



UK Government



UK Community Renewal Fund Invitation to Submit Project Bids

1. Introduction

Herefordshire Council is seeking bids from organisations wishing to deliver activity as part of the UK Community Renewal Fund.

Please read the 'UK Community Renewal Fund Prospectus' and the 'UK Community Fund Technical Note for Project Applicants and Deliverer's before starting work on a bid. They are available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-community-renewal-fund-prospectus/uk-community-renewal-fund-prospectus-2021-22>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/970057/UKCRF_Technical_Note_for_Project_Applicants_and_Deliverers.pdf

The Prospectus provides detailed information on the objectives of the Fund, the types of projects it intends to support, and how it operates, including the process and selection criteria that will be used to assess bids.

Successful UK Community Renewal Fund bids will be **for 2021/22 only** and activity **must end by 31st March 2022.**

2. Background

To help local areas prepare for the introduction of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the UK Government is providing funding in 2021/22 through the UK Community Renewal Fund. We are interested in bids that build on local insight and knowledge, and project proposals that align with long-term strategic plans for local growth, target people most in need and support community renewal. In addition, projects should show how they complement other national and local provision. A focus for this Fund is to support innovation and new ideas in these areas, investing in pilots that draw on local insights and which will help places to prepare for the introduction of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in 2022.

Herefordshire Council has been designated as a lead authority by the UK Government. As a lead authority, Herefordshire Council is responsible for:

- issuing this invitation
- receiving bids
- selecting the bids that will be sent to UK Government for consideration
- paying grants to successful projects and managing their performance

Full details of the role of lead authorities can be found in the UK Community Renewal Fund Prospectus here [UK Community Renewal Fund: prospectus - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/672122/UK_Community_Renewal_Fund_prospectus.pdf)

3. What type of bids are we looking for?

Projects must deliver activity that is line with the national UK Community Renewal Fund Prospectus and align with at least one of these investment priorities:

1. Investment in skills

- Work-based training
- Retraining, upskilling or reskilling members of the workforce
- Promoting the advancement of digital skills and inclusion

2. Investment for local business

- Supporting entrepreneurs and helping businesses with potential to create more job opportunities for current employees or take on new employees
- Encouraging businesses to develop their innovation potential
- Supporting decarbonisation measures

3. Investment in communities and place

- Feasibility studies for delivering net-zero and local energy projects
- Exploring opportunity for promoting culture-led regeneration and community development
- Improving green spaces and preserving important local assets
- Promoting rural connectivity

4. Supporting people into employment

- Supporting people to engage with local services which supports them on their journey towards employment
- Identifying and addressing any potential barriers individuals may face in gaining employment or moving closer to the labour market
- Raising aspirations, supporting individuals to access Plan for Jobs employment support, jobs and finding sustainable employment
- Supporting people to gain the basic skills they need to develop their potential for sustainable work
- Testing what works in helping people move towards work

There are no financial allocations to these priorities.

In addition to aligning to at least one of the investment priorities, the government is requiring that any investment made under this Fund should be able to demonstrate the extent of contribution to net zero objectives or wider environmental considerations. Projects should be based on low or zero carbon best practice, adopt and support innovative clean tech where possible and support the growing skills and supply chains in support of Net Zero where possible. As a minimum, investment under this fund should meet the clean growth principle and must not conflict with the UK's legal commitment to cut greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050.

To support green growth, bids should also consider how projects can work with the natural environment to achieve project objectives, and – at a minimum – consider the project's impact on our natural assets and nature. For further information on how to take these considerations into account, see the Enabling a Natural Capital Approach (ENCA) resources.

This is not applicable to interventions focused on supporting people into employment.

The UK Government anticipates supporting a range of projects by theme and size, but applicants are encouraged to maximise impact and deliverability through larger projects (£500,000+) where this is possible.

As 90% of funding available through the UK Community Renewal Fund is revenue funding, and only available in 2021/22, projects should be predominantly, or exclusively revenue based. Projects that focus predominantly on the construction or major refurbishment of buildings, the purchase of land, or the purchase of large pieces of equipment will not be supported.

4. Local Priorities

In selecting the bids that will be forwarded to the UK Government for consideration, Herefordshire Council will prioritise the bids that have the greatest potential to deliver against key local growth priorities.

Applicants need to explain how their proposed project aligns with or will assist in the delivery of the ambitions, and success measures, set out in the Herefordshire County Plan https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/1500/county_plan_2020-24.pdf

5. Geographic Coverage - projects should benefit the following places:

- Herefordshire

6. How Bids will be assessed

As the lead authority, Herefordshire Council will assess all bids submitted. Bids will be assessed against:

- the gateway criteria set out in the UK Community Renewal Fund Prospectus – bids that fail to meet these criteria are ineligible for support and will be rejected
- the extent to which they meet the objectives of UK Community Renewal Fund, specifically the:
 - Strategic fit (both overall contribution to the strategic objectives of the UK Community Renewal Fund, and how well the proposal contributes to local needs set out in relevant local plans);
 - Deliverability;
 - Effectiveness, and;
 - Efficiency

Bids will be assessed using the UK Government supplied assessment process which is available at [UK Community Renewal Fund: assessment criteria \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk) Applicants should familiarise themselves with the assessment process and ensure that they provide sufficient information to enable the assessor to make an accurate assessment against all the assessment criteria.

Herefordshire Council will implement the nationally defined assessment process, including the procurement of independent third party services to lead the appraisal of applications ensuring an open and transparent approach to the selection project proposals. Following assessment, Herefordshire Council

will submit those eligible bids which most strongly meet the UK Community Renewal Fund and local priorities to the UK Government for consideration, up to a maximum of £3m.

The UK Government will assess all bids submitted by lead authorities against the criteria set out in the UK Community Renewal Fund Prospectus.

The UK Government will announce the outcome of the assessment process from late July 2021 onwards.

Herefordshire Council will enter into a funding agreement with successful bidders.

7. Submitting a Bid

Bids must be submitted using the UK Community Renewal Fund Application Form, which is available at [UK Community Renewal Fund: prospectus - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/91222/uk_community_renewal_fund_prospectus.pdf) Bids submitted in any other format will not be accepted.

Bids must be submitted to Herefordshire Council using this email address:
CommunityRenewalFund@herefordshire.gov.uk

Bids must be submitted by 23.59 on **Sunday 23 May 2021.**

The UK Community Renewal Fund is a competitive process and Herefordshire Council and the UK Government will not enter into discussions with bidders.

Questions relating to this process should be directed to CommunityRenewalFund@herefordshire.gov.uk
To ensure equality of access to information about the bidding process, responses may be shared with all prospective bidders.

8. Summary of Timeline

- Thursday 8th April 2021 – Call for Applications launched
- Sunday 23rd May 2021 – Deadline for applications to be submitted to Herefordshire Council
- Friday 18th June 2021 – Herefordshire Council submits short listed project to government
- Circa end of July 2021 – Government to inform Lead Local Authorities of the outcome
- August 2021 to March 2022 – Project delivery
- 31st March 2022 – all projects completed