



Local Improvement Scheme (Capital Fund)

Information for Applicants
**Please read this document before
completing your application form**

Please submit your application by 28th February 2019



**Local Improvement Scheme: Capital Fund
Information for applicants**

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Introduction

The Local Improvement Scheme Strategy (Capital Fund)

Nottinghamshire County Council has a strong record in supporting voluntary and community groups across the County and continues to be committed to supporting local people and communities to help themselves.

The **Local Improvement Scheme** is a **discretionary financial contribution** awarded by Nottinghamshire County Council to support the delivery of non-statutory capital projects that help to achieve the Council's priorities as set out in the [Council Plan 2017-21](#).

Applications for capital funding should also show how the proposed project / asset contributes to the Local Improvement Scheme strategic aims:

- To encourage and support local communities to be strong, vibrant and resilient
- To encourage and support volunteering and
- To seek wider funding opportunities.

The year 2020 sees the 400th anniversary of the sailing of the Mayflower to the United States. Nottinghamshire has a close association to this historic event. Therefore, applications for capital projects that commemorate this significant anniversary and that help to promote community engagement are particularly welcome.

This document aims to assist organisations who are interested in applying for **capital** funding from the Local Improvement Scheme, therefore, this document includes information about:

- How much money organisations can apply for
- Organisations that are eligible to apply
- What the capital funding can and can't be used for
- Match funding
- Governance
- The role of Nottinghamshire County Council Elected Members.

After carefully reading this document, interested organisations that meet the eligibility criteria and that can demonstrate how their project will contribute to the [Council Plan 2017-21](#) and the Local Improvement Scheme strategic aims are welcome to apply by following the instructions outlined in this document.

How much money can organisations apply for?

Eligible organisations can apply for one-off **capital grants**, ranging from a minimum of £1,000 up to a maximum of £50,000 in any funding year. Recipients of capital funding will have **up to 24 months** to spend the money. A list of eligible organisation types is provided in the ‘Can my organisation / group apply?’ section below.

Can my organisation / group apply?

The Council encourages applications from **eligible** organisations. Organisations can apply if they are:

- ✓ A charity registered with the Charity Commission* (this could be a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), an unincorporated association, a trust or charitable / not-for-profit company limited by guarantee)
- ✓ A voluntary / community group that is not registered as a charity (this group could be set up as an ‘unincorporated association’ or an ‘excepted’ charity as defined by the Charity Commission*)
- ✓ A Friendly Society or an Industrial and Provident (Community Benefit) Society with charitable purposes and registered with an appropriate regulator
- ✓ A community interest company (CIC) with charitable activities and limited by guarantee.
- ✓ A social enterprise that is set up using a recognised legal form
- ✓ A sports club - sports clubs that have achieved or that are working towards Clubmark are particularly welcome
- ✓ A Parish or Town Council
- ✓ A District Council acting as an accountable body for a local voluntary / community group. Please note that District Councils applying on behalf of a community group may be required to provide additional information about the relationship with the community group and information about the roles and responsibilities of each party in the proposed project. Therefore, the Council may contact the District Council and / or the community group to request further details if required.

**Please refer to the [Charity Commission](#) for further information.*

Please note that the Council does not accept applications to the Local Improvement Scheme from individuals or sole traders.

What can organisations use the capital funding for?

Examples of how Local Improvement Scheme capital funding could be used include:

- ✓ New teenage and junior play equipment to provide an exciting and safe play area for local children and families, offering opportunities for physical activity and vibrant community interaction at an open, public space.
- ✓ Signage for a country park to direct visitors to the park, and signposts and information boards within the park that include points of interest to improve the visitor experience.
- ✓ Development of an 'all year-round' community garden for the benefit of all members of the community.
- ✓ Construction of a permanent and accessible paved foundation for a memorial dedicated to RAF aircrew who were killed in flying incidents during WWII.
- ✓ Developments of community facilities / spaces to improve access and/or to improve health and well-being (e.g. wheelchair accessible outdoor play equipment, such as a swing).

Please note:

Village gateway signs, traffic calming schemes and brown tourism signs

- **If you wish to apply for funding to help towards the cost of village gateway signs, traffic calming schemes and / or brown tourism signs, example costs of these assets are available on the Council's webpage: www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/capital, which you may find helpful when completing your application.**
- **Organisations wishing to install village gateway signs, traffic calming schemes and / or brown tourism signs must follow the relevant Nottinghamshire County Council and / or VIA Highways (or other regulatory) process as appropriate to the project / asset.** On receipt of your application, the Council will contact you to discuss your application further as explained on page 7 of this document.

Public Use

- The asset that the capital funding contributes to will need to **remain in public use and/or leave a legacy for at least three years** after the asset has been purchased and installed / launched / is in use.

Maintenance

- Capital funding can be used to help with the initial cost of the project / asset, however, it **cannot** be used for ongoing maintenance; therefore, **organisations must ensure that they have plans and funds in place to maintain the project.**

What can't organisations use the funding for?

The Local Improvement Scheme capital funding cannot be used as a full or partial contribution to the following:

- × Assets / purchases / projects not recognised or not in line with the organisation's governing document (i.e. the set of 'rules' or 'agreement' for your organisation).
- × Costs that are incurred before the application is approved by the Communities and Place Committee. Therefore, if the application is successful, applicants are advised to wait until their funding agreement has been signed by both parties before commencing the project / purchasing the asset.
- × Projects that do not primarily benefit Nottinghamshire County residents. It is recognised that some capital projects may also benefit some people beyond the Nottinghamshire boundary, however, residents outside Nottinghamshire should not be the primary / majority target group.
- × Projects that are not delivered within the Nottinghamshire County geographical boundary.
- × Costs associated with pre-schools and / or children's nurseries.
- × Costs considered to be revenue items / overheads and maintenance costs (e.g. rent, salaries, gas, electricity, consumable goods and general building maintenance).
- × Projects that are for the sole purpose of promoting political or religious views.
- × Unspecified expenditure (note that applicants are asked to list the itemised capital costs associated with the proposed capital project / asset on the application form).
- × Funds to specifically build up a reserve or surplus.
- × For general appeals or endowment funds.
- × Office / IT equipment, including PCs, laptops and associated periphery equipment such as keyboards, printers, laminators, etc. (the Local Improvement Scheme aims to support capital assets that are open and accessible to the wider Nottinghamshire community).

Match Funding

Local Improvement Scheme funding is a *contribution* to the delivery of a project. This means that it is not intended to cover the full project costs and therefore, match funding will be required. There is a high demand for Local Improvement Scheme funding and as such, match-funded projects enable the Council to award funding to a broader range of projects.

Please note:

- Applications should aim to secure at least 50% of confirmed match funding, although projects with less than 50% of confirmed match funding may also be considered.
- Match funding / income can include grants and donations from other organisations, member subscription fees, fundraising, and contributions 'in-kind' where appropriate (such as the financial value of volunteer time, where relevant).
- Local Improvement Scheme capital funding is a contribution towards the purchase of an asset and as such, the organisation is likely to need a higher proportion of 'cash' compared to 'in-kind' match funding.
- Match funding must not duplicate funding from the Council – i.e. any grant awarded must not be used to pay for the same items covered by match funding (and vice-versa).

Governance

Governance is about the way your organisation is set up and run. The Council is accountable for public funds and therefore reviewing the governance arrangements that organisations have in place helps to reassure the Council that an organisation is:

- Operating in line with the law AND in line with relevant regulation
- Operating in line with its own governing document
- Able to effectively manage public funds and fulfil the monitoring requirements.

Good governance is essential for your organisation, service users and other stakeholders, as it underpins the delivery of quality projects in a safe and efficient way, and can help to reassure other potential funders and partners.

To be considered for Local Improvement Scheme funding, applicants must demonstrate that they have satisfactory governance arrangements in place, which the Council will review during the application assessment stage. For example: organisations (with the exception of Parish and Town Councils) must have an appropriate, up-to-date and satisfactory governing document that permits the organisation to raise funds and deliver the proposed project, and includes an appropriate dissolution clause, e.g. in the unfortunate event of an organisation closure, any excess money should not personally benefit any individual(s).

A Good Governance checklist is available in [APPENDIX 1](#) to this document, which applicants may find useful as a starting point when reviewing the governance arrangements for your organisation.

Elected Member (County Councillor) Role

In line with the principle of involving elected members in their communities, **all applications must be signed by a Nottinghamshire County Councillor for the District in which the project / asset will be delivered / installed.** However, please note that:

- County Councillor support is not a guarantee of application success – all applications will go through the Council's formal assessment process.
- It is the applicants' responsibility to contact the relevant County Councillor to discuss the proposed project / asset and seek their support.
- Only the signature of a **Nottinghamshire County Councillor** will be accepted on the application form.
- Contact details for all the Nottinghamshire County Councillors are available on the Councils website:

<http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/councillors/contact-a-councillor>

How to apply and supporting information / documents required

1. **It is strongly recommended that you carefully read all the information provided in this document and consider whether:**
 - a) The project / asset that you have in mind contributes to the Council Plan and the Local Improvement Scheme strategic aims (as outlined on [page 1 of this document](#)).
 - b) Your organisation is an eligible organisation type (see page 2: '[Can my organisation / group apply?](#)')
 - c) The project / asset that you have in mind could be eligible for funding (see pages 3 and 4 of this document: '[What can / can't my organisation use the funding for?](#)')
 - d) Your organisation can raise the match funding (see page 5 of this document re: '[Match Funding](#)').
 - e) Your organisation has in place appropriate governance (see [page 5](#) and [APPENDIX 1](#) to this document)
2. **Download the application form from:** www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/capital
3. **Discuss your proposed application with your local Nottinghamshire County Councillor to seek their support** (see page 6: '[Elected Member - County Councillor Role](#)')
4. **If you decide to apply, and you have the support of your local County Councillor, complete the application form.** Remember to save your application as you work through it. **Tip:** Use the 'Assessment Considerations' as outlined in [APPENDIX 2](#) to review your application.
5. **Ask your local Nottinghamshire County Councillor to sign the completed application form.** The County Councillor should return the application to the applicant / organisation.
6. **Email your completed application to:** LIS@nottscc.gov.uk.

Please note:

Privacy Notice

The information provided in your application will be subject to **the Local Improvement Scheme Privacy Notice** which is available on the Council's webpage: www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/lis

Applications approved 'in principle'

- **Applications approved 'in principle' for funding will need to follow the process as advised by the Council and provide further information / documents / assurances as requested, before the funding is released.** For example, projects / assets that involve the use of the highway / land / buildings not owned by the organisation applying for the grant must obtain and provide written permission from the appropriate organisation to use / develop the highway / land and / or building for the proposed funded project / asset.
- **Therefore, on receipt of your application form, the Council's Communities Team will aim to contact you within 12 working days to discuss your application and to explain any additional information required / process that needs to be followed in order to progress your application.**
- **If you do not receive any contact within 12 working days after submitting your application, it is important that you contact the Communities Team immediately.**

Applications for more than one project /asset

- If your organisation would like to apply for funding for more than one project / asset, you should complete a separate application form for each project.

Supplementary information

- Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the supplementary document which contains information about what to expect if your application for capital funding is successful and frequently asked questions (FAQs); this document is available on the Council's webpage: www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/capital

If you have a question

- If you cannot find the answer to your question from the information / documents provided on the Council's webpage: www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/capital, please email the Communities Team: LIS@nottscc.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1: Good Governance Checklist

What do we mean by governance?

Governance is about the way your organisation is set up and run. You can use the checklist below as a starting point to help review the governance arrangements for your organisation:

Item	Question	Yes / No
Governing documents <i>A governing document is a set of rules or agreement for your organisation / group.</i>	Is the governing document the correct type for your organisation? E.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Constitution (or 'Rules') for unincorporated associations. • A Small Charity Constitution (for organisations that do not meet the financial threshold for registering with the Charity Commission). • A CIO Foundation or Association Constitution for CIOs. • Articles of Association (for charitable companies). • Trust Deed for Trusts. 	
	Does your governing document include appropriate information? For example, does it include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What the charity is set up to do? (objects) • How the charity will do those things? (powers) • Who will run it? (charity trustees) • What happens if changes to the administrative arrangements need to be made? (amendment provision) • What happens if the charity wishes to wind up? (dissolution provision) • How the charity trustees will run the organisation • Initial arrangements for meetings, voting and financial procedures etc. 	
	Is your governing document up-to-date - including trustee details?	
	Is your governing document signed and dated by the trustees?	
Trustees & management teams	Is the information that you have provided about your trustees and management team correct and consistent with the information that you supplied to the Charity Commission, Companies House and/or any other regulatory body?	
Policies and procedures <i>E.g. policies and procedures regarding safeguarding children & young people, vulnerable adults, health and safety, equality and diversity, recruitment and selection and volunteering.</i>	Do you have relevant policies and procedures in place? You may find it helpful to list the policies and procedures that you do have – and identify any gaps to address.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are all your policies and procedures up-to-date and in-line with good practice? • Are all your policies and procedures used in practice? 	
Accreditation of professionals employed (e.g. contractors, manufacturers, accountants, architects)	Do all the professionals that you employ have the correct and up-to-date accreditation, qualifications and registration for the work that they will be carrying out? Do they have appropriate policies, procedures and insurance in place?	

If your group would like further information / guidance about good governance arrangements, please have a look at the Councils' **'Support, advice and networking for voluntary and community groups'** webpage: <http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/get-involved/supporting-voluntary-sector/support-advice-networking>

This Good Governance checklist is intended to provide introductory, general guidance and contains information based on research at the time of publication. This checklist is not a substitute for specific governance / legal / financial or other professional advice.

APPENDIX 2: Assessment Considerations and Process

In order to assist with the assessment process, the Council will contact all applicants to discuss their application in more detail. Considerations during the assessment process include:

- Is the organisation type eligible?
- Is the project / asset described in the application in line with the organisation's governing document?
- Is the application supported AND signed by a Nottinghamshire County Councillor?
- Is the amount requested within the minimum and maximum levels of funding?
- Will the majority of the beneficiaries (e.g. at least 75%), be Nottinghamshire County residents?
- Proportion of confirmed match funding and proportion of 'cash' and 'in-kind' match funding.
- Has the organisation provided information to show that there is a need for the proposed project / asset?
- How will the community benefit from the capital project / asset?
- The extent to which the application demonstrates that the project will contribute to The Council Plan and the Local Improvement Scheme strategic aims as stated in this document.
- Does the application explain how the project will be managed (or co-ordinated)?
- The risks associated with the project (these may include whether or not sufficient funding has been secured, do the contractors have the required qualifications, where necessary? The extent of the health and safety and safeguarding risks – e.g. what is the risk that the scheme may attract vandalism or anti-social behaviour? How does the organisation plan to mitigate / address the risk(s)?
- Has the applicant provided itemised costs?
- Has the organisation confirmed how the project will be maintained / sustained?
- What will be the long-lasting impact of the capital project? Does the organisation have sufficient funding and a plan to maintain the project for at least 3 years?
- Has the applicant provided sufficient, clear, relevant information in response to the questions?
- Does the organisation have relevant, recognised approval / standards in place (where appropriate)?
- Has the organisation confirmed all the declaration statements in the application?

Please note that:

- On completion of the assessment process, recommendations for funding will be presented to the Council's Communities and Place Committee for consideration, who will then make the final decision regarding funding awards.
- The Local Improvement Scheme funding is limited and competition is likely to be strong, therefore the Council may also take into consideration previous funding awards, and priority may be given to organisations that did not receive an award in the previous Local Improvement Scheme capital funding year / round.
- Local Improvement Scheme funding is discretionary and therefore subject to the availability of finances as determined in the Council's annual budget review and the availability of funds after previous Local Improvement Scheme capital funding awards.
- Submitting an application does not guarantee funding. If your application is successful, the Council may not necessarily award the full amount requested – for example, where there is information to suggest that the project could be delivered at a lower cost than the amount of funding requested.
- The Council will aim to notify all applicants about the outcome of their application as soon as possible after the applications / awards have been approved by the Communities and Place Committee.