

Year 1 2005/06
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What is Rural Renaissance?

Rural Renaissance is a South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) funding stream which sub-regional partnerships can bid into.

Its aim is:

'To help rural communities in the South West respond to and influence economic change, by supporting the development and implementation of sustainable projects that use innovation and enterprise to:

- Create prosperity and generate employment
- Improve delivery and access to services and
- Realise the value of the environment as an economic asset

Who will be delivering Rural Renaissance in Gloucestershire?

Rural Renaissance schemes will be managed through local delivery partnerships. In Gloucestershire this strategic delivery partnership will be Gloucestershire First.

In June 2004, Gloucestershire was informed by SWRDA that its Rural Renaissance bid had been successful.

Work began immediately on developing and delivering the scheme, with some projects being approved before Year 1 officially began on 1st April 2005.

What does this mean for Gloucestershire?

The total Scheme is worth around £7 million - £3 million from SWRDA and approximately £3.8 million from other partners.

This funding will be spent on projects which have been developed with local partners to benefit rural areas across Gloucestershire between 2004 and March 2008.

Current project examples include:

Assistance for small rural start up businesses, support to increase productivity of small rural manufacturing companies, business support for rural retail businesses, skills training, setting up agricultural and planning forums in Tewkesbury, Stroud and Cotswold districts.

A quick response Small Project Investment Fund (SPIF) is now operating to enable smaller groups within the voluntary and community sector to benefit from the initiative. Through this fund the partnership will be able to respond to emerging needs in the rural economy and proactively address strategic gaps in delivery of the Scheme across the county.

*Please see overleaf for
further information on the
management of this
delivery.*

*Ask for the guidance leaflet
on the Small Project
Investment Fund (SPIF).*

The Strategic Context leaflet available for project applicants will provide further information.

**SWRDA Corporate Plan
SWRDA Regional Economic Strategy**

Both regional documents are available from the South West Regional Development Agency on www.southwestrda.org.uk

click on publications

Rural Economic Strategy for Gloucestershire 2003-2010 (published May 2004)

Log on to the Gloucestershire First website and download your own copy of the Rural Economic Strategy at www.glosfirst.co.uk.

Click on publications.

Strategic Background

There are three major documents which set the strategic context for the Rural Renaissance Scheme in Gloucestershire, and all projects will be appraised against the strategic background of these documents.

These three publications are

1. The Rural Economic Strategy for Gloucestershire 2003-2010, produced by Gloucestershire First
2. South West Regional Development Agency's Corporate Plan.
3. South West Regional Development Agency's Regional Economic Strategy (RES)

In addition, to the Small Project Investment Fund applications will also need to take into account local strategies and community plans.

Gloucestershire Rural Economic Strategy

The Gloucestershire First Partnership agreed the **Rural Economic Strategy** for Gloucestershire 2003-2010 in January 2004. All projects seeking Rural Renaissance funds will be judged against this document.

Mission – *“To increase sustainable prosperity and productivity for rural Gloucestershire and its people.”*

Objective 1: To raise business productivity in rural Gloucestershire to achieve a gradual adjustment of the proportions of employment in the current key sectors, whilst developing new sectors

Objective 2: To increase economic inclusion in rural Gloucestershire to achieve a measurable increase in the lowest household incomes, particularly in the most deprived areas and especially in the Forest of Dean, as a result of higher wages and less unemployment, combined with an increase of affordable housing leading to a better, more prosperous quality of life in rural communities.

Objective 3: To strengthen rural communities in Gloucestershire through communications and partnership to achieve more cohesive, supportive and economically active rural communities with better physical and electronic access.

Objective 4: To realise fully the economic potential of Gloucestershire's rural environment whilst protecting the exceptional quality of the countryside for future generations.

How will Rural Renaissance be run in Gloucestershire?

Gloucestershire First has established a countywide Partnership to develop, review and deliver the Rural Economic Strategy.

This consists of:

- Rural Economy Advisory Panel (REAP) which is responsible for overseeing the delivery of Rural Renaissance in Gloucestershire, and approving project funding or for larger projects recommending applications for approval by SWRDA.
- Rural Economy Management Group (REMG) which is responsible for managing the effective delivery of the Rural Renaissance programme. This includes producing the annual Delivery Plan, encouraging development of projects and managing the appraisal process. This body also approves project applications for the Small Project Investment Fund.
- Gloucestershire Rural Partnership Network which brings together annually, representatives of those with an interest in or key role to play, in the rural economy of Gloucestershire, including businesses, parish councils and community groups. Its role is to advise on priorities and new initiatives and to promote the delivery of the objectives of the Rural Economic strategy.
- Gloucestershire County Council, on behalf of Gloucestershire First, acts as the accountable body for the Partnership, and is responsible for administering and monitoring the funds, outputs and outcomes of the Rural Renaissance Scheme.

How will individual projects be processed and approved?

Following discussions with the Scheme Management Team, project applicants will complete and submit the appropriate form. After an initial check for completeness by the Scheme Manager, the application will pass to the external Project Appraisal Team.

Following appraisal, the project application and appraisal recommendations will be passed to REAP for discussion and approval. Projects will be notified of the outcome by the Scheme Manager.

Please note: some larger projects may have to be passed to the SWRDA office for final approval based on the recommendations of REAP. Some smaller projects such as those applying to the Small Project Investment Fund will be appraised by the Scheme Manager and passed to REMG for approval.

Each project will be informed as to the route, timescale and progress of their application.

Successful Projects

Applicants who are successful will be notified by the Scheme Manager in writing. An annual contract will be issued on approval detailing the grant and the procedure for the submission of quarterly claims and monitoring returns.

Further funding for subsequent years will be dependent on project progress.

***Ask for the Small Project
Investment Fund
Guidance Sheet***

**RDA Tasking Framework
Output targets**

- *Jobs created or safeguarded*
- *Employment support*
- *Business creation*
- *Business support*
- *Regeneration*
- *Skills development*
- *Hectares of brownfield land reclaimed/remediated*
- *No. of housing units*
- *Sqm of workspace created*

If you want to develop a project, contact the Scheme Management Team for an informal discussion.

Other sources of information

- *Application forms and guidance information*
- *Rural Economic Strategy for Gloucestershire*

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New Projects

There are **opportunities to develop new projects**, particularly those with innovative and creative ideas. These new projects must have a hard economic basis and contribute to the RDA's Tasking Framework for 2005-2008.

The development of new projects will be encouraged if they:

- meet SWRDA's strategic priorities and deliver clear outputs
- meet the objectives within the Gloucestershire Rural Economic Strategy (see overleaf) and
- resources are available.

Projects must be submitted by an organisation, a partnership or a group who will deliver the project. This project should benefit a number of people or a group of businesses or organisations.

To avoid unfair competition, project funding cannot be made available directly to individual businesses. Similarly individuals cannot receive funding directly. Individuals, organisations and businesses can of course benefit through funded initiatives such as training, establishment of a network, and so on.

Projects must show clear evidence of need, and there must be the capacity and expertise within the organisation or group to deliver the project and act in an accountable manner.

Applicants should consider funding a proportion of the costs from their own or alternative sources (match funding) and some of these costs can be in-kind e.g. office space, staff time, equipment etc.

Local Contacts

Claire Edwards, Scheme Manager

Gloucestershire First
c/o Environment Department
Gloucestershire County Council
Shire Hall
Gloucester
GL1 2TH
Tel: 01452 425573
Email: claire.edwards@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Robin Grist,

Chairman, Gloucestershire Rural Economy Advisory Panel

Gloucestershire First
Chargrove Business Centre
Main Road
Shurdington
Cheltenham
GL51 4GA
Tel: 01242 864190
Email: info@glosfirst.co.uk

