

Harborough District Council

Environmental Grant Scheme: Guidance for Applicants



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1. Introduction

Harborough District Council declared a Climate Emergency in July 2019.

Harborough District Council has adopted the Climate Emergency Action Plan 2022 - 2030. To support this plan, the council have developed a grant scheme that will invest up to £450,000 in local, environmental projects (over the four financial years between April 2023 and March 2027).

The Environmental Grant Scheme will support capital projects that will help to meet the following commitments:

Commitment 3: The Council commits to working with residents and communities to support their actions in reducing emissions and help them increase their resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Commitment 6: The Council commits to working in partnership to promote resilient natural systems that will help to reduce the impacts of climate change.

The Environmental Grant Scheme will encourage communities across the Harborough District to engage in capital projects that will have a positive and provable impact on the environment.

The last round has now closed. However, there will be further rounds of funding as detailed above, ending in the financial year 2026-27.

2. Primary Outcomes

All projects must have a clear public benefit, and a positive and proven impact on the environment, meeting one or more of the primary outcomes of the fund. The primary outcomes we are seeking to achieve through the Environmental Grant Scheme are:

- 2.1 **Reduce the carbon footprint of the community:** Projects that actively contribute to lowering the carbon footprint of the community.
- 2.2 **Reduce the waste produced in the community:** Communities striving to reduce the amount of waste produced within their boundaries, fostering a culture of responsible waste management.
- 2.3 **Create, or protect and enhance, biodiversity or environmental assets such as green spaces and waterways:** Initiatives focused on creating, protecting, and enhancing biodiversity, as well as safeguarding environmental assets such as green spaces and waterways.
- 2.4 **Educate and/or raise awareness of climate change that will result in one of the above outcomes:** Proposals that aim to educate and raise awareness about climate change, ultimately leading to one or more of the above outcomes, will be considered as part of this scheme.

3. Eligibility Criteria

- 3.1 The applicant must be a constituted 'not for profit' organisation. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - village or community groups.
 - community enterprises.
 - registered charities.
 - town or parish councils.
- 3.2 Organisations that are in administration, insolvent or where a striking-off notice has been made, are not eligible for funding under this scheme.
- 3.3 The application must be for a capital project. This means you must spend grants on lasting assets such as a building or equipment.
- 3.4 The application must be for a grant of between £5,000 and £20,000.
- 3.5 The project must be based in, and support, a village or major settlement in the Harborough District.

- 3.6 The project must have a clear public benefit, and a positive and proven impact on the environment, meeting one or more of the primary outcomes outlined in Section 2.
- 3.7 The project must have a minimum of 10% cash match funding and that funding must be from a source other than Harborough District Council.
- 3.8 The project must have a letter of support from someone, in a position of authority, who is going to champion the project (for example a letter from the parish council or a local councillor).
- 3.9 Where relevant, the project must have any permissions or licences needed before a grant can be approved. This includes, but is not limited to:
- Planning permission.
 - Buildings regulations approval.
 - Conservation area consent.
 - Listed building consent.
 - Appropriate ecclesiastical permission.
 - Consent of landlord where the applicant is a tenant or leases the building / land.
 - Waste carrier's licence.
 - Relevant health and safety and insurance requirements including risk assessments where relevant.
 - Photo permission forms.
- 3.10 The application must be backed by a plan that demonstrates the viability and sustainability of the project. Please refer to Section 6.4 for further information.
- 3.11 This funding may only be used for new projects. Projects must not start before the grant is approved.
- 3.12 The application must be received before the application deadline. The next deadline for applications is **noon on Friday 25 April 2025**.

4. Project Examples

The following are examples of activities which may be eligible for funding:

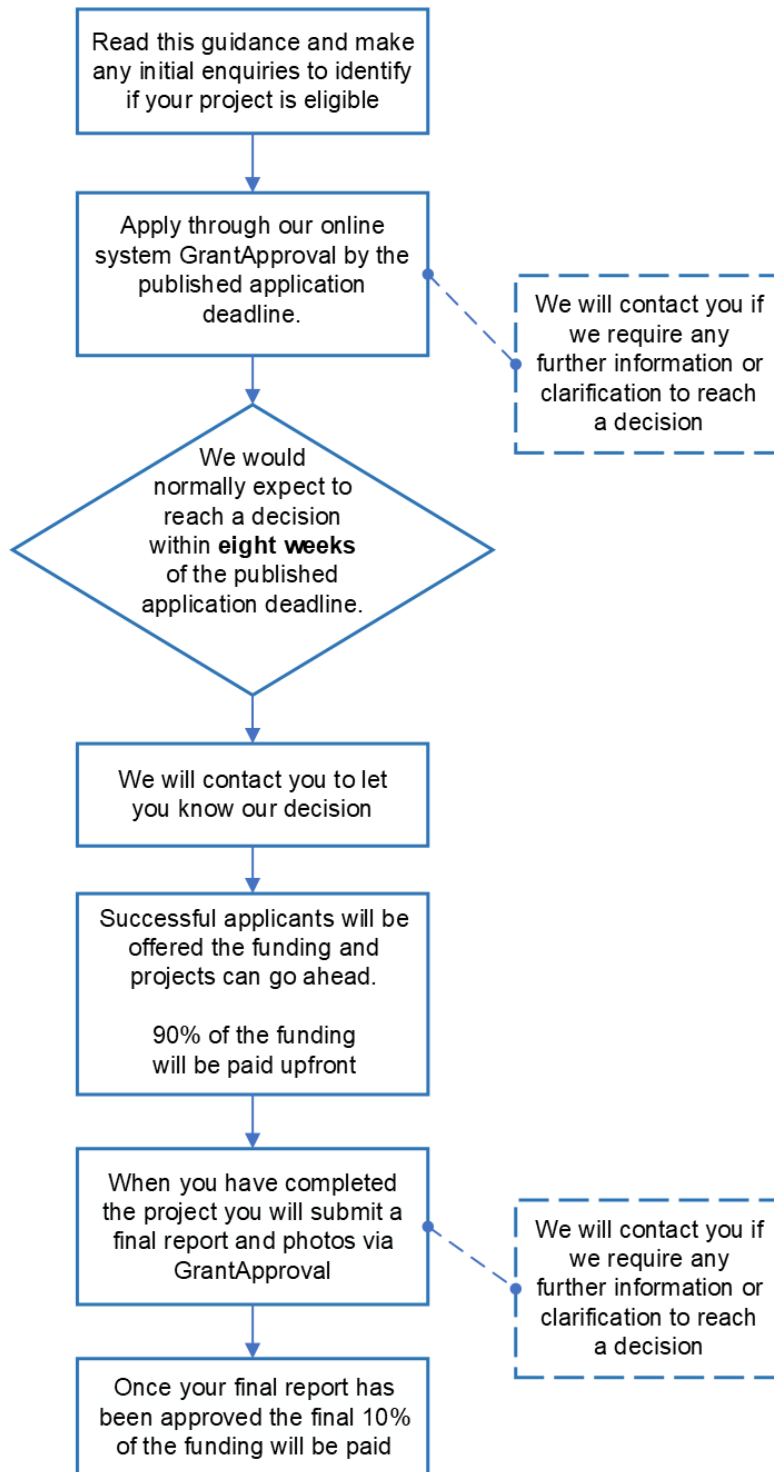
- 4.1 Community energy schemes e.g. solar farms.
- 4.2 Community repair or swap scheme.
- 4.3 Community farm or garden.
- 4.4 Community transport scheme e.g. bike shares, car clubs.

4.5 Increasing the energy efficiency of community buildings.

4.6 Creative projects to raise the awareness of climate change.

5. Application Process

5.1 A diagram of the funding process:



- 5.2 The council will only accept online applications, and these must be made via the www.grantapproval.co.uk website, please see Section 6.1 for further information.
- 5.3 If you have any initial enquiries about the Environmental Grant Scheme you can email us at communitygrants@harborough.gov.uk You should discuss an application that you have submitted or an ongoing grant with us using the 'Comments' function in the online system.

6. Application Form

- 6.1 The council will only accept online applications, and these must be made via the www.grantapproval.co.uk website. If you have not used this system before, you will need to register for an account. Once you are registered and logged onto the system, select 'Harborough' as your local authority and click 'find schemes'. The title of the fund in the online system is 'HDC – Environmental Grant Scheme'. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that they provide correct and accurate information the first time.

The system has boxes asking for your property reference number, as GrantApproval is also used by businesses. Most community organisations will probably not have a property reference number and it is fine to leave this blank; you will still be able to proceed.

6.2 Application – Questions

You should complete the following information within the online application form:

- **Please enter the required applicant information about your organisation.**
- **Please provide the grant amount that you are requesting.**
This amount should be between £5,000 and £20,000.
- **Please provide a brief description of your capital project.**
Your answer must be between 500 - 1000 characters.
- **Please explain how this project will meet one or more of the required outcomes, outlined below.**
Your answer must be between 500 - 1000 characters.
 - Reduce the carbon footprint of the community (please quantify).
 - Reduce the waste produced in the community (please quantify).
 - Create, or protect and enhance, biodiversity or environmental assets such as green spaces and waterways.

- Educate and/or raise awareness of climate change that will result in one of the above outcomes.
- **Please explain the public benefit of your project. Please consider how the community will benefit and who specifically the project will reach?**
Your answer must be between 500 - 1000 characters.
- **Where relevant, you must have any planning or other permissions/licences etc. needed before a grant can be approved. Do you have the required permissions in place for this project?**
The maximum character count for this answer is 1000.
- **Please outline the expected timeline for this project. Please provide the key milestones for the project, including a provisional start date and completion date.**
Your answer must be between 500 - 1000 characters.
- **Please state where the minimum 10% cash match funding is being sourced from? Please note that this source can't be Harborough District Council.**
The maximum character count for this answer is 1000.

6.3 Application - Required Documents

You should upload the following documents to your online application. For each relevant document type, you will need to select a document and click the 'Upload' button below it. A list of the uploaded documents will then appear at the top of the page. We would recommend checking the list of uploaded documents before proceeding with your application.

- **Bank Statement (Mandatory)**
Please provide a bank statement to match the bank details provided on the application. This needs to clearly show the bank account name, sort code and account number. Please note this grant can't be paid into an individual account. The bank account name must correspond with the name of the organisation applying for funding.
- **Letter of Support (Mandatory)**
Please provide a letter of support from someone, in a position of authority, who is going to champion the project (for example a letter from the parish council or a local councillor). This letter should evidence community support for the project and so it can't be from the organisation applying.
- **Governance Document (Mandatory)**

The applicant must be a constituted 'not for profit' organisation. Please provide your organisation's governance information.

- **Project Plan (Mandatory)**

Please upload your project plan, which should demonstrate the viability and sustainability of the project. Please refer to Section 6.4 for further information.

- **Quotations (Mandatory)**

Please provide at least two quotations for any assets, products, equipment, or services that will be made from this grant. These quotations should be from different suppliers.

- **Permissions (If Applicable)**

Please provide evidence of relevant permissions or licences obtained. Further information is available in Section 3.9.

- **Ownership or lease (If Applicable)**

If any alterations/works are proposed to a building or land, please provide proof of ownership, or the lease agreement in place. If the property is leased, please also provide a letter of permission from the landlord.

6.4 Project Plan

Your project plan should include:

- A project name.
- A summary of the project and its objectives.
- Project elements, ideally divided into must-have, nice-to-have and not-in-scope categories, if relevant.
- An outline of the need for the project and who specifically in the community this will impact. Please include evidence e.g. market research/engagement with the community.
- Details of how this project will benefit the environment. Include a CO² reduction calculation. You may find these resources helpful:
 - <https://impact-tool.org.uk/>
 - <https://www.leicestershirecommunities.org.uk/parish-councils/net-zero-toolkit>
 - <https://www.carbonfootprint.com/businesscarboncalculator.html>

- <https://www.sseenergysolutions.co.uk/small-business-sustainability/carbon-footprint-calculator>
- Partners or team members who will deliver the project, along with their roles and responsibilities. Please outline if they are confirmed partners and if not when you expect to confirm their involvement.
- A detailed project timeline including: the expected start and completion dates, key outcomes, milestones, tasks, and due dates.
- Project finances – Your application project budget should balance; this means that your total cash income must be equal to your total cash expenditure. You should supply a detailed budget breakdown.
 - **Income** – this should include the grant requested from the Environmental Grant Scheme and any other cash match funding. Please note that you must have a minimum of 10% cash match funding and that funding must be from a source other than Harborough District Council. Please indicate if the cash match funding is confirmed and, if not, when you expect it to be secured.
 - **Expenditure** – a detailed breakdown of the costs required to deliver the project. You should indicate how you have estimated these costs (e.g. quotations).
 - **Support in-kind** - you should provide an estimated value of any non-cash contributions to the project. This may include materials or services that are provided free of charge or at a reduced rate.
- Any risks identified to successful delivery of the project and mitigating steps that you will take.
- The sustainability of the project and plans for ongoing maintenance of any assets that would be purchased with the grant.
- Site plans/photos and any other reference material relevant to the project.

7. Disclaimers

- 7.1 Harborough District Council reserves the right to vary the terms of the Environmental Grant Scheme. Every effort would be made to inform organisations that have registered their interest with the Council of any such changes.
- 7.2 Harborough District Council reserves the right to pause applications to the Environmental Grant Scheme to evaluate the programme and implement any

necessary changes. Every effort would be made to inform organisations that have registered their interest with the Council of any such changes.

- 7.3 FINANCES – Any grant awarded will normally be paid in two instalments. An initial instalment of 90% and a final instalment of 10% following the completion of the project. The final instalment will be subject to a report evidencing the outcomes of the project and expenses incurred. If the outcomes have not been achieved to the satisfaction of the grants team, the Council reserves the right to re-consider the final amount of funding to be awarded, based on the outcomes achieved by the project.
- 7.4 TAX - Any grant received may be subject to tax and organisations may wish to consult HM Revenue and Customs or a qualified, independent financial advisor.
- 7.5 PUBLICITY - Any organisation receiving a grant must agree to publicly acknowledge receipt of the grant, display relevant logos, and agree to participate in any publicity or promotional activities associated with the funding. In addition, they must agree to participate in any monitoring and reporting required by the Council, whether specifically noted in the grant approval notification or not. Such reporting, monitoring and publicity may help inform whether similar funding is offered in future.
- 7.6 INFORMATION - Personal data supplied on the application form and any supporting documentation will be held on our systems and will be used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and Freedom of Information Act 2000. The information you provide will be used for statistical analysis, management planning and the provision of services by the Council. You can find further information about our relevant policies on our website here: <https://www.harborough.gov.uk/information>
- 7.7 FRAUD - The online application system will undertake anti-fraud checks and various checks will be made on each application and grant awarded. Any applicant caught falsifying their records to gain grant money will face prosecution and any funding issued will be recovered, as will any grants paid in error.