

My Community Rights



Neighbourhood Planning

The Department for Communities and Local Government has made £10.5m available to provide support and grants to help hundreds of areas across the country create neighbourhood plans.

Locality is currently helping over 500 groups and have awarded over £2.5m in grants. The programme has proved hugely popular and we're delighted that so many people are interested in neighbourhood planning.

But unfortunately we can't work with everyone at once, so the number of applicants accepted onto the direct support programme each month will be limited from 25 February.

Direct support from 25 February 2014

Once the monthly applications limit is reached, our website will announce that applications for direct support have closed until the beginning of the following month. These same restrictions will

apply every month for the remainder of the programme, but **grant applications remain unchanged and can be submitted at any time.**

The direct support programme will reopen to all applicants, having been limited to designated forums and advanced plans since October.

When to apply?

The window for submitting expressions of interest for direct support will close once capacity for that month has been reached.

Expressions of interest will open on the following dates: 25 February, 1 April, 1 May, 3 June, 1 July (future dates to be advised). If you are unsuccessful in one month, you may re-apply again the following month.

This does not affect grant applications, which will remain continuously open until the fund is exhausted.

Grants are available to support groups at all stages of the neighbourhood planning process. Grants range from £500-£7,000 and must be spent before the end of 2014.

We will continue to endeavour to offer support to groups currently under-represented on the programme.

What is Neighbourhood Planning?

The Localism Act 2011 introduces statutory Neighbourhood Planning in England. It enables communities to draw up a Neighbourhood Plan for their area and is intended to give communities more of a say in the development of their local area (within certain limits and parameters).

These plans will be used to decide the future of the places where you live and work giving opportunities to:

- choose where you want new homes, shops and offices to be built
- have your say on what new buildings should look like
- grant planning permission for the new buildings you want to see go ahead.

Neighbourhood Planning support

The Supporting Communities in Neighbourhood Planning programme will support groups developing neighbourhood plans in two ways:

- direct support – advice and support, with an average value of equivalent to £9,500, tailored to meet the needs of supported neighbourhoods

- [grant payments](#) – up to £7,000 per neighbourhood area, to contribute to costs incurred by the group preparing a neighbourhood plan or order.

The programme is underpinned by activities and resources to share learning, promote good practice, and encourage networking for groups developing neighbourhood plans.

Before you apply make sure you talk to your local authority about the support they may be offering and what additional needs you might have.

Are you eligible for direct support?

Applications received for direct support will be subject to an initial screening, and successful applicants will be invited to complete a full application form. This will be taken forward to our diagnostic stage and, if you are successful, a support package will be drawn up and taken to DCLG for approval.

We are particularly keen to support groups that are under represented on the programme for example neighbourhood forums and areas that rank highly in the indicators of deprivation. Therefore as of Tuesday 25 February 2014 we can accept applications for direct support from groups who:

- are writing a Neighbourhood Plan;
- are based in England; and
- are an eligible body. Town and Parish Councils, Neighbourhood Forums and prospective Neighbourhood Forums are eligible bodies.

If you're not quite sure whether you fit and would like to find out – please get in touch with our [advice team](#).

What if I'm not eligible for direct support?

All groups are still able to apply for [grant funding](#), including those also applying for direct support.

Grants are available to support groups at all stages of the neighbourhood planning process. Grants range from £500-£7,000 and must be spent before the end of 2014.

There are also lots of other great free resources available online.

Learning events and resources

Planning Camp:

The Eden Project is running two free Planning Camps in 2014 for community members of neighbourhood planning groups who lack professional planning experience. The events are on 23 – 25 March in York and 3 – 5 April in Oxford.

To apply for a free place, visit the [Eden Project's website](#).

Locality's [Neighbourhood Planning Roadmap](#) and the [Quick Guide to Neighbourhood Plans](#) will guide you through the process.

Find further resources and join discussions on the [Neighbourhood Planning Knowledge Hub](#) or the [LinkedIn neighbourhood planning group](#).

Visit the [government's neighbourhood planning pages](#) for policy and overview.

Follow us on [twitter](#), or search the hashtag [#neighbourhoodplanning](#) for the latest info.

Still have questions? please contact us through the [advice service](#).

We also welcome enquiries from local councils needing guidance on how to put the policies in place.

- See more at: <http://mycommunityrights.org.uk/neighbourhood-planning/#sthash.OS1S1QIO.dpuf>