



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

**Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local
Government**

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Julie Beilby
Chief Executive
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council

Dear Ms Beilby

Local Authorities Parks Improvement Funding

On 17 February, the Rt. Hon James Brokenshire, Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government announced £9.7 million funding to be allocated directly to all local authorities with the expectation the award be used to undertake remedial work and renovation of existing parks to enhance the green space available to their local communities.

The funding will enable **Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council** and all other local authorities to target funds to those parks in your local area in need of greatest repair and improvement.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (the Department) is issuing a grant of **£20,231** to **Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council** under powers in section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003. This will support work on those parks in your local area where you consider there is urgent need of refurbishment i.e. parks currently in disuse or at risk of closure due to health and safety concerns.

We recognise that **Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council** is best placed to understand where you should allocate the monies to create good quality green spaces within your local area. However, we would expect that working with parks managers and those within the council responsible for preserving your green spaces, funds will be targeted where there is an immediate need. Some examples of the work you might look to undertake might include:

- Renovating children's play areas, particularly where they have fallen into disuse or disrepair or where health and safety may be an issue;
- Replacing essential footpaths and benches that are potentially dangerous or represent a health and safety risk;
- Undertaking essential improvements to infrastructure – including the installation of gates and other barriers to address health and safety concerns;

- Improving areas in parks which are known to attract antisocial behaviour, graffiti or present other community safety concerns;
- Improving access to parks for all sections of the community - including disabled people;
- Improvements to maximise opportunities for local people to take part in physical activities - including multi-use games areas, improvements to playing fields and increasing opportunities for sports; and
- Creating inclusive spaces that encourage people to interact and meet, contributing to community cohesion.

Parks and green spaces are vibrant and inclusive locations for communities to socialise, volunteer, work, and exercise. The Government is committed to safeguarding the future of parks and green spaces, so they can be passed on to future generations and consider. This investment is one of the many ways the Government is supporting local authorities in delivering work to achieve this.

The Department will:

- Provide through a Section 31 grant to your authority **£20,231** to support work to deliver improvements to at least one park. **These funds will be paid into the local authority account on the 18 March 2019.**
- Issue a monitoring form three months from the date of the award allocation to inform our evaluation of the programme. We will assess the progress made on improvements undertaken by the local authority to demonstrate the value delivers outcomes compatible with the examples illustrated above.
- MHCLG will commit to visiting at least 10 % of the 353 local authorities awarded funds, within one year of the funding to review the outcomes from the project. This will enable the Department to undertake a review on the outcomes across a range of local authorities around the country i.e. urban, metropolitan areas and different parts of the country.

This grant and support provided will assist you in implementing the work to achieve the improvements necessary to improve quality standards in your local parks. We look forward to seeing the positive outcomes delivered by **Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council** as a result of the funding support.


Integration and Communities
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government