

Vale REPF 2024/25 - officer evaluation report.

Scoring summary

Capital grants for small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas.

Ref no.	Organisation	Scheme	Total Project Cost	Amount Requested	Suggested score
VREPF2\100032	B&B Rafters	Attract more visitors with EVs to the area and cut carbon emission of the B&B by installing solar panels	£21,539	£16,154	11
VREPF2\100064	Bishopsland Educational Trust	Renovation of Grade II listed farm buildings to provide low carbon-impact teaching workshops, offices and community engagement facilities	£283,036	£41,458	10
VREPF2\100063	Ashbrook 2009 LLP	Installation of inset solar panels and battery storage	£36,105	£27,000	9
VREPF2\100013	AG Dental (Equipment) Ltd.	Solar PV system	£16,256	£12,192	8
VREPF2\100067	The Hill End Outdoor Education Centre	North Dormitory Improvement Project	£37,984	£28,488	8
VREPF2\100074	Buscot Manor	POWER UPGRADE TO MAINS SUPPLY	£9,420	£9,420	8
VREPF2\100087	Amos Hospitality Ltd	The George At Upton Village Store & Cafe	£106,203	£75,000	8
VREPF2\100052	Vermtek Ltd	Investment into heat treatment	£50,989	£35,994	7

VREPF2\100088	G D Lay & Partners	Farm and Office Solar Project	£82,680	£60,000	7
VREPF2\100036	H L Binning & Son	Wedding venue upgrade	£15,999	£10,000	6
VREPF2\100047	Apple Cottage	Shepherd's Hut as a Home Office and Sustainable Business Hub	£24,066	£10,000	6
VREPF2\100022	Chapel Hill Comestibles	Scaling Up Efficiency and Production	£5,620	£5,620	4
VREPF2\100075	Buscot Manor	EXPANDED EXPERIENTIAL OFFER & WORKSHOPS EQUIPMENT & SIGNAGE	£4,062	£4,062	3
VREPF2\100082	Ichorbio Ltd	Solar Panels for company office	£16,412	£12,309	3
				Total Requested	£347,697
				Total Budget	£218,169
				Budget Remaining	-£129,528

Scoring and award matrix for REPF Grant applications

Suggested Scores	Scores: The scoring thresholds which identify what priority level the project falls into can be amended, depending on the number of applications received and potential allocation of funds to ensure maximum community benefit. As agreed by the Cabinet Member.
7 - 12	Project is recommended for funding
0 - 6	Project is not recommended for funding

Projects MUST score at least one point in the Project outputs/outcomes section in order to be recommended for funding.

Need for project.

Points		
0	No evidence of need for project has been provided	
1	Limited evidence for need for project has been provided	A small-scale survey of employees or service users has been carried out.
2	Good evidence of need for project has been provided	A larger scale survey has been carried out asking the wider community
3	Detailed evidence of need for project has been provided	A full business plan or formal community consultation have been provided.
+ 1	If no other projects like this are located locally	Is there a similar facility or business within a reasonable distance or not. For example, EV charging points, will the project provide the only charging point in a village, or are there already several public charging points available in the village.

Climate Action

Points		
-1	The project will negatively impact on the council's climate agenda,	The project will have a detrimental effect on the local environment without any mitigation in place, this could be via destruction of green space and wildlife habitat, increase in greenhouse gas emissions, installation of non-energy efficient equipment, or purchase of new diesel or petrol vehicles etc.
0	The project has not considered its impact on the environment, or not provided any information in this area.	No evidence of environmental impact of the project has been provided in the application form.
1	The project will have some positive impact on the council's climate agenda	Small scale improvements such as replacing some lightbulbs with energy efficient ones, installing bike racks, implementing an energy smart meter
2	The project will have a positive impact on the council's climate agenda	Installation of EV charging points, renewable energy systems, creation of green spaces for nature, creation of new cycle paths or active travel routes.
+ 1	The organisation applying has a sustainability/climate action forward plan or strategy in place	Evidence of a climate action policy has been provided

Social Action

Points		
0	The project has no wider community benefits	The project only benefits the immediate applicants, such as a private business e.g. installation of equipment to cut costs for the business
1	The project has limited wider community benefits	The project will benefit a small number of groups or individuals, less than 50 people
2	The project has several wider community benefits	The project will benefit a large number of community groups or more than 50 people

Projects MUST score at least one point in one of the following sections.

Projects outputs/outcomes

Applications applying for **Capital grants for small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas** will be assessed against the following outputs/outcomes. Please note, projects will be scored against their highest achieving output i.e. if a project will increase productivity by over 10% and safeguard 3 jobs it will score 3 points. The jobs safeguarded will be brought to the grant panels attention but not scored.

Points	Jobs safe-guarded	Adoption of new to the firm technology or process	number of firms with improved productivity
0	0 jobs safe-guarded	Adoption of 0 new to firm technology or processes	Expected 0% increase in productivity
1	1-5 jobs safe-guarded	Adoption of 1 new to firm technology or processes	Expected 1%-5% increase in productivity
2	6-10 jobs safe-guarded	Adoption of 2 new to firm technologies or processes	Expected in 6%-10% increase in productivity
3	10+ jobs safe-guarded	Adoption of 3 or more new to firm technologies or processes	Expected over 10% increase in productivity

Applications applying for **Capital grants for growing the local social economy and supporting innovation areas** will be assessed against the following outputs/outcomes. Please note, projects will be scored against their highest achieving output i.e. if a project will create a new business and create 3 jobs it will score 3 points. The jobs created will be brought to the grant panels attention but not scored.

Points	Jobs created	Number of new businesses created
1	1-5 jobs created	
2	6-10 jobs created	
3	10+ jobs created	New business created

Applications applying for **Capital grants for investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups** will be assessed against the following outputs/outcomes. Please note, projects will be scored against their highest achieving output i.e. if a project will increase user numbers by over 50% and increase perceptions of facilities by 20% it will score 3 points. The increase in perceptions will be brought to the grant panels attention but not scored.

Points	Expected improved perceptions of facilities or amenities	Increase users of facilities or amenities
1	1-25% expected increase in perception of facilities or amenities	1-25% expected increase in user numbers
2	26-50% expected increase in perception of facilities or amenities	26-50% expected increase in user numbers
3	50%+ expected increase in perception of facilities or amenities	50% + expected increase in user numbers

B&B Rafters	Ref	VREPF2\100032
Project Name: Attract more visitors with EVs to the area and cut carbon emission of the B&B by installing solar panels		
Project Description: The aim of the project is to provide B&B guests with an EV charging point to encourage more tourists with EVs to come to the area. At the moment there is no B&B at all in The Vale of White Horse providing this service. When the B&B opened more than 20 years ago the electricity consumption had been about 10000kWh per year. So far this has been cut down to 5000-6000kWh per year. The second aim of the project now is to substantially lower the B&B's carbon footprint even further by cutting down on electricity (used mainly for heating, washing, drying, ironing and lighting) drawn from the grid by installing solar panels onto the roof of the garage and extending that roof in order to be able to get more solar panels fitted. This will be another of B&B Rafters' contributions to tackle the climate emergency. The house itself has too many dormer windows and gables and is therefore not suitable for solar panels.		
Application Theme: • Capital grants for small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas.		
Location of Project: B & B Rafters, Abingdon Road, Abingdon, OX13 6NU		
Number of Staff: 1 (2 FTE)		
Project Start Date: 01 November 2024		Project End Date: 01 December 2024

Total project cost	£21,539
Organisation's contribution	£5,385
Other secured funding	£0
REPF Grant Requested	£16,154
Organisation's latest bank balance	£6,982

Scoring

<p>Need for Project</p> <p>"The applicant has done extensive research on the numbers of EV vehicles currently on the road and the predicted increases in numbers over the next 10 years, they have also searched for B&B accommodation in Vale with charging points and found that none are currently listed as having EV chargers available. (This has been checked on the Internet on various websites including Visitsoutheastengland, Booking.com, Good Hotel Guide, Wolsey Lodges, Air BnB, Coolplaces, Travelmyth, Farmstay and Carwow.) as at June 2024. The application does not have surveys or community consultation, but has been extensively researched, and is the next step in an ongoing plan for the business. The lack of other projects like it allows it to score the additional point"</p>	Score	4/4
<p>Action on Climate Emergency</p> <p>The installation of EV charging point and renewable energy system will have a positive impact on the council's climate agenda. The organisation has also provided details of the sustainability/climate action forward plan with has allowed them to score the additional point.</p>	Score	3/3

<p>Social Action The project will benefit a small number of individuals using the B&B, however the expansion of EV charging points to rural businesses may encourage potential EV purchases when they see charging points are conveniently located.</p>	<p>Score</p>	<p>1/2</p>
<p>Project Outputs 1-5 jobs safe-guarded - jobs safeguarded through projection from fuel cost fluctuations Adoption of 3 or more new to firm technologies or processes - EV charger, solar panels, battery storage Expected over 10% increase in productivity</p>	<p>Score</p>	<p>3/3</p>
<p>DEDUCTIONS, CONCERNS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS This project fits with the following council objectives – Climate emergency work Local visitor economy work</p>	<p>Total score</p>	<p>11/12</p>

Applicant responses

Need for Project

How do you know there is a need for your project?

A quote from <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6569cb331104cf000dfa7352/net-zero-government-emissions-roadmap.pdf>; paragraph 1.2

"In November 2008, the UK passed the Climate Change Act with an overwhelming majority across political parties.

The 2008 Climate Act committed the UK to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by

2050 compared to 1990 levels, formed the Committee on Climate Change, and established UK

carbon budgets. In June 2019, this was strengthened, committing the UK to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050."

Over the past few years I have been talking frequently to my guests about how we at B&B Rafters aim to reduce our carbon emission; about what we have done so far, what is in the pipeline and what they can do to get involved.

Details of this journey are now in the information folder in the guest rooms and are also uploaded to this form within section 8, filed as: Reduce Carbon Footprint.

Is there a facility or business providing a comparable service or product nearby?

There is no B&B in The Vale of White Horse offering an EV charging point for guests, nor does any B&B in the area have a solar panel system. There is no public charging point in the village.

Social Action

How many people in the wider community will the project benefit?

The project will benefit more than 50 people

Who will benefit from your project and how?

Everyone driving an electric vehicle and planning to come to the wider area will benefit when staying at B&B Rafters as they can charge their car overnight.

The solar panel system with the battery will help the local council and the government to achieve the net zero aim. If and when we will be able to cut our carbon emission at the B&B even further and this time substantially, it will in the end help everybody.

Action on Climate Emergency

The project is expected to make an impact on the following -

Decrease energy use, Increase energy efficiency, Decrease use of vehicles with a combustion engine, Reduce air pollution (outdoors), Use sustainable materials, Other (please specify below)

Looking at your answers above, please describe how your project will help to achieve these actions.

The ability to charge their EV at B&B Rafters will attract more guests with such vehicles to the area, long-term replacing bookings of guests with non-EVs. This will result in better air quality.

The installation of a powerful battery storage system will substantially increase the energy efficiency of the solar panel system. The solar panel system itself will decrease energy use (drawn from the grid) and will {see source <https://www.greenlivingblog.org.uk/environmental-benefits-of-solar-panels>} "reduce water use from energy production".

The solar panel installation and the extension of the garage roof will be done by using as much sustainable materials as possible.

Project outcomes

Micro & small business outputs

1-5 jobs safe-guarded, Adoption of 3 or more new to firm technologies or processes, Expected over 10% increase in productivity

Social Economy outputs

Civil society outcomes

In fewer than 300 words, please explain how your project will meet the above outcomes.

I have spoken to the local electrician who is a specialist contractor for solar panels and EV charger installation; he is ready to go as soon as I get the funding sorted. He will coordinate the timing with the builder who is going to build the extension of the garage roof.

I will myself project manage all of this and will make sure that everything gets finished way before 31 March 2025.

The quotes I have received are definite ones. This is a very straight forward project; both contractors involved have evaluated the current situation and the project very thoroughly and can't see anything major turning up that might raise the costs significantly.

Bishopsland Educational Trust	Ref	VREPF2\100064
Project Name: Renovation of Grade II listed farm buildings to provide low carbon-impact teaching workshops, offices and community engagement facilities		
Project Description: Hills Yard is a derelict Grade II listed yard in Buscot and is part of the National Trust's Buscot and Coleshill Estate. Originally built as a cattle yard in the 19th century, in recent times it was used for light industrial purposes prior to falling into disrepair 10 years ago. Bishopsland has a 5 year agreement to lease and a further 30 year lease with the National Trust, and planning permission, to restore and enhance the site. The NT are committed partners and we will join an expanding community of crafts businesses located on the Coleshill estate as part of their Heritage & Rural Skills Centre.		
<p>Phase 1a work commenced on 2 sides of the quad in May 2024 and is scheduled to complete in early September. This work will deliver a main workshop plus 3 smaller workshops that can accommodate 17 makers, and a toilet block. This work (which is NOT part of this REPF application) will enable us to begin our 24/25 programme from the site in September, and we have accepted 12 early-in-career makers. We have also leased 6 residential properties from the National Trust to provide accommodation for 2 staff and the 12 makers.</p> <p>The conversion work currently underway is funded by Bishopsland's Cash Reserves and a private donation.</p> <p>If successful, this REPF application will enable us to deliver our low carbon-impact objectives for Building A. We will install air source heat pumps and a heat recovery system, an EV charging point, bike racks (<35% of our students own cars), an online digital teaching capability and remove asbestos. We have no other source of funding for these specific activities, which not only will make the site eco-friendly but also supports Bishopsland in running more cost efficiently.</p>		
Application Theme: • Capital grants for small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas.		
Location of Project: Hills Yard, Buscot, SN7 8BY		
Number of Staff: 3 (2 FTE)		
Project Start Date: 16 September 2024		Project End Date: 28 February 2025

Total project cost	£283,036
Organisation's contribution	£221,578
Other secured funding	£20,000
REPF Grant Requested	£41,458
Organisation's latest bank balance	£378,000

Scoring

<p>Need for Project Detailed evidence of the need for project has been provided. The organisation has provided details of community consultation along with evidence of Parish meetings.</p>	<p>Score</p>	<p>4/4</p>
<p>Action on Climate Emergency The project to install air source heat pumps and a heat recovery system, an EV charging point, bike racks (less than 35% of our students own cars), an online digital teaching capability and remove asbestos will have a positive impact on the council's climate objectives. They have included details of the organisations sustainability strategy allowing them to score the additional point.</p>	<p>Score</p>	<p>3/3</p>
<p>Social Action The project will primarily benefit the applicants.</p>	<p>Score</p>	<p>0/2</p>
<p>Project Outputs "1-5 jobs safe-guarded Adoption of 3 or more new to firm technologies or processes Expected over 10% increase in productivity"</p>	<p>Score</p>	<p>3/3</p>
<p>DEDUCTIONS, CONCERNS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS This project fits with the following council objectives – Climate emergency work</p>	<p>Total score</p>	<p>10/12</p>

Applicant responses

Need for Project

How do you know there is a need for your project?

The National Trust's Heritage & Rural Skills Centre provides an umbrella group of heritage skills organisations all operating within a few miles of each other. We believe that a concentration of heritage skills organisations around Coleshill demonstrates the need for the facilities and the businesses/charities that operate there. Bishopsland is the only silversmithing organisation within the Heritage & Rural Skills Centre and brings a unique heritage craft with a long history of successful silversmithing training. The new site will enable us to introduce traditional skills which are on the Heritage Crafts critically endangered list, such as Silver Spinning

<https://heritagecrafts.org.uk/redlist/categories-of-risk/>

The renovation of Hills Yard is integral to Bishopsland being able to continue to operate in Oxfordshire. Without this site and the investment we are making, we would have to cease operating. Given our 31 year history, we know we have a unique and proven model that supports early-in-career silversmiths transition from education to commercial independence. The fact that normally we have twice as many applicants as places on offer we think demonstrates the need for our Programme. But the programme cannot be delivered without the site and, as previously discussed, Hills Yard was derelict until Bishopsland took on the lease and investment commitment. We are grateful to the National Trust Coleshill Estate and headquarters team for their active support and encouragement.

We held a Buscot community consultation on 17 October 2023 and there was overwhelming support for our plans for Hills Yard, with the Parish Council voting to approve planning permission on the night.

In short, our 31 year history proves the need for the Bishopsland programme but to deliver this we need a site that offers workshops, teaching facilities and offices and therefore we need Hills Yard and the totality of the renovation project described.

Is there a facility or business providing a comparable service or product nearby?

Bishopsland's annual residential post-graduate vocational skills training programme is unique and there are no competitors in the UK. In fact we also receive a high volume of applications from overseas students which would indicate few alternatives overseas. This is partly why we think the digital teaching capability, with ability to join masterclasses online will be popular with our alumni. The nearest public EV charging points appear to be Highworth or Faringdon.

Social Action

How many people in the wider community will the project benefit?

The project will benefit more than 50 people

Who will benefit from your project and how?

- 1) if we assume we will operate for another 30 years, and that we will teach 12 makers each year, this capital project will benefit 360 early-in-career silversmiths & jewellers
- 2) we hold a series of events and exhibitions each year, with an average of 80-100 visitors. Several of these will be held at Buscot or the Coleshill Estate, bringing our traditional supporters into the County
- 3) our 3 staff will benefit from modern offices that can be created only once the asbestos is removed
- 4) South Square Trust funding is already in place to enable us to increase our headcount by

- 1 new part time member of staff, who will be recruited locally
- 5) if successful, National Lottery Heritage Funding will also enable us to increase headcount by a further new part time member of staff, who would also be recruited locally
- 6) the 15 sessional tutors we employ will benefit from modern renovated workshops with a low carbon footprint, as well as use of the digital teaching facility to intricate close-up work
- 7) our alumni network of over 300 silversmiths will be able to remotely join masterclasses via the digital teaching facility
- 8) we will require grounds maintenance, cleaners, a regular driver and catering, all of which will be sourced locally
- 9) we have already begun to locally source materials, for instance our propane gas is now supplied by Peter Kinch Plant in Farringdon
- 10) our sessional tutors will require local accommodation for the week they spend teaching for us
- 11) our 12 students and 2 staff will now all live in and around Buscot, supporting local food retailers, pubs, restaurants, leisure facilities, hairdressers etc
- 12) as with Universities, some students do then settle locally once they finish our programme, bringing new micro-businesses to the County

Action on Climate Emergency

The project is expected to make an impact on the following -

Decrease energy use, Increase energy efficiency, Decrease use of vehicles with a combustion engine, Reduce air pollution (outdoors), Improve air quality (indoors), Increase use of public transport, Increase use of active travel

Looking at your answers above, please describe how your project will help to achieve these actions.

If successful, our REPF funding is almost entirely focused on the actions Bishopsland can take to address the climate emergency. We are excited at the prospect of being able to install a sustainable and efficient heating system, and believe it will be a popular feature that future operational and capital funders will score us highly on. Our current Phase 1 renovation is using sustainable insulation, heritage grade roof lights, double glazing, LED lighting - all efforts to ensure the building is as efficient and sustainable as possible for a Grade II listed barn.

Normally only 1/3 of our students have a car and so, by ensuring our accommodation options are located within a maximum 20 minute cycle ride, many will cycle or walk to/from Hills Yard.. The secure bike racks will be well used. 50% of our students will live within 250m of Hills Yard, meaning even if they have a car, they will not use it on a day to day basis.

Not all of the student travel will be to/from the Yard, they will need to go shopping, to get to Swindon or Oxford train stations etc. We have always encouraged the use of public transport and car shares, and are sure this will continue.

The installation of an EV charging point will ensure that our Chief Exec can travel across the County (Home - RG4 9BB) to work secure in the knowledge that she can recharge at once there. We can also encourage sessional tutors and visitors to travel by EV if we can guarantee charging at the site. Future plans include the installation of solar panels.

Finally, Bishopsland is a signatory of the Scottish Goldsmiths Ethical Making Policy which encourages our sector to employ green, sustainable and ethical approaches, such as removing plastics, acids and non-sustainable products from our operation. A good example is packaging, in that we no longer use bubble wrap or 'polystyrene noodles' and instead rely on recycled paper packaging. We only buy recycled bullion, never newly mined silver or gold, and in fact are often donated old silver objects (eg cutlery) which we smelt and reform into ingots for the students to work up into new contemporary pieces.

<https://ethicalmaking.org/news/pledge-signing-bishopsland-educational-trust>

We received a small amount of funding from The Clothworkers Company to support our transition to sustainability and circularity and I have enclosed the funding report submitted at the end of that project.

Project outcomes

Micro & small business outputs

1-5 jobs safe-guarded, Adoption of 3 or more new to firm technologies or processes,
Expected over 10% increase in productivity

Social Economy outputs

Civil society outcomes

In fewer than 300 words, please explain how your project will meet the above outcomes.

We are extremely confident in being able to meet the project budget and deadline because:

- 1) we have a contract with Wilkins Builders for Phase 1a and they are currently at site and will complete this phase in early September
- 2) our intention is to extend their contract for the additional work that this REPF funding would enable
- 3) we already have planning approval for these project activities and a retained project manager
- 4) the air source heat pumps, heat recovery and asbestos removal have already been designed/specified by our retained MEP consultants, architect & planning advisor
- 5) we already have quotes for the air source heat pumps, heat recovery system & asbestos removal as this was initially included within our current Phase 1 build but had to be descope as we did not have sufficient funds

Project deliverables:

- 1) air source heat pumps and heat recovery system installed in Building A (main workshop)
- 2) digital teaching capability installed in Building A (main workshop). Business grade Gigaclear internet being installed 17 July
- 3) 3x 4 bike bicycle racks installed in empty Building D
- 4) EV Charging point (planning permission will be required but we have time to secure this)
- 5) Asbestos removal

Project responsibilities:

Overall approval and oversight : Bishopsland Board of Trustees

Financial management, organisational planning, fundraising & funder reporting lead :

Bishopsland Chief Exec (staff), Principal (staff) & Treasurer (Trustee)

Project Manager : Freshlife Consulting

Architect : Andrew Goodman Architecture

MEP Design : Qoda

Asbestos Survey : Amiantus

Energy Efficiency assessment : Vital

Principal Designer : Andrew Adler

Building Inspectors : Owl

Planning : SF Planning

Bat survey : Worcester Wildlife

Project plan uploaded is for current Phase 1a. If we receive REPF funding, a similarly detailed plan will be created

Ashbrook 2009 LLP	Ref	VREPF2\100063
Project Name: Installation of inset solar panels and battery storage		
Project Description: We have obtained planning permission and listed building consent to install inset solar panels into 4 of our properties at Ashbrook Mews in Blewbury. The project will be to help our move to net zero and should encourage further tourism visits to the Vale of White Horse. By adding a battery storage solution we will be able to run our ground source heat pumps during the night using electricity generated during the day from the PV panels.		
Application Theme: • Capital grants for small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas.		
Location of Project: Ashbrook Mews, Westbrook Street, 1,2,6 and 7 Ashbrook Mews, Westbrook Street, Blewbury, OX11 9QA		
Number of Staff: 15 (8.4 FTE)		
Project Start Date: 30 September 2024		Project End Date: 01 November 2024

Total project cost	£36,105
Organisation's contribution	£9,105
Other secured funding	£0
REPF Grant Requested	£27,000
Organisation's latest bank balance	£97,000

Scoring

Need for Project good general evidence of the importance of decarbonising holiday accommodation has been provided, but limited information specific to their accommodation.	Score	2/4
Action on Climate Emergency The installation of the renewable energy system will have a positive impact on the council's climate agenda. The organisation has also provided details of the sustainability/climate action forward plan with has allowed them to score the additional point.	Score	3/3
Social Action The project will benefit a small number of individuals using the accommodation	Score	1/2
Project Outputs 6-10 jobs safe-guarded Adoption of 2 new to firm technologies or processes Expected over 10% increase in productivity	Score	3/3
DEDUCTIONS, CONCERNS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS This project fits with the following council objectives – Climate emergency work Local visitor economy work	Total score	9/12

Applicant responses

Need for Project

How do you know there is a need for your project?

There is a climate emergency happening and the hospitality industry is required to reduce its carbon emissions by 66 per cent per room by 2030, and by 90 per cent per room by 2050 to ensure that the growth forecast for the industry does not lead to a corresponding increase in carbon emissions. The report is found via the following link;

<https://sustainablehospitalityalliance.org/our-work/climate-action/>

There are a number of surveys and reports that show by 'going green' an accommodation provider can increase their number of bookings.

<https://eat-drink-sleep.com/2024/05/31/advantages-of-hotel-investment-in-solar-energy-boosting-sustainability-and-savings/>

Also attached is the Booking.com partner research (Ashbrook Serviced Apartments are a Booking.com partner) document 'Helping accommodation providers start their sustainability journey'

Our quotation from Eco Power Systems for the installation of PV + battery storage at our location show that we will;

Reduce our Co2, SOx and NOx emissions by 10% annually, avoiding 3 tons of CO2 per year.

Over the systems lifetime this will result in;

A reduction in CO2 of the equivalent of 100321 km of car journeys. It will mean the equivalent of 645 trees planted and the equivalent saving of CO2 of 72 long haul flights.

We also see that our annual saving in electricity (at current rates) will be over £3,500.

Is there a facility or business providing a comparable service or product nearby?

No other local accommodation business are running their heating, hot water via ground source heat pumps and solar panels + battery storage.

Social Action

How many people in the wider community will the project benefit?

The project will benefit more than 50 people

Who will benefit from your project and how?

By driving our business towards Net Zero, we will play our part in tackling the current climate crisis. If we are able to reduce our emissions, by using solar panels to heat our buildings and hot water whilst providing green energy for EV car charging, it will benefit the wider community.

By encouraging more guests to stay with us, due to our appealing environmental credentials, we will directly boost local businesses in the area. For example, guests will regularly eat out at local pubs and restaurants, visit cafes, museums and buy their food from local farm shops. If we can encourage more tourism in the area, the knock on effect will be an economic boost to other local businesses.

The attached report illustrates the boost serviced accommodation businesses has on the local area.

Local tradesmen, undertaking various aspects of the solar install will benefit due to jobs

created. By encouraging more guest visits we will safeguard our cleaning and administrative jobs and look to increase the number of employed staff in the area.

Action on Climate Emergency

The project is expected to make an impact on the following -

Decrease energy use, Increase energy efficiency, Decrease use of vehicles with a combustion engine, Reduce air pollution (outdoors), Improve land use, Use sustainable materials

Looking at your answers above, please describe how your project will help to achieve these actions.

By installing a solar panel and battery system we will be generating a significant proportion of our energy on site and be more energy efficient. This will result in less reliance on fossil fuel imported energy. We can use the energy produced to power our EV network, encouraging guests with EVs to stay with us and therefore reduce the number of combustion engine vehicles and air pollution.

Project outcomes

Micro & small business outputs

6-10 jobs safe-guarded, Adoption of 2 new to firm technologies or processes, Expected over 10% increase in productivity

Social Economy outputs

Civil society outcomes

In fewer than 300 words, please explain how your project will meet the above outcomes.

We have been provided 2 fully costed quotes for the job.

Project details are;

1. Scaffolding
2. Roof strip
3. Installation of PV panels
4. Adding battery storage
5. Installation of associated electrical equipment
6. Re roofing around new panels
7. Removing scaffolding and sign off.

The anticipated start date for the works, due to take up to a month, is Monday 2nd September. The project will provide a fully installed and connected solar panel system to our tourism business. The project will be undertaken and managed in full by the single contractor, Eco Power Systems.

AG Dental (Equipment) Ltd.	Ref	VREPF2\100013
Project Name: Solar PV system		
Project Description: Adding Solar PV - 30 panels to the roof structure, with 10kW inverter to assist in powering our relatively new high power consumption machines used in the cabinetry side of the business, so helping us achieve a big step towards net zero as a business. This will enable us to promote the low carbon side of the business as the cabinetry material we use is specialist and 95-98% recycled material, and so help expand and employ further positions with fitters and assemblers within the business		
Application Theme: • Capital grants for small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas.		
Location of Project: A G Dental Equipment LTD, Unit 1, Northford Close, Swindon, SN6 8HL		
Number of Staff: 6 (6 FTE)		
Project Start Date: 01 November 2024		Project End Date: 01 November 2024

Total project cost	£16,256
Organisation's contribution	£4,064
Other secured funding	£0
REPF Grant Requested	£12,192
Organisation's latest bank balance	£11,000

Scoring

Need for Project The organisation provide sales, servicing and repairs of dentistry equipment to both private and NHS dentists. They have provided details of the NHS procurement process, and the emphasis this places on carbon reduction. Without undertaking a project like this they are unlikely to be successful when bidding for NHS contracts	Score	2/4
Action on Climate Emergency The project will have a positive impact on the council's climate agenda as it involves the installation of a renewable energy system. The organisation have also provided evidence of their climate action plan, allowing them to score an additional point.	Score	3/3
Social Action The application states that their 6 staff will benefit from greater job security, and the wider community will benefit from reduction of draw from the national grid. The area they are based in is known to suffer frequent power cuts and the applicants believe that less demand on the grid may help this issue.	Score	1/2
Project Outputs 6-10 jobs safe-guarded - through the reduction of overheads Adoption of 1 new to firm technology or processes - solar panels Expected over 10% increase in productivity	Score	2/3
DEDUCTIONS, CONCERNS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS This project fits with the following council objectives – Climate emergency work	Total score	8/12

Applicant responses

Need for Project

How do you know there is a need for your project?

We are currently using significant amounts of electricity from the grid and this can be at peak times when gas and coal are being used to power the grid, hence affecting our net zero trajectory. The system will smooth out the use of grid power at peak times from the system, and also during high sun periods and low usage such as weekends then the system will add green energy back to the grid to help reduce the grids need for fossil fuels generally. In reducing our grid power usage, we reduce our carbon footprint and also help with reducing the businesses vulnerability to high fluctuations in energy prices such as we have seen in recent years. The NHS is heavily involved in dentistry both directly and via high street - their procurement process now includes significant weighting on net zero, so we need more and more to prove our net zero commitments to ensure that our employees locally remain.

Is there a facility or business providing a comparable service or product nearby?

Solar PV is in place locally but this does not negate that we need to provide our own system to ensure ongoing net zero trajectory and compliance with NHS requirements for tendering as well as high street dentistry anticipated requirements in future

Social Action

How many people in the wider community will the project benefit?

The project will benefit more than 50 people

Who will benefit from your project and how?

All employees will benefit from greater job security. Future positions will likely become open as the business grows through having known costs and more reliable planning. Local residents will benefit from there being more local generation and hence less pressure on the grid locally - the area is known for power cuts and any that are due to lack of grid capacity further upline will be reduced as there will be more capacity locally. Our client base will benefit from being able to promote that they use suppliers with green credentials. The wider health patient community benefit from being able to have providers who care about green credentials and knowing their environmental impact is being minimized as far as possible. The NHS will benefit from having a quality supplier committed to their net zero journey and their dental sector can comply and ensure local jobs remain within Oxfordshire.

Action on Climate Emergency

The project is expected to make an impact on the following -

Decrease energy use, Increase energy efficiency, Reduce air pollution (outdoors), Use sustainable materials

Looking at your answers above, please describe how your project will help to achieve these actions.

Any power generated by the Solar PV will reduce that imported from the grid and therefore the use of fossil fuels. It is also more efficient to generate from solar as the energy is freely available and zero carbon unlike for example coal which has a very low comparable efficiency. In using locally produced energy, we in turn use less energy from the grid. Reduction in air pollution is brought about by the very nature that solar PV is zero emission. The system is mounted and installed with sustainable materials - the metals used in the roof mounted system are mostly aluminum and hence are easily and commonly recycled. copper wiring is of equal sustainability. Solar PV panels are predominantly made from Silicon which is easily recycled

Project outcomes

Micro & small business outputs

6-10 jobs safe-guarded, Adoption of 1 new to firm technology or processes, Expected over 10% increase in productivity

Social Economy outputs

Civil society outcomes

In fewer than 300 words, please explain how your project will meet the above outcomes.

The system will be installed in one day

The lead time at the time of writing is 6 weeks, the providers estimate this may increase slightly during the summer but the project should be installed by the end of 2024 at the latest, so well in time for March 2025.

There is one provider (Cahill) who has carried our works locally and for our Directors personal home- and their quality is renowned - one quotation has been obtained from this company, and a second for comparison has been obtained from a national supplier (EDF). It must be noted that EDF only supply up to 20 panels per system, so we would require TWO of their systems, however Cahill provide an all-in system and hence Cahill would be our preferred supplier

The Hill End Outdoor Education Centre	Ref	VREPF2\100067
Project Name: North Dormitory Improvement Project		
<p>Project Description: Hill End has a long-term vision to transform our site and facilities to make them fit for the future. This includes making our buildings more energy efficient, comfortable and accessible - increasing our visitor numbers, and extending our busy season into the spring and autumn. This project will significantly improve one of our most-used buildings, the North Dormitory, by installing new double-glazed windows and doors.</p> <p>Currently, the dormitory has aging, original 1960s wooden windows and external doors that are inefficient, draughty, unattractive, and costly to maintain. Replacing these will complement our ongoing North Dormitory improvement project planned to begin this autumn. We have already secured grant funding to install new ramps and create a disabled-access toilet/shower within the building, as well as a new project coordinator post for site-wide developments (c£47k) alongside using around £24k of our own reserves. We are applying for funding for other energy efficiency measures in the building such as insulation and remote heating and boiler management. The new windows and doors provided by this part of the project would mean that heat was not lost, saving money, reducing our carbon footprint and improving our customer experience.</p> <p>These improvements will also help make Hill End more financially sustainable for the long term. Our research shows that the majority of schools would visit for outdoor education outside the peak summer season, but the facilities on offer mean that in reality our bookings are far fewer. We are currently wasting energy and money on heating poorly insulated buildings, resulting in increased costs to visitors and a much smaller surplus to contribute to our charitable activities.</p>		
Application Theme: • Capital grants for small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas.		
Location of Project: The Hill End Outdoor Education Centre, Eynsham Road, Farmoor, OX2 9NJ		
Number of Staff: 8 (7.1 FTE)		
Project Start Date: 01 October 2024		Project End Date: 28 February 2025

Total project cost	£37,984
Organisation's contribution	£9,496
Other secured funding	£0
REPF Grant Requested	£28,488
Organisation's latest bank balance	£475,887.87

Scoring

<p>Need for Project Limited evidence for the need for project has been provided, with some market research done, but nothing specific to this project</p>	<p>Score</p>	<p>2/4</p>
<p>Action on Climate Emergency The project will have a positive impact on the council's climate agenda, as the new windows will help the organisation reduce their energy useage. The organisation has not supplied a sustainability plan</p>	<p>Score</p>	<p>2/3</p>
<p>Social Action The project will benefit more than 50 people as a large number of schools have residential stays at Hill End. They are a environmental education centre that welcomed over 24,000 visitors last year.</p>	<p>Score</p>	<p>2/2</p>
<p>Project Outputs "6-10 jobs safe-guarded Expected in 6%-10% increase in productivity"</p>	<p>Score</p>	<p>2/3</p>
<p>DEDUCTIONS, CONCERNS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS This project fits with the following council objectives – Climate emergency work</p>	<p>Total score</p>	<p>8/12</p>

Applicant responses

Need for Project

How do you know there is a need for your project?

With around 24,000 visitors in 2023-4 (see our impact report), Hill End is busy and popular.

We also believe there is significant potential for growth as described in our business plan (see attached here). Our most recent market research survey for Oxfordshire schools (our core customer base) shows that, in principle, 82.5% would visit in spring and 62.5% in autumn (as opposed to 92.5 in summer).

Improvements to the North Dormitory and other facilities are essential if we are to develop our offer, increase bookings and increase revenue. This project will contribute our overall goals of:

- Nature-based primary education – to increase our visitor numbers by 25%
- Nobody misses out – to provide new, funded outdoor activities for under-represented groups
- A leading centre for adult outdoor education training – increasing learner numbers by 25%
- A 'hub' for like-minded organisations – increasing occupancy to 50% to sustain our facilities
- Capacity building – developing our team and volunteers to deliver our vision
- Create an efficient business model which maximises our assets and puts us on a sound financial footing
- Environmental sustainability – working towards net zero emissions by 2050

Currently we are spending over £30k per year on repairs and maintenance, largely reactive 'patching-up'. The new windows and doors will be modern and easy to clean and maintain, reducing our costs.

Our energy costs in 2023-4 were £29,056 (around 5% of expenditure) and increasing as we waste money on aging, poorly insulated buildings. Our annual property emissions were estimated at 38 tonnes CO₂e, equivalent to 13.8 typical medium-sized houses, and improving our energy-efficiency through projects such as this is vital. Providing double-glazed windows and doors to the North Dorm will contribute significantly to this key strategic aim.

Is there a facility or business providing a comparable service or product nearby?

No, Hill End is unique. While there are Scout camps, public campsites and nature-based day trips available in Oxfordshire, there is no other similar centre providing such a diverse range of nature-immersive day and residential outdoor experiences.

Social Action

How many people in the wider community will the project benefit?

The project will benefit more than 50 people

Who will benefit from your project and how?

There is a ever increasing need for people of all ages to get outdoors for education, health and wellbeing, and we are seeing a greater number of visitors using our services, as summarised in our impact report 2023-2024 (see attached).

We believe Hill End is here for everyone regardless of income, background or need, and the range and diversity of groups who visit is huge. Last year we welcomed special schools,

autism support groups, young carers, charities working with children impacted by parental imprisonment, multicultural youth groups, Afghan refugee families and more. Highlights include

- Last year we welcomed around 24,000 visitors
- 15,000 were children – 9,000 were adults
- 36% were from primary schools, 23% secondary (others mixed ages or families)
- 2,755 visits were for alternative education – for children not in mainstream education or struggling at school
- Our weekly volunteers gave 1,971 hours of their time to support us. In our volunteer survey they described. benefits to their health and wellbeing from being outdoors, socialising, learning new skills and giving back.

“...how lucky we feel being able to learn about nature; resilience; friendship and the world around us, in such a beautiful setting!” Class teacher, primary residential

Residential, nature-immersive experiences are key to this, and the North Dormitory is very important as our most booked dormitory. Many of the targeted and vulnerable groups and charities named above used this facility.

In 2023-24 we welcomed 45 organisations using this building for 81 bookings, but as already described, these are currently limited by the lack of comfortable, warm and attractive accommodation. Improving the North Dormitory will increase the number and range of people who can use and benefit from this accommodation.

Action on Climate Emergency

The project is expected to make an impact on the following -

Decrease energy use, Increase energy efficiency, Improve biodiversity, Other (please specify below)

Looking at your answers above, please describe how your project will help to achieve these actions.

Decreasing energy use and Increasing energy efficiency:

This project will deliver increased energy efficiency and a reduction in energy use through the installation of new double-glazed windows and doors in the North Dormitory. This will significantly reduce heat loss from this building and reduce the amount of gas used in heating.

In 2023-2024 we worked with EiE (Environmental Information Exchange) and volunteer sustainability specialist Neil Clark to review our energy usage, improve our data and reporting, and seek sensible solutions and funding for carbon reductions. We are still developing our work in this area and are currently creating a new climate and energy policy for our charity, which we plan to complete before the end of this financial year.

Improving biodiversity / Other - promoting environmental awareness and sustainability through education:

Hill End exists to enable people to learn about and value the natural world and promote a more sustainable future. We believe this is more important than ever as we face the challenges of a changing climate and other threats to wildlife. Our staff and volunteers carefully manage our grounds for wildlife, including our hilltop grassland Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which surrounds the North Dormitory, all of which in turn become our living teaching spaces and countryside skills workshops. Supporting Hill End supports all of these benefits.

Project outcomes

Micro & small business outputs

6-10 jobs safe-guarded, Expected in 6%-10% increase in productivity

Social Economy outputs

Civil society outcomes

In fewer than 300 words, please explain how your project will meet the above outcomes.

We have asked for quotations / estimates from two reliable contractors who have successfully undertaken similar works at Hill End to an excellent standard, and we have every confidence in their ability to complete to plan and to schedule. They are very used to working at Hill End, which is a natural, rural site with some challenges in the colder and wetter months, but this has been managed very effectively in the past.

While slightly higher, we have chosen the quotation by Windrush windows as the preferred option, as they are a professional window replacement company we have used before, to further reduce risks of delays. (Brian Wilkinson is a general buildings contractor)

The building is detached, and has already had a few of the windows (the small, high level windows on the eastern side) replaced with double-glazed units by the same contractors in recent years. This was done as an urgent health and safety measure following some damage that was causing concern, but Hill End could not afford to replace the remainder at that time. We are therefore familiar with doing very similar works to this building.

The project deliverables will be planned and managed day to day by a grant-funded experienced project coordinator who is already overseeing the other parts of the North Dormitory improvement programme, working with our landlord, building contractors and other professional services.

The project progress will be managed by Hill End's Site and Operations Manager, who has 30 years of experience at Hill End, has successfully managed many building refurbishment projects on site (including previous extensive window replacements) and has overseen work by the contractors mentioned above on many previous occasions.

The Centre Director will oversee the project as a whole, with overarching governance by the board of trustees, who have approved this application.

Buscot Manor	Ref	VREPF2\100074
Project Name: POWER UPGRADE TO MAINS SUPPLY		
Project Description: Funding to create an upgraded power infrastructure which will SECURITY OF SUPPLY & loading required for the power needed to INSTALL EV CHARGERS - An absolute business need and desire from customers , a differentiator from the competition thus allowing us to expand our revenue as well as creation of a new income stream from a Motorhome x1 to start with and additional workshops that require power, ECO Heating to allow a year round suitable space, NET ZERO/CLIMATE CHANGE - Allows us to reduce carbon footprint, contribute to climate change targets, prepared for net zero , builds on our own energy objectives to be as ethical and sustainable as possible . INCREASED REVENUE by increasing customer offer with new services which will encourage longer staycations		
Application Theme: • Capital grants for small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas.		
Location of Project: BUSCOT MANOR, Buscot, SN7 8DA		
Number of Staff: 2 (80 FTE)		
Project Start Date: 01 August 2024		Project End Date: 28 February 2025

Total project cost	£9,420
Organisation's contribution	£0
Other secured funding	£0
REPF Grant Requested	£9,420
Organisation's latest bank balance	£16,373

Scoring

Need for Project The applicant has supplied good evidence of need for project, and has supplied industry data to show need for EV chargers at holiday accommodation. They have scored an additional point as have shown no other EV chargers locally	Score	3/4
Action on Climate Emergency The project will have some positive impact on the council's climate agenda, they have scored an additional point as have provided a sustainability plan.	Score	2/3
Social Action The project will primarily benefit the applicant	Score	0/2
Project Outputs 10+ jobs safe-guarded - Application state 2FTE posts for company Adoption of 2 new to firm technologies or processes - EV charger Expected over 10% increase in productivity - expected in user numbers from	Score	3/3

having a EV point available."		
DEDUCTIONS, CONCERNS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS This project fits with the following council objectives – Climate emergency work Local visitor economy work	Total score	8/12

Applicant responses

Need for Project

How do you know there is a need for your project?

We are routinely asked by our customers for EV charging stations . We are on specific holiday forums keeping abreast with changes and legislation in the industry. We ourselves were within the top 10% of B&B's in Oxfordshire and are now Superhosts .

We ask our customers what they would like and this particular area keeps coming up. Research shows that customers want EV so does local government to meet their strategic objectives.

<https://www.hoteldive.com/news/electric-vehicle-charging-hotel-industry/703000/>

I have done extensive research on CS designated clubs for motorhomes/touring caravans as well as the wider glamping industry as we wish to go down this route as soon as we can. There is a shortage of EV chargers in this area and places where you can bring a motorhome in such a beautiful spot. We will start off with one motorhome and then expand/adapt our offer accordingly . Our guests can be reassured that they can relax knowing that they can charge there vehicle.

I have carried out extensive research on what accommodations are on offer, the price point, services they offer, their availability and visited sites to gain useful insight into a range of offers to see how we can improve and provide the best offer. Buscot Manor is a seasoned provider of holiday accommodation and was AA rated 5 stars from inception year right up to closure during covid switching to self catering.

Experiential holiday activities will increase our market as will us being able to differentiate and attract customers with EV vehicles.

There is a growing need for customised holidays offering activities/experiences which also bring in additional vital income to ourselves but support the rural economy/jobs, creates additional jobs/services protecting vital skills/crafts - stonemasonry, antiques as just some of the examples.

We are also ensuring we are striving for net zero

Is there a facility or business providing a comparable service or product nearby?

There are no EV charging points in the village and no comparable businesses nearby offering the services that we do. This is the starting point for this area of the business to grow in an environmentally sensitive way and preparing for future demand. It is vital for our service offer and to bring in additional revenue.

Social Action

How many people in the wider community will the project benefit?

The project will benefit more than 50 people

Who will benefit from your project and how?

Holiday guests local, national and overseas from a broad and diverse group of people and cultures.

Partners working with us providing services as well as additional employee benefits from better service with us encouraging the use of EV for transport and leisure

Community Groups and charitable organisations will benefit from being able to use our expanded service offer and not to be constrained by inadequate power with existing supply.

Local rural economy and business

Increasing access and connectivity

Safeguarding existing business

Improves visitor experience and increases access to existing and better facilities

Promotes well being , encourages activity improves mental health and creates community

Our planet benefits from the use of environmentally sensitive travel as does our contribution to VWHDC objectives/aims for sustainable travel and climate change, net zero etc
Additionally the Neighbourhood plans and targets

Action on Climate Emergency

The project is expected to make an impact on the following -

Decrease energy use, Increase energy efficiency, Decrease use of vehicles with a combustion engine, Reduce air pollution (outdoors), Increase use of active travel, Other (please specify below)

Looking at your answers above, please describe how your project will help to achieve these actions.

This funding will allow us to decrease use of vehicles with a combustion engine for ourselves potentially switching as well as for our guests - making ourselves a preferred destination whilst reducing air pollution.

The expansion of experiential service offerings encourage longer stays and by promotion of staycations with active travel linking up with local footpaths and walks along the river. Health and mental well being promoted.

Increase in energy efficiency by improved eco heating decreasing energy usage, travel and renewables.

Project outcomes

Micro & small business outputs

10+ jobs safe-guarded, Adoption of 2 new to firm technologies or processes, Expected over 10% increase in productivity

Social Economy outputs

Civil society outcomes

In fewer than 300 words, please explain how your project will meet the above outcomes.

We are fortunate that we have two contractors to do the work lined up who know our premises well and who completed the internal power needs to the barn with sockets/internal/external lighting.

The project is straightforward in that we are looking to start the work in Q3 at a time when we have fewer guests to cause the minimum disruption The work is anticipated to take 2 weeks .

I will be overseeing the works on a day to day basis but the reassurance of trusted seasoned

contractors who know the premises is a major bonus.

Amos Hospitality Ltd	Ref	VREPF2\100087
Project Name: The George At Upton Village Store & Cafe		
<p>Project Description: Our proposal is to convert part of the existing TGAU premises into a dedicated village store and café. We have already invested over £80,000 of our own money (refurbishing the garden, upgrading electrics, lighting and decorating the interior of the premises) to begin the process of providing a comfortable and welcoming space suitable just inside the North Wessex Downs AONB</p> <p>The George at Upton is directed by a local two-family partnership (one living in Upton and one in nearby Aston Upthorpe) who do not draw an income from the business, rather any profits are re-invested in the pub for as long as required to help ensure its' long term viability and success as a community asset. As a new business, Amos Hospitality Limited trading as The George at Upton have never previously received any funding, or applied for any grants. Support from the REPF would allow us to create a community shop selling basic staples for local residents and local produce including bakery products, cakes, honey, eggs etc. as well as a cafe area with good coffee, free wifi, comfortable toilets and hotdesking space creating a community for local homeworkers.</p> <p>The premises are owned by Admiral Taverns, who are extremely supportive of our proposals. It is no exaggeration to say that the pub was on the border of unviability, and being sold to developers would have been the likely outcome, leaving the village of Upton with, aside of a small village hall, with no other public facilities whatsoever. This is already happening to many villages across South Oxfordshire/Vale of White Horse, as well as nationally, with 509 pubs closing for good nationally in 2023, with a loss of more than 6000 jobs and a quarter of all UK pubs have closed since 2022! (source, The Morning Advertiser, 22 Jan 2024)</p>		
Application Theme: • Capital grants for small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas.		
Location of Project: The George At Upton, Reading Road, Upton, OX11 9JJ		
Number of Staff: 8 (4 FTE)		
Project Start Date: 01 October 2024		Project End Date: 31 January 2025

Total project cost	£106,203
Organisation's contribution	£31,203
Other secured funding	£0
REPF Grant Requested	£75,000
Organisation's latest bank balance	£43,226.13

Scoring

Need for Project Detailed evidence of need for the project has been provided, and there are no other facilities like this in the area	Score	4/4
Action on Climate Emergency This project has not considered its impact on the environment and not provided	Score	0/3

any information in this area			
Social Action The project will potentially benefit over 50 people		Score	2/2
Project Outputs The applicants have applied to local Civil Society, however they are a limited company. Officers have moved the application to micro and small enterprises in rural areas as this seems a better fit. Officers believe that it would not be unreasonable for the project to expect a 6-10% increase in productivity from the project		Score	2/3
DEDUCTIONS, CONCERNS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS This project fits with the following council objectives – Climate emergency work Local visitor economy work		Total score	8/12

Applicant responses

Need for Project

How do you know there is a need for your project?

We know there is a palpable local desire for the project through extensive research we have taken place in recent months and a huge local buzz on what could be possible. Our team hand-delivered postcards to all addresses in Upton and all neighbouring villages within a 3-mile radius in May, asking for what they would like to see in their local village pub

The feedback was very conclusive:

98% of Upton residents would welcome and more importantly support a village store selling key essentials and other local goods.

89% of Upton residents would be interested in a daytime café operation, with more elderly local residents preferring to go out in the morning and at lunchtime rather than in the evening, especially during the winter months.

76% of Upton residents would support a pub selling takeaway food and would be happy to collect it. Given it is 5 minutes or less walking distance to the pub, we would expect most villages to walk or cycle to the pub rather than use a car.

There are no other businesses in the area providing the hybrid offer we are proposing. The local area is distinctly lacking in daytime/café options and local convenience stores, with most people driving to Asda or Tesco in Didcot, which involves a 3+ mile drive.

Is there a facility or business providing a comparable service or product nearby?

None.

Social Action

How many people in the wider community will the project benefit?

The project will benefit more than 50 people

Who will benefit from your project and how?

We are providing a community hub for Upton and surrounding villages, with food and drink available throughout the day. We will be supporting local homeworkers with a comfortable space to work (free wifi, good coffee) and shop facilities for those locally who cannot drive or just don't want to make a long round-trip to Didcot. We hope to be able to home-deliver small orders to villagers in Upton who may have mobility issues. We aim to provide an accessible space for those with babies or disabilities in terms of a place to meet and socialise, as well as changing/toilet facilities. We will attract much passing trade due to our favourable location on the A417 and hope to bring in new business from passing tradesmen grabbing a bacon sandwich in the morning instead of going to McDonalds or another national chain. We are fortunate to be close to some incredible walking routes and plan to attract walkers (with and without dogs) as well as cyclists - we are very close to Sustrans routes. We are already attracting customers from Didcot who are cycling or walking to us along the old railway track. Sustainability is at the heart of everything we do and we want to use this grant to build on that. In the future we plan to instal EV chargers and cycle racks.

Action on Climate Emergency

The project is expected to make an impact on the following -

Decrease energy use, Increase energy efficiency, Decrease use of vehicles with a combustion engine, Reduce air pollution (outdoors), Improve air quality (indoors), Increase use of public transport, Increase use of active travel, Improve land use, Improve biodiversity,

Reduce or prevent waste, Use sustainable materials

Looking at your answers above, please describe how your project will help to achieve these actions.

Please see answer above!

Project outcomes

Micro & small business outputs

Social Economy outputs

Civil society outcomes

50%+ expected increase in perception of facilities or amenities, 50% + expected increase in user numbers

In fewer than 300 words, please explain how your project will meet the above outcomes.

We are already engaged with local tradesmen and businesses and have received quotes for the building works from well-reputed single operators and small businesses . Our plan is to continue running the pub business from the garden over the summer to raise some of the funds we need to complete the full interior.

We have a GM and two Directors of the business onsite at all times to supervise the works and project manage contractors.

We have researched and identified the equipment required for the shop fitting and cafe kitchen, and are ready to purchase if we are successful in our grant application.

We have both tradesmen who have quoted for the job ready to start work in October 2024 and are motivated to finish the works as quickly as possible over the winter months, with a hard deadline of end Jan 2025 for the works to be completed.

Vermtek Ltd	Ref	VREPF2\100052
Project Name: Investment into heat treatment		
<p>Project Description: Since the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a rapid increase in bedbug activity in our area. Vermtek Ltd, trading since 2008, has seen a significant rise in treatment requests from Swindon to Oxford, centred around Wantage. Treatment visits increased from 276 in 2018 to 660 in 2023, the total number for 2024 so far is 402.</p> <p>This increase is due to several factors: reduced funding for local councils, increased mobility post-COVID, the cost of living crisis (leading to more DIY treatments and increased chemical resistance), and international issues. The cost and registration of new chemicals, along with increased awareness of their environmental and health impacts, have reduced the availability of effective active ingredients. This coincides with increased chemical resistance due to poor treatment practices and the natural evolution of bedbugs, which are resilient and hard to locate (e.g., within bed frames and behind sockets).</p> <p>Heat treatment is a viable solution as it physically controls the insects and can effectively treat all areas of a property. Key benefits are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No chemical resistance • Guaranteed treatment • Instant control of all life stages • Fast treatment time (4 hours vs. 2 weeks) • Reduced overall cost for the customer <p>The main limitation is the investment cost for the capital equipment and the required training. Insecticide treatments traditionally cost £400-£500 per visit to a 3-bed house, three visits required, totalling £1200-£1500. This can double if using a national provider or for deep-seated infestations. In contrast, heat treatments range from £500-£1200, but the upfront quoted cost can deter customers.</p> <p>Our proposal is to request grant funding to invest in the necessary equipment. We will train our staff and provide heat treatments to residents of VWH at cost until the value of the grant awarded is repaid.</p>		
Application Theme: • Capital grants for small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas.		
Location of Project: Vermtek Ltd, Unit 8, shrivenham 100 business park, Watchfield, SN6 8TZ		
Number of Staff: 13 (36.92 FTE)		
Project Start Date: 01 September 2024		Project End Date: 31 December 2024

Total project cost	£50,989
Organisation's contribution	£14,995
Other secured funding	£0
REPF Grant Requested	£35,994
Organisation's latest bank balance	£145,829.06

Scoring

<p>Need for Project Detailed evidence of the need for project has been provided, with details of increased call outs for bed bug infestations, along with information about general about increase in bedbugs post covid.</p>	<p>Score</p>	<p>3/4</p>
<p>Action on Climate Emergency The project will have some limited positive impact on the council's climate agenda, as by using the heat treatment it will reduce the use of chemical treatments</p>	<p>Score</p>	<p>1/3</p>
<p>Social Action The project will primarily benefit the applicants business</p>	<p>Score</p>	<p>0/2</p>
<p>Project Outputs 1-5 jobs safe-guarded - The project will also create 2 new jobs and an apprenticeship Adoption of 1 new to firm technology or processes Expected over 10% increase in productivity - treatment time goes from 2 weeks to four hours giving a significant improvement in productivity</p>	<p>Score</p>	<p>3/3</p>
<p>DEDUCTIONS, CONCERNS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</p>	<p>Total score</p>	<p>7/12</p>

Applicant responses

Need for Project

How do you know there is a need for your project?

There is a clear and growing need for the heat treatment project for bedbug control by Vermtek Ltd. Here are the key points that underscore the necessity of this initiative:

Rising Bedbug Infestations:

- The number of bedbug visits has seen a dramatic increase from 12 in 2011 to 660 in 2023. In the first five months of 2024 alone, there have already been 402 bedbug visits, indicating a continuing upward trend.
- The percentage of jobs involving bedbugs has also escalated significantly, from 6.42% in 2011 to 25.65% in 2024. This sharp rise demonstrates the growing prevalence of bedbugs in local residences.

Increasing Residential Jobs:

- The total number of local residential visits has increased substantially, from 187 in 2011 to 3012 in 2023. Although there was a dip in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the numbers quickly rebounded, showing an ongoing demand for pest control services.
- In just the first five months of 2024, there have already been 1567 local residential jobs, indicating a robust and increasing market for pest control services.

Insufficient Current Capacity:

- The number of technicians has gradually increased from 1 in 2011 to 4 in 2023, reflecting the growing need for more skilled personnel to manage the rising demand. However, the current capacity is still insufficient to handle the escalating bedbug problem effectively.

Service Gap and Market Opportunity:

- There is a clear gap in the market for locally-based, self-delivered heat treatments. Current service providers often rely on subcontractors, leading to inconsistent quality and higher costs for residents. National companies offering this service are prohibitively expensive for many local customers.

By establishing a local heat treatment service, Vermtek Ltd can provide affordable, effective, and environmentally friendly pest control solutions, addressing the significant rise in bedbug infestations.

Is there a facility or business providing a comparable service or product nearby?

Currently, no locally-based companies in our area self-deliver heat treatments for bedbug control. Several businesses offer this service, but they rely on subcontractors, leading to potential issues with service consistency, quality control, and higher costs. This approach results in fragmented service delivery. A few national pest control companies offer heat treatment services, but their pricing is often prohibitive for local residential customers due to their higher overheads and operational complexities. Thermokil Insect Control Ltd, the market leader in heat treatments, has set high standards for this service. Importantly, Thermokil's sister company imports and distributes the necessary equipment. Thermokil has offered to support Vermtek Ltd in establishing a local presence for heat treatment services because they are unable to meet the local demand in this area. Thermokil's inability to fulfill local demand highlights a significant market opportunity. By partnering with them, Vermtek Ltd can address this gap and meet the rising demand for bedbug heat treatments in our area. Establishing a local, self-delivered service ensures better quality control and consistency while allowing us to offer competitive pricing tailored to the local market. This strategic move will position Vermtek Ltd as a key player in the local pest control industry, differentiating us from competitors who rely on subcontractors and from national companies with prohibitive

pricing. With Thermokil's backing, we can leverage their expertise and resources to quickly and effectively ramp up our heat treatment services, meeting local demand and providing residents with an affordable, reliable solution to bedbug infestations

Social Action

How many people in the wider community will the project benefit?

The project will benefit more than 50 people

Who will benefit from your project and how?

Project Beneficiaries

1. Local Residents:

Reduction in Bedbug Activity: Residents will experience a significant reduction in bedbug infestations, improving their quality of life and health.

Lower Cost Treatments: By offering heat treatments at a reduced cost, residents of Vale of White Horse (VWH) will have access to affordable and effective pest control solutions.

2. Vermtek Employees:

Increased Employment: The project will create three new jobs, including one apprentice, providing local employment opportunities.

Better Working Conditions: Employees will benefit from working with advanced, non-chemical pest control methods, reducing exposure to harmful chemicals and enhancing job satisfaction.

3. Community Groups:

Improved Facilities: With reduced bedbug activity, community centers and group facilities will become safer and more comfortable, encouraging greater community engagement and use.

4. Local Economy:

Economic Growth: Increased employment and business activity will stimulate the local economy, contributing to overall economic development in the VWH area.

5. Environmental Benefits:

Eco-Friendly Pest Control: Heat treatments are environmentally friendly, reducing the reliance on chemical pesticides. This method lowers chemical residues in the environment, promoting a healthier ecosystem.

Sustainable Practices:

Adoption of heat treatment technology supports sustainable pest management practices, aligning with growing environmental awareness and conservation efforts.

6. Educational Institutions:

Apprenticeship Opportunities: Partnering with Swindon New College, the project will provide apprenticeship opportunities, fostering skill development and career growth for students.

7. Public Health Sector:

Improved Public Health: Reduced bedbug infestations contribute to better public health outcomes by decreasing allergic reactions and psychological stress associated with bedbug bites.

Action on Climate Emergency

The project is expected to make an impact on the following -

Decrease use of vehicles with a combustion engine, Improve biodiversity, Other (please specify below)

Looking at your answers above, please describe how your project will help to achieve these actions.

Other environmental impacts:

- reduction in chemical usage

Project outcomes

Micro & small business outputs

1-5 jobs safe-guarded, Adoption of 1 new to firm technology or processes, Expected over 10% increase in productivity

Social Economy outputs

Civil society outcomes

In fewer than 300 words, please explain how your project will meet the above outcomes.

To ensure our project is delivered within budget and ahead of the scheme's deadline of 31 March 2025, we have outlined a detailed schedule, clear deliverables, and defined responsibilities:

Project Schedule/Due Dates

1. Grant Approval and Funding Release (by 1 August 2024)

Secure grant funding and finalise budget allocation.

2. Equipment Procurement (by 1 September 2024)

Order heat treatment equipment with lead time of 6 weeks.

3. Equipment Delivery and Setup (by 15 October 2024)

Receive and install equipment, ensuring all technical aspects are functioning.

4. Staff Training (completed by 1 November 2024)

Conduct training sessions for two technicians and one apprentice from Swindon New College.

5. Pilot Heat Treatments (November 2024)

Begin initial heat treatments to ensure all processes are streamlined and effective.

Marketing targeted at VWH stakeholders

6. Full-Scale Operation (by 1 January 2025)

Launch full-scale heat treatment services for residents.

Project Deliverables

1. Heat Treatment Equipment

Acquisition of necessary heat treatment equipment.

2. Trained Staff

Two trained heat treatment technicians and one apprentice ready to operate the new equipment.

3. Service Implementation

Successful deployment of heat treatment services to residents, with the goal of treating a minimum of 50 properties by 31 March 2025.

Project Responsibilities

1. Project Management (Charlie Hancock & Mel Brooke)

Oversee the entire project, ensuring adherence to the schedule and budget.

2. Equipment Procurement and Setup (Charlie Hancock & Dan Timms)

Responsible for ordering and receiving heat treatment equipment.

3. Hiring & Training Coordination (Kathy Durham)

We have a pre-existing partnership with Swindon New College, enabling us to source one apprentice swiftly and efficiently integrate them into our training program.

Arrange training sessions for the new technicians and apprentice.

4. Service Deployment (Dan Timms)

Execute pilot and full-scale heat treatment operations.

G D Lay & Partners	Ref	VREPF2\100088
Project Name: Farm and Office Solar Project		
<p>Project Description: We are planning a solar installation with a capacity of 55.44 kWp on a new agricultural building currently under construction. We have scaled the installation to supply our farm and an on site third party office. Cumulatively these buildings use over 106,000 kWh of grid electricity pa, resulting in ~22 tonnes of CO2e emissions a year. The installation of onsite solar will negate a large proportion of these emissions with immediate effect, saving over 190t CO2e emissions over the project lifetime, in contribution to the UK commitment to net zero by 2050 and a material consideration of the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF).</p> <p>The tenant within the office are in support of this project and happy to agree a power purchase agreement for a supply from the installation. The office also have two existing EV charge points for employees which would be supplied by the proposed solar installation. Alongside the positive environmental impact and cost savings, this installation will also provide another source of income to our farm business in line with one of the REPF objectives to diversify farm income streams. It will also help retain the tenant who are a large corporate with >40 employees, all of which have a positive contribution to the rural local economy, another key objective of the REPF.</p> <p>Over the past 5 years we have worked hard to reduce the impact of our farming activities through regenerative farming (we are part of the SFI pilot) and efficiencies, but farming commercially remains a challenging sector to decarbonise. We are measuring our annual carbon footprint, increasing soil carbon and working towards net zero wherever possible. A solar energy supply is something we can do now and we would be grateful for REPF support in realising the project.</p>		
Application Theme: • Capital grants for small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas.		
Location of Project: Princes Manor Farm, Church Lane, Harwell, OX11 0HA		
Number of Staff: 4 (3 FTE)		
Project Start Date: 01 August 2024		Project End Date: 30 September 2024

Total project cost	£82,680
Organisation's contribution	£22,680
Other secured funding	£0
REPF Grant Requested	£60,000
Organisation's latest bank balance	£4,000,000

Scoring

<p>Need for Project Detailed evidence of the need for the project has been provided, with detailed reports on the farm's carbon emissions and an understanding of how these can be reduced.</p>	Score	3/4
<p>Action on Climate Emergency The project will install a renewable energy system which will have a positive impact on the councils climate agenda.</p>	Score	2/3

<p>Social Action The project primarily benefits the applicants, but they also have an onsite tennant who employs over 40 staff who's positions will be safeguarded by this project.</p>	<p>Score</p>	<p>1/2</p>
<p>Project Outputs 10+ jobs safe-guarded - 3FTE jobs on application, but this number includes staff a tennant in barn who will be supplied with electricity from the panels Adoption of 1 new to firm technology or processes - Solar panels, Expected 1%-5% increase in productivity - relates to reduction in fuel costs</p>	<p>Score</p>	<p>1/3</p>
<p>DEDUCTIONS, CONCERNS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS This project fits with the following council objectives – Climate emergency work</p> <p>Please note that while the organisations bank balance may look large officers are aware that it is currently inflated due to probate.</p>	<p>Total score</p>	<p>7/12</p>

Applicant responses

Need for Project

How do you know there is a need for your project?

1. Net Zero by 2050 - Combined our farm and the onsite tenant emit ~27t CO₂e pa as a result of grid electricity consumption (please see attached emissions report for our business). Efficiency measures are being taken where possible - insulation, behaviour change, energy management, improved technology. But the reduction is limited and in a conservation area with listed buildings we are further restricted by what we can achieve. We estimate that this project will reduce 193 tonnes of CO₂e emissions over its lifetime - please see attached Financial & Carbon Impact Analysis.

2. Supporting Local Economy - We have a large corporate with >40 employees on site, bringing jobs and money into the local economy. Retaining them with competition from well serviced business parks and urban offices is essential for us and other local businesses. They have expressed their support for on site renewable energy and will commit to a power purchase agreement - please see attached letter expressing this demand.

3. Farm Diversification - In 2021 BPS made up nearly 19% of our farm income (page 4 of 2022 Accounts). It is essential that we find ways to be a sustainable business as this is phased out and protect ourselves from the volatility of modern farming (energy crisis, fertiliser supply, weather, global markets etc). An onsite solar array is a low risk diversification that will generate income and reduce overheads, covering an estimated >15% of the BPS shortfall we must find each year (against 2022 figures).

Is there a facility or business providing a comparable service or product nearby?

no

Social Action

How many people in the wider community will the project benefit?

The project will benefit more than 50 people

Who will benefit from your project and how?

Ariat, who will be supplied by the planned installation, have expressed their excitement at the prospect of renewable energy supply (please see letter on previous page). Their team onsite (>40 people) are engaged in the rural environment and sustainability, tangible actions by the company towards this will be welcomed by those working on site and the wider company.

Indirectly, it is a challenge to attract and retain such a large and prominent company to a rural location such as this farm. They are a hugely positive addition to the local economy, supporting local charities and using the surrounding food retailers, shops and suppliers. Providing extra benefits such as onsite solar helps this location compete with more urban settings and established business parks, securing their business here for all those in the area benefiting from it.

Our third generation, family run farm is deeply integrated into the local economy and area. Using trade, suppliers, contractors, brokers, supporting local charities and schools (our popular annual lambing visits). In 2021 BPS made up 18% of our income. With the phasing out of this income stream, volatile global markets, extreme weather, energy crisis etc, maintaining a profitable farm business is challenging. We are striving to achieve this through more efficient practices, technology and where viable diversification. By reducing outgoings and generating income, this solar project will offset ~15% of the BPS shortfall helping us secure this business for our current employees, partners, their families, our supply network

and future generations.

Action on Climate Emergency

The project is expected to make an impact on the following -

Decrease energy use, Decrease use of vehicles with a combustion engine

Looking at your answers above, please describe how your project will help to achieve these actions.

This project will directly and quickly reduce fossil fuel energy use and support the council's commitment for South Oxfordshire to be a carbon neutral district by 2030 and ultimately the UK net zero by 2050. Over the lifetime of the project, we estimate our solar supply will avoid >190t CO₂e emissions - please see attached. It will also make the necessary changes to our current metering system to enable renewable supply for evermore.

In addition, a source of clean, free electricity will provide the infrastructure and clear business case for our farm to further decarbonise as the electrification of farm vehicles becomes readily available, decreasing use of vehicles with a combustion engine. Emissions from red diesel (farm vehicles) currently account for 70t CO₂e of our farm emissions (please see emissions report provided). This solar project will ensure electric farm vehicles are financially viable for us in the future.

This project has been endorsed by Sustainable Harwell - please see attached supporting statement.

Project outcomes

Micro & small business outputs

10+ jobs safe-guarded, Adoption of 1 new to firm technology or processes, Expected 1%-5% increase in productivity

Social Economy outputs

Civil society outcomes

In fewer than 300 words, please explain how your project will meet the above outcomes.

1. Project schedule/due dates - the new agricultural barn on which we propose installing the solar panels is already under construction and running ahead of schedule (please see attached evidence). Ideally for efficiency and cost savings, we hope to use the safety equipment installed as part of the barn construction for the installation of the solar panels - please see attached request letter. If agreed, we would hope to initiate the project mid-end of July and finish in September. The project is on a new building with an overarching project manager co-ordinating the entire build. All preliminary work and planning has been conducted including multiple site visits. The risk of unexpected delays is minimal; however we have a 6 month time buffer before the scheme deadline allowing for the unlikely event that a delay occurs.

2. Budget Risk - we are working with a well-established and experienced solar installer who has conducted site visits and modelling to design the project specifically around the known

on site demand. Due diligence has been completed to minimise any practical or financial risk to the project. Notably, it was identified in advance that the current meter set up was not suitable for onsite generation, as a result the project must include reconfiguration of the meters adding 35% to the project cost. However, this is a one-off cost not only enabling this solar project, but onsite renewable generation indefinitely. With the help of a REPF grant the project remains financially viable for our business.

3. Deliverables and responsibilities

- a) BK Grain are project managing the overall barn construction and will be responsible for the alterations to mains which will be carried out alongside installation of the solar panels.
- b) Solar SW will be responsible for the procurement, installation and commissioning of the solar installation.

H L Binning & Son	Ref	VREPF2\100036
Project Name: Wedding venue upgrade		
Project Description: There is a events space as part of the farm diversification. This is located in a former farm building and has the original concrete floor in place. The concrete floor is cold and not conducive to the smart image of the space, we are seeking to improve it to an insulated wooden floor. The space is used for many different uses - over the past year, two funeral wakes for people from the village (no fee), 10 Duke of Edinburgh weekend training sessions (no fee) and commercially as offices for Truck during the festival, some birthday parties and a wedding.		
Application Theme: • Capital grants for small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas.		
Location of Project: The Traditional BArn - hill farm, steventon, abingdon, ox13 6sw		
Number of Staff: 5 (2 FTE)		
Project Start Date: 01 November 2024		Project End Date: 22 November 2024

Total project cost	£15,999
Organisation's contribution	£5,999
Other secured funding	£0
REPF Grant Requested	£10,000
Organisation's latest bank balance	£129,863

Scoring

Need for Project a small scale customer survey has been carried out, which supports the need for improved flooring and increased insulation	Score	1/4
Action on Climate Emergency The project will have some impact on the councils climate agenda as the new flooring will be insulated. The flooring will also be sourced from sustainable sources.	Score	1/3
Social Action The venue is used by multiple groups - Didcot Rotary, Steventon Church, Oxfordshire Army Cadets, Drayton & District Farming Club. The barn is also used as a wedding venue and hired for other private functions	Score	2/2
Project Outputs 1-5 jobs safe-guarded Expected 6%-10% increase in productivity	Score	2/3
DEDUCTIONS, CONCERNS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS This project fits with the following council objectives – Climate emergency work	Total score	6/12

Applicant responses

Need for Project

How do you know there is a need for your project?

On an informal basis we have met with users of the space to seek feedback on what could have improved their experience.

Farm visits - perfectly adequate existing space and flooring - no difference

Drayton and District Farming Club meetings - club meetings and a quiz event - an improve the feel and reduce the echo of the space.

Duke of Edinburgh (operated by Abingdon Cadets) - an element of the course is "classroom" based and the space is used for this. A wooden (insulated) floor would be a significant improvement for this period and use of the barn.

Truck temporary offices - for the duration of the festival this is used as a temporary HQ. It works well but the change from a concrete floor

Weddings / Birthdays / Funeral Wakes / Charity event - This is the big difference and where we have received the most negative feedback on the space from those who have used it. The existing concrete floor makes it very difficult to create a warm atmosphere in the building for parties and is the area we are looking for the biggest improvement.

Is there a facility or business providing a comparable service or product nearby?

Lains Barn, Wantage and Earth Trust Didcot are the closest comparable properties but offer a very difference service to slightly different markets.

Social Action

How many people in the wider community will the project benefit?

The project will benefit more than 50 people

Who will benefit from your project and how?

- Immediate Applicants

- Employees

- Customers Paying users of the barn

- Charities we support who use the barn - So far Batemans Trust (Party), Didcot Rotary (Race Night), Cream Teas Steventon Church (2 or 3 times) - 100+ at each event

- Community Groups - including Oxfordshire Army Cadets (Abingdon) - who use the barn 5-6 times / year for Duke of Edinburgh (probably 30-40 people per visit), Drayton and District Farming Club (Christmas Party and Quizzes - circa 100 people per visit)

Action on Climate Emergency

The project is expected to make an impact on the following -

Decrease energy use, Increase energy efficiency, Improve air quality (indoors), Use sustainable materials

Looking at your answers above, please describe how your project will help to achieve these actions.

The new floor will be insulated and much warmer than the existing bare concrete. This will reduce the need for heating the barn.

There has also been some problem with dust from the concrete which this floor should eliminate.

The wood floor will be sourced from sustainable sources.

In the attached quote please note underlays and wood sourcing.

Project outcomes

Micro & small business outputs

1-5 jobs safe-guarded, Expected in 6%-10% increase in productivity

Social Economy outputs

Civil society outcomes

In fewer than 300 words, please explain how your project will meet the above outcomes.

Two quotes have been obtained with both suppliers confirming they are able to meet timescales requested. We are hoping to get work done through November when the use of the barn is lower.

Apple Cottage	Ref	VREPF2\100047
Project Name: Shepherd's Hut as a Home Office and Sustainable Business Hub		
Project Description: Apple Cottage seeks to secure £10,000 in funding from the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) to establish a Shepherd's hut as a multifunctional home office on our land. This project will support our sustainable agricultural business, enhance local tourism, and contribute to the community's economy.		
The primary purpose of the hut (a self contained and fully mobile off grid building) will be to provide a dedicated space for managing farm operations including camping, processing honey, and content creation/editing. The secondary purpose will be in providing accommodation itself on an ad hoc basis for glamping. Having the hut will allow us space to work and a convenient point for guests to visit us without entering our private home/garden.		
The hut will be entirely traditional in design to blend seamlessly into the rural landscape, causing minimal disruption and maintaining the aesthetic of the countryside. The hut will be entirely self-sufficient and as environmentally friendly as possible in so far as there will be a compost toilet, discreet solar panels and made from the highest quality British artisanal workmanship.		
Application Theme: • Capital grants for small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas.		
Location of Project: Apple Cottage, Baulking Lane, Faringdon, SN78NS		
Number of Staff: 2 (1 FTE)		
Project Start Date: 01 October 2024		Project End Date: 31 December 2024

Total project cost	£24,066
Organisation's contribution	£14,066
Other secured funding	£0
REPF Grant Requested	£10,000
Organisation's latest bank balance	£22,749.45

Scoring

Need for Project Limited evidence of need for project has been provided.	Score	1/4
Action on Climate Emergency The project will have some impact on the councils climate agenda as the new hut will be solar powered. They have also attached a climate policy which allows them to score an additional point	Score	2/3
Social Action The project will primarily benefit the applicants as they will have an office space for honey processing, and potentially a glamping space to let out under the 28 day rules over the summer	Score	0/2

<p>Project Outputs Expected over 10% increase in productivity - by creating a space to create new products from honey, and to share online to help people build local rural businesses</p>	<p>Score</p>	<p>3/3</p>
<p>DEDUCTIONS, CONCERNS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</p>	<p>Total score</p>	<p>6/12</p>

Applicant responses

Need for Project

How do you know there is a need for your project?

Dedicated Home Office for farm operations:

- Operational Efficiency: The Shepherd's hut will provide a dedicated, quiet space for managing our farm operations, processing honey, and conducting business activities. This will streamline our workflow and enhance productivity.
- Local Craftsmanship: The hut will be constructed by a local tradesman, supporting local employment and ensuring high-quality, artisanal workmanship. This approach also reduces the environmental impact compared to constructing a new building, preserving the rural character of the area.
- Environmental Integration: A Shepherd's hut blends seamlessly into the rural landscape, causing minimal disruption and maintaining the aesthetic of the countryside.

Accommodation Shortage:

Evidence of Demand: There used to be a campsite at Britchcombe farm in Uffington - please see attached report from 2016 where they mention having over 500 campers come to stay over August bank holiday. This camp site has since been closed, following the death of the owner. The report was pre-pandemic where many people were forced to take UK holidays and bought camper vans. This resurgence in UK holidays has continued and with no replacement for the loss of Britchcombe farm's campsite, we feel confident that there will be demand to stay on our land. The lake at Baulking has recently opened for fishing and since we are so close we would provide a perfect base for fisherman visiting to fish the lake.

Support from Local Businesses: We have spoken to several local establishments about our plans to begin growing mushrooms and micro greens and so far this has been well received and we feel we have enough interest to begin seriously planning these new ventures as part of the future diversification of our business.

Is there a facility or business providing a comparable service or product nearby?

Within the immediate local area, the closest would be Evelyn's garden which has 8 yurts for glamping. I have attached their online booking summary which shows they are almost fully booked for weekends over July and August.

Social Action

How many people in the wider community will the project benefit?

The project will benefit more than 50 people

Who will benefit from your project and how?

The hut will provide accommodation for two people, if rented for glamping under the 28 day rule then this could see up to 56 people benefitting from the opportunity. If we prove the business and apply for full planning consent then this reach could increase significantly.

We ourselves will benefit from having space to process our honey and work on other farm projects.

The local rural community who will benefit from items we provide to the farm shop across the road.

Support staff to help us run and maintain the glamping enterprise (for example, cleaners, chimney sweep, local builders/plumbers)

The business building the shepherds hut for - a local business.

Local pubs will benefit from our recommendations for food and drinks, some of these pubs have been at risk of closure due to their rural location, raising awareness of them during peoples stay will make a difference and impact the wider community if they are able to increase business and remain open to support their local community. (The Blowing Stone, The Star, The Fox and Hounds, The Horse and Jockey and The Woodman)

Other local businesses, we hope to provide toiletries, produce and decorative items from local artisans to help raise awareness of their businesses. We will be using social media to promote our hut and offering so this will also help give a wider reach to these businesses that support our guests during their stay.

Action on Climate Emergency

The project is expected to make an impact on the following -

Decrease energy use, Decrease use of vehicles with a combustion engine, Improve land use, Improve biodiversity, Use sustainable materials

Looking at your answers above, please describe how your project will help to achieve these actions.

Decrease energy use:

- By working in the shepherds hut which will be off grid/solar powered rather than in our home which uses electric from the grid.

Decrease use of vehicles with a combustion engine:

- We won't have to travel to local cafe's or library for workspace
- We process our honey in a clean space several miles away, we'd be able to do this on site.

Improve land use:

- We have c. 4 acres and it has the potential to be so much more productive. After we take our hay crop the land is currently left to regrow for the next hay crop, camping and clamping would extend the use of the land and allow others the enjoyment of the space.

Improve biodiversity:

We have already planted more than 1000 trees of a variety of species on our land. If we are able to grow our business we would love to explore other ideas for growing things - more flowers for pollinators, mushrooms, an 'edible forest' for our guests to enjoy. We are also considering some goats to help manage weeds organically and alpaca to help improve our pasture where we keep our pet ponies - it gets very poached and the alpaca's cloven hooves help flatten out the soil.

Use sustainable materials:

- The providers we have chosen for quotes both use sustainable and locally sourced materials.

Project outcomes

Micro & small business outputs

Expected over 10% increase in productivity

Social Economy outputs

Civil society outcomes

In fewer than 300 words, please explain how your project will meet the above outcomes.

Project schedule/due dates:

- Order shepherds hut - on confirmation of positive grant outcome
- Shepherds hut lead time 1-2 months

Project deliverables:

- Purchase and site Shepherds hut
- Hut will be used immediately for business operations

Project responsibilities:

- We will place the order for the hut once we know the outcome of the grant.
- The hut manufacturer will be responsible for the build and delivery of the hut.
- We will then begin using the hut and will be responsible for beginning to promote our first season of camping/glamping starting in summer 2025.

Chapel Hill Comestibles	Ref	VREPF2\100022
Project Name: Scaling Up Efficiency and Production		
Project Description: I was able to produce about 500 Jars of shelf product (preserves) in the last year, I could have done another 500 but did not have the space to freeze and store produce until I could go into production. Since January, I began making specialty desserts for restaurants. I could do 4 times as much business, if I had more equipment: oven, mixers, blenders, spinners, a dishwasher...all to make production more efficient. It would also reduce my costs of production, so I could reduce my retail and wholesale prices on my shelf products.		
Application Theme: • Capital grants for small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas.		
Location of Project: 6 Chapel Hill, Swindon, SN6 8TA		
Number of Staff: 1 (1 FTE)		
Project Start Date: 23 September 2024		Project End Date: 30 November 2024

Total project cost	£5,620
Organisation's contribution	£0
Other secured funding	£0
REPF Grant Requested	£5,620
Organisation's latest bank balance	£1,510

Scoring

Need for Project no direct evidence of need for project has been provided such as surveys or community consultation. The application states that no one else is making the products that she makes, but a quick google search shows both products mentioned available from other uk suppliers	Score	0/4
Action on Climate Emergency The project will have some positive impact on the councils climate agenda by replacing inefficient kitchen equipment, and allowing the applicant to cook in larger batches. The applicant is environmentally conscious and forages for a lot of her ingredients, however they have not been able to score an additional point as they do not have a formal climate action policy	Score	1/3
Social Action The application states the project would benefit less than 50 people as the applicant collects unwanted fruit from people in their village meaning that they do not have to deal with disposing of unwanted fruit which can attract vermin.	Score	1/2
Project Outputs 1-5 jobs safe-guarded, Adoption of 2 new to firm technologies or processes, Expected over 10% increase in productivity. This would allow them to score 2 points.	Score	2/3
DEDUCTIONS, CONCERNS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS	Total score	4/12

Applicant responses

Need for Project

How do you know there is a need for your project?

I have more demand for my product than I can currently fill. I have not been able to approach additional retailers or restaurants because I do not have the capacity to fill the orders reliably in my current stage.

I have been asked to do cooking courses and write a cookbook. This is something I would like to do to promote making small-batch preserves as well as purchasing them from people like me. I am a cottage industry, literally in a cottage, so this is a step in that direction. It's a process to scale up my business and products reliably.

Is there a facility or business providing a comparable service or product nearby?

There is no-one who does what I do! I use what our countryside so abundantly provides to make food and preserves. This would otherwise go to waste in fields and trees. My recipes are also secret, I don't share them with anyone. No one else makes Medlar Toffee Pudding or Chilli Quince Jelly!

Social Action

How many people in the wider community will the project benefit?

The project will benefit fewer than 50 people

Who will benefit from your project and how?

I collect fruit from people in villages and towns nearby to make my preserves and desserts. In exchange, I give them a few jars of preserves made with their fruit! This helps them as they don't have to deal with waste fruit attracting vermin, and the need to dispose of it.

I'm also growing sapling trees from my quince tree to share with people in my village, farmers wanting to plant fruit trees, and anyone who wants one!

What I have that I am unable to use, I donate to food banks and people in need. I don't have a head count of how many people this is, but it's less than 50 for now.

Action on Climate Emergency

The project is expected to make an impact on the following -

Increase energy efficiency, Improve land use, Improve biodiversity, Reduce or prevent waste

Looking at your answers above, please describe how your project will help to achieve these actions.

Now that farmers are no longer prevented from planting trees (risking losing their funding), I am finding many farmers are interested in planting fruit trees. I grow saplings from my quince tree and share with anyone who wants them! This is good for land use and biodiversity.

Foraging as I do prevents food waste. There is so much food around us, and I hope to continue to learn and teach others how to use it - berries in the hedges, wild herbs, wild medlar and damson - all foods we can eat fresh and preserve!

My current kitchen is small, and it would be so much more energy and time efficient to use a proper oven, a dishwasher, and be able to do larger batches of food prep. The equipment I have chosen will help make my kitchen more energy efficient.

Project outcomes

Micro & small business outputs

1-5 jobs safe-guarded, Adoption of 2 new to firm technologies or processes, Expected over

10% increase in productivity

Social Economy outputs

Civil society outcomes

In fewer than 300 words, please explain how your project will meet the above outcomes.

Staying on budget should be fairly simple: my purchases are all from reputable wholesale suppliers for the catering industry. I can buy the equipment when I receive funding.

I will need to employ a plumber to install the dishwasher, but that shouldn't be too difficult, would like to get that done in September or October 2024. The months leading up to Christmas are very busy after harvest and before Christmas retail time.

I am very dependent on how much produce I am able to store until I can process, and processing more quickly means more products get made both for shelf delivery and restaurant delivery of desserts.

My deliverables projection for October 2024 to April 2025 I should be able to produce 2,000 shelf products across a broader range from my existing line, and 4 times as many puddings/desserts (and hopefully bread) for sale to restaurants. This would be a 400% increase in product, while enabling me to reduce cost. Processing more efficiently means my costs go down in terms of ingredients, so I can reduce my retail and wholesale shelf prices, while being equally if not more profitable with this new equipment purchase.

I anticipate I will be able to train and take on an employee to help me in October to meet my production targets. I would not be able to afford to employ someone without this grant for purchase of the equipment.

My responsibility is work at full capacity to make this planned scaling up a successful reality.

Buscot Manor	Ref	VREPF2\100075
Project Name: EXPANDED EXPERIENTIAL OFFER & WORKSHOPS EQUIPMENT & SIGNAGE		
<p>Project Description: EXPANDED EXPERIENTIAL OFFER & WORKSHOPS EQUIPMENT & SIGNAGE</p> <p>Expanding our offer through an expanded range of activities and workshops . The focus is to provide a low key, low impact holiday destination to enjoy the setting/countryside, alongside nature , the River Thames with traditional back to basics appreciation for simple pleasures of what is here in abundance on our doorstep – The River Thames, National Trust sites, local conservation villages, wildlife etc. Creation of additional art/cultural/creative programmes/activities encourages pride of place, reinforces community and investment to improve our environment by the reduction of emissions from reduced journeys, our well being across a diverse, broad and multi cultural /generational base being open and inclusive.</p> <p>Provision of premises for storage of bikes/paddleboards/games/equipment.</p> <p>Collaboration with local businesses for expertise , safeguarding skills and jobs. Creates revenue and business resilience for existing business.</p> <p>BIKES PADDLEBOARDS GAMES POTTERY WHEEL KILN SIGNAGE</p> <p>By offering these services we are able to</p> <p>Promote and support Active Travel , well being and connectivity to existing routes and walkways. Encourage longer stays and local revenue</p> <p>Holiday guests local, national and overseas benefit</p> <p>Partners working with us providing services as well as additional employee benefits from better service with us encouraging the use of EV for transport and leisure</p> <p>Community Groups and charitable organisations will benefit from being able to use our expanded service offer and not to be constrained by inadequate power with existing supply.</p> <p>Local rural economy and business</p> <p>Increasing access and connectivity</p> <p>Safeguarding existing business</p> <p>Improves visitor experience and increases access to existing and better facilities</p> <p>Promotes well being , encourages activity improves mental health and creates community</p> <p>Our planet benefits from the use of environmentally sensitive travel as does our contribution to VWHDC objectives/aims for sustainable travel and climate change, net</p>		

zero etc Additionally the Neighbourhood	
Application Theme: • Capital grants for small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas.	
Location of Project: Buscot Manor, Buscot, Oxfordshire, United Kingdom, SN7 8DA	
Number of Staff: 2 (8 FTE)	
Project Start Date: 01 August 2024	Project End Date: 01 December 2024

Total project cost	£4,062
Organisation's contribution	£0
Other secured funding	£0
REPF Grant Requested	£4,062
Organisation's latest bank balance	£16,373

Scoring

Need for Project No evidence of need for project has been provided	Score	0/4
Action on Climate Emergency The project is unlikely to have either a positive or negative impact on the council's climate agenda, they have scored one point for providing a sustainability plan	Score	1/3
Social Action The project will primarily benefit the applicant	Score	0/2
Project Outputs "6-10 jobs safe-guarded - Application states 2 FTE posts for company Adoption of 3 or more new to firm technologies or processes - purchase of bikes, paddleboards, kiln, Aunt Sally, signs etc Expected in 6%-10% increase in productivity - expected increase in user numbers due to activites available."	Score	2/3
DEDUCTIONS, CONCERNS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS This project fits with the following council objectives – Local visitor economy work	Total score	3/12

Applicant responses

Need for Project

How do you know there is a need for your project?

Extensive research on holiday forums, online travel agencies, monitoring of our competitors. I have carried out extensive research on what accommodations are on offer, the services offered to see how we can differentiate ourselves and provide the best offer.

I am constantly checked ONS data, experience oxfordshire, OXLEP, updates from the tourist boards and visit Oxfordshire/Wiltshire and Thames organisations as well as Fleurets a specialist in the leisure industry and forums regarding the visitor economy.

A key part is our own customer feedback and ensuring that we offer what our customers desire.

Is there a facility or business providing a comparable service or product nearby?

There is no other offer for accommodation providers locally who are offering experiential stays

Social Action

How many people in the wider community will the project benefit?

The project will benefit more than 50 people

Who will benefit from your project and how?

Holiday guests locally, nationally and overseas from a broad and diverse group of people and cultures.

Partners working with us providing services have employment and facilities to benefit from and collaborate with.

Community groups and charitable organisations will benefit from being able to use our expanded offer to educate and promote well being/active travel, sustainability.

Benefits the rural economy and business

Increases access and connectivity

Safeguards and improves our existing business

Improves visitor experience and increases access to existing and better facilities

Promotes well being, encourages activity and creates community.

We assist with the VWHDC objectives/aims for sustainable travel and assist with climate change and net zero.

Action on Climate Emergency

The project is expected to make an impact on the following -

Decrease energy use, Increase energy efficiency, Decrease use of vehicles with a combustion engine, Reduce air pollution (outdoors), Increase use of public transport, Increase use of active travel, Reduce or prevent waste, Use sustainable materials, Other (please specify below)

Looking at your answers above, please describe how your project will help to achieve these actions.

We will be decreasing energy usage as our guests will be staying for longer, not taking the car but using our bikes/paddleboards therefore decreasing use of the car meaning less air pollution . Opportunity to connect with local footpaths and walks along the river and public transport.

We will be looking to recycle items in our workshops thus reducing waste whilst promoting community spirit, relationships and helping the economy.

Will be educational to community groups fostering an ethos and knowledge of sustainable/energy best practice

We do our very best to recycle , reuse wherever we can.

Project outcomes

Micro & small business outputs

6-10 jobs safe-guarded, Adoption of 3 or more new to firm technologies or processes,
Expected in 6%-10% increase in productivity

Social Economy outputs

Civil society outcomes

In fewer than 300 words, please explain how your project will meet the above outcomes.

The plan is to purchase the equipment as soon as possible to allow us to form a schedule of activities over the quieter months as well as booking in local artisans to deliver.

The provision of bikes/ paddleboards/ games will be offered to guests as soon as we have the go ahead.

As a sole operator I will ensure the project will be delivered within budget and ahead of the schemes deadline of the 31st March 2025

Ichorbio Ltd	Ref	VREPF2\100082
Project Name: Solar Panels for company office		
<p>Project Description: Ichorbio Ltd. seeks to secure £12,309 in funding from the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) to install solar panels and battery storage at our rural home-office location. This project will support our biotechnology business, enhance sustainability, and protect against frequent power cuts. The primary purpose of the solar panels and batteries is to provide a reliable and eco-friendly energy source for our operations, which include maintaining freezers for antibody storage and charging an electric vehicle. This initiative is part of our broader goal to achieve B Corp certification, demonstrating our commitment to high standards of social and environmental performance, accountability, and transparency.</p> <p>The official company address is a virtual office located in Boston House, Grove Business Park - however all day to day operations take place in a home office located on land owned by the two directors of ichorbio Ltd. Operations include marketing & sales, packing and shipping and storing our products in a big chest freezer.</p>		
Application Theme: • Capital grants for small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas.		
Location of Project: Apple Cottage, Stanford in the Vale, SN7 8NS		
Number of Staff: 2 (1.5 FT		
Project Start Date: 01 September 2024		Project End Date: 30 September 2024

Total project cost	£16,412
Organisation's contribution	£4,103
Other secured funding	£0
REPF Grant Requested	£12,309
Organisation's latest bank balance	£120,000

Scoring

Need for Project No evidence of need for project has been provided	Score	0/4
Action on Climate Emergency The project will install a renewable energy system which will have a positive impact on the councils climate agenda.	Score	2/3
Social Action the project will primarily benefit the applicant	Score	0/2
Project Outputs "Adoption of 1 new to firm technology or processes Expected 1%-5% increase in productivity"	Score	1/3

<p>DEDUCTIONS, CONCERNS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</p> <p>This project fits with the following council objectives – Climate emergency work</p> <p>Please note this business is run from a home office, and officers have not been able to determine a percentage of energy use for the home v's the office and freezers.</p>	<p>Total score</p>	<p>3/12</p>
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Applicant responses

Need for Project

How do you know there is a need for your project?

We have experienced frequent power cuts in the 6 years that we have lived at the property.

Is there a facility or business providing a comparable service or product nearby?

Jade Alpacas operate their farm business using solar panels.

Social Action

How many people in the wider community will the project benefit?

The project only benefits the immediate applicants

Who will benefit from your project and how?

Employees will benefit from better working conditions.

Action on Climate Emergency

The project is expected to make an impact on the following -

Decrease energy use, Decrease use of vehicles with a combustion engine

Looking at your answers above, please describe how your project will help to achieve these actions.

The solar panels will decrease our consumption of non-renewable energy and allow us to invest in an additional electric vehicle.

Project outcomes

Micro & small business outputs

Adoption of 1 new to firm technology or processes, Expected 1%-5% increase in productivity

Social Economy outputs

Civil society outcomes

In fewer than 300 words, please explain how your project will meet the above outcomes.

We expect the solar panels to be completed at the end of 2024 at the latest.

We have a quote already which includes the installation of 27 solar panels together with inverter and batteries to cover our business requirements.

The solar panels will be installed by a company called Honest Solar (<https://honest solar.co.uk/>) that is from the same town as our home location which is where the company office and freezers are situated.

ichorbio will contribute the extra amount above the grant received from REFP.