

Information Pack

Introduction

new futures buckinghamshire provides expert one-to-one support for your organisation which is **completely free of charge!** It has been designed to support the development needs and long-term sustainability of Buckinghamshire's Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS).

If you meet our simple eligibility criteria, you could receive:

- A free half-day workshop to help you explore and confirm your organisation's key areas of need; and
- Up to nine days of free specialist support to help you address the needs you've identified, to improve what you already do, or even to take a new direction.

This isn't a grant programme, so there are **no lengthy application forms to complete.**

new futures buckinghamshire has been commissioned and is being funded by **Buckinghamshire County Council.**

What does this information pack provide?

This information pack:

- Explains how organisations can benefit from **new futures buckinghamshire's** support.
- Helps you check whether your organisation is eligible for support, and how to quickly apply for this.
- Explains how **new futures buckinghamshire's** two-stage support process works.
- Lets you know who to contact if you would like to chat through your needs, if you are unsure whether your organisation is eligible, or if you have any other questions.



The specialist support your organisation could receive:

new futures buckinghamshire has ten specialist support packages available. These cover the following areas, each of which can be tailored to meet your organisation's specific needs:

Finance and income generation (managing finances and raising funds)	New ways of working (including setting up new services, collaborations and partnerships)
Strategy and planning	Performance (to help maximise efficiency and effectiveness)
Governance and legal structures	Research and evidence gathering
People, HR and employment	Information & Communications Technology (ICT) Services
Marketing and communications	Facilities and supply management

Who is eligible to receive support?

To be eligible for support from new futures buckinghamshire your organisation must meet the following requirements:

- Be based in Buckinghamshire.
- Be not-for-profit or non profit-distributing. This includes:
 - Voluntary and community groups;
 - Faith groups, provided that they are carrying out non-faith based activities for wider social and community benefit;
 - Social enterprises (including credit unions, co-operatives, social firms, community owned enterprises, community interest companies and development trusts) provided that any profits made are reinvested to sustain and further their main activities and are not distributed;
 - Buckinghamshire-based organisations that are affiliated to national umbrella groups (e.g. Age UK and Citizens Advice Bureaux), provided that they have their own constitution and produce their own financial accounts.

{We regret that we are unable to assist statutory organisations, Parish Councils, individuals and businesses under the scheme.}

- Deliver the majority of its activities/services to people living in Buckinghamshire.

- Have a gross annual income of less than £1 million ⁱ
- Contribute, via its activities and/or services, to one or more of Buckinghamshire County Council's priorities, as detailed below.
- Have a bank account with at least two signatories.

What are Buckinghamshire County Council's priorities?

As detailed above, to be eligible for support from **new futures buckinghamshire** your organisation's activities and/or services should contribute to one or more of the County Council's priorities. These are as follows:

1. Improving the lives of vulnerable adults, families and/or children. ⁱⁱ
2. Delaying and reducing the need for care and support.
3. Improving the quality of life for people with care and support needs and their carers.
4. Supporting young children to be ready for school.
5. Making sure young people are prepared for the world of work and adult life.
6. Providing positive activities for disadvantaged children and young people. ⁱⁱⁱ
7. Increasing the numbers of young people volunteering.
8. Enabling all communities to access key education services and facilities.
9. Supporting the provision of skills training or other interventions to improve the employability of local people.
10. Improving the public health of disadvantaged ^{iv} Buckinghamshire residents.
11. Improving community safety, and reducing crime and the fear of crime.
12. Promoting and encouraging sustainable approaches to energy, water, waste and transport.
13. Improving and protecting the Green Belt, the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Rights of Way and Green Spaces.
14. Helping communities to provide more services for themselves.

ⁱ It doesn't matter if you are receiving either grant or contract funding from the County Council.

ⁱⁱ Particularly by providing early help and early intervention activities and services to help families and individuals before they reach the point of crisis.

ⁱⁱⁱ Disadvantage may result from living in – or being affected by - poverty and deprivation, disability, illness, abuse and / or neglect or behavioural problems.

^{iv} See iii above.

15. Working, or planning to work with, the County Council to deliver services in new or different ways.

An overview of the support available from newfutures buckinghamshire:

newfutures buckinghamshire is being managed for Buckinghamshire County Council by GrantScape, an independent fund manager and registered charity, based near Milton Keynes. Their contact details are provided below.

The free one-to-one support available is provided in two stages, as detailed below. We have also produced a simple flowchart (please see Appendix A), to show how the process works.

Stage 1 - Development planning support

During a half-day workshop, Community Impact Bucks will help you identify your organisation's key areas of need and will record these in a short development plan.

Community Impact Bucks is the registered charity that promotes excellence in voluntary and community services in Buckinghamshire.

Stage 2 - Specialist support

To help your organisation address the key needs identified during Stage 1, specialist support will be available via ten support packages. Each support package will be tailored to meet your organisation's specific needs and will take from 1-3 days, spread over a period of no more than 3 months.

The specialist support packages will be delivered by approved experts and cover the following areas:

Finance and income generation	New ways of working
Strategy and planning	Performance
Governance and legal structures	Research and evidence gathering
People, HR and employment	ICT Services
Marketing and communications	Facilities and supply management

You will be eligible to receive up to three of these packages (i.e. up to nine days' free support) in any one year. Support will also be available to help you identify any longer-term activities that are necessary.

Further details of the topics covered by the specialist support packages is provided below.

How do we request support from new futures buckinghamshire?

- First, you will need to complete a simple online **Expression of Interest**. This has been designed to be as user-friendly as possible, and full guidance on its completion is provided.
- In the Expression of Interest, you will be asked to provide some basic information about your organisation, including brief details of how its activities and/or services contribute to the County Council's priorities (above). This will enable GrantScape to verify your organisation's eligibility for support.
- The Expression of Interest will additionally ask you to confirm that your organisation is prepared to make the necessary time commitment if you are chosen to receive support.
- With the Expression of Interest, you will need to provide your organisation's:
 - Governing document or constitution (if you are a new organisation, a set of rules will be fine);
 - Latest financial accounts (if you are a new organisation, a written treasurer's report will be acceptable).

You will also need to confirm that you have a bank or building society account with a minimum of two signatories in place.

- If you are unable to access the internet or to use a computer, GrantScape will assist you with alternative arrangements. They will also help if you have any special communication needs.
- GrantScape will let you know if your Expression of Interest has been accepted. If it has, they will confirm this to you and will ask Community Impact Bucks to arrange your free Stage 1 development planning session.

What will the Stage 1 development planning session with Community Impact Bucks involve?

- During your free half-day session, Community Impact Bucks will help you to identify, or confirm, your organisation's main development priorities. In order to ensure that you have agreement and commitment from across your organisation, it is important that you have people at that session who can represent your governing body as well as your delivery team.
- Community Impact Bucks will explore your development priorities with you and will help you decide on the specialist support package (or packages) that your organisation will most benefit from. They will recommend the sequencing of these and the approved experts who could help you.
- Community Impact Bucks will then provide you with notes from the meeting and a draft development plan. You will need to finalise this and ensure that your board/management committee and key staff members understand and support it.

- Once signed-off, you will need to send your development plan to GrantScape. They will then arrange your first specialist support package.

Your specialist support package may take up to 3 days, depending on your organisation's specific requirements. This can be spread over a maximum period of 3 months.

What do the ten specialist support packages actually cover?

Here are brief details of the topics covered by the ten specialist support packages:

- 1. Finance and income generation:** This covers support in managing finances and your organisation's assets, complying with regulatory requirements and developing strategies and skills for generating income (including trading and selling services). Please note that it will not cover helping with specific bids or tenders as this activity is ineligible for support.
- 2. Strategy and planning:** This covers setting strategic and business priorities, managing change, project management and project costing. It also includes stakeholder and community/service-user engagement.
- 3. Governance and legal structures:** This covers all the steps required to ensure that your organisation has robust governance structures and procedures in place. It includes recruiting and developing trustees (who are responsible for good governance), entering into contracts and setting-up new organisations (i.e. where you are already a properly constituted organisation eligible for support from New Futures).
- 4. People, HR and employment:** This covers all areas from recruitment to staff/leadership development, and from employment law (including equality and diversity) to managing and developing volunteers. It also includes specialist areas such as HR benchmarking, conflict management, mediation and safeguarding.
- 5. Marketing and communications:** This covers communications and marketing strategies, making the most of media opportunities and how to integrate different communication methods most effectively. It includes using social media, developing website content, undertaking market research and managing events.
- 6. New ways of working:** This covers help for organisations considering setting-up new types of service, new ways of delivering services or even new organisational structures. It includes collaborative working, mergers, consortia, asset transfers (including Community Asset Transfers).
- 7. Performance:** This covers some of the key areas to help ensure that your organisation is as effective and efficient as possible. It includes help to develop skills in monitoring and evaluating the value and quality of what your organisation does, and performance benchmarking.
- 8. Research and evidence gathering:** This covers how to carry out effective research and how best to interpret and present it. It will help your organisation

to assess the impact of its policies and the results of different activities and approaches. It will also show you how to develop a strong evidence base for identifying needs which you can then demonstrate to potential funders.

9. Information and Communications Technology (ICT) services: This covers making the most of ICT in your organisation's everyday activities. It includes setting ICT strategies, identifying requirements and how to implement them, and systems development and support. Data management and protection are also covered.

10. Facilities and supply management: This covers all of the non-core things that your organisation needs to manage to function safely and effectively. It ranges from your premises (tenancies, maintenance, security etc) to the utilities that you use. It also includes licensing, and health and safety issues.

Who are the approved experts for the specialist support packages?

- In setting-up [new futures buckinghamshire](#), the County Council has created a framework of carefully-chosen people with specialist skills in the ten areas covered by the support packages.
- All of these experts were chosen through an application process.
- Please note that it won't be possible to use anyone who isn't a selected member of our framework. This helps us to ensure that the highest standards of support will be provided.
- If you have a particular consultant who you are familiar with and would like to use, they first have to apply to the County Council to become an expert provider. Whether or not they are then registered to join the framework will depend on them meeting the necessary criteria, including as regards skills and experience.

What will the expert providers' support involve?

- Once your development plan has been completed and sent to GrantScape, you will be eligible to receive up to three support packages in any one year.

These will each take from 1-3 days, depending on your specific needs, and will be arranged to suit your availability. The support for each package can be spread over a maximum period of 3 months.

- After each support package has been completed, you will be asked to complete a simple evaluation and feedback form, telling us how the scheme's support has benefited your organisation. This process will be managed by GrantScape.
- Approximately 9 months after your support from [new futures buckinghamshire](#) has ended, we will ask you to complete a simple feedback form to tell us how valuable the support has been to your organisation over the intervening period. This process will be managed by GrantScape.

Will the County Council see details of our development planning needs?

- No. Buckinghamshire County Council fully understands that your development planning needs are sensitive and not for sharing outside **new futures buckinghamshire**. This is particularly true if you are one of the County Council's existing service delivery providers, or are hoping to be one.
- The information that you provide to GrantScape, to Community Impact Bucks and to the approved experts supporting you will, therefore, be treated in complete confidence by them.
- The one exception is that GrantScape will be reporting to the County Council on the overall progress and successes of **new futures buckinghamshire**. As part of this, they will need to let the County Council have the names of the organisations that have received support. If you would prefer, though, you can ask GrantScape not to provide your organisation's name.
- Otherwise, all reporting by GrantScape to the County Council will be at an aggregate level, with no information being provided that would enable the County Council to identify your organisation's development needs, nor the support that you have actually received.
- This aggregated, anonymised information will be used to help inform and improve service delivery. General lessons learned will also be shared with the county's VCS support organisations so they can help other groups to improve.

How do we contact GrantScape for help with any questions?

- GrantScape will provide support over the telephone to help with any queries you may have. They will also be happy to have general discussions about the sort of development needs that **new futures buckinghamshire** can support.
- This support is available on Mondays - Fridays, from 9am to 5pm. An answer phone and call-back service is available for messages left outside these times. To speak to GrantScape, please call: **01908 247637** and ask for Andrew Budd in the first instance.
- GrantScape also has a dedicated email address for any queries. This is: **nfb@grantscape.org.uk**

Please see Appendix A overleaf for the **new futures buckinghamshire** Process Flowchart.

new futures buckinghamshire
Process Flowchart

Step 1

If eligible for support, your organisation submits a simple online Expression of Interest to GrantScape.



Step 2

GrantScape advise you whether or not your Expression of Interest this has been accepted



Step 3

If it has, Community Impact Bucks contact you to arrange your free half-day's development planning session



Step 4

The development planning session takes place, when Community Impact Bucks help you explore and record your organisation's key priorities and what support you need with them



Step 5

You finalise your development plan, secure your organisation's agreement to it and send it to GrantScape



Step 6

GrantScape contact the approved expert(s) so that your 1-3 day free support session(s) can be arranged



Step 7

The support session(s) take place



Step 8

You tell us how the support received has benefited your organisation