

Guidelines for ZCT's Sustainability Fund 2024

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Meade

With an acceleration towards becoming sustainable and as a part of an increasingly digital and technologically advanced world, it's expected that everyone, including the charitable sector, plays its part in the UK reducing its collective carbon footprint.

There are already a growing number of community groups around the UK supporting their communities to get involved in climate change initiatives while supporting their people - ZCT wants to empower and support our charity partners to do the same.

Our new Sustainability fund has been designed to help our charity partners further their own goals whilst encouraging them to work alongside other organisations and their local communities, if possible, with an emphasis on sustainability - not just from an environmental and consumption perspective by reducing carbon emissions or impacting positively on the environment but given inflation and cost-of-living increases, from a traditional perspective of sustainability too.

We're also encouraging our partners to work with one another and/or local organisations, where possible, as we know that through supporting each other, charities not only increase efficiencies, they also save money. In order to survive and thrive in today's climate, we know organisations need to **collaborate**, pool resources, expertise, and assist one another.

In support of our charity partners, we have created the following fund:

- Total pot of £100,000, per annum
- Open to applications for funding of between £5,000 and £10,000 per project and charity
- Open to existing charity partners only
- Application to be made via completion of a [Microsoft form](#) with an estimated time of between 10 and 15 minutes to complete. If preferred, video submission (answering the questions set out in the Microsoft Application form) can be used instead with a maximum time of 7 minutes. Videos should be sent to zurichcommunitytrust73@gmail.com
- The fund should be used for sustainability projects where our partners not only support their service users, but, if possible, bring their communities together to support the local environment, reduce their carbon emissions, create social cohesion, efficiencies and save money.

Frequently Asked Questions

What would a successful application look like?

We'll use the example of one of our partners, the Growing Zone (GZ) in Leeds, who are already helping the environment, creating efficiencies, and saving money - as well as supporting their service users and those of their partner organisations.

In 2022, the GZ created the 'Coming Together' Initiative where ten charitable and community groups pull together to assist one another and make a difference locally – the aim is to support the local community, environment, and their people.

With the GZ leading the way, the Coming Together group shares information, knowledge, skills and resources. The GZ benefits from an allotment and orchard which supports young people with learning disabilities to learn new skills and make new friends – the GZ grow fruit, vegetables, plants and donate fruit trees and the harvest to other community groups and local people – who give a proportion back to them in the form of jams, chutneys, crumbles and pies for those that are less fortunate. This helps the local community groups save money but it also means the supply chain is much smaller as the produce stays locally and helps local people resulting in less carbon being used – all while helping the young people at the GZ thrive.

The GZ also gives bedding plants away to help raise funds for other charities. And of course, the young people get a lot of pleasure in benefiting their local community and wider charitable events such as supporting Ukraine by growing the flowers and plants.

Various groups, such as local SEN schools and colleges also visit the GZ to grow produce - the children and young people benefit from being in nature and by getting involved in planting seeds - not only helping the local community but also supporting their own overall wellbeing. With new mindfulness and exercise cabins at the GZ, the children and young people attending can also enrich their wellbeing in other ways. The GZ is truly accessible – they have a hoist and a wash bed and they also have some a greenhouse with bi-folding doors for easy wheelchair access.

The GZ also recycles as much as possible, repurposing items from its original use and ensuring that minimal rubbish goes to landfill.

If our partners wanted to work with each other or other local partners in a similar way, we would be open to funding such a project to help get it started.

We have an idea for a sustainability project benefiting our service users but it doesn't involve other local groups or ZCT's other charity partners, can we still apply?

Absolutely! While we encourage working together, solo projects are fine too – as long as you're furthering your own goals while benefiting your service users and the local environment, then we'll consider it!

Can you give us some other examples of projects you would fund please?

Below you'll find details of some external charities making a difference. Should our partners approach us wanting to offer something similar for their own service users and local community, we'd strongly consider it:

[The Welcoming:](#)

Would you like to help your service users learn about climate change and how they can take steps to reduce their own carbon footprint?

“Helping Edinburgh’s recently-arrived migrants and refugees learn about climate change, and encourages them to make positive changes that will improve their lives while also reducing carbon emissions. The Initiative helps refugees, migrants and asylum seekers in Edinburgh to come together through climate focussed activities such as food growing and cooking, home energy savings and waste reduction. Through the project, refugees find friends, save money, improve their health and wellbeing, and get support to settle down comfortably in their new community...”

Working with partner organisations is key to The Welcoming’s success – it brings in a range of charities to deliver workshops and activities and has played a leading role organising events such as the Edinburgh Climate Festival.”

[Community Fridge Network \(hubbub.org.uk\)](http://hubbub.org.uk)

Perhaps one of your goals is to reduce food waste. Maybe you’ve already been considering how to go about supplying surplus food to your service users and to the wider local community?

“A Community Fridge is a space that brings people together to eat, connect, learn new skills and reduce food waste. It is a site where local people can share food, this includes surplus from supermarkets, local food businesses, producers, households and gardens. Fridges are run by community groups in shared spaces such as schools, community centres and shops, their main purpose is saving fresh food from going to waste.

The Community Fridge Network is coordinated by Hubbub and it connects fridges across the UK. It is a support network for groups running fridges to share knowledge and skills and to ask questions. The Network offers free guidance on how to set up your own fridge and provides comprehensive support, design assets, a knowledge sharing forum, health and safety templates and discounted fridges and freezers!”

Barefoot Kitchen CIC – [Alley Pals Middlesbrough](#) | [Facebook](#)

Does your charity back on to an alley way that needs some TLC? Alley Pals have been doing some fantastic work which may provide some inspiration:

“We are a group of residents living in the Gresham and Linthorpe areas of Middlesbrough. Our neighbourhoods typically consist of rows of terraced houses, with shared alleys at the back. The alleys are used for access, but also for collection of household waste and recycling. They’re often misused and neglected, but we like to turn them into gardens! We work together, with other neighbours and some of the organisations active in our area to clean and clear the spaces, and we begin planting in tubs and boxes. We often hold parties and events in the alleys so that people can meet and share time in a safe space. Children are free to play in the spaces and sometimes we organised games days. We celebrate birthdays, we paint murals, we show films and we’ve even held concerts! Our neighbourhood is described as ‘deprived,’ but we see a rich community of different but wonderful people. We have our problems, but we tackle them by working together and building strong networks that support people when they need it. We’ve successfully tackled several alleys, but we want to do more so that more of our neighbours can benefit and become Alley Pals. Everyone is welcome!”

If you would like to discuss your own sustainability ideas with us, please reach out to Carla Mandis – carla.mandis@zct.org.uk or Jane Boulton – jane.boulton@zct.org.uk