Zero Carbon Communities Grant - Guidance notes and criteria

The Zero Carbon Communities Grant Scheme supports communities in South Cambridgeshire to take action on climate change.

All eligible grant applications will be reviewed by the Grants Advisory Committee, who will make recommendations to the lead Cabinet Member for Finance for decision. We aim to let applicants know of the decision within two months of the application deadline.

Applications are invited for projects under two main themes - Carbon emission reduction or locking up carbon and Community engagement on climate change. Applicants are welcome to apply for more than one project, although it should be noted that allocation of funding will take into account the aim of achieving a good spread of funding across the district.

Project proposals will be scored and prioritised for funding based on how well the answers to the questions fulfil the objectives given for each theme. We really want the grant to stimulate wider engagement around what zero carbon means in each local community. Applications that show this are more than just publicity, they are something that will help change behaviour, for example through meetings and surveys, which are likely to be well received. For projects requesting more than £5,000 we would encourage applicants to seek part funding/in kind contributions in order to score highly.

Assessment Criteria

Fit to the project category

One or more of the key objectives for funding must be met:

• Carbon Emission Reduction

• Community Engagement

Measurement and impact

The application must provide a projected measurement for the difference that the project will make. For Carbon Emission Reduction this should be the reduction in CO2e emissions. For Community Engagement this should be the

number of individuals having changed their behaviours as a result, or the difference will the project make to the environment. Projects should communicate the benefits of their project to the community.

Project plan and capacity

The grant panel are looking for a clear project description, identifying what the group wants to do and what the project will achieve. The plan must set out how the project will get the necessary people, support and resources.

Value

Does the project represent value for money – is there a good impact for the amount of money requested?

Project Reporting

Please note that all projects will be required to report on their progress 6 months from the date of project completion. Projects must set out how they will measure and report on how they have met their objectives.

Carbon emission reduction or locking up carbon
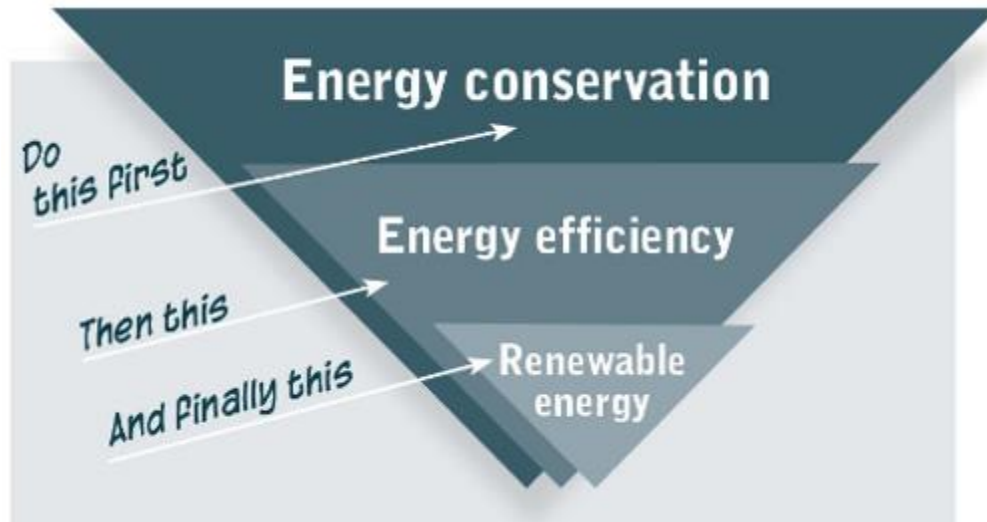
Objectives:

1. The project reduces the production of carbon emissions or reduces carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. (33%)

2. The project contributes additional value (e.g. funding contributions; volunteer time/expertise from other sources; collaboration between organisations, and/or evidence of local and/or Member support; communication of the project to the local community). (33%)

3. The project is sustainable and will have a 'lifetime' impact on the local and wider community. (33%)

Examples:

Community Buildings
Projects which provide improvements to community buildings to reduce its carbon emissions (e.g. the need for grid electricity, gas or oil).

Projects which take a whole-building approach are preferred, considering the 'energy hierarchy' (see below), which ranks the stages of using less energy in a building. We recommend that projects receive an energy survey before applying to the grant.

Credit: Centre for Sustainable Energy

Projects which provide additional value by communicating the value of energy efficiency improvements are recommended.

Advice on planning permissions should be sought before applying for the grant.

Ideas for Community Buildings Projects:

- Energy conservation measures - Draught proofing, insulation of walls, ceilings, roofs, floors and pipes and replacing doors or windows.
- Energy efficiency measures - Lighting upgrades, smart heating control units or infrared heating. We will prioritise these where they have been recommended on an energy survey.
- Solar PV and/or battery storage system for solar PV - feasible energy conservation and efficiency measures must have already been undertaken or be planned to be undertaken. We will prioritise schemes where a significant proportion of electricity generated will be used on-site (either through daytime use of the building or through battery storage).

The value of projects on a community building is much greater if it can be used to raise awareness in the wider public about improvements which can be made to homes and other buildings. We will ask you for your plans to do this, for example by holding an open event, and/or providing an article for your local newsletter.

(For energy improvements to schools, please contact Cambridgeshire County Council's **Re:fit Schools Programme** which arranges energy saving measures for schools funded through loans or managed service arrangements).

Nature

Projects involving tree-planting and other nature-based solutions to help combat climate change and increase biodiversity.

Projects should consider how carbon will be captured from the atmosphere or prevent its release, whilst at the same time creating or restoring natural habitats.

Projects which provide additional value by communicating the value of nature-based solutions are recommended.

When designing the project, we recommend that groups look at Natural Cambridgeshire's **Local Nature Recovery Toolkit** for guidance.

Trees and equipment to plant trees can also be funded, although applicants will be expected to have explored the possibility of obtaining free trees through other sources such as **The Woodland Trust**.

Where tree planting is on private land, consideration must be given to the ways in which the community will benefit, for example by way of access or landscape value. We would also like to see how the trees will be preserved in the future if land ownership changes.

Ideas for nature-based projects

- Planting of a landmark tree/tree populations
- Community orchard project
- Community tree nursery project
- Small-scale restoration of peatland
- Hedge or larger village-wide tree canopy project

Where tree planting is on private land, consideration must be given to the ways in which the community will benefit, for example by way of access or landscape value. We would also like to see how the trees will be preserved in the future if land ownership changes.

Community engagement on climate change

Objectives:

1. Achieving wider community engagement and behaviour change around climate change (33%)
2. Additional value (e.g. funding contributions or contributions in kind, for example, volunteer time/expertise from other sources, collaboration between organisations, and/or evidence of local and/or Member support) (33%)
3. The project is sustainable and will have a 'lifetime' impact on the local and wider community (33%).

In your application, you will be required to provide information on the number of individuals engaged as a result of your project. Further information is provided in the Application Guidance.

In this theme we encourage projects which engage the community on climate change which therefore reduces carbon emissions. We encourage bold, ambitious and imaginative projects that are able to fulfil the above objectives to a high standard.

We want the grant to stimulate wider engagement around what zero carbon means in each local community. Applications showing this is more than just publicity, for example through meetings and surveys, which are likely to be well received.

Information on how to engage with your community on climate change can be found on our **climate emergency and nature webpages**.

Examples

Transport

Projects which engage the community to reduce the reliance on car travel, encouraging walking, cycling and low carbon transport.

Projects which can demonstrate how they will encourage people to walk or cycle more with the installation of structures, as well as the need and demand for the project.

- Community cycling events - funding for events or projects that promote sustainable lifestyle choices, or cycling
- Cycle shelters or stands - Cycling infrastructure improvements which encourage cycling connectivity around the district on publicly

accessible land. The cost of installation can be included. Advice on planning permissions required for the shelter must be sought prior to applying

We cannot fund Electric Vehicle Charging Points through this scheme, but please visit our **sustainable travel page**, or email **zcc@scambs.gov.uk** for more information on Grants available for charging points.

Events, Campaigns and Education

Projects which engage the community to encourage them to reduce their carbon emissions through waste and recycling, diet or interacting with nature.

Projects which can demonstrate how they can engage people and evidence a change in behaviours through volunteering etc.

- Food waste reduction projects - such as recycling or composting campaigns
- Community allotment projects - to encourage people to grow their own food and engage with nature
- Creation or enhancement of a community nature area - to encourage people to engage with biodiversity
- Biodiversity mapping - to encourage people to get out into nature and engage with nature
- Climate Festival - to showcase climate action and engage others to take action

Full list of eligibility criteria

Applicants must:

- Be a non-profit group or organisation based in South Cambridgeshire or benefiting South Cambridgeshire residents, OR a South Cambridgeshire parish council

Non-profit organisations could include registered charities, companies limited by guarantee, unincorporated associations or clubs, community interest companies, charitable incorporated organisations, community benefit societies, social enterprises, established voluntary sector organisations and community shops with an appropriate legal structure (not profit-making).

Schools and any other organisations can apply for a grant for a project which is accessible to the community and not just for educational purposes.

Applications from informal community groups and local businesses are also encouraged provided they partner with an eligible non-profit organisation as listed above. The lead applicant must be the non-profit organisation and as such will be required to demonstrate an appropriate level of involvement in the project. Commercial businesses are **not** eligible to apply.

- Have a written constitution or mission statement
- Have an elected committee or representative steering group
- Have a bank account
- Be able to provide an up-to-date copy of their accounts and any relevant protection policies. Parish councils can signpost us to relevant online documentation and do not need to submit hard copies

If your organisation does not have a written constitution, bank account, mission statement and/or relevant protection policies/insurance, please contact Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service for advice in meeting these requirements. For more information call **01223 464696** or email **enquiries@cambridgecvs.org.uk**

How much can be applied for?

Applications are invited for a minimum of £1,000 and up to £15,000 per project.

How will the grant be paid?

A funding agreement will be prepared for all successful applicants. This will include arrangements for payment of the grant.

What we fund

As well as capital costs we can fund:

- Salaries of project workers
- Salaries of management staff who supervise project staff. These should be in proportion to the staff time spent on the project
- Reasonable expenses of project staff and volunteers
- Marketing and publicity for the project (as appropriate)

We cannot pay for the following:

- Activities, events or services which have already taken place, including staff development time
- Activities that benefit individuals, rather than the wider community
- Activities that generate profits for private gain

- Religious activity or content (although we are able to fund religious organisations if they are providing benefit for the wider community)
- Activities that replace or supplement government funding (for example, we can only fund school activities that are additional to the curriculum)
- Renewable energy installations where it is intended to claim Renewable Heat Incentive payments or any other payments where the use of public grants renders the installation ineligible for such payments
- Loan repayments

Where funds allocated through the scheme can be spent on local businesses this is welcomed.

What are the conditions of funding?

Organisations that are awarded a grant will be expected to comply with the following conditions as a minimum:

- Funding must only be used for the agreed purpose and must be spent within 12-months of the award being made except where exceptional circumstances apply, and an extension is agreed with the grants officer in writing
- Where a proposal anticipates financial savings or income, the applicant will need to show this will be for the benefit of the community
- Publicity must take place acknowledging the award provided by South Cambridgeshire District Council
- Any unused grant must be returned to South Cambridgeshire District Council
- An end of project report with photographs must be submitted to the Council within six months of project completion

Applicants are encouraged to seek support for their application from their local Member.

Applicants are encouraged to read case studies of ZCC funded projects published in our Zero Carbon Communities newsletters. If you would like any help or advice from our previous applicants, please email **zcc@scambs.gov.uk** for more details.

Where appropriate, applicants are encouraged to seek part-funding from other sources including their parish council. There is no requirement for this, but if as expected, the fund is oversubscribed, proposals including funding

from other sources will be prioritised. Part-funding can include your own fundraising and can be of monetary and/or in-kind value.

Applicants seeking less than £1,000 are encouraged to apply to the **Community Chest** for funding if the project involves improvements to community buildings, group 'start-up' costs or the purchase of equipment or materials.

What supporting documentation is required?

- A copy of your organisation's constitution or mission statement (except parish councils)
- A copy of your latest accounts (audited if available)
- A quote for the project

Guidance notes

A - Contact details

The first contact should be someone from your organisation who can discuss the application. This would normally be the person responsible for how any grant would be used. Please provide a telephone number and email address to enable us to contact you if there are queries relating to your application.

B – About your organisation

1. What does your organisation do?

This should be a summary of the work your organisation does rather than the project you want a grant for. Please give a brief account of the aim of your organisation, the services or activities you provide, who they are provided for. If you are a new group, please state what you intend to achieve. For community groups, please tell us how many people use the services you provide?

2. Is your organisation a charity?

If yes, please provide your charity number. This can be found on the **gov.uk website.**

3. Is your organisation VAT registered?

If yes, please provide your **registration number** and confirm if your organisation will be able to recover the VAT incurred in relation to the project?

If no, is your organisation still able to recover VAT incurred in relation to the project?

The following organisations may be able to use a VAT126 form to recover the VAT incurred from non-business activities (even if not VAT registered):

- local authorities or similar bodies such as parish councils
- academy schools or multi-academy trusts (MAT)
- charities in palliative care, air ambulance, medical or search and rescue
- a non-departmental body or similar body not registered for VAT

4. Does your organisation have a bank account?

If no, please note your application will not be eligible for funding until a bank account is set up.

To receive funding for your group you will need to open a bank account. Having a bank account is the best and safest way to look after your organisation's money. The account should be opened in the name of your organisation and you will need at least two members to act as signatories. Most **banks and building societies** offer special accounts for small voluntary and community organisations. They also usually offer free banking as long as your account is in credit.

5. Does your organisation have a website?

If yes, please provide the full weblink.

This is the website address of your organisation, or the website address for the project if there is one.

6. Is your organisation affiliated to another body?

If yes, please give details of any national or local bodies to which your organisation belongs.

7. Safeguarding. Does your organisation work with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults?

If yes, please upload a copy of your safeguarding policy using the upload feature at the end of this form.

Please note, the Council requires organisations working with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults to have appropriate safeguarding

procedures in place. If you do not have a safeguarding policy, please visit the **CCVS support webpage** for Community and Voluntary groups

8. Insurance. Does your organisation have appropriate insurance in place for your project?

If not, we would recommend you have **adequate insurance** in place for your project.

C - About your proposal

C1 Carbon emission reduction or locking up carbon.

1. Please provide a short summary of your project (max 50 words) then in the next section, describe your project.

2. Please describe your project.

3. Please provide the location of your proposed project, how is the land/building currently used

Please provide a postcode or the easting and northing of the project. This can be found using the **grid reference finding website**.

4. Please provide details of the ownership of the land/building.

If your organisation does not own the land, please state if you have written landowner permission for the measures to be undertaken. If you have written permission, please provide a copy of this in your supporting information. If you have not, please note that we will require written permission from the landowner before funding your project. If there is a lease in place there must be at least 21 years left to run on the lease. Please provide a copy of this in your supporting information.

5. What, if any, actions to reduce carbon emissions or lock up carbon, have already been undertaken by your group?

This could be measures to promote energy conservation, install energy efficiency measures, plant trees etc.

6. Have you obtained any expert advice on your proposal?

If yes, please give details.

Are your proposals informed by an energy survey or advice from a specialist consultant (for example, an ecologist). If the measures have been suggested

as the result of a formal report, please include a copy of this (upload at end).

7. Please provide information, using the guidance below, on the carbon savings resulting from your project.

Please provide the projected carbon savings. If the measures have been suggested as the result of an energy survey, please include a copy of this in the appendix, and the projected reduction in CO_2e emissions below. If you did not receive an energy survey, please calculate the projected reductions in CO_2e emissions using your own calculations, or the calculations suggested below. Alternatively, please refer to our webpage for more information on how to calculate your organisation's carbon footprint or the Carbon Trust's **carbon footprinting guide**.

Community buildings
To calculate your reduction in carbon emissions you will need to refer to energy bills from the past year.

1. Calculate how much energy you have used this year using the example below.

4582 – 1345 = 3237kWh

Nov 2021 usage: 4582kWh

Nov 2020 usage: 1345kWh

2. Multiply your annual usage by the conversion factor* of 0.233 to work out the annual carbon emissions produced.

3237 x 0.233 = 754.22kgCO$_2$e

3. Multiply your projected annual usage by the conversion factor of 0.233 to work out the projected annual carbon emissions.

2237 x 0.233 = 521.22kgCO$_2$e

4. Minus your projected annual carbon emissions produced from your current annual carbon emissions to calculate your annual savings

754.22 - 521.22 = 233kgCO$_2$e

*This is the conversion factor provided by the UK Government

Solar Panels

For this calculation you will need the projected size of your solar panel installation e.g. 4kW

1. Multiply your system by 2.343* for the kWh per day produced

4 x 2.343 = 9.372kWh

2. Multiply kWh per day produced by 365 for the annual kWh.

9.372 x 365 = 3,420.78kWh

3. Multiply by the conversion factor of 0.233 to calculate the CO$_2$e saved per year.

3,420.78 x 0.233 = 797.04kgCO$_2$e

 *Factors taken from data from Solar Together Cambridgeshire Scheme

Nature

Please include number and sizes of trees to be planted, with their associated estimated carbon savings (these can be estimates) and the benefit they will provide to wildlife. Please include a sketch or planting plan for your project (upload at end).

A useful guide on calculating the carbon savings of your tree project can be found on **The Woodland Carbon Code website** under the 'Accounting for project carbon sequestration' section.

8. Have you got experience in delivering similar projects?

If yes, please give details.

9. Are you working with any other organisations on this project?

If yes, please give details.

Are there any other organisations directly involved with delivering this project? If so, how are the project work streams divided? Include any

evidence that working in partnership on this project will contribute more widely to strengthening community networks.

10. Please indicate how the changes that you make through the project will be lasting and sustainable.

What resources will you have for maintenance once the project is completed? (e.g. how will volunteer programmes be sustained?) What are the long-term prospects for the site? i.e. tree maintenance or ensuring proper usage of community building energy measures by the people using the hall. Please demonstrate how your project fits with the priorities and action plans of and/or your local parish/neighbourhood plan.

11. What additional value do *you* think your project provides?

Please provide details of any co-benefits resulting from your project.

12. How will your project be communicated to the local community and wider?

Please explain how you will share the details of your project with your local community and wider i.e. through a presentation to your parish council, through social media, through a newsletter.

C2 Community engagement on climate change

1. Please provide a short summary of your project, (max 50 words). then in next section, describe your project.

2. Please describe your project.

3. How will the project achieve community engagement and behaviour change around climate change?

How will the project promote behaviour change in reducing carbon emissions?

- How has the community been involved in drawing up these proposals?
- What difference will the project make to your community?
- How will your project inspire and encourage others to do similar projects?

Further guidance can be found on the Council's **climate emergency toolkit webpages**.

4. How many people are expected to make a difference in their lives as a result of the project?

Please ensure that this is more than how many people are expected to attend sessions.

- How many people are expected to volunteer or get involved with running the project?
- What plans are there for community involvement in the project in future?

5. How many people will be exposed to your project?

How many people do you expect to engage on a superficial level i.e. How many people will you reach through social media? How many people have attended your events in the past? How much traffic does your website get?

6. Have you experience in delivering similar projects?

If yes, please give details

7. Are you working with any other organisations on this project?

If yes, please give details

Are there any other organisations directly involved with delivering this project? If so, how are the project work streams divided? In particular include any evidence that working in partnership on this project will contribute more widely to strengthening community networks.

8. Please indicate how the changes that you make through the project will be lasting and sustainable

What resources will you have for maintenance once the project is completed? (e.g. how will volunteer programmes be sustained?)? How will you ensure that people remain engaged on the topic of climate change? Please demonstrate how your project fits with the priorities and action plans of your local parish/neighbourhood plan.

9. What additional value do *you* think your project provides?

Please provide details of any co-benefits resulting from your project.

D - Financing your project

Projects requesting more than £5,000 are advised to demonstrate that they have additional funding/in kind contributions or support from other organisations in order to score highly.

1. Is your parish council able to contribute part-funding for your project?

If yes, please give details

We encourage you to approach your **parish council**, especially if it is one of the larger parish councils, for part-funding of any applications you make. They may have a local fund available for small projects, or monies from building developments (s106) that could be used for your project. Applications with part-funding in place will be looked upon favourably.

2. Do you hope to have other sources of funding?

If yes, please give details

This could include part-funding through your own fundraising, other grants or sponsorship. Please list other funders to whom you are applying, detailing when you submitted your application, or plan to, and a date by which you should be informed of the decision. If any applications were refused, please provide details. If there is a shortfall in funding, what steps will you take to overcome this?

3. Please give a breakdown of project costs.

Please give as much detail as possible and include ALL costs. The breakdown should be for the whole cost and not just the amount you are asking for funding for. Please make it clear what part of the project you are specifically asking for funding for and ensure that the amount you are requesting related directly to at least one of your quotes. If you do not provide accurate information, this may jeopardise your application's success.

4. What is the total project cost?

This should be the total cost of the project, including parts of it that others will be funding. Please use net cost figures if your organisation is able to reclaim VAT or if the VAT is not payable for any reason, and gross cost figures if you are unable to reclaim VAT. You should also include any in-kind contributions to the total project cost figure to give a full account of the

whole scheme. The figure should be entered as a whole number, **without** commas or a decimal point.

5. How much are you asking for from the Zero Carbon Communities grant?

This can be up to 100% of project costs. Please use net cost figures if your organisation is able to reclaim VAT or if the VAT is not payable for any reason, and gross cost figures if you are unable to reclaim VAT. You should also include any in-kind contributions to the total project cost figure to give a full account of the whole scheme. The figure should be entered as a whole number, **without** commas or a decimal point

E - Reporting and Measurement

1. How will your project measure and report on its progress after 6 months?

Please provide details on how the project will measure and report on its progress and outcomes.

F - Support from your District Councillor

1. Is your District Councillor in favour of the project?

Please give details. We encourage applicants to inform their **district councillors** about their project.

Contact Details

- **zcc@scambs.gov.uk**