

Kent and Medway Rural Access to Services Programme Community Transport Sustainability Grant Application Information

What is the Rural Access to Services Programme (RASP)?

The public transport network in Kent and Medway is not accessible by distance or time to all rural households. Many rural households are over the acceptable 1km from public transport and furthermore access to services and jobs is beyond the reach of public transport. Private transport is a necessity for many rural households however those without a car (13% of rural households) need to make alternative arrangements to access services.

Affordable transport provision remains a key factor in overcoming problems of accessibility and community transport schemes play an important role at increasing access with rural areas. To date a number of rural community transport schemes have been established across Kent and Medway, however volunteer transport schemes are under great personnel and financial pressure attempting to cope with the need for transport.

RASP is a 3 year programme, funded by SEEDA and managed and supported by Action with Communities in Rural Kent. The aim of the programme is to help rural inhabitants access services in new and innovative ways, which are also economically, environmentally and socially sustainable. There are two themes within the programme, the first, of which this is part focuses on rural transport provision to access to services and the second is providing services to rural communities.

What is the Rural Sustainability Transport strand in the RASP programme?

RASP is a small devolved project fund seeking to strengthen rural community transport provision across Kent and Medway.

In view of the limited funding available for this three year programme all expenditure is being carefully targeted to ensure that the greatest and most equitable benefits are achieved with the investment available. In order to add value to investment that has already occurred in this sector, this work strand is focusing on identifying ways that existing, successful community transport operations can move towards greater sustainability.

What is the sustainability grant?

This sustainability grant fund allows rural community-led groups and community transport providers to apply for a grant up to a maximum of £5000 to assist or improve an existing community transport scheme to achieve greater sustainability. Schemes should address the needs of those within the main project area and benefit the local rural community.

Who can apply?

Sustainability grant applications are invited from community groups or community transport schemes wishing to maintain and improve their scheme anywhere in rural Kent & Medway. The sustainability grant fund will consider projects where a rural benefit can be shown. Groups should have a constitution and a bank or building society account in the name of the organisation. Any group without one or other of these should contact Action with Communities in Rural Kent. Submissions may be made at any time on the form provided. Only one application per project will be allowed. Evidence of community support and the extent of a real or potential need will be required.

Awards procedure

An initial visit will be made by Action with Communities in Rural Kent and any further information or clarification will be sought before submission of eligible applications to the review panel.

The review panel includes representatives from County, District and Unitary Councils and registered charity.

The aim will be to provide a decision within one month of the receipt of all necessary information. All applicants will be advised in writing of the outcome of their application.

The maximum award for a single grant will be £5000, over a maximum period of three years.

Successful applicants will receive an offer letter setting out details of the award, claims procedures, monitoring requirements and any special terms and conditions that apply.

Payments will normally be made in arrears against receipted invoices. In exceptional circumstances, agreement may be given for advance payment, in which case receipts should be submitted as soon as possible after expenditure.

Where appropriate, the applicant will be expected to undertake regular monitoring to establish value for money and demonstrate that the project has achieved its stated objectives and agreed targets. Where such monitoring is not practicable suitable reporting arrangements will be agreed between the applicant and Action with Communities in Rural Kent.

Kent County Council will seek repayment of any award in the event of a breach of conditions or unsatisfactory performance.

What can be funded?

Vehicle

Staff time

Staff 'uniform' ie polo shirts

Promotional material ie: posters and leaflets

Secure box for fares

Garaging including lighting and security

Timetable information

What cannot be funded?

Costs incurred in preparing grant applications.

Costs not directly related to the provision of a transport initiative.

Work already carried out, or works undertaken before a formal grant offer has been made and accepted.

Further information can be obtained from:

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The Rural Access to Services Programme is funded by SEEDA and Kent County Council in partnership with Action with Communities in Rural Kent, Medway Council, Church in Society and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Thanet District Council representing Kent District Councils