

How to... find funding

There are a huge variety of ways that you can raise funds for your local campaign. Think about:

- Organising your own fundraising events, such as open garden days, raffles and car boot sales
- Securing sponsorship or benefits in kind from local businesses (see How to secure a sponsor/ support)
- Applying for grants (see below)
- Approaching the local authority - some may have funds available to support community groups in their area (see How to work with your local authority)

Applying for grants for your activities

There are a large number of grant-giving bodies across the UK and community action and the environment are popular themes for funding. Submitting an application can take a significant amount of time, but, if successful, it can completely finance a project and is well worth the effort. If you can, identify someone in your group who is happy to dedicate a period of time to researching grant opportunities; even just a few hours can start to unveil potential leads. It is also recommended that you keep good records of your group's activities, e.g. the number of hours donated by your volunteers, the amount of financial and in-kind support you generate and the impact of your activities on the local community. All of these figures will help you to build a stronger case in an application for funding.

Before you start, make sure that your project meets the full criteria of the fund that you are applying for; there's no point wasting time filling out applications that will only be rejected. Contact the funder if you need clarification about the criteria.

The majority of funders will provide grants for specific projects, rather than finance towards your on-going operations. You will need to scope out your proposed project in full and provide supporting evidence to show how the work will benefit local people/ wildlife etc. You will also need to show in detail how you will spend the money.

Writing a winning funding application is a practised skill, so if you have this expertise within your group make sure that you use it. Funders often expect, and will always look favourably upon, bids which propose to match fund the amount requested, either financially or through in-kind donations. This might be through your group contributing a lump sum, or it could be your commitment to maintaining the site voluntarily for 5 years, for example.

In summary, when applying for grants, make sure you:

- Read the small print and ensure that you meet the full criteria before starting
- Enquire if anyone in your group has experience of making funding applications – their expertise and experience could lead to a winning bid
- Make sure you have someone to proof read your application before you send it, to check for errors and double check your sums
- Don't lose heart if you're not immediately successful; ask for feedback and keep trying.

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Key grant schemes relevant to community green spaces

Big Lottery Fund

Every year BIG Lottery Fund gives millions of pounds from the National Lottery to good causes. Their money goes to community groups and to projects that improve health, education and the environment. The following are examples of programmes for which community green space projects may qualify:

Awards for All

Awards for All is a lottery grants programme aimed at local communities throughout the UK. Grants of between £300 and £10,000 are available to support participation in art, sport, heritage and community activities, and projects that promote education, the environment and health in the local community. Applications can be made at any time, the application form is short and simple, and the outcome is given to the applicant within eight weeks. <http://www.awardsforall.org.uk>

Parks for People

The Parks for People programme is a joint initiative between the Big Lottery Fund and the Heritage Lottery Fund to provide further funding for Parks in England. This will be added to the £24m that HLF are committing each year for parks across the UK. Parks for People builds on the two Lottery Funds' shared commitment to bring real improvements to local communities by improving historic spaces to make a lasting impact on the lives of local people and the places where they live. For more information, visit BIG at http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog_parks_people?regioncode=-uk

Reaching Communities: England

Reaching Communities funds projects that help people and communities most in need. Projects can be new or existing, or be the core work of your organisation. You can apply for funding for a revenue or smaller capital project if you're a voluntary and or community organisation, school, local authority, not for profit organisation or social enterprise. http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog_reaching_communities

The BIG Lottery Fund also runs programmes specific to Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. You can find more information on BIG's web site.

<http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/>

Heritage Lottery Fund

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund gives grants to sustain and transform our heritage from parks, gardens, buildings, museums, archaeology, wildlife habitats and cultural traditions. As the largest dedicated funder of the UK's heritage, with around £375 million a year to invest in new projects, the Heritage Lottery Fund has developed a considerable body of knowledge and project evaluation over 15 years. They are also a leading advocate for the value of heritage to modern life. The Heritage Lottery Fund has supported more than 33,900 projects allocating £4.4billion across the UK.

<http://www.hlf.org.uk/Pages/Home.aspx>

Local Trust

Big Local is a ten year programme working with and supporting communities, in up to 150 selected areas, to make where they live and work a better place now and in the future.

<http://localtrust.org.uk/>

Green Places Fund

The Green Places Fund, developed by national parks charity Greenspace with Birmingham and Nottingham aims to safeguard the future of public green spaces by allowing community groups and philanthropists to give and influence locally. The Green Places Fund concept is supported by

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Nottingham City Council, Birmingham Open Spaces Forum and Birmingham City Council.
<http://www.green-space.org.uk/GreenPlacesFund/index.php>

Coalfields Regeneration Trust

The Coalfields Regeneration Trust (CRT) is the leading regeneration organisation dedicated to improving the quality of life in Britain's former mining communities. The charity provides practical help and community investment and delivers employment, skills and training programmes.
www.coalfields-regen.org.uk/

The Landfill Community Fund

The Landfill Communities Fund (LCF) is a tax credit scheme enabling operators of landfill sites to contribute money to organisations enrolled with ENTRUST as Environmental Bodies (EBs). The scheme was designed to help mitigate the effects of landfill upon local communities. It encourages partnerships between landfill operators, their local communities and the voluntary and public sectors.
www.entrust.org.uk/landfill-community-fund

Biffa Awards

Biffaward is a multi-million pound fund, part of the Landfill Communities Fund, which helps to build communities and transform lives through awarding grants to communities' environmental projects across the UK. It supports projects that will be of lasting environmental benefit, increase or maintain biodiversity, improve quality of life and foster vibrant communities. Funding is directed to projects that provide and improve public amenities for communities within 10 miles of a Biffa operation. Three types of grants are available:

- Community (for projects that provide and improve community facilities);
- Biodiversity (for projects that conserve wildlife species and habitats); and
- Small Grants (for projects that enable communities to improve local amenities and to conserve wildlife).

<http://www.biffaward.org>

Esmee Fairbairn Foundation

The aim of the foundation is to improve the quality of life throughout the UK. Their primary interests are in the cultural life of the UK, education and learning, the natural environment and enabling disadvantaged people to participate more fully in society.

<http://www.esmeefairbairn.org.uk/>

Lloyds TSB Foundation

The TSB scheme aims to support charities that help disadvantaged people play a fuller role in the community by delivering lasting changes and benefits for their users/beneficiaries. TSB funding is needs-driven and their portfolio of grant making programmes is designed to fund issues that affect individuals as well as multiple communities.

<http://www.lloydstsbfoundations.org.uk>

The Co-operative Group

The Community Fund is a grant scheme designed to help local communities throughout the UK. Members of the Co-operative Group who want to help improve the lives of others, donate part or all of their share of the profits. These members have already raised millions of pounds each year for all kinds of community projects. <http://www.co-operative.coop/communityfund>

The Country Land and Business Association Charitable Trust

A fund, operating in England and Wales, to provide facilities for the disabled and disadvantaged to take part in recreation and education in the countryside. The trust is supported by the Country Land and Business Association

http://www.cla.org.uk/About_the_CLA/Charitable_Trust_Introduction/

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Community Foundations

Community Foundations are charities across the UK dedicated to strengthening local communities, creating opportunities and tackling disadvantage and exclusion issues.

Community Foundations target grants that make a genuine difference to the lives of local people. They manage funds donated by individuals and organisations, building endowment and acting as the vital link between donors and local needs, connecting people with causes, and enabling clients to achieve far more than they ever could by themselves.

<http://www.communityfoundations.org.uk/>

Grants from companies and local businesses

Numerous companies and local businesses are now giving various grants to community and voluntary groups in their areas to promote the benefits of green spaces and community engagement. This is often as part of their policy on corporate aid responsibility.

Countryside Stewardship Grants

Countryside Stewardship grants provide support for landowners towards a number of different land management areas. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants>

NCVO (National Council for Voluntary Services) Help with applying for grants

There are over 8,000 grant giving bodies in the UK, so choosing where to apply can seem like a daunting task. Their website **Funding Central** can help you identify the most relevant funders, both nationally and locally.

NCVO Publications: Art of Raising Money

Author: Professor Ian Bruce CBE

Publication date: 21-09-2010

Edition: 1

ISBN: 978-0-7199-1802-5

Publisher: NCVO

Number of pages: 45

Format: Paperback

Price (each) £ 14.50



It's time to break down boundaries: if your organisation thinks that marketing is just advertising, PR and selling, then this publication will change your mind. Theories and techniques developed in the commercial world will help you to transform your fundraising and income generation so that it is sustainable, integrated and rewarding. The ideas and tools in this fun and engaging publication are as relevant to income from donations as to contracts or trading, and are suitable for anyone who is unfamiliar with marketing theory and who needs to raise funds.

The Art of Raising Money is first and foremost a practical book – easy to read and split into bite-sized sections, it addresses:

- what to do first if you need to raise funds urgently
- how to choose new methods for income generation and consider the return on investment they are likely to give you
- how to apply marketing theory to your chosen income generation methods to make them sustainable.

The Art of Raising Money is written by Professor Ian Bruce CBE, who founded the non-profit management centre at City University's Cass Business School (Cass CCE), where he specialises in strategy and marketing of fundraising, services and campaigning.

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The Tudor Trust

The Tudor Trust is an independent grant-making trust which supports voluntary and community groups working in any part of the UK. They particularly want to help smaller, community-led organisations which work directly with people who are at the margins of society: organisations which support positive changes in people's lives and in their communities. **0207 727 8522**

B&Q Waste Donation

B&Q Waste Donation is a scheme coordinated in store either by the environmental champion, duty or warehouse manager who will keep a Waste Donation Form on file for interested groups. Can donate waste materials, for example slightly damaged tins of paint, off-cuts of timber, and end of range materials, to community groups, charities and schools. **0845 609 6688**

Regional Funds

Veolia Envirogrant (Southwark, London)

The Southwark EnviroGrant Scheme has been set up by Veolia to help local people concerned with protecting and improving their local environment with grants of up to £1,000. Veolia can also help with practical support from staff volunteers for work such as decorating, landscaping or event build.

MPGA Metropolitan Public Gardens Association (London)

Modest grants and practical assistance to community gardens and green sites across London
<http://www.mpga.org.uk/>

The McRobert Trust (Scotland)

Funding charities across Scotland to provide programmes to engage young people and care for green spaces and communities. <http://www.themacroberttrust.org.uk/>

Useful links

fundingscentral.org.uk – free to use for community groups

biglotteryfund.org.uk/funding – information, grants and resources for community groups

justact.org.uk – advice and funding for volunteer-led community projects

Tips from groups

- We find our funding by planting up tubs in the spring & selling them at our school fete, and Christmas arrangements at our Christmas bazaar. We sell seedlings after school and crops from our vegetable garden. We also send out the Sutton Seeds fundraising catalogue once a year. Finally, we enter competitions, as we often win garden vouchers or money - this year we even won a greenhouse. *(Hook Lane Primary School, IYN)*
- Get to know who your residents are and what they do. We found that a local resident had worked with groups to apply for funding and grants. This helped us to understand what the protocol is for applying for grants / funding. *(Devonshire Park Garden Festival, IYN)*
- Keep trying! We've worked hard to try and get funding. We've not always been successful but we've had good support from our local county councillor and building society. *(Maun Conservation Society, IYN)*

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- Apply for grants by working with local VSC, local councillors and county officers, who can help complete forms. (*Prestatyn in Bloom*)
- There are national grants, but local grants can often be more easily obtained. Contact your local council or housing association in the first instance. (*Chipping in Bloom*)
- We found that the Big Lottery's 'Awards for All' was the easiest programme to apply for successfully. (*St Lukes Church, Crosby, IYN*)
- When applying for funding, ensure that your group meets all the specified criteria and make sure that your application is submitted well before the closing date. You can always seek advice from other groups. Ensure that your financial records are up to date and try to provide audited accounts. (*Friends of Devonport Park, IYN*)
- Always keep your volunteer hours recorded as some funding will use these as matched funding. Keep as many records as possible on everything you do as this comes in very handy for filling out the forms particularly for obscure and not-so-well known grants – no matter how old the information. (*Ross-in-Bloom*)