

Rural Activities

# SOUTH EAST LEP

# Key Activities to Report

- SE LEP Rural Strategy
- ESIF – Chapter 6 – Rural Chapter
- EAFRD: Call for Applications in March

European Structural and Investment Funds Strategy  
(ESIF)

## Chapter 6: Rural Chapter

# Introduction and Vision

- ⦿ ESF and ERDF – then EAFRD
- ⦿ *Vision for SELEP rural areas:*  
*A growing rural economy with a highly skilled workforce in full employment*
- ⦿ Extensive mix of outstanding natural and farmed landscapes: Essex coastline and Dedham Vale AONB

# Rural Sector

- 936,000 of 3.97 million live in rural areas
- Farmed landscapes range from the **fertile cereal growing areas in Essex**
- Rural tourism offer is considerable with significant potential for future development

# Nature of the rural economy

- ① 24% of all employed people in the SELEP live in rural areas
- ① Non-rural businesses located in the rural area make a significant contribution to the economy, including retail, construction, finance, hospitality and public sectors
- ① Small and micro businesses are a particular feature of the rural economy

# EAFRD

- ◎ £14million
- ◎ 50% on rural economy and business
  
- ◎ Non-ERDF projects:
  - Enhanced advice services
  - Creation of new non agricultural businesses
  - Agritech and agrifood industries
  - Increase the number and quality of tourist visits

# EAFRD

## ⦿ Community

- Connectivity: innovative solutions for high speed communications
- Skills: highly specific training and qualifications to those rural businesses with the highest jobs and growth potential

## ⦿ Environment

- Small scale renewable generation



# ESIF Rural Chapter

- Draft
- Is this right for Essex?
- What else might we want it to say?

European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development  
(EAFRD)

**Call for applications**

# EAFRD Call for Applications

- ⦿ Proposal to issue call on 2<sup>nd</sup> March
- ⦿ Second call likely to follow in July
- ⦿ Any unspent funds in March will roll forward

# EAFRD Call for Applications

- March call for applications will not include Broadband or Renewable Energy.
- Information on the calls for applications must be on Civil Service website by the **2<sup>nd</sup> March** (to avoid purdah restrictions)
- Defra will design the specs but the LEP can be very specific about what it wants.

# EAFRD Call for Applications

- Programme lowest threshold can be £35,000
- SELEP propose that **£50,000** is appropriate
- 50% match funding

# EAFRD Call for Applications

- **Two stage application process**
- Focus the call for applications on **small business grants**  
*under 6.2 and 6.4 (see page 8 of the draft chapter)*
- Funding for this call is **£1 million**
- *Some relaxation of minimum grant size could potentially be accepted in the white spaces between **Leader** programmes in Essex*

# What Next?

- ⦿ Support for Call for Applications to EAFRD
- ⦿ Feedback on Rural Chapter of ESIF
- ⦿ Project ideas and promotion of EAFRD
- ⦿ Consultation on SE LEP Rural Strategy