

**CATEGORY: Mrs Joan Christie CVO, OBE
Legacy Grant and Bursary Scheme 2026-27
Information for Applicants**

Mrs Joan Christie CVO, OBE Legacy Grant and Bursary Scheme Guidance Notes 2026-27

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Contents

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Purpose of Grant Programme/Overview of fund
- 1.2 General Principles
- 1.3 Who can apply?
- 1.4 What can be funded?
- 1.5 What cannot be funded/exclusions?

2.0 How to answer the questions

3.0 How we assess and score your application

- 3.1 Eligibility assessment
- 3.2 Assessment and scoring
- 3.3 What happens if an application is successful?
- 3.4 Monitoring and reporting
- 3.5 Marketing and promotion
- 3.6 What happens if an application is ineligible/unsuccessful?
- 3.7 Appeals procedure
- 3.8 Fraud and Corruption

4.0 Application process

Appendix 1

General Data Protection Regulation

1.0 Introduction

The Mrs Joan Christie CVO, OBE Legacy Grant and Bursary Scheme was created in 2019 by Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council in recognition of the significant work carried out by the late Mrs Joan Christie CVO OBE, former Lord Lieutenant for County Antrim. Awards are made annually under each of the following three categories: -

- Music
- Volunteering
- Horticulture

These conditions should be read in conjunction with the Grant Funding [Policy](#).

1.1 Purpose of Grant Programme/Overview of Fund

The Mrs Joan Christie CVO, OBE Legacy Grant and Bursary Scheme 2026 will provide three categories of funding as follows:

Category	Key notes / Purpose of application	Maximum award
*Music	Talented young musicians who live within the Borough can apply for the Music Bursary Award. The Council will award £1,000 to four successful applicants who can play a musical instrument or sing to a high standard.	£1,000
*Volunteering	Young volunteers who play an active role in volunteering within a group in the Borough can apply for the Volunteering Bursary Award. The Council will award two bursaries of £1,000 to two successful applicants and the organisations with whom the volunteer works will also receive an award of £1,000. <i>All candidates for the Music and Volunteering Bursary Awards must live within the Borough, be under 21 years of age on 31 August 2026 and must have not previously received a bursary from the Council for any reason.</i>	£1,000
*Horticulture	The Council will award a Horticultural Grant of £1,000 to two schools within the Borough for the delivery of horticultural projects. The primary	£1,000

	purpose of their project will be to engage and inspire pupils with additional needs. Submissions should involve projects working with plants or garden and horticultural materials. Schools who apply must be recognised by the Education Authority.	
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***NB:** at the discretion of the Assessment Panel, the number of awards made in each category may be subject to change.

1.2 General Principles

The fundamental principles of this grant guidance document are:

Funding Award is based on evidenced need

- This is a competitive programme and grant awards will be determined based on merit. Applicants must demonstrate how they meet the eligibility criteria for each grant.
- All applications must be completed in full, with supporting documentation uploaded in the relevant section. Applications that are not complete, do not provide a detailed project budget, or do not have supporting documentation will not be considered. Applicants will be contacted and asked to submit any missing information.
- Individuals must be residents within the Borough; schools must also be in the Borough.
- Retrospective applications will not be considered i.e. the application must be submitted before event, activity or project takes place.
- Applications will only be accepted online, via the Grant Management System.

Accessibility

Information on all grant funding programmes will be publicly available through the Council's website and proactively promoted across Mailing Lists, Social Media channels and Borough Life. This will include:

- Guidance on completion of relevant grant application
- Grant Management System embedded into Council public facing platform with digital accessibility options available
- Centralised Grant Funding information on Council webpage
- Guidance notes for all individual grant streams
- Point of contact clearly communicated for relevant queries
- Annual Grants Funding calendar made available

We will strive to ensure the process is user friendly, transparent, and fully inclusive.

Accountability

The Council will always adhere to the Grant Funding policy and guidance criteria outlined within each grant funding programme.

- A clear decision-making process will be utilised, with clear rationale and demonstrable evidence to support funding decisions
- Decision making process will be robust and transparent
- Funding decisions will be approved through Committee and Full Council with details made publicly available
- Unsuccessful Applicants will be entitled to receive feedback on their application
- An accessible Appeals process will be communicated as part of each grants call

1.3 Who can apply?

To be eligible to apply applicants must meet the following criteria

Category	Criteria
Music	• Under 21 years of age on 31 August 2026 • Live at a permanent address within the Borough • Never have previously received a bursary from Council for any reason • Play a musical instrument or sing to a high standard <i>NB If applicant is Under 18 they will need consent of parent/guardian to complete the application.</i>
Volunteering	• Under 21 years of age on 31 August 2026 • Live at a permanent address in the Borough • Never have previously received a bursary from Council for any reason • Work as a volunteer in a group that services the needs of those living in the Borough <i>NB If applicant is Under 18 they will need consent of parent/guardian to complete the application.</i> <i>All applicants to this category must ensure they have the approval of their group to make the application.</i>

Horticulture	To be eligible to apply applicants must be a primary, post-primary or special school in the Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough as recognized by the Education Authority. These grants will seek to assist with the delivery of a horticulture scheme or project within the school with the primary purpose to engage and inspire pupils with additional needs. Types of projects that will qualify for an award: The successful submission will involve projects that pupils – particularly those with additional needs – working and interacting with plants or garden and horticultural materials and features. Examples of the types of projects that will be successful may well include- • Provision of a restful feature in a garden landscape • Projects that support indoor or outdoor schemes that involve living and growing plants. • Provision of a sensory plot or growing feature
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1.4 What can be funded?

Music Bursaries

- Purchase of musical instruments
- Tuition fees
- Practice / performance facility hire
- Recording studio time
- Transport to performances

Volunteer Bursaries

- Volunteer work with any recognised community group operating in the Borough

Horticultural Bursaries

- Horticultural equipment and products
- Design and installation consultancy services
- Specialist accessibility equipment

1.5 What cannot be funded / exclusions?

- Applicants from outside the Borough
- Retrospective expenditure
- Unrelated expenditure

2.0 How to answer the questions

Category	Criteria
Music	
1	What is your musical specialism?
2	Need for financial support: What challenges do you face that limit your ability to progress in your musical specialism? (max 300 words)
3	Effectiveness of the intended expenditure: How would you use this bursary to help reach your full potential? (max 300 words)
4	Supporting others: How could you ensure that a bursary would be of benefit to you and others? (max 300 words)
5	Musical Ability: Shortlisted applicants will be invited to deliver up to a maximum of a 3 minute performance for the assessment panel. Performances will be scored in order to select bursary recipient. What will your style of performance be?
Volunteering	
1	• What is your volunteering role? • What is the group you volunteer with and what services does it deliver for people in the Borough?
2	Need for financial support: What challenges do you face that limit your ability to volunteer or contribute as much as you would like? (max 300 words)
3	What benefits have you realised because of your volunteering?
4	Effectiveness of the intended expenditure: How would you use his bursary to develop your volunteering work? (max 300 words)
5	Organisational Bursary:

6	How would the group you work for use its bursary to delivery additional benefits of those who live in the Borough? Supporting other volunteers: How could you ensure that bursaries to you and your group would help others to volunteer more? (max 300 words)
Horticulture	
1	Eligibility Criteria: Name and address of school and evidence of status of the school
2	Need for financial support: What challenges do you face that limit your ability to deliver horticultural projects for the children with additional needs who attend your school? (max 300 words)
3	Please demonstrate how you will achieve the following objectives:- i. How the project will add and improve wellbeing and enjoyment of the environment for all. ii. How the project will be sustained over future years. iii. How the project will improve the environment for pupils with additional needs.

3.0 How we assess and score your application

3.1 Eligibility assessment

All applications must be completed in full, with supporting documentation uploaded in the relevant section. Applications that are not complete, do not provide a detailed project budget, or do not have supporting documentation will not be considered. Applicants will be contacted and asked to submit any missing information.

A panel will evaluate eligible applications against the category criteria. Applicants will be notified via email detailing the outcome of the application.

3.2 Assessment and scoring

All applications will be assessed using the pass/fail method. Applicants who meet the eligibility criteria will be recommended for funding.

Music Category

Assessment Criteria:

Applicants to the Talented Young Musicians from the Borough Bursary will be assessed, scored and ranked against the following criteria:-

No:	Criteria:	How it will be assessed	Max score:	Score:
1	Eligibility	Proceed to scored assessment	N/A	Yes/No
2	Need for financial support	Written submission	10	
3	Effectiveness of the intended expenditure	Written submission	10	
4	Supporting others	Written submission	10	
5	Musical ability	3 min performance	30	

Assessment Process:

The eligibility of applicants and scores against the criteria 2-4 will be assessed by Council officers.

The 6 highest scoring applicants will be invited to perform for a maximum of 3 minutes to the final assessment panel. The final assessment panel will be made up as follows:

- Chair: Mrs Harriett Roberts (or a nominee)
- Council's Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events
- An Elected Member from each political party

Each application and performance will be scored against the above criteria, and the four highest scoring applicants will each be awarded a £1,000 bursary.

Sharing the Benefits of the Bursary:

In return for the investment, it is anticipated that the recipients should undertake the following over the course of the subsequent 12-month period:

- Find volunteering opportunities to share their musical skills for the benefit of others.
This could include such things as:
 - Teaching music on a voluntary basis
 - Giving musical performances to those experiencing need
 - Provide a short, written report to the Council on how they have used the bursary, how it has benefited their development and been used to benefit others.
- Be available to attend at least one Council event to perform and/or present on how the bursary has been a benefit.

Volunteering category

Assessment Criteria:

Applicants to the Young Volunteer Bursary will be assessed, scored and ranked against the following criteria.

No:	Criteria	How it will be assessed	Max score:	Score:
1	Eligibility	Proceed to scored assessment	N/A	Yes/No
2	Need for financial support	Written submission	10	
3	Benefits realised	Written Submission	10	
4	Effectiveness of the intended expenditure	Written submission	10	
5	Organisational bursary	Written submission	10	
6	Supporting other volunteers	Written submission	10	
7	Meet the Panel to Present Your Work		30	

Assessment Process:

The eligibility of applicants and scores against the criteria 2-6 will be assessed by Council officers.

The 6 highest scoring applicants will then be invited to meet the assessment panel for an informal chat about what they do as a volunteer and why it is important to them. The final assessment panel will be made up as follows:

- Chair: Mrs Harriet Roberts (or a nominee)
- Council's Head of Community Planning
- An Elected Member from each political party

Each application will be scored against the above criteria and at their meeting with the Panel and the 2 highest scoring applicants will each be awarded a young volunteering bursary of £1,000 with their groups also to receive a bursary of £1,000.

Sharing the Benefits of the Bursary:

In return for the investment, it is anticipated that the recipients should undertake the following over the course of the 12-month period:

- Find ways to encourage and support others to volunteer
- Provide a short, written report to the Council on how both the individual and group bursaries have been used, how they have personally benefited in their development and how it has been used to the benefit of others; and
- Be available to attend at least one Council event to present how the bursary has been of benefit.

Horticulture category

Assessment Criteria:

Applicants will be assessed, scored and ranked against the following criteria.

No:	Criteria:	How it will be assessed	Max score:	Score:
1	Eligibility	Proceed to scored assessment	N/A	Yes/No
2	Need for financial support	Written submission	10	
3	Effectiveness of the intended expenditure	Written submission	10	
4	Supporting Volunteers	Written Submission	10	

Assessment Process:

The eligibility of applicants and scores against the criteria 2-4 will be assessed by the following panel:

- Chair: Mrs Harriet Roberts (or a nominee)
- Council's Head of Parks
- An Elected Member from each political party

Each application will be scored against the above criteria, and the 2 highest scoring applicants will each be awarded a bursary of £1,000 for their horticulture project.

Sharing the Benefits of the Bursary:

In return for the investment, it is expected that the recipient schools should undertake the following over the course of the 12 month period:

- Find ways to use horticulture as a development tool for pupils
- Provide a short, written report to the Council on how the school has used the bursary and how it has benefited pupils; and
- Be available to attend at least one Council event to present on how the bursary has benefited from working with young people with special needs.

3.3 What happens if an application is successful?

3.3.1 Successful applicants will be presented with a cheque for £1,000 at an awards ceremony in October/November.

3.3.2 The Grant shall be used only for the purposes of the Project as defined by the Applicant in the application form or variations, which the Council has agreed to fund

3.3.3 The Council reserves the right to withhold any or all of the payments and/or require the Grant Recipient to repay part or all of the Grant if Council deems there to be a substantial or material change in the nature, scale or timing of the Project, or if the Grant is used for purposes other than those specified in the application or agreed variations

3.4 Monitoring and reporting

If your project receives grant support, you will be in receipt of public funding, and this must be accountable. Monitoring and reporting are an essential requirement for you in delivering your project.

We will also ask all organisations for auditing purposes, to check how the grant was spent and that the terms and conditions of the funding were met.

If any information in the application, monitoring or supporting information is found to be untrue or misleading, we will withdraw any grant. If we have already paid part of a grant to your organisation, you must repay it. This will have implications for any future applications or requests for funding. We may also review grants made to your organisation in the past.

3.5 Marketing and Promotion

The Grant Recipient shall acknowledge the contribution made by the Council in all relevant publicity materials including brochures, leaflets, newspaper articles etc. The Council shall be entitled to publish details of the assistance referred to in this letter at such times and in such manner as is necessary without further agreement from the Grant Recipient. It is important to note that logos should be of a reasonable size and retain their original perspective. All promotional materials should be approved **in advance** by the Council's Public Relations and Marketing team. Please email all proofs to marketing@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk or media@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk

If you have any queries, please contact the Council PR and marketing team on Tel: 0300 1234 568

3.6 What happens if an application is ineligible/unsuccessful?

If you are unsuccessful in your application, you will be sent the broad reasons why you have not received funding. You will receive feedback as to the strengths and weaknesses of your application.

3.7 Appeals procedure

An appeals procedure will be available to unsuccessful applicants. For further information please contact the officers detailed at the end of this document.

3.8 Fraud and Corruption

The Council is committed to the prevention and detection of fraud and the promotion of an anti-fraud culture.

The Council operates a zero-tolerance attitude to fraud and corruption, whether from internal or external sources. The Council requires staff and individuals/organisations that it deals with, to act with honesty and integrity, to safeguard the public resources and to report all suspicions of fraud and corruption.

Every case of alleged or suspected fraud will be thoroughly investigated in accordance with the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy, and where appropriate, referred to the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). The Council will also seek to recover any loss suffered because of fraud and if appropriate, will take civil, and/or disciplinary action.

The following relevant policies can be located on the Council website:

Anti- Bribery Policy - April 2023

Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy - April 2023

Financial Regulations – April 2024

Fraud Response Plan - March 2023

Raising Concerns Policy – November 2023

The Council reserves the right to disallow any other current, pending or future grant applications and claims submitted by an organisation or an individual member of the organisation in respect of the financial year and to apply a moratorium on Council funding to any organisation or individual member of an organisation where fraudulent activity is identified within the current financial year and for at least 2 forthcoming financial years. This will also extend to individuals in receipt or applying for a bursary.

The Council will inform in writing the Chairperson of the organisation, or the individual in case of bursary, where fraud is suspected or has been identified. In the case of a bursary where the recipient is underage of 18 years the parent/guardian will also be notified.

4.0 Application process

Opens	Closes	Notification of Outcome
1 June 2026	14 August 2026	October/November 2026

Grant Information Sessions

Interested applicants should book a place at one the person/online Grant Information Sessions where officers will take groups through the grant funding available as well as the new application forms and online process. For further information please visit Council's Grants and Funding webpage:

<https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/residents/grants-funding/>

Contact details:

For further information, please contact:

Arts & Culture E: culture@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk or

The Funding Unit: E: fundingunit@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk

T: 0300 123 4568.

Appendix 1

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council are entitled to disclose your details to other government agencies, departments and bodies engaged in distributing funds (subject to the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998, known as General Data Protection Regulations GDPR from May 2018).

To process your grant application, Applicants are advised that:

- Council use the information you give us on the application form during assessment and for the life of any grant we award you to administer and analyse grants and for our own research.
- Council may give copies of this information to individuals and organisations we consult when assessing applications, when monitoring grants and evaluating the way our funding programmes work and the effect they have. These organisations may include accountants, external evaluators and other organisations or groups involved in delivering the project.
- Council may also share information with other departments, organisations providing match funding and other organisations and individuals with a legitimate interest in applications and grants, or for the prevention or detection of fraud.
- Council might use the data you provide for our own research. We recognise the need to maintain the confidentiality of vulnerable groups and their details will not be made public in any way, except as required by law.