

North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund

- Summary: In March 2020 Cabinet approved a recommendation to:
- Change the name of the Big Society Fund to the North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund (NNSCF).
 - Refocus the NNSCF to encourage a wider and more diverse range of projects from communities across North Norfolk.
 - Give additional weight to projects with positive environmental outcomes which demonstrates the Council's commitment to the Climate Emergency it declared in 2019.
 - To support the delivery of identified Council priorities in respect of Quality of Life and Climate, Coast and Environment.

This report provides an overview of the North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund during its second year of operation.

Recommendations: Cabinet to receive the report and note the contribution that the NNSCF makes on Council priorities in respect of Quality of Life and Climate, Coast and Environment.

Reasons for Recommendations: To ensure the NNSCF continues to reflect Council priorities to build sustainable communities and respond to the Climate Emergency declared by the Council in 2019.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

(Papers relied on to write the report, which do not contain exempt information and which are not published elsewhere)

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| Cabinet Member(s) Cllr. Virginia Gaye | Ward(s) affected All |
| Officer - Sonia Shuter – Early Help and Prevention Manager | |

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund (NNSCF) was launched in June 2020. Sustainable Communities are places in which people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life.
- 1.2 The North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund was originally financed from a proportion of the second homes council tax returned by Norfolk County Council. This funding has now ceased, and the finances to support NNSCF are being taken from accrued community reserves. This reserve is used for the NNDC Community Transport Fund (50K) and the NNSCF (£225,000) per annum. If the maximum budget allocated to both the Community Transport Fund and the NNSCF is used each year there are sufficient reserves for both grant Funds to continue until 31st March 2024. If either of the funds do not use all of their allocated budget at the end of the financial year, the underspend goes back into the community reserve.
- 1.3 The Council declared a Climate Emergency across the District in April 2019. In addition to enhancing the sustainability of local communities, projects funded by the NNSCF should reflect the priorities of the Council in respect of climate change. Additional weighting is given to projects that clearly demonstrate that they have focussed on carbon reduction, reducing the environmental impact of their project and / or conserving or enhancing the biodiversity of their local environment.
- 1.4 To reflect the priorities of the Council in respect of quality of life, weighting is also given to applications which promote, encourage or support healthy lifestyles, increase accessibility and promote the physical, mental and social wellbeing of communities.
- 1.5 To widen access to the Fund amongst all communities across North Norfolk, and to allow for a wider range of beneficial projects to be supported, equal priority is given to revenue and capital projects.
- 1.6 A simplified application process was set up for smaller revenue or capital projects below £1,000.
- 1.7 In order to make best use of the funding available, all applications for grants of between £1K and £15K are expected to identify a level of match funding of at least 10% commensurate with the type and size of the organisation and value of the project.

2. North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund 2021 / 2022

- 2.1 The NNSCF Panel is politically balanced and consists of seven members of NNDC appointed by NNDC's Cabinet.
- 2.2 The Panel meets quarterly in June, September, December and March to consider grant applications over £1,000 and up to a maximum limit of £15,000. The Panel recommends that grant applications are either approved, not approved or deferred. Grants recommended for approval will identify the

amount of funding to be awarded and any conditions that should be applied to the grant award. Recommendations made by the Panel will be submitted to the Leader of the Council, as the Senior Executive Member for approval and authorisation within one week of the Panel meeting.

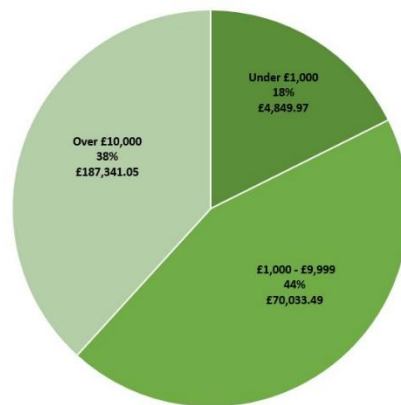
- 2.3 The Chair and or Vice of the Panel meet monthly to consider grant applications under £1,000. The Chair and or Vice Chair of the Panel recommends that grant applications under £1,000 are approved, not approved or deferred. Grants recommended for approval will identify the amount of funding to be awarded and any conditions that should be applied to the grant award. Recommendations made by the Chair and or Vice Chair will be submitted to the Leader of the Council as the Senior Executive Member for approval and authorisation within one week of the recommendation being made.

3. NNSCF applications

- 3.1 In the last financial year, the Panel met remotely in June, September, December and March to consider applications to the NNSCF. In addition the Chair and Vice Chair of the NNSCF met virtually as required to consider applications under £1,000.

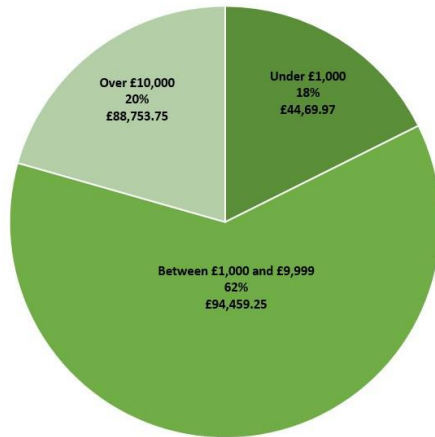
- 3.2 Forty three organisations in total submitted grant applications to the NNSCF requesting funding of £262,224.51

Breakdown of Grant Requests to the North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund
2021-22



- 3.3 Thirty four grant awards were approved totaling £187,682.97. Two applications were not presented to the Panel as they were withdrawn by the applicant, one organisation declined the grant award, four were not approved, and two deferred in March 2022 so a recommendation will be made in the next financial year.

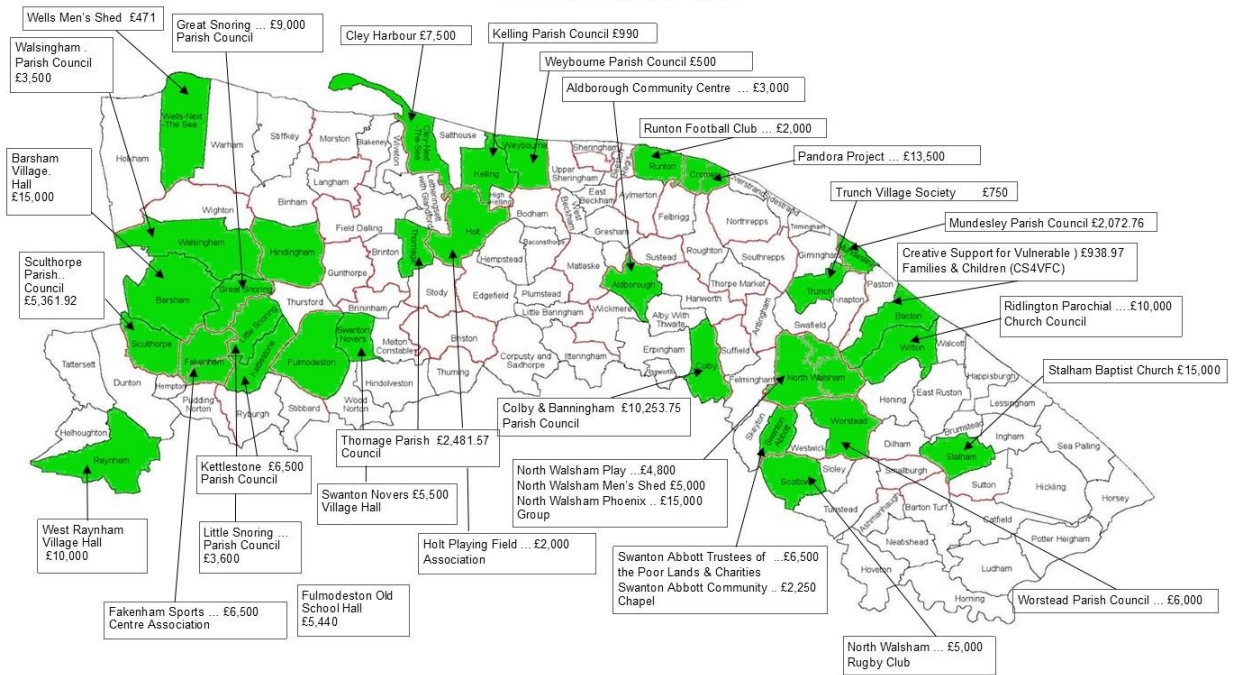
**Breakdown of Awards Made by North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund
2021-2022**



3.4 Parishes awarded a North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund grant

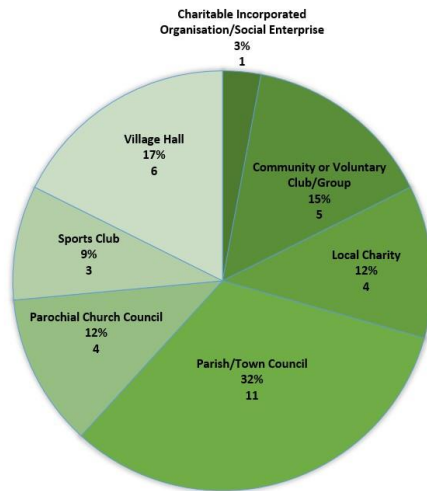


**North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund
Grant Awards 2021-2022**



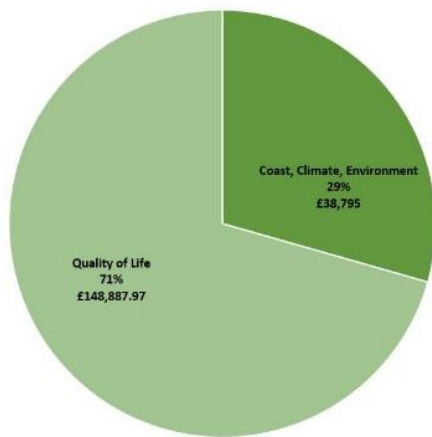
3.5 Type of organisations applying to the North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund

ORGANISATIONS APPLYING TO THE NORTH NORFOLK SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FUND
2021-2022



3.6 NNSCF applications in relation to Corporate Plan priority

North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund By Corporate Plan Area
2021-2022



Over 70% of the projects awarded funding related to the Quality of Life Corporate Plan priority. Whilst these projects align to the Quality of Life Corporate Priority successful applicants are still expected to use sustainable materials, local suppliers and consider environmental sustainability. Continued publicity and promotion of the NNSCF particularly to encourage applications for projects that meet the Coast, Climate and Environment priority as well as support the delivery of the North Norfolk District Council Environmental Charter will continue.

The Climate and Environmental Policy Manager and Climate Change Policy Officer are asked to attend the Panel meetings and comment on Coast, Climate and Environment applications. They also promote the NNSCF amongst their networks.

4. Financial Implications and Risks

The funding for the NNSCF is taken from allocated reserves. It is envisaged that if the normal annual grant budget of £225,000 is spent. There are sufficient reserves for the Fund to continue for approximately two years.

5. Equality and Diversity

- 5.1 There are no identified equality or diversity implications. The need to increase accessibility is integral to the NNSCF. One of the Panel Members, Cllr. Spagnola offers advice and support to applicants to ensure projects are as inclusive and accessible as possible.

6. Crime and Disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications

7. Conclusion

Monitoring and End of Grant reports from organisations awarded a NNSCF grant demonstrates the benefit of the NNSCF. The fund enables a wide variety of projects to be delivered that support sustainable communities and Council priorities in respect of Quality of Life and Climate, Coast and Environment.