

Current funding available to Parish Councils and rural communities

Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF)

Who can apply?

Any rural organisation with legal status can apply for a REPF grant. This may include local authorities, public sector organisations, higher and further education institutions, private sector companies, voluntary organisations and registered charities. Grants must be for business and community purposes.

How to apply?

Application forms and criteria are available on the Borough Council website. Applications can be made at any time and will be considered at the monthly meeting of the REPF Grant Panel.

How much can be applied for and what can the funding be used for?

Grants can be applied for under 3 different areas called interventions. The funding can be used for capital expenditure only.

Priorities	Intervention	Year 1 (2023/2024)	Year 2 (2024/2025)
Supporting rural businesses	Funding for small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas	£80k (up to £20,000 per grant)	£120k (up to £20,000 per grant)
	Funding for the development and promotion of the visitor economy	£58k (up to £2000 per grant) (up to £5000 per grant)	£95k (up to £10,000 per grant) (up to £5000 per grant)
Supporting rural communities	Funding for active travel enhancements in the local area	£0 Grant applications will be open from Year 1 to allow permissions to be sought and planning undertaken ready for award in year 2	£200k (up to £25,000 per grant)

Where to find further information

Further information can be found at [Rural England Prosperity Fund | Bedford Borough Council](#)

Rural Grants Scheme

Who can apply?

Rural organisations or rural Parish Councils can apply for funding from the Rural Grants Scheme.

How to apply?

Application forms are available on the Borough Council website. Applications can be submitted at any time, although they are normally considered by the Rural Affairs Committee three times a year, subject to funds available. All applications must be submitted through the relevant Parish Council. An application will not be accepted unless it has been signed by the Chairman or Clerk to the Parish Council stating it to be in the interests of their local inhabitants.

How much can be applied for?

Maximum funding limit is usually £20,000

What can the funding be used for?

Funding can be used for capital expenditure. Expenditure on routine maintenance and repair cannot normally be classed as capital expenditure.

Where to find further information

Further information can be found at [Grants and funding for towns and organisations | Bedford Borough Council](#)

Ward funding

Who can apply?

A resident or community group can apply for Ward funding.

How to apply?

Residents and community groups should contact their local Ward Councillor to request a Ward Fund donation. If the Councillor wishes to support the scheme, they can complete an online form and submit to Democratic and Member Services at Bedford Borough Council. It is recommended that applications are made to Ward Councillors as soon as reasonably possible after a project need has been identified.

What can the funding be used for?

The Ward Fund can be used to provide:

- One off project, equipment or other costs.
- Contributions to celebration events that will provide ongoing benefits to the community or have a follow-up plan of community engagement.
- Start up costs for a new group or organisation.
- Start up costs for Parish Council Liaison meetings in their Ward.

- Match funding for projects – evidence will be required that such funding has been secured.
- VAT costs if the organisation is not VAT registered and therefore unable to claim back the VAT incurred.

Where to find further information

Further information can be found at [Ward Funds | Bedford Borough Council](#) and via your Ward Councillor. Councillor contact details can be found at [Find Councillor - Bedford Borough Council](#)