



GUIDANCE AND CRITERIA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS



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Introduction

Community Development Grants provide financial support to community and voluntary groups delivering community development opportunities for the residents of Charnwood, particularly where those projects would not go ahead without financial assistance. As the grant funding comes from the public purse, the money must be spent for the benefit of the public in general and therefore must cater for people from all walks of life. Community Development Grants are revenue grants to cover the running costs of a project, e.g. the costs of stationery, heating, lighting, printing, postage, telephone etc. and in certain cases a contribution to employee costs. Applications to deliver specific projects are encouraged and therefore organisations may submit more than one application per year if they organise more than one qualifying project.

Grants are normally provided for the current financial year only but longer-term funding arrangements may be considered.

The Council's Aims

The Council has identified the following aims in its Corporate Plan to ensure the Borough is attractive to established and new residents as a place of choice to live, work and visit through being prosperous, progressive and innovative whilst preserving the diverse and unique identity of its communities, landscape, heritage and built environment. Applications should help the Council fulfil at least one of these aims:

- **People** - We will work to improve the wellbeing of, and services to residents, acknowledging their diverse needs.
- **Prosperity** - We will invest in and support sustainable development in a dynamic economic context.
- **Place** - We will work to make Charnwood a safe, cohesive Borough in which to live and work.
- **Environment** - We will contribute to limiting the effects of climate change, protect our environment and mitigate the effects of climate change where necessary.

This guidance includes information on the following:

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I. Types of schemes that receive funding

Community Development Grants support a range of new and on-going projects of voluntary and community organisations. The Council will provide grant aid to voluntary organisations (subject to the availability of resources) that satisfy the criteria set out below, particularly those which are meeting a need that would be otherwise unmet. In this respect, applications for funding from the ethnic minority sector, which is currently under represented, will be welcomed.

The following illustrate the types of applications supported under this scheme recently:

- Charnwood Action for Fairtrade received £245 towards the cost of organising and promoting a Fairtrade Christmas Market.
- Charnwood Youth Forum received £600 towards the cost of providing members of the group with a training and personal development course.
- Loughborough Women's Aid received £7,227 towards an office improvement project and staffing costs.
- The Co-operative and Social Enterprise Development Agency received £12,150 towards a project to provide events, support and advice for local people wishing to set up in business.

Although all applications will be considered on their merits, there can be no assumption that the Borough Council will be able to replace time-limited funding from the National Lottery or other schemes.

Parish Plans and Village Design Statements

Parish Plans and Village Design Statements are a valuable resource, not only to the Parish that produces one, but also as a useful source of knowledge for the Borough Council on local needs. They are developed by local people for local people and therefore are very well informed, with the added benefit of drawing communities together.

The Council provides support to these processes in the following ways:

- By part funding a Community Development Officer on the Leicestershire and Rutland Rural Community Council.
- By providing professional advice at various stages to ensure the villages get the most out of the processes.
- Through this Grants Scheme by awarding grants of up to 50% towards printing and publicity costs of the final Plans and Statements subject to a maximum grant of £500 for villages with a population of less than 5,000 and up to £750 for those with a population over 5,000.

Individual Grants

The only assistance given to an individual is to those residents of the Borough selected to participate in Operation Raleigh or equivalent ventures. Financial assistance is limited to a maximum of £150 per person. The Borough Council has only limited funds available and it will be appreciated that it is not feasible to finance the many varied activities of all the citizens of the Borough.

Arts and Sports Grants

There are specific Charnwood Grants schemes designed to support the arts and sports. Please refer to <http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/charnwoodgrants> for details of the full range of Charnwood Grants.

Religious Organisations and Festivals

Religious organisation projects will be funded if the project is providing an appropriate service to the community. Religious festivals that demonstrate cultural diversity and are open to other communities in order to bring a 'shared experience' will also be eligible for funding. Requests for funding to promote religious beliefs will not be granted.

Ineligible Organisations

Requests from political organisations or those which are of a purely social nature and do not provide a community benefit fall outside the scope of Charnwood Grants.

Examples of projects or requests for funding that the Community Development Grant scheme would not normally be able to support:

- Events/projects that would be taking place outside of the Borough of Charnwood, where it would be difficult to identify the benefits of the event/project for people living or working within the Borough. (Not including individual grants of up to £150, which are often awarded for overseas trips which would help with personal development).
- Requests for funding towards an established annual event, such as an annual concert or festival – unless evidence can be provided that a new element has been added to the event, which will benefit and provide development for the community.
- Requests for funding solely towards general running costs of an organisation, i.e. staffing costs, office maintenance etc – unless a specific new project has been identified and help with running costs would show clear benefits to the community.

2. Grant aid provided and submitting an application

Community Development Grants can provide up to 50% of the cost of your scheme or project subject to the following qualifying preconditions being met.

- Applications must be submitted by properly constituted community and voluntary groups for activities not conducted for profit.
- The organisation or project must be Charnwood based or carry out activities (other than fund-raising) within Charnwood.
- The organisation to which the application relates should not be exclusive, but should allow access to, or use/participation by, the general public. There must be no restriction on membership by any organisation to which a grant is to be made. Membership must be open to the general public and not refused on grounds of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, occupation, religious, political or other beliefs.
- The purpose to which the grant is to be applied must not relate to promoting religious belief or party political activities.

The application form for Community Development funding can be requested using the contact details on the front page of the guidance or downloaded from <http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/commdevgrants>.

If you feel that your group or organisation fulfils the preconditions above and the assessment criteria as set out in section 5 you should complete and return the application form to the address on page 1. All relevant sections of the application form must be completed.

Applicants will need to provide the following additional information although it is not always necessary to provide this at the time of application:

- Your organisation's Equal Opportunities Policy or a statement that the organisation will abide by the key themes of the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- If five or more staff are employed, your organisation's Health and Safety Policy.
- Where relevant, your organisation's policy statement about how it works to protect children/vulnerable adults and discharges its safeguarding responsibilities. Any grant offered will be dependent on the applicant providing evidence of such a policy or evidence that the group is actively working towards adopting a policy.
- The two most recent bank statements for your organisation.
- For grants over £2000, audited accounts for the most recent financial year.
- For grants over £2000, a completed Sustainability Checklist.

Unless there are significantly changed circumstances unsuccessful applications will not be reconsidered within six months.

3. When to apply

The Charnwood Grants Panel (the Panel) has authority to consider, evaluate and approve Community Development Grant applications below £20,000, and to make recommendations to the Council's Cabinet where applications are for £20,000 or more.

The Panel normally meets monthly and you may apply for a grant at any time. Grant applications are evaluated prior to being considered by the Panel and your application will usually be considered at the meeting of the Panel in the month after it is submitted.

Applications should be made well in advance of the start date for your project to allow sufficient time for the Panel to resolve any queries and determine the level of support before it starts. Grants will not normally be awarded retrospectively.

4. Processing applications

Once an application is received by the Council an assessment will be completed, reviewing the application against the criteria set out in section 5. Once the assessment is completed, the application and assessment are referred to the next scheduled meeting of the Panel. Each application is considered on its merits, and meeting the minimum criteria is not a guarantee that a grant will be made.

If the grant is within the delegated authority of the Panel, you will be notified in writing of the decision within 10 working days of the Panel meeting. If Cabinet approval is required, you will be informed in writing of their decision 10 working days after the relevant Cabinet meeting. Grant payment arrangements will be set out in the grant approval letter.

Where appropriate, a Funding Agreement will be prepared to accompany grants which are awarded. This document will contain monitoring and evaluation targets which will be agreed

between the organisation and the Council. It will also confirm payment arrangements for the grant.

5. Assessment criteria

When considering your application the Council will consider the following factors:

Does the project meet the Council's priorities?

- Have you demonstrated how the project will benefit the residents of Charnwood?
- Have you demonstrated how the project links to the aims of Charnwood Borough Council's Corporate Plan? These are summarised on page 2 or can be viewed at www.charnwood.gov.uk/democracy/corporateplan.html. Alternatively please use the contact details on the front page of this guidance to obtain a copy.
- Is the application for a new project or does it only support ongoing work?

What is the financial need for grant funding?

- What balances and reserves do you have available?
- What proportion of the cost of the project is the Council being asked to fund?

What is the quality of the application?

- Have you identified the total cost of the project and obtained other funding to enable the project to begin?
- Have you identified a timetable for the project?
- Have you identified how you will measure the success of the project?

How much volunteer input is there in the scheme?

- What contribution will volunteers make to the delivery of your project?

In addition, to help ensure projects are sustainable we have developed a **sustainability checklist**. The checklist should help organisations improve their projects by taking into account social, environmental and economic needs of the local area.

For grant applications over £2000 the checklist must be completed and submitted with your grant application. For grant applications under £2000 the checklist does not need to be submitted with your application but you are encouraged to consider it when completing your application.

6. Grant agreements and conditions of funding

The Council needs to ensure that the public money it spends is used effectively. This includes monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of grant funding and partnership working. Therefore, the Council needs to ensure that Community Development Grants are contributing to delivering its corporate aims and are achieving the outcomes and targets identified for the project.

Where appropriate therefore, a Funding Agreement will be prepared. This document will contain monitoring and evaluation targets which will be agreed between the organisation and the Council. It will also confirm payment arrangements for the grant. Funding Agreements will normally be required for all grants of over £2000.

The Council acknowledges the limited capacity of many voluntary organisations and will endeavour not to impose excessive administrative requirements on them. Therefore, funding agreements will be tailored both to the value of the grant provided, and the capacity of the organisation to report on the success of the projects undertaken.

The grant approval letter/funding agreement will set out any specific conditions attached to a grant approval. The following conditions apply to all approved schemes:

- Any changes to the project or activity for which the funding was originally granted require further approval from the Council.
- The Charnwood Borough Council logo must be included on all publicity material relating to the project or activity. To obtain an electronic or hard copy of the logo please contact the Communications Team on 01509 634989.
- You must use the grant within 12 months of receiving the grant and provide the information requested by the Council to show how it has been spent and the benefits that resulted.

If you do not comply with the conditions attached to a grant the Council may seek to reclaim some or all of the grant awarded.

7. Support and other sources of funding

If you are still in doubt, then please do not hesitate to telephone the Council on 01509 634710 to speak to the Grants Administrator to discuss your project or e-mail grants@charnwood.gov.uk. Alternatively you are welcome to visit Southfields and have an informal discussion about your particular needs.

It is our aim to help support you on finding the appropriate funding for your project. For additional support and assistance please contact the following:

- Grants Administration for alternative funding sources
Charnwood Borough Council
Tel: 01509 632516
Email: grants@charnwood.gov.uk.
- The full range of Charnwood Grants can be viewed at <http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/charnwoodgrants> or information can be requested using the contact details on the front page of these guidance notes.
- Five Steps to Funding – Leicestershire Toolkit includes information about:
 - Preparing to make a bid
 - Identifying funding sources
 - Making a grant application
 - Once you have the money
 - Developing a fund raising strategy.<http://www.fundingtoolkit.org/index.htm/mainpage.htm>