

Community Investment Fund Policy

Date written: February 2010

Date(s) reviewed: Reviewed June 2017 / Reviewed April 2019 / Reviewed April 2020 / Reviewed April 2021

Purpose: To set out Bernicia's approach to providing Community Investment Funding to benefit Bernicia customers and the communities we operate in.

Scope: To ensure that the Community Investment Fund budget is allocated in line with Bernicia objectives and priorities, funding criteria and to consider applications from Bernicia residents, community groups, charities, voluntary organisations and partner agencies.

Definitions: Community Funding – funding provided by Bernicia to improve the quality of life for Bernicia tenants and enhance neighbourhoods in which they live.

Associated documents:

- Community Investment Fund Application Form
- Community Investment Fund Application Guidance Notes
- Community Investment Fund Information Leaflet
- Customer Engagement Privacy Statement

Date for review: April 2023

Responsibility: Customer Engagement Team Officers

Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Bernicia is committed to adding Social Value for its tenants and neighbourhoods. This policy sets out how the Community Investment Fund will contribute to this commitment.
- 1.2 A dedicated budget for Community Investment will be provided annually at the start of each financial year.
- 1.3 Projects funded should fit within one or more of the following priority themes:
 - Health and wellbeing
 - Supporting communities
 - Employment, skills and training
 - Financial well-being

2. Policy statements

- 2.1 Bernicia residents, community groups, charities, voluntary organisations and partner agencies can apply for Community Investment Funding.
- 2.2 A Community Investment Group, made up of Bernicia tenants and leaseholders will oversee expenditure against this budget in line with agreed priorities and objectives.
- 2.3 We will only consider a maximum of 2 applications per scheme/unit/estate in any financial year. Where there is a second submission, successful funding award will be dependent on nature of application and criteria suitability.
- 2.4 We will only accept applications which benefit the majority of residents. Those for individual gain will not be accepted.
- 2.5 Community Groups making funding applications must have a form of constitution with associated financial arrangements.
- 2.6 If a bid is made for a community day or group activity, the applicant must show that a level of match funding is being carried out and how the activity will support continued social inclusion.

- 2.7 Applications which do not meet our commitment to equality and diversity, which are the statutory responsibility of others and that do not provide outcomes for tenants and the community, will not be considered.
- 2.8 Where possible, the number of tenants and residents affected by the requested funding should be identified in the application.
- 2.9 We reserve the right to refuse an application prior to discussion with the Community Investment Group, if it is considered to have no sustainability, longevity or value to the community.
- 2.10 Any on costs (for example, maintenance and insurance) for equipment or landscaping must be taken into consideration during all phases of the application.
- 2.11 We will seek technical advice to ensure requests conform to current health and safety regulations and are fit for purpose.
- 2.12 Only qualified/approved trades and contractors will carry out works.
- 2.13 We will request 2 quotes for all funding.
- 2.14 Members of the Community Investment Group directly involved with an application will be asked not to be present when that particular application is being considered.
- 2.15 The outcome of any request will be provided (in addition to any telephone calls) to the principal applicant in writing.
- 2.16 Applications which are rejected will not be reconsidered and a new amended application will be required for re-submission.

Discretionary

- 2.17 Funding applications up to £300 can be agreed by the Customer Engagement Team and reported to the Community Investment Group.

Using the criteria set out in the policy, the Customer Engagement Team can make a decision as to whether an application will be of benefit to an estate or community.

The Community Investment Group, although not directly involved, will be informed of these grants.

- 2.18 Applications above £300 will be agreed by the Community Investment Group.

If an application needs a response before the next scheduled meeting, group members in the area the application relates to will get together to consider and approve them and a report on decisions will be taken to the whole group.

Any application above £1,000 must be agreed by the whole group.

- 2.19 The total amount of budget for Small Grants will be £10,000 per year. This may be varied on approval by the Community Investment Group. Community groups can apply for local community events and activities for example, garden projects or community fun days.

Strategic

- 2.20 A proportion of the Community Investment budget will be reserved to support objectives/priorities within Bernicia's Corporate Strategy and/or Annual Plans. This will include larger projects that can provide significant outcomes for our tenants through partnership work.

The Community Investment budget is aimed at helping us deliver on the 4 key objectives within our corporate plan 'Housing People, Helping People', particularly our investment in homes and communities:

- Delivering an exceptional housing service
- Investing in homes, neighbourhoods and communities
- Building an effective organisation
- Helping to deliver the regional agenda

3. Responsibility and implementation

- 3.1 The Customer Engagement Team (referred to as the 'Grant Facilitators') will be responsible for implementing this policy.
- 3.2 The Customer Engagement Team will oversee the application process and support tenants in applying for funding.
- 3.3 The Customer Engagement Team will work closely with the Community Investment Group when considering relevant applications.

4. Actioning the policy

- 4.1 This policy will be actioned every time there is a request for Community Investment Funding.

5. Monitoring the policy

- 5.1 The Customer Engagement Team will monitor applications to ensure funding is awarded fairly and correctly.
- 5.2 A review will be carried out on an annual basis or when there is any change to the funding process.

6. Resources

- 6.1 There are currently no resource implications as a result of this policy.

7. Equality and Diversity

7.1 An equality and diversity impact assessment has been undertaken on this policy. In carrying out its services, we are committed to:

- Treating all customers and employees positively regardless of any personal characteristics including gender, age, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, gender reassignment or religion.
- Taking seriously all complaints and investigating and responding accordingly.
- Using plain language and providing information in other languages, large print, audio and Braille on request.

Uncontrolled if printed – This may not be the latest version of the policy

All policies must be printed from Connect only – please make sure it is the latest version.

Policy Planning Document (PPD)

*ALL sections must be completed with every review or any creation of a new policy. For anything that doesn't apply, state N/A.

ALL sections must be completed with a review or any creation of a new, policy. For anything that doesn't apply, please state N/A. Anything left blank will be returned to you.	
1. Policy Title*	Community Investment Fund
2. Staff/Departments that must be tested*	Housing Services
3. Staff/Departments for mandatory read*	Housing Services
4. Supporting documents, procedures & process maps*	Community Investment Fund Application Form, Guidance Notes, Information Leaflet and Customer Engagement Privacy Statement.
5. Associated Policies*	N/A
6. Completed E&D Submitted:*	Yes
7. Reason for review (scheduled/non-scheduled)*	Scheduled
8. Minor or Significant change?*	Minor
9. Details of Changes (if any)*	None
10. What good practice and ext. learning sources have been used?*	Consideration of match funding for applications. Measurable community project outcomes for Bernicia.
11. Who has been consulted?*	Community Investment Group.
12. Does this Policy need to go to Board for approval?*	No
13. If any significant change, who has approved this?*	N/A
14. Have all legal implications been considered in the policy?*	Yes
15. Does this policy meet regulatory requirements?*	Yes
16. How is the impact of this policy measured?*	Feedback from users / Post evaluation reports / Evaluation visits / PR

17. How will training be offered to support these changes?*	N/A
18. How will the distribution of knowledge be tested?*	N/A
19. Any other information	N/A
Please confirm details below	
Policy Holder	Customer Engagement Team Officers
Next Review Date	April 2023

Policy Risk and Compliance Assessment

“Policies are documents devised to advise individuals as to a set of behaviours required on a specific topic. Within an organisation they provide a “voice” to the organisation and ensure consistency as well as providing a mechanism for performance management and monitoring.”

As part of reviewing or developing a new policy it is important you complete one of these Policy Risk & Compliance Assessments to tell us a little more about what you are planning so we can support you and your teams appropriately. Please answer the following questions as honestly and openly as you are able.

This assessment is not to prevent you doing anything, but to centrally offer you the best advice and support in developing and reviewing your policies whilst minimising risk from the outset.

Policy Risk & Compliance Assessment	
Name and Job Title	Gillian Buchan Customer Engagement Officer
Department	Customer Engagement
Title of new policy / policy to be reviewed	Community Investment Fund Policy
Brief description of the policy, its purpose, and the areas of the business it covers	Community Funding – funding provided by Bernicia to improve the quality of life for Bernicia tenants and enhance neighbourhoods in which they live. To set out Bernicia’s approach to providing Community Investment Funding to benefit Bernicia customers and the communities we operate. To ensure that the Community Investment Fund budget is allocated in line with Bernicia

	objectives and priorities, funding criteria and to consider applications from Bernicia residents, community groups, charities, voluntary organisations and partner agencies.
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All policies will require this document prior to being hosted on Connect and the review being logged as complete.

Policy Title: Community Investment Fund Policy		
Date: 20 April 2020	Name: Gillian Buchan	
	Yes (won't always be the case in this policy but is a possibility)	No
1. Equality and Diversity, Will the policy be likely to impact or involve...		
Any individual specifically because of one of their protected characteristics?	X	
The collection or processing of information relating to the protected characteristics?	X	
An event or initiative only open to certain people or groups of people?	X	
The processing of any information relating to a persons protected characteristics?	X	
The monitoring of a service take up, by protected characteristics?	X	
2. Data Protection, Does the policy relate to / involve...		
Collecting data (electronically, with a form or face to face)?	X	
Using, sharing or sending data?	X	
Taking photos?	X	
Sending any information outside of Bernicia?	X	
Asking for any information about children?	X	
Any sensitive information (sexuality, ethnicity, race, religion etc.)?	X	
Technology that will automatically makes decisions or evaluates data?		X
Any systematic monitoring – such as CCTV or tracking?		X
The large scale processing of data? (there is no definition of large scale, so please use of your discretion in line with Bernicia's business)		X
Using electronic communications (text, email)?	X	
3. Money Laundering		
Will you be collecting any cash as part of the activity covered in the policy?		X
4. Health and Safety, Will the policy involve...		

Any predominantly any offsite activity?	X	
Undertaking an activity with members of the public?	X	
Using any PPE?		X
Vehicles (or their use) as a key component?		X
Vulnerable adults, young people or children?	X	
Bernicia staff be working on their own or out of hours?	X	

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Impact Assessment

Policy Name: Community Investment Funding Policy

Date: 21 April 2021

Names of those undertaking the assessment: Gillian Buchan – Customer Engagement Officer North

Question 1: Please delete as appropriate.

Are there concerns that this policy or practice could have a positive or negative impact on any of the following?

Race	Gender	Age	Sexual Orientation	Disability	Religion	Gender Reassignment	Other
N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

Question 2: Please complete all fields, detailing any supporting knowledge you have for your assertions. Please note, the term N/A should not be used, and all field should be completed.

Please describe the positive and negative impacts for each group as identified above, and what supporting knowledge you have for identifying these impacts:

Race	Impact
	Group is inclusive within Community Investment projects.

	Support knowledge	Variety of projects carried out in the Bernicia stock area and documented in annual reports. This information is not always available as individuals are not required to provide this personal information.
Gender	Impact	Group is inclusive within Community Investment projects.
	Support knowledge	Variety of projects carried out in the Bernicia stock area and documented in annual reports.
Age	Impact	Group is inclusive within Community Investment projects.
	Support knowledge	Variety of projects carried out in the Bernicia stock area and documented in annual reports.
Sexual Orientation	Impact	Group is inclusive within Community Investment projects.
	Support knowledge	This information is not always available as individuals are not required to provide this personal information.
Disability	Impact	Group is inclusive within Community Investment projects.
	Support knowledge	Variety of projects carried out in the Bernicia stock area and documented in annual reports. Annual objective included in Newcastle United Foundation Kicks project.
Religion	Impact	Group is inclusive within Community Investment projects.

	Support knowledge	Variety of projects carried out in the Bernicia stock area and documented in annual reports.
Gender Reassignment	Impact	Groups is inclusive within Community Investment projects. Northern Soul Kitchen project has supported this group in particular by providing volunteering posts.
	Support knowledge	Evidenced as case study in report provided by Northern Soul Kitchen.
Other	Impact	No further information to provide
	Support knowledge	No further information to provide

Question 3: Please complete all fields.

Can any of the above impacts be justified? Please describe how and why.	
Race	Justified due to the inclusivity/opportunity and positive impact.
Gender	Justified due to the inclusivity/opportunity and positive impact.
Age	Justified due to the inclusivity/opportunity and positive impact.
Sexual Orientation	Justified due to the inclusivity/opportunity and positive impact.
Disability	Justified due to the inclusivity/opportunity and positive impact.
Religion	Justified due to the inclusivity/opportunity and positive impact.

Gender Reassignment	Justified due to the inclusivity/opportunity and positive impact.
Other	No further information to provide.

How do you feel that you can minimise any of the negative impacts identified? Please describe what actions you will take to do so, and undertake or escalate these as appropriate.

No further information to provide.

Does this policy require a fuller impact assessment?

Please delete as appropriate

