

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

'Making a Difference in East Ayrshire Communities'

ALERT



21 November 2025

Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – Hidden Voices Programme

UK registered charities, CICs and local authorities can apply for grants of up to £25,000 to support that enable accessible, bespoke mental health and wellbeing support for those with seldom heard needs in the armed forces community.

The funding is for projects that meet both of the following outcomes:

- Those who are underrepresented, or whose voices are seldom heard, within the armed forces community, have equitable access to mental health and wellbeing support which meets their specific needs.
- Awareness of the needs of underrepresented groups within the armed forces community has been raised among organisations supporting them, through mutual learning and knowledge exchange to embed best practice.

The project should be focused on supporting either serving personnel, veterans or their families or carers who are 'seldom heard', to access defined or bespoke mental health and wellbeing support.

Potential beneficiaries may include, for example:

- Individuals from ethnic minorities
- Carers
- People with disabilities
- Members of the LGBT+ community
- Those for whom English is an additional language
- People from Foreign and Commonwealth communities
- Other members of the armed forces community with seldom-heard needs

The funding can be used for most things need to run the project or activity, including people's time, costs of delivering work online or buying/hiring equipment. It can support new projects as well as the continuation or expansion of existing work which offers collaborative approaches to support under-served cohorts. Both local and regional projects are eligible to apply.

The deadline for applications is 21 January 2026.

[Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust - Hidden Voices Programme](#)

Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – VALOUR Recognised Centres Development Fund

As part of the UK Government's new Veterans Strategy aimed at improving access to services for former Armed Forces personnel, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) has launched the new £50 million VALOUR Recognised Centres (VRCs) Development Fund designed to connect veterans with health, housing, employment, and welfare support.

The funding is for existing organisations or consortiums to provide a set of fixed services, including health, housing and employment guidance and support.

Projects need to deliver all of the following outcomes:

- Help reduce the postcode lottery by delivering more equity of access and a level of consistency in service quality.
- Enhance collaboration and coordination within your area between statutory and non-statutory organisations.
- Help improve understanding of need through sharing data and information on veterans and the wider armed forces community.

There is a total fund of £50 million spread across two funding rounds:

- Round 1 offers grants of between £500,000 and £1 million to support projects delivered over a period of three years.
- Round 2 offers grants of up to £500,000 (with a possibility for some areas to potentially be able to apply for grants of £1 million too) for projects delivered over a period of up to three years. (Note: Round 2 is subject to confirmation.)

Applications will be accepted from registered charities, CICs, and local government bodies.

The funding is for centres that:

- Address a specific need for veterans (year one) and the wider armed forces community (year two and three).
- Have a physical space for beneficiaries to attend.
- Are accessible a minimum of four days a week and with processes in place to support beneficiaries when the centre is not open.
- Can make a significant difference to people's lives and meet the fund's requirements.
- Can show that the award will have longer term sustainable benefits that will have an ongoing legacy in the event that funding ends.

The funding can be used for most of the things needed for the project or activity, including people's time, costs of delivering work online or buying/hiring equipment.

The deadline for applications to round one is 14 January 2026.

[Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust - VALOUR Recognised Centres Development Fund](#)

Energy Saving Trust – Energy Redress Scheme

Community energy groups, including co-operatives, community benefit societies and community interest companies, are now eligible to apply for grants through the Main and Small Funds, alongside registered charities. Funding will support projects that help households most at risk from cold homes and high energy bills.

The scheme also prioritises projects that develop innovative energy related products or services and empower people to reduce their carbon emissions, through the Innovation and Carbon Emissions Reduction Funds.

The funding streams available are:

- Main Fund – aimed at projects seeking grants between £50,000 and £2 million that will support households in vulnerable situations.
- Impact Fund – aimed at projects monitoring the impact to households, of energy advice and other interventions. Applicants can apply for grants between £20,000 and £500,000.
- Small Project Fund – aimed at projects seeking grants between £20,000 and £49,999 that will support households in vulnerable situations.
- Innovation Fund – aimed at projects that will develop innovative products or services to benefit households. Applicants can apply for grants between £20,000 and £1 million.
- Carbon Emissions Reduction Fund – aimed at projects that will reduce UK carbon emissions and empower households to reduce their carbon footprint. Applicants can apply for grants between £20,000 and £1 million.
- Just Transition Fund – aimed at projects that will develop community renewable energy which will benefit energy consumers in vulnerable situations. Applicants can apply for grants between £20,000 and £250,000.

Applications are accepted from registered charities, Community Interest Companies (CICs), Community Benefit Societies and Cooperative Societies in England, Scotland and Wales that are registered with the Energy Redress Scheme and have passed the due diligence process.

Only one application can be made per round across all the funds.

The deadline for applications is 2 December 2025.

[Energy Saving Trust - Energy Redress Scheme](#)

Historic Environment Scotland – Heritage and Place Programme

Grants to not-for-profit organisations, local authorities, and national parks across Scotland to deliver community-led regeneration of the historic environment, supporting the development of vibrant and sustainable communities and places.

Funding is for projects that meet the following objectives:

- Enable communities to prioritise investment in local historic environment assets.
- Renew communities' sense of place and appreciation of their local historic environment.
- Strengthen the resilience of local historic environment assets and build the capacity of communities to look after them.

- Establish a sustainable foundation of traditional skills for the local community.
- Contribute to climate action outcomes for the historic environment.
- Result in sustainable and inclusive benefits for the local economy.

Funding can be used to cover activities and costs such as:

- Repair and resilience capital projects that may involve the reuse of historic environment assets. These will be facilitated through the awarding of third-party grants to the asset owners or long-term leaseholders and will only provide support for repairs using appropriate techniques and materials.
- Traditional skills training and materials activities that target local needs.
- Community heritage activities.
- Developing a management and maintenance strategy to include activities that will help to build capacity within communities to value and look after the historic environment for the longer term.

While no set value can be applied for, development phase grants will typically be up to 50% of the total costs. Delivery phase grants will typically range between £750,000 and £1.5 million, depending on the project size and match funding.

There is a two-stage application process, wherein groups must submit an Expression of Interest before being invited to complete a full application.

The deadline to submit an Expression of Interest is 16 January 2026.

[Historic Environment Scotland - Heritage and Place Programme](#)

Inspiring Scotland – Improving Access Fund

Not-for-profit organisations in Scotland that currently deliver disabled people-led activity can apply for support through the Improving Access Fund. The funding, provided by the Scottish Government and administered by Inspiring Scotland, supports the delivery of the Scottish Government's Disability Equality Plan.

The Fund aims to advance equality for disabled people by funding peer-led initiatives that follow the social model of disability. It seeks to strengthen financial support for disabled households, promote inclusion and improve mental health outcomes. A total of £1.5 million is available through the fund. Incorporated groups can apply for up to £80,000, while unincorporated volunteer-led groups can seek up to £5,000.

Applications will be prioritised from organisations supporting disabled people in rural or island communities, those representing marginalised disabled people facing multiple barriers and Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) run and controlled by disabled people.

Eligible applicants include:

- Constituted community groups.
- Trusts.
- Companies Limited by Guarantee.
- Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisations (SCIOs).
- Community Benefit Societies.

- Co-operative Societies.
- Community Interest Companies (CICs) with an asset lock and a strong board or advisory group with relevant expertise.

Funding will support revenue costs for existing activity that extends reach, increases participation or strengthens delivery and may cover small capital costs to improve accessibility or digital inclusion.

The deadline for applications is 19 January 2026.

[Inspiring Scotland - Improving Access Fund](#)

Lintel Trust – Small Grants Programme

Small, registered charities and community groups working in Scotland can apply for grants of either £500 or £1,000.

To be eligible, applicants must have:

- A close connection to a housing association, housing co-operative or local authority.
- An annual turnover under £500,000.
- Equal Opportunities and Protecting Vulnerable People policies in place.

The funding is intended to support projects with a housing focus that will deliver positive outcomes for beneficiaries in Scotland under the following aims:

- Tackling social isolation in housing communities.
- Promoting digital participation in housing communities.
- Enabling older people to remain independent and in their own home.
- Enabling people with disabilities to live independently.
- Assisting people moving from homelessness into a secure tenancy.

Applications are considered quarterly.

The next deadline is 4 February 2026.

[Lintel Trust - Small Grants Programme](#)

National Deaf Children's Society – Community Grants

Grants of between £1,000 and £10,000 for community groups, charities, and other not-for-profit organisations across the UK to deliver projects and activities that support early years deaf children (aged 0 to 5) and their families.

The Community Grants Programme will support projects that both directly and indirectly support early years deaf children, such as play schemes, peer-to-peer support for parents, or schemes to train deaf young people as role models for younger children. Proposed projects should also achieve at least one of the following objectives:

- Deaf children and their families can access relevant support to meet their needs within their communities.

- Families have access to peer support and guidance from others who are currently in, or have previously experienced, a similar situation.
- Families are supported to build confidence and skills to aid their deaf child's development, including providing knowledge and support specific to the child's needs.
- Families have access to deaf mentors/role models and a wider visibility of deaf adults. This can include empowering young deaf people to develop skills and confidence to become deaf role models and volunteers.
- Deaf children and young people have opportunities to make friends with one another, explore their deaf identity, and feel part of a community.
- Deaf children develop their communication skills through regular and consistent language exposure, interaction, and practice.
- Professionals working with deaf children, including in education and care, have the information they need to support deaf children and have high aspirations for them.

Each grant is for 12 months and is intended to cover the essential running costs of a project, such as venue hire, transport, promotional costs, wages for sessional workers, and equipment.

Applications can be submitted at any time.

[National Deaf Children's Society - Community Grants](#)

Paul Hamlyn Foundation – Ideas and Pioneers Fund

Grants of up to £20,000 for up to 18 months are available for individuals, groups and small organisations to explore a new idea for social change that has the potential to transform the way things are currently done within the UK. Their ideas should be 'bold and brave', have a charitable purpose and be:

- **Challenging injustice.** Ideas should show a clear vision to help build a better society and contribute to shifting power and challenging and transforming the root causes of systemic oppression. There is interest in ideas working at a local level as those working at a national level.
- **Emerging.** The funding is for ideas that are still forming. Applicants need to have a clear sense of the learning and experimenting they need to do to progress their idea.
- **Long-term potential** - ideas with a long-term impact.

The funding can support a number of things, including but not limited to research to develop the idea; gathering evidence for a campaign, bringing people or communities together to build power, and paying the applicant or others to deliver these activities.

Applications will be accepted from:

- Individuals.
- Groups or collectives working together (it is not a requirement to be a registered organisation).
- Organisations of any legal structure with a turnover of under £150,000.

Priority is given to people aged 18–30, however, consideration is given to applications from those aged 30 years and older. Pre-application access support and a bursary of up to £750 are available.

The deadline for applications is 2 December 2025.

[Paul Hamlyn Foundation - Ideas and Pioneers Fund](#)

Rosa – Voices from the Frontline

Grants of up to £10,000 to women's and girls' organisations to support campaigning and influencing work that enables women and girls in the UK to use their voices to achieve change. The campaigns could be targeted at local communities, the general public, local or national government, media, service providers or businesses.

To be eligible, organisations need to:

- Have identified the issue they want to campaign on.
- Have an understanding of their intended audience.
- Be ready to start, or have started, their campaign.
- Secure resources to support their campaigning and influencing work.

The work funded should strengthen the organisation's skills and experience in campaigning, activism and/or advocacy and influence power holders in the UK.

Applications will be accepted from not-for-profit women's and girls' organisations in the UK that have been active for at least one year and can produce annual accounts for an entire year.

Priority will be given to the following organisations, not listed in priority order, that are:

- Operating in the top 20% of the most disadvantaged areas in the UK based on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).
- Based in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.
- Led by and for Black and minoritised women and girls.
- Led by and for disabled women.
- Led by and for LGBTQ+ women and girls.

Applicants will be notified of decisions by the end of March 2026 and will have up to 18 months to spend their grant.

Rosa will be hosting a 'How to Apply' webinar on 27 November (14:00 to 15:00). Registration is required and can be done on Rosa's website.

The deadline for the online application and three minute video is 9 December 2025.

[Rosa - Voices from the Frontline](#)

Weir Charitable Trust

Grants of up to £25,000 to small charities and community groups across Scotland with an annual income of less than £150,000 to deliver projects and activities that improve the quality of life for local communities.

The Trust will support projects and activities that fall within the following categories:

- Sport - Projects to encourage and increase public participation in sport (eligible activities should involve physical skill and exertion).
- Recreational facilities - Providing or organising recreational facilities (buildings, pitches or similar) to improve the conditions of life for the people for whom the facilities are primarily intended. This is

only in relation to facilities which are primarily intended for people who need them due to age, ill health, disability, financial hardship, or another disadvantage.

- Animal welfare - The advancement of animal welfare.
- Health - The advancement of health, including prevention or relief of sickness, disease, or human suffering.
- Culture - Supporting the heritage - tangible or otherwise - of Scotland, through projects that encourage participation in and preservation of Scotland's distinctive culture.

Examples of eligible activities and costs are as follows:

- Capital projects (such as equipment, fixtures, fittings, and refurbishments).
- One-off projects.
- Running costs.
- Core costs.
- Salaries.

Priority will be given to groups and charities that may have faced challenges in accessing funds from other sources.

Applications are considered quarterly.

The next deadline for applications is 6 February 2026.

[Weir Charitable Trust](#)

East Ayrshire Council Community Grant

The next deadline for applications is 13 February 2026

[East Ayrshire Council Community Grant](#)

Renewable Energy Fund

To check the next deadline for applications please contact Democratic Services at Council HQ on 01563 554400 or eaarenewableenergyfund@east-ayrshire.gov.uk.

[Renewable Energy Fund](#)

Tincornhill Quarry Fund

For further information on application criteria and deadline dates please go to:

[Tincornhill Quarry Fund](#)

East Ayrshire 4 Community

If you are looking for external funding for a particular project then please remember to register **FREE** at East Ayrshire 4 Community by going to the following link:

[East Ayrshire 4 Community](#)