

You are recommended to read the Marsh Million Economic Projects Scheme Application Guidance notes before completing the pre-application and full application forms.

You must complete all parts of the pre-application and full application forms except where exceptions are indicated e.g. where questions relate to parent companies and none exist. The pre-application and full application forms are only part of the application documentation required.

Please ensure that a written project plan forms the basis of your application. You are advised to complete the application form and project plan in co-operation with your own financial advisor.

1. What is the Marsh Million?

The Marsh Million is a £1m three-year, economic growth fund for the Romney Marsh, area funded by the Magnox Socio-economic programme, Kent County Council, Ashford Borough Council and Shepway District Council. Kent County Council is the Accountable Body for the scheme with support provided by the Romney Marsh Partnership and other public and private sector partners.

The scheme consists of two elements, a Business Loan Scheme and an Economic Projects Scheme.

This guidance only relates to the Marsh Million Economic Projects Scheme (EPS) which offers grants ranging between £10,000-£100,000 for projects seeking to help start-ups, small businesses and social enterprises in the Romney Marsh area to grow and diversify. Examples of such projects could include training provision, business workspace, access to transport and potentially some environmental improvements with an economic benefit (for example, through tourism).

2. The type of funding that is available

This scheme provides financial support in the form of grants (see **Glossary**).

Zero percent interest loans may be allocated in place of grants on a case-by-case at the discretion of the Accountable Body. In addition, the Accountable Body reserves the right to seek a personal guarantee in certain circumstances.

3. Where is the Marsh Million Economic Project Scheme (EPS) eligible area?



Marsh Million Fund Eligible Area. Only specific Parishes within the local authority areas of Ashford and Shepway are eligible these are highlighted in **Blue**

Map 1 Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right

4. Who can apply?

You can apply for investment support from Marsh Million EPS if you meet the following criteria:

- **Type** - Are you a voluntary and community organisation, small business, educational organisation or town/parish council (see **Glossary** for definitions) located or seeking to undertake a project in the Marsh Million eligible area (see above).
- **Amount** - Are you seeking a grant between £10,000-£100,000.
- **Size** – In the case of a private sector applicant do you currently have less than 50 employees (see **Glossary** for definition).
- **Community Participation** – Can you evidence your engagement with the local community/stakeholders when developing your proposal.
- **Location** - Are you seeking to provide a project to grow or diversify (see **Outcomes** below) the local economy in the Marsh Million eligible area. i.e. designated areas within the Borough of **Ashford** (Parishes of: Aldington, Appledore, Bilsington, Bonnington, Kenardington, Newenden, Orlestone, Ruckinge, Stone-Cum-Ebony, Warehorne, Wittersham) and the District of **Shepway** (Parishes of: Brenzett; Brookland; Burmarsh; Dymchurch; Ivychurch; Lydd, Newchurch; New Romney; Old Romney; Snargate; St Mary in the Marsh) - see **Map page Section 3 eligible areas are indicated in Blue**.
- **Demonstrate link to local priorities/outcomes** – Can you demonstrate that you will achieve one or more of the Priorities of the scheme (Supporting Local

Employment; Strengthening Our Business Base; A Great Place to Live, Work and Visit) plus one or more of the Outcomes of the scheme (see **Appendix Two** for further details).

5. Eligibility Criteria

In addition to meeting the criteria in **Section 4** above, all investment proposals must fulfil the following conditions:-

- **Demonstrate Need** – The applicant must be able to demonstrate the need (additionality) for financial support to go ahead or in exceptional circumstances would go ahead on a smaller scale.
- **Viability** - The organisation undertaking the investment proposal must be viable, have good growth potential and be self-sustaining by the completion of the investment.
- **Match Funding** - The investment proposal requires support from other funding sources (see **Section 8** below for further details).
- **Number of Applications** - Applicants can only submit one application for the Marsh Million EPS scheme at any one time. The opportunity to submit further applications would be dependent on such a grant not breaching State Aid rules, permission should be sought from the Marsh Million Programme Management Team (for contact details see **Section 14**) prior to any further submission.

6. What we can fund

The minimum grant that can be applied for is £10,000. The maximum grant is £100,000. In addition, the Marsh Million EPS grant cannot constitute more than 80% of total eligible costs. Therefore for an eligible investment totalling £100,000 the maximum Marsh Million EPS contribution would be **£80,000**.

Marsh Million EPS funding can be used to cover the following types of expenditure:-

- **Staff & Revenue expenditure** – The scheme can support a range of eligible staff and revenue expenditure e.g. staff costs, marketing and promotion, office costs (see **Appendix One** for detail).
- **Capital expenditure** – The scheme can support small scale expenditure projects which are clearly linked to the primary and supporting outcomes of the scheme (see **Appendix Two**) e.g. community, business, training and tourism infrastructure.
- **On-road vehicles** - Funding can be used to cover the costs of the purchase or leasing of on-road vehicles provided certain conditions are met: a) Marsh Million EPS scheme is not used to fund the purchase or lease costs of a road transport vehicle with a gross weight of more than 3.5 tonnes and which requires an operating licence; b) covers no more than 50% of the purchase or lease costs; c) the purchase or lease cost does not exceed £10,000 per vehicle.

Capital assets funded under this scheme must be used primarily within the Marsh Million eligible area and remain within the eligible area for a period of at least three years after the offer of funding.

7. What we cannot fund

- **Ineligible Sectors** - Marsh Million cannot accept applications from firms active in the following sectors as they are ineligible and they cannot be considered for support: Fisheries and aquaculture (SIC 03); Primary production of agricultural products (SIC 01); Coal (SIC 05); Steel production (SIC 24.1); Shipbuilding (SIC 30.11); Synthetic fibres (SIC 13.1) and Franchises.

We also acknowledge that for some investment proposals it may be difficult to easily define which sector they fall within. Therefore please submit a pre-application form so that the Marsh Million Programme Management Team can assess eligibility.

- **Ineligible Expenditure** - We cannot fund what we consider ineligible expenditure. Funding from the Marsh Million programme **cannot** be used to cover the following types of expenditure:-
 - **Repayment of debt** - Funding cannot be used to repay outstanding debt to overdue creditors.
 - **Purchase of commercial land and/or property** - Funding cannot be used for any costs related to the purchase of commercial land and/or property but can be used to cover the costs of deposit, moving etc. (see above).
 - **Residential accommodation** - Funding cannot be used for any costs related to residential premises.
 - **General Expenditure** - Funding cannot be used for general repairs, maintenance and/or running costs.
 - **Statutory Provisions/Obligations** - Funding cannot be used for projects being undertaken fund an applicant's statutory provisions or to comply with statutory regulations/obligations.
 - **Replace Public Sector Support** – Funds cannot be used to replace funding previously obtained from Kent County Council, Ashford Borough Council and Shepway District Council. In addition KCC, Ashford Borough Council and Shepway District Council operate a range of schemes to support local businesses and community projects, please note that the Marsh Million Economic Projects Scheme (EPS) will not fund applications where the main purpose of the project falls within the scope of these existing programmes and/or funding has been sought/obtained from these programmes for a similar project. EPS will only support for projects where the main purpose of the project meets one or more of the schemes priorities (Access to Employment; Strengthening the Business Base; Helping Romney Marsh remain a Great Place to Live, Work and Visit).
 - **Expenditure already incurred** - Funding cannot be used for to recoup expenditure already incurred before a formal offer is made by Marsh Million.

- A full application for assistance must be submitted and an offer made before expenditure on an investment proposal is commenced.
- **Others** – Funding cannot be used for the purchase of shares or goodwill.
 - **Health** – Funding cannot be used to fund project linked to healthcare procedures, physical therapy and/or cosmetic personal procedures.
 - **Research** – Funding cannot be used for socio-economic research activities (research, experimentation and survey work) unless clear economic benefits are demonstrated and the research is undertaken using sound methodology and procedures. Projects which are considered to be using questionable methods will not be considered for assistance.
 - **Non-Viable Investment Proposals and Businesses** - Due to State Aid regulations Marsh Million cannot be used to support non-viable investment proposals from non-viable businesses.
 - **State Aid Limits** - Any offer of finance assistance would lead to State Aid limits being exceeded. In the case of this scheme the applicant must not have received more than €200,000 (approximately £156,000) of financial assistance from a public source for a trading activity over the previous 3 financial years (EU De Minimis Regulation).
 - **Limited Private Sector Investment** - Marsh Million will not provide 100% funding or cover all the costs of an investment and will seek an element of public or private sector investment (match funding). The types of eligible expenditure and the levels of funding offered for Marsh Million are detailed in **Section 6**.
 - **Reputation** - Investments which would result in potential damage to KCC and its partners' image and reputation.

8. Match funding

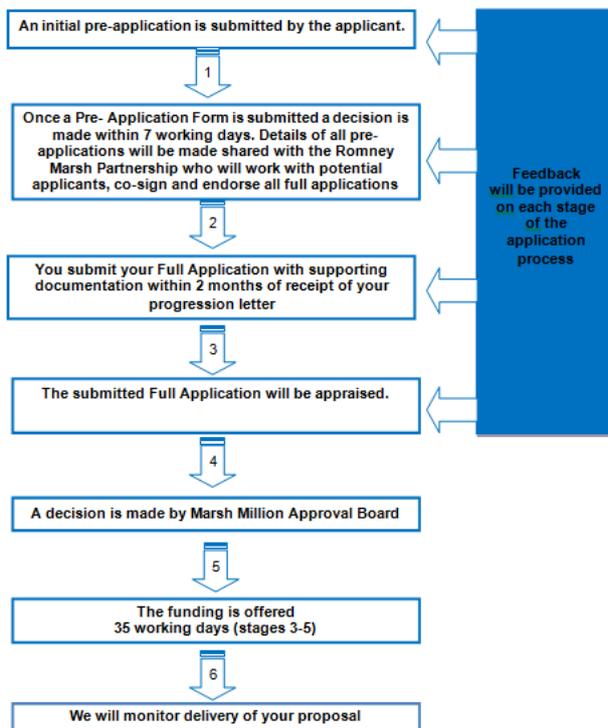
Applications must demonstrate a requirement for Marsh Million investment. A minimum level of 20% of the costs of an investment are required to be funded from other public or private sector sources. In the case of private sector resources such as the applicant's own resources or commercial lenders e.g. for a project costing £100,000, Marsh Million EPS could make available £80,000 with the business providing the remaining £20,000.

Eligible private sector match funding includes: Grants; Match-funding in-kind; Bank loan; Company own funds; Overdraft facility; Own funds inc. Owner, Partner's, Director's, Member's loan; Pension funds from Company; Private investor/New share capital/New equity investors.

Sources regarded as ineligible match funding include: Costs already incurred; Loans or overdraft facilities which have been committed to cover previous expenditure.

Applicants should aim to have secured match funding by the time that they submit their full application. At full application stage all applicants must complete a Match Funding Declaration (Part 2) which confirms the level and sources of this match funding.

9. Marsh Million Economic Projects Scheme Application Process



10. Pre-application

The Marsh Million EPS pre-application is a key part of the application process and is undertaken to determine:

- The eligibility of your organisation and your investment proposal.
- Whether your investment proposal meets the Marsh Million Fund objectives.
- Whether there are funds available to support your investment proposal.
- Eligibility to proceed to a Marsh Million EPS full application.

Receipt of a Marsh Million EPS pre-application form will be acknowledged within 3 working days and a decision on a fully completed pre-application will be made within 7 working days. Unsuccessful applications will be provided with feedback and given the opportunity to re-apply if they are eligible. Details of all pre-applications will be shared with the Romney Marsh Partnership who will work with potential applicants (see Section 16).

11. Full Application & Appraisal

A copy of the Full Marsh Million EPS application form will only be provided once the pre-application has been approved and the proposal is deemed eligible to continue to the next stage.

Applicants will be given 2 months to complete and submit their Marsh Million EPS full application form on-line. We require all those submitting full applications to work with the Romney Marsh Partnership (see Section 16).

They should also then submit through the post one signed hard copy of the full application form plus one copy of each of the supporting documents that are relevant to the proposal.

<p>Businesses (sole traders, limited companies, partnerships)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A signed hard copy of the full application form. • A project plan detailing the history of the applicant and their future plans (a template is provided). • An excel spreadsheet (My Project Profile) outlining your expenditure (a template is provided). • Funding requests of upto £50,000 up to one year's statutory audited/unaudited/drafted accounts (this would depend on how long the business has been in existence - this documentation is not required for start-ups – see guidance below). Funding requests of over £50,000 up to two year's statutory audited/unaudited/drafted accounts (this would depend on how long the business has been in existence - this documentation is not required for start-ups – see guidance below). • A copy of any planning approval or licence (if relevant). • Completed De Minimis Declaration (Part 1) and Match Funding Declaration (Part 2).
<p>Voluntary and Community Organisations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A signed hard copy of the full application form. • A project plan detailing the history of the applicant and their future plans (a template is provided). • An excel spreadsheet (My Project Profile) outlining your expenditure (a template is provided). • Funding requests of upto £50,000 up to one year's annual accounts (this would depend on how long the charity has been in existence - this documentation is not required for start-ups). Funding requests of over £50,000 up to two year's accounts (this would depend on how long the organisation has been in existence - this documentation is not required for start-ups). • A copy of any planning approval or licence (if relevant). • Unless you are a registered charity or a company limited by guarantee (or a registered charity that is also a company limited by guarantee) we require a copy of your written governing document (for example, a constitution, memorandum and articles of association, set of rules or trust deed).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only complete the Match Funding Declaration (Part 2).
Educational & Town and Parish Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A signed hard copy of the full application form. • A project plan detailing the history of the applicant and their future plans (a template is provided). • An excel spreadsheet (My Project Profile) outlining your expenditure (a template is provided). • A copy of any planning approval or licence (if relevant). • Only complete the Match Funding Declaration (Part 2).
Start-up businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A signed hard copy of the full application form. • A project plan detailing your future plans (a template is provided). • An excel spreadsheet (My Project Profile) outlining your expenditure (a template is provided). • A financial projection of income and expenditure covering the next 18 months. • A copy of any planning approval or licence (if relevant). • Completed De Minimis Declaration (Part 1) and Match Funding Declaration (Part 2).
Startup Voluntary and Community Organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A signed hard copy of the full application form. • A project plan detailing your future plans (a template is provided). • An excel spreadsheet (My Project Profile) outlining your expenditure (a template is provided). • A financial projection of income and expenditure covering the next 18 months • A copy of any planning approval or licence (if relevant). • Unless you are a registered charity or a company limited by guarantee (or a registered charity that is also a company limited by guarantee) we require a copy of your written governing document (for example, a constitution, memorandum and articles of association, set of rules or trust deed). • Only complete the Match Funding Declaration (Part 2).

On receipt through the post of this documentation the Marsh Million Programme Management Team will undertake a key criteria check to ensure conformance.

Please note that by submitting a Marsh Million application your organisation is agreeing to KCC seeking necessary credit references or reports. All proposals and supporting documents must be the property of the applicant and must not infringe any existing patent or copyright and all applications will be deemed as commercial and in confidence.

All full applications will normally be fully appraised within 35 working days of receiving the full application and supporting documents. The process for undertaking an appraisal of an investment proposal is proportionate to the level of funding requested.

An independent appraisal team has been appointed by KCC and they may need to raise questions with the applicant to clarify issues or request additional information. The

independent appraisers will make recommendations to the Marsh Million Approval Board.

Applicants may be invited to attend a Marsh Million Approval Board meeting to make a presentation related to their application. Please note that the Approval Board is seeking to support a board range of projects and reserves the right not to fund applications were it considers that a sector or type of project is already oversubscribed. Final decisions on awarding or withholding investment will be at the discretion of KCC.

If your application is successful you will be sent an offer letter detailing the level of finance and the conditions associated with the funding. This will constitute part of the contract with KCC as the Accountable Body for the Marsh Million Economic Projects Scheme. If your investment proposal is unsuccessful then your letter will provide information on the reasons for this decision.

Payment of funding is dependent upon agreed investment and/or employment milestones being achieved by the recipient (to be set out in the offer letter).

- Suitable milestones will be identified from the information contained in your project plan; these will then be monitored during the lifetime of the investment period and 3 years beyond the final payment to ensure that the conditions of the finance offer have been met.
- All details will be fully documented in the offer letter.
- Any award of finance under the Marsh Million Fund may become repayable in its entirety if the investment should move outside the Marsh Million eligible area.

12. Guidance on the content of the Project Plan

Please note that your project plan should not be submitted until after your pre-application form has been submitted and assessed. Your project plan should be prepared and submitted alongside a signed copy of the full application form and other supporting documents requested.

Your project plan is an essential part of the application process and you must submit one copy of this document along with copies of your full application form and other supporting documentation (see **Section 11** above). Your project plan will remain “commercial in confidence”.

The project plan must be specific to your proposal but should also refer to how your proposal links to any other parts of your business already in place, if appropriate. A template of a project plan will be provided to all prospective applicants.

13. Payment

Marsh Million EPS will allow applicants to claim a single advance of 30% of their total grant. This payment will only be processed if the applicant has provided the Marsh Million Programme Management Team with:

- A signed and returned contract with the My Project Profile and advance claim form;
- The Match Funding Declaration as appropriate; and
- Written certification that the project has actually started.

Applicants can submit further grant claims in arrears at agreed quarterly intervals. The timing of claims will depend on the expenditure agreed in the My Project Profile and will require detail on the actual expenditure incurred to date and the progress made.

14. This Guidance

Copies of this guidance are available in an alternative format on request.

15. Contact for further Information

Marsh Million Programme Management Team, Kent County Council
2nd Floor, Invicta House, County Hall
Maidstone ME14 1XX
Email: marsh.million@kent.gov.uk
Website: www.marshmillion.co.uk

16. Romney Marsh Partnership

Tess Luetchford
Romney Marsh Partnership Co-ordinator
Tel: 01303 853344
Email: tess.luetchford@shepway.gov.uk

Glossary of Terms

Additionality	Applicants must describe the additionality of their project and the ways in which this will be achieved. For example, demonstrate the reasons why Marsh Million funding is necessary to enable the proposal to succeed? Provide the reasons why the project would not go ahead without Marsh Million funding.
De Minimis	Commission Regulation No (EC) 1407/2013 which covers the Marsh Million and sets a threshold for applicants of €200,000 (approx. £156,000) for financial assistance from a public source for a trading activity over the previous 3 financial years.
Educational Organisation	Primary and Secondary Schools, Academies and Colleges. Grants will not be awarded for activities which these bodies have a statutory responsibility to provide e.g. curriculum based activities.
Innovation	Applicants must describe the innovation of their project and the ways in which this will be achieved. For example, explain how your application will be innovative to the Marsh Million eligible area? How the application will be innovative in terms of you as an applicant, your sector or activity?
Loans	Marsh Million Business loans are offered at 0% interest to eligible applicants. There are no arrangement fees and repayments terms are flexible within certain parameters.
Small Business	The EU defines a small business (enterprise) as either a sole trader, partnership or limited company who : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employing less than 50 people • Having a balance sheet that is less than €10m • Annual turnover less than €10m pa.
Voluntary and Community Organisations	These include: registered charities; co-operatives; friendly societies; industrial and provident societies; not-for-profit companies (i.e. Community Interest Companies and Companies limited by guarantee); not-for-profit unincorporated associations.

Appendix One – Eligible Expenditure

Capital Expenditure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental improvements – The environmental improvement of community, business, training or tourism infrastructure e.g. landscaping, tree-planting or security improvements (see below). • Building Improvements – The modernisation of a community, business, training or tourism facilities. The maximum grant available for this type of expenditure is £30,000 including VAT and contingency. • Safety improvements - The provision of new safety improvements linked to community, business, training or tourism infrastructures e.g. new signage or security lighting and general access improvements (induction loops, chair lifts, mobility equipment) that are essential to the overall project. • Professional and legal fees – Which are associated with any eligible capital expenditure.
Staff & Revenue Expenditure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salaries of project workers - Including any extra costs, such as pensions and National Insurance contributions (maximum 2 years). • Salaries of management staff - Who only supervise project staff, including any extra costs, such as pensions and National Insurance contributions (maximum 2 years). • Recruitment – One- off costs recruiting of staff who will work on the project. • Expenses – For project staff and volunteers, including travel, accommodation and telephone bills (maximum 2 years). • Running expenses - Including rent, heating, lighting, maintenance and insurance for office space and buildings, telephone bills and stationery only used for this project (maximum 2 years). • Training of staff and volunteers - Working directly on/for the project • Monitoring and evaluation – Including self-evaluation costs • Exit Strategy – The costs associated with the development of an exit strategy and sustainability planning. • Marketing and publicity - For the project i.e. website infrastructure, including increasing central server capacity and interconnection costs, software, website content design and development (including the use of consultants or designers). • Professional and legal fees – That are associated with revenue expenditure on the project (must be less than 10% of revenue costs) • VAT – Which cannot be recovered from HM Revenue and Customs.
On-Road Vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marsh Million EPS grant is not used to fund the purchase or lease costs of a road transport vehicle with a gross weight of more than 3.5 tonnes and which requires an operating licence; b) covers no more than 50% of the purchase or lease costs; c) the purchase or lease cost does not exceed £10,000.

Appendix Two – Marsh Million EPS Priorities, Objectives and Outcomes

Priorities	Outcomes
Please demonstrate that you will achieve one or more of the following EPS priorities	Please demonstrate that you will achieve one or more of the following EPS outcomes:
Access to Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strengthened labour market • A better skilled workforce • A more resilient and sustainable economy • A truly connected economy
Strengthening the Business Base	
A Great Place to Live, Work and Visit	
All applications will lead to a more inclusive society	