**Rural England Prosperity Fund - Community Grants Application**

Please refer to the separate Rural England Prosperity Fund information on the Bedford Borough Council website and **the criteria and guidance in Appendix 1** of this form when completing the application. Please verify that your organisation is based in an **eligible rural area of** **Bedford Borough** prior to completing the application.

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| **Part 1** - **About your Rural Community Organisation** |
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| **1.1 Organisation details**  |
| Organisation Name |  |
| Address of Organisation (Must be based in an eligible rural area of Bedford Borough) |  | Postcode |
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| Contact Name (for queries & clarification) |  |
| Contact Address |  | Postcode |
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| Contact Email |  | Contact Telephone |  |
| Legal Status of Organisation *(e.g. Registered Charity)* |  | Company No. (if applicable)  | Charity No. (if applicable) |
|  |  |
| Website |  |
| Does your organisation have an active bank account? | [ ]  Yes | [ ]  No |
| Geographical location  |  |
| Please provide a summary of your organisation’s aims and objectives. |
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| 1. Is your organisation the subject of any ongoing investigation relating to suspicion of fraud or irregularity under an existing contract
 | [ ]  Yes | [ ]  No |
| 1. Is your organisation in a state of insolvency, voluntary administration, compulsory winding up and receivership, composition with creditors, company voluntary arrangements or subject to equivalent proceedings?
 | [ ]  Yes | [ ]  No |
| 1. Does your organisation have up to date policies and procedures relating to Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity and Data Protection including GDPR?
 | [ ]  Yes | [ ]  No |
| 1. Does your organisation have in place both employers and public liability insurance as legally required?
 | [ ]  Yes | [ ]  No |
| 1. Is your organisation registered with the Information Commissioner’s Office for processing or intending to process personal data?
 | [ ]  Yes | [ ]  No |
| 1. Has your organisation received or is it expecting to receive funding for the project under other Defra schemes including:
* The Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme
* The Farming Investment Fund
* The Platinum Jubilee Village Hall Improvement Grant Fund
 | [ ]  Yes | [ ]  No |
| If you have selected *Yes* for(i) (ii) or (vi), or *No* for (iii) (iv) or (v) above, please provide further relevant information. |
|  |
| Are you commercially, financially, legally, professionally or personally linked to Bedford Borough Council or it’s Councillors or Officers? |
| [ ]  Yes | [ ]  No |
| If you have selected yes, please give further details: |
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| **1.2 Track record** |
| Please provide details of any similar projects that you have successfully delivered in the past. |
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| Does your organisation have the capacity, resources and capability to deliver the proposed project? Please provide details: |
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| **Part 2 - About your Project** |

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| **2.1 Which intervention are you applying for?** |
| **Intervention** | **Select intervention** |
| Funding for **impactful volunteering** and **social action projects** to develop social and human capital in local places. | [ ]  |
| Creation of and improvements to **local rural green spaces** | [ ]  |
| Funding for investment in **capacity building and infrastructure support** for local civil society and community groups. | [ ]  |
| **2.2 Overview** |
| Please tell us the name of your project. |
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| **2.3 Brief Summary of Your Project** (max 500 words) |
| Please provide a description of the project for which funding is being sought, including why it is required and what it aims to achieve.  |
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| **2.4 Who will benefit?**  |
| Please provide an overview of who will benefit from your proposed project.  |
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| **2.5 Tell us about the need for REPF for your project** |
| Would you be able to run your proposed project without REPF? Would it be necessary to run your project at a smaller scale without REPF? |
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| **2.6 About the location of the project**  |
| Where will your project be delivered?  |
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| Does the project need planning permission? If planning permission is required, please provide further details. |
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| Does the project involve the acquisition of any land? If acquisition is required, please provide further details. |
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| Does the organisation own the land on which the project will be based or has permission been sought from the landowner?  |
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| Does the organisation hold a lease on the land on which the project will be based with at least 10 years of the lease remaining? Please provide evidence of lease and permission from landowner. |
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| **2.7 How will your project meet the criteria for the intervention?** |
| Explain how your project meets the objectives of the intervention? (see Appendix 1 Table 2) |
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| How does your project demonstrate value for money? |
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| How does the project demonstrate additionality? (The extent to which something happens as a result of an intervention that would not have occurred in the absence of the intervention) |
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| What are the project’s impacts on natural assets and nature? |
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| What are the expected outputs of the project and how will they be measured?Please include details of your baseline assessment and refer to the criteria for the grant |
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| What are the expected outcomes of the project and how will they be measured?Please include details of your baseline assessment and refer to the criteria for the grant. |
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| * 1. **Delivery**
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| Please outline your expected timescales for delivering your project. Include any key milestones or deadlines you need to meet if they are known. Please consider that all projects must be completed and claims submitted by the 05th January 2025 and reports submitted by 01st February 2025.  |

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| Project Timescale: |  |
| Start Date: |  | End Date: |  |

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| Further information: |

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| **2.9 Costs and Funding** |
| Please indicate the total amount of funding you are requesting for your project, **under the applicable year**. |
| **Cost of the Project** |
| Please indicate the total cost of your project. | £      |
| **REPF Funding Requested (capital only)** | **2024/25** |
| Please indicate the level of REPF funding sought | £      |
| **Total Grant Requested:**  | £      |
| **Co-funding** |
| Please indicate how you intend to fund the balance of the project outlined above. Provide details of co-funders and whether sums have been confirmed. |
| Total amount of co-funding (including from non-local authority partners) that your authority has secured to date, or anticipates securing  | £      |
| *[Optional – only complete for each partner you have identified]* | **Amount applied for** | **Confirmed** |
| Own authority's (i.e. Parish Council) co-funding resource name: | £      | Y/N |
| Co-funder name: | £      | Y/N |
| Co-funder name: | £      | Y/N |
| Co-funder name: | £      | Y/N |
| Co-funder name: | £      | Y/N |
| **2.10 Quotations** |
| Your application must be accompanied by at least one quote. If your application is for a total of £1,000 or more, you must provide three quotes for each aspect of the works or goods costing £1,000 or more. Please give details of your quotations below: |
| Quote reference | Supplier name | Cost (exc. VAT) | VAT amount | Preferred supplier |
|  |  |  |  | [ ]  |
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| Please tell us how you have selected your preferred supplier from the quotes that you have obtained? |
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| Is your organisation VAT registered?  |
| Yes [ ] (Please provide VAT Number below) | No [ ]  |
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| Is your organisation able to reclaim VAT? |
| Yes [ ]  | No [ ]  |

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| **Please enclose a copy of your latest set of accounts, together with your budget and reserves for the current year.** |

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| **Part 3 – Declarations**  |

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| **3.1 Disclaimers** |
| **Data Protection** |
| Please note that by submitting this application form, you are consenting to any Personal Data collected being processed by Bedford Borough Council and shared with partners involved in the delivery of UKSPF and REPF. This includes the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and its contractors. The Personal Data will be held for the purposes of contacting applicants and assessing applications.  |
| **UK Subsidy Control Regulation** |
| Please note that as a Public Authority, Bedford Borough Council must comply with the new UK Subsidy Control regime. By proceeding, you are agreeing to provide the necessary details of your project to enable the Council to meet the transparency obligations that apply to public authorities awarding subsidies.Please also note that according to Minimal Financial Assistance regulation, standalone subsidies up to the value of £315,000 are exempt from having to meet the subsidy control requirements. However, if an individual organisation’s total subsidy receipts exceed £315,000 over a period of three financial years, the exemption no longer applies, and the relevant subsidies must be assessed against the subsidy control principles. Recipient organisations must inform the Council if this £315,000 threshold is due to be exceeded. Further information is available here, [via the Government website.](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/subsidy-control-regime) |
| **3.2 Approval by the Applicant** |
| Please check that all sections of the form are complete and provide your name and date below to confirm that the information provided in this form is correct. Please confirm that you have the authority to submit this form on the behalf of the organisation in question. |
| Name:  | Date:  |
| Position: |
| **3.3 Approval by the Parish Council** |
| Minute reference for the meeting of the Parish Council at the which the application was considered: |  |
| Name:  | Name of Parish Council:  |
| Position: | Date: |

**Please return your completed form via email to** **bedfordukspf@bedford.gov.uk**

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| **Appendix 1 - Criteria for Rural England Prosperity Fund grants – rural organisations and Parish Councils** |
|  | An application can be made by a rural organisation or a Parish Council in an eligible rural area.  |
|  | The Borough Council must be satisfied that the Parish Council considers the application to be in the interests of their local inhabitants. An application will not be accepted unless it has been considered by the Parish Council and the application form has been signed by the Chairman or Clerk to the Parish Council stating it to be in the interests of their local inhabitants**.**  |
|  | Applications can be made at any time, although they will only be considered at the monthly meeting of the REPF Grant Panel. To ensure an application is considered applicants should ensure that it is submitted 2 weeks before the date of the meeting. The Mayor may consider urgent applications at other times where it is considered appropriate that the application be considered outside of the normal committee cycle. |
|  | 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.  |
|  | Applicants seeking funding towards a project of £20,000 or more, may be required to make a presentation to the REPF Grant Panel at the first meeting that will consider 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 Table 1.  |
|  | 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 10 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 10 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 Borough 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 Borough Council would prefer to give assistance to a rural Parish Council or rural organisation approved by the Parish Council 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 the remaining cost of the project will be met from sources such as:(i) Fundraising generally(ii) Grant applications from other bodies(iii) Seeking loan assistance from the Association of Local Councils(iv) Loan from the Public Works Loan Board(v) Fundraising from the Parish Precept(vi) Contribution by the Parish Council |
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| **Table 1 - Interventions, allocations and co-funding** |
| **Intervention** | **Funding allocation and maximum grant limit** | **Co-funding and completion date** |
| **Impactful volunteering and social action projects to develop social and human capital in local places.** | £67,500(up to £10,000 per grant) | 20% co-funding  |
| **Creation of and improvements to local rural green spaces**  | £67,500(up to £10,000 per grant) | 20% co-funding |
| **Funding for investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups** | £30,700(up to £10,000 per grant | 20% co-funding |

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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 Borough 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 Bedford Borough Council for monitoring and audit purposes. |
|  | Where funding is awarded, payment will be made to the recipient upon completion of the project and receipt of evidence of the completion and the costs incurred (for example receipts for payments and a copy of the supplier’s invoice). Where the funding is a contribution to a larger or more complex project consideration may be given to the release of funding on a phased basis as elements of the project are completed, subject to the whole project being fully funded and scheduled for completion (applicants requesting release of part or all of the funding prior to completion of the whole project should contact the Borough Council prior to commencement of the project). |
|  | Where funding is awarded, the recipient is required to record the outcomes and outputs of the project and provide these to the Borough Council by the date given in the Award letter. Please refer to Table 1 for further information on the indicative outcomes and outputs.  |
|  | Applications in excess of £1,000 will not normally be considered unless three independent quotations are provided for each aspect of the works, goods or services, costing in excess of £1,000 for which the grant is sought. 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 Borough 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 claimed by the date given in the Award letter to allow for funds to be processed and cleared, by the end of the funding period. Funds should be utilised in a timely manner following the award. Other sources of funding can be used after this date to complete the project. |
|  | 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 Grant Panel that the offer of funding remains valid. |
|  | In the event that 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 Borough Council may reduce the award accordingly. Applicants are advised to seek confirmation of the final award in these circumstances. |
|  | 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 Borough Council, VAT may be reclaimed any award will be based on costs net of VAT.  |

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**Table 2 - Interventions, outputs and outcomes**

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| **Intervention** | **Objectives**  | Indicative outputs | Indicative outcomes |
| Funding (capital grants) for **impactful volunteering** and **social action projects** to develop social and human capital in local places. This intervention corresponds to the UKSPF intervention E9. | Strengthening our social fabric and fostering a sense of local pride and belonging, through investment in activities that enhance physical, cultural and social ties and amenities. This includes: • community infrastructure • local green space • community led project | Number of organisations receiving grants • Number of local events or activities supported • Number of projects supported | • Improved engagement numbers • Volunteering numbers as a result of support |
| **Example Projects** | Capital grants to enable people to develop volunteering and social action projects locally, such as: • purchase of equipment • improvements to premises to enable local volunteering groups such as youth charities, carers groups or refugee support groups |

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| **Intervention** | **Objectives**  | Indicative outputs | Indicative outcomes |
| Creation of and improvements to local rural green spaces (corresponds to the UKSPF intervention E3) | Strengthening our social fabric and fostering a sense of local pride and belonging, through investment in activities that enhance physical, cultural and social ties and amenities. This includes: • community infrastructure • local green space • communityled projects | Amount of rehabilitated land or premises • Square metres (m2 ) of land made wheelchair accessible or step free• Amount of public realm created or improved • Number of facilities supported or created • Amount of green or blue space created or improved | • Increased footfall • Increased visitor numbers • Increased use of cycleways or paths • Jobs created • Improved perception of facilities or amenities • Increased users of facilities or amenities • Improved perceived or experienced accessibility |
| **Example Projects** | Capital grants to establish or enhance rural green and blue infrastructure including: • community gardens • green spaces • watercourses and embankments• greening of streets and paths • incorporating natural features into wider public spaces |

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| **Intervention** | **Objectives**  | Indicative outputs | Indicative outcomes |
| Funding (capital grants) for investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups  | Strengthening our social fabric and fostering a sense of local pride and belonging, through investment in activities that enhance physical, cultural and social ties and amenities. This includes: • community infrastructure • local green space • community-led projects | * Number of EV charging points
* Number of visitors or locals using charging points

Number of community energy projects funded | * Improved perception of facilities or amenities
* Increased users of facilities or amenities
* Improved perceived or experienced accessibility
* Number of new businesses created
 |
| **Example Projects** | Capital grants for provision of net zero infrastructure for rural communities and to support rural tourism activity, for example: * EV charging points
* community energy schemes such as scaled up biomass, heat pumps or solar
* Capital grants for kitchens in community hubs which are capable of supporting food and drink entrepreneurs to get accreditation for food production.
* Funding for resilience infrastructure and nature-based solutions that protect local businesses and community areas from natural hazards including flooding and coastal erosion.
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