

GUIDANCE NOTE AND CRITERIA

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY WHEN COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION

Section 1: Contact Details

Please ensure this section is completed in full and that a copy of the group's Constitution or Memorandum and Articles is attached along with a copy of the most recent independently examined accounts.

Section 2: Details of the Project

The Garioch Area Initiative Fund for 2025/26 has been set at £26,600, and can be used to support the following Themes:

Theme	
1. Improving the appearance and maintenance of towns	£26,600
2. Stronger and Empowered Communities	
3. Healthier Communities	
4. Connected Communities	

Themes 2-4 are aligned to Community Planning themes and are designed to allow applicants to take an outcome-focussed approach when planning projects and local interventions. Applicants should seek to achieve the following local outcomes as linked to one or more of these themes and where applicable to a Community Action Plan:

Improving the Appearance and Maintenance of Towns and Villages within Garioch

- Improve the attractiveness of Garioch as a place to live, invest, work and visit.
- Improve residents' aspirations, confidence, decision-making capacity and involvement in community life.
- Improve the physical environment and infrastructure of Garioch including energy efficiency measures.

Stronger and Empowered Communities: Support and empower the people of Garioch to develop and deliver a vision for their local area, by delivering Place Based Community Plans, to ensure their communities are well informed, involved in decision-making and take a responsibility in delivery of local actions and priorities, to help form stronger and resilient communities through the contribution of volunteers and to enable communities feel empowered and enabled.

Healthier Communities: Support and empower the people of Garioch to reduce in inequalities in health outcomes between communities, to protect and support public health, community mental health and physical wellbeing and build community resilience, to ensure greater community partnership working, increasing the ability of individuals and groups to influence matters affecting them and their communities and to increase participation in quality wellbeing activity.

Connected Communities: Support and empower the people of Garioch to reduce loneliness and social isolation, to provide active travel routes that are easy and safe to access, to improve transport provision to healthcare and wellbeing activities, to challenge inequality, social exclusion, rural isolation, and vulnerability and provide greater opportunity to connect digitally to reduce commuting, access services and encourage commercial and social enterprise.

For the avoidance of doubt, Festive lights will not be supported from the Area Initiative Fund, consideration can be given to a Small Grant fund application

Area Initiative Fund

Funding for projects meeting the above criteria, must also meet the following eligibility criteria: -

- Amount must not exceed 50% of the total project.
- Maximum grant of £4,000 available
- Grants must be claimed in the financial year in which they are awarded.
- The balance of the funding must be in place.

Funding for Energy Efficiency Measures

Funding applications for Energy Efficiency Measures require to meet the following eligibility criteria:

- This fund is available to support Community Facilities in Garioch to reduce energy overheads and increase the use of energy efficient measures.
- An energy assessment must be carried out by a recognised body and funding will only be available for energy saving measures identified in this assessment.
- Any Constituted Group with a responsibility for Community Facilities in Garioch may apply. (The Fund is not available to individuals or private organisations operating as a profit-making business)
- Applicants can source 50% of the total cost from this fund to a maximum of £4,000.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that any permissions e.g. planning consent, landlord / building owner approval is sought before any work takes place.

2.1 Project Plan

Please provide details of the person/s responsible for managing the project, start and finish date, key milestones such as when the project is likely to be operational and key risks such as what will happen if additional funds cannot be secured.

2.2 Outcomes

Applicants should detail the outcomes the project hopes to achieve and explain how these relate to the chosen theme or themes.

2.3 Community Support

Applicants should include evidence of need and strong community support for the project.

2.4 Maintenance Arrangements

Applicants should demonstrate how any maintenance arrangements will be sustained in the long term.

2.5 Is this a new or an existing activity?

If this is existing activity applicants should be clear about the outcomes already achieved from the project, number of years in existence, etc.

2.6 How many people are likely to benefit from the project?

Please give an indication of the number of people who will benefit from this project. If possible, applicants should seek to provide demographic information.

2.7 Does the project demonstrate partnership working?

Does your project involve other groups or partners?

2.8 Is your project aimed specifically at any of the following protected characteristics?

Everyone is protected by the Equality Act. Every person has one or more of the protected characteristics, so the Act protects all of us against unfair treatment.

Please indicate if your project is specifically aimed at promoting positive attitudes, equality and diversity and eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation in any of the nine protected characteristics.

Section 3: Project Costs

Please ensure all sections are complete.

Applications will be limited to 50% towards the total cost of a project, to a maximum of £4,000.

Payment will be made retrospectively on proof of payment such as receipted invoices. Payment will be made by BACS transfer to a group's bank account. **The money awarded must be spent, and receipts sent to the Area Manager's Office, by March 2026.**

To enable the money to be spent within the agreed timescale, the project **must** have the balance of funding in place, or it will not be eligible.

3.1 Previous funding from Area Committee Funding

Please give details of any Area Committee funding you have received in the past three years.

3.2 Other funding applied for:

Please give details of other funding you have applied for. The project will not be eligible for funding if the balance is not in place.

Section 4: Organisation Finance:

Please submit a copy of your most recent independently examined accounts (bank statements are not sufficient) and ensure the application is signed by one of the group's office bearers.

Additional Information

This scheme will be advertised widely by the Area Manager's Team.

Successful applicants will be required to provide a short report which should be outcome-focussed and detail how the Outcomes described in Section 2 of your application form have been achieved.

Eligibility is limited to properly constituted groups with an annual turnover of less than £250,000 per annum. Applications which are solely or substantially for individual benefit will not be considered.

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