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| **A black and white sign with white text  AI-generated content may be incorrect.Criteria for Rural England Prosperity Fund grants – Rural micro and small sized business** |
|  | An application can be made by a new, micro or small sized business (as defined by the government) If the applicant is part of a larger group or linked with any other businesses in any other way, then guidance will need to be sought with the REPF Project Officer on eligibility. |
|  | The District Council must be satisfied that the application to be in the interests of their local inhabitants.  |
|  | Applications can be made within the application period as shown on the website, although they will only be considered once all information is provided. Projects must **not** start until the Grant funding has been awarded and a signed contract is in place |
|  | Grants may only be made for capital projects. This means that they must be spent on assets such as a building or equipment which are expected to be used for a period of at least 3 years. This may include enhancements to existing assets which:* Significantly lengthen the life of the asset.
* Significantly increase the value of the asset.
* Significantly increase usefulness of the asset.

It will not include minor repairs and routine maintenance. Grant recipients cannot use grants to fund domestic property improvements or to buy private vehicles. Grant recipients cannot spend grants on revenue costs such as running costs, commissioning advice, design and project management costs for any projects, or promotional activities.  |
|  | The grant must be used for the purposes it was awarded and should demonstrate value for money and additionality. Consideration must be given to how the project may contribute to net zero and nature recovery objectives. As a minimum consideration must be given to the project’s impact on natural assets and nature. Consideration will be given to the economic, environmental and social benefits of the project when assessing the application.  |
|  | REPF cannot be used to support projects or costs where there is a statutory duty to provide them. |
|  | Applicants are required to demonstrate that their project meets the requirements of REPF intervention and is located in a rural area of Braintree by checking <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/> (see website for guidance on how to check). |
|  | Funding for projects on land not directly in the ownership of the rural businesses concerned, will ordinarily only be considered if the rural business has obtained written agreement from the landowner and that the land will be available for use for the purpose of the grant for a period of at least 3 years (e.g. the construction of a multi-use sports area on third party land leased to a rural organisation for a period of over 3 years). The landlord’s written permission for the improvements must be obtained where this is a condition of the tenancy. In addition, the applicant must provide written evidence of the tenancy agreement, including the duration of the agreement remaining if it is a fixed term arrangement. The Council may request to see a copy of the full tenancy agreement. |
|  | The District Council wishes to see assistance from REPF maximised and, in any event, it may not have sufficient funds to assist all the requests put forward by rural businesses. Therefore, the contribution to a project in the form of a REPF grant will normally be limited and applicants should be able to demonstrate that co-funding of a min 50% of the remaining total costs of the project will be met from sources such as:(i) Own funds (evidence will be requested)(ii) Bank Loan (evidence will be requested) |
|  | In determining the grant application, due regard will also be given to the level of financial reserves held by the business and the annual income and expenditure, and the ability or otherwise to generate additional income. |
|  | Where funding is awarded the District Council will not be responsible for meeting any ongoing revenue costs. Applicants may be required to demonstrate that arrangements are in place to meet any ongoing costs arising from the project. Evidence may be requested that the project and/or its ongoing operation will meet any legislative requirements (for example health and safety requirements). |
|  | Where funding is awarded the recipient rural business is required to install a plaque at a location readily visible to the public, bearing the appropriate UK government logos, project name and standardised text. Co-branding is only allowed with lead local authorities or funders. Please refer to the UKSPF branding document for further guidance [UK Shared Prosperity Fund: branding and publicity (6) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-branding-and-publicity-6). Evidence of compliance with branding and publicity guidance should be provided to Braintree District Council for monitoring and audit purposes. |
|  | Payment will be made to the recipient in ***arrears*** and at project completion through a claim form. Evidence of the project completion and the costs incurred will need to be provided through banks statement showing payments and a copy of the supplier’s invoice(s). All grant monies to be defrayed by the **13th February 2026.** Final progress report and the grant claims to be submitted to the District Council by **01st March 2026. *Failure to do so may result in the grant offer being withdrawn regardless of whether you have started the project.*** |
|  | Where funding is awarded, the recipient is required to record the outcomes and outputs of the project and provide these to the District Council by the date given in the Award letter. Please refer to the application form and website for further information on the indicative outcomes and outputs.  |
|  | Your application must be accompanied by at least one quote for each item up to £2499. You must provide three quotes for each aspect of the works or goods costing £2,500 or more. Awards will be based on the lowest quote provided except where the applicant can demonstrate that this option does not represent the best value for money. The District Council may seek independent corroboration of any costs/quotes set out in the application. Any items over £25,000 will need to be discussed with the REPF Project Manager for procurement process. |
|  | Release of funding will be dependent upon the whole project being fully funded unless otherwise explicitly stated in the Award letter. |
|  | Awards must be used only for the purposes set out in the application and as specified in the Award letter. Where a change is proposed to the project, for any reason, the applicant must seek confirmation from the REPF Project Officer that the offer of funding remains valid |
|  | If the cost of either the project as a whole or specific items for which a grant has been awarded are less than set out in the application, the District Council will reduce the grant awarded accordingly.  |
|  | If your business is VAT registered, or VAT is recoverable from HMRC for another reason, you must not include VAT in your grant amount requested |

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