

Mid Devon Green Enterprise Grants 2025-2026

Guidance for Applicants

Mid Devon District Council's **Green Enterprise Grants 2025-2026** is a competitive capital grant scheme that supports Mid Devon businesses in taking action to reduce their carbon footprint and move toward a net-zero future.

What is available?

This scheme offers capital grants covering up to **50% of eligible project costs**, with individual grants ranging from **£500** to a maximum of **£5,000**. **Applications will not be accepted for projects with total costs exceeding £30,000** (inclusive of VAT).

Who is it for?

Eligible applicants are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and social enterprises located within Mid Devon district.

(You can check online whether an address is in Mid Devon: www.gov.uk/find-local-council.)

For this scheme, an **SME** is defined as a business with up to 250 employees, an annual turnover of no more than £25.9 million, and a balance sheet total not exceeding £12.9 million. A **social enterprise**, for the purposes of this scheme, refers to an organisation that trades (generates an income) with primarily social or environmental objectives that reinvests profits for that purpose – for example, a charity or Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), a community interest company (CIC), a co-operative, or even a sole trader or partnership with a clear social purpose and formal registration.

For the avoidance of bias and any risk of overlap with the Council's climate action investments, business tenants based at Council assets will not be eligible to apply.

To qualify for a grant, an applicant **must** meet **all** of the following criteria:

- **Legally registered business:** Be a business, or a formally constituted social enterprise, registered with HMRC and/or Companies House (as appropriate to your business type).
- **Business bank account:** Have a UK-based business bank account in the name of the business or organisation.
- **Trading history:** Have been actively trading for more than 2 years (i.e. not a start-up).
- **Independence and income:** Be independent of government or state control and derive more than 50% of its income from trading (commercial activities).
- **Local business rates** (if applicable): If the business premises are liable for business rates, be registered for business rates with Mid Devon District Council.
- **Compliance and due diligence:** Agree to cooperate with any due diligence checks (e.g. providing additional information or access to records if requested) and to comply with all grant terms and conditions.
- **Financial viability:** Demonstrate financial resilience – for example, the business should not be insolvent, in administration, or at imminent risk of closure.

Top tips

- **Plan ahead.** Anticipate and address potential issues early to help avoid delays that could jeopardize your application (e.g. obtaining quotes or permissions).
- **Prepare a strong, eligible bid.** Grants will be offered only to the best applications that meet all eligibility criteria. Ensure your proposal is well-advised, fully informed, and submitted in good time.
- **Grant offers are time-limited.** So ensure your project is fully prepared, properly resourced, and ready to commence as soon as approval is given.

How do I make sense of emissions?

Depending on the nature of your project, a supplier or installer should be able to provide details of energy / fuel / water efficiency, and therefore potential savings.

This table provides examples of the carbon footprint (greenhouse gas emissions factors) linked to typical energy use and water use. Taken from the UK Government's 2024 official [emissions factors](#).

Emissions measured in kg of CO ₂ equivalent (kgCO ₂ e)	Source of information
UK grid electricity consumption 1 kWh = 0.225 kgCO ₂ e	Total kilowatt-hours, from electricity bills
Natural Gas consumption (gross CV) 1 kWh = 0.183 kgCO ₂ e	Total kilowatt-hours, from gas bills
Heating fuel used e.g. Burning oil 1 litre = 2.54 kgCO ₂ e	Litres used, from bills.
Water supply 1 m ³ = 0.153 kgCO ₂ e	Total water supplied, in cubic metres (m ³) from water bill
Water treatment 1 m ³ = 0.186 kgCO ₂ e	Total water treated in cubic metres (m ³) from water bill

What can you get?

Eligible businesses can receive a **one-off capital grant** under this scheme. The grant funding is intended **exclusively for capital expenditure** i.e. one-off investments in new permanent equipment, installations, or structures that will help reduce your business's carbon emissions. **Revenue costs (ongoing running costs)** and routine overheads **cannot** be funded.

Because the scheme operates on tight timelines, your project should be ready to start promptly and be completed within the allowed timeframe once the grant is awarded.

Applicants must clearly demonstrate **how their project will reduce greenhouse gas emissions**. You will be required to provide evidence and calculations showing the anticipated savings in emissions (directly, or through energy, water, or material efficiency improvements). As part of the application, you must estimate the annual reduction in your carbon footprint resulting from the project, expressed in **kilograms of CO₂ equivalent (CO₂e)** per year.

Examples of eligible projects: Improvements that could qualify for funding include upgrades to **energy-efficient lighting and control systems**, enhancements to **heating or cooling systems** (such as installing heat recovery units or more efficient boilers), measures for **water efficiency**, acquisition of equipment to **reduce, reuse, or recycle waste**, and installation of **renewable energy systems** (for example, solar panels).

What is not eligible?

The following are **ineligible** and will **not** be funded under the Green Enterprise Grants scheme:

- **Revenue or routine costs:** Ongoing running costs or day-to-day operational expenses of your business are not eligible. (This includes general administrative costs, utility bills, staff salaries, and the like.) In addition, professional fees – such as fees for planning applications or consultants – cannot be covered by this capital-only grant.
- **Retrospective funding:** Any works that have been **started or completed**, or items purchased, **before a formal grant offer is made and accepted**, are ineligible. The grant cannot reimburse expenditures incurred prior to the grant agreement.
- **Conflicting initiatives:** Projects or initiatives that conflict with existing Council policies or priorities will not be funded. (For example, the Council will refuse funding for a project that undermines its environmental or planning policies.)
- **Stock or trading goods:** Applications aimed at purchasing stock for resale or general business inventory are ineligible. The scheme is intended for capital investments, not trading merchandise or raw materials.
- **Insolvent or unregistered businesses:** Businesses that are insolvent, in administration, or otherwise not trading as a going concern are not eligible. Likewise, entities without any legal status (for example, an informal club or unregistered group) cannot receive funding.
- **Domestic property projects:** Projects at **residential properties** are not eligible for grant aid, even if a business operates from that property. (The scheme is designed to support business premises improvements, not home renovations.)
- **Electric vehicles and charge points:** Expenditure on electric vehicles or vehicle charging points is excluded from this grant scheme. *(Note: The UK government's separate [Workplace Charging Scheme](https://www.find-government-grants.service.gov.uk/grants/workplace-charging-scheme), provides grant support towards the costs of the purchase, installation and infrastructure of electric vehicle charge points at eligible places of work and there is a Government grant to support the purchase of plug in vans: www.find-government-grants.service.gov.uk/grants/plug-in-van-and-truck-grant-1)*

Premises and Consent Requirements

- **One application per premises:** Only one application will be considered per business premises under this current scheme. If multiple businesses operate from the same address, they should coordinate and submit a **single joint application** (e.g. several offices in one building making a combined bid) rather than separate applications.
- **Landlord versus tenant applications:** For any given property, **either** the landlord **or** the tenant may apply for a grant – but not both. (If a landlord applies for improvements to a building, a tenant of that same building cannot separately apply, and vice versa.)
- **Multiple businesses under common ownership:** If one individual (such as a director or owner) has control of several businesses operating from the **same** premises, only one of those businesses can receive a grant for that premises. In other words, an applicant cannot receive multiple grants for the same location by using different business entities they own.
- **Property ownership or lease:** If your project involves works on a building or land, you must either own that property **or** hold a secure lease for it (granted by a private-sector landlord) that allows you to undertake the proposed works.
- **Necessary consents:** You are responsible for obtaining **all necessary consents and permissions** before starting any work. This includes (where applicable) planning permission, building regulations approval, listed building consent, and any leaseholder or

landlord approvals. If planning permission (or any statutory consent) is required, you must have it in place before submitting a grant application.

- **Permitted Development compliance:** If your project does not require formal planning permission because it falls under “permitted development rights,” you must ensure that it **fully complies with all conditions of those rights** under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. In other words, the project must strictly meet the criteria for permitted development – otherwise, you *do* need to obtain planning consent.
- **Landlord’s consent:** If you are a tenant (leaseholder), you must obtain written consent from the landlord for any material changes or works to the property, where such consent is required under your lease. This consent should be obtained before work commences and ideally before applying for the grant.

If planning consent is required, you must have approval before submitting a grant application.

How to apply

Step 1: Submit an Expression of Interest. Prospective applicants must first complete a simple online Expression of Interest form via <https://letstalk.middevon.gov.uk/green-enterprise-grants-2025> and once we receive your expression of interest, if you meet the basic eligibility, we will send you the full application form.

Step 2: Submit a full application with evidence. Fill in the application form with details of your project and email it to **businessgrants@middevon.gov.uk**. You must include all required supporting evidence along with your application (for example: photographs of the site/equipment, detailed cost estimates or quotes, and copies of any relevant consents or permissions). **Be sure to read this guidance carefully when preparing your application**, to ensure you provide everything needed.

Timescales and deadlines

The Green Enterprise Grants scheme is time-limited and subject to funding availability. A **Decision Panel** will convene at intervals to evaluate applications. **Panel meetings in 2025 are provisionally scheduled for June, August, October, and December.** (These dates may be subject to change.) Only applications that have been received in full and **fully assessed** in advance will be considered at the next panel meeting.

Grant offer expiration: If your application is approved and a grant offer is made, note that the offer will be time-limited. You will be given a specific deadline (up to a maximum of 6 months from the offer date, and no later than 31 March 2026) to complete the project and submit your grant claim. **If you do not submit a valid grant claim with all required evidence by the deadline stated in your offer, the offer will be automatically withdrawn and you will no longer be entitled to the funding.**

End of scheme: All grant claims must be submitted by 31 March 2026, after which the scheme will close.

Assessing your application

When your application is assessed, the Decision Panel will consider several factors to ensure fairness and that the funding goes to projects with the greatest benefit. The key assessment criteria include:

1. **Carbon reduction impact:** The core criterion is the project’s potential to substantially **reduce the business’s annual carbon emissions**. Projects are evaluated on how

significantly and credibly they will shrink your enterprise's carbon footprint through improved energy or resource efficiency, or by switching to low-carbon energy sources.

2. **Evidence of need and baseline:** The Panel will look at the evidence you provide about your **current carbon footprint** (baseline emissions) and the explanation of how your proposal will make a measurable difference. Clear, quantitative evidence of your current energy/resource use and the projected savings strengthens your application.
3. **Deliverability and project management:** The application must convince the Panel that the project will be delivered properly and on time. This includes showing that you have a realistic and well-thought-out project plan, qualified contractors or staff in place (as needed), and that any risks or dependencies (like obtaining planning permission or equipment availability) are managed. A well-prepared implementation plan gives the Council confidence in your project.
4. **Compliance and quality standards:** Projects must be carried out in a proper manner. For example, any renewable energy systems or other low-carbon installations should be installed by suitably accredited professionals (such as installers certified under the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS)). The Panel will consider whether the application shows an understanding of relevant quality standards and regulatory requirements for the works.
5. **Wider benefits and legacy:** Where appropriate, the Panel may take into account any broader benefits of the project beyond carbon reduction – for instance, benefits to the local community or the potential for the project to have a long-term legacy (such as demonstrative value or scalability to other businesses). While the primary aim is carbon reduction, co-benefits can make a proposal more attractive if the core criteria are met.
6. **Comparison with other bids:** The scheme is competitive. Your application will be **compared against other eligible applications** received in the same funding round. Even if a project meets the minimum criteria, it will only be funded if it ranks sufficiently well relative to others, given the limited budget. The Panel aims to fund the strongest proposals in each round (which may result in some good projects being held or refused due to competition).

After the Panel's review, you will be informed of the decision in writing.
There is no right of appeal on funding decisions, due to the competitive nature of the scheme and limited funding. **The Panel's decision is final.**

Supporting Evidence

You **must** submit relevant supporting evidence with your application. The following list outlines the expected documentation. (It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the evidence provided is comprehensive and appropriate to the nature of the project. These examples are a guide but not exhaustive.)

- **Energy usage evidence:** Documentation of your business's energy consumption (electricity, gas, etc.) over the most recent 12-month period for which records (bills or meter readings) are available. This establishes your baseline energy use.
- **Other resource usage (if applicable):** Evidence of any other resource usage relevant to your project. For example, if your project aims to reduce water consumption, provide records of your water usage for the past year and an explanation of how the project will lower that usage.
- **Photographic evidence (before works):** Clear "before" photographs of the site, equipment, or structures that will be improved or replaced by the project. These images establish the pre-project condition and will be compared to "after" photos upon completion.

- **Evidence of costs (quotes or estimates):** You must supply **independent** cost estimates or quotations for all significant items or works in your project budget. (Applicants are encouraged to seek quotes from local suppliers where possible.)
 - For **items or works under £2,500** (including VAT): Provide at least one written quote, pro forma invoice, or published price demonstrating the cost.
 - For **items or works costing £2,500 or more** (including VAT): Provide **three** recent and comparable quotations. Each quote should be from a different supplier, be obtained within the last 3 months, and detail the same or similar specifications so they can be compared "like for like."
- **Permissions and consents confirmation:** A written confirmation that you have checked all necessary permissions for the project. You should attach copies of any **planning permissions, listed building consents, environmental permits**, or other relevant authorisations obtained. **Note:** If a required planning permission or consent has not yet been granted, you **should not apply** for the grant until you have that approval, as your application will not be considered without it.
- **Proof of property tenure:** Documentation of your right to undertake the project at the premises. For owned property, provide proof of freehold ownership (e.g., a title register or solicitor's letter). For leased property, provide a copy of the key pages of your lease or occupancy agreement showing you have control of the premises for the duration of the project and any maintenance period.
- **Landlord's consent (if applicable):** If you are not the property owner, provide a letter or signed form from the landlord confirming they consent to the proposed works. This should detail any conditions of that consent.
- **Business bank account statement:** A recent bank statement (dated within the last 3 months) from the business's bank account that will be used for grant transactions. The statement should clearly show the account name, account number and sort code, and some transaction history (to demonstrate the account is active). This is used to verify your banking details and that the account belongs to your business.
- **Other supporting documents:** Any other documentation that is relevant to your project and would support your case can be included. For example, this might include product brochures for new technology you plan to install, letters of support from project partners, evidence of other funds secured for the project, or maintenance plans for the new equipment.

Applications may be delayed or rejected if required supporting information is missing or insufficient. It is in your interest to be as thorough as possible.

Important information

Before applying, please note the following terms and conditions of the scheme. These requirements are designed to ensure the grant is used fairly, lawfully, and to maximum effect. By submitting an application, you are acknowledging and agreeing to these conditions:

- **Match funding requirement:** Every project must have at least 50% of its funding come from the business's own resources (cash contribution). In-kind contributions (such as your own labour or existing equipment) do **not** count toward this match. Each business is eligible for only one grant from this scheme (one-off support).
- **Competitive allocation:** The grant programme has limited funds. Meeting the minimum eligibility criteria does **not** guarantee funding. The Council reserves the right to award grants in full, to award a lesser amount than requested, or to refuse funding

altogether, depending on the assessment outcome and the funds available. Some otherwise eligible projects may receive no funding if other proposals are stronger or if the budget is exhausted.

- **No double-funding:** You must not use this grant to pay for any expenditure that is also being funded by another grant or public funding programme. If you receive (or have already received) any other public sector funding for the project (or any part of it), you are required to disclose this to the Council. In such cases, the Council will determine whether the funding sources, combined, exceed the allowable support limits or whether adjustments to our grant are necessary.
- **Grant use and repayment conditions:** Grants are paid **retrospectively** (after project completion) and strictly for the purposes set out in your application and our offer letter. A grant **claim** will only be paid if the project is completed as described, all grant conditions have been met, and you submit a proper claim **before the deadline** with all required evidence (invoices, proof of payment, completion photos, etc. (as specified in your Grant Offer)). If these conditions are not met, the Council is not obliged to make payment. Furthermore, the Council reserves the right to **withhold payment or reclaim** grant funds if it finds that the project has not been delivered as agreed, if any grant conditions were breached, or if any information provided was false or misleading.
- **Grant cap (maximum award):** The grant amount offered to you is the **maximum** funding available for your project. **In any event, the grant paid will not exceed the lesser of:** (i) the amount stated in your Grant Offer, or (ii) the percentage of actual total project costs that was approved (for example, if you were offered 50% of project costs, you will receive 50% of your final actual costs, should those be lower than expected). This ensures that public funding is proportionate to what is actually spent. If your project comes in under budget, the grant will be reduced accordingly (and you cannot reallocate any 'surplus' grant to other spending).
- **Changes to the project:** The grant is awarded based on the specific project description and outputs you provided. **You must notify the Council immediately** if there is any proposed change to your project's scope, objectives, timeline, or budget (including changes to the total project value or the expected outputs/outcomes). Any change must be approved by the Council in writing. The Council reserves the right to reconsider the grant in light of changes – this may include reducing the grant amount, imposing additional conditions, or, in serious cases, withdrawing the grant offer entirely if the project no longer aligns with the scheme criteria or approved purpose.
- **Monitoring and verification:** The Council may monitor the progress of your project as it is implemented. You may be asked to provide updates on milestones, or Council officers (or authorized representatives) may request to visit the project site to verify that works are underway or completed as described. By accepting a grant, you agree to cooperate with reasonable monitoring requests. After project completion, you may also be asked to participate in a review or provide information on the project's outcomes (for example, actual energy savings achieved).
- **Data protection:** The information you provide in your application (and in any subsequent correspondence) will be used by Mid Devon District Council solely for the administration of the Green Enterprise Grants and related purposes. We will handle all personal and business data in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. You have the right to know how your data is used and to request correction of any inaccurate data. The Council's **Privacy Notice** for grant applicants is available on our website, detailing your rights and our data retention policy.
- **Freedom of Information and transparency:** As a public authority, the Council is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. This means that details of your application and any grant awarded **may be disclosed publicly** if an FOI request is made, unless an exemption applies.

Additionally, the Council may include information about grant awards (such as the name of your business, the amount of funding, and a brief description of the project) in its public reports or on its website as part of transparency and accountability for public funds. **If your application contains commercially sensitive information**, you should clearly identify it. The Council will take into account any sensitivity when responding to information requests, but absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

- **VAT and tax matters:** If your business is VAT-registered and you are able to reclaim VAT on your project purchases, you should only claim grant funding on the net cost (excluding VAT). You are responsible for accounting for any VAT and other tax implications of receiving the grant. The Council will not increase the grant to cover any tax liabilities.
- **Legal compliance:** The applicant (and any contractors or partners involved) must comply with all relevant laws and regulations in carrying out the project. This includes (but is not limited to) health and safety legislation, environmental regulations, planning and building laws, and employment laws. The Council's provision of funding does not override or exempt you from any legal requirement. If the project's implementation violates any law or regulation, the Council may withdraw funding and you would be liable for any consequences.
- **Governing law:** This guidance and any subsequent Grant Offer or Agreement shall be governed by the laws of England. In the event of any dispute arising from the grant process or agreement, you and the Council agree to submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the English courts.

Subsidy control - Minimal Financial Assistance notification

Under the **Subsidy Control Act 2022**, the support provided by this grant is classified as a form of **Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA)**. An enterprise (including any enterprises under common ownership or control, i.e., your corporate group) can receive up to **£315,000** in total MFA subsidies from UK public authorities within any rolling three-year period.

- **MFA threshold confirmation:** As part of the grant process, the Council will require you to **confirm in writing** (via a subsidy declaration form or similar) that accepting this grant will not cause your organisation (together with any linked businesses) to exceed the £315,000 MFA threshold. This includes taking into account all other subsidies or public aid you have received in the current and previous two fiscal years. If you have received other public grants or subsidies in that period, you will need to list them. The Council cannot award you the grant unless it is satisfied that the subsidy control rules are met.
- **Record-keeping and future transparency:** If you receive a grant, you (the enterprise) are responsible for keeping a written record of all subsidies (including this grant) you've received under the MFA allowance. **You must retain these records for at least 3 years** from the date you receive the grant. This record should detail the amount and date of each subsidy. You may be required to produce this information if requested by any public authority or regulator to verify compliance with subsidy control rules. By accepting the grant, you acknowledge this obligation.

*(The £315,000 MFA limit applies at the group level – if your business is part of a larger group of companies, the total subsidies to the entire group are considered. The Council's grant letter will include a formal **Subsidy Declaration** form for you to sign to this effect.)*