

Neighbourhood Portion of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for Bath Grant Application

Project name:

Bath Waterways Volunteer Workforce

Organisation:

Bath Towpath Volunteers Canal and River Trust

Project location:

Along the Canal and River Avon throughout Bath

Locality or Ward which will benefit from this project:

The City of Bath. It is not restricted to one ward. The whole community benefits for improved access along the Waterways

Target start date:

July 2022

Target completion date:

July 2027

Have you or your organisation previously applied for funding from Neighbourhood Portion of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for Bath?

The Bath Canal & River Trust (CRT) Volunteers deliver the annual agreed programme for the improved maintenance and operation of the K&A Canal and River Avon, alongside the City Riverside developments for the CRT and Waterspace Partnership (WP). The Bath Volunteers cover from the commencement of the Kennet and Avon Canal (K&A) on the River Avon at Hanham (Lock 1) through to magnificent aqueduct at Dundas in Monkton Coombe - the same footprint as the Waterspace programme.

In 2019, the group secured a CIL funding of £28,500 which enabled the following:

- Purchased essential Health and Safety equipment such as lifejackets, clothing, boots and workboat equipment.
- Provided essential H&S and other training.
- Purchased 12ft rib boat "Community Spirit" and trailer. The boat is used for debris and litter retrieval; checking and replacing river safety lines; accessing confined areas and providing safety cover while working on the river.

- Provided Royal Yachting Association Safety Boat training for boat helmsman and deckhands volunteers.
- Purchased graffiti removal machine and training for use along the listed structures along the Waterways; and
- Purchased Woodchippers and other offside vegetation clearance equipment. Training for use. This is being lent out to B&NES Parks Dept for occasional use by Friends of Henrietta Park, subject to appropriate risk assessment and training.

In addition, matched funding was also secured from the following to support the project costs:

Public, Private and Charity Grant	Amount
Kennet and Avon Canal River Trust (KACT)	£5,000 secured 2019
B&NES Council	£3,000 secured 2019
Bristol City Council (Avon and Frome Partnership)	£5,000 secured 2019
Canal and River Trust	In kind Includes Insurance, Licence, Mooring, Ongoing Maintenance, fuel & pump out charges. This is equivalent to £9,000 per annum for 2 boats "Sulis" and "Community Spirit".

Charitable Match	Amount in kind	
Canal and River Trust	£180,000 secured in 2019	The CRT provided a newly refurbished wide-beamed working narrow boat for the dedicated use within the Waterspace area (Hanham to Dundas).

Thanks to the previous CIL funding the group has made very significant progress and achievements over the last 3 years. The group now has 28 active volunteers. It is the only group supporting the operation and maintenance of the Kennet and Avon Canal and River Avon infrastructure running throughout the city. The group carries out a wide range of activities completing essential offside vegetation management, extensive litter and debris removal, clearing up after flooding, preparing and painting locks, repairing broken seats and drainage work alongside the towpath and on the riverbank.

In a non-covid year an annual estimate would be that the volunteers contribute around 5500 hours a year to the work of the CRT and the Waterspace programme. In 2021 3610 hours were recorded. The Community work boat "Sulis" and the CIL funded "Community Spirit" have proved to be indispensable and subsequent training have helped to develop a highly effective voluntary work force.

Description of project:

The CIL funding will provide the essential funding required for the operation of the Implementation stage of the Waterspace Plan. This will include:

- Delivering for residents by supporting improvements to the towpath which could include some restoration, painting, safety issues and access.
- Providing a 'vision of the Bath River Line' on the "Sulis" from the river.
- Carry out a street furniture quality and location audit.
- Supporting the River Avon mooring strategy.
- Supporting water borne surveys which could include river travel, possible parks, audit of live-aboard boats and recreation usage.
- Continuing with the previous activities such as Community safety issues along the canal and river, litter, vegetation management and debris removal.
- Maintaining the lock flight through Bath
- Refurbishment of offside abutments through Sydney Gardens Bath. An initiative led by a Bath volunteer, is restoring the jewel in crown on the K&A, through Sydney Gardens, back to its former glory. Extensive work has been already carried out including, removal of all the Yew Trees, removing of ivy on tunnel entrances, stone work and preparing some abutments for planting natural grass and flower meadows resembling the original 1794 design (as agreed by BANES). This work is expected to be completed in 2023.

Community Support

The Bath group has extensive experience in hosting corporate volunteering days from B&NES Council, local organisations and voluntary groups, and members of the River Avon User Consultative Group. The group could support working with: Developing a 'Friends of the River Avon Parks'; Bath Parks Foundations and engaging communities.

Riparian Owners

All the work undertaken alongside the River Avon is in agreement with the Riparian Owners (the landlords on each side of the River). For example, the River Avon Rowing Club gained approval from the Riparian owners, when Bath volunteers and "Sulis" assisted in the removal of overhanging vegetation along the Rowing course.

Reasons for supporting this project:

The part delivery of the Waterspace programme, a nationally recognised programme to revitalise the waterways of Bath and Northeast Somerset, requires a robust group of volunteers, well resourced, trained and financially supported. The Canal and River Trust, has responsibility for the Kennet and Avon Canal and the navigational rights and locks along the river. As a Partner within Waterspace Partnership it has widened its remit and has made a significant contribution with a Wide Beam Working Boat situated in Bath and ongoing annual contributions as previously highlighted. However, the group still requires further funding to continue develop and grow and deliver on the forthcoming objectives. There is no doubt without the previous CIL funding the group would not be as strong as it is today.

THE BATH VOLUNTEERS SUPPORTING THE NEW TERM AND LONG TERM OBJECTIVES

THE VISION: to revitalise the waterways of Bath & North East Somerset

1. Make best use of the partners' assets and landownership to enhance the waterways, taking a partnership approach and seeking for multibenefits from projects.
2. Improve the district's mooring offer whilst safeguarding navigation.
3. Realise opportunities from development and regeneration to benefit both the waterways and the quality of new development.
4. Enhance the environmental (including ecology, amenity and water quality) value of the waterways, including retaining dark corridors for wildlife.
5. Protect and improve opportunities for both land and water based leisure and recreation.



The volunteer work fulfils the Councils Corporate Strategy:

- Talking the issues from climate change – debris removal and flood damage
- Delivering a better environment along the Waterways for the residents
- Focus on safety and prevention along the Waterways
- Encouraging volunteers and residents in Bath to have a bigger say

Without the funding the future will be challenging.

[Is this a new project or does this project link into an existing project?](#)

This is a continuation of an existing project. The application is for funding to support the Delivery Stage of the Waterspace Plan. The application by the Canal and River Trust, a charity, will have a legal responsibility to ring fence the CIL funding specifically identified for the Waterspace programme.

[Breakdown of how you plan to allocate the funding](#)

A typical annual Budget and Activity 2022 - 2027	Cost
Volunteer capacity building which will include Training Helmsman, Crew and H&S Training	£3,500
Work Kit	£1,000
Tools and Maintenance	£1,000
Materials	£1,000
Purchasing and Servicing Life Jackets	£1,000
Contingency	£1,000
Total per year	£8,500
Total 5 years	£42,500

Project milestones and targets:

The group is effectively managed and trained with clearly defined roles and responsibilities with a Lead Volunteer who will agree an annual plan is agreed with the CRT and Waterspace Partnership.



A Memorandum of Understanding has been written with a tri-partite agreement with Waterspace Partnership, CRT and the volunteers. Bi-annual meetings are held to monitor progress against the annual plan and an annual report is also produced which is attached in Annex A. At the time of writing the plan is still be finalised. An example is given below.

Outline work plan for 2022 on River Avon and K&A Canal from Dundas to Hanham.

Work	Frequency
Safety: River Safety Cabinet Checks	Monthly
Safety: Check and repair river safety lines	6 monthly
Safety: Lock Cill markers and white edging	Yearly
Safety: River clear up after flooding (debris and mud at locks)	1/2 per year
Safety: Remove overhanging vegetation from towpath	1/2 per year
Safety: Maintenance of boat safety equipment (lifejackets)	Yearly
Safety: Replace fencing alongside locks 12 & 13	One off task
Safety: Repair trip hazards on the Bath Lock Flight	One off task

Environmental: Removal & disposal of plastic & debris from river/canal	Weekly
Environmental: Removal of invasive species on canal (Himalayan Balsam)	Yearly
Environmental: Provide boats & crew for bat and light pollution surveys	Yearly
Environmental: Provide boats & crew for planning surveys	Yearly
Maintenance & Painting 12 canal & river locks and landing stages	Every 3 years
Maintenance: Offside Vegetation cut back and removal	Weekly in season
Maintenance: Sydney Gardens regular maintenance	6 monthly
Maintenance: Planned Preventive Maintenance at Locks and swing bridges	Ongoing
Control: Assisting mooring/licence team with river surveys	1/2 per year
Control: Moving boats for enforcement teams	As required
Replacing all Landing Stages on River Avon	One off Project
Repair Signage as required	One off Project
Repair Cobbled Ramp towards Bathwick Hill	One off Project
Pot hole repairs	One off Project
Graffiti removal	One off Project

B&NES Council Services. Appropriate work is discussed with the BANES Waterspace Manager. For example, as litter and debris had not been previously cleared from the River Avon an arrangement was made for the Bath cleansing department to collect from designated areas.

If planning permission is required for this project has it been granted?

Not applicable

How does the project address the specific impacts of the new developments from which the funding has been generated?

The River Avon and K&A canal are an integral part of the City of Bath. However historically neither has been treasured or appreciated. In 2012 all British Waterways' assets and responsibilities in England and Wales were transferred to the newly founded charity the CRT which sadly acknowledged the serious lack of investment and care throughout the waterways. They embraced the use of volunteers (like the National Trust) and over the last 10 years have seen the extensive contribution and change they have made.

Similarly, over the last 50 years the ownership and management of the river Avon has gone through a series of changes with some confusion on roles and responsibilities. For example, whose role is to remove sunken boats in the river and up to the Weir is still being addressed. Mooring strategy by the weir is another. Bath lies astride the river Avon and is one of the most elegant and architecturally distinguished of British cities. In 1987 the city was designated a UNESCO World Heritage site and an inspection visit was concerned that the River Avon was “somewhat neglected in the beautiful city”.

The current and continuing developments along the Riverside re-enforce the need for an attractive, safe and welcoming waterfront and clean and safe river. This project will support these ambitions as the volunteer group is the sole tackling these issues on the Waterways.

How does the project provide links to the locality in the area where development has taken place?

The continued support of the CRT volunteers and the workboats “Sulis” and “Community Spirit” will enable the ‘WaterSpace extended’ programme to continue links with resident’s associations to improve access, recreation, ecology and safety.

The group is unique on the River and the KA for accessing and delivering Implementing the Management & Maintenance Plan supporting Ecological enhancements and becoming involved in developing long term projects. The recent work on the Weston Lock with local volunteers and community groups planting new flower beds is an example of this engagement.

The project within Bath and working with other agencies, demonstrates the effectiveness of the partnership and volunteering; The workboats have trained RYA crew to support looking at the rise in popularity of river-based activities.

Please provide evidence which shows how the community has been listened to and what support exists for your project:

Three local resident’s associations have been contacted Bathwick Hill, Widcombe and Bathwick Estates have all supported the application and attached responses.

The project must show that it either supports the development of the relevant area by funding the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure, or anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on the area:

The project fundamentally supports the improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of waterways infrastructure throughout Bath.

Total cost of project:

Item	Cost
Capital costs Sulis work boat	£120,000

Volunteer work hours costs	£390,000
Work boats running costs	£45,000
Volunteer Costs kit etc.	£35,000
Total Cost of Project	£590,000

Amount of funding sought from Neighbourhood Portion of CIL Fund:
£42,500 for 5 years

Does this project benefit from any source of matched funding?

Running Costs: Canal and River Trust £9000 per annum, £45000 for 5 years

Capital Costs: Sulis work boat £120,000 Capital costs.

Additional Funds which have already been agreed:

Kennet and Avon Canal Trust , £1500 per annum, £7500 for 5 years

Funds which have been applied for but are awaiting a decision:

None

Volunteering hours:

6500 voluntary hours x £12 x 5 years cost equivalence = £390,000 for 5 years

Breakdown of the costs for the delivery of this project

A typical annual Budget and Activity 2022 - 2027	Amount
Volunteer capacity building, which will include Training Helmsman, Crew and H&S Training	£3,500
Work Kit: Work boots, Protective Equipment, goggles gloves	£1,000
Tools and Maintenance: This includes the purchasing of essential equipment such Stihl gardening equipment, lawnmower and hand tools	£2,000
Materials: Paint, Engine Fuel,	£1,000
Purchasing and Servicing Life Jackets	£1,000
Total per annum	£8,500
Total Contribution sought from the Bath CIL Fund	£42,500 for 5 years