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Welcome to Supporting Communities 211th 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

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## Volunteers the lifeblood of sports NI Sport and Human Rights Forum hears

Ahead of Volunteer Week, the important role of volunteers in sport has been explored at the latest Northern Ireland Sport and Human Rights Forum.



NORTHERN IRELAND  
HUMAN RIGHTS  
COMMISSION

Ulster GAA, the Irish Football Association and Ulster Rugby presented to members about their joint initiative: 'Sport – A Home for Lifelong Volunteering', which engages over 4,000 volunteers across the three sports. The trio highlighted how successfully working together has allowed them to increase the involvement of young volunteers, break down barriers, encourage respect and acknowledge the power and value of volunteering.

The meeting heard about the work of Street Soccer NI in engaging with disadvantaged groups such as those who are homeless, fighting addiction, unemployed, and refugees and asylum seekers through football and other sports. CEO Justin McMinn talked about how the organisation also relies on the stellar work of its volunteers in order to help it provide as much support as possible to those who need it.

Finally, Denise Hayward from Volunteer Now spoke about some of the challenges, including the need to tackle the alarming fall in volunteer numbers since Covid19 with a collaborative and inclusive approach that appeals to a new generation of volunteers.

NI Human Rights Chief Executive, David Russell said:

*"We were delighted that our member organisations were able to share their wealth of experiences and best practice around volunteers in sport, creating a culture of respect and tackling homelessness through sport."*

*"It highlights the importance of the NI Sport and Human Rights Forum as a space where sports can learn from each other, explore partnership opportunities and learn more about human rights issues affecting the world of sport."*

NI Sport and Human Rights Forum Chair Conal Heatley said:

*"Volunteering is vital to the success and survival of so many sporting organisations. It is great to hear from our member organisations about some of the stellar work they are doing to ensure volunteers have the best possible experience whilst feeling valued and part of a community."*

*"I thank our speakers from Ulster GAA, the IFA, Ulster Rugby, Street Soccer NI and Volunteer Now for taking the time to address the Forum, and wish them well with their ongoing work."*

Denise Hayward CEO of Volunteer Now said:

*"It is so important to celebrate the important roles that volunteers are playing in sport. Without volunteers there would be no sports clubs and very limited sporting activity taking place. We need to encourage a new generation of volunteers to step forward and continue to enable a thriving sporting community."*

## Northern Ireland Local Council Elections 2023

Voters across Northern Ireland went to the polls on Thursday 18 May to choose new councillors for the first time in four years.

A total of 462 seats were contested in all of Northern Ireland's 11 councils.

The elections give people the chance to decide who is responsible for a range of local issues - such as leisure services, bin collections and the rates bills paid by every household.

Councils are responsible for a range of services, including:

- Leisure services
- Cemeteries
- Waste collection and disposal
- Local planning
- Dog control

They also look after some local tourism, off-street parking and elements of heritage such as managing conservation areas.

These services are paid for by rates. Every council votes each year on what the district rate will be in their area, which is added to the regional rate set by Stormont and sent out to every eligible household as a rates bill.

The elections decide the make-up of each council, which has an impact on their approach to the services run by each local authority.

In short, the outcomes of the vote includes Sinn Féin becoming the biggest party in local government in Northern Ireland for the first time, with 144 councillors.

It is the largest party at Belfast City Hall, with 22 councillors. The DUP have 14, with Alliance third on 11.

Sinn Féin is also the largest party in Mid Ulster, in Derry and Strabane, in Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon, and in Newry, Mourne and Down.

The party will also have overall control of Fermanagh and Omagh after winning 21 out of 40 seats.

The DUP will be the largest grouping in Lisburn and Castlereagh, Mid and East Antrim, Causeway Coast and Glens, and in Ards and North Down. It also has the largest number of councillors in Antrim and Newtownabbey.

The Belfast Telegraph has published a number of tables of results including an interactive map which reports on the results in each Council area and ward. It can be viewed at; [Northern Ireland Council Election 2023: The results in one table and two charts | BelfastTelegraph.co.uk](https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/northern-ireland-council-election-2023-the-results-in-one-table-and-two-charts-1.2000000)

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## Register with Social Value NI

Social Value is about maximising the social, economic and environmental benefits through the public procurement process. Ultimately, this allows Government Departments and their stakeholders to find new and far reaching methods to deliver on the outcomes of the Programme for Government.

<https://biteable.com/watch/3839349/057567cda04300a577b20688fe969067>

The Social Value NI website offers the public, private and third sectors a suite of bespoke resources, training modules and model procurement documentation to ensure consistency of approach

while allowing public bodies, and their suppliers, to retain flexibility in the delivery of the 4 social value themes:



- Increasing secure employment and skills
- Building ethical and resilient supply chains
- Delivering zero carbon
- Promoting Well-being

Your organisation may be able to benefit from contractors working in your area – all you have to do is register as a broker here: <https://socialvalueni.org/brokers/>



# Consultations

## Consultation launches on revised regional strategic planning policy for renewable and low carbon energy

The Department for Infrastructure has issued a draft revised regional strategic planning policy on renewable and low carbon energy for 12 weeks public consultation.



The aim of the review is to ensure that planning policy remains fit for purpose and up-to-date to inform plan-making and decision-taking in relation to renewable and low carbon energy planning applications, while reflecting our commitment to the Energy Strategy and the Climate Change (Northern Ireland) Act 2022, which has established a renewable electricity consumption target of 80% by 2030.

The consultation documents are available at [Draft Renewable and Low Carbon Energy](#). The consultation is open until 5.00 pm on 30 June 2023.

### Section 75 Equality Action Plan 2022-2025

Department for Communities

[Consultation on Section 75 Equality Action Plan 2022-2025 | Department for Communities](#)

[\(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

Closing date; 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023

### Equality Scheme, Audit of Inequalities and Disability Action Plan 2022-2027

Department for the Economy

[Equality Scheme, Audit of Inequalities and Disability Action Plan 2022-2027 | Department for the Economy](#)

[\(economy-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

Closing date; 4<sup>th</sup> June 2023

### Climate Change Reporting by Specified Public Bodies - Developing New Regulations

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

[Consultation on Climate Change Reporting by Specified Public Bodies - Developing New Regulations | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

[\(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

Closing date; 9<sup>th</sup> June 2023

### Review of the Race Relations (NI) Order 1997

The Executive Office NI

[Consultation on the Review of the Race Relations \(NI\) Order 1997 | The Executive Office](#)

[\(executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

Closing date; 18<sup>th</sup> June 2023

**YOUR VIEWS WANTED**

The Northern Ireland Policing Board is seeking views from across the community on the delivery of the policing service and how the police work in partnership with the community in local areas as part of the Community Policing Survey 2023.

With our responsibility to oversee the work of the Police Service of Northern Ireland, we want to find out about your experience of PSNI in your local area, whether that be as an individual or through your work with a community group or an organisation.

This information will be used to inform the Policing Plan and assist the Board in assessing and evaluating the impact of police partnership working within local communities. We appreciate you taking the time to complete this survey. The Board will publish the results in Autumn 2023.

**SCAN TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY**

The online survey will be open from Monday 3 April 2023 to Friday 30 June 2023 and can be accessed by scanning the QR Code or by visiting [consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/doj/community-policing-survey-2023](#)

Anyone unable to access the survey online, can request hard copies of the survey by contacting the Policing Board:

Northern Ireland Policing Board  
James House, Block D, 2 - 4 Cromac Avenue,  
The Gasworks, Belfast, BT7 2JA

Statistics@nipolicingboard.org.uk  
028 9040 8500

You can find out more about the role and work of the Policing Board by visiting our website at [www.nipolicingboard.org.uk](#)  
Stay up to date by following us on social media:

# Policy and Practice Focus

## View from the Chair: Refusal of service due to political opinion



View from the Chair article published in *The News Letter*, 9 May 2023  
by Geraldine McGahey, Chief Commissioner, Equality Commission

Following recent news stories about local businesses refusing service to some people, and some enquiries from service providers, I thought it might be useful to revisit what the law says about unlawful discrimination in this area, in particular the potential for discriminating against someone on the grounds of their political opinion.

Simply put, businesses providing services to the public must not discriminate against people on any of the grounds covered by Northern Ireland's anti-discrimination laws governing the provision of goods, facilities and services to the public. Rights in respect to provision of goods, facilities and services are protected on the grounds of disability, race, sex, sexual orientation, religious belief and political opinion. Unlike other parts of these islands, you are not protected on grounds of your age.

The recent news stories included allegations of discrimination from people who believed they were unlawfully refused services because of slogans on the tee shirts they were wearing, connected to a rally in Belfast.

To explain, the equality law that is relevant to this situation is FETO, the Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order 1998, which prohibits discrimination on the grounds of religious belief and political opinion in employment and in the provision of goods and services. FETO also prohibits discrimination on the grounds of philosophical belief in the field of employment, but not in relation to the provision of goods and services.

So, if someone feels they have experienced unlawful discrimination because of a refusal of service on political grounds, they can take proceedings in the County Court. The court may well decide that the views expressed amount to a political opinion and are protected by FETO but whether it amounts to unlawful discrimination will depend on the specific facts and ultimately would be for the court to decide.

More generally, a service provider cannot refuse to provide a service to a customer on one of the five equality grounds above. As a service provider you cannot refuse to provide services, even if you think that serving that customer will upset or raise objections from other customers.

None of this means that a person for example who holds a particular set of protected religious beliefs or political opinions has a right to express, or demonstrate their support for, those beliefs or opinions in ways that would discriminate against or harass your other customers. Failure to treat your employees and other customers with respect would allow you to consider withdrawing your services from disrespectful or offensive customers.

As an employer, you are liable for the actions of your staff, including if they discriminate against a customer. You should be able to show that you have in place an equality policy which covers how your staff behave with customers or service users, that all staff know about it and that it has been implemented effectively. Policies must be fair, proportionate, applied consistently to everyone and non-discriminatory.

These policies may prohibit the use of offensive words and phrases, the display of flags and emblems in shared spaces, or clothing or emblems, such as football shirts, tattoos or other logos. It is important that any policy is applied consistently and not just to some individuals and groups rather than others.

It is fair to say that this can be a complex area, and if you are in any doubt, or in need of guidance, we can offer you free and confidential advice and information – just phone our Advice and Compliance team on 028 90 500 600 or email [enquiries@equalityni.org](mailto:enquiries@equalityni.org)

# 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 at the Board in [Policing Matters Issue 31: March 2023 \(nipolicingboard.org.uk\)](#) and the Chief Constable's Report to the Policing Board March 2023 is available at; [chief-constables-report-to-the-northern-ireland-policing-board.pdf \(nipolicingboard.org.uk\)](#)



Please click the link below to access the latest edition of Inpartnership – the newsletter for PCSPs which highlights local events and initiatives; [Inpartnership Issue 12 \(pcsp.org\)](#)

## Northern Ireland Central Investment Fund for Charities Conflict of Interest Policy with the Charities Commission Northern Ireland

All charities under the law of Northern Ireland are required to register with and be regulated by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI). There are no exemptions to this requirement.

These arrangements apply to the Department for Communities (DfC) in respect of those charities for which DfC is the charity trustee.

The purpose of this document is to set out the procedures to be followed by DfC where any concern/issue is raised and does not obviate the need for any charity for which DfC is the charity trustee to adhere to the requirements of the Charities Act (Northern

## Scope<sup>NI</sup>

Available online, includes a series of important articles on a range of matters including **including the way forward for the third sector, self-harm, the cost of living, the Budget, segregation, inflation and public finances**; Scope can be accessed at; <http://scopeni.nicva.org/>



The Environmental news bulletin is available at [ENRA-March-2023.pdf \(nienvironmentlink.org\)](#). For other NIEL publications and events, go to; [www.nienvironmentlink.org](http://www.nienvironmentlink.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](#)



Ireland) 2008 (the 2008 Act) or any subordinate legislation emanating from it.

The aim of this arrangement is to protect DfC and CCNI from any appearance of impropriety.

[Northern Ireland Central Investment Fund for Charities Conflict of Interest Policy with the Charities Commission Northern Ireland | Department for Communities \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

# Events

## All-Ireland Tenant Engagement Conference Update

Limited tickets remain for the first All-Ireland Tenant Engagement Conference on 13th June 2023.



# Plan your day!

The All-Ireland Tenant Engagement Conference Programme is online now.

Tuesday 13 June  
Carrickdale Hotel

With thanks to our headline sponsor, Circle VHA



If you've been waiting to see what we have planned for you, wait no longer!

The [programme](#) for the event has come together nicely, and we are so excited to showcase involved tenants, leading housing professionals, and policymakers who care about tenant involvement from across the island of Ireland. We'll learn what works, what doesn't, and how we can all help take tenant participation to the next level.

Join us at the Carrickdale Hotel for this exciting opportunity to learn, network, and be part of shaping the future of tenant engagement in Ireland.

Read all about it on the Supporting Communities [website](#) and [book your tickets](#) today!



**Tuesday, 6 June**  
11:00am - 12:00pm

Join the Age Friendly Network NI, in partnership with Northern Ireland Age Sector Networks, for an online Regional Rapid Rundown!

This online event will showcase the wide range of services and support that is available for Older People in Northern Ireland. With 20 organisations taking part, each group will have two minutes to present.

Register here: <https://forms.gle/ah8jmbFvlnT652fo2>  
Or contact Agewell: 028 25658604

The Age Friendly Network NI in partnership with Northern Ireland Age Sector Networks are hosting an online Regional Rapid Rundown.

This online event will showcase the wide range of services and support that is available for Older People in Northern Ireland.

With 20 organisations taking part, each organisation will be given just two minutes to present.

To Register for this event, go to: [Regional Rapid Rundown \(google.com\)](#)



## Do you need help applying for the NI Housing Executive's Community Involvement Grants?

Our Funding Officer, Anita Doonan, has appointments available on 11 May and 16 May for HCN groups to get support for completing the application.

### About the Grants

The Community Involvement Grants allow community groups to apply for funding for projects that will benefit Housing Executive communities.

Projects must fit in with one or more of these themes:

- Health & Wellbeing
- Environment Improvement
- Intergenerational Practice
- Digital Inclusion

Read more about the grants here: <https://www.nihe.gov.uk/community/community-involvement/community-involvement-grants-application>

The closing date to apply is 30 May 2023.

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-to-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!

This face-to-face symposium is a unique collaboration between the National Association for Pastoral Care in Education (NAPCE) and Stranmillis University College, Belfast.

It seeks to bring together educational practitioners from a range of school settings in Northern Ireland to identify the current pastoral challenges facing schools as we emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic and enter a period of significant budget cuts.

STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE | 100  
Shaping education since 1922

napce The National Association for Pastoral Care in Education

SYMPOSIUM

Wednesday 21 June 2023 | 4.00pm-7.00pm

**Who cares about Pastoral Care?**

Addressing the pastoral challenges facing schools in Northern Ireland

The symposium features contributions from Koulla Yiasouma, the former Children's Commissioner for NI, and three local schools, each of which has won awards for their outstanding pastoral care. There will be presentations and time for group discussion, as well as informal networking and sharing of experiences and ideas.

For more information go to; [Who cares about Pastoral Care? Tickets, Wed 21 Jun 2023 at 16:00 | Eventbrite](#)

# Training

## HCN Online Forums Digital Drop-In Sessions

Are you a member of the [Housing Community Network](#)?

If you attend Central, Area, Regional, District Level meetings or Inter-Agencies, you will soon have access to all of your forum resources online!

Carla Mullholand, our new digital inclusion officer, will be holding regular drop-in sessions on Thursday afternoons from 1.30pm - 2.30pm to help members get signed up and use the online forums.

Not to be confused with the tenant portal, where you can manage aspects of your tenancy by signing in on the Housing Executive website, the collaboration portal or 'HCN Online Forums' are designed to create a simple online environment for sharing files, online chat, discussions, managing meetings and associated papers and assigning tasks or 'to-do' lists.

The online forums will improve the network's ability to collaborate by removing the need to email papers, minutes, and meeting invitations which individuals can quickly lose. Instead, all the forum's documents and discussions will be stored in an organised way online where members can access them whenever needed. Read more [about Carla and her new role](#) in assisting the HCN to gain the digital skills needed to participate online.

### Register for these session

These session will be held on Zoom. To register for any of these sessions, please [fill in this form](#).

If you have any questions, contact Carla Mullholand at [carla@supportingcommunities.org](mailto:carla@supportingcommunities.org).



## Housing Rights Training Challenging housing decisions



Help your clients to address problems they are encountering in keeping their social rented tenancy.

### Online

**Date;** Thursday 8th June 2023 from 10:00am to 1:00pm

**Fees;** Voluntary / Community from £56.00 to £70.00  
Public / Statutory from £100.00 to £125.00

Gain the skills to effectively challenge a negative housing decision in the social rented sector.

This course will give you the confidence and skills to help your client challenge a negative housing decision in the social rented sector. You will gain knowledge on the law supporting challenges to housing decisions.

It will also address common problems and issues that Housing Rights advisers come up against when challenging housing decisions. We will share with you how to best address these.

### What we will cover

- procedures for challenging different negative decisions
- processes around reviewing requests and submissions
- conducting homelessness investigations and reviews
- temporary accommodation pending review
- the principles of judicial review and appeals to County Court
- role of the ombudsman

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



## Volunteer Now Training Sessions in May / June 2023

### The New Environment: Recruit, Retain, Reward Volunteers



Join Volunteer Now Enterprises Ltd for a short session to look at volunteering and what the future hold in terms of recruitment, retention, and recognition.

**Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2023 from 10.00am - 3.30pm**  
**online standard course from £15**

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

Volunteer Now courses are booking up fast, especially the safeguarding courses so be quick! If you don't see what you are looking for, please drop us an email ([training@volunteernow.co.uk](mailto:training@volunteernow.co.uk)) and let us know, we might add it to the calendar! And don't forget, we also offer tailored training.

- **FREE Keeping Children & Adults Safe: An Introduction | 20 June**
- **Keeping Adults Safe: Adult Safeguarding Champion & Appointed Person Refresher Training | 22 June**

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



## FREE VOLT Session: The King's Award for Voluntary Service

Following the Accession of King Charles III, The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service will now become The King's Award for Voluntary Services (KAVS)

The King's Award for Voluntary Service is the highest Award given to local volunteer groups across the UK to recognise outstanding work done in their own communities. It is the MBE for volunteer groups and is awarded to groups of volunteers whose level of initiative and impact are truly exceptional.

182 volunteer groups currently hold the Award in Northern Ireland and there will be more awardees being announced in November 2023. Do you know an inspirational group that could be nominated?

This FREE VOLT Session to promote the Award and explain the nomination process, is being organised by the NI Representative for The King's Award for Voluntary Service in partnership with Volunteer Now. The event is aimed at potential nominators and interested groups. It will be an opportunity to hear from those involved in promoting the Award and from others who have been through the process.

**Date: Wednesday 7 June 2023**

**Time: 10.00-11.00am**

**Cost: FREE**

To book a place, please email [Deborah.Kyburz@volunteernow.co.uk](mailto:Deborah.Kyburz@volunteernow.co.uk)

**Volunteer Now** - Email: [info@volunteernow.co.uk](mailto:info@volunteernow.co.uk)  
Tel: 028 9023 2020



## An Intro to Research to Support Your Funding Applications (Online Session)

Monday 5th June 2023 from 12 noon to 12.30 pm

Support your funding applications with solid research! Join us for this short lunchtime session to understand the process of developing beneficiary-led programs.

We will help you to:

- Understand what research is and why it is important when delivering a program in the community and voluntary sector.
- Be aware of the differences between primary and secondary research.
- Be aware of the differences between Qualitative and Quantitative data.
- Identify online resources when gathering relevant data for NI.

Grab a bite and meet us online at 12 noon!

### Register your place

This session will be held on Zoom. To register, [please fill in this form](#).

If you have any questions, contact Aidan Kearney by email at [aidan@supportingcommunities.org](mailto:aidan@supportingcommunities.org).

**Please note, this session is designed for community groups in Northern Ireland.**



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## Writing Successful Funding Applications (Online Session)

Wednesday, 7th June 2023 from 10.00am to 11.00am

Join us for this short session looking at planning and completing a successful funding application.

Learners will gain:

- an understanding of the key processes of a successful funding application
- increased confidence when approaching funders
- enhanced fundraising skills and knowledge

### Register your place

To register for this course, [please fill in this form](#).

**Please note, this session is designed for community groups in Northern Ireland.**



## Reporting to the Charity Commission NI - Lunchtime Special Training (Online Session) Friday 16th June 2023 from 12 noon to 12.30 pm

How would you rate your understanding of the reporting requirements for the Charity Commission NI?

Get a better understanding of the reporting guidelines and learn what you need to prepare for your annual report.

Whether you need a quick refresher or just want a peek at the topic before committing to a longer course, our lunchtime taster sessions are perfect for you! In just 30 minutes over your break, you can catch up on this important topic and be confident that your group's governance is getting a look in!

Grab a bite and meet us online at 12 noon.

### Register your place

This session will be held on Zoom. To register, [please fill in this form](#).

If you have any questions, contact Aidan Kearney by email at [aidan@supportingcommunities.org](mailto:aidan@supportingcommunities.org).

**Please note, this session is designed for community groups in Northern Ireland.**



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## Understanding 'Social Value'? (Online Session) Wednesday 21st June 2023 from 10.00 am to 11.00 am

Join us online to get a better understanding of what we mean when we talk about 'Social Value' and 'Impact Measurement'.

This session will help you to:

- Recognise the importance of measuring your social value
- Understand the jargon associated with impact measurement
- Learn about the tools available to use to measure your impact

### Register your place

This session will be held on Zoom. To register, [please fill in this form](#).

**Please note, this session is designed for community groups in Northern Ireland.**

# Funding

## The Duke of Edinburgh's Award/ Joint Award Initiative

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award/ Joint Award Initiative is supporting organisations who are interested in offering young people the opportunity to take part in the Award through a funding package which aims to give organisations the resources and skills to be able to deliver the Award.

We are the world's leading youth achievement Award, giving 14-24 year olds the opportunity to take on their own challenges, follow their passions, make a difference in their communities, and discover talents they never knew they had. Each young person builds their own Award programme – picking their own activities for the 4 sections of the Award:

- Volunteering,
- Physical,
- Skills and
- Expedition (with an additional Residential section at Gold) – to achieve a Bronze, Silver, or Gold Award.

Gaisce – The Irish President's Award and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award work in partnership through the Joint Award Initiative (JAI) to offer Award participants in Northern Ireland a choice of recognition for their achievements. On completion of their Award programme, they can choose a Duke of Edinburgh's Award, a Gaisce – The President's Award or a Duke of Edinburgh's International Award certificate.

Eligible voluntary and community organisations which do not currently offer the Award programme can access up to £10,250 of grant funding combined with support from a dedicated member of staff to help set up, launch, and deliver the Award programme.

Eligibility criteria includes but is not limited to:

- Organisations must be a not for profit/Voluntary, Community or Social Enterprise (VCS) Organisation. Types of eligible VCS organisations would include:
  - Charitable Companies, registered with Companies House and the Charity Commission.
  - Community organisations who are Companies Limited by Guarantee (CLG) with no share capital and are registered with Companies House.



- Community Interest Companies (CICs) which are not conducted for private gain: any surplus or assets are used exclusively for the benefit of the community.
- Organisations with other governance structures should contact us to discuss their eligibility.
- Organisations must not have delivered the Award within the last 6 months.
- Organisations must have been established for at least one year.
- Organisations must be incorporated and registered with Companies House.
- Organisations must have appropriate minimum standards in place to adhere to DofE licencing requirements.
- The organisation is willing/able to contribute towards the reduced DofE licence fee (Year 1 will be fully covered by the grant, and 50% in year 2).

For more information go to [Access Without Limits – community. Funding in Northern Ireland - The Duke of Edinburgh's Award \(dofe.org\)](#) or email Jim at [jim.peacock@dofe.org](mailto:jim.peacock@dofe.org).

If you are interested but don't currently meet eligibility criteria, please do get in touch to discuss how we could support young people in your organisation to take part in the Award.



## Community Relations / Cultural Diversity Scheme

If you are planning events for the forthcoming year, please feel free to [contact a member of our team](#) to discuss your proposals prior to submitting your application. We can give you advice on how to plan your work and to source additional funding, if required.

The scheme will continue to support a wide range of work and offer support and assistance whether you are a first-time applicant or have been supported in the past.

While we will be supporting projects through to 31 March 2024, **the closing date for all applications is 15 December 2023 at 4 PM.**

### CR/CD Funding Details

- All projects in receipt of CR/CD funding must be completed within this financial year.
- Grants are up to £10K maximum and for project costs only.
- Average grant is £2K – £5K.

### Aims of the CR/CD Scheme

The Community Relations Council, with the support of Government, has established a fund to spend each year on community relations projects. This funding is intended to help community/voluntary groups throughout Northern Ireland develop their capacity to engage in community relations work and to enhance the community relations potential of projects they undertake.



If you have any questions or would like to discuss a proposal prior to submitting an application please [contact a member of the Funding and Development Programme](#) or phone 028 9022 7500.

### T:BUC Requirement

Applicants are required to outline the outcome in Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) to which the proposed project will contribute. [Read more about the T:BUC strategy.](#)

### Eligibility Requirements

There are certain specific criteria you must adhere to when applying for funding:

[Read about the CD/CR scheme criteria.](#)

### Apply for the Scheme

Use the link below to apply: [Apply now for CR/CD Scheme](#)

## Rural Engagement Arts Programme

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland is welcoming applications to the second round of the Rural Engagement Arts Programme (REAP), a funding scheme, funded through The National Lottery, which aims to increase access and participation in the arts in rural areas of Northern Ireland. Grants from £500 - £10,000 are available and applications must be made online on the Arts Council's website.

**Applications are open from Friday 5 May 2023 and will close at 12noon on 3 July 2023.**

The purpose of the Rural Engagement Arts Programme (REAP) is to provide an integrated, cohesive approach to the needs of local rural communities while recognising some specific issues they face.

The primary theme of REAP is combatting isolation and loneliness and promoting social inclusion. The recent pandemic adversely affected many lives as families and friends were separated for sustained periods of time, resulting in a negative impact on mental health and well-being. This was felt deeply in rural communities, characterised by smaller and more dispersed populations, where isolation can be more acute than in towns and urban areas.

There are a number of ways to differentiate between loneliness and social isolation:

- Loneliness can affect any age group; it is the subjective, unpleasant and distressing phenomenon stemming from a difference between an individual's desired and achieved level of social relationships.
- Social isolation is a forced isolation from normal social networks caused by loss of mobility or deteriorating health.

The impact that loneliness and social isolation can have on the physical, mental and social health of isolated older people is well documented. [The Campaign to End Loneliness \(opens in a new tab\)](#) points to research which shows that lacking social connections is as damaging to health as smoking. Lonely individuals are more likely to visit their GP, use more medication and have a higher incidence of falls. They are also



## Community Relations / Cultural Diversity Scheme continued

more likely to enter residential or nursing care earlier. Participating in the arts, and coming together as communities, can make a vital contribution to improving health and wellbeing, building confidence and integrating communities. The Arts Council has worked with local authority community development and arts officers to ensure that information on REAP is available and that this public funding is as widely distributed as possible.

Groups can apply for one-off projects or for a programme of events. Projects do not have to be new - existing, successful programmes which meet the strategic themes of REAP, are also eligible for support.

**While engagement must be targeted at rural communities as defined here, Local Authorities and other groups based in urban areas may apply to fund programmes delivered in rural communities.** The definition of rural is outlined in Appendix 1 at the end of these guidance notes, page 12, and is taken from the [NISRA review of statistical classification and delineation of settlements in March 2015 \(opens in a new tab\)](#)

### Who can apply?

We welcome applications from the widest possible range of organisations. You will be required to provide proof that you have a legal constitution.

- Registered charities and other organisations which cannot distribute profits
- Groups of organisations working together to deliver specific projects
- Formally constituted parent-teacher associations
- Local Authorities
- Arts Organisations
- Organisations based in Republic of Ireland or based outside the UK and Northern Ireland, may be eligible to apply however, any proposed project must benefit people living in rural communities within Northern Ireland.
- Organisations currently in receipt of Arts Council grant funding (Annual Funding or National Lottery Project Funding) can apply providing they demonstrate that project costs are additional to any programme and administrative costs already funded under other grants.
- In exceptional circumstances, organisations based in Belfast who are partnering with other organisations to deliver REAP projects in rural areas may be eligible to apply.

Applications from single organisations are permissible but should demonstrate partnership working. Consortium applications demonstrating partnership working will be prioritised. Partnerships might include sector providers such as rural development organisations, older people's providers and agencies, arts organisations or Local Authorities. See the Arts Council's REAP [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) for examples of good partnership working.

### How much can you apply for?

You can apply for an award between £500 and £10,000 for a project.

### What you can apply for?

You can apply for the following eligible costs, which are indicative and not limited to:

- Costs of artists and tutors (including fees, accommodation, travel and subsistence) However please note that subsistence costs are capped at £20 per day. Also, if you are applying for artists and/or tutor costs, you must supply the relevant CVs, biography, or history of artistic practice information
- Transport costs, including vehicle hire (for example this could be to transport participants to courses/ activities)
- Existing programmes which meet the criteria of the scheme are eligible – but only for activity which will not begin prior to issue of funding decision letters
- Materials
- Travel expenses within Northern Ireland – please note the Arts Council has a maximum allowance of 25.7p per mile. If applicants are partnering with organisations in border communities and the project would necessitate travel across the border, this additional travel is eligible within reason
- Equipment hire
- Volunteer expenses
- Venue hire for workshops, training, rehearsals and performance
- Publicity and marketing costs
- Evaluation costs
- Participation, education and outreach work in film and media
- Equipment costs to a maximum value of 50% of your requested amount
- Equipment items will only be considered if identified as essential within your project and where it is vital for its successful delivery. Arts Council will not fund equipment only projects. Contributions towards laptops or PCs will be up to a maximum of £1,200; and, towards tablets, up to £500

For more information and to apply, please visit [Rural Engagement Arts Programme | Arts Council NI \(artscouncil-ni.org\)](#)



## Community groups urged to apply for support as Co-op opens applications for Local Community Fund

**Applications have now opened for community groups and charities to apply to receive funding and support from Co-op's Local Community Fund.**

**Co-op is searching for around 4,000 community organisations to take part in the next round of the local funding scheme.**

Applications have now opened for community groups and charities to apply to receive funding and support from Co-op's Local Community Fund.

Co-op's Local Community Fund has supported over 30,000 local community projects across the UK since its launch in 2016, and charities and organisations, who play a vital role in the wellbeing of communities, can apply up until 11 June to be considered for the next round of funding.

The Co-op's support comes at a much-needed time, with insight from community causes across the UK showing that more than eight-in-10 (84%) of local groups have seen a jump in demand for their services through the cost-of-living crisis.

Co-op is looking to continue to support projects that have an impact and make a difference locally and, align with Co-op's vision of co-operating for a fairer world, with a focus on:

- **Bringing people together to access food:** Such as community fridges, allotments, and cookery classes
- **Helping to improve people's mental wellbeing:** Including sporting activities and, clubs and societies that promote mental well-being and build social connections
- **Creation of opportunities for young people to be heard and make a difference:** For example, youth groups and forums that work to build confidence, life, and employability skills
- **Enabling communities to save and restore nature or tackle climate change:** With examples including community gardens, tree planting, energy schemes, re-wilding, and sustainable transport



Local Community Fund

Last month, (April) Co-op also announced that it was aiming to attract one million active new Members over the next five years, and launched new member price benefits within its food business to help its members save more.

Members make a difference simply by shopping at Co-op. By buying selected Co-op products and services, members earn rewards for themselves and for their community too – with £117m raised over the last seven years to support local causes and community projects across the UK.

**Rebecca Birkbeck, Director of Community and Member Participation at Co-op said:** “Co-op is committed to making a real and tangible difference in our local communities, while creating significant value for Members through our Membership scheme. Our Local Community Fund is more relevant than ever as the cost-of-living crisis is making it incredibly challenging for many local organisations. We know that our members want to support the communities they live in, and Co-op membership is a powerful way for people to do this, simply by shopping at Co-op - with our funding support enabling local organisations to provide valuable services and support to people at a time when communities need it most.”

More information about the benefits of Co-op Membership including its exclusive offers and deals is available by visiting [www.coop.co.uk/membership](http://www.coop.co.uk/membership)

Community groups interested in applying to Co-op's Local Community Fund, should visit [causes.coop.co.uk](http://causes.coop.co.uk)



## Small Grants Scheme 2023

Live Here Love Here Small Grants are funded by 10 Local Councils, Northern Ireland Housing Executive and Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful. The Small Grants Scheme provides support to volunteer projects that:

- Contribute to the development of civic pride within a community with a focus on environmental improvement.
- Encourage actions and projects that enable Pollution Solutions, Biodiversity Recovery and Climate Action.
- Enhance the environmental management of a local area.
- Improve the health and wellbeing of communities whilst helping to improve and/or maintain public spaces.
- Improve the quality of their local environment by reducing littering and dog fouling through community Action.
- Support environmentally focused actions that help support people impacted through reduced contact with society.

### Value of Grants

Grants are available between £500 - £3000. The average value of grants awarded is £1200. Non-constituted groups can apply for a maximum of £500.

### Eligibility

The Small Grants Scheme is open to:

- Community & Voluntary groups (including non-constituted groups)
- Sports clubs, churches and youth groups
- Not for profit organisations
- School and third level education organisations



Applications are particularly welcome from grassroots groups who have not previously received support through the Live Here Love Here Small Grants Scheme.

**Funding is only available in the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area to projects located in Northern Ireland Housing Executive areas.**

### What type of projects will the Small Grant Scheme fund?

- Development of shared spaces such as alleys.
- Community food growing initiatives.
- Skill sharing in horticulture and community growing.
- Projects that tackle litter issues and dog fouling.

**Litter picking equipment is not eligible for funding through this grant - please check out the [Adopt A Spot project](#).**

### Need some inspiration?

Check out the documents below, they are packed with hints and tips to help with your application.

[Biodiversity Recovery Project Advice](#)  
[Pollution Solutions Project Advice](#)  
[Tackling Textiles Project Advice](#)

Please visit [Small Grants Scheme delivered by Live Here Love Here](#)

## Slieve Rushen Wind Farm Fund

Is your community project located within 12 km of Slieve Rushen Wind Farm in South West Fermanagh? If Yes your group may be eligible to apply for a Slieve Rushen Wind Farm Fund Grant.

For further information see [GUIDELINES](#) and [APPLICATION FORM](#)

**Closing date for applications Friday 9th June 2023 at 12 noon.**

Any queries please email: [gemma@fermanaghtrust.org](mailto:gemma@fermanaghtrust.org)



The Fermanagh Trust will not discuss, or fund applications submitted by professional fundraising consultants on behalf of local groups. We are committed to building the capacity of grass roots organisation's and are here to help voluntary committee members directly.





## Tesco Community Grants

Tesco Community Grants helps to fund thousands of local projects across the country. Since 2016 the scheme has supported over 50,000 community groups with more than £100 million in grants. The scheme aims to make a positive difference – because where our communities thrive, our business and our colleagues thrive too.

### Who is eligible to apply?

Grants will be awarded to schools, voluntary or community organisations (including registered charities/companies), health bodies (e.g. Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), NHS Hospital Trust, Foundation Trust), Parish/Town Councils, local authorities and social housing providers.

This list is not exhaustive and there will be many other types of organisations that will be funded.

Applications are **not eligible** from:

- Individuals
- Community Interest Companies with shares (CIC's)
- Community Interest Companies with guarantee that are less than two years old
- Profit-making organisations

### What types of projects will Tesco Community Grants fund?

Applications are open to all local good causes, but we are currently prioritising helping projects that support

children's food security and health and local store nominated good causes.

This is not an exhaustive list and other project ideas also welcomed.

Examples include:

- School Breakfast clubs
- Holiday clubs
- Play areas
- Food banks
- Counselling and support services for children
- Equipment or non-statutory services for nurseries or schools e.g. forest schools, library books
- Equipment for Brownie, Guide or Scout Groups e.g. camping equipment, badges
- Services or equipment to support children and young people's health
- Equipment/kit for youth sports teams

For more information, please visit [Apply for a grant – Tesco Community Grants](#)



## Climate Action Fund - Energy and Climate

This funding aims to inspire and support communities across the UK to address the energy and climate crisis. We're looking for projects that show how communities can address climate change while tackling the energy challenges through community-led climate action.

### We want to fund projects that:

- encourage communities to use energy in an environmentally friendly way
- bring communities together so that they can explore ways to promote energy efficiency
- enable communities to understand and engage with opportunities for clean energy generation, which do not use fossil fuels.

All projects should consider how everyone in the community can get involved with climate action. They must also address any reasons why some people might be left out.

We're looking for projects that will bring a range of benefits to communities, including:

- improving health and well-being
- creating local 'green' jobs, such as jobs providing low-carbon heat for homes, community energy champions and energy advisors
- reducing carbon emissions
- supporting communities to be more resilient.

We want to fund projects that aim for long term change.

And projects that have the potential to have a positive impact beyond the communities they're directly working with.



### Area UK-wide

**Suitable for** Community and voluntary organisations

### Funding size:

Projects can apply for up to £1.5 million over 2 to 5 years, with most projects over £500,000. Minimum grant £500,000. We aim to fund around 8-12 projects.

**Total available** £10m including £1.5m for a Learning Network.

**Application deadline** You can apply when you're ready. We expect the programme to remain open until at least December 2023 but it will depend on when and how many others apply for our funding.

There will be virtual information sessions on the following days:

- 20 June 2023, 12 noon – 12:45 pm

For more information and to apply, please visit [Climate Action Fund - Energy and Climate | The National Lottery Community Fund \(tnlcommunityfund.org.uk\)](#)



## Funding Clinic Sessions

Tuesday 27th June 2023 from 10.00 am to 3.00 pm

This is a one-to-one funding support session for HCN members with Anita Doonan, Funding and Social Value Officer. You can meet by phone or video call, whatever you prefer.

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 min slots available for individuals or groups to discuss their funding needs one-to-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!

