

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL GRANT SCHEME

Green Business Grant Guidance Notes

2025/2026

Introduction

Is your business looking to reduce its energy costs and consumption or need help with increasing renewable energy generation or lowering carbon emissions through transport?

It's also a priority for Winchester City Council to reduce carbon emissions so we are launching a green project grant that will reduce your carbon footprint and running costs in line with our recommendations in the [Green Economic Development Strategy](#) and [Carbon Neutrality Action Plan](#).

FIVE PATHWAYS

1. Reduce energy consumption

2. Reduce transport carbon emissions

3. Increase renewable energy generation / purchase

4. Carbon sequestration through nature based solutions

5. Purchase of carbon credits

The Carbon Neutrality Action Plan sets out five pathways for carbon reduction.

Your business can apply for a grant of between £2,000 to £5,000 to cover up to 100% of your project costs.

For help and advice please contact our Economy Team at ecodev@winchester.gov.uk.



Am I eligible?

You must:

- be a business based in and operating from within the Winchester district. Please see our [Ward Map](#) for more information.
- be a landlord whose commercial, office, industrial warehouse etc. premises is within the Winchester district
- be a legal entity such as a limited company, limited liability partnership or cooperative or Community Interest Company
- be a small business that does not employ more than 50 people
- have an independent energy or carbon assessment by a qualified assessor that recommends the project that you are applying for a grant for. Please refer to the Winchester City Council supported low carbon assessment programme if you would like to arrange an assessment of your business
- have all necessary insurances, polices and permissions in place, including [planning permission](#), to enable you to deliver this project
- have a project that can be delivered by 28 February 2026
- be actively trading on 30 September 2025, not in administration, insolvent or has had a striking off notice made

What can I use the grant for?

Your project should deliver carbon emissions savings for your business, for example from energy savings, water savings and/or direct reductions in emissions, measured as tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO2e).

Outcomes and impacts of funded projects will need to demonstrate they can deliver on one or more of the five pathways set out in the Winchester District Carbon Neutrality Action Plan.

Carbon Neutrality Action Plan Pathways	Potential Outcomes & Impacts	Potential Project Activity
1. Reduce energy consumption	Retrofitting energy efficiencies (saving) measures	Insulation and glazing improvements Replacing a gas boiler with low carbon heating technologies such as heat pumps or solar water heating. Replacing lighting with LED alternatives Installing energy management systems and monitors

2. Reduce transport carbon emissions	Active travel to reduce the need to use the car. Increase use of low emission vehicles. Contribute to cleaner air.	Electric bike schemes including shared community e-bikes, bike racks and shelters and repair workshops EV charging points Car clubs and car sharing
3. Increase renewable energy generation / purchase	Increase energy supply resilience. Reduce energy costs	Solar photovoltaic panels and batteries
4. Carbon sequestration through nature-based solutions	Increase bio-diversity. Safeguard and enhance our district's natural habitats. Protect against extreme climate events.	Tree planting schemes Rewilding projects Flood defences
5. Support creation of local carbon credits	Generate source of carbon credits to offset residual emissions Reduce and/or remove carbon	Local carbon market platforms/registries Carbon credit projects

Your business can apply for a grant of between £2,000 to £5,000 to cover up to 100% of your project costs. Please do contact us if you would like to discuss a smaller project.

What type of expenditure is eligible is?

Grants can be used for:

- capital and revenue
- scoping studies / design work to enable capital investment
- pilots – trying some new to test out concepts
- innovation – project where you want to do something new

How much is my business eligible to match fund?

Size of business	Description/criteria	Amount of match funding required *
Sole trader/freelancer	A self-employed person who owns and runs their own business as an individual.	None
Social enterprise	A business with specific social objectives among its primary purpose	
Community interest company	A special type of limited company that exists to benefit the community rather than private shareholders	
	Under the Companies Act 2006 a business must satisfy two or more of the following requirements:	
Micro business	Turnover: not more than £632,000 Balance sheet total: not more than £316,000 Number of employees: a headcount of staff of not more than 10	10%
Small business	Turnover: not more than £10.2 million Balance sheet total: not more than £5.1million Number of employees: a headcount of staff of less than 50	25%
Medium business	Turnover: not more than £36 million Balance sheet total: not more than £18 million Number of employees: a headcount of staff of less than 250	50%

* We will accept revenue as a match funding contribution

Additional considerations

Liability and ongoing costs for any equipment purchased or asset improved must be met by the applicant organisation. The council will not take on any liability as a consequence of grants awarded.

Contributions to a large-scale project will only be considered if this grant would help secure other sources of funding / investment.

All necessary permissions (e.g. planning / building; landlord / owner), where appropriate, must be in place before an application will be considered.

Only one grant from this funding scheme will be given to an organisation in any one financial year.

We will prioritise applications from businesses and organisations that have not been funded under previous rounds of this funding programme or through our UK Shared Prosperity Funding or Rural England Prosperity Funding Programmes

This is a competitive fund for applications and applications will be assessed against the published evaluation criteria.

Applicants should obtain three quotes for items of expenditure above £2,500. Quotes must be dated within three months of the application submission date.

Ineligible expenditure

We are unable to provide grant funding for:

- activities that will increase your production and overall carbon emissions but at a lower carbon intensity per item produced
- individuals
- staff costs
- general running costs of a vehicle
- vehicles
- replacement or 'like for like' equipment or items
- retrospective funding of activities/projects
- repeat projects
- websites
- projects that have received funding in previous years via this scheme or from other council or government funds such as the UK Shared Prosperity and Rural England Prosperity Fund.
- planning fees or permits

How will my application be assessed?

This is a competitive fund. Each application will be assessed against the grant eligibility and criteria and scored using the grant scoring matrix below.

Scoring Criteria	Evidence		Score
Exceptional demonstration by the grant applicant of the relevant ability, understanding, skills, facilities & quality measures required to deliver the project with evidence to support the response, where appropriate.	5	Excellent	
Good demonstration by the grant applicant of the relevant ability, understanding, skills, facilities & quality measures required to deliver the project with evidence to support the response, where appropriate.	4	Good	
Satisfactory demonstration by the grant applicant of the relevant ability, understanding, skills, facilities & quality measures required to deliver the project with evidence to support the response, where appropriate.	3	Satisfactory	
Contains minor shortcomings in the demonstration by the grant applicant of the relevant ability, understanding, skills, facilities & quality measures required to deliver the project with evidence to support the response, where appropriate and/or is inconsistent or in conflict with other proposals with little or no evidence to support the response.	2	Minor Reservations	
Satisfies the requirement but with considerable reservations of the grant applicant relevant ability, understanding, skills, facilities & quality measures required to deliver the project, with little or no evidence to support the response.	1	Serious Reservations = Fail Submissions which receive a '1 – serious reservations' will not be considered further	
No response provided.	0	no score = Fail Submissions that 'Fail' will not be considered further	

Criteria	Aspect of evaluation	Weighting
Project need	<p>Clear evidence of need for project (provided through carbon audit/assessment)</p> <p>Demonstration of delivery on one or more of the five pathways set out in the Winchester District Carbon Neutrality Action Plan</p> <p>The EPC rating of the property will be taken into consideration</p> <p>Amount of carbon emissions reduction resulting from project (measured in tCO2e)</p>	50%
Deliverability	<p>Project can be delivered by 28 February 2026</p> <p>No permissions required</p> <p>Permissions already in place</p> <p>Evidence that measures are in place to evaluate the success of the project against the Carbon Neutrality Plan pathways</p>	30%
Grant	<p>A clear description of how the money will be spent on eligible activities</p> <p>Evidence that 50% match funding in place</p> <p>Provision of three quotes</p>	20%

Grant award process

The deadline for applications is 13 February 2026, with decisions according to the grant eligibility and criteria taking place by 18 February 2026. Decisions are made by Winchester City Council's Economy Team.

There is no obligation for Winchester City Council to fund eligible bids. We may decide to close the grant round early or prioritise grant awards if the programme is oversubscribed.

Please do not start work on your project or incur any expenditure until you have a signed funding agreement in place.

All decisions will be communicated by email to businesses. There is no right of appeal.

How is the grant paid?

The grant is paid in arrears once the project is completed and is, in effect, cashback on your project spend. You must be able to cashflow the project while it is in progress – we do not pay grant upfront, nor do we pay grants in instalments while the project is in progress.

We aim to pay grants within 28 days of receiving all the information we need to process your claim. We will notify you when your claim has been processed and when to expect the grant to reach your bank account.

All payments of grant will be made by a BACS transfer to the organisations nominated business bank account, as confirmed in the on-line declaration. Please ensure that your bank details on the on-line form are correct to minimise delays in payment.

Grant income received by an organisation is taxable therefore will be subject to tax.

Only organisations which make an overall profit once grant income is included will be subject to tax.

Grant terms and conditions

All grant recipients are expected to enter into a grant agreement with Winchester City Council which includes the following terms:

- 1) Any spend by the business prior to formal notification from the council, will make the business ineligible for funding.
- 2) All funding must be spent by 28 February 2026
- 3) Winchester City Council reserves the right to fund less than the amount requested in the application form.
- 4) Businesses must not change the use of the grant award and must spend the grant on the purpose for which it was approved unless agreed otherwise in writing by the Economy Team at Winchester City Council.
- 5) All grant recipients will be required to publicise the support of Winchester City Council including the use of the appropriate council logo on publicity material. Guidance on this will be sent to successful applicants.
- 6) All grant recipients will be required to explain how they used their grant within one month of spending the grant. The business must submit to the council a short statement of project completion, to confirm and evidence that the money was spent on the approved purpose, or the council may seek to reclaim its funding.
- 7) Payment of the grant by the council will be made once the project is completed and appropriate evidence has been submitted.
- 8) If grant funding is used inappropriately, is not used, or the applicant fails to respect the conditions attached to the grant, the council may demand reimbursement of any funds already paid out, or take other measures to recoup the funds.
- 9) Funding decisions are delegated to Corporate Head of Economy and Community. The council's decisions with regards to funding are discretionary and no appeals process is available.

Subsidy control

In accepting funding the business shall comply with all [Subsidy Control](#) rules and shall ensure that all requirements for all such rules shall be met.

Managing the risk of fraud

Winchester City Council will not accept deliberate manipulation and fraud. Any organisation caught falsifying their records to gain additional grant money could face prosecution and any funding issued will be recovered, as may any grants paid in error. All applications will be subject to checks and verification.

Applicants will be required, as part of the declaration process, to declare that they understand that if they knowingly and dishonestly provide false or misleading information in communication with the Council including verbal communication they will be committing a criminal offence contrary to the Fraud Act 2006 and could be subject to a criminal investigation and criminal proceedings may be taken against them.

Data Protection Statement

Any personal data you supply on this application form will only be used for purposes in connection with the Winchester City Council Grant Scheme.

In line with our transparency reporting procedures, we would however, publish a list on our website (www.winchester.gov.uk/business) of organisations to which we have awarded grants.

The Council's data protection and privacy policy was detailed upon registration of this system. Should you require a refresh of this information please see links below:

- [Winchester City Council - Privacy Policy](#)
- [Winchester City Council - Data Protection and Privacy protocol](#)