

## **Community funding in Westborough through Travel SMART**

### **What is Travel SMART?**

Travel SMART is a programme of travel improvements and behaviour change aiming to help people to travel SMART, reducing carbon, calories and cost.

### **Travel SMART in Westborough**

As part of Surrey County Council's submission to the Department for Transport's Local Sustainable Transport Fund, money has been successfully allocated to develop a community project aimed at improving people's access to travel in Westborough, Guildford. Westborough is identified as an area of deprivation, with higher than average levels of unemployment.

The aim of Travel SMART in Westborough is to make it easier for people to travel and to bring services into the community, reducing the need to travel. Community funding will be targeted towards projects and improvements that help to achieve this aim and complement one or more of the following objectives:

- Help people make better travel choices and improve accessibility
- Improve people's access to jobs/skills
- Encourage people to live healthier lifestyles

### **Community funding in Westborough**

There is approximately £200,000 per annum available for community funding in Westborough, with two strands to this funding :

1. Funding to develop a 'community hub' in Guildford, drawing on examples of existing hubs such as the Sheerwater Community Centre. We anticipate this will involve working with partners to develop a continuous presence in Westborough where residents will be able to access advice on travel, but also health, job and skills related issues, and information about community groups, activities and other services available in the local community.

2. A funding programme available to local community groups to bid for funding to help support local projects and the local community as a whole. This will give local people the opportunity to identify improvements, activities and support for groups that will benefit the local community.

### **Setting up a community hub**

The concept of the hub is to bring together a number of different services offered by local organisations and authorities into a central location in Westborough, making it easier for residents to access service near to their home.

The objectives of the hub are to:

- Reduce people's need to travel by bringing services and information to the community, services which might otherwise be difficult to access because of difficulties with travelling to them.
- Use the hub as a base to encourage behaviour change in the local population, including encouraging people to live healthier lifestyles and make better-informed choices about travel.

We would like to explore the possibility of the following services possibly being offered from the hub:

- Skills training and Jobseekers advice – for example working with the Guildford Job Club and Job Centre plus – helping bring more of these opportunities into the area.
- Community health services and advice for local people on how to maintain a healthy lifestyle.
- Giving a base/drop in centre for the Safer Neighbourhood teams.
- A place for local groups to meet and provide activities for local residents.
- Somewhere to access information and advice about travel, possibly including cycle repair/recycling similar to that in Sheerwater. Where possible provide travel planning for local people who would like advice.
- Somewhere people and groups can find out about the travel SMART project, getting advice and training about how to apply for funding.

Travel SMART has approximately £50,000 per annum for three years to be able to contribute to setting up a hub in Westborough. We would like to explore this possibility with Guildford Borough Council, NHS Surrey, Safer neighbourhood policing team and other organisations that have an interest in setting up a hub in the area.

### **The funding programme**

Approximately £150,000 of funding per annum for three years is available to the local community to spend on improvements and activities that would support the objectives highlighted above. In Westborough there will be two routes to access the funding:

1. Community groups will be able to bid for funding at any time during the year to support existing or new projects with the opportunity to bid for up to a maximum of £5,000. Projects that have received or are applying for funding elsewhere and require match funding can also bid for a maximum of £5,000.

An annual fund of £25,000 will be available for these applications.

2. For projects requiring funding of between £5,000 and £50,000 community groups and local organisations will be able to submit projects to a participatory budgeting process giving residents the chance to decide which schemes they

[www.surreycc.gov.uk/reigateandbanstead](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/reigateandbanstead)

would like to fund. There will be a limit of £50,000 for schemes in this process, and again funding can be used as match funding alongside another project.

## **Small applications**

### **Funding criteria**

The aim of the travel SMART funding in Westborough is to make it easier for people to travel and to bring services into the community, reducing the need to travel. All applications submitted for funding will need to demonstrate how their project will contribute towards this aim.

Groups submitting bids will also need to be able to identify how their scheme will support at least one of Travel SMART's objectives :

- Help people make better travel choices and improve accessibility
- Improve people's access to jobs/skills
- Encourage people to live healthier lifestyles

The funding can be used for one off projects or to support the costs of activities that are already being provided. For ongoing activities the group should demonstrate how the project will continue after Travel SMART funding has been spent.

### **Decision making process**

The travel SMART team will validate applications to ensure they are suitable for funding within the scheme. All applications that pass validation will be presented to a local board that will be set up to decide upon applications. We envisage that the board will be made up of representatives from the following:

- Local Councillors
- Community representative
- Local schools + college
- NHS Surrey
- Job centre

We anticipate identifying a pool of up to 30 people from which a decision-making board of 6 or 7 people could be convened for each meeting. This would allow more people to be involved in the decision making process and allow it to be easier to hold regular board meetings.

### **Timescales**

This will be a rolling fund that groups and organisations will be able to bid for at any time. Depending upon the volume of applications submitted, we envisage the board meeting every 6 weeks to make decisions on applications, and funding awarded as soon as possible after these meetings.

## **Large applications**

### **Funding criteria**

Any local not for profit, public sector, or third sector organisation will be able to put forward ideas to be included in the participatory budgeting process. As with small applications the following criteria will be applied:

The aim of the travel SMART funding in Westborough is to enable people to be able to travel around better, or reduce the need to travel by bringing services into the community. All applications submitted for funding will need to demonstrate how their project will contribute towards this aim.

Groups submitting bids will also need to be able to identify how their scheme will support at least one of Travel SMART's objectives:

- Help people make better travel choices and improve accessibility
- Improve people's access to jobs/skills
- Encourage people to live healthier lifestyles

In addition, the application should also demonstrate how the project will benefit the local community, either by improving the local environment, or providing a service to local people that they need.

The funding can be used for one off projects or to support the costs of activities that are already being provided. For ongoing activities the group should demonstrate how the project will continue after Travel SMART funding has been spent.

### **Outline decision making process**

It is proposed that there will be a deadline in September in each of the three financial years that the funding is available, for groups and organisations to submit bids.

The travel SMART team will validate applications to ensure they are suitable for funding within the scheme.

All applications will be uploaded on a website with the responsible group/organisation having the opportunity to put together an introduction and 'pitch' for their idea. These will be available to view on-line for a month. Residents would be able to vote in an online poll during this period for their preferred schemes.

At the end of the one month period a community event would be held (Mid October) where bidders would be able to further 'sell' their ideas to residents, and then residents would be able to vote on which schemes they like best. The results of funding would be announced during the event to ensure that people are fully engaged in the process.

We will be meeting with the [Participatory Budgeting Unit](#) in February 2012 for guidance on the most effective way to run the participatory budgeting programme.

### **Support for bidders during 2012/13**

During the first year that funding is available it is important that local groups and organisations can get adequate support and assistance to help them to submit bids. We therefore intend to use a small amount of the 2012/13 budget c.£10,000 to provide support and advice for groups to assist them in developing ideas and writing robust funding proposals.

We will evaluate the value of the support and if it proves valuable, we may repeat this in years 2 and 3 of the programme.

### **Additional funding**

As part of the wider Travel SMART programme, Surrey County Council has submitted a second large bid to the Dept for Transport. Within this bid funding for an additional £150,000 is sought to support this project.

