

**PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT FUND
INFORMATION FOR CLUBS
OCTOBER 2008**

1. INTRODUCTION

The Planning and Environment Fund is a fund established and funded by the BGA (through member clubs' affiliation fees) to assist clubs which are at risk in the context of planning, environmental or similar developments and may need financial help to fight legal challenges or to support a complex planning application or appeal.

2. STRUCTURE OF THE FUND

The Fund is governed by a Trust Deed, which is drafted in broad terms, to enable the Trustees to use their discretion in deciding whether to offer funding to any particular case. The Trust refers to "assisting or promoting the aims and objectives of member clubs and/or the development of civil and/or recreational aviation in matters of an environmental nature, including matters involving town and country planning regulations and controls".

3. INTERPRETATION

The Trustees have recently reviewed the interpretation of the Trust Deed and have agreed a number of general principles.

1. The Fund is for the purpose of funding professional fees, rather than capital purchases.
2. The Fund is not intended to assist Clubs with general development, which they should be planning and providing for in the normal course of their operations. The Trustees recognise that such development is necessary and important, but the PEF will not be available to fund it.
3. Cases where the Trustees would expect to offer funding (subject to the nature of the application being satisfactory in other respects) include:
 - a. Where a club is losing its site and needs assistance with planning permission and similar work, to establish a new site.
 - b. Where a club is at risk of loss of amenity on its present site, due to neighbouring developments, and needs to fight a planning case to retain the use of the current site. Examples of this would include windfarms, significant buildings or other obstructions planned in such close proximity as to threaten a club's safe operations.
4. A precautionary action by a club to head off possible future problems might be eligible for funding, depending on the full circumstances.
5. Where a club is forced to build or develop facilities to comply with unavoidable external pressure, such as new regulations, consideration would be given to funding.
6. The likely success or failure of a planning application or other case is not considered to be a critical factor in the process of deciding on a funding application, unless the case is clearly and objectively completely unsustainable. Subject to the application being satisfactory in other respects, funds would be made available.

7. In all cases any offer of a grant would be subject to sufficient funds being available in the Planning and Environment Fund.

4. APPLICATIONS

Clubs that wish to make an application to the PEF should do so to the Chairman of Trustees, Diana King, by post or email through the BGA Office.

There is no formal application form, but clubs applying should prepare a brief business case for their application, covering the following points:

- explain the circumstances of the case
- outline actions taken and progress so far
- the timescale and degree of urgency
- the potential benefits to the club
- conversely, the threats or disadvantages to the club if it is not granted the relevant permission
- an outline of the anticipated costs
- a summary of the club's financial situation
- the process that is intended
- details of the expert advisers that you propose to use
- any unusual circumstances
- any aspects which could create a precedent for the benefit of other clubs or British gliding in general.

On receipt of an application, the trustees confer and make a decision, usually within a couple of weeks. If a grant is agreed, an offer is made to the club, specifying any conditions of the grant. The grant is normally paid in arrears, on production of receipts and a brief report on the outcome.

The BGA Development Officers and Diana King are available to advise clubs on a proposed application, in order to maximise the chances of good quality applications and to reduce the number of rejections.

Diana King
21 January 2009