

# Local Authority Promotional Pack:

Round 2 Window 3  
Launch

FEBRUARY 24

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COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP FUND  
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# 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The £150m Community Ownership Fund helps communities across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to take ownership of assets at risk of closure.
- 1.2. There is a long-term trend of communities losing assets that foster a sense of community pride and bring people together. This has a knock-on impact on people's satisfaction with the place they live in, and the strength of local communities.
- 1.3. There is evidence that assets of this variety can be successfully and sustainably brought into community ownership. This both enables people to continue to benefit from the places that matter most to them and empowers communities to shape their local areas.
- 1.4. However, we recognise it can be hard for community groups to raise the initial funding required to buy the asset. The Community Ownership Fund will help enable community groups to overcome these barriers.
- 1.5. The Fund ensures that local people across the UK can support and continue benefiting from treasured local institutions whose future may be in doubt. We will invest in community ownership projects where these assets make the biggest difference to the local place.
- 1.6. Community ownership of assets can boost local connections, participation and pride of place, and bolster community resilience. By investing in the capacity of communities across the UK to take ownership of the places and spaces that matter to them, the Fund will help to strengthen the social infrastructure that supports communities to thrive.
- 1.7. From July 2021, community groups have been able to bid for up to £250k matched funding to help them buy or take over local community assets at risk of being lost, to run as community-owned businesses.
- 1.8. In exceptional cases, up to £1m matched funding is available to help establish a community-owned sports club or help buy a sports ground at risk of being lost without community intervention.
- 1.9. The Community Ownership Fund helps to ensure that important parts of the social fabric, such as pubs, sports clubs, theatres and post office buildings, can continue to play a central role in towns and villages across the UK.
- 1.10. This Fund forms part of the UK Government's levelling up agenda, helping support ambition and building opportunity, with support targeted towards places where community assets can make the most difference. The Community Ownership Fund helps to safeguard the small, but much-loved local assets on which we cannot put a price.

- 1.11. So far, the Community Ownership Fund has awarded £16.74m to 70 projects across the UK, with £11.8m allocated across England, £2.0m allocated to Scotland, £1.6m to Wales and £1.3m to Northern Ireland. 46 projects are in England, 10 of these projects are in Scotland, 8 of these projects are in Wales, and 6 of these projects are in Northern Ireland.

## 2. ROUND 2

### Round 2 Changes

Having learned lessons from the review of the first bidding round after engaging with applicants and sector stakeholders, we have made some positive changes to the eligibility requirements and the design of the programme for Round 2 onwards. These changes are explained in full in the updated prospectus.

#### **A summary of the key changes to the eligibility requirements for the relaunch of the Fund include:**

- an extension for project completion from 6 months to 12 months from the date indicated on the offer letter
- allowing the approval of bids for assets with at least 15-year leases and reasonable break clauses, although 25-year leases are still preferable
- removing the requirement for projects to have had a community use in the last 5 years, although assets must still have evidence of some past community use
- clarifying and simplifying the eligibility requirements for publicly owned assets and sporting assets.

#### **A summary of the key changes to the design of the programme include:**

introducing a two-stage application process by including an always open Expression of Interest (EOI) stage

- moving to three bidding windows per year, meaning applicants can submit a full application once their EOI has been approved, at a time that is right for their project
- Providing more information to successful applicants on what they can expect after receiving an offer letter
- introducing a cap on the number of full applications that can be made for each project. Applicants are now permitted two full application attempts. Application attempts from Round 1 will be disregarded from the cap.

### EOI and main application stage

2.1. We have introduced a two-stage application process for applicants.

- 2.2. Applicants first need to submit an EOI form and have this approved before being sent a link to the full application for the Fund. The EOI form will test whether a project is likely to be eligible through a pass/fail assessment based on the eligibility requirements.
- 2.3. The EOI stage is designed to strengthen the application process by ensuring that applicants are fully aware of the eligibility requirements ahead of submitting a full application to the Fund.
- 2.4. The EOI stage will be always open so that applicants can submit an EOI form at a time that is right for their project.
- 2.5. If applicants pass the EOI stage, they can then apply in any bidding window suitable for the timings of their project. There will be three bidding windows each year to submit a full application to the Fund.

## Round 2 Timings

- 2.6. The first bidding window opened in June and closed on 19 August 2022. Bidding window 2 opened on 31 October and closed on 14 December 2022.
- 2.7. Window 3 of Round 2 opened on 15 February and will close on 14 April 2023 at 11:59am. If applicants apply in this window, we aim to inform you of the outcome of your application in spring 2023.
- 2.8. There will be additional bidding windows in the future, with three windows per financial year. Each bidding window will close at 11:59am on its respective closing date. The dates of future bidding windows will be announced in due course.

## LA Introduction to COF PowerPoint Presentation



# LA Introduction to COF.pptx

## 3. ELIGIBILITY FOR PUBLICLY OWNED ASSETS

- 3.1. The Community Ownership Fund grant cannot fund the costs of purchasing publicly owned assets where the public authority would credit a capital receipt. However, the Fund will work alongside existing Community Asset Transfers to support these transfers by funding the costs of renovation and refurbishment.
- 3.2. For example, if an applicant was able to secure an asset transfer or raise the funds through another route, they could be eligible for funding from the Community Ownership Fund for any refurbishment needed in order to save that asset.
- 3.3. The purpose of the Fund is to provide support to voluntary and community groups who want to take ownership of assets. We hope however, that local authorities will play an active role in encouraging community groups to apply. We see the role of local authorities and parish councils as providing essential support to the efforts of local community groups, rather than delivering the projects themselves.
- 3.4. Alongside the mandatory eligibility requirements that every applicant will need to fulfil, bids relating to publicly owned assets will also need to demonstrate the following additional requirements. These additional requirements are that:
  - 3.4.1. The responsibility for delivering statutory services (if relevant) is not transferred from the public authority to the community organisation
  - 3.4.2. The Community Ownership Fund grant received will only be used for renovation and refurbishment costs following the transfer of an asset into community ownership; the public authority will not credit a capital receipt from Community Ownership Fund funding.
- 3.5. These additional requirements are necessary because local authorities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have a number of statutory functions requiring them to provide various services to their communities.
- 3.6. For projects relating to publicly owned assets, we will require additional, specific evidence covering the following points:
  - 3.6.1. **Risk facing the asset** - the Fund will only invest in community assets which would otherwise be lost. We will therefore need evidence from both the current public owner and applicant about the current status of the asset and why its future is at risk
  - 3.6.2. **Impact on service provision** - evidence that any statutory services currently delivered from the asset at risk will be continued by the public authority. This may be evidenced by a letter or appropriate cabinet paper from a local authority, for example
  - 3.6.3. **Deliverability and sustainability** - we can't invest in projects where we assess the transfer of liabilities associated with the asset to be unmanageable or unreasonable. Sustainability of the management of the asset should be evidenced in the application

## 4. KEY LINKS

- **Prospectus:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-ownership-fund-prospectus>

- **Assessment Guidance:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-ownership-fund-round-2-application-form-assessment-criteria-guidance>

- **Expression of Interest Guidance:**

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/community-ownership-fund-round-2-how-to-express-your-interest-in-applying>

- **Webinar:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-ownership-fund-round-2-webinar-slides>

- **List of Successful Bidders:** <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/community-ownership-fund-first-round-successful-bidders>

- **Leveling Up Website:** <https://levellingup.campaign.gov.uk/projects-near-me/>

## 5. PROMOTION

5.1. We encourage you to share the Window 3 of Round 2 launch with your networks. Below you will find some supporting communication products.

### Social Media Post Draft

***The £150m Community Ownership Fund next application window is now open!***

***Applicants can now see exactly what they need to include in their applications with the newly published Assessor Guidance found here:***

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-ownership-fund-round-2-application-form-assessment-criteria-guidance/community-ownership-fund-round-2-application-form-assessment-criteria-guidance>

***If you are a community group looking to protect a treasured community asset, submit your Expression of Interest now by following this link:***

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/community-ownership-fund-round-2-how-to-express-your-interest-in-applying>

### DLUHC Social Pages

5.2. We will be promoting the Community Ownership Fund on DLUHC social media pages. Please feel free to like and share any post about the Fund with your network. You can find DLUHC's social media pages here:

- Twitter - <https://twitter.com/luhc?s=20&t=vZheyUXTlgGa5Y6yX4E1pA>
- Instagram- <https://www.instagram.com/luhcgovuk/>
- Linked-In- <https://www.linkedin.com/company/luhcgovuk/>
- Facebook- <https://www.facebook.com/luhcgovuk>

### Webinar slides for applicants

5.3. Below you will find webinar slides which can be used if you wish to hold applicant facing webinars:



Community\_Ownership\_Fund\_round\_2\_-\_'



## 6. PHOTOS OF PROJECTS

Hartcliffe City Farm



The Old Forge



Leigh Spinners Mill Community Regeneration



Racehorse Community Pub



Ballymacash Sports Academy



This tweet from DLUHC's twitter account has a promotion video for COF -

<https://mobile.twitter.com/luhc/status/1593556591294513154>

## 7. SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS

Community Ownership Fund Project	Local Authority
Aberporth Village Hall and Recreation Ground	Ceredigion
Aberystwyth and District Hospice at Home Volunteers	Ceredigion
Banana Enterprise Network Ltd (Rock Hall)	Bolton South East
Caistor and District Community Trust Limited (C&DCT) (2-4 Market Place)	Gainsborough
Cliftonville Cultural Space	South Thanet
Falkirk Rugby Football and Sports Club (SCIO) (Sunnyside Pavillion)	Falkirk
Glór Uachtar Tíre (Teach Uidhilin)	South Down
HAVERHUB CIC	Preseli Pembrokeshire
Heart of Newhaven Community	Edinburgh North and Leith
Horrabridge Recreation Field Trust	Torridge and West Devon
Keswick Youth Centre Services CIO (Rebuilding Keswicks Future)	Workington
Kilcoo Regeneration Group Limited	South Down
KILCOOLEY WOMENS CENTRE (Ladybird Parent Children and Family Care)	North Down
Kingswood Arts CIC (Kingwood House Restoration)	Dulwich and West Norwood
Langside Sports Club	Glasgow South
LifeLine Church (Community Centre)	Barking
Limpley Stoke Community Benefit Society Ltd (Save the Hop Pole)	Chippenham
Margaret Haes Riding Centre Limited (the spirit of the Horse)	Bury North
Mind in Bexley and East Kent Ltd (Revival: Food & Mood)	Canterbury
Moor Pool Heritage Trust (Moor Pool Community Jigsaw)	Birmingham, Edgbaston
Myddleton Road Community Benefit Society Limited	Hornsey and Wood Green
North Arran Community Benefit Society Ltd	North Ayrshire and Arran
Oxhill Village Hall	Stratford-on-Avon
Sawyers Church (Community Centre)	Brentwood and Ongar
SHGT COMMUNITY BENEFIT SOCIETY LTD. (Siop Havards)	Preseli Pembrokeshire
ST GEORGE'S CHURCH FATFIELD PCC	Washington and Sunderland West
The Black Horse Community Group Limited	Rutland and Melton
THE HONEST MILLER COMMUNITY GROUP LIMITED	Folkestone and Hythe
The Llandyrnog Community Shop Ltd.	Vale of Clwyd
The Raven Inn Community Benefit Society Limited	Warrington North
The Roxy Collective	Barrow and Furness
Zion Bristol Limited	Bristol South
Adwick Park Community Hub	Doncaster North
Aurora	Foyle
Bury Community Football Stadium	Bury South
Centre of Social Enterprise and Creativity	BiShop Auckland

Community Hub Project (Phase 2) 2021	Lagan Valley
Community ownership of the Fontmell Magna Village Shop	North Dorset
Countrymans Community Pub	Richmond, Yorks
Hartcliffe City Farm	Bristol South
Newtown St Martin Pub	St Ives
Oxford Arms Pub and Hub	North Herefordshire
Progressing the Internal Envelope	North West Durham
Pugin Studios	South Thanet
SavetheSilks	Devizes
TBIFCG	Rutland & Melton
The George Community Hub	Forest of Dean
The Old Red Lion: A rich history, an exciting future	Islington South & Finsbury
The Oldham Boxing Club (Victoria House)	Oldham West and Royton
Vogrie Hall Refurbishment	Midlothian
Achub Tyn Llan Save Tyn Llan	Arfon
Callander Visitor Information Centre	Stirling
Clayton Community Wellbeing Hub	Hyndburn & Haslingden
Community Building for Whitley Bay	Tynemouth
Glens Digital Hub	East Antrim
Leigh Spinners Mill Community Regeneration	Leigh
NEH Purchase	Tynemouth
New Galloway Town Hall SOS Save Our Space	Dumfries and Galloway
Purchase and Renovation of The Jubilee Centre	Bradford West
Rannoch Hub	Perth and North Perthshire
Refurbishment and Redevelopment of the Queens Ballroom	Blaenau Gwent
The CANA Resource and Training Centre	Cynon Valley Constituency
THE GEORGE COMMUNITY	Ashford
The Hub Community Centre and Cafe, Manor Field, Thurnby	Rutland and Melton
The John Jenkins Stadium	Portsmouth North
The Old Forge Community Benefit Society: a community owned pub	Ross, Skye and Lochaber
The Rising Sun Co-operative	Lewisham, Deptford
The Wharf Marple Community Hub, Heritage, Health & Wellbeing Centre.	Hazel Grove
Westhall Racehorse Community Pub	Suffolk Coastal
Whithorn ReBuild Renewing the Old Town Hall	Dumfries and Galloway

## 8. Q & A

### 8.1. General Q&A

**Q: Taking ownership of an asset is complicated, what support will be put in place to help?**

**A:** We recognise that taking ownership of an asset can be challenging. The Fund will help ensure that community groups have the necessary help, both practical and financial, to support them in taking ownership of an asset.

We also intend to provide additional early stage support to the applicants who need it the most. Our Delivery Partners will start to offer support from March 2023. Those who express interest in the Fund will be directed to liaise with the Delivery Partner about their support needs. Please refer to section 9 of the prospectus for more information on this support.

### 8.2. Fund-Specific Q&A

**Q: How long will the fund run for?**

**A:** The Fund will run from July 2021 for 4 years until 2025.

**Q: How many times can applicants submit an EOI Form to the Fund?**

**A:** The EOI stage of the application process is always open, meaning applicants can submit the form at the time that is right for their projects. There are no limits on how many times you can submit an EOI like there is for the main application stage, however if your project is ineligible you should not submit a new EOI unless the circumstances have changed and you now think your project will be eligible for the Fund.

**Q: Do I have to wait before submitting another EOI if I am unsuccessful?**

**A:** There is no time limit on re-submitting an EOI after receiving an unsuccessful outcome from a previous EOI submission. Nonetheless, you should only submit another EOI if there has been a marked change in your projects circumstances that may deem it to be eligible. We may determine that your project will never be eligible for the Fund and will advise you accordingly, in which case you will not be able to submit another EOI.

**Q: Can I expect feedback on my EOI submission?**

**A:** You can expect to receive feedback on the outcome of your EOI application within three weeks. Those applicants who are unsuccessful will receive feedback summarising where their application did not meet our eligibility requirements.

**Q: What happens if my EOI is successful?**

**A:** You will be written to confirming an invitation to apply for funding. A link to the full application form will be included in this correspondence for you to complete. An invitation to apply for funding does not guarantee a grant from us, but it does indicate that we see potential in your idea.

**Q: Is project X eligible for funding?**

**A:** Full eligibility requirements are published in the bidding prospectus.

**Q: Will funding be provided in grant or loan form?**

**A:** Applicants can bid for a capital grant of up to £250,000 match funding. In exceptional cases, bidders will be able to make the case for up to £1 million match funding to help establish a community-owned sports club or help buy a sports club/asset at risk of being lost without community intervention. Full details of available funding is provided in the bidding prospectus. This is provided as a grant and is not paid back.

**Q: Are you able to advise projects on how best to develop their application?**

**A:** All the information needed to submit a compelling and evidence-based application is available in the prospectus. To ensure fairness for all applicants and uphold the integrity of the bidding process, we are unable to advise applicants beyond what is publicly available on how best to develop and present their application. Although we cannot advise on how to develop applications, we may be able to clarify points in the prospectus that applicants are unsure of.

**Q: Why is there a cap at £250,000 on general asset types?**

**A:** This threshold was informed by evidence from previous external programmes funded by the National Lottery which indicated that community groups typically required up to £250,000 to secure ownership of an asset. This cap will maximise the impact of the Fund by allowing hundreds of projects across the UK to submit a successful application to save their community asset.

**Q: Why can't the Community Ownership Fund provide funding to save publicly owned assets?**

**A:** The Community Ownership Fund grant cannot fund the costs of purchasing publicly owned assets where the public authority would credit a capital receipt. However, the Fund will work alongside existing Community Asset Transfers to support these transfers by funding the costs of renovation and refurbishment.

For example, if an applicant was able to secure an asset transfer or raise the funds through another route, they could be eligible for funding from the Community Ownership Fund for any refurbishment needed in order to save that asset.

**Q: Why have you introduced a two-application limit?**

**A:** As a result of the feedback received from applicants in Round 1 and from stakeholder engagement, we have taken the decision to limit the number of applications for any one asset to two applications during the period of COF funding.

If a project has not been found to be fundable after two attempts, it is unlikely they could benefit from the Community Ownership Fund programme of funding. This means that projects which do not meet the eligibility or standards of the Fund can focus their efforts applying to more suitable opportunities. To clarify, this limit is on a project, not on an organisation – so if the same organisation wishes to apply for funding for more than one asset, this will be accepted.

**Q: Will you be making further changes to allow X in the future?**

**A:** We want to make positive changes to ensure that as many community organisations as possible across the UK can save their treasured local assets at risk of loss. We therefore actively engage with

our stakeholders and applicants to understand how the Fund can be improved throughout its lifespan and welcome any feedback to achieve this.

**Q: My asset is not at immediate risk of loss but could still do with support for refurbishments/improvements etc. Can I apply?**

**A:** This Fund exists to prevent important assets being lost to the community. In order to meet the Community Ownership Fund eligibility requirements, applicants need to provide evidence that demonstrates that the asset is at risk of being lost to the community. The risk can be from closure, sale, neglect and dereliction under current ownership, or unsustainable operations under the current business model.

**Q: Can this Fund be used to save a professional / semi-professional sports club that is important to the community?**

**A:** We are keen to ensure that community groups have the opportunity to bid for funding where there is a risk that a sport, or assets associated with sport such as a sports ground, will be totally lost to that community. However, we won't let funding be used to pay off an existing club's debts – that wouldn't be a good use of public funding. Sports clubs should carefully check the eligibility requirements for the types of organisations we can fund, as we do not fund profit distributing organisations, including those that pay out to shareholders.

**If you have any questions, please get in touch with your DLUHC Area Team contact who will contact the Community Ownership Fund Team.**

**THANK YOU,  
THE COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP FUND.**