



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

GUIDANCE

Safe routes in communities grants: guidance to applicants 2022 to 2023

How local authorities apply for funding to improve road safety and walking and cycling routes to schools.

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Introduction

The purpose of the Guidance is to confirm the priorities that Welsh Government will support through the Safe Routes in Communities Grant to local authorities in Wales in 2022 to 23.

The Guidance also sets out the process by which local authorities should submit applications in line with these priorities, for consideration by the Welsh Government, and how they will be assessed.

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Welsh transport appraisal guidance (WelTAG)

Outcomes

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires public bodies to think more about the long-term, to work better with people, communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach.

The 2015 Act, places a duty on public bodies to seek to achieve the well-being goals and objectives in everything they do.

Llwybr Newydd: a new Wales transport strategy (WTS) is our strategy for the future of transport in Wales. It sets out our ambitions for the next 20 years and our priorities for the next 5 years. This forms the basis of the grant objectives.

In your applications you must demonstrate that you have developed your proposal using the five ways of working and that your proposal maximises your contribution to the WTS ambitions that are aligned to the well-being goals.

Well-being of future generations act: the essentials

In your applications you must demonstrate how your proposals will meet these grant objectives.

Grant name

Grant objectives

Safe routes in communities

- Increase levels of active travel among children travelling to school and in the wider community
 - Improve the liveability of communities
 - Improve the environment for walking, cycling and scooting around schools
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Eligibility for capital funding

Subject to confirmation of budgets, the indicative total funding available for Safe Routes in Communities schemes across Wales for FY2022-23 is expected to be approximately £5,000,000.

Safe Routes in Communities funding has the primary focus of encouraging more children and families to travel actively to school and to do so safely. In recent years, School Street initiatives, which involve the part time closure of access roads for most vehicle traffic combined with promotion and awareness raising activities and enforcement, are starting to be introduced with positive results.

We would like to see School Streets become a focus of the Safe Routes in Communities programme and encourage local authorities to come forward with ambitious proposals to introduce School Streets. These can range from a scheme for an individual school or a package of schemes covering a number of schools (there is no limit on the number of schools that can be included and they do not need to be located in proximity to each other) which the local authority can submit under one application.

School Street measures can also be incorporated in a wider Safe Routes in Communities scheme.

Local authorities are invited to submit up to three applications for individual schemes or School Street packages including any existing multi-year schemes. Schemes that are located in designated localities under the Active Travel Act should be on or linked to active travel routes that have been identified on the submitted Active Travel Network Map or the approved Existing Routes Map /Integrated Network Map and a reference must be given. We also allow applications for schools that are not in designated localities under the Active Travel Act, for example, in more rural areas.

Where a proposed scheme is within a locality to which the mapping duties under the Active Travel Act apply, but not on an existing or planned active travel route, then applications will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

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Safe Routes in Communities schemes are most successful where they have been developed with close involvement of pupils, parents, school staff and the wider community. We want to see involvement and collaborative design from the early stages of scheme development, wherever possible. We therefore expect schemes put forward for funding to provide evidence of involvement already undertaken, or a plan for involvement.

If you are applying for funding for design and construction within the same financial year you **MUST** submit your detailed designs as soon as they are available to Welsh Government for consideration, and before you begin construction.

Please note that we will no longer fund 20mph schemes through Safe Routes in Communities. An exception will only be made in circumstances, where a package of measures relies on lowering the speed limit and includes physical measures.

Funding will only be granted, where scheme design reflects the **Active Travel Act guidance**.

When designing schemes, local authorities must also consider their responsibilities under Section 6 –The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The duty requires that public authorities must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity so far as consistent with the proper exercise of their functions, and in so doing, promote the resilience of ecosystems. This is for example highly relevant to the treatment of verges and planting schemes as part of transport projects. Guidance on the Duty can be found here: **Environment (Wales) Act 2016: biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems**

The Welsh Government will consider schemes that will take up to three financial years to complete. Total scheme costs must be outlined at the beginning of the project and funding will be subject to year-to-year agreement. Schemes taking several years to complete, if successful, will be prioritised for funding in subsequent years for the duration of the scheme, subject to grant funding being available and satisfactory progress being made.

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Local authorities can work together on their applications. The lead local authority must be identified for each scheme. Funding would be allocated to the lead local authority.

We will fund works and pre-works for capital schemes and the cost of scheme monitoring and evaluation can be included. Schemes where only pre works will take place will also be eligible for consideration for funding.

Applications for new schemes can be made for single projects or for a package of related projects. Applications for a package of projects should contain a costed list of the associated projects in priority order.

Funding will be allocated up to the amount awarded for actual eligible expenditure incurred on an accepted scheme. Funding will be capped at the level of the award and the local authority will be required to carry the risk of any overspend that may occur. Where increased costs arise due to exceptional circumstances, outside the local authority's control, Welsh Government may consider making additional funding available.

Local Authorities will be expected to deliver the schemes accepted in accordance with their applications. Reports on progress will be required at intervals throughout the 2022 to 2023 financial year and further information will be included in the award letter.

Relevant Welsh Government officials or their nominated representatives, may request meetings or site visits to discuss scheme progress as considered appropriate. Failure to demonstrate appropriate progress with delivery may result in funding offers being withdrawn and funding claimed up to that point being recovered from a local authority.

Schemes that include match funding will attract additional scores in the appraisal process, with schemes that demonstrate greater levels of match funding scoring higher.

Applications must clearly identify the levels and sources of available match funding and confirm this will be in place to ensure the completion of the works within the 2022 to 2023 financial year. Match funding may be from internal or

external sources and may include officer time.

All schemes should be ranked in number order of priority.

Where multi-year schemes were given indicative approval in 2020 to 2021 or 2021 to 2022, an application form will be required to update the information provided previously. This should highlight changes to scheme design, timeframes and the amount of grant required. Should the application vary considerably, this will be appraised as if it was a new scheme and will not automatically attract funding.

Grant terms and conditions

Funding will be made direct to local authorities and will be available for 2022 to 2023 only. Local authorities should note that Welsh Government is unable to give a commitment for grant support after 2022 to 2023.

Other than in exceptional circumstances by prior agreement, schemes submitted for works funding in 2022 to 2023 should demonstrate that all land issues will be resolved and orders or required permissions are in place to allow works to progress.

Whilst Welsh Government is prepared to fund the cost of land purchase, funding will not be provided in respect of compensation claims arising from the land purchase or from the project itself.

The provision of capital support to schemes is conditional upon local authorities' commitment to meet future revenue and maintenance costs.

Monitoring and evaluation

All schemes and educational initiatives must be monitored and evaluated. Local authorities are able to include the costs of monitoring for up to three years within their funding applications but these must be clearly identified.

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Schemes must be monitored for three years post completion and reported to the Welsh Government annually. Further guidance will be provided on reporting processes.

Promotion

Applications should include costs associated with the promotion of schemes, including signage, materials and events, for up to three years after scheme completion. These must be clearly identified.

Application process documentation

Local authorities should submit their applications using the relevant template application forms. All schemes will be assessed through an appraisal process.

Local authorities will be responsible for ensuring that delivery remains on schedule and reporting any change to the works programme and/or spend profile.

Applications for capital schemes must include a plan showing the scheme in as much detail as possible at application stage and a map showing the scheme context. An OS GB grid reference must also be included.

Supporting documentation will be considered as follows:

- maps and plans in respect of capital applications (these maps and plans must clearly show the proposed measures)
- other supporting information, which you feel is essential to the bid, must be kept to a minimum and be anonymised, where applicable.

Appraisal process

Applications will be considered by a panel of Welsh Government Transport officials and relevant external stakeholders as appropriate.

Final decisions on funding will be made by the Minister and Deputy Minister for Climate Change.

The assessment criteria for the grants are available separately, see [Grant assessment criteria 2022 to 2023](#).

Deadline for submissions

Applications must be submitted by 9 February 2022.

Electronic copies must be submitted to the relevant Welsh Government contact listed below via transportplanning@gov.wales – please keep appendices' to a minimum. All documents should be submitted in a word or PDF format.

No additional or revised information will be accepted after the above date, unless requested by the Welsh Government.

Welsh Government contacts

Safe Routes in Communities

Active Travel Delivery Manager

transportplanning@gov.wales

03000 256420

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