



Ards and
North Down
Borough Council



Ards and North Down **SPORTS FORUM**

2026-2027

Events

Guidance Notes

2026-2027 Events Guidance Notes

Aim of Grant

The aim of the event grant is to provide financial assistance to support sport clubs in the delivery of safe, planned and organised events. Applications are sought for events that encourage participation and/or provide competitive opportunities within the Borough of Ards and North Down.

Definition of an Event – an activity that is planned for a special purpose and usually involves a lot of people, not the normal activities of the Club.

Funding Allocation

Ards and North Down Sports Forum have allocated £13,000 for 2026/27. Maximum funding for Sports Forum affiliated clubs is

- **£1,500 for sporting events and**

A max of £500 can be allocated for fundamental equipment required to hold the event. This is subject to available funds. Should the programme be oversubscribed and due to limited funds available, a reduction in funding percentage will be applied to pending applications at that time.

Application Timeline

Event grants will be open in 2 tranches.

Tranche 1	£6,500
OPEN: Wednesday 1st April 2026, 12 noon	
CLOSE: Wednesday 13th May 2026, 12 noon	
Assessment will be week commencing - Monday 25th May 2026	
Notification to sports clubs will be week commencing – Monday 1st June 2026	
Please note: if there is any underspend in Tranche 1 funds will roll into Tranche 2.	

Tranche 2	£6,500
OPEN: Tuesday 1st September, 12 noon	
CLOSE: Tuesday 13th October, 12 noon	
Assessment will be week commencing – Monday 19th October 2026	
Notification to sports clubs will be week commencing - Monday 2nd November 2026	
Please note:	

All completed applications must be submitted by 12 noon prior to submission deadlines above along with essential documents. Submit completed applications to email: sportsdevelopment@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to apply, applicants must meet the following eligibility requirements.

1. Be affiliated to the Ards and North Down Sports Forum
2. Event must be delivered within the Borough of Ards and North Down
3. Have a formal club constitution
4. Have an up-to-date 'Safeguarding Children & Adults' policy
5. Have an Equal Opportunities Policy
6. Have adequate Public Liability Insurance
7. Submit an Event Risk Assessment

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Project Criteria

Eligible clubs must be able to demonstrate within the application how the event meets the following criteria. Please use SMART principles (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-framed) when answering the following questions.

1. Provide details on your sporting event and demonstrate how the event will increase participation or mark special anniversaries.
2. Demonstrate the need for the event, how it benefits the sport club, its members and/or the local community.
3. Provide approx. numbers participating the event – club members, volunteers and/or visitors/entries traveling to the Borough.
4. Demonstrate how the event will improve and sustain activities within the club or celebrate club anniversaries
5. For sporting events, does your event target any priority groups (women, disability, over 50's and social disadvantaged areas/groups).

General Guidelines for Applicants

Applications will be considered in line with the guidance outlined below:

- All applications must be completed in full, signed and submitted with all mandatory supporting information. Incomplete applications will not be considered, and **only typed forms** will be accepted.
- Retrospective funding will not be considered.
- Please note that successful Clubs may be requested by the Council to acknowledge the Forum support in hosting their event.
- Successful applicants will receive an emailed 'Letter of Offer' (LoO). The Letter of Offer sets out the following information:
 - What the funding is for
 - What we need from you to reimburse costs
 - Deadlines by when documents are required
 - Attached to the LoO are several forms which need to be returned: 1) grant acceptance, 2) declaration of interests, 3) grant claim and 4) payee form

Guidelines for Returning Documents

1. Return grant acceptance form & declaration of interest by the deadlines stated in the LoO.
2. Agree any changes to the project applied for and its funding arrangements with the Sports Forum before implementation
3. Return the completed grant claim form, bank form and evidence of cost incurred
4. For 'Proof of Payment', submit all original receipts and bank statements for each cost associated with your application
5. For auditing purposes, bank statements must show clearly account name, payment date and details as well as recipient. (Note: cash payment receipts cannot be accepted)
6. Only costs which correspond with the application and Letter of Offer will be reimbursed

Failure to submit all required information will result in funding being withdrawn.

Scoring Matrix

Assessment Criteria	Scoring	Success Factors
Criteria 1: <u>Description</u> of event_incl. who is involved, what activities are involved and how it will increase participation	10 Marks	The application describes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event details of Who/ What/ When • How the project will increase participation (i.e. milestones). • that the event has been well planned.
Criteria 2: <u>Justification</u> why the event it is needed, how it benefits the sport club, its members and/or the local community.	15 marks	The application: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is clear and unambiguous. • Justifies why this event should receive financial support and how it will benefit the club/ wider community.
Criteria 3: <u>Outcomes</u> incl. expected participation numbers for the event (incl. Club members/ volunteers & visitors travelling from outside the Borough to participate)	25 Marks	The application provides: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • anticipated attendance figures and any collaborative partners
Criteria 4: <u>Impact</u> of how the event will improve and/or sustain sports activities within the club and/or the Borough.	25 marks	The application describes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>how</u> the event will impact on <u>whom</u> and <u>why</u> (demonstrating positive contribution or change) • Realistic Breakdown of event income and expenditure, and how surplus will be used
Criteria 5: <u>Equality</u>: Does your event target any priority groups (women, disability, over 50's and social disadvantaged areas/ groups).	25 Marks	The application describes clearly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that the event addresses an identified gap/ need • <u>who and how</u> disadvantaged groups are targeted for what purpose • describes the potential for the event to bring about change.
Total Marks available:	100 Marks	

A quality scoring threshold of 50 will be applied. Any application that fails to meet the above threshold will not be considered for funding.

Events Management Resources

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For guidance and useful links on event management, please refer to Councils' Event Management Toolkit:

[Event Management Toolkit - Ards and North Down Borough Council](#)

The Event Management Toolkit includes:

- How to Manage your Event Guide
- Event Management Plan – Template and Guidance Notes
- Risk Assessment Template
- A request to use Council Land Form; please seek permission if you are using Council Land for your Event.

Eligible Costs

- Event/equipment hire costs
- Sports equipment to support the hosting of sports events within the Borough
- Fundamental equipment associated with any given sport such as balls, bats, racquets, sticks etc up to a max of £500, and will be subject to the discretion of the Sports Forum.
- External coaches
- Event specific costs – road Closures, external First Aid provision etc

What we will NOT fund

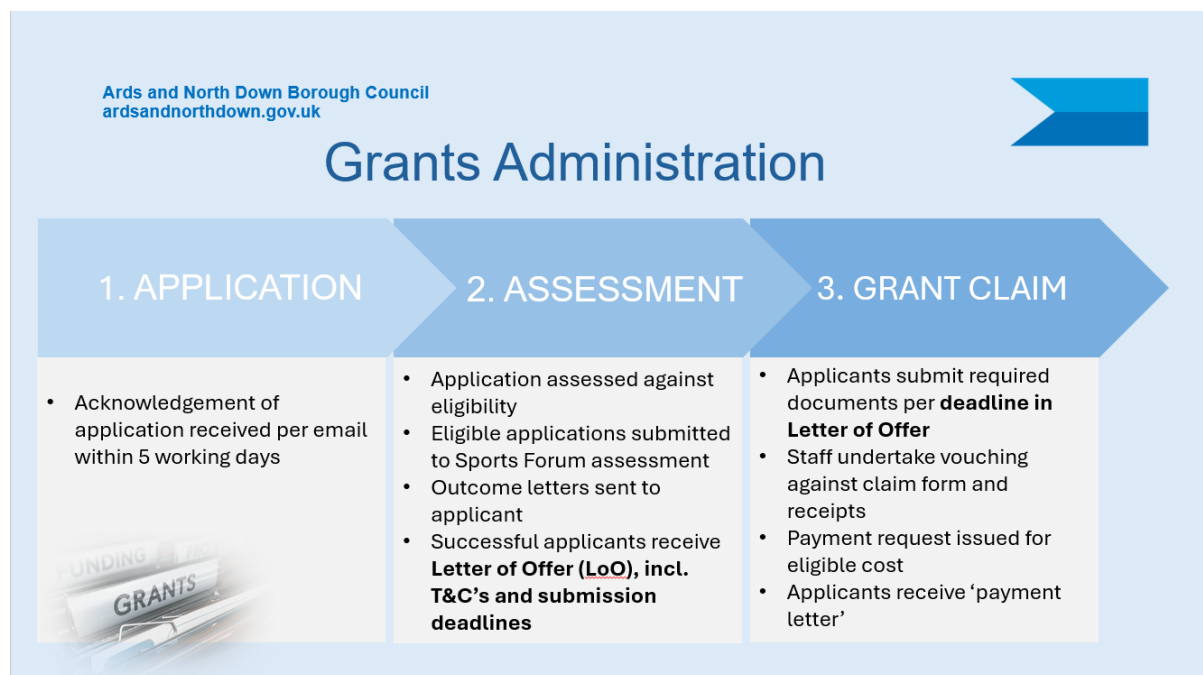
- Applications for events which do NOT meet the eligibility criteria outlined above
- Projects, events, and activities where the primary benefits is outside of the Borough. (cross reference with eligibility criteria)
- Costs incurred outside of the specified award period (i.e. from the date LoO is issued to date of submission for return of receipts).
- Events, projects or activities which conflict with any council run project, event or activity OR which are not compliant with the Council's aims and objectives
- Sports or projects for sports not listed by Sport Northern Ireland / Sport Ireland
- Events which are discriminating, promote religious or political beliefs
- Organisations not legally established in the UK (**is SF affiliation limited to org residing within the borough? – if so remove this point**)
- We will **NOT** fund profit making events (i.e. income **MUST** go back into club)
- We will **NOT** fund costs not directly associated with the running of the event (i.e. club public liability or personal injury; routine running costs or equipment, salary costs, loan repayments, endowments and volunteer costs, fundraising activities, club's own facility hire, consultancy fees, publication & marketing)
- We will not fund entertainment costs, food and beverages incl alcoholic beverages
- Items which only benefit individuals (e.g. prizes; personal clothing or equipment; event tickets, water bottles etc)
- VAT that can be recovered from HM Revenue and Customs
- Curriculum time school programmes.

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The list above is not exhaustive. The Council reserves the right to fund/not fund any project which is deemed suitable/unsuitable for the Ards and North Down Sports Forum grant scheme.

Grant Administration Process

Following submission of applications, the following process will be completed:



Incomplete applications, and applications received without the accompanying mandatory supporting documentation, will be deemed ineligible and not proceed for assessment.

Further information

Event guidance notes and application forms are available at:

[Grants and Funding | AND Leisure \(leisureardsandnorthdown.com\)](https://www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/grants-and-funding/and-leisure)

For queries contact the Sports Development Team

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