Inclusive Regeneration

Lewisham Repair, Reuse, Recycle Grants Guidelines 2026/2027



Guidance for applicants

Climate Resilience Team
Laurence House
1 Catford Road
London SE6 4RU
020 8314 3306

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Repair, Reuse, Recycle Grants Guidance

1. Overview

Lewisham Council is offering grants to help local businesses grow while making the borough cleaner, greener and less wasteful. We want to support businesses who demonstrate that reducing waste can save money, make businesses run more smoothly, attract new customers and opportunities.

The programme is open to local businesses, sole traders, social enterprises and community interest companies (CICs). We are looking for practical projects that reduce waste, repair items instead of replacing them, find new uses for unwanted materials, improve recycling, make better use of resources, or inspire community action.

You can apply for a grant of up to **£3,000**. Successful applicants will also receive workshops, mentoring and support to help them measure their impact, such as how much waste or carbon emissions their project saves, and how to manage and grow their ideas.

If your business already takes steps to reduce waste, or you have an idea to become more sustainable, this grant could help you put it into practice. We are especially interested in projects that reduce waste, cut down on plastic use, reduce reliance on fossil fuels, or help materials stay in use for longer.

Applications are most likely to succeed if they clearly explain what they want to do, how it will reduce waste, and what difference the funding will make.

This guidance explains the funding available through the **2026/27 Repair, Reuse, Recycle Grants** and how to apply.

2. What kinds of projects can apply?

The **Repair, Reuse, Recycle Grants** support practical projects that help reduce waste and make better use of resources in Lewisham. Grants of up to **£3,000** are available.

We are looking for projects in one or more of the following areas:

1. Repair and fixing skills

Helping people learn how to repair and look after their belongings instead of throwing them away. Examples include:

- Repair cafés
- Mending and sewing workshops

- Bike repair sessions
- Furniture or electrical repair services

2. Reducing single-use plastics

Finding alternatives to items that are only used once and then thrown away. Examples include:

- Refill schemes
- Reusable cup projects
- Reusable food containers
- Plastic-free packaging

3. Food waste and composting

Helping people reduce food waste, take up council food waste collections, and turn uneaten food into something useful. Examples include:

- Community composting projects
- Food redistribution schemes
- Using food waste to create recipes or products

4. Reusing and upcycling materials

Giving unwanted items and materials a new purpose instead of throwing them away. Examples include:

- Upcycling furniture or clothing
- Creative reuse projects
- Making new products from waste materials
- Community reuse activities

5. New ideas to reduce waste

Using creativity, technology or new ways of working to help reduce waste. Examples include:

- Apps or websites that help people share resources
- Tools that connect people with surplus materials
- New products made from waste materials
- Innovative recycling or reuse projects

3. Who can apply

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

You can apply if you are:

- A sole trader, including designers, makers and creatives
- A small or medium-sized business
- A social enterprise
- A Community Interest Company (CIC)

To apply, you must:

- Be ideally based in Lewisham and at least deliver your project in Lewisham
- Have a business or organisation bank account (not a personal bank account)
- Be able to provide accounts or financial records from the last 12 months

You can work with other organisations or businesses and put in joint bids. One organisation should be listed as the main coordinator.

If you are not a registered sole trader or organisation, you cannot apply on your own. If you have a good idea, you can work with an eligible organisation that can apply on your behalf.

4. What the grant can and cannot fund

The grant can fund activities that help reduce waste, repair items, reuse materials, or make your organisation more sustainable.

Examples include:

- Running repair workshops, repair cafés or skill-sharing events
- Buying tools or equipment for repair, reuse or recycling projects
- Composting equipment or food waste projects
- Reusable cup, container or refill schemes
- Staff time or training linked to the project
- Creating products from waste or unwanted materials
- Testing or piloting a new idea
- Community campaigns that encourage people to waste less
- Software or digital tools that help track, reduce or reuse waste

Example:

A café could buy reusable takeaway containers, train staff to use them, and encourage customers to join a refill scheme. This could reduce packaging waste, save money over time, and attract new customers.

What the grant cannot fund

The grant cannot be used for:

- Paying off debts
- Rent, utility bills or every day running costs
- Stock for existing products
- New computers, phones or tablets, unless they are refurbished and essential to the project

- Ongoing software subscriptions that are not directly linked to the project

You can only spend grant funding after you have been awarded the grant.

5. What support will I receive?

As well as funding, successful applicants will receive:

- Workshops
- One-to-one mentoring
- Advice and support

We'll also help you measure the difference your project makes, such as how much waste it reduces or how many items are repaired or reused.

All applicants will receive:

- Invites to showcasing and networking events
- News of external grant funds via our climate grants newsletter

6. Application process and timeline

Applications must be submitted through the online application form:

https://engage.zencity.io/london-borough-of-lewisham/en-GB/projects/lewishamclimategrants

The application form helps us assess every project fairly and consistently.

Your application should clearly explain:

- What you want to do
- Why it is needed
- How it will reduce waste
- Who will benefit
- How you will use the funding
- What difference the project will make

7. 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	What evidence shows this project is needed? Please include one or more of: previous project results, customer/community feedback surveys, pilot activities, sector research examples from elsewhere. We'll be looking for evidence that you have thought through your idea, how it fits with your existing business objectives, and how waste is disposed of currently by Lewisham. 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 partnership working	Collaboration	Support or involvement from local groups, customers, your staff or other organisations.
	Community benefit	How your project benefits the local community, economy, 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.

8. Timeline:

- Opens: 26 October 2026
- Information webinar: 24 November 2026
- Deadline: 28 December 2026
- Results: January 2027
- Agreements signed by: January 2027
- Funding awarded by: February 2027

9. Examples of past grantees:

Mont58: Food waste and composting / Reducing 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: Reusing and upcycling materials

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.

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

See more case studies here:

- https://engage.zencity.io/london-borough-of-lewisham/en-GB/projects/lewishamclimategrants
- https://relondon.gov.uk/type_of_content/case-study

10. 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. You'll be supported to understand your environmental impact and to develop practical ways to reduce waste and carbon emissions.

Support will include:

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

- Visits to create publicity materials and case studies, as part of Lewisham wide advertising campaigns for successful grantees.

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. 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, funders and partners.

11. Important information

Grant projects should ideally be delivered or started within 6 weeks of receiving grant funding. Proof of purchases and spend will be asked for within 6 months, as part of mentoring sessions.

More case studies and the application form can be found here: https://engage.zencity.io/london-borough-of-lewisham/en-GB/projects/lewishamclimategrants

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