

***“Build on the environmental assets of the Fens to develop the area as a high quality visitor destination and a “green lung” for the growth area”***

The Fens are a popular tourist destination attracting millions of visitors per year. Visitors are attracted to the Fens for many different reasons. Most of these tourists are short stay visitors who are attracted to its unique landscape and the breathtaking countryside which is an attractive backdrop to spectacular churches which reside within the numerous historic market towns. Waterways are also an integral part of Fens Landscape attracting visitors interested in leisure activities such as fishing and boating.

The LAG will use FARDP funds to invest in businesses that develop the Fens as a destination for visitors and local people by increasing sustainable access to the environmental assets of the area and developing a brand identity for the Fens. FARDP will support tourism through the following measures.

**Measure 313 - Encouragement of Tourism Activities**

The LAG wants to use this measure to increase the profile and accessibility of the Fens countryside by developing infrastructure around new landscape scale attractions and the waterways. This could include investment to create or enhance visitor attractions with investment in capital build, interpretation, cycle/footpaths and revenue investment in visitor guides.

**Measure 312 - Support for the creation and development of micro enterprises**

The LAG wants to use this measure to support small scale tourism operators, be this accommodation providers or other tourism businesses that fit the definition of a micro-enterprise ‘fewer than 10 employees and with a turnover or balance sheet of less than €2 million (£1.8 million)’. Grants will be available for start up or enhancement costs and could include revenue and capital expenditure. In all cases the LAG would need to see evidence that investment would create new jobs or in the least safeguard existing jobs from being lost.

**Measure 331 - Training and information for economic actors**

The LAG wants to use this measure to improve the quality and environmental management standards of tourism businesses through developing the skills of their workforce with non-statutory and non qualification based training. This could include courses on how to market their attractions and meet the expectations of the modern consumer.

**Measure 421 - Implementing cooperation projects**

Funding will be available within this measure for tourism attractions and other relevant tourism businesses to link with similar operations within the EU to share knowledge and best practice. Support will generally be towards the facilitation of this joint working, so will cover travel and other associated costs. Examples of initiatives supported through this measure could be tourism attractions supported through FARDP that want to forge links with similar attractions within the EU.