, water and energy, with its lead role in relation to water, flood and coastal management;
- English Heritage in relation to the built and historic landscape;

- Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group in its role helping landowners to develop robust environmental plans for their farms;
- The NFU and CLA;
- Wildlife Trusts, the National Trust and other major landowners such as the RSPB, both in terms of the land they manage in hand and the farmers with whom they work;
- England Farming and Food Partnership with their role in fostering greater collaboration and new enterprises.
- Business links in their role providing information, diagnostic and business support brokerage;
- Land based Colleges and Universities in their role supporting skills acquisition and technology transfer;
- Agricultural and Rural Training Groups in their role as specialist farmer controlled training providers;
- Local Authorities and Sub Regional Economic Partnerships (SREPs).
- Food and farming based groups such as the South East Food Group Partnership and the Farming and Rural Industries Group.
- Investing in Communities (IiC) partnerships in their role in addressing social inclusion at the sub regional level;
- Rural Community Councils (RCCs) in their role helping rural communities to plan for the future and address their weaknesses;
- Farmer Controlled Businesses (FCBs) in their role in developing collaborative projects which benefit many businesses.
- Land agents and other consultancies specialising in the land based sector in bringing forward projects.
- Leader local action groups

Regional Communications Plan for Beneficiaries

7.8 There are coordinated marketing plans for activities under all three Axis. These plans aim to ensure

- widescale awareness of the programme and what it aims to achieve
- good levels of uptake with good quality projects
- publicity for Defra and the EU

8. Governance and reporting arrangements

8.1 Within the region the RDPE delivery partners will report to the South East Rural Board. This Board will receive quarterly high level summaries of RDPE performance from SEEDA, Natural England and the Forestry Commission. In return the Board will provide feedback and challenge, and offer guidance on the future strategic direction of RDPE in the region. In addition, to help coordinate and optimise the activities of the three delivery partners there will be periodic meetings of SEEDA, Natural England and the Forestry Commission.

V 04-04-2008

8.2 The region will provide Defra and the Rural Payments Agency with performance data in accordance with their financial and common monitoring and evaluation framework requirements.

Annex A

Analysis of Regional Evidence

9.1 The following key evidence sets were used to derive RDPE priorities

- The South East Rural Delivery Framework and the evidence Base for the Regional Rural Delivery Framework for the South East.
- SEEDA Regional Economic Strategy
- SEERA The South East Plan
- Heritage Counts: The State of England's Historic Environment 2005.
- Action for Biodiversity in South East England, English Nature (on behalf of South East England Biodiversity Forum), 2002.
- Countryside Quality Counts²
- Seeing the Wood for the Trees, A Forestry and Woodlands Framework for South East England, 2004.
- Sustainable Farming and Food Strategy
- London Food Strategy.
- Impact of water abstraction on wetland SSSI, English Nature FRESHWATER SERIES NO 4, 1996.
- Health of Wetlands in the South East, Petre Brett Associates for English Nature, 2003.
- Climate Change Impacts - Looking ahead for the South East, South East Climate Change Partnership, 2003.
- Renewables Innovation review
- UK climate change programme
- Index of Deprivation (2004).
- Defra Economics and Statistics – June 2006 Agricultural and Horticultural Survey (2006).
- London Plan (2004).
- The Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy (2002).
- ERDP Appendix A8 Oct 2000.

All of these documents are available on line and the evidence contained in them is not repeated in this document

9.2 Regional overview³

The South East region encompasses 19 county and unitary authorities and 55 districts, stretching in an arc around London, from Thanet in the south-east to the New Forest in the south-west and to Aylesbury Vale and Milton Keynes in the north-west.

While it is without a single dominant urban centre, the region is home to two cities with populations of around 250,000 (Medway and Brighton and Hove) and five cities with populations of greater than 100,000. The South East is home to over eight million people in some three million households.

² Countryside Quality Counts - Tracking Change in the English Countryside, Constructing an Indicator of Change in Countryside Quality Final Report Nottingham University Consultants Limited, 2004 & Land Use Change at the Urban: Rural Fringe and in the Wider Countryside Department of Town and Regional Planning University of Sheffield, 2006

³ Extract from <http://www.go-se.gov.uk/gose/ourRegion/aboutTheSE/?a=42496>

V 04-04-2008

Transport

The major south coast ports, including Dover, Southampton and Portsmouth, as well as the Channel Tunnel, make the South East the natural access point to continental Europe. The presence of Gatwick airport, the UK's second busiest airport, and Heathrow immediately adjacent to the regional boundary, also place it at the hub of the UK's international travel links.

Research and Development

The region has a strong research presence, including both public sector and private sector establishments. Over a quarter of all expenditure on research and development performed in UK businesses took place in the South East in 2003.

Culture

The region has a strong cultural heritage. Long established and internationally famous events such as the Glyndebourne Festival Opera and the Chichester Theatre Festival stand alongside the largest number of specially designated museum collections of any region. The region also contains two of the nine UK sports institutes and has a renowned architectural heritage.

Economy

The region makes a major contribution to the UK economy, accounting for 15.3% of total UK Gross Value Added (GVA) in 2004. GVA measures the contribution to the economy of each individual producer, industry or sector in the UK.

Deprivation

In the South East there are 400,000 people living in areas that fall into the 20% of most deprived areas in England, and 222,000 children live in income deprived households. The Coastal South East is characterised by some of the country's cleanest beaches, major environmental assets such as the Downs and the Channel Coast, and a number of coastal cities and towns each with their own distinctive character and history. Yet it is also an area of substantial untapped economic potential, characterised by:

- Low productivity relative to the South East and, in some cases, the UK
- Generally lower economic activity and employment rates
- High concentrations of economic inactivity and higher 'structural' unemployment rates
- Relatively low skilled profile of its workforce
- Lower business density and business start-up rates
- More traditional industrial activities, including lower value added manufacturing and the visitor economy
- High dependence on public sector employment
- A low proportion of employment in knowledge based sectors, especially in the private sector
- A greater proportion of people already over retirement age than the regional average, with projections of further ageing
- Relatively poor infrastructure and connectivity

9.3 The Rural South East Region

More than 80% of the South East is classified as rural with a population of 2.5 million (32%) out of a total population for the region of 8 million⁴. Around 100,000 businesses operate in

⁴ LA Classification dataset

rural areas, the majority in manufacturing, services, tourism or leisure. Fewer than 20% of them are farms, with agriculture accounting for around 0.7% of the region's Gross Value Added⁵.

The land-based sector is vital to maintaining and managing the countryside and in doing so provides the region with a real competitive advantage in terms of quality of life. Areas of Outstanding National Beauty and a National Park account for 37% of the regions land area and there are nearly 700 SSSIs of which 90 are of international importance. [The most heavily wooded region - four of the five most wooded counties] in England and has 40% of England's Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland. Woodland in the region is greatly under-utilised and ownership is fragmented (10,000 owners)⁶. It is estimated that there are 1m tonnes of growth each year in the region and there is a very large stock of existing unused timber.

Oxon, Hampshire and Kent would be described as arable counties but overall the predominant identified farm type for the region remains lowland cattle and sheep with dairying featuring strongly in Buckinghamshire, East & West Sussex and Hampshire. The average farm size is 57 ha with almost 70% of farms being less than 50 ha. Counties where smaller farms predominate are East & West Sussex, Surrey, Kent (and the Isle of Wight).

Farm incomes are under pressure countrywide from low commodity prices and (particularly in the South East) rising costs. Many farmers in the region have responded positively to these pressures with 68% of farms diversified (86% by letting buildings for non-farm uses and 26% from Tourism or Sport and recreation) and earning £111.7 million in non-farm income⁷.

The South East is the second most visited region by UK residents with 51.7 million holiday trips recorded between 2000 & 2003⁸. In particular, interest in history and the historic environment is very strong: the National Trust & English Heritage have over 900,000 in the SE and at least 11 million people visited historic properties in the SE in 2004. In 20029 there were more than 2688 scheduled monuments, 88,000 listed buildings, 1966 conservation areas, 346 entries on the Historic Parks and Gardens Register and 2 World Heritage Sites in the region.

9.4 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

The headline SWOT below is derived from a series of detailed SWOT analyses for RDF priority themes. This SWOT has been generated in consultation with regional partners.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A higher level of environmental designation than any other region. • Most wooded region (twice the national average) with 40% of all England's Ancient Woodlands • High levels of economic activity and relative prosperity - 100,000 rural businesses in small towns, villages and countryside including a strong tourism sector. • Highest level of farm diversification in the country. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Region perceived as uniformly affluent but there are areas of deprivation, many in rural communities, that are not recognised or well addressed. • Farming, forestry and horticultural businesses have low levels of profitability. • Low levels of collaboration amongst land managers and between land managers and other rural businesses/communities • Woodland ownership fragmented and volatile timber markets, lack of economic

⁵ Region in Figures, South East, Winter 2004/05, National Statistics Office

⁶ Seeing the Wood for the Trees, A Forestry and Woodlands Framework for South East England, 2004

⁷ Farm Business Survey, Defra 2004

⁸ UKTS Survey 2000-2003

⁹ State of the South East Historic Environment Report 2005

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good levels of volunteering and community based organisations delivering services. 	<p>incentive and so huge under management - workforce lacks skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient awareness in rural business and the general public of their impact on the fragile SE environment and how to mitigate it. • People may be isolated and/or excluded because of their age, disability, gender, income, race, religion/belief or sexual orientation.
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High[est] population density and some of it relatively affluent creating big markets for food and renewable energy products • Major habitat creation and restoration opportunities for chalk grassland, lowland heathland, river and woodland restoration, coastal habitat creation matched with strong governance of env assets. • Collaboration between rural businesses, organisations and communities to better exploit market opportunities and deliver improved services. • Olympics 2012 - a massive opportunity for enduring progress for the rural sector. • Growth Areas provide the opportunity for developing multi-functional greenspace. • Climate change mitigation and adaptation - strategic commitment to reduce the environmental footprint provide opportunities for markets in renewable energy, carbon sequestration, waste and water management etc. • Strategic partnerships are emerging, working towards more joined-up delivery at a local level • London food strategy • Addressing equality and diversity of the rural population 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change. • Development pressures (air quality, water supply, transport, housing, business) that exceed environmental capacity. • Urban sprawl and the problems inherent in peri-urban areas • Relatively low levels of key essential skills in the land based sector, including business development, marketing, IT, setting-up and managing collaborative ventures, and environmental management. • Funding streams tend to be focused on urban development and regeneration.

9.5 Regional Overview - London

The Greater London area covers approx 1,613km² and comprises a total of 33 boroughs; these are the 32 boroughs which together comprise the Greater London Metropolitan County with the addition of the City of London. Whilst highly urbanised, two thirds of London's total land area is occupied by green spaces and water.

The region itself is situated within the south east of England, bordering the South East and East of England regions. As the capital city of the UK, it is one of the principal centres of population for the country. The overall population of the London area in 2006 was approx 7m(home to 11% of the UK population). This factor alone has an important influence on the adjacent regions. In addition the region also has 1 million commuters and 26 million tourists.

Transport and access links

London is particularly well served by roads, with a significant primary road network within the regional boundary and the London orbital motorway (M25) close to the borders with nine motorways radiating to other areas of the country. Most of the English rail network radiates from London, providing transport to the other regions and, locally, into the capital for commuters. In addition, the rail link to mainland Europe passes out of London through Kent en route to the Channel Tunnel. International access by air to London is of a high standard with the two most important airports in the UK located in or close to the Greater London area accounting for over 60% of the UK's total passenger volume.

There is also a good network of Public Rights of Way (RoW) across London. Of the 33 London local authorities, over 20 have statutory duties to manage Public Rights of Way (RoW) networks. However, for many boroughs this is not seen as a priority and the network could be described as 'patchy'. All local highway authorities are encouraged to prepare Milestones statements which set out a business plan approach to RoW management.

The region also contains part of The Thames Path National Trail. It represents a major recreational resource for the region providing access to some of the area's most outstanding rural and urban landscapes. The Thames Path covers more than 68 km (42 miles) of public rights of way within the region. Other important public access routes in London include the Outer Loop and Capital Ring.

In addition the region also contains two Community Forest, which have been designated for open access due to their close proximity to the large urban population of London, these areas are:

- Thames Chase – Essex and parts of the Boroughs of Barking & Dagenham and Havering.
- Watling Chase – Hertfordshire and parts of the Borough of Barnet.

Greenspace

London has a wealth of ecological and landscape features from the extensive open spaces of the Thames estuary to the small-scale lowland farmed landscape of the clay vales to the north and west. The region also touches into the more dramatic North Downs chalk feature towards the south. As such although the region has a very high proportion of developed land, it can also boast a wide ecological range that includes the grazing marshes, historic parklands, heaths and commons, chalk downland, ancient woodland, wetlands and intertidal mudflats. These open spaces support over 1500 species of flowering plants and 300 types of birds.

Currently London has the following nature conservation designations:

- 3 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) – Epping Forest, Richmond Park, Wimbledon Common
- 2 Special Protection Areas (SPA) – South West London Waterbodies and Walthamstow Reservoirs.
- 2 National Nature Reserves (NNR) – Ruislip Woods, Richmond Park
- 36 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – Covering just under 5,200 ha.
- 110 Local Nature Reserves (LNR) – covering nearly 1,400 ha.
- 1200 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) – non statutory, over 1300 sites covering nearly 19% of London (Mayors Biodiversity Strategy).
- 2 Community Forests – Thames Chase and Watling Chase.

These sites support a surprising variety of wildlife including protected species (such as bats, grass snake, great crested newt, water vole, kingfisher and peregrine falcon) which are given certain degrees of legal protection. In addition there are 54 agri-environment schemes within

V 04-04-2008

the region covering approx 879 ha. The sensitive management carried out under these schemes also helps to conserve and enhance the regions wildlife and habitats.

A London Biodiversity Partnership of public, private and voluntary organisations has also been established (1996), it aims to protect and enhance the capital's habitats and species for future generations to benefit from and enjoy. There are now 31 Action Plans: 11 habitats, 12 species, and 8 Generic Action Plans covering cross-cutting issues. There are also 'Statements' for the house martin, 'humble bumble' and London's exotic flora.

As well as having a high nature conservation value, the London region also contains a rich cultural heritage ranging from archaeological remains and historic buildings to orchard and parkland landscapes. At present there are 165 Schedule Ancient Monuments (SAMs) within the region.

Deprivation

Although it is shown that overall the London region is particularly affluent when compared to other parts of the country, it also contains some of the poorest boroughs in the country especially in the highly urbanised inner London area. It is a region of contrasts between an affluent working population and a poor population where general deprivation is amongst the highest in the country.

There are significant areas of poverty especially within the almost wholly urbanised Inner London boroughs such as Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Haringey and Southwark. Within the more 'rural' boroughs towards the edge of the region one ward in the Borough of Havering is shown as having an 'Index of Local Deprivation' score within the top 5% most deprived wards in England in 2000. A significant number of wards in the outer London boroughs (the more rural areas) fall into the range of most deprived areas in the country where the index score is between 0 and 8.5.

Within the region three specific areas of deprivation are recognised and are proposed by the Government as Objective 2 areas with a 10 year programme of assistance. These were approved by the European Commission in 2000. Of the three areas, named as Lee Valley and Thames Gateway, Park Royal and the South London Central Urban Corridor, the Lee Valley is the only one that contains any significant amount of green space. These proposed areas are in addition to the designated Objective 2 area which follows a similar line to one of the proposed areas (Lee Valley).

9.6 Rural London

Of the 122 Districts in England recognised as being "rural" none are in London. Of the 33 Boroughs of the region, 14 contain more than 200ha of agricultural land in 2000 and are considered as containing a significant rural aspect (Barnet, Bexley, Bromley, Croydon, Ealing, Enfield, Harrow, Havering, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Kingston-upon-Thames, Redbridge, Richmond-upon-Thames and Sutton).

The agriculture of Greater London varies from extensive sheep grazing on the steep slopes of the downs to intensive horticultural production. It has evolved as a result of the prevalent topography and soil types which in turn have been influenced by the underlying geology as well as historic influences of market and transport links into the city.

Agriculture and other primary industry provides an extremely limited contribution to the economic output of the region. None of the Boroughs has an economy that is dominated by rural industry. However, London is made a more attractive place by the quality of its countryside and the green spaces and further loss or abandonment of this resource would be to the detriment of the environment as a whole for the entire population.

The limited nature of the rural industry and the difficulty of transport across the region essentially means that there is little intra-regional dependence, i.e. a farmer in Hillingdon is unlikely to source supplies from Bexley because he could gain better service from a supplier outside the region. In effect, the rural economy in London is almost non-existent, the agricultural activities that take place are part of the neighbouring South Eastern and Eastern regions' rural economy; except that the urban areas of London form a major food products market to which the regional farmers could contribute more than is currently the case.

The most numerically significant farm types in the London region are horticultural, followed by cropping, including cereals. Other significant farm types in the region include cattle and sheep farms. Dairying and pig and poultry production are of relatively minor significance. The total farmed area for the region in 2006 was 14590ha.

There were 531 registered agricultural holdings in the London region in 2006, of this total 77 are over 50ha in size and 36 are over 100ha in size. The number of full-time farmers in the region has fallen by 87 since 2000, to 219. Over the same time period, the number of part-time farmers has increased to 239.

9.7 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

This SWOT analysis is taken from the ERDP Appendix A8 (2000).

<p>Strengths</p> <p>Large area of Green Belt protects rural environment</p> <p>One-third of undeveloped land is woodland</p> <p>A diverse habitat range</p> <p>A high percentage of open land is owned by local authorities</p> <p>Invaluable 'green lung' for London urban area</p> <p>Relatively high percentage of the land is protected by designation/management schemes</p> <p>Green space is accessible to a large proportion of the population</p> <p>Large accessible network of rivers, canals and open water</p>	<p>Weaknesses</p> <p>The large area of Green Belt restricts rural diversification</p> <p>Green Belt restraints lead to increased development pressure</p> <p>A reliance on a commuting workforce</p> <p>Urban fringe problems - trespass, vandalism, fly tipping, livestock worrying and land dereliction are prevalent throughout the region</p> <p>Agriculture is insignificant and is a low priority for Local Authorities</p> <p>Fragmented land ownership</p> <p>Low rural / agricultural skill base - hedge-laying, thatching, woodland management</p> <p>High cost of accommodation throughout the region</p> <p>Inconsistent coverage of countryside management advice</p> <p>The prevalent NIMBY culture</p> <p>Insufficient data on the composition and biodiversity value of ancient woodlands</p>
<p>Opportunities</p> <p>Improving the overall quality of life for the</p>	<p>Threats</p> <p>Development of green space</p>

<p>population of London</p> <p>To improve land management</p> <p>Promote rural tourism</p> <p>Encourage water borne transport</p> <p>Diversification for farmers</p> <p>The development of an agri-environment scheme peculiar to London</p> <p>The rehabilitation of derelict land</p> <p>The development of commercial uses for woodland</p> <p>Greater involvement of local communities in the management of open spaces</p> <p>Community food production</p> <p>Green investment by companies in the region</p> <p>Environmental planning gain</p> <p>Improve access opportunities</p> <p>Increased environmental awareness</p> <p>The introduction of appropriate management regimes to improve the bio-diversity, timber and amenity value of woodlands</p>	<p>Increased pressure on open spaces</p> <p>Dereliction through abandonment</p> <p>Loss of habitat through inappropriate management</p> <p>Pollution - noise, light, air and water</p> <p>Increasing access can increase trespass</p> <p>The loss of inner city open spaces to development which also places increased pressure on the outer city open spaces</p> <p>The loss of the nature conservation value of brownfield sites to redevelopment</p>
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