

FOX CORNER COMMUNITY WILDLIFE AREA ASSOCIATION – APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Executive Summary	
<p>Fox Corner Community Wildlife Area Association manages a nature reserve just off Fox Corner roundabout, at the junction between the borders of Woking Borough Council and Guildford Borough Council. Schools, scout groups and other local organisations visit the site from across the area. The site has attracted a range of wildlife and a number of rare plants are thriving at the site, and has been designated a Nature Reserve.</p> <p>The Association received support of £500 from the Council in 2014/15 towards the replacement of the secondary gate at the site. The new application before the Executive is for the sum of £1,000 towards the cost of replacing the bridge crossing the Hodge Brook. The Council’s policy for capital applications is to award a maximum of 50% of the total project cost and the application from the Association meets the criteria with a total cost of £4,500.</p> <p>Engineering advice sought by the Association has recommended that the bridge should be replaced to maintain both safe public access and movement of maintenance machinery across the site. Its replacement would be a community project benefitting residents and visitors of all ages, with the environment of flora and fauna being safeguarded.</p> <p>It is therefore proposed that the Association be awarded a grant of £1,000 towards the new bridge subject to the usual conditions and the presentation of invoices for the work.</p>	

Recommendations	
Reasons for Decision	To support the Association in its work to preserve the natural environment of the site, and ensure the reserve is accessible to all.
Legal Authority	S19 (Misc. Provisions) Local Government Act 1976
The Executive is requested to:	RESOLVE That a grant of £1,000 be awarded from the Community Fund towards the cost of the new bridge at the site.
Conditions	<p>Accounts. The Organisation must submit audited accounts for the year in which the grant is awarded, including an income and expenditure account and balance sheet. Please note that accounts for other years may also be required.</p> <p>Monitoring Information. The Organisation must submit quarterly monitoring information as a measure of its achievements. Failure to provide details will jeopardise the award. E-mail requests will be sent to the applicant on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>Publicity. Where possible, the Organisation is required to publicise the support received from Woking Borough Council, including on all literature and leaflets produced.</p> <p>Payments. Unless exceptional circumstances exist all invoices must be received quarterly with details of the costs incurred and monitoring information for the previous quarter.</p> <p>Payment Period. Final quarter claims must be made by the second week in March. Unclaimed awards will not be available at a later date</p>

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	<p>unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated to the Council before the end of the award year.</p> <p>Joint Working. WBC expects the Organisation to engage positively on health and wellbeing multi-agency joint work affecting Woking. Groups which refuse may place their Council support at risk, e.g. grant, concessionary rent and other assistance.</p> <p>Invoices / Receipts. In order to claim an element of the funding, the Organisation must submit paid invoices or receipts relating to equipment purchased or services provided.</p> <p>Venue Hire. Woking Borough Council has a duty to ensure that publicly-owned venues and resources do not provide a platform for extremists and are not used to disseminate extremist views. This duty extends to organisations that work with the local authority so this includes recipients of any grants from Woking Borough Council. If you hire out your venue/s you should ensure you have good processes in place for record keeping and checking if they are an appropriate group to be making the hire arrangements. The following are some of what should be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic details should be recorded to include speakers address, mobile phone number & organisation details. • Has the identity of the speaker been confirmed & is their organisation bona fide? Are they known to you? • Is the speaker from the area? Are they UK citizens or from overseas & will they travel specifically for this event? • Consider checks on the internet to confirm the status of speaker to include website, YouTube or social media sites. • How many people are likely to attend (check previous or similar events either locally or online).
Performance Indicators	<p>Users. The Organisation to provide a breakdown of the users in the past quarter.</p> <p>Activities. The Organisation to provide details of activities and events held during the last quarter.</p> <p>Publicity. The Organisation to advise how the Council's support has been publicised over the last quarter.</p>
Future Support	<p>The financial pressure on the Council's budgets is expected to continue in the coming years and accordingly the overall level of support available in future years may be reduced. The applicant is therefore to be advised that the award of funding for 2018/19 does not imply that a similar application in 2019/20 would be supported. In particular, it is emphasised that the Council is unlikely to be in a position to award any sums above the 2018/19 levels.</p> <p>In view of this, the applicant is to be advised to ensure that contingency plans for the Group's operations for 2019/20 have been drawn up in the event that the Council is unable to continue its support beyond April 2019. All applicants are strongly recommended to pursue alternative sources of funding and are encouraged to approach Woking Borough Council's Community Support Team for advice and support.</p>

The Executive has authority to determine the above recommendations.

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Background Papers:

2018/19 Application Form.

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1.0 Summary of Application	
1.1 Status and Aims	The Association was formed in 1991 to improve the conservation of wildlife and natural habitats for public benefit and for the advancement of knowledge and education in natural sciences by developing and managing the community wildlife area. The site is located adjacent to the A322 at Fox Corner at the junction of St John's, Pirbright and Worplesdon parishes.
1.2 Employees	None.
1.3 Volunteers	<p>8. The volunteers carry out duties including maintenance and management of the site. They are regularly supplemented by residents, corporate volunteers and youth groups such as brownies, scouts and Duke of Edinburgh Scheme participants. The work includes grass cutting, footpath clearing, fence and boundary inspection and repairs, information boards and publicity.</p> <p>The current project for the replacement of an access bridge is engineered and managed principally by one of the volunteers who is a qualified civil engineer.</p>
1.4 Clients/Users	<p>200, comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 male 100 female 20 disabled 20 ethnic minority 50 resident in Woking <p>The wildlife area has disabled access and is open to the public. Visitors include residents of the immediate area and from further afield in Woking and Guildford. The site is promoted to local schools and youth organisation. Visiting groups regularly undertake their own environmental project work.</p>
1.5 Members	<p>70, including 10 Woking residents.</p> <p>Membership is by household or family group and includes children.</p>
1.6 Sum Requested	£1,000 (Capital)
1.7 Project	The site straddles Hodge Brook which visitors can cross on the Winter Bridge, a sympathetically designed wooden bridge originally sponsored by a Fox Corner resident and erected 15 years ago. The bridge is reaching the end of its life and the Association plans to replace it to maintain safe access. A new bridge has been designed and would be erected by residents including a qualified civil engineer. The structure would have a galvanised steel sub-frame which would be hidden from view by an oak structure. It would be similar in size to the existing bridge.
1.8 Cost breakdown:	The project has been estimated at a total cost of £4,500: Steelwork supply £2750,

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	<p>Oak timber £1250, Fixings and sundries £500.</p> <p>The Association has secured a grant of £3,000 from a donor, through Foundation for Surrey, along with a donation of £500 from a local resident. Therefore the Council is being asked to consider funding the remaining £1,000 to enable the project to go ahead.</p>
1.9 Community Benefit	<p>The wildlife area draws regular visitors from Fox Corner, Brookwood, Knaphill and Surrey. The site is open to the public and visitor numbers are not monitored but the Group can tell by observation and from feedback at social and village events that the site is well used and appreciated. The Group aims to complete the work before the end of 2017 and certainly before Easter 2018.</p>

2.0 Financial Background	
2.1 Budget	<p>At the time of the application, the Group held £3,129 in the bank.</p> <p>The Group has submitted a budget for the project applied for which is set out in paragraph 1.8 (cost breakdown) above.</p>
2.2 Accounts	<p>The Group has submitted accounts for 2016 which show an income of £1,467 (£6,980 in 2015) against expenditure of £1,565 (£5,768 in 2015), resulting in a deficit of £98 (a surplus of £1,212 in 2015). The sum of £3,081 was carried forward at the end of the 2016/17 year.</p>
2.3 Support over the past five years	<p>2014/15 – £500 towards replacement of secondary gate and fence.</p>

3.0 Assessment of Application		
3.1 Key Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Constitution ○ Registered Charity ○ VAT Registered ○ Equal Opportunities Policy ○ Safeguarding Policy ○ Reserves Policy ○ Quality Mark ○ Other funding sources pursued ○ Other support by the Council ○ Fundraising ○ Two quotes ○ Regular monitoring provided previously 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>No</p> <p>No</p> <p>No</p> <p>No</p> <p>No</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>No</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>N/A</p>
3.2 Consultee Comments	<p><u>Officer Comment</u></p> <p>The Council previously supported an application from the group for the replacement of an access gate to the site, as it considered that by doing so</p>	

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it would help open up the area for wider access to all, acknowledging in doing so the important part that green space plays in an individuals health and wellbeing.

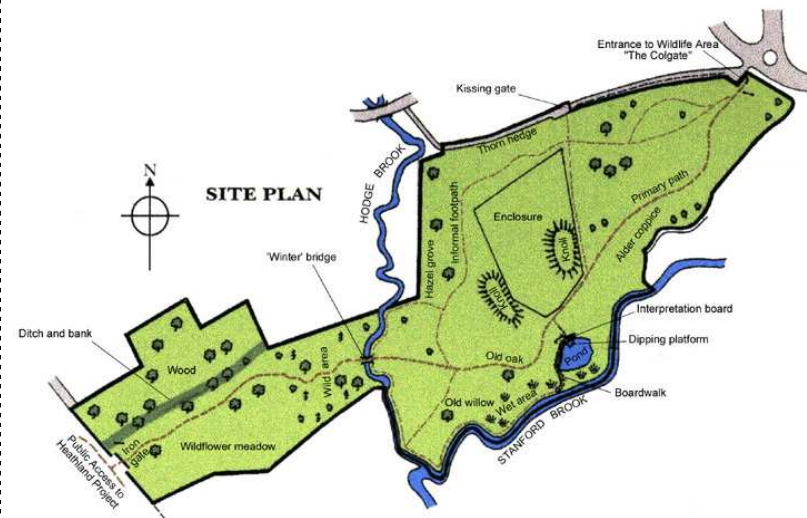
I would be supportive of this request, especially as they have managed to secure some other funding to the project.

3.3 Assessment

Fox Corner Community Wildlife Area Association manages a nature reserve just off Fox Corner roundabout, at the junction between the borders of Woking Borough Council and Guildford Borough Council.

The site has been designated a Nature Reserve and is open 24/7, attracting moth experts at night and amateur photographers at any times. The Guildford Society presented the Association with a design award in the environment category in 2012 in recognition of new features such as enhanced access for wheelchair users, a dipping platform and a boardwalk. The site has attracted a range of wildlife, including kingfishers, the woodmouse, roe deer, woodpeckers, wrens and a variety of butterflies. A number of rare plants are thriving at the site, including grass vetchling, spindle and meadow sweet.

A plan of the site is set out below:



The Association has previously received support from Guildford Borough Council and, in 2014/15, Woking Borough Council towards the cost of replacing its secondary gate, which was in a state of disrepair and not accessible for wheelchair users. Schools, scout groups and other local organisations visit the site from across the area.

The Association is requesting financial assistance towards the replacement bridge which enables Hodge Brook to be crossed, and has raised £3,500 towards the total cost of £4,500. The Council's policy for capital applications is to award a maximum of 50% of the total project cost and the application from the Association meets the criteria.

The existing bridge has been surveyed and engineering advice is that it should be replaced. This bridge is essential for safe public access and movement of maintenance machinery across the site. Its replacement would be a community project benefitting residents and visitors of all ages, with the environment of flora and fauna being safeguarded.

It is recommended that the Association be awarded a grant of £1,000

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towards the new bridge subject to the usual conditions and the presentation of invoices for the work.

REPORT ENDS