Powering Collaboration

Dacorum Borough Council
Green Community Grants

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Dacorum Borough

- Located in West Hertfordshire. Main towns are Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted, Tring, with several villages. Population ~155k
- Areas of affluence and deprivation across the Borough
- Conservative 1999-2023, Lib Dem 2023-today
- Two-tier: Hertfordshire County Council and 10 districts

Climate & Ecological Emergency Strategy

1. Reach net-zero emissions as an organisation by 2030

2. Reach net-zero emissions for our Council housing stock as quickly as possible, by 2050 at the latest

3. Support the borough in reducing its emissions and reaching net-zero as quickly as possible, by 2050 at the latest

4. Support the borough in improving biodiversity

5. Support the borough in creating more sustainable communities

Dacorum Climate Action Network

- Dacorum Climate Action Network (Dacorum CAN) launched in 2021
- There are 847 members: 123 organisations & 724 individuals
  - ‘What’s On?’ bulletin (monthly)
  - Newsletter (quarterly)
  - Dacorum CAN event (annually)
  - **Green Community Grants (annually)**

DACORUM CAN CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK

THINK GLOBAL ACT LOCAL

Green Community Grant Structure

- 2021-2023 budget of £20k
  - Maximum grant award of £3k
  - Grants distributed to applicants for widest reach
- 2025 onwards, budget grew to £50k
  - Three levels of grant to apply for
  - This has facilitated projects through increased financial support and filling a gap in grant provision
  - The £10k opportunity helps get large projects started or over the line
  - Grants distributed to strategic fit with the CEE strategy

£3,000

Small scale projects, or top-up an existing budget

£5,000

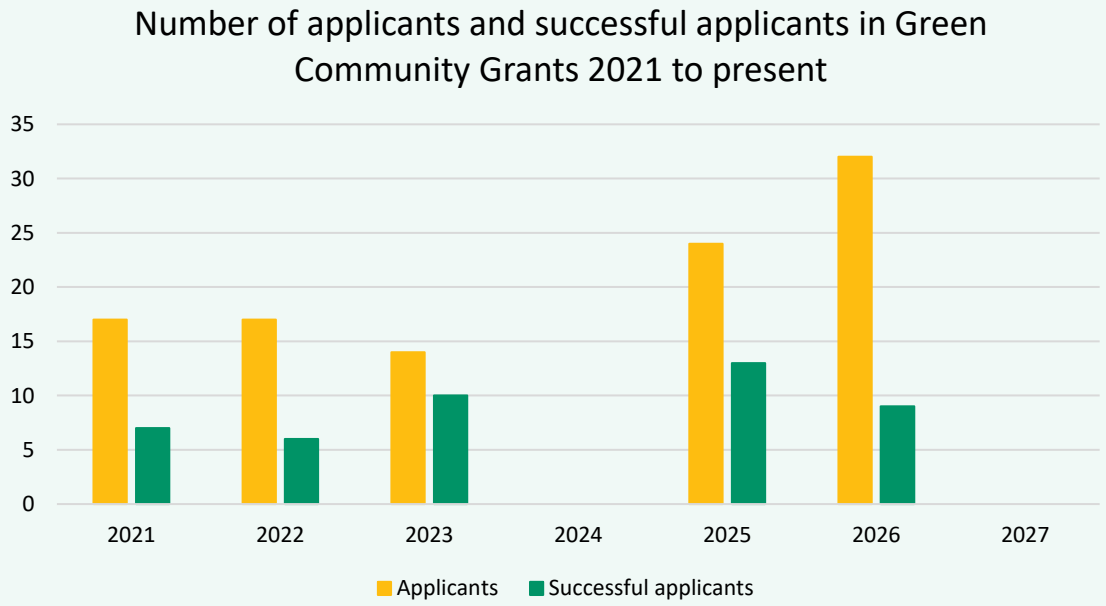
Medium-sized projects with wider community impact

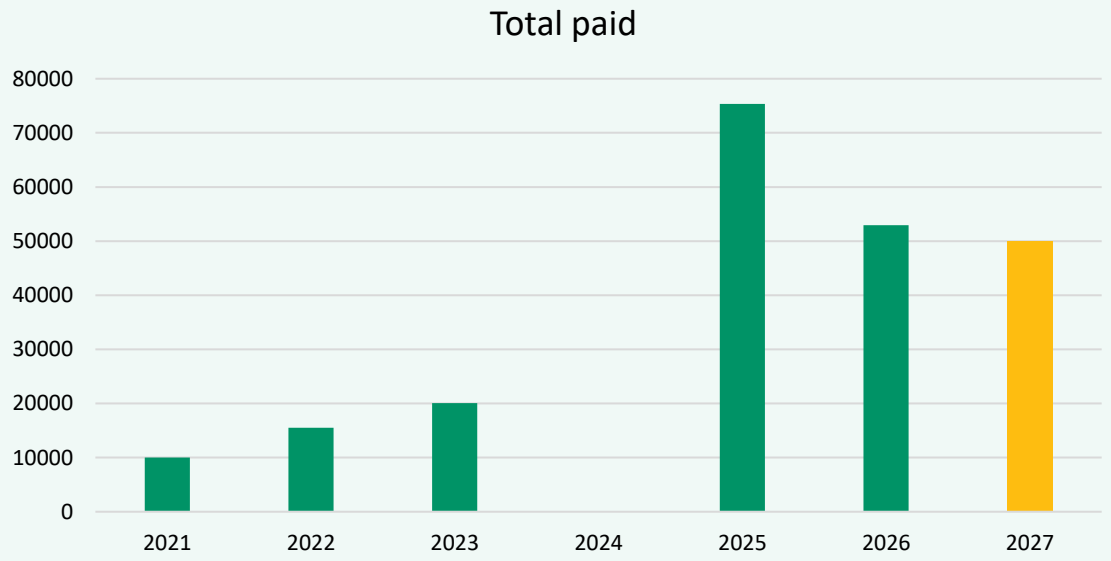
£10,000

For large projects with significant and measurable benefits with large costs

Applications and Awards

- Launched in 2021 and runs annually. Did not run in 2024
- Since 2021: 104 applicants, 45 successful, total paid out ~£175k



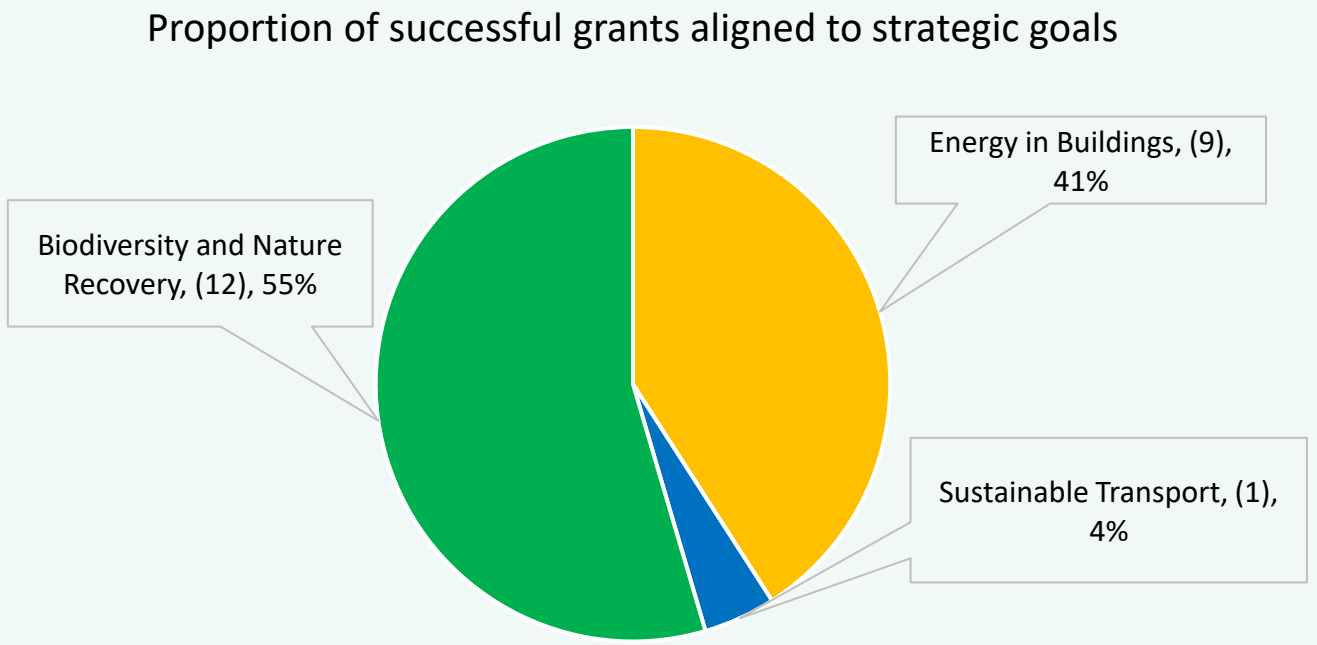


Strategic Fit for Applications

- Biodiversity and Nature Recovery
  - Improving local biodiversity by supporting the creation, protection, enhancement, monitoring and/or management of sustainable green spaces
- Sustainable Transport
  - Promoting active, healthy living by encouraging people to walk and cycle
- Energy in Buildings
  - Making community buildings more energy efficient and/or implementing renewable energy technology that will reduce carbon emissions from powering and/or heating

Strategic alignment

- How the successful applications from 2025 and 2026 align to our strategic goals



Requirements

- Who can apply?
  - Community groups, parish/town councils, schools, or informal groups with an eligible sponsor
- What will we fund?
  - Revenue or capital as a ‘one-off’ grant for a specific project, event or programme of events, or equipment. Short term revenue costs for a specific project
- Value for money
  - For paid goods/services, three quotes must be shown in the application or evaluation

Requirements continued

- Delivery timescale
  - Completion of the project within 12 months of being granted funding
- What are the desired outputs?
  - Reduced carbon emissions, biodiversity, engagement
- What will we fund?
  - Revenue or capital as a ‘one-off’ grant for a specific project, event or programme of events, or equipment
  - Short term revenue costs for a specific project

Process and Improvements

- Applications submitted with Survey Monkey/Microsoft Forms
- Application form has 29 questions
- Need to streamline the application process
  - Ask for supporting documentation after the application has been judged and provisionally awarded
  - Make questions more concise
  - AI can streamline application content, perform an initial scoring against key criteria, and identify areas for clarification in applications with technical aspects

Assessment

- Strategic fit to the three themes
- Extent of climate change mitigation
- Evidence the project needs support from Green Community Grants
- Demonstration of how residents will be engaged
- How the project avoids service duplication
- Efforts to identify match funding
- Value for money
- Deliverable within 12 months
- Demonstrate long term benefits of the project

Process

Applications Open
Duration: 8 weeks

Review Applications
Duration: 4 weeks

Judging panel
Duration: 1 weeks

Paperwork signed
Duration: Up to 4 weeks

Grant paid
Duration: Up to 4 weeks

Project duration
Duration: Up to 52 weeks from payment

Evaluation form
Duration: At completion

Final grant paid (if relevant)
Duration: At completion

Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust

- Awarded £1,995 funding: May 2025
- Improvements at Aldbury Nowers Nature Reserve through conservation grazing by replacing stock fencing and adding to the existing flock of sheep
- It engages local volunteers to support scrub clearance to extend the grassland, and to keep pathways accessible to visitors. Staff and volunteers will monitor plants and butterflies, with guided walks available to display the effects

Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust









Flamstead Village School

- Awarded £10,000 funding: March 2026
- Project: Transform a derelict swimming pool and grounds into a pocket forest with 50 native trees, wetland/pond areas, native hedging, wildflower meadow, and inclusive outdoor learning spaces. This would provide a compact yet biodiverse space for teaching and learning



Berkhamsted Bowls Club

- Awarded £5,500 funding: May 2025
- Match funding of £11,000 from members and £5,500 from the club
- 16.2kw solar panel system with battery storage and smart export guarantee to reduce the clubhouse electricity bill by 100% with some exported electricity

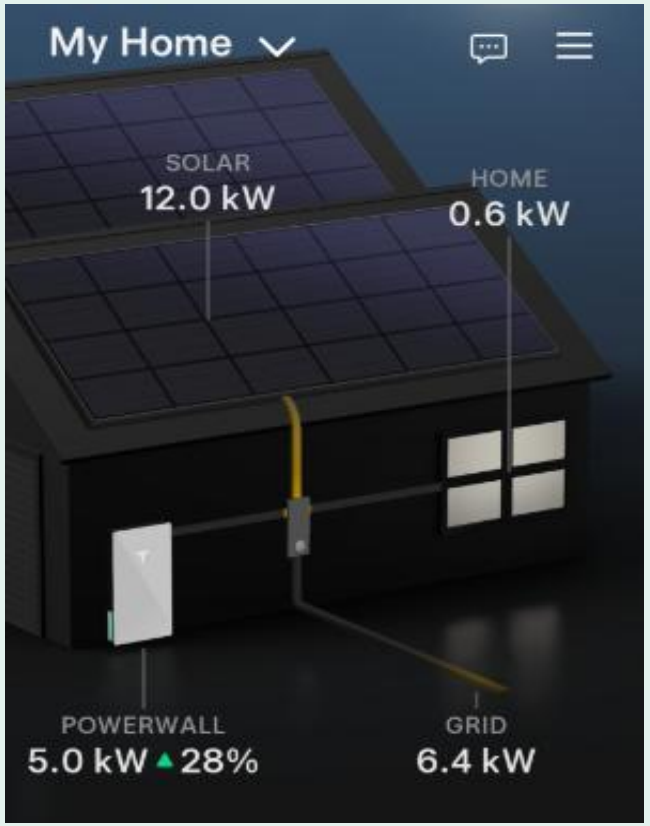


1st Apsley Scouts

- Awarded £10,000 funding: March 2026
- Match funding of £8,750 from fundraising
- 13.0 kW solar panel system with smart export guarantee; 62% self consumption and 38% exported to the grid
- 21.2 kWh Battery storage
- Over 20-year lifetime, net savings of £65,671 and ~40 tons of CO_2

1st Apsley Scouts





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