



GUIDANCE AND CRITERIA

COMMUNITY FACILITIES CAPITAL GRANTS



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Introduction

The Charnwood Grants - Community Facilities scheme provides support to Town and Parish Councils and properly constituted community organisations to invest in projects of community benefit and which would not go ahead without such financial assistance.

As the 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.

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:

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I. Types of schemes for which funding is available

This scheme supports:

- a. The renovation, improvement and provision of community buildings (including fitting out and provision of facilities for people with disabilities) (but not routine maintenance) – this includes community centres, village halls and other community buildings that are a focus for their communities and which house a range of activities and services to meet those communities' needs.
- b. Small scale environmental improvement schemes, for instance:
 1. creation or improvement of public open spaces
 2. creation of outdoor public art works
 3. native tree and shrub planting
 4. field /village pond creation or renovation
 5. small woodland management
 6. pollarding of trees
 7. hedge planting
 8. renovation of drystone walls
 9. ornamental planting
 10. hedge laying
 11. landscaped surrounds of war memorial
- c. The purchase of IT equipment to assist public access to public services – for instance a computer terminal to assist public access to Charnwood Borough Council web based information and services.

For community buildings and small scale environmental improvement schemes grants are subject to an **upper limit to £30,000** and to a limit of **50% of the cost of the scheme**.

For IT, grants will be limited to **50% of the cost of the scheme** and to an upper limit of £3,000 in any three year period per organisation.

In all cases grant amounts are dependent on the resources available for distribution.

In addition, in order to be eligible for a grant the project must:

1. be delivered within the Borough of Charnwood.
2. relate to a non-sports scheme – there is a separate Charnwood Grants fund for sports facilities grants.
3. be delivered by a community organisation that is properly constituted and must not be exclusive, but should allow access to or use 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.
4. not relate to religious belief or party political activities. Works to religious buildings are excluded except those which fulfil a substantially wider community role beyond the confines of religious practices.

5. obtain the necessary planning permission and building controls required for the building works within the scheme.
6. begin within twelve months of the Grant aid being approved.

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.

2. How to submit an application

If you feel that your group or organisation fulfils the preconditions above and the assessment criteria as set out in section 4 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:

1. Requests for community buildings and small scale environmental improvement capital grants must be accompanied with **two** competitive quotations for the proposed work.
2. Where relevant, confirmation of Building Regulations approval and/or planning permission for the works must be provided.
3. Requests for IT grants must be accompanied by one quotation for the proposed equipment.
4. 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.
5. If five or more staff are employed, your organisation's Health and Safety Policy.
6. 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.
7. The two most recent bank statements for your organisation.
8. For grants over £2000, audited accounts for the most recent financial year.
9. For grants over £2000, a completed Sustainability Checklist.

3. When to apply

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

For this scheme there are two closing dates **30th June** and **30th November**. Before being considered by the Panel and, where appropriate the Cabinet, applications are referred to the relevant Area Forum so that local views on the application can be sought. This process means that it normally takes between three and six months for a decision on Community Facilities Grants and you should bear this in mind when making your application.

4. 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.

5. Processing applications and conditions of funding

When a completed application is received it will be referred to relevant officers for assessment. A Grant Assessment form will be completed outlining the key particulars from the Grant Application form and the expected outputs and monitoring arrangements.

Part of the assessment under this scheme will include Area Forums being consulted on the applications received relevant to each Forum Area. The views of Area Forums will be taken into account in the final determination of each application.

The Application and completed assessment will be referred to the Charnwood Grants Panel. Each application will be 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 days of the Panel meeting. If Cabinet approval is required you will be informed in writing of its decision 10 days after the relevant Cabinet meeting.

Once written confirmation of an offer of grant aid has been received, work can begin on the scheme, provided all other consents and permissions have been secured (for instance, planning permissions or building control permits). Work should not begin prior to this approval.

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:

1. Any changes to the project or activity for which funding was originally granted require further approval from the Council.
2. The 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.
3. Work should commence on the scheme within twelve months of being awarded the grant.

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.

The grant will be paid to the organisation on production of copy invoices equal to or greater than the approved sum and upon confirmation that the work has been completed to a satisfactory standard. This may include an inspection of the site by a member of the Panel or confirmation of compliance with building regulations by the Council's Building Control Section. Interim payments can be made as each area of work is completed.

If the organisation is VAT registered, VAT is then reclaimable by the organisation. The grant allocation will be based on a percentage of the NET cost of the project.

If the organisation is not VAT registered, VAT is not reclaimable by the organisation. The grant allocation will be based on a percentage of the GROSS cost of the project.

6. 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 who deals with Grants to Voluntary Organisations. 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 you 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>