

Customer and Communities Improvement Fund

2023/24 Scheme Handbook



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Front page picture: Hampshire Adventurers – Aided by CCIF funding, MHA delivered a programme of outdoor activities to encourage walking for those in rural areas of New Forest, Hart, Rushmoor and Eastleigh. Especially during the Covid-19 pandemic this project helped the participants feel less isolated and more confident. Since Autumn 2020, the Hampshire Adventurers have executed 235 walks around the county, involving 618 members, 84 of whom are living with memory loss.

Welcome to SWR Customer and Communities Improvement Fund

The Customer and Communities Improvement Fund (CCIF) is South Western Railway's programme to support projects that have a community benefit or address an area of social need across our network.

CCIF is intended to support small and medium-sized projects which can be completed over the course of the year. In previous rounds of funding, we have supported more than 70 projects with a value of over £6 million, supporting important local causes and initiatives and delivering extensive social value and benefit.

An important part of CCIF is that it involves customers and stakeholders in helping inform which schemes are taken forward. Once a list of preferred schemes has been finalised, it is submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT) which will make the final decision on which schemes go ahead.

We are pleased to say that we are now inviting bids and proposals for our next round of CCIF. This handbook provides details on the type of projects we are looking for, the application process, and how to contact us should you have further questions about CCIF or your application.

We look forward to seeing a wide range of bids from all parts of our network.



Off the Track, on the Way to Success – Funded by CCIF, this UK Youth project delivered a unique, on-site experience, designed to raise young people's awareness of rail safety, helping them understand how to embrace and manage risk in outdoor settings and engage them in outdoor activities that offered a fun learning experience.

Overview

CCIF offers communities across the SWR network the chance to bid for funding for projects that address an area of social or community need and educate or engage with the community throughout the SWR network.

We would welcome bids from grassroot or neighbourhood groups, local authorities (i.e. parish or town councils, borough councils, county councils), elected representatives, civic societies, charities, sports teams, social clubs, or any other organisation with a great idea for how CCIF may be able to help their community.

An intrinsic aspect of CCIF is that it is designed to support schemes that have a tangible community benefit, address an area of social need, and are not for commercial gain. Our own Socio-Economic Needs Analysis of our region has identified four main areas of social need in the communities we serve:

- **Employability and Education** - focusing on building skills, promoting employability and education amongst marginalised groups by investing in the current and future skills requirements.
- **Community Health & Wellbeing** - promoting aspects of wellbeing such as physical, mental and financial health, social connection, arts, culture, heritage and the environment.
- **Environmental Sustainability** - providing support to environmental projects and encouraging sustainable mobility, looking at ways to reduce the impact of congestion on our customers and communities, cutting emissions and improving air quality.
- **Accessibility and Inclusion** – improving accessibility and/or supporting diverse and inclusive community projects, reducing social isolation and providing new opportunities for learning and the social mobility of vulnerable groups.

A good CCIF scheme application should:

- Show clear evidence of how it will address at least one of the areas of social need of a community served by SWR network identified above;
- Demonstrate a clear level of community engagement, through offering clear evidence of meeting an issue identified by the community; and
- Set out clear plans for delivering the project, with accurate costs, timescales, how the project will be managed and, where appropriate, assurances about any consents or permissions needed from other organisations.

Match funding is an important part of many projects, and we welcome applicants who are able to utilise other funding, especially confirmed, in support of their CCIF applications. We are aware that not all schemes are able to generate or source match funding, and this should not deter bidders from submitting schemes that have a clear social need and have demonstrated a high level of community engagement.

Projects in this round of CCIF can start delivery from 1 April 2023 and must be completed by end of March 2024. If a project is expected to take longer it must demonstrate how this will be achieved without any further CCIF funding beyond March 2024.

What we can support

We would like to encourage a wide variety of bids from a diverse range of bidders. To help try and provide some guidance, we have identified three broad categories of projects we would be happy to support

Grant funding

We seek proposals to provide one-off grant funding to local community projects that do not require any on-station development. A scheme has to demonstrate clearly how it links with the South Western Railway network and the communities we serve and how it addresses one or more of the four priority areas mentioned on page 4.

A good bid will demonstrate the ongoing positive impact on individuals from participating in the programme.

Station improvements

Delivering projects on railway land is often more complex or restrictive than elsewhere. We have however identified some small and medium-sized projects which would be deliverable over the course of a year, which communities may wish to bid for the delivery of.

- Multi-modal CIS screens
- Information totems
- New or improved cycle facilities
- Benches
- Noticeboards
- Plaques or memorial stands
- Living or green walls
- Wildlife “facilities” – i.e., bug hotels, hedgehog homes, wildlife gardens
- Bus shelters
- Planters

These would most likely be procured and installed by SWR. This list is not necessarily exhaustive, and we would consider creative ideas assuming they can be delivered within the established timescales of April 2023 to March 2024.



Get on Track for Portsmouth and Southampton - A programme by Dame Kelly Holmes Trust for young people facing disadvantages in the two cities, with a series of confidence building activities, intensive personal and skills development training, career guidance, network events, and peer led community action projects focused on the railway, all supported with mentoring from ex-Olympic athletes.

Major project design and scoping work

We are happy to consider proposals for larger development projects, with a particular focus on bringing redundant and under-utilised spaces back into use. We know from previous rounds of CCIF that such projects can be major undertakings, be that in the scale of the work to be done or the complexity of the project.

This round of CCIF funding differs from previous rounds in that all projects have to be delivered in a single year, 2023/24. As such, we are focusing this time on supporting the necessary and scoping work that is required for major refurbishment or restoration work.

Please contact us if you are considering submitting an application of this nature as we may be able to support you in developing your scheme.



Goodbye to Graffiti - A highly visible section of wall adjacent to the railway west of Wimbledon Station was consistently being targeted by graffiti artists, often with offensive and graphic tags and messages. For this project, Love Wimbledon worked with a strong community artist and used their CCIF funding to provide public art that the local community can identify with, thus improving the welcome to Wimbledon view for visitors whilst also reducing anti-social activity.

What we cannot support

CCIF cannot be used to fund work that SWR is already committed to deliver as part of our National Rail Contract or Annual Business Plans, or anything that forms part of our day-to-day operation.

CCIF is intended to support projects which would not usually be commercially viable or deliver a return. Bids that would generate direct revenue benefits to SWR are also unlikely to be successful. We are not able to fund the day-to-day resourcing of organisations or the ongoing employment of individuals.

Bids can only be accepted for projects in communities geographically served by our network and any project must be completed by 31 March 2024. Bids for projects that require ongoing funding beyond this date will need to show how this will be secured without access to further SWR funding.

We are not able to consider bids for funding feasibility studies into the opening of new stations or reopening of closed railway lines, as these are substantial and complex projects well outside of the scope of CCIF.

Application and assessment process

You can apply for this new round of CCIF by using our online application form. You can access the application form through the CCIF webpage at:

<https://www.southwesternrailway.com/ccif>

Please contact us if you have any difficulty using the online application form.

All bids must be submitted online by the deadline of **23.59 on Friday 16th September 2022**.

After the closing date, SWR will review and assess all applications received and, if necessary, may contact applicants on any issues that require clarification.

Preferred projects will be submitted to the Department for Transport for their final approval by the end of 2022, to form part of the Annual Business Plan negotiations for the year 2023/24. We will inform bidders at this time if their projects have been included in the list of preferred schemes submitted to the department.

If your application is not successful, we will try and advise you quickly and explain why we could not support your application.

Following the Department for Transport's final approval of the CCIF programme of schemes, we will provide more detailed feedback on individual bids and inform successful applicants in early 2023.

Successful bidders will be required to provide appropriate administrative and financial details, agree a joint press release, and countersign a community funding agreement with SWR.

Once that is complete, we will help you get your scheme underway and then keep in touch as you deliver your project.



Beverley Brook Cycleway – Project by Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators transformed a kilometre section of a key, vehicle-free cycle/pedestrian route across Wimbledon Common. This section of the route, which connects Wimbledon to Kingston Vale, Roehampton and Putney, was previously a mud track, uneven and difficult to cycle, and impossible to use in winter.

Contact us

If you have any further queries about the application process or general questions about CCIF, contact Veronika Krcalova who will be pleased to assist.

Veronika Krcalova

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Alternatively, if you have any questions specifically about an area of the South Western Railway network, please contact one of our Regional Development Managers

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