

## Scheme Guidance Notes

### **1. What is the main purpose of this grant scheme?**

The Community Planning Grant Scheme is designed to help parishes and towns in the Stroud District to:

- a) **Produce a new Parish or Town Plan**
- b) **Review and refresh a Parish or Town Plan (including Market town Healthcheck)**
- c) **Produce a Village Design Statement (VDS)**

Definitions of a Parish/Town Plan and Village Design Statement are given in the 'reference note' at the end of these Guidance Notes and your project will need to embrace these principles.

#### **A note about Neighbourhood Plans**

**Neighbourhood Planning** is being introduced within the Localism Act as a new way for communities to establish general planning policies for the development and use of land in a neighbourhood. They will be able to say, for example, where new homes and offices should be built and what they should look like.

The formal legal right to carry out a Neighbourhood Plan will be introduced by central government in 2012. In the meantime, some communities may wish to produce or update their parish/town plan or VDS in order to work towards producing a neighbourhood plan in the future. It is not the purpose of this current grant scheme to aid communities specifically in the production of a Neighbourhood Plan.

### **2. Who can I contact for more information regarding this scheme?**

For administrative queries and for return of applications please contact:

Claire Snow, Stroud District Council, Ebley Mill, Stroud, Glos GL5 4UB  
Telephone: 01453 754410      Email: [claire.snow@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:claire.snow@stroud.gov.uk)

Stroud District Council (SDC) works in partnership with Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC), who provide advisory support for Parishes undertaking Parish Plans. If you need help in planning your project or completing this application form please contact:

Elin Tattersall, GRCC, Community House, 15 College Green, Gloucester, GL1 2LZ  
Telephone: 01452 528491      Email: [elin@grcc.org.uk](mailto:elin@grcc.org.uk)

### **3. Who can apply for this grant scheme?**

Most applicants will be local Parish or Town Councils. Applicant organisations must have a formal constitution or officially registered governing documents and an official bank account.

Where a group of Parishes/Towns want to produce a joint plan, one Parish/Town Council should be selected as the lead that makes the application on behalf of the group. Only one application form needs to be completed and only one grant can be allocated.

#### **4. What can the funding be used for?**

##### **Parish/Town Plans and Village Design Statements**

Funding can be used for *any costs* associated with undertaking a new or refreshed parish / town plan or a Village Design Statement. We expect to fund the following kinds of items: stationery and materials, room and venue hire, publicity and promotion, design, print and distribution costs.

Before applying, you are advised to visit the following Action with Communities in Rural England website which has a helpful section on community led planning:

<http://www.acre.org.uk/our-work/community-led-planning/Resources/Community+Guidance>

You should work closely with GRCC throughout the community led planning process (see section 2) and support is available on the GRCC website:

<http://www.grcc.org.uk/community-led-planning/community-led-planning>

#### **5. How much funding is available?**

##### **Parish/Town Plans & Village Design Statements**

Up to 50% of total project costs is available, with a maximum grant award of £500. In kind contributions, such as volunteer time, can form part of your contribution to the costs. Section 3.2 of the application form contains additional details.

#### **6. Grant Requirements**

- a) You must be able to start and complete work between 1 April 2012 and 31 March 2013.
- b) You will be sent a grant funding claim form, which should be returned to SDC when the project is complete. The form should be accompanied by detailed evidence of project expenditure (e.g. paid invoices and receipts for work undertaken). Failure to provide this paperwork may result in non payment of the grant award.
- c) Any publicity or media in connection with the project must acknowledge SDC's support.
- d) If your grant relates to the production of a Parish/Town Plan or Village Design Statement, you are required to send us a copy of the final document.
- e) You're expected to show that you follow the principles of best practice when procuring items or services; for example, getting different quotes before purchasing an item or service.
- f) Where applicable use environmentally friendly products or services. To help the local economy, also consider whether your purchase can be locally sourced.
- g) Projects should demonstrate equal opportunity for all sections of the community.
- h) We cannot fund work that has been carried out prior to our agreement.

##### **Requirements specific to Parish/Town Plans**

You're expected to follow best practice as advised by GRCC, and you should work in partnership with any organisation that may influence the delivery of any action areas. It's advised you consult with these organisations from the outset.

##### **Requirements specific to Village Design Statements (VDS)**

You must work in partnership with SDC's Planning Strategy Services. Planning requirements under the 'Local Development Framework' (planning system) are set by central Government and can be quite complex; it is important that you get professional advice. If you do not follow the advice of the Council's Planning Officer, a request to adopt the VDS may be refused and funding withdrawn.

## **7. Application Processing**

Completed applications should be sent to Claire Snow (contact details are provided on the application form).

**The closing date for applications is Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2012**

We will not be able to consider applications submitted after this deadline. Applications will be assessed according to whether the proposal meets the priorities for this scheme, if it is achievable and is based on realistic costs.

All applicants will receive a letter advising of the outcome. Successful applicants will receive an offer letter with terms and conditions of the grant to be signed in order to confirm acceptance.

<b>REFERENCE NOTE</b>	For the purposes of this scheme the following definitions are used:
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### **A Parish/Town Plan**

The Parish/Town Plan (community led plan) sets out a comprehensive vision for how the community wants to develop and identifies the action needed to achieve this vision. The plan includes any social, environmental or economic issues of relevance to the people who live and work in the community.

It is a statement of how the community sees itself developing over the next few years and:

- Reflects all the views of all sections of the community
- Identifies which features and local characteristics people value
- Identifies local problems and opportunities
- Spells out how residents want the community to develop in the future
- Prepares a plan of action to achieve this vision

### **A Village Design Statement (VDS)**

A Village Design Statement sets out clear and simple guidance for the design of all development in a village, based on its character. It is an advisory document produced by the village community, not by the planning authority. It will not stop change from happening, but it can help affect how any new building fits in to the village. VDSs are intended to influence the operation of the statutory planning system, so that new development is in harmony with its setting and makes a positive contribution to the immediate environment.

A VDS:

- describes the distinctive character of a village and its surrounding countryside
- shows how character can be identified at three levels:
  - the landscape setting of the village,
  - the shape of the settlement,
  - the nature of the buildings themselves;
- sets down design principles based on the distinctive local character;
- production of a Statement fosters working in partnership with the local authority, engenders understanding of current planning policies, and offers the chance to influence future policies.