

FUNDING SOURCES FOR CLIMATE & ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

17 March 2025

GRANTS AND OTHER FUNDING

There are a range of web-based databases which can be used to identify potential sources of funding. These include www.getgrants.org.uk/funding-finder/ and www.fundsonline.org.uk . Other examples of grant and funding schemes may be found via:

- Your local Council for Voluntary Service should be aware of local grants. You can find your local CVS at www.navca.org.uk/find-a-navca-member/ .
- The Charities Aid Foundation lists funds: www.cafonline.org/services-for-charities/funding-for-charities/information-on-grants
- Big Lottery funding may also be suitable – for example Awards for All – see www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes

Please note that all these funds are subject to changes and it's always worth researching funding options at the time.

THE NATIONAL LOTTERY FUND

As well as regular community-based grants, there is the [Climate Action Fund](#) that is the Lottery's commitment to help communities across the UK tackle climate change.

The Fund is aimed at supporting communities to be environmentally sustainable and has different themes over time. The current theme is Our Shared Future, about which they say:

"We want to involve more people in climate action. And we want to inspire bold and exciting change.

We'll only fund projects developed in a formal partnership with other organisations.

We're looking for partnership projects that reach more people by either:

- ***linking climate action to the everyday lives and interests of local communities.*** And inspiring them to take action.
- ***influencing communities at a regional or national level.*** Like linking up groups across locations. Or a campaign that inspires change across one country, or the whole UK.

You do not have to be a climate or environment focused organisation to apply

We want to reach people who are new to climate action by funding other types of organisations too. And by using people's everyday activities as a starting point for climate action.

We're particularly interested in projects that involve people, places and communities experiencing poverty, discrimination and disadvantage.

See more at www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/climate-action-fund-our-shared-future .

A summary of some other funding opportunities can be found (with web links) at www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/climate-action-fund-round-2/climate-action-other-funders, as below:

Broad climate change

Funding that's supported a wide range of climate and environment initiatives, rather than having a specific thematic focus. Different amounts of funding have been available - from small grants to larger and longer-term grants.

- [Children's Investment Fund Foundation](#)
- [Climate Challenge Fund - Keep Scotland Beautiful](#) (Scotland only)
- [Climateworks Foundation](#)
- [Coca-Cola Foundation](#)
- [European Climate Foundation](#) (generally focused within the EU)
- [Global Greengrants Fund UK](#)
- [Heathrow Community Trust](#) (Greater London region and areas surrounding Heathrow)
- [Lush Charity Pot Funding](#) (UK and international)
- [Network for Social Change](#)
- [Oak Foundation](#)
- [Sainsburys Family Charitable Trusts](#)
- [Schroder Charity Trust](#)
- [Thirty Percy](#)
- [Wellcome - Our Planet Our Health](#).

Energy advice

The [E.O.N Next Fund](#) offers funding opportunities for household energy bills.

Energy efficiency

[Transmission Net Zero Fund](#) for support on electric vehicle transport and improving energy efficiency.

Find more [funding opportunities relevant to community energy organisations in England](#)

Environmental justice, campaigning and grassroots action

Key areas of focus for these funders include climate and social justice and reducing inequalities, particularly for those more vulnerable and hardest hit by climate change. Funding has also supported projects to develop grassroots campaigning, activism and social movements.

- [City Bridge Trust](#) (London only)
- [Edge Fund](#)
- [Friends of the Earth - Climate Action Fund](#)
- [Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust](#)
- [Paul Hamlyn Foundation](#)
- [Solberga Foundation](#).

Food

Funding focused on climate and environmental action looking at food systems and structures.

- [Necessity](#).

Nature and land use

Funding has covered areas such as improving biodiversity, creating and increasing community outdoor spaces and connecting people to nature, conservation, education, and environmental restoration and recovery.

- [Co-op Foundation](#) (Wales only)
- [Dulverton Trust](#)
- [Ernest Cook Trust \(ECT\)](#)
- [Esmée Fairbairn Foundation](#)
- [Postcode Local Trust](#)
- [Samworth Foundation](#)
- [The National Lottery Heritage Fund](#) (England only).

Policy, finance and economy

Not all funding programmes have had a specific climate action focus but funding has supported areas such as community business and shares, innovative finance, influencing policy, values and attitudes, systemic change, and projects seeking to develop a fair economy and challenging power.

- [Frederick Mulder Foundation](#)
- [Friends Provident Foundation](#)
- [Hewlett Foundation](#)
- [Polden-Puckham Charitable Foundation](#)
- [Power to Change](#)
- [Wallace Global Fund](#) (US-based but will consider initiatives with a global or national scope).

CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

This charity provides links to a range of funding opportunities, including:

- www.cse.org.uk/my-community/funding-for-community-energy-projects/ - links to sources of grants as well as general advice on other approaches including crowdfunding and community shares
- www.cse.org.uk/my-community/funding-for-community-energy-projects/funding-energy-improvements-for-community-buildings/ - special sections for village halls, schools and churches
- www.cse.org.uk/resource/funding-for-your-community-project-or-building-2/ - a funding spreadsheet for charities and community groups updated every six months
- www.cse.org.uk/my-home/funding-and-grants-for-energy/ - for domestic grants

CARBON LITERACY PROJECT

As well as its own scheme, this charity publishes grant opportunities at www.carbonliteracy.com/community-pot/funding-for-you/ .

GOVERNMENT GRANTS

These can be difficult to track down, but one source of information is at www.find-government-grants.service.gov.uk/grants ;

SALIX FINANCE LTD

Salix Finance provides Government funding to the public sector to improve energy efficiency, reduce carbon emissions and lower energy bills. Salix Finance is a non-departmental public body, wholly owned by the UK government, that administers funds on behalf of the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales and the Scottish Funding Council. Funding schemes vary over time – see the latest at www.salixfinance.co.uk .

DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCIL GRANTS

Some larger councils are also offering climate action grants, sometimes channelling Government funds - such as a recent Kent County Council scheme for electric vehicle charge-points aimed at parish councils and village halls. Contact your local authority or check out their website for the latest information.

SECTION 137 FUNDING

Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 allows local councils to spend a limited amount of money for purposes for which they have no other specific statutory power, “*expenditure which in their opinion is in the interests of, and will bring direct benefit to, their area or any part of it or all or some of its inhabitants*”. Central government has set the expenditure limit for parish and town councils in England for 2025-26 at £11.10 per elector.

SECTION 106 / COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

Some local councils have already gained climate action funding through this route. It is best if they send their requirements in advance to their local planning authority.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Some larger firms have special funds for local communities, themes often chosen by their employees. Check out the websites of local companies and also the Co-op.

OTHER APPROACHES TO FUNDRAISING

Crowd funding

There are more and more web-based funding mechanisms which can be used to attract donations or investments from individuals or organisations. It can be easier than traditional fundraisers to promote via the internet and easier to manage since payments are usually made electronically. However, success relies quite heavily on access to wide networks of people. There are a number of crowd funding 'platforms' which can be broadly categorised into equity-based, lending-based, reward-based and donation-based. One example is Crowd Funder www.crowdfunder.co.uk, but search the web for **crowdfunding platforms** to find out more.

Share issues

Establishing a community owned legal entity and raising equity through a share issue is becoming more and more common. So much so that the government has established a team and a website to provide support: www.communityshares.org.uk

Specialist grants

Some grants, or other types of other financial support, are available for specific types of buildings or locations. Here are some examples:

Churches and faith groups

- The National Churches Trust aims to protect and support the built heritage of churches, chapels and meeting houses throughout the UK: www.nationalchurchestrust.org/get-support/grants

Schools

- Again, if there is a budget allocated for school improvements or maintenance costs you could make a strong case for monies to be allocated to making energy efficiency improvements.
- Loans are an option to pay for improvements and pay back over the longer term.
- Schools may also be able to raise a significant proportion of the money needed to install improvements through fundraising activities and donations from the school community.

Village Halls

- Start by contacting your local council to see if they offer any local grant funding schemes for the measures that you mention.
- If your area has a Local Action Group or a Rural Community Council, they may have a small grants scheme you can apply to.
- ACRE (Action for Rural Communities in England, www.acre.org.uk) runs a Village Hall Information Service. They can flag up funding specific to your area and run the Rural Community Buildings Loan Fund mentioned above.

Landfill Communities Fund

- Landfill Operators are obligated to pay a tax for waste disposed of on landfill sites. Some of this can be put towards a fund for local environmental projects to help to offset the negative impacts of living close to a landfill site.
- Funding could be available through a Distributive Environmental Body (DEB) or direct from the Landfill Operator. LCF is regulated by ENTRUST and more information is available at www.entrust.org.uk/landfill-community-fund/

Bank loans and other loan funding

Because energy efficiency improvements generally pay for themselves over time through the savings they generate on energy bills, a loan may be a sensible option to consider. There are various low interest loans specifically for energy efficiency improvements, alternatively, a standard bank loan could also fund the project, but either way you will need to convince them that that you will be able to repay the loan. This will most likely require a robust business plan as well as a legally recognised body to manage the project and be held accountable should anything go wrong.

Local fundraisers

Depending on the amount of money you need to raise to implement your plans, you may be able to generate some or all of it via local fundraising. This could include donations from members of the public, sponsorship from local businesses, fundraising activities such as village fetes, cake sales, sponsored runs, benefit gigs and so on. If you also apply for grant funding, showing that you have already raised some of the money yourselves may help.