

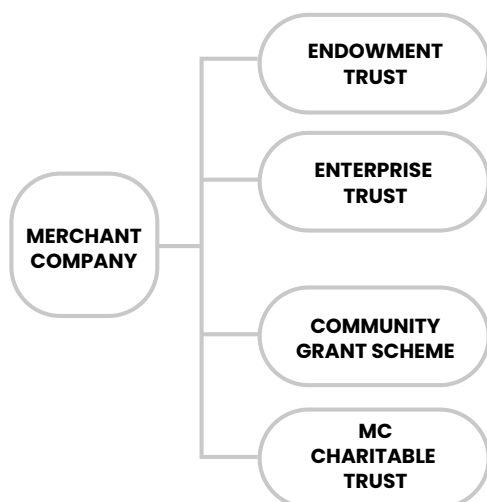
COMMUNITY GRANT SCHEME UPDATE

WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY GRANT SCHEME?

Back in 2023, The **Merchant Company Endowment Trust** agreed to fund a Community Grant Scheme. The scheme is targeted at organisations operating in Edinburgh and the Lothians needing funding for activities and projects benefiting the community across a wide range of categories:

- Alleviation of Poverty or Disadvantage
- Relief of Disadvantage due to Age, Health or Disability
- Promotion of Physical or Mental Health
- Encouragement of public participation in Sport
- Supporting Community or Recreational Facilities and Activities
- Support of the Arts, Music, Culture, Sciences or Heritage
- Development of Community or Citizenship
- Promotion of Education
- Promotion of Environmental Protection
- Support of Equality and Diversity

OUR RELATED CHARITIES



HOW APPLICATIONS ARE REVIEWED

A Company committee reviews the applications twice a year and allocates **£50,000** in grants of up to **£5,000** each.

Applications are made in March and September for rounds distributing in June and December each year.

The first 2025 round (our 4th round since inception) is just closing for applications and as usual we are expecting a strong field.

SO, WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED SO FAR?

The scheme tries to spread the grants across the range of categories and ensure organisations in East, West and Mid Lothian benefit as well as those in the city. It is open to organisations located in EH postcodes which stretch from Armadale to Innerwick and from Leadburn to Leith.

To date the Community Grants Scheme has distributed **£75,000** to 25 organisations. Given the wide remit and geography, the range of grants has been diverse.

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COMMUNITY GRANT SCHEME



ARTICLE BY ROBERT ARMOUR

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Impact assessment for the first round suggests 527 people have benefitted from our support. Much of the funding went to smaller local organisations:

Cutting Edge Theatre provided drama classes to disabled under 12s; **Grassroots Clothing** supported 124 individuals on the path to employment with interview clothing and **School Bank West Lothian** distributed 475 winter warmer clothing packs to families facing the choice of food, heat or clothing. **Kinship Care Midlothian** supported those who step in when neglect, abuse or loss forces remoter family members to take on parenting while **Dads Rock** helped under 25, often single dads to cope, cook or build relationships with children.

The older groups were addressed by **West Lothian 50+ Network** and **Open Door Edinburgh**, tackling loneliness and isolation through activity and fellowship. And **Inch Park Community Sports** offered structured activities for 13–16 year olds in SE Edinburgh, in partnership with Police Scotland, while **Beach Wheelchairs** helped disabled people of all ages enjoy the fun of sea and sand with family and friends at Portobello and Seton Sands.

HOW WE MEASURE OUR IMPACT

Each recipient organisation is required to report on the use and impact of its grant within 12 months of receipt and we are building these reports into an annual report on the impact the Merchant Company and its related charities makes each year.

GET IN TOUCH

The feedback confirms our funding offered a lifeline by providing the simple things that so many of us take for granted, tackling poverty, isolation, access and health. As the scheme continues that impact will grow.

If you want to know more about the Merchant Company Endowment Trust Community Grant Scheme, or suggest worthy recipients of support, please contact:

CHARITIES@MCOE.ORG.UK

