



# **Nexus Grants Programme**

**Supporting the Rural Regeneration Zone in the West Midlands**

## **Guidance notes**

**To be used when completing the standard application form**

**We strongly advise you to make contact with your local outreach and support worker who will be able to offer advice around developing your project and understanding the criteria.**

For further details, in the first instance, contact;

**Sophie Mead**

**Project Assistant**

Nexus Grants Programme

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# Introduction

The vision for the Rural Regeneration Zone is that by 2020 the zone will be a connected rural area with a strong identity, a rich quality of life for all, a healthy environment and a strong economy.

The 2006 – 2009 Rural Regeneration Zone Implementation Plan has a specific core objective:

*“To reduce poverty, value diversity and promote social inclusion  
and  
community cohesion by allowing full access to services”*

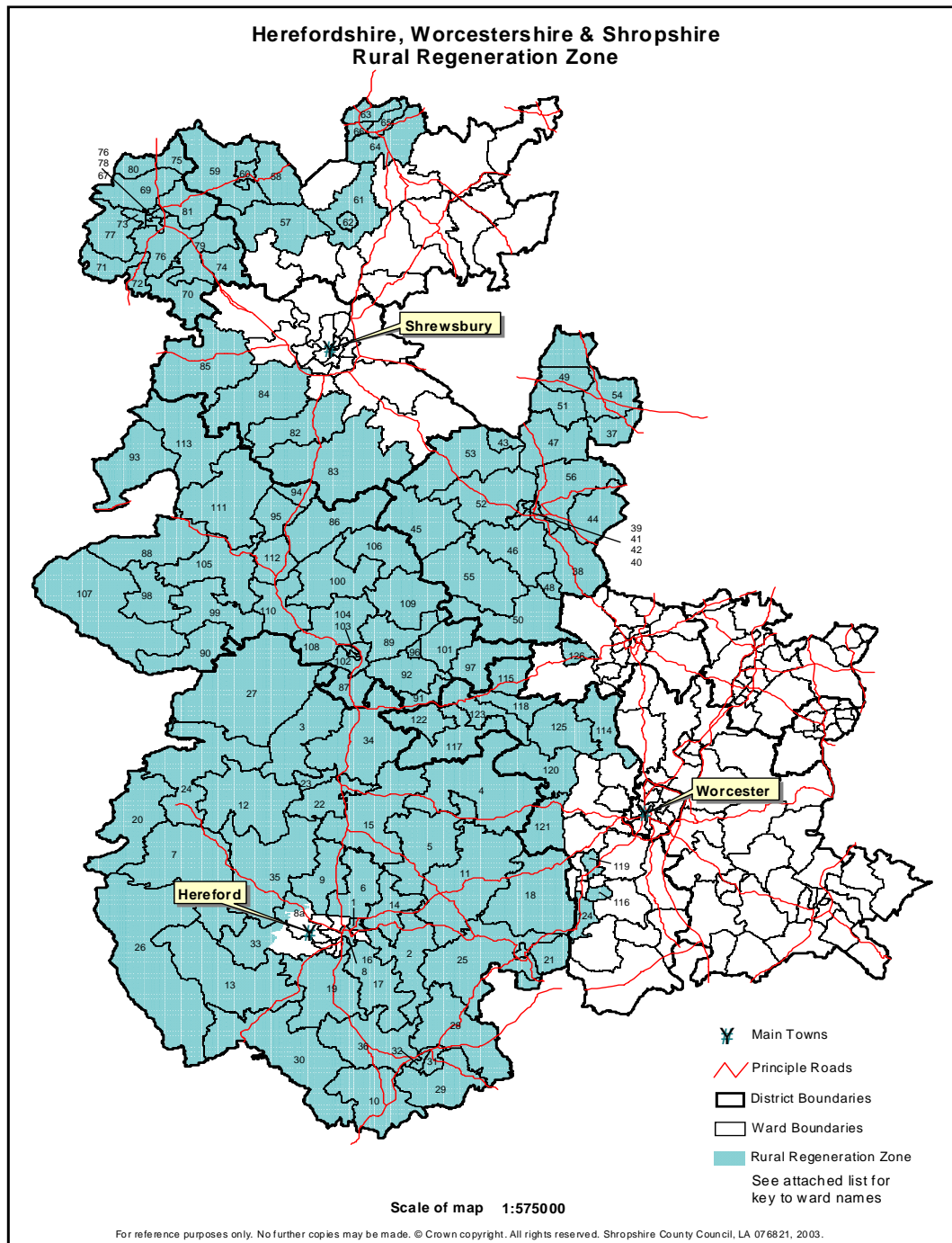
This includes a specific action to launch a small grants programme which is focused on the community and voluntary sector.

## Aim

To establish a small grants programme in the Rural Regeneration Zone that will be focused on improving access to services and facilities for rural communities.

Nexus is focused on improving access to service provision for communities in the Rural Regeneration Zone. This will be achieved primarily through the voluntary and community sector, giving local groups an opportunity to address their communities' needs whilst encouraging capacity building within the organisation itself.

To assess whether you meet the RRZ eligibility criteria your project must be responding to a need in one or more of the following wards. An organisation or group could be based elsewhere but its beneficiaries must be within the RRZ



## Herefordshire

## Herefordshire cont...

## Shropshire cont....

Ref	Ward	District	Ref	Ward	District	69	Gobowen	Oswestry
1	Aylestone	Herefordshire	35	Weobley	Herefordshire	70	Kinnerley	Oswestry
2	Backbury	Herefordshire	36	Wilton	Herefordshire	71	Ilanyblodwel	Oswestry
3	Bircher	Herefordshire	<b>Shropshire</b>			72	Llanymynech	Oswestry
4	Bringsty	Herefordshire	37	Albrighton	District	73	Maserfield	Oswestry
5	Bromyard	Herefordshire	38	Alveley	Bridgnorth	74	Ruton xi Towns	Oswestry
6	Burmash	Herefordshire	39	Bridgnorth castle	Bridgnorth	75	St Martins	Oswestry
7	Castle	Herefordshire	40	Bridgnorth east	Bridgnorth	76	Sweeney	Oswestry
8	Central	Herefordshire	41	Bridgnorth Morfe	Bridgnorth	77	Trefonen	Oswestry
8a	Credenhill	Herefordshire	42	Bridgnorth West	Bridgnorth	78	Victoria	Oswestry
9	Dinmore Hill	Herefordshire	43	Broseley	Bridgnorth	79	West Felton	Oswestry
10	Doward	Herefordshire	44	Claverley	Bridgnorth	80	Weston Rhyn	Oswestry
11	From	Herefordshire	45	Ditton Priors	Bridgnorth	81	Whittington	Oswestry
12	Golden Cross	Herefordshire	46	Glazeley	Bridgnorth	82	Condover	Shrewsbury & Atcham
13	Golden Valley	Herefordshire	47	Harrington	Bridgnorth	83	Lwaley	Shrewsbury & Atcham
14	Hagley	Herefordshire	48	Highley	Bridgnorth	84	Rea Valley	Shrewsbury & Atcham
15	Hampton Court	Herefordshire	49	Idsall	Bridgnorth	85	Rowton	Shrewsbury & Atcham
16	Hinton	Herefordshire	50	Kinlet	Bridgnorth	86	Apedale	South Shropshire
17	Hollington	Herefordshire	51	Manor	Bridgnorth	87	Ashford	South Shropshire
18	Hope End	Herefordshire	52	Morville	Bridgnorth	88	Bishops castle	South Shropshire
19	Kingsthorne	Herefordshire	53	Much Wenlock	Bridgnorth	89	Bitterley	South Shropshire
20	Kington Town	Herefordshire	54	Sheriffhales	Bridgnorth	90	Bucknell	South Shropshire
21	Ledbury	Herefordshire	55	Stottesdon	Bridgnorth	91	Burford	South Shropshire
22	Leominster East and South	Herefordshire	56	Worfield	Bridgnorth	91	Caynham	South Shropshire
23	Leominster North	Herefordshire	57	Cockshutt	North Shropshire	93	Chirbury	South Shropshire
24	Lyonshall with Titley	Herefordshire	58	Colemere	North Shropshire	94	Church Stretton North	South Shropshire
25	Marcle Ridge	Herefordshire	59	Ellesmere Rural West	North Shropshire	95	Church Stretton Sth	South Shropshire
26	Merbach	Herefordshire	60	Ellemer Urban	North Shropshire	96	Clee	South Shropshire
27	Mortimer	Herefordshire	61	Wem rural	North Shropshire	97	Cleobury Mortimer	South Shropshire
28	Old Gore	Herefordshire	62	Wem urban	North Shropshire	98	Clun	South Shropshire
29	Penyward	Herefordshire	63	Whitchurch North	North Shropshire	99	Clunbury	South Shropshire
30	Pontrilas	Herefordshire	64	Whitchurch rural	North Shropshire	100	Diddlebury	South Shropshire
31	Ross on Wye East	Herefordshire	65	Whitchurch South	North Shropshire	101	Hopton wafers	South Shropshire
32	Ross on Wye Wesy	Herefordshire	66	Whitchurch west	North Shropshire	102	Ludlow castle	South Shropshire
33	Stoney Street	Herefordshire	67	Cambrian	Oswestry	103	Ludlow east hamlet	South Shropshire
34	Upton	Herefordshire	68	Gatacre	Oswestry	104	Ludlow Galdeford	South Shropshire

## Shropshire cont....

Ref	Ward	District
105	Lydbury North	South Shropshire
106	Munslow	South Shropshire
107	Newcastle	South Shropshire
108	Stanton Lacy	South Shropshire
109	Stoke St. Milborough	South Shropshire
110	Stokesay	South Shropshire
111	Wentnor	South Shropshire
112	Wistanstow	South Shropshire
113	Worthen	South Shropshire

## Worcestershire

Ref	Ward	District
114	Baldwin	Malvern Hills
115	Bayton and Mamble	Malvern Hills
116	Chase	Malvern Hills
117	Kyre Dale	Malvern Hills
118	Lindridge	Malvern Hills
119	Link	Malvern Hills
120	Martley	Malvern Hills
121	Temeside	Malvern Hills
122	Tenbury town	Malvern Hills
123	Valley on the Teme	Malvern Hills
124	Wells	Malvern Hills
125	Woodbury	Malvern Hills
126	Bewdley	Wyre Forest

## Nexus Aims and Objectives

Nexus aims to fund small-scale project activity which responds to an identified rural community need for increased access to a service that perhaps those in more urban areas would take for granted. In particular, the fund is looking to enhance or create the following types of services:

- health advice
- information communication technology
- counselling/support services
- leisure
- training and development

As primarily this fund is to support capital expenditure, priority will be given to projects that:

- adapt buildings or purchase equipment to provide new services
- establish or enhance outreach services to improve accessibility for rural communities

Projects will seek to implement solutions that address local service needs, have local support and suit local circumstances. Please note that this fund is to support new activities or a newly enhanced extension to activities, not to continue existing work.

Projects will need to demonstrate that they have, or will have **at least** 25% (50% for an independent retailer) of the total costs of the project to contribute as match funding.

Applicants will also need to demonstrate that there is local support for the project and does not conflict with any local services.

Priority will be given to projects that can deliver one or more of the RRZ priorities. Projects will be required to produce evidence that these have been achieved and 25% of their Nexus grant will be dependent on receipt of this evidence.

## Eligibility

Applications can be made by:

- statutory agencies,
- independent commercial retailers
- voluntary and community groups,
- service providers

Nexus will fund projects that enhance access to services for communities in RRZ wards. Priority will be given to voluntary organisations and community groups working with those who are disadvantaged or disengaged.

Community Groups will be expected to be constituted, have a terms of reference and a bank account (or be in that position before any grant is awarded) as an absolute minimum. However, applications will be encouraged from applicants with (or working towards) more formal structures, namely:

- Charitable trusts
- A company limited by guarantee
- Development trusts

Independent commercial retailers (principally village shops) will have to demonstrate that the improvements they are making are for the benefit of the wider community and are not just related to diversifying or enhancing their business.

Only one project will be supported in any given organisation. Therefore, for bigger structures such as statutory agencies, applications will not be accepted from multiple departments.

### **We are not looking to fund any of the following:**

- Projects specifically relating to transport information and transport services. This is because it is felt that grants already exist to support this activity within the RRZ
- The provision of statutory services such as schools, social services, GPs, or of utilities such as water or energy ( but helping to set up an outreach service related to these may be eligible)
- Routine maintenance and repairs of village halls, community buildings and church buildings, unless this is specifically related to enhancing or setting up a new service
- Housing projects

- Work specifically focused on improving primary aspect of an independent commercial retailer's business, such as shelving, cooler units, shop signage, etc.

### **Are you ready – monitoring and claiming**

Hopefully, you will now feel confident that you have a project idea that fits well with Nexus priorities and criteria. Be sure your group/organisation is comfortable with the monitoring and claiming processes applicable to successful projects:

- You must be in a position to commence the project within 2 months from the date of approval
- You must be able to complete project delivery within 12 months (or by 31 March 2009 if your project is funded in the last year)
- You must be able to keep clear audit trails to support any grant related expenditure for 10 years
- You must be in a position to deliver the project based on two staged payments – 75% in advance following a meeting to draw up the agreement and 25% at project completion and our receipt of the agreed evidence and end of grant report.
- You must be willing to participate in progress visits and ensure the outreach and support worker can demonstrate the necessary evidence to draw down your funding
- You must use the Nexus and WMRCCN logo on all publicity relating to the project

# Completing the application form

## Section One – about your organisation

### 1a. Organisation/group

This should be the group who intends to take lead responsibility for a project, and be accountable for grant expenditure. Please give the name of the person who will take lead responsibility for the project and can answer any queries relating to the application Please give details of the most convenient and accessible means of contacting you. You should also state which ward(s) within the RRZ your project beneficiaries are based.

### 1b. About your group

This should be a brief overview of your main purpose or aims, the people/communities you intend to serve, how long you have been in existence and any relevant partnership working.

### 1c. Best description of your organisation

Please select the structure that best describes your organisation. We will use this data for monitoring the kinds of groups supported. Only one grant per year can be made to any given organisation and priority will be given to the voluntary and community sector working with disadvantaged groups. If you are a social enterprise, we need to ensure that you are not firstly eligible for Impetus support – a loan scheme. If you are, unfortunately you will not be able to apply to Nexus.

### 1d. Your financial turnover

This will provide the panel with an indication of how Nexus funding will impact on an organisation and will provide useful data for monitoring purposes.

### 1e. and 1f. How many staff and volunteers do you support

Please give details of full time equivalents and an estimated number of volunteers involved with your service (excluding the management committee or Board) at the time of application.

### 1g. The makeup of your board or management committee

Please give an overview of the makeup (i.e. gender, ethnicity, and age) of the board or committee members, and their skills and experiences relevant to the project or to managing the grant.

## Section Two – about your project

Please note that this section is key to having your project approved

### 2a. What is the key activity your project will address

This section is very important and requires you to identify the key strand of your project from health, ICT, leisure, counselling and support services, training and learning. Your choice may reflect the service to be delivered, the outcomes to be generated or the focus of expenditure. We will use this data to monitor the kinds of activities support in the RRZ wards. Primarily, this selection should assist us to map increased access to services.

### 2b. Which does your application seek to do

A priority for Nexus will be to support applications that address one of these two aspirations.

Ideally, your project will either:

- adapt a building or purchase new equipment to provide a new service or;
- establish or enhance outreach services to improve accessibility

You will either be seeking to alter your current services internally to make them more accessible to a particular client group or find improved ways to deliver a service that 'reaches out' to a community of interest.

### 2c. What need have you identified

You must have supporting evidence of the need and copies should be submitted with the application. This may be a copy of a parish plan, local strategy or service user survey. Whichever it is, the panel should clearly be able to see that a need exists. This should reflect back to the original aim of increasing access to services. Be clear about what the need is – do not leave it open for interpretation – and discuss the relevance to your organisation.

### 2d. The project idea

This is your opportunity to sell your project and pull all the key areas together:

- explain how your project addresses the need in 2c
- what do you want to do? (be clear in the detail – remember the panel are relying on you to provide them with the information they need to make the right decision)
- how does this respond to the need
- links to Nexus aims and objectives
- timescale and key dates

**2e. What will the nexus grant pay for**

Explain how the Nexus grant will be spent and what it will enable you to do.

**2f. Partners involved**

This could include partners who support the idea, other sites for outreach, service deliverers or contractors. You should be clear about who they are, what their role will be, why they have been chosen and the skills they offer to the project.

**2g. People or communities to benefit**

Give details of the people or communities who will benefit – not only the demographics but likely numbers during the project and beyond.

**2h. What will you achieve**

Summarise your idea, the people supported, the need and the main things you intend your project to produce. Outcomes are the end result – what do you hope will happen as a result of your intervention. Be realistic – make them measurable and achievable.

**2h. Demonstrating Success**

Provide details of how you will know if the outcomes are met.

## Section three - Outputs

### 3a. RRZ outputs

Priority will be given to applications that meet one or more of the RRZ outputs detailed below. You will be required to provide evidence that these have been achieved by the end of your project and before the final grant payment can be made. If you do not feel your project will produce any of these outputs, then please ensure you are able to respond to the next question.

<b>RRZ output</b>	<b>Output description</b>	<b>Output evidence needed (one of the following)</b>	<b>Description and estimate of numbers</b>
Jobs created	<i>Permanent, paid and filled position equivalent to 30hrs per week or more and expectancy to last longer than 12 months</i>	<i>Employment records showing – title of new job, start date of employment, expected duration (min of 12 mths), hrs of work. Letter confirming contract of employment. Confirmation that the new job is result of project.</i>	
Jobs safeguarded	<i>Post forecast to be lost within 12 months without intervention</i>	<i>Letter from employer confirming that position is at risk and will be lost without intervention, business plan, management statement, file notes from business relating to job losses, statutory redundancy notices being issued/withdrawn and why.</i>	
Business supported	<i>One day or more of consultancy advice/other non financial assistance</i>	<i>Full name and details of business assisted. Formal record of type of support provided and how expected to improve the business. Formal evaluation / feedback from the business assisted. Where assistance is given through a grant evidence is required linking money received to a payment for consultancy, business advice etc and how it will improve the business.</i>	
Business created	<i>New businesses (social enterprises) created and demonstrating growth after 12 months</i>	<i>Full name and contact details of business created. Formal letter from director confirming when business started trading (at least 12 mths trading is confirmed). Verifiable evidence from company of number of employees at the end of 12 / 24 mths from date trading started. Monitoring visits from agency staff to confirm business is trading.</i>	
People assisted to improve skills	<i>Staff, volunteers or service users achieving NVQ Level 2 or equivalent</i>	<i>Full contact details of training provider. Details of training provided. Details of learners attending. Evidence training provided meets either; meets level required, intended to close a gap or allows progression to a higher level training intervention. Details of</i>	

		<i>accredited learning or qualification undertaken (copies of awards / certificates).</i>	
People supported to find work	<i>Individuals supported in their search for work</i>	<i>Full contact details; date of birth; National insurance number; employment status at time of assistance. Confirmation from project of actual assistance given and when</i>	

### 3b. secondary outputs

If your project will not produce any of the priority outputs, it does not mean you will be unsuccessful. We are also interested in supporting projects that contribute to the following secondary outputs. Be prepared to evidence achievement of these.

<b>Secondary outputs</b>
No. of additional community groups or trusts.
No. of people using new-improved facilities - such as a building, a meeting room, a kitchen, a new hall. If it is an improved facility, you can only count the number of additional people expected to use it; do not include those that were using it before it was improved.
No. of people using new/improved services - this would be something for general benefit, e.g. doctor's surgery/CAB Outreach/mobile library. If it is an improved service, you can only count the number of additional people expected to use it; do not include those that were using it before it was improved.
No. of childcare places created.
No. of people entering further learning or volunteering (informal or formal)
No. of people engaging with community leisure activities
No. of community facilities established/created - buildings, meeting rooms, kitchens, halls or specific areas expected to be established or created for social and/or recreational purposes.
No. of community services established/improved - In this instance, a service is would be the provision of assistance or something for general benefit, e.g. doctor's surgery/CAB Outreach/mobile library.

## Section Four Project Costs

You need to break down the project into all the activities requiring funding then show how much each activity costs, with details of how this has been calculated. This will provide you with a total project cost.

### Match funding requirements

Nexus can only contribute a maximum of £5000 to one project. You need to demonstrate that you have, or will have **at least 25%** (50% if you are an independent retailer) of the total costs of the project to contribute as match funding. It is important to include all match funding relating to the project if more than 25% / 50% and to explain how this is calculated.

For example:

If your project was going to cost £4,000 you would need to have or contribute at least £1000 match funding and apply to Nexus for £3000.

If your project was going to cost £6,500 you would need to have or contribute at least £1625 match funding and apply to Nexus for £4,875.

Match funding could be from a variety of sources – other funders, subscriptions, income generation, fundraising, commercial sponsorship. For voluntary and community groups, you may also be able to demonstrate match funding in kind. This may include staff or volunteer hours, free advice and services from a local expert (eg architect, builder etc), training and development or use of a venue.

The appraisal panel will look more favourably at applications where the required match funding has already been secured or confirmed. If there is likely to be a long delay in securing the remaining funds to deliver the project successfully, it is possible that support will not be offered by Nexus.

To demonstrate **at least 25%** match funding please state how much next to the relevant activity. If a match funder has made an overall contribution rather than a contribution for a specific activity include this detail along the 'total' line. The panel want to know who the match funder is and what progress has been made towards securing the resources. Completing the match funding will enable you to calculate how much financial support is required from Nexus.

Example:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Calculation</b>	<b>Total cost</b>	<b>Capital</b>	<b>Revenue</b>
<i>Building contractor</i>	<i>3 days @ £250 pd</i>	<i>£750</i>		<i>750</i>
<i>ICT equipment</i>	<i>3 laptops @ £800 Software @ £100 each</i>	<i>£2700</i>	<i>2700</i>	
<i>Engage volunteers</i>	<i>Recruitment £500 Training £50 x 20 vols Expenses 20 vols x £200pa</i>	<i>£1500</i>		<i>1500</i>
<b>Total</b>		<i>£4950</i>	<i>£2,700</i>	<i>£2,250</i>

<b>Match funding amount</b>	<b>Calculation</b>	<b>Source of match funding</b>	<b>Match funding progress</b>	<b>In cash or in kind</b>
<i>£1000</i>	<i>2 x printers</i>	<i>Tesco grant</i>	<i>Secure</i>	
<i>£3000</i>	<i>Core costs to cover expenses</i>		<i>Secure</i>	<i>In kind</i>
<b>Total project cost (as box A)</b>	<i>£8,950</i>			
<b>Total Match funding(as box B)</b>	<i>£4,000</i>			
<b>% match funding ( = Box B ÷ Box A × 100)</b>	<i>45%</i>			
<b>Total Nexus grant requested ( = Box A – Box B)</b>	<i>£4950</i>			

## **.Section Five – Capacity and Experience**

### **5 a. Financial and Management Capacity**

The panel will want to ensure you are able to manage any funding allocated, the project is delivered within time constraints and funding agreement and you can record successes and outcomes. To demonstrate this you may wish to discuss other funding streams you have managed, some of the finance and project management tools you have in place and the staff involved to ensure the project is delivered. Other factors may be the policies and procedures your organisation adheres to – these should be specific to the project, such as equal opportunities, working with vulnerable adults, supporting volunteers, H&S etc. When considering a reference (see section 6), someone who could support your organisation's ability to manage resources would be useful.

### **5 b. Looking to the future**

What impact would this short term Nexus investment have for your service and users? Give some detail about the difference this project will make beyond the 12 months delivery and how you might replace the grant or continue the service after 12 months. If the grant is to support a pilot how will you use the learning?

### **5 c. Risk Assessment**

This question enables you to demonstrate to the panel that you have thought about the possible risks to the successful delivery and completion of your project. Identifying risks is not a bad thing – this shows that you have anticipated what could go wrong but also thought about what you have done or will do to minimise the risk.

### **5 d. Equality of opportunity**

Tell us what efforts you will make to ensure your project is open to everybody

### **5 e. Environmental impact**

For those purchasing equipment or making building adaptations. Planning permission is essential (and you should include this with your application) but other considerations may be given to low energy use such as cavity wall insulation, draught proofing etc or heating and water use. Registered local contractors are encouraged. Outline what you think the environmental impact of your project will be and how you have addressed it (e.g. referring to travel etc).

## Section Six - Referee

### 6. Reference details

We will contact your reference if your application is successful. A grant will only be allocated on receipt of a satisfactory reference. A reference provides further understanding about your track record as an organisation, particularly when delivering projects and managing funding. In light of this, your reference should be a professional who you have worked with previously, perhaps another funder. The referee should not be a 'friend' of the organisation, a member of the management committee or volunteer. Independence is critical. We may ask for a further or different referee if we have any concerns.

### Submitting your application

You should now ensure your application is fully completed, you have gained all the necessary signatures, including that of the outreach and support worker and have attached all the required appendices. Applications can be sent to you electronically for ease of completion; however, the final version should be printed and posted to:

**Sophie Mead**

Project Assistant

**Nexus Grant Programme**

West Midlands RCC Network

C/o Community First

141 Church Street

Malvern, WR14 2AN

Faxed or email versions will not be accepted as the final version. Your outreach and support worker will be able to inform you of relevant deadline dates but we welcome applications at any time. Your application will be acknowledged and you will be given a unique reference number and a date to show when you will hear whether your application has been successful

Your application will be considered by the NEXUS appraisal panel which meets regularly through out the year. You will be notified of the panel's decision and if unsuccessful may be encouraged to re-apply. Feedback on reasons for the panel's decision will be available on request

**Please make sure your application includes all the necessary additional paperwork requested in the appendix. If you submit your application form at the deadline date and papers are missing this may mean your application will be have to be considered at a later appraisal panel.**

For further information, contact Sophie Mead on 01684 573334 or  
[sophiem@comfirst.org.uk](mailto:sophiem@comfirst.org.uk)