

Accessibility Fund: the due diligence check

As part of our application process, we carry out a due diligence check on every applicant. This isn't part of assessing the quality of your application, it's more of a check on the suitability of applicants to receive funding from Barnwood Trust. For example, as a charity supporting disabled people and people with mental health conditions, we would not wish to fund any organisation which did not have a strong and robust approach to keeping vulnerable people safe. This means we will always need to see your safeguarding policy. The table below sets out the areas covered in the due diligence check; the information we look for; and why we need it.

Please note that the due diligence check is not a way for us to find a reason to decline your application – very few applicants actually fail the due diligence check. If the check does raise any concerns, we'll discuss these with you in full.

If you'd like to see the actual due diligence check form we use, [click here](#).

Issue	Why we check this	How we check it
Status of your organisation	To ensure that your organisation is eligible for funding – we can only fund organisations which are not for profit, including charities, Community Interest Companies (CICs), social enterprises and other community-based groups. Individuals and profit-making organisations are not eligible for the Accessibility Fund. We're aware that, especially in smaller communities, spaces managed by parish councils and church groups can have an	If your organisation is a charity, we check your details (including your charitable aims) on the Charity Commission website. If you're a CIC, we'll find this information on the Companies House website. if you are neither of the above but are constituted as a not-for-profit community-based group, we'll ask to see a copy of your constitution or similar document.

	important role as community venues, so we will consider applications for these spaces on a case-by-case basis.	
Address of your organisation	Legally, Barnwood Trust funding can only be awarded to organisations which are based in Gloucestershire, or are delivering services to Gloucestershire residents.	We check that your registered address on the Charity Commission or Companies House website, and the address on your application if different, is in Gloucestershire.
Conflicts of Interest	We want to be sure that our decision making is fair, transparent and accountable. We therefore need to be sure that no-one involved in making the application also has a role at Barnwood Trust (for example, as a Trustee or employee). We also make sure that no-one at Barnwood who will be involved in our decision making is involved with the application.	If a charity, we can find details of your Trustees on the Charity Commission website: if a CIC, details of your Directors should be on the Companies House website. We check that your Trustees/Directors don't also have a role at Barnwood Trust. If we do find a potential conflict of interest, we'll ask you to confirm in writing that that person wasn't involved in making the application. If anyone involved in Barnwood's decision making has a connection with the applicant, we expect them to declare their interest and not to take part in the discussion on that application.
Work to be funded	The Accessibility Fund has been established by our Board with a specific purpose in mind: to help to improve the accessibility of indoor and outdoor spaces in Gloucestershire for disabled	We carefully check the information on your application form to make sure that the work you intend to deliver is in line with the outcomes of the Accessibility Fund.

	people and people with mental health conditions. We need to ensure that any application we fund will contribute to this outcome.	
Compliance/filing record	This is a useful measure of your financial management. As a charity or CIC, you are required to file your accounts annually. Both the Charity Commission and Companies House keep a record of the date you file your accounts each year.	If a charity, we check the date you filed your accounts for the last five years. If a CIC, we can find this information from Companies House. If your accounts were filed a few days late in a couple of years, we won't take this as evidence of poor financial management. However, if you were regularly several months late filing your accounts, we might ask you about this as it could indicate that your finances are not well managed.
Accounts	We check your accounts for two reasons: we want to make sure your organisation is financially sustainable from year to year: and we also don't want to fund organisations which have substantial reserves (see below).	We ask to see your accounts for the last two years for which they are available. For each year we check your income; your expenditure; and the level of your free reserves at year end. We also check the sources of your income to make sure you don't appear to be overdependent on a single grant source. For CICs, we check that you have an independent revenue stream and are not purely dependent on income from grants.

		We also check that your accounts have been audited, or at least reviewed, by a qualified person who is independent of your organisation. Usually this will be your accountant. If the most recent accounts that you have available are more than six months old, we'll ask you to provide additional information, such as recent management accounts, to give a more recent insight into your finances.
Level of reserves	Arguably, an organisations with a high level of free reserves doesn't really need our funding as they could be drawing on their reserves to fund the project instead.	We disregard any restricted funds and fixed assets and only consider your unrestricted or 'free' reserves. Most of our applicants have free reserves equivalent to between three and six months' expenditure. If your free reserves are equivalent to more than a year's expenditure, we'll get in touch to ask whether there's a specific reason why you need to hold unusually large reserves.
Project costs reasonable	We aren't experts in construction or in managing spaces! However, we need to take what steps we can to ensure that the costs you provide for your project are reasonable.	We'll ask you to provide two quotes for each capital item costing over £10,000.

Leases (if appropriate)	If you are a user, but not the owner, of the space you can still apply for funding. However, we'll need to check that you have security of tenure – we wouldn't want to commit a large sum to improving a space and then suddenly find that the owner has decided to use the space for another purpose and has served notice.	We'll ask to see a copy of your lease for your use of the space. To be eligible for funding you'll need to have security of tenure for at least five years.
Safeguarding	Because of the nature of Barnwood Trust's work, we consider that all our beneficiaries (disabled people and people with mental health conditions) are potentially vulnerable. For this reason we always ask to see your safeguarding policy. Your policy needs to cover all the specified areas and we won't be able to fund your project if it does not – this is not negotiable. if you have separate safeguarding policies for children and vulnerable adults, we will need to check both.	We check that all the following issues are included in your policy: • The policy has been reviewed within the last two years. • Your Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is named in the policy. • The policy covers safe recruitment – we expect all your staff and volunteers to be subject to Disclosure and Barring Service checks. • The policy includes details of the safeguarding training you provide for your staff, and staff and volunteers are regularly reminded of their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. • The policy sets out how you share safeguarding information with other parties such as the Police and Social Services. • The policy covers your procedure for managing any safeguarding allegations that might be made against your staff.

		• The policy document includes contact details for Gloucestershire County Council's safeguarding teams for children and vulnerable adults.
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