



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Small Scale Works Grant:

Application Guidance for Local Authorities in Wales

November 2021



This guidance has been prepared by Welsh Government for Local Authorities. Its purpose is to provide guidance when applying for funding through the Small Scale Works Grant.

For enquiries please contact the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management team, within the Welsh Government by emailing:
Floodcoastalrisk@gov.wales

Guidance - Small Scale Works Grant

Introduction:

The purpose of the Small Scale Works Grant is to enable Local Authorities to undertake smaller flood alleviation schemes utilising Welsh Government funding.

In March 2017 the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs agreed to ring fence at least £1 million from the annual FCERM budget for the small scale works grant.

In February 2017 officials undertook an evaluation of the small scale works grant. The report concluded the grant has been very successful at reducing risk to properties and providing wider benefits from relatively small amounts of capital.

Despite the small scale of these works, many wider benefits in line with the Wellbeing Goals have been identified, including:

- Improvements to drainage structures to become more resilient to climate change;
- Safe and well connected communities, improving access to a hospital, a care home, and businesses;
- Ensuring business is not adversely impacted by flooding/ coastal erosion, maintaining employment;
- Awareness raising work with residents providing information on river levels and flood alerts;
- A healthier Wales, by reducing anxiety which is a common effect amongst people who have experienced flooding;
- Use of local materials to carry out works;
- Use of smaller, local contractors to carry out works, which helps the development of local workers, and indirectly could support the Welsh language;
- Use of in-house designers to reduce costs and promote skills within the Local Authorities.

Between April 2015 and March 2021 over £12 million of grant funding for more than 480 schemes has been awarded, reducing risk or rebuilding resilience to over 7,900 properties around Wales.

Eligibility criteria:

As with the Welsh Government's Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) core grant, and in line with our [National Strategy](#), proposed works must **reduce risk to people and properties** or maintain their current levels of protection. In line with our Programme for Government commitment, this should focus primarily on reducing risk to homes.

FCERM small scale works should focus on addressing a flood or coastal risk problem where there is a strong case for the works proposed and there are no other feasible options. Works need to be economically worthwhile and satisfy all necessary statutory requirements. Local Authorities will be required to demonstrate value for money in the delivery of the works.

Funding decisions will be taken based on a prioritisation of schemes by the benefits they deliver, with as many schemes funded as budget availability allows.

Grant funding will be awarded in line with the current grant rates for the FCERM Programme.

Work must be undertaken, completed and claimed for within the financial year the scheme is awarded funding.

The list below provides examples of the types of FCERM work which would be eligible, however, if you have any queries about eligibility, please discuss with the Welsh Government Flood Team:

- Minor works to existing flood and coastal risk management infrastructure e.g. improving trash screens/headwalls, relining culverts, restoring drainage systems, structural renovation works where properties are benefitting.
- Minor new drainage and defence infrastructure works where properties are benefitting.
- Property Level Protection – this should be installed on a community basis and must be supplied and fitted*. A scheme solely for businesses would not be eligible
- Telemetry.
- Natural Flood Management works (where costs are capitalised).

*Many Property Level Protection schemes previously submitted have been subject to delays. This may be due to issues such as access for surveys, procurement of products and installers, and engaging with numerous 3rd parties (tenants, private owners, landlords, housing departments). Local Authorities must demonstrate they recognise and are able to manage the risk surrounding these type of schemes.

Work which is not eligible for funding:

- Schemes which only reduce risk to roads or other infrastructure. In line with our National Strategy, there **must** be benefit to homes and businesses, however reducing risk to roads and infrastructure could be a wider benefit of a scheme.

- Revenue work e.g. awareness raising – this should be funded through the FCERM Revenue Grant.
- Schemes with a cost over £200,000
- Schemes which will run over more than one financial year, unless the “Scheme Design” approach is used as detailed below.
- Costs associated with responding to or recovering from flooding, e.g. sandbags, emergency call-out of staff to flood incident, clean-up work etc.
- Works to non-FCERM infrastructure.

Scheme design

We recognise that undertaking design work upfront can provide a better idea of scheme costs and ultimately a better scheme, therefore we are content to consider applications for the design element alone of a small scale scheme which you intend to construct the following financial year. In agreeing funding for design costs which should be completed within the financial year, please be aware of the following:

- If design and construction can be completed within a single financial year both phases should be included in the same application. If this is not possible a separate application should be made for the construction phase in a later financial year. This must be done within 2 years of completion of the design phase.
- If the scheme does not move to construction within 2 years of completion of the design, we reserve the right to claw back the funding provided for this phase.
- There is no guarantee that funding will be available in a later financial year.
- The cost of design and construction combined must remain below £200,000 per scheme.

Application process:

Authorities are invited to submit applications for individual schemes up to a maximum value of £200,000 per scheme and can submit multiple applications for schemes which can be completed within the financial year. One application form should be submitted per scheme.

Funding awarded cannot be carried forward to the following financial year and this should be considered when submitting applications, especially for any proposals involving work within watercourses. If a scheme is delayed and is unable to be completed by the end of the financial year, funding awarded will be lost, and there is no guarantee funding will be made available for the scheme in future years.

Applications received will be prioritised considering the following factors:

- Evidence of actual flood events or near-misses.

- Total number of homes benefiting (priority to schemes of 2 or more homes).
- The estimated cost per home.
- Wider benefits.

Schemes must demonstrate good value for public money, therefore schemes where the cost per home is over £50,000, or where less than two properties benefit, will not be prioritised.

Applications will be invited once a year, usually in advance of the start of the financial year to allow for grant to be awarded from the first day of the new financial year. Applications for grant to support small scale schemes which arise outside the annual application process may be considered by exception and on a case by case basis, subject to available funding.

The simplified application process for Small Scale Schemes means full funding is awarded in advance of design and construction. Local Authorities are not required to provide the same evidence as they would do for a capital grant in advance of agreeing funding. However, all Local Authorities are expected to comply with all necessary statutory consents and approvals when delivering these schemes

Wider benefits

Wider benefits beyond flood risk management can be achieved through grant funded works, and these should be considered as part of the application process. Even though these schemes are small in nature, there are still wider benefits which can be achieved. For example, using local based contractors to carry out these works and develop skills, engaging with residents and schools, and supporting local businesses.

All public bodies must comply with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. It is therefore essential that you consider how the proposed works contribute to the well-being goals and the sustainable development principles and evidence this within the applications.

When applying for funding, please provide specific examples of how the proposed work will provide wider benefits and contribute to the well-being goals.

Evidence to support applications:

Whilst small scale applications provide a simplified process for lower value works, there is still a requirement to submit relevant data and information to support the application. Providing evidence with the application will assist the efficiency of the assessment process.

Evidence to be submitted with application forms should include (where appropriate):

- Maps showing location of proposed works and properties benefiting.
- Flood maps showing risk.
- Section 19 reports.

- Photos/evidence of past flooding and/or annotated maps showing how previous flooding incidents occurred (flow paths etc.).
- Pre-construction photos of area affected by proposed works.
- Reference to Local Flood Risk Management Strategies where appropriate.

Failure to provide sufficient evidence may result in the application being delayed or rejected.

Claims:

Claims will be requested four times a year in the following months:

- Quarter 1: July
- Quarter 2: October
- Quarter 3: January
- Quarter 4: March

In line with the agreement sent to Local Authorities in January 2019, no Variations Orders will be accepted to increase grant value or extend the length of a Small Scale Works Grant.

In order to provide some flexibility, there will be one grant award for multiple schemes as in previous years. This allows for movement of grant between schemes if costs on some increase and others decrease up to the value of the grant awarded. However, each individual scheme **must** still be under £200,000 value.

Branding:

Where appropriate, any work funded through Welsh Government grants should be branded and show the Welsh Government logo. Costs associated with branding are eligible for grant funding. If you have any questions on whether a plaque is appropriate for your scheme, please contact the Welsh Government FCERM Branch.

Further information and guidance on Welsh Government branding can be obtained from the Welsh Government Branding Team: BrandingQueries@gov.wales

Further information/contact details

For further information on the Small Scale Works Grant, please contact the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Branch at; FloodCoastalRisk@gov.wales