

Lewisham Repair, Reuse, Recycle Grants Guidelines 2025/2026



Guidance for applicants

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Repair, Reuse, Recycle Grants Guidance

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1. Overview

Lewisham Council is awarding grants to local businesses to help them grow while making the borough cleaner and greener. Cutting waste can save money, improve efficiency, attract customers, and build stronger businesses.

This grant programme supports local businesses, sole traders, social enterprises and community interest companies. We will fund practical ideas that reduce waste in day-to-day operations or supply chains, find new uses for materials, repair items that might otherwise be thrown away, or use smarter recycling methods.

Each grant is up to £3,000. Alongside funding, you will receive guidance, workshops and mentoring to help you measure your impact, such as how much waste or carbon your project saves, and manage it effectively. These steps can lower costs and open new opportunities for growth.

If your business already uses sustainable practices, or wants to expand them, this grant may be right for you. We are especially interested in projects that cut waste, reduce reliance on plastics or fossil fuels, or use resources more wisely.

Applications that clearly explain how funding will help achieve these goals are most likely to succeed. This guidance sets out the funding available through the 2025–26 Repair, Reuse, Recycle Grants and explains how to apply.

2. What the grant funds and how much you can apply for

The Repair, Reuse, Recycle Grants support practical projects that reduce waste and carbon emissions within Lewisham. Each grant is worth up to £3,000.

The fund focuses on five key areas:

- 1. Repair and fixing skills:** This includes setting up repair workshops, events or cafes, or offering fixing services for items such as clothing, electrical goods, furniture or bicycles.
- 2. Cutting single-use plastics:** Projects can replace or reduce disposable packaging by switching to reusable or refillable alternatives.
- 3. Food growing and composting:** Funding can support local food growing projects, composting, or packaging-free food initiatives.

4. **Creative reuse:** This includes repurposing materials already in use, reducing waste and giving items a new life instead of sending them for disposal.
5. **Waste stream innovations:** This can involve developing new materials, products or digital tools to make better use of local waste or connecting businesses to share unused resources.

Your project must take place within the London Borough of Lewisham and show clear benefits for the local community and environment.

Alongside the grant, businesses receive wraparound support. This includes workshops, mentoring, and help to measure the impact of their work, such as carbon savings or reductions in waste.

3. Who can apply

The Repair, Reuse, Recycle Grants are open to businesses based in the London Borough of Lewisham.

You can apply if you are:

- A sole trader, including designers and creatives
- A micro, small or medium business
- A social enterprise or community interest company

Applicants must:

- Be based in Lewisham and deliver their project in the borough
- Have a business or organisational bank account (not a personal account)
- Be able to provide company accounts for the past 12 months

You can work with other businesses or organisations, but one organisation must act as the lead applicant. Individuals not registered as sole traders cannot apply on their own. However, if you have an idea for a project, you can partner with an eligible organisation to deliver it.

4. What the grant can and cannot fund

The grant can support a wide range of costs, as long as they help your business reduce waste or carbon emissions. **Funding can be used for activities such as:**

- Running repair events, workshops or pop-up repair cafes
- Buying equipment or materials to support repair, reuse or recycling projects
- Purchasing composting machinery or tools to grow food locally
- Developing reusable or refillable packaging systems
- Covering staff time or training costs for repair and reuse activities
- Creating new low or zero waste products
- Developing prototypes or testing new ideas
- Running campaigns to change customer behaviour or build community partnerships
- Purchasing software to help track and reduce waste

For example, a small café could use the grant to buy reusable containers for a refill scheme, train staff to run it, and run a simple campaign to encourage customers to take part. This would reduce packaging waste, save money over time and build stronger customer loyalty.

The grant cannot fund:

- Debt repayment
- Rent or utility bills
- Stock for existing product lines

- New computers, tablets or phones (unless they are refurbished and essential to the project, with a clear explanation provided)
- Ongoing software subscriptions not directly linked to the project

All spending must take place after the grant is awarded. The grant cannot be used for costs already incurred.

5. Application process and timeline

All applications must be submitted using the official application form at <https://lewishamclimategrants.commonplace.is/>. This ensures every project is assessed fairly and consistently. Your application should describe your project clearly and explain how it meets the aims of the grant. You should also show how the funding will be used and what impact your project will have.

What you will need to apply

Before starting your application, make sure you have the following:

- Project description – A clear summary of what you plan to do and why.
- Budget – A simple budget that explains how you will spend the grant and any other funding you have.
- Organisational details – Your business or organisation name, type, contact details and location.
- Proof of location – Evidence that you are based in Lewisham, such as a business address.
- Bank account – An organisational bank account, not a personal account.
- A balance sheet or your latest accounts – micro accounts are also fine.
- Key policies and documents – For example, your health and safety policy, insurance certificates, and safeguarding documents if relevant.
- Monitoring information – A short plan for how you will measure your project's impact, such as waste saved or emissions reduced.

Assessment process

Applications are reviewed by a panel from Lewisham Council. Each application is assessed against clear criteria to make sure funding supports the strongest projects.

Below is a summary of the selection criteria used to assess applications:

Category	Criteria	What we are looking for
Project planning	Project plan	A clear, realistic plan with milestones and manageable risks.
	Research	Evidence that you have thought through your idea and how it fits with your existing business objectives, and how waste is disposed of currently in the borough. For example, nothing goes to landfill if collected by Lewisham council, but waste is incinerated. Find out more here: https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/recycling-and-rubbish/where-your-rubbish-and-recycling-goes
	Budget	A reasonable budget, with quotes where needed and any matched funding clearly shown.
Community and	Collaboration	Support or involvement from local groups,

partnership working		customers, your staff or other organisations.
	Community benefit	How your project benefits the local community or local spaces, for example through creating skills, new or safeguarded jobs, or shared resources.
Impact	Waste and carbon reduction	Clear potential to reduce waste, single-use plastics or carbon emissions.
	Green growth and business benefits	Evidence of how the project will support the growth of your business. For example, measuring cost savings, energy efficiency gains, reduced waste collection costs, or attracting new customers.
	Value for money	Efficient use of grant funds to achieve strong outcomes.
Experience and capacity	Track record	Relevant experience to deliver the project, strong partnerships to provide support, or an indication of how you would use the provided mentoring or workshops to reach your goals.
	Delivery capacity	Evidence you have the people, time and resources to deliver the project on schedule.

6. Timeline:

- Opens: 20 October 2025
- Launch event: 23 October 2025
- Deadline: 8 December 2025
- Results: 22 December 2025
- Agreements signed by: January 2026
- Funding awarded by: February 2026

7. Examples of past grantees:

Mont58: Food growing and composting / Cutting single-use plastics

Mont58, a local coffee roastery, used their grant to buy an ice machine and a kitchen composter. This reduced their reliance on plastic-bagged ice and enabled them to process all their food waste on site, before giving the **compost** powder to nearby community gardens. By making these changes, they saved money on packaging and waste collections while improving their environmental impact. They also communicated this to customers on their website. This kind of measurable business benefit, alongside carbon emissions saved and waste reduction, is what we are looking for in strong applications.

RMUK: Food growing and composting / Creative reuse

Rastafari Movement UK CIC used their grant to upcycle wooden pallets into herb planters and an outdoor seating area. This **creative reuse** project transformed their garden into a welcoming community space, reduced packaging waste by supporting local food growing, and improved the experience for visitors. By cutting waste and creating new opportunities to engage the community, RMUK demonstrated both environmental impact and social value — exactly the kind of outcomes we aim to support.

Make Mee Studio: Repair and fixing skills

Make Mee Studio used their funding to run sewing workshops that taught people how to repair and upcycle clothing. This helped reduce textile waste, passed on valuable skills and encouraged more

sustainable shopping habits. The project brought together residents, supported creative learning and reduced the need for new clothing purchases.

See more case studies here:

- <https://lewishamclimategrants.commonplace.is/en-GB/map/climate-action-in-lewisham>
- https://relondon.gov.uk/type_of_content/case-study

8. Support and workshops

The grant programme includes more than financial support. Successful applicants will also receive tailored guidance and training to help make their projects a success. This wraparound support is designed to build skills, strengthen ideas and help businesses measure their impact.

Workshops and mentoring

All grantees will be invited to take part in a series of workshops and mentoring sessions. These are delivered by The WIP, a Lewisham-based consultancy that helps small businesses and underrepresented founders to grow sustainably. The WIP supports businesses to understand their environmental impact and to develop practical ways to reduce waste and carbon emissions.

Support will include:

- Grant readiness workshops and an information webinar to help applicants improve their project plans and applications before applying.
- Two bespoke workshops for successful grantees, covering topics such as impact measurement, storytelling, circular economy practices and sustainability ideas.
- Two to three short mentoring sessions, delivered online, to check progress and offer tailored advice as projects develop.

These sessions are designed to be practical and accessible. They will help you understand how your project is performing and how to collect clear data on its outcomes. This includes measuring waste reductions, carbon savings and business benefits such as cost savings or increased efficiency.

Networking and events

As part of the Repair, Reuse, Recycle programme, there will also be opportunities to take part in networking events, including Circular Economy Week in October. These events bring together businesses, social enterprises and community organisations to share learning, build partnerships and inspire new ideas.

Participating in these activities can help strengthen your project, make your business more efficient and connect you with new customers and partners.

9. Important information

More guidance and the application form can be found here:

<https://lewishamclimategrants.commonplace.is/en-GB/proposals/v3/apply-for-the-repair-reuse-recycle-grants?step=step1>

If you have any concerns or questions about the above requirements or anything else related to this application, please contact: climate@lewisham.gov.uk

Appendix A: Terms and Conditions

Applicants will be expected to agree to the following standard terms and conditions when submitting an application to the Lewisham Repair, Reuse, Recycle Grants:

1. The grant will only be spent on the purpose detailed in the application unless otherwise agreed in advance by the Council in writing.
2. On confirmation of the award you will receive an email confirming the final award amount, notification if supplementary documents are required and a bank form for immediate completion. Payment will only be made once this and any required supplementary documents are returned.
3. In exceptional circumstances, the grant can be withdrawn or withheld at the Council's discretion.
4. Any part of the grant that is not required for the purpose approved must be refunded to the Council.
5. Repayment of the grant can be required at the sole discretion of the Council if:
 - The Council finds that any false information has been supplied to the Council;
 - the work undertaken is not the work for which the grant was approved (if the Council has not been informed of, and approved, these changes in accordance with point 1);
 - the grant has not been spent within one year unless otherwise agreed by the Council;
 - your organisation becomes insolvent or goes into administration, receivership or liquidation, and the grant has not already been spent on its intended purpose, or;
 - there is any other breach of any of the conditions in this form.
6. The grant is made on a 'one-off' basis and does not carry any commitment to future funding.
7. Failure to report on previous successful grant applications will lead to ineligibility for this round.
8. The grant cannot be made as "match" funding against any other Lewisham Council funded initiatives.
9. The project shall be required to return a completed monitoring form and financial breakdown of how the grant was used no later than 3 months after the end date of the project. Failure to do so will render the Project ineligible for future grants. A template monitoring form will be forwarded to successful applications as part of the confirmation process.
10. The grant shall be specifically acknowledged within your annual accounts for the year in which it was received.
11. The grant and Lewisham Council will be acknowledged in all printed and digital materials that the organisation produces about your project and acknowledged appropriately elsewhere.
12. The Council may use your name in any publicity material.
13. The Project shall comply with any legal obligations that may be relevant in order to carry out the scheme, such as planning, licensing, employment, health and safety, insurance and equal opportunities legislation.
14. Receiving a grant from Lewisham Council does not constitute the grant of planning permission, or any other permission, and in no way prejudices future decisions of Lewisham Council or the Local Planning Authority. You must obtain all relevant permissions.
15. Lewisham Council reserves the right to share the information you have provided with relevant parties (e.g. Charity Commission) where appropriate.
16. Any Value Added Tax (VAT) payable by your organisation is your responsibility and Lewisham Council shall not be obliged to pay any additional amount.
17. Lewisham Council requires all organisations signing for an award to hold the following documentation. By signing this form you hold the relevant documents for the project the Council are pledging against, and your organisation agrees to provide these to Lewisham Council if it is deemed necessary.
 - Balance sheet or company accounts
 - Signed grant agreement