



Neighbourhood Development Plan Grant funding

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Introduction

Stratford on Avon District Council has set aside funds to support Town and Parish Councils who are reviewing or preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP), also known as a Neighbourhood Plan. The below document outlines what funds are available, and how to apply.

What support is available

Historically NDP groups could access central government funding through an organisation called 'Locality'. NDP groups could access £10k of basic grant funding through this organisation. However, this funding is no longer available. To continue to support Neighbourhood Planning Groups the District Council has allocated £300,000 over the course of 3 years to support groups preparing or reviewing an NDP. Any funding would be provided to the relevant Parish or Town Council as the Qualifying Body for the relevant Neighbourhood Area for them to administer. The term 'NDP group' is used below for brevity.

Each NDP group is able to access a maximum of £10,000 (excluding VAT) to support their plans preparation. Parish and Town Councils are able to apply for a maximum of £5,000 in any one financial year.

For the avoidance of doubt - funding is only available for the preparation or review of a Neighbourhood Plan – and therefore excludes Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders, Village Design Statements and Parish Plans.

Other sources of funding are also available and should be explored, including Town and Parish CIL funds and the [National Lottery](#).

What costs are already covered?

Stratford-on-Avon District Council will cover some costs of preparing and reviewing an NDP, and as such Parish and Town Councils do not need to apply for funds to cover these. Costs covered by the council include:

- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)/Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) Screening
- Full SEA/HRA if required
- Examination Costs

- Referendum costs

How to qualify for funding

NDP groups can access this funding once they have:

- a designated Neighbourhood Plan Area and;
- a NDP steering or working group and;
- a suitable structure enabling the receipt of funds (e.g. a suitable bank account and legal structure). As noted above funds would be administered by the relevant Parish or Town Council.

What can the money be spent on

NDP groups can use the funds to cover costs associated with developing the neighbourhood plan. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Developing a website
- Training sessions for members of the steering group
- Help with putting together a project plan and project management
- Help with developing the evidence base and analysing it to identify issues and aims for your plan
- Undertaking a household survey (which SDC can undertake for a fee)
- Engaging an external facilitator for community consultation and /or workshops, Contributions to required studies for example housing need, environmental assessment
- Engaging a planning expert to help you to draft relevant policies
- Support for making site allocations and the consideration of reasonable alternatives
- Support with undertaking the six week pre-submission consultation
- Support with collecting and analysing responses from the six week pre-submission consultation and deciding how to modify the Neighbourhood Plan
- Help with understanding whether your plan is ready for examination (meeting the [Basic Conditions](#) and other legal requirements)
- Providing training in the legal requirements which will be tested at the examination stage (the basic conditions)
- Venue hire, publicity materials, printing and other costs associated with public engagement and consulting on the plan.

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How to apply

Each NDP group can apply for a maximum of £10,000 to support the preparation of their NDP. Parish and Town Councils can claim up to £5,000 in one financial year (1 April to 31 March), with the remaining monies to be claimed in subsequent financial years, subject to availability of remaining funds.

NDP groups can apply at any point throughout the financial year to receive their first instalment, however, they can only apply once in any financial year. Applications will be determined within 28 working days.

NDP Grant applications are to be sent to planning.policy@stratford-dc.gov.uk. Appendix 1 contains an application form to support Town and Parish Council applications.

The application to receive funds must include:

1. Evidence of intent
 - a. This should come in the form of Parish/Town Council meeting minutes where the preparation of the NDP has been agreed to.
2. Project Plan
 - a. The application must be accompanied by a project plan outlining the steps to be taken by the NDP group. This should include indicative timescales and costs.
 - b. The project plan should include a detailed plan for the next 12 months, outlining how the money (if granted) is planned to be spent.
 - A project plan template can be found on the government's NDP Toolkit webpage: [Neighbourhood plan project planner - GOV.UK](#). Guidance on the requirements of an NDP and the steps necessary for preparation can also be found on the toolkit webpage. It is recommended that NDP groups familiarise themselves with the process in order to prepare a considered project plan. [Neighbourhood planning toolkits - GOV.UK](#)
3. Sources of additional funding.
 - a. The application form should demonstrate where additional funds for the development of the NDP are planned to come from. Whether this be precepts, CIL monies or other grants, such as the National Lottery fund or other sources.

The overall application will be assessed utilising the below criteria:

1. Evidence of Intent
 - a. A clear intention to develop a new NDP or to review an existing one.
2. Project Plan
 - a. The project plan will be assessed on its appropriateness and value for money. The project timescales need to be realistic and achievable whilst showing a desire to have an adopted NDP in as succinct a time period as possible. The indicative costs of the tasks will be reviewed to ensure that they are reasonable and appropriate.
 - b. The project plan needs to cover the entire period of the plan's preparation.
3. Sources of additional funding
 - a. The application will need to demonstrate a clear understanding of the costs of preparing an NDP and how the NDP group plan to cover this.

Requirements for the second round of funding

In order to receive monies in subsequent years, following a successful first application, the Parish/Town Council must:

- Have successfully provided an update report, outlining how the money to date has been spent (this is also required in advance of the final £500 being issued in previous years), and is important to establish the benefits of the funding provided. These reports will be used when considering if funding support will continue to be offered to NDP groups.
- Provide an updated project plan outlining the work undertaken to date, and the work still to be completed. This should correlate with the initially prepared project plan, and will be assessed as per the criteria above.

Why is there a £5,000 limit each round?

Whilst each NDP group has access to £10,000 to support them in preparing their NDP, there is a £5,000 limit each financial year. This is to ensure as many NDP groups can be supported each financial year as possible, and also helps the council manage the flow of funds.

Contractual obligations

If successful, the Parish/Town council will be required to enter into a contract with the District Council. The contract will outline the obligation of the NDP group, including the requirement for the update report prior to the final £500 being issued.

Appendix 1 – Application Form

Town/Parish Council:	
Qualifying Details	
Designated Neighbourhood Plan Area Yes/No	NDP Steering Group/Working Group Yes/No
Bank Details:	
Application	
1.Evidence of Intent	
<i>Please attach, or include below details showing Parish/Town Council intent to prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan</i>	
2. Project plan	
<i>Please attach, or include below the Project Plan for preparing the Neighbourhood Development Plan. (A Project Plan Template is available on the government toolkits page: Neighbourhood planning toolkits - GOV.UK).</i>	
3. Additional Funding	
<i>Please attach, or include below details outlining other sources of funding explored and to be used to fund the preparation of the Neighbourhood Development Plan</i>	

Grant Request	
Amount:	
Details of planned spend:	
Expected timescales for spend:	