

## **Funding for Access**

This Information Sheet gives information on the possible sources of funding to facilitate public outdoor access. Most land managers will find that the main source of public funding for access is through the Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP), administered through the Scottish Government. However, there are possibilities for other sources of funding and we have provided some options here too.

### **The SRDP: Land Managers' Options (LMO)**

#### **1. The works this scheme covers**

Funding for public outdoor access within the LMO Scheme can be found under **Option 20 – Improving Access**. Funding is available for works which will help upgrade and enhance routes to make them accessible to a fuller range of users, including cyclists, horse riders, and person with disabilities. Funding could also include work to facilitate access to inland water. The type of works this measure covers includes:

- removing overgrown plants and grass,
- controlling weed encroachment,
- installing filter drains,
- providing gates,
- signposts, and
- waymarkers,

and payment will also be made to partially cover one-off capital works such as boardwalks, bridges, and culverts.

#### **2. Eligibility**

Eligible paths must meet at least one of the Improving Access priorities:

- Linking to local networks,
- Give access to points of attraction, or
- Meet a local need.

Applicants cannot apply to enhance a path that is already being enhanced, managed or maintained by another organisation or individual.

Funding under this option is available to any land manager with land in Scotland that is either owned or held under a secure tenancy agreement or contractual license for at least 5 continuous years. Land managers must be registered with the Integrated Administration Control System (IACS) and have a Business Reference Number (BRN). This option is not available on seasonal let land or individual applications on common grazing land, although the Common Grazing Committee could apply for this option.

#### **3. Funding available**

Land managers can receive up to 75% of actual costs supported by invoices within the overall LMO limit. The Scottish Government will pay for items referred to in the technical specification (which is contained at the end of the Improving Access Option). The rate for capital items such as installing boardwalks, bridges and culverts is also 75% of costs, with a limit of £150 for each item.

#### **4. Conditions**

Under the terms of the scheme, land managers will be subject to Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions (GAEC) and Statutory Management Requirements under cross compliance.

Match-funding is not permitted under the LMO scheme.

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Applicants must submit copies of the 1:10 000 map, showing the route of their path and the location and type of capital item being claimed for, to their local Scottish Government Rural Payments & Inspections Directorate (SGRPID) Area Office and local access officer by 31 August in year one of their agreement.

## 5. How to Apply

LMO is a guaranteed entry scheme (non-competitive), and applications on a LMO application form should be submitted along with the Single Application Form (SAF) by the IACS deadline of 15th May for every year of participation in the scheme. The LMO details need to be included on the SAF data sheet. There is a funding limit on the amount of money available under LMO based on the SAF determined land area (budget includes any commitment under Land Management Contract Menu Scheme (LMCMS) – predecessor to LMO).

Full details of the scheme can be found at [www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Rural/SRDP](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Rural/SRDP) and go to Land Managers Options. They will also be included in IACS packs.

## The SRDP: Rural Priorities

### 1. The works this scheme covers

Funding for public outdoor access within the Rural Priorities Scheme can be found under **Priority 25 – Public Access**.

Rural Priorities funding is available for Area Access Management (so collaborative applications from more than one land manager or land managers working with a local community group may be appropriate) for the creation and upgrading of paths and routes, provision of facilities and amenities, land management measures and monitoring of access use. These include:-

- **Path/route construction**, upgrading and associated works, including path surfacing, drainage, gates, bridges, steps, boardwalks, including provisions for particular user groups such as horse riders, water based use, and all abilities.
- **Vegetation reduction** to enable access, including mowing, brashing, high pruning as appropriate to the site.
- **Provision of amenities** car parking areas, seats, picnic tables, hard standings and dog exercise areas close to arrival points.
- **Provision of safety features** if required to facilitate access to viewpoints, water margins and well used areas. This can include handrails, lifebelts and signs.
- **Near to communities** manage fields and/or areas to integrate access and informal recreational use with productive use. This can include the installation of gates, access points and link paths providing access to the community.
- Responsible access for sensitive areas. This can include paths that guide people away from sensitive habitats or species and the construction of hides, etc.
- Monitoring. This can include operation of people-counters, normally automated sensors/counters placed under or beside a path, which detect and log the number of people using that path. Surveys and other similar means to monitor levels and characteristics of public use, as an aid to management planning.
- Signage - signposts, fingerposts, waymarkers and information boards.
- Associated provision of information leaflets.

Funding is also available to the same individuals through Rural Priorities in the Information & Awareness Raising Option, for the following eligible activities:

- Providing publications and other media
- Providing information panels/interpretation boards, trails and signage
- Accessibility improvements for the public
- Coach parking and turning areas for schools and disabled parking

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## 2. Eligibility

Rural priorities funding is available to all rural land managers, community groups and non-profit organisations that own or occupy land in Scotland. Applicants cannot apply to enhance a path that is already being enhanced, managed or maintained by another organisation or individual.

Funding under Rural Priorities is available to any land manager, group or organisation with land in Scotland that is either owned or held under a secure tenancy agreement or contractual license for at least 5 continuous years. Applicants must be registered with the Integrated Administration Control System (IACS) and have a Business Reference Number (BRN). This option is not available on seasonal let land or individual applications on common grazing land, although the Common Grazing Committee could apply for this option.

## 3. Funding available

This Option has a funding limit of up to 75% of the actual cost per capital item.

## 4. Conditions

Under the terms of the scheme, land managers will be subject to Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions (GAEC) and Statutory Management Requirements under cross compliance.

Match-funding is permitted in some instances under the Rural Priorities scheme; case officers consider applications where match-funding is sought on a case-by-case basis. Match funding cannot come from other Government or EU funds however, but it might be possible to match-fund with, for example, the Heritage Lottery fund – see below.

With their application, applicants must submit a 1:10,000 map showing the detail of their project and the location of the path/route and the location and type of capital items in their proposal. A copy of this map must be provided to their LA or NP Authority Access officer, prior to submitting an application. With their application they must also include written evidence from their LA or NP Authority that they have received the map.

## 5. How to apply

Rural Priorities is a competitive scheme aimed at funding those projects which best match with agreed priorities for the particular region they would be delivered in. Rural Priorities applications are submitted through a 2-stage on-line application process. They can be submitted at any time of year.

The initial stage involves submitting a Statement of Intent which allows an applicant to register their interest in Rural Priorities funding and give an outline of their ideas. This initial application will be assessed by a Case Officer, who will advise on eligibility, regional priorities, budgetary positions and the need for consents/approvals. Following their initial assessment the Case Officer will give the applicant either a red or amber light. A red light indicates that the case officer feels the proposal should go no further in its current format, although it does not preclude the applicant from taking it forward if they feel strongly that they wish to. An amber light indicates that the application could proceed to stage 2.

The second stage requires the applicant to develop their initial submission into a Full Proposal which will include an outcome plan and supporting documentation. Some funding is available to the applicant to enable them to employ a consultant (and it is recommended applicants do seek professional support) to further develop their Statement of Intent into a Full Proposal. Full Proposals are considered by a Regional Priorities Assessment Committee (RPAC) at one of 2 or 3 proposal assessment meetings per year. The RPAC will recommend to Scottish Ministers proposals which are felt to be suitable for funding.

Full details of the scheme can be found at [www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Rural/SRDP](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Rural/SRDP) and go to Rural Priorities.

## LEADER Funding

LEADER Funding is an element within the Scottish Rural Development Programme. It is aimed at promoting economic and community development within rural areas. Support is aimed primarily at small-scale, community driven projects that are pilot and innovative in nature. Funding is awarded by Local Action Groups (LAGs) who take decisions on projects which are community driven and have a wide community benefit. For more information on LEADER and LAGs visit [www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/farmingrural/SRDP/LEADER](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/farmingrural/SRDP/LEADER)

There is potential for LEADER funding to deliver a range of outdoor access initiatives which are for the benefit of rural communities.

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LEADER will not be suitable to deliver all types of access provision and land managers are generally directed to apply through the Land Management Options or Rural Priorities schemes (see above). However where the right mix of innovation and rural community involvement exists, land managers may wish to work as a partner in community or local authority led LEADER projects.

### **Heritage Lottery Fund**

The Heritage Lottery Fund may be able to support some outdoor access related works. The fund itself covers a wide range of areas from museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions. Works such as re-establishing old heritage trails (drove roads, creel paths and so on) or routes which will enhance the public's understanding of the natural heritage might attract funding. A successful bid to this fund would need to show community support for the proposal.

It is possible that Heritage Lottery Funding could be used in conjunction with SRDP Rural Priorities funding to make up 100% of project costs.

There are two grant programs to consider:

- 1. Heritage Grants** (Grants of more than £50,000 are offered under this program)
- 2. Your Heritage Grants** (Grants of between £3,000 and £50,000 are offered under this program)

To receive a grant under either of these programs a project must

- help people learn about their own and other people's heritage.

and must also do either or both of the following:

- Conserve the UK's diverse heritage for present and future generations to experience and enjoy.
- Help more people, and a wider range of people, to take an active part in and make decisions about heritage.

If applying for funding under either of these programs, you can fill out a pre-application form online, which is a simple outline of your proposed project. You will then receive feedback on its likely eligibility for funding before taking an application any further. Full details of both programs are available at [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk).

Some local authorities also employ Lottery Fund Officers who can provide help and advice about possible projects in your area.

### **Scottish Natural Heritage Grants**

Scottish Natural Heritage offer a grants program. Projects which could be otherwise funded through the SRDP will not however be considered as eligible for grant support from Scottish Natural Heritage. Paths creation work and other access facilities are not likely to be considered on this basis. If your project does not fit with SRDP criteria, Scottish Natural Heritage may have a grant scheme which can offer some support. Usually up to 50% of project costs can be met. Full details can be found at [www.snh.org.uk/about/ab-grants.asp](http://www.snh.org.uk/about/ab-grants.asp)

### **VisitScotland Growth Fund**

This fund supports tourism marketing activities and so will not directly fund paths and other access enhancing work. The fund also requires businesses (3 or more) to be working in collaboration. It could however provide support with marketing of outdoor recreation facilities within an area, for example on a website or by leaflet.

The fund can offer up to 50% contribution to project costs. Full details are available at [www.visitscotland.org/growthfund](http://www.visitscotland.org/growthfund)

### **Landfill Communities Fund**

The Landfill Communities Fund (LCF) is a tax credit scheme for Landfill Operators (LOs). LOs pay a tax to the Government on every ton of waste that they dispose of in a landfill site. The LCF allows LOs to 'offset' a percentage of the landfill tax and give a proportion of it to organisations who deliver environmental objectives, instead of paying it as tax to Government. The principle behind the LCF is that it 'offsets' some of the negative impacts of living very close to a landfill site.

It may be possible to obtain funding for outdoor access through the LCF and the advantage of this funding stream is that it can be used to match-fund SRDP grants. For more information visit [www.entrust.org.uk](http://www.entrust.org.uk)

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### **Other local authority grant schemes**

Local authorities often have other Community Grant Schemes. These usually provide smaller grants for community action. It is possible these schemes would provide some funds with community-led outdoor recreation initiatives.

Where community-led initiatives are being proposed for grant-funding it may be sensible for the landowner's involvement merely to be to lease the relevant area of ground to the community group.

#### *Notes:*

*1. Land managers should remember that if they are involved in providing, enhancing or maintaining a path for the purpose of the public's use and enjoyment, it is important that workmanship is to agreed standards. They may become liable for any injury sustained by a member of the public if the standard of what they have provided is such that it has resulted in or contributed to the injury.*

*2. Land managers providing, enhancing or maintaining paths for the purpose of the public's use and enjoyment are likely to be considered to be providing a service to the public and they should therefore be aware of the requirements of the Disability Discrimination legislation in relation to service provision. For further details see Information Sheet 11.*

### **Scottish Land & Estates Contact**

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***Date Issued: July 2010***

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