

GRANTS SCHEME GUIDANCE NOTES

These notes tell you things you need to know in relation to the overall scheme. You will find useful help text throughout the application form, which are designed to help you in your answers. Before making an application, we advise that you take time to read these guidance notes fully, taking care to ensure that your project meets our criteria. An application will not be processed without all the required information; incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant and put on hold until all information has been received and, where possible the application will be rolled over to the next available meeting or withdrawn.

ELIGIBILITY

Biffa Award's Main Grants Scheme is aimed at groups that need funding to improve the quality of life in their community. We provide funding for site based capital expenditure to create or improve a community amenity or habitat for biodiversity. Between £10,000 and £75,000 can be awarded for projects that are within 5 miles of a significant Biffa Group Limited operation or 10 miles of an active Biffa Landfill site for Recreation and Community Buildings projects. However, if you're applying under the Rebuilding Biodiversity theme, the radius of the Biffa operation or landfill site is extended to within 15 miles. In addition, all projects must be within 10 miles of a landfill site (not necessarily owned by Biffa Group Limited) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. All projects must fit within one of the three themes listed below, and the total cost of the project must be less than £200,000 including VAT.

Please note you **cannot re-apply** for funding on the same site of a previous Biffa Award grant within one year of receiving your final payment. In addition, we will only accept a **maximum of two full applications** per financial year from any one organisation, and only one application per organisation will be considered at any Board meeting.

We require that a project has started and can make their first financial claim within three months of a formal funding offer. All projects are expected to complete and submit their final claim within one year of receiving that offer. In addition, Rebuilding Biodiversity projects are expected to complete and submit their final claim within 12 months of receiving a formal funding offer. No extensions to these timescales can be given.

We do not fund:

The following list is not exhaustive but contains important details about what we do not fund. We strongly advise that you check that your project meets our criteria and is eligible for funding **before** you send in your application. Our criteria can also be found on our website, or you may prefer to contact us directly on 01636 670000 / biffa-award@wildlifetrusts.org.

- Individuals, profit-making or local government organisations (including Community Councils) and organisations that are not able to register as an Environmental Body

with the regulator ENTRUST (please visit the ENTRUST website for details on eligibility www.entrust.org.uk or call the helpline on 01926 488 300)

- Projects on sites that are owned and or maintained by borough, county, city, district, parish or town councils, unless a formal lease, with a minimum term of no less than 10 years, is formally in place with the applicant
- Projects where no formal lease, with less than 10 years remaining, is in place
- Projects more than 5 miles from a significant Biffa Group Limited operation (15 miles for Rebuilding Biodiversity projects)
- Recreation and Community Building Projects more than 10 miles from an active Biffa Group Limited landfill site
- Projects more than 10 miles from a licensed landfill site (owned by any company)
- Core costs of an organisation, office equipment and furniture or, elements that directly benefit staff
- Projects with a total cost of more than £200,000 including VAT
- Improvements to car parks, offices or services
- Alterations to buildings in order to meet Disability Discrimination Act requirements
- Items of personal kit or equipment, e.g. sports shirts, cricket gloves
- Portable items that will not be permanently kept at the address listed as your project location
- Projects in school buildings or on school grounds, on the premises of hospitals, hospices, medical centres, day-care centres, charity offices, or for allotments
- Sports related projects
- Projects which are purely for fencing
- Events, excursions, CDs and websites, publications and marketing materials
- Purely church fabric repairs, e.g. to bell towers and church spires
- Storage containers
- Feasibility studies, tender costs, building consents or recruitment costs
- Enhancement of town or village centres, e.g. signage, seating, dog waste bins and seasonal bulbs
- Energy saving or green technology based projects which have a derived income, e.g. solar panels
- Retrospective funding – work that has already taken place before any grant has been awarded

If necessary, we may revise the amount of funding available and make changes to our published criteria, as well as updating the list of significant Biffa operations. As soon as any changes are known, we will post them on our website, or be in touch with you directly if you have an application that is being considered by us. We aim to give three months' notice about any changes where possible.

In common with most funders, Biffa Award receives far more applications than we are able to fund. We strongly recommend that you only apply when the project is in a position to start quickly - we will give preference to projects that apply for their total costs, or projects that have already secured the majority of match funding needed to deliver the project. The Board may delay a decision or reject the application outright if it feels that an application is premature.

THEMES

Community Buildings

Biffa Award aims to provide and improve community buildings such as village halls, community centres and church halls to act as mechanisms for community involvement. Priority is given to those projects that enhance, maintain or introduce real community led social, economic or environmental improvements. Projects which fall within this description will be registered under the ENTRUST category D.

Applications for repair or maintenance of churches must be able to demonstrate wider community benefit.

Rebuilding Biodiversity

Biodiversity is the variety of living things and includes all species of plants and animals and the natural systems (or habitats) that support them. It is important that we protect and enhance our environment so that it can adapt to threats such as climate change. We will ask you to submit a list of habitat types and species being conserved or protected via your project. Projects which fall within this description will be registered under the ENTRUST category DA.

We will give preference to projects under this theme that have a strong element of public access or inclusion, such as volunteer involvement.

To be eligible a project must lead to a direct improvement to a habitat or species; projects that are purely for research will not be funded.

Recreation

The Recreation theme generally covers projects which will benefit people within their free time. Many projects under this theme also have elements of the other three themes within them; we tend to receive more applications under this theme than the others. Projects which fall within this description will be registered under the ENTRUST category D.

Examples of projects that fall under this category are green spaces, woodland walks, nature reserves, play areas, community gardens and building works or improvements to clubhouse facilities, that can demonstrate multi-usage within the wider community, and that they are not for the sole use of the sports club or any other organisation.

WHAT WE LOOK FOR IN AN APPLICATION

Creativity, innovation and sustainability

We want to see exciting, innovative and creative solutions incorporated into your project ideas. Your application should outline how you intend to ensure the project is sustainable following completion. It is essential that you outline how you will maintain, publicise and develop the project following completion of the improvements.

Established Need - For Community Buildings and Recreation projects

We like to see evidence of wider community consultation and involvement in an application. This could be in the form of letters of support, a questionnaire, a village design statement or parish plan. The evidence should include consultation and analysis of the results as well as priorities for improvement in the community. The community involvement should be widespread and include the full diversity of possible beneficiaries. Providing evidence of how you have investigated the needs of the people who will benefit from the project, will make your application stronger.

Established Need - For Rebuilding Biodiversity projects

A site survey, photos of the site's condition and a clear rationale for the habitat management techniques, employed to fulfil the project's aim and outcomes, should be outlined.

Where applicable, we would like to see how you have established the needs of the people who will benefit from the project and provide details of any community consultation carried out. This could be in the form of letters of support or a questionnaire. The evidence should include consultation and analysis of the results as well as priorities for improvement in the community. The community involvement should be widespread and include the full diversity of possible beneficiaries.

IF SUCCESSFUL...

We would love to receive photographs, tweets, Facebook posts and any other communication about how your project is progressing. Sending us regular updates of your progress will keep us informed and allow us to maximise any publicity opportunities as well as help with any hurdles that you come across along the way. Once you have completed your project we will ask you to send a short film about your completed project, just a quick introduction to the project including what we have funded and what a difference it has made to your community.

Your Formal Offer Agreement will set out a timescale for claiming your grant. If for any reason you are unable to meet this timescale or your project delivery is delayed, please keep us informed.

One condition of the grant will be to acknowledge the grant on site, we expect to see our funding celebrated and widely promoted. This can be via a plaque, banner or including our logo on your own interpretation or signage boards. You will need to check with us

before you use our logo. If you choose to use a plaque or banner to acknowledge our funding, you will be asked to pay up to £30 for the cost of production and postage, you can claim this back as part of the grant as long as you have included it within your budget.

SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION

- Ensure that you have answered all the questions on the form
- Your answers must be within any stated word limit
- Answer all questions in full, do not simply refer to a business plan or another document

Expression of Interest Applications

We will give you a decision within three weeks of submitting your Expression of Interest application. If successful, you will be invited to submit a Full Stage Application, which must be received by us within the timescale provided on our Invitation to Full Application email. Your application will then be assessed and considered at the next appropriate Board meeting, held three times annually. Two themes will be reviewed at each meeting; February – Rebuilding Biodiversity and Recreation; June – Recreation and Community Buildings; and October – Community Buildings and Rebuilding Biodiversity. Please bear in mind that we continue to receive a large number of eligible applications and competition for funds is very fierce.

Full Application Supporting Information

Ensure that you have read the checklist and provided all supporting documentation required.

You must provide the following information as part of your application. These documents (size limit for each attachment is 15mb), should be sent as attachments on your application form. Please note that your project application may be rejected if it does not meet the Biffa Award first stage checks.

All Project applications must include:

- Your organisation's **signed** constitution/governing document
- **Signed** lease agreement (minimum 10 years) for the land or buildings where the project will take place
- A copy of any necessary formal landowner agreements (for Rebuilding Biodiversity projects only)
- **Signed** copies of your organisation's accounts for the last two financial years
- Evidence of community support (at least three recent and signed letters of support and results of other consultations e.g. surveys)
- A copy of your organisation's Environmental Policy
- Photographs of the current project site or amenity
- Management plan for the site (Rebuilding Biodiversity projects only)
- Three recent quotations for any single item/works costing more than £1,000
- Proof of any shortfall/match funding required to deliver your project

- A milestone and payment schedule for the project
- A copy of your planning permission approval documentation
- If you are using the services of a fronting Environmental body, a letter from them agreeing to do so

All Community Building and recreation applications must also include:

- At least three recent and signed letters of support from direct beneficiaries
- Further evidence of community consultation i.e. results of other consultations or surveys
- Schedule of occupancy to include existing regular groups using the facility, average user numbers per group and frequency of each group activity
- Detailed and project relevant photographs to evidence need
- Site plans or drawings of the facility
- A business plan (if a new build project)

All Rebuilding Biodiversity applications must also include:

- Copies of all formal landowner agreements
- Management plan for the site
- Job descriptions for any posts to be funded

The following information is not mandatory at application stage, but will be required as a condition of your grant if you are successful.

- Your organisation's Entrust Environmental Body registration document
- Entrust project registration confirmation letter
- Proof of match funding

STEP BY STEP GUIDE AND TIMESCALES

1. Submit your completed online Expression of Interest Form. There is no deadline – applications can be submitted at any time.

2. Your Expression of Interest will be acknowledged within seven working days. You will be informed, by email, within three weeks whether you have been invited to submit a Full Application.

3. Submit your completed Full Application form, with supporting information on or before the deadline date shown on your invitation email.

4. Your application will be acknowledged within seven working days of receipt. First stage checks will be completed by the grants team. If the application has passed all checks, a Grants Officer will be assigned to assess your project and will contact you if any further information is required.

5. Your application will be assessed and considered at the next appropriate Board meeting, which is held three times annually. Two themes will be reviewed at each meeting; February – Rebuilding Biodiversity and Recreation; June – Recreation and Community Buildings; and October – Community Buildings and Rebuilding Biodiversity. Please allow up to six months after submitting your Full Application for a decision. We will let you know of the Board's decision within 14 working days of the meeting. If successful, you will be sent a Conditional Offer Letter.

6. You will have a maximum of two months to meet all conditions set out in the Conditional Offer Letter. Once all conditions have been met, a Formal Offer Agreement will be sent to you.

7. You must submit Claim Report Forms, with evidence of expenditure and photographs of project progress on at least a quarterly basis. All payments are made in arrears.

8. Upon completion of your project, you will need to send an End of Grant Claim Report Form, evidence of expenditure, a project video and photographs of the completed works, any assets that have been funded and the Biffa Award plaque or logo in place to claim the final grant instalment.

GLOSSARY

RSWT

Biffa Award is managed by the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts. As well as operating as an umbrella group for the 47 local Wildlife Trusts that have been formed across the UK, RSWT has a dedicated grants team that manages several different funds, covering broad environmental themes. The team does this on behalf of organisations, such as Biffa Group Limited, European Union, The Peoples Postcode Lottery and the Big Lottery Fund.

ENTRUST and Environmental Body

Biffa Award's money comes from landfill tax credits, reclaimed from the Government through the Landfill Communities Fund (LCF). The LCF regulator, ENTRUST, ensures that landfill tax credits are awarded and managed according to the Government's regulations. To be able to be awarded, and receive landfill tax credits, applicant organisations must enrol with ENTRUST as an Environmental Body (EB). (A small administration fee is payable to ENTRUST for this.) Biffa Award requires all grantees under its Main Grants Scheme to enrol as an EB, and also register the project for which funding is sought, to ensure organisational and project compliancy. Confirmation of these registrations will therefore be required as a condition of any grant offered after Biffa Award Board approval. For further information on registration, please access the [ENTRUST website](#) or call the helpline on 01926 488300.

Third Party Contributor

Under LCF regulations, only 90 per cent of a grant can be paid by us using landfill tax credits. The remaining 10 per cent needs to come from another source. Therefore, you need to find someone (an individual or another organisation) who is willing to contribute the remaining 10 per cent. This cannot come from your organisation's own funds or general reserves. The 10 per cent is then paid to Biffa Group Limited, which allows us to release 100 per cent of the grant to you. Third Party Contributions are completely separate from match funding. Further details about this can be found on the [ENTRUST website](#).