



## **Customer Initiative Scheme 2010/11**

### **Introduction**

Stafford & Rural Homes is committed to reflecting the views of our customers in the delivery of services.

As part of this commitment we offer our customers, across Neighbourhoods and Communities, the opportunity to put forward suggestions for small-scale improvements in the areas they live. By working in partnership with customers, and contractors, we can enhance and promote community spirit and help to improve standards of living.

This information pack gives details of how you can apply for funds up to £100,000. Also included, are Ideas and suggestions for bid, an Application Form and details of how schemes will be judged.

Once you have read the enclosed, please provide as much information as you can on your Application Form and return it before the deadline to the address on the last page of the form.

If you have any queries please contact Sandra Shipperley the Customer Liaison Officer, Stock Investment on 01785 216654.

**Please be mindful of the deadline date for returning your Application Form**

*Good Luck with your bid!*

## **What is the Customers Initiative Scheme?**

The Customers Initiative scheme is funded through Stafford & Rural Home's Programmed Budget. It is a pot of money that has been set aside to encourage and enable customers to put forward proposals to enhance the area in which they live. This scheme allows customers to have an active role in their community.

## **Who can apply?**

If you have an idea for your community and a minimum of 10 people who are also willing to sign up to your idea, your bid will be considered. For example: a Tenants and Residents Association would be well suited to apply, as would a group of community minded customers who come together to support the application.

## **What sorts of schemes are likely to be successful?**

Schemes that are on Stafford & Rural Home's land or property and which are in line with corporate policy will be considered against the following criteria: -

- A scheme which improves the condition of one or more parts of a property or group of properties
- A scheme that reduced vandalism and or the fear of crime within an area
- A scheme that helps to build community spirit
- A scheme that is targeted at elderly or vulnerable groups within the community
- A scheme that improves disabled access to a building, area or facility
- A scheme that exclusively or primarily benefits Stafford and Rural Homes customers, because it is rents that fund this initiative.
- A scheme that provides an environmental improvement.

It should be noted that the above criteria are not ranked in any order of importance and it would be necessary for the judging panel to apply a weighting to each part of their assessment process

Descriptions of some of the successful schemes from last year are attached (see Sheet 2 attached).

## **How do we apply?**

The way to submit applications is detailed on **Sheet 1**, attached.

Application forms are sent out to the group representative and can be obtained by contacting Sandra Shipperley the Customer Liaison Officer on 01785 216654 **The closing date for the receipt of completed applications is Friday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2010. Forms must be returned for the attention of John Allen.**

At the back of this information pack there is an application form, which asks basic questions about the scheme, fill this in as fully as you can and include any suggestions on an approximate cost if you are able (this is not essential and will not affect the final judgment). Please contact the Sandra Shipperley the Customer Liaison Officer on 01785 216654 or John Allen the Specialist Projects Manager on 01785 216690 if you would like some guidance on this and they will be able to assist you.

## **What happens once Stafford & Rural Homes has received our application?**

We will acknowledge receipt of your application within 5 working days.

(You may be contacted again if further information is needed or something about your application is unclear).

## **How are decisions made on which schemes will be successful?**

There will be two parts to the process.

### **1<sup>st</sup> Stage**

Applications will be evaluated and shortlisted at this stage with an idea of costs for consideration. The criteria will include for example ownership of land, cost or planning consent. All applicants will be informed by the Project Officer if:

- Their bid has been put through to the next stage.
- Their bid has not been successful

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Stage**

Successful applications will be put forward to stage two and will be fully costed by SARH staff before they go to the final judging panel.

The bids will be presented to the panel by a 'Project Manager' who has costed the work and has knowledge of the details involved for guidance

It is anticipated that the panel will consist of:

- Chairperson of the town and Rural Communities Forum – or their representative
- Director of Stock Investment – or their representative
- The Chief Executive of Stafford and Rural Homes.

In judging those applications which fit the parameters of the scheme, the panel will consider the following: -

Who would benefit from the scheme? (They would look for a substantial benefit to our customers in particular)

- Does the bid demonstrate proper consultation with all of the customers affected by the proposal?
- Does the bid meet some or all of the criteria set out in this document?

(It is important to note that some bids may require planning permission. We can apply for this on your behalf but should planning permission be refused or a delay in the application process occur, which takes the scheme outside of the time bands available, this may result in your application being unsuccessful)

Once bids are approved they will be subject to project management in the same way other maintenance and improvement projects are conducted to ensure that they are delivered on time, to budget and within specification.

#### **Keynotes:**

- The final agreed specification will be the document that defines the nature, content and duration of the final agreed project.
- The Judges decision will be final.
- No additional works over and above the agreed specification will be considered.
- All projects will be limited by the funds allocated by the judging panel.
- The Project Manager will be solely responsible for managing the contractor's quality and performance.

#### **What happens if your proposal is unsuccessful?**

If your application is unsuccessful the person named, as a contact on the application will be sent a letter setting out the reasons why.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Failure to properly consult your community prior to submitting a bid may result in an unsuccessful bid.

As a guide, groups in previous years have used sheet no3 [enclosed] and circulated it to the community for comments. These have then been collated and issued with the application form as evidence of consultation.

### **And if it is successful?**

We will inform you in writing that your application has been successful. The person named, as a contact on the application will be invited to an event at which all successful schemes will be officially launched.

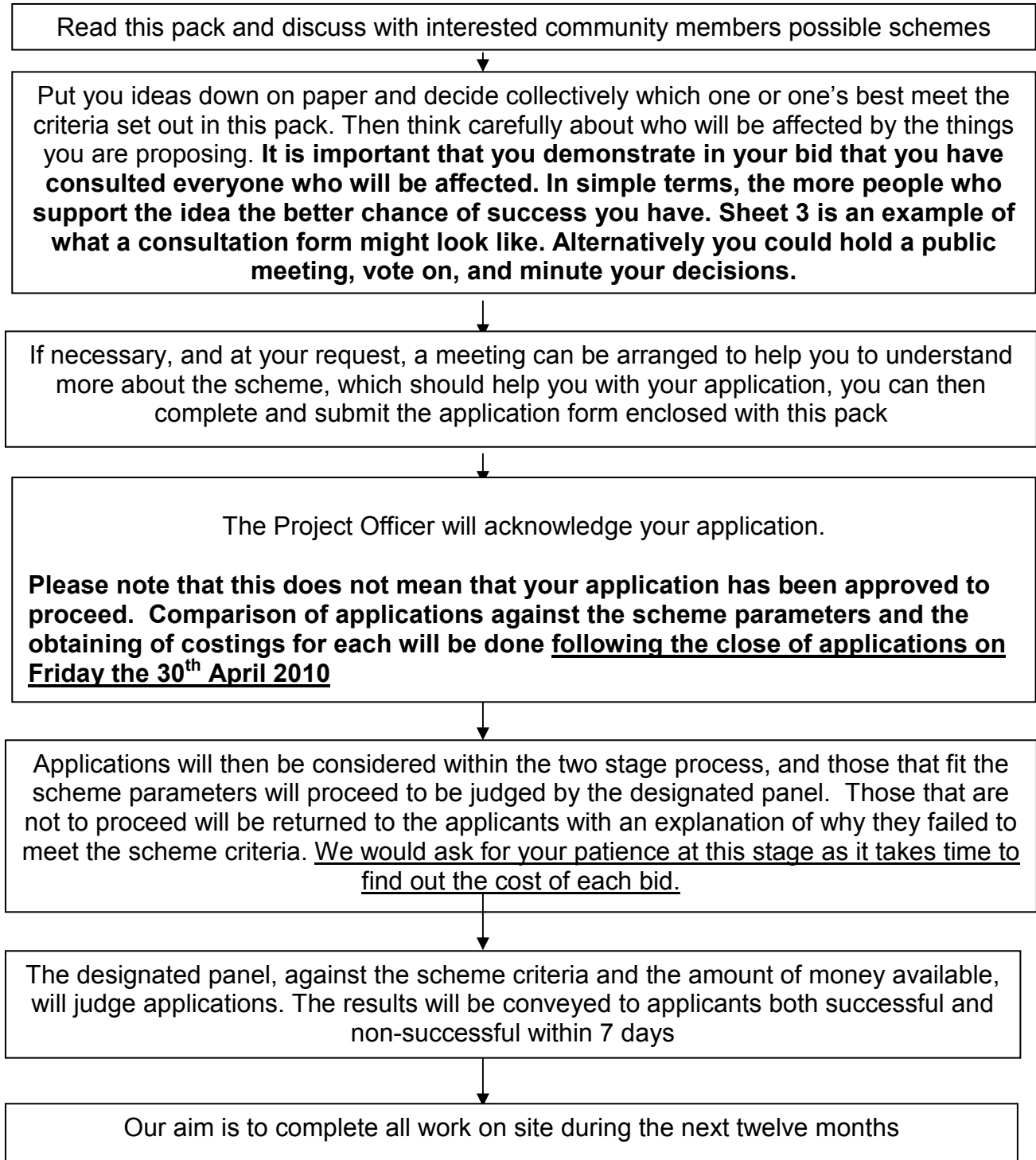
Regular follow up progress meetings will be held to keep everyone up to date.

### **What will be our responsibilities if we are successful in our application?**

- We would ask that you use Stafford and Rural Homes logo or name in any publicity regarding the scheme – we will be happy to help you organise this.
- To conduct appropriate consultation of all stakeholders affected by the proposal (with assistance from the Customer Participation Team on request). This could include for example, a member of our staff arranging a consultation meeting to discuss with the residents a choice of materials, exact location or position required or colour samples for selection.
- To work in partnership with officers of Stafford and Rural Homes to undertake the successful completion of the proposed application.

## Stafford and Rural Homes Customers Initiative Scheme 2008/9

What do we need to do to submit an application and what happens after that?



# Stafford and Rural Homes **Customers Initiative Scheme**

## Examples of Successful Schemes

- **The erection of security lighting and fencing around a group of properties**
- **The provision of an area of non-slip paving at a warden-serviced scheme**
- **The improvement of a clothes drying area to the rear of flats**
- **The improvement of a garage forecourt area**
- **The provision of a play area (in partnership with other agencies)**

Example consultation form

.....Tenants & Residents Association

# What would you do with £100.000?

.....Customer group [10 or more community members]

.....Tenants & Residents Group

Stafford and Rural Homes has a pot of money £100.000 that we can bid for. Before we submit a bid we have to provide evidence that we are bidding on behalf of the community. Listed below on the left are ideas that we think our community would benefit from. Please circle your preferred choices. Alternatively list your own ideas on the right.

Our Ideas

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Your Ideas

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Thank you for taking the time to fill in the form please return it to..... no later than.....

**The most popular idea will be the one we bid for.**





# Stafford and Rural Homes

## Customers Initiative Scheme 2010/11

### Application Form

(Note: Additional sheets may be added to the application pack if required)

**1. Name** .....

**2. Address** .....  
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**3. Contact Telephone Number** .....

**4. Please confirm whether you are a customer of Stafford & Rural Homes or a resident**

Customer

Resident

**5. Please give details of the group that is making the application; please include contact details regarding all Executive Members if you are a Tenants and Resident Group, if the application is in from a Community Group, then list all 10 members details who support the application.**

**Our Proposal**

**6. Address of site (If the area in question is a property or group of properties please give the address. If it is a piece of land, please give a description of its location plus a sketch plan or map of where it is – additional sheets may be added to the application pack if required).**

## **7. Description of the Proposal**

Please be specific about what you are asking for and give as much information as possible.

**8. What benefits would the scheme bring to the area were your application to be successful? (Consider the benefit to customer/environmental or security benefit)**

**9. Do you have a suggested cost for the scheme?**

It is not essential that you submit a cost if it is difficult to obtain.

**10. Have you consulted everyone regarding the proposal? Please attach evidence i.e. names and addresses of those who may be affected by the proposal. (Please attach separately if there is not enough space to give below)**

**Thank you for taking the time to complete the application pack and we wish you well with your proposal. Please return, by Friday 31<sup>st</sup> April 2010, to the:**

**John Allen Project Officer, Stafford & Rural Homes, The Rurals, 1 Parker Court, Dyson Way, Stafford Technology Park, Beaconside,  
Stafford, ST18 0WP.**

**PLEASE KEEP THE INTRODUCTORY NOTES FOR REFERENCE**