
Search and Rescue Fund Application Guidance

£60,000 for Support of operational Search and Rescue team(s) in West
Mercia

John Campion seeks Search and Rescue applications from organisations who:

- Are committed to saving lives and protecting communities.
- Are committed to providing a support service to vulnerable people in their time of crisis.
- Will develop a greater relationship with West Mercia Police, supporting and complementing operational activity with the Police Search Advisor Team.
- Have a strong passion for the promotion and education of water safety for West Mercia residents, with visibility at relevant professional network meetings.

Someone is reported missing every 90 seconds in the UK, and when there is concern for a person's safety it not only impacts upon loved ones but can be wide-felt in the community.

I am committed to protecting lives and saving those who may find themselves vulnerable or trapped in life threatening situations. As such, I am pleased to be opening this Search and Rescue grant and will be offering £60,000 to fund 3 years of support for delivery between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2025.

This is to ensure that Police operational responses to incidents across West Mercia are robust, and harness the skills, additional expertise and specialism offered by a Search and Rescue organisation, for those who need it most.

I hope with this grant we can mitigate some of the pain felt by families and the community when someone goes missing in suspicious or unexpected circumstances by ensuring any search is swift and broad, in the hope of reuniting and reconnecting a person missing as soon as possible, bringing them to safety.

I am resolute that, through this partnership working, we can make improvements to the safety of everyone within West Mercia and protect those who are at risk.



John Campion, Police and Crime Commissioner, West Mercia

Background

Regionally, our landscape includes quarries, remote hills, rivers & canals, lakes and woodlands. If a person is missing near one of these locations, it can present policing resource challenges, both in terms of staffing and equipment.

With considerable bodies of inland open water, all 5 local policing areas of West Mercia are also prone to significant flooding. Water safety kits were first introduced and distributed in 2006 to support areas within West Mercia, but the dangers posed by changing weather, injury or getting lost near open water remain.

Nationally in 2020, 456 people drowned across England and 631 across the whole of the UK. 6 people sadly drowned in the West Mercia region (3 in Worcestershire and 3 in Shropshire). Most drowning incidents occur in or around rivers, with drownings in the River Severn prominent, followed by the River Wye.

Locally Herefordshire and Worcestershire Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) have the highest incident figures in the country. Analysis shows that this is due to significant flooding events.

In 2017 the PCC provided funding to support the launch of the Home and Dry campaign. The campaign is driven by the PCC and supported by a network of agencies. The campaign remains committed to reducing the number of water deaths by collectively and extensively tackling the roots of the presenting issues, with emphasis on improved education around water safety, physical prevention, targeted work with the night time economy and mental health awareness.

In 2019/2020 West Mercia Police recorded 1529 missing Children and Young People and 1786 missing adults.

Factors including dementia, age, neuro-diverse needs, mental health, medication users/medical conditions, hikers/users of remote areas, frailty, being ill-equipped, bad weather and flash flooding can increase vulnerability.

In 2020/2021 West Mercia operational policing teams were supported on at least 69 occasions with incidents where there was a significant high threat risk to human life.

Search and rescue teams played a crucial role in these incidents by offering the emergency services specialist help and equipment, more often than not for a vulnerable adult.

What works?

A close relationship with West Mercia Police is vital in ensuring the success of search and rescue teams. The ability to provide experienced professionals as demand presents, to deal with missing persons, promote water safety and respond during flooding and civil-contingencies alleviates demand upon operational resource, reducing cost to the force for NPAS deployments, providing a greater visible presence in the community and providing a much better service to vulnerable people in their time of crisis.

Introduction to PCC Funding

The aim of the Search and Rescue grant is to support an organisation(s) that is committed to the safety of communities in West Mercia, helping to find people in danger, whilst cohesively working with relevant networks and providers on the wider approach to educate and promote water safety messages to the public.

The PCC is not prescriptive about the type of organisation(s) that will be funded through this grant, providing they meet the required outcomes and criteria for success measures below.

The 3 key areas of focus are:

- **RESPONSE** - Work well with Police on immediate and long-term missing person searches, flood response, public reassurance / support during high-profile missing-person searches and more.
- **PROMOTE** - Promoting water safety, ideally offering some form of easily accessible water safety training resource for the public or supporting.
- **REASSURE** - Providing a visible presence in the community with equipment resources and volunteers, offering a service to vulnerable people in their time of crisis, with input and support to relevant networks.

Intended outcomes

The PCC is seeking to achieve one or more of the following outcomes:

- Develop stronger partnerships between Police and the SAR team
- Increase safety in communities, especially for vulnerable people, or at locations posing risk
- Deploy rapidly to incidents with trained team members and equipment

- Attend civil contingencies and flooding.
- To align with the Commissioner's priorities in his new Safer West Mercia plan.

Purpose for funding

- The funding should be used to allow for the flexibility of members in order to concentrate on the support given to the West Mercia Police.
- To soften the burden of fundraising in order to concentrate on growing and training the search and rescue team.

Application deadline and grant term

A 'Search and Rescue Fund' application will need to be submitted by **21st January 2022**
Funding can be applied for from 1 April 2022 until 31 March 2025. The application package includes:

- Search and Rescue Application form;
- Search and Rescue Finance application;
- Search and Rescue Application guidance (this document)
- Search and Rescue Policy and Procedure

Please submit applications and supporting paperwork to: grants@westmercia.police.uk

Timetable

Stage	Key Date
Despatch Invitation to quote	W/C 13 December 2021
Deadline for submission of proposals	28 January 2022
Evaluation period	W/C 31 January 2022
Notification of award	14 February 2022
Commencement of grant	1 April 2022
End of grant	31 March 2025

Evaluation criteria

After the deadline, an initial eligibility/due diligence assessment and scoring process will be administered by the PCC's commissioning team. The assessment scoring definitions are defined below:

Assessment	Score	Interpretation
Fully meets the requirement	5	Outstanding evidence is provided meeting all relevant requirements/considerations. The response includes added value and innovation. There is full confidence in the bidders' ability to deliver this aspect.
Good	4	Good evidence is provided meeting most relevant requirements/considerations in this area. In addition the response provides reasonable confidence in the bidder's ability to deliver on this aspect.
Satisfactory	3	Acceptable evidence is provided meeting most of the relevant requirements/considerations in this area.
Limited Evidence	2	Some evidence is provided but there are important omissions.
Poor response	1	Very limited evidence of appropriate content (as applicable).
	0	Did not answer the question/scoring not required.