

PRESS RELEASE – SEPTEMBER 2023

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

Up to £10k grants available to help tackle crime and antisocial behaviour

Charities and voluntary groups working to address issues such as antisocial behaviour, drugs and hate crime in Devon and Cornwall can now apply for grants of up to £10,000, thanks to funding from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC).

The grant scheme is being delivered in partnership with Devon Community Foundation (DCF) and Cornwall Community Foundation (CCF) and aims to benefit small and medium-sized organisations whose work contributes to the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan. The Commissioner works to enable safer, more resilient communities and this scheme aims to empower smaller voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations to play a role in both progressing and informing PCC priorities.

The Commissioner is particularly keen to support community groups led by or working with minoritised communities, those working in rural or coastal communities and those facing cost of living challenges.

Alison Hernandez, Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, said: "Antisocial behaviour, drug use and other criminal activities affect people all across our force area, not just those living in highly populated areas, causing feelings of fear and distress in our communities.

"Our rural and remote communities by their very nature can feel isolated and unseen, and I want those residents to know that I am as committed to helping them feel safe as I am those in our larger towns and cities.

"The cost of living has hit many in our communities hard and it's vital that support is also out there for those struggling to make ends meet.

"I am making this funding available to support groups in Devon and Cornwall who are working hard to tackle drug use and antisocial behaviour, as well as violence and road safety - all issues I have made priorities in my Police and Crime Plan. I urge any organisation that is working to create safe, resilient and connected communities to apply for a grant before the November deadline."

Philippa Knott Kos, Head of Grants at Devon Community Foundation, said: "We're delighted to see the Commissioner proactively seeking to support groups working for people facing particular disadvantage and those hit by rising costs within Devon's communities, and trusting them to create their own solutions to the problems they face. At DCF we're committed to ensuring the funding reaches those who need it the most, and can make best use of it."

Tamas Haydu, CEO of Cornwall Community Foundation said: "We are grateful to the Police and Crime Commissioner for their generous funding to enable us to continue to support community groups and organisations in Cornwall who support people and help to reduce antisocial behaviour, addiction and violence."

Cornwall Community Foundation have two funds available - the Police Property Act Fund, focusing on preventing crime and reducing anti-social behaviour in rural and coastal areas, and the Police & Crime Commissioner's Community Grants which focuses on projects related to anti-social behaviour, drugs and victims of crime through all of Cornwall.

Devon's grants schemes, PCC Safer Communities, along with the two CCF funds, opened on Monday, September 18, and groups have until Wednesday, November 8 to apply. Grants of up to £10,000 are available in Devon, and up to £5,000 in Cornwall. This funding can include contributions towards running costs to help organisations become more sustainable in the face of rising bills and expenses.

The PCC has been working with DCF and CCF since 2021 to deliver grant schemes to benefit local residents. To date, more than £250,000 has been distributed in Devon thanks to funding from the PCC, and £300,000 across Cornwall. This has enabled both DCF and CCF to award more than 60 grants within each county, to groups and charities working to connect communities and policing, prevent and deter crime, and protect people at risk of abuse.

To apply for a grant in Devon visit <https://devoncf.com/grants/pcc-grants/>.

To apply for CCF's Police Property Act Fund:

<https://www.cornwallcommunityfoundation.com/news/police-property-act-fund-opens-for-applications-soon/>

To apply for CCF's Police & Crime Commissioner's Community Grant:

<https://www.cornwallcommunityfoundation.com/news/police-crime-commissioners-community-grants-opening-soon/>

Devon case study:

Clean Ascent, a Devon-based charity, received a PCC Community Grant from DCF in 2022 to deliver an outdoor climbing project for people in recovery from substance misuse. Pilots of the programme had demonstrated its effectiveness in helping people move on from long-term drug use or dependence on prescription replacements, and often long histories of involvement in the criminal justice system.

The programme not only helps participants to improve their health and fitness but develops their feelings of confidence and self-worth, and their connection with others. There is also a much wider positive impact in terms of reduced rates of criminality and ill health, and improved relationships within families and the community.

A survey of participants following the programme showed, among other results, a 65 per cent reduction in drug use and a 68 per cent improvement in physical and mental wellbeing. Six of those who took part in the programme are now in training for professional outdoors and climbing qualifications.

One participant said: "I can't believe how far I have come since I first joined. I still have challenges to face but they don't seem impossible thanks to Clean Ascent."

Cornwall case study:

Recent funding from the Commissioners Community Grant Scheme supported the West-Cornwall-based charity, A Band of Brothers. A well-established charity providing mentoring programs for deprived, vulnerable young men including ex-offenders.

The £5,000 grant helped A Band of Brothers to run their Rite of Passage Wilderness Weekend mentoring sessions for thirty ex-offenders who were potentially at risk of offending again. The weekend workshops encouraged the men to learn more about themselves from older male mentors in a safe space, disconnected away from technology and any other distractions. The experience from the Rite of Passage workshops forged a healthy union between each young man, their mentors, and their community.

The grant facilitated the start of the men's positive transformation and enabled the young men to make a fresh, positive start back in their communities.

Notes for editors:

Devon and Cornwall Community Foundations are part of a network of community foundations across the UK, all of which are accredited by and belong to a central membership body, UK Community Foundations (UKCF). Community foundations exist to distribute funds to local communities and support them to thrive. They do this by working with individuals, families, businesses, public sector bodies and others who want to give money, time and resources to the places where they live or work.

For more information about Devon Community Foundation and the PCC grant scheme in Devon contact Alice Davis, Communications and Marketing Manager – adavis@devoncf.com – 01884 906 685

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