



Basingstoke and Deane

Community Environmental Enhancement Fund Guidance Notes for Small Grants

Introduction

The overall aim of this grant scheme is to involve communities in the improvement of their local area, thereby fostering an understanding and appreciation of the environment and creating a sense of pride in that locality. The emphasis of the new Community Environmental Enhancement Fund (CEEF) is on implementing larger projects with the help of both partnership funding and working in partnership with community groups and other organisations.

Successful schemes will include those that are initiated by the community and sustained by community involvement. CEEF replaces the Pride of Place Partnership Initiative Grant (POPPI). The scheme will continue to grant aid the smaller, individual projects that have traditionally been supported under POPPI.

Who can apply?

Applications are open to anyone wanting to engage the community in improving the environment anywhere in the Borough. The council is happy to consider more than one application in a single financial year.

What projects are eligible?

Grants of up to £5000 can be offered for small environmental enhancement schemes.

The following list identifies small projects that may be eligible, but it is not exhaustive:

- creation of new habitats (including erection of bird and bat boxes)
- pond restoration
- creation of paths, walks, board walks, paving or dipping platforms (ponds)
- installation of an environment interpretation board next to a local feature of interest
- improvements to historic features
- repair of grave stones and churchyard walls
- provision of railings, fences walls or gates
- reclamation of spoiled areas
- new shrub, bulb or tree planting

For a project to be considered for grant aid, three initial criteria must be met. Thus, a project should:

- improve the built and/or natural environment in a way that is appropriate to the setting and character of the area;
- be of benefit to the general public; and

- represent good value for money in relation to the planned improvements.

How are projects assessed?

If a project is eligible, the success of an application will depend on the extent to which the initial criteria and the following additional criteria are met. Thus, a project will have a greater prospect of receiving grant aid if it fulfils some or all of the following criteria set out below.

The following are considered:-

- amount of community involvement and demonstrable public backing
- improvement to the natural/built or historic environment in a way appropriate to character and setting
- value for money in relation to planned improvements
- support for relevant council policies, strategies, targets
- benefit to environmental designations (AONB, SINC's, CAs)
- gives rise to significant visual enhancement
- creates/improves passive recreation/access
- level of partnership funding

Applicants should note that due to the popularity of the grant in relation to the available budget, it is possible that not every eligible application will be approved.

Grants are discretionary and there is no automatic entitlement to funding. Some projects may be considered for the following financial year. Projects need to be submitted by the end of June 2009.

What projects are not suitable?

The following are not eligible for grant aid:

- Projects that constitute ongoing or regular maintenance and management works, unless this is a relatively minor part of a larger project,
- Projects which could be funded solely by other means via Hampshire County Council, the Borough Council or any government agency e.g. improvements to the highway for lighting, signage and traffic calming; improvements to leisure facilities and community halls,
- Projects that would help an applicant comply with any legal / statutory requirement or other obligation e.g. planning conditions, compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act.
- Projects that have already started – retrospective grants will not be considered.

Note: Applications can be made for 'top-up', complementary or partnership funding.

How much grant aid could I expect ?

The maximum percentage grant that can be awarded depends on the type of applicant, as follows:

50% - Private landowners.

70% - Private landowners with all Ward Councillor and Parish Council backing.

70% - Charitable organisations, community groups, schools etc.

90% - Parish Councils.

90% - Charitable organisations etc with all Ward Councillor and Parish Council backing.

100% - applicant has no access to other funds.

How would I contribute?

The contribution required of applicants may be financial and/or 'in-kind'. The latter could include the value of donated labour, materials and machinery, expertise etc.

What costs can be included in an application?

- Everything necessary to ensure that the project is a success.
- Some voluntary work from community groups
- As the applicant (or agent) is normally expected to be responsible for all aspects of the project, reasonable and necessary professional fees incurred in preparing an application and for implementing a project can be included. However, any pre-application fees incurred are at the applicant's own risk if the project is, for whatever reason, not awarded grant aid.
- For projects involving tree and shrub planting, the first year of maintenance should be included in the application (particularly for weed control).

Is any help or advice available?

The council is able to give advice and assistance to applicants especially in seeking partnership funding and with helping to identify potential projects. It maybe

possible, in some instances, for applicants to engage professional assistance where necessary, (for example a landscape architect) and these fees funded through CEEF.

This would be for a more major or complete scheme which could be delivered over 2 years (for example a grant be offered in year 1 for fees and a further grant for implementation in year 2). If a grant is offered in year 1, the principle of the scheme would be agreed and the project would be a priority for funding in year 2.

It is recommended that you discuss your project ideas with Keith Frost before making an application – this could save you time and help you develop suitable proposals. He can be contacted on 01256 845512, or e-mail keith.frost@basingstoke.gov.uk.

Your application form should be returned to:-

**Built and Natural Environment
Team
Neighbourhood Development
Basingstoke and Deane Borough
Council
Civic Offices
London Road
Basingstoke
Hampshire RG21 4AH**

Or emailed to:
neighbourhood.dev@basingstoke.gov.uk

<http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/regeneration/urban/ceef.htm>