

**Grant Aid Annual Review:
2015/16**

Appendix 6

Appendix 6: Sustainability Plans and Support

In the Grant Aid 2015-18 Application form, applicants were asked:

“How do you plan to generate other income to become less reliant on future Grant Aid awards?”

In the 2015/16 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), groups were reminded about the importance of becoming less reliant on Grant Aid awards:

“Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) strongly recommends that all funded groups develop a sustainability plan (i.e. a plan to ensure that the project / service will continue after the end of the Grant Aid contribution).”

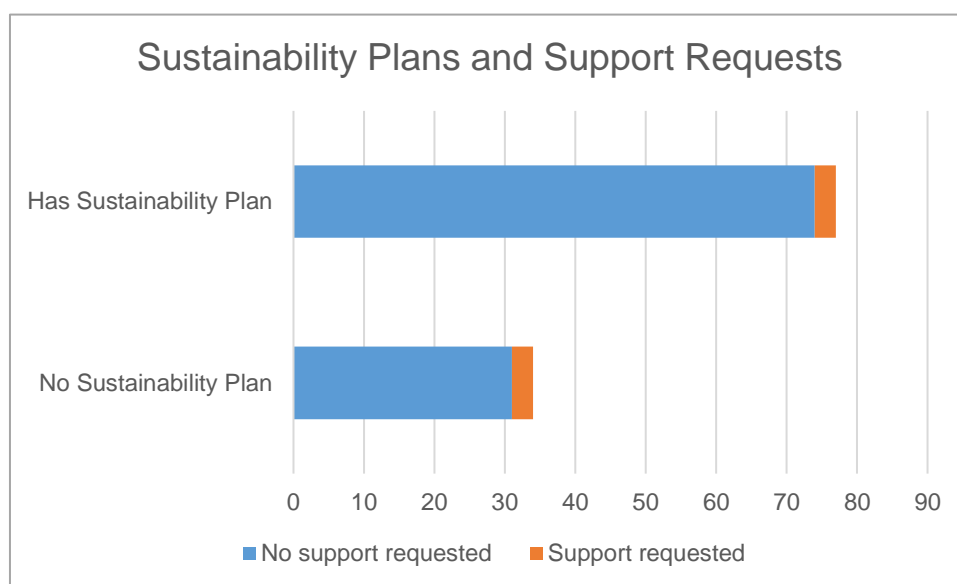
Groups were then asked:

“Does your organisation have a ‘project sustainability plan’ in place?”

- ☐ YES
- ☐ NO

If groups selected ‘no’, they were invited to contact the C&VS team to discuss how NCC may be able to offer advice/guidance on developing a sustainability plan.

A summary of responses to this question is presented in the graph below:



As shown in the above graph, out of the 111 responses:

- Almost 80 groups reporting having a sustainability plan
- Thirty four groups reported not having a sustainability plan in place
- Three groups in both response categories (total 6 groups), specifically requested further information / support with sustainability planning.

During a review of the responses provided, it was identified that although some groups demonstrated knowledge sustainability planning, a small number of groups gave rise to concern as to their level of understanding about sustainability plans. For example, some groups stated that they have a sustainability plan in place, which is to use their reserves.

For some groups/organisations, there are particular challenges with regards to securing additional funding and other approaches are being explored as illustrated in the case study below.

Case Study: The CAB Consortium and sustainability

The CAB Consortium reported that:

“None of the Citizens Advice services has a sustainability plan as such; however, they apply for as many relevant funding streams as possible to try to diversify our income streams so they are not totally reliant on funding from Local Authorities... It is what the CABs can use the grant for that is the most useful. Whilst we do need to diversify as much as possible, it is the core funding that is key to enabling us to deliver other projects and it is the core funding that is impossible to secure from elsewhere. It enables us to open our doors and pay for Managers and Supervisors to support our volunteers...unlike other charities we are not permitted to charge for our services - even if we could charge our client group, largely, does not have the money to pay for services.”

And

“As part of our future plans from October 2016 we are holding quarterly Consortium Meetings where all the Chairs and Chief Officers of all 6 County Offices come together to discuss:-

- Sharing Resources and expertise
- Look at our structures and for any efficiency savings
- Consider joint funding bids to develop our Countywide services.
- Expansion of our Countywide telephone service.”

CAB Consortium lead, August 2016

Sustainability planning support and information provided to groups

In light of the responses to the sustainability question, the C&VS team emailed the a range of support information to all groups/organisation (as it was felt that the information could be useful to group wishing to review their current sustainability plan, as well as to those group who need to develop a sustainability plan for the first time). The information shared with groups included:

- Introduction: What is Sustainable Funding?** Grant Aided groups were signposted to an introductory article about sustainability funding on the NCVO (National Council for Voluntary Organisations) website: <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/practical-support/funding/sustainable-funding>.
 - The Sustainable Sun Tool*** - this tool is designed to help VCS groups:
 - Assess where they are in working towards financial sustainability
 - Give VCS ideas for how to move forward
 - Help VCS groups to review their progress.
 - The Income Spectrum*** - designed to help VCS groups review their current income streams and assess their level of risk. Again, you'll find more information/guidance within the document.
- * From the NCVO Sustainable Funding Project. The Sustainable Sun Tool and The Income Spectrum are also available from the NCVO website. Groups were encouraged to share and complete both tools with their colleagues and committee members / trustees (guidance on how to complete the tool is provided within the relevant documents).
- Groups were emailed information about free fundraising training, free advice clinics and a free skills sharing and mentoring service for small charities and voluntary groups. Groups were also reminded that they could contact the C&VS team for support.