

Report on Berwickshire Area Partnership (BAP) Neighbourhood Support Fund 2023/24

Following BAP Meeting in March, where it was agreed the assessment panel would meet to consider feedback from BAP members to the pausing of the Neighbourhood Support Fund, the assessment panel met on 10th May. Those present included: Cllr James Anderson; Cllr John Greenwell; Andrew Mitchell; Keith Dickinson (Chair); Kathy Huffman; Gillian Jardine (SBC); James Purves (SBC). The panel considered three urgent issues:

1. Membership of the assessment panel
2. Delivery of the NSF during 2023/24.
3. Other funding opportunities

1. Assessment Panel Membership

Since the last meeting of the panel a further member has withdrawn. There is therefore an urgent need to recruit new panel members. The panel has space to recruit up to four new members. It was suggested that a more personalised proactive approach might be more successful than blanket emails. All panel members are asked to promote the opportunities, and direct potential new panel members to SBC officers. In addition, it was agreed that SBC would identify individuals and community groups who may have an interest in being part of the assessment panel and discuss this offer with them. SBC would also promote this opportunity more generally. Those who are interested must submit an application form to join the panel and SBC will support this process.

2. Delivery of the NSF 2023/24

Last year (2022/23), over three application rounds, the NSF received 58 applications with a total request for £211K. The NSF supported 31 of these applications and distributed £95,497.19 in support of community activity in Berwickshire. Funded projects ranged from recreational and social activities, capacity building, facility development, health and wellbeing, heritage, arts and culture, the environment and young person's services. The distribution of applications was uneven over the three rounds with the final round receiving 36 applications, the highest number of applications out of the three rounds.

Despite the success of the fund, in attracting strong applications throughout 2022/23, the budget available through the Berwickshire NSF to support community activity has been reduced significantly to £50,185.

Following consideration of the current circumstances it was agreed to recommend the following:

- The application maximum of £5,000 should remain.
- The criteria of the fund should remain the same.
- There should be two application rounds this year.
- The fund should open on June 2nd 2023
- The first funding round is to be considered at the meeting of the BAP on September 1st 2023. The closing dates for applications will be late July (date to be confirmed)
- The second funding round is to be considered at the meeting of the BAP on February 1st 2024. The closing dates for applications will be mid-December (date to be confirmed).

3. Other Funding Opportunities

Following consideration of the reduced NSF budget, reference was made to other community funds that SBC is operating, and community funds administered by external funders. In some cases, applications coming forward to the NSF would be eligible to apply to these other funds as well. To help manage expectation and interest in the NSF, it was agreed that

- SBC Officers should signpost potential NSF applicants to other funding streams where appropriate so they can also explore the opportunity to secure funding elsewhere. SBC Officers will also provide the same information to NSF applicants, where appropriate, and encourage them to consider alternative funding whilst awaiting a NSF decision.
- SBC share with the BAP a summary of information related to funding streams that are currently open and available to support community activity (see Appendix 1 below).

Appendix 1 – Summary of Funding Opportunities

Fund Name	Total Funding Available	Funder	Grants Available	Who can apply	Match Funding Requirement	Revenue or Capital	What can it fund?	Duration	Application Process
UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF)	'Community & Place' investment £1.9m	UK Government	Requests £20,000+	Constituted voluntary organisations including charities and social enterprises, micro businesses and public agencies delivering projects/services in Scottish Borders	Match not compulsory but encouraged	Mostly revenue but some capital can be supported (max £786,000 across 2022-2025)	Examples:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of local towns, villages and settlements; • Town centre regeneration; • Projects linked to development of town and village plans; • Active travel projects such as walking/cycling 	1/4/2023 – 25/2/2025	Expression of interest to SBC followed by application form Partner advisory panels Chaired by SBC
UK Community Ownership Fund	£150m over 4 years	UK Government	Up to £1m for all asset types.	Incorporated voluntary or community organisation or a parish, town and community council		Mostly capital but can fund up to £50k / 20% of total capital ask in revenue funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support ownership of physical assets at risk of being lost to the community • Renovate, repair or refurbish assets for sustainability • Set up or buy a community business 	Until March 2025 Round 3 Bidding Window 1 31 May – 12 July 2023	Submit Expression of Interest at any time. If approved, application to be submitted during a bidding window.
Place Based Investment		Scottish Government		Constituted voluntary organisations including charities and social enterprises, micro businesses and public agencies delivering projects/services in Scottish Borders	Match Not Compulsory	Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community led regeneration • Town centre revitalisation • Community wealth building 		Expression of interest to SBC SBC assessment panel
Regeneration Capital Grant Fund	£25 million	Scottish Government		Local Authority led	Match Not Compulsory	Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regeneration projects • Tackle inequalities • Encourage additional investment and address market failure 	For spend 2024/25	Expression of interest to SBC. 2 stage application process

							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver transformational change • Part of the Place Based Investment Programme 	<p>Stage 1 Applications due 21.06.23</p>	<p>Independent investment panel co chaired by Govt and COSLA assesses applications</p> <p>Closing date 21.06.23</p>
Low Carbon Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme	£15 million	Scottish Government		Local Authority led	Match Not Compulsory *cant apply to RCGF if applying to VDLIP		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance places and regenerate communities • Tackle disadvantage and inequality • Meet climate change targets • Attract private investment and create economic growth 	<p>For spend in 2024/25</p> <p>Stage 1 applications due 23.06.23</p> <p>(5 year programme running until 2026)</p>	<p>Expression of interest to SBC.</p> <p>2 stage application process</p> <p>Independent investment panel co chaired by Govt and COSLA assesses applications</p> <p>Closing date 23.06.23</p>
Community Led Local Development Fund (CLLD)	Circa £270,000	Scottish Government	£1,500 to £20,000 (may consider some grants over £20,000 but max is £50,000)	Constituted micro community orgs including charities and social enterprises who are based and/or work in Scottish Borders	Match not compulsory up to £20,000 (match will be required for requests over £20,000)	Predominantly revenue with limited capital (up to £5,000 per project)	<p>Priorities:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Net Zero and other environmental activities • Poverty alleviation • Social inclusion <p>Separate scheme for young people (up to 30) but still under development (likely to be grants £1-£2k) with different but likely to be similar priorities</p>	<p>1/4/2023 – 26/2/2024</p>	<p>Expressions of interest to SBC followed by application form</p> <p>SBC assessment panel</p>

Neighbourhood Support Fund	£50,185 for Berwickshire	SBC	Up to £5,000	Voluntary, community and charity groups who will deliver in Berwickshire	Match not compulsory	Revenue or capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of community based projects 	2023/34	<p>Application to SBC.</p> <p>Assessed by community panel</p> <p>Decision made by Berwickshire Area Partnership</p>
Community Festival and Events Small Grant Scheme	£70,000	SBC	£3,000 - £5,000	Community groups and organisations within Scottish Borders	Match not compulsory	<p>Revenue or capital</p> <p>Core delivery costs ineligible</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and develop small festivals and events • Attract new audiences to participate • Engage under represented groups • Add value to existing programmes • Promote, celebrate and raise awareness of Scottish Borders 		<p>Application to SBC</p> <p>SBC Officer Panel</p>
Community Cycle Scheme	£125,000	SBC	£3,000 - £15,000	Community groups / organisations and event businesses	Match not compulsory	Revenue or capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing existing events with new cycling opportunities • Cycling innovations • Free small activity and events • Sustainable practices 	2023/24	<p>Application to SBC</p> <p>SBC Officer assessment panel</p>
Healthier, Happier, Stronger Fund		Scottish Government	Small grant scheme up to £5,000	Voluntary, community and charity organisations and groups	Match not compulsory	Revenue or capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development or delivery costs in providing an activity or project which meets an identified nutritional, social, physical, emotional or mental wellbeing need 		<p>Application form to Borders Community Action</p> <p>Joint assessment between SBC, NHS and a third sector rep</p> <p>No application deadline</p>