

LiveSmart Community Environmental Grant Programme 2021-22

Guidance Notes

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Author	P O' Brien

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1.0 Introduction

These guidelines provide information about the financial support available through the LiveSmart Community Environmental Grant Programme. They will help you and your organisation decide if the financial assistance offered is appropriate to support the project or activities that you are planning.

You may find it helpful to discuss your project with a member of the Environmental Resource Officer Team. Please email recycle@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk or telephone 028 2766 0248.

Covid-19

Please note responsibility remains with you, the applicant, to ensure that all event activities are permitted and comply with current and any future changes in Northern Ireland regulations, as set out in the Government's Coronavirus guidance specific to events and mass gatherings at the time of event planning/delivery.

Council reserves the right to withdraw funding if it is deemed that either during planning and/or at the point of the event delivery date the event is contravening the latest Northern Ireland Covid-19 guidance on events and mass gatherings. At the event delivery date if the event is contravening the latest Northern Ireland Covid-19 recommendations and therefore necessitates event cancellation, at that point only eligible costs accrued will be paid.

1.1 Purpose of Grant Programme

Our Borough is known worldwide for its beautiful scenery and amazing visitor experience. Council wants to preserve that for years and generations to come – this requires everyone making a conscious effort to live a more environmentally-friendly lifestyle.

The purpose of the LiveSmart Community Environmental Grant Programme is to provide small grants up to a maximum of £500 to local community and voluntary organisations. The grants are to give financial assistance to allow groups and organisations to: -

- (1) improve the general cleanliness in their local area, particularly in respect of litter
- (2) promote recycling, reuse and waste reduction
- (3) look at ways of reducing carbon footprint by taking simple, practical actions such as planting

Council has an already established LiveSmart Initiative, delivered by the Environmental Resource Officer Team, which aims to encourage, inform and involve all our residents, businesses and visitors to live more lightly on our planet by taking simple steps to protect our environment. LiveSmart Community Environmental Grant Programme is based on the idea that if every person in our Borough tries their best to live sustainably, the combined impact will be huge.

The LiveSmart Community Environmental Grant Programme will complement the LiveSmart Initiative by engaging local communities and raising environmental standards in places where people live, work, relax and spend time.

1.2 Overview of fund

Community groups and organisations are being encouraged and supported to keep their local area clean and tidy, promote recycling, reuse and waste reduction and have a positive impact on their carbon footprint. There are a number of specific objectives which applicants must address. Your application can address more than one objective but only one is necessary.

- **RecycleSmart:** aims to reduce waste by educating, engaging and inspiring us all to buy less, reuse more, recycle and compost.
- **LitterSmart:** aims to reduce litter through education, encouraging responsible disposal and supporting local people to carry out litter lifts.
- **ClimateSmart:** aims to reduce our carbon footprint by increasing our knowledge of sustainability and empowering change with simple, practical actions such as planting vegetables, fruit, native shrubs and pollinator plants

1.3 Levels of grant award.

LiveSmart Community Environmental Grant Programme	Maximum Grant Amount
Applicants can apply for 100% grant aid towards project costs	£500

The total amount available in the pot for grant-aid is £10,500. Applicants can request a grant up to a maximum of £500. You can only apply for one grant per year.

This is a competitive process and all grant awards will be determined based on merit.

In the event that the fund is oversubscribed only the top scoring projects will be offered an award.

Council reserves the right to reduce the amount of funding awarded if we do not consider that the amount applied for represents value for money.

Please Note: Groups will have to provide all evidence requested once the project expenditure is complete. This will include receipts, bank statements, or any other documentation deemed necessary. If requested documentation is not supplied, then clawback procedures will be initiated. Please do not apply for funding if you cannot supply these items.

1.4 General Principles

In line with Council’s Grant Funding Policy the overarching principle for all Council grant funding is that of meeting local needs which have been identified and prioritised by Council or by others but acknowledged by Council. Any activity that cannot be shown to meet the following basic requirements will not be provided with funding:

- Have a clearly identified need.
- Can deliver outcomes which meet this need.
- Deliver cost effective and quality service provision, fitting with the purpose and remit of the funding.
- Be delivered by a credible organisation with the capacity to deliver the project as stated.
- Reflect the statutory remit of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, aligning with Council's Corporate Plan, the relevant Service plan and that they can meet the specific criteria of the fund, in this instance the LiveSmart Community Environmental Grant Programme criteria.
- Applicants must demonstrate their commitment to promoting Good Relations and Equality of Opportunity.
- In the interests of transparency, equality and accountability, all applicants will have a right of appeal should their application be rejected.

1.5 Who Can Apply?

Organisations must be from within the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area. To be eligible for grant-aid, you will have to show that your organisation is a bona fide organisation that is well run and that it:

- Has a properly adopted "Governing Document" such as a constitution or memorandum and articles of association which clearly show that it is non-profit making and taking. Evidence that a constitution has been formally adopted must be supplied.
- Groups must demonstrate that they are well run and that they provide a voice for local concerns. The project for which you are seeking funding for must be inclusive, open to the whole community and adhere to democratic principles.
- **Only groups which meet the criteria can apply to the LiveSmart Community Environmental Grant Programme.**

If an organisation is satisfied that it is an eligible formally constituted organisation as outlined, it **MUST** be able to meet the following criteria:

- Be based in the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area or have their main activities based in the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area.
- Be committed to Equal Opportunities in terms of organisational policies and the delivery of services to those being served or represented.
- Have a constitution / governing document that has been adopted at a public meeting showing clearly defined purposes that are for the public benefit in line with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.
- Be non-party political and open to the full range of local opinion.

- Be able to demonstrate a fair and equitable ethos through established aims and objectives in accordance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998).
- Be able without prejudice to the obligations of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998), to demonstrate regard to the desirability of promoting Good Relations between persons of different religious belief, political belief, political opinion or racial group.
- Be accountable through an established constitution, open membership, committee elections, accounting procedures and Annual General Meetings. The Office Bearing positions of Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer should be held as a minimum.
- Have appropriate and adequate insurance cover for all activities and all actions proceeding such as costs, claims, demands and liabilities whatsoever, arising from all or any of the group activities. To also ensure that any individuals or organisations worked with are properly insured.
- Ensure that all group activities abide by the law and that the necessary permissions are obtained for activities from the appropriate body/authority.
- Ensure that Child Protection Policy / Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures are in place and adhered to as and where appropriate.
- Have a bank/building society account and keep a proper record of group accounts.
- Be able to produce an annual statement of independently audited or certified accounts or be able to present a bank statement in the case of newly established groups.
- Have arrangements in place for dispersing the group's funds if they dissolve/ end.
- Agree to Causeway Coast and Glens Council's promotion, monitoring, evaluation, and training procedures as required.

1.6 What can be funded?

Applicants can apply for grants of up to 100% of costs up to a maximum of £500 towards project costs including small items of equipment.

Example projects might include:

- Community litter collection and prevention
- Fruit and vegetable planting
- Gardening projects e.g. planting of pollinator plants
- Native shrub planting
- Recycling, reuse and waste prevention projects

The types of expenditure that the grant can contribute towards include:

- Materials & signage
- Insurance and other essential operating costs
- Small Capital items such as gardening tools
- Professional fees

- Hire of equipment
- PPE
- Operating costs

1.7 What cannot be funded?

In general, the following will not normally be eligible for funding from the LiveSmart Community Environmental Scheme:

- Proposals that do not directly benefit Causeway Coast & Glens Council residents.
- Applications for funding which are considered to be the responsibility of another statutory organisation or Council fund.
- Retrospective expenditure where services/items have already been obtained and paid.
- Applications received after the closing date specified in the promotional literature.
- Applications where the applicant will have a personal financial benefit.
- Costs that are not auditable e.g. cash payments unsupported by an approved petty cash system.
- Costs towards banking charges and / or repayment of debt.
- Costs that can be claimed back from elsewhere e.g. VAT.
- Festivals and Fun days (as there is a separate Community Festivals Fund).
- Salary costs
- Alcohol
- Gratuities, gifts or prizes
- Trips

If you are unsure if the project you have in mind is eligible, please contact a member of the Environmental Resource Officer team at recycle@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk or telephone 028 2766 0248.

1.8 Exclusions

In general, it is important to note that this funding programme will not normally award grants to the following:

- Individuals
- Groups operating outside the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area
- Organisations with charitable fundraising as their main focus
- Organisations who have substantial, demonstrable reserves

Applications will be weighted in accordance with level of deprivation based on the Multiple Deprivation Measures 2017. This is to ensure that support is provided to those areas in most need.

Q8: Please tell us how you will publicise your activities to ensure that those who will most benefit are aware of the project.

Q8: Please provide a breakdown of all costs for your project and how much you are requesting from Council.

(Please refer to 1.6 of these guidance notes for what can be funded. Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council will contribute a maximum of 100% of the total project costs, up to a maximum of £500).

3.0 How we assess and score your application

Every application that is received requesting a LiveSmart Community Environmental Grant Programme will be assessed for the following:

- to ensure that the organisation is eligible to apply to this particular Grant Programme
- for reassurance of each organisation's capability to deliver the proposal, and
- how well the proposal meets community needs and contributes to Council's Strategic Priorities

An acknowledgement receipt will be electronically issued to you once your submission has been received. The Funding Unit will assess your application for eligibility. If your application is eligible to apply for grant aid, it will be forwarded to the relevant section for a full assessment and scoring against the stated criteria.

3.1 Eligibility assessment

The assessments in respect of Part 1 of the application form are awarded a pass or fail eligibility rating.

If the organisation, based on the information supplied is able to satisfy the Council of their eligibility to draw down the grant, they will progress to the next part of the process.

If the organisation, based on the information supplied, is not able to satisfy the Council of their eligibility to draw down the grant from the fund, they will be advised of specific omissions / shortcomings and how these can be addressed to help prepare them for any future funding requests.

3.2 What if an application is not eligible?

If your application is not eligible, you will be notified immediately and the reasons will be outlined to you, it will not proceed to assessment and scoring.

If an organisation is not eligible for funding through the LiveSmart Community Environmental Grant Programme, organisations should contact Councils Funding Unit by emailing grants@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk who will help signpost to alternative sources of funding.

If an organisation or its activities are deemed to be the responsibility of other Council Departments, statutory agencies or voluntary bodies then you will be signposted to who you should apply to. If signposted elsewhere you will be required to complete and submit the relevant application form.

3.3 Assessment and scoring

If the organisation, based on the information supplied is able to satisfy the Council of their eligibility for the LiveSmart Community Environmental Grant Programme they will be assessed according to established assessment criteria shown in the table below.

All questions will be scored out of 5 and weighting will be applied as detailed below:

Criteria	Score out of a possible 5	Weighting	Possible Score
1. Good project description; range of activities, quality of project; fit with the fund objectives.		X4	20
2. How well the need has been demonstrated		X2	10
3. How well the project includes participation from the wider community and involves a range of people		X2	10
4. Area deprivation score		X1	5
5. How well the project is promoted & publicised.		X1	5
			50

Applications must achieve a minimum score of 65% to be considered for funding.

In the event of the fund being oversubscribed only the highest scoring projects will receive an award.

3.4 How decisions are made.

When the scores are finalised the applications will be presented to the Environmental Services Committee for consideration and recommendation to full Council for approval.

It will be at this point, that the successful/unsuccessful applicants will be notified.

3.5 What happens if an application is successful?

If an application is successful, Council will issue a letter of offer which is a legal agreement with the organisation to deliver on the proposals outlined in their application form.

Signed Letters of Offer will need to be returned before any funding is released

If successful, group members can avail of training that will explain the processes and procedures that relate to programme monitoring, submitting a financial claim, requesting a change to programme, promoting Council's support for the programme, monitoring and evaluation requirements and the process of verification

Council funding is usually paid retrospectively.

Grants on occasions be released in two instalments – 50% of the grant will be awarded upfront if the organisations do not have sufficient reserves followed by remaining 50% once evaluation/financial claim is verified satisfactorily.

Successful organisations may also be required to submit an annual/ end of funding evaluation report. Officers may discuss the monitoring information with the groups that were funded and with some of the people who have benefited from the community activity.

3.6 What happens if an application is unsuccessful?

If an application is not successful, officers from the relevant service area will be available to meet with the organisation to go through their application, develop a working relationship and provide practical developmental support to address areas of concern.

An Appeals Process / Review Procedure is also available if an application is unsuccessful. The purpose of this is to ensure that the decisions taken and procedures followed by Committees for individual applications are applied fairly and consistently.

The Review will provide an independent process through which an applicant will have the opportunity to demonstrate to the Review Panel that either:

- the outcome was unreasonable or
- that the proper procedures were not followed

Appeals on any other grounds will not be considered.

3.7 Government Funding Database

Please be aware we are required to check the Government Funding Database (GFD) prior to making awards in order to avoid duplication of funding.

If registered on GFD we ask you to state your organisation's Unique Reference Number (URN) to help with this process. Details of grants awarded will be uploaded to the GFD, it is the responsibility of the applicant group to ensure that the organisation details held on GFD are up to date.

3.8 Late Applications

It is the responsibility of each applicant to ensure that their application is submitted prior to the advertised time and date of closing. Applications received after the closing time/date will not be considered for funding. No exceptions will be made and there is no recourse to appeal.

Appendix 1

General Data Protection Regulation

- We will use the information you give us on the application form during assessment and for the life of any grant we award you to administer and analyse grants and for our own research.
- We may give copies of this information to individuals and organisations we consult when assessing applications, when monitoring grants and evaluating the way our funding programmes work and the effect they have. These organisations may include accountants, external evaluators and other organisations or groups involved in delivering the project.
- We may also share information with other government departments, organisations providing match funding and other organisations and individuals with a legitimate interest in applications and grants, or for the prevention or detection of fraud.
- We might use the data you provide for our own research. We recognise the need to maintain the confidentiality of vulnerable groups and their details will not be made public in any way, except as required by law.

Freedom of Information Act

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives members of the public the right to request any information that we hold, subject to certain exemption that may apply. This includes information received from third parties, such as, although not limited to, grant applicants, grant holders and contractors. If information is requested under the Freedom of Information Act we will release it, subject to exemptions; although we may consult with you first. If you think that information you are providing may be exempt from release if requested, you should let us know when you apply. For further information please visit the Information Commissioner's Office at www.ico.gov.uk