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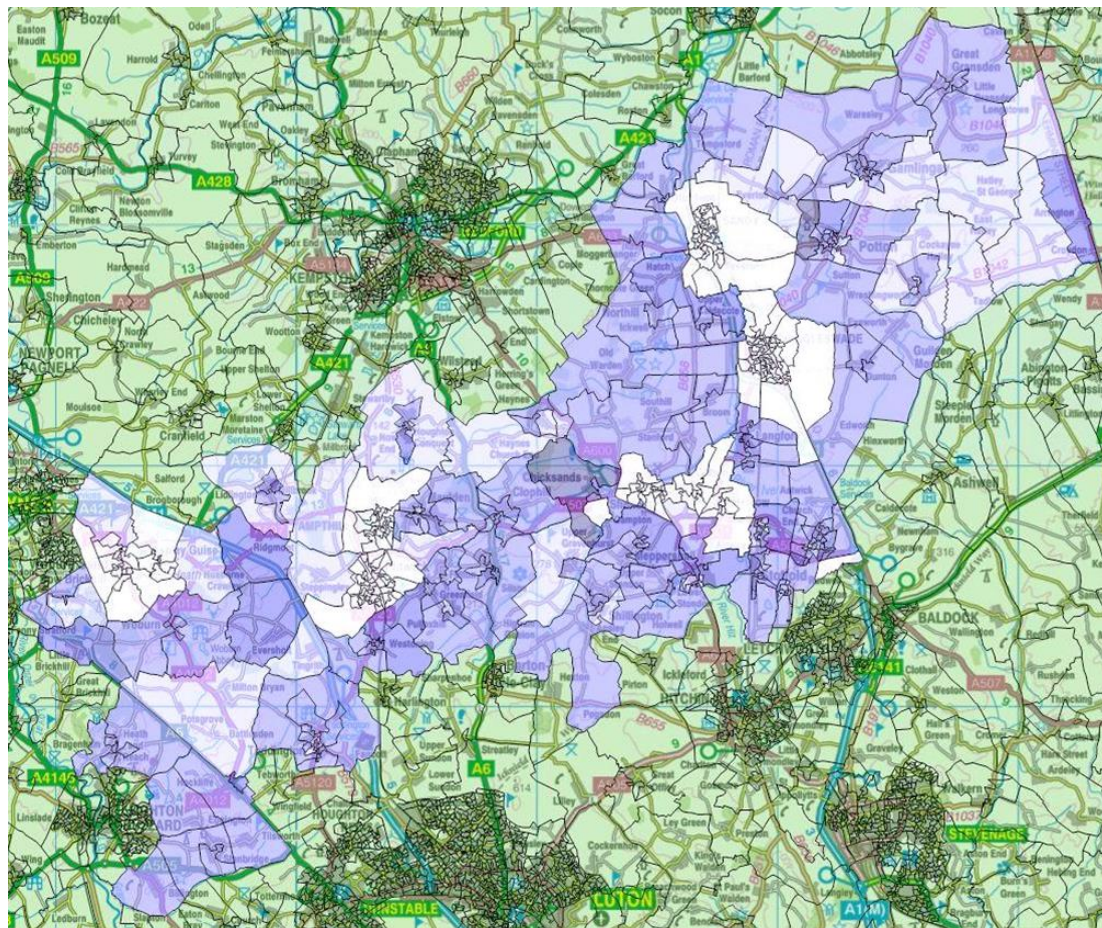
SEMLEP RURAL INCLUSION PLAN

Appendix A

LEADER Groups

Greensand Ridge LEADER Programme

The LAG area is based around the Greensand Ridge National Character Area (no.90), which has also been designated a Nature Improvement Area by Central Bedfordshire Council. Further to a review of the previous Greensand Ridge LAG area, it now also incorporates the Ivel Valley, which dissects the Ridge in a north-south direction and has strong connectivity in socio-economic terms.



The area falls mainly within the Central Bedfordshire unitary authority area, although there are also small parts of Milton Keynes to the west, and Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire to the south. The Bedfordshire part falls within the South East Midlands LEP area, and the Cambridgeshire part within the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough LEP area. The total population of the LAG



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Area is 140,684. 53.61% of the population lives in areas defined as rural, and 46.39% in areas defined as urban that are eligible for LEADER (such as 'hub towns').

The area is subject to considerable housing growth pressures from all sides, including from Luton to the south; Bedford to the north; and Milton Keynes to the west. There has also been urbanisation within the area, particularly around the market towns of Ampthill, Flitwick, Stotfold, Sandy and Biggleswade, but also around larger villages such as Henlow and Clifton, which in some cases are showing signs of coalescence.

Key objectives for the LEADER in the Greensand Ridge area are:

- 'Stay a little longer'
- 'Farm2Plate'
- 'Buy Local'

The Bedfordshire & Huntingdon Claylands LEADER Programme

The Beds & Hunts Claylands area has been chosen as it is a coherent area within the Bedfordshire & Cambridgeshire Claylands National Character Area, unified by the River Great Ouse as well as the predominantly clay soils, and surrounded by marked contrast on all sides. It falls mainly within the Bedford Borough and Huntingdonshire local authority areas, as well as small parts of Central Bedfordshire and South Cambridgeshire. It broadly conforms to the Bedford Ouse and Lower Ouse water sub-catchment areas as defined by the Environment Agency.

The area is a predominantly rural, sparsely populated area with settlements generally located along the river valleys and more recently along major road and rail corridors. The area comprises of a broad, gently undulating, lowland plateau dissected by shallow river valleys. Commercially farmed arable farms predominantly landscape with generally scattered and sparse woodland cover. The total size of the area is 106,566 ha. The area shares a number of common issues, including its relatively low profile. Bedfordshire & Huntingdonshire have traditionally had a close relationship, however in more recent years opportunities may have been missed to collaborate for mutual benefit.

The total eligible population of the LEADER Area is 147,965. 79.45% of the population live in areas defined as rural, and 20.55% in areas defined as urban that are eligible for LEADER (principally the 'hub town' of Huntingdon).



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

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Source: Defra

- Farm2Plate (Local food & drink)
- Living Villages (Rural services and micro-enterprise)
- Transition Claylands (Resource efficiency and renewable energy)

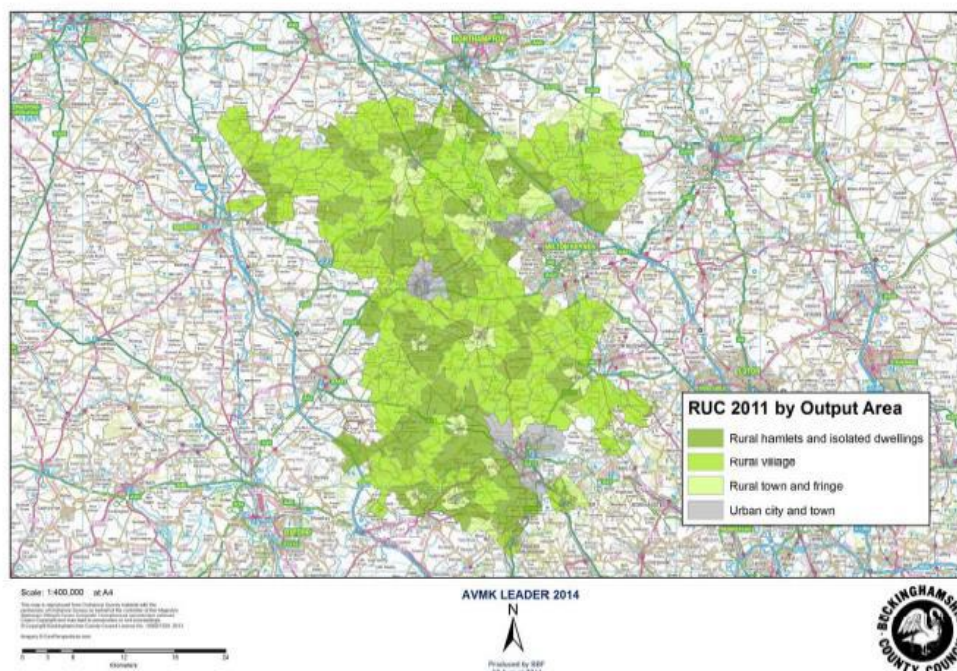


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The Clay Vales LEADER Programme

The Clay Vales LAG area largely covers the administrative areas of Aylesbury Vale, South Northants and rural Milton Keynes. It also includes the hub town of Buckingham and the market towns Winslow and Princes Risborough.

Under the current proposals, the Clay Vales LEADER area has an eligible population of 162,272. Clearly, the ability to operate with a LEADER area of this size is dependent on DEFRA being successful in securing the European Commission's approval to the proposed derogation for LEADER groups to cover areas with an eligible rural population of under 200,000, rather than the 150,000 proposed in the original regulation. If DEFRA's derogation is not approved, it is recognised that it will be necessary to review the proposed LAG area to ensure it comes in under the 150,000 population proposed in the original regulation. Current thinking about how to achieve this is likely to focus on removing some of the 'urban city and town' areas in the current proposals to reduce the overall eligible population of the LAG area.



Key objectives for the LEADER in the Clay Vales area are:

The Clay Vales LAG has identified that major opportunities to stimulate additional jobs and growth in the local rural economy are likely to be built around:

- Strengthening the rural tourism, culture and heritage offer
- Adding value to local food
- Strengthening farm productivity through diversification
- Strengthening forestry productivity
- Improving access to markets and employment by enhancing supply chain linkages
- Strengthening the provision of rural services, particularly those delivered by community enterprises.

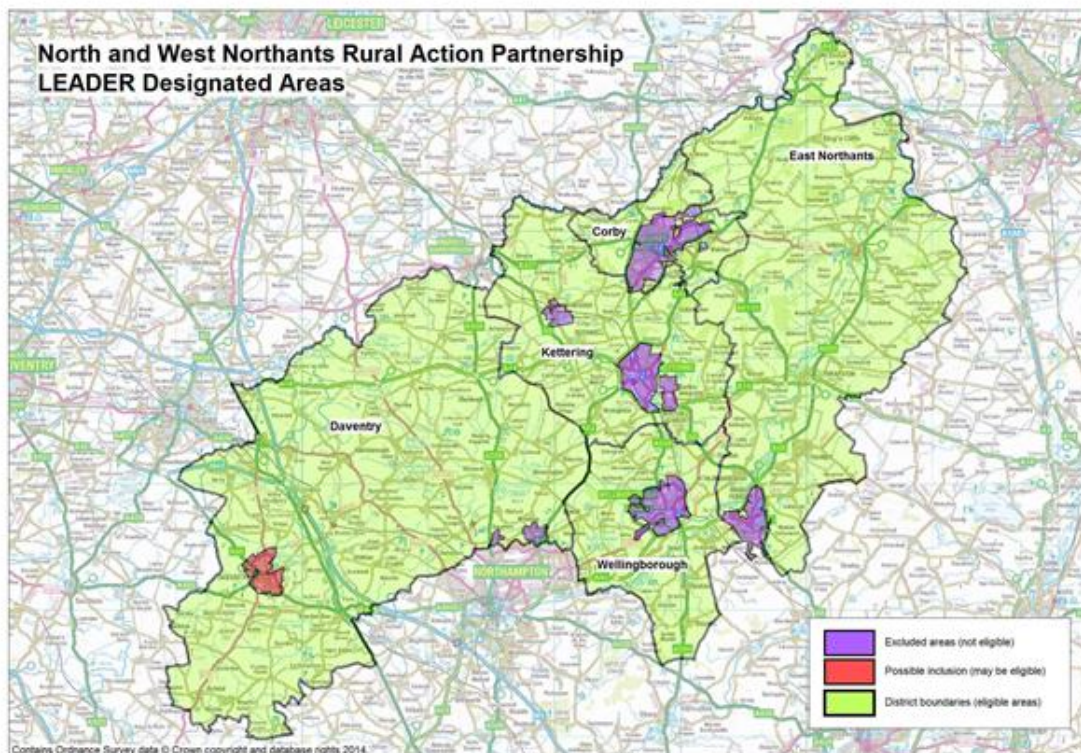


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The North and West Northamptonshire LEADER Group Partnership (N&WN LEADER)

The North and West Northamptonshire LEADER Group Partnership (N&WN LEADER) has evolved from the successful North Northamptonshire LEADER Group that operated between 2009 and 2013 and prior to that the LEADER Plus Programme, 2002- 2007.

The North and West Northamptonshire LEADER Area is a predominantly rural, sparsely populated area situated in the heart of England. The population density in the LEADER area is 16.73 per hectare. This area contains a number of wards with Assisted Area status, including King's Forest in East Northamptonshire; Corby Village, Weldon and Gretton in Corby; Barton and Burton Latimer in Kettering; Irchester and Wollaston in Wellingborough. Assisted Areas are recognised in European state aid rules as being less economically advantaged places that would benefit from additional support for development.



Northamptonshire has a significant rural based economy, with around 20% of jobs located in rural areas that are dependent upon the main market towns Wellingborough, Kettering and Corby and Daventry. The total population of this LEADER Area is 147,822. Over half the population of the county live in the rural areas. There are a number of larger towns in the area that have not been included as they are not defined as rural and so ineligible, namely Wellingborough, Kettering and Corby. Daventry town however has been classified as a rural hub town with a population of 23,879. It is recognised of its importance of providing services, employment and businesses to its rural hinterland. It is however excluded from the LEADER Area and will access funds from other sources.



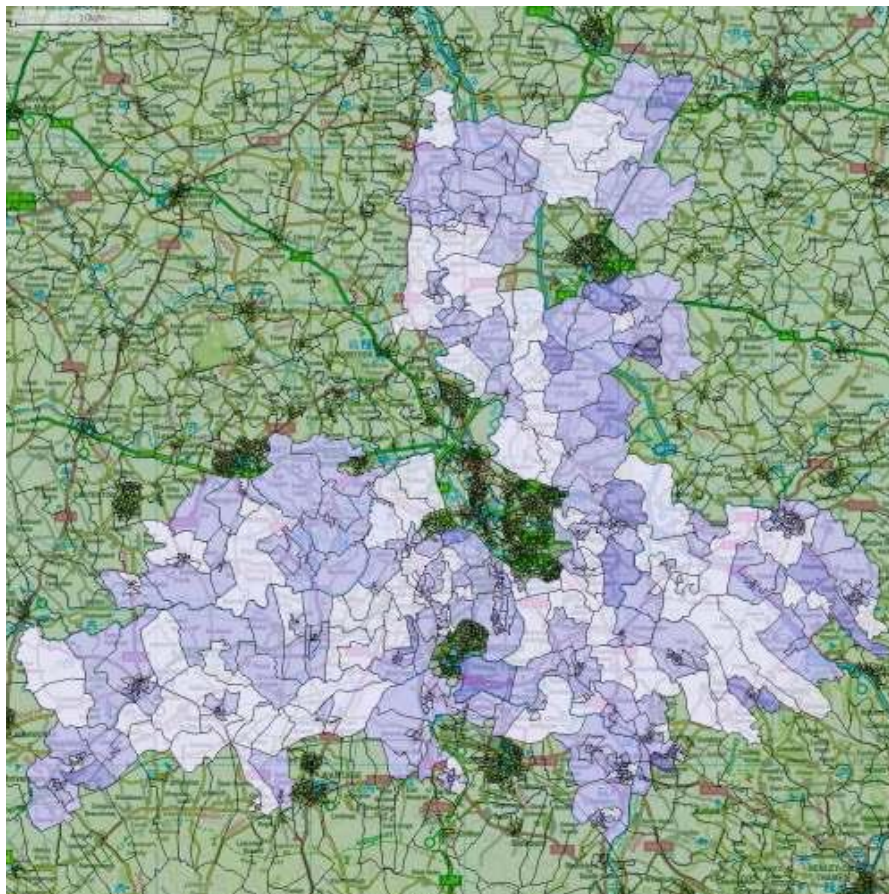
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Its key priorities and objectives for the LEADER in North and West Northamptonshire LEADER are:

- Promote the sustainable growth of rural businesses.
- Promote the sustainable management of natural and cultural resources whilst safeguarding and enhancing local distinctiveness.
- Enhance wellbeing in rural communities and build on the distinctive nature of village life culture.

Oxfordshire LEADER Programme

The population within the proposed Oxfordshire LEADER area is 149,716. In accordance with Defra requirements the area is made up of census output areas rather than parishes or council wards. The population in the LEADER area classified as rural is 105,791 and the population classified as urban is 43,925. The socio-economic links to Oxford and the River Thames and its tributaries (with a connection to the Oxford Canal) are specific features that help to create a coherent area. The proposed Oxfordshire LEADER area joins up with the proposed Chilterns, Cotswolds and North Wessex Downs LEADER areas, all of which extend into Oxfordshire.





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The four key strategic themes are:

- Revive the River Thames
- Get growing, get selling, get eating more local food
- Unlock the potential of woodland
- Vibrant villages