

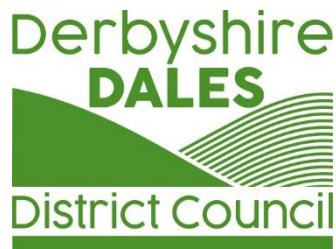
DERBYSHIRE DALES UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND

2022 – 2025

EVALUATION

INDEX OF PAGES

Introduction & UKSPF Programme background.....	2
Development of the Programme	4
Investment Plan	7
Public Realm intervention.....	7
Site feasibility intervention.....	7
Community Resilience intervention.....	8
Rural Innovation Grant intervention.....	8
Accelerator Programme.....	9
Carbon Reduction	9
Generic & Specialist advice.....	10
Business Start up intervention.....	10
UKSPF Partnership Board.....	11
Management administration.....	13
Impacts & Value for Money.....	15
Public Realm impact.....	15
Community Resilience impact.....	20
Rural Innovation impact.....	21
 Beneficiary views on UKSPF in the Derbyshire Dales...	27
Case Studies examples.....	27
Lessons Learnt.....	32



Evaluation - Derbyshire Dales District Council UKSPF Programme 2022 – 2025

1. UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) in Derbyshire Dales

Introduction – Councillor Flitter

“In 2022, we were delighted that the government awarded us £2.7m to implement our UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme and I am proud to be able to report that UKSPF has been a huge success here in the Derbyshire Dales. This is a major achievement, particularly when the launch was delayed until September 2023.

I am immensely proud of our programme and the key statistics illustrate the scale of achievement. The Rural Innovation Grant Scheme has seen an average business grant of £9,662 from a pot of £973,106 which has levered in a substantial amount of private sector investment; £844,164 and contributed to the creation of 62 jobs across this part of the Programme; that’s a cost of £7,743 per job, which is excellent value for money. I have also been encouraged to see that 120 additional local residents have been engaged as volunteers in community activities and over 3,400 people have benefitted from the improvements in local communities that the Community Resilience Fund has enabled. This has included improvements to village halls and upgrading of outdoor spaces. This funding was a very welcome boost following the pandemic, which had such a huge impact on social activities.

We also have 56 businesses who have carried out significant decarbonisation activity and 258 who have received business advice via the Accelerator programme and Start Up business service.

I have no doubt of the immense benefit that the programme has provided to the businesses and communities in the Derbyshire Dales and look forward to being part of the extension to the programme and seeing more significant impact for our area.”

2. Introduction and UKSPF Programme Background

Launched in 2022, the UK Shared Prosperity Fund replaced the previous European economic development funding, specifically the European Regional Development Fund and the previously successful rural model of delivery under the Leader programme, the last iteration of which ran from 2014 until 2020.

The guidance for UKSPF and REPF had a focus on national evaluation and a robust national evaluation strategy is in place. Several LA's are part of the ongoing evaluation work, Derbyshire Dales was not requested to contribute directly however data supplied to MHCLG through the National Power App will provide data for use in the final evaluation reports at a national level. The decision to evaluate robustly at a national level was to reduce funding programme bureaucracy and costs and also to minimise the burden on those Local Authorities that are asked to directly participate, in line with MHCLG's simplification agenda.

The UKSPF national evaluation aims to:

- **evaluate impact and process**, through understanding what the UKSPF has delivered; whether it has successfully achieved its own policy objectives and contributed to wider Levelling Up goals; how effectively it has been implemented in places (including whether this varies across and within different nations) and whether it has constituted good value for money
- **build the evidence base on 'what works' for pride in place and life chances across the UK**; developing MHCLG's understanding of how success in these areas can be measured; and using this insight to inform future local growth programme design at both the programme and place level
- **provide accountability** that MHCLG has delivered funding in the most effective way to support realisation of the UKSPF's outcomes

DDDC evaluation work has considered commissioning external evaluation via a consultancy contract. The programme has no dedicated evaluation funding to deliver a piece of work such as this, all the data required to evaluate is held internally, and the Economic Development Team have the skills to draw together the information. The timeframe for evaluation is limited with this interim piece of work used to inform future funding announced in February, data has been updated following closure of the programme at 31st March 2025 to give final spend figures. Contracted outputs and outcomes have been finalised at 31st March 2025. Individual contracts will report outcomes and outputs up to 31st December 2025 to be reported to the UKSPF Board. Resources to collate this data is being taken from the Economic Development Team.

Key areas of consideration:

- ❖ An evaluation of performance management data from the start of the programme August 2023 until 31st March 2025
- ❖ Reporting of anonymous survey work undertaken in February

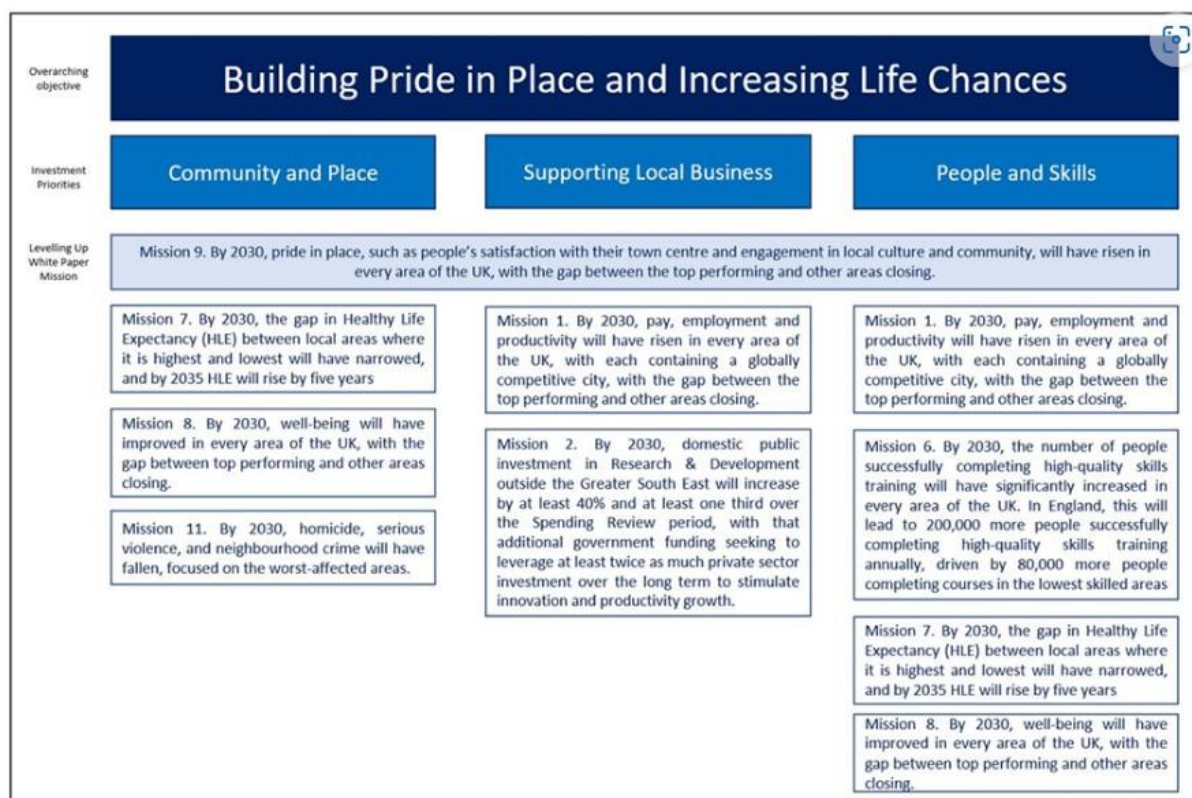
- ❖ Identifying whether the programme achieved the aims and objectives of the UKSPF Investment Plan and the REFP addendum
- ❖ A review of the input from key programme participants on the operational and management aspects of the programme
- ❖ A review of the impacts of the programme and value for money
- ❖ Identifying and learning key lessons of the programme to inform future programmes.

Development of the Derbyshire Dales UKSPF Programme

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Prospectus, part of the then Government's Levelling Up Agenda, was published on 13 April 2022, with the Investment Plan submission window open between 30 June and 1 August. The Investment Plan was a comprehensive document which included guidance to provide all measurable outcomes, decisions on how projects/ activities were to be procured and the delivery and governance arrangements to be implemented.

The overarching objective of UKSPF nationally, was building pride in place and increasing life chances. Underneath this general heading were 3 investment priorities:

- Community & Place
- Supporting Local Business
- People and Skills



The original budget allocation for UKSPF in the Derbyshire Dales was £1,954,752, in September 2022 the District Council was advised of an additional £0.748m 'rural top-up' allocation to UKSPF through the Rural England Prosperity Fund from April 2023. A rural Addendum to the Investment Plan was required to be produced by 30 November 2022.

Kada Consulting were appointed to help determine priorities for the UKSPF Programme and to draft the investment plan proposal, utilising funding awarded from central Government. The District Council held a member workshop on the 16 June 2022 to gather priority areas of work and to inform the plan.

REPF was announced in the Autumn of 2022 to increase the Derbyshire Dales allocation from £1,954,752 to £2,703,489 (or 38%) and this scale of change had an impact on decisions in relation to how the UKSPF programme was to be delivered.

Discussions at the November 2022 Board determined that REPF funding would be used to backfill capital funding within the existing UKSPF grants funding allocation and re-allocate UKSPF capital to reinvest into Dale's market towns, noted as priority work.

The changes to the UKSPF expenditure and deliverables profiles were then formalised through preparation of a single delivery plan for the programme. The overarching aim was to make the best use of the funds available from both Government sources – MHCLG and Defra and develop a co-ordinated and coherent approach to delivering grant support for the lifetime of UKSPF / REPF.

	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	Total
UKSPF	£237,227	£474,454	£1,243,071	£1,954,752
REPF		£395,000	£353,737	£748,737
TOTAL	£237,227	£869,454	£1,596,808	£2,703,489

The Derbyshire Dales Investment Plan priorities were drawn from the approved Economic Development Plan 2019-2033 and the Rural Economy Position Statement approved in November 2020. At that time, the Derbyshire Dales priorities were as follows:

Key priorities (Economic Recovery Plan): Regenerating brownfield and other key housing/employment sites (unlock market failure): Ashbourne Airfield, Middleton Rd/Middlepeak, Cawdor Quarry, Halldale, Bakewell Road, Matlock.

Key themes (Rural Economy Position Statement)

- ❖ small scale manufacturing and engineering (esp. advanced and green activities) + knowledge-based and CDIs
- ❖ a dedicated fund for rural economic growth (managed in and by rural areas themselves)
- ❖ ultrafast broadband in the most isolated rural areas
- ❖ better quality visitor attractions and accommodation - as single easy-to-book packages.

Supporting priorities (Economic Plan 2019)

- ❖ high quality, free, 1:1 business advice service to SMEs including practical assistance to help growth companies access external grants and loans
- ❖ DE-Carbonise business

The agreed Derbyshire Dales interventions to deliver outcomes for the area were taken from the national Investment priorities below:

Communities & Place

- E1 - Funding for improvements to town centres and high streets
- E2/E9/E11 - Funding for new or improvements to existing community infrastructure projects
- E4 – Tourism, culture or heritage assets created or improved
- E14 – Funding to support feasibility studies

Supporting Local Business

- E23/E17/E26/E32 - Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems
- E23/E24 - Funding for new and improvements to existing business support offers

➤ E29 – Supporting decarbonisation and improving the local environment

No activity under the People and Skills investment priority was included in the Derbyshire Dales plan. Delivery of this strand would potentially have duplicated funding being delivered through DWP and DCCs education programmes. The original guidance stated delivery of People and Skills priorities should be scheduled into the final year of delivery. This was subsequently amended to enable delivery in 23/24.

Approvals for delivery:

To maximise the impact of the two funds, minimise bureaucracy and to simplify the funding streams for communities and business the two funds were to be delivered as a single programme with a total of £2,703,489 allocated to be delivered by March 2025.

The programme, developed with partners and set out within the Council's UKSPF Investment Plan aimed to support business diversification, growth, adaptation and long-term resilience; as well as supporting community projects which help strengthen local communities and foster local pride.

The Investment Plan submitted by the District Council was approved by Government on 5 December 2022. The Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and the then Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities was signed on 16 December 2022.

Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) - 7 April 2023

The Investment Plan comprised the following 7 areas of interventions and indicative outputs and outcomes:

I. Public Realm Intervention – Matlock Town Centre

This original plan for capital investment from UKSPF to be committed alongside private sector investment to support the development of the vacant former Market Hall located at the western entrance to the town, enabling provision of a new indoor leisure attraction and ancillary commercial use on the frontage; Matlock Western Gateway, Bakewell Road including transport hub, new retail outlet and two screen cinema.

Indicative Output	Indicative Outcomes
538m2 public realm improved	10% increase in footfall 75% improvement in perception of amenities

This original plan was amended to reflect the changing economy following re costing and deliverability checks and is explained in detail in section 4 below.

II. Site Feasibility Intervention – Ashbourne, Wirksworth and Matlock

This intervention consisted of site investigations and other assessments to inform the delivery of allocated strategic development sites, with a focus on sites on the edge of market towns yet to be brought forward by local landowners. Lack of delivery had been impacting on the provision of new employment floorspace within the district and the Council's 5 year housing land supply. This intervention did not proceed as originally intended; details and outcomes are explained in Section 4 below.

Indicative Output	Indicative Outcome
4 feasibility studies supported	50% projects coming forward

III. Community Resilience Intervention

The delivery of the Community Resilience Grant Fund (CRG) was openly procured and contracted with Derbyshire Dales Council for Voluntary Services on 4 September 2023 with a subsequent extension agreed on 31 July 2024. Funding has been made available to local community, voluntary organisations, parish & town councils and social enterprises to support community-led projects which achieve at least one of the following objectives:

- ❖ Maintain key rural services, facilities and community infrastructure
- ❖ Boost community/volunteering capacity to tackle locally identified challenges, enhance social inclusion and resilience, support a post pandemic recovery longer term and help maintain safe and healthy communities
- ❖ Take local action on climate change to help reduce carbon emissions and promote behaviour change

Indicative Outputs	Indicative Outcomes
E2/E9/E11 15 organisations receiving grant	E2 75% improvement in perception of facilities
E2 5 neighbourhood improvements	E2 25% increase in use of facilities
E2 3 facilities supported	E9 25% increase in volunteering
E9 5 volunteering projects supported	E9 7 volunteers
E9 7 volunteering opportunities supported	
Plus REPF Outputs	Plus REPF Outcomes
E2/E9/E3/E7 12 organisations receiving grant	E2 75% improvement in perception of facilities
E2 7 neighbourhood improvements	E2 25% increase in use of facilities
E2 4 facilities supported	E9 25% increase in volunteering
E9 5 volunteering projects supported	E9 7 volunteers
E9 7 volunteering opportunities supported	E11 20% increase in capacity building numbers
E4 tourism, culture or heritage assets created or improved	E4 25% increase footfall
E4 2 facilities created or supported	E4 75% improved perception of facilities or amenities
	E4 25% increased users of facilities or amenities
E26 5 social enterprises/community businesses receiving grants	E26 2 new businesses/social enterprises created

IV. Rural Innovation Programme Intervention (RIG)

The Rural Innovation Grant scheme provided grant assistance to medium, small and micro businesses including social enterprises to assist business diversification,

growth, adaptation and longer term resilience. The original plan explored a Peak District wide Rural Innovation Grant Programme to replicate the previous LEADER Programme. Discussions were held with colleagues in High Peak / Staffordshire Moorlands who had also received Rural Prosperity Fund allocations and UKSPF , the decision was ultimately made to proceed independently as the timeframe for joint delivery was not viable.

Original 3 Tiers of Grant - RIG:

- ❖ **Small Business Adaptation Grant** - £2,500 - £10,000 project cost. Up to 80% intervention Micro and Small, any sector.
- ❖ **Business Development Grant** - £10,000 - £50,000 project cost. Up to 50% intervention rate, Micro and Small, various sectors
- ❖ **Business Growth Grant** - £50,000 - £100,000 project cost. Up to 40% intervention rate, Micro, Small and Medium, manufacturing and engineering sectors only

Indicative Outputs	Indicative Outcomes
E23 23 business receiving grants	E23 15.3 jobs created
	E23 13.7 jobs safeguarded
	E23 16 businesses improving productivity
	E23 16 businesses adopting nre to the firm technology
E17 15 businesses receiving grants	E17 5 jobs safeguarded
E32 3 businesses supported to improve flood protection	E32 3 businesses better protected from flooding
Plus REPF Outputs	Plus REPF Outcomes
E23 29 businesses receiving grants	E23 24.2 jobs created
	E23 21.6 jobs safeguarded
	E23 26 businesses improving productivity
	E23 25 businesses adopting new to the firm technology

The indicative outputs and outcomes provided baseline information to inform target setting on the understanding open and transparent grant funding is not fully predictable and targets were always indicative.

V. Accelerator Programme

Derbyshire Dales District Council contracted alongside 5 other local authorities, directly with North East Derbyshire District Council for delivery of business support by the East Midlands Chamber under the Accelerator Programme branding. Inter-authority agreement signed September 2023.

Carbon Reduction Intervention

Businesses and communities could access energy audits to be carried out by a third party via EMC with decarbonisation grant applications appraised by EMC and awarded directly through DDDC.

Indicative Outputs	Indicative Outcomes
10 businesses supported with grants for decarbonisation	E29 15% decrease on tonnes of CO2 emissions (from businesses supported)

IV. Generic and Specialist Business Advice Intervention and Audits - Accelerator Programme

In addition to the energy audits and decarbonisation grants, training events and business advice also formed part of the contract with the East Midlands Chamber and the following outputs and outcomes agreed.

Indicative Outputs	Indicative Outcomes
E23 110 businesses receiving non-financial support	E23 15 businesses improving productivity
E24 40 businesses receiving non-financial support	E24 15 businesses adopting new to the firm technologies
E29 38 businesses assisted with decarbonisation plans	
28 businesses receiving decarbonisation advice	

VII. Business Start-Up Intervention (Vision Derbyshire)

The Vision Derbyshire Business Start Up Support programme was established, as a pilot project, in June 2021 by DCC to assist economic recovery and meet the objectives of developing and increasing the business base across Derbyshire. A total of £1m was secured from the D2 Joint Committee to support the work. This pilot programme represented a shared commitment across Derbyshire County Council (DCC) and participating District and Borough Councils to:

- ❖ Offer 1:1 pre-start support through a network of additional, locally based, start-up advisers (supporting concept development, business initiation and registration, business planning, funding applications and resilience building) with referral to the other programmes for structured workshops and events and the University of Derby for graduate support, as appropriate.
- ❖ Offer a grant scheme to new start businesses within the first year of trading whereby up to £10,000 of funding was available on a matched funding basis.

During 2022/23 the service enabled 15 new businesses to start in the Derbyshire Dales. The final DCC evaluation report completed on the programme in June 2025.

UKSPF funding was allocated to enable the continuation of the service from January 2024 to March 2025.

Indicative Outputs	Indicative Outcomes
E23 50 pre starts/potential entrepreneurs supported to be business ready	12 new businesses created
12 businesses receiving grants	12 jobs created

UKSPF Partnership Board

The Derbyshire Dales UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Partnership Board was set up as a partnership group established to oversee the effective management and delivery of the UKSPF programme and additional Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) allocation available to the district.

The Partnership has been a key body within the programme governance established to help provide assurance to Derbyshire Dales District Council as the lead local authority / accountable body and to central Government regarding the use of UKSPF / REPF funding.

The Partnership Board has been chaired by Derbyshire Dales District Council as the lead local authority / accountable body for UKSPF / REPF funds. The Partnership Board has been supported by a smaller officer Executive Group formed from the Board Membership.

The Partnership Board comprised representatives across sectors and organisations within the District, they brought a wealth of knowledge and experience to the process and have been highly supportive and effective:

Cllr Steve Flitter – Leader of Derbyshire Dales District Council - Chair

Diane Beresford - Deputy CEO - East Midlands Chamber of Commerce

Diane is highly experienced (30+ years) in developing and delivering publicly funded business support programmes across the region. Diane manages commercial training, employment services and publicly funded support portfolio for D2N2 and Business Gateway Growth Hubs and Digital Upscaler. Board member of UKSPF Boards in both Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire.

EMC are contracted to deliver the business support Accelerator Programme for UKSPF

Neil Moulden – CEO – Derbyshire Dales Council for Voluntary Services

Joined DDCVS in 2002. Board and Executive Committee of Business Peak District and a Board member of Third Sector Support for Derbyshire (DDIA). Neil supports

key partnerships with agencies such as Derbyshire County Council, Derbyshire Dales District Council, the Integrated Care Board and the Peak District National Park Authority. He also provides development support to Derbyshire Dales CVS members on topics such as governance and business planning.

Tracy Duggan – Vice Chair of Business Peak District

Founder and director of Skills Local a consultancy business providing consultancy support to businesses to improve performance through people. Licensed Investors in People (IIP) practitioner, Health & Wellbeing advisor and trainer.

Emma Simpson (replaced Bev Parker in 2025) - CEO - Rural Action Derbyshire

Emma Simpson was appointed as CEO of Rural Action Derbyshire (RAD) in January 2025. Emma has a long-standing and deeply rooted connection to RAD, having worked with the organisation for over a decade. She has played a pivotal role in many of RAD's flagship initiatives, including tackling rural fuel poverty, championing community-led solutions to rural challenges and helping to create innovative partnerships

Andrew Critchlow - NFU County Advisor for Derbyshire

Representing farmers across Derbyshire, escalating local issues within the NFU and cascading information down to members. A former member of the Rural Development Programme LEADER Bord. Farms in Edale, rearing sheep for breeding and has dairy heifers on 'bed and breakfast' during the winter months. He has been involved in agri-environment schemes for over 30 years.

Brian Taylor – Head of Planning - Peak District National Park Authority

Brian has 30+ years experience of planning issues. With an understanding of rural issues and partnership working, he has responsibility for UKSPF and is a Board member for 2 other local authorities.

Rob Barlow - representing Derbyshire Dales & HP Manufacturing Network.

Rob is the founding director of TDP, a Wirksworth-based manufacturer of recycled outdoor furniture. 148 businesses were honoured with a distinguished King's Award and TDP was one of only 15 to have been recognised for sustainable development and the only one in Derbyshire.

Joe Battye - Director of Economy and Regeneration - Derbyshire County Council

As a town planner/ urban designer by trade, Joe's real passion is making sure everyone has the opportunity to succeed and believes that education, vocation and life skills are the key to success.

Wendy Amis - Chief Officer - Derbyshire Association of Local Councils:

Wendy leads on strategic planning and executes the decisions on the Board, liaises with sector bodies, delivers training and responds to member enquiries. Previously worked in policy for the PDNPA.

Jo Dilley - Managing Director - Visit Peak District & Derbyshire (VPDD)

VPDD is a public/private partnership Destination Management Organisation promoting the area nationally and internationally to grow and support the visitor economy.

Gaynor Davis (replaced Dr Peter Dewhurst 2024) - Head of Strategic Bid Support - University of Derby

Gaynor is the University of Derby's representative on the Board.

Rt Hon John Whitby (replaced Sarah Dines 2024) – MP for Derbyshire Dales

John Whitby is a Labour Party politician who has served as Member of Parliament for Derbyshire Dales since 2024

The Executive Group have acted as the decision Panel for the Development and Growth grant applications chaired by Steve Capes Director of Place and Economy.

The Board have provided excellent, considered strategic oversight of the programme and ensured delivery has been aligned with external opportunities such as business support delivered by East Midlands Chamber, activities of Visit Peak District and Derbyshire and representation from the Voluntary sector. The Board have agreed to continue their role of the duration of the extension funding to March 2026.

Management Administration

In addition to the main 7 interventions above, funding also provided for a full time Business Adviser, 3 days support for a UKSPF Monitoring and Business Support Officer and 6 hours additional hours for an Economic Development Officer.

The existing Derbyshire Dales Business Adviser retired in early June 2023 with a replacement starting on 31 July 2023. Subsequently, this adviser moved to part time working and left on 30 November 2023, the replacement adviser joined the team on 8 January 2024. The full time Business Adviser has supported applicants to complete grant applications and animation work for the Rural Innovation Grant scheme, provided a link to with the Vision Derbyshire Start Up scheme, the Accelerator programme and other business opportunities available regionally and nationally.

Overall original investment plan budget

In line with reporting requirements the District Council submitted a monitoring return to DLUHC on 2 May 2023 setting out progress during 2022/23. Within the report, the

Council was also required to set out proposals for carrying forward expenditure from 2022/23 into 2023/24.

Due to the delayed start of the programme and as agreed by the UKSPF Board at the time, as part of the change control process, the majority of the capital and revenue expenditure allocated in 2022/23 was rolled forward into 2023/24 with expenditure further reallocated into 2024/25 delivery. Minor adjustments across interventions were implemented following agreement through the Board.

Original budget

	Capital	Revenue	Total
RIG (UKSPF)	54,000	402,153	456,153
RIG (REPF)	523,000	0	523,000
Energy Grants (Via EMC) (UKSPF)	88,235	0	88,235
Accelerator (EMC) (UKSPF)	0	98,103	98,103
Accelerator (Energy Audits) (EMC) (UKSPF)	0	57,970	57,970
Town Centre (UKSPF)	733,000	0	733,000
Town Centre (REPF)	135,737	0	135,737
CRG (UKSPF)	100,500	94,500	195,000
CRG (REPF)	90,000	0	90,000
CRG (UKSPF) Feasibility		30,000	30,000
Feasibility (UKSPF)	0	145,000	145,000
Vision Derbyshire (UKSPF)	0	73,291	73,291
Management & Admin Fess (4% of UKSPF)	0	78,000	78,000
TOTAL	1,724,472	979,017	2,703,489

3. Impacts and Value for Money (performance management data)

Breakdown of all Spend at 31 March 2025

	Capital	Revenue	Total	Difference
RIG (UKSPF)	21,107	391,715	412,822	- 43,331
RIG (REPF)	495,401	0	495,401	-27,599
Energy Grants (Via EMC) (UKSPF)	116,438	0	116,438	+28,203
Accelerator (EMC) (UKSPF)	0	98,103	98,103	
Accelerator (Energy Audits) (EMC) (UKSPF)	0	57,970	57,970	
Town Centre (UKSPF)	737,690	0	737,690	+4,690
Town Centre (REPF)	163,336	0	163,336	+27,599
CRG (UKSPF)	100,500	94,500	195,000	
CRG (REPF)	90,000	0	90,000	

CRG (UKSPF) Feasibility		30,000	30,000	
Feasibility (UKSPF)	0	145,000	145,000	
Vision Derbyshire (UKSPF)	0	73,291	73,291	
Management & Admin Fess (4% of UKSPF)	0	78,000	78,000	
TOTAL	1,724,472	968,579	2,693,051	

The UKSPF Programme has completed it's delivery. All partners have completed their activity and all grants and vouchers (via the Decarbonisation and Accelerator programme) have been claimed. Savings to the value of £10,438 revenue funding has been made from a small number of RIG applicants that could not be re allocated before programme closure and has not been claimed from MHCLG.

Maps showing the location of grants awarded across the Rural Innovation Grant Scheme, Decarbonisation, Start Up Programme and Community Resilience Grant Scheme can be found at **Appendices 1 & 2.**

Impacts per Intervention

I. Public Realm Intervention – Matlock Town Centre

The design for the full scheme; the redevelopment of the site including restaurant, cinema and associated works was produced for January 2023 which included Derbyshire County Council works.

The project went out to tender for the works in April/May 2023, this did not attract suitable quotations, a second value engineered specification was produced however again an acceptable / affordable tender was not forthcoming. This was due to the volatile construction market, impacted by high-cost inflation.

Options to replace the full scheme were then considered and a report went to Committee in December 2023 to explain the issues and the option to carry out a Phased delivery, consisting of phase 1 with a bus station refurbishment scheme. This approach was agreed followed liaison with relevant ward members.

The Phase 1 approach was agreed at Committee and a paper taken to the UKSPF Board in February 2024, outlining the new plans and the budget requirements. In terms of the spend from UKSPF, this amounted to £268,000. Plans and spend were approved by the Board, this was significantly below the original investment for the full range of works.

The contract for the Phase 1 refurbishment was procured after initial work by DDDC and legal delays involving consents from the head leaseholders. Work on the bus

station and public realm has been completed satisfactorily and within the revised budget.

The work on phase 1 of the Gateway to Matlock project released £600,737 to support additional projects not included in the original investment plan. The UKSPF Board in March 2024 approved £600,737 to a Town Centre Improvement Fund to be administered through an open call for projects. Five projects were contracted that met the brief for Town Centre Improvements below:



Matlock Bus station with new planting

Town Centre Improvement Fund

Total Funding 31 March 2025

	UKSPF REPF funding	LA Capital Programme Funding	Total
Gateway to Matlock Town Centre	268,000	126,680	394,680
Skatepark Replacement	159,619	55,000	214,619
Hall Leys Park Splash Pad	174,867	83,116	257,983
Hall Leys Resin Pathway	148,335	170,786	319,121
Wirksworth Scheme	150,205	55,698	205,903
TOTAL	901,026	491,280	1,392,306



Actual Outcomes 31 March 2025

Matlock Gateway (Bus Station)	The Meadows, Wirksworth	Hall Leys Park
325 Sq M public realm improved	20,000 Sq M public realm improved	Public realm created or improved
75% Improved perception of amenities	2 x Public Right of Ways upgraded	Skate Park - 626m2
1 Facility improved	1 x new public recreational area created	Cycle Route 1,920m2 *not yet reported
1 Neighbourhood Improved external lighting/CCTV	New Seating	Footways 8,278m2
	Current footfall 6,000 increase by 35%*not yet reported	Splashpad 140m2
Additional 5 new trees planted	Improved perception of area* not yet reported	Green space created/improved 3.68Ha



Hall Leys Park new skate park

II. Site Feasibility Intervention

The UKSPF Feasibility objective was to strengthen social fabric and foster a sense of pride and belonging, through investment in activities that enhance physical, cultural and social ties and amenities. Building resilient and safe neighbourhoods, through investment in quality places that people want to live, work, play and learn in, through targeted improvements to the built environment and innovative approaches to crime prevention.

To meet these objectives, the Investment Plan focused on prioritisation of site investigations, feasibility work, master-planning and other assessments to inform the delivery of strategic development sites with a focus on sites on the edge of market towns within Derbyshire Dales.

The District Council's Economic Plan (2019-2033) highlighted the importance of delivering six key (mixed use) strategic sites across the district to support business expansion and to prevent local businesses relocating outside the area. These sites are located within the key A6 economic corridor in the towns of Matlock and Wirksworth, and at Ashbourne to the south. New housing on these sites is needed to provide accommodation for local employees and to ease pressure on greenfield sites in the Derbyshire Dales.

Feasibility funding was to enable preliminary investigation work, options appraisals, site assessments, master-planning, (review of) development appraisals and investigation of potential delivery models in order to develop a pipeline of site proposals ready to access external funding support where a requirement for gap funding is identified.

Ashbourne Airfield

The requirement to accelerate the site was a comprehensive feasibility/masterplan for the whole of the Ashbourne Airfield site i.e. both phases 1 and 2 as identified within the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan. This follows the opening of the new A52 link road, providing a second access to the established Airfield Industrial Estate and opening phase 1 land. This work has been successfully progressed and encouraged landowner engagement to move the site to the next phase of planning.

Further feasibility work referenced in the original investment plan at strategic sites has not been progressed due to difficulties in staff recruitment to develop and deliver the workstream.

The original £250,000 funding was therefore reallocated as follows:

Project	Amount £	31 March 2025 Spend £
Ashbourne Master Plan Phases 1 & 2 feasibility study	85,000	76,791
Ashbourne BID feasibility study	60,000	51,523
Additional works		12,293
CRG extension	64,500	64,500
CRG management fund	10,500	10,500
CRG feasibility studies	30,000	30,000
Total	250,000	245,608

Overall, there was £4,392 revenue available reallocated to RIG.

Business Improvement District



Church Street, Ashbourne

As a strategic investment area Ashbourne had attracted investment of £13.4 m from central Government Levelling Up funding and an additional £2.5m local match funding to deliver strategic site development within the Town. "Ashbourne Reborn" is led by Derbyshire Dales District Council working with Derbyshire County Council and Ashbourne Methodist Church as key delivery partners, in collaboration with Ashbourne Town Team, Ashbourne Town Council and AshCom who brought forward project ideas, identified opportunities, and raised match-funding for the bid and are now in delivery phase.

Ashbourne Town Team identified there was a missing piece of work in the development of the Town to ensure this unique legacy piece of work is carried forward and so, with the support of the Town Council looked at developing a Business Improvement District (BID) which would be the first of its type in Derbyshire.

The decision was therefore made and approval granted at the Environment Committee on 30th July 2024, that UKSPF funding be made available to the feasibility work involved in progressing the BID and for a feasibility study with a formal proposal for a BID and ballot preparation be completed by February 2025.

A Grant Funding Agreement was issued to Discover Ashbourne CIC for up to a maximum amount of £60,000.

CRG Extension & Feasibility Studies

Approval was sought and given to provide an additional £105,000 to the Derbyshire Dales CVS, to include 10% management and administration costs from E14 Feasibility Studies intervention to be reallocated to: E14/E2/E9/E11/E26 with the following outputs/outcomes to be achieved.

- Completed feasibility studies with administrative support to develop the work – maximum of £10,000 per study minimum grant £5,000 – 10% match funding
- 6 additional grants delivering Improved engagement numbers, new volunteering opportunities, neighbourhood improvements.

The remaining £12,293 has been allocated across a number of additional activities as follows: (referenced in table as Additional works)

KADA Consulting - £5,000

The political landscape has shifted following the formation of the East Midlands Combined County Authority in March 2024 and as a result, the evidence base has been updated to support fresh Economic Priorities and to help influence and inform EMCCA's strategic thinking.

EQM - £4,403

A set of 4 business and community events have been held by Environmental Quality Mark supported by the DDDC Business Adviser. The events were well received and provided practical advice to attendees.

Signs and benches - £2,890

Additional budget has been allocated to Halls Leys Park for the purchase of additional benches at the Skate Park and related signage.

III. Community Resilience Intervention

The Community Resilience Grant Fund has been managed on behalf of the District Council by the Derbyshire Dales Council for Voluntary Services. Their original contract was extended to include feasibility studies and additional grants; the original budget of £210,000 was increased by £105,000 to £315,000 to meet demand.

Capital	Revenue (inc feasibility studies)	Total
£190,500	£124,500	£315,000

The final open grants round closed in September 2024.

Over the course of four grant rounds, the total allocation was paid to CVS to support community development. There were 67 registrations for this scheme and of those, 29 projects were awarded grant, support and signposting to develop the outstanding registrations has taken place.

Engagement has been excellent with local communities and Derbyshire Dales CVS has exceeded the contract targets.

Final monitoring has been completed and data has produced some notable outputs, including 21 community venues enhanced, 90 new volunteers recruited, and 2600 additional people using services and venues. 2 new social enterprise activities have started, and 2 feasibility studies have been completed.

Outcomes achieved

	Engagement numbers	Feasibility Studies/energy audits	New volunteering opportunities	New social enterprises created
Creation of and improvements to local green spaces	34	0	36	2
Impactful volunteering and/or social action projects	69	0	55	0
Capacity support and infrastructure support for local groups	3,398	0	21	0
Growing the local social economy	51	0	52	0
Feasibility studies	0	8	0	2

Financial return as at 31 March 2025

Detail	Grants Awarded	Total Grant £'s
Grants	25	241,997
Feasibility	2	34,610
Energy Audits	2	6,929
Delivery Cost		31,464
TOTAL	29	315,000

IV. Rural Innovation Grant Programme Intervention

The Rural Innovation Grant Scheme was launched with the Business Growth Grant in Spring 2023. Additional technical guidance issued for the UKSPF programme, relating to revisions to Government procurement guidance placing a requirement on business grant applicants to follow a formal tender process for goods, services or supplies with a contract value above £24,999 put the grant on hold.

This threshold limit was well below that operated by previous grant schemes such as the Peak District LEADER programme which (as proposed for the Business Growth Grant) worked on the basis of three quotations for items such as machinery and equipment.

As a result of the revision the administrative team focused initially, on the two lower tier grants, whilst a solution was found to proceeding with the Growth Grant (a review of the Council's internal procurement procedures was implemented).

The grant schemes then proceeded to receive a steady flow of applications.

With the arrival of the new Economic Development Manager in September 2023 some changes were made to the thresholds for the grants as below and the Business Adaptation Grant was renamed the Small Business Adaptation Grant.

This change was instigated to broaden the availability of the grants to businesses.

Business Development Grant - £10,000 - £50,000 changed to maximum of £100,000.
Business Growth Grant - £50,000 - £100,000 changed to £100,000 - £150,000

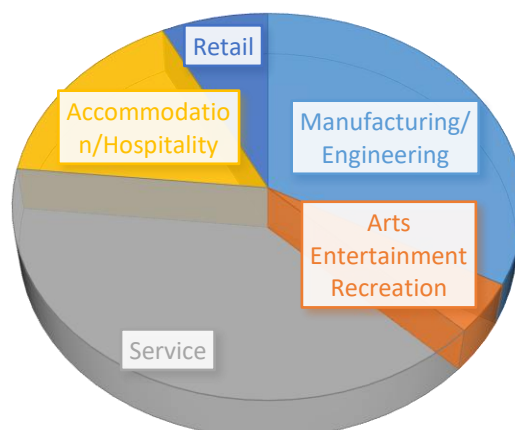
The Rural Innovation Grant programme has had an excellent take up and has delivered a range of measures to businesses to improve productivity, innovation, create jobs and increase sustainability and viability of micro and SME businesses in the Derbyshire Dales. The business adviser has worked with a wide range of businesses to support applications and assist growth within the area. Capital grant take up has been above expectation with investment in building adaptations, equipment, machinery and new technology having been supported.

Savings by projects on revenue costs in the final weeks of the programme resulted in £10,438 not being claimed from MHCLG.

Total RIG – Number of grants, grant totals, project totals and private match funding at 31 March 2025

Grant type	Number of grants	Grant £'s	Private Sector match funding £	Total Project cost £
Adaptation	62	337,239	95,149	432,388
Development	21	364,192	473,209	837,401
Growth	4	139,208	275,806	415,014
Delivery costs	0	71,975	0	0
Reallocation	0	60,492	0	0
TOTAL	87	973,106	844,164	1,684,803

SPLIT BY SECTOR



UKSPF Contracted outcomes / achieved with businesses at 31 March 2025

RIG	DDDC contracted outputs/outcomes	Actuals achieved to 31 March 2025
Jobs created	57	24.5
Jobs safeguarded	51.5	15
New Tech/Digital/processes	19	15
New Service	39	26
Increased Turnover	84	17
Improved Production	47	17
Projects reducing Co2	8	4

A wide range of contracts have been delivered across sectors, reflecting our diverse economy in the Derbyshire Dales, leading to businesses being better equipped to withstand wider economic shocks and increasing employment. A number have taken the opportunity to invest in new technology and digitalisation of services to increase their sustainability going into the future. The grant scheme has exceeded contracted outputs and outcomes from MHCLG and Defra. Collection of monitoring returns will continue to the end of December 2025. Support for grant recipients is ongoing with access to DDDC Business Adviser to assist in continued growth where needed.

Examples of New Service/product launched

Introduction of spin bikes and instruction into gyms

Chimney sweeping service

[Wine dispensing machine – Hattersley Wines](#)

Sweat testing & hydration planning
 Reformer Pilates machines into gym setting
[Fit out of horse box for mobile bar – Bentley Brook Brewing Company](#)
 Pedicure chairs & nail service
[Dog grooming service – Hound Hut](#)
 Electronic surveying measuring
 Digital garden design
 Pizza Oven
[Motorcycle diagnostic equipment – RR Motorcycles](#)
 Glamping pods

Examples of New Technology & Digital

IT software to enable accommodation release
 E-Commerce website
 Camera & IT video equipment for filming
 3d printers
 Drone & scanner
 Plasma cutter & vertical machining centre
 Dust extraction

Example cases studies can be found in section 5 below and a full selection can be found on the [Invest In Derbyshire Dales website](#).

V. Carbon Reduction (Grants) Intervention

Businesses have accessed energy audits to review their costs and assess possible outcomes through implementation of energy saving measures. Investment has supported the installation of solar panels, invertors, glazing and insulation. The fund has been well received particularly as rising energy costs are impacting business viability. Not all audits resulted in grant request as some audits identified process changes to achieve savings or areas where businesses will invest in the future.

All funds have been fully utilised supporting 10 Decarbonisation recipients as follows:

Grant (10 Recipients)	Match Funding	Total Project costs
£116,438	£125,938	£242,376

Achieved outcomes on awarded grant – 31 March 2025

Jobs created	New Technology	New Digital Investment	Improved Productivity	Co2 Reduction	Total
--------------	----------------	------------------------	-----------------------	---------------	-------

6	6	0	4	10	26
---	---	---	---	----	----

Examples of CO2 Reduction

Solar panels, inverters and batteries

Heat extractor condenser

Double glazing

Floor and ceiling installation

VI. Generic and Specialist Business Advice Intervention – Accelerator

The contract with East Midlands Chamber of Commerce has included business advice and training events in addition to energy audits and growth vouchers. EMC business advisers have worked in conjunction with our own business adviser to deliver additional capacity into the area. The programme has delivered above the original contract with many additional targets achieved. Derbyshire Dales businesses have accessed training and development opportunities with a high take up around social media/website development being noted; this has historically been an area of high demand for businesses on the area.

Accelerator	Total funding 31 March 2025
Business advice	£98,103
Energy audits	£57,970
Total	£156,073

Contracted outcomes and achieved 31 March 2025

	Target	Claimed to date
No of enterprises receiving non-financial support	100	209
No of enterprises receiving non-financial support – de carbonisation	28	49
No of decarbonisation plans developed	38	46
Improved productivity	15	30
New to the firm technologies or processes	15	33
No of Jobs safeguarded	0	12.8
No of Jobs created	0	19.8
Adopting new or improved products or services	0	20
Engaged in new markets	0	15
New to market products	0	8
Increased export capability	0	2
New business created	0	2
New knowledge transfer activity	0	12
Carbon Reductions	0	1

Increase in investment	0	5
------------------------	---	---

In addition to the above, the Accelerator also awarded 16 growth vouchers for businesses to procure specialist business advice.

VII. Business Start Up Intervention (Vision Derbyshire)

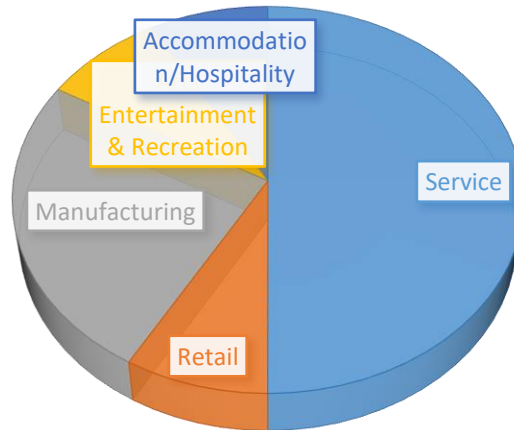
The Vision Derbyshire programme has achieved all targets.

Star up advisers employed by DCC have worked across the area to develop new start activity in Derbyshire Dales where there is a good reputation for entrepreneurial activity. Activities have been monitored by the Vision Derbyshire Economic Development Board monthly meetings. Start up businesses could be supported from pre start to 12 months old where they could then be passed to the DD Business Adviser for ongoing support as needed.

12 grants have been awarded to businesses in the Dales;

Company Name	Amount Awarded
The Logical Parent	£2,019.86
Haarlem of Wirksworth Ltd	£6,475.57
Nicola Cranham Virtual Assistant	£1,128.30
Nicola Smith Mazy Days Design	£1,905.27
Peak E Pedals	£10,000.00
Derbyshire Home Care Services	£4,294.05
Ovayonda Ltd	£6,364.44
Duckworth Publications	£500.00
Hodgins and Rayner	£9,177.65
Rob Bird	£500.00
Peak Saunas	£7,718.83
Corfield Gardening Services	£2,823.26
Total	£52,907.23

GRANT BY SECTOR



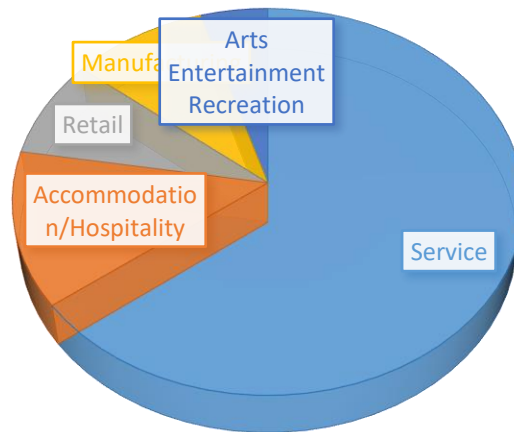
Total Funding

No of Grants Awarded	Grant Amount	Private Sector Other Investment	Total Project Costs
12	*30,000	67,522	97,522
Delivery/Other costs	43,291	22,907	66,198
Total Funding - £73,291	73,291	90,430	163,721

*additional £22,907.23 funding for grants came from the D2 Retained Business Rates fund

	Target	Achieved 31 March 2025
Number of potential entrepreneurs provided assistance to be business ready	50	55
Number of Businesses Supported – Non Financial Support	0	32
Number of Grants (Approved)	12	12
Number of new businesses created	12	22
Number of jobs created	12	17

NON FINANCIAL HELP BY SECTOR



7. Beneficiary views on UKSPF in the Derbyshire Dales

In order to understand the impact the programme had on businesses and partners, short surveys were used to capture feedback:

Survey 1

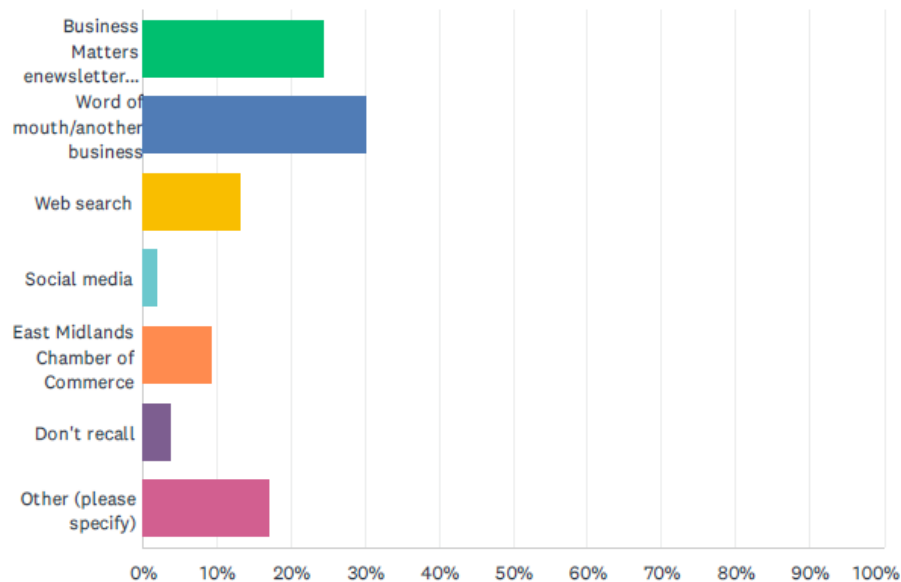
Businesses who received grant or business advice from the DDDC Business Adviser

The survey went out to 85 recipients; this did not include those businesses who we knew had withdrawn their application for specific reasons. 53 businesses completed the survey.

The majority of businesses heard about the grant scheme via the newsletter; 27% or word of mouth; 31%. The rest were via a mix of routes, including networking meeting, employee at the council and through the business adviser.

Q1 How did you hear about the UKSPF Programme in the Derbyshire Dales?

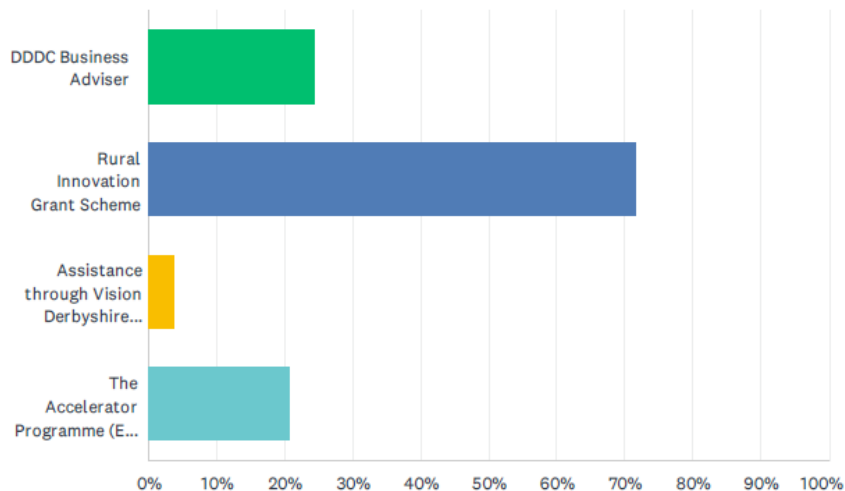
Answered: 53 Skipped: 0



75% of respondents accessed the grant and 22% the business adviser.

Q2 What did you access through the UKSPF Programme? (please tick as many as apply)

Answered: 53 Skipped: 0



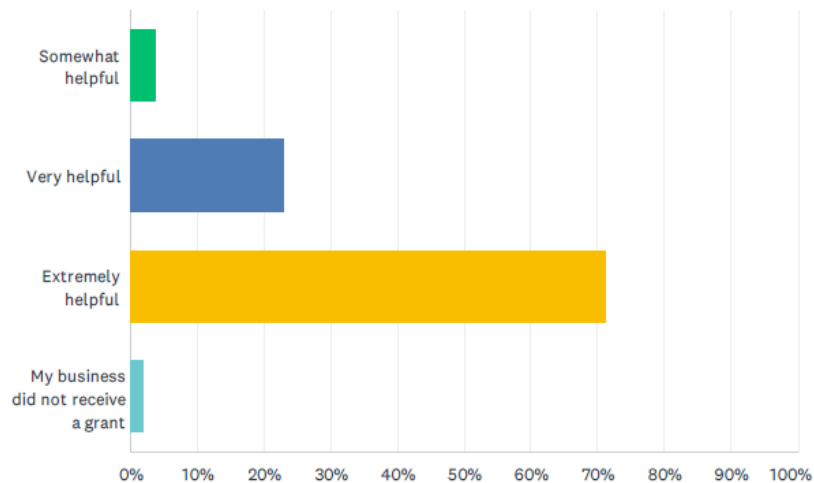
Majority of those who accessed the business adviser found it very easy; over 80%

Over 90% said that the support received from the adviser was excellent

Of those who received grants, over 70% said it was extremely helpful to their business, with over 20% saying it was very helpful.

Q5 If your business received a grant, how helpful was it for your business?

Answered: 52 Skipped: 1



In terms of accessing the grants, over 90% said registering was easy or very easy and over 70% reported that completing the application was easy or very easy.

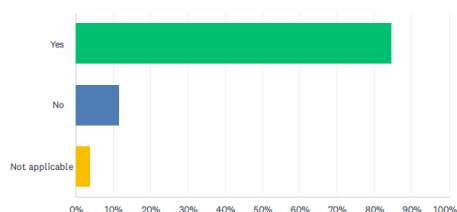
70% found the overall process very easy or easy and 80% found the claim process the same.

For the few who had issues, 93% said that they were resolved quickly or very quickly.

Over 80% reported that their application progressed as originally planned and where changes were necessary, over 80% reported that were easily resolved.

Q8 Did your grant funded project/investment progress as originally stated in your application?

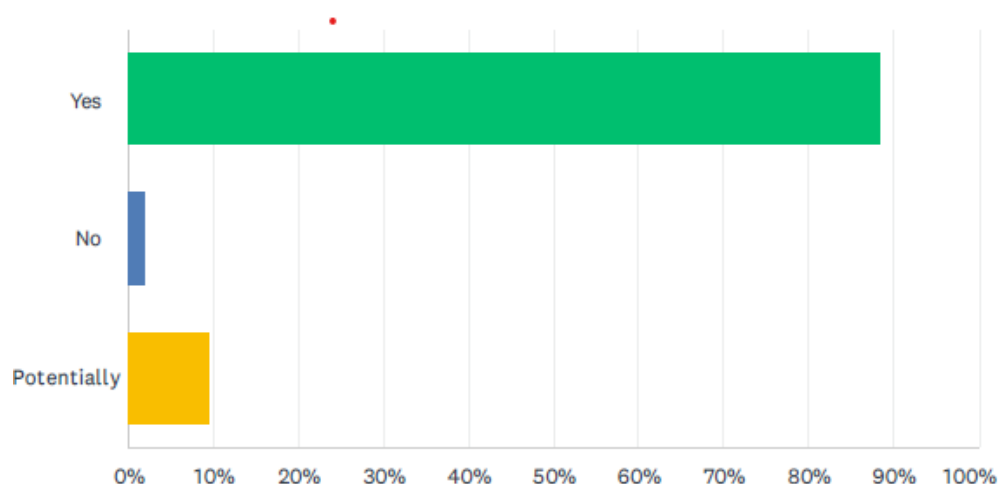
Answered: 52 Skipped: 1



98% of those who answered said they would access the grant scheme again.

Q10 Would you access grant funding in the future ?

Answered: 52 Skipped: 1



Over 75% said they would prefer a further grant scheme to be administered locally.

Some of the comments received were as follows; a complete list of comments; a complete list of comments can be found at appendix 1

'very grateful it exists'

'very helpful members of your team'

'amazing programme; couldn't have done w/o it'

'the whole process was excellent'

'absolutely brilliant'

Survey 2

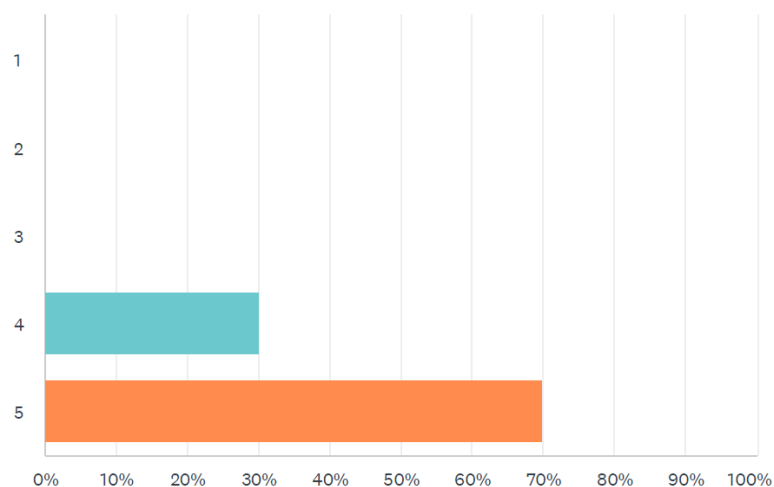
UKSPF Board members

The survey went out to all Board members and all responded.

100% of recipients have found the experience positive or very positive and 90% suggested it was a 'fair' commitment, with 10% saying 'low'.

Q1 Overall, how have you found the experience where 1 is very negative and 5 is very positive?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 0



100% were happy with the timing of receipt of paperwork and the responses from the UKSPF team and all respondents suggested that they would be happy to remain Board members.

Survey 3

Internal partners – colleagues involved in administration

This survey was sent twice to 11 colleagues within the Council who have been involved in the administration of the programme. 6 completed the survey.

Of the responses received, 100% said that their experience had been good or excellent. 40% suggested a 'fair' level of commitment and 60% low.

No one offered areas for improvement.

Survey 4

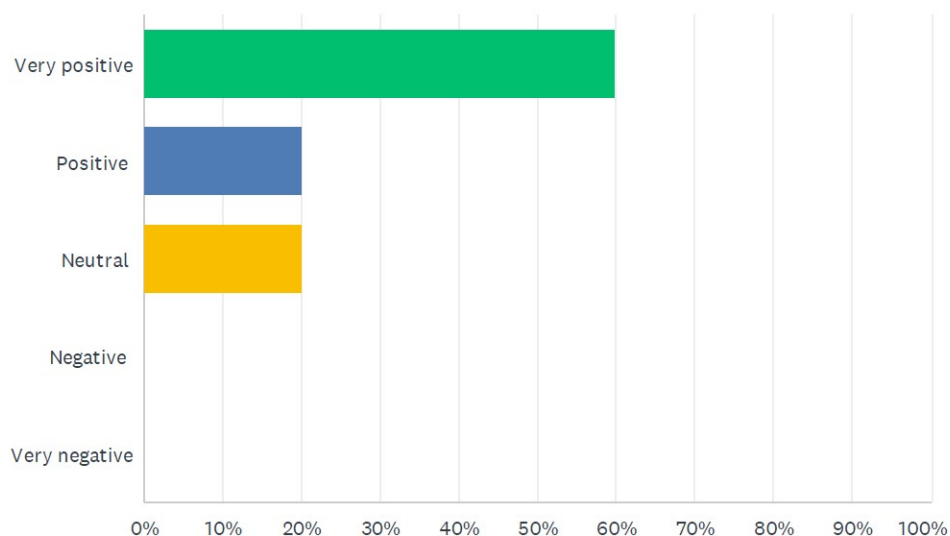
External partners – those delivering with targeted outcomes

This survey was sent to all delivery partners and it was completed by all 5.

80% responded to say it has been a positive or very positive experience with 100% agreeing that there had been supportive contact from the UKSPF team and 100% having achieved their outcomes.

Q1 Overall, how have you found the experience?

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



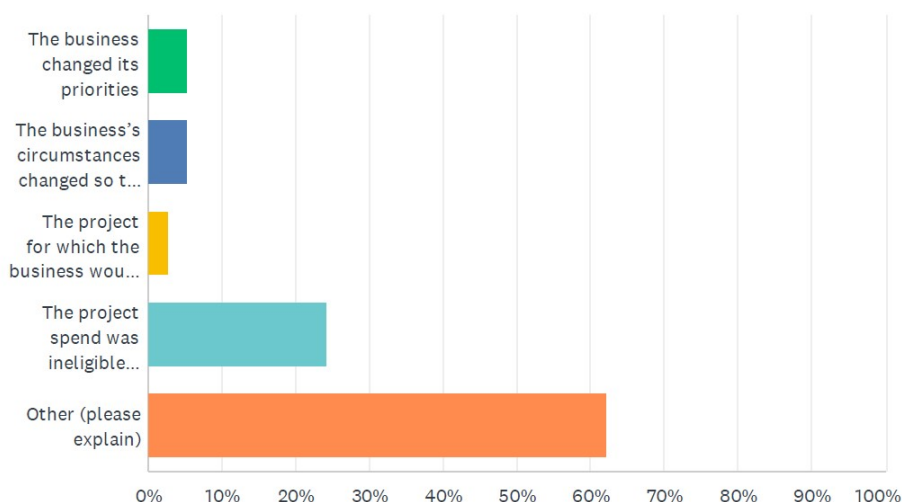
Survey 5

Businesses who registered for UKSPF but did not go on to apply for a grant.

Businesses who had registered for UKSPF and verified as eligible to apply for grant but did not to do so, received this survey, so that there could be an understanding of any barriers that may have been apparent for businesses.

Q1 When you registered your business, you ticked that you were interested in grant funding but did not go on to apply. Please can you explain why this was by choosing one of the following options:

Answered: 37 Skipped: 0



Over 60% had very specific reasons; they were too busy, the timing was wrong, the business could not find the specific piece of kit needed, illness; and 30% said their project was ineligible.

78% of respondents said they would apply if a new scheme was available and 21% said they were unsure.

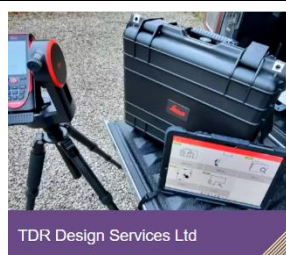
Overall, the feedback received was very positive, particularly from businesses for whom the grant had been particularly welcome; at the right time. Some feedback from businesses who had registered but not gone on to apply, indicated that there was some lack of understanding or awareness about the programme but the majority had personal or business reasons for not putting in an application.

Any improvements that can be made to the process or the communication of how the process operates, will be considered if there is an opportunity to extend the grant scheme.

4. Case studies

The intention has been to provide a case study for all of the grants that have been claimed so that we can provide a robust evidence base to illustrate the success of the grant schemes across RIG, Decarbonise and Vision Derbyshire. This case study creation is ongoing. A selection of examples of the case studies for the grant schemes are provided below and a link to the pdf of the Case Studies brochure that was created in autumn 2024 is included at **Appendix 3**.

Rural Innovation Grant Case Studies



TDR Design Services

TDR Design Services based at Ednaston Park, provides architectural services for all building types from new-build modern projects to conversions, alterations and extensions of existing buildings.

The company received a Small Business Adaptation Grant of £2,158 towards the purchase of new laser survey equipment and an associated tablet. The new equipment provides the company with more accurate survey data as the equipment records the data electronically in drawing files. Also the new equipment saves time and increases productivity as less time is spent on site recording the data. On return to the office the electronic files of the building or site can be uploaded and worked upon immediately.



R Stone Joinery

Rob Stone, a local joiner based at Riverside Business Park in Bakewell has benefitted from a £5000 Small Business Adaptation Grant from Derbyshire Dales District Council to purchase new equipment. The Sedgwick CP planer thicknesser and a Wadkin BWS 20" rip table saw are enabling him to deal with timber in the raw form and machine everything from scratch, this offering a more bespoke service.

By upgrading his workshop with these 2 machines Rob can buy in timber in board format, machining to exact sections instead of the previous process of buying in standard sizes. This reduces waste, is cheaper and makes the business more efficient and competitive in the market. He can take on any project knowing that he can cut and machine the timber to whatever sections required.



XRO Chemical Services

Ashbourne-based XRO. Chemical Services Ltd formulate and manufacture bespoke 'own label' cleaning chemicals, which are distributed both nationally and internationally. The company supports many industries, including medical, healthcare, engineering, transport, marine, graffiti-removal, agriculture, and food processing.

The £38,458 Business Growth Grant from Derbyshire Dales District Council helped the company to install electrics and plumbing for a much improved and efficient production line in new larger premises, to enable both efficiency and growth. Their largest customer was predicting a large increase in sales and to achieve this XRO needed to increase their capacity,

When larger adjacent property became available, the company felt it would be the ideal opportunity to enable an increase in their sales volumes in a more suitable environment with more energy efficient electrics.



The Welcome Team Ltd

The Welcome Team

The Welcome Team is a specialist housekeeping, laundry and management service for holiday cottages throughout the Derbyshire Dales.

Previously the company could only offer a laundry hire option for cottage owners (with linens hired from a large commercial company). However, it was recognised that many owners wanted to use their own linens and there was a need for a service to launder them. The company researched new premises where they could offer this service.

The requirement was to set up a facility which would be efficient and responsibly managed, providing the ability to wash, dry and iron a large quantity of linens each week. A £14,272 Business Development Grant from Derbyshire Dales District Council has facilitated the opening of the new laundry facility in the Old Cheese Factory near Elton - which is enabling the company to grow in many ways. It can offer a service to more cottage owners, offer more options than previously and has a bigger and better visibility.

Community Resilience Grant Case Studies



Care Farming Development CIC

Care Farming Development CIC

The WELLIES Project offers therapeutic learning activities with animals, plants, creativity and the countryside for people recovering from mental ill health.

The £12,000 Community Resilience Grant from Derbyshire Dales District Council has enabled the company to develop staff and volunteer skills including chainsaw training, woodwork, sustainable floristry and crafts – to enable them to pass these skills onto participants.

It has also enabled more volunteers to be involved in the project and helped build the social enterprise aspect.



Kirk Ireton Village Hall

Kirk Ireton Village Hall

Kirk Ireton village hall was built in the 19th century and previously belonged to the church. The parish council has been responsible for it since the 1970s. A recent survey had identified that the tiles on the roof were slipping as the nails holding them in had rusted away, the roof lathes needed replacing and insulation adding.

Without a £13,930 Community Resilience Grant from Derbyshire Dales District Council the parish council would not have been able to complete this repair and the hall would have become unusable. With the grant they were able to replace the wooden lathes, insulate the roof and renovate and replace the Staffordshire blue tiles. The village hall continues to be the centre of activity in Kirk Ireton.

Vision Derbyshire Case Study



Hodgins & Rayner Ltd

Located in Ashbourne and trading as The Middle One Bar & Kitchen, this business received £9,177.65 from Vision Derbyshire to purchase fixtures fittings and equipment.

Decarbonisation Grant Case Study



Hoe Grange Holidays

Hoe Grange Holidays received a grant through Derbyshire Dales District Council's share of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to purchase additional solar panels and a battery storage system. The new installations have had a huge impact on the business. The business has already managed to reduce reliance on imported electricity by around 60%, and of that around 80% tends to be a cheap rate, night-time tariff. This is leading to savings of £800-£1000 per month.

5. Key Lessons Learnt

Overall, the programme has been well managed, administered and monitored. With the benefit of hindsight however, there are areas where changes can be made for the extension of the programme and on reflection, areas that could be improved moving forward.

Partnership working

The Investment Plan has been delivered successfully and exceeded outputs and outcomes through excellent partnership working both within DDDC internal departments and with external partners. Specifically Executive Board Members, who have been critical in ensuring fully `rounded` knowledge of other programmes and work in development has not caused duplication within the programme. Promotion and understanding of UKSPF by partners has ensured good quality projects have come forward from a wide range of businesses and communities.

Partners on the Board had broad in depth understanding of the area and added significant value, such as where the programme required adaptation during delivery to ensure good outcomes across the diverse investment plan. Where changes were required as in the Feasibility funding and the Town Centre Improvement fund the Board responded swiftly to requests for amendments from Officers.

Promotion and publicity

When delivering grants to businesses and communities to ensure open, fair and transparency is in place widescale promotion is required. Derbyshire Dales District Council is fortunate that the department has success in promoting via traditional media routes and our own Invest in Derbyshire website and social

media outlets along with an established Newsletter with almost 2,500 subscribers. Website and social media outlets were heavily used and increased as the programme progressed and case studies became available, LinkedIn has produced direct contacts that hadn't previously been in place. Partners also circulated messaging on our behalf with success. A number of events were attended by the Business Adviser and Economic Development Manager to promote the programme and a celebration morning held on Friday 12 October 2024 was well received by businesses as a networking opportunity and a supply chain opportunity. We also emailed all businesses via the business rates mailout.

General

Combining REPF with UKSPF, had both funds been allocated at the same time from Government clear demarcation of funding for internal monitoring purposes would have been straightforward, coding had to be 'retrofitted'.

Rural Innovation Grant

Original launch of the RIG Programme

A decision was made to launch the Business Growth Grant first as the Business Adviser had worked with businesses who had 'oven ready' projects on standby. This took place in December 2022. Resulting Government delay due to the procurement issues and the need for the Council's Contract Standing Orders to be amended; necessitated businesses being informed that their submitted applications could not be processed and those submitted were on hold. The funds were relaunched in September 2023.

A delay in launching SBAG due to exploring options on internal and external delivery resulted in businesses waiting between registration and being able to submit an application. The funds were launched successfully in October 2023. Delays from central Government, adapting internal systems(CRM) and recruiting staff reduced the delivery time on the funding significantly and while successfully delivered, a longer delivery time would have been helpful.

Third party agents

Some difficulties were encountered where agents representing businesses making applications prolonged processes or made it unclear who was to be contacted. The application form has therefore been amended to ask if an agent is acting for the business.

Intervention rate for SBAG

The intervention rate for the above was up to 80% with no point differential between sectors. This will be reduced to a maximum of 65% intervention rate and a more robust scoring introduced for an extension contract with more focus on the sector.

Measurable outcomes

Outcomes for the RIG included an increase in turnover. This proved difficult to measure as businesses were often unable to state their turnover at the time of application so had to use figures from previous accounts which in some cases, were quite out of date. In addition, increase in turnover is not reported to government as an outcome. This outcome has been removed from the extension of the programme.

Consistency on the CO2 measure

Some of the decarbonisation application outcomes were not based on the BEIS conversion factors. Decision has therefore been made to only accept this as a measurable outcome for the extension of the programme.

New job – created or recruited

Some businesses created jobs but were not able to recruit to them. It therefore needs to be clear for the extension, if this is acceptable as 'job creation'.

Recruitment issues

UKSPF Programme Coordinator

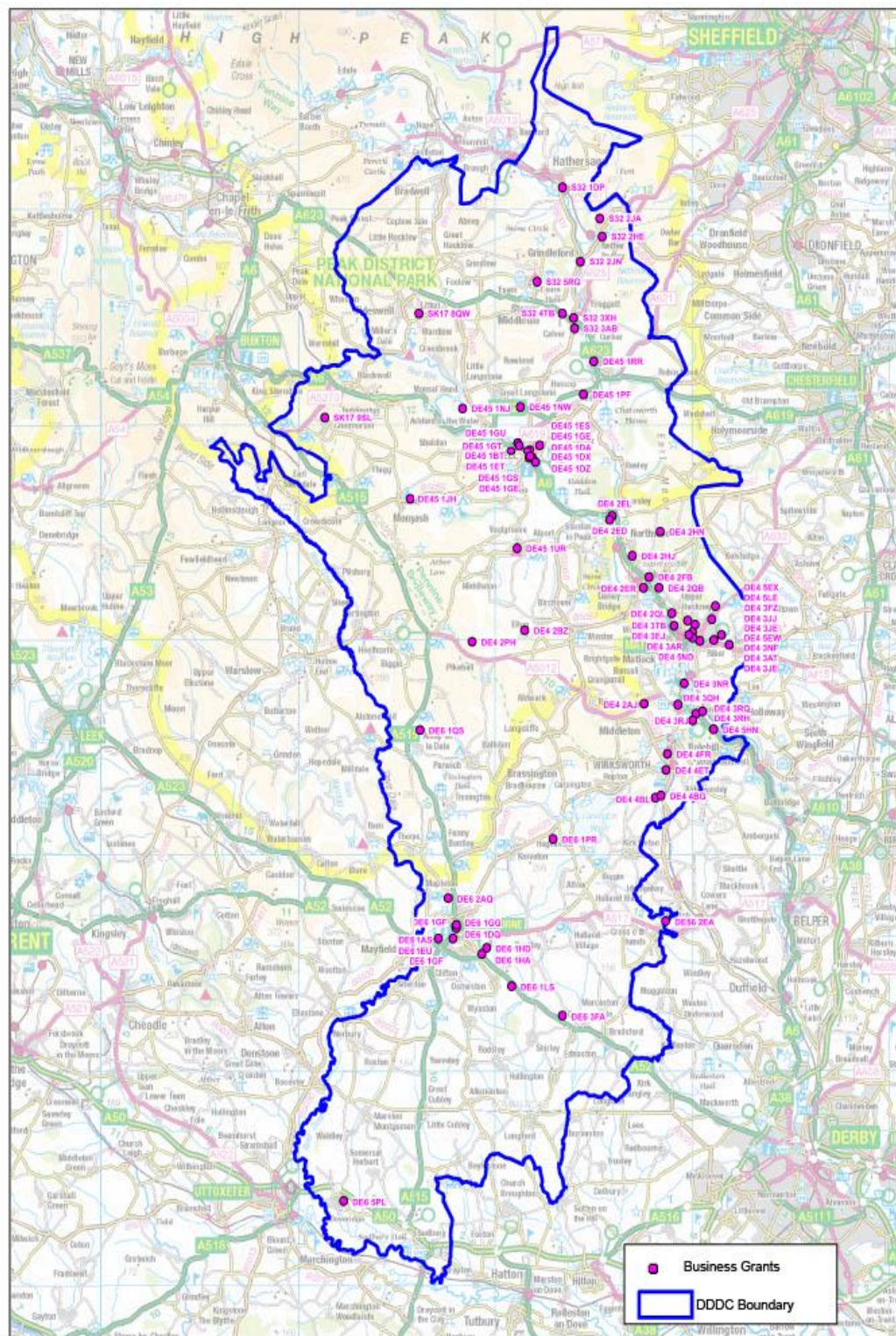
At the beginning of the programme, there was a decision made to recruit a UKSPF Programme Coordinator who would be responsible for the monitoring of all aspects of the programme and would fulfil the secretariat role for the Board and Executive programme of meetings. This role was advertised but not recruited to then readvertised in March 2023 but not recruited to; potentially due to the mix of responsibilities and temporary nature of the role. In future programme development early stage discussion with existing staff to understand existing expertise in house, and required, could avoid similar delays.

Recruitment of a Monitoring Officer did not take place until 4 March 2024 which did cause pressure on existing staff. The Monitoring Officer and extension to the economic development role was successful alongside the new Economic Development Manager provided acceptable staffing levels.

Business Advisor

The long-term business advisor for Derbyshire Dales, retired at the end of the Growth Hub contract (end of June 2023). The post of Derbyshire Dales Business Advisor post had therefore been advertised as a fixed term contract until the end of June 2025 which was filled then soon vacated again. Post filled by current Business Advisor who started in 8 January 2024. To ensure added value to grant delivery, the BA liaises closely with numerous partners such as EMC, HE providers, BBC, DBT and alternative funding provision to maximise opportunities for businesses in the area.

Appendix 1



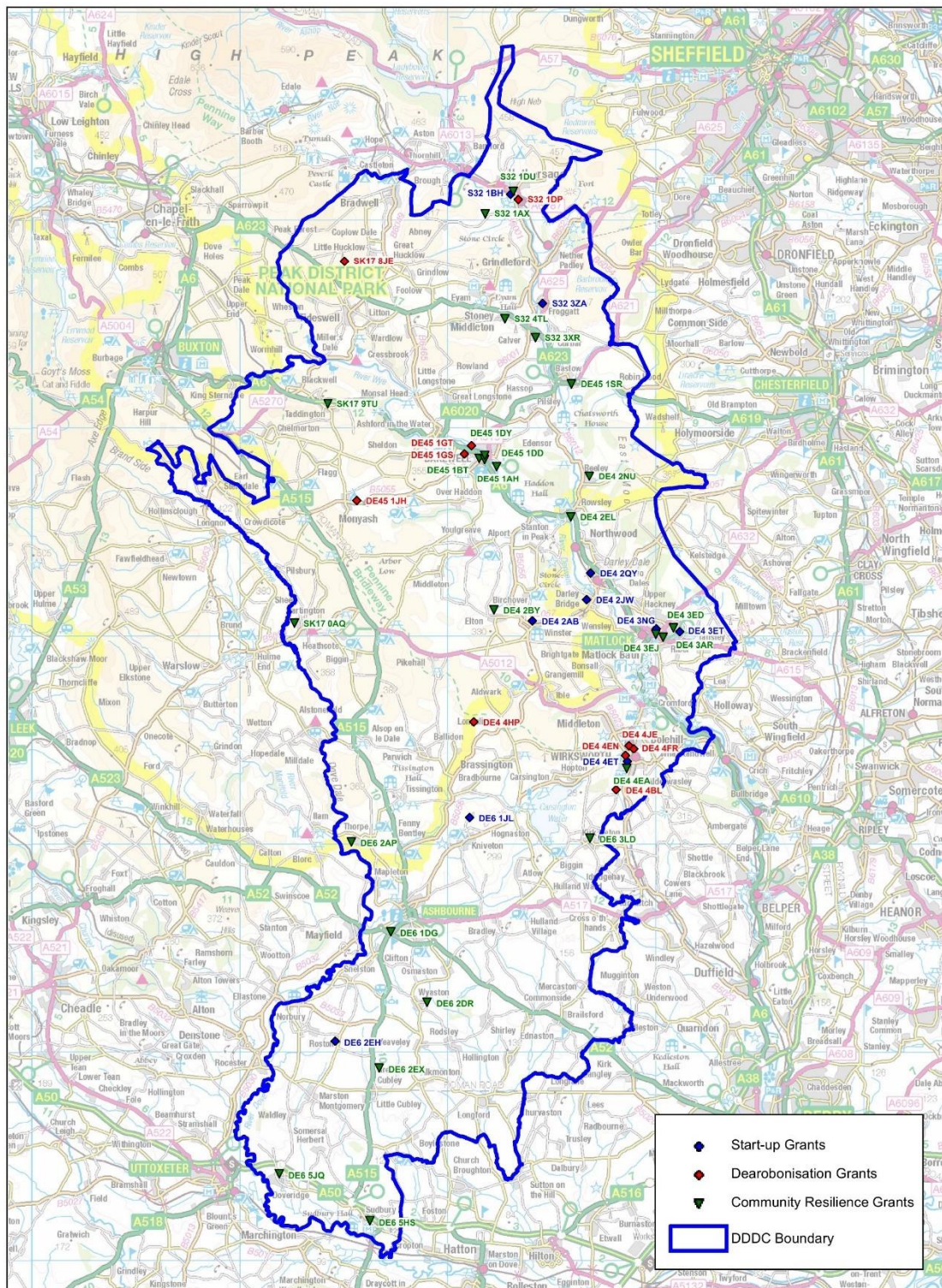
© Crown Copyright and database rights (2025) Ordnance Survey (AC0000824144)

Derbyshire Dales District Council, Town Hall, Bank Road,
Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3NN.
Telephone: (01629) 761100.



18/06/2025
WWW.DERBYSHIREDALES.GOV.UK

Appendix 2



© Crown Copyright and database rights (2025) Ordnance Survey (AC0000824144)

Derbyshire Dales District Council, Town Hall, Bank Road,
Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3NN.
Telephone: (01629) 761100.


 18/06/2025
WWW.DERBYSHIREDALES.GOV.UK

Appendix 3

[Case studies brochure](#)

