

1 RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR ENGLAND 2007-2013

The Rural Development Programme for England 2007 – 2013 is submitted by the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).



The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development:
Europe investing in rural areas



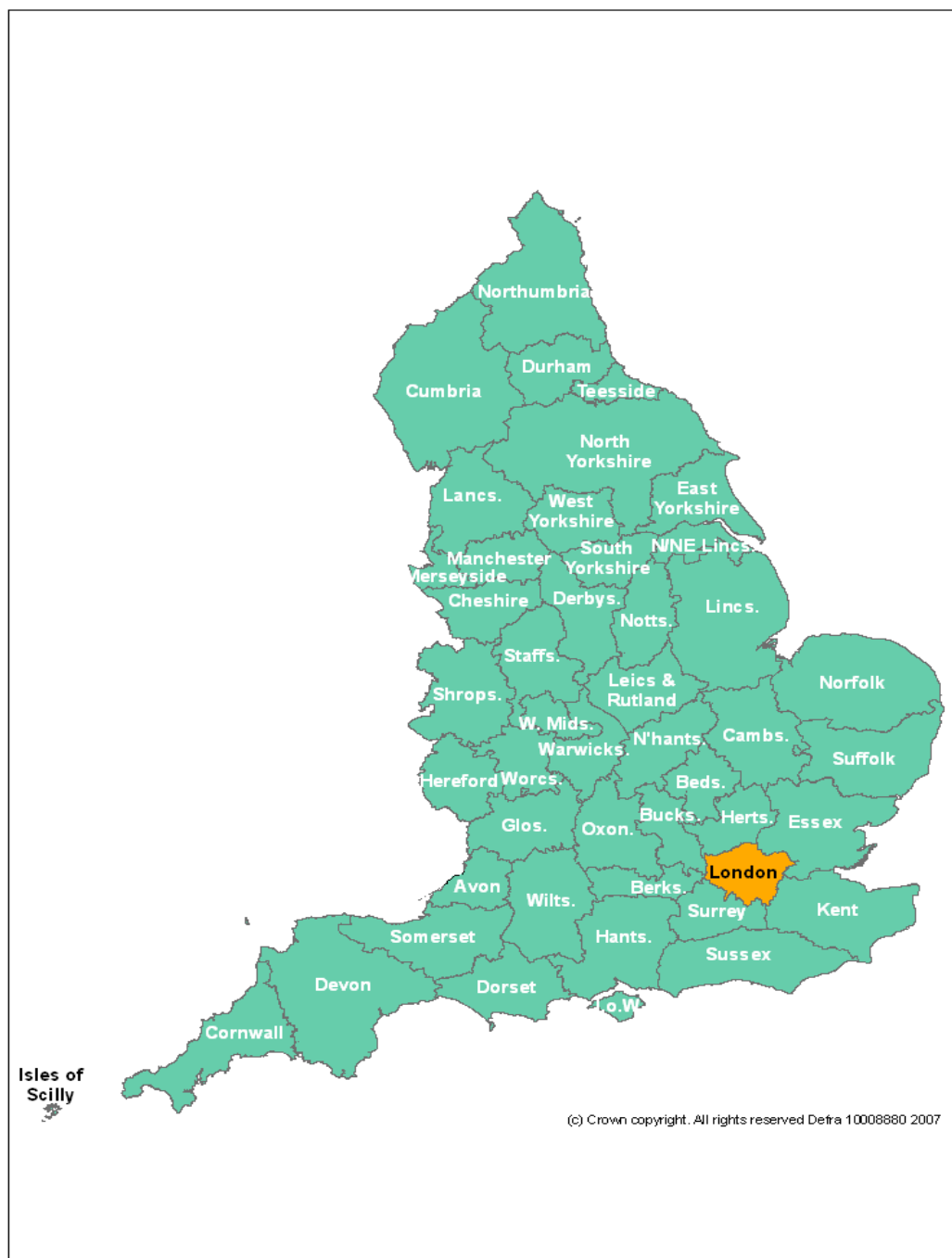
MEMBER STATE AND ADMINISTRATIVE REGION

1.1 Geographical area covered

1. This is the Rural Development Programme for England 2007-2013. It is one of four such programmes prepared for the four constituent regions of the United Kingdom by the four departments with responsibility for agriculture and rural affairs. The other programmes cover Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
2. This chapter of the Programme document provides information on the administrative structures and organisations with responsibilities in rural areas in England, and identifies the Convergence Regions.

Local Government

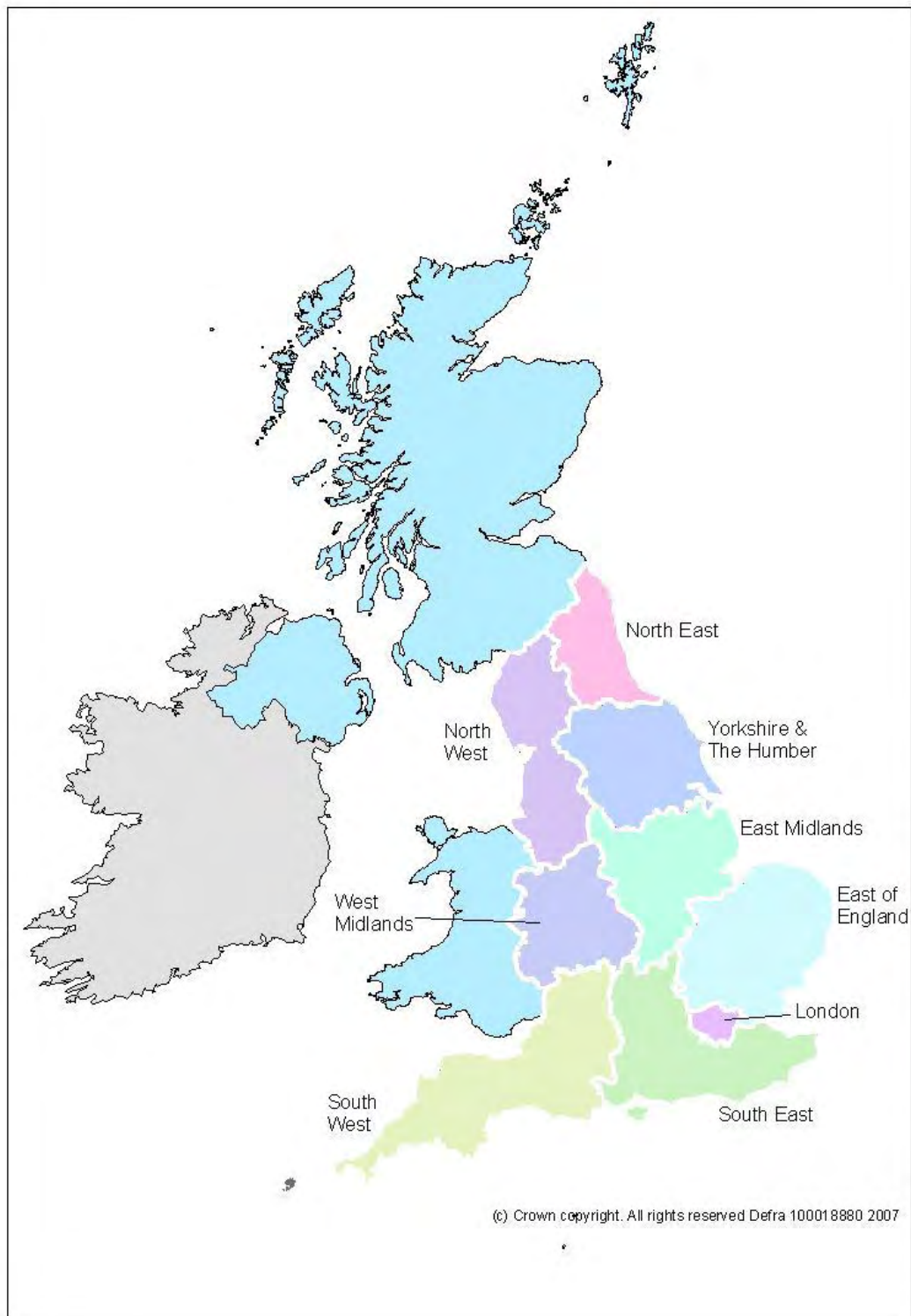
3. Local government in England is structured in two distinct ways. In parts of England, a single tier "all-purpose council" is responsible for all local authority functions. The remainder of England has a two-tier system, in which the responsibilities are divided between county and district councils. There are typically five or six districts in each county, although a few have more.
4. There are 47 Unitary Authorities in England, 36 Metropolitan Authorities, 34 County Councils, and 238 District Councils.
5. Local authorities provide a range of services and enforce a number of regulations. For example, local authorities deliver municipal waste services, improve the local environment, regulate animal health and welfare, provide many services to rural communities (such as education, social care and support for public transport), manage local nature reserves and access to the countryside, and seek to prevent, and mitigate, the impact of civil emergencies e.g. animal disease or floods.
6. The map below shows county areas and the major metropolitan areas in England.



Regional Administration

7. There are nine administrative regions within England, each of which, with the exception of London, contains significant rural areas. Regional administrative structures relevant to the Rural Development Regulation include Regional Assemblies¹ (RAs), Government Offices for the Regions (GOs), Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) and the regional arms of major national agencies such as Natural England and the Forestry Commission. The map below shows the nine England regions.

¹ Arrangements in London are different to those of the eight partnership Regional Assemblies. London has the Greater London Authority (GLA), which is a form of strategic, citywide government. It is made up of a directly-elected Mayor and a separately elected Assembly.



Regional Assemblies

8. Regional Assemblies (RAs) are partnership bodies, which bring together representatives from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. The exact profile and number of Assembly Members varies from region to region. In general, 70% of Members are elected local authority councillors and 30% are social, economic and environmental partners drawn from sectors such as business, arts and culture, education, faith groups, community, voluntary and environmental organisations. Some members of the European Parliament (EP) are also members of Assemblies.

9. All RAs perform the same four core activities, although they may also engage in other work according to regional circumstances and priorities:

- regional planning - preparing statutory Regional Spatial Strategies;
- regional housing – preparing Regional Housing Strategies;
- advocacy and policy development - representing the “voices” of regions to the Government and European institutions; and,
- accountability - scrutinising the work of RDAs. Some RAs also hold other public sector bodies to account.

Government Offices

10. Government Regional Offices (GOs) seek to enable effectual joined-up delivery of Government programmes, regionally and locally. GOs bring together the activities and interests of different Government Departments within a single organisation.

11. GOs are funded and staffed by ten Government Departments including Defra, and work with a wide range of partners in the regions. GOs put Government policy into practice, implementing key programmes and initiatives in partnership, and provide feedback to Central Government to help inform future policy.

Regional Development Agencies

12. Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) are non-departmental public bodies, statutorily independent, whose primary role is as strategic drivers of economic development in their regions.

13. Under the Regional Development Agencies Act 1998, each RDA has five statutory purposes;

- to further economic development and regeneration;
- to promote business efficiency, investment and competitiveness;
- to promote employment;
- to enhance development and application of skills relevant to employment;
- to contribute to sustainable development in the UK where it is relevant to its area to do so.

14. The 1998 Act also states that an RDA’s purposes apply as much in relation to its rural parts as its non-rural areas.

15. RDAs have a statutory obligation to develop and review Regional Economic Strategies (RES), which are frameworks for action to deliver economic growth and regeneration across each region. These strategies are developed, owned and delivered by all relevant public, private and voluntary sector organisations.

16. Defra has decided to build on the RDAs’ existing responsibility for economic regeneration and sustainable development across England by making them responsible for managing the delivery of most of the spend under Axes 1 and 3 in this Rural Development Programme.

Natural England

17. Natural England was established in 2006 by bringing together parts of three existing, delivery bodies in England: English Nature, the landscape, access and recreation elements of the Countryside Agency and the environmental land management functions of the Rural Development Service. It is a national organisation, covering England, with regional offices that match the boundaries of the nine English regions as shown above.

18. Natural England's general purpose, as set out in the founding legislation, is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

19. Natural England is responsible for the delivery of agri-environment schemes and the Energy Crops Scheme.

Forestry Commission

20. The Forestry Commission is the Government Department responsible for protecting, expanding and promoting the sustainable management of forests and woodlands and increasing their value to society and the environment. Its remit covers Britain, but it has different strategies for England, Scotland and Wales.

21. The Forestry Commission delivers the English Woodland Grant Scheme. It has regional offices, which match the boundaries of the nine English regions as shown above.

1.2 Identification of Convergence regions

22. Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly constitute a sub-region, which qualifies for funding in support of the Convergence objective as defined in Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006. It will receive an additional €75 million (£55 million) funding for rural development in this Programme.

MAP OF UK SHOWING ELIGIBILITY FOR STRUCTURAL FUNDS 2007-2013

