

13 Provisions to ensure that the Programme is publicised

1. As described in Chapter 11, the Rural Development Programme for England will be delivered by Natural England, the Forestry Commission and the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), with Defra as the Managing Authority. There will be a joint Communications Strategy shared by Defra and the delivery partners. Each of the delivery partners will have their own detailed communications plan aimed at their specific target audience. This more detailed activity will be consistent with the overarching plan, and all will work together to ensure effective joining up and co-ordination.

Aim

2. The aim of the Communications Strategy is to:
- ensure that the Programme is publicised effectively and transparently, so that all potential rural beneficiaries are aware of both it and the Community's contribution;
 - encourage the submission of high quality applications that deliver a range of public benefits in a cost-effective way; and,
 - help keep processes simple and easy for the customer to understand.

Target Groups:

- the general public
- beneficiaries
- local and regional authorities
- professional organisations
- economic and social partners
- NGOs, particularly;
 - bodies promoting equality between men and women
 - environmental organisations
- information centres on Europe
- Commission representations in the Member States

Content and Strategy

Dissemination of information to potential beneficiaries

3. Comprehensive information on the financing opportunities and financial contributions from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), offered by the Programme will be available on Defra's website. The delivery partners' websites will include detailed information about the schemes they offer, along with information about where to obtain details about other aspects of the Programme.

4. Detailed information about the Programme will also be set out in guidance literature. This will be available to all who request it, and will also be delivered directly to the key target audience for the Programme, e.g. through promotional mail-outs.
5. All beneficiaries of the Programme will receive, as part of the notification of their award of the assistance, information explaining that the action is being financed from a programme part-financed by the EU Community through the EAFRD.

Dissemination of information to the public

6. The Government will inform the public of the Programme's adoption by the Commission. It will also keep them informed about updates, the main achievements in implementation and its closure. This will be done in a variety of ways including, though not restricted to, information available on public websites, Ministerial announcements, statements and speeches, information releases to the relevant media and attendance by delivery partners and Defra staff at agricultural and rural shows.
7. Defra, as the Managing Authority, and the delivery partners will work with beneficiaries to provide information for the public on the measures financed under the Programme. This will be done, for example, through use of information boards.

The content of Scheme Guidance and Publicity

8. The literature for all the schemes in the next Programme (web-based and hard copy) shall include clear and detailed information (which will be updated regularly) on the following:
 - (a) the administrative procedures to be followed in order to qualify for financing under the Programme;
 - (b) a description of the procedures for examining applications for financing;
 - (c) the eligibility conditions and/or criteria for selecting and evaluating the projects to be financed; and
 - (d) the names of persons or contacts at national, regional or local level who can explain the way the Programme works and the criteria for selecting and evaluating the operations.
9. Where an operation under the Programme results in an investment (e.g. on farm or on food enterprise) whose total cost exceeds EUR 50 000, the beneficiary shall place an explanatory plaque in a suitable place.
10. A billboard shall be erected at the sites of infrastructures whose total cost exceeds EUR 500 000.
11. An explanatory plaque shall also be installed in the locations of the Local Action Groups (LAGs) financed by Axis 4.
12. The billboards and plaques shall carry a description of the project/operation and the European flag with an explanation of the Community's role. For actions and measures financed by the Leader Axis, the Leader logo shall also be used. That information shall take up at least 25% of the billboard or plaque.
13. Beginning in 2008, the Rural Payments Agency (the Programme's Paying Agency) will ensure that, at least annually, a list of beneficiaries receiving support from the Programme, the names of the operations and the amounts of public contributions allocated to these operations, is published.
14. In accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 - Fair Processing Notice, Defra, Natural England, the RDAs and the Forestry Commission will ensure any potential beneficiary is made aware of the statement in paragraph 13 above.

Publicity media

15. All publications (such as booklets, leaflets and newsletters, and including electronic publications) and posters about measures and actions part-financed by the EAFRD will contain a clear indication on the title page of the Community's participation, as well as the Community emblem if the national or regional emblem is also used. The publications will also be clear about the delivery partner responsible for the information content, and about the role of Defra as Managing Authority in implementing the assistance package in question.

16. Websites concerning the Programme will:

- mention the contribution of the EAFRD at least on the home page;
- include a hyperlink to the Commission website concerning the EAFRD.

17. Each action of information and publicity will contain the following elements:

18. The European flag in accordance with the graphic standards set out in point 4, together with an explanation of the Community's role, by means of the following statement:

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

19. For the actions and measures financed by the Leader Axis, the Leader logo will also be used.

20. Defra as Managing Authority and the delivery partners will, for the life of the Programme, consider the role of new technologies, which permit the rapid and efficient distribution of information and facilitate a dialogue with the general public, and will update the Communications Plan as appropriate.