

21st February 2024

E-Zine



**Supporting
Communities**
Empowering Society

Welcome to Supporting Communities 226th 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

Investment to support conversations on the future sustainability of voluntary youth work in Northern Ireland

Leeann Kelly of NICVA reports



Youth work in Northern Ireland has always made a positive impact on the lives of children and young people, supporting thousands of young people through a range of organisations. Moving into the next decade the voluntary youth work sector is working to collaborate and secure the sustainability of the sector.

Over the past decade, the voluntary youth work sector in Northern Ireland has faced a myriad of challenges. Issues cited include declining structures for communication and coordination, over-reliance on limited funding streams, diminished workforce capacity, and frayed relationships between different stakeholders.

Since April 2021, a small group from across uniformed, regional and local community youth and play work organisations have been meeting to explore these issues and consider ways to repair, reconnect and transform the sector. We expressed hopes to rebuild trust, celebrate the diversity of provision, and develop a shared vision for voluntary youth work. In 2023 we started to refer to this group as a coordinating committee. Throughout 2022/2023 the group focussed their energies on a proposal to the Dormant Account Fund (TNL Community Fund) to advance wider engagement across the sector.

This coordinating committee has secured £50,096 from the National Lottery Community Fund. The purpose of this investment is to widen these conversations across the full voluntary youth work sector and discuss the possibilities of a shared vision. Rather than establishing any new formal entity, the coordinating committee have agreed to work with independent facilitators to convene inclusive events focused on reconciliation, asset-based dialogue, and appreciative inquiry. In December 2023, following a procurement process, NICVA was appointed as an independent convenor for these conversations. We also appointed a dedicated communications intern to highlight the vital and transformative youth work happening across the voluntary sector.

The coordinating committee is focused on providing leadership through facilitating inclusive conversations while recognising they alone do not represent the whole sector. As 'guardians' of the awarded funding from the National Lottery they aim to invest in rebuilding relationships and dialogue across voluntary youth work in an accountable manner. We strive to involve the voluntary youth work sector representation in collectively defining the architecture for a progressive, outward and forward-looking voluntary youth work sector. We aim rather to facilitate conversations where the sector can shape its future.

A committee representative said: "This feels like a pivotal moment for our sector as we come together collectively to shape what we want our shared future to look like. We want all parts of voluntary youth work to feel heard, valued and able to contribute to important conversations about the road ahead. This is a very exciting time for the sector and voluntary organisations are looking forward to collaborating and promoting the voice of young people across NI".

The series of inclusive sector-wide conversations will take place during March 2024, facilitated by NICVA, the independent convenors. All those involved in voluntary youth provision are encouraged to engage and make their voices heard as part of this process. The Department of Education and Education Authority will be invited to join us in an observatory capacity as we progress on a pathway to transformative change.

The dates and locations for these events are:

- 6 March 2024 from 6pm-8pm at NICVA
- 7 March 2024 from 6pm-8pm at Derry Shared Centre
- 13 March 2024 from 7.15pm-9.15pm at The Jethro Centre, Lurgan.
- 19 March 2024 from 11am-1pm at Omagh Enterprise Centre

- 20 March 2024 from 7pm-9pm at The Braid, Ballymena
- 26 March 2024 from 11am-1pm at The Canal Court, Newry

For more information and to book a place at any of the workshops, go to; [Join the conversation on the future sustainability of voluntary youth work in Northern Ireland | NICVA](#)

Households in Northern Ireland facing homelessness

Households in Northern Ireland are facing homelessness as the cost of living crisis continues, according to local housing charity, Housing Rights.

The charity says soaring food and fuel costs, multiple increases in mortgage interest rates, and increases in rents have left many unable to pay their household bills.

Housing Rights Advice Services Manager, Aisling Cunningham told us:

“People have been hit with continuous rises in monthly mortgage payments and increased rents on top of increases in food and fuel prices, and are either nearing crisis point or are already there. Wages are not always keeping up with inflation and we are hearing from people daily who are struggling or simply can’t afford to pay for their homes.

“Not only are we hearing from those who were already in a vulnerable position, but people whose homes were once affordable to them are now in need of our help and are desperately worried about keeping a roof over their heads.

“We are seeing a spike in requests for help from both homeowners and renters due in court for repossession hearings and sadly we expect this trend to continue. This is also reflected in recent High Court statistics (1). We continue to help people with repossession court hearings and this service is currently experiencing its highest number of debt referrals in recent years.

The charity is urging people to contact Housing Rights for advice and support and have highlighted a number of ways they can help people who are struggling with household debt including helping:

- negotiate with your mortgage lender or landlord;
- apply for Discretionary Housing Payments;
- set up a repayment plan; and
- avoid repossession by speaking on your behalf in Court.

Mrs Cunningham continued:

“We’re urging anyone who is struggling to get help. Our services are completely free and confidential. The earlier you act the more we may be able to do for you, but it is never too late to contact us and try to save your home. Our expert advisers are ready and waiting to help you.”

Anyone who is worried about keeping their home or meeting housing costs can contact Housing Rights on 02890 245640, or can get information and chat online with one of our expert advisers at www.housingrights.org.uk

For enquiries contact pressofficer@housingrights.org.uk or call 02890 245640.

(1) <https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/justice/mortgages-bulletin-july-to-september-2023.pdf>



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

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.



**Northern Ireland
Fire & Rescue Service**

**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.



inspire
wellbeing, ability, recovery

Housing Executive

Healthy Restart

Free Training Sessions

Belfast		Time
Self-care- May 21st 2024	HQ NIHE, The Housing Centre, 2 Adelaide St, Belfast BT2 8PB (3rd Floor Training Room)	2.30-4.30
Coping with emotions- June 4th 2024	Dundonald NIHE Office, 30 Church Road, Dundonald, Belfast BT16 2NA (Groud floor meeting room)	2.30-4.30
Substance use/addiction- June 18th 2024	Lisburn Antrim street NIHE Office, 29 Antrim St, Lisburn BT28 1AU (1st Floor Meeting Room)	2.30-4.30
Online		
Sleep- March 19th 2024	Online MS Teams	10:30-12:30
Food & Mood- April 30th 2024	Online MS Teams	2.30-4.30
Healthy Relationships- May 7th 2024	Online MS Teams	10:30-12:30
Email olivia1.kelso@nihe.gov.uk to book your place.		
North		Time
Mental Health Awareness- February 20th 2024	Twickenham House, 59-71 Mount St, Ballymena BT43 6BP (Ground Floor Conference Room)	2.30-4.30
Healthy Relationships- March 5th 2024	Richmond Chambers, The Diamond, Londonderry BT48 6QP (2nd Floor)	2.30-4.30
Email		
South		Time
Healthy Relationships- April 16th 2024	NIHE South East Regional Office, 21 Frederick St, Newtownards BT23 4JF (Conf. room 2)	2.30-4.30
Managing Stress and Anxieties- April 23rd 2024	Rural Community Network, 38A Oldtown St, Cookstown BT80 8EF	2.30-4.30

Now Open: Voluntary and Community Sector Nominations to the Area Integrated Partnership Boards (AIPBs)

[Kathy Maguire](#) of NICVA reports;

On behalf of the Department of Health, NICVA is currently seeking nominations for Voluntary and Community Sector representatives to the 5 Area Integrated Partnership Boards being established for the roll out of the Integrated Care System across NI.

Contents

- [Overview of the Selection and Appointment Process](#)
- [What are the AIPB's and their Key Functions?](#)
- [What will be the Role and Responsibilities of VCS Members?](#)
- [Can my Organisation Apply & What Skills, Knowledge and Expertise are required?](#)
- [How can organisations make a nomination\(s\)](#)
- [Online Information Sessions](#)

Overview of the Selection and Appointment Process

NICVA has recently been appointed by the Department of Health to coordinate the Nomination Process for Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Representatives to each of the 5 Area Integrated Partnership Boards (AIPB's) to be established in April 2024 as part of the implementation of the [Integrated Care System NI](#) (ICS) across Northern Ireland.

What VCS Positions are Available

Applicants wishing to be considered for membership of an AIPB must be a representative from a voluntary and community sector organisation with an interest in health and social well-being within the area of the respective Area Integrated Partnership Board.

Four Voluntary and Community Sector positions will be available on each of the local Area Integrated Partnership Boards (AIPB's) established across the region, which will mirror the geographical boundaries of existing Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts.

These are as follows:

- Belfast Area
- Southern Area
- South-Eastern Area
- Northern Area
- Western Area

In addition to the initial twenty VCS places, a reserve list of 2 candidates for each AIPB, to replace any vacancies that may arise over the term, will also be recommended.

How will VCS Nominations and Appointments be made

A Selection Panel made up of three Voluntary and Community Sector Representatives of NICVA's Executive Board will consider and agree up to four VCS appointment recommendations (& 2 reserves) to each of the five local Area Integrated Partnership Boards, via a nomination and selection process coordinated by NICVA support staff. These Nominations will then be submitted to the Department of Health for consideration and final decision making on all appointments.

The Panels nominations will be based on their assessment of all applications against



selection criteria provided by the Department of Health, reflective of the role description for VCS representatives and the key competencies and experience required.

There are a number of other key factors the Department of Health have tasked the Selection Panel to consider in agreeing any Nominations. These are as follows:

- Ensuring a balance in terms of the scale, size and diversity of organisations nominated (eg ensuring a community/local/regional mix) to avoid over representation by a smaller number of larger organisations across all of the AIPBs.
- Appointee recommendations must be reflective of the local AIPB population which they will represent. Factors such as population demographics, and urban/rural mix should be considered.
- Nominees will need to demonstrate a sound understanding and awareness of the range of contributions, knowledge, and expertise the VCS brings to integrated care within their respective AIPB area and an ability to enhance and inform other AIPB members knowledge and understanding regarding.
- Nominees must agree to represent the VCS as whole rather than any specific organisation or interest group.

Final Decision making on all VCS appointments to the AIPB's will be made by the Department of Health.

Timeframe for Nominations and Appointments

NICVA is now inviting Voluntary and Community Sector organisations to submit nominations to any of these AIPB's via an open Nomination process, commencing on Monday 5th February 2024 and closing at 12 pm on Tuesday 5th March 2024.

The aim is to complete the Nomination process as promptly as possible after the date of closing and to advise applicants of the outcome as soon as is practical. It is anticipated that confirmation of VCS appointments will be made by the end of March 2024.

Successful applicants will be notified of their appointment by the Department of Health directly. An update on the anticipated timescale for this will be provided as soon as is available.

A full list of all Voluntary and Community Sector appointments will be available to view on the NICVA website once they have been confirmed by the Department.

[Further Supporting Information on the VCS Nomination and Appointment process can be read here](#)

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 \(justice-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

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

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.

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](#)'.



Policy and Practice Focus

CIH Scotland publishes new paper on what the housing sector wants to see in 2024

CIH Scotland has published a new paper to ensure that the voices of housing practitioners are reflected in upcoming legislation.

The Scottish Government is expected to introduce a new Housing Bill ahead of the Parliament's summer recess which is anticipated to cover some of the commitments set out in [Housing to 2040](#) and the draft rented sector strategy, [A New Deal for Tenants](#).

While the detail of the Bill is still being developed, it is expected to include:

- A new duty for all social landlords to introduce a domestic abuse policy
- A new homelessness prevention duty
- A national system of rent control for the private rented sector (PRS)
- Greater rights for tenants to personalise their homes and keep pets

However, housing policy and practice is determined by more than legislation and as such, CIH Scotland has today published a new [policy paper](#), based on engagement with members, which notes other priority areas where it wants to see the Government make a policy response in 2024, including a greater focus on housing professionalism, the development of a national strategy on workforce planning and more financial support for the Affordable Housing Supply Programme.

Commenting on the paper, CIH Scotland's national director Callum Chomczuk said: "While there is a lot to welcome in the proposed Housing Bill, the policy on rent controls causes us concern. With the PRS demonstrably shrinking and social housing development following the same direction, we have concerns around the unintended consequences of capping rents in the PRS leading to a further collapse in supply of PRS homes. It is vital that any rent control policy is proportionate and based on robust data to demonstrate the need for intervention.

"However, the proposed legislation only informs part of the Scottish housing policy landscape. We ended 2023 with a decision from the Scottish Government to cut around £200m from the Affordable Housing Supply Programme and it is a decision that will put a pause on much development activity and further increase the financial pressure on social landlords.

"CIH Scotland and its members are ambitious for Scotland's housing system, and we believe there is the opportunity for radical change which meets the ambition of Housing to 2040. This includes our desire to see housing recognised and supported as a dedicated profession, as set out in this paper.

"However, at this time, we also need a real focus on housing supply and homelessness. Among the range of policies our members want to see progressed, this remains the top priority for Scotland's housing sector."



Publications

Social Value of Cultural Heritage and Arts Projects – Identifying Good Practice

The ranking of economic projects can be relatively easily determined using a range of quantitative economic measures, but estimating the anticipated impact of arts, heritage, sports and community projects - cultural projects - is more challenging. DfC's Infrastructure Planning & Delivery Support Unit (IPDSU) with the department's Professional Services Unit commissioned research from Ulster University Economic Policy Centre on valuing the social impact of cultural projects.

Details

The research helps inform the development of a more comprehensive assessment framework for the broader cultural sector. In particular, the research considers approaches to valuing cultural assets; relevant



assessment criteria; and the current assessment process used by DfC.

New processes which could evolve would complement the business case approval process which covers quantitative financial factors (e.g. value for money and financial sustainability) and economic factors (e.g. tourism spend and job creation) alongside, to some extent, non-monetary considerations.

[Social value of Culture, Heritage, Sports and Community Projects \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](https://communities-ni.gov.uk)



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](#)



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 February 2024 | Northern Ireland Policing Board \(nipolicingboard.org.uk\)](#)

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

- 2024-47 - Stock Condition Survey Project Manager
- 2024-50 - Building Safety Manager
- 2024-36 - Fleet Logistics Driver
- 2024-215 - 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

Women in Northern Ireland Conference Invitation

Women in Northern Ireland

CONFERENCE



Have things improved for women in Northern Ireland over the past

25 years or do they continue to face the same challenges and barriers? What needs to be done to improve sex equality in Northern Ireland?

Join us for our conference, our programme will include discussions on women and equality law, work and employment, politics and public life and the launch of new research on the impact of Brexit on women

When: Tuesday 5th March 2024

Where: Riddle Hall QUB, Belfast

Time: Registration 9.30 am

This conference is the first in a series of events to mark the 25th anniversary of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

If you wish to attend please register by clicking the link [Women-in-NI-Conference.eventbrite.co.uk](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/Women-in-NI-Conference)

National Lottery Heritage Grants: Information session (Northern Ireland)

Do you have an idea for a heritage project that could benefit your community and want to find out more about our grants programme?

National Lottery Heritage Grants is our open programme for all types of heritage projects in the UK. Under our new strategy, Heritage 2033, grants fall under two categories: **£10,000 to £250,000**, and **£250,000 to £10 million**. Whether you apply for £10,000 or £10 million, we want the projects we support to value, care for and sustain our heritage for everyone, now and in the future.

If you want to learn about our funding, then our **free online information sessions** are for you. Hosted by the Engagement team in Northern Ireland, each session will cover:

- What heritage is and our definition
- The types of organisations we can fund
- What makes a fundable heritage project
- The four investment principles which will guide our

funding decisions

- Our new application process under Heritage 2033 and deadlines for each grant programme.

There will also be time for a Q&A at the end of each session.

Sessions which will take place on the following dates:

- **11 March 2024, 7.00 – 8.30pm:** <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/booking/t-rpgrova>
- **8 April 2024, 6.00 – 7.30pm:** <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/booking/t-dvxprzp>

If you would like to attend, it is essential that you **sign up in advance** via **Ticketsource** to secure your place. **Each session is limited to 25 people. To sign up, please use the above links for your chosen date.**



**Heritage
Fund**

Funding Clinic Sessions

Date: Thursday 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?

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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 in February and March 2024

Keeping Children Safe: Designated Officer Refresher Training

DATE: Tuesday 12th March 2024 at 10.00 am - 1.00 pm
ONLINE Standard Course from £30 +VAT



This is a half day's refresher training for Designated Officers who have already attended a full day's training. It covers:

- The role and responsibilities of the Designated Officer
- Health and Social Care Trusts structures and processes
- Issues and experiences around referrals and sharing information
- Recent developments in safeguarding children and young people.

Participants should ensure their basic awareness training is also refreshed every three years (or earlier if required).

Places are allocated on a first come, first served basis and are limited to a maximum of 5 per organisation.

Joining information will be sent out the day before the session.

[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 mortgage debts



Voluntary and Community from £64 / £77; Public and Statutory from £115 / £138

Book now

Location; Online, Via Zoom

Date; 29th February 2024

Time; 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm

This training session will focus specifically on homeowners and how to successfully deal with mortgage arrears. We will discuss how to negotiate with lenders and the forbearance options that could be open to debtors when dealing with their mortgage provider. This training course provides a great grounding on debt processes in Northern Ireland and this session will assist anyone who is supporting someone dealing with arrears.

What we will cover

- discuss what happens once the mortgage provider moves to court proceedings
- explain the different outcomes of court hearings,
- explain the application process for stays of enforcement and ultimately enforcement

Who should attend?

- generalist advice workers
- housing association staff
- constituency office staff
- community/residents 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](#)

Funded by UK Government

Go Succeed Grow

Social Enterprise Business Support

Are you a social enterprise with ambitions to grow?

Free 1-1 mentoring support, workshops and grant to support growth plans
Visit www.go-succeed.com

POWERED BY
LEVELLING UP



HCN Members Forum Training

Book your session:

Carrickfergus

Thursday 7 March 2024
10.15 am-1.15 pm
Carrickfergus Community Forum

Larne

Tuesday 12 March 2024
10.15 am-1.15 pm
NIHE Offices Conference Room, 1st floor

Ballymena

Tuesday 19 March 2024
10:15 am – 1:15 pm
NIHE Twickenham House
Rooms 3&4, 2nd floor



Bring your own device:
laptop/tablets/
mobile phone



Each session from
10:15am- 1.15pm



7 March 2024
12 March 2024
19 March 2024

Sign up now:

Marie-Louise McClarey
07840849449
marie-louise
@supportingcommunities.org

Carla Mulholland
carla@supportingcommunities.org



Mid and East Antrim Area HCN members, join us for training on the new online forums!
[Carla Mulholland](#), our digital inclusion officer, will help you register on the system and show you everything you need to know to participate in the HCN online.

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](#)



**NFU Mutual
Charitable Trust**

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](#)



All Ages April Small Grants 2024

This funding aims to **create connections across generations** and links between groups, settings and organisations that wouldn't normally work together. LGNI's vision is that these connections and relationships will continue into the future.

Activities can be a one-off event or a project delivered over a number of sessions promoting the value of incorporating Intergenerational and Age-friendly values into everyday practice.

40 small grants of £125 are available and open to a range of groups across Northern Ireland including: older people's groups, care homes, schools, community groups, youth groups etc.

Opening 1st February 2024 for applications with closing date for submission 29th February 12 noon.

Download the application form further down on this page or [HERE](#) complete and return to joyce.savage@bjf.org.uk

An information video can also be viewed at the bottom of this page as well as last year's All Ages April 2023 report!



Linking Generations
Northern Ireland

This year's All Ages April grants scheme will form part of LGNI's Global Intergenerational Week 2024 celebrations and we hope all our grantees will share their inspiring activities on social media to highlight the benefits of intergenerational work!

For more info on Global Intergenerational Week visit - [Global Intergenerational Week – Linking Generations NI](#) and our partners site - [Intergenerational Week \(generationsworkingtogether.org\)](#)

For further information contact joyce.savage@bjf.org.uk

Big thanks to the Public Health Agency NI for their continued support of this initiative!

Barclays Community Football Fund

Barclays believe in creating opportunities for all through access to football. That's why, in partnership with us here at Sported, the Barclays Community Football Fund is providing grants, training, and exclusive ticketing offers to make football more accessible in communities across the UK.

The Barclays Community Football Fund is helping to reduce inequalities in football by supporting community sports groups who need it most. The programme focuses on groups operating in areas of high deprivation and supporting young people from the following underrepresented groups: women and girls, racially diverse communities, young people with disabilities, from the LGBTQ+ community, and from lower socio-economic areas.

Community sports groups can apply to receive:

- £1000 Access Grants to spend on increasing underrepresented young people's access to play
- Up to £5000 Deep Impact grants available for existing fund recipients



Community Football Fund

- Coaching grants to get more women qualified to coach girls' football at a grassroots level
- Access to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training and resources
- Exclusive opportunities to apply for Premier League and Barclays FA Women's Super League tickets, mascot opportunities and exclusive promotional experiences

[Click here to find out more and apply \(you will need to register an account to access some of these page\).](#)