



Tyne-Esk  
LEADER



Scottish Rural  
Development  
Programme



**TYNE ESK LAG MEETING MINUTES**  
**31<sup>st</sup> March 2017, 10:00 – 13:30pm**  
**Fairfield House, Dalkeith, EH22 3AA**

**Members present**

Andrew McDonald (AM), Edinburgh Butterfly World, LAG Chair  
Anne Hastie (AH), Private Individual, LAG Vice Chair  
Hilary Smith (HS), North Berwick Community Council, LAG member  
Karen Calvert (KC), Papermill Restaurant, LAG member  
Yvonne Stoddart (YS), STRIVE, LAG member  
Cllr Jim Bryant (JB), Midlothian Council, LAG member  
Cheryl Brown, Midlothian Sure Start, LAG member  
Pam Ralston, Skills Development Scotland, LAG member

**In attendance**

Susan Smith (SS), East Lothian Council Economic Development, LAG Observer  
Angela Lamont (AL), LEADER Project Officer, Leader Team  
Dawne Milligan (DM), LEADER Finance Support Officer, Leader Team

**Apologies**

Frank Beattie, Scottish Enterprise, LAG member  
Alasdair Mathers, Midlothian Community Planning Partnership, LAG Observer  
Paolo Vestri, East Lothian Partnership, LAG Observer  
Kerry Clark, NFU Scotland, LAG member  
Douglas Reynolds (DR), Bolton Steading Residents Association, LAG member  
Alexandra Duncan (AD), SWRI, LAG member  
Cllr John McMillan (JM), East Lothian Council, LAG member  
Neil Ramsay (NR), LEADER Co-ordinator, Leader Team

<p><b>Welcome and apologies</b> AM welcomed everyone to the meeting and declared the meeting quorate.</p> <p>Apologies were noted as above.</p>	
<p><b>1. Matters arising</b> AM went through the minutes of the last meeting.</p> <p>DM was to explore doing a LARCS survey but decided it would not go ahead as the Scottish Government are not going to change the system so to feedback would be fruitless.</p> <p>It was decided by the LAG that in LAG meeting minutes there should be a statement to say whether the meeting is quorate.</p> <p><b>2. Assess Application</b></p>	



**East Linton Saleground Ltd.**

SS left the meeting and declared an interest on behalf of Cllr McMillan.

This project was discussed and approved unanimously by the LAG in a vote subject to standard conditions. The LAG discussed the impact on the village hall nearby and if this would affect any business that they currently have. This was addressed by East Linton Saleground Ltd by the kind of events that the space would be used for so there is no competition. Displacement effects on the town centre, on shops such as the butcher's chop were also discussed.

There was agreement that this project would benefit the community by improving the use of the building for the community to use and providing jobs at a later stage and were happy that it fits very well within the LDS.

The LAG overall score for the project was 6 which will be entered onto LARCS.

**3. Update on:  
3.1 Governance**

The Appeals and Complaints process that was discussed has now been completed. The LAG agreed that it can be put onto the Tyne Esk website for viewing.

A paper on a best practice code of conduct when viewing applications via LARCS (as an extension of the LARCS IT policy) was circulated at the meeting. A few changes were suggested by the LAG and the paper will be updated.

We have 2 LAG vacancies at present, with the skills matrix showing needs in arts & culture, heritage & local history and previous LEADER application experience. There is also a current under-representation of Midlothian members and men. The team sought approval from the LAG to advertise openly instead of cherry picking which until now has been unsuccessful and this was granted.

SS is in touch with Alan Laidlaw from the Royal Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland and Crown Estate as a potential LAG member as he has both experience and interest in rural affairs and LEADER experience. SS will keep the LAG updated on progress. Otherwise it was suggested that we approach Midlothian Voluntary Action (MVA), Ian Gardener from Rosslyn Chapel and Sheena Irving from Cousland Smiddy.

**3.2 Staffing levels**

**ACTION: DM to update IT requirements**

**ACTION: LEADER Team to enlist new LAG members**



Tyne-Esk  
LEADER



Scottish Rural  
Development  
Programme



up to

Staffing levels were discussed in the Governance Sub Group and a paper went to LAG members. All agreed that the adverts for the two new posts should go ahead, one post full-time Project Officer post and a 0.5 time administrative assistant.

### 3.3 Change requests policy

Change requests will be approved by NR unless a more substantial change is requested, which will be approved by the Chairs and Accountable Body rep. More significant changes still will have to go to the full LAG to be assessed. The LAG agreed circulation of the change request list by email from time to time was sufficient for their information.

### 4 Scottish Government

The LAG were updated on the new ruling that change requests to the LDS will be made at a maximum twice per year.

### 5 LAG feedback Sought

#### 5.1 Glamping/Biomass Expressions of Interest

The LEADER team had encountered types of project they were unsure about from two Expression of Interests and sought the LAG's opinion.

The first was a glamping project, where it was felt the cost for two glamping pods was in excess of the return they would provide to the local economy and to LDS outcomes. It was suggested that a maximum amount/intervention rate could be set for business projects such as this. The LAG discussed this and agreed that they would like further information on projects such as this in a case by case basis before making a decision whether they would like the enquiry to come to them as an application.

The second was a project to produce high quality biomass pellets as there are no other such facilities in central/south east Scotland. It was felt this project, as it stood, hit too few LDS outcomes to be considered. The LAG felt it did hit the overarching environmental objective, however, and was worthy of further discussion with the applicant.

#### 5.2 Applicant Accounts

The principle of what to do with applicants whose accounts, which appeared unhealthy were discussed to find out whether such applicants posed too great a risk to support. There was acceptance and agreement in the LAG that business accounts can be highly variable at best. The LAG suggested more banks statements are sought to analyse the trend over a longer period, and business plans are requested in these instances. Again they said they should be considered on a case by case basis and that weak accounts need not necessarily be a barrier to applying.



Tyne-Esk  
LEADER



Scottish Rural  
Development  
Programme



<p><b>6 AOB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The LAG and LEADER team should attend Dalkeith and Haddington Shows and the purchase of new promotional items was agreed.</li> <li>• An interim June meeting was agreed for one application and other important decisions/business.</li> <li>• Tyne Esk LAG jackets were discussed, team to send round pictures and gauge interest.</li> </ul>	<p><b>ACTION: AL to send LAG image of jackets.</b></p>
<p><b>6 Finish – Date of next meeting</b></p> <p><b>11 May 2017 – VENUE TO TBC</b></p>	

*W. Anderson*  
10/5/17