

How to apply for a tenant participation grant

1. What is a tenant participation grant?

The Council has a duty to support tenant participation and we provide a range of resources to help make that successful. For a tenant group that means we can financially support the running of a group so that they can operate democratically, representing their area. For active groups, to save on hall hire, we can also provide community flats for them to base themselves from where necessary.

2. What grants are available?

Starter Grant	Starter grants are for administration costs (such as hall hire, stationery, travel expenses, postage) for starting up a tenants group. Grants of £200 are available for new tenant organisations.
Annual Grant	Annual grants are for the general running costs of a tenants group
Top-up Grant	Top-up grants are for items that were not budgeted for on the annual grant form or if your funds are low.

3. Is your group eligible for a grant?

To be eligible for a tenant participation grant from the Council at least half of your group's committee (50%) must be West Dunbartonshire Council **tenants**. This is because the grants are funded from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The HRA is made up of tenants' rents and Housing Benefit and is used by the Council to pay for the housing service it delivers. As the grants come from tenants' money we need to ensure every penny is spent effectively and require receipts for all grant money spent.

4. When should a group apply for a grant?

Groups should apply for a grant after their annual general meeting or when they first become a constituted group. The amount requested should be for the projected expenditure for the year ahead. For existing groups they should review their spending over the previous year and any amount left in their bank account to work out what they will need for the next year.

5. Where can you get a grant form?

Contact Tenant Participation or forms can be down loaded from <http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/housing/council-housing/tenant-participation/tenants-residents-groups/> . We can also provide guidance to help you complete your application and a useful booklet to help you keep a record of your accounts during the year. The same grant application form is used for all 3 types of grant.

6. What happens next?

Grant applications will be processed by TP staff in 10 working days providing all the information is received and correct. If we need further information we will contact the group's Treasurer. Once the grant application is processed it can still take up to 4 weeks for our creditors section to process and actually transfer the money into the tenant group's bank account (the Council no longer issues cheques). You will receive notification confirming that the bank credit has been done.

7. What needs to be included along with the grant application form?

Other documents needed

Item	Why	Grant type
Constitution	The Council needs to see a copy of your constitution if you are a new group or if you have recently made changes to it.	All
Annual Audited Financial Statement	If you have previously received a grant you are required to have your accounts independently audited. Some groups pay for this to be carried out by a qualified accountant; others get it done for free by Community Volunteer Services or by Tenant Participation Staff. Once accounts have been audited you should be given a statement which demonstrates the income and expenditure of your group over the financial year.	Annual
Additional financial statement	If you apply for an annual grant 3 or more months after* the period covered by the audited financial statement (above) you should also complete an additional financial statement. This additional financial statement demonstrates what has been spent between the period of the audit and your application for a grant.	Annual* Top-up
Receipts covering the period of the financial statement.	You must provide the receipts which cover the additional financial statement.	Annual* Top-up
Bank statements	You must provide a copy of bank statements covering the period in the audited financial statement.	Annual Top-up

Minute and attendance list of recent AGM	By providing a copy of your AGM minute and attendance list you can demonstrate that your group was quorate, that you operated constitutionally and that those who attended live with the area you represent.	Annual Starter
List of new committee members	Providing a list of your committee members will ensure that the Council has their contact details, it will also demonstrate that your committee members live within the Association's area of operation and that there are 50% tenants on the committee.	Annual Starter

8. Contact Us

If you have any queries about the grant application process please contact Tenant Participation,

Jane Mack on 01389 737281, text 07983542993 or email jane.mack@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Hanne Thijs on 07823 664247 or email hanne.thijs@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

