

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL COMMUNITY GRANT SCHEME

GUIDANCE NOTES



PLEASE READ THESE GUIDANCE NOTES CAREFULLY BEFORE COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM

What is the Scottish Borders Council Community Grant Scheme?

The Scottish Borders Council Community Grant Scheme has been designed to provide limited support to voluntary and community groups that are active within their communities, and to assist communities or interest groups with the development of community based projects.

The scheme is provided by Scottish Borders Council and is divided up annually between each of the 5 Area Forums (Berwickshire, Cheviot, Eildon, Teviot & Liddesdale and Tweeddale), with an amount set aside for Borders-wide and non Borders-based groups. The amounts provided are subject to periodic review by Scottish Borders Council.

Who can apply?

You can apply for a grant if:-

- you are a voluntary or community group based in the Borders
- you are a non-Borders based voluntary or community group who can demonstrate direct benefits for identified groups in the Borders
- you have a constitution or set of rules or equivalent
- you have a bank or building society account
- you have independently approved annual accounts which are less than 15 months old (new organisations must be able to provide a 12 month estimate of income and expenditure)
- your activities benefit the well-being of the Borders people
- you are committed to equality for all and equality of opportunity
- your project meets one of the outcomes of the scheme (the outcomes are the changes or differences our funding will make):-
 - **Communities have more access to better quality local services or activities (including arts, music, heritage or sports activities)** – for example improvements to community buildings, development of community events, enabling more people to take part in arts and sporting activities
 - **Communities have more access to a better quality environment (including the built environment)** – for example by increasing access to the countryside, development of community gardens, improving open spaces, development of floral displays
 - **Communities have more pride in their community** – for example development of Christmas Lighting projects, participation in celebratory events
 - **Communities have more access to better quality advice and information** – for example provision of public noticeboards, promotional leaflets, development of websites
 - **More local groups or services are better supported to recover from financial difficulty**

Note: Constitutions, annual accounts and bank accounts must all be in the same name

Who cannot apply?

- individuals
- organisations involved in party political activities
- companies who aim to make a profit
- statutory bodies
- religious organisations (excluding uniformed youth groups)

What kind of grants are available?

The Scottish Borders Council Community Grants Scheme is the Council's main provider of financial support to voluntary and community groups. It combines the former Community Support Fund with a range of other small Council grants schemes including support for Town Twinning, Christmas Lights, Guides, Scouts, uniformed youth groups, youth clubs, pipe bands and brass bands. It is an application based grant scheme, based on need. It will mainly fund defined projects but will, in certain circumstances, be able to provide one-off support grants to help sustain groups themselves.

Note: Support grants are intended to help groups that are experiencing temporary financial difficulties. They are not intended to be annual payments.

What cannot be funded?

Grants cannot pay for:-

- ordering or spending which has taken place prior to approval
- wages, salaries, or fees of sessional workers,
- alterations and improvements to licensed serving areas
- electricity costs for Christmas Lighting
- upkeep of hanging baskets
- trips abroad
- maintenance of private roadways
- used vehicles

How will projects be assessed?

Grants will be assessed using the following criteria:-

- if you have received a grant before
- how you have made use of previous grants
- how your group is set up and managed
- your finances and the financial need for funding (see note below)
- what need/demand there is for your project/activity
- benefits to be gained and how well your project meets the outcomes of the scheme
- support and involvement of wider community
- efforts to secure other sources of funding
- your group's commitment to promoting equality for all and equality of opportunity

Note : If your group has more savings than the income your group receives in a year, you should explain what you are planning to do with this money. If you have not set aside this money for anything in particular a grant is unlikely to be awarded

Decisions on grants from £501 to £5,000 will be considered by the Chief Executive, subject to agreement of officer recommendations by at least 50% of Members in the relevant Ward areas . Decisions on grants of up to £500 will be delegated to relevant officers of the Council depending

on the outcome of the project. Decisions on grants from Borders-wide and non-Borders based groups will be made by the Executive Committee.

How much is available?

The Scheme can offer grants to a maximum of £5000. A maximum of £5,000 can be awarded to any single project with a maximum of £5,000 awarded to any single group in any one financial year. Applications of £500 and over will require 10% match-funding in cash or 'in-kind' support (ie this might take the form of volunteer's time or local skills that are a direct input to your project). Grants of up to £499 can be funded up to 100%. The grant requested should be the minimum required to enable the project to go ahead.

Because of the limited amount of money within the Scheme **it is essential that applicants can demonstrate that they have checked other sources of funding before applying to the scheme.** Applicants should note that they may be asked to apply to other funding sources. To meet this condition it is important that potential applicants contact the Council's Grants Co-ordinator, The Bridge or Berwickshire Council of Voluntary Service in the first instance - see contact details below.

- Grants Co-ordinator, Strategic Policy Unit, Council Headquarters, Newtown St. Boswells TD6 0SA. Tel: 01835-826659
- The Bridge, Newby Court, High Street, Peebles EH45 8AL. Tel: 01721-723123
- The Bridge, 6 Roxburgh Street, Galashiels TD1 1PF. Tel: 01896-755370
- The Bridge, Veitch's Close, Castlegate, Jedburgh TD8 6AY. Tel: 01835-863554
- Berwickshire Association of Voluntary Service, Platform 1, Station Road, Duns TD11 3HS. Tel: 01361-883137

What happens if I get a grant?

Grants can only be used for the purpose applied for. Projects receiving a grant will be expected to be realistic and achievable and **must be completed within 12 months from the date of acceptance of the grant.** A Grant Evaluation Form must be completed and receipts provided to show that the amount given has been used for the purpose intended. The conditions of any offer of grant, along with the project outcomes, will be closely monitored. Any amount not used must be repaid in full. **Failure to comply with any conditions attached to a grant may result in the grant being repaid to Scottish Borders Council or affect future grant awards.**

What is the time-scale for grants?

Applications may be submitted at any time. **Applications for Christmas Lighting should normally be submitted by the end of September each year.** In general, you should receive a letter within 8 weeks from receipt of a fully completed application letting you know the result of the decision (incomplete applications may cause delays). If you have been successful you will receive a grant offer letter in duplicate specifying the terms and conditions. You must sign and return one full copy to us within 3 weeks. **Grants will not be paid until we have received a signed grant offer letter.** Following receipt of the signed grant offer letter and acceptance of the terms and conditions, grants will be paid directly into your bank or building society account.

Application Forms for Scottish Borders Community Grant Scheme can be downloaded from our website and are also available from:-

**Grants Co-ordinator
Scottish Borders Council
Strategic Policy Unit
Newtown St. Boswells
Melrose TD6 0SA
Tel: 01835-826659
Fax: 01835-825059
Email: lcornwall@scotborders.gov.uk
www.scotborders.gov.uk**

Completed application forms should be returned to the above address.

You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the above address