



**Town Clerk**

Les Trigg

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15 Station Road  
STONE  
ST15 8JP

29 June 2020

Dear Councillor,

A **VIRTUAL** meeting of the **GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** will be held on **TUESDAY 7 JULY 2020** at **7:00pm** for consideration of the matters itemised in the following agenda.

The meeting will be streamed live on YouTube and members of the public are welcome to observe.

View Meeting: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXHye7pCvT-mVBouN3IUTWQ>

Les Trigg  
Town Clerk

**AGENDA**

1. **To receive apologies for absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Requests for Dispensations Received**
4. **To receive the report of the County Councillors**
  - County Councillor Mrs J. Hood
  - County Councillor I. Parry
5. **To receive the report of Borough Councillors**
6. **Representations from Members of the Public**

To consider representations from members of the public on items to be considered at this meeting, in accordance with the Council's scheme of public participation.

**7. Minutes of Previous Meetings**

- a) To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 24 March 2020, Minute No's GP20/200 – GP20/210 (attached).

**8. Minutes of Sub-Committees**

There are no minutes for consideration

**9. To receive the reports of Committee and Sub-Committee Chairmen on COVID-19 responses and moving forward:**

- General Purposes Committee
- Planning Committee
- Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee
- Estates Sub-Committee (report attached)
- Environment Sub-Committee
- Management Sub-Committee

**10. Stone Heritage Centre**

To consider the application for a grant for Stone Heritage Centre under the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Programme. A copy of the programme handbook is attached (electronic copy).

**11. Update from Working Groups:**

- a) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
- b) Stone Area Parish Liaison Group
- c) Traffic Management in Stone Working Group
- d) VE Day 2020 Commemoration Working Group

**12. To receive reports from Town Councillors on attendance at meetings of local organisations and outside bodies as a representative of the Town Council**

Stone ATC – Mayor & J. Davies

Age Concern Stone & District – Cllrs: T. Adamson & C. Thornicroft

Stafford & Stone Access Group – Cllr T. Kelt

Stone Common Plot Trustees – Cllrs: Mrs J. Hood, R. Kenney & T. Adamson

Stone Community Hub Liaison Group – Cllrs: Mrs J. Hood, M. Hatton & J. Powell

SPCA Executive Committee – Cllr M. Green

Members of the Public are welcome to attend the virtual meeting of the General Purposes Committee as observers.

# Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

## Minutes of the meeting held virtually, on Tuesday 24 March 2020

**NOTE:** Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19) and Prime Minister's instructions on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 to avoid public gatherings of more than two people, the physical meeting was cancelled. The meeting was held virtually, with voting by email.

**PRESENT:** Councillor R. Kenney in the Chair, and  
Councillors: K. Argyle, A. Best, Mrs A. Burgess, J. Davies, Mrs K. Dawson,  
I. Fordham, M. Green, J. Hickling, Mrs J. Hood, T. Kelt, P. Leason, C. Thornicroft and  
R. Townsend.

**ABSENT:** Councillors: T. Adamson, Mrs L. Davies, M. Hatton and J. Powell.

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**GP20/200     Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors: T. Adamson and Mrs L. Davies

**GP20/201     Declarations of Interests**

None

**GP20/202     Requests for Dispensations**

None

**GP20/203     Minutes**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March (Minute Numbers GP20/185 – GP20/199), be approved as a correct record.

**GP20/204     Minutes of Sub-Committees**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Tourism Sub-Committee held on 17 March 2020 (Minute Numbers TTP20/037 – TTP20/046) be noted.

**GP20/205     Local Plan for Stafford Borough**

The Committee considered the following Stafford Borough Council consultations inviting views on:

- a) A new Stafford Borough Local Plan 2020-2040: Issues & Options Consultation – seeking views on the approach to future development of Stafford Borough over the next 20 years.

A copy of an email from Stafford Borough Council had been enclosed with the agenda for the meeting along with a link to a range of documentation and information supporting the consultation.

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\* Items marked with an asterisk refer to reports or papers circulated with the agenda or distributed at the meeting. They are attached as an appendix to the signed copy of the Council minutes.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk be delegated to submit a response in consultation with the Committee Chairman.

**GP20/206      COVID-19 – Helpline Proposal**

The Committee considered investigating the viability of creating a telephone helpline for people requiring support due to the COVID-19 outbreak, with a view to help coordinating volunteers and local residents groups with their support efforts in Stone and surrounding areas. This work would be undertaken alongside Age Concern and A Little Bit of Stone, who have already started work in this area.

The support offered would relate to activities such as collection of shopping for people unable to leave home.

RESOLVED:

1. A viability investigation be undertaken into providing a helpline to support people affected by COVID-19.
2. The Town Clerk be authorised, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee, to determine the viability of the scheme and, If considered viable, to implement a helpline and support scheme for the duration of the current crisis.
3. A budget of £10,000 be made available from reserves to meet the cost of this project.
4. That, due to the urgency of this issue, the requirements of Financial Regulation 10.9 regarding the seeking of competitive quotations shall not apply to this project.

**GP20/207      COVID-19 - Council Actions**

The Committee considered the temporary changes to Council services and meeting schedules implemented as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, and the flexibilities required to continue to operate the Council during the current crisis.

RESOLVED:

1. To note the actions taken to date by the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee, and that these actions will be regularly reviewed and updated, if necessary, as the situation develops.
2. For the purposes of Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, to approve the absence of any Councillor unable to attend meetings due to issues related to COVID-19.
3. To amend Standing Order 10.9 on a temporary basis as follows, to allow the Town Clerk to exercise existing delegations in a situation where it is not reasonable to call a Council/Committee meeting (as opposed to the current delegation which is restricted to when it is not possible to call a meeting):

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\* Items marked with an asterisk refer to reports or papers circulated with the agenda or distributed at the meeting. They are attached as an appendix to the signed copy of the Council minutes.

*“Where any matter is urgent and cannot reasonably be dealt with in a meeting of the appropriate Council/Committee, the Council’s Proper Officer is authorised to take any decision on behalf of the Council which can legally be delegated by the Council to an officer. Before taking such a decision, the Proper Officer shall take reasonable steps to consult with Council Members, and shall report the decision and the reason for its urgency at the next ordinary meeting of the Council or one of its committees if the decision would normally have been taken there. The Assistant Town Clerk (Business) may deputise in the absence of the Proper Officer in respect of this delegation.”*

**GP20/208      Members Motions**

**Councillor R Townsend**

*“I am asking the Council to submit a letter to Her Majesty’s Inspectorate for Planning in relation to the redetermination hearing for the planning appeal on the Blackies Lane site off Sadler Avenue, Stone.*

*The letter should state that Stone Town Council believes that the intention of Rural Exception Policy C5A in the adopted Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031) is clear and that it is inappropriate to try to apply it to Stone which is designated a Tier 2 Town in the settlement hierarchy and not a rural community. It is the Town Council’s view that Stafford Borough Council’s decision to deny planning permission for up to 20 affordable homes on the site is in compliance with their stated policy.*

*The deadline to submit is 31<sup>st</sup> March and the Inspectorate have proposed 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> July for the hearing. Support from the Council would add additional weight.”*

RESOLVED: To support the motion.

**GP20/209      Exclusion of the Press and Public**

RESOLVED: Pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting whilst the next items of business are discussed on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the debate.

**GP20/210      Confidential Minutes**

- a) Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee Meeting held on 17 March 2020, Minute Number TTP20/046.

RESOLVED:

- i. To note the draft minutes.
- ii. To approve the recommendations contained in Minute Number TTP20/046.

**CHAIRMAN**

## **FRANK JORDAN CENTRE AND STONE STATION**

### **STATUS UPDATE AND POST COVID RESTART**

#### **1 BACKGROUND**

Both centres have been closed during lockdown and significant maintenance/upgrade work has and still is being carried out.

A decision will be required as to when a re-opening will be feasible following Government advice that community centres are able to re-open subject to guidelines and their specific situations from 4<sup>th</sup> July.

The earliest opening date for the 2 centres is early August subject to completion of scheduled works, making the centres Covid-Secure and ensuring that any users have produced acceptable Risk Assessments.

Irrespective of this, an early September media re-launch should be planned accompanied by suitable promotion of the upgraded and improved centres.

#### **2 FRANK JORDAN CENTRE**

Although the centre has been closed to the public since the start of lockdown, Stone Town Council agreed to SCH continuing to operate its Food Bank and allowed a temporary expansion into the St Michael's Suite without additional rental charge. This has provided invaluable community support as there has been a 10-fold increase in demand for food parcels from those out of work and unable to access immediate financial help. SCH believe that demand for food parcels is likely to increase further should more unemployment result from the wind-down of the furlough initiative.

Significant work is under way to upgrade the Christchurch Suite, to make it the equivalent of the St Michael's Suite, so that on re-opening, a major effort can be made to promote its use. Specifically, by end July and within existing budgets the following will be complete:

- The piping around the skirting boards boxed in and painted.

- The floor sanded and varnished.

- The walls made good and painted.

- The doors sanded and re-varnished.

- The radiators repainted.

- The gas pipe repainted.

- The sloping roof over the store room allowing water ingress, made good.

- Rendering on the external porch will be made good.

Consideration should also be given to refurbishment of the kitchen area which is in a barely functioning state. Quotes will be required and a decision made as to timing.

External works are also planned to the building and car park. These are also budgeted and should also be completed by end July. Specifically, the following will be completed:

The car park cleaned and tidied.

Wooden fencing re-stained.

The entrance walls from Lichfield Street and onto Abbey Street repaired.

The entrance car park sign moved to widen access.

Aluminium weather strips on St Michael's Suite emergency exit doors replaced.

Metal railings removed to maximise car parking space.

Car park spaces marked out to maximise visitor numbers.

Exterior doors on Lichfield Street re-painted as agreed and metal goods highlighted (colour to be approved by SBC CO)

Wi-Fi installed (as agreed but delayed by lockdown) for use of room hirers.

With the completion of the above work, the FJC will have been considerably upgraded and its facilities can be actively promoted as 'best in class'.

### **3 STONE STATION**

There are problems with the flashing on the several roof areas which has given rise to water ingress. This has affected the main room which lies beneath a flat roof, the Porter's Room and the kitchen area where walls are stained in several places and redecoration is required. However, redecoration makes little sense unless the water ingress has first been stopped.

Full replacement of the various failing flashings is likely to cost several thousand pounds and is not budgeted this year. A shorter term fix has been quoted at a cost of around £1,500 but is not a guaranteed fix. An additional quote is being obtained for comparison purposes. It seems sensible to carry out the short term repair to try to fix the water ingress and then carry out the necessary redecoration. These issues will not prevent a re-opening but the works will be required before Winter weather sets in.

The agreed installation of Wi-Fi has been delayed by lockdown but is now being pursued with the aim of ensuring it is in place by end July at which point the facility can be promoted again (lockdown rules permitting).

The Station was beginning to lose bookings due to the lack of car parking spaces when the previous train timetables were running. The new timetable may result in fewer train commuters and more car park spaces. There is a question as to whether discussion with Network Rail might result in an agreement for a set number of spaces to be allocated to hirers of the Station.

**Ian Fordham**

**Chair – Estates**

**24 June 2020**



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs



The European Agricultural Fund for Rural  
Development: Europe investing in rural areas

# RDPE Growth Programme Rural Tourism Infrastructure Handbook



Deadline for expressions of interest: midnight 16 February 2020

Search 'RDPE Growth Programme' on GOV.UK



With thanks to The Birdpark, Gloucestershire and Peak District National Park, Derbyshire for the images used in this document.

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# How Growth Programme grants work

## 1 Got an idea? Make a plan

Every successful application starts with a good idea and a clear plan for how to make that idea a reality.



## 2 Read this handbook

Read the rest of this handbook to make sure you're definitely eligible and that there is funding available in your local area.



## 3 Express an interest

Fill in an expression of interest (EOI) form and email it to RPA. Tell us about your project and how a grant will make it bigger and better.



## 4 Apply in full

If your EOI is accepted, you can make a full application. If this is successful, you'll get a funding agreement to sign.



## 5 Get to work

With your funding agreement signed, you can start work on your project.



## 6 Claim your money

After you've finished the work, you can claim your money.



Read the rest of this handbook to find out more, including our 'top tips for applicants' on page 30

# About the RDPE Growth programme

## Includes:

- How the government manages these grants
- Government guarantees about funding after the UK leaves the EU

# About the RDPE Growth Programme

The RDPE Growth Programme provides funding for projects in England which create jobs and growth in the rural economy.

Under the RDPE Growth Programme, there are grants for:

- rural tourism infrastructure
- food processing
- business development

The grants are funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), which is part of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF).

This handbook is about RDPE Growth Programme grants for rural tourism infrastructure. It explains what the grants are for, who is eligible and how to apply.

To find information about the other grants, search 'RDPE Growth Programme' on GOV.UK.



Planning a project that will grow your business, create jobs or bring more money into the rural economy?

You might be able to apply for a grant to help you fund it.

You can only apply for one RDPE grant for your project and only in one LEP area.

RDPE includes RDPE Growth Programme, LEADER, Countryside Productivity, Farming Recovery Fund and Cumbria Countryside Access Fund.

## How the government manages these grants

The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) delivers the grants, working with ESIF sub-committees in Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) areas.

RPA's role is to assess applications for grants, with advice from the ESIF sub-committees.

LEPs are partnerships between public bodies and businesses. Their role is to decide local priorities for the grants. Money should be directed to give the most benefit locally.

Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (CloS) are defined by the EU as a 'Less Developed Region'. Applications from the CloS LEP area will be considered separately, but at the same time as applications from other LEP areas.

The total funding for these grants is limited. Therefore, your grant application will be in competition with others for the available funding and your application may not be successful.

Read pages 33 to 71 for the LEP areas that are offering these grants. Use the map on page 31 to find your LEP area.

## Government guarantees about funding after the UK leaves the EU

The UK Government has guaranteed that any Rural Development Programme projects where funding has been agreed before the end of 2020 will be funded for their full lifetime. This applies in both a negotiated and a no-deal scenario. It will make sure funding is continued for these projects until they finish. This means that Defra can continue to agree and sign new projects after the UK leaves the EU during 2019 and 2020.

Please read the priorities for funding on page 17.

**Deadlines:** The RPA will agree a target end date with all successful applicants. The final date by which all projects must be finished, paid for and complete grant claims submitted is 30 September 2021.

# About rural tourism infrastructure grants

Includes:

- Who can apply
- What the grants are for
- How much money you can apply for
- Examples of projects

# About rural tourism infrastructure grants

An overview of the tourism infrastructure grants – who can apply, what the grants will fund and how much funding is available.

## Who can apply

If the project is commercial and intended to make a profit, only small businesses and farmers who want to diversify can apply.

If the project is not expected to make a profit, a wide range of organisations can apply.

Read page 13 to check if your business is eligible.

## What the grants are for

The grants will help fund the costs of capital expenditure on tourism infrastructure.

The aim is to support projects that will encourage more tourists to come, to stay longer and to spend more money in rural areas.

## How much money you can apply for

The minimum grant is £20,000.

### You won't automatically get a grant.

All applications are assessed to see how well they fit the priorities for funding and which projects provide best value for taxpayers' money.



## Examples of projects

Here are some examples of the kinds of projects which may be eligible for a rural tourism infrastructure grant.

### New access infrastructure



The local district council is investing in paths to connect up a number of existing footpaths, cycle ways and bridleways.

This will create a network of easily accessible circular routes of between 4 and 15 miles, which will make the area more attractive for walking and cycling.

### Extending a local museum



A local heritage museum (which is free to enter) wants to build a second viewing gallery, so it can display more of its collection.

The new gallery will include a small area for a café. The new gallery and café mean that visitors will stay longer at the museum. The project will create 2 new full-time jobs.

## Capital investment in visitor attractions



A business is building a new visitor attraction for families. This will add to the range of attractions already in the area.

It will make the area more attractive to tourists and increase the number of visitors.

Because the new visitor attraction is all-weather, it will help extend the tourist season in the area.

This means other tourism businesses, like restaurants and accommodation providers, will also benefit.

The project will create one full-time job and 4 seasonal jobs.

## Who can apply

### Includes:

- Check the size of your business
- What is a 'full-time equivalent' (FTE) employee
- Who can't apply

## Who can apply

What type of organisation can apply depends on whether or not the project will be commercial.

These grants can fund a wide range of projects that provide products and services to tourists. Who can apply depends on whether or not the project is profit-making and commercially run.

All projects must be in a rural area:

Type of project	Examples (these are illustrations only)	Who can apply
Commercial, profit-making project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tourist attractions</li><li>• Accommodation</li><li>• Retail outlets</li><li>• Food and drink outlets</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Small businesses, including social enterprises</li><li>• Farmers wanting to diversify into tourism</li></ul>
Has some income to offset costs, but is not intended to make a profit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Small buildings for tourist information</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rural businesses, including social enterprises</li><li>• Farmers</li><li>• Land-owners</li><li>• People or groups representing rural communities</li><li>• Charities</li><li>• Public bodies</li></ul>
Generates no income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Free tourist attractions, for example local landmarks</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rural businesses, including social enterprises</li><li>• Farmers</li><li>• Land-owners</li><li>• People or groups representing rural communities</li><li>• Charities</li><li>• Public bodies</li></ul>

## Check the size of your business

The size of the business depends on the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees it has and its financial performance.

The table below shows what qualifies as a small or micro business.

Business Size	Number of FTE employees		Annual turnover or balance sheet total
Small	fewer than 50	and	€10m (about £8.5 million) or less
Micro	fewer than 10	and	€2m (about £1.7 million) or less

### What is a 'full-time equivalent' (FTE) employee

Anyone who works 30 hours or more per week counts as 1 FTE employee. A person working 30 hours a week for 3 months of the year would be 0.25 FTE employee.

FTEs include business partners and directors. If a business partner or director works 30 hours or more per week they count as 1 FTE employee.

### New businesses can also apply

If you have an idea, a business plan and potential private funding for your project, you can apply for a grant.

## Is your business 'linked' to other businesses

If your business is linked to other businesses, this might mean you exceed the business size requirements and the funding limits.

The most common circumstances under which businesses are considered to be linked include:

- one business holds a majority of the shareholders' or members' voting rights in another business
- one business is entitled to appoint or remove a majority of the administrative, management or supervisory body of another
- a contract between the business, or a provision in the memorandum or articles of association of one of the businesses, enables one to exercise a dominant influence over the other
- one business is able, by agreement, to exercise sole control over a majority of shareholders' or members' voting rights in another

## Who can't apply

The following are not eligible for the grants:

- Crown bodies
- projects that are carried out only to meet a legal requirement

**Not sure if you are eligible?  
Contact RPA.**



03000 200 301



GPEnquiries@  
rpa.gov.uk

# 4

## Preparing an application

Includes:

- National priorities for funding
- Local priorities for funding
- How we assess applications
- EOI - what we look for
- Full application - what we look for



# Preparing an application

RPA will assess all applications. We're looking for evidence of a sound business case and for projects that meet the priorities for funding.

We're looking for projects that best meet the national and local priorities for funding, and that are good value for taxpayers' money. If you can show this clearly in your application, you're more likely to get a grant.



## National priorities for funding

Your project must meet two of the priorities below, or your application will be rejected. The more priorities your project meets, the more likely you are to get a grant.

<b>Create jobs</b>	Create at least 1 FTE job for every £30,000 of grant funding. Creates skilled jobs
<b>Extend the tourism season</b>	Attracts tourists outside the usual period of May to October
<b>Develop tourist attractions and infrastructure</b>	Creates or develops tourist attractions and infrastructure to increase the range of attractions available locally, encourage tourists to stay longer and increase their spend
<b>Wider benefits</b>	The project provides benefits to the wider tourism economy in the rural area



### Local priorities for funding

Local priorities are set by the ESIF sub-committees. Check the LEP area directory on pages 33 to 71 to see the priorities for your LEP area.

Some tourist destinations have 'destination plans' or strategies for encouraging tourism locally. Your project will be prioritised if it fits with the objectives of the destination plan. The LEP directory will say if there is a destination plan in your local area.

### How we assess applications

Application is in 2 stages. First, you must submit an 'expression of interest' (EOI) form. If we endorse your EOI, we will invite you to submit a full application.

We assess your application at both stages. Read 'How to apply' on page 26 for more information.

### EOI – what we look for

We use the information on the EOI form to check that both the applicant and project are eligible.

Then we assess how well your project meets the national and local priorities for grants. To do this we look at question 30 of the EOI (the 'strategic fit') and score and rank it against other applications.

It will help your application if you explain your project clearly.

Tell us exactly what you're doing, why it's good for your business, how and where you're doing it and who will benefit from it.

## Full application – what we look for

If you're invited to submit a full application, we'll ask for more information to further assess your project and your business. This table will give you an overview of what we assess.

Strategic fit	<p>How well the project meets the national and local priorities for funding.</p> <p>How the project will impact the environment.</p> <p>That the project does not disadvantage anybody in terms of characteristics such as ethnicity, disability, age and gender.</p>
Value for money	<p>How the project costs represent value for money.</p> <p>The amount of grant required to deliver the outcomes and outputs, including jobs.</p> <p>What difference grant funding will make, compared to what would happen without grant funding.</p>
Need and demand	<p>Why grant funding is required for the project.</p> <p>There is a clearly identified market need for the project.</p> <p>The impact the project has on other businesses, both positive and negative.</p>
Financial viability	<p>The current financial viability of your business.</p> <p>How the project may impact on your existing business operations.</p> <p>How you will fund the project until the grant is claimed.</p> <p>How the business will benefit from the project financially.</p>
Delivery and sustainability	<p>Whether the project will be delivered in budget and on time.</p> <p>That the right skills and resource are in place to deliver the project successfully.</p> <p>How project outputs and other benefits will be monitored and recorded.</p> <p>That risks to project delivery have been identified and how they will be mitigated.</p>

# 5

## Funding and costs

Includes:

- How much funding is available
- Paying for the project
- Eligible costs
- Costs which are not eligible

# Funding and costs

You can use grant funding to cover a certain percentage of some project costs – some costs are not eligible.

## How much funding is available

The minimum grant is £20,000.  
The maximum grant per project is €200,000 (approximately £175,000 at current exchange rates).

The grants can only fund a certain percentage of eligible costs and there is a maximum percentage that applies. You can use other public money to pay for eligible costs – but only up to that maximum percentage.

Above the maximum percentage, all the money you use to pay for eligible costs must be from private sources (like savings or a bank loan).

The maximum percentage of funding you can get depends on whether or not the project is commercially run and intended to make a profit, not the status of the applicant organisation.

Type of project	Maximum percentage
Commercial, profit-making project (such as a tourist attraction)	Up to 40%
Makes some income to offset costs but is not intended to make a profit (such as small buildings for tourist information)	Up to 80%
Generates no income (such as a new cycle path)	Up to 100%

### **Has your business already had some public funding?**

When you apply, we'll ask you to tell us if you have had any funding from the EU or other public sources, and if it was awarded under 'industrial de minimis'.

If so, we might need to limit the amount of the funding you can get, to comply with the EU state aid industrial de minimis rules.

### **Hire-purchase or leased items must be paid off before you claim**

If you buy an item for the project using lease purchase or hire-purchase, you must own this outright before you can claim any grant money towards it.

That means that, before you claim the grant, you must:

- pay all of the instalments
- show that the title has passed to you

Otherwise you will not be able to include these costs in your claim.

### **Paying for the project**

Grants are paid in stages, in arrears. They can only be claimed after the work being claimed for is finished and has been paid for.

We expect you to make a maximum of 3 claims over the course of the project.

You must show that you have sufficient funds to pay for the project costs until you get the grant payments.

**Do not start work, incur costs or place an order before your grant agreement has been signed.**

This will potentially make your whole project ineligible.

## Eligible costs

The grant can be used to pay for a percentage of the following costs:

- constructing or improving buildings
- buying new equipment and machinery

The following costs are also eligible, if they form part of a larger project being funded:

- architects, engineer or consultant fees for the project (as long as these don't add up to more than 15% of the project's total eligible costs)
- buying or developing a dedicated piece of computer software (but not an off-the-shelf piece of software like Microsoft Office)
- patents, licences, copyrights or trademarks
- energy-saving and resource efficiency equipment



## **Costs which are not eligible**

The following are not eligible for the grants (this list is not exhaustive).

Costs specific to tourism:

- refurbishment only to retain the current star rating of tourist accommodation
- tourism brown signs
- hire costs (for example, covering equipment or temporary structures)
- costs of establishing the England Coast Path where these are part of the statutory obligation

General costs:

- any costs incurred before the project start date shown in the grant funding agreement
- contingency costs
- the cost of getting any permissions or consents, such as planning permission
- any items which you have already had EU or national funding for (or intend to get EU or national funding for)
- relocation costs – if the business needs to relocate in order to expand, it can only apply for funding for the cost of the expansion
- costs associated with the provision of housing
- marketing and promotion

Buildings, land and equipment costs:

- repairs and maintenance of existing buildings, equipment and machinery
- purchase of land, whether or not this land is built on
- like-for-like replacement of existing items (such as buildings, equipment and machinery)
- purchase of machinery or equipment that will not be on the asset register of the business 5 years after completion of the project
- the cost of moveable fittings – like soft furnishings, beds, tables, chairs, cutlery and crockery, curtains, televisions and audio equipment
- renewable heat and energy systems covered by the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) or Feed-In Tariffs (FITs)



**Business running costs:**

- salaries and running costs of the business
- in-kind contributions (this means the value of donated work or services) such as the cost of using your own labour, vehicle and office space
- recurring licence fees, subscriptions and service charges
- computers, software and printers used in the general running of the business, like processing orders or accounts
- mobile phones
- standard, non-specialised domestic vehicles, such as cars (including 4 X 4) and motorbikes
- road freight transport vehicles for hire or reward

**Agricultural business costs:**

- buildings, machinery and equipment used for growing and harvesting agricultural and horticultural products
- standard agricultural equipment and inputs like animals and crops
- the cost of agricultural production rights and payment entitlements
- developing or setting up agricultural businesses

**Financial costs:**

- bad debts
- advance payments
- insurance policy costs
- working capital
- financial charges, such as bank charges, fines and interest
- costs connected with a leasing contract, such as a lessor's margin, interest refinancing costs, overheads and insurance charges
- reclaimable VAT
- pension provision

To check if a cost is eligible call the Rural Payments Agency helpline on 03000 200 301 or email [GPEnquiries@rpa.gov.uk](mailto:GPEnquiries@rpa.gov.uk)



# 6

## How to apply

Includes:

- The EOI form
- What happens after you submit an EOI form
- Full application
- If you are offered a grant
- Top tips for applicants

# How to apply

What you need to do to begin your application, and an overview of the information you must provide.

Application is in 2 stages. First, you must submit an 'expression of interest' (EOI) form. If we endorse your EOI, we will invite you to submit a full application.

RPA will assess your application at both stages. At EOI stage, applications will be assessed as they are received. At full application stage, projects will be assessed in batches. Only the highest-scoring applications will be successful.

## Deadline:

We must receive your EOI before midnight on 16 February 2020 – if we get it after this deadline, we will reject it.

## The expression of interest (EOI) form

You can find the EOI form on GOV.UK – search 'RDPE Growth Programme EOI'.

On the EOI, you'll need to give us some information about your business, including:

- whether it's linked to any other businesses
- turnover and balance sheet total from the most recent financial accounts
- details of any previous public funding your business has had

You'll also need to tell us about your project:

- what the objectives are and what the outputs will be
- an overview of the costs
- important dates for the project
- how it fits with the local and national priorities for funding
- the market demand for your project and its impact on similar businesses

## How to submit your form

Email your form to  
[growthapps@rpa.gov.uk](mailto:growthapps@rpa.gov.uk)

We can only accept forms that are:

- sent by email
- Microsoft Excel documents saved in the 1997-2003 XLS format

We cannot accept any other format – including PDF documents, scanned documents, hard copy printed applications or hand-written applications.

Email your EOI from the email address you specify at question 5 of the EOI form. If an agent sends the form on your behalf, that address must be copied into the email.



**Provide an email address that you check regularly.**

We will use the email address you put in section 5 of the form as our main way of contacting you.

## What happens after you submit your EOI

After you submit the form, you'll get an automatic email to say we have received it. We will then assess your EOI and let you know whether or not you will be invited to submit a full application.

We aim to give you a decision on your EOI within 30 working days.

### If an application is unsuccessful

If your EOI is unsuccessful, RPA will send you a letter with the reasons.

To find out how to complain against the decision, read the 'How to complain' section of the RPA complaints procedure page on GOV.UK.

## Full application

If you're invited to submit a full application, we'll send you the relevant form and advice about how to fill this in.

The form asks for full details about you, your business and your project, including:

- final project costs
- supplier details
- key dates
- proposed project outputs

You'll need to send us:

- supporting documents appropriate to the project (such as market research, customer surveys, or industry reports)
- business accounts for last 3 financial years (unless you are a new business)
- relevant permissions and consents
- 3 quotes for each item to be purchased
- evidence that you can cover the project costs before claiming the grant in stages

There is potentially a lot of information, evidence and paperwork to collect. It can take 2 - 3 months for you to prepare your full application, possibly longer if you need planning permission.

You'll be given a named contact at RPA to support you and answer questions.

You'll also be invited to attend a workshop, where RPA will explain the application process in more detail and answer any initial questions you have.

Before you send us your full application, you'll need to be registered on RPA's [Rural Payments service](#) and have a Single Business Identifier (SBI) number.

We will assess Full Applications in three batches. Decisions on applications in each batch will be made at the same time. You will need to tell us on the EOI form which batch you want your full application to be part of.

We aim to give you a decision on your full application within 60 working days of receipt.

## If you are offered a grant

If you are offered a grant, we'll send you a grant funding agreement for you to sign. This will set out the legal terms and conditions of the grant, including:

- the amount of the grant
- the outputs we've agreed for your project
- which suppliers you're using

If you need to change anything in the grant funding agreement over the course of the project, such as changing a supplier, you need to get written agreement from RPA first. If not, we could terminate your agreement and reclaim any grant we've already paid.

You'll get more information and help with this if you're offered a grant.

# Top tips for applicants



Before you start your application, here are some important reminders...

## **Jobs + growth + rural**

The main aim of the RDPE Growth Programme is to create jobs and growth in the rural economy. Tell us how your project will help do this.

## **Sell us your idea**

Explain really clearly what your project does and how it will benefit the economy. It's hard for us to justify giving you a grant if we don't understand your project.

## **Show us what the funding will mean to the success of your project**

We must invest public money carefully. We're looking for viable, growing businesses. If you can show us that your project is good value for money, and that you're planning to use the grant money to improve your project, you're more likely to get the grant.

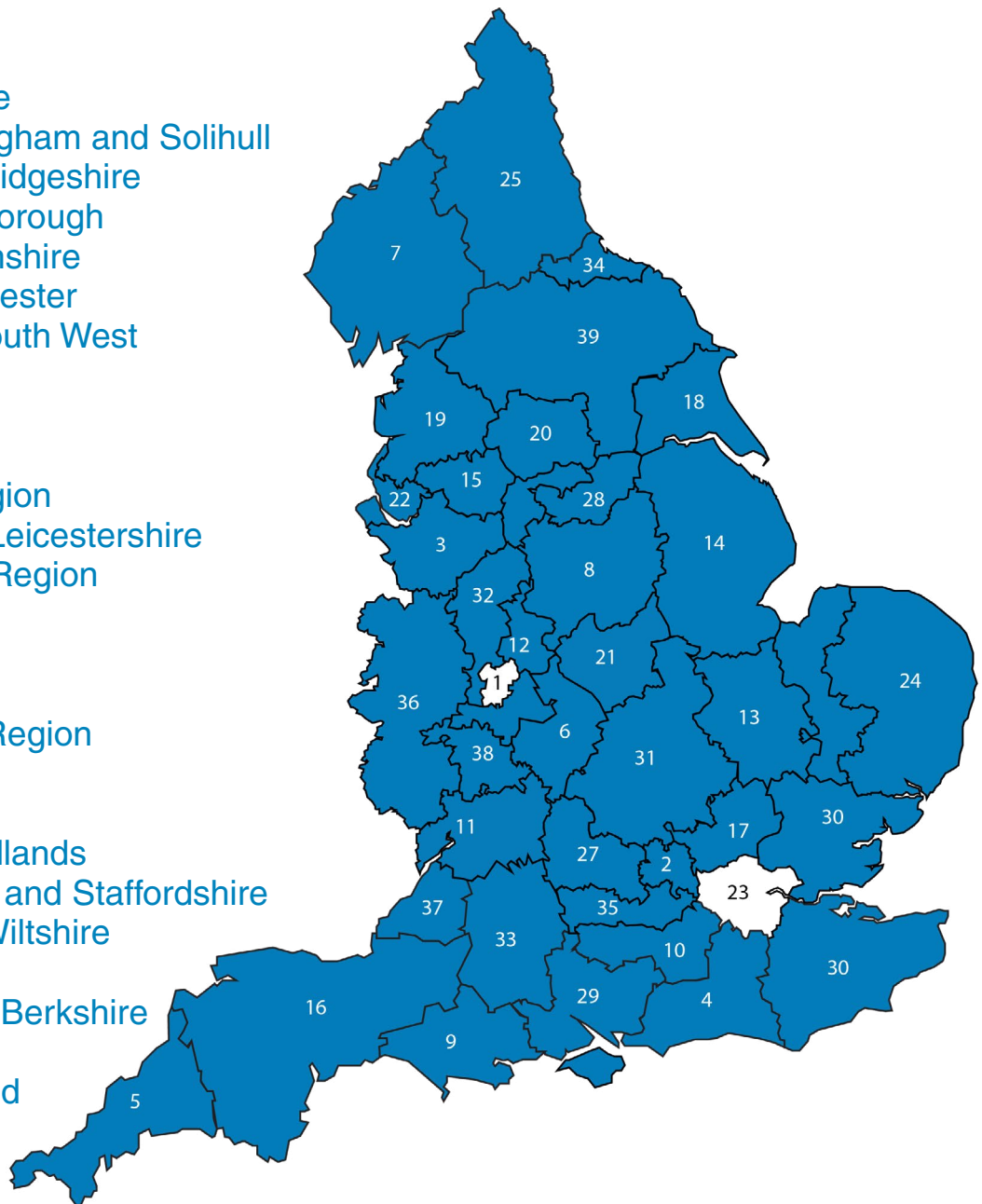
## **Do the market research**

You have to show that there is real demand for what you want to do, or you're unlikely to get a grant.

# LEP directory: grants in your area

## LEPs offering rural tourism infrastructure grants:

- 2 Buckinghamshire Thames Valley
- 3 Cheshire and Warrington
- 4 Coast to Capital
- 5 Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly
- 6 Coventry and Warwickshire
- 7 Cumbria
- 8 D2N2
- 9 Dorset
- 10 Enterprise M3
- 11 Gloucestershire
- 12 Greater Birmingham and Solihull
- 13 Greater Cambridgeshire  
Greater Peterborough
- 14 Greater Lincolnshire
- 15 Greater Manchester
- 16 Heart of the South West
- 17 Hertfordshire
- 18 Humber
- 19 Lancashire
- 20 Leeds City Region
- 21 Leicester and Leicestershire
- 22 Liverpool City Region
- 24 New Anglia
- 25 North East
- 27 Oxfordshire
- 28 Sheffield City Region
- 29 Solent
- 30 South East
- 31 South East Midlands
- 32 Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire
- 33 Swindon and Wiltshire
- 34 Tees Valley
- 35 Thames Valley Berkshire
- 36 The Marches
- 37 West of England
- 38 Worcestershire
- 39 York  
North Yorkshire  
East Riding



# Grants in your area

Use this directory to find out about the priorities for funding and what funding is available in your LEP area.

## How to use this directory

Check the map on the previous page to see if your LEP area is offering a rural tourism infrastructure grant

- Find the entry for your LEP area (these are listed alphabetically)
- Each entry has a link to the LEP area rural map. Use this to check if your project is in a rural area
- There is also a link to the LEP area Growth hub website. Growth hubs help businesses access local and national advice. This makes it easier for them to find the help they need to grow their businesses
- Read the whole entry carefully to find out:
  - minimum and maximum grants available
  - types of eligible projects and businesses
  - local priorities
- Read the documents at the links shown in the 'Further reading' section

### Deadlines:

The RPA will agree a target end date with all successful applicants.

The final date by which all projects must be finished, paid for and complete grant claims submitted is 30 September 2021.



# Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire

LEP area	Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire	Call reference number	32RD19TO0008
LEP area Growth hub website	<a href="http://www.stokestaffsgrowthhub.co.uk">www.stokestaffsgrowthhub.co.uk</a>		
LEP area rural map	<a href="#">Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire area rural map</a>		
Minimum grant	£20,000	Maximum grant	€200,000, approx. £175,000
Local priorities			
<p>The tourism sector is important to the economy of the SSLEP area. The tourism priorities for the SSLEP area are shown in the destination management plan. These grants are for capital investments to develop and grow tourism in rural areas.</p> <p>Priority will be given to projects that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• create new and develop existing visitor attractions in rural areas to               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increasing the range of visitor activities</li> <li>- extend the tourism season beyond the usual period of May to October</li> </ul> </li> <li>• increase the number and length of overnight stays</li> <li>• create and develop infrastructure building on the success of high profile sporting and leisure events as well as food and drink events</li> <li>• create skilled jobs in the applicant business</li> </ul> <p>It is expected that new accommodation will aim to achieve at least 4 star or equivalent accreditation rating. Accommodation below this accreditation rating may be supported where there is evidenced market need and demand. These projects must show all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clear need and market demand for the new accommodation</li> <li>• the number of new bed spaces to be created, and</li> <li>• provide benefits to other businesses and the economy in the local rural area</li> </ul>			
Further reading			
<p>The <a href="#">Staffordshire Excellence programme</a> helps develop and improve the quality of the tourism experience across the LEP area. This may help when making an application.</p> <p><a href="#">SSLEP Strategic Economic Plan</a> April 2018</p> <p><a href="#">SSLEP ESIF Strategy</a></p>			