



Department for  
Communities and  
Local Government

# Coastal Community Teams

An invitation to establish a Coastal Community Team



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# Introduction

Coastal cities, towns and villages are an extremely important part of the country, providing a major contribution to the economy as well as to our national identity. Over 11 million people live in coastal communities, and many more visit regularly for business and pleasure.

In recent years, coastal communities have faced unique challenges. While some have successfully reinvented themselves, others have suffered significant economic decline. For example, coastal areas have, on average, lower levels of employment than other areas of the country. The Government is committed to supporting coastal places to help their economies to grow and to support them to reduce unemployment and deprivation.

The Government has done a lot to support coastal areas, for example through the investments made by the Coastal Communities Fund, but recognises that there is significant potential for further improvement by accessing the ideas, enthusiasm and pride within communities through the involvement of local groups in partnership. Local partnerships with an in-depth knowledge of their area, successfully working together with their local authority and others, can help to make coastal areas even better places to live and work.

From major coastal towns to seaside villages, the Government sees great potential in supporting and enabling this local knowledge. We are therefore encouraging the establishment of 'Coastal Community Teams' to enable local communities to come together and develop a common vision and plans for their area.

The overall aims of Coastal Community Teams are to:

- encourage greater local partnership working in coastal areas
- support the development of local solutions to economic issues facing coastal communities
- establish a network of teams across England who can work together and with Government to tackle issues facing coastal communities, and
- encourage the sustainable use of heritage/cultural assets to provide both a focus for community activities and enhanced economic opportunities.

This pack sets out information on Coastal Community Teams and gives information on how partnerships can apply to be recognised as a Team. To make an application, prospective teams should complete the form at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/supporting-economic-development-projects-in-coastal-and-seaside-areas--4>

# Coastal Community Teams

## Purpose and Membership of Teams

We are inviting applications, from 20<sup>th</sup> March 2015, from local partnerships in any coastal community in England to become a 'Coastal Community Team'.

### **What counts as a Coastal Community?**

For the purposes of this programme a coastal community will be defined in the same way as for the Coastal Communities Fund.

A coastal community is therefore any coastal settlement within an English local authority area whose boundaries include English foreshore, including local authorities whose boundaries only include estuarine foreshore. Coastal settlements include seaside towns, ports and other areas which have a clear connection to the coastal economy.

If it is not clear that the area covered by the proposed Coastal Community Team is coastal, then applicants may be asked to provide further justification for why they should be eligible to set up a Team.

### **What is a Coastal Community Team?**

A Coastal Community Team is a local partnership consisting of the local authority and a range of people and business interests from a coastal community who have an understanding of the issues facing that area and can develop an effective forward strategy for that place. The Team should include a range of local stakeholders and have broad support.

Members of the team could be drawn from any part of the community who have an interest in their area being successful. We would also expect to see existing groups joining the team, such as local voluntary and community organisations, the town team and Business Improvement District (where these are in place), major local employers and representatives of important local assets, such as a major local tourist attraction. We also envisage the involvement of Destination Management bodies where relevant.

### **What will Coastal Community Teams do?**

Coastal Community Teams should have an understanding of the economic issues facing their local community and should develop a plan for making improvements. This may build on existing work which is already underway or could be an entirely new initiative.

While Coastal Community Teams may choose their own priorities, suggested areas of focus, particularly for very new partnerships, are as follows:

- Enhancing the attractiveness and accessibility of public areas,
- Providing increased community facilities,

- Promoting the visitor economy,
- Encouraging sustainable uses of heritage/cultural assets, and
- Creating links to support the growth and performance of the retail sector.

In terms of the plan developed by the Coastal Community Team, this should focus on a defined local area, which should be specified in the application form. We are anticipating that Teams will cover a particular coastal town or a group of nearby and economically connected small towns or villages.

If community groups working in deprived areas are interested in developing an economic plan for a small geographic area, i.e. a village or a community within a town, and are seeking more technical support or early capacity building, then they may be interested to apply to DCLG's [Community Economic Development programme](#). Community Groups may also like to join the [My Community Network](#) to talk to experts and connect with others who are also passionate about their community.

Coastal Community Teams will receive £10,000 to spend in the financial year 2015/16. This can be spent on establishing the Team itself, developing the economic plan and/or progressing initial priorities.

## **Membership of the Coastal Community Team**

Coastal Community Teams must have the support and involvement of the unitary or lower tier local authority for the area (e.g. the District or Borough Council). Where there is an upper tier local authority for the area (i.e. a County Council) they can also be involved.

While there must be local authority support for the Team, the Team could be led by a community or voluntary group, or a private sector organisation. The application may be completed by any member of the proposed Team.

If local groups are interested in establishing a Coastal Community Team but are having difficulty engaging with their local authority they should contact DCLG for advice at [coastalcommunities@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:coastalcommunities@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

## **Key Criteria**

Every coastal community is unique and will have different issues and priorities so we do not want to mandate what they should focus on or take forward. However, we would like each Team to meet the following criteria:

- Support for Partnership Working

One of the main aims of the Coastal Community Teams programme is to encourage greater local partnership working in coastal areas. We are therefore looking for applicants for Coastal Community Teams to demonstrate that the creation of a Team will have local support and will increase the level of partnership working and coordination already in place in the local area. Applicants should set out how a Coastal Community Team will improve

and build on existing arrangements, and should set out the range of organisations that are supportive of the Team.

- Understanding of the needs of the area and vision for improvement

Another aim of the programme is to support the development of local solutions to the economic issues facing coastal communities. We are therefore looking for applicants to show understanding of the issues affecting the area, particularly as regards constraints to growth. We also want applicants to set out (in broad terms) how they see the Team helping to overcome these issues and what the overall vision is for the future.

- Proposed Outputs

As mentioned above, Coastal Community Teams will be expected to produce an economic plan for the area that they are focussed on. The format of this plan will not be specified, but it should contain information on the needs of the area and the challenges it faces, particularly with respect to the local economy, along with the actions that the Team has agreed should be prioritised to help address those challenges. The plan should set out identified means of delivering the actions, such as possible sources of funding and support, or the further work which is needed to develop solutions. The plan for the area produced by the Team should be made publically available and should be published, at the latest, by the end of January 2016.

Applicants will need to set out clearly how they intend to draw up their plan for the area, the timescales involved in achieving this and how the £10,000 will be used, including the outputs that will be delivered. We expect that the funding will be used to support production of the plan, but some or all of it could also be used for other activities. Either way, the application form should be clear about how the funding will be used.

- Transparency and engagement

Coastal Community Teams will be expected to be open and transparent about their activities. We will expect the Team's membership to be publically available on the local authority's website, member organisation's websites and/or their own website. Once the Team has prepared their plan for the area this should also be made publically available. We will also want this information to be accessible via the Coastal Communities Alliance, who will provide overall coordination for the programme and support to Coastal Community Teams. All Coastal Community Teams should take steps to encourage local engagement with their work.

Applicants should set out in the form how they will make the activities of their Team open and transparent.

## Further Information

### Funding

Total funding of £1.1 million is available in 2015-16 to provide up to 110 Coastal Community Teams with £10,000 of grant funding to help with the establishment of the Team, support development of the economic plan and/or progress initial priorities. This funding will be paid as unringfenced grant directly to a local authority, who will act as the Accountable Body. This means that the local authority will hold the grant funding on behalf of the Coastal Community Team and will ensure that it is managed in a way that is appropriate for public funding.

The local authority who will act as the accountable body will need to provide a letter confirming that they are happy to take on this role. The local authority that acts as the accountable body will probably be the authority for the area covered by the team, but this does not have to be the case.

As the funding is revenue funding it should not be spent on capital projects. The funding must be spent by the end of March 2016.

### Coastal Revival Fund

A £3m capital fund is also being made available to coastal areas – the 'Coastal Revival Fund'. This will be subject to a separate bidding process. This fund will not be restricted to applications from Coastal Community Teams, but Teams will be encouraged to apply to the fund if they want to for capital grants. The purpose of the fund will be to support the development of local assets of heritage or community value in order to make them sustainable into the future, and also deliver an economic benefit to the community.

### How many Coastal Community Teams can be applied for?

It will not be possible to establish more than one Coastal Community Team for the same geographical area.

There is no set limit to the number of teams that can be applied for within a particular local authority area. However, local authority capacity to engage with multiple teams will be a limiting factor. We therefore suggest that no more than two teams in a (unitary or lower tier) local authority area are applied for initially. This will also help to ensure that there is scope for coastal communities from all around England to be involved in the scheme.

If there is a strong appetite for more than two Teams within one local authority area then DCLG is happy to discuss this with the areas involved. Please contact the department at: [coastalcommunities@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:coastalcommunities@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

### Pilot Coastal Community Teams

When developing the programme of Coastal Community Teams, Government approached a number of local authorities around the country to discuss the proposal and seek views on whether it would be beneficial. Many of these areas were keen to establish a Coastal

Community Team and so, in order to generate momentum and provide an initial set of Teams that can act as a model for others, Government will be announcing a small number of pilot Teams prior to the pre-election period.

## **Application Deadline**

The deadline for making an application for a Coastal Community Team is the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015. Applications submitted prior to that date will be assessed as they are received, but Teams will not be able to be formally accepted or established until after the election period.

## **How to apply**

We recognise there are many pressures on local authorities and community groups and so we have sought to make the application process as simple as possible, while ensuring decisions on applications will be fair and transparent. To apply, please complete the form that accompanies this prospectus. We do not wish to receive any additional information beyond what is asked for in the form, although letters of support may be annexed.

The application form can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/supporting-economic-development-projects-in-coastal-and-seaside-areas--4> You can also request an application form by emailing [coastalcommunities@communities.gov.uk](mailto:coastalcommunities@communities.gov.uk)

## **Information required**

Applications will be assessed on the basis of the information contained in the form and specifically against the criteria:

- Support for Partnership Working
- Understanding of the needs of the area and vision for improvement
- Proposed outputs
- Transparency and engagement

To be accepted, applicants will also have to demonstrate support from the relevant unitary or lower tier local authority.

We will be providing advice and networking support to Coastal Community Teams through the Coastal Communities Alliance (see [www.coastalcommunities.co.uk](http://www.coastalcommunities.co.uk)). Teams will be expected to engage with the Alliance and share information with them about the team's activities and experiences.

Applications should be submitted electronically to the following address: [coastalcommunities@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:coastalcommunities@communities.gsi.gov.uk) Any questions about the process can also be sent to this address.