

Groundwork East: Funding Town & Parish Council Biodiversity/Green Space Initiatives, 2025



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Nature at Work

These guides have been produced by Groundwork East as part of East Suffolk Council's Nature at Work programme. Nature at Work aims to respond to the climate and nature emergency by supporting nature to thrive at hundreds of community sites across East Suffolk: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/nature-at-work

Groundwork East registered charity number: 293141 | www.groundwork.org.uk/east/

Funding can come via a range of sources, from the National Lottery or a local charitable trust to a council's own fundraising events. The source of funding you choose depends on what you want to do and the scale, and who is involved in or who benefits from your project – also your teams' skills and energy levels! Since many grant giving trusts and foundations exist to support registered charities, statutory bodies may be excluded from applying so double check their criteria before proceeding.

A few generic project ideas:

- Re-wilding programmes for existing green and blue spaces including clearing invasive species.
- Enhancing existing initiatives, e.g. extending No Mow May, delivering community scythe training.
- Creating new nature friendly green/blue spaces, orchards, ponds, woods, community gardens.
- Creating or extending wildflower meadows.
- Habitats for stag beetles, hedgehogs, water voles etc.
- Enhancing allotment sites e.g. hazel plantations for coppiced products to replace imported bamboo.
- Wilding churchyards and cemeteries.



General advice on applying for funding

The application process for funding bodies varies, with some funders simply asking you to outline your project in a short letter and others requiring completion of a lengthy application form. Funding bids can fail due to incomplete/ill-matched applications or missed deadlines so before you start, ensure you:

- meet the fund criteria, e.g. organisational status, any match funding needed and outcomes
- have the time to undertake the application
- have all the information required

Involve the whole council and community

Not all projects are large scale and many can be completed in small, discreet phases. However, in all instances the most successful projects will be well thought out and involve beneficiaries in meaningful ways. If relevant to your project, involve external groups or users of council amenities as this could make the project of interest to a wider range of funders and supporters. As well as council staff and elected members, consider local community groups, other organisations or businesses.



The more people that are involved, the greater the resources for you to tap into and the stronger your application will appear to funders who like to see evidence of consultation, collaboration and how you have identified the need for your project. Funders often ask for evidence of how your project:

- meets the funder's aims and criteria;
- fits with your council's strategic plan and if relevant, wider local district or county strategies e.g. climate and nature resilience; health and wellbeing; and
- has involved beneficiaries, e.g. the part residents or others have played in shaping/planning the project.

Planning is key to success

It is helpful to establish a project management group, ideally with beneficiaries represented. Once you have calculated the costs of the work, *develop a fundraising plan which:*

- aligns with project aims & objectives - to avoid being funding-led and making compromises;
- has realistic timescales and target dates - many funders have long decision times.



- breaks the project down into 'do-able' chunks - this allows flexibility and for early successes, good for morale!
- includes plans/funds for ongoing maintenance
- can be reviewed and amended periodically or after application outcomes or fundraising events

Other hints and tips

1. Gifts in kind – survey to see what skills and knowledge your council/community could input. Some funders may require or welcome 'in-kind' input/value.
2. Try approaching local businesses for materials, services or cash contributions.
3. Re-use materials e.g. paving stones, bricks, plants – either from your site or gifted by others.
4. Hold fundraising events e.g. sponsored walks, cake sales, fun day, quiz nights, plant sales etc.
5. Use social media to raise awareness and online fundraising platforms (Just Giving etc), and keep people updated on progress.
6. Speak to others e.g. local district council or Wildlife Trust staff involved in relevant initiatives as they may be able to access or signpost you to relevant funds.



Funding open to parish & town councils

(please check their guidelines & deadlines before applying)

National Association for Local Councils information for climate resilience related projects

<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/campaigns/tackling-climate-change/funding.html>

National Biodiversity Network Trust

<https://nbn.org.uk/tools-and-resources/funding-and-grants/>

Nature Towns & Cities <https://naturetownsandcities.org.uk/>

a programme underway to be aware of, maybe explore opportunities to collaborate with your higher tier authority.

Tesco Community Grants Programme

<https://tescocommunitygrants.org.uk/> Supports with extra financial help to provide healthy food and activities. Up to £1,500. Every three months, three local causes are chosen for the blue tokens customer vote.

The Tree Council – <https://treecouncil.org.uk/grants-and-guidance/our-grants/> Various funding streams for tree planting



One Stop Community Partnership

<https://www.onestop.co.uk/community-partnership-page/>

Supports groups local to stores working to tackle a range of issues. One Stop offer a tailored approach for every local partnership which may include, funding, volunteering support, fundraising and raising awareness for your group or organisation. Visit your local One Stop and talk to the Store Manager.

DPD – Eco Fund <https://green.dpd.co.uk/>

Enables the delivery of green projects and environmental initiatives. Grants up to £2,000. Applications must be include a quote(s) for the goods or services for which the donation is going to be used. Applications welcome at any time for monthly review.

National Lottery Community Fund – Awards for All

<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/national-lottery-awards-for-all-england>

Grants from £300 - £20,000 for projects improving communities and the lives of people within them. Simple application process and usually a decision within twelve weeks.



National Lottery Community Fund– Reaching Communities

<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/reaching-communities-england>

Up to £500,000, can be used for green space projects.

Woodland Trust free trees

<https://woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/schools-and-communities/>

The funding is open for trees to be delivered in early autumn. Usually must apply before August.

Giving away thousands of trees to schools and communities.

Asda Foundation

<https://www.asdafoundation.org/foundation-grants>

Supports small, local activities that directly involve Asda customers. Their mission is to transform communities and improve lives within the UK.

B&Q Community Reuse

<https://www.diy.com/corporate/waste-donation>

B&Q stores donate unsellable materials and products to local community groups, schools and charities.



Screwfix Foundation

<https://www.screwfix.com/landingpage/screwfix-foundation>

Supports projects that will fix, repair, maintain and improve properties and community facilities. Currently offers local registered charities and non-profit organisations grants up to £5,000.

Other sources of support

Your Local Authority community/sustainability team or local CVS (Council for Voluntary Services) may be able to help identify relevant funding or allow you to use a grant search database. Your local Community Foundation offers a wide range of support

- Cambridgeshire <https://www.cambscf.org.uk/>
- Essex <http://www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk/>
- Hertfordshire <http://www.hertscf.org.uk/>
- Luton & Bedfordshire <http://www.blcf.org.uk/>
- Norfolk <http://www.norfolkfoundation.com/>
- Suffolk <http://suffolkcf.org.uk/>



Check local utility company websites - water and energy companies often have community grant schemes.

Other sources of information and support

- The Soil Association – Food for Life Programme - <https://www.foodforlife.org.uk/>
- Wildlife Trusts - <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/learning>
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) - <https://www.rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do>
- Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) – info/courses <https://www.rhs.org.uk/education-learning>
- Froglife - <https://www.froglife.org/>
- Buglife - <https://www.buglife.org.uk/our-work/buglife-england/>
- Thrive - <https://www.thrive.org.uk/>

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