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South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership



UK Government



The UKSPF and REPF Communities and Place Open Grant Scheme

(Boston and East Lindsey) 2025/6 Prospectus

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1. Introduction: Supporting Communities, Transforming Place – An Invitation

On 30th October 2024, HM Treasury and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) announced the renewal of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) for a final 'transitional year' (2025-6) on a reduced national budget, with the renewal of the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) confirmed in March 2025. South and East Lincolnshire Councils (Boston Borough, East Lindsey District and South Holland District) have been granted a continuing role in the distribution of funds through the new Greater Lincolnshire County Combined Authority.

The South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership has an enduring commitment to the distribution of funds on an open, inclusive and equitable basis. Most of the allocated funding in all three Districts will be disbursed through grants below £25,000, distributed by Grants4Growth (grants to businesses) and the LCF GRASSroots Scheme (grants to Parish Councils, Village Halls and small community projects). Even with the reduction in available funding, we are seeking to use these grants to realise substantial impact for communities and businesses alike, building on the achievements of the 2023-5 UKSPF/ RPF Programme in South and East Lincolnshire.

Through this Prospectus, we are inviting applications for new, mid-sized **Communities and Place** projects – Projects which support the development of facilities, improvements to local living standards and larger, strategic culture, heritage and community development projects. Through this Fund, we are inviting applications from within **Boston Borough** and **East Lindsey District** only and **projects that will deliver impact beyond a single ward or settlement**. The available funding is **mostly capital** but some revenue funding is available. Principally, as this is the last year of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Programme, **we are seeking to support ideas that can generate sustained, long-term impact for our residents and that are likely to continue after the grant aid support ends**. We are also keen to encourage innovation and creative approaches to social and economic challenges faced by our communities.

The project delivery period is a maximum of 7 months (to mid-March 2026), so we're looking for short, sharp interventions. During this period, the Councils will intensively support projects to deliver, enabling them to realise the maximum possible benefit for communities.



1.1 About The UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a central pillar of the UK government's Local Growth funds, supporting the Government's 'National Mission' of generating growth in local economies. Funding has been allocated to Local and Combined Authorities across the entire United Kingdom for a final, transitional year, concluding in March 2026. The Funding is administered by the Council in line with national guidance on the use of UK Shared Prosperity Funding, details of which are available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus/ukshared-prosperity-fund-prospectus>.

Ultimately, the objective is to generate visible, tangible improvements to the places where people work and live by supporting a local priority and targeting investments where they have the greatest impact. The funding can be used to support both Capital and Revenue projects. It must, however, be fully spent by 31st March 2026.

Rural England Prosperity Funding (REPF) is a top-up to UKSPF funding, distributed by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). Its focus is on addressing the challenges faced by rural areas, aiming to increase productivity and strengthen rural economies and communities. Rural England Prosperity Funding can only be invested in settlements with under a 10,000 population and within Market Hub Towns with populations of under 30,000 that serve their surrounding rural areas. Successful Applicants will be allocated a source of funding at the point of award by the Councils.

2. Key Facts - Applying for A Grant

2.1. How Can I Apply and What is the Deadline for Applications?

Applications will be accepted by means **a completed UKSPF Application Form**, submitted digitally to the following email address: LGGF@Sholland.gov.uk.

The deadline for applications is **Wednesday 30th July 2025, 5:00PM**.

2.2. How Much is Available?

The following amount of funding is available within the two District Council areas:

District	Revenue	Capital	Total
Boston Borough	£21,465	£89,900	£111,365
East Lindsey District	£53,153	£268,862	£322,015

2.3. How Much Can I Apply For?

Due to the varied amounts available per District, the scale of projects supported will vary too:

- In Boston Borough, applications will be accepted from £25,000 to £50,000 (a maximum of four projects supported).
- In East Lindsey District, applications will be accepted from £25,000 to £100,000 (a maximum of twelve projects supported).
- In both District Council areas, grants will be offered up to an 80% rate of intervention (supporting at least £550,000 directly invested in our communities through this Scheme).

For grant requests under £25,000 that still meet the criteria for this fund, applicants are referred to the UKSPF and East Lindsey Investment Fund-funded GRASSroots Schemes:

- UKSPF GRASSroots (Boston and East Lindsey) – <https://lincolnshirecf.co.uk/grants/ukspf/>
- ELIF GRASSroots (East Lindsey Only) - <https://lincolnshirecf.co.uk/grants/elif/>

If you are uncertain about which fund is right for your application, further guidance can be found in the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section (Section 5.9 – Page 11).

2.4. Am I Eligible to Apply?

The following types of organisation are eligible for support under this Fund:

- Private sector companies
- Voluntary organisations
- Registered Charities
- Community Interest Companies/Community Interest Organisations (CICs/CIOs)
- Higher and Further Education Institutions
- Eligible Public sector organisations and
- Eligible Local Authorities - District, County and Combined.

The following are ineligible for support under this Fund:

- Organisations that are Insolvent, in the process of being struck off or classified as being an 'undertaking in difficulty'.
- Schools
- Parish Councils (to be funded under the LCF GRASSroots Scheme).
- Private individuals

Organisations must be constituted and in possession of a bank account for the receipt of grant.

2.5. What Will We Fund?

We are looking to fund the following types of activity:

- Improvements to Town Centres and High Streets.
- Creation of and Improvements to facilities, spaces and the public realm
- Investment in Local Art, Cultural and Heritage Assets
- Community and Neighbourhood infrastructure.
- Projects which improve access to services for rural communities, including health, transport and skills.

We will not fund the following:

- Activities of a political or exclusively religious nature. This includes:
 - a) funding for religious spaces restricted to exclusive use by one denomination
 - b) Political campaigning.
- Capital works to domestic properties.
- Input VAT reclaimable from H.M. Revenue & Customs.
- Gifts.
- Entertaining, including the purchase and consumption of alcohol.
- Statutory or legal obligations, including statutory fines, criminal fines or penalties.
- Gambling.
- International Travel.
- Interest-bearing loan finance and personal loans (interest-bearing or interest free) or dividends.
- Non-Project Specific Working Capital
- Expenses in respect of litigation, unfair dismissal or other compensation
- Payments for works or activities which the Local Authority, other government agencies, project deliverer, end beneficiary, or any member of their partnership has a statutory duty to undertake, or that are fully funded by other sources
- Costs incurred by individuals in setting up and contributing towards private pension schemes.

2.6. How Do I Evidence The Impact of My Project?

Projects must demonstrate achievement of one or multiple of the following outcomes:

- Increased number of facilities/amenities (number of people).
- Increased number of visitors to the area (number of visitors)
- Number of community facilities created or improved (number of facilities)
- Improved perception of community facilities (number of people reporting)
- Improved perception of place (number of people reporting)
- Jobs created as a result of support (number of jobs FTE)

- An increase in the number of volunteers (number of volunteers)
- An increase in the number of community-led arts, culture and heritage Programmes as a result of support (number of Programmes).
- Number of residents attending training courses (number of residents)
- Number of residents achieving an accredited or industry-recognised qualification (number of residents)
- Projects are expected to collect baseline, interim and final evidence of outcomes throughout the project lifecycle.

2.7. Is Support Available?

The Local Growth and Grant Funding Team at South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership administers the UKSPF and RPF Programme. The Team can offer pre-application advice and/or technical support on completing an application. For all requests for support, please contact: LGGF@Sholland.gov.uk

3. Key Facts – The Grant Award Process

3.1. How Will You Assess My Application?

Applications will be assessed and scored on a scale of 1-5 on the following six criteria categories:

- **Strategic Fit** - Strategic fit with national UKSPF and REPF guidance and both regional (GLCCALevel) and local (District-level) local policy imperatives.
- **Impact** – Delivery of a substantial outcomes and outputs, as quantified by the local UKSPF outcomes and outputs guidance.
- **Additionality** – Delivery of new activity and/or activity that realises additional economic (GVA) or social impact for local communities.
- **Value for Money** – Benchmarked value for money to the taxpayer, including rate of grant intervention and presence of secured match funding.
- **Risk and Deliverability** – Level of risk associated with the delivery of the project and deliverability by March 2026.
- **Sustainability** – Ability for the project to sustain funding, delivery and outcomes beyond the end of the UKSPF Programme.

Projects scoring a zero (0) on any criteria will be adjudged as non-compliant and issued with an unsuccessful notification post-scoring. The higher scoring the project, the more likely it is to be successful.

3.2. How Does the Assessment Process Work?

Grants will be assessed through the following process:



3.3. How Long Will It Take to Make A Decision on My Application?

With the restricted amount of time available for project delivery, **the Councils will assess applications and mobilise projects as quickly as possible.**

Milestone	Date
Deadline: Submission of Applications	30 th July 2025 (5:00PM)
Officer Panel Assessment	6 th August 2025
Panel Assessment	12 th August 2025
Notification of Awards	19 th August 2025

Sometimes unexpected delays are unavoidable; should these arise, applicants will be informed of any impact to the above timelines.

3.4. What are the Potential Outcomes of the Assessment Process?

Applicants will be in receipt of one of four outcomes:

- **Successful, Unconditional Award** – The grant application has been successful with no conditions.
- **Successful, Conditional Award** – A conditional award of grant may be given where decision-makers wish to achieve a policy objective through the award of grant, mitigate risk or alter the financial basis of any grant award. Conditions will be communicated within the offer of grant and the text of the Grant Funding Agreement (GFA). A successful applicant may choose to accept or reject a conditional offer of grant. Refusal of grant conditions may lead to a withdrawal of grant award.
- **Unsuccessful** – The grant application has been appraised as unsuccessful within the competitive process.
- **Non-Compliant** – The grant application is non-compliant due to being submitted by an ineligible organisation, constituting ineligible expenditure or receiving a 'non-compliant' (0) score on any of the criteria in 3.1.

3.5. I Have Been Unsuccessful – What Next?

- **Feedback and Ongoing Support** - High-level feedback will be given within the written notification confirming an unsuccessful application. Additionally, the applicant may request post-application advice on their application with an assessor. During this session, the assessor may signpost the Applicant to other Council or third party funding sources in the interest of providing support. Due to the anticipated volume of applications, it may not always be possible to offer detailed feedback on all applications, though the Councils shall endeavour to ensure that feedback is timely and appropriate.

- Appeals - All grant decisions are final. There is no facility to appeal. However, if an Applicant feels that there has been a procedural irregularity that has disadvantaged their application, they are advised to submit a complaint. Complaints will be arbitrated by the Senior Programme Manager for Local Growth and Grant Funding within the Local Growth and Grant Funding Team at the Councils. The Assistant Director for Strategic Growth and Development at the Councils will be the final arbiter of all complaints.
- Re-Submissions - An unsuccessful application does not exclude the Applicant from re-applying to future Rounds of this Fund or for future UKSPF funding. However, in this circumstance, it would be expected that a second application would propose a project that is either materially different from that submitted previously or that the application has been amended to address any areas of feedback.

4. Successful Applications - Receiving A Grant

4.

If your project is successful, the following will happen:

Notification of Award (Day One)

You will be informed via a written notification of award, which will detail the amount you have been awarded, any conditions of award and naming your dedicated Contract Manager, who will be your key point of contact at the Council.

Contracting Process (Weeks 1-3)

You will receive a legally binding Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) for review about 2- 3 weeks after the Award Notification. This GFA must be signed by you and will then be countersigned by the Programme's Senior Responsible Officer. Once both signatures have taken place, the project will move into formal delivery. You may submit claims for funding after this point.

Claims (Throughout Your Project)

Claims for funding are made through the submission of a claim form and supporting evidence (usually invoices and evidence of purchases made). Payment is made in arrears, other than in exceptional circumstances mutually agreed in advance.

Contract Meetings (Throughout Your Project)

You will meet your Contract Manager throughout the life of your project at mutually agreed intervals and will have access to their advice and support throughout. They will review and monitor delivery, as well as process claims for funds

End of your project

At the end of your project, your Contract Manager will process your final claim and request a final submission of impact and outcomes data. Once this has been sent, your Contract Manager will issue a closure email, formally ending your project.

5. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

5.1. Is the Process Competitive?

Yes.

The process is expected to be competitive, with it unfortunately not being possible to fund all qualifying applications. Those who score highest on the criteria (3.1) are the most likely to be successful. Due to the limited amount of funding available, the application window has been shortened and it is expected that the funds will be allocated in one Round.

5.2. How Important is Match Funding?

Very important.

Match funding can come in the form of hard cash or as quantifiable in-kind support provided to cover running costs such as salaries or office administration. Applicants are expected, as part of their application, to have investigated and actively sought match funding. The maximum intervention rate of 80% should be regarded as a maximum, with the scale of match funding being a key consideration through the assessment process.

Through the application process, projects will be asked to present detailed financial plans showing what steps have been taken to attract and secure either Public, Private or third Sector matched funding.

5.3. Can I use Some of My Grant to Support Overhead (running) Costs Associated with Delivering a Project?

Yes, though:

- **These must be directly associated with delivering the project** (e.g. staff directly delivering the project, resources used by project participants) rather than non-project specific working capital, which is ineligible.
- **These must be charged at a reasonable proportion of project cost** – While we recognise that circumstances vary and we will appraise each application on its own merits, we consider 12% or below of grant request to be a maximum benchmark for this type of grant expenditure.

5.4. How Will I Be Paid?

The standard practice is for grants to be paid in arrears once expenditure has been incurred and payment made.

Grants will be paid upon the submission of a claim form and evidence of expenditure. Your claim will be reviewed by your designated Contract Manager within the Local Growth and Grant Funding (LGGF) Team, who, subsequent to a review, will confirm compliance. Claims

are paid within the Council's standard 30-day period of payment (which commences once your Contract Manager has confirmed compliance). Payments are made via BACs transfer to a nominated bank account for the receipt of grant (which must be held by the lead recipient).

5.5. How Does VAT Apply to my Project?

If your organisation is registered for VAT, you cannot claim the VAT element of any expenditure.

For example, if you are spending £60,000 (purchasing a machine for £50,00 + VAT) they can only claim against the £50,000 net cost.

If your organisation is not VAT registered, you are entitled to claim against the gross cost. In the above example the full £60,000 would be treated as the eligible cost.

5.7. What is Subsidy Control and Does it Apply to Me?

Subsidy Control is the name given HM Government's regime governing the prevention of public funds being used to confer unfair advantages or harm to competition. It applies to grants given beyond the Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA) threshold of £315,000.

In most cases, UKSPF or Rural subsidies will not take recipients beyond the subsidy thresholds set by the UK government.

Unless a Grant recipient receives in excess of £315,000 (when adding their award to any grant aid they've received within the current financial year or the previous two there is unlikely to be a need to classify or justify the support being offered and to comply with the majority of subsidy control measures as contained in the Subsidy Control Act 2022.

We will however, as a matter of course, need to ask Grant Applicants the value of any recent previous support to eliminate any risk of non-compliance and to determine if the Grant can be considered as Minimal Financial Assistance under the Act.

Where Grants given exceed the MFA threshold (either alone or cumulatively with an award from the 2023-5 Programme or from another Local Authority), Recipients will be required to produce a statement of compliance with the UK Government's Subsidy Control Regime. that £25,000 (net of VAT) then you must run a formal tender process and be in receipt of five written quotes unless a compliant exemption.

5.8. How Should I Acknowledge my Grant?

All communications releases, material, publicity and events associated with your UKSPF/ RPF-funded project must appropriately acknowledge both the source of funding (UKSPF, RPF and HM Government) and the Local Authority providing the funding. They should

adhere to the standard UKSPF Programme branding toolkit (issued to all recipients). This is a standard condition of grant. In written communication, this will usually be through the medium of both the HM Government Logo and that of the relevant Council or South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership.

The following formulation should be used to accompany this:

'Supported by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund/Rural England Prosperity Fund in [Insert Name] District Council'

Where multiple Councils have provided the funding:

'Supported by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund/Rural England Prosperity Fund in the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership'

The Local Growth and Grant Funding Team has a dedicated Communications Officer who can advise on press enquiries and on publicity, press and branding. They should be consulted routinely where press enquiries arise.

5.9. Which Fund is Right for My Project?

With multiple grant Funds currently available, each with different objectives, the Councils wish to support Applicants by directing the 'right applicant to the right Fund'. At the present time, the other major fund that is open in the Communities and Place Theme (also UKSPF-funded, as well as supported through the East Lindsey Investment Fund and Boston Levelling Up Partnership Fund) is the GRASSroots Scheme, which is administered by the Lincolnshire Community Foundation (LCF). The following matrix provides guidelines as to the difference between the types of project supported by each Fund:

Fund	LCF GRASSroots (ELIF, LUPS and UKSPF-funded) (Applications below £25,000)	East Lindsey and Boston Open Communities and Place Grant Fund (BBC – Applications between £25,000 and £50,000) ELDC – Applications between £25,000 and £100,000)
Types of Project Supported*	<p>Creation or renovation of individual community facilities that serve a particular area</p> <p>For example, improvements to a local Village Hall's toilet and kitchen facilities or a contribution towards new play equipment at a park.</p>	<p>Creation of new community facilities that serve multiple wards</p> <p>For example, a substantial new urban green space or a rural skills hub, serving multiple communities.</p>

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Fund	LCF GRASSroots (ELIF, LUPS and UKSPF-funded) (Applications below £25,000)	East Lindsey and Boston Open Communities and Place Grant Fund (BBC – Applications between £25,000 and £50,000) ELDC – Applications between £25,000 and £100,000)
Types of Project Supported*	<p>Smaller Heritage, Culture, Tourism or Public Art Projects</p> <p>For example, an individual art installation in a village.</p> <p>Small Public Realm Initiatives</p> <p>For example, new bins and benches for a village or improvements to a local green space.</p> <p>Projects that support a single Ward of the Council (Parish Councils eligible)</p> <p>For example, renovating a local public toilet or a Programme of activities at a local Youth Centre.</p>	<p>A Mid-Sized Heritage, Culture, Tourism or Public Art Project</p> <p>For example, the development of a new series of exhibits at a local museum or improving the visitor offer at a local attraction.</p> <p>Mid-Sized Public Realm Initiatives</p> <p>For example, new bins and benches in multiple local villages* or street trees for a Market Town Centre.</p> <p>Projects that support multiple Wards of the Council (Parish Councils noneligible*)</p> <p>For example, a project that supports rural residents to access transport across a subgeography of the District (e.g. Boston Town or the East Lindsey Coast).</p>

***Please note – These examples are indicative only, the Council retains the flexibility to fund the full range of project types highlighted in S2.5.*

**Where multiple Parishes (defined as more than two Wards) wish to achieve a larger scale change (for example, a substantial new community facility or uniform replacement of bins and benches) and those Parish Councils are willing to accept long-term management of the asset, nomination of a mutually agreeable 'host' organisation for the receipt of grant may be agreed in advance would permit that group of Parish Councils to circumvent ineligibility in this specific circumstance. Advice should be sought from the Local Growth and Grant Funding Team prior to the submission of an Application in this circumstance.*

6. Data Protection Statement

East Lindsey District Council, South Holland District Council and Boston Borough Council will be the joint data controllers in processing information for this Programme. We may need some personal information to process applications made under this Fund.

The information will be held at South Holland District Council for no more than six years after the conclusion of your Grant Funding Agreement. Dependent on category of information, information collected may be subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (2000).

The Councils will collect your contact details so that we can provide this Service. To meet obligations set by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, we will collect information on your grant and may relay this data (though not sensitive personal information) to third parties, including the Greater Lincolnshire Combined Authority. This may be to supporting marketing activity, to assess impact or in support of overall Programme evaluation. Alongside these obligations, we will share the information to third parties where there is a legal requirement to share.

Where there is a specific 'commercial sensitivity' to applications made or within projects, please make the Council aware at the time of application or through the Contract Management process.

For more information about your rights, and how the councils process data, please visit the following links:

<https://www.boston.gov.uk/Privacy>

<https://www.e-lindsey.gov.uk/article/6288/Privacy-Statement>

<https://www.sholland.gov.uk/article/8613/Privacy-Policy>

Also See: <https://www.e-lindsey.gov.uk/article/6192/Data-Protection-Act-Your-Rights>