

## Funding Scoping Report – September 2021

**To identify suitable funding sources for the enhancement of Elford Jubilee Memorial Playground**



## Contents Page

	Page
<b>Funding Outline</b>	
Introduction .....	3
Summary .....	3
<b>Funding Pathway</b>	
Recommendations .....	4
Primary Funding Opportunities .....	4
Secondary Funding Opportunities .....	5
Recommended Grant Sources .....	5
The Next Steps .....	6
General Recommendations .....	7
Outcomes V Output .....	7
Needs-Assessment .....	8
Other Evidence .....	8
Feasibility and Project Rational .....	9
Other Project Considerations .....	9
<b>Funding Categories</b> .....	10
<b>Funding Options</b>	
Table A. Primary Funding Sources .....	11
Table B. Secondary Funding Sources .....	13
Table C. Social Investment Sources & Donations .....	14
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	16

## Funding Outline

### Introduction

Mike Deegan Consulting has been commissioned by Elford Parish Council to source external-funding towards the cost (approximately £85,000) of upgrading the Jubilee Memorial playground. This detailed assessment will identify all relevant or accessible grants/funding sources for the replacement of current furniture and equipment in the play area. The Parish Council already has CIL funds from a local housing development that should be available to contribute towards project costs.

Most of the play apparatus and furniture was installed approximately 20 years ago and is becoming excessively worn and starting to show its age. The Parish Council wishes to upgrade the play equipment and redesign the layout to provide more effective use of the playground space. In addition, there is scope to improve community-use of this village facility; particularly utilising the large oak-framed pavilion and outside catering/barbeque area. Another possible option is to re-instate access from the village school.

One quote has already been attained by the Parish Council (from Wickstead Leisure) and two others are being sought for the supply and installation of play equipment and safety surfacing.

### Summary

This initial Funding Report establishes the most relevant and accessible funding available. This information includes;

- Relevant accessible grants
- Total sums likely to be available
- Timescales required and an outline of funding criteria
- Supporting information & evidence required
- Steps necessary to reach application stage

The subsequent stage will be to prepare and submit the agreed grant applications & funding bids. This will include liaison with funders and provision of all necessary supporting evidence



## Funding Pathway

### Recommendations

#### Main Funding Opportunities

Given the availability of appropriate grants, securing adequate external funding to upgrade the Jubilee Memorial playground is extremely viable. This process will require a small package of two to three grant applications to the primary funding sources identified in Table A (see page 12). Few grants provide 100% project funding, so a number of successful grants can be used to meeting different match-funding requirements. Additionally, multiple funding bids provide greater certainty rather than relying solely on the successful outcome of a single source.

- **Primary Grants**

The Community Fund's *Reaching Communities* is the most compatible primary-grant to develop a bid around and should be the Parish Council's preferred grant. The playground project also meets the eligibility criteria of Severn Trent's *Community Fund*, although this has become an extremely popular and over-subscribed grant. Never the less, this grant might still also be considered, with an application made in tandem. This additional Severn Trent submission need not be too onerous if much of the information and supporting evidence has already been produced for the *Reaching Communities* grant bid. If both applications are successful, the Parish Council can simply accept its preferred grant and decline the other.

Of the four Landfill Communities Funds operating in Staffordshire, Elford unfortunately does not meet the stringent postcode eligibility of three of the four Community Funds; *Veolia*, *Enovert/Ibstock* or *Suez*. However, Derbyshire Environment Trust has confirmed that the playground is located within an eligible area for *Tarmac Landfill Communities Fund* (the nearest qualifying Tarmac operation is Alrewas Sand & Gravel Quarry, approx. 2.7 miles away). Derbyshire Environment Trust administers this Landfill Communities Fund on behalf of Tarmac and the fund usually allocates grants up to a maximum of £15,000-£20,000 (and up to 40% of total project costs). It is recommended that an application to The Community Fund's *Reaching Communities* (or Severn Trent's *Community Fund*) is synchronized with a match-funding application to the *Tarmac Landfill Communities Fund*.

- **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

A financial contribution to any funded project demonstrates genuine commitment on behalf of the applicant. Elford Parish Council is fortunate to have three instalments of CIL payments due from two developments in the village. Lichfield District Council has confirmed that the first instalment (£12,991) of this £51,965 will be transferred in April 2022. Part of this sum can be used as match-funding (or contributing third party payment) and hopefully negate the need for other direct financial input from the Parish Council.

### Secondary Funding Options

Given the availability of primary grants, it should not be necessary to pursue the other sources outlined in Table B or C (see pages 13 and 14). It is useful, however, to keep these funding sources in mind as a contingency. The main secondary source could be HS2's Community & Environment Fund, as the proposed HS2 line will pass to the west of the parish and there is the possibility of sourcing a grant due to local disruption during construction.

### Recommended Grant Sources

In summary, it is recommended that an application to the Community Fund's *Reaching Communities* forms the main current focus of funding applications (possibly with an application to Severn Trent's *Community Fund* running in tandem) and match-funded by a grant from Derbyshire Environment Trust

Recommended Primary Grant Sources			
	Grant Source	Approx. Value	Timescale – Funder's Decision Dates
1	The Community Fund's <i>Reaching Communities</i>	£57,000.00	A rolling programme
2	Severn Trent's <i>Community Fund</i> (an optional contingency application)		From June 2022
3	Derbyshire Environment Trust's <i>Tarmac Landfill Communities Fund</i>	£15,000.00*	From June 2022
4	<i>Community Infrastructure Levy</i> (via Lichfield District Council)	£13,000.00	Confirmed; From April 2022

\* Including 10% additional Contributing Third Party Payment cost (see page 12)

## The Next Steps

1. Elford Parish Council to consider the favoured grant sources outlined in this report.
2. The Parish Council to consider any further additions or adaption of the project to enhance overall outcomes (see page 7).
3. Elford Parish Council to finalise any outstanding supporting information and ensure that 'evidence of need' measures are sufficient. If required, the consultant can work with the Parish Council to help develop an action plan to meet grant criterion or community consultation measures.
4. The Parish Council to confirm the final total cost/s and budget required, plus evidence of any contractor's or suppliers quotes.
5. Elford Parish Council to proceed by submitting a main grant application to The Community Fund's *Reaching Communities* in parallel with a match-funding application to Derbyshire Environment Trust. An application to Severn Trent's *Community Fund* might also be considered as a contingency. A contribution from forthcoming CIL payments to be used as a contribution and match funding from Elford Parish Council.
6. The Parish Council can develop these bids itself or commission *Mike Deegan Consulting* to undertake this service.
7. Once submitted, the turn-around time with most grants of this size (from first enquiry to successful award of funding) is usually up to six months. Project delivery should be planned and be in place to ensure that the preferred contractors and suppliers are agreed upon and can start work as soon as possible after this date.



### **General Recommendations for Funding Applications**

Early liaison with funding organisations is always helpful in developing a working relationship with funding officers. This liaison process also helps to fully understand the requirements or nuances of each grant and what likely funding opportunities will be available. Many funding officers provide useful help and guidance throughout the process, particularly regarding supporting information and meeting their specific grant criteria. It is still crucial, however, that the project is planned as thoroughly as possible before grant applications are made. It can be frustrating for funding officers when they have to deal with applicant's uncertainty, chase-up on basic requirements or simply face organisations and projects that demonstrate a lack of preparedness.

For a project of this size, most funding applications and decisions should be completed within six months.

### **Outcomes V Output**

Grant eligibility criterion has become more discerning in recent years and funders are seeking more diverse benefits from capital projects. In particular, successful applicants increasingly need to demonstrate favourable long-term outcomes rather than regular or like-for-like benefits (output). For instance funders might wish to see one or more of the following: -

- Greater community use
- Additional health and well-being benefits
- Enhanced disabled access
- Increased participation from specific sectors of the community, such as the elderly, youth or BAME groups
- Evidence of sourcing environmentally-sustainable materials or use of eco-friendly building methods
- Green and energy-efficient installations or modifications

Where possible, it might sometimes be beneficial to diversify or adjust plans to adequately meet enough of the funders grant criteria. This refocus should not be viewed as a compromise to 'chase funding', but as a delicate balance, especially if the grant still helps achieve the main funding goal and is not leading the Parish Council in directions it does not want to go. Broadening the scope of a project can also provide great benefits and make schemes more attractive. Grant applications effectively function as a marketing exercise for your project or organisation to funders; so any unique or stand-out 'selling points' are usually a bonus. Modifications that demonstrate the beneficial outcomes (to meet eligibility criteria) and enhance the overall project will truly help make the grant application stand-out in increasingly competitive circumstances.

### **Needs-Assessment**

Providing sufficient *Evidence of Need* and undertaking community consultation is a crucial component of all funding criteria. Grant applications should draw on any such supporting information to justify the project to help fulfil this element of funding criterion.

Ideally this evidence is usually provided through a consultation exercise, survey or Neighbourhood Plan. These forms of engagement help to identify a community's priority needs - and most importantly will justify the necessity for continued and enhanced use of the playground to funders.

Grant applications should also draw on any other supporting information that might help validate the project in meeting funding criteria. Funders increasingly want to see evidence of a wide range of the local community using proposed facilities; particularly from specific demographic, socio-economic or ethnic backgrounds. Therefore any applications will need to demonstrate that this project meets the diverse needs of the local population, and not just a narrow user-group. The evidence of two new housing developments also indicates a growing village population, with an increase in young families and likely need for access to community amenities – this factor should be emphasised.

It will be particularly beneficial to indicate how community-use of this village facility might be utilised - especially by enhancing the outside catering/barbeque area and oak-framed pavilion for organised events and activities. Another possible option mentioned was re-instating access from the village school for greater use by pupils, while there is scope to plan for use by non-parishioners visiting the village for events or nearby attractions.

Any documented proof of support or endorsements will be greatly beneficial – particularly from user-groups, Elford community organisations or local stakeholders (such as District and County Councillors). As part of this exercise, it might also be possible to determine how usage of the playground can be enhanced by the project – especially if additional or potential users can be identified. Such a plan of action would help demonstrate how the Parish Council is being proactive and planning positive outcomes. Questions about future usage of the play area should form part an important element of any consultation exercise and help to positively inform both the project and funding applications.

### **Other Evidence**

Evidence demonstrating a lack of facilities and access to services in Elford, despite proximity to Tamworth and Lichfield, could be greatly significant. Service and facility poverty is a concern of many funders and utilising favourable demographic statistics or socio-economic data indicating this will be advantageous. Facts and data regarding proximity to the next nearest similar play facility will be helpful.

Funders increasingly want to see community initiatives that help address local health & well-being issues – both physical and mental. The importance that such a village facility might have played during Covid-19 lockdown, and more importantly, likely to perform in future should be highlighted.



### **Feasibility and Project Rational**

It will be valuable to explain how the playground developed through community initiative - using locally sourced materials and play equipment. Part of this story is the use and enjoyment that children and families have had over the past 20 years that has understandably led to wear and tear/deterioration. Likewise it will be necessary to demonstrate to funders the likely consequences of equipment not being replaced or updated. The current threat will include health and safety implications, loss of usage and unsustainable maintenance costs.

Applications should consider the rationale behind why the proposed play equipment and playground design been chosen. Funders might also want to know how well the playground is currently used and want reassurance regarding the project's long-term sustainability and future usage of the facility. For instance, how will the playground and its usage be maintained in the long-term, and if projected future use has been calculated (and how)?

Any rationale or proposals will need to demonstrate the durability of the materials being used and suitability of the chosen specification. It will also be necessary to provide at least three quotes for the work (showing the process of why and how successful contractors were chosen) with a breakdown of costs and specification details. The same requirement also applies to any major project supplies or materials the Parish Council purchases.



*Left. Weathered interpretation panel*

### **Other Project Considerations**

This project provides a funding opportunity to address amenities other than play facilities. As part of the Jubilee Memorial Playground's development, a series of interpretation panels and historic figures (on stone uprights) were created to provide a chronological history of the parish. As impressive as this material is, it is starting to look rather tired and lost behind the playground planting scheme. This is an ideal time for the Parish Council to sensitively consider whether it wishes to update this information and artwork or replace it completely with something completely new and innovative.

Another visible omission is the absence of any indication that Elford Parish Council manages the playground or clear signage of the play area's name. Funders prefer projects with attention-grabbing titles, or at the very least, a site location that will 'blow its own trumpet'. This project is an opportunity to emphasise the identity of this community facility and raise awareness of the Parish Council's role.

## Funding Categories

The funding sources are divided into three categories of priority: -

- I. Primary grant source - with a strong possibility of funding for this project
- II. Secondary grant source – possible alternatives or contingency sources, with but for smaller total grants or a lesser certainty of funding
- III. Social Investment sources - including loans, donations and crowdfunding campaigns. This does not include increased precept contributions.

Tables A - C provide the names of the key funds or sources identified, the maximum amount that can be awarded, general criteria of the grants and a relevant summary analysis in relation to the project (including opportunities, challenges and comments).



**Table A. Primary Funding Sources**

Grant	Amount	Criteria
<p><b>1. The Community Fund - Reaching Communities</b>  <a href="https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/reaching-communities-england#section-1">https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/reaching-communities-england#section-1</a></p>	<p>Up to <b>£100k</b></p>	<p>The larger of the two main Community Fund grants. It can fund up to £100k of capital costs for items such as small-scale refurbishment and equipment.                      Local authorities can apply.</p>
<p>Formerly the Big Lottery Fund, the Community Fund is one of up to six Lottery distributors - covering Heritage, Sports, Arts and Community. The grant process takes up to nine months from start to finish and the funding budget allocated for each county is based on its population.</p> <p>This funding is for projects that help people and communities most in need. All projects must address one or more of the following outcomes: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stronger communities, with more active citizens</li> <li>• Improved rural and urban environments, which local communities are better able to access and enjoy</li> <li>• Healthier and more active people and communities</li> </ul> <p>In order to support communities to thrive, the grant aims to build strong relationships in and across communities and improve the places and spaces that matter to communities. The Fund is looking for applicants with a good understanding of other activities and services in the community - plus how this project will compliment these and add value to what's already there. Community engagement and involvement is important – especially in the design, development and delivery of activities.</p>		
<p><b>2. Derbyshire Environment Trust - Tarmac Landfill Communities Fund</b>  <a href="https://www.entrust.org.uk/environmental-bodies/eb-detail/?eb=014033">https://www.entrust.org.uk/environmental-bodies/eb-detail/?eb=014033</a></p>	<p>Average award is £15k to £20k.</p>	<p>Projects should have all match funding in place</p>
<p>The Trust manages funds on behalf of Tarmac. Organisations can apply for funding for a wide range of community and environmental projects within 7 miles of a Tarmac waste, cement and lime or quarry operation (in addition to being within 10 miles of a licensed landfill site of any operator).</p> <p>Eligible project categories incorporate public amenities; such as providing, maintaining or improving a public park or other public amenity (including children's play areas). The project must focus on direct project works.</p>		

A complicating factor is that like most LCF Trusts, applicants incur an additional Contributing Third Party Payment cost (or CTP). This basically covers any shortfall to Tarmac for their contributions as tax credits. If Elford Parish Council’s application is successful, a CTP payment of 10% of the grant amount will be necessary to the landfill operator before the grant can be released. Therefore, if awarded £20k, the Parish Council will receive £18k and have to find the other CTP payment of £2k. Parish Councils can provide the outstanding CTP.

The Fund Committee usually meets four times a year. The next closing date for applications is 26th November 2021 for an anticipated decision in late February 2022. Subsequent committee meetings in 2022 will be; 1<sup>st</sup> March, 14<sup>th</sup> June and 12<sup>th</sup> September (with decisions three months later).

<p><b>3. Severn Trent Water - Community Fund</b>  <a href="https://www.stwater.co.uk/about-us/severn-trent-community-fund/">https://www.stwater.co.uk/about-us/severn-trent-community-fund/</a></p>	<p>Three sizes of grant - e medium level (<b>£10k - £75k</b>) is most relevant.</p>	<p>This grant will only fund projects located in the Severn Trent region (including Elford). Applications require at least 10% financial match funding.</p>
---	---	---

Between 2020-25, Severn Trent is providing £10 million in the Severn Trent region to support new projects that help make a tangible difference in their communities. The fund is overseen by a panel that reviews applications on a quarterly basis.

The Fund looks to promote schemes that seek to improve community wellbeing.

Of the three main themes, two include: -

- People: Projects that help people to lead a healthier life and gain new skills
- Places: Initiatives that help to create better places to live in and use

The Fund is looking for projects that are unique, have a genuine community need, and stand out as having a real impact on improving community wellbeing. The key criteria used to assess applications are projects that show a community need, are well-planned (with community involvement in the process), sustainable and provide value for money. Severn Trent will only welcome applications from projects where they are the lead funder – ideally contributing over 55% of the total cost. Applicants have to sign-up on the Severn Trent website to create an account and a profile for the project.

Their quarterly panels are held in March, June, September and December with approximately £500k allocated for distribution per quarterly meeting. An application would need to be submitted at least one month before the panel dates. The grant has so far proved particularly popular and extremely competitive.

Table B. Secondary Funding Sources

Grant	Amount	Criteria
<b>1. Community &amp; Environment Fund (CEF)</b> <a href="https://www.groundwork.org.uk/Sites/hs2funds/pages/Category/community-funds-hs2">https://www.groundwork.org.uk/Sites/hs2funds/pages/Category/community-funds-hs2</a>	Up to £75k	Government funding to offset the impact of construction of Phase One of HS2 on local communities and businesses. Applications are made through Groundwork.
<p>The Phase One route was divided into three regional areas with £15m allocated for the Central area including Staffordshire. The CEF grant will fund smaller projects and benefit quality of life for individual communities for schemes such as provision of enhanced or new community facilities. Local authority-led bids need a minimum 25% requirement for match contributions and grants can be used as match fund against grant applications to other funders.</p> <p>The fund is aimed at mitigating communities e demonstrably disrupted by construction, principally along the line of route of HS2, but also a small number of off-route locations disrupted e.g. due to relocation of railway facilities, and these communities will be eligible to apply to the Funds. Initiatives might include improved access/enhancements to public open space and provision of enhanced or new community facilities.</p>		
<b>2. Community Fund - Awards for All</b> <a href="https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/national-lottery-awards-for-all-england">https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/national-lottery-awards-for-all-england</a>	Up to 10K	An easily attainable alternative to the larger <i>Reaching Communities</i> Fund. It can pay for equipment and small capital projects.
<p>This is the smaller of the two relevant Lottery grants, providing up to 10K support for ‘what matters to people and communities’.</p> <p>It is a relatively easy grant to apply for and will fund organisations that: -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Bring people together and build strong relationships in and across communities</li> <li>II. Improve the places and spaces that matter to communities</li> </ol>		
<b>3. Screwfix Foundation</b> <a href="https://www.screwfix.com/help/screwfixfoundation/">https://www.screwfix.com/help/screwfixfoundation/</a>	Up to £5k	This is a small grant, but with a simple application process open to not for profit organisations.
<p>One of the grants two main criteria is that projects must relate to the repair, maintenance, improvement or construction of community facilities or buildings</p>		

**Table C. Social Investment Sources and Loans**

Source	Amount	Criteria
<b>1. Public Works Loan Board</b> <a href="https://www.dmo.gov.uk/responsibilities/local-authority-lending-pwlb/">https://www.dmo.gov.uk/responsibilities/local-authority-lending-pwlb/</a>	N/A	PWLB lends to Town and Parish Councils. Its function is to lend money from National Loans Fund to local authorities, and collect the repayments.
<p>The PWLB provides loans to local authorities, primarily for capital projects. Two types of loan according to interest rate are available from the Board: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fixed rate loans, on which the rate of interest is fixed for the life of the loan and interest is payable at half-yearly intervals</li> <li>• Variable rate loans, on which the rate of interest is variable at one, three or six monthly intervals. The interval is at the choice of the borrower but once chosen remains the same for the life of the loan</li> </ul> <p>The fees payable by local authorities in respect of advances from the Board are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fixed rate loans - 35p for every £1k</li> <li>• Variable rate loans - 45p for every £1k</li> </ul>		
<b>2. Charity Bank</b> <a href="https://charitybank.org/">https://charitybank.org/</a>	From <b>£50k</b> up to <b>£3.5m</b>	Charity Bank supports Parish Councils. It is owned by charitable foundations, Trusts & social purpose organisations.
<p>Charity Bank lends to social enterprises and other organisations where the loan is being used for a social purpose. It offers competitively priced loans, an understanding of community group work, tailored terms and a team of regional managers to help.</p>		
<b>3. Crowdfunding</b> <a href="https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/">https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/</a>	<b>No upper limit</b>	This is an investment fund raised via an online platform. It is not secured against any asset (building/equipment).
<p>Crowdfunding is the practice of funding a project by raising small amounts of money from a large number of people - typically via the Internet and in particular social media to talk to thousands of potential funders. It is a form of crowd-sourcing and raising finance through donations.</p> <p>Those seeking funds set up a website profile of their project and then use social media, alongside traditional networks of friends, family and work acquaintances, to raise money. It is usually run as a campaign and the process can take time and effort to set up or maintain. However, it has proved extremely rewarding for hundreds of community projects. Crowdfunding schemes also provide an excellent source of core funding for organisations managing projects.</p> <p>There are a number of platforms that help facilitate campaigns, one of the popular with community projects being Crowdfunder.co.uk, who also run an affiliated Crowdfund scheme through Staffordshire County Council for not-for-profit organisations (<a href="https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/funds/staffordshire">https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/funds/staffordshire</a>). The most relevant form for this project is Donation or Reward Crowdfunding. People invest simply because they believe in the cause. Rewards can be offered, such as tickets to an</p>		



event, regular news updates or engraved *Benefactors Items* in a new facility. Donors have a social or personal motivation for putting their money in and expect nothing back, except perhaps to feel good about helping the project.

**4. Donations and Fundraising**

<https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/funding/fundraising/individual-giving/local-and-community-fundraising#>

No upper limit

Raising donations demonstrates local community support.

The first call for a local community project is often its stakeholders via local fundraising. Raising donations from users demonstrates community backing and provides an invaluable source of core-funding to match against external grants.

Most Parish Councils excel at innovative ways to raise local funds and donations. Methods may include raising money through special activities, social events & sponsorship.



*Above: Deterioration of facilities.*

## Report Conclusion

This Funding Report outlines the best funding sources available to enable the project for the replacement of playground equipment and redesign of this community facility to proceed.

The evidence of grants provided demonstrates that funding is achievable and the project is certainly viable. The report also outlines the measures necessary to undertake and it presents an achievable pathway forward to secure external financial support.

Elford Parish Council can decide to undertake these funding applications by itself or commission Mike Deegan Consulting to develop and submit the grant bids on its behalf.



Above: Gate to village school.



Wooden throne