

## East Coker Paddock Path Renewal Grant Application (Executive Decision)

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### Purpose of the Report

Councillors are asked to consider the awarding of a grant of £4,166.67 towards the East Coker Parish Council's project to renew a historic footpath at The Paddock.

### Public Interest

Awarding grants is a key way that SSSC supports and helps to deliver community projects sponsored by Parishes and voluntary community organisations in the towns and villages across the district.

East Coker Parish Council has applied to the Area South community grants programme for financial assistance with the costs to renew a historic footpath at The Paddock. The Locality Officer is submitting this report to enable the Area South Committee to make an informed decision about the application and has assessed the application.

### Recommendation

It's recommended that Councillors award a grant of £4,166.67, the grant to be allocated from the Area South capital programme and subject to SSSC standard conditions for community grants (appendix A).

### Application Details

Name of applicant:	East Coker Parish Council
Project:	Village Green footpath renewal
Total project cost:	£9,166.67 exc. VAT
Amount requested from SSSC:	£4,166.67
% amount requested	45%
Application assessed by:	Beth Poole

## Community Grants Assessment Score

The table below shows the grant scoring for this application. Applications must meet the minimum score of 22 to be considered for SSDC funding under Community Grants policies.

Category	Max Score available	Officer assessment score
A Supports Council Plan/Area Chapter	1	1
B Supports Equalities & Diversity	1	1
C Supports Environment Strategy	3	2
D Need for Project	10	8
E Capacity of Organisation	15	9
F Financial need	7	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>24</b>

## Background

East Coker Parish Council purchased land known as The Paddock from Coker Court circa 2003, which is a triangle of land between Church Terrace and Coker Marsh at the heart of its picturesque ham stone village through which a historic footpath runs. There are records of the footpath dating back at least 100 years, when locals were invited to admire over 200 species of lilacs planted in The Paddock by its former owners, so long as they kept to the path. Nowadays, the area is admired for its modest arboretum of trees and annual display of spring daffodils. It's also host to East Coker's annual lit Christmas tree, Carol Service and other village celebrations, such as VE Day and Jubilee events. East Coker's heritage makes the area a popular destination for walking and visitors, who can find a tourist information board and memorial bench at the higher end of the footpath in the Paddock. The area is well-used, though exact numbers are unknown, and it's not uncommon to see people picnicking there in fair weather or sat on the bench for rest and contemplation.

### Parish information

Parish*	East Coker Parish Council
Parish Population	1,667
No. of dwellings	796

\*Taken from the 2011 census profile

## The project

East Coker Parish Council aims to renew the hazardous, worn and well-trodden footpath located within The Paddock. The footpath provides off-road access between local amenities including St Michael's and All Angels Church and The Helyar Arms Public House, and to sites of historical interest including the Almshouses and Coker Court, as well as linking two public rights of way, namely Y9/28 and Y9/8, either side of the busy, unpaved Coker Marsh road. The area is unlit at night, making both routes particularly hazardous. See Appendix B for mapping and images.

The project will involve removing approximately 118 sq. meters of existing pathway, and replacing it with a permeable resin-bound surface laid over a compacted under surface grid. This method is said to be used extensively by the National Trust at their properties, and has been carefully chosen to preserve the character and heritage of the local area, whilst offering a smooth and even surface that will cater to all user groups, and enabling surface rainwater to effectively run off or soak away.

## Local support / evidence of need

The footpath is showing clear signs of significant wear, weathering, erosion and deterioration. The surface is uneven with sharp, loose stones and deep hollows concealed underfoot by rotting leaf matter and water that is able to collect within the hollows. This presents a hazard of injury to users from slips, trips and falls, with increased risk to people with reduced mobility and those reliant on walking aids. The uneven surface also impedes access to people using wheeled aids, such as mobility scooters, wheelchairs or pushchairs, meaning that these people have to take the alternative route on the busy, unpaved road, near to a blind bend and a brook. Numerous constituents have expressed complaint about the hazardous condition of the footpath, and the treacherous alternative of bypassing it on the unpaved road.

## Project costs

<b>Project costs</b>	<b>Cost £</b>
All labours, materials and plant hire: Remove existing path surface, approx. 118 sq. meters Reinstate existing path edging stones; replace any damaged Lay geo-tex membrane, compacted scalping, and grid Infill grid with clean stone Overfill with resin-bound topping	£9,166.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>£9,166.67</b>

## Funding plan

Funding source	Secured or pending	Amount £
East Coker Parish Council	Secured	£5,000.00
SSDC Community Grant	Pending	£4,166.67



## South Somerset District Council

<b>Total</b>		<b>£9,166.67</b>

### Conclusion and Recommendation

It is recommended that a grant of £4,166.67 is awarded.

### Financial Implications

The balance in the Area South Capital programme is £136,342. If the recommended grant of £4,166.67 is awarded, £132,175 will remain.

Grants are awarded subject to all other funding being secured before the commencement of the project and are on a 50% basis of the full project costs. Payment of the grant cannot exceed the grant award and is proportionally reduced if full project costs are under budget.

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### Council Plan Implications

Council Plan themes and Areas of focus for 2021/22

Environment:

- Enhance the quality of the environment and its resilience and ability to adapt to climate change in partnership with our communities and businesses
- Initiate and support actions and infrastructure to encourage a shift to low carbon transport options including walking, cycling and electric mobility

Healthy, Self-reliant Communities:

- Work with partners to support people in improving their physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Enable quality cultural, leisure and sport activities

Area South Chapter:

- Support a range of improvements to community facilities through S106 and Community grants
- Improving opportunities for non-car transport including walking and cycling

### Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

None identified.



## Equality and Diversity Implications

<i>An Equality Impact Relevance Check Form has been completed in respect of the Proposal?</i>	Yes
<i>The Impact Relevance Check indicated that a full EIA was required?</i>	No
<i>If an EIA was <b>not</b> required please attach the Impact Relevance Check Form as an Appendix to this report and provide a brief summary of its findings in the comments box below.</i>	
<i>If an EIA <b>was</b> required please attach the completed EIA form as an Appendix to this report and provide a brief summary of the result of your Equality Impact Assessment in the comment box below.</i>	
<b>Additional Comments</b>	
The project will increase accessibility of the open space to people with the protected characteristics of age, disability and gender (female carers of people with limited/reduced mobility), and aims to be inclusive of all characteristics.	

## Background Papers

Appendix: Equality Impact Assessment

## Appendix A

### Standard conditions applying to all SSDC Community Grants

#### The applicant agrees to: -

- Notify SSDC if there is a material change to the information provided in the application.
- Start the project within six months of the grant offer and notify SSDC of any changes to the project or start date as soon as possible.
- Confirm that all other funding sources have been secured before starting the project, if these were not already in place at the time of the application.  
Acknowledge SSDC assistance towards the project in any relevant publicity about the project (e.g. leaflets, posters, websites, and promotional materials) and on any permanent acknowledgement (e.g. plaques, signs etc.).
- Work in conjunction with SSDC officers to monitor and share the success of the project and the benefits to the community resulting from SSDC's contribution to the project.
- Provide a project update and/or supply before and after photos if requested
- Supply receipted invoices or receipts which provide evidence of the **full** cost of the project so that the grant can be released.
- Complete an evaluation survey when requested after the completion of the project.
- Note that they cannot apply for another community grant for the same project within a 3 year period of this award.

#### Standard conditions applying to buildings, facilities and equipment

- Establish and maintain a “sinking fund” to support future replacement of the building / facility / equipment as grant funding is only awarded on a one-off basis.
- Use the SSDC Building Control Service when buildings regulations are required.
- Incorporate disabled access and provide an access statement where relevant.

#### Additional conditions applying to Play & Facilities

- All play equipment considered for purchase will have passed an EN1176 test.
- All play equipment installed will have Impact Absorbing Surfacing (safety surfacing) installed to EN1177 standard.
- All play equipment installed will have a Post Installation Inspection completed by a fully trained person.
- Ensure that the play area is inspected and maintained in accordance with EN1176 or a successive standard
- Provide good quality signage to buildings and facilities.

#### Special conditions

*For example where an applicant has not provided all necessary information in the application and you are happy to wait for it eg access review; planning permissions. Or where some further encouragement could be given to do X or Y in future. Or to secure a definite outcome in the long term should the project fold, perhaps where land or buildings are concerned.*