

7th February 2024

E-Zine



**Supporting
Communities**
Empowering Society

Welcome to Supporting Communities 225th Edition of E-Zine, bringing you Best Practice from the Community Sector; Funding and Training Updates and Policy Developments in Northern Ireland, Great Britain and Republic of Ireland

My Housing Executive Customer Portal Tenants can sign up to the online portal

With over 20,000 tenants registered on My Housing Executive, this week we will begin contacting tenants by text message on a phased basis to encourage greater sign up to the service.

For those who are not aware of the Customer Portal, you can find out more at:

[Online services](#)

The text message will say:
"Housing Executive tenants can sign up to our online portal for 24/7 access to report and track a repair, message your Patch Manager and more."



Information and registration is available at:
[My Housing Executive tenant portal](#)

Call [03448920901](tel:03448920901) for assisted registration.

To opt out of information texts, reply STOP

Fire Escape Plan: Your family needs to know what to do if there is a fire in your home and how to escape safely.



**Northern Ireland
Fire & Rescue Service**

Plan A

- Close the door of the room where the fire is, only if it is safe to do so.
- If there is smoke, keep low where the air is clearer.
- Best exit is through the main door; if blocked, use another door or downstairs window.
- Ensure everyone knows where the door keys are.
- Or, escape from first floor, leave through a window using bedding to cushion your fall. Remember! Lower yourself by the full length of your arms. Land with your knees bent. Don't jump!
- Agree an assembly point outside.
- Practise your escape plan.
- Don't put your life at risk rescuing pets or valuables.
- Call 999 as soon as you're out.
- Review your plan if any circumstances change in your home.

Plan B

If you can't escape:

- Choose a room with a big window that opens wide.
- Stay together and dial 999.
- Pack blankets around the door to keep smoke out.
- At window, shout 'help' or 'fire'.
- Hang a towel or similar item from the window to let firefighters know your location.

**Get out, stay out and
get the Fire Service out.**

Inspire Wellbeing Free Sessions

Inspire wellbeing will be giving free sessions both in-person and on-line on a range of mental health topics including:

- Mental health awareness
- Sleep
- Coping with emotions
- Substance use/addition

These sessions are completely free. The in-person sessions will be taking place regionally across NIHE

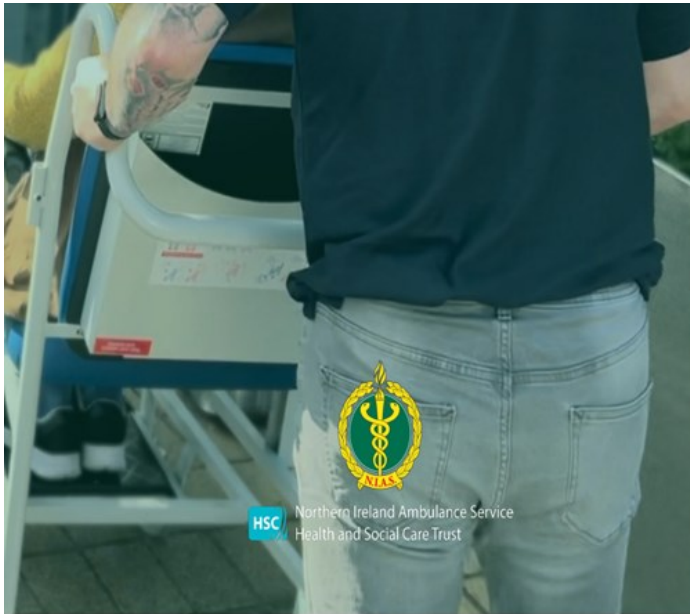
offices, however, there will be several on-line sessions available.

The in-person sessions have a maximum of 20 people, although more attenders can be accommodated through the on-line sessions.

If you would be interested in any of sessions, please contact Olivia Kelso at olivia1.kelso@nihe.gov.uk to book your place.



Online		Time
Self-care - 6 th February 2024	Online MS Teams	2.30pm - 4.30pm
Sleep - 19 th March 2024	Online MS Teams	10.30am - 12.30pm
Food & Mood - 30 th April 2024	Online MS Teams	2.30pm - 4.30pm
Healthy Relationships - 7 th May 2024	Online MS Teams	10.30am - 12.30pm
North		
Healthy Relationships - 13 th Feb. 2024	Richmond Chambers, The Diamond Londonderry BT48 6QP (2nd Floor)	2.30pm - 4.30pm
Mental Health Awareness—20 th Feb. 2024	Twickenham House, 59-71 Mount Str, Ballymena BT43 6BP (Ground Floor Conference Room)	2.30pm - 4.30pm
South		
Health Anxieties - 2 nd April 2024	Rural Community Network, 38A Oldtown Str, Cookstown BT80 8EF	2.30pm - 4.30pm
Healthy Relationships - 16 th April 2024	NIHE South East Regional Office, 21 Frederick Str, Newtownards BT23 4JF (Conf, Room 2)	2.30pm - 4.30pm
Belfast		
Self-Care - 21 st May 2024	HQ NIHE, The Housing Centre 2 Adelaide Str, Belfast BT2 8PB (3rd Floor Training Room)	2.30pm - 4.30pm
Coping with Emotions - 4 th June 2024	Dundonald NIHE Office, 30 Church Road Dundonald, Belfast BT16 2NA (Ground Floor meeting Room)	2.30pm - 4.30pm
Substance use/addition - 18 th June 2024	Lisburn Antrim Street NIHE Office 29 Antrim Str, Lisburn BT28 1AU (1st Floor Meeting Room)	2.30pm - 4.30pm



BECOME A VOLUNTEER WITH THE NIAS VOLUNTEER CAR SERVICE



BECOME A VOLUNTEER WITH THE NIAS VOLUNTEER CAR SERVICE

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) plans to increase the size of its Volunteer Car Service (VCS), which provides high quality transport to and from non-emergency healthcare appointments and treatments for patients that don't require an ambulance. VCS is viewed as a vital part of NIAS' Patient Care Service.



YOU WILL BENEFIT FROM:

- ✔ Volunteering within your own community
- ✔ A supportive work environment, with a designated VCS contact and peer support via VCS Forum activities.
- ✔ NIAS badged uniform
- ✔ Developing key interpersonal and workplace related skills.
- ✔ Reasonable expenses covered, including a competitive mileage.
- ✔ Gaining experience of working within the Health & Social Care environment

VCS DRIVERS OPINION

"If you're a people person and want to help those who are sick or those in their potential end days then this is the role for you. It's very rewarding and your patients become like friends or family." - Richard

THE ROLE:

- ✔ Support patients in your community by transporting to non-emergency healthcare appointments and treatments.
- ✔ Personally rewarding and fulfilling, an opportunity to help your community.
- ✔ Flexible, to fit in with other aspects of your life.
- ✔ and reasonable expenses covered.

SERVICE USERS VIEW

"I have nothing but thanks and admiration for this excellent service and it the drivers themselves which is its best asset."
Eric



So, if you are over 18, with no more than 3 points on your driving licence and with access to your own car then why not explore this fulfilling voluntary role with NIAS.

For further information or to make an application please contact nias.vcs@nias.hscni.net or: 028 7134 7134 Option 3, or Mobile/Text message: 07771520122, or post to Non-Emergency Ambulance Control (NEAC), Altnagelvin | Glenshane Road, Derry-Londonderry, BT47 6GT.

Consultations

Consultation on Proposals to Amend Legislation to Help Tackle Anti-Social Behaviour

DfC, in conjunction with the Department of Justice, is publishing proposals for future legislation on Anti-Social Behaviour. The consultation will run for 14 weeks until Monday 4th March 2024. The full consultation documentation is available online [here](#) and there will also be social media activity to increase awareness of the consultation.

Social Housing Policy have contributed to the consultation and have developed housing-related proposals concerning:

- Injunctions against anti-social behaviour; and
- Absolute Grounds for Possession.



We want to ensure that we receive as many responses as possible to enable the proposals to be strengthened and developed in order to bring forward legislation. We would encourage all relevant housing colleagues to read the consultation and provide feedback.

The consultation document and supporting documents are available at; [Anti-Social Behaviour | Department of Justice \(justice-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/Anti-Social-Behaviour)

Department launches a Call for Evidence on Planning Policy and Climate Change

The Department for Infrastructure is inviting the public to have their say as a consultation to help inform any future focused review of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) is launched.

The SPPS sets out the regional planning policies for the orderly and consistent development of land here. Given the climate emergency and the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022, the Department is looking at how its planning policies can help to reduce carbon emissions, as we collectively chart the path to net zero by 2050. We have seen at first hand the significant impacts of recent flooding events and there is understandably an increased interest in the role of planning policy in responding to our changing climate.

Our planning system plays an important role in helping to address the climate change challenges we will continue to face. We are currently finalising the review of planning policy for renewable and low carbon energy, which was consulted on last year. In addition, we need to consider whether the rest of the SPPS remains appropriate and fit for purpose in relation to climate change. For example, a future focussed review of the SPPS could include a fresh look at the appropriateness of extant policy provisions such as on flood risk, transportation and development in the countryside.

Planning matters affect everyone and the Department is continually seeking opportunities to make positive changes to planning policy which will support the planning system as it shapes our places and communities, delivering for people now and for future generations.



The primary purpose of the Call for Evidence is to engage with stakeholders on the proposed areas of focus for a review of the SPPS and to invite the submission of evidence on the relevant factors that can assist with determining the best way forward.

The consultation will run for 12 weeks until 5.00 pm on Thursday 28 March 2024 and the Department welcomes responses from the public, stakeholders and planning authorities.

Documents are available at: <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/consultations/call-evidence-future-focused-review-SPPS-climate-change>

The information gathered through the Call for Evidence will be considered by the Department and will help inform any decision by a future Infrastructure Minister on a potential review of the SPPS and the options for it. In the absence of Ministers, any final decisions will be taken in light of the decision-making framework at that time.

Big Parenting Survey 2024

Hello Parents, a major part of Parenting NI's work is ensuring that the views, issues and concerns of parents in Northern Ireland are heard. We are asking you to take part in our anonymous "Big Parenting Survey" 2024. This survey will give you a chance to tell us about your experiences, the high points and the struggles. This will help shape the work of Parenting NI to reflect the genuine feelings and challenges that you may face and ensure that our programmes tackle these challenges. The results of this survey will also help us to lobby and campaign for change for a better Northern Ireland for all our families, children and young people.

By "Parents" we mean anyone in a "parenting role", and who has parental responsibilities. It should take no more than 10 minutes to complete, if you don't want to answer a question, you can skip to the next one or you can withdraw from the survey at any point, although we

would encourage you to complete the survey in full.



ParentingNI

Parenting NI takes data protection and information security very seriously. We will not share your personal information with any other organisation. More information is available at <https://www.parentingni.org/privacy-policy/>

This survey will close at 5pm on the 26th February. If you have questions about the survey, please contact Emma by email at emma.hitchen@parentingni.org or phone 02890 310891.

Thank you for your time and support. To start the survey please click '[OK](#)'.

Public Consultation on the new ten-year strategy for the Arts Council of Northern Ireland (2024-34)

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland would love to hear from you on our proposed ten-year Strategy for 2024-2034. This consultation also invites submissions on The Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) of the draft strategy on Section 75 groups.

[Download the Strategy Document \(346.7 KB, PDF\)](#)

The Arts Council (ACNI) develops and champions the arts in Northern Ireland through investment and advocacy. We do this through distributing Public and National Lottery funds. Our public funding creates opportunities for more people, from all backgrounds and communities, to enjoy and take part in the arts. We support, develop and champion arts and cultural activity by supporting artists, arts practitioners, organisations, venues and communities throughout Northern Ireland.

This is our first ten-year strategy and it was developed over the course of 2023, including five months of extensive engagement with artists, arts organisations, key representatives across government, businesses and the wider public sector.

The Arts Council welcomes public feedback on the strategy and invites you to respond using the **online survey** [here](#). It should only take 15 minutes. In addition, we would really appreciate it if you might spread the word and share this public consultation with your audiences or members, colleagues and contacts.

The Public Consultation will take place from **Friday 12th January - Friday 5th April 2024** with the final 10-year strategy due for publication in Spring 2024.



Strategic Framework to Prevent the Harm caused by Obesity, and Improve Diets and Levels of Physical Activity

Department of Health

[Strategic Framework to Prevent the Harm caused by Obesity, and Improve Diets and Levels of Physical Activity | Department of Health \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

Closing Date; 16th February 2024

Offshore Renewable Energy Installation Policy Options for NI

Department for the Economy

[Consultation on OREI policy options](#)

Closing Date; 8th March 2024

New Strategy for Victims and Survivors

The Executive Office

[Public Consultation on the New Strategy for Victims and Survivors - NI Direct - Citizen Space](#)

Closing Date; 13th March 2024

Water and Sewerage Charges— options for revenue raising

Department for Infrastructure

[Public Water and sewerage charges - options for revenue raising](#)

Closing Date; 13th March 2024

Policy and Practice Focus

More than a quarter of Scotland's households in housing need

This article appeared in *Scottish Housing News*

Scottish Housing News

A comprehensive survey into the housing needs of the population has found that more than a quarter (28%) of households in Scotland do not live in accommodation that adequately meets their needs.

The stark figure - equivalent to 693,000 households – comes following a report commissioned by housebuilder body Homes for Scotland (HFS) and carried out by The Diffley Partnership and Rettie & Co.

It finds that estimates of housing need to date, calculated through the Scottish Government's Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) tool, have significantly underestimated how many households are facing housing hardship. According to HFS, one of the issues this has led to is the insufficient allocation of land for social, affordable and private house building, which has further exacerbated the housing crisis.

The report follows declarations of housing emergencies by City of Edinburgh Council, Glasgow City Council and Argyll & Bute last year.

The ['Existing Housing Need in Scotland'](#) report includes the findings of a survey of 13,690 people across Scotland. It found that an alarming number of households are not being counted in official figures as being in housing need.

This includes those living in unfit properties, overcrowded accommodation and homes requiring specialist adaptations as well as households that are concealed or struggling financially as a direct result of high housing costs. According to HFS, as the HNDA tool only includes those in acute need (namely homeless households in temporary accommodation and overcrowded households that have at least one concealed family), the Scottish Government and local authorities are underestimating the true extent of Scotland's housing need.

HFS chief executive Jane Wood said: "Adequate housing is a human right, but today more than a quarter of households in Scotland are in one or more forms of housing need. There is simply no excuse for Scotland to continue on this path. By utilising data to inform policies, and with public and private sectors working collaboratively and intelligently together, we have the opportunity to recognise the true extent of housing need in Scotland and to build the homes of all tenures that we need in adequate numbers and in the right places. We need to create an inclusive and agile housing system, one that meets the needs of all those living in Scotland and which can cope with additional demand caused by unexpected events such as those seeking refuge from war.

Figure 1: Summary of estimates of existing housing need in Scotland



Source: Diffley Partnership/Rettie & Co

“As this comprehensive report demonstrates, the level of housing need far exceeds the current calculations used to determine where and how many homes need to be built in Scotland. It provides local authorities and the Scottish Government with an easy and robust data tool to help them understand true housing need at local and national levels. It is our hope that, in our shared endeavour to end the housing crisis, this data will be welcomed and used by the Scottish Government, local authorities and other stakeholders to ensure that our housing needs are properly met.”

Dr John Boyle of Rettie & Co analysed the survey results and was the lead author of the report. He said: “Accurate data is key to addressing the housing crisis. Several solutions will be required to resolve the wider need that has been identified, such as bringing empty homes back into use, but it is clear that the building of new homes must play a significant part. As such, sufficient land must be allocated in Local Development Plans for much needed homes of all tenures. Scotland’s chronic undersupply of housing has already had a drastic and far-reaching impact on its economic and social development. If we don’t get this sorted, the consequences across a broad range of national outcomes - from health to education to wellbeing - will be severe.”

The Scottish Government estimates that c.15,000 households are in homeless temporary accommodation and a further 15,000 are in overcrowded accommodation with at least one concealed family.

According to the report, a significantly higher number of

households in Scotland should be counted as being in housing need. The poll found:

- 14.9% had at least one concealed household – this is equivalent to 373,000 households. A concealed household is defined as an individual or group wishing to move to form their own household but unable to do so.
- 7.5% of households in Scotland say they are struggling financially due to high housing costs – equivalent to 185,000 households living in properties that they are struggling to afford.
- 4.9% were found to be living in overcrowded accommodation – equivalent to 123,000 households.
- 3.4% were in properties that required specialised housing adaptation or support. This is equivalent to 85,000 households living in properties that are unsuitable due to specific needs. For example, disabled access.
- 3.4% of people in Scotland were found to live in ‘unfit’ properties – equivalent to 85,000 households living in “very poor conditions”.

The final figure of 693,000 in housing need in Scotland takes account of overlapping need across these categories and also includes the 15,000 households in temporary accommodation.

Jane Wood concluded: “Home builders of all tenures are committed to playing a critical role in providing the housing that Scotland needs and creating a thriving society and economy but cannot do this in isolation. We look forward to working with housing stakeholders across the spectrum to achieve this.”

Podcast: Reidvale and the role of tenants in stock transfers with Paul Sweeney MSP and Lesley Baird

With Reidvale Housing Association currently considering its options after shareholders voted against a proposed transfer of engagements to Place for People Scotland, Kieran Findlay and Jimmy Black reflect on some of the issues that have been raised so far.

They spoke to Glasgow Labour MSP Paul Sweeney, who was a prominent part of the campaign against the transfer and raised concerns about the process with the Scottish Parliament’s housing committee.

Paul shares those concerns, laments the loss of community-controlled housing associations more widely and sets out measures that he believes could protect them in the future.

Another issue raised by the shareholders’ vote is that the majority of Reidvale tenants who took part in the ballot will not now see the transfer they voted for.

This is a concern shared by tenant participation and engagement specialist Lesley Baird, a former chief executive of TPAS Scotland, who is concerned about a loss of voice for tenants.

Lesley also talks through the process of providing tenant advice during stock transfers and stresses the



Paul Sweeney MSP and Lesley Baird

importance of having independent advisors, both to tenants and members.

Jimmy Black has written a blog to accompany the episode [here](#).

Further reading:

You can catch up with all the news on Reidvale Housing Association [here](#).

The Scottish Housing News Podcast is co-hosted by Kieran Findlay and Jimmy Black. All episodes are available [here](#)



Publications



Live Here Love Here is Northern Ireland's largest civic pride programme

It's about loving where you live... and feeling empowered to take positive environmental action. Examples include: creating a community vegetable patch, organising a beach clean or starting up a tool swap scheme.

Create your profile [here](#) and join us in doing something positive for your community today.

Sign up for the e-bulletin here; [Live Here Love Here - Show your support](#)



Catch up on what's been happening with the Chief Constable's Report to the Board at [chief-constables-report-northern-ireland-policing-board.pdf \(nipolicingboard.org.uk\)](#) and the Human Rights Review of Privacy and Policing at [Human Rights Review of Privacy and Policing \(nipolicingboard.org.uk\)](#)

In addition the November edition of Policing Matters is available at; [Policing Matters December 2023.pdf](#)



The Report "Linking the Irish Environment" is available at [Linking-the-Irish-Environment-Executive-Summary-June-2023.pdf \(nienvironmentlink.org\)](#). For other NIEL publications and events, go to; [www.nienvironmentlink.org](#)



Please click the link below to access the latest newsletter for PCSPs which highlights local events and initiatives; [PCSP Projects coming to Life | Policing and Community Safety Partnerships \(pcsp.org\)](#)



RCN produces a range of publications including Rural Brief, a regular update of news and views affecting rural communities as well as Consultation Responses and Policy updates. A range of RCN publications is available at [Publications Archive - Rural Community Network](#)

Please see the list of following jobs currently available at the Housing Executive:

- 2024-2 - Area Maintenance Manager
- 2024-44 - Planning Officer
- 2024-32 - Hostel Assistant
- 2024-33 - Administrative Support Officer (Governance & Administration)
- 2024-29 - Housing Services Senior Admin Officer
- 2024-41 - Assistant Housing Benefit Manager
- 2023-215 - Housing Advisor



Further information on these jobs can be found at the GetGot website which can be accessed by clicking this [link](#) and typing 'Housing Executive' into the search bar.

Events

Social Enterprise Plus & Your NWRC

Calling all social enterprises in the Derry / Londonderry area
Wednesday 21st February 2024 at 11.00am



Housing
Executive



The Housing Executive in partnership with North West Regional College are holding an informal session on social enterprise and personal development. Come and hear what opportunities are available for new and existing social enterprises, meet other enterprises and meet other funders from the sector.

Lunch is available for participants.

For more information and tickets, go to Eventbrite at: [Social Enterprise Plus & Your NWRC Tickets, Wed, Feb 21, 2024 at 11:00 AM | Eventbrite](#)

Omagh Funding Fair

Date: Tuesday 13th February 2024

Time: 4:00 pm - 8:00 pm

**Venue: Omagh Leisure Complex,
Old Mountfield Road, Omagh,
Northern Ireland, BT79**

**The Funding and Advice Fair will take place on
Tuesday, 13 February, from 4-8 pm at the Omagh
Leisure Complex.**



The Fair will allow groups and individuals to drop in and meet with representatives from various funding and support agencies.

We'll be there to help groups looking for funding and to tell them about our funding support services. Come meet funders face to face, find out what they have to offer, and discuss your ideas!

More Information

Contact Anita Doonan, Supporting Communities Funding and Social Value Officer

Email: anita@supportingcommunities.org

Tel: 07840849453

Funding Clinic Sessions

Date: Tuesday 7th March 2024

Time: 10:00 am to 3:00 pm

Finding the right funding can be difficult and time-consuming. Get some help to streamline the process and improve your chances of success!

HCN members can book a one-to-one funding support session with Anita Doonan, Funding and Social Value Officer, for advice and help to access the resources your group needs.

Start thinking about your next projects by asking questions like:

- What funding to apply for
- How to structure your application and plan accurate budgets
- How to carry out a community survey
- How to prepare for action planning
- How to do pre and post-monitoring and evaluation of your project



Book Your Place

Please [fill in this form](#) to request an appointment.

The funding clinic will run from 10 am - 3 pm with 30-minute slots available for individuals or groups to discuss their funding needs one-on-one with our funding officer.

This service is free for HCN members. If you are interested in becoming a member of the [Housing Community Network](#), please get in touch!

Digital Drop-In Session at Murphy's on Main Street Community Hub Ederney

Date: Thursday 29th February 2024

Time: 10:00 am to 3:00 pm

**Location: Murphy's on Main Street Community Hub,
15 Main Street, Enniskillen, NI BT93 0DH**

Do you need help to access online services?

Whether it's sending an email, getting onto Facebook, shopping online for the best deals, accessing your Universal Credit account....or simply learning how to turn your tablet on, we can help!

Anita Doonan from Supporting Communities will be at [Murphy's on Main Street](#) for a free digital skills support day on Thursday, 29 February. Bring your tablet, laptop, or smartphone and get one-to-one support on whatever has you stumped!

A second drop-in day will be held on Thursday, 14 March also at the Ederney Community Hub.

Book Your Place

For more information and to book in for one-to-one help, please contact Neil at the Community Hub at 028 6625 1068.



FREE DIGITAL SKILLS SUPPORT

Digital Drop-In Sessions at Murphy's on Main Street Ederney

Do you need help to access online services?

Whether it's sending an email, getting onto Facebook, shopping online for the best deals, accessing your Universal Credit account....or just learning how to turn your tablet on, we can help!

Anita Doonan from Supporting Communities will be at Murphy's on Main Street for free digital skills support days on **Thursday, 29 February** and **Thursday, 14 March**.

Bring your tablet, laptop, or smartphone and get one-to-one support on whatever has you stumped!

To book, contact:

Neil at the Community Hub
on 028 6625 1068



**Supporting
Communities**
Empowering Society



Training

Volunteer Now Training Sessions

Keeping Children Safe: Training for Staff and Volunteers Refresher

DATE: Thursday 15th February 2024, 6.30 pm - 9.30 pm
ONLINE Standard Course from £25 +VAT



This half day certificated training course provides a refresher on the following topics:

- Legal and policy context
- Abuse issues
- Reporting concerns
- Planning activities and assessing and managing risk
- Code of behaviour.

Places are allocated on a first come, first served basis and are limited to a maximum of 3 per organisation.

This training programme is a suitable foundation for completing the Keeping Children Safe: Designated Officer Training.

Joining information will be sent out 24 hours before the session.

This training is available for those working or volunteering in the Northern, Southern and Western Trust areas. For training in the Belfast and South Eastern Trust areas please contact the relevant Keeping Safe Initiative: [Keeping Children Safe: Training for Staff and Volunteers Refresher - Volunteer Now](#)

[Click here for instructions on how to create a Training Account.](#)

Find out more and book your places here – <https://www.volunteernow.co.uk/training/courses-scheduled/>

Housing Rights Training

Supporting people with housing rental debt



Voluntary and Community from £64.00 / £77.00;

Public and Statutory from £115.00 / £138.00

Book now

Location; Online, Via Zoom

Date; 20th February 2024

Time; 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm

This training session offers specific advice and information for anyone supporting tenants who are in housing arrears.

This session is specifically related to tenants in the private and social rented sector and will provide a grounding on debt processes within Northern Ireland.

What we will cover:

- the legal processes that private and social landlords must follow to regain their property
- the process the landlord must follow, including court processes and enforcement.

Who should attend?

- generalist advice workers
- housing association staff
- constituency office staff
- community/resident's groups
- other statutory agencies such as Environmental Health Departments & Social Services
- Solicitors

For more information on Housing Rights training courses and events, go to; [Training and events | Housing Rights](#)

Funding

Thomas Wall Trust Accepting UK Applications for Summer 2024 Meeting

Grants of up to £5,000 are available for UK registered charities for specific projects that improve communication skills for disadvantaged adults and supports NEET people into employment.

The Trust views communication skills as critical capabilities for people who want to improve their employment prospects, self-confidence, resilience, and life chances.

The funding is for registered UK registered charities with an annual turnover of between £25,000 and £500,000 that are working to develop communication skills for people from disadvantaged groups who want to improve their employment prospects. Beneficiaries must gain at least one accredited vocational qualification during delivery.

As an inclusive charity, the Trust welcomes proposals which target people experiencing multiple deprivation or other groups demonstrably facing major hurdles to

employment, especially women, people with physical, mental, or learning disabilities, and refugees.

Priority will be given to match funded projects and self-sustainable projects, with a view to becoming less reliant on grants in the future.

There is a two-stage application process.

The next deadline to submit a first stage application is 29 April 2024 for assessment at the July 2024 meeting.

For more information please visit [Thomas Wall Trust | Thomas Wall Trust](#)



Henry Moore Foundation Accepting Applications for First 2024 Funding Round

Henry Moore Foundation is offering various grants of up to £20,000 for art galleries, museums, and other not-for-profit organisations concerned with art and art history across the UK to support projects that promote the growth and development of sculpture across historical, modern and contemporary registers, and research that expands the appreciation of sculpture.

The Foundation offers funding in the following categories:

- New projects and commissions: Grants of up to £20,000 to encourage new thinking about sculpture or sculpture history or contribute to public awareness and appreciation of sculpture.
- Acquisitions and collections: Grants of up to £20,000 for museums and galleries who wish to acquire or conserve sculpture for their collections as well as for cataloguing and display costs.
- Research and development:
 - Long-term grants of up to £20,000 for projects that require funding for more than one year, such as a permanent collection catalogue.
 - Small research grants of up to £2,500 for

academics, curators, and independent scholars to cover research costs on the history and interpretation of sculpture.

- Conferences, lectures, and publications: Grants of up to £5000 to publish a new book or journal, or to stage a conference or other event related to sculpture.

There are typically four deadlines per year.

The next deadline for applications is 1 March 2024 (23:00).

For more information, please visit [Grants & fellowships | Henry Moore Foundation \(henry-moore.org\)](#)



Pixel Fund Reopens for Applications in 2024

The Pixel Fund is offering grants of between £2,500 and £5,000 for UK-registered charities to deliver projects and activities that promote the mental health and wellbeing of children and young adults aged under 26 years old and provide a measurable difference to the charity's users.

From 1 February 2024, the Pixel Fund has introduced a new eligibility checklist and reevaluated their application process to help reduce the number of unsuccessful applications.

To apply, groups must first check the new eligibility checklist, before attending a Pixel Fund Applicants pre-meeting to discuss their ideas. Eligible charities will then be required to complete an Eligibility

Requirements questionnaire and due diligence form before being assessed and potentially invited to complete a full application.

There is a strong preference for charities with an annual income of less than £2 million. Typically, no single grant will be worth more than 5% of an organisation's annual income.

To apply, groups must first book a place at an Applicant pre-meeting which will be held regularly throughout the year.

For more information, please visit [The Pixel Fund - UK Mental Health Grants for Charities](#)



Prudence Trust Accepting Applications for New Funding Round

Prudent Trust has launched a new funding round and is offering around five to eight grants of between £10,000 and £200,000 for youth mental health organisations with an annual income of more than £250,000 across the UK to deliver evaluation projects.

In this funding round, titled 'What's Working for Young People's Mental Health?', a total of around £1 million is available to support charities working to support young people's mental health to better understand how their service works and how it can be improved.

Examples of what funding can cover include:

- Consultancy support for work such as strategy review, theory of change, creation of an evaluation and change plan.
- Upskilling of staff responsible for monitoring and evaluation
- Costs to work with an external evaluator or academic on specific programmes.
- Staff or consultant time to review evidence of similar services.

Where a proposal is linked to a particular service, the service must have been running for at least two years and applicants must have secured sufficient funding to ensure the programme runs for the duration of the proposed evaluation.

Priority will be given to proposals that clearly demonstrate strategic value, eg designing more effective programmes, demonstrating impact for commissioning, stopping programmes, or aligning services with young people's needs.

There is a two-stage application process. Groups must first submit an online expression of interest, before being invited to submit a full application.

The deadline to submit an expression of interest is 8 March 2024 (16:00).

For more information, please visit [New Funding Opportunity from The Prudence Trust](#)



Community Development Running Cost Grants open for applications

Ards and North Down Borough Council has opened its annual funding scheme for local constituted voluntary and community groups to apply for help with running costs. Awards are subject to budget availability. Groups from the Ards and North Down Borough can apply to the following grants funding streams –

Funding Stream - Community Development Grants – Running costs

Open from 5th February 2024 at 9am

Closing date and time 27th February 2024 at 12pm
Application forms, guidance notes and criteria are available at:

[Community Development Grants | Ards and North Down Borough Council](#)

or may be requested from the Community Development Section.

Where possible completed applications should be emailed as a pdf with an electronic signature to



communitygrants@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

If this not possible please forward completed application forms to the address below before the deadline.

Further information is available from: Community Development Section, Unit 5, 16 South Street, Newtownards, BT23 4JT Tel: 0300 013 3333 or via e-mail –

communitygrants@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

February 2024 - Update from the Reconciliation Fund

The Department of Foreign Affairs are pleased to inform you that the Reconciliation Fund's Annual Funding Round (for 12-month funding) will open on **Monday 12 February 2024 at 11am**. They will accept applications through their online application portal until the **final closing date of Wednesday 20 March 2024 at 12pm**. **No late applications will be accepted.**

Due to the high volume of traffic on the online application portal, it may take some time to receive the email to register as a new user, or to reset your password, so please allow for this when planning the submission of your application.

From 2023, the Reconciliation Fund has moved to one annual funding application round only. This means there is no longer an autumn application round for annual grants. Please ensure that if you are planning to apply for grant funds from the Reconciliation Fund in 2024, you are prepared to submit an application in this upcoming round.

As previously advised, our new Strategy for 2021-2024 came into effect in March 2021 and sets out the current funding criteria and priorities that guide how grants are awarded by the Reconciliation Fund. All applicants should therefore consult this document to ensure that their proposals align with the criteria and



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha
Department of Foreign Affairs

priority areas identified there. A copy of the text of the Strategy is available [here \(in pdf format\)](#).

In addition to project funding, the Reconciliation Fund will welcome applications for core operational as well as certain capital costs, where this will support organisations' work within the framework of our strategy. Further information on this is available in the Strategy document and on our webpage.

Full details on how to apply in this funding round can be found on the website: www.dfa.ie/reconciliation. As always, "[Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#)" and "[User Guide](#)" documents are also available on the website to help you submit an application through their online portal.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at reconciliation@dfa.ie.



National Lottery Community Fund - Sustainable Community Buildings Programme (Northern Ireland)

Grants are available for voluntary and community organisations in Northern Ireland to support them in making their buildings more energy efficient, helping to save money on bills.



Funding body: National Lottery Community Fund - Northern Ireland

Maximum value: £ 50,000

Application deadline: 20th March 2024

Background

The Sustainable Community Buildings programme is provided and administered in Northern Ireland by the National Lottery Community Fund.

Objectives of Fund

The funding is intended to support organisations with reducing their carbon footprint, creating an environment plan, and improving the environmental performance of their community buildings.

Value Notes

Grants of up to £50,000 are available. Organisations that apply to the programme will also take part in free carbon literacy training delivered by Business in the Community, which will help them to look at ways to reduce their carbon footprint. Action Renewables will also support organisations to write and implement an environmental plan to consider steps to improve sustainability and cut costs.

Who Can Apply

Applications will be accepted from voluntary and community organisations with an annual income of less than £500,000. This includes:

- Registered charities.
- Unregistered voluntary or community organisations with a governing document, e.g. a constitution.
- Not-for-profit companies (company limited by guarantee).
- Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIO or SCIO).
- Community Interest Companies (CIC).

To be eligible, applicants must:

- Have at least two board or committee members who are not related.
- Have a bank account in the organisation's name.

The applicant's community building must meet the following criteria:

- The building must have been built before 2005.
- The organisation must own their building or have an unbreakable lease for at least six years.
- The building must be open and used, evidenced by the number of people who use the building and its opening hours.
- The organisation must not be solely focused on delivering sports activities, or affiliated with a governing body of sport (recognised by Sport

Northern Ireland).

- The building must not already have solar panels.

Location: Northern Ireland

Restrictions

The following are not eligible for funding:

- Anything that is not listed on the environment plan that the applicant creates together with a sustainability expert.
- Revenue costs for the organisation, e.g. salaries or running costs.
- Activities or events.
- Sports clubs that are affiliated with a governing body of sport (recognised by Sport Northern Ireland) - for example, the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA), Ulster Rugby and Irish Football Association.
- Individuals.
- Sole traders.
- Faith or religious institutions - such as churches, synagogues and mosques. However, faith-based groups that are working in a community setting are eligible.
- Organisations based outside Northern Ireland.
- Companies that can pay profits to directors, shareholders or members (including Companies Limited by Shares).
- Statutory organisations.
- Schools.
- Organisations applying to more than one National Lottery Community Fund programme for the same project over the same period.
- One organisation applying on behalf of another.
- Applications written on behalf of an organisation by private businesses or consultants.

Eligible Expenditure

Grants may be used for **capital funding only**.

Upon completing carbon literacy training and creating an environment plan, organisations invited to apply for funding to improve their building's environmental performance may use grants to support costs including:

- Solar panels.
- Battery storage.
- Ground-source heat pumps.
- Energy efficient lighting.
- New insulation.
- Energy-efficient windows and doors.



How To Apply

The Sustainable Community Buildings programme will open in stages across Northern Ireland.

In the first application period from 7 February 2024 to 20 March 2024, applications will be accepted from organisations with community buildings located in the following council areas:

- Ards and North Down Borough Council
- Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council
- Mid Ulster District Council
- Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

In the second application period from 11 September 2024 to 23 October 2024, applications will be accepted from organisations with community buildings located in the following council areas:

- Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council
- Derry City and Strabane District Council
- Fermanagh and Omagh District Council
- Mid and East Antrim Borough Council

In the third application period from 8 January 2025 to 19 February 2025, applications will be accepted from organisations with community buildings located in the following council areas:

- Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council
- Belfast City Council
- Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council

For all applicants, there is a two-stage application process:

- Stage 1: submit an Expression of Interest - National Lottery Community Fund aims to give applicants a decision in around six weeks. If successful, applicants will be invited to Stage 2.
- Stage 2: full application for funding.

Organisations successful at stage one will be asked to sign up to carbon literacy training. National Lottery Community Fund will also ask organisations to work with a sustainability expert to create an environment plan for their organisation.

Guidance notes and the online Expression of Interest form can be found on the National Lottery Community Fund website.

Useful links

National Lottery Community Fund - Sustainable Community Buildings Programme
[Sustainable Community Buildings | The National Lottery Community Fund \(nlcommunityfund.org.uk\)](https://www.nlcommunityfund.org.uk)

Deadline - First Application Period

Application start date: 7th February 2024

Application end date: 20th March 2024

Frequency: Key Deadline

This application period is for organisations with community buildings located in the following council areas:

- Ards and North Down Borough Council
- Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council
- Mid Ulster District Council
- Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Call 1 2024-2025 Financial Assistance now open

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council invites applications for financial assistance towards the programme areas outlines below:

- Arts & Culture Projects
- Community Engagement
- Community Events, Festivals
- Community Summer Schemes
- Good Relations
- Irish Language
- Minority Communities Fund
- PCSP Community Safety Support
- Sports Programmes
- Tourism Events

All themes are subject to funding availability. Late application submissions will not be accepted under any circumstances.

Closing: 28 February 2024 at 12 noon



Comhairle Ceantair
**an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin**

**Newry, Mourne
and Down**
District Council

Application and guidance notes can be reviewed online via: <https://newrymouredowndc.smartsimpleuk.com/>

Should you have any queries, please contact:
Grants & Funding Unit

T: 0330 137 4040 / 0330 137 4782

E: programmesunit@nmandd.org



Boots Charitable Trust Extends Grants Programme to Support Local Communities across the UK

Boots Charitable Trust is an independent registered charity wholly funded by Boots UK Limited. The Trust recently expanded its grants programme from its home base of Nottinghamshire to across the UK.

Registered charities working in the areas of health, lifelong learning, community development and social care can apply four times a year for grants of between £100 and £10,000. Grants of up to £5,000 are available for smaller voluntary organisations whose income and expenditure is less than £5,000 per year and who are not yet required to register with the Charity Commission.

To be eligible, projects must meet at least one of Trust's four funding priorities:

- Health: Community healthcare, such as homecare or support for sufferers of medical conditions, and health education and prevention
- Lifelong learning: Local literacy and numeracy projects
- Community development: For example, supporting councils in providing voluntary services
- Social care: Personal, social or community activities or schemes.

Additionally, a particular focus within each of these priorities is how the projects demonstrate a commitment to improving diversity, equality and inclusion within the community.



There is particular interest in projects with the capacity to deliver significant impact and which reach the greatest number of people.

The funding can be used for most expenditure items, including salary and running costs. Large building or construction projects will not be funded, although minor structural improvements and refurbishments would be considered.

There are four application windows per year and applications will only be accepted during the quarterly windows.

Applications will next be accepted from 1 to 28 February 2024.

For more information and to apply please visit [Boots UK - Boots Charitable Trust \(boots-uk.com\)](https://boots-uk.com)

Water Quality Improvement Strand of NI Environmental Challenge Fund Open for Applications

Funding is available to community-focused organisations for projects to help people improve and to connect with Northern Ireland's aquatic environment.

The Northern Ireland Environment Agency has launched the 2024/25 call for applications to the Water Quality Improvement Strand of its Environmental Challenge Fund Competition. The competition is open to applications from constituted not-for-profit organisations and local authorities, with projects beginning from spring 2024.

All on the ground project activity must take place in Northern Ireland, with the three key themes for funding under this challenge competition as follows:

- Connecting people with the aquatic environment to achieve behavioural change.
- Conservation and restoration of our aquatic environments.
- Nature-based solutions, particularly for climate



Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone

change mitigation and adaptation.

Capital grants of between £5,000 and £30,000 are available to cover up to 85% of eligible project costs. Applicants must be able to demonstrate that sufficient match funding is available to complete their project, and projects must be completed by 28 February 2025.

The deadline for applications is 10 March 2024 (11.59pm).

For more information and to apply, please visit [Environment Fund – Water Quality Improvement Strand 2024/25 | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](https://daera-ni.gov.uk)



Funding to Support Rural Development Projects Across the UK

NFU Mutual Charitable Trust is offering grants of between £1,000 and £50,000 for organisations working in agriculture, rural development, and insurance across the UK to deliver projects and activities across one or more of the Trust's main objectives:

- To advance the education of the public using research and dissemination of information concerning agriculture.
- To advance the education of young people within rural areas.
- To relieve poverty within rural areas.
- To promote the benefit and social welfare of inhabitants of rural communities by associating together with the inhabitants and local authorities, voluntary and other organisations to advance education and leisure.
- To promote research into agricultural-associated activities.
- To advance the education of the public using

research and dissemination of information concerning insurance.

Priority will be given to larger initiatives that would have a significant impact on rural communities, as well as initiatives in the areas of education of young people in rural areas and relief of poverty within rural areas.

Trustees met twice a year to consider applications, typically in June and November.

The next deadline for applications is 24 May 2024.

For more information and to apply, please visit [NFU Mutual Charitable Trust: What do we do | NFU Mutual](#)



Halifax Foundation for NI launch new funding streams

Halifax Foundation for NI have launched their new website and Strategy for 2024 - 2028, 'Better Together' - the following new funding streams are now available;

Community Flex

This is our main programme which will be a rolling programme, open to registered charities only which have 1 years full accounts published on the Charity Commission website. Maximum grant available £10,000. The charity income in the last 12 months needs to be less than £500,000 (this is a change to our last programme as it was open to those with an income of less than £1m) the charity must support those in greatest need and we can support running costs, salaries, materials, training, transport, activity costs and volunteer costs. Open now!

Ignite

This is a seeding grant for new charities, this does not mean newly registered on the Charity Commission website this means set up within the last 2 years -we will check the constitution date for this information. Groups must be on the Charity Commission website. The maximum grant available is £2,000. There is a set budget for this programme and once this has been allocated we will not be able to issue any further grants. There is an option for mentoring or training support with this grant. Open now!

Collaborate

This programme is for 2 or more registered charities coming together to tackle a social issue, both charities must have an income under £500k. This programme



has a set budget and once this is allocated we will not be able to issue any further funding. Applicants must have a pre-application meeting with the Grants Team before applying online. This is for one year funding only. This programme is open for applications now. Max grant £20k.

Empower

This programme is not currently open for applications however this will open for funding on **3rd June 24 closing on 28th June 24. Awards will be made in August with a starting date of September.**

This is for infrastructure charities supporting community groups to receive 1-2 year funding , maximum grant is £20k. The organisation needs to be a registered charity and must be strategic/ transformational in nature. Projects must not duplicate activities supported by or the responsibility of government departments. A pre-application meeting must take place before applying.

More information on each funding stream can be found on their website - [About Us – Halifax Foundation NI](#)



Grand Choice 2024

Local residents or groups in the Castlereagh East area of Lisburn and Castlereagh can apply for up to £1,000 via the 'Grand Choice' participatory budgeting initiative from 15 January 2024.

The key difference between Grand Choice and other council managed funding opportunities is that the successful projects are chosen by the community. The votes of those living in Castlereagh East will decide which projects will be funded.

Councillor Thomas Beckett, Leisure & Community Development Chairman, said: "Once again the council is proud to be supporting this scheme. There is £15,000 available for projects across the council's district electoral area of Castlereagh East. This includes the Moneyreagh, Ballyhanwood, Carrowreagh, Dundonald, Enler and Graham's Bridge areas.

"As with previous rounds of Grand Choice, successful projects can win up to £1,000 and will be chosen by their local community. Voting will be in person at a Community Decision Event on Saturday 9 March in St Mary's Church of Ireland Hall, Ballybeen, 1A Craighigh Drive, Dundonald from 11am to 3pm. We encourage residents in the Castlereagh East area to use their voting power to select the projects they feel best suit their communities."

Projects that relate to one or more of the Take 5 themes of Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning and Give will be eligible for funding.

All projects must be completed between March and June 2024.

Councillor Alan Givan, Chair of the Lisburn & Castlereagh PCSP, said: "To date Grand Choice has

been a great success in all the other district electoral areas with the most recent held in the Castlereagh South area in October 2023. It offers the perfect opportunity for residents, constituted groups and schools to bring a project or event to their local community. If you and a few friends have an idea to support your local community then I would encourage you to consider applying.

"You can apply for up to £1,000 for things such as online or in-person activities, events, tutors, workshops, performers or specialist facilitator. Should you have a specific community issue that needs addressed then you could request funding for marketing campaigns or equipment for projects. If your group is not constituted you must obtain sponsor support from a local constituted group.

"All applications will be assessed to ensure the project is legal, safe, and achievable within government guidance, the budget and timescale. Our communities have the power to decide where the Grand Choice funding goes.

Lisburn & Castlereagh PCSP, PSNI, Sport NI, Ark Housing, Choice Housing and Northern Ireland Housing Executive have contributed to the scheme in addition to the council.

To apply online or to download an application form [please use this link](#) before Sunday 11th February 2024.

