

Grants available

Funding is now available in East Cornwall for projects to improve the quality of life in rural areas – enabling local communities to diversify and strengthen their local economy, and gain better access to services and the environment.



Local Action for Rural Communities is new funding being delivered as part of the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE).

It runs until 2013. The priorities are for projects to:

- **Be innovative – offering new opportunities and solutions**
- **Be co-operative – bringing groups together**
- **Be sustainable – economically, socially and environmentally**
- **Contribute to low energy usage**
- **Offer wider benefits – have community support**

THE LOCAL ACTION GROUP

In East Cornwall* the £1.8m fund is being delivered through the **East Cornwall Local Action Group**, with the Cornwall Development Company performing Secretariat and Accountable Body duties.

The Local Action Group wants to fund projects which improve the quality of life in rural areas – enabling local communities to diversify and strengthen their local economy, and gain better access to services and the environment.

TARGET APPLICANTS

Local Action Group for Rural Communities is for:

- Voluntary and community groups
- Partnerships and social enterprises
- Registered charities and not-for-profit organisations
- Local businesses with less than ten employees

This leaflet details how to get involved, the priorities, technical issues, and gives some top tips on making applications.

GETTING INVOLVED

- Develop a project and find out if Local Action funding is suitable. Either take a look at the website to see what projects have been funded, come along to one of our networking meetings or contact the Local Action Group Manager.
- Join the Local Action Group and become actively involved in making decisions on projects. A commitment to attending regular meetings throughout the year and being prepared to make tough decisions on deciding priority projects is required.
- Keeping up to date and be in the know as part of our wider Stakeholder Group. Invites to the networking meetings and the monthly email update will be sent to you.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The Local Action Group operates a two-stage application process, to avoid applicants wasting time completing a detailed form for a project that isn't suitable:

- Expression of Interest Stage – giving an outline of the project.
- Application Form Stage – requesting more detail such as evidence of demand and local support, market research, risk assessment, cash flow forecasts etc.

Expressions of Interest must be received at least two weeks before the meeting at which it will be considered. A decision will be communicated after the meeting, either inviting application (at which time an application form will be sent), deferring to allow for further development work to be done or rejecting.

There is a more streamlined process for smaller projects – Local Action Small Grant schemes for Communities and Businesses.

* For the purposes of the fund, 'East Cornwall' is designated as the former districts of North Cornwall and Caradon, excluding Bodmin and Saltash. Local Action for Rural Communities is also running in Clay Country, West Cornwall, Greater Dartmoor, Torridge and North Devon, and South Devon Coastal.



Photo: Ingrid King

Priorities will be determined by how far a project meets the objectives of the East Cornwall Local Development Strategy. Projects must meet **at least one** of the following priorities.

PRIORITY ONE

Increase the sustainability, economic value and social cohesion of the rural economy through environmentally sustainable improvements to the recreational infrastructure, access to services and the historic environment.

Successful projects will:

- create new footpaths, cycle ways or trails
- improve or increase access to services, including recreational, for local residents
- use natural and cultural resources to attract visitors to the area.



Photo: Trevor Burrows

Types of project may include:

Small scale infrastructure such as interpretation, marketing of tourism services, developing niche markets.

PRIORITY TWO

Support micro businesses and social enterprises, particularly those related to tourism, primary products and development of local sustainable supply chains for food, crafts and energy.

Successful projects will:

- encourage growth aspirations and entrepreneurship
- create future employment opportunities
- link with, and complement, Business Link, the Cornwall Rural Community Council or other sources of support.



Photo: Linda Emmett

Types of project may include:

Cost of capital investment, start up revenue costs, feasibility studies, marketing support, product development, skills development.

Small scale projects meeting this priority will mainly be addressed through the Local Action Small Grants Business Scheme.

PRIORITY THREE

Engage with partners to develop the capacity of rural communities in order to empower them to take proactive approaches to improving the local economy and quality of life in rural areas.

Successful projects will:

- enable communities to identify, develop and implement solutions to their problems
- improve and maintain living and welfare conditions
- support integrated village initiatives which promote cross-community development
- develop partnerships working with existing agencies and organisations.



Types of project may include:

Cultural and leisure activities, community buildings/facilities, shop/retail, increasing skills and knowledge, amenity spaces, workspaces, renewable energy projects, ICT provision.

Small scale projects meeting this priority will mainly be addressed through the Local Action Small Grants Communities Scheme.

PRIORITY FOUR

Encourage and promote the local quality environment, heritage sites and quality local-produce centres in the area.

Successful projects will:

- raise awareness of the local environment in East Cornwall
- use the rural heritage as a basis for sustainable growth
- maintain, restore and upgrade the natural heritage
- build on the cultural identity of the rural areas in East Cornwall
- involve partnership working between organisations.



Photo: John Such

Types of project may include:

Studies identifying local needs, audits and action plans, small scale infrastructure improvements, promoting local culture and crafts.

Who can apply and the maximum intervention rate is dictated by the various RDPE measures. This is a complex area, so the Local Action Group Manager can provide advice at an early stage.

In making its decision on funding, the Local Action Group will consider if the package proposed is reasonable, considering the scale, size and scope of the project and the applicant, other funding available and risk. Only ask for what you need to ensure the project is successful.

The Local Action Group **cannot fund** continuation of existing activities or services, statutory services or work to meet statutory requirements, routine repairs or maintenance work, general motor vehicles, any expenditure defrayed before the agreed project start date, recoverable VAT, costs not directly attributable to project delivery, gifts.

This is not an exhaustive list, contact the Local Action Group Manager if you are unsure if elements of your project are eligible.



To complement the East Cornwall Local Development Strategy priorities, the Local Action Group has established the following guidelines for projects:

- a cap of £40,000 grant
- be situated in, or benefiting the residents of, the East Cornwall Local Action Group area
- a maximum of three years funding
- complete by September 2013
- include some local contribution as match funding
- use other more appropriate sources of grant support if available (e.g. Convergence)
- able to start within 3 months of receiving any offer
- have applied for legal consents (e.g. planning permission) before a full application is made.

HELP!

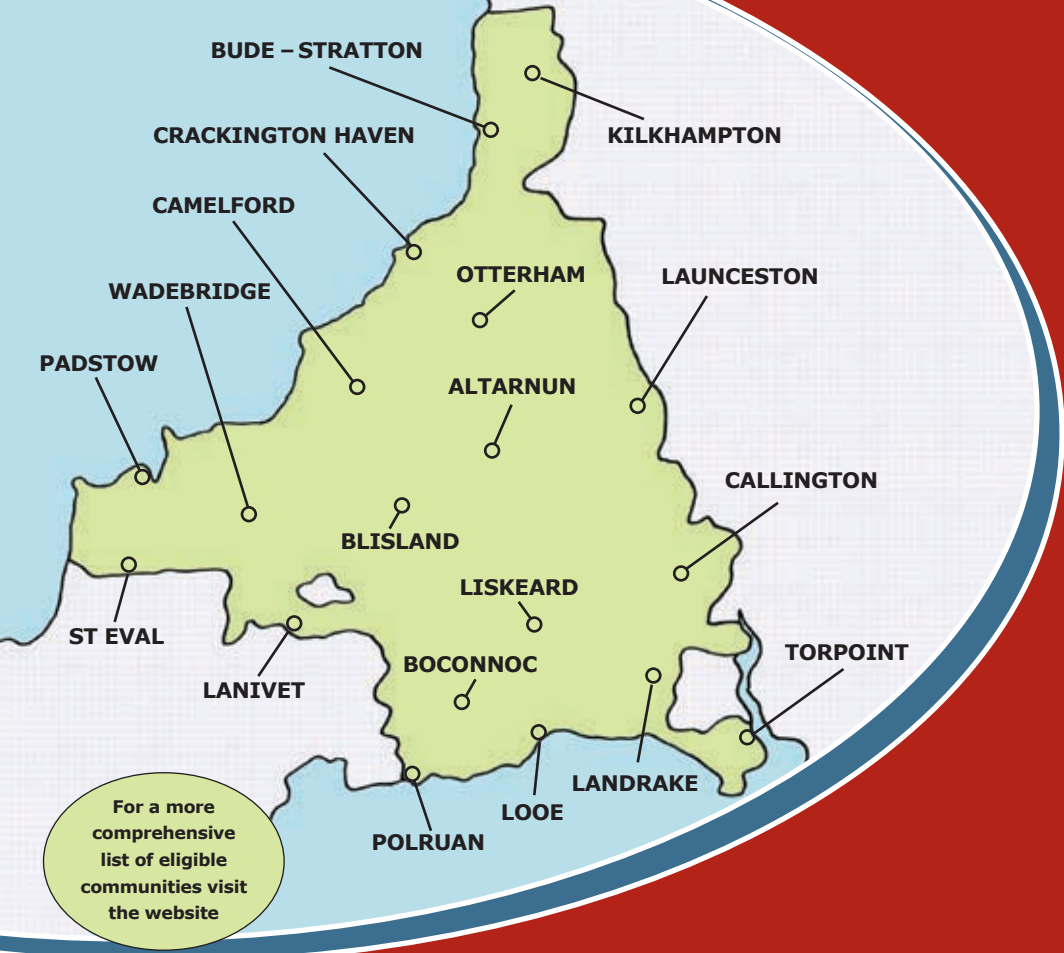
Some top tips:

1. Think the project through. Give it a beginning, middle and an end so you know exactly what will be done, when and by whom.
2. Be available so you can respond quickly to requests for further information.
3. Make sure the need for the project, the benefits it will bring and the proposed 'target groups' link up.

4. Focus on the issues in East Cornwall when putting together the case why funding is needed. Include statistics and quote studies that are relevant to the area.
5. Draft a job description for any roles you propose, as it will identify what skills/experience is required and establish the main duties and day to day management.
6. Don't assume any pre-knowledge by the reader. When completing the forms, explain any technical terms and limit the use of abbreviations. Include maps and photos if it helps get the message across.
7. Explaining the project out loud may help if you're having problems getting the words down on paper.
8. Be ready to respond to the difficult questions – they won't go away. Having put the project together, you are best positioned to know its weaknesses.
9. Don't be constrained by the questions on the form. Plan your project separately and then complete the form.
10. If you aren't sure about anything, and feeling a little despondent, contact the Local Action Group Manager who will try and help to get you back on track.



Photo: Launceston Town Heritage Initiative



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FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:
www.localactioncornwall.info

USEFUL ORGANISATIONS

- CORNWALL COMMUNITY FOUNDATION • www.cornwallfoundation.com
- CORNWALL RURAL COMMUNITY COUNCIL • www.cornwallrcc.co.uk
- EAST CORNWALL COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE • www.eccvs.org.uk
- THE SOUTH WEST RURAL ENTERPRISE GATEWAY • www.regsw.org.uk

East Cornwall is also covered by various business and tourism associations which offer information and advice.



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