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| **Criteria for Rural England Prosperity Fund grants – Rural organisations and Parish Councils** |
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|  | An application can be made by a Community/Voluntary/Parish Council with a project in an eligible rural area.  |
|  | 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 one year. 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 community purposes 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. Further information can be found in Appendix 1 of the application. |
|  | Funding for projects on land not directly in the ownership of the rural organisation concerned, will ordinarily only be considered if the rural organisation 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 5 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 5 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 organisations or rural Parish Councils. The District Council would prefer to give assistance to a rural Parish Council or rural organisation that has made efforts to provide a reasonable contribution from its own resources or other sources. 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 20% (discretionary) towards the cost of the project will be met from sources such as:1. Fundraising generally(ii) Grant applications from other bodies(v) Fundraising from the Parish Precept(vi) Contribution by the Parish Council
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|  | In determining the grant application, due regard will also be given to the level of financial reserves held by the Parish Council or rural organisation, 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 organisation 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. |
|  | Where funding is awarded, payment will be made to the recipient upon completion of the Grant funding agreement by both parties. Payment of the grant will then be made. Evidence of the project completion and the costs incurred will need to be provide. Banks statement (of the organisation) showing payments and a copy of the supplier’s invoice will need to be provided. Failure to do so may result in the recovery of the grant. |
|  | 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 website for further information on the indicative outcomes and outputs and ensure Appendix 2 in the application is fully completed. |
|  | 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. |
|  | 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 Manager 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 expect the difference to be repaid.  |
|  | It is expected that VAT will be reclaimed wherever possible where the applicant is a Parish Council. Applications should clearly set out the VAT element of any costs and state the position regarding the reclaiming of VAT. Where, in the opinion of the District Council, VAT may be reclaimed any award will be based on costs net of VAT.Please contact repfenquiries@braintree.gov.uk if any of the above needs’ clarification. |

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