



Title	Community Fund and Donations Policy
Purpose	<p>This Policy sets out the parameters for use of the Community Fund, Customer Kitty and Donations and how they can be accessed.</p> <p>The Community Fund, Customer Kitty and Donations promote and support participation in local communities by creating a budget which can be accessed for projects and individuals improving the community and opportunities for customers. This contributes towards our corporate aim of providing great homes in strong and thriving communities.</p>
Scope	<p>The Community Regeneration Manager oversees the budget for the Community Fund, Customer Kitty and Donations, and will implement this policy to ensure that items are funded in line with requirements.</p>
Definitions	<p>Community Benefits</p> <p>Community benefit requirements are defined in the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 as a contractual requirement imposed by a contracting authority:</p> <p>a) relating to: training and recruitment availability of sub-contracting opportunities</p> <p>b) or which is otherwise intended to improve the economic, social, or environmental wellbeing of the authority's area in a way additional to the main purpose of the contract in which the requirement is included.</p>
Policy Statement	<p>Background to Community Fund</p> <p>The Community Improvement Fund was introduced in February 2009 to address Resident Association requests for maintenance and improvements. The fund is intended to be used for addressing local priorities and complementing our approach to tenant and resident participation. The Community Fund helps secure Maryhill Housing's role as a lead anchor in both the local and wider community.</p>

The scheme cannot be used to fund work to individual homes, but it can be used to benefit the environment and / or improve security where customers live. The success of this scheme is that it helps encourage a sense of ownership, community and can improve the sustainability of local neighbourhoods. Sometimes the fund can also be “matched” with other funding where applicable – meaning our contribution could go further.

Maryhill Housing invites ideas for Community Fund projects from Registered Tenants Organisations, individual customers and from our staff team who work in the estates on a daily basis. We will invite ideas throughout the financial year, and project ideas will be considered and agreed at two Community Fund meetings per year.

Process and Criteria

Ideas and suggestions will be encouraged from Registered Tenants Organisations, individual customers, and Maryhill Housing staff. The scheme is intended to demonstrate innovative partnership working between Maryhill Housing, the communities that we serve and Tenant Organisations.

Community Fund requests must be able to demonstrate value for money and meet **at least one** of the following proposed criteria:

- Enhance the quality of life in areas where Maryhill Housing customers and residents reside, for example, to improve the environment, promoting safe, healthy, and vibrant communities or provide support for events/activities that encourage community cohesion and celebrate diversity.
- Encourage community involvement that will positively impact on Maryhill Housing residents and their families, for example by encouraging volunteering.
- Promote equality of opportunity within the areas Maryhill Housing serves.

Also, when deciding what projects to fund, considered factors include: ideas that will limit or reduce exposure to risk and liability to Maryhill Housing; improvements that will make our estates look better; and temporary improvements or projects that have a significant impact.

Not all projects have to be about physical improvement works. We will also consider funding projects that help us to meet our community regeneration agenda and our strategic organisational objectives.

NB: This scheme is for one off maintenance or improvement items which will have a relatively low-cost value. It is not for planned or cyclical work.

Accessing the Fund

RTOs can apply directly, however, in most cases the Community Regeneration Team will work with groups to come up with workable, costed applications that meet the group's aims in line with the Community Fund policy.

Individual residents will be invited to suggest ideas and projects that they would like to see taken forward in their communities. We will request ideas for the Community Fund in our newsletters and social media.

Maryhill Housing staff will be encouraged to put ideas forward for Community Fund projects. These suggestions may come from staff knowledge of local issues / needs, resident feedback and from issues raised during estate walkabouts with housing staff or initiatives which can improve the economic or social wellbeing of the Associations tenants.

Other 3rd sector organisations may also request funding providing they have a clear set of rules, operate in an open and democratic way, operate either in our area of operation or for the benefit of the communities we serve. In the best interests Maryhill Housing and to safeguard value for money for our customers, we reserve the right to decide which organisations we will support.

A pro forma will be made available for anyone seeking to apply.

Reaching Decisions About What to Fund

Proposals to access the community fund will be considered at a Community Fund Award meeting convened for the purpose of deciding which projects will be funded and implemented. Community Fund Award meetings will comprise of two customer board members, Community Ambassador and two staff representatives as delegated by the Director of Operations: likely to be the Community Regeneration Manager and Housing Managers. Board Members will be elected annually following the AGM.

Ideas that provide the best value for money and benefit the greatest number of people will be considered. Occasionally we will fund small scale works on publicly owned land where the impact of the community improvement is greater than the cost to the Association, particularly where the improvement would benefit our customers and support our organisational aims.

For a variety of reasons there may be instances where it will not be possible to fund projects. For example, the request may fall out with the criteria of the scheme or prove to be too expensive. Should this be the case, and a request for funding is unsuccessful we will advise the group or individual the reasons why and suggest alternative funding opportunities they can apply for. Projects and activities will be categorised as follows:

Environmental Projects

Maryhill Housing is committed to improving our estates for our residents and creating vibrant attractive communities for people to live, play and work. Our Estates are an important part of our community and previous environmental projects have enhanced the lives of both residents and visitors.

Community Projects

Maryhill Housing encourages community resilience and sustainability. The Community Fund helps us to encourage community involvement and provide support for events/activities that encourage community cohesion. This helps empower residents as projects are based on local circumstances and need.

External Projects

Maryhill Housing recognises its role as a community anchor and the importance of supporting and promoting collaboration between local partners. Engaging with harder to reach groups can be difficult and the Community Fund allows us to act as a facilitator with other agencies such as North United Communities and Maryhill Integration Network to promote community cohesion and celebrate diversity.

Funding Conditions

Maryhill Housing will agree the best way to fund a particular project, depending on circumstances. Sometimes we will be able to instruct and order works directly – removing the need to transfer money to a third party organisation to pay for works. In particular, it is unlikely we would pay money direct to an individual. On other occasions we will make monies available in the form of a grant, to a constituted group along with details confirming how we expect the funds to be used. We expect organisations to keep records of their income and expenditure and groups should keep evidence of how any grant awarded by Maryhill Housing was used.

Where Maryhill Housing provides grant funding for a particular project, our support should be publicly acknowledged. We will make our logo available to help emphasise where we have funded a particular project. Where appropriate we will also assist with signage to illustrate our involvement.

Customer Kitty

In addition to the community fund, there is also the opportunity for customers to access the Customer Kitty which was established in celebration of our 40th Anniversary. Non-repayable grants are available for a variety of things including clothing, family trips / excursions, education costs and training which might not otherwise be affordable.

An annual budget will be agreed to support the delivery of the Customer Kitty for items such as laptops for College/University students, family activities, children's clothing, and tuition fees. To access this scheme, customers have to complete an application form which is then assessed by the Community Regeneration Team for decision. The Community Regeneration Manager has delegated authority to manage the Customer Kitty.

The Value of Projects Funded though Community Fund

Normally funding requests up to the value of £5,000 will be considered. Amounts higher than this will be at the discretion of the Directors, with an absolute upper limit of £7,500. Anything above this limit should be passed to the Board for approval.

An annual budget will be available to support the Community Fund scheme and the Customer Kitty. The Director of Operations will have delegated authority to manage the Community fund who in turn will delegate operation of the scheme to the Community Regeneration Manager. The budget will be reviewed each year in response to the success of the fund and other business priorities.

Contractors Community Benefit Contribution to the Fund

One of Maryhill Housing's strategic objectives is to address poverty and enable customers to make their lives better. Maryhill Housing believes that we should lead by example by employing trainees, offering apprenticeships, and providing work placements and we therefore expect that our contractors will provide this kind of community benefit when they work with us.

There are a number of negotiable and essential benefits which can be offered from contractors one of which, and most relevant to this policy, is 0.1% of the contract value provided to the community fund. This can either be a financial payment or work in kind. Any financial contributions should be added to the overall core budget for approval by panel members. Any works offered "in kind" and valued over £5,000 should be agreed by Senior Management in line with the delegated authority levels.

Where the value of the community benefit is less than £350, the amount shall be paid up front by the contractor to the community fund.

Donations to other organisations

Maryhill Housing sets aside an annual Donations Budget and will be set on the basis of £1 per year per social housing tenant. This budget is used to fund local charitable groups or other appropriate activities such as sponsorship of Maryhill and Ruchill community members or members of Maryhill Housing staff.

Proposals for donations can be made by any member of staff, Board member or resident of Maryhill/Ruchill for any group or activity that:

- Operates within Maryhill and Ruchill areas – can apply for donations of up to £500.
- Operates more widely but will allocate any donation from Maryhill Housing to or for recipients within the Maryhill/Ruchill areas – can also apply for donations of up to £500.
- Operates out with the local area but which support the principles of Maryhill Housing – can apply for donations of up to £100. No more than £500 will be donated in any financial year to these types of charities.
- Supports a staff Member(s) undertaking fundraising / sponsorship for a chosen charity who are looking for a donation from Maryhill Housing towards sponsorship – can apply for a donation to match overall sponsorship raised up to £150. No more than £750 will be donated in any financial year to these types of requests from staff.

Approval of donations is delegated to the Community Regeneration Manager.

All sponsorship requests from members of staff will be approved by the CEO and any award will be approved on the basis that the event has taken place and evidence provided of the staff members participation. The donation will be made directly to the selected Charity that the sponsorship is for.

	Any unspent donations budget will be allocated equally to the one national and one local charity nominated by the staff of Maryhill Housing each year. These will be registered charities and local bodies with a charitable purpose.
Approval	Board, January 2025
Policy Owner	Community Regeneration Manager
Review	January 2026