

## Rural Grants Programme

### Introduction

Somerset Community Foundation (SCF) is very concerned about the plight of local rural communities and the people that live within them. The idyllic countryside often masks very localised pockets of deprivation – sometimes only a few households hidden within more affluent communities.

We recognise that the nature of rural deprivation and the pressures facing rural communities are often distinct from the problems facing urban communities, and often require a different kind of approach. Central Government and larger charities frequently adopt models and policies that work best in urban environments, and target resources to cities with the greatest concentration of deprived households.

Against this background, our rural communities are experiencing significant changes and threats. Our Rural Fund grants will therefore support local community-led initiatives that are specifically addressing the pressures facing Somerset's rural communities.

### **There are two specific outcomes we wish to achieve:**

- **strong, vibrant and inclusive rural communities**
- **a better quality of life for the most disadvantaged rural residents**

### **Priority will be given to:**

- **small-scale, community-led self-help projects that are tackling specific issues arising from living in a village**
- **local community projects specifically designed to increase 'community cohesion'**
- **help new, innovative groups, projects and initiatives get off the ground**

**Grants up to £1000 are available** to voluntary groups and community organisations (see below). The Foundation will look for evidence that a grant of £1000 or less will make a significant difference to a project's success. Grants will not exceed 80% of a project's costs.

Given their size, in most cases these grants will be most relevant to small voluntary groups (those with an income of £30,000 or less), but we recognise that a few hundred pounds can sometimes make a useful contribution in the early stages of a much larger community project, for example a consultation exercise for an affordable housing scheme.

While we are particularly keen to support community-led initiatives based in the most rural areas (i.e. villages and hamlets), we understand that some services can only be effectively delivered by specialist organisations located in towns. In such cases we will give priority to applications to help such organisations pilot new approaches that either:

- help them to reach their target groups in the most rural areas (preferably in partnerships with local community organisations), or
- that help the most rurally isolated people access their services in towns.

Please note that the Rural Fund will not support:

- individuals
- statutory organisations (except where they act as a 'host' for a voluntary group)
- projects taking place outside the county of Somerset
- general appeals
- projects that start before a grant has been awarded

\*\*Please note that it is unlikely we would be able to fund the same project within a 12 month period.\*\*

## **How to apply**

We anticipate that there will be a high demand for these grants. For this reason we have made an Expression of Interest form available on our website <http://www.somersetcf.org.uk/grants.html> for applicants to give us an outline of their project first. If you would like to clarify any aspect of this programme, please feel free to contact us on 01458 833133, or by e-mail [info@somersetcf.org.uk](mailto:info@somersetcf.org.uk)

We will contact all applicants who submit an Expression of Interest form to advise them on whether they should proceed with a full application. **Please note, if we do advise an applicant to make a full application, this does not in any way guarantee a successful outcome.**

When submitting a full application, applicants should include as much relevant and supporting materials as possible, and in particular:

- a constitution or other governing document
- the most up-to-date annual accounts
- health and safety

\*If you are working with children and/or vulnerable adults then you will need to produce a separate document outlining your procedures i.e. reporting an incident\*  
**If you need guidance and help with this there are examples available from our office.**