



Ards and  
North Down  
Borough Council



# Ards and North Down **SPORTS FORUM**

**2026-2027**

**Sports Equipment**

**Guidance Notes**

## 2026-2027 Sports Equipment Guidance Notes

### Aim of Grant

The aim of the grant is to provide financial assistance to support sports club to create new opportunities, increase and/or sustain participation within the club.

### Funding allocation

Ards and North Down Sports Forum have allocated **£28,000** for 2026/2027. Maximum funding per sporting organisation is **£1,500 (per financial year)**, a max of £500 can be allocated for fundamental equipment. This is subject to available funds Sports Club may apply in either Tranche 1 or Tranche 2, but not both. 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.

<b>Tranche 1</b>	<b>£14,000</b>
<b>OPEN: Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026, 12 noon</b> <b>CLOSE: Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2026, 12 noon</b>	
Assessment will be week commencing - <b>Monday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2026</b>	
Notification to sports clubs will be week commencing – <b>Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2026</b>	
<b>Please note:</b> if there is any underspend in Tranche 1 funds will roll into Tranche 2.	

<b>Tranche 2</b>	<b>£14,000</b>
<b>OPEN: Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September, 12 noon</b> <b>CLOSE: Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> October, 12 noon</b>	
Assessment will be week commencing – <b>Monday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2026</b>	
Notification to sports clubs will be week commencing - <b>Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2026</b>	
<b>Please note:</b>	

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](mailto:sportsdevelopment@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk)

### Applicant Eligibility

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

- Affiliated to the Ards and North Down Sports Forum
- Delivering sporting activities within Ards and North Down
- Sports Clubs are only permitted to apply once per financial year
- Club constitution
- Full Safeguarding Children and/or Vulnerable Adult Policy (needs to be reviewed, dated and signed within past 3 years). We will NOT accept a statement
- Have an Equality Policy
- Valid Public Liability Insurance. – clearly showing the policy start and expiry dates
- Proof of permission to store equipment on property/ in facility.

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### Project Criteria

Applicants must demonstrate within their application how their project meets the following criteria. Please use SMART principles (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-framed) when answering the following questions.

1. The need for the sports equipment and the purpose of the sports equipment
2. How it will benefit the sports club and its members.
3. How the sports equipment will create new opportunities for people to take part in sport and/or physical recreation within the Borough
4. How the sports equipment will contribute to sustained participation in sport and physical recreation within the Borough

### Scoring Matrix

Assessment Criteria	Scoring	Success Factors
<b>Criteria 1: <u>Description</u></b> Demonstrate the need for the sports equipment and its purpose	25 Marks	The application describes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What the funding is for, who will be using it for what purpose</li><li>• How the equipment will create new opportunities and increase participation (i.e. milestones).</li><li>• that the application been well planned.</li></ul>
<b>Criteria 2: <u>Justification</u></b> Demonstrate how the equipment will benefit the sport club/ members and local community	25 marks	The application: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• is clear and unambiguous.</li><li>• Justifies why the funding is needed</li><li>• how this equipment aims to supports and benefit the club</li><li>• who will benefit from the equipment and how.</li></ul>
<b>Criteria 3: <u>Outcomes</u></b> Demonstrate how the equipment will create new opportunities for people to take part in sport and/or physical recreation within the Borough	25 Marks	The application provides: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• clear outcomes how the funding will benefit the club and its members (i.e. in which ways will the equipment benefit the club and participants; how many people will benefit)</li></ul>
<b>Criteria 4: <u>Impact</u></b> Demonstrated how the sports equipment will increase, improve and/or sustain participation within the club	25 marks	The application describes <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>how</u> the equipment will have long-term impact on <u>whom</u> and <u>why</u> (demonstrating positive contribution or change)</li></ul>
<b>Total Marks available:</b>	<b>100 Marks</b>	

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

### General Guidelines for Applicants

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

- Sports Clubs/Organisations must be currently affiliated to the Ards and North Down Sports Forum.
- All applications must be completed in full, signed and submitted with all essential information. Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- Retrospective funding will not be considered.
- Equipment already purchased will not be considered.
- Successful applicants must:

### 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.**

### What we WILL Fund

- Only Sports Equipment will be considered i.e Equipment that is used to compete/participate in a sport.
- 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.
- Sports Equipment that will enhance the delivery of physical literacy for junior (under 18) clubs.
- Sports equipment to support the development of new organisations, or new sections of existing organisations.
- Sports equipment to support the hosting of sports events within the Borough.
- Training equipment such as SAQ equipment, bibs, cones, time keeping devices etc.

## 2026-2027 Sports Equipment Guidance Notes

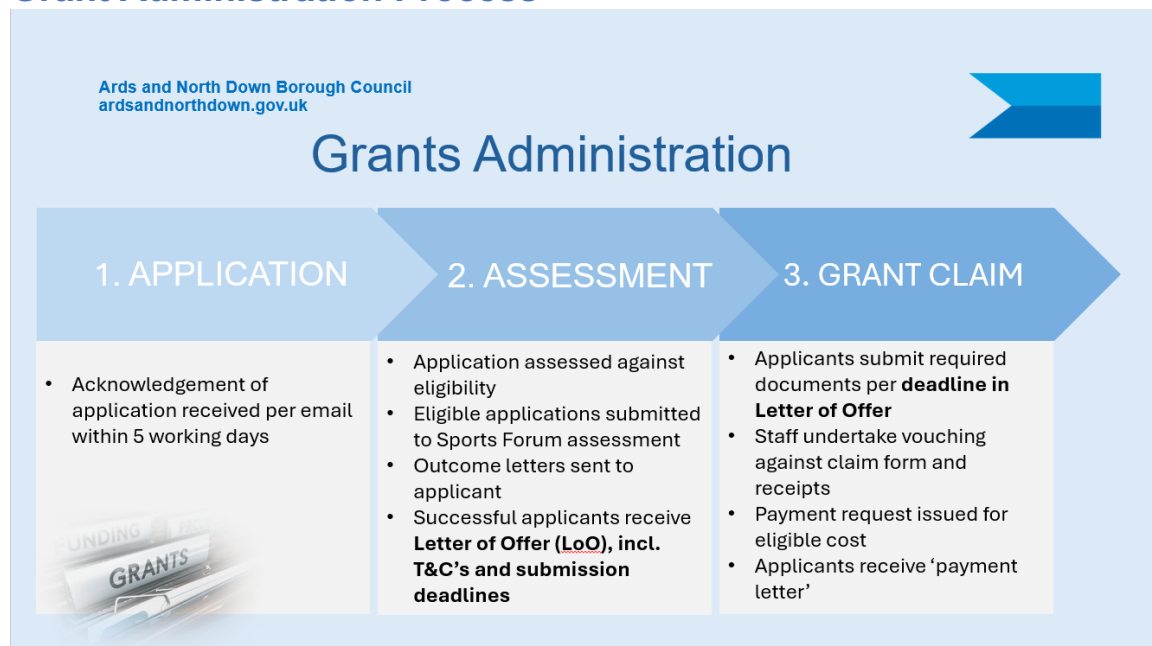
- High performance sports equipment – heart rate monitors, video analysis equipment etc. (Safeguarding evidence/qualifications must be provided in relation to video / photographic analysis equipment applications)
- Recovery sports equipment e.g. Compression boots, portable ice baths.

### What we will NOT fund

- Projects, events, activities undertaken or equipment purchased outside of the specified award period.
- Projects, events, and activities where the primary benefits outside of the Borough.
- Events, projects or activities which conflict with any Council run project, event or activity.
- Organisations not legally established in the UK
- Projects, events, activities not compliant with the Council's aims and objectives
- Equipment which is not Sports Equipment
- Sports or projects for sports not listed by Sport Northern Ireland / Sport Ireland
- Sports or projects which are discriminating.
- Organisations that do not have a Full Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults policy.
- Personal equipment and clothing such as team kits and Items which only benefit individuals (e.g. prizes; boots, etc.)
- Costs incurred before successful Letter of Offer issued.
- Computer, software packages or websites (unless High Performance Analysis Equipment)
- Office equipment, furniture, maintenance equipment
- VAT that can be recovered from HM Revenue and Customs
- First aid kits/medical bags, defibrillators, medical personal costs, e.g. physio, sports therapist, etc.
- Gym equipment e.g. treadmills, rowers, bikes, etc.

**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



**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

**Email:** [sportsdevelopment@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk](mailto:sportsdevelopment@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk)

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