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| About Care Link Grassroots Sponsorship |

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# Introduction

Our Care Link grassroots sponsorship campaign provides sponsorships for local grassroots clubs. We have written this guide to help you put together a successful sponsorship application.

Reading these notes should help you to understand:

* what the purpose of the campaign is
* who can apply
* what we will sponsor and what cannot be sponsored
* what we expect of you, should you be sponsored
* how we monitor and evaluate the campaign
* how to apply and what happens after your application.

**Please make sure you read all sections of this document to check if your sports club is eligible before reading the Application Form Guidance Notes and completing an application form.**

# Purpose of the campaign

The purpose of the Care Link grassroots sponsorship campaign is to support local grassroots sports clubs that make a real difference within our communities. We want to support clubs that benefit those most in need and are linked to building vibrant communities, such as improving health and wellbeing and enhancing the quality of life of our community members.

We’ll prioritise applications where clubs can demonstrate that their activities will have a positive impact on the wider community, rather than a smaller, closed group. You will be able to tell us in the application form how many people you think the sponsorship will positively impact.

We’re committed to providing value for money in all that we do. Doing this means that we achieve the most benefit from the money we spend.

We’ll consider the amount of money you are asking for, alongside the benefit to the local community and the number of people who will be positively affected.

In the application, you’ll be asked to provide details of what you would buy with the sponsorship money. You should include a brief explanation of why you have chosen a particular item and why you think it achieves best value for money. This does not mean you need to choose the cheapest option as it could be of poor quality.

# Sponsorship guidelines

The maximum sponsorship that can be awarded to any one club will be £500.

Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee to sponsor the maximum amount available from the campaign, or the full amount that you request on the application. If we can’t provide the full amount of sponsorship, you will need to let us know the minimum amount of sponsorship you would need to fulfil your activities.

You’ll also need to explain how you will fund the remainder of the activities if this is the case. If the cost of the activities is more than the amount of sponsorship you’ve asked for, you will need to confirm you have got additional funding and explain where from.

Please note we will not make general contributions towards activities. You’ll need to ask for sponsorship for specific items for us to consider your application. Your club can apply for sponsorship to fund a repeat activity if you can show that you have a plan to build on the initial event and increase community participation.

# What cannot be sponsored?

The aim of the campaign is to award sponsorships to clubs within our communities for the benefit of our communities, so we cannot accept applications from the following:

* individuals (including items which will only benefit an individual such as scholarships, equipment which is not shared, and personal clothing)
* commercial businesses and profit-making organisations
* clubs involved in political activities
* clubs involved in religious activities (although hiring church halls for a non-religious activity is acceptable)
* charities who do not have the same aims and objectives as us.

Unfortunately, we cannot consider sponsorships for:

* funding salaries for people employed on a permanent basis at your club. Clubs are still able to request funding for the cost of professional fees as long as this is not paid to anyone involved with the club.
* activities that have already started, where an application was made under an assumption that a sponsorship will be awarded to cover costs already incurred. This is different from being able to apply for funding to continue an activity that has been previously validated under the campaign rules.
* funding ongoing rental costs and/or utility costs. Clubs are still able to request funding for one-off rental costs as part of an individual event or activity.
* the cost of putting together the funding application.
* fundraising activities including events for your organisation or others, general appeals, or sponsorship.
* purchase of alcohol.
* VAT that you can recover.
* travel, food, or accommodation, unless you can show that they are an essential part of the activity and are in line with the purpose and priorities of the campaign.
* any club deemed to be in breach of our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy.
* Prizes.
* a sponsorship will not be considered where there is evidence that a previous sponsorship has not been managed satisfactorily by your club.

# What we expect of you

Please be aware that it is the responsibility of your club to have the necessary policies and procedures in place, as well as any insurance policies and risk assessments that you may need.

By submitting your application form, you’re confirming that all of the below is in place, where necessary. If you are unsure whether any of the below is required, you should take independent advice.

Vico Homes / Care Link reserves the right to withhold sponsorship, or request sponsorship be repaid if it is found your club does not have the acceptable policies, procedures, and insurance in place.

**Projects Working with Children, Young People, or Vulnerable Adults**

If your club works with children, young people, or vulnerable adults, it is your responsibility to have acceptable safeguarding policies and procedures in place and ensure relevant DBS checks have been undertaken.

**Health and Safety / Insurance**

Your club must consider any health and safety issues relating to the proposals and complete a full risk assessment where appropriate.

It is the responsibility of the club to ensure that there is adequate insurance in place for the proposed activities. Where necessary, your club should take out, amend, or upgrade Public Liability Insurance and provide a copy of the certificate with the sponsorship application.

**Financial Requirements**

Your club must have a UK-based bank or building society account in the name of the club. At least two people, who are unrelated and do not live at the same address, must be able to sign cheques or make a withdrawal.

# Monitoring and evaluation

If you are successful in your sponsorship application, the sponsorship should be spent within 12 months of it being paid to you. We’ll contact you within six months to see how you are getting on, and to check that the sponsorship is being spent on the activities that you described in your application form.

This is a good opportunity to let us know if you are having any problems, or if we can help at all. If it is all going well, we’d love to hear about that too.

Unless discussed with and agreed by us, if the sponsorship is not spent within 12 months, we reserve the right to request that the money is repaid.

Please bear in mind the following important information:

* Receipts must be sent to the Vico Homes / Care Link within six weeks of the sponsorship being spent.
* One of our officers may visit you to see how the sponsorship has been spent and how the community has benefited.
* Sponsorships awarded must be used as specified in your application form. If there are any changes to the application once the award has been issued, you must let us know straight away. If the change means that the activities are substantially different from the ones you described in your application, the sponsorship award will be reviewed and you may have to repay some, or all, of your sponsorship.
* If, at the end of your activities, there is any unused money, this should either be repaid to us, or if there is a way that you can spend it which would add to the activities you have completed, then please let us know what that is. If we can see that it will further enhance the activities, we will usually agree to you using the remainder of the money for that.
* If the club dissolves, we should be notified, and any unused sponsorship should be repaid or equipment still remaining returned to be redistributed in the community.

# How to apply and what happens next

If after reading this ‘Care Link Grassroots Sponsorship Campaign’ document you feel that your club and its activities are eligible, please read the Application Form Guidance Notes and complete an application form. Please make sure that all requested information is included.

Once we receive your application form, we’ll confirm receipt within seven working days, and it will then be assessed against the campaign criteria. If your application form and / or supporting evidence is not complete, we will return it to you so you can add the missing information.

An incomplete form is the most common cause of delay, so please use the checklist at the end of the application form to make sure that you have sent us everything we need. Once your application has been validated against the Care Link Grassroots Sponsorship Campaign criteria, it will be considered by representatives from our panel.

If the panel offers you a sponsorship, you will need to sign and return our offer letter and accept the terms and conditions. The offer letter will ask you to confirm that you are still able to fully deliver the project set out in your application with the funding that has been awarded, and that you agree to the terms expected of your group.

When we get your signed letter, we will transfer the funds into your group’s bank account. Our Communications Team may be in contact to arrange publicity.

Any publicity you undertake regarding the grant must mention us and you should contact our Communications Team to make them aware. This is really important as it helps to spread the word about the campaign, hopefully encouraging others to apply in future.

If your application is not successful, we will write to you telling you the reasons why. Please consider our reasons carefully before deciding whether to apply again.

We reserve the right to refuse any application at our own discretion.

**Data protection**

We need the information we ask you to provide to help us decide whether your grant application will be successful. The information will be shared with appropriate colleagues where necessary.

If the application is successful, we might publicise details of the grant to encourage others to apply. Any personal data will be processed in accordance with data protection legislation.

**Timescales and deadline for applications**

The campaign will run once a year, and groups will be able to submit their applications from April each year. Groups will be notified of the outcome of their application, and funding will be allocated until the budget for the campaign is spent.

We will not be able to process any applications received after the end of the campaign which will be advertised on our social media channels and website.