

## Cabinet

- Date and Time - **Monday 5 September 2022 – 6:30pm**
- Venue - **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Bexhill-on-Sea**
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### **Councillors appointed to the Committee:**

Councillor D.B. Oliver (Leader), S.M. Prochak, MBE, C.A. Bayliss, T.J.C. Byrne, K.P. Dixon, K.M. Field, A.K. Jeeawon, H.L. Timpe and J. Vine-Hall.

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## **AGENDA**

1. **MINUTES**

To authorise the Leader to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2022 as a correct record of the proceedings.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

3. **ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS**

To consider such other items as the Leader decides are urgent and due notice of which has been given to the Head of Paid Service by 9:00am on the day of the meeting.

4. **URGENT DECISIONS**

The Leader to give details of those reports that have been referred to the Chairman of the Council to consider designating as urgent, in accordance with Rule 17 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules contained within Part 4 of the Council Constitution, and to which the call-in procedure will not therefore apply.

5. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

To receive any disclosure by Members of personal and disclosable pecuniary interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the Member regards the personal interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct. Members are reminded of the need to repeat their declaration immediately prior to the commencement of the item in question.

6. **COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME - ROUND 1** (Pages 3 - 16)

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At the discretion of the Leader, the order of the items set out in the agenda may be varied

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**Rother District Council putting residents at the heart of everything we do.**

7. **VILLAGE HALLS ENERGY PROJECT** (Pages 17 - 22)
8. **DISPOSAL OF LAND AT BLACKFRIARS, BATTLE** (Pages 23 - 28)

Malcolm Johnston  
Chief Executive

Agenda Despatch Date: 25 August 2022

## Rother District Council

**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date:** 5 September 2022

**Title:** Community Grants Scheme – Round 1

**Report of:** Director – Place and Climate Change

**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Dixon

**Ward(s):** All

**Purpose of Report:** To present and recommend approval of Community Grants applications for Round 1, 2022/23

**Decision Type:** Non-Key

### Officer

**Recommendation(s):** It be **RESOLVED**: That:

- 1) the community grants detailed within Appendix A, as recommended by the Grants Panel be approved, subject to specific conditions relating to each application;
- 2) a fund of £15,000 ringfenced from the Community Grants Scheme budget be approved for the Rother Reduce, Reuse and Recycle scheme for 2023/24; and
- 3) all Members be requested to promote the round 2 Community Grants scheme within their Wards.

### Introduction

1. The Council's Community Grants Scheme (CGS) makes provision for up to £130,000 per annum to be made available to community groups or organisations that meet the grants criteria of Rother District Council's (RDC) CGS.

### Community Grants

2. The Community Grants Panel has delegated authority to award grants up to £1,000. One application was awarded in Round 1 for these small grants to The Archive Resource Centre for £1,000.
3. Round 1 of the Rother CGS for 2022/23 closed on 30 June 2022. Five applications were received requesting £65,435 in total. The Panel met on 28 July 2022 and have recommended awards for five applications.
4. Cabinet is asked to consider the following applications for funding from the Council's CGS as set out in Table 1 (each application is summarised in Appendix A):

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Amount requested</b>	<b>Amount recommended</b>
1. Brede Parish Council	£11,000	£11,000
2. Fairlight Parish Council	£5,060	£5,060
3. Northiam Village Hall	£10,500	£10,500
4. Rye Harbour Sailability	£8,875	£8,875
5. Winchelsea Beach Community Association	£30,000	£30,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£65,435</b>	<b>£65,435</b>

Table 1: Grants Panel recommendations

5. Should Cabinet agree with the Panel's recommendation to award the applications as set out above, this will result in a maximum of £65,435 being awarded in Round 1. This leaves £59,565 for grants for the Round 2, 2022/23 opening on 1 October 2022 and closing 15 December 2022 (£5,000 is ring-fenced each year for the small community grants scheme).
6. Members are reminded that conditions are applied when awarding the grants which include that full funding is obtained in advance of any Rother payments being made and that RDC is acknowledged in any publicity and promotional material associated with these projects. Other specific conditions will also be applied to grants as appropriate.

### **Small Grants Scheme**

7. Members are reminded that small grant applications are accepted all year round. Applicants are encouraged to make applications through the online application process. Support and advice can be accessed through Rother Voluntary Action (RVA) and it is recommended applicants contact RVA before the submission of an application. A balance of £4,000 remains for applications for 2022/23.
8. It should be noted that all applications are to be driven by community support, and need to have an element of match funding, whether their own contributions or at least funding applications submitted to the total value of the project. This is to demonstrate it is fully costed, funded and ready to go. Applicants are strongly encouraged to seek funding from Parish and Town Councils.
9. Further information is available via the CGS section of the Council's website: <https://www.rother.gov.uk/benefits-grants-and-funding/community-grants-scheme/>

### **The Rother Reduce, Reuse and Recycle 2023 Scheme**

10. The proposed Rother Reduce, Reuse and Recycle Grants scheme offers funding to Parish and Town Councils and properly constituted community groups and charities who are committed to helping the Rother District to Reduce, Reuse and Recycle and meet its environmental aims. Funding can be granted for a variety of projects and activities including workshops, practical equipment, education and awareness raising.
11. It is proposed that RDC match funds, pound for pound, relevant expenditure to a limit of £1,000 of grant funding per application. A total fund of £15,000 is

recommended and would be allocated on a first come, first served basis. A scheme guidance and application questions (online application form) are attached at Appendix B for consideration.

## **Conclusion**

12. Members are requested to consider the applications attached at Appendix A and be mindful of the clear benefits these offer to their communities. The CGS offers a robust assessment process that benefits communities applying for grants and secures considerable additional value for money benefits for the Council.
13. Members are requested to consider that a fund of £15,000 be ringfenced for supporting the Rother Reduce, Reuse and Recycle Grants scheme for 2023/24 leaving £110,000 available for the Medium and Large Grants Scheme and that delegated authority be granted to the Community Grants Panel to approve grants up to the value of £1,000.

## **Rother Community Lottery Update**

14. The first draw took place at the end of April 2022, with 56 organisations on board. This exceeded our initial target of 40 organisations. Gatherwell, our Lottery Provider, has commended the Council on its successful lottery launch, and are using Rother District Council (RDC) as a good example case study.
15. Lottery sales dipped as expected after Week 5 but are now steadily increasing back towards the first draw levels. We now have 68 causes signed up and over 625 players for the current draw. £2,175 has been awarded in prizes, with five lucky people winning £250. 357 '3 extra tickets' have been won.
16. After 17 weeks, approximately £12,000 has been facilitated by the Rother Community Lottery, with £7,000 of this sum to the various good causes. £75 of prize money has been donated back to the cause supported.
17. If ticket sales remain steady (same number, same cause), the potential annualised income facilitated to the various good causes is approximately £23,500, with a further £17,000 of income to RDC.

## **Financial Implications**

18. The assessment and monitoring system for Community Grants will mitigate the financial and reputation risks associated with handing over grant finance. The Council attaches specific conditions to grant applications to mitigate risk.

## **Environmental Implications**

19. All community grant applications request environmental considerations to be noted.

## **Risk Implications**

20. We are often at the hands of voluntary groups to the amount of time, effort and other financial support they can commit to their projects. This is mitigated

by the good working relationships that exist across the district, and the support provided by RVA.

<b>Other Implications</b>	<b>Applies?</b>	<b>Other Implications</b>	<b>Applies?</b>
Human Rights	No	Equalities and Diversity	No
Crime and Disorder	No	External Consultation	No
Environmental	Yes	Access to Information	No
Risk Management	Yes	Exempt from publication	No

Chief Executive:	Malcolm Johnston
Report Contact:	Nicola Mitchell – Corporate Programme and Projects Officer
e-mail address:	<a href="mailto:Nicola.mitchell@rother.gov.uk">Nicola.mitchell@rother.gov.uk</a>
Appendices:	Appendix A - Community Grants Round 1 2022-23 Summary Appendix B – Rother Reduce, Reuse and Recycle Community Grants application and criteria
Relevant Previous Minutes:	CB08/115
Background Papers:	None.
Reference Document:	None.

## **Rother Community Grants Summary of Applications – Round 1, 2022/23**

### **1. Brede Parish Council**

Total cost of project: £22,000 (net VAT)

Funding secured: £11,000

Funding shortfall: £11,000

Amount requested: £11,000

Percentage of total project costs requested: 50%

Funding shortfall if full grant approved: nil

#### Applicant and Grant Request Details

The applicant is Brede Parish Council.

The grant will be used for providing a new piece of multi-purpose play equipment 'Captain Mannering' for the recreation ground, suitable for several children to play together, with a variety of experiences contained within it. This is the second phase of the project following the installation of swings partly funded by a Rother Community Grant in 2021.

#### Benefits

The Parish Council has been aware for several years that the play provision is very limited and has received many requests to update the provision and range of equipment to interest and excite the children.

Children between the age of 3-10 will benefit from the upgrade of equipment, getting those additional minutes of daily physical activity, recommended to keep them fit and healthy, as well as the wider community, allowing families time to socialise together, supporting their own mental health and well-being.

Councillors have carefully considered the needs of the Parish. While a more disability friendly piece of equipment could be purchased, it does not have the depth and variety of play experiences as the Captain Mannering, which itself can be accessed in part, with some help, to those with some mobility issues. The Council has not been made aware of a greater need for disability accessible equipment for the moment but will strive to consider all needs as new equipment is considered and purchased. There is a bucket swing currently provided.

#### Support for the Project

The school has noted how the recreation ground is an integral part of the Brede Community and how the children and families regularly make use of the play equipment before and after school. It has welcomed the opportunity to be part of the consultation process for the new equipment as the children were incredibly disappointed when the pirate ship had to be dismantled following the annual playground check.

The children of Broad Oak Primary school were asked to contribute their wishes and ideas for the recreation ground, and almost 100 responses were received with drawings of their ideas with many requests for slides, climbing walls, scramble nets and more.

Councillor Maynard has provided his support for the project, as have other Members of the Parish who have emailed their ideas and suggestions following a request made in the Parish newsletter.

#### Project Sustainability

Brede Parish Council pays yearly for inspections, and maintenance is carried out as required to ensure play equipment is in good working order and passes any regulations required and is included within the Parish Council's revenue budget.

#### Funding Details

The applicant is contributing £11,000 towards the project. Should the grant be successful this will be acknowledged by way of an article in the Parish newsletter, plus a news items on the Parish website and on local social media.

#### Environmental Considerations

The mulch surface is made from recycled rubber. The company that has been proposed to install the equipment has environmental, sustainable policies. The equipment has been chosen for its expected lifetime and is made from wood.

#### Panel observations and recommendation:

The panel noted that accessibility is key and needs to be in place.

Grant £11,000, subject to standard conditions and:

- a) That consideration be given to creating an accessibility path to the play equipment in the future project development.

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## **2. Fairlight Parish Council**

Total cost of project: £10,120 (excluding VAT)

Funding secured: £5,060

Funding shortfall: £5,060

Amount requested: £5,060

Percentage of total project costs requested: 50%

Funding shortfall if full grant approved: nil

#### Applicant and Grant Request Details

The applicant is Fairlight Parish Council who wish to provide new playground equipment and appropriate safety matting for the younger and less able children who live in Fairlight or who visit the village.

#### Benefits

This project will make a great difference to the children and parents within Fairlight and surrounding communities. Facilities would be available for all ages in the playground and would be more inclusive for the under 5's and less able who have not been provided for in the past. The proposed equipment includes a wheelchair accessible train.

Parents/carers will be able to bring younger children to a safe fenced area with other siblings and let them enjoy the facilities provided together. It has been observed that the demographics of the community are changing, and more families are moving to



the village. It has also been observed that the recreation ground and play area usage has increased as people want to spend more time outdoors.

The current playground is situated on the recreation ground which is either accessed via a tarmac with a concrete path and wide gate for wheelchairs, buggies, prams etc. or via the car park and across the recreation ground. From the car park a new wider access has recently been provided including a new short concrete path.

#### Support for the Project

District Councillors Roger Bird and Andrew Mier are in support of the project, along with the Fairlight Nursery and Playgroup and the St Peter's Church's Teddy's Group who will have age-appropriate playground equipment to use as part of the main recreation ground. Local families have also provided their support.

#### Project Sustainability

The equipment and matting proposed is very low maintenance and any running costs and annual equipment checks will be provided by Fairlight Parish Council.

#### Funding Details

The Parish Council is contributing £5,060 towards the project. Should the grant application be successful, this will be acknowledged by placing articles on the Parish Council's website and newsletter. Other acknowledgements would be in the village magazine, community website, local press and at the site of the playground.

#### Environmental Considerations

The proposed equipment is either made from sustainable pressure treated timber or 100% HDPE recycled plastic, both of which are maintenance free. Rubber safety matting, made from recycled rubber, is also being provided for the apparatus rather than playground bark chips. This matting will be low maintenance and will not require topping up on an annual basis like the bark chippings. This will save trees being used for the chippings and reduce other pollutants in the production and transportation of the chippings. In addition, chemicals will not need to be used to remove weeds etc. which would grow in chippings.

Any materials to be removed from the site such as soil etc. will be done by the contractor and be reused.

#### Panel recommendation:

Grant £5,060, subject to standard grant conditions.

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### **3. Northiam Village Hall Trust**

Total cost of project: £21,500

Funding secured: £11,000

Funding shortfall: £10,500

Amount requested: £10,500

Percentage of total project costs requested: 49%

Funding shortfall if full grant approved: nil

#### Applicant and Grant Request Details

Northiam Village Hall Trust is a registered charity with the aim to ensure that Northiam Village Hall shall be held upon trust for the use of the inhabitants of the Parish of

Northiam, including use for meetings, lectures and classes and for other forms of recreation and leisure-time occupation with the object of improving the conditions of life for the said inhabitants.

The applicant wishes to convert an existing storage area into a meeting room, requiring the provision of an inclusive external access ramp, new accessible width entrance door, upgrading of existing WC facilities plus the upgrading of heating, lighting, flooring and decoration.

### Benefits

The applicant has observed that the current meeting room is increasingly being booked by small exercise groups as an alternative to the larger and more expensive main hall. This has led to booking clashes with local social groups requiring the room for their needs.

The Trust Committee has identified an area currently being used for random storage that could be upgraded to create a suitable additional meeting room with a dedicated external entrance. The new meeting space will have its own accessible entrance, with a turning point at the top of the ramp.

This project would provide additional facilities to enable both small exercise classes and local group and society meetings to be held concurrently. The additional space would also result in a quicker room set up for local groups as the current set up entails the regular removal and replacement of the large meeting room table and chairs.

### Support for the Project

District Councillors Ganly and Mooney have provided their support for this project along with Northiam Parish Council and community groups who use the hall.

### Project Sustainability

If the grant were successful, maintenance and running costs would be maintained by the Northiam Village Hall Trust via increased meeting room booking revenue.

### Funding Details

The applicant is contributing £10,000, with the Parish Council awarding £1,000. This leaves a shortfall of £10,500 (nil if full award requested granted).

If successful, the applicant will acknowledge the contribution by including within the village hall newsletter and website plus a plaque in the meeting room.

### Environmental Considerations

Additional insulation will be applied where appropriate. The heating will be controlled by the computerised booking system to ensure energy is matched to the room usage. The existing fluorescent lighting is to be replaced with low consumption LED lighting controlled by movement sensors. A strong preference will be given to the employment of local trades people.

### Panel recommendation:

Grant £10,500, subject to standard grant conditions, and:

- a) That environmental upgrades are considered in conjunction with recommendations of energy site assessments under the RDC Village Halls Energy Project if participating.
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#### **4. Rye Harbour Sailability**

Total cost of project: £17,750

Funding secured: £5,300

Funding shortfall: £12,450

Amount requested: £8,875

Percentage of total project costs requested: 50%

Funding shortfall if full grant approved: £3,575

##### Applicant and Grant Request Details

Rye Harbour Sailability (RHS) is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation with the aim to provide or assist with the provision of facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation or other leisure time activities for people who have need of such facilities by reason of their disabilities and with the object of improving their conditions of life. RHS is a small but established charity with 45 members and has regular sailors.

The applicant wishes to purchase a stable adapted dinghy to enable people with disabilities to sail at Rye Harbour as a replacement to a dinghy that was a second-hand gift to RHS when they were established in 2017. This vessel is now coming to the end of its life.

##### Benefits

The main people who will benefit are people with disabilities such as autism, dementia, schizoaffective disorder, mild mobility issues, special needs, Cerebral Palsy, Fibromyalgia and Multiple Sclerosis for example.

RHS takes people with disabilities out sailing at Rye Harbour under the watchful eye of a Royal Yachting Association (RYA) Senior Instructor. The charity is run entirely by volunteers who give up their time and share their skills to run Sailability sailing days once or twice a month from April to October.

The vessel that is being replaced has a heavy lifting keel that only the strongest of crew can lift. This restricts the number of volunteers who can crew for that dinghy. The proposed new dinghy will correct this imbalance as well as ensure that they can keep taking people with disabilities out sailing. To be able to take the 10 regular sailors sailing over a tide, two reliable sailing dinghies are required. With only one boat, if sailors, because of the nature of their disabilities, they must wait too long in between sails and this can be frustrating for them. There are restrictions due to the tides at Rye Harbour and so have a limited time to sail at each event.

##### Support for the Project

Testimonials for the project have been received from existing users of the facilities, noting the freedom the events provide; a break from the routine and opportunity to meet other people and how accommodating and understanding the volunteers are.

The project has received support from the Mayor of Rye, Rotary Club of Rye and Winchelsea and Rye Harbour Discovery Centre and other local groups.

District Councillors Hacking and Osborne have provided their support. Icklesham Parish Council is supportive of RHS and will consider a grant application in September 2022.

### Project Sustainability

The ongoing maintenance costs will be met by RHS, through membership fees and fees for sails. The group's profile has been raised in the local area by holding events at different venues within the local area. At each event new people are met who are interested in volunteering their help, resulting in a dedicated and increased regular volunteer sailors and other support.

### Funding Detail

The applicant is contributing £2,800. The applicant has successfully received £2,500 from Little Cheyne Court Wind Farm Fund. A funding application is due to be considered by Icklesham Parish Council in September 2022. The applicant has a detailed funding plan for the £3,575 shortfall to be raised by December 2022 should the grant be approved of £8,875. This includes an Opera Night in October 2022 (in 2021, this raised £2,000) and a quiz and film night (in 2021, this raised £1,000).

Should the grant be successful, this will be acknowledged on the RHS website and social media. They would be happy to add RDC as a sponsor of RHS on their website.

### Environmental Considerations

The sailing vessel planned to be purchased is built by the company that designed it. It is planned to purchase an electric outboard for the boat rather than a petrol run outboard. The existing vessel will be disposed of with due consideration to the environment by sorting the different materials that make up the dinghy.

### Panel recommendation:

Grant £8,875, subject to standard grant conditions and:

- a) Confirmation of successful funding from Icklesham Parish Council.
- b) Confirmation of funding for £3,575 shortfall.

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## **5. Winchelsea Beach Community Association**

Total cost of project: £86,000

Funding secured: £25,000

Funding shortfall: £61,000

Amount requested: £30,000

Percentage of total project costs requested: 35%

Funding shortfall if full grant approved: £30,000

### Applicant and Grant Request Details

Winchelsea Beach Community Association (WBCA) is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation set up to secure the existence of the established Winchelsea Beach Community Hall to provide events and activities for the local community.

In 2021, the applicant was granted planning permission for a single floor extension to the front of the Community Hall which will be used to upgrade the toilet facilities to include an accessible toilet with baby changing facilities. Included in the design is a ramped accessibility and wider front doors.

The grant request is to part-fund this extension.

### Benefits

The ramped access and wider entrance to the Community Hall will make entering the building safer and easier for all members of the community.

Events and classes, such as chair based pilates, baby sensory, coffee mornings, dances and craft fairs are well attended but the stepped and narrow entrance makes all events at the hall difficult to access by wheelchair users, less mobile people and adults with pushchairs.

The current toilet used by the disabled is tiny and does not meet current standards. The toilet areas have not been updated since the 1980s. The addition of an accessible toilet with baby changing facilities will be an encouraging addition to improve the inclusivity to the building as noted on the aims and objectives of the WCBA.

The proposed works will widen the group of people in the community promoting physical and mental wellbeing.

It is planned to use a part of the extension to store items such as tables out of the main hall and increase the amount of space that can be utilised by groups.

### Support for the Project

District Councillor Lizzie Hacking has provided her support for this application, noting how this worthwhile project will make a positive difference to the Hall which is already an important part of the village. Several community groups and Icklesham Parish Council support the project.

### Project Sustainability

The ongoing maintenance will be completed by the WBCA management committee, through revenue raised and is included within their budgets each year.

### Funding Details

The applicant is contributing £25,000. A funding application has been made to the National Lottery Community Fund for £30,000. Icklesham Parish Council is due to consider grant applications in September 2022. This leaves a shortfall of £30,000 (nil if full grant is awarded).

Should the grant be successful, this will be acknowledged on the Winchelsea Beach Village Hall website and social media.

### Environmental Considerations

The applicant will be using local suppliers and builders to complete this project and aims to use the eco-friendliest methods and fittings that the budget allows.

### Panel recommendation:

Grant £30,000, subject to standard grant conditions, and:

- a) Confirmation of successful funding from the National Lottery Community Fund.
- b) Confirmation of successful funding from Icklesham Parish Council.
- c) That environmental upgrades are considered in conjunction with recommendations of energy site assessments under the RDC Village Halls Energy Project if participating.

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**ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL  
REDUCE, RE-USE AND RECYCLE  
GRANTS SCHEME 2023/24 GUIDANCE**



The Rother Reduce, Reuse, Recycling Grant offers funding to community groups and charities who are committed to helping the Rother District to Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. If you have an idea that helps to inspire others to be thoughtful about waste, the grant could help you get equipment or resources.

Funding can be granted for a variety of projects and activities including workshops, practical equipment, education and awareness raising. This can be anything from swap shop events to repair workshops, community gardens (which make use of reused, reclaimed, or recycled materials), to food growing, food waste reduction initiatives and composting schemes.

The grant pot is set at a maximum of £15,000 and will be awarded on a first come, first served basis. The maximum number of grants has not been set.

1. To receive funding, groups must be a properly constituted community group, charity, Parish or Town Council within the Rother District and show they have a bank account in place to process the grant.
2. The fund will open on 1 April 2023. The closing date for this Grants scheme is when all funds have been allocated or 31 March 2024, whichever is sooner.
3. Projects must request no more than £1,000 funding and be for no more than 50% of eligible costs.
4. Applications will be considered on their own merit as they are received by the Council and applicants will be notified of the decision within 14 days of receipt.
5. All projects must demonstrate a clear link to reduce, reduce and/or recycle.
6. Applications with missing information or without quotes will not be considered.
7. Funding cannot be awarded for wages or expenses to staff who may be involved either directly or indirectly with the project.
8. All projects must, in some way, acknowledge Rother District Council's contribution.
9. If successful, the grant must be claimed within 12 months of the notification of award.
10. The grant will be paid once evidence is provided that all funding is in place and payments have been made that match, as a minimum, the amount Rother District Council is putting into the project.
11. The Council reserves the right to amend these guidance notes and the assessment criteria.

The application form can be found on our website at: <https://www.rother.gov.uk/benefits-grants-and-funding/community-grants-scheme/>

# **Rother Reduce, Reuse and Recycle 2023 Grants Scheme** **Application**

## **About your organisation**

Organisation name:

Contact name:

Position in organisation:

Your address:

Email:

Phone number:

Website:

How would you describe your organisation? *(select from drop down list)*

Do you have a formal structure? *(upload)\* (if not unable to proceed, refer to RVA for support)*

Please summarise the main aims and objectives of your organisation:

Bank account details:

## **About your application**

1. What is the name of your project/event?
2. When do you expect your project to start and finish?
3. Is your project taking place at your organisation's correspondence address?  
*Yes, if no select address*
4. Please detail the project proposed to be funded \*
5. Please outline how your project will Reduce, Reuse and/or Recycle? \*
6. Please detail what difference this will make and how the project will benefit the local community by reducing/reusing and/or recycling \*
7. If your request is for an ongoing project, how will this be led and funded in the future?
8. Please provide evidence of support from local community groups and those who will benefit from your project *(upload)\* letters/consultation/questionnaires*
9. Do you have written (including email) observations from the RDC Ward Member where your project is taking place? *(upload)\* (unable to proceed if no)*

## **Costs and Funding**

10. Are you able to reclaim VAT? *yes/no*
  - a. What is the cost of the project excluding/including VAT?
11. How much are you requesting from Rother District Council? *\*maximum £1,000 / 50%*
12. How much has your organisation committed to the project?
13. Do you have other sources of funding? *yes/no*
  - a. Please list other sources of funding
  - b. Please provide evidence of other sources of funding *(upload)*
14. Please provide a clear project budget which sets out each cost identified to complete your project. *\*(upload)*
15. Please provide quotes for all elements of the project *\*(upload)*

My files are too large to upload to this form: I will email to [communitygrants@rother.gov.uk](mailto:communitygrants@rother.gov.uk).  
Tick

## **Submit**



## Rother District Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date:</b>	5 September 2022
<b>Title:</b>	Village Halls Energy Project
<b>Report of:</b>	Director - Place and Climate Change
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Field
<b>Ward(s):</b>	All
<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	To present details of the Village Halls Energy Project, with a view to gain approval to progress the project to both assessment and installation phases, as per the prioritisation process detailed herein, assigning the £500,000 as awarded by the Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy Allocations Panel.
<b>Decision Type:</b>	Key
<b>Officer Recommendation(s):</b>	<b>Recommendation to COUNCIL:</b> That the Village Halls Energy Project be included in the Council's Capital Programme with a budget of £500,000, to be funded from ring-fenced Community Infrastructure Levy strategic funding.

### AND

It be **RESOLVED**: That:

- 1) subject to Full Council approval, delegated authority be granted to the Director – Place and Climate Change to accept the £500,000 grant from the Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy, for the purposes of delivering this project; and
- 2) delegated authority be granted to the Director – Place and Climate Change to procure the contractor/s required for both the assessment and installation phases and enter into any other contracts as necessary for the completion of the project works.

### Introduction

1. At the Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy Allocations Panel's first meeting on 26 April 2022, infrastructure projects were identified to be invited to apply for Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding. Projects identified by the Council's Climate Change Steering Group were invited to apply to the Climate Emergency Bonus Fund (CEBF), a sub-fund established to support either in part or whole infrastructure projects which can demonstrate that they will make a significant contribution to the reduction of carbon emissions.

2. The Village Halls Energy Project aims to reduce the carbon footprints of Village and Community Halls across Rother by reducing their consumption of oil and gas, and decreasing electricity drawn from the national grid. An application for £500,000 from the CIL CEBF was submitted in June 2022. This was approved at the Strategic CIL Allocations Panel in July 2022.

### **The importance of Village Halls**

3. Village Halls provide extensive economic, social and cultural benefits to our communities. Section 12.36 of the Rother Local Plan Core Strategy details the pivotal role that Village Halls play in Village Community life, the importance of their protection and the Council's ongoing commitment to provision for new, extended or refurbished facilities.
4. The Council declared a Climate emergency in Rother in November 2019 and has committed to become a carbon neutral district by 2030. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change ([IPCC](#)) [reported in 2022](#) that the impact of current levels of global warming, which they have high confidence will reach the 1.5 degree limit of the Paris Agreement between 2030 and 2052, will persist for centuries, if not millennia. An overshoot of a 1.5 degree rise can only be achieved if CO2 emissions begin to decline in advance of 2030. Engagement with Village Halls has identified that many are ageing or otherwise inefficient buildings with high energy costs and therefore expected high levels of emissions - particularly those fuelled by oil. These venues must be decarbonised to meet the Council's net-zero target of 2030 and protect the future of the planet.
5. Climate change brings more extreme weather, including hotter, drier summers and wetter, stormier winters. In the face of increasingly probable severe weather events, the Council must also consider the potential for increased reliance on Rest Centres. Ensuring those halls designated as Rest Centres can operate when connection to the National Grid fails is of growing importance, and the Council must move away from using emergency diesel generators to sustainable, renewable energy generation in order to align with the net-zero pledge for Rother.
6. The Centre for Research into Energy Demand Solutions' (CREDS) [place-based carbon calculator](#) shows emissions from cars in Rother are almost 20% higher than the national average - a reflection of the rural nature of our district and limited public transport. A blueprint of public EVCP infrastructure in East Sussex developed by Urban Foresight in March 2022 detailed only six existing public Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCPs) in Rother. Whilst projects to improve EVCP provision are in progress, they focus largely on urban areas. Rural residents, particularly those with a lack of in-curtilage parking, currently face a long wait for the opportunity to de-carbonise their personal vehicles. Some Village Halls could be ideally placed to provide a rural EVCP resource for their community.

### **Rother Village Hall provision and engagement**

7. A review of the definition and provision of Village Halls has been undertaken by the Environment Projects Officer, in consultation with Action Rural Sussex. The agreed definition of "Village Halls" and halls considered eligible for this project is as follows:

*Any charitable community facility whose primary purpose is to provide a venue for hire to the local community for economic, social and cultural purposes. Other venues which offer general hire however have a primary responsibility to a sub-section of the community, such as Scout/Guide huts, Sports Clubs and Church Halls, have been excluded from the scope of this project in the most part, with an exception for those which fall into Parish Council areas where there is no alternative community venue that fulfils the definition of “Village Hall”.*

8. Through direct engagement with hall committees, 40 halls have been confirmed eligible for this project, 37 of which have already confirmed their desire to participate in principle. Efforts have been made to ensure at least one hall in every Parish Council area of Rother is invited to participate, however, to date, no eligible venues have been identified in the areas of Bodiam and Rye Foreign. The only identified eligible venue in Ashburnham and Penthurst has declined to participate.

### **Project outputs and outcomes**

9. During Phase 1 of the project, site assessments will be completed to generate a bespoke report for all halls, prioritising measures for energy efficiency and decarbonisation in line with the energy hierarchy “Lean, Clean and Green”, taking a whole buildings approach:
  - Lean – increasing energy efficiency of the buildings themselves, for example through improved insulation, draft proofing or replacement doors and windows.
  - Clean – improving and decarbonising energy systems within the building, for example replacing oil / gas systems with more efficient or electric alternatives, low energy LED lighting, water saving taps and toilets and Smart meters / thermostats.
  - Green – considering feasibility for renewables, such as solar panels and batteries, and EVCPs.
10. The proposals will be reviewed and prioritised based on a range of factors approved by the Climate Change Steering Group on 26 June 2022:
  - a) potential emissions reduction with priority for halls relying on oil;
  - b) how regularly each hall is used by the community;
  - c) cost and payback timeframes;
  - d) whether the hall is a designated Rest Centre; and
  - e) accessibility of the hall.
11. A target date of March 2023 has been set to confirm and prioritise the best range of measures for installation which fall within the budget of the project.
12. Phase 2 will involve a procurement process to acquire suitable contractors for the works as detailed in Phase 1. Installations will be completed systematically between June 2023 – May 2024 until the full £500,000 budget is spent.

## The main project outcomes are as follows:

13. District-wide emissions from the direct consumption of oil and gas will be reduced by reducing heat loss and replacing inefficient, high emission systems.
14. District-wide emissions from the consumption of electricity drawn from the National Grid will be reduced through efficiency measures and potential installation of renewables.
15. Income may be generated by halls from selling excess energy back to the national grid from solar arrays, or from EVCPs.
16. Halls may use their site assessment to identify additional carbon reduction and / or efficiency opportunities they may wish to explore outside of the boundaries of this project.
17. Improved EVCP provision unlocks the potential for local residents to switch to electric vehicles.

## Funding

18. The full project budget of £500,000 was approved by the Strategic CIL Allocations Panel in July 2022. £42,000 is assigned to Phase 1 for site assessments and subsequent related surveys, quotes and detailed specifications. The remaining £458,000 will be dedicated to capital investment in Phase 2.
19. It is expected the cost of all measures identified in Phase 1 will far outweigh the project budget. Based on need and potential impact, applications for additional funds from future rounds of CIL funding and / or other sources to expand the project will be considered.
20. On completion of Phase 1, grants and funding opportunities that may be available to individual halls will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and support offered to the hall committees to apply for these where possible.

## Key Risks

21. Listed below are some of the key risks and the relevant mitigations:

<b>Risk Description</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Scope – change in direction / eligibility / scope creep	Clear eligibility criteria have been set outlining which halls are eligible. Once site assessments are completed, a clear set of prioritisation criteria will be developed to fairly and transparently decide which measures at which sites are funded within the project budget.
Delays	Appropriate allocation of officer resource to oversee the project and robust procurement processes to identify providers that can meet the specified milestones.
Increase in costs of installations	Budgets will be closely monitored as the project progresses and include a contingency against any quotes. As it is

Risk Description	Mitigation
beyond the specified budget	anticipated that demand for this project will? outstrip feasible delivery within two years, a phased approach with additional bids for funding will be considered likely in the future. Alternative / additional funding streams will routinely be considered on a site by site basis.
Installations not meeting expected carbon emission reduction and / or energy efficiency levels	Quality site assessments will be completed by industry approved experts, giving clear expected financial and carbon offset returns for each proposal. Only industry approved experts will be considered for installations.
Insufficient resource for project oversight	Whilst led by the Environment Project Officer, consideration will be given to delegate various aspects of the project to other specialised officers where required and appropriate.
Failure to procure suitable contractor/s	Diligent procurement processes will be followed. Research and engagement with stakeholders and local experts has been conducted to identify appropriate contractors for both phases.

## Monitoring

22. In order to measure the impact of the project we will seek to undertake baselining for all those halls chosen for the first phase. Following the completion of the project we will be able to measure the direct impact on energy usage and carbon output giving us a 'carbon saved' figure for the scheme.

## Conclusion

23. This project directly links to the strategic objective within the Rother Local Plan Core Strategy 'to mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts and to use natural resources efficiently', specifically the objective "to reduce carbon emissions and move towards a low carbon future".
24. The vision of the Council's Corporate Plan places residents at the heart of what we do whilst delivering key objectives, which include protecting our natural environment and tackling climate change. The project also supports the Environment Strategy 2020 – 2030, promoting green economy, improving air quality and sustainable transport provision, providing sustainable energy and decarbonising existing buildings.

## Financial Implications

25. The project will be a demonstration of the Council's execution of the CIL, specifically the CEBF, implemented for infrastructure projects of this type that will drive a reduction in emissions. Supplementary funding from local schemes and grants will be considered and applied for where applicable (to be identified on completion of Phase 1).

## Environmental

26. The project will deliver a reduction in local emissions through a reduction in reliance on fossil fuels, decreased consumption of energy through efficiency measures, increase in generation of renewable energy, and potential to provide EVCPs to encourage residents to switch to low emission vehicles.
27. This project will demonstrate both locally and nationally, the Council's commitment to our Environmental Strategy and Core Plan, as well as providing a leading example to drive further carbon reducing change within our communities.

## Sustainability

28. Reducing their reliance on fossil fuels and installing renewable energy generation and storage, where feasible and economical, will improve the sustainability of our Village Halls.

## Risk Management

29. A full project risk register has been developed and will be maintained through the lifetime of the project.

## Equalities and Diversity

30. An equality impact assessment has been completed and through consultation with the Equalities Officer, it has been agreed that each participating hall will be asked to provide their Access Statement and confirm that all areas of the venue and toilets are fully accessible. In the event of any uncertainty, the Equalities Officer will conduct site visits to ascertain the extent of accessibility. A higher weighting will be awarded during the prioritisation exercise to those venues which are fully accessible to accommodate the needs of all users in line with statutory requirements, promoting inclusivity, diversity and wellbeing.

Other Implications	Applies?	Other Implications	Applies?
Human Rights	No	Equalities and Diversity	Yes
Crime and Disorder	No	Consultation	No
Environmental	Yes	Access to Information	No
Sustainability	Yes	Exempt from publication	No
Risk Management	Yes		

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Appendices:	None
Relevant Previous Minutes:	CCSG 21/12: February 2022 CB20/20: September 2020
Background Papers:	None
Reference Documents:	None

## Rother District Council

**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date:** 5 September 2022

**Title:** Disposal of Land at Blackfriars, Battle

**Report of:** Malcolm Johnston

**Cabinet Member:** Councillors Dixon and Jeeawon

**Ward(s):** South Battle and Telham

**Purpose of Report:** To confirm the previous delegation to the Chief Executive to facilitate development of housing at the Blackfriars, Battle site through Rother DC Housing Company Ltd.

**Decision Type:** Key

### Officer

**Recommendation(s):** It be **RESOLVED:** That the delegation to the Chief Executive to dispose of land at Blackfriars, Battle (as outlined at Appendix A) to Rother DC Housing Company Ltd on terms agreeable to him in consultation with the Cabinet Portfolio Holders for Transformation, Procurement and Social Value and Finance and Performance Management be confirmed.

### Introduction

1. At its meeting on 6 September 2021, Cabinet gave delegated authority to the Chief Executive, to dispose of land at Blackfriars, Battle to the Council's Housing Company on terms agreeable to him in consultation with the (then) Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance and Performance (Minute reference CB21/33 refers). For the sake of accuracy and completion, the matter now falls under the Cabinet Portfolios for Transformation, Procurement and Social Value along with Finance and Performance Management.
2. The reason for bringing this report is that, although not contained in the recommendations, the body of the report (in September 2021) stated, "It was intended that the housing land would be sold to AH to procure a development partner to deliver the site. Despite AH being owned by the Council, the land must be sold in a manner that demonstrated good value. Valuation, legal and tax advice were required prior to ascertaining the precise framework and structure through which the land would be disposed. It was noted that the Council had invested significant sums in both the acquisition of land and the development of the planning permission which remained unfunded costs at this stage. Whilst the final value would be based on specialist advice, it was expected that the minimum price paid by AH should not be less than the unfunded costs incurred by the Council in making this scheme 'build ready'."

## **Discussion**

3. As the basis on which the original delegation was given has changed, and to ensure transparency in the process, it was felt to be the correct approach to bring the matter back to Cabinet and to request that the original decision is reaffirmed, while noting the changed considerations.
4. The land at Blackfriars has been the subject of a number of valuations by Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyor (RICS) qualified agents over time, the most recent giving a low land value. This is a valuation based on the assumption the Blackfriars site has a very marginal break even on the site. This valuation is being reviewed to reflect the latest economic predictions, the margins being paid to the contractors and the delivery of the original homes' specifications.
5. The latest valuation is lower than that originally anticipated by the Council and could result in a zero-capital receipt in this financial year, this could reduce the total level of funding from the Council to Rother DC Housing Company Ltd and have an impact on the timing of available funding for the Council's wider capital programme.
6. It is still envisaged that as sole owner of the Rother DC Housing Company Ltd, the Council will receive an overage receipt for the homes sold by Rother DC Housing Company Ltd. This is likely to materialise over several years and will be dependent on the phasing of the homes delivered, commercial arrangements and economic pressures.

## **Conclusion**

7. The Council established the local housing company to deliver sites within its ownership. The housing company business case, approved at Full Council, identifies the Blackfriars Battle site as one of those to be brought forward.
8. Given the complexities of the sale it is still recommended that authority be delegated to the Chief Executive to agree the terms of the sale between the Council and Rother DC Housing Company Ltd, in consultation with the Cabinet Portfolio Holders for Transformation, Procurement and Social Value and Finance and Performance Management and that the revised considerations be noted.

## **Financial Implications**

9. The Council is unlikely to receive a capital receipt for the sale of this land immediately and that may impact on the timing of future capital projects. This will be developed further through the affordability review of the capital programme to be undertaken by the Chief Finance Officer.

## **Risk Management**

10. The development of the Blackfriars site has already been identified as a high-risk project. These risks are mitigated by viability assessments of the project, which will be confirmed before any transfer of land occurs.



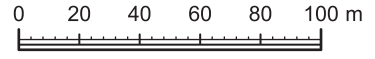
Other Implications	Applies?	Other Implications	Applies?
Human Rights	No	Equalities and Diversity	No
Crime and Disorder	No	Consultation	No
Environmental	No	Access to Information	No
Sustainability	No	Exempt from publication	No
Risk Management	Yes		

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Appendices:	Appendix A - Map
Relevant Previous Minutes:	CB21/33
Background Papers:	N/A
Reference Documents:	N/A

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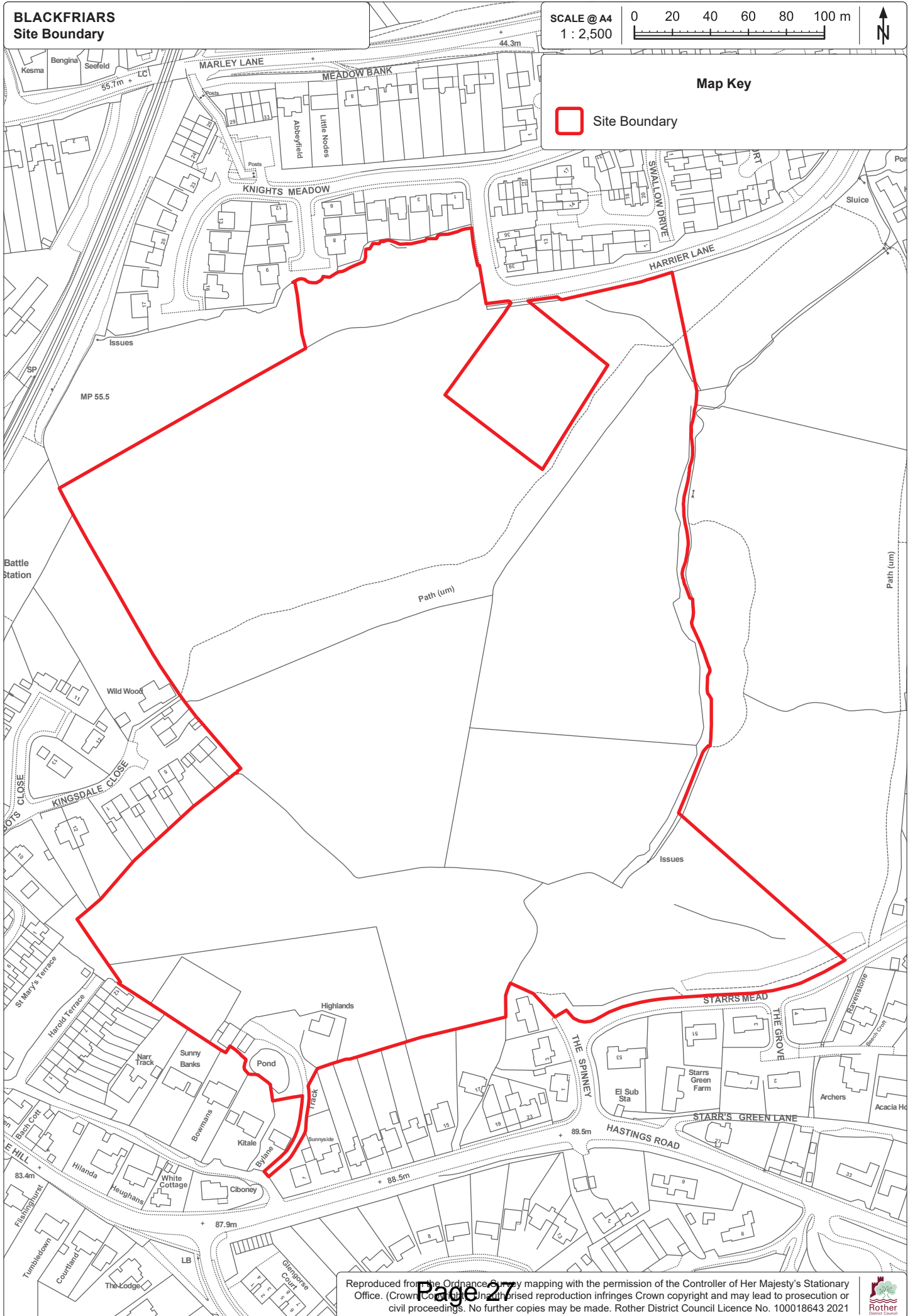
**BLACKFRIARS  
Site Boundary**

SCALE @ A4  
1 : 2,500



**Map Key**

 Site Boundary



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