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UK Government



UK Shared Prosperity Fund & Rural England Prosperity Fund

Community Infrastructure Grants

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— UP —**

Community Infrastructure Grant 2023

Background

- 1.1 This grant scheme has been established to support community infrastructure in Swale, using money allocated from two Government funds - the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF).
- 1.2 Grants are available for **capital** investment only and will prioritise investments for community benefit, focused on the following:-
 - the provision of infrastructure that supports improving digital access in rural areas
 - Investment that will increase the use of community buildings, for instance enabling improved or expanded activities and services
 - Investment which improves the environmental and financial sustainability of community facilities/amenities through carbon reduction measures.
 - Projects encouraging walking and cycling or the use of electric vehicles.
- 1.3 It is intended that this scheme will operate in the 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years, although funding beyond the current financial year has yet to be confirmed by Government. Full eligibility criteria and grant funding levels for this scheme are detailed below. It should be noted that this is a **discretionary** grant scheme and all decisions are based on Swale Borough Council's assessment of applications, to determine if the required criteria is met. For carbon reduction measures, **this will include contact with a Council appointed expert contractor, who will provide both support to applicants and advise the Council on individual applications.**
- 1.4 *If you would like further advice on this scheme and how it will be applied, please contact us at prosperityfund@swale.gov.uk.*

1. Who and what will be eligible for the grants?

- 2.1 This Grant scheme is open to not-for-profit organisations that provide community facilities and amenities within Swale. This includes
 - Unincorporated associations such as voluntary and community groups
 - Incorporated organisations such as registered charities;
 - Companies limited by guarantee and
 - Social enterprises.
- 2.2. Unincorporated voluntary and community groups can apply if they have:
 - A governing document that has as a minimum the name, aim/purpose, objects, a dissolution clause for the organisation, a list of Trustee/committee members and Trustee/committee member signatures. This can be known as a terms-of-reference, please contact us on prosperityfund@swale.gov.uk if you are unsure;
 - A bank or building society account in the organisation's name;
 - Up-to-date annual accounts (for groups over 12 months old), or a 12 month cash-flow forecast for newer organisations.
- 2.3 Applicants will generally only be awarded one grant within each financial year, except where there is an identified potential underspend for the funding allocation. Grants should not support political or directly religious activity. For the avoidance of doubt, organisations that are in administration, insolvent or where a striking-off notice has been made, are not eligible for funding under this scheme.

Community Infrastructure Grant 2023

- 2.4 There are two funding sources that are being used to support this scheme, with different geographical eligibility criteria. This means that the greater part of the funding will be used in rural areas, but not exclusively, with some, more limited funding available to the whole Borough.
- 2.5 Projects that will be supported must not have already commenced (generally defined as purchased goods or contracted and/or commenced works) at the point the grant is awarded. Applicants should clearly demonstrate the grant allows the project to proceed and the contribution delivery would make to meeting the overarching objectives of the scheme (as set out at 1.2). Any funding sought should be for investments to be made within the Borough. It is acknowledged that mobile assets may spend time out of Borough, but they should normally be based within Swale.
- 2.6 Under the themes for which the grant has been set up, examples of projects include
- Warm and sustainable – grants for insulation, green power, LED lighting,
 - Fit for purpose – alterations, improvements and new facilities
 - Digitally Connected – fast broadband and Wi-Fi
 - Welcome and work – café development, creating or improving meeting and work-space
 - Mobility - EV Charging points, bike storage.
- 2.7 The Fund shall not be available for projects that
- solely seek to repair, maintain or renew
 - are focused on securing compliance with legal requirements
 - are focused on improvements to car parking
 - benefit a property which is not wholly for non-domestic use.
- 2.8 In addition to defining the nature of the capital investment, applicants will be asked to set out what outputs/outcomes are expected from the investment supported by the grant and how these will be measured over a period of time. This might include, increased numbers of visitors to a facility; a new service being delivered as a result of the investment or a reduction in Carbon footprint.
- 2.9 Projects that are seeking funding from more than one source must declare other funding being sought for the project and demonstrate that the elements of the project being funded through this scheme are not 'double funded'.
- 2.10 Grants for the acquisition of vehicles will not normally be considered.

Compliance

- 2.11 Applicants/applications will be subject to due diligence checks including legal entity checks, bank account verification, the financial viability of the organisation and compliance with subsidy control regulations. It is therefore important to respond to the information requested in the application form and any further requests arising from an application made.
- 2.12 Projects that are funded will need to comply with the rules of the scheme. These will be set out in a sealed grant agreement and failure to comply may lead to any funding issued becoming subject to claw back.

Procurement

- 2.13 In order to ensure that value for money has been obtained in the procurement of goods funded by the Grant, Government rules requires the following minimum procedures for recipients. To optimise local benefit we would also encourage the use of local suppliers.

Value of Contract	Minimum procedure required
£0-£24,999	A minimum of 1 quote. Further quotes may be requested when your application is assessed to ensure value for money.
£25,000-£99,999	Please discuss with the team by emailing prosperityfund@swale.gov.uk .

Branding & Publicity

- 2.14 Grant recipients will need to comply with Government requirements for branding and publicity, which can be found [here](#). This covers both press activity and printed and online materials and activity. Examples of how this has been followed will be collected by Swale as part of its evidence to demonstrate compliance.

Planning and Other Permissions:

- 2.15 Where an applicant requires planning, building regulations or any other approvals to deliver their proposal, but has not yet secured it, any award from this scheme will be 'subject to securing the necessary permissions'. In short, failure to demonstrate that the necessary permissions have been secured within an agreed timescale (set out in the grant agreement) will mean any grant offer may be withheld or withdrawn and any grant paid be potentially repayable to Swale Borough Council.

2. Funding Levels and expenditure timeframe

- 3.1 Grants of between £1,000 and £7,000 will be awarded to organisations to cover no more than 75% of the costs of works against which the grant application has been made.
- 3.2 If an organisation is VAT registered, the scheme will not consider VAT when calculating the grant offer.
- 3.3 Recipients of grants received in any financial year will normally be expected to complete spend of the grant on the intended investment/project within the same financial year as the award has been made.

Please note, Swale Borough Council has a fixed amount of funds available for this grant scheme. If the number of eligible applications exceeds the funds available, we reserve the right to close the scheme and/or alter these funding levels accordingly.

3. How do I apply?

- 4.1 Applications can be made using the attached form or via an online form available [here](#). If you require assistance in completing the form or need to make an application through an alternative format, please contact the Economic Development team and External Funding Team on 01795 417398.

Community Infrastructure Grant 2023

- 4.2 **All applications for this funding should be received by no later than the published date for each funding round. This will be publicised and published on Swale Borough Councils website.** If the fund is substantially over-subscribed, the Council reserves the right to close the scheme prior to this date. Subject to the availability of further funds and the number of applications received, further funding rounds will be held, but this is not guaranteed.
- 4.3 You may be contacted by a member of the grants team who will advise if any further information is required after your application has been reviewed and what the next steps will be. This may include a virtual or in person appointment with a Council officer or the Council's appointed expert contractor to discuss the proposal. **This may be a necessary step for the application to proceed** and is intended to both help assess the suitability of the proposal on behalf of the Council, and also provide any further guidance or advice required by the applicant organisation.
- 4.4 Eligibility checks will also be carried out including an independent security and fraud check by an external company as required by Government. If an application is received from an organisation that does not meet all the required criteria, they will be informed as soon as possible of this and the reason(s) they are not eligible.
- 4.5 The Council will not accept deliberate manipulation and fraud. Any organisation or individual caught falsifying their records to gain grant money may face prosecution and any funding issued will be subject to claw back.
- 4.6 Depending on the proposal, payment schedules will be agreed with successful applicants. It is anticipated initial payments to successful organisations will be made as soon as is reasonably practical after a decision has been made and the relevant grant agreement has been returned. The nature and scale of the project and the applicant will determine whether payment will be made in full, in advance or in stages.
- 4.7 No grants will be awarded without an application being made and considered.

4. Decision Making and Appeals

- 5.1 Applications received will be reviewed by any relevant officers of the Council and/or its appointed expert. A recommendation of award will be made to responsible Swale Borough Council for approval.
- 5.2 The Council will operate an internal review process and will accept an applicant's request for a review of its decision. All review requests must be made in writing to the Council within 14 days of the Council's decision and should state the reasons why the applicant is aggrieved with the decision of the Council. New Information may be submitted at this stage to support the applicant's appeal.
- 5.3 The application will be reconsidered by a senior officer of the Council, as soon as practicable and the applicant will be informed in writing or by email of the decision. As a discretionary scheme, any decision made will be final.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 6.1 Successful applicants will be expected to comply with monitoring requests for the project's delivery and any evaluation of outputs and outcomes required. This may mean that data will

Community Infrastructure Grant 2023

need to be collected, before, during and after the project has been delivered. Failure to comply with his may result in the Council seeking to recover some or all of the grant that has been paid.