

Cotswolds LEADER Priority 4

Provision of rural services



The maximum grant that Cotswolds LAG will offer is £50,000 and the minimum £5,000.

The maximum grant rate and amounts will depend on whether or not the project is a commercial project which aims to generate an operating surplus, regardless of the type of applicant organisation.

Grants limits are:

- **up to 40%** of the eligible project costs for commercial activities where there is the intention to generate a profit or surplus, (for example a transport or social care service operating commercially) awarded under *de-minimis state aid rules.
- **up to 80%** for non-profit making projects that have a benefit in terms of value added to the wider rural community, and where there is some income to offset costs but no profit or dividend (for example a community hall where any income covers operating costs and maintenance).
- **up to 100%** for projects that have a benefit in terms of value added to the wider rural community where there is no income, such as playgrounds, free transport services where there is no charge made for the service.

These grants are for projects that aim to alleviate some of the difficulties faced by rural communities, particularly the lack of access to services and the provision of infrastructure. Projects should make a contribution to growing the local economy. They could include, the development of community buildings, public spaces, or cultural or tourism amenities.

Who can apply - these grants could be for:

- new or existing micro or small businesses;
- rural community organisations;
- charities;
- public or private entities working in partnership with small and micro business and rural community groups; and
- local authorities (in exceptional circumstances, where for example the project outcomes are enhanced by their inclusion, or the local authority can show that the project and the funding required is in addition to their statutory requirement to provide rural services).

Types of project could include:

- plans for the development of municipalities and villages in rural areas and their rural services;
- setting up, improving or expanding of essential rural services for the local community;
- projects that involve visits to farms for educational purposes so that the public has a greater understanding of the countryside and rural areas;
- creation, improvement or expansion of small-scale village infrastructure projects, including amenity buildings and village access (for example footpaths);
- developing village infrastructure and access to key services, which may include tourism projects that increase services for the local community and contribute to village renewal;
- setting up, improving or expanding essential services (for example transport) for the local community.

Costs could include:

- construction, acquisition (including leasing) or improvement to buildings;
- the purchase or hire purchase of new and second hand machinery and equipment (please see further guidance on hire purchase and second-hand equipment on page 2 of the handbook);
- general costs linked to facilitating investments such as architect, engineer, consultation fees, but these can't add up to more than 15% of the project's total eligible costs.

What isn't covered

In addition to the general list of costs which can't be claimed on pages 5 and 6 of the handbook the following costs are not eligible under this priority:

- computers, software and printers that are used for the general running of a business, such as processing orders and accounts;
- salaries associated with the on-going running of projects;
- access to broadband services;
- landscaping - unless it is part of 'making good' for an application for a major attraction or accommodation expansion. In which case, only the landscaping contractor's fees would be eligible excluding the plants, seeds, turf or trees;
- projects to meet statutory requirements for disabled access, fire regulations or emergency exits, unless the costs of providing access, exit and complying with regulations form part of the normal costs for a major expansion project.

Refer to the Cotswolds LEADER Handbook for more details on eligible costs and the Application Process available at www.cotswoldsleader.org.uk

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