



## SITA Cornwall Trust – Funding application notes and Assessment Criteria

### **Background**

SITA Cornwall Trust was formed on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2007. Formerly known as County Environmental Trust (see background information below), the Trust now secures funding from SITA Cornwall, the new waste management company in Cornwall. The Landfill Community Fund Scheme is not compulsory and all donations received from SITA Cornwall Ltd are voluntary.

Early in 1997, County Environmental Services Ltd (CES), Cornwall's waste management company, facilitated the formation of an Environmental Trust for Cornwall with the support of Cornwall County Council. This followed legislation in October 1996 introducing a tax on the disposal of waste to landfill sites throughout the United Kingdom. The government decided that some of the tax that is raised could be redirected to support the environmental aims of the legislation by allowing a "landfill tax credit" to landfill operators who make donations to approved 'Environmental Bodies' (such as SCT) for spending on approved objects

The Landfill Tax Regulations allow site operators to claim "landfill tax credits" up to 6.7% of the tax collected on waste going to landfill. The landfill operator can claim a credit of 90% of the donation, the remaining 10% being reimbursed from a Third Party Contributor. The creation of an Environmental Body for Cornwall ensures that SITA Cornwall Ltd or any other future participant's donations are retained for the benefit of the residents of Cornwall and of its environment.

SITA Cornwall Trust Ltd (SCT) is an independent company limited by guarantee. SCT Ltd will accept contributions from any landfill operator, but its principal contributor is likely to remain SITA Cornwall Ltd who currently collects 90% of all landfill tax in the county. A management board whose membership and constitution has been approved by ENTRUST – the national government regulatory body for the landfill tax credit scheme, administers these funds. At least

half of SCT's board must be independent of the landfill operator or the County Council and schemes can only gain approval if there is no direct benefit to the landfill operator, or to the council.

## **Priorities**

SITA Cornwall Trust will seek to maximise the benefits of these funds for a broad section of the community, enabling wherever possible the drawdown of further resources to support eligible projects in or of benefit to Cornwall. However, funds are heavily oversubscribed, and not all eligible projects will be supported. The board regrets that some applicants will inevitably be disappointed.

When making decisions on the allocation of these funds to projects SCT will apply the eligibility rules defined by the Landfill Tax Regulations and the assessment criteria developed by its management board to support the environmental and community aims behind the legislation. These rules and criteria are set out below.

In addition, we place particular emphasis on the following priorities:

- To achieve a fair balance of grants across the county, with priority given to schemes near landfill sites where local communities will benefit
- To consider applications covering the whole range of eligible project categories
- To give grants which promote the environmental purposes of the scheme and which make a real beneficial impact on the environment and the local communities.

## **Eligibility - Approved Objectives**

The legislation governing our activities specifies that grants may be made for spending on certain approved environmental objectives defined by the Landfill Tax Regulations. We cannot fund projects retrospectively, therefore if you have already started the project it will be ineligible for the whole funding, however it may be possible to apply for future stages. We can only process applications that are eligible by fulfilling one of the following objects:

Object (a) – Bringing land back into use

Reclamation, remediation, restoration, or any other operation intended to facilitate the economic, social or environmental use of land where its use has been prevented or restricted because of an activity that has now ceased, unless a benefit accrues to any person who carried out or knowingly permitted the previous use

Object (b) – Reducing or preventing pollution

Any operation intended to prevent or reduce any potential for pollution or to remedy or mitigate the effect of any pollution on land by a previous activity, unless a benefit accrues to any person who carried out or knowingly permitted the pollution

Object (d) – Public parks and amenities

Where it is for the protection of the environment, the provision, maintenance or improvement of a public park or other public amenity in the vicinity of a landfill site provided that the park or amenity is not to be operated with a view to profit

Object (e) – Buildings and Structures

Where it is for the protection of the environment the maintenance, repair and restoration of a building or other structure which is a place of religious worship or of historic or architectural interest, which is open to the public and within the vicinity of a landfill site and not operated with a view to profit.

Object (da) – To promote biodiversity

Where it is for the protection of the environment, the conservation or promotion of

biological diversity through:

- provision, conservation, restoration or enhancement of a natural habitat
- the maintenance or recovery of a species in its natural habitat on land or in water situated in the vicinity of a landfill site.

*Note; reference to “the vicinity of a landfill site under objects d) da) and e) is normally taken to be within a 10 mile radius.*

## Assessment Criteria

We are aware that we will receive far more eligible applications than funds will support. In deciding where to allocate grants we will apply the following assessment criteria;

- **Criterion 1 - Eligibility**

All applicants and projects must be eligible under the Landfill Tax Regulations. Projects must be within the county of Cornwall, except where it relates to a national research project.

- **Criterion 2 - Protection of the Environment**

All projects must demonstrate direct environmental benefits or be designed in an environmentally friendly way, for instance using materials from sustainable sources. You should be able to demonstrate the environmental importance of your project, or that it will preserve and maintain, not detract or damage, the environment. Proposals for development or improvement should always be led by environmental considerations. Work involved should meet professional standards, with appropriate quality of design and materials.

- **Criterion 3 - Public and community benefits**

We aim to ensure that as many and as wide a range of people as possible benefit from SCT grants, especially in those areas in close proximity to landfill activity. You should be able to demonstrate the public and community benefits that will result from your project.

In particular we will look favourably on applications which can show that their project is supported by, and will involve, their local community. This could include evidence of local fund-raising, self-help, use of local skills and evidence of the need for the project in the local community, and details of public consultations. Wider public benefits which may result from the project, such as job creation or economic regeneration will also be taken into account

For category d) and e) projects your project should be able to be used by a broad section of the community, with accessible opening arrangements. For places of public worship, there should be evidence of broader community use and the provision of facilities that are not found elsewhere in the vicinity.

- **Criterion 4 – Financial Viability**

Preference will be given where SCT monies will enable significant additional resources to be secured or drawn down. You should be able to show that these additional resources are either in existence or at proposal stage. Funding from other sources must be sufficient and likely to be forthcoming. Please be aware that the project must be complete within 12 months of an offer being made by SCT, therefore it may not be advisable to apply to SCT before other applications have been made where needed.

Preference will be given where local fundraising demonstrates local support.

Applications must be supported by justifiable and realistic cost estimates.

- **Criterion 5 – Capabilities of the applicant**

We will want to assess that the applicant is financially sound and can demonstrate, if relevant, that continuing sources of funding for the running costs of new projects, such as maintenance and repair, have been identified and are in place. The applicant should be able to demonstrate that they have the experience and ability to carry out their project, whether it is large or small. A key factor will be the quality and level of professional advice available, whether from within the organisation or from outside sources. Ability to fill out the application form correctly and return the necessary supporting information will be key to assessing this criterion.

- **Criterion 6 – public authority support.**

You must have sought the opinion of your local parish and district council. Where appropriate, you should be able to demonstrate how your project is relevant to local authority or other regional plans and strategies.

- **Criterion 7 – Project Specifications.**

If your project is part of a larger activity, it should be self-contained and identifiable, and not depend on the larger activity to be viable.

Preference will be given to projects that can demonstrate a definite, quantifiable and practical benefit. Feasibility or project development studies will be considered and assessed on their originality, innovation and likely contribution to furthering the aims of the Trust. Projects with high management or consultancy costs are unlikely to be successful unless applicants can demonstrate exceptional benefits.

*Recipients of grants will be expected to co-operate in publicity and related measures in order to credit the Trust's assistance.*

- **Criterion 8 - Completion within 12 months**

A further requirement of SCT is that the project must be able to demonstrate that should funding by SCT be awarded that the project will be complete within a 12 month period.

- **Criterion 9 - Third Party Contributor**

At present SITA Cornwall Trust does not need to pass on the Third Party Contribution

## The Process

1. Complete the application form and forward with enclosures to the Fund Manager. Applications should be typed wherever possible and should contain all the additional information required such as maps and letters of support.
2. Your completed full Grant Application will then be considered by the SCT Board of Directors who meet on a quarterly basis. It is likely that prior to its consideration the Trust Manager and one or more of the Trust's directors will arrange to meet the project applicants and gain first-hand knowledge of your project. Projects will be assessed on the basis of the contribution that they will make to the improvement of the environment in Cornwall rather than the sophistication of the presentation. All applications will be either approved, rejected or deferred for a specific reason at the quarterly Board meeting to which they applied.
3. If your project is approved it must then be sent to ENTRUST for final approval against the legislation and guidance.
4. Finally a funding contract will be arranged for all approved projects, giving specific milestones and dates for the drawing down of the funds – which are normally released in arrears upon evidence of expenditure.
5. At this stage the Third Party Funding levy must be paid to the Landfill Operator.
6. Where a project is rejected please be advised that the decision of the Board of Directors is final and that no appeals are allowed. SCT does not allow re-application for the same project within one year of the original application.

*Contact information; all enquiries and correspondence should be sent to;*

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