

Summary: To provide a proposal for implementation of a Learning and Education theme for the Sustainable Development Fund, to target the distribution of available funds.

Recommendation: That the proposed theme outlined in this document is adopted as a focus for the Sustainable Development Fund over a 3 year period.

Officer Ref: Edward Bonn (01451 862032)

Proposed theme:

1. The Officer proposes that the Sustainable Development Fund trials a themed approach to applications over the next 3 year period, subject to a review at the end of year 2.
2. This theme would be for funding requests that have an educational purpose or remit relating to the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, with specific reference to its landscape, geology, biodiversity and/or historical environment of the AONB. Successful applicants will identify their particular target group or intended audience, which may include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - Primary and/or Secondary Education;
 - Groups with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND);
 - Urban communities located around perimeter of Cotswolds AONB, particularly, within cities which have a high density population such as Swindon and Bristol.
3. Such projects may relate to diverse sectors such as tourism and recreation, education and business, for example, however, their focus should be to disseminate information about features of the Cotswolds AONB to their target groups or audiences.
4. The Management Plan of the Cotswolds AONB provides further information about the various Objectives and Policies relating to the educational focus of this theme for subsequent funding applications. Please note that the Sections entitled 'Conserving and Enhancing' and 'Understanding and Enjoying' are of particular relevance to this possible theme.
5. Projects which involve a proven element of joint-working and match-funding between a range of partners will be given particular attention by the Officer and Sub-Committee, as key features of Sustainable Development Fund applications, which are identified as components which significantly strengthen an application in clause 14 of the applicant's guidance notes.
6. Example projects could include:

- Countryside classroom and outdoor learning initiatives aimed at schools, colleges and other centres of education, involving field trips to appropriate locations within the Cotswolds AONB;
- Projects which aims to broaden understanding and knowledge about the Cotswolds AONB, particularly involving urban populations situated in proximity to the area, with a view to encouraging broader access to the countryside.
- Conservation and display of agricultural implements and/or historical artefacts, or events which showcase traditional ways of life associated with the Cotswolds landscape, such as rural crafts or sheep farming.

Supporting papers: None