

### **Community Infrastructure Levy priorities**

Shropshire Council will shortly be writing to all town and parish councils asking them to review their priorities for any Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding which is generated in their area.

Community Infrastructure Levy is a charge made on developers of open market housing and is used to improve local infrastructure such as roads, drainage, community buildings and play areas. It's important that town and parish councils highlight what their local needs are so that any CIL funding is spent correctly.

Between now and January town and parish councils are being asked to think about their priorities, and where possible consult with the local community to identify a list of priorities for 2013/14 in their area. These priorities will then be signed off by the local Shropshire Councillor in January and form part of the place plan for that area.

Parish and town Councils can opt to spend their CIL funding in 2013/14, or “bank” the money for a long term project such as a village hall redevelopment.

We are also asking parishes that won't have housing development – because they have opted to remain as open countryside – to tell us their priorities. The place plan will also be used to help secure external funding, and to show partner organisations such as utilities companies, the Highways Agency and Environment Agency what local priorities exist. This will help them to plan their work programmes around the needs of local communities.

I am happy to attend meetings to help town and parish councils respond to talk about the CIL and infrastructure needs they have. Please contact me if you need more details.

### **Parish Plan funding**

Funding is now available through Shropshire Council to help communities develop or refresh their parish plans.

Parish plans are a good way for communities to come together to review what is good and bad about living in their community, and to identify actions to maintain and improve the parish. The plans are becoming increasingly important since the Localism Act was introduced in 2011, as local councils are being asked to consult with their community and make sure funding is spent on the correct priorities. In Shropshire around 65% of parishes have a plan, and they are a good way of reviewing the priorities which feed into the Community Infrastructure Levy funding.

Shropshire Council has made funding available to help parishes start or review a plan. £100 is available to “kick start” a new plan, with a public meeting or event to get interest in starting a plan. This funding can also be used to help review a plan annually through a public meeting.

Once a group has been established a grant of up to £1,500 is available to help develop a plan. This can be spent on items such as questionnaires, analysis of data or employing a consultant to undertake a piece of work that is needed to help the plan develop. There are also a number of organisations in Shropshire that can help you develop your plan.

Please contact me if you would like more details about parish plan funding

### **Community Right to Bid legislation**

On September 21<sup>st</sup> the Government passed a section of the Localism Bill giving communities the right to bid for assets in their community.

An asset can be a pub, village green, school, playing field or community centre which is important to the community. The community can apply to have this asset registered, then if it is ever put up for sale the community is then given a period of 6 months to develop a bid for the asset.

Assets can be registered with Shropshire Council and will be kept on a register for 5 years. Communities undertaking a new parish plan will be asked to identify any assets in their community as part of the plan. Support for preparing a bid for an asset will also be available.

More details will be released about the Right to Bid policies shortly, but if your community has an asset you are interested in registering please let me know and I'll provide you with more details.

### **Awards for All Grants**

The Lottery's Awards for All programme for is currently piloting the award of grants for repeat and on-going activities. This pilot continues until 30 November 2012.

Previously Awards for All funding was only available for capital projects, but due to the difficult economic situation and pressure on many groups ability to generate new income streams, the Lottery are piloting the award of revenue funding to a limited number of projects in the West Midlands.

Only organisations with an annual income of £30,000 or less (according to latest accounts) are eligible to apply, but projects facing pressure on their revenue funding are being encouraged to apply. Grants of between £300 and £10,000 are available. A decision on funding is normally made within 12 weeks of submitting an application.

Application forms and guidance notes will not be changed during this time period, but projects are advised to speak to a lottery advisor before applying. All other criteria still apply, and applications will be assessed in the normal way. Support for lottery applications is also available through the Community Action team. Further details can be found at

[www.awardsforall.org.uk/england](http://www.awardsforall.org.uk/england)

or by calling 0845 4 10 20 30

### **Contact details**

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