

Leicestershire Post Office Development Scheme (PODS)

Guidance Notes

Details of Scheme

The aim of the scheme is to maintain, and wherever possible, improve the performance of village post offices. To increase viability and competitiveness and help prevent further closures or business failures.

In addition the scheme will support the introduction of new post office services including satellite operation and community run projects.

Grants of up to £5000 are available to part fund a wide range of business improvements and projects.

Criteria

The scheme is available to rural post offices based in, or serving a rural community with a population of less than 10,000 people.

Eligible businesses must contribute a minimum of 50% of total eligible project costs. This match funding cannot be sourced from any other grant making authority.

Applicants should be able to clearly identify the benefits of the project to the business and to the wider rural community, and whilst a full business plan is not required, applicants should be able to demonstrate a planned approach to the project and a commitment to future success.

Priority areas

- Protection of essential rural services.
- Enhancement of the range of services /products available.
- Disability access improvements.
- Projects developed in consultation with the local community.
- Creation of new employment opportunities.
- Protection of existing employment.
- Redevelopment of redundant or unused spaces.

Eligible Activities

A range of investment items are eligible and are not limited to the examples below:

- Improving access to premises.
- Improvements to sales area – e.g. new shelving, lighting and heating etc.
- Security – e.g. CCTV, alarms and mirrors etc.
- Internal modernisation – e.g. flooring and energy saving devices etc.
- External appearance – e.g. signage, shop front improvements and window blinds etc.
- Marketing.
- Introduction of new services – e.g. dry cleaning, solid fuel sales and internet access etc.

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Non Eligible Activities

- General repair work and maintenance.
- Running costs.
- Purchase of stock.
- Staff costs.

It is important to note that any work undertaken or items purchased prior to an application being made cannot be considered for grant support.

Funding Levels & Grant Payment Details

The maximum grant available under this scheme is £5000. This represents the total grant available to a single business under this scheme and further applications above this limit will not be considered.

The grant will not exceed 50% of eligible costs.

Additional Support Agencies

Rural Shops Alliance – www.rural-shops-alliance.co.uk

Information required in the Application Form

(The General Guidance notes provide details on completing the application form, however the following specific information is required to apply for a Post Office Development Scheme).

Contact Details (for queries and completed applications to be sent to:)

Kevin Butcher
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Rural Community Council (Leicestershire & Rutland),
Community House,
133 Loughborough Road,
Leicestershire, LE4 5LQ
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