

# **Local Communities Fund**

## **Small Revenue & Capital Programme**

### **Guidance for Applicants Autumn 2025**

**This document aims to assist organisations that  
would like to apply for Revenue and/or Capital funding  
from the Local Communities Fund**

### **Is your organisation ready to apply?**

It is strongly recommended that you carefully read all the information provided in the document to help decide if your organisation is ready to complete an application for funding.

The first part of the application form includes the eligibility gateway. If your organisation does not meet all the eligibility criteria, it will not be considered for this round of funding.

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## **Introduction: The Local Communities Fund (LCF)**

Nottinghamshire County Council recognises the huge contribution that the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) has made to the lives of residents over many years.

The Council has a strong record in supporting the VCS by empowering local communities to be more self-sufficient. This continues to be a key priority for the Council and supporting the VCS to grow and thrive is central to achieving this.

The Local Communities Fund is a discretionary financial contribution awarded by Nottinghamshire County Council to support the delivery of projects that help to deliver the strategic aims of the County Council and the Local Communities Fund.

This document provides guidance for organisations interested in applying for Revenue and/or Capital funding. Whilst some criteria are the same for both funds, there are some differences, so please read carefully.

## **Revenue Programme**

Applications for Revenue funding are invited from VCS organisations that have developed effective activities in response to a local need / gap analysis, in particular activities that:

- Contribute to a prosperous and growing economy
- Deliver School Holiday Play Schemes
- Enable Nottinghamshire residents to contribute to social and cultural opportunities
- Encourage innovation to strengthen communities and support vulnerable residents
- Encourage local networks where people help themselves and each other to be resilient, neighbourly and safe
- Increase volunteering opportunities that enable more vulnerable residents to be supported
- Help to address climate and environmental change
- Help to improve mental health
- Help to improve physical health
- Help to reduce loneliness
- Improve access to existing community-based services (e.g. advice and signposting), for the most vulnerable residents
- Offer early help and prevention to those who most need it
- Provide support to communities of interest, for example rural communities.

The Autumn 2025 launch of the LCF Revenue Programme consists of a Revenue **Small Grants** Scheme. Please note that:

- The **opening and closing dates** for this Revenue application window will be communicated once they have been formally agreed upon
- The **maximum award** will be **£5,000** per project in any financial year.
- Successful organisations will be offered a **12-month funding agreement**.

Revenue funding can help towards the running costs ('core costs' or 'overheads') that are essential to delivering the project / service as described in the application for funding, such as:

- Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity & water bills)
- Communications (e.g. internet, landline & telephone)
- Rent
- Insurance & professional fees
- Relevant staff salaries and staff training
- Volunteer training and volunteer expenses.

### **Capital Programme**

The Capital Programme is designed to contribute to improvements of facilities or purchase assets that support community access and improve health and well-being. Eligible organisations can apply for one-off Capital grants up to a maximum of £20,000 per organisation in any funding year.

Applications for Capital funding should have in place at least 50% match funding and should show how the proposed project:

- Helps to address local priorities e.g. improving access to new or existing services such as sports and leisure, protecting the environment, reducing loneliness, improving physical and mental health
- Improves local places and spaces that are important to communities
- Brings people together and involves them in the design and implementation
- Helps to address climate and environmental change and/or minimises any negative impact on the environment.

Please note that:

- The **opening and closing dates** for this Capital application window will be communicated once they have been formally agreed upon
- The **maximum award** will be **£20,000** per organisation in any financial year.
- Successful organisations will be offered a **12-month funding agreement**.

Examples of how the Capital funding could be used include:

- Improvements to sporting facilities which help to improve wellbeing and access for all.
- New outdoor play equipment (including accessible outdoor equipment) to provide an exciting and safe play area for local children and families, offering opportunities for physical activity and community interaction in an open, public space.
- Green / horticultural improvements to open spaces such as the development of an 'all year round' community garden for the benefit of all members of the community.
- Memorial and heritage improvements, such as the construction of a permanent and accessible paved foundation for a memorial dedicated to RAF aircrew who were killed in flying incidents during WWII.
- Signs and information or interpretation boards that improve the community and/or visitor experience such as brown tourist signs to direct visitors to Nottinghamshire attractions, signposts and information boards that include points of interest within a park, gateway signs upon entering a village.

### **What type of organisations are eligible to apply for LCF Revenue & Capital funding?**

The Council encourages applications from **eligible organisations**. Eligible organisations include:

- Charities registered with the Charity Commission\* (e.g. Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIOs), unincorporated associations, trust or charitable / not-for-profit companies limited by guarantee).
- Voluntary / community groups that are not registered as a charity (e.g. the group could be set up as an 'unincorporated association' or an 'excepted' charity as defined by the Charity Commission\*).
- Friendly Societies or Industrial and Provident (Community Benefit) Societies with charitable purposes and registered with an appropriate regulator.
- Community Benefit or Cooperative Societies.
- Community Interest Companies (CICs) with charitable aims, a community purpose and limited by guarantee.
- Social enterprises that are set up using a recognised legal form.
- Sports clubs – clubs that have achieved or are working towards Clubmark are particularly welcome.
- Parish or Town Councils (Capital funding only)

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

### **Who can't apply?**

- National Organisations - a national charity (or local branch thereof) that cannot adequately provide evidence that funding is being solely spent in Nottinghamshire or for the benefit of the residents of Nottinghamshire.
- Borough and District Councils.
- Any organisation who is applying on behalf of another organisation.
- A District Council acting as an accountable body for a local voluntary / community group.
- Companies that can pay profits to directors, shareholders, or members (including companies limited by shares).
- Sole traders and individuals.

### **Funding criteria**

The funding criteria applies to the Revenue and Capital Programmes, unless otherwise stated.

**Community engagement:** Organisations are encouraged to involve the community in the design, development, and delivery of the project.

**County Councillor Role:** In line with the principle of involving County Councillors (Elected Members) in their communities, all Revenue and Capital applications must provide an endorsement from an elected Nottinghamshire County Councillor for the District in which the proposed project / asset will be delivered or installed.

As part of this phase of the fund, councillor endorsements will be collected through a dedicated form embedded within the application process. Councillors will be required to complete a brief form for each project they choose to endorse.

It is the responsibility of the applying organisation to provide the endorsement form to their chosen councillor. The form will be accessible within the application and can be easily shared to facilitate completion.

Please note that:

- County Councillor support is not a guarantee of application success.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to contact the relevant County Councillor to discuss the proposed project and to seek their support.

The contact details for all Nottinghamshire County Councillors are available online:

<https://councillor.nottinghamshire.gov.uk>

**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; and,

- 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 satisfy the Local Communities Fund requirements, applicants must ensure that they have satisfactory governance arrangements in place.**

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.

**Match Funding:** Local Communities Fund funding is a contribution to the delivery of a project. This means that the funding is not intended to cover the full project costs and therefore match funding will be required.

**Organisations will need to raise the match funding before applying and will be asked to provide details of confirmed match funding on their application form.** There is a high demand for funding and as such, match-funded projects enable the Council to support a broader range of projects. A match funding approach also helps to show shared support and commitment to the project from all parties concerned. Note that:

- Organisations must have in place **at least 50% of the total project cost from other sources** (i.e. match funding).
- Match funding can include grants and donations from other organisations, member subscription fees and fundraising (and where appropriate, contributions 'in-kind').
- Please note, if you are using volunteer time towards match funding, we only accept up to 25% towards match funding. All volunteer hours are calculated at £13.50 per hour for this formula, and you will be asked to provide evidence of this.
- Organisations should ensure that any grant awarded is not 'double-funding' (e.g. the grant must not be used to pay for the same items paid for by other means).
- To make best use of the funds the County Council aims to invest in Capital projects with full match-funding already in place, so they are 'ready to go'.

**The following criteria also applies to Capital projects:**

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

**Maintenance:** Capital funding can be used to help with the initial cost of the project, however it cannot be used for ongoing maintenance. Therefore, organisations must ensure that they have plans and funds in place to maintain the project for at least three years.

**Ownership:** The applying Organisation must be able to evidence title to the land / property or provide evidence of permission to use the land / property for the proposed project.

## **How to Apply**

Please follow the [link here](#) to complete your application.

You can submit your application in one sitting or if you prefer, you are able to save changes and return to the application later.

To ensure a smooth submission process, please have the following documents ready to upload with your application:

- The organisation's constitution or governing document
- A quote for the cost of any works for the proposed project (required for capital projects only)
- The organisation's most recent financial accounts
- Public liability insurance documentation
- Any required permissions for your project (e.g. planning permission)

## **Apply for Revenue and/or Capital LCF Funding**

- During this phase of the fund, **County Councillor Endorsements** will be collected via a dedicated form included within the application. Please be prepared to request that your councillor completes this form in support of your project. The endorsement form will be accessible within the application and can be easily shared with your councillor.
- In the **Required Documentation** section, you will be asked to confirm that your organisation has the following documents, and that they will be made available to the Council on request:
  - Governing document (except for Parish and Town Councils)
  - Current Public Liability Insurance certificate
  - Policies: Health and Safety, Equality and Diversity & Safeguarding
  - Confirmation of additional funding
  - Any other information or documents as requested by the County Council.
- **Applications for Capital funding:** If your organisation is applying for Capital funding, in addition to the above, you will also be asked to upload the following:
  - **A quote** for the proposed project (providing a quote helps to show that the proposed project costs are realistic). Where possible, obtain at least two quotations and attach the quote which represents the 'best value'.
  - Quotes should be on headed paper and should be a fixed price for the works and not an estimate.
  - Permission to use land or buildings from the owner (or permission / consent from VIA Highways), as appropriate & where applicable.



- When you have completed all sections of the application **and** uploaded all required supporting documents, click '**Submit**' (you can save and complete your application later if you wish).

### **What happens after I submit my application?**

You will receive an email to confirm that your application has been submitted. If you would like a copy of your application, you can contact [LCF@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:LCF@nottscc.gov.uk) and request a copy.

Elected Members make the decisions regarding funding awards. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application as soon as possible after completion of the decision-making process - this could be approximately 12 weeks after the closing date.

### **Next steps if your Revenue or Capital application is successful**

- If your application is approved for funding, you will receive an email notification. The email will contain further details about your award.
- Where appropriate, you will be advised of any other information / documents that the County Council needs to receive before payment is made. Organisations awarded Local Communities Funding must comply with the County Council's **acknowledging funding and publicity** procedure as published on [our website](#).

### **Payment**

Organisations awarded funding will be provided with information about getting set up to receive the grant payment.

Revenue and Capital grant awards up to £5,000 will be paid in one instalment.

Capital grant awards over £5,000 will be paid in two instalments: 75% when the agreement is signed and the due diligence is satisfactory, and the final 25% when the project is complete and satisfactory monitoring is completed.

### **Monitoring and completion of projects**

Monitoring helps to demonstrate that the grant has been spent as agreed by Elected Members.

Organisations awarded funding will be required to provide additional information to support project monitoring, reporting, audit, and other compliance requirements. This may include periodic updates on project progress and outcomes.

Successful applicants must submit invoices and/or receipts to verify the total project cost and demonstrate how the funding has been utilised. Organisations must also confirm whether they are able to reclaim VAT on any project-related expenditure.

In addition, a site visit by representatives from the County Council will be mandatory for all funded projects. These visits will be arranged at a suitable time and will be subject to access permissions and safety considerations.

Organisations should raise any issues or concerns and advise the County Council of any planned changes at the earliest opportunity.

## 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
<b>Governing documents</b> <i>A governing document is a set of rules or agreement for your organisation / group. Note that there are different arrangements in place for Parish and Town Councils.</i>	<b>Is the governing document the correct type for your organisation?</b> <b>e.g.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Constitution (or 'Rules') for unincorporated associations.</li> <li>• A Small Charity Constitution (for organisations that do not meet the financial threshold for registering with the Charity Commission).</li> <li>• A CIO Foundation or Association Constitution for CIOs.</li> <li>• Articles of Association (for charitable companies).</li> <li>• Trust Deed for Trusts.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Does your governing document include appropriate, up-to-date information? For example, does it include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What the organisation is set up to do? (objects)</li> <li>• How the organisation will do those things? (powers)</li> <li>• Who will run it? (trustees)</li> <li>• What happens if changes to the administrative arrangements need to be made? (amendment provision)</li> <li>• What happens if the organisation wishes to wind up? (dissolution provision)</li> <li>• How the trustees will run the organisation.</li> <li>• Initial arrangements for meetings, voting and financial procedures etc.</li> <li>• Trustee details</li> <li>• Is it signed and dated?</li> </ul>	
	<b>Is the proposed project permitted by the governing document for your organisation?</b>	
<b>Trustees &amp; management teams</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the information provided to the Charity Commission, Companies House and/or any other regulatory body correct / up to date?</li> <li>• Are your trustees and management team supportive of the proposed project and application for funding?</li> </ul>	
<b>Policies and procedures</b> <i>E.g. policies and procedures regarding safeguarding children &amp; young people, vulnerable adults, health and safety, equality and diversity, recruitment and selection and volunteering.</i>	<b>Do you have relevant policies and procedures in place?</b> You may find it helpful to List the policies and procedures that you do have and identify any gaps.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are all your policies and procedures up-to-date and in-line with good practice?</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are all your policies and procedures used in practice?</li> </ul>	

<b>Quality Standards &amp; Accreditation of professionals employed (e.g. contractors, manufacturers, accountants, architects etc.)</b>	Does your organisation – (and where appropriate, the professionals that you employ), have the correct and up-to-date accreditation, qualifications, and registration for the work carried out? Do the people / organisations that you employ have appropriate policies, procedures, and insurance in place? Sports clubs – has your Club achieved or are they working towards Clubmark?	
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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.

**Please note:** 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: Eligibility criteria

### To be eligible to apply, the organisation or project must:

- Be an eligible organisation type / structure.
- Have in place the relevant governance – e.g. governing document, health and safety and safeguarding policies and procedures, as appropriate to the organisation / project.
- Benefit Nottinghamshire residents / communities.
- Only apply for up to 50% of the project costs up to the maximum award for the Fund, i.e. up to

£5,000 for Revenue and up to £20,000 for Capital.

- Have at least 50% confirmed match funding.
- Have sufficient confirmed funding in place to deliver / complete the described project (including the amount you are applying for from the LCF).
- Have the support of a County Councillor from the district that the project is within (note that County Councillor support is not a guarantee of application success).

### Also, for Capital applications, the project must:

- Benefit the community for at least 3 years.
- Have all relevant permissions in place.

### Please note that grants awarded from the Local Communities Fund 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
- Costs that are incurred before the application is approved by Elected Members. Therefore, if the application is successful, applicants are advised to wait until their funding agreement has been signed by both parties and payment received before starting the project / purchasing the asset
- Projects that are not delivered within the Nottinghamshire County administrative boundary.
- Projects that do not primarily benefit Nottinghamshire County residents
- Costs associated with pre-schools or children's nurseries
- Projects that are for the sole purpose of promoting political or religious views
- Unspecified expenditure – e.g. 'miscellaneous' costs
- Funds to specifically build up a reserve or surplus
- General appeals or endowment funds
- Costs that have not been agreed with the County Council.

**Note that:** any funding awarded must be used as stated in the funding agreement.

### **Appendix 3: Assessment Considerations and Process**

Before applying, organisations should check that their proposed projects meet the criteria. All applications will be reviewed by the County Council against the funding criteria.

**Please note that:**

- The County Council will carry out relevant checks on the information provided.
- Elected Members make the decisions regarding funding awards. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application as soon as possible after completion of the decision-making process - this could be approximately 12 weeks after the closing date.
- The funding is limited, and competition is likely to be strong, therefore the County Council may also take into consideration previous funding awards. Priority will be given to applications that best meet the criteria and organisations that did not receive an award in the previous funding year.
- If your application is successful, the County Council may not necessarily award the full amount requested. For example:
  - If the project can be delivered at a lower cost than the amount of funding requested
  - If some costs are not eligible for funding (e.g. on-going maintenance costs are not eligible for Capital funding)
  - High competition for funding.
- Local Communities Funding is discretionary and therefore subject to the availability of finances as determined in the Council's annual budget review.

## **Appendix 4: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

### **1. Can our organisation apply for more than one project?**

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

### **2. Can I apply as a partnership and separately?**

If an organisation is part of a partnership application, then it should not also apply as an independent organisation for funding to deliver the same project / asset.

### **3. We're a branch of a larger umbrella / national organisation – can we apply?**

As a national charity (or local branch thereof) you would need to demonstrate that the funding is being spent solely in Nottinghamshire and/or for the benefit of the residents of Nottinghamshire.

### **4. Our application was 'approved 'in principle' – what does this mean?**

If your application for funding is approved 'in principle', the organisation will need to follow the process as advised by the County Council and provide further information / documents / assurances as requested before the funding is released.

### **5. We would like to query why our application was not successful – how do we do this?**

All applications that are not successful will be provided with a summary of the reason(s) why the application was not successful. Common reasons why applications are not successful include:

- There is not enough additional funding to cover the remaining cost of the project
- Project does not have at least 50% confirmed match funding
- The project does not address an unmet need
- The project does not benefit the wider community
- The project did not submit quotes (Capital projects only)
- The project did not submit the required documentation / approvals as applicable
- Additional funding already meets or exceeds the cost of the project
- The application did not have support from the relevant County Councillor
- Most beneficiaries are not Nottinghamshire residents
- The Organisation type is not eligible for this Fund
- The project does not contribute to the Council priorities
- The project is part of commissioned services or duplication of mainstream / other services
- The timeframe of the project is not in line with the guidelines for this Fund
- The application was incomplete / under-developed.

If you cannot find the answer to your question in this document, or on [our webpage](#), please contact the Local Communities Fund team at [LCF@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:LCF@nottsc.gov.uk) and a member of the team will be able to assist you.