

Cash for communities to kickstart low carbon projects

June 25, 2020

Community groups can apply for up to £100,000 to fund projects to boost greener living as Cornwall Council launches a new scheme to support low carbon investments.

Since January 2019 Cornwall Council has been charging developers Community Infrastructure Levy, or CIL, as a way to reduce any potential adverse impacts on an area resulting from a development.

CIL payments are set aside by Cornwall Council to be spent on projects to benefit communities and support development such as in new or improved infrastructure.

Between 15 to 25 per cent of the levy goes to the town or parish council where the development has taken place and so far Cornwall Council has paid £203,900 to local councils through the CIL.

Now Cornwall Council is making available a further £500,000 collected to not-for-profit organisations and constituted community groups, including local councils, who can all bid for funds to pay for infrastructure projects which encourage greener and healthier lifestyles.

The new CIL Fund which will be launched on July 1 will hand out grants of £20,000 to £100,000 through a competitive application process.

Applicants will need to show how there is local need and community support for their project as well as how it will enable lower carbon living as part of the Council's ambitions for Cornwall to become carbon neutral by 2030.

This could include projects such as new pedestrian and cycle paths to improve links around and to town centres, improvements or creation of green spaces using infrastructure, or the adaptation of community buildings to enable multi-use functions such as improved access to health facilities and physical activities.

Infrastructure projects that will help communities recover from the impact of COVID-19 will also be welcomed.

Applications will be scored using the Council's pioneering Decision Wheel, based on the 'Doughnut Economics' model developed by the award-winning economist Kate Raworth, and introduced last year as part of its climate change action plan.

Infrastructure projects which can demonstrate significant environmental and social benefits for residents will be favoured.

Tim Dwelly, Cornwall Council cabinet portfolio holder for culture, economy and planning, said: "The Community Infrastructure Levy is aimed at supporting development in communities while helping address the cumulative impact of development. Having been charging CIL for 18 months we now have a significant amount of funding which we hope community groups across Cornwall can capitalise on to kickstart low carbon infrastructure projects to benefit their residents.

"This is a great opportunity for groups with ambitious, local, infrastructure plans to get their projects off the ground with our support. We look forward to receiving applications which show how communities will benefit from low carbon projects and we also welcome bids for schemes that can aid communities recovering from the pandemic."

Edwina Hannaford, Cornwall's cabinet portfolio holder for climate change and neighbourhoods, said: "Opening up the Community Infrastructure Levy funds to community groups to develop projects to encourage us to adopt greener and less carbon-emitting practices is a great example of our commitment to tackling climate change and helping Cornwall work towards becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

"We have seen some incredible community action throughout the pandemic and I am sure we will see some inspirational project ideas coming through that could benefit from the CIL funding."

Applications to the CIL Fund are invited from July 1 from not-for-profit organisations and constituted community groups, including local councils, for between £20,000 and £100,000.

The application form and guidance will be available at www.cornwall.gov.uk/cil from July 1. Deadline for applications is October 19, 2020.

Note to editors

For more information on support during the pandemic see www.cornwall.gov.uk/coronavirus.

Contact details

Angelina Lambourn
Communications Specialist – Carbon Neutral Cornwall

Neighbourhoods

Cornwall Council
Tel: 07483 303948
angelina.lambourn@cornwall.gov.uk

Cornwall Council
County Hall, Truro TR1 3AY
Media news releases at: www.cornwall.gov.uk

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