How to Find Funding

For parks and green space community groups

Introduction

Many community groups affiliated with parks and other green spaces are keen to raise funds so they can achieve their aims. Funds are required for many reasons - they might be needed for site improvements (e.g. trees, paths, signage or wildflower meadows), or to run events or for insurance or tools for volunteers. Whatever the reason you need funding, this document aims to give you some ideas about where to look.

Before you get started

A group that plans to fundraise for a project needs to be organised. We would recommend that you only start seeking funding after you have set up a committee for your group including a Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, agreed a constitution and opened a bank account. Having these things in place makes it a lot more likely you will succeed in gaining funding and achieving your objectives.

Planning

Before starting to look for funding, you need to be clear what you are trying to achieve. Your group should have an action plan with objectives in priority order.

Always ensure your plans have been approved by the landowner before agreeing them – otherwise, you might find you spend considerable time and effort on a project you don't get permission for in the end.

Think about different ways you can achieve your objectives; you might not always need to raise money - are there alternative solutions such as using volunteers to do labour or getting in-kind donations (like tools or materials) from local businesses?

Do your research – are there any other organisations with similar aims? There's no point duplicating what another organisation is already doing (and you might end up competing for funding) but it might be worth working in partnership if another organisation does share your aims - you can often achieve more together.

Once you have identified your objectives, break them down into the component parts and what they will cost (remember to consider if they can be achieved by other means e.g. in-kind?). It's important to know how much you need to raise and if the funding you require is capital or revenue, one-off or ongoing.

You are now ready to identify some potential funding sources.

Types of funding

There are two main ways to obtain funding:

1. 'Do it yourself' fundraising which involves encouraging people to donate to your cause in various ways ranging from selling raffle tickets to seeking sponsorship.
2. Applying for grants – a more formal approach whereby you apply to funders for grants to pay for all or part of your project.

More details about these methods are provided below.

1. Do it yourself fundraising

This method of fundraising, which involves getting people to donate to your project, can work well.

Options:

a) Get people to donate directly to your cause through crowd funding. Internet websites like '*Just Giving*' (www.justgiving.com) or '*Local Giving*' (www.localgiving.org) are perfect for this or you can use collection buckets to take cash donations.

b) Membership subscriptions are also a way you could raise funds – ask people to pay a small amount to join your organisation or for an annual fee.

c) Run fundraising events. There could include anything from a family fun days to jumble sale, sponsored walks to raffles.

d) Make contact with local businesses who may be interested in supporting your project by donating money or in kind support. Some businesses might be interested in sponsoring your project (make sure you speak to the landowner before agreeing any sponsorship package).

This kind of fundraising will require lots of publicity to ensure people are aware of your cause. Think about using social media, posters, flyers, press releases, etc. to promote your project.

2. Grants

Grant funding is available from various organisations including national and local government, charitable trusts and foundations, the lottery and landfill tax.

In particular, it is worth approaching local councillors as they can often provide useful advice on funding that is available in the area.

See the table at the end of this document for a list of open grant schemes that might be suitable for your project.

It is also worth doing an internet search of grants available from big businesses operating in your area e.g. supermarkets and banks.

Finding funding on the web

If none of the funding streams we've listed are suitable for your project, don't worry, there are lots of other grants available out there that you can identify using 'funder finder' websites as listed below:

Funding finder website	Description	Web address
Entrust	Landfill grants	http://www.entrust.org.uk/environmental-bodies/eb-search
Funding Central	A great, free website that identifies a wide range of grants tailored to your project	http://www.fundingcentral.org.uk/default.aspx
Government Funding	Government funding!	http://www.governmentfunding.org.uk/default.aspx
Grantfinder	Identifies a wide range of grants to suit your project – but there's a fee to use it.	www.grantfinder.co.uk
Leeds Community Foundation	Details all the grants available for projects in the city from Leeds Community Foundation.	http://www.leedscf.org.uk/open-grants-programmes/
Lottery Funding	Helps you find lottery funding that might be suitable for your project.	http://www.lotterygoodcauses.org.uk/funding-finder
Voluntary Action Leeds	Up to date list of grants that are currently available in the area.	https://doinggoodleeds.org.uk/current-funding-opportunities/
Funding Leeds	Local advice on all things funding!	https://www.idoxopen4community.co.uk/lcc

Tips for applying for funding

- Before you do anything else, check that your organisation and your project are eligible for the grant.

- Read the guidelines carefully before filling in the form – make sure your application explains how your project will achieve the aims of the funders.
- It's often worth giving the funders a call before applying to discuss your project and how suitable it is for the grant – they may give you some tips on applying too.

Further information and support

Voluntary Action Leeds is the main organisation in the city devoted to supporting community and voluntary groups. They provide information and training on everything from writing a constitution to filling in grant applications. It's well worth signing up to receive their e-newsletter which often features details of funding that's available. Find out more at: https://doinggoodleeds.org.uk/val

Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum is an organisation made up of groups and organisations interested in enhancing the green spaces of the city. It's worth joining the forum to find out about relevant funding and training opportunities through their e-newsletter and also to meet other, similar groups and get tips from them from their experience of fundraising. Find out more at: www.leedsparksforum.org

TCV – The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) at Hollybush (http://www.tcv.org.uk/hollybush)are often able to provide support for community groups affiliated with green space, including with fundraising. Contact them for more information on 0113 274 2335 or J.Kandola@tcv.org.uk

Grants Currently Available
Updated June 2017

Type of funding	Funder/Grant	How much?	What for	Website
Big Lottery Fund	Reaching Communities	£10k - £100k	Projects that help people and communities most in need.	https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/global-content/programmes/england/reaching-communities-england
Big Lottery Fund	Our Heritage	£10k - £100k	To protect and share the heritage you care about. Covers everything from personal memories and cultural traditions to archaeological sites and rare wildlife.	https://www.hlf.org.uk/looking-funding/our-grant-programmes/our-heritage
Big Lottery Fund	Awards for All	Up to £10k	Grassroots and community activity that aims to improve life for local people and neighbourhoods. You can apply at any time.	https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/global-content/programmes/england/awards-for-all-england
Charitable Trusts	Leeds Community Foundation	Various	Community groups, charities and social enterprises aiming to make a difference in Leeds.	http://www.leedscf.org.uk/open-grants-programmes/
Charitable Trusts	Wades Charity	Not specified	Wades charity covers open spaces within the pre-1974 Leeds city boundary, and grants must be related to their use and/or offer recreational opportunities.	http://www.wadescharity.org/
Charitable Trusts	Leeds Community Foundation - Jimbo's fund	Up to £20k	Groups working in certain areas of Leeds and Leeds citywide projects in the field of health or children/young people.	http://www.leedscf.org.uk/jimbos-fund/
Charitable Trusts	Coalfields Regeneration Trust	Not specified	To support ex-coal mining communities - only applicable to Garforth & Swillington, Kippax & Methley and Rothwell	http://www.coalfields-regen.org.uk/what-we-do/support-people-into-work/coalfields-community-investment-programme-england/

Type of funding	Funder/Grant	How much?	What for	Website
Charitable Trusts	The Garfield Weston Charitable Trust	Not specified	For registered charities only - supports organisations & activities that share a commitment to making a positive impact on the lives of the communities in which they work, and that are driven by a desire to achieve excellence. Includes environment category.	http://www.garfieldweston.org/
Charitable Trusts	The Ernest Cook Charitable Trust	Not specified	Supports outdoor learning projects only.	http://ernestcooktrust.org.uk/
Charitable Trusts	Persimmon Trust Community Champions Fund	Up to £1k	Persimmon Community Champions is here to help local community groups, good causes and charities.	http://www.persimmonhomes.com/charity
Charitable Trusts	Groundwork - Tesco Local Community Scheme	Up to £4k	Local community projects	https://www.groundwork.org.uk/Sites/tescocommunityscheme
Charitable Trusts	Woodland Trust	NA	Trees available for planting.	http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/trees-on-land/grants-and-funding/from-us/
Charitable Trusts	Sir George Martin Trust	£500 - £5000	Tends to support small – medium sized local charities which strive to improve the lives of the people they work with. Focus on capital projects	http://sirgeorgemartintrust.org.uk/
Landfill	Biffa Awards	£10,000 to £75,000	Projects that provide or improve biodiversity, community spaces, cultural facilities, and places for outdoor recreation.	http://www.biffa-award.org/main-grants-scheme
Charitable Trusts	Chestnut fund	Up to £350	Grants available to encourage and enable community groups to carry out conservation activities	https://www.tcv.org.uk/community/join-community-network
Landfill	Wren	£2,000 and £50,000	Environmental improvements within a certain radius of the landfill site	www.wren.org.uk

Type of funding	Funder/Grant	How much?	What for	Website
Landfill	Veolia	Up to £75k	Environmental improvements within a certain radius of the landfill site	http://www.veoliatrust.org/funding/
Landfill	Mondegreen Caird Peckfield	Up to £50k	Environmental improvements within a certain radius of the landfill site	http://www.mondegreen.org.uk/landfill-sites/caird-peckfield
Local government	Small pots from Leeds City Council	Various	Various funds for communities. Note that the document is slightly out of date and the *Recreational (non-sporting) Organisations Grant* is no longer available.	http://www.leeds.gov.uk/docs/SmallGrantsBooklet2013.pdf
Local Government	Community committees	Not specified	Wellbeing and Youth Activity funds are available	http://www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/Pages/Locality-Working-in-Leeds.aspx
Local Government	Housing area panels	No minimum/ maximum amount	Community/environmental projects that will benefit housing tenants	http://www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/Pages/HSG-Join-Area-Panels.aspx
National government	Sport England	Varies	Grants aim to get people more active	http://www.sportengland.org/funding/
Private company	Skipton Building Society (Grassroots Giving)	£500	To support small community groups	https://www.skiptongrg.co.uk/