

Appendix A

NWL Community Grants

From April 2024 until March 2025

BACKGROUND

The Council's grant programme provides significant benefits to residents of North West Leicestershire. The Community Focus team administers various grants, including two key streams delivered over the past year:

- General Grants – Small Grant (up to £500), Zero Carbon Grant (up to £1,000), and the Green Shoots programme.
- Grant Agreements – Leicestershire and Rutland Age UK Befriending and Citizens Advice Leicestershire.

Additionally, last year, the team supported the Health and Wellbeing team (through a Community Mental Health Grant).

Another key component of the Community Focus grant funding is the Grant Agreements, which support Leicestershire and Rutland Age UK Befriending and Citizens Advice in North West Leicestershire.

- Leicestershire and Rutland Age UK Befriending Service received a grant of £14,660, funding a part-time coordinator responsible for reviewing service referrals, matching clients with befrienders, and supporting volunteer befrienders.
- Citizens Advice Leicestershire was allocated a budget of £72,000, allowing them to operate from Stenson House and provide essential services to residents of North West Leicestershire. Their service includes face-to-face appointments, a well-utilised drop-in service at the Council's Customer Service Centre in Coalville on Fridays, and remote support via email and phone. This funding ensures that local residents can access critical assistance, including benefits guidance, debt advice, housing support, and legal services.

This document summarises the grant expenditures including the additional grants Community Focus has supported with a detailed breakdown of each grant.

Throughout the document, there are outcomes and photos showing how the grants have been used. Additionally, each section concludes with videos showcasing the impact of the grants on the voluntary, community, and social enterprises sector, highlighting the difference they make.

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL GRANTS

Small Grant Scheme

The Small Grant Scheme plays a crucial role in supporting community projects and programmes. To qualify for funding, applicants must be not-for-profit voluntary organisations, community groups, or registered charities. Although the grant amounts are modest, they have a significant impact on the supported projects.

Quote from Steven at Community Safety Education CIC. This project is wonderful to support especially now with debt and financial budgeting being so important and recognising the challenges many face with their interaction with Citizen Advice Leicestershire as adults.

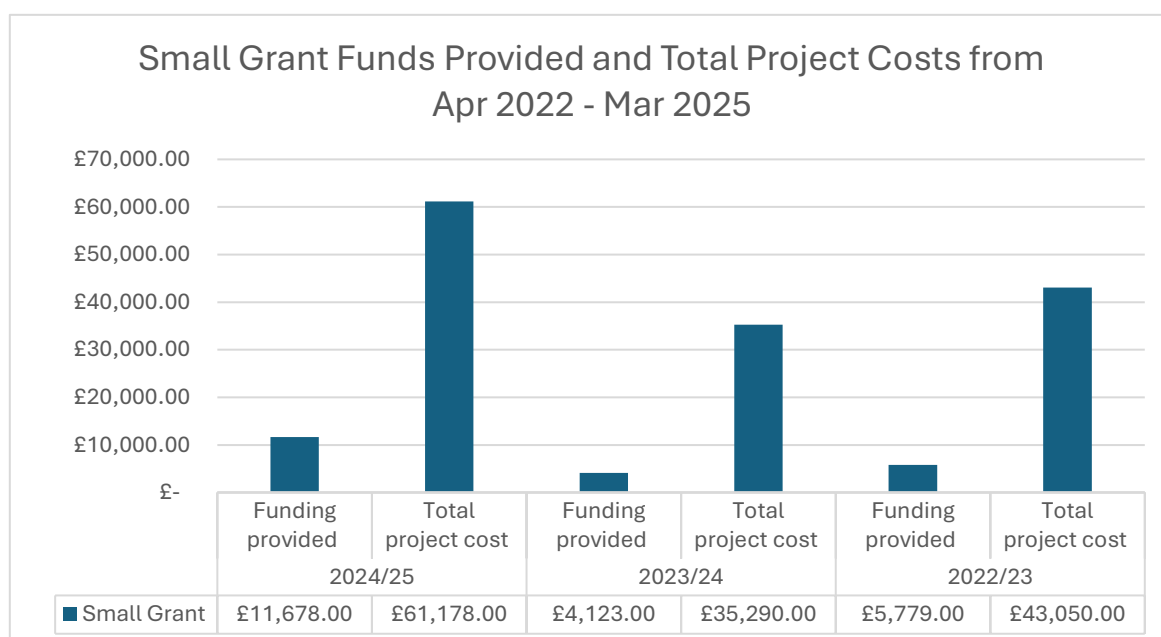
“We are immensely grateful for the generous grant of £400 from Northwest Leicestershire District Council, which has enabled teaching staff at Newbridge School (LE67) to introduce the Money Wise financial literacy programme to approximately two classes of students aged 13-14, with the potential to expand across the whole year group.

Thanks to this funding, teachers have now begun delivering the Money Wise programme, equipping young people with essential knowledge, skills, and confidence to manage their money effectively. Designed to be engaging and easy to use, the programme helps teachers integrate financial education into the curriculum in a way that is accessible and relevant to students.

Although the programme is still in its early stages, students are beginning to explore key financial concepts, including:

- 1. Different sources of money, how to keep it safe, and the importance of managing it well.*
- 2. The role that money plays in everyday life.*
- 3. Managing risks and emotions linked to financial decisions.*
- 4. Making informed choices about spending and saving.*
- 5. Recognising financial risks, such as loan sharks and payday loans.*
- 6. Understanding how financial decisions can impact themselves and others.”*

The table below outlines the total grants provided by the Council over the past three years, alongside the overall project values. The 2024/25 period has been particularly remarkable, with the total project value reaching four times the amount of grants awarded.



Notably, the number of Small Grant applications increased in 2024/25. This rise may be due to the reduction of Leicestershire County Council's grant fund, prompting groups in North West Leicestershire to seek alternative funding sources. Additionally, the proactive approach of the supporting officer has played a crucial role. Increased hands-on assistance, more face-to-face engagement, and participation in community events have helped groups successfully complete their grant applications. Another contributing factor is that more groups are seeking guidance before applying.

Pictures below: Measham Events CIC received a Small Grant for a road closure and hiring of the open space to run a successful community event



To ensure that the Small Grant Scheme remains accessible and inclusive, an Equalities Impact Assessment was conducted. The review confirmed that the grant criteria is fit for purpose.

The only identified challenge related to religious organisations, as the grant does not fund projects for religious activities. However, religious organisations may apply if they can demonstrate that the funding will benefit the wider community rather than support religious practices.

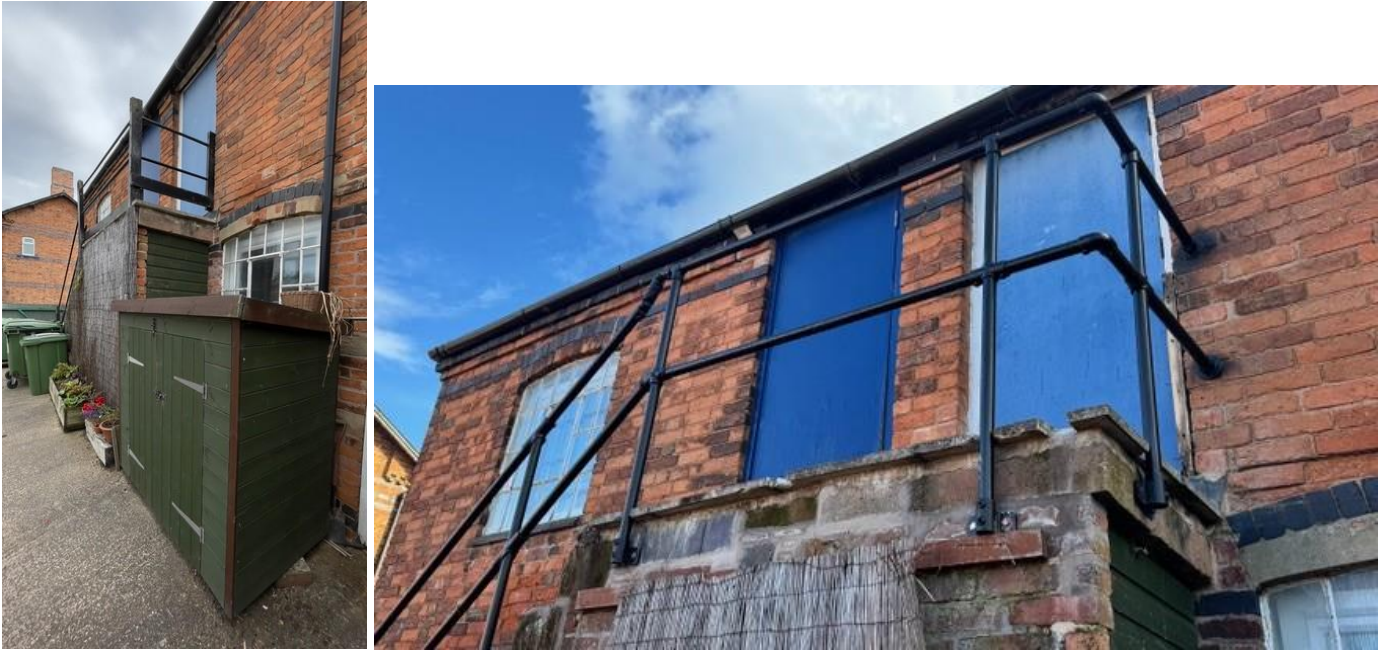
Additionally, feedback was sought from neighbouring authorities through the Equalities Officer to confirm that the Councils grant criteria aligns with other Councils' policies. Three authorities responded, verifying that the Council criteria are fair and non-discriminatory.

Picture below: Leicestershire Junior Darts Academy received a Small Grant towards dart boards as their junior teams have expanded!



Previously, applicants were required to provide match funding (either in cash or in kind). However, this requirement led to challenges and confusion among applicants. To address this issue, the match funding requirement was removed from March 2025. However, for projects exceeding £500, applicants must provide evidence of funding sources to confirm their project can proceed.

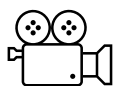
Pictures below: Kegworth Heritage Centre, received £500 toward repairs to an escape staircase which meant they were able to open the second floor of the heritage centre and put more displays on and utilise an unused space.



The impact of the Small Grant Scheme is evident in the projects it has supported. Below are some key outcomes:

- New sports teams established for young people, encouraging new skill development and community engagement.
- Strengthening community bonds by celebrating diversity and fostering inclusivity.
- Enhancing community facilities, such as increasing storage capacity and expanding activities in village halls.
- Raising awareness of local services and support networks.
- Creating safe spaces and providing activities for individuals with mental or physical disabilities.

A link to the details of 2024/25 applications and awards is provided ([here](#)).



Now hear from a few groups how the grant has made a difference!

[Ashby Baggers](#) received £500 to put towards new cornhole boards so they are offer more children and adults the opportunity to get involved.

[Concordia Choir](#) received £500 to bring an orchestra to put on big concert in the local area.

[Peter Le Marchant Trust](#) received £500 from the Small Grant and £1000 from the Community Mental Health Grant to allow groups from North West Leicestershire with physical and mental disability to access their service for free.

Zero Carbon Grant

The Zero Carbon Grant supports environmentally focused community projects across North West Leicestershire. This grant is available to constituted organisations, parish and town councils.

In April 2024, the maximum grant amount increased from £500 to £1,000 to encourage more applications. However, applicants must provide matching cash funding, meaning projects must have a total budget of at least £2,000 to receive the full £1,000 grant.

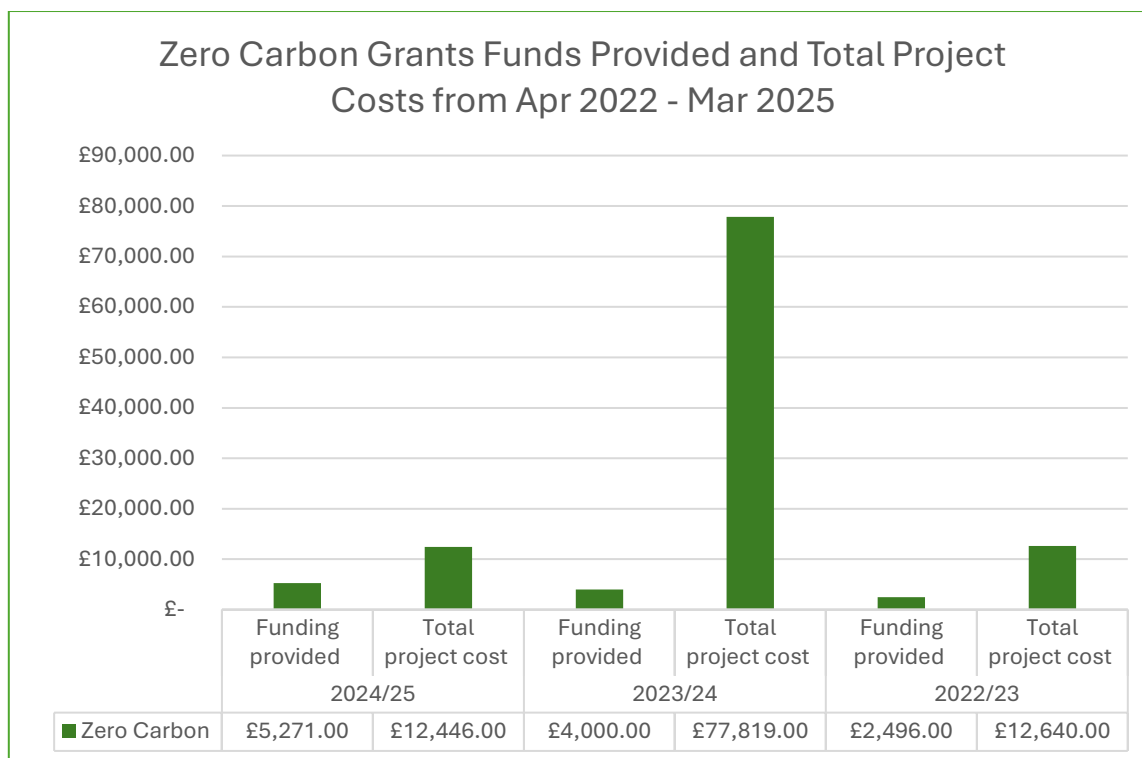
Pictures below: Desford Brass Band Club received £1000 from the Zero Carbon Grant to replace all lighting with LED. The LED lighting has reduced their electricity bill by 45%.



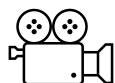
Despite the funding increase, the Zero Carbon Grant has seen a decline in applications in 2024/25 compared to the previous year. Promotion efforts remained consistent, but interest levels dropped.

To boost applications in 2025/26, the Community Focus Team will align grant promotion with key environmental events, including:

- Earth Day
- World Bee Day
- World Environment Day
- National Allotment Week
- National Tree Week



As shown from the table above, the total project cost of approved applications in 2024/25 is significantly lower than in 2023/24, this is partly due to two applications that exceeded £10,000, and another surpassed £50,000, contributing to the higher overall value that year. Applications are similar from year to year - particularly with LED lighting upgrades being a common theme.



A link to the details of 2024/25 applications and awards is available ([here](#)).

Now hear from a groups how the grant has made a difference!

[Blackfordby Village Hall](#) received £1000 to put towards loft insulation this followed on from a previous grant from the Zero Carbon for LEDs in 2023/24.

Green Shoot Scheme

The Green Shoots Scheme supports the Council's green agenda by increasing biodiversity while enhancing community areas. The scheme provides bulbs and plants for public spaces. Bulb selections Include:

- Spring
- Long-season
- Daffodils, Tulips, Crocuses, Narcissi and Snowdrops

The Green Shoots Scheme had a significant number of applications this year (31). Of these, 24 were approved, while seven were either withdrawn or deemed unsuccessful due to not being submitted by a community group or parish/town council, or because the bulbs were not intended for community benefit.

In 2024/25, a total of 65,000 bulbs were distributed throughout the district at a cost of just over £5,000 with community groups contributing 50% of the cost.

Below are some photos from the communities who had the bulbs in 2023 (photos of the distributed bulbs in 2024 has yet to be submitted).

Donisthorpe



Heather



Blackfordby



NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE GRANT AGREEMENT 2024/25

Citizen Advice Leicestershire

Citizens Advice Leicestershire was awarded £72,000 to support its services in North West Leicestershire. Key services include:

- [Debt advice and financial management](#) – including assisting with applications for benefits, charitable funding, debt relief orders, breathing space, etc.
- [Benefit checks and claims](#)
- [Energy advice](#)
- [Budgeting advice](#)
- [Macmillan advice](#)
- [Pension wise](#)
- [Family advice](#)
- Support to reduce the risk of homelessness
- Support with Landlord and Tenant issues – particular focus on private landlords

The grant enables face-to-face advice at Stenson House and a popular drop-in service at the Customer Services Centre in Coalville on Fridays.

Citizens Advice Leicestershire has confirmed that:

- Phone consultations remain in high demand.
- The number of clients served is stable, as complex cases require longer consultations.

In addition, a video was made with Citizen Advice Leicestershire explaining how NWLDC grant funds support the service within the district.

Click the Citizen Advice Leicestershire logo to hear how the grants have made an impact on services in North West Leicestershire.



Leicestershire and Rutland Age UK Befriending

In 2024/25, Leicestershire and Rutland Age UK Befriending Service received £14,660 in funding. This funding supported a Befriending Coordinator role that is responsible for:

- Reviewing service referrals;
- Matching clients with volunteer befrienders; and
- Providing ongoing support for volunteers.

The service supports residents of North West Leicestershire who experience loneliness and social isolation. Many clients have family members who live far away or are unable to visit frequently or are housebound or bedridden.

Engagements are primarily face-to-face, conducted by volunteer befrienders and the Befriending Coordinator. Clients are also referred to specialist services based on their needs, including bereavement services, mental health support, food banks, First Contact Plus (social support and signposting service) and daycare services.

Face-to-face befriending services will continue, with the additional telephone support. Leicestershire and Rutland Age UK is exploring opportunities to expand social group engagements to foster long-term community connections, and the organisation is actively seeking alternative funding sources.

Click the Leicestershire and Rutland Age UK logo to hear how the grants have made an impact on services in North West Leicestershire.



NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE ADDITIONAL GRANTS 2024/25

Community Mental Health Grant

The Community Mental Health Grant was established using £10,000 from Public Health England to support mental health initiatives and reduce health inequalities that arose as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, including projects that tackled loneliness and isolation.

Parish and town councils, constituted voluntary and community groups and not-for-profit organisations were eligible to apply for this funding. Grants of up to £1,000 were available for new or existing projects or for purchasing equipment that would help an organisation deliver activities or services supporting the aims of this funding. There was no match funding requirement for this grant.

The Health and Wellbeing team was responsible for approving or rejecting applications, while the Community Focus team supported the coordination, delivery and application reviews. There were 17 applications received, of which 11 were approved and six were unsuccessful (due to not meeting the criteria). The entire £10,000 budget was allocated.

A link to the 2024/25 applications and awards is available ([here](#)). Project monitoring is still ongoing.

Help us to promote our grants

COMMUNITY GROUPS GRANTS



**Are you a community organisation, voluntary group
or charity in North West Leicestershire?**

SMALL GRANTS UP TO £500

Suitable for:

- New projects
- New events
- Equipment
- Venue improvements and more.

**Think about what could improve
your service!**



ZERO CARBON GRANTS UP TO £1,000*

Suitable for environmental
improvement projects such as:

- Energy efficiency
- Community planting
- Litter picking
- Recycling
- Cycling / walking projects and more.

Think Green!

*requires match funding



