

**Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF)
Round 7 Projects – 2020/21
First Stage Application**

First stage applications must be submitted to the Scottish Government before the publicised deadline 14:00 on 10 June 2019. A Second Stage, full submission will not be accepted for this project unless this proposal has been recommended by the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund Investment Panel.

1. Applicant Organisation	East Lothian Council and The Ridge SCIO
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2. Total Number of Submissions	This submission No.
2	2

3. Project Title	The Ridge Community Support Centre		
4. Project Start Date	April 2020	5. Project Completion Date	March 2022
6. Has this project been submitted to Previous Calls	YES /NO	Previous Ref(s)/ Call	
	NO		

7. Project Costs:	2020/2021	2021/22	Total
RCGF Costs to which grant will contribute.	£ 900,000	500,000	£1,400,000
Costs funded by other sources	£		£
Total	£ 900,000	£ 500,000	£1,400,000

8. Funding	2020/21	2021/22	Total
Regeneration Capital Grant Fund Requested	£ 900,000	£ 500,000	£ 1,400,000
Please detail any sources of funding other than RCGF.	2020/21	2021/22	Total
	£		£
Total	£ 900,000	£ 500,000	£ 1,400,000

8.	Project Officer – Lead Contact	Additional Contact
Name	██████████	██████████
Position in Organisation	████████████████████	████████████████████
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PROJECT PROPOSAL SUMMARY – Maximum 3 Page – minimum font size 12.

This project will create a new Community Support Centre in Dunbar Town Centre, offering a home for local support services and an activity venue for the wider community. It will be sited at Black Bull Close in a group of 5 derelict C17th buildings that will be repaired and extended. This will house a mix of functions for the Ridge SCIO (a local community organisation) and rent-paying 3rd parties.

The Ridge focus on providing crisis support and habilitation for those struggling with mental ill-health, substance misuse, homelessness, the effects of poverty and debt, criminal justice involvement, worklessness, and those who would not normally, or would struggle to access mainstream services. Their focus is on non-stigmatisation, inclusion and building relationships across the community with the aim of helping people move 'from dependency to contribution'.

Objectives - The new Centre will house space for The Ridge's expanding support services, delivering:

- Crisis support for those struggling with issues including mental ill-health, substance abuse, homelessness, effects of poverty, debt, & benefits, criminal justice, & worklessness;
- Employability support, modern apprenticeships, start-up workshops and small business space;
- Life skills training such as budgeting, nutrition, cooking, digital, and tenancy etc.;
- A new restaurant/training kitchen with volunteer work experience opportunities, skills training and employment for those who would otherwise struggle to access these;
- Multi-purpose community spaces for use by groups and private individuals for a wide range of social, cultural, and recreational purposes.

Outputs - The reconstructed and extended buildings will provide net usable space of approx. 275m² (The Ridge services 40%; training kitchen/restaurant and function space 40%; additional lettable 20%):

- 17 jobs and 12 training places, 10 existing jobs supported, and 17 construction jobs supported.

Outcomes – The Ridge's development aims to:

- Improve local access to support, helping people overcome challenges and live full lives.
- Provide access to high quality training and employment progression routes.
- Provide access to life skills training, enhancing capabilities and increasing resilience.
- Help make the community less fractured and more inclusive, as people access support and social, cultural and recreational opportunities in a shared space.
- Provide a training restaurant to boost the local economy, attracting locals and visitors.
- Improve the quality of the historic environment, providing an increased range of accessible / attractive historic sites, boosting the local economy and supporting regeneration efforts.
- Support new businesses boosting the local economy and providing sustainable income to support The Ridge's continuing work for the benefit of the community.

Viability - Completed preparations include: community consultation, feasibility studies, archaeology investigations, Listed Building Consent. Building Warrant and detailed costings are under preparation. Works will be ready to tender by Autumn 2019. If funded, construction could commence in April 2020.

Community support and how the project has evolved - The Ridge was set up in 2012 by a group of local people to address a dearth in training, employability skills, and jobs opportunities, especially for young people in a rural area where access to services is available on an equal basis.

Working with local partners, the organisation has identified a demand for holistic support services and are delivering a range of projects to enable people to make the transition into the dignity of paid work. Many factors, including increasing visibility of services, local trust and reputation, and the impact of Universal Credit and a related rise in poverty, mental health issues, substance abuse etc., led to an increase in demand for Ridge services locally (from projections of 50 individual clients in 2018/19 to 250 in reality, and rising). The Ridge took over wasteland behind Black Bull Close and, with volunteers, created a community garden. During the regeneration, a group of NEET young people were trained to repair/rebuild stone walls alongside older people emerging from issues including addiction, mental health, and prison experience. The team and their trainers formed a building company, The Ridge Foundations CIC. With intensive support to address personal challenges, employed trainees are ready to take on larger projects to regenerate the local built environment.

Consultation shows a desire to see the ruined buildings repaired and extended to meet local needs. People strongly value the work of The Ridge in supporting vulnerable community members, and also see the potential for the site to offer spaces for social, cultural and other uses which are currently difficult to access locally. The community currently engages via direct involvement in seeking support and by accessing services, by visiting the garden, café, or attending events to enjoy the space, socialise, and use the, albeit currently limited, facilities. The Ridge are regularly asked to present to local community groups (e.g. Rotary, churches) and since opening membership in March 2019, over 300 people have signed up to support their work. In summer 2018 over 1,000 local people attended events organised as part of a programme of community engagement and heritage celebration.

Partnership – The Ridge engage with a wide range of local, regional and national partners, particularly GPs, EL Health and Social Care Partnership Substance Misuse team, Social Work and Criminal Justice, 3rd sector partners MELD (substance abuse support) and Dunbar Dementia Carers Group, East Lothian Council (Housing/Homelessness, East Lothian Works, Education, CLD), Jobcentre Plus/DWP, CAB, Welfare Rights, Criminal Justice Voluntary Sector Forum, Community Justice Scotland, SDS, Dunbar Trades Association, the Local Area Partnership, Sustaining Dunbar, Historic Environment Scotland, CITB and the Scottish Building Federation.

Socioeconomic and physical regeneration outcomes - Dunbar's town centre and associated economy have suffered from major decline since it was a thriving seaside holiday destination in the 1970s. Recent efforts to attract tourists focus on heritage, particularly John Muir's legacy. The addition of restored historic buildings and the Ridge's activities within Black Bull Close will:

- Add critical mass to the tourist attraction of the town centre benefitting local business, boosting the economy, and enhancing the sustainability of the community.
- Provide local access to support services and skills training improving the health and wellbeing of local people and enhancing their capacity to contribute socially and economically.
- Enhance local sector expansion in construction / hospitality, meaning there will be more jobs available at a time when a significant number of the migrant workforce are returning home. This capital project will help provide a skilled workforce for local employers.
- Enhance and open up this historic town centre site, improving the local community's sense of place. Creation and use of this community support centre, with all its ancillary uses will transform a vacant and derelict site into a vibrant hub which serves the community.
- Save and repurpose 5 derelict B-listed buildings removing them from the Scottish Buildings at Risk register. 200m² of space will be remediated and brought into use for community benefit.

Other financial contributions – The Ridge have carried out feasibility studies and community engagement, stabilised and restored some structures, and carried out archeological investigations.

Development costs / funds raised to date, HLF £114,600; AHF £35,000; Foundation Scotland £8,000; Area Partnership £11,416; Dalrymple Trust £4,000; local donations £700; HES £35,000.

How the project will benefit disadvantaged communities – The Dunbar and East Linton Ward is relatively affluent, but as highlighted in ‘Scotland’s Economic Strategy’, there are significant barriers to accessing services (training and a range of supports / services easily accessible to others) posed by the geographical isolation. The focus of The Ridge’s proposals are within Dunbar itself and particularly the town centre. This is an area that suffers from poor private sector housing (70%+ dilapidation in main elements of tenements), and high levels of fuel poverty. Relative deprivation, living poor in an affluent area, produces specific issues and stressors for elements of the local community and these are the focus of the Ridge’s work.

A number of SIMD datazones in the area show access in the lowest 5% and 10% nationally, and education, employment and skills in the 3rd and 4th lowest deciles. Within the statistics, geographic access is positively skewed by the presence of a main line rail station and proximity to the A1. These do not serve those on low incomes or with complex needs well. Support services for complex needs are concentrated in the West of the County within the largest towns. These are often 2 costly / time-consuming bus / train rides away and therefore less accessible for The Ridge’s user groups. The proposed training restaurant, employment space, and volunteer facilities at the site will positively enhance opportunities for local people currently struggling to access opportunities to improve their skills and employment prospects, hampered by the geographical isolation of the Dunbar area.

Strategic importance – forming part of Dunbar’s Conservation Area, and a fine example of Scottish Burgh Townscape, being part of the hometown of conservationist John Muir, the site is of high local and national importance, its regeneration will contribute to:

- The Dunbar & East Linton Local Area Plan – ‘Our Conservation Areas will be promoted and enhanced’, ‘Local business supported to grow’, ‘Young people will have improved post-school employment opportunities’; ‘Vulnerable/isolated community members will be supported’.
- The East Lothian Plan 2012 – 23 – Priorities relating to a growing sustainable economy, living healthier, more active and independent lives, higher quality environments, and stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential and inclusive communities.
- The East Lothian Economic Development Strategy – Setting up and growing businesses, being Scotland’s leading coastal destination and providing high quality employment pathways
- Scotland’s Regeneration Strategy and Scotland’s Economic Strategy – Investing in training, employment and infrastructure.
- The Town Centre First Principle – Locating services to enhance access and support town centre living & employment, especially for deprived communities / those with complex needs.
- Our Place In Time – Ensuring Scotland’s historic environment is understood, valued, cared for and protected, enjoyed and enhanced.
- The Scottish Government’s Place Principle - ‘All those responsible for providing services and looking after assets working and planning together to improve the lives of people, support inclusive and sustainable economic growth and create more successful places’.
- Dunbar Town Centre Strategy – Helping the town centre to be attractive to both local and out of town residents by provision of facilities, including evening use in the restaurant. Reusing vacant building / sites for the benefit of the community.
- Scottish Government’s “No-One Left Behind” agenda - Co-location with partner services will link trainees/volunteers/service users to support to help them overcome significant life issues.
- EL Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan – Priorities relating to making facilities more sustainable and proportionate, exploring new models of provision, and reducing inequalities and breaking the cycle of deprivation.

Location Map – The Ridge Community Support Centre

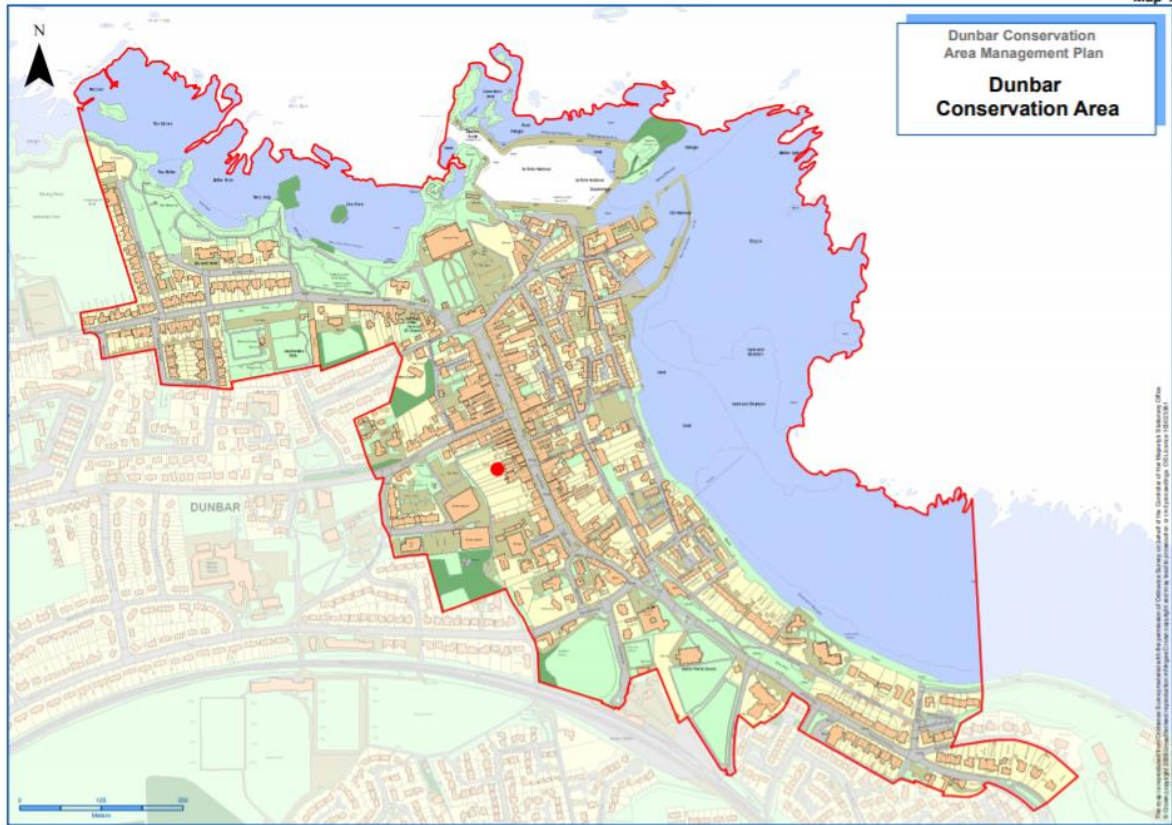


Fig 1. Dunbar Conservation Area



Fig 2. Black Bull Close, Dunbar High Street