



Homes
England

Community Housing Fund - Supplementary Information for bidders

GENERAL BIDDING ENQUIRIES

- 1. Is there a certain timeframe within which the money will need to be spent?**
 - A. Payments will have to be claimed by 31st March 2020.
- 2. Can a group that receives revenue funding through the Community Housing Fund subsequently apply for capital support from this or other Homes England programmes?**
 - A. Receiving an allocation for revenue funding through this Fund does not preclude an organisation from applying for capital grant from Homes England towards the development costs of the affordable housing scheme. Any revenue funding received under the Community Housing Fund should be declared in the application process.
- 3. Would Homes England offer any explicit support to organisations looking to achieve Registered Provider status?**
 - A. Unregistered organisations considering whether to register are encouraged to speak to the Social Housing Regulator's Registrations team at the earliest opportunity. A list of sector organisations which may be able to offer support and advice on this process are listed in the prospectus. Homes England is unable to provide grants towards the cost of an organisation becoming a registered provider.

ELIGIBILITY

- 4. Does Homes England have a view on 'communities of interest' as distinct from geographically defined communities applying for funding? E.g. Community-led housing for older or disabled people.**
 - A. Assuming that a proposal meets the requirements set out in the prospectus there are no restrictions on the types of communities that may be supported whether spatial or community of interest.
- 5. Do organisations applying for funding under the Community Housing Fund need to be Registered Providers of social housing?**
 - A. It is not a requirement for organisations to be a Registered Provider of social housing before applying for funding. Any organisation that intends to be the landlord of low-cost rent accommodation funded with capital grant from Homes England will need to be a Registered Provider of social housing, or transfer the funded homes to a registered organisation, ahead of the first letting.



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REVENUE FUNDING FOR PRE-DEVELOPMENT COSTS

6. Can the minimum 10% provider contribution be an 'in kind' contribution based on previous spend/work already done?

- A. Yes, providing the organisation can demonstrate that the work carried out is of a sufficient value and that it is attributable to the proposed community-led scheme. It could also, for example, be the cost of getting incorporated.

7. What evidence will groups need to provide to claim payment of revenue funding allocations awarded under the Fund?

- A. Detailed documentation will be requested at milestone payment stage when the provider will be required to self-certify their work and this may include quotes and invoices. For the first milestone to be completed it will be important to demonstrate that the group is incorporated. At the end of each financial year the provider will need to submit a statement of grant usage from an accountant to confirm that the grant has been spent as expected.

8. Where revenue funding is to be used to fund support staff costs, will funding be available to support delivery of the whole project or would funding cease on 31st March 2020?

- A. Payment of revenue funding to Local Authorities will be made in arrears at quarterly intervals subject to a review of the funded activity. Funding will not be available beyond 31st March 2020.

9. Can a group apply multiple times for pre-development revenue funding, i.e. completing one stage and then applying for more funding to progress further?

- A. Applications should be made for the total amount of grant funding that the organisation anticipates needing to progress their community-led housing proposals within the Community Housing Fund programme timeframe. This should not exceed 90% of the total estimated pre-development costs.

Homes England may consider revenue bids for split / partial milestones on a case by case basis. For activities relating to Community Housing Fund milestones which will fall beyond 31st March 2020, groups would need to ensure that proposals are deliverable without any further grants as there is no guarantee funding will be available after this time.

INFRASTRUCTURE

10. Can Local Authority Right to Buy receipts be used to match fund capital costs for new build or refurbishment projects?

- A. Funding generated from Local Authority Right to Buy receipts cannot be blended with Homes England grant as a contribution to the total scheme costs.



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11. Would clearance/demolition of existing buildings or removal of site contamination (e.g. asbestos) be acceptable within applications for infrastructure capital funding under Phase One?

- A. As long as the proposed work involves removing buildings and preparing the land for infrastructure or housing it can be considered for funding under Phase One. No works that involve elements of construction will be considered under this phase.

12. If a provider receives grant for infrastructure but does not complete the works before March 2020, will all grant received be repayable or will just the final amount be withheld?

- A. Recovery arrangements are to be confirmed, however all schemes should be bid on the basis that they will be completed by 31st March 2020.

CAPITAL SCHEMES

13. Does Homes England require Registered Providers to accept housing nominations from local authorities for schemes developed under this fund?

- A. No. Homes England requires that housing providers of all grant-funded homes (whether community-led or otherwise) ensure that the lettings and nominations arrangements for these homes are agreed in accordance with local and national policies, including the Regulator of Social Housing's Tenancy standard. Local authorities may negotiate individual nominations agreements with providers as part of the planning process. This is subject to separate agreement between the local authority and the housing provider.

STATE AID

For further information on State Aid please see the clarification document published in March 2019: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-housing-fund-state-aid-clarification>