

Re: The launch of the East Riding of Yorkshire Community Tree Planting Fund

I write to inform your Council about the new East Riding of Yorkshire Community Tree Planting Fund that has just been launched. This grant programme is for the purposes of delivering new tree planting activity and is open to private and public landowners across the East Riding of Yorkshire.

I am pleased to let you know that we are now welcoming applications for funding through this programme for 2020, for the purposes of creating new areas of native woodland, planting new clusters of native trees, or establishing new individual native standard trees. There are no restrictions on who can apply to the fund for a grant, and it is envisaged that applications will be received from a range of individuals and groups such as private and public landowners, farmers and land managers, community groups, businesses, community organisations, charities, Town & Parish Councils, schools and faith groups.

Applications to the fund should be made through the online FlexiGrant system, and this is available at <https://eastridingofyorkshirecouncil.flexigrant.com/> where potential applicants are able to register and find all of the tree planting funds we currently have available, including the new East Riding of Yorkshire Community Tree Planting Fund.

For your interest, I enclose a Guidance Note supporting this fund which sets out the broad principles by which it is intended to make funding awards. This Guidance Note is intended to steer applicants towards bringing forward the types of proposals that will be eligible through this fund, and these can be rural or urban in nature, and must demonstrate clear benefits to the East Riding of Yorkshire. The deadline for the submission of applications for funding this year will be 31st July 2020 and a small grant panel will convene to oversee the process of awarding grants to successful applicants. We hope to make all decisions regarding funding by 30th September 2020.

I hope that this information is of interest and should your Council require any further information regarding this fund, including any assistance in developing an application to it, please do not hesitate to contact me. In the meantime, I would be grateful if you alert anyone you know who might be interested in funding opportunities of this nature to the availability of this new grant programme.

The East Riding of Yorkshire Community Tree Planting Fund

Guidance Note for Applicants

Introduction & Scope

The East Riding of Yorkshire Community Tree Planting Fund is open to private and public landowners for the purposes of delivering new tree planting activity within the East Riding of Yorkshire. For the purposes of this fund, tree planting shall be interpreted to include the following:

- Creating new areas of native woodland
- Planting new clusters of native trees
- Establishing new individual native standard trees

There are no restrictions on who can apply to the fund for a grant, and it is envisaged that applications will be received from a range of individuals and groups such as private and public landowners, farmers and land managers, community groups, businesses, community organisations, charities, town & parish councils, schools and faith groups.

The fund will seek to support projects that are significant in scale, either rural or urban in nature, and which can demonstrate clear benefits to the East Riding of Yorkshire. The focus of the fund will be to support the planting of British native species of trees and shrubs appropriate to the East Riding of Yorkshire area. The fund will support new projects as well as those which seek to expand and improve existing features.

Grant Awards

The fund will award grants of no greater than £3,000 to each successful application. However, this amount may be greater in exceptional circumstances where it can be fully justified by the applicant and where the grant panel agree to make such an award. There is no restriction on multiple applications for separate projects being submitted by the same landowner, but please be aware that it is the intention to distribute the benefits of the East Riding of Yorkshire Community Tree Planting Fund as widely as possible throughout the area.

Although the fund is available to support native tree planting projects, it will not be available to applicants who are required to undertake tree planting work that is required under other obligations (e.g. to implement a planning condition, to fulfil a felling license restocking requirement, etc.). Also, the fund will not normally support work within domestic gardens, although the grant panel may consider such applications in exceptional circumstances where the wider community benefits are demonstrated to be of sufficient merit.

Prioritising Applications to Receive Funding

All projects submitted to the East Riding of Yorkshire Community Tree Planting Fund must be located within the East Riding of Yorkshire. All project applications that satisfy the broad aims of the fund will be considered against a series of criteria to ensure that those receiving a grant will deliver the maximum benefits that the funding can bring to the area.

Funding Criteria

Each project will be considered on its merits and in accordance with a set of criteria based on the following factors:

- Deliverability
- Value for Money
- Benefits/Outcomes
- Sustainability

Fulfilling the Criteria

To help demonstrate how a project fulfils the criteria, an application should seek to show how it satisfies some, or all, of the following factors against which it will be considered:

- The project is of sufficient scale to make a beneficial impact to the area

- The planting activity comprises of solely native species appropriate to the area
- The project will deliver a clear benefit for wildlife (i.e. species and habitats, connectivity, etc.)
- The project will deliver a clear enhancement to local landscape character
- The community has been/will be involved in the project (e.g. development, planting, maintenance)

Projects are not expected to necessarily fulfil all of these factors, but applicants should bear in mind that funding will be awarded on a competitive basis, and that proposals that can demonstrate the maximum benefits are more likely to receive support.

Evaluating Projects

Where there are sufficient funds to do so, all suitable projects will be supported where demonstrable benefits can be identified in accordance with the above criteria. An independent grant panel will scrutinise applications received and oversee the awarding of grants to successful projects. The grant panel will be made up of representatives of the local authority, independent experts, environmental organisations and Parish/Town Council.

Please note that should the fund be over-subscribed, some projects which fulfil the above criteria will inevitably not be able to receive funding. The grant panel will have the duty of deciding how to prioritise projects received. Unsuccessful applications will be recorded on file and landowners contacted should further funding become available in the future.