

Initiation Form

Summary		Reference:	RUR002b
Activity Name:	<i>Strengthening Rural Community Infrastructure and Assets</i>		
Activity Description:	<i>Activity that will have a positive impact on rural business and communities by strengthen community infrastructure and assets</i>		
Investment Priority:	Supporting Rural Businesses Supporting Rural Communities	Intervention:	<i>1.3 Capital grant funding for developing and promoting the visitor economy</i> <i>2.2 Capital grant funding for investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups</i> <i>2.3 Capital grant funding for creation and improvements to local rural green spaces</i> <i>2.4 Capital grant funding for existing cultural, historic and heritage institutions that make up the local cultural heritage offer</i> <i>2.6 Capital grant funding for active travel enhancement in the local area</i>
Funding Available:	£ 4.6m (Total)	£ 4.6m (Capital)	£ 0m (Revenue)
Type of funding opportunity:	<i>Open invitation to bid.</i>		
Open Date:	01/05/2023	Close Date:	09/10/2023
Review Point 1:	24/07/2023	Review Point 2:	09/10/2023



Context

Description: Description of the activity and what is expected to be achieved

The Rural Prosperity Fund will align with the wider UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (CloS) and aims to deepen support and investment into rural areas. With this open invitation we want to invest in community infrastructure, assets and nature-based solutions that will allow CloS to take advantage of the opportunities presented to us by unique natural assets as well as our clear strategic aim around net-zero transition and nature recovery.

A budget of £4.6m will be made available for this open invitation for rural projects to come forward with projects that strengthen community infrastructure and assets that will have a positive impact on rural businesses and communities. Grants of £100,000 to £1m will be made available through this open invitation for the following type of activities:

- The development or improvement of local attractions, rural workspace, trails and other tourism infrastructure such as information boards or visitor centres. This could include establishing workspace for rural businesses, making existing visitor attractions more accessible and/or sustainable or establishing new attractions or trails. A particular emphasis will be placed on activity that can spread tourism to parts of CloS outside of existing tourism hubs and which can extend the tourism season by creating a tourism offer outside of the normal peak season. Holiday accommodation and projects aimed at increasing the tourism bed capacity in CloS will not be supported under this funding opportunity.
- Larger projects that support local civil society and community groups through the development or improvement of community infrastructure and local green spaces with the aim of enhancing physical, cultural and social aspects of local rural communities. All grant requests must be above £100,000. This could include community net-zero infrastructure, local start-up spaces for enterprises operating in a particular community and funding for resilience infrastructure and nature-based solutions protecting local businesses and community areas from natural hazards. Our distinctive local communities are the backbone of CloS and a particular emphasis will therefore be given to activity that can foster a local sense of pride in place and an increased sense of belonging through the investment in assets that will support local civil society and community groups.
- Development or improvement of community green and blue spaces such as community gardens, green spaces, watercourses and embankments, greening of streets and paths and incorporating natural features into wider public spaces. CloS is known for its beautiful landscape, but our local communities living surrounded by green and blue landscapes do not always have good access to or the ability to use these green and blue spaces. Priority will be given to rural villages, hamlets and coastal communities, and to improvements that will increase the accessibility and use of community green and blue spaces to a wider group people.
- Development, restoration, refurbishment or improvement of cultural, historic, natural and heritage assets and sites in rural areas in CloS. This could include investments into establishing workspace within existing buildings and investment that will improve the visitor experience and accessibility of these assets and investments that foster nature recovery around the assets and/or reduce CO2 emissions. A particular emphasis will be given to better access of local communities to these assets and sites as well as to activity that that can spread tourism to parts of CloS outside of existing tourism hubs and which can extend the tourism season by creating a tourism offer outside of the normal peak season.

- Creation or upgrading of footpaths and cycle paths particularly in areas of health needs. Dependency on car travel for work, education and leisure is a feature of CloS's rural and coastal communities where access to public transport and active travel options is often limited. This has costs and health implications for the people who live in these communities. A particular emphasis will therefore be placed on providing or improving active travel infrastructure within rural and remote communities and linking this infrastructure with existing networks and public transport options.

Please note that only capital funding is available through this open invitation and projects coming forward will need to ensure that any revenue funding needed for the project to succeed has been secured from other sources.

Priority will be given to places in CloS outside of larger towns as we know that smaller and rural-based places within CloS have historically been less successful in accessing funding. Please note that following updated guidance from Defra there are some geographical parts of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (CloS) which are ineligible for the Rural Prosperity Fund (RPF) due to them not being classified as rural based on Defra's rural classification for Rural Prosperity Fund¹. In addition to being based in an area deemed eligible by Defra, all projects coming forward for Rural Prosperity Funding must articulate how they will benefit rural businesses and/or rural communities within CloS. This targeting will ensure that activity funded via the Rural Prosperity Fund complement activity within the wider Shared Prosperity Fund Good Growth Programme by extending the reach of these activities and ensuring that rural areas within CloS benefit from the additional funding made available through the Rural Prosperity Fund.

Strategic Alignment: Description of how proposals should meet strategic objectives, local need and the programme priorities. Expectations for coordination with other funding programmes.

Proposals should demonstrate their strategic fit and link to local community, social or economic needs.

The Rural Prosperity Fund (RPF) supports the aims of the Government's Levelling Up White Paper and Future Farming Programme. The RPF builds on and is complementary to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) and supports the wider commitment to level up all parts of the UK. On the key metrics identified in the Levelling Up White Paper Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly is one of the areas in the UK that is most in need of levelling-up. The RPF will in particular have a focus on supporting rural areas, including CloS, to address challenges around:

- lower productivity rates
- poorer connectivity
- poorer access to key services

¹In CloS the following broad locations are **not eligible** for RPF: RNAS Predannack; Lands End Airport; Falmouth and Budock Water; Penryn; Restronguet Creek Waters Edge; RNAS Nancekuke; Camborne, Pool, Redruth; Illogan; Eden Project; Par Harbour; Saltash; St Marys Airport, Isles of Scilly. In addition the following are only eligible if the application from a project in this area clearly demonstrates benefits to rural businesses or communities in the surrounding areas (To be Confirmed on Application): Lelant Downs; Perranporth Airfield; St Eval Airfield; St Merryn Airfield; Davidstow Airfield. It is recommended that you check eligibility on the DEFRA magic website to make sure your project is based in an eligible area. The map can be found under Administrative Geographies > Other Administrative Boundaries > Rural England Prosperity Fund - <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

This opportunity contributes significantly to the achievement of Government’s Mission 1 for Levelling Up:
Living standards – pay, employment and productivity rising in every area of the UK.

This opportunity contributes significantly to the achievement of Government’s Mission 9 for Levelling Up:
Pride in Place – people’s satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community will have risen in every area of the UK.

This invitation to bid is part of the Supporting Rural Business and Supporting Rural Communities priorities where the Rural Fund will make capital funding available with the aim of:

- support new and existing rural businesses to develop new products and facilities that will be of wider benefit to the local economy. This includes farm businesses looking to diversify income streams
- support new and improved community infrastructure, providing essential community services and assets for local people and businesses to benefit the local economy

It covers the following interventions:

- 1.3 Capital grant funding for developing and promoting the visitor economy
- 2.2 Capital grant funding for investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups
- 2.3 Capital grant funding for creation and improvements to local rural green spaces
- 2.4 Capital grant funding for existing cultural, historic and heritage institutions that make up the local cultural heritage offer
- 2.6 Capital grant funding for active travel enhancement in the local area

The Cornwall and Isles of Scilly [Rural Prosperity Fund Investment Plan Addendum](#) outlines local challenges and priorities for the Rural Prosperity Fund. Rural Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (CloS) is a very special place to live and work with a wealth of invaluable assets. However, some of the unique characteristics of CloS also presents challenges for meeting changing needs and delivery of key infrastructure to support population and economic growth. Cornwall’s beautiful but peripheral location and the remoteness of the Isles of Scilly pose particular challenges in terms of social deprivation, an absence of large employers, high house prices compared to average earnings and higher transport costs with implications for travelling to learn and work. All of these challenges have an impact on businesses and local communities with low productivity and low wages being the overarching challenge for CloS. This open invitation to bid is looking for projects which will address these challenges by strengthening infrastructure and assets in rural community throughout CloS. Projects should articulate how the activities within their project will have a positive impact on rural business and communities with a particular focus on improving productivity and pay within local businesses and on strengthening belonging and a sense of pride in place for local residents.

All activity funding via this initiation form should contribute to the [“Good Growth” outcomes and principles](#) outlined in the [CloS UK SPF Investment plan](#). Higher levels of funding may be granted to projects, activity or initiatives that deliver the greatest contribution to the objectives outlined in this opportunity especially where they are located and/or target the areas and people of Cornwall and the IoS most in need of levelling up. Applicants are always encouraged to apply for the lowest level of funding required to make the project happen.

Projects should note that the RPF cannot fund projects that have received funding from or are eligible to apply to other Defra schemes, including:

- Future Farming Schemes, including [Farming Investment Fund](#)
- Farming Transformational Fund
- Farming Equipment and Technology Fund

- Farming Innovation Programme
- Farming Resilience Fund
- [Farming in Protected Landscape Programme](#)
- [The Platinum Jubilee Village Hall Improvement Grant fund](#)

The RPF cannot fund projects or costs where there is a statutory duty to provide them.

The CloS RPF is complementary to the wider SPF and priority will be given to projects located outside of larger towns as we know that smaller and rural-based places within CloS have historically been less successful in accessing funding. All projects coming forward for Rural Prosperity Funding must articulate how they will benefit rural businesses and/or rural communities within CloS. This targeting will ensure that activity funded via the RPF complement activity within the wider SPF by extending the reach of these activities and ensuring that rural areas within CloS benefit from the additional funding made available through the RPF. Please note that following updated guidance from Defra there are some geographical parts of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (CloS) which are ineligible for the Rural Prosperity Fund (RPF) due to them not being classified as rural based on Defra's rural classification for Rural Prosperity Fund².

Please note:

- Cornwall Council reserves the right to allocate more or less funding than the values set out in this invitation to bid.
- This invitation to bid is subject to Defra sign-off of the CloS Rural Prosperity Fund Investment Plan Addendum

Route to Market: Open Invitation

This funding is being made available as an open invitation for projects to bid for funding. This is deemed to be the best route to market in order to identify the projects that will deliver best strategic fit and value for money.

This route to market will enable all relevant and interested organisations in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly the opportunity to apply for funding to deliver the ambitions outlined in this initiation form. Project(s) must be delivered by a legally constituted organisation that can receive public funds and the project must be designed to be fully in line with [UK Subsidy Control rules](#).

Specific Requirements:

All projects coming forward for Rural Prosperity Funding must articulate how they will benefit rural businesses and/or rural communities within CloS. Priority will be given to places in CloS outside of larger towns as we know that smaller and rural-based places within CloS have historically been less successful in accessing funding. Please note that following updated guidance from Defra there are some geographical parts of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (CloS) which are ineligible for the Rural Prosperity Fund (RPF) due to them not being classified as rural based on Defra's rural classification for Rural Prosperity Fund (see footnote earlier in this document).

² In CloS the following broad locations are **not eligible** for RPF: RNAS Predannack; Lands End Airport; Falmouth and Budock Water; Penryn; Restronguet Creek Waters Edge; RNAS Nancekuke; Camborne, Pool, Redruth; Illogan; Eden Project; Par Harbour; Saltash; St Marys Airport, Isles of Scilly. In addition the following are only eligible if the application from a project in this area clearly demonstrates benefits to rural businesses or communities in the surrounding areas (To be Confirmed on Application): Lelant Downs; Perranporth Airfield; St Eval Airfield; St Merryn Airfield; Davidstow Airfield. It is recommended that you check eligibility on the DEFRA magic website to make sure your project is based in an eligible area. The map can be found under Administrative Geographies > Other Administrative Boundaries > Rural England Prosperity Fund - <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

This open invitation offers capital funding only and projects coming forward will need to ensure that any revenue funding needed for the project to succeed such as staff costs has been secured from other sources. All project activity must be completed by the 31 March 2025 and therefore projects coming forward must have relevant permissions in place to start activity as soon as possible and be in a position to comfortably deliver the project and relevant outputs and outcomes within this relatively short timeframe.

The Rural Prosperity Fund (RPF) is complementary to the wider Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) and we expect projects coming forward for the RPF to avoid any duplication with activity funded under SPF and where possible dovetail with and extend the reach of activity funded via SPF.

Cornwall Council encourages applicants to maximise the leverage of other funding within project design. However, we recognise not all projects, or applicants will be able to secure match funding. Applicants should note value for money will be a selection consideration as it has a number of benefits, including enhanced alignment with other provision and efficient delivery which increases value for money. Therefore, we will take the overall funding package for each project, including any match funding, into account. All projects must demonstrate adherence to subsidy control rules.

Cornwall Council and the Council of the Isles of Scilly are committed to ensure that projects supported through the Shared Prosperity Fund deliver green and inclusive economic growth. That the jobs created are well paid, quality jobs, that all our communities are able to access the opportunities available through this fund and that our environment benefits from this economic prosperity.

The good growth outcomes have been designed to ensure that all SPF applicants consider the impact of their project and identify what contribution it will make towards good growth. Whilst we accept that not all projects can contribute to every good growth outcome, we will expect projects to:

- contribute the [good growth outcomes and principles](#)
- design their project using the good growth outcomes
- report on the good growth contribution of the project

We therefore expect proposal coming forward in response to this initiation form articulates how the above Good Growth principles will be carried into the delivery of this activity. The good growth policy will provide further detail and support will be provided from within the Good Growth Team.

Proposals should also:

1. Set out how people and skills and talent development opportunities are included as part of wider project delivery
2. Demonstrate how activity will complement and not duplicate mainstream, existing and other funded activity. Highlighting the wrap-around support being proposed, and how communities and beneficiaries to be supported will be identified and engaged.
3. Respond to a clearly identified need and clearly describe the need.
4. Not conflict with national policy or local strategies.

Budget & Spend Profile

Funding Available:	£ 4.60m	£ 4.60m	£ 0m
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	(Total)	(Capital)	(Revenue)
Minimum Award:	£ 100,000	Maximum Award:	£ 1,000,000

	23/24		24/25		Total	
Intervention	Capital (£m)	Revenue (£m)	Capital (£m)	Revenue (£m)	Capital (£m)	Revenue (£m)
1.3 Capital grant funding for developing and promoting the visitor economy	£0.46m	£0.00m	£0.46m	£0.00m	£0.91m	£0.00m
2.2 Capital grant funding for investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups	£0.46m	£0.00m	£0.46m	£0.00m	£0.91m	£0.00m
2.3 Capital grant funding for creation and improvements to local rural green spaces	£0.46m	£0.00m	£0.46m	£0.00m	£0.91m	£0.00m
2.4 Capital grant funding for existing cultural, historic and heritage institutions that make up the local cultural heritage offer	£0.46m	£0.00m	£0.46m	£0.00m	£0.91m	£0.00m
2.6 Capital grant funding for active travel enhancement in the local area	£0.46m	£0.00m	£0.46m	£0.00m	£0.91m	£0.00m
Total	£2.30m	£0.00m	£2.30m	£0.00m	£4.60m	£0.00m
Total per year	£2.30m		£2.30m		£4.60m	

Intervention Rate:	Flexible but value for money must be demonstrated.	Target Leverage:	£ 4.60m (Total)
Spend Start:	01/04/2023	Spend End:	31/03/2025

Good Growth Principles

All SPF investments must be made in consideration of the Equality Act 2010. It is mandatory for all applications to assess impact of their project between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

In addition, the following specific good growth principles must be considered for this activity:

Clean and Green	Business / Economy	Equality/Inclusive growth
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C1 Reduction in CO2 emissions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	BE1 Increase % of workforce earning real living wage	X	EQ1 Invest in projects that encourage a healthy lifestyle	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
C2 Circularity - reduction in use of virgin raw materials. Recycle reuse principles	<input type="checkbox"/>	BE2 Improve productivity of businesses in CloS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	EQ2 Reduce gender pay gap	X
G1 Nature recovery	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	BE3 Contribute positively to CloS economy, environment and equality through purchasing/procurement	<input type="checkbox"/>	EQ3 Increased levels of functional numeracy and literacy in the adult population	<input type="checkbox"/>
G2 Attracting private sector green finance income to Cornwall	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	BE4 Upskilling the workforce	X	EQ4 Maximise opportunity for people with disability and ill health (including mental health)	X
Contribute to the Environmental Growth Strategy for Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			EQ5 Maximise work based opportunities for those with SEND particularly relating to spectrum disorders and dyslexia	X
				EQ6 support for the aging population to remain economically active	X
				EQ7 Support young (under 30) entrepreneurs	<input type="checkbox"/>
				EQ8 Levelling-up of towns and neighbourhoods throughout CloS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
				EQ9 Increased capacity and place-based leadership in communities	<input type="checkbox"/>
				EQ10 Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristics and those who do not (Equality Act 2010)	X
				EQ11 Assist individuals with complex barriers to employment to access opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>
				EQ12 Have a positive impact on children and promote and uphold children's rights under United Nations Convention	<input type="checkbox"/>

				on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)	
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Outputs/Outcomes

For this invitation to bid we are looking for activity that outcomes:

Outcomes related to supporting rural businesses:

- Jobs created
- Jobs safeguarded
- Number of businesses adopting new to the firm technologies or processes
- Number of businesses with improved productivity
- Number of businesses increasing their turnover

Outcomes related to supporting rural communities:

- Improved perception of facilities or amenities
- Increased users of facilities or amenities
- Increased footfall
- Increased visitor numbers
- Increased use of cycleways or paths

The outcomes stated here reflect our RPF Investment Plan Addendum submission to Government. Applicants should note Cornwall Council reserves the right to adjust and refine these outcomes as delivery progresses during the duration of our RPF programme and further national guidance becomes available.

Appraisal Criteria

Strategic Alignment	Good Growth	Deliverability	Value for Money
30 %	25 %	30 %	15 %
Explanation for criteria weighting			
<p>We will in particular place emphasis on projects ability to deliver within the relatively short timeframe for this programme as well as on how well projects will deliver against the strategic fit of this opportunity. We also place high importance on projects' ability to deliver against the Good Growth principles and outcomes. While Value for Money remains an important consideration, it is acknowledged that Value for Money can be harder to achieve in remote rural and coastal communities.</p>			

For further information on the programme please refer to the [Good Growth website](#). Completed Applications and relevant documentation must be submitted via email to goodgrowth@cornwall.gov.uk before the deadline stated on this Form.

Support and guidance to assist applicants through the application process is available at [Good Growth website](#).

More information on Shared Prosperity Fund can be found on the UK Government website; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus>

Date Updated:	23/08/2023	Lead:	Good Growth Team
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