

Build Back Better Councillor Scheme

Frequently Asked Questions

How much money is available for projects in my electoral division?

Each division has a total of £40,000 to be allocated, over a four-year period

When does the scheme start?

The fund will be launched on the 30th July 2021. Applications will be accepted from this date until 31st January 2025.

How long is the funding for?

The scheme is taking place across the financial years 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25. Grants can be awarded from 30th July 2021 until 31st March 2025. The grant is not recurring so once all of the money has been awarded no further funding will be available.

Who can receive funding?

The scheme is aimed at community and voluntary organisations, charities, community interest companies, town and parish councils, sports groups and other not for profit groups, which must have a bank account held in the name of the organisation that is applying. Larger schemes will be asked to submit accounts and documentation to prove that the money will be spent appropriately.

Can schools and academies apply?

Schools and Academies are eligible for the grant although the reason for the grant should also benefit the wider community.

How do organisations get an application form?

Application forms are available from the Gloucestershire County Council website:
<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/build-back-better-councillor-scheme>

How do interested parties submit an application?

Applicants should download the application form from the website and email the completed version to the relevant councillor. This is then sent by the councillor to the Build Back Better inbox buildbackbetter@gloucestershire.gov.uk.

It is expected that all applications will be completed electronically and the project team will be on hand to assist applicants with this if needed. In exceptional circumstances hard copies will be accepted but these must be signed by the relevant councillor.

How long will it take to process applications?

We will aim to make payments for grants under £5K within one month of receiving the application. Grants of more than £5K will require more information from the applicant so these will take longer to process but we will aim to have these payments made within two months of receiving the application. These timescales will depend on the number of grants that we receive but we will keep applicants informed of the progress of their application.



How many projects can I support?

There is no lower limit for funding so it is up to individual councillors to decide if they wish to support a small number of large projects or a greater number of smaller projects.

How long have organisations got to spend the money?

Once organisations have received funding the grant should ideally be spent within 12 months.

Who will make the final decision about funding?

Final approval of applications will be made by the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Public Health in accordance with the criteria and financial regulations. There is a presumption that projects will be approved unless the scheme requirements and criteria are not met. In this instance, officers will contact the relevant councillor to discuss the application.

What happens once grants have been awarded?

Council officers will administer the scheme, process grant applications and keep records of payments on behalf of each councillor.

What happens if a successful applicant does not spend all of the money?

If applicants do not spend all of the money they have been awarded the relevant councillor will be informed and the grantee will be contacted by an officer to understand the reasons for this. Depending on the amount of underspend officers will discuss with the councillor if they are happy for the grantee to retain the remaining funds if assurances can be made that the remainder of the grant will be spent in line with the scheme criteria.

If a large amount of the grant has not been spent then this may be reclaimed by the council after discussion with the relevant councillor.

Any funds reclaimed will be returned to the allocation for that electoral division. However, any reclaimed funding must be spent within the timescales for the scheme. Funds returned after the scheme has ended will be returned to the corporate finances.

What can be funded?

In recognition of how challenging the past year has been for the Voluntary and Community Sector a flexible approach to grant giving will be taken, but there will be some things we can't fund, such as:

- Sole Traders
- For profit activities
- Funding individuals
- Overseas holidays

Please contact the Build Back Better Project Team if you wish to discuss a proposed grant. You can also view the types of projects supported by the previous Growing Our Communities Fund on the website.

How will we make sure the scheme is open to everyone?

Any decision must pay due regard to the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. Information on these duties can be accessed at [Equality Duties](#).

As part of the monitoring process, grantees will be expected to collate and submit information on who participates in their projects.



How will the Council ensure that funding is allocated fairly?

The application form and accompanying guidelines outline how the funding can be spent, the responsibilities of grantees and the processes that will be used to allocate funding.

The Councillor's Code of Conduct sets out general obligations on an individual councillor regarding their role and conduct when acting as a member of the council. Members will need to adhere to this code when making decisions on which projects to support.

Do I need to keep a record of the decisions I make?

Councillors may be challenged to provide reasons for the decisions they make regarding the applications they support and those they decline. Therefore, councillors will need to keep a record of all of the applications that they submit for approval as well as those that they decide not to support and the reasons for their decision.

Will successful applicants be made public?

To ensure that the scheme is transparent we will make information about which projects have been funded publically available on the council website. All expenditure from county council funds is considered to be information that is available to the public. Therefore, details of any spending made from the fund will be provided to any internal or external enquirer upon request.

Where can I get more information about my electoral division?

A range of information is available to Members on the health and wellbeing needs of people in Gloucestershire through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). The JSNA provides data and information on a County and Local Authority area and can be accessed via <https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/understanding-gloucestershire-a-joint-strategic-needs-assessment-jsna/>.

More information on local profiles, neighbourhoods, parishes and the economy can be found on the County Council's Inform Website: <https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/>

Information is also held by local neighbourhood projects, parish and town councils, district councils and other organisations. Members are encouraged to work collaboratively with these partners both to assess need in their area and to avoid duplication and prevent the double-funding of projects.

Who do I contact with any other queries not covered in this document?

Please email the project team who will assist you: buildbackbetter@gloucestershire.gov.uk