



**Southern
Dorset**
LOCAL ACTION GROUP

Call for Projects 2016

Innovative Competitive Exemplary

Call 2: Community Places – Community Hubs:

up to £183,000 is available, to be shared between two or more projects.

Deadline for Outline Applications 2 March 2017



The European
Agricultural Fund for
Rural Development:
Europe investing in
rural areas

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Dorset County Council



To discuss this call and for an Outline Application Form contact the Dorset LEADER Programme Team 01305 225525 or email dorsetleader@dorsetcc.gov.uk and state which call you are applying for: Call 1, 2 or 3

Southern Dorset Local Action Group

The Local Action Group (LAG) is open to receive at any time, applications for grants within the scope of its Local Development Strategy. The LAG decides which projects should receive grant funding by assessing each application.

The Local Action Group has also identified several areas for specific support in its strategy and launched a **competitive** 'challenge' for **innovative** and **exemplary** projects which will help it meet three of these objectives.

1. Local Food & Drink Innovation
2. Community Places, Community Hubs
3. Celebrate Rural Dorset

This Call for Projects focuses on the second of these objectives and provides an outline of why we are launching it and what we expect from potential proposers. The LAG will use these criteria to assess each application.

We warmly hope that this Call will stimulate communities, voluntary organisations and enterprises – acting alone or together with others – to bring forward imaginative proposals to create, extend or improve community places in order to serve the well-being of the people who live in the rural areas of southern Dorset.

Applications are considered within two stages:

- Outline Application; this is not a grant application but will be used to assess your project proposal and if eligible and a good fit with the call criteria invite you to submit a
- Full Application

Timescale

The deadline for Outline Applications is: 2 March 2017. The decision making meeting will be held on 13 April 2017. This is a competitive process and applications will be considered by the LAG against each other.

The project doesn't have to be fully worked up at this stage. If invited to make a full application you will be allocated a project sponsor to help you develop the project further, with a deadline for submission of 19 June 2017.

If that application is complete then it could be approved at a decision making meeting on the 27 July 2017. Your project could start in August 2017 and should be completed by 30 September 2018.

Check the area covered by the Local Action Group at: [Map of the LAG Area](#)

The Projects : Community Places – Community Hubs;

The LAG wishes to support communities that are exploring innovative ways to provide services to their residents. The nature of these services depends on the needs of each community. We particularly wish to encourage applications that:

- Create new provision for rural services, perhaps by bringing together one or more service; (**Note:** LEADER cannot support projects which seek only to continue existing provision or to replace it, like for like.)
- Create new use for existing buildings, create new spaces or use new technology and equipment;
- Are innovative; i.e. new to that community or group of communities;
- Could become exemplary and replicable in other communities
- Provide benefits to the wider rural economy and one or more communities

Residents of the LAG area tell us that essential rural services are under threat and in decline. Pressures from a wide range of factors contribute to the difficulties faced by rural residents to sustain existing services. Many look for support to help create imaginative solutions to ensure the survival of their community shop, pub, post office, library, doctor's surgery, youth centre, day care centre, pre-school, etc.

Many well-loved buildings in villages and market-towns are in poor condition and need to find new uses to survive. There is a strong desire to safeguard these assets, often by co-locating different services under the same roof into 'community hubs'. There is also potential for collaboration between communities to share resources across villages.

Note: Projects that benefit a single service, such as community stores can apply for funding through our open calls, and should not be submitted as response to this call.

Outputs and Outcomes

The proposal should show how the project will contribute to the LAG's Local Development Strategy objective to create 10 jobs in the rural services sector and benefit at least 15 businesses in the Local Action Group Area.

The proposal should also:

- demonstrate community support for the project;
- show how the project will benefit local residents; in your application you should consider the number of residents who will benefit, how they will benefit and how you will measure and show this;
- be exemplary and replicable in other areas and by other communities; in your application you should consider how you will promote your project and support other organisations in learning from your experience.

NB. The following information should be read in conjunction with the Applicants Handbook.

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).

Funding Available and grant limits

Up to £183,000 is available, to be shared between two or more projects.

The minimum grant is £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. The maximum grant amount awarded by the Southern Dorset LAG will be £140,000.00
- 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). The maximum grant amount awarded by the Southern Dorset LAG will be £140,000.00
- 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. The maximum grant amount awarded by the Southern Dorset LAG will be £140,000.00

State aid rules

*[De minimis state aid regulations](#) mean that a maximum of €200,000 (currently around £145,000) of Public Funds is available to any one undertaking in any rolling period of 3 financial years. If an applicant has had other public funding, this may count towards the de minimis aid amount and reduce the amount of money they can apply for under LEADER. Please note that Basic Payment Scheme and Countryside Stewardship payments do NOT count towards the de minimis limit. Please also note that any de minimis state aid received by linked businesses may also count towards the de minimis amount.

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 in the Applicants Handbook);
- general costs such as architect, engineer and consultation fees (restricted to a maximum of 15% of total project costs);

What isn't covered

See SDLAG Applicants Handbook for more information.