

Item

Environmental Improvement Programme Project Submission Summary Report (2023) for Discussion

To: West Central Area Committee:

16 November 2023

Report by:

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Wards affected:

Castle, Market and Newnham

Key Decision: No

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report details the Environmental Improvement (EIP) applications and ideas received for 2024 funding for projects in the West / Central Area. The Area Committee can comment on the applications and make recommendations. The area-based recommendations made by all the area committees and those put forward for city-wide strategic funding will be included in overall recommendations report to be considered by the Executive Councillor for Open Spaces and City Services, for an out of cycle decision on behalf of the Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.2 The report provides information on eligibility, funding criteria and funding budgets for the Environmental Improvement Programme.

2. Recommendations

The West / Central Area Committee is recommended to:

- i. To note the EIP budget allocation for West / Central Area for 2023/24 and for Strategic EIP see 3.4,

- ii. To consider the new EIP ideas and projects submitted for West / Central Area, against the EIP Funding availability and the eligibility criteria (Appendix B - Table 1),
- iii. Consider the recommendations made in the Appendix B; Tables 1 and 2, discuss, and clearly outline the committee's priorities in line with the available area EIP funding, for consideration by the Executive Councillor for Open Spaces and City Services.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Council's Environmental Improvement Programme (EIP) has been operating as a rolling programme since 2004. The programme budget, which has been £170,000 per annum for the most recent period up to 2020/21. In 2020/21, Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee approved restructuring the programme budget, allocating £70,000 pa to a Strategic programme (which all Area Committees can bid towards) and £100,000 pa devolved between the four Area Committees (on a per capita basis) for Local project bids with the decision on both Area and Strategic bids now devolved to the Executive Councillor for Open Spaces and City Services. The current EIP eligibility criteria are set out along with the programme application form in **Appendix A**.
- 3.2 The programme has been subject to periodic review to improve flexibility, ensure good value and help speed up project delivery. That said, there have been delivery difficulties with much of the programme which was put on hold for 2020/21 and 2021/22, due to the impact of the Covid pandemic and the need to redirect resources towards Covid response and recovery.
- 3.3 As referred to in 3.1 above, there are now two forms of EIP funding:
 - **Local Area:** With a budget of £100,000 pa, which is devolved and divided between the four Area Committees (South, East, West/Central and North), in proportion to the size of each Area's population. Committees consider which projects in their area they recommend for funding, up to a project value of £5,000 (or £10,000 if strongly supported).
 - **Strategic:** With a budget of £70,000 pa, this element of the programme is dedicated to priorities the Council has identified as being important across all areas of the city and which are aligned to the Corporate Plan and supporting strategies such as the Tree and Biodiversity Strategies, plus the Herbicide Reduction Plan. This includes enhancing tree canopy,

improving biodiversity and benches (that promote community/ social interaction).

- 3.4 Based on the devolved Area Committee Local budget, there is a total of £20,373 available for West / Central Area as a proportion to the size of its population and £70,000 for citywide Strategic EIP.
- 3.5 An open application process for project bids within the city was started on the 28th June 2023 and closed on the 17th August 2023. There was also an opportunity to select any ideas put forward and like or comment on them, this ran until the 28th September 2023. The opportunities to submit project bids was advertised, via a press release and on the Council's website through the current consultations page with links through to Citizenlab (the Council's community consultation and engagement platform).
- 3.6 West / Central Area Committee members are asked to consider the projects included in Appendix B and after considering the funding parameters, eligibility and known public support (indicated from the Citizenlab platform) to make clear recommendations on priority projects for the area EIP funding, to be considered by the Executive Councillor.
- 3.7 Recommended projects will be included in a final recommendation report and include both EIP Local area funded projects and proposed Strategic projects.
- 3.8 Following consideration of the final recommendation report by the Executive Councillor for Open Spaces and City Services the approved bids will be published in early 2024.
- 3.9 Following publication of approved projects, project delivery will commence through the Environmental Services - Project Delivery Team throughout 2024 and 2025, in liaison with project proposers and local ward councillors.
- 3.10 Those unsuccessful Local Area project bids, along with any Strategic project bids, supported by Area Committees but unable to be afforded this year, might be considered in any further available funding round if reapplied for (subject to annual budget setting/ any available budget underspends), alongside any new applications received.

3.11 The current status of EIP projects in the West Central Area and other areas can be viewed [here](#),

4. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

The current EIP has an approved capital budget allocation of £170,000 per annum from 2021/22 (funding re-phasing from 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24 to 2024/25 subject to annual budget setting).

(b) Staffing Implications

Historically a small number of projects have proven difficult to develop and deliver and have had a disproportionate impact on staffing resource in comparison with other programme work. The programme needs to be managed and delivered within the existing funded EIP programme management staffing resource (2 FTE).

(c) Equality and Poverty Implications

EIP project bids have historically been prioritised across all areas proportionate to population and in accordance with locally identified need. The impact of all EIP projects on Equality Act 'protected groups' is assessed at the design/planning stage of each approved project. All hard infrastructure schemes are designed to national standards to accommodate the needs of those with physical impairments, including mobility, sight and hearing. The overall impact of the programme is considered positive.

(d) Environmental Implications

The programme aims to preserve and improve the quality of the natural and built public realm environment across Cambridge, in a manner that does not contribute towards climate change and leaves a positive legacy for future generations. The Council has declared both a Climate and Biodiversity Emergency and there is increased focus on climate change mitigation and adaptation and biodiversity protection and net gain. The overall impact of the programme on the environment within Cambridge is therefore rated as +M (positive; Medium).

(e) Procurement Implications

The programme projects are either delivered in-house, utilising existing internal resource within Environmental Services, or externally, via existing framework

contract arrangements. To ensure value for money, the larger Strategic programme schemes may be delivered through competitive tender processes.

(f) Community Safety Implications

The programme is designed to deliver local public realm environmental improvements and foster increased pride of place and community cohesion. Several local area projects have been delivered in association with local community and voluntary groups. As a result, the programme is considered to have a positive impact on community safety.

5. Consultation and communication considerations

The Citizenlab engagement tool has been used to canvass local people directly and further involve and engage all sections of the public in the Council's decision-making processes. All the programme's projects are consulted on at the planning/ design stage, with the level/ type of consultation determined by and proportionate to the nature, scale, and scope of the proposed project. With much of the programme being small-scale projects, it is imperative that the proportionate principle continues to be followed.

6. Background papers

- Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee Agenda and Minutes 21st March 2019.
<https://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=476&MId=3566&Ver=4>
- Current status of EIP funded projects included in:
<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/environmental-improvement-programme>

7. Appendices and Tables

Appendix A – EIP application form and eligibility criteria,

Appendix B – EIP project submissions, recommendations for 2024 West / Central Area, and strategic programme information.

8. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on this update report please contact:

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Appendix A

Environmental Improvement Programme (EIP)

2024 Year Project Ideas

Proposal/ideas are open from the 28th June 2023 until the 17 August 2023. Submission ideas are unlikely to be accepted following the 17 August 2023. Following this ideas submission phase through our [engagement platform](#), you can select any ideas put forward and either like or dislike them to a maximum of 10. This stage will run from the 22nd of August until the 28th September 2023.

First Name

Surname

Email Address
(not to be shared
with public) so
we can contact
you for more
project details if
your idea is
supported

Location of suggested
Environmental Improvement -
Street/Greenspace name or
nearest postcode

Title - What: Issue/Problem/Improvement – please give a title to idea and what your idea is likely to achieve:

Description - How: Suggested Solution – please outline how you feel your objectives might be best met e.g., improve biodiversity on Such and Such Street – Plant wildflower grasses on greenspace on corner outside number 1 Such and Such Street and change grass cutting regime:

Outcomes - Why: Such and Such Street is part of an important Local Nature network corridor, it will help with health and wellbeing of local people, improve the environment, contribute towards secure nature species for the future.

Who: Please outline who or which Group or local Councillors are supporting the project. Whether group of residents are likely to be engaged and assist in establishing the project for example for wildflowers when initially planted they need some intensive looking after for first two or three months e.g., watering and weeding until they get established.

Proposed Budget - Not compulsory - But may outline items required, and possibly an approximate cost of these giving an approx. budget requirement - note Officers may add in estimate costs or change any costs inputted based on experience of delivering projects.

Environmental Improvement Programme (EIP): Eligibility Criteria

Essential Criteria:

- Projects should have a direct, lasting, and noticeable improvement to the appearance of a street or area.
- Projects should be publicly visible and accessible.
- Should the scheme be on private land, the owners' permission must be granted – unless there are exceptional circumstances by which the Area Committee may wish to act unilaterally, with full knowledge and responsibility for the implication of such action.
- Projects must ensure low future maintenance costs / liabilities.

Desirable criteria:

- Active involvement of local people.
- The project will benefit a large number of local people.
- Additional 'partnership' funding available.
- Ease and simplicity of implementation.
- Potential for meeting key policy objectives (e.g. improves biodiversity, improves community safety or contributes to equal opportunities).

Ineligible for funding:

- Where a readily available alternative source of funding is available.
- Revenue projects (i.e. management and maintenance of existing facilities).
- Projects that have already received Council funding (unless it can be clearly demonstrated that this would not be 'top up' funding).
- Works that the City or County Council are under an immediate obligation to carry out (e.g. repair of dangerous footways)
- Play areas (S106 funding should fund these facilities)

Other Information:

The following categories of work were agreed as being eligible for funding by the Area Committees:

- Works in areas of predominately council owned housing

Projects we generally fund and deliver from EIP Area funding are:

Pathways, wayfinding lighting on recreation space, landscaping, Street Trees, benches on recreation space and highway, community noticeboards, fencing.

EIP Strategic project funding key themes:

Strategic EIP allocation is for initiatives to make better use of the city's green amenity spaces and verges, enhancing tree canopy, encouraging social interaction in our open spaces and encouraging biodiversity. Applications of this type are more likely to be funded from Strategic EIP.

Appendix B – EIP project submissions, recommendations for 2024 West / Central Area, and strategic programme information.

Please consider that the funding available is **£20,373** and the 10 project submissions just for the Area EIP are estimated to cost **£41,300**, as set out in the table 1 below.

Prior to the committee the project list and details were sent out to ward Councillors for the West/Central Area with the advice that Councillors consider the projects put forward giving an opportunity to indicatively prioritise which ones they would wish to proceed. Within the Table below there is an Officer rating based on Officer comments and analysis, table 2 puts the green and green/ amber rated projects into Officer recommendations for approval. However, this is to be discussed with the final recommendation for project funding approval coming from Area Committee Board Members. Where applicants have estimated costs of works, or not included, Officers may have added or adjusted to appropriate estimated amounts.

Table 1 - Summarised project submissions, support and Officer ratings for 2024 West/Central Area:

No.	Scheme Title	Scheme Description (Shortened)	Proposed by	Ward	Est. Cost £	Cost Deliverability Eligible Rating	Persons in Support and neg. comments	Officer funding suggestion (Summarised Text)	Link to Application
WC1 – 2024	Replacement of dead and removed Tree, Burleigh Street	To replant a tree in the same position although would still require an engineered tree pit. Trees in such a heavily pedestrianised area offer many benefits including shade, shelter, greenery (wellbeing), softening of the hard built environment, biodiversity, nesting, and roosting.	Aboriculture Team	Market	7.5k	Amber	Thumbs up 8 and 1 Negative Comment	Not recommended – Planning Application now received for Grafton Centre and surrounding redevelopment	Link to Application
WC2 – 2024	Protect a beautiful ancient willow and help biodiversity recover	At Grantchester meadows motorists park under a willow and have now compacted the earth over the tree roots. The proposed solution is to lay cut tree trunks along the north side of the path to prevent parking and to sow wildflower seeds and water and weed around the willow to speed regrowth and regain biodiversity.	Local Resident	Newnh am	4k	Green / Amber	Thumbs up 47 and 3 negative comments	Recommended – Strongly supported, but note it is not in the City Councils ownership and therefore not responsibility.	Link to Application
WC3 - 2024	Turn a dank corner into a pleasant place to rest awhile	Corner of the Coton Footpath and Wilberforce Road is neglected with heavy vegetation, the bench needs to be refurbished, the trees and shrubs need to be trimmed and flowers planted, to make it a place where people can enjoy.	Local Resident	Newnh am	2.5k	Amber / Red	No comments or thumbs up	Not recommended – This project could be delivered through Community Engagement Team also ownership not City Council	Link to Application
WC6 - 2024	Histon Road Rec Biodiversity Improvements	Improving Biodiversity on Histon Recreation Ground. The project proposes to renew and add additional bird and bat boxes, create areas of more appropriate meadow via native perennial turf meadow and introduce hard wood logs and possibly beetle towers, e.g., sunk vertically into the ground, drilled for bees and invertebrates.	Cllr Nestor	Castle	4k	Green	Thumbs up 14	Recommended – works or items need to be capital expenditure	Link to Application
WC7 - 2024	Neighbourhood Access to Christs Pieces	Creation of a formal entry onto Christs Pieces through the continuous fence along Emmanuel Road to recognise the strong 'desire line' and the provision of a soft surface path connecting to the existing path network on the green space.	Cllr Bick	Market	5k	Amber	Thumbs up 13	Not recommended - Soft path conflicts with tree roots and alternative access point less than 100m away.	Link to Application
WC8 - 2024	Biodiversity in Ascension Parish Burial Ground	To protect and enhance the biodiversity of the burial ground's delicate habitat, improve people's enjoyment and access to this environment, and support volunteers who help maintain the burial ground. The measures proposed include creation of a small pond, woodcrete bird boxes, paved area in front of soon notice boards, Sheffield hoop bicycle stands, tools for with general purpose biodiversity management, dowels on gravestones to protect volunteers and visitors	Friends to the Parish of the Ascension Burial Ground	Castle	3.5k	Green	Thumbs up 18	Recommended – works or items need to be capital expenditure	Link to Application

No.	Scheme Title	Scheme Description (Shortened)	Proposed by	Ward	Est. Cost £	Cost Deliverability Eligible Rating	Persons in Support and neg. comments	Officer funding suggestion (Summarised Text)	
WC9 - 2024	Improve biodiversity and provide additional seating at Cockcroft Place	Improve biodiversity at Cockcroft Place by planting new shrubs and wildflowers. These would be placed near the Clarkson Road entrance, on the east side, to be able to also be enjoyed by residents not living at Cockcroft Place. Provide additional seating with wooden benches to encourage community cohesion near to the main site entrance.	Cllr Holloway	Newnh am	4k	Amber	Thumbs up 3	Not recommended - on private road and housing area already landscaped limited biodiversity gains	Link to Application
WC 10 - 2024	Creation of a Biodiversity Hub at St Clement's Church in central Cambridge	St Clement's church in central Cambridge the churchyard is managed by a small team from the church and the surrounding parish. They wish to expand their work by creating a "Biodiversity Hub" /potting shed in the churchyard, both to promote local interest in the churchyard ecosystem and provide resources such as plants and seeds to give to residents to enrich their gardens. It is the intention to build further involvement through contacts and by involving other local churches who have expressed an interest in joining the project which we see as a great opportunity for creating a city centre churchyard biodiversity network with St Clement's as its Hub.	Local Community Group lead	Market	4k	Green / Amber	Thumbs up 24	Recommended - works or items need to be capital expenditure	Link to Application
WC 11 - 2024	Improve local biodiversity & increase habitat for pollinators at Storey's Way	Plant wildflowers along the verges in Storey's Way (Maddingly Rd end) to improve local biodiversity and provide much needed habitat for pollinators.	Local Resident	Castle	2k	Amber / Red	Thumbs up 2	Not recommended - Areas not in Council/Public ownership. Contact made with University Biodiversity Promotions Team.	Link to Application
WC 12 - 2024	Improve local biodiversity & increase habitat for pollinators within Windsor rd	Plant wildflowers along the verges in Windsor Road to improve local biodiversity and provide much needed habitat for pollinators.	Local Resident	Castle	4.8k	Green / Amber	Thumbs up 2 and 8 negative comments	Recommended - Work with Community Engagement Team and happy bee streets to look at options to install turf to resident selected verge areas.	Link to Application

Table 2 - Officer recommendations for project approval from the West/Central Area EIP (Green and green/amber rated projects):

Project Number	Scheme Title	Project Value £	Available £
WC2 - 2024	Protect a beautiful ancient willow and help biodiversity recover	4,000	
WC6 - 2024	Histon Road Rec Biodiversity Improvements	4,000	
WC8 - 2024	Biodiversity in Ascension Parish Burial Ground	3,500	
WC10 - 2024	Creation of a Biodiversity Hub at St Clement's Church in central Cambridge	4,000	
WC12 - 2024	Improve local biodiversity & increase habitat for pollinators within Windsor rd	4,800	
TOTAL WEST CENTRAL AREA EIP		£20,300	£20,373

Table 3: Project submissions for West / Central Area EIP - rejected:

No.	Scheme Title	Scheme Description (Shortened)	Proposed by	Ward	Est. Cost £	Cost Deliverability Eligible Rating	Why Rejected	Link to Application
WC4 – 2024	Upgrade Pump out facilities at Jesus Green	To refurbish the pump out facilities so that it can provide clean facilities for river users, a larger area for waste disposal from portable toilets and a pump out mechanism that can accept card payment.	Local Resident	Market	??k	Rejected	The project doesn't fit within the EIP criteria as it would not have a direct, lasting and noticeable improvement to the appearance of a street or area and wouldn't likely be publicly visible and accessible	Link to Application
WC5 – 2024	Eddington Lake Ecological Regeneration Proposal	To improve the biodiversity of Lake and surrounds.	Local Resident	Outside City Boundary	7.5k	Rejected	The project doesn't fit within the EIP criteria as it is outside the boundary of Cambridge City.	Link to Application

Table 4: Projects For Strategic Funding. (The projects recommended are an equal value to the Strategic EIP funding allocation)

No.	Scheme Title	Scheme Description (Summarised)	Proposed by	Ward	Estimated Cost	Cost Deliverability Eligibility Rating	Persons in Support and neg. comments	Status	Link to Application
					£	R/A/G			
sE6 - 2024	Whitehill Estate Green Corners - from "no ball games" to cheerful spaces	Implement a variety of improvements to be shared across several green corners of the Whitehill Estate for the benefit of people and biodiversity. Improvements include seating for relaxation, sensory garden(s) for residents with disabilities, night blooming plants for nocturnal species such as moths, wildflowers to attract pollinators, and communal food growing to promote community cohesion.	Cllr Bennett	Abbey	7,500	Amber	Thumbs up 9	Not recommended	Link to Application
sE13 - 2024	Trees needed in barren streets	Plant trees in the streets of north Petersfield where there are currently none to provide a natural habitat for many animals, birds, and insects, harness storm water, reduce noise and light pollution and improve the overall wellbeing of people, wildlife, the environment, and the street scene.	Cllr R Robertson	Petersfield	15,000	Amber	Thumbs up 53 and 3 negative comments	Not recommended	Link to Application
sE18 – 2024	Increase biodiversity and tree cover on Cherry Hinton Road	To plant a number of trees on Cherry Hinton Road as it has long stretches without trees and between Perne and Coleridge Road has wide pavements on one side. There are also two patches of grass, one outside Kwik-fit and one on the corner of Derwent Close which could have some planting to increase biodiversity and improve the look and feel of the road for residents.	Cllr R Moore	Coleridge	15,000	Green / Amber	Thumbs up 31	Recommended	Link to Application
sE26 - 2024	Improve and brighten up the whole area around the roundabout at Cromwell Road	Create colourful, welcoming, and habitat rich areas of planting on several small green spaces in Romsey Place to promote pollinator and other species and provide a sense of wellbeing and community cohesion among residents. Install seating to enable people to sit, relax, and enjoy the space(s)	Cllr Baigent	Romsey	5,000	Amber	Thumbs up 21	Not recommended	Link to Application
sN3 - 2024	Biodiversity Improvements on St Alban's Recreation Space	Improve the biodiversity and amenity value around the boundary edges of St Alban's Recreation Ground. Improvements could include invertebrate and wildflower banks, with the banks creating a wildflower seed bank, bee-mounds, additional tree planting, and social interaction through seating.	Project Development	Arbury	20,000	Green / Amber	Thumbs up 14	Recommended	Link to Application
sN5 and sN8 combined 2024	Biodiversity Improvements on Arbury Town Park	Improve the biodiversity and amenity value on the boundary areas of Arbury Town Park. Improvements could include invertebrate and wildflower banks, with the banks creating a wildflower seed bank, hedging along Arbury Road park-edge, bee-mounds, additional tree planting, and social interaction through seating. An access point created with lockable bollards or similar, to allow authorised vehicles onto the green space.	Project Development and Local Resident	Arbury	20,000	Green / Amber	Combined Thumbs up 51 and 1 Negative Comment	Recommended	Link to Application (1) Link to Application (2)
sN9 - 2024	Hedges for Kings Hedges - for Biodiversity and People Friendly Spaces.	Plant hedgerows to improve green spaces in Kings Hedges and provide a diverse sheltered sanctuary where insects, birds and mammals can thrive. Four locations are proposed (Along the south side of Hanson Court; in Arbury Town Park; The Pulley, close to the old hedging at the Apollo Way end; and grass bordered by Roxburgh Road, Northfield Avenue and Sackville Close).	Local Resident	Kings Hedges	10,000	Green / Amber	Thumbs up 36	Recommended	Link to Application
sN18 - 2024	Greening Gilbert Road Through Tree Planting	Plant trees along the south side of Gilbert Road at the Milton Road end, near The Fellows House Aparthotel to replace lost trees and plant new to re-green and reclaim this end of the road from further unsightly development, and to improve the wellbeing of people, wildlife, the environment, and the street scene.	Cllr S Carling	W Chesterton	5,000	Green / Amber	Thumbs up 40 and 7 Negative Comments	Recommended	Link to Application

No.	Scheme Title	Scheme Description (Summarised)	Proposed by	Ward	Estimated Cost	Cost Deliverability Eligibility Rating	Persons in Support and neg. comments	Status	Link to Application
City 4 - 2024	Citywide Happy Bee Street Biodiversity and Habitat Creation Projects	Create opportunity for residents to be able to undertake and manage small scale biodiversity improvements in their neighbourhoods across the city, including creation of wildflower meadows, benches, habitats (bees, invertebrates, and hedgehogs), tree planting, bulb planting and community garden areas (such as raised planters). This will involve making increasing use of green assets to reduce climate impacts, improve biodiversity, and promote social well-being.	Community Engagement Team	All	10,000	Amber	Thumbs up 11	Not recommended	Link to Application
City 5 - 2024	Citywide led Biodiversity, Habitat and Green Infrastructure Improvement Projects	Community led volunteer groups working with residents, businesses, and organisations to develop and enhance local community areas and growing spaces ensuring better value for money and reducing environmental impact by utilising local resources. Measures will reduce climate impacts, improve biodiversity, and promote social well-being and include benches (to increase social interaction), wildflower meadows, trees, and invertebrate (bees) and wildflower bank(s)/features, as well enhancing existing areas to support wildlife corridors. Many of these project interventions will incorporate and improve the availability of hedgehog habitats and highways across the city.	Community Engagement Team	All	10,000	Amber	Thumbs up 6	Not recommended	Link to Application
City 7 - 2024	Fingerposts advising the public of the locations of City Centre public toilets	Install directional signage to enable residents and visitors to access public facilities/conveniences easily and quickly ensuring their visit to the city centre is a comfortable one. Signage will improve the offer of the city, enable people to navigate external spaces more easily and efficiently, improve pedestrian flow, and create a more pleasant experience for all.	Parks Assets Team	City Centre	7,500	Amber	Thumbs up 6	Not recommended	Link to Application

Table 5 - Officer recommendations for project approval from the Strategic Funding (Green/amber rated projects):

Project Number	Scheme Title	Approved Value £
sE18 - 2024	Increase biodiversity and tree cover on Cherry Hinton Road	15,000
sN3 - 2024	Biodiversity Improvements on St Alban's Recreation Space	20,000
sN5/8 - 2024	Biodiversity Improvements on Arbury Town Park	20,000
sN9 - 2024	Hedges for Kings Hedges - for Biodiversity and People Friendly Spaces.	10,000
sN18 - 2024	Greening Gilbert Road Through Tree Planting	5,000
TOTAL OVERALL STRATEGIC EIP PROJECTS		£70,000

***Note:** Several projects were rejected as being ineligible for EIP funding if you wish to see a list of these please contact us and we will be happy to share these.

