

FAQ's – Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) Business Grant Applications

Q1. How can I check if I am in an eligible rural area of North Warwickshire and Stratford District?

The large majority of these two lower tier local authority areas are eligible. However, WCC is proposing to give priority to businesses in the rural areas according to Defra's Rural Urban Classification (2025).

However, Defra have classed the Birch Coppice Business Park, Hartshill and Ansley Common areas of North Warwickshire as **ineligible**. Defra have also classed parts of Gaydon, Lighthorne and Long Marston in Stratford District as only eligible "on application" or under certain circumstances. Applicants from those areas should contact WCC at the earliest opportunity.

Here is a link to Defra's Magic Map - <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.html> Please search for the layer 'Rural England Prosperity Fund' and this will show, eligible/ineligible areas in detail within Warwickshire.

Q2. What project activities would be classed as ineligible in this fund?

A list of ineligible activities under this funding scheme can be found in the REPF Grant Guidance under Appendix A.

Q3. Projects funded must only be in rural areas, why has this only identified North Warwickshire and Stratford District?

Eligible areas are subject to Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) criteria, which means that a limited amount of funding has only been made available to the North Warwickshire Borough Council (NWBC) and Stratford on Avon District Council (SDC) areas.

This is according to DEFRA's criteria using a national method for allocation. It was not a decision made by WCC.

Q4. Does a project have to deliver on every output or outcome shown under Rural Fund Indicators?

No, a project does not have to deliver on **all** output/ outcome indicators. However, we would expect the project to meet some of the outputs/ outcome indicators. These must be highlighted as part of your application form.

Q5. Do projects need to be financially completed by March 2026?

Yes, this funding concludes at the end of the financial year and no funding will be provided for activity after 31 March 2026. This means that all project expenditure must be claimed in full prior to this date.

Q6. What is the process for applying for a grant?

If you believe your business meets the eligibility criteria for this fund, you will need to complete the REPF Eligibility Form, which can be found on the WCC web page: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/repf

WCC will then carry out an initial eligibility check. If WCC confirm you meet the eligibility criteria, a link to the grant application form will then be sent directly to the business, to complete and return along with all supporting documentation.

After the end date for submissions, all completed grant applications received will have a formal assessment alongside all supporting documents, as part of this competitive process, using a scoring criteria and applications will be presented at panel for approval.

Q7. The application is a competitively assessed process, how will this be achieved?

WCC have a scoring criteria for assessing the applications. This is to ensure all projects are assessed fairly.

Q8. Can the REPF be used to fund farm business diversification projects?

REPF can be used to fund farm diversification projects as long as those projects are not to purchase agricultural equipment and are classed as non-agricultural activities, such as creating event venues or farm tourism facilities, like accommodation, wedding venues and leisure facilities.

Q9. Would an existing farming business who is looking to diversify, need to set up a new company in order to be eligible for this fund? For example, setting up a separate company to run a farm café.

No, if you are an agricultural/farming business as long as your project is not classed as an agricultural project and is a diversification of your existing business, you do not need to set up a new company solely for this purpose.

Q10. The delivery window is very short. How do we accurately forecast timescales?

As part of the grant allocation process WCC will review and discuss expected delivery dates with the business, before issuing an offer agreement.

We do understand that plans can change from those set out in the initial forecasting depending on project activity. If a business expects any changes or slippage to delivery, they must notify WCC as soon as possible.

Any changes required to an approved project will need to be submitted in writing to WCC and approved before any further progress is made.

Q11. What does small and micro enterprise mean?

Micro and small enterprises can apply. Defining a micro or small business:

Turnover or balance sheet total	Headcount	Business size
Turnover less than £15 million, or balance sheet total less than £7.5 million.	Fewer than 50	Small
Turnover less than £1 million, or balance sheet does not exceed £500,000.	Fewer than 10	Micro

Relationships with other enterprises are also taken into account, when determining whether you or not you meet this criteria.

[Supplementary information: Small and Medium-sized Enterprises definition \(HTML\) - GOV.UK](#)



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Q12. What if I need to gain Landlord / Planning / Change of Use permission for my project to go ahead?

Please seek permission from your landlord or relevant local authority ASAP. If permissions are not in place at the time of application, any grant offer will be conditional based on the correct permissions being in place in time for the project to begin and be financially completed by 31/03/2026.