

Gloucester City Pitch Improvement Grants 2023

Information for applicants

The scheme

Gloucester City Council is supporting the improvement of the city's outdoor sports facilities, with an emphasis on natural turf pitches, via a small grant scheme awarded to local community sports clubs. The initial 3-year programme ran from April 2019 (extended to Oct 2022 due to covid disruption). The scheme has now been further extended with additional council funds. The grant scheme is administered by The Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association (GPFA) on behalf of Gloucester City Council.

Who can apply?

- Sports clubs playing on natural turf pitches that are located on formal public open space within the administrative boundary of Gloucester City.
- Clubs should have (or be developing) a 3-5-year Pitch Improvement Plan.
- Clubs should ideally have security of tenure (signed lease or similar) of at least 3 years.
- Clubs should be affiliated to their national sports governing body and be a part of the respective NGB's Grass & Natural Turf Pitch Improvement Programme.
- Sites which support more than one club may wish to make a combined application.

Types of project supported

- End of season pitch renovations (ideally as part of a longer-term pitch improvement plan). An NGB approved contractor may be required, depending on the work involved.
- Enhanced maintenance regime (with a club contribution and in line with Pitch Improvement Report) e.g. verti-drain or aeration
- Grounds maintenance equipment (there will be additional criteria ref: users/storage/insurance)
- Pitch drainage or levelling work
- Goalpost replacement
- Floodlight installation/replacement
- Cricket nets/covers/sightscreens

Other works we may consider funding (please discuss with us before applying)

- Changing room/pavilion refurbishment
- Site fencing/gates
- Security measures
- Practice areas
- Storage facilities

Please note – some of the works listed above may require planning consent – you will need to consult Gloucester City Council's Development Management team for further information (01452 396396). If permission is required, consent should be secured before a grant application is made.

Works we won't fund

- Routine maintenance (e.g. general grass cutting)
- Social or bar areas

Please note – grants will not be awarded retrospectively. A signed grant acceptance form must be received by the grant administrator before any works are commissioned or commenced.

Grant limits

We would expect the club to provide its own or partnership funding of around 40-50%. However, we will consider each application on its merits, so the amount of match funding required may be more flexible.

Generally single applications should not exceed £5,000, but again, there is some flexibility on this – for example if the club would like to put a 10-year pitch improvement programme into place.

Clubs will only be eligible to apply for funding once every 12 months (clubs with multiple sites may be eligible to apply for each site separately, but this should be part of an overall co-ordinated club plan).

Security of Tenure – The City Council wishes to ensure that any investment in pitch improvements benefit local clubs and playing fields in the longer term. The council therefore encourages clubs to enter into a lease or license arrangement relating to their pitch facilities, this is often set up for a period of 5 or 10 years (sometimes longer). However, the authority also understands that this level of commitment may not be possible for all clubs and is therefore happy to discuss proposals with those who only have a seasonal tenancy arrangement or similar.

Should clubs also be considering other external funding applications, these may require a longer security of tenure than the city council does. Therefore, if clubs wish to enter into a formal lease agreement, increase or amend their current arrangements, the city council's Asset Management team will be happy to consider this. It is advisable to have discussions regarding tenancy arrangements as early as possible in the grant application process.

Applying for funding

Ideally the club should arrange a pitch improvement visit from an NGB-approved Pitch Advisor before applying. This will generate a report, which can be used to support your application.

The city council will support improvements that are sustainable in the medium to long term (3-5+ years), so the proposed works should be part of the club's development plan (if they have one) or a pitch improvement plan, which will identify the short/medium/long term objectives and actions proposed. If possible, these should also identify where funding for the works will be sourced from (and illustrate how any financial input from the city council will decrease year-on-year – see example in table below).

Timescale	Glos City Contribution	Club/s Contribution
Year 1	£ 2,000	£ 500
Year 2	£ 1,500	£ 1,000
Year 3	£ 1,000	£ 1,500
Year 4	£ 500	£ 2,000
Year 5 Onwards		Club Cover full costs.
Total	£5,000	£5,000

A simple **application form** can be downloaded from www.glospfa.org.uk/gloucester-city-council-pitch-improvement-grants. The application should be submitted with the following supporting documents:

- Pitch improvement report by NGB pitch advisor
- Club's Pitch Improvement Plan (minimum 3-5 years)
- Contractor's quote or formal estimate (for projects over £5,000 two quotes are required) (include details of any work to be undertaken by volunteers)
- Details of the club's current tenancy agreement (or similar) for the pitch(es)/facilities
- A copy of the club's annual accounts/statement of assets

All documents should be returned to the grant administrator, GPFA:

- By email – secretary@glospfa.org.uk
- By post – GPFA Secretary, 31 Cheltenham Road, Gloucester, GL2 0JF
- For initial queries/further information – 07504 544413 or email as above

Decision Process

- Grant applications will be considered on a rolling basis throughout the year.
- The GPFA will consider each application on its merits, will request further information or a site visit if necessary and will then recommend approval/refusal to Gloucester City Council as appropriate.
- Support from the relevant NGB will be needed to secure a grant.
- The application process will take a maximum of 6-8 weeks but will usually be quicker than this providing all necessary information is submitted at the time of application.
- The applicant will be formally notified of a grant award in writing and a grant acceptance form will be forwarded for signing. No works should commence until the grant administrator has confirmed receipt of this completed acceptance form.

Payment

Payment will be made to the applicant once the works are completed and invoices/evidence (e.g. photos) of the finished project have been submitted to the grant administrator. A site visit may be undertaken to inspect the completed works.

Grants made to clubs will be paid into a registered club account only and all payments will come directly from the city council (not via the grant administrator). In some cases, it is possible for the council to pay the supplier/contractor directly instead and this will be discussed/agreed with each applicant during the process. We will aim to make payments within 28 days.

Should the applicant require the funding to be paid at the project outset (for example, in order to provide the club with sufficient funds to purchase machinery), they should make this known from the outset.

Other potential sources of funding:

<i>Sport</i>	<i>Grant and loan schemes</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Football	<p>Please contact Gloucestershire FA for further information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.gloucestershirefa.com • Matt Boucher – Football Development Manager Matthew.Boucher@gloucestershirefa.com 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small grant schemes may be available.
Rugby Union	<p>Please contact Gloucestershire RFU for further information:</p> <p>Gloucestershire RFU</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.grfu.org • Ashley Stephens – Rugby Development Officer ashleystephens@rfu.com 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small grant schemes or interest free loans may be available. • Potential for allocation of RFU partnership funding from Local Rugby Plan.
Cricket	<p>Please contact Gloucestershire Cricket Board for further information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.gloucestershirecricketboard.com • Eric Woodmason – Clubs and Programmes Officer (North) Eric.Woodmason@glosccc.co.uk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small grant schemes or interest free loans may be available.
General	<p>Sport England</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Asset Fund www.sportengland.org/funding/community-asset-fund £1,000-£150,000 • Small Grants Scheme www.sportengland.org/funding/small-grants £300-£10,000 <p>Enovert Community Trust (Landfill Tax) http://www.enovert.co.uk/Trusts/Enovert+Community+Trust</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See websites for individual qualifying criteria. • Grants available may change – refer to relevant website for latest information.

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