

## ***Extract from the West Kent LEADER Local Development Strategy***

### ***3.3 Local priorities and programme of activity***

The West Kent LEADER programme has an over arching principle - to promote sustainable business growth within the land based and rural economies in the area. Investment through the LEADER programme is intended to improve the long term viability of businesses and to reduce their reliance on future support funding. LEADER will help add value and ensure and enhance sustainable development, promote energy efficiency, as well as build on the resilience of the rural communities, whilst recognising the important part to play of the high quality landscape of the area.

The focus of the West Kent LEADER programme under this overarching principle will be on jobs and growth, with over 70% of the projects / funds directly supporting the rural economy and the remaining 30% having to demonstrate that they are contributing to the local economy.

The key objectives which have emerged for West Kent are:

- Improve competitiveness and financial sustainability of West Kent's farming and forestry
- Encourage innovation and diversification in West Kent's land based sector
- Support new and existing rural businesses and promote entrepreneurship in rural West Kent
- Encourage the development of local heritage and rural tourism-related businesses, particularly where projects support the local economy and create or sustain employment
- Promote the provision of additional rural services to encourage vibrant rural communities
- Ensure best practice in land management and promote sustainable development