

St Helens Borough Council

2021/22 Climate Emergency Response Fund: Guidance Notes



Please read this information carefully as it will support with your application.

Introduction

St Helens Borough Council declared a Climate Change Emergency at a meeting of full Council on 10th July 2019 and through this committed to address the ecological and climate crisis that is faced.

The Council is keen to play its full part in addressing the challenges faced by the declaration of the climate emergency. As a result, committed to achieving zero-carbon status by 2040.

Who can apply?

Applications are encouraged from local SME's and community organisations who wish to reduce their carbon footprint and support the Council on its journey to net zero by 2040.

A total of £120,000 is available 2021/22, split into two streams:

Stream 1: Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SME's)

- Less than 250 employees
- Locally based with their Head Office located in St Helens

Applicants able to apply for up to £10,000.

Stream 2: Community organisations. Examples include:

- Charities
- Voluntary groups
- Faith groups
- Residents associations
- 'Friends of' groups

Applicants able to apply for up to £5,000.

What type of projects can be supported?

Capital projects that tackle the climate emergency by delivering quantifiable carbon benefits (upfront capital funding will be supported but ongoing revenue costs will not

be funded).

Examples include but are not limited to:

- **Renewable energy projects**
Use of renewable forms of energy e.g. Solar PV and/or battery storage systems for solar PV.
- **Energy efficiency projects**
Reduce consumption, lighting upgrades or smart heating control units.
- **Zero or low carbon transport**
Improvement to cycling infrastructure or a project to promote cycling.
- **Recycling and reuse projects**
Including but not limited to increasing material that can be recycled and extending the lifetime of materials through re-use or refurbishment.
- **Empower local community to promote a culture of sustainable living**
Community initiatives that promote sustainable lifestyle choices.
- **Support biodiversity and ecological change**
Tree planting in small open spaces, creation of pocket parks or a community allotment project.
- **Increase community composting**
Provide support to residents without gardens, set up schemes in parks, allotments and community gardens.

Education and community involvement are key considerations.

What cannot be supported?

- Anything that does not respond to the Climate Emergency
- Ongoing revenue or maintenance costs
- Any costs incurred when putting together an application
- Loans or interest payments
- Anything party political, including supporting political organisations
- Anything solely for religious purposes
- Lobbying against Council policy
- Anything that will bring the Council into disrepute
- Anything contrary to the Council's financial regulations or Council policies
- Anything illegal

- Any organisations planning to use funding to hand out separate grants to other people or organisations
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Selection Criteria

Like any funding, there is a certain general criteria which this fund seeks to support, including but not limited to:

- Reducing carbon emissions or adapting to climate change and the environment.
 - Benefits to the local community.
 - Development of awareness in environmental issues.
 - Lasting benefits and long-term impacts.
 - Reducing impacts on the environment, particularly regarding climate change.
 - Ensuring funded projects benefit the wider St Helens community.
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Conditions of funding

Organisations that are awarded funding 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 by 31st March 2022. In the event the funding is used for purposes other than those set out in the offer letter, the Council reserves the right to withdraw the funding at any time and recover money previously paid.
- Only one project can be funded per establishment.
- At least two quotations or robust cost estimates must be submitted for each item of expenditure.
- Information needs to be captured relating to the reduction of CO2 emissions and levels of CO2 saved.
- For all projects, if the applicant is not the proprietor of the premises (building/land), it is their responsibility to obtain the owner's permission.

- Upfront capital funding will be supported. However, any on-going revenue/maintenance costs must be met by the organisations and not covered by St Helens Borough Council.
 - Any unused funding must be returned to St Helens Borough Council.
 - An end of project report with photographs must be submitted to the Council within three months of project completion.
 - There is an expectation that the project will continue, and any on-going expenses will be met by the organisations.
 - All projects will be required to evidence delivery and form part of a wider co-ordinated communications campaign focusing on how the borough is acting on climate change and delivering against the climate emergency commitments.
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Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

All submissions will be evaluated using a point scoring system and the following will be considered:

- Delivering greenhouse gas reduction benefits
- Assessment of local impact, innovation and value for money
- Match funding from applicant
- Confidence in the delivery of the project by 31st March 2022
- Confidence in the scope and costs of the project
- Compliance with financial regulations and all legal requirements
- Ensuring transparency, openness, non-discrimination and fair competition
- Supporting the Council's Corporate Vision and Priorities (including Create green and vibrant places that reflect our heritage and culture)

All applications will be assessed against the following weightings using the scoring criteria below. All scores are out of 100. The higher the prioritisation score, the higher priority the project is for investment.

Area:

- Strategic fit (20%)
- Value for money (30%)
- Deliverability (30)
- Outputs (20%)

Score:

- 0: Failure to respond or irrelevant information which fails to meet the requirement.
- 1: Response is unsatisfactory, only partially meets the requirement.
- 2: Response is acceptable and meets the minimum requirement.
- 3: Response is good, exceeds the requirement and gives added value.

The application process will be competitive and potentially all good quality applications will not receive funding.

The Council reserves the right to request further information to assist with the assessment of applications.

Timescales

All applicants will be required to complete an application form containing a project overview, aims, timeline, outcomes, and breakdown of expenditure.

Project application forms will be available from 28th June with bids to then be prepared and submitted by 8th August.

After the closing date, applications will be reviewed and scored. Applicants may be contacted by E-mail or telephone to provide additional evidence to support the application.

Due to the expected number of submissions, individual feedback and scores cannot be provided.

Funded projects must start by 1st October 2021 and completed by the end of March 2022.

Shortlisted projects

Project proposals will be scored and prioritised for funding based on how well the answers to the questions fulfil the objectives and criteria.

All successful projects will be subject to due diligence to confirm they are deliverable and to ensure that the relevant organisation has obtained all the necessary approvals.

A funding agreement will be prepared for all successful applicants which commits both parties to the funding and delivery agreements.

Organisations will have up to 10 working days to return the signed agreement,

provide bank account details and any further information requested.

How to apply:

Apply via the Council's online webpage - www.sthelens.gov.uk/climatechange

For further information E-mail – climatechange@sthelens.gov.uk