

A guide to fundraising for allotment associations

Details of organisations mentioned in this factsheet are listed in *Useful Contacts*.

Introduction

Welcome to *A guide to fundraising for allotment associations* (formerly called *Money Maze*). This pack provides an introduction to grants, ideas for raising funds in other ways, and hints for reducing the need for money in the first place. It contains the following sections:

- Fundraising for beginners flowchart
- Income generation
- Reducing the need for money
- An introduction to grants
- Widening the benefits of grants
- Grant schemes relevant to allotment projects
- Useful contacts

Money is a mixed blessing: applying for grants can involve lots of paperwork with no guarantee that it will secure any money; fundraising by other means can be time consuming but sociable and good for promoting the site.

What this pack will not do is to provide a 'magic formula' of who to apply to and for how much: grant schemes come and go all the time and the best schemes are often available locally, so the research is down to you. Grant research is more about knowing which bodies are likely to be running relevant grant schemes, rather than chasing specific schemes.

Fortunately there will be people who can help you find your feet, especially your local Council for Voluntary Service (see *Where to get help* below).

Before thinking about where the money will come from, it is important to have a clear idea of what the money is needed for and why. It is very easy to get 'addicted' to fundraising once you get your first grant, and to start searching for money for the next big project without thinking about whether your allotments really need the changes a successful bid will bring about.

Good luck with your fundraising and let us know how you get on!

Please refer to the *Fundraising for beginners* flowchart as you read through the notes below and the rest of this pack.

First steps

Hold a meeting to consider the following:

- What exactly do you want to improve or change on the site?
- Do you need money to do it?
- Do any of you have the time and energy for fundraising or applying for grants?
- What will you do if you don't get the money you need?

Try to get plotholders from outside the committee involved by holding the meeting separate to routine business or combining it with a 'social'. If plotholders have a say in how to improve the site they are more likely to help with the fundraising and to be happy with the outcomes.



Our vision is to
increase allotment
uptake by individuals
and groups

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Forming a plan

Get something on paper that covers the following:

- What exactly are we hoping to improve or introduce on the site?
- Who will it benefit and why?
- When? An initial timetable is useful, even if you need to change it later.
- What will it cost?

Check your plans with the allotments authority.

You are now in a position to think about whether you can apply for grants and/or what other methods of fundraising you could use.

Where to get help

Councils for Voluntary Services

A Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) is a voluntary organisation that is set up, owned and run by local groups to support, promote and develop local voluntary action. CVSs provide their members with a range of services and are a voice for the local voluntary sector.

All CVSs will be able to provide some sort of fundraising advice. The support available varies but can include training courses, funding surgeries to help you fill out grant application forms, funding news in newsletters or email bulletins and access to directories or databases of local and national funding opportunities.

Some services may be available to non-members, but usually associations will need to join the CVS

to benefit fully from the range of services available. Membership conditions and charges vary but membership represents excellent value for money.

If your CVS says that it is unable to help allotment associations, please contact ARI for advice.

Usually funded by the local authority and other statutory agencies, there is a CVS working in almost every district and city. Each CVS differs in character and size, although they usually work to the same geographical boundaries as the local authority. They also differ in name. Many are called CVS, while others might be called Voluntary Action or Voluntary Sector Council. To find your local CVS please contact their national office(s) – see *Useful Contacts*.

Networking with similar groups

Talking to people who have succeeded in obtaining funds can be more useful than any training course. Ask your allotment officer or neighbouring associations for contacts that have managed to raise funds and arrange a visit. Your ARI Mentor can help put you in touch with associations who have successfully raised funding.

If you find wading through grant applications and other paperwork daunting, you could ask for help from a friend who has worked in the civil service or a bureaucratic job. Your local CVS may also be able to help with forms, and never be afraid to phone up the grant body and ask them to explain their questions. See *An introduction to grants*.