

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL GRANT SCHEME

Green Business Grant | Guidance Notes

2026/2027

INTRODUCTION

Is your business looking to reduce its carbon emissions or increase renewable energy generation?

A Green Business Grant can help you to reduce your carbon footprint and running costs in line with Winchester City Council's [Green Economic Development Strategy](#) and [Carbon Neutrality Action Plan](#).

Your business can apply for a grant of up to £3,000 to cover up to 90% of your project costs. Find out below whether your business is eligible, what you can use the grant for, and how much funding you can apply for.

IS MY BUSINESS ELIGIBLE?

To apply for a Green Business Grant, you must:

- Be a sole trader, social enterprise, partnership or limited company.
- Have been actively trading since 1 April 2026 (i.e. not in administration, insolvent or had a striking off notice made).
- Be based in **and** operating from within the Winchester district. Please see our [Ward Map](#) to confirm you are within district boundaries.
- Be based in a commercial, office, or industrial premises (i.e. not a home-based business).
- Have an independent carbon assessment by a qualified assessor that recommends the project for which you are applying for a grant. Please refer to the Winchester City Council-supported [low carbon assessment programme](#) to arrange an assessment of your business.
- Provide evidence of all required insurance, policies and permissions needed to deliver your project. This includes evidence that planning permission is **not** required, or that an approved planning application is in place. Applications will not be considered unless this evidence is submitted with the application.
- Be able to deliver your project by 31 January 2027.

WHAT CAN THE GRANT BE USED 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.

The grant must be used for capital projects. These are works dedicated to buying, building, repairing or upgrading physical and lasting assets such as buildings, infrastructure or equipment.

Carbon Neutrality Action Plan Pathway	Potential Outcomes & Impacts	Potential Project Activity
Reduce energy consumption	Retrofitting energy efficiency 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
Reduce transport carbon emissions	Active travel to reduce the need to use cars Increase the use of low-emission vehicles Contribute to cleaner air	Electric bike schemes, including shared community e-bikes, bike racks, shelters and repair workshops EV charging points
Increase renewable energy generation / purchase	Increase energy supply resilience Reduce energy costs	Solar photovoltaic panels and batteries
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

HOW MUCH FUNDING CAN I APPLY FOR?

Businesses can apply for up to £3,000 in grant funding. The size of your business will determine how much match funding you will be required to contribute to your total project costs.

Match funding can be sourced from internal reserves, debt finance, private investment or alternative fundraising.

Size of business	Description/criteria	Amount of match funding required
Micro-entity	A business must satisfy two or more of the following requirements: A turnover of £1 million or less £500,000 or less on balance sheet 10 employees or less	10%
Small company	A business must satisfy two or more of the following requirements: A turnover of £15 million or less £7.5 million or less on balance sheet 50 employees or less	25%
Medium company	A business must satisfy two or more of the following requirements: A turnover of £50 million or less £38 million or less on balance sheet 249 employees or less	50%

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Before applying for a Green Business Grant, please consider the following:

- Liability and ongoing costs for any equipment purchased or asset improved must be met by the applicant business. 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 a business in any one financial year.
- We will prioritise applications from businesses 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 all items of expenditure above £2,500. Quotes must be dated within three months of the application submission date. An application will not be considered unless three quotes have been submitted with the application, if required

WHAT CAN'T THE GRANT BE USED FOR?

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 Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund
- Planning fees or permits
- Projects to support community buildings
- Projects to support home based businesses
- Organisations or businesses providing training programmes

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.

Due to the volume of applications, you are not guaranteed to be offered the full sum of the grant you applied for. If this is the case, you will be given the opportunity to withdraw.

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	Clear evidence of need for project (provided through carbon audit/assessment) Demonstration of delivery on one or more of the five pathways set out in the Winchester District Carbon Neutrality Action Plan The EPC rating of the property will be taken into consideration Amount of carbon emissions reduction resulting from project (measured in tCO2e)	50%
Deliverability	Project can be delivered by 31 January 2027 No permissions required Permissions already in place Evidence that measures are in place to evaluate the success of the project against the pathways set out in the Winchester District Carbon Neutrality Action Plan	30%
Grant	A clear description of how the money will be spent on eligible activities Evidence that relevant match funding in place Provision of three quotes, if required	20%

HOW IS THE GRANT AWARDED AND PAID?

The deadline for Green Business Grant applications is 30 September 2026, with decisions according to the grant eligibility and criteria taking place by 14 October 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. All decisions will be communicated by email to businesses. There is no right of appeal.

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

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.

The project must be completed by 31 January 2027. Any cost incurred after this date is ineligible for grant funding.

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 nominated business bank account, as confirmed in the application form. Please ensure that your bank details are correct to minimise delays in payment.

Grant income received by a business is taxable therefore will be subject to tax. Only businesses 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 project costs must be invoiced by 31 January 2027.
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. The council may also contact you to use your grant success in case studies to help future applications and other businesses wishing to reduce their carbon emissions.
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, FRAUD AND DATA PROTECTION

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.

Winchester City Council will not accept deliberate manipulation and fraud. Any business 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 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.

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](#) of businesses to which we have awarded grants.

Please familiarise yourself with Winchester City Council's [Privacy Policy](#) and [Data Protection and Privacy Protocol](#).