



Guide to Capital Funding

September 2026

We know that charities and community groups are always thinking about how they adapt and sustain their services to provide help and support to those in need across County Durham.

It is our aim to support organisations with funding advice by promoting all funding opportunities as they arise through our website, news bulletins, social media channels and through the continued operation of our dedicated Information, Advice and Guidance service offer.

In this guide we will provide a short introduction to capital funders, helping you to choose which funds best meet your needs and the needs of those you are supporting.

This guide is not an exhaustive list, there are other funds available and new funds are regularly released.

We will endeavour to keep the information in this guide as accurate as possible and respond to updates from funders as quickly as possible.

What can I do now?

Scenario planning and risk management are useful activities that help trustee boards to plan for an unpredictable future by considering what needs to be put in place to build on existing services or help consider how to adapt the way you work to best meet the changing needs of your beneficiaries.

Financial planning is also important, and funders might ask to see your organisational budgets and so thorough preparation of actual and projected income and expenditure as you shape your funding strategy is key.

Our training and information sessions focusing on recovery and resilience are available online and more information can be found [here](#)

We have identified a list of funders below who regularly provide capital grants and other funding to voluntary and community organisations in our region. Please note these funds are constantly under review and we recommend checking the individual funders' websites regularly for the latest information and updates.

Ballinger Charitable Trust

Ballinger Charitable Trust give grants to charitable causes working with younger and/or older people in the North East.

BBC Children in Need

BBC Children in Need is the leading independent funders for children and young people in the UK. Through their grant making and wider work, they aim to create lasting, positive change across the UK for the children and young people who need them most.

Believe Housing

Believe Housing have community funding which supports projects that make a real difference to people's lives and wellbeing. Funding is open to applications from projects within the areas Believe Housing operates in County Durham.

Bernard Sunley Foundation

Bernard Sunley Foundation is a family grant-making foundation which supports charities in England and Wales. They have four funding categories: Community, Education, Health and Social Welfare. Their focus is on capital projects.

BIFFA Award

Biffa Award gives grants to community projects near landfill sites to build communities and transform lives. You need to be in an eligible geographical area checked on their website.

Catherine Cookson Charitable Trust

The Catherine Cookson Charitable Trust awards grants in the areas of education and training, environment and conservation, arts and culture and general charitable purposes. The trustees prefer projects which involve or are directed towards capital expenditure.

Coalfields Regeneration Trust

Coalfields Regeneration Trust has a variety of programmes and funding opportunities in England focused on improving their five key priorities: Community, Health, Skills, Jobs and Climate. Their programmes and funding are delivered in their eligible coalfield areas which include some areas of County Durham.

Community Foundation North East

Community Foundation North East award grants to support a wide range of causes in Tyne & Wear and Northumberland, and across North East England. The grants come from different funds set up by their donors. You can apply as an organisation or as an individual.

Garfield Weston Foundation

The Garfield Weston Foundation is a family founded grant-maker that gives money to support a wide range of charities across the UK that make a positive difference working in different sectors. These include welfare, youth, community, environment, education, health, arts, heritage and faith.

Karbon Homes

Karbon Homes have a Community Investment Fund and welcome applications from not-for-profit organisations and schools. The grants aim to support projects that make a real difference to people's lives and wellbeing within the communities in which they work.

Key Fund

Key Fund provide social investment to organisations, enabling growth and sustainability for communities most in need. They provide flexible loans and grants to help enterprises start up, become sustainable and grow.

Livin

Livin are a housing provider that has community funding for projects that will help tenants and the communities they live in. They are particularly interested in projects that will help with financial inclusion and making your community safer, greener, healthier and more sustainable.

Morrisons Foundation

Morrisons Foundation Connecting Communities grants offer up to £20,000 to charities who provide place-based services to the entire community or specific groups.

National Churches Trust

The National Churches Trust provide essential funding to repair, restore and improve church buildings, as well as offering bespoke training and advice.

National Lottery Heritage Fund

The National Lottery Heritage Fund provide different levels of funding to heritage of all shapes and sizes. Their grants range from £10,000 up to £10 million.

Northern Powergrid Foundation

The Northern Powergrid Foundation has launched its new strategy where they will launch a series of new funding programmes across their three strategic priorities: enhancing resilience, creating opportunities and overcoming barriers.

Northstar Ventures

Northstar Ventures provide early-stage venture capital and impact investments to entrepreneurs with big ideas. They have a range of funds and programmes available.

Point North

Point North (formerly County Durham Community Foundation) is a local grant-making foundation that awards grants from the many funds established by their donors to try to make a lasting difference in local communities. They do this by matching your application wherever they can to the most appropriate fund available at the time. They provide grants for groups, individuals and families in need.

Rothley Trust

The Rothley Trust are a registered charitable trust which gives small grants to assist with charitable work in the North East. Grants are generally made for specific projects such as the purchase of equipment or the provision, refurbishment or repair of premises.

Sir James Knott Trust

Sir James Knott Trust support charitable activity in Tyne & Wear, Northumberland, County Durham and Hartlepool by making grants to organisations. They operate on a rolling programme.

Screwfix Foundation

Screwfix Foundation currently offers local registered charities and not-for-profit organisations funding up to the region of £5,000 to support projects that improve, repair and maintain homes and community facilities used by those in need throughout the UK.

Sport England

Sport England invest National Lottery and public money to help people play sport and take part in physical activity. They have a range of funding programmes available.

Suez Communities Fund

The Suez Communities Fund supports community and environmental projects through the Landfill Communities Fund, distributing funds contributed by SUEZ Recycling and Recovery UK. You need to be in an eligible geographical area checked on their website.

The Clothworkers Foundation

The Clothworkers' Foundation improves the lives of people and communities – particularly those facing disadvantage and marginalization – through grant-making. The Foundation awards capital grants to charities registered in the UK or not-for-profit organisations working across their ten areas of priority defined in its Open Grants programme.

The National Lottery Community Fund Awards for All

This programme offers funding from £300 to £20,000 and can support your project for up to two years. Eligible projects will need to do at least one of these things: bring people together to build strong relationships in and across communities, improve the places and spaces that matter to communities help more people to reach their potential, by supporting them at the earliest possible stage support people, communities and organisations facing more demands and challenges because of the cost-of-living crisis.

The National Lottery Community Fund Reaching Communities

The Reaching Communities programme offers a larger amount of funding (over £20,000). The fund supports projects and organisations which aim to build strong relationships in and across communities, improve the places and spaces that matter to communities and help more people to reach their potential, by supporting them at the earliest possible stage.

Veolia Environmental Trust

Veolia Environmental Trust support community and environmental projects across England through the Landfill Communities Fund using money provided to them by Veolia. You need to be in an eligible geographical area which can be checked on the website.

Training and Events

Durham Community Action offer a range of fully funded online training workshops including a 'Completing a Funding Application – Bring your Project to Life' session which covers understanding the basics of applying for grant funding and how to link your project to a funder's criterion. Visit our [Training](#) webpage to find out more.

Funding Searches

Durham County Council manage a funding portal called [Durham4Community](#) for community groups which you can sign up to for free. It allows you to search for funding schemes available to your group, apply for funding and get advice on producing your funding application.

Durham Community Action Funding Top Tips

Before starting your application, please read through our 'top tips' to make sure that you have all of the information you need and that you have a plan before you contact them.

1. **Always check the funder's exclusions list**
2. **Make sure you meet the funder's priorities/criteria**
3. **Be clear and concise**
4. **Only provide information you have been asked for** Most funders will ask for your governing document and bank account details
5. **Be clear about why your project is needed and who will benefit from it**
6. **Know your outcomes and what difference your project will make**
7. **Provide an accurate budget**
8. **Complete application forms fully and accurately**
9. **Get someone else to read your application before you send it**
10. **Meet funders deadlines and timescales**

How Durham Community Action can help

Durham Community Action will support in any way we can in order to help organisations access the funding and advice they need. We are happy to talk through funding opportunities and help shape applications alongside our usual funding advice which includes our 'Critical Friend' service where we will read through your application before you submit it to make sure it is clear and concise.

Further Support Available

Our friendly staff at Durham Community are here to provide information, advice and guidance so don't hesitate to get in touch!

Email: info@durhamcommunityaction.org.uk

Website: www.durhamcommunityaction.org.uk

