



Green Community Grants Programme

Thanks for taking the time to read this guidance. It contains important information that you will need to help you decide whether your organisation is eligible for our funding.

Overview

We offer one-year flexible funding for not-for-profit groups in England, Scotland and Wales with an annual income between £10,000 and £1 million.

To be eligible for funding, your organisation's main objects or purpose as stated within your governing document must fit with one of the funding themes listed below:

- Contributing to nature recovery and responding to the climate emergency
- Improving nature rich spaces and access to them

We will only consider applications where the organisation's core purpose and main activities closely align with one of our funding themes. We're looking to support organisations that are primarily set up to work in these areas, rather than an isolated project that is part of an unrelated portfolio of work. Please ensure your application reflects this.

Whilst your organisational objects or purpose must fit one of these two themes, funding can be used to fund wider sustainability activities, such as recycling, litter picking in nature rich spaces and sustainable transport.

We will fund organisations whose work is coastal or marine focused as well as organisations whose work is based inland.

Applications are likely to be unsuccessful if the activities that we are being asked to fund are dependent on any external factors that have the potential to cause delays, such as land purchase or planning permission.

You can apply for a maximum of £25,000, depending on your organisation's income. Your request should be no more than 25% of your annual income listed on your most recent set of signed accounts. For example, if the annual income on your most recent set of accounts is £40,000, the maximum you can apply for is £10,000.

The application form questions are listed at the end of this document. We recommend using this to prepare your answers to the questions before you submit your application through our online portal.

As part of our assessment process, we carry out several checks on each applicant organisation. Please read our FAQs which can be found towards the end of this document for further details, and if you have any questions, please contact us.

Funding priorities

Previous funding rounds have been oversubscribed, meaning that we are unlikely to be able to support all strong applications. To assist with assessment process and decision-making, additional scores will be given to:

- Organisations that have an income of £250,000 or below
- Organisations that work in communities located in the top 15% of the Index of Multiple Deprivation
- Organisations whose main activities are focused on supporting marginalised groups. This could include, but is not limited to, disabled people, communities experiencing racial inequity, and LGBT+ people
- Organisations whose objects or purpose within its governing document relate to habitat or species restoration/protection.

Organisational criteria

We welcome applications from registered charities and not-for-profit groups based in England, Scotland and Wales.

Your organisation needs to have been operating for a minimum of 12 months and have signed annual accounts at the time of submitting your application.

Organisations may only make one application per funding round.

You cannot apply for funding if you have been supported by players of the Postcode Lottery through any other Postcode Trust within the last 12 months (this is counted from the date payment was received into your organisation's account).

Organisations must also meet the following criteria to be eligible to apply:

- Income should be between £10,000 and £1million in the most recent financial year. The income stated in the accounts that you provide must also fit within this bracket
- No more than 50% of the members serving as Trustees, Directors, or Committee members can be related
- Objects or purpose must align with at least one of our funding themes. Applications without clear alignment will be considered ineligible.

Organisations that we do not fund:

- Local, regional or government institutions and organisations with core statutory responsibilities (e.g. NHS Foundation Trusts and NHS Charities, parish councils, town councils and public bodies)
- Political parties or party-political activities
- Individuals
- Organisations that have been operating for less than one year
- Organisations that do not have signed accounts
- Universities, colleges, schools, academies, nurseries and preschools
- Parent Teacher Associations and affiliated groups
- Organisations with solely religious objects in their governing document
- Organisations outside of Great Britain
- Organisations with an annual income less than £10,000 or more than £1,000,000
- Schedule 3 Community Interest Companies
- Organisations that have previously breached their Funding Agreement with any Postcode Places Trust
- Organisations supported by players of Postcode Lottery through other Trusts. This includes organisations affiliated with national charities who are Long-Term Partners. These include but are not limited to: Home-Start, Riding for the Disabled, Scouts Association, Girlguiding, Trussel, Mind, Woodland Trust, and The Wildlife Trusts

- Organisations that do not have a UK bank account in the name of the organisation with two unrelated signatories. Accounts must be with a UK bank, rather than an electronic money service.

Activities that we do not fund:

- Medical research, clinical treatment, medical staff in a clinical setting where the diagnosis, and/or prescribing of clinical advice or medication is taking place and medical equipment
- Activities taking place outside of Great Britain or foreign travel
- The promotion or practice of religion
- Animal welfare
- Distribution of grants/funds to individuals or other organisations. This would include but not be limited to bursaries, per diems, and honorarium payments
- Funding being allocated to the organisation's reserves
- Retrospective requests for activities that have already occurred or costs that have previously been incurred

Supporting documents

To support your application, we require four documents to be uploaded when submitting the application form. These are:

1. A governing document in the name of your organisation. This must be the most recent version, in your organisation's name, clearly state your charitable objectives, and contain an asset lock and dissolution clause.
2. Signed accounts no older than the financial year ending 2025, detailing income and expenditure for the most recent financial year. If required by your regulator, these should also include a report from an Independent Examiner or Auditor. If your end date of accounts is before December 2025, you will be asked to upload management or draft accounts/an explanation for the interim period so we can understand the current financial health of the organisation.
3. A bank statement dated within the last 90 days. This must be for a UK bank account in your organisation's name, with two unrelated signatories. This must be an account with a bank, not a Wise Account, ANNA, MoneyCorp, or any electronic money service.
4. Your organisation's safeguarding policy. All applicants working with children, young people or vulnerable adults must submit a comprehensive Safeguarding Policy. This policy should reflect best practice and regulatory standards in governance, risk management, training, recruitment, response protocols, and accountability.

Your organisation's name must appear exactly the same across all key documents and records, including your:

- regulator's website (if applicable) e.g. Charity Commission
- bank account
- governing document
- annual accounts
- safeguarding policy
- grant application

If your organisation's name or format has changed within the last 12 months, you must provide official documentation confirming the change.

Examples of previously funded activities

We will fund staffing costs, office and running costs to support an organisation's core work.

We will also provide funding to expand activities, continue successful programmes as well as capital expenditure for equipment and repairs.

Here are a few examples of specific work funded through the programme:

Improving access to a nature reserve by resurfacing a heavily potholed track to improve visitor experience, ensuring people feel confident to reach the reserve and explore it.

Expanding the delivery of a carbon literacy programme to school children. Enabling children to gain the confidence and motivation to take meaningful climate action, while strengthening a network of trained volunteers and embedding sustainable behaviour change in schools, homes, and communities.

Investing in practical improvements at a green space and gardens, such as planting schemes, wildflower areas and wildlife shelters. These enhancements will increase biodiversity, improve soil and water health, and allow hands-on learning opportunities for participants.

Providing sessions for young people to improve their food knowledge and interest in climate action through food: cooking, growing, and composting food waste.

Expanding volunteer training and coordination, ensuring local people develop skills in gardening, conservation, and environmental stewardship. This will enhance self-esteem, transferable skills and a stronger community volunteer base.

FAQs

You can find answers to Frequently Asked Questions for different stages of your grant journey below, alongside information on our due diligence process.

Please read through this Guidance Notes document before contacting us with a query.

Due diligence

As a funder, we conduct due diligence checks to assess the financial health, operational integrity, and overall impact of potential grantees. This includes looking over annual accounts, governing documents and researching publicly available material. This process helps minimise the risk of fraud or misuse of funds. By carefully evaluating each application, we can make informed decisions, ensuring funds are directed to organisations that will use them effectively and responsibly to achieve meaningful outcomes. Due diligence is essential for maintaining transparency, accountability, and trust within our funding process.

If you have any questions around our due diligence criteria or eligibility, please do not hesitate to contact us before applying.

My filings have been late with my regulator, am I eligible to apply for funding?

If your annual accounts are overdue with your regulator when the application is being assessed, the application will be made ineligible.

If your latest set of annual accounts is more than 60 days late, your application will be considered ineligible.

You will not be eligible for funding if you have had regular substantially late filings over the last four years.

What are your requirements for trustee/director numbers?

Trustee/director numbers must align with the minimum/maximum stated in the organisation's governing document. We require that there is a minimum of three trustees/directors.

No more than 50% of trustees/directors can be related, for example, by family, marriage, civil partnership, or long-term cohabitation.

We expect all trustee and director details to be current on the Charity Commission and Companies House website (if applicable) at the time of application.

What do you require with our annual accounts?

Annual accounts must be formally formatted and, if relevant, comply with SORP requirements.

Annual accounts must be signed by relevant trustees/directors.

A breakdown of income and expenditure must be included in the accounts that are submitted with the application.

The income stated on the application must match the annual income reflected in the annual accounts submitted with the application. Any discrepancies may result in the application being deemed ineligible for funding.

If the annual accounts show a deficit, we expect there to be an explanation either in the application or within the annual accounts. This allows us to assess the financial health of the organisation. If no details are provided, the application may be considered ineligible.

Do we need an online presence?

An assessment of the organisation's online presence will be conducted using all publicly accessible materials. This evaluation aims to ensure that the organisation's application aligns with its ongoing work. If

there is no online presence, the application may be rejected, however we are aware that under certain circumstances there may be minimal need for such a presence.

Considering an application

Do you fund a set number of organisations for each funding theme?

No, we do not have a set number of organisations per theme and base funding decisions on a wide range of factors.

Our organisation has some objectives that are included in the 'activities we do not fund' list. Can we still apply?

Funding cannot be spent on any activity included in our 'we do not fund' list. If your charitable objectives only include activities that we do not fund e.g. the promotion of religion or medical research, the application will be made ineligible. However, if you have additional objectives that focus on other activities alongside what we cannot fund, you would still be eligible for funding.

Do you provide multi-year funding?

No, the funding must be spent within one year.

We are a new organisation set up in the last twelve months, can we still apply for funding?

To be eligible for funding, your organisation must have been operating for at least one year and have signed accounts you are able to provide on submission.

Please note, if your organisation has changed type (e.g. from a CIC to a Registered Charity) the new entity must have been operating for a minimum of 12 months and be able to produce accounts for this organisation type.

Can we have more support before applying?

Please read through our funding guide and FAQs. If you still have questions after this about our application process, you are welcome to contact the grants team at greencommunitygrants@wildlifetrusts.org or on 01636 670000.

While we don't generally provide 1-on-1 support to applicants before they apply, we aim to provide an accessible application process and are happy to help organisations who require additional support.

What is the difference between a funding theme and a funding priority?

Applications need to provide a strong alignment to at least one of our two funding themes to be eligible to apply. An application does not need to have met any of the priorities to be considered for funding, but our priorities will be considered when funding rounds are oversubscribed.

My organisation doesn't meet all the funding priorities, can I still apply?

Our funding priorities are not eligibility criteria, meaning that groups can apply even if they meet none or only some of the priorities. If your organisation meets multiple funding priorities, this will strengthen your application if we are oversubscribed with strong applications.

Submitting an application

Will you close the funding round early if you reach a set number of applications?

No, our funding window will be open until the published closure date.

What do you mean by character count?

A character count is the total number spaces that can be used in an application form. The character count on our forms includes letters, numbers, punctuation and spaces. This is different to a word count which usually does not include spaces and punctuation.

Why do you ask if we pay our employees the Real Living Wage?

Fair pay is an important aspect of our equity, diversity and inclusion commitments. Though Real Living Wage accreditation is not a requirement for funding, we encourage all organisations employing staff with

our funding to pay the Real Living Wage or above. If your organisation does not pay at this rate, we will ask about this as we work to understand the needs and challenges of the groups we support.

How will I know my application has been submitted correctly?

Once you submit an application, you will receive confirmation via email that this has been received. Please make sure you check junk and spam folders. If you do not receive email confirmation, please contact us at greencommunitygrants@wildlifetrusts.org

Can I submit extra links or documents with my application?

Due to the volume of applications that we receive, we are unable to review external links or extra documents.

My latest accounts are due to be published after the submission deadline, can I send them to you later?

You will need to submit your most recent signed accounts, regardless of whether new ones are due to be published after the application deadline. The oldest annual accounts we can accept are for financial year ending 2025. Please submit your signed accounts with your application, as it will be ineligible otherwise. If your end date of accounts is before December 2025, you will be asked to upload management or draft accounts/an explanation for the interim period so we can understand the current financial health of the organisation.

What do you mean by a 'UK bank account' and how do I know if my bank will be accepted?

We require your organisation to hold an account with a UK registered bank. A UK bank account is different from a money transfer service. We cannot pay grants into money transfer services such as Wise, Anna, Moneycorp or Tide. Please check if your account is a UK registered bank account, and not a money transfer service before applying.

Waiting for a decision

How long before I receive a decision?

This can vary depending on the date of the Panel meeting. Please allow up to two months from the application deadline for decisions to be communicated. We will contact you through the application portal so please ensure that you have marked no-reply@benefactorcloud.co.uk to your safe senders list.

What is the success rate?

In 2025, we were only able to fund 20 per cent of the eligible applications that we received.

Will I be contacted during the decision process?

You will not normally be contacted during the decision-making process. However, our assessment team may contact you if we have further questions about your application or supporting documents.

When will my references be contacted?

Referees will be contacted if we require any further information about your organisation during the application process or before any funding is awarded.

Who decides which organisations will receive funding?

All applications are assessed by the Wildlife Trusts' grants team. Once this has been completed, applications are reviewed by a funding panel who then approve which organisations will receive funding. All funding decisions are final.

Successful application

What steps should I take after learning my application was successful?

If you are successful, we will send you a funding agreement via the application portal to complete and sign that confirms the funding offer.

You will be asked to complete a bank details form. When you complete this form, please make sure that the bank account name is worded and spelt exactly the same as on your bank statement.

We will make the initial payment of the grant after we have received your signed funding agreement and bank details form.

You will be asked to provide an update on the funding after six months and one year (at the end of your funding period).

Application form questions

Please note that this is not the application form and should not be emailed to us. Applications must be submitted through our online portal: <https://wildlifetrusts.benefactorcloud.co.uk/>

Eligibility checker

General Eligibility Questions

These statements must all be true to be eligible to apply for funding.

Have you read our Funding Guide?

We have read the Funding Guide and understand that this application will not be considered if the criteria are not met

Governing document requirement

We have a governing document in the name of our organisation with clear charitable objectives/aims. For Community Interest Companies, your objects and/or CIC36 document must be included

Funds need to be spent in Great Britain

We are based in Great Britain and understand all funds will need to be spent on activities in Great Britain

People

No more than 50% of Trustees/Directors members are related

Bank Account

We have a UK bank account in the exact name of the organisation that is applying, with two unrelated signatories. This is an account with a bank, not a Wise account, ANNA, MoneyCorp, or any other electronic money service

No outstanding review form

Our organisation does not have an outstanding review or evaluation form for a previous grant supported by players of the Postcode Lottery

Your work is not wholly restricted to the promotion of religion

Our governing document has at least one object that is non-religious

We have not funded you in the past 12 months

We have not received funding through any Postcode Trust within the last 12 months (this is counted from the date payment was received into your organisation's account)

Your organisation has been operating for more than one year and has a set of signed accounts

Our organisation has been operating for more than 12 months and we have a signed set of accounts that show both income and expenditure and have been audited/independently examined if required

Your organisation has all relevant policies in place at the time of this application including a Safeguarding / Vulnerable Adult Policy.

Our organisation has all relevant policies in place (safeguarding etc)

About Your Organisation

We want to understand a little bit more about your organisation, please ensure your organisation's name provided below, matches exactly to your governing document, accounts and bank statement.

Organisation legal name max 150 characters

Organisation email address

Website

Organisation address

Contact details

We will use these details to contact you as the applicant and lead for the funding.

First name

Last name

Phone number

Mobile number

Email address

Do you have somebody we can contact in instances where the main contact is unreachable?

Yes/No

If yes, please provide Secondary Contact details

Title

First name

Last name

Phone number

Mobile number

Email address

Referees

We require the details of two contactable referees for your organisation.

These can be from any of the following:

- A partner organisation that you have worked with
- A funder of a project that you have delivered
- A contact at your local authority
- A contact from a third sector support organisation

These cannot be:

- A member of your organisation, including a Trustee
- A third party confirming on your referee's behalf
- Someone that does not know you (the applicant)

Referees must be contactable using the details provided for us to make a prompt assessment. If required, contact will be made during the assessment process and before any funding is awarded. Please ensure that you obtain prior consent from both referees before including them in the form.

Referee 1

First name
Last name
Job title
Email address
Phone number
Organisation/place of business

Referee 2

First name
Last name
Job title
Email address
Phone number
Organisation/place of business

Your organisation type

What is your organisation type? Registered Charity / Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) / Community Interest Company (CIC) with an asset lock (Schedule 1&2 only) / Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) / Other not for profit organisation

For charities registered with the Charity Commission in England and Wales or the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) only. Who are you registered with? Charity Commission (England and Wales) / Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) / Both

Charity Commission Number *(if applicable)* max 255 characters

Charity Commission Charity Suffix *(if applicable)*

Companies House Number *(if applicable)* max 255 characters

Scottish Charitable Regulator (OSCR) Number *(if applicable)* max 255 characters

For Community Benefit Societies only. Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) Mutuals Public Register Number

Are there any for-profit companies affiliated with your organisation? Yes/No
By affiliated we mean shared directors, staff, or similar services being provided

If yes, please provide details of the companies and the nature of the relationship here.
Max 100 words

Has your organisation changed its legal structure (e.g. from a CIC to a Registered Charity) in the past 2 years? Yes/No

Governance and management

These details are used as part of our Due Diligence process. Please ensure that all relevant regulator records have also been updated to reflect any recent Trustee or Director changes.

How many Trustees does your organisation have?

Please enter a number. To be considered for funding no more than 50% of Trustees/Directors members can be related

Please provide the full names of each of your Trustees.

Are any of your Trustees or Directors members related (for example, by family marriage, civil partnership, or long-term cohabitation)? Yes/No

If yes, please provide details about the related Trustees or Directors.

How many paid employees does your organisation have?

If your funding request will be used towards staff costs, will these staff be paid in line with the Real Living Wage? Yes/No/Not Applicable

Are you an accredited Real Living Wage Employer? Yes/No

If you are not an accredited Real Living Wage Employer or any staff to be funded through the grant will not be paid a living wage, please explain why:

Max 140 characters

We now want to gain an understanding of your leadership team. By this we mean the key decision-makers within your organisation—those responsible for setting direction, making strategic choices, and overseeing day-to-day operations. This could include senior staff, trustees, founders, or others who play a central role in shaping and leading your work

Have there been any significant changes in leadership in the last year? By significant we mean more than 50% of Trustees/Directors changing, or changes to your senior management team.

Yes/No

If yes, please explain the circumstances and impact this has had on your organisation.

Max 150 words

Please tell us about your leadership team and how they are best placed to make a difference in your organisation. Are they reflective of your service users or do they have a specific skill set or level of experience? Please also explain why this is beneficial to your organisation.

Max 150 words

Finances

Has your organisation been in operation for 12 or more months? Yes/No

In order to consider your application, the figures you provide below must match those in your annual accounts.

Do you have a set of signed accounts that have been audited/independently examined if required?

Yes/No

What was your organisation's total income in the last financial year? This must be from your most recent set of full accounts that have been signed off by Trustees/Directors, and if required Auditors/Independent Examiners

Does your organisation have a financial reserves policy? Yes/No

If yes, please provide details of the policy and whether you are currently in line with it. If no, why do you not have a reserves policy? Max 150 words

What are your current reserves?

This should be your free reserves, and/or reserves designated for staffing costs.

Has your organisation incurred any significant losses or debts in the last 3 years?

If Yes, please provide details of any losses incurred in the last 3 years or any significant debt. This should include an explanation of any actions taken to mitigate losses, and any repayment arrangements for debts. Max 500 words

Safeguarding

Do you work with children or vulnerable adults? Yes/No

When did you last review your Safeguarding / Vulnerable Adult Policy?

Do you have a procedure that clearly sets out the steps to take in the events of an incident or concern about a child or vulnerable adult? Yes/No

If yes, when did you last review this procedure?

Your organisation's work and who it supports

Postcode: What postcode(s) do you work in?

If you work across multiple areas, please provide the postcodes of your main areas of work. We prioritise organisations that operate in the most deprived 15% of the Index of Multiple Deprivation. Please provide valid UK postcodes including a space. Eg "EH2 4ET".

Do you have a social media handle? Yes/No

If yes, what are your organisation's social media handles?

If you do not have an online presence (no website or social media handles), what is the reason for this and where is the best place to see evidence of your work? Max 50 words (skip if you have provided a website or social media handle)

Organisation purpose

Tell us what your organisation is here to do — your core purpose. This should include the community or group you support and the issue or need that you address. You don't need to copy and paste a formal mission statement (unless it fits!). Just explain your purpose in a clear, straightforward way.

What is your organisation's mission?

Max 250 words

Please select the theme that best fits with your organisation's main purpose.

- Contributing to nature recovery and responding to the climate emergency
- Improving nature rich spaces and access to them

Core activities

Please remember, as this is a flexible funding application we will be looking for organisations whose overall activities closely align with the chosen theme. We would not consider detail on future projects or ideas as a close fit to the chosen theme.

Please describe your core services or activities – by this we mean the majority of the work you do.

Max 250 words

How do you measure the impact of your work? Please also include how you put your findings into practice.

Max 200 words

Community benefit

Your answer to this question does not form part of the assessment of your funding application and will only be used if your group is awarded funding.

Please briefly explain what your organisation does for your community. Max 150 words

You are applying for funding for one of our themes. Please detail what impact your organisation has had in this area so far.

We're looking for a clear picture of the difference your work is making. Wherever possible, include outcomes (what changed) rather than just outputs (what was delivered). Please avoid generic or overly broad statistics as we are more interested in the real-world impact you have made.

Max 200 words

We're interested in whether your organisation was set up specifically to support people from marginalised groups — for example, disabled people, people experiencing racial inequity, or LGBT+ people.

Are your organisation's main activities focused on supporting people from a marginalised group, such as, but not limited to disabled people, people experiencing racial inequity, and LGBT+ people?

- Specifically focused on one or more marginalised groups
- Open to all but not specifically focused on one particular marginalised group
- None of the above

If your organisation is specifically focused on one or more marginalised groups, which marginalised groups does your organisation primarily support?

- Specifically supporting disabled people
- Specifically supporting people experiencing racial inequity
- Specifically supporting LGBT+ people
- Specifically supporting another marginalised group

If you have selected 'Specifically supporting another marginalised group', what other marginalised group(s) are your organisation's main activities focused on supporting and please provide detail on how your organisation's activities support the selected group(s). If more than one is selected, provide detail for each one. Whilst we appreciate your organisation aims to be inclusive for all, please only include details where your organisation is specifically supporting one of the above groups.

Max 100 words

Supplementary question

How did you hear about our funding opportunities?

- Press
- Another organisation
- A player of the Postcode Lottery
- From a previous applicant
- I am a previous applicant
- Web/Internet search
- Grants/organisation newsletter
- A local Community Voluntary Service (CVS)

- Social Media
- Other

If Other, please specify

Funding Request

How much funding are you requesting? No more than 25% of your annual income up to maximum of £25k.

How do you intend to spend any funding we provide?

Max 200 words

Supporting documents

The form will ask you to submit the following documents.

Governing Document

This document should clearly show your organisation's objects. An asset lock and dissolution clause should also be present. Failure to upload the correct documents will render your application ineligible.

Latest Signed Accounts

The attached accounts must show income and expenditure for a full financial year. They must be signed by a Trustee or Director, and an Independent Examiner and/or Auditor if required. These accounts must be no older than financial year ending 2024.

What is the end date of the financial year in these accounts?

Management accounts (only required if the end date on your accounts is before December 2025)

If the end date of your accounts is before December 2025, please also upload your latest management or draft accounts/an explanation for the interim period so we can understand the current financial health of the organisation

Safeguarding policy

Bank Statement.

This must be dated from the last 90 days and have the name of your organisation clearly visible. Please note, we only accept bank accounts and not Wise accounts, ANNA, MoneyCorp, or any other electronic money services. If we assess your application and you do not have an UK bank account that meets our criteria, your application will not be eligible.