

## Local Environment and Economic Development (LEED) Toolkit

Using the LEED Toolkit will show LEPs how to do their strategic economic planning in ways that will

- gain growth benefits from the environment; and
- help avoid future costs to growth that could arise from the environment.

### What is it?

- The Local Environment and Economic Development (LEED) toolkit has been produced by the Defra network (the Environment Agency, Natural England and the Forestry Commission), working in partnership with several Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), Local Authorities (LAs) and Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs).
- The LEED toolkit offers an easy-to-use, technically robust, systematic and proportionate way of making sense of environmental information in relation to economic planning.
- The aim of the toolkit is to systematically consider the evidence relating to the local economy/environment relationship in order to reveal opportunities and threats and to consider appropriate responses to them.
- The toolkit produces accessible, non-technical outputs that assist strategic economic decision making.

### Why do I need it?

- The environment is an essential component of the economy and growth; however this relationship is not always given sufficient recognition in economic planning.
- The environment provides clean air and water, regulates climate and disease, supports nutrient cycles and crop pollination, and provides cultural benefits such as wellbeing and recreational opportunities.
- Assessing environmental information for its economic relevance can be complicated which results in the environment being insufficiently considered in economic planning.

### Who is it for?

- The toolkit has been produced to support LEPs because they have responsibility for strategic planning for sustainable economic growth.
- Other local organisations such as LAs and LNPs can be involved in working through the toolkit via a consortium approach, thereby bringing a wider mix of perspectives.

### Does it work?

- The LEED toolkit has been piloted by the New Anglia LEP. They found that it both highlighted important strategic and operational factors which required co-operation between local bodies, and helped build good working relationships.

### What does it involve?

- The toolkit has a bespoke structure that can be suited to your need and the resources available. This consists of three levels of engagement
  - Level 1 is expected to involve 3 days of secretariat time including a one-day workshop and will produce an initial assessment of threats and opportunities.
  - Level 2 is expected to involve 25 days and uses interviews to develop more sophisticated findings
  - Level 3 focuses on the development of a robust evidence base to support the identification of opportunity and threats and any resulting decisions. This is expected to take 50 days work
- You can start with Level 1 and then decide if there is benefit in undertaking Level 2, and then similarly for Level 3. Each level will provide outputs that can be used to inform economic planning.

### What support can I expect?

- The Defra network offers support to LEPs using the toolkit, subject to available resources. Our local staff will be pleased to discuss our involvement in the use of the toolkit in your area. In addition to this we can offer further support to the first six LEPs that apply to work through the toolkit.
- For further information or to discuss the possibility of running the LEED toolkit in your area speak to Tom Butterworth, Natural England's Senior Advisor for Local Government on 07500 608458 or e-mail on [tom.butterworth@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:tom.butterworth@naturalengland.org.uk).