

Community Grant 2024-25 Guidance Notes

The Forest of Dean District Council offer not for profit voluntary and community groups - both constituted and non-constituted - the opportunity to apply for one off funding to help develop stronger and more cohesive communities. Small informal groups (a minimum of three people) can be considered.

This approach is aimed at building capacity of the community rather than directly delivering services. Projects should clearly be able to show that there is local value and leadership in them and demonstrate its importance to the community.

*In order to support your application we encourage you to discuss the project with the Community Delivery Lead Officer **before** submitting your application. This will ensure that you have included all the information that the panel will need as well as better understand your aims when evaluating your project. **Please ring 01594 812609 or email lena.maller@publicagroup.uk or see our FAQ section on the Website.***

Applicants need to identify:

- Who is taking part in the project
- Clearly evidence that the project or activity does not duplicate with other local projects or how it supports those projects
- Whether they are connecting to other groups in the area & who they are – partnership working
- Evidence of need – is this what the community wants and needs?
- How the project helps to build community capacity and community resilience
- How the project aims to be sustainable after the funding has been spent

Total level of funding available in 2024-25 is £19,800

Constituted Groups

One off, revenue* grants up to £3,000 are available.

Non-Constituted Groups

One off, revenue* grants up to £500 are available.

Any projects applying over the maximum limits **will not** be reviewed.

Funding Priorities and Criteria for 2024-25:

PROIORTIES:

- Projects which support, strengthen and empower communities.
- Activities which address climate change and support the District Net Zero objective – and ideally have clear links to your organisation’s climate change action plan, or a parish or town or the district council’s plan or are addressing biodiversity loss and working to improve an area for nature.
- Forest Food Network co production project areas (seed & tool share; lifelong learning; growing; knowledge and skill share; cooking/eating; accessibility, inclusion, equality)
- Activities which help to reduce social isolation and improve people’s feelings of wellbeing (all ages)
- Projects which enable and establish inclusive activities (this may also be funding to support an existing activity to become more inclusive)

Please identify which of the above priorities your project aligns to in section 3 Your project information on our application form (page 3) – minimum of one but the more priorities you address the stronger your application.

CRITERIA: *All projects need to address one of the above priorities **as well** as meet **ALL** of the criteria as set out below. It is therefore very important that you demonstrate how you respond to all of the points listed below in Section 4 (Brief outline of the proposal) on your application form.*

- Volunteering – how the project engages and supports volunteering locally.
- Match funding in either volunteer time, financial or both (capture on page 5 of the application form – use Appendix 1 to help estimate).
- Partnership working - working with other community groups.
- Activities that involve the skills and knowledge of the community, particularly of those members who are older, vulnerable, disadvantaged .
- Sustainable on-going projects which meet the criteria, will take priority.
- How what you are applying for in this application will contribute to reduce carbon dioxide emissions or how your group is adapting to a changing climate.
- Is your project, or your groups activities, inclusive/accessible to serving armed forces personnel, veterans or their families, currently and/or could they be in the future.

Who may apply:

All applicants must:

- 1a) Be a not for profit voluntary or registered charitable organisation with a Constitution or set of rules which lay out the aims of the organisation and how it operates and be able to demonstrate how they develop relationships and support networks with the people they are involved with OR

- 1b) Be a Community Interest Company OR
- 1c) Be a group of people (minimum of three people) who have come together for a specific project/activity and have a plan of action which clearly identifies what they intend to do, how the award would be spent (*Maximum claim of £500*) and what difference their project/activity will make to their community
- 2) Demonstrate how they involve others - how they understand the skills and knowledge of people they support and work with as well as work in partnership with other groups and organisations and how they enable each other
- 3) Be active in helping all citizens – irrespective of age, gender, ability, sexual orientation, race or creed – to be contributing members of society and to be fully inclusive
- 4a) Have a bank account in the name of the organisation and have at least two unrelated signatories to that account OR
- 4b) Have the support of a constituted organisation who has agreed to be the banker of your project
- 5) Be an organisation or a group of individuals living or with a local base in the Forest of Dean District and the project must be directly beneficial to the **residents of the Forest of Dean**
- 6) Be able to demonstrate the extent to which there is a need/demand for their proposed project
- 7) The Community Grant scheme is one of the mechanisms in which FODDC is able to support the Voluntary and Community Sector and helps to contribute to its strategic priorities for the district:
 - **Thriving communities:** We want to support local communities and help them grow so that we can work together to respond to the challenges and opportunities posed by the climate and nature emergencies.
 - **Decarbonisation and Nature Recovery:** Protect and enhance the natural environment and be on target to be carbon neutral by 2030.
 - **Sustainable Economy:** To improve the Forest of Dean economy while encouraging business to be environmentally sustainable and protecting the well-being of residents.
- 8) Demonstrate that the initiative does not duplicate any other existing effective arrangements or projects
- 9) Be able to provide match funding in either money or * “in kind” time
 - * *In kind time is the number of hours that your volunteers contribute to the development and delivery of your project – see application form for a calculator guide.*
- 10) VCS agreement holders (formally SLA) can apply for activities that are not connected or enhance or support VCS agreement activity.

If the applicant is a **constituted** organisation, demonstrate why District Council funding is needed. An organisation may have high levels of free reserves which are not adequately explained or have sufficient funding from other sources from which to deliver the work applied for. If you have free reserves of more than twelve months income we need to know the reason for this.

What are Reserves?

Reserves describe that part of a charities income that is freely available for its general purposes and can be spent for any or all of the charities purpose once it has met its commitments and covered its other planned expenditure.

Who may not apply:

- Statutory bodies
- Parish and Town Councils
- Previous applicants of a FODDC Community Grant who have *not* returned a satisfactory monitoring and evaluation form
- Previous applicants or funded projects applying for the same project work or activity
- Village Halls and Community Centres looking for capital funding for building improvements
- Projects for the advancement of religion or political activities
- Individuals (*non-constituted group must be 3 or more active participants through the entire length of the project*)
- Organisations requiring deficit funding
- Organisations requiring 'core' funding unless there is clear explanation and evidence to show that future funding is secured for continued delivery - sustainable on-going projects which meet the criteria, will take priority
- Organisations which could reasonably be expected to fund their activities or needs from members' subscriptions
- National organisations with no specific **local** brief or organisations whose principle activity is outside the district and whose aims and objectives are not specifically directed at the residents of the Forest of Dean
- Organisations with substantial free reserves, the annual turnover of the organisations will be material to the level of the free reserves
- Organisations currently in receipt of a VCS agreement (formally SLA) from the Forest of Dean District Council (unless they meet the criteria above).
- Lead Applicants under the age of 18 years old

What we will not fund:

- Retrospective requests. We cannot support applications for activities or purchases that have taken place before a formal grant offer has been made
- On-going maintenance costs
- Loan payments or endowments
- Items that will only benefit individuals, for example scholarships or bursaries
- Trips and day trips
- Activities that are part of statutory obligations
- Capital costs – such as large items of equipment, building costs etc. (*The scheme will fund essential 'start up' materials for community projects*)

Please ensure that you get an *acknowledgement of receipt* of your application once submitted. This will be *your responsibility* to do so. All applications submitted after the closing date and time, will *not* be reviewed.

Application Timeline	
Friday 14th June 2024 (4pm)	- Closing date for applications <i>(Late submissions will not be accepted)</i>
W/C 1st July 2024	- Notification of result of application
Monday 15th July, 2024 @ 10.30 am	Celebration event @ FODDC office in Coleford

What happens after applications have been completed?

- Applications made will be assessed by a panel of Elected Members and Officers of the District Council's Community Wellbeing Team.
- All applications will be assessed and scored against the same set of criteria, as identified in these guidance notes. Those applications with the highest points will be put forward for a successful award.
- Following assessment of the application, a decision will be made whether to contact the applicants for further information, invite applicants to conduct a presentation or whether to award none, some or all of the funds requested - the panel's decision is final.
- Feedback will be given by the Community Delivery Lead to applicants who wish to request it.

Other Information

- Every project is expected to complete a follow up/evaluation report. This could be either in the form of a video clip/link or by replying to evaluation questions, either by phone, email or evaluation visit as agreed with the Community Delivery Lead.
- A visit to your project may be made in later years by the Council to follow up on the progress of your project
- Copies of invoices will be required as evidence of how the grant was spent appropriately and this **MUST** be as agreed in the award and as requested through the application form.
- Please can you also attach a scan or photo of a document from your bank that shows the account name, account number, and sort code. This will help issue payments more quickly if you are successful. Feel free to blank any non-relevant information.
- We will hold the applications on a secure server to reference in case of future applications unless we receive a request for the information to be destroyed.

Please contact the Community Delivery Lead for any questions you have regarding this process on 01594 812609.

Appendices are designed to try and help you to include as much information as possible so that we can score your application.

Appendix I (In-kind time) – page 5 on the application form.

In some cases, calculating the value of in-kind contributions can be relatively simple, for example if it's the contribution of a piece of equipment. Other costs could be a little more difficult, for example, the value of volunteer time. Below is a table that indicates the standard rates, which should be used to calculate volunteer time.

Type of voluntary/in-kind contribution	Per hour	Per day
General, unskilled labour (for example, supervised scrubclearance, ditch-digging, planting, basic administrative support)	£8.50	£63.75
Specialist, skilled, trained labour (for example, operations for which certificated training is a requirement, such as operating dangerous equipment, driving off-road vehicles, using chemicals)	£25.00	£200.00
Specialist services, (for example, supervising, training labour teams, surveys, printing, designing, photography)	£35.00	£270.00
Professional services (for example, consultants, lawyers, planners, engineers, accountants, auditors)	£50.00	£375.00

Appendix 2:

In Section 3 we are asking for you to tell us how your project will contribute to reduce carbon dioxide emissions in the district or how it helps your organisation or local area adapt to a changing climate.

We appreciate that this may feel overwhelming if you are applying for a very small amount of funding from us. We hope that the information we have provided makes this process easier but if you have any queries we encourage you to contact the Community Delivery Lead to discuss. These are some things you might like to consider when replying:

Aspect examples:	Examples:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing Energy Consumption; • Using Renewable Energy; • Planning to cut emissions. <p>- <i>you may be applying for a specific project or activity, but you may own or operate out of a building you have responsibility for and could show how you already do these things or are looking into them.</i></p> <p>- <i>If your project reaches wider into the community or if your group has members you could highlight and encourage people to think about these things in their own homes.</i></p>	<p>Looking to Switch saving accounts to one that invests sustainably and doesn't support fossil fuels.</p>
	<p>Show how you have done a Carbon footprint calculation. At an individual level the WWF Footprint Calculator can be used. Or to look at the footprint of a geographic area, you can use the Community Carbon Calculator.</p> <p>- or that you plan to help you review your energy consumption so you understand what the biggest and smallest contributors are to then look at potential costs savings and efficiencies. This is something that individuals in your group may look at for their own household use, or something you look at as an organisation in your operations/building use.</p>
	<p>If you are applying to us for a contribution towards equipment try to choose A-rated appliances which cost more to buy but can have much lower running costs when choosing the things that - you use a lot; involve heat (dishwasher, tumble dryer), run 24/7 (fridge/freezer)</p>
	<p>Office equipment – computers, printers, and kitchen utilities can also be big energy users. Buying second hand or refurbished technology where you can.</p>
	<p>How you don't leave electrical items on standby (they can use up to 85% of the energy they would use if fully switched on. Turn them off at the wall). How you communicate this to staff and volunteers Reducing the size of your digital footprint by deleting duplicate or unnecessary files from cloud and computer storage. More information on that here.</p>
	<p>How you buy second hand items or those made from recycled materials as often as possible</p>
	<p>Buy less / share more – using waste hierarchy for making buying decisions, starting with reducing unnecessary purchases, particularly of single-use items. WRAP resource to help with this (www.wrap.org.uk).</p>
	<p>Replace high energy bulbs with low energy LED bulbs Review insulation options for your building and do what is possible, and seal up drafts to keep your heat</p>
Minimising Waste	<p>Reducing consumption/ re-using/ re-purposing (e.g. second hand office equipment, tool share etc) Purchasing longer lasting products Minimising packaging Avoid single use plastics.</p>
Conserving Water	<p>Harvesting rainwater or are making arrangement to..</p>
Sequestering carbon <i>(Which is the process of capturing and storing</i>	<p>Tree/ hedge planting Wetland protection</p>

<i>atmospheric carbon dioxide. It is one method of reducing the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere with the goal of reducing global climate change)</i>	Avoiding use of peat products (<i>Peat releases huge amounts of stored carbon dioxide when it is harvested, which adds to greenhouse gas levels - it grows back at just 1 mm a year</i>)
Travel	Demonstrate how your members car share as much as possible – combining journey's /trips to avoid ping-ponging back and forth If appropriate, promote walking, cycling (install cycle parking)
Biodiversity loss and working to improve an area for nature.	(Re)-wild green space to nature, let lawn grow longer so that flowers have time to set seed <i>A reduced use of chemical fertilisers (50%) or avoid completely.</i> <i>Wildlife via a pond, any size - see pond in a pot concept - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yeT5sDtYEU</i> <i>A reduction in the use of petrol equipment in your green space</i>
Activities which contribute to increased resilience to food availability (impacted by the changing climate)	Land/space made available for growing How you are or might encourage your group to increase their food crop and grow different things each year, and share/swap surplus crops with others Show how you save your seeds and get involved in a local seed swap, or plan to.

Other ideas to consider for climate action: Mitigation (*helping to prevent climate change*)

- Community fridge or food sharing networks – with the opportunity of bringing people together to coordinate these.
- Biodiversity projects including bird boxes, hedgehog houses, community tree or wildflower planting.
- Create compost heap/opportunity for food waste recycling/waste separation for recycling in buildings.
- Starting/in the processing of create a climate action plan as an organisation. Involving local people/stakeholder in this process.
- Doing a basic energy survey of your building using [this resource from CSE](#).
- Looking to provide electric bikes and/or electric cars or minibus for staff/community use.
- Climate change awareness raising and education.
- Repair cafes

Other ideas to consider for Climate Action: Adaptation (*helping to adapt to the inevitable impacts of climate change*)

- Signing up for flood warnings: <https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings>
- Increasing green spaces and areas for rainwater to drain naturally and create shade.
- Climate change awareness raising and education
- Tap water refill schemes
- Retrofitting buildings to deal with hotter summers.
- Non-native invasive species monitoring

¹ The Forest of Dean District Council declared a Climate Emergency in December 2018 and aim to make the district carbon neutral by 2030.