



Parish / Community Caretaker Scheme Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main purpose of a Parish Caretaker?

The caretaker can carry out regular maintenance work around the Parish and generally make the area a nice place to live and visit.

What tasks can LEADER fund a Caretaker to do?

- Grass cutting
- Spraying weeds
- Liaison with service providers (e.g. fallen branches/flooding)
- Providing advice and directions to tourists
- Drainage clearance
- Road sweeping
- Snow clearance
- Dealing with hazards
- Cleaning off sets/drainage
- Control of saplings from verges
- Control of ragwort and thistles
- Maintaining verges, including cutting and small wild flower planting schemes.
- Pot hole maintenance/monitoring
- Vegetation control
- Minor surface repairs
- Install/maintain signs and way markers
- Assist with Open Access Management
- Car park areas, seats and bus shelters.
- Small scale improvements, litter control and maintenance of these areas
- Maintenance of public walls
- Litter picking
- Small scale tree planting schemes

What are the benefits of having the caretaker as a local service provider?

- Employing a local person which means there is less travelling to work.
- Someone who could wear 'Ranger' type clothing and could be seen as someone who visitors could approach.
- Own area of responsibility. The caretaker will develop a good local knowledge and will become known to the residents.

Can we get the caretaker to carry out work that is normally done by a local authority?

Yes, the caretaker is able to do this. However, LEADER is unable to fund the time a caretaker would spend carrying out any work that is the *statutory responsibility* of the Parish, District or County councils.

Do we have to employ the caretaker?

Whilst it is an option for your Parish Council to directly employ the caretaker, the caretaker can also be self-employed and the work contracted to them. This can make it easier for a Parish Council to manage the scheme.

Can we ask the caretaker to work on privately owned land?

Yes, provided there is some public benefit and the landowner is in agreement.

What support can LEADER provide?

The LEADER programme is able to fund 75% of the costs in year 1 (2011), 50% of the costs in year 2 (2012) and 25% in year 3 (2013). It is expected that the remaining costs will be covered by the Parish Council, either through the Parish precept or by obtaining additional grants. Unfortunately, there will be no funding available from LEADER after 2013.

When can we apply for LEADER funding?

Applications are now being accepted. The deadline for applications is **17th September 2010** will allow your parish to receive funding towards the first three years of your caretaker scheme (starting in January 2011 and ending in December 2013).

Where can we find an application form?

Application forms, guidance notes and criteria are available on our website – www.moorscoastandhills.org.uk/parish-caretaker-scheme/

Can we use existing Parish maintenance budgets to provide the match funding required?

Yes, Parish Council funds are eligible as match funding.

Can we use the grant to buy equipment for use by the caretaker?

No, either the Parish Council or caretaker must provide their own equipment.

Does the Parish Council need to fund the cost of any materials required by the caretaker?

Yes, the Parish Council would be responsible for purchasing any materials required.

Do Parishes have to follow a recruitment procedure for the caretaker job?

There are no formal procedures required by LEADER but we would encourage applicants to obtain three quotes where using a contractor, with a robust selection procedure to enable a final decision. Where the Parish Council will employ a caretaker we would encourage use of a formal recruitment and selection procedure.

Can Parishes submit a joint application?

Yes, we would welcome any parishes that wish to work together but you must be able to demonstrate how this will work.

Is Health and Safety very important?

Yes, the Parish has a duty of care to the caretaker under Health and Safety legislation even if the caretaker is working on a contract.

How may hours can our caretaker work?

This will depend on the funding available, the number of villages working together, the size of the village, the tasks the caretaker would be required to do etc. Most Parish Caretakers work between 5-10 hours per week.