

Cultural Expression Agreement 2021

AIMS

The aims of the Council's Cultural Expression Agreement supported under The Executive Office (TEO), Cultural Expression Programme are as follows:

- To maintain and develop the level of goodwill built up in the local community and build good relations;
- To maintain and develop the core environmental conditions of any bonfires that do take place;
- To continuously support positive local cultural festivals associated with bonfires;
- To enable the Council to fulfill its environmental obligations and to ensure compliance with the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (NI) 2011.

The steps required to ensure that these aims are met are as follows:

- To reduce and minimize damage to public land, thus reducing clean up and reinstatement costs by encouraging the more environmentally friendly alternatives, such as the use of cages or fences to outline the size of the bonfire, sand bases, willow burners and gas beacons;
- To provide funding to support positive community festivals associated with bonfires that positively celebrate local culture and family participation and encourage cultural/educational and diversionary activities;
- The festival should demonstrate a Good Relations element in keeping with the Together: Building a United Community strategy
- To continue to liaise with local representatives to ensure the aims and core conditions of this agreement are met.

CORE PRINCIPLES & LOCAL AGREEMENTS

The core principles for participation in the Council's Cultural Expression Agreement are:

- Council funding can only be used to support specified festival and safety costs e.g. bouncy castles, face painting etc. Council funding cannot be used for costs in relation to associated bonfires materials.

- Community groups will have adequate public liability insurance for the festival and cultural/educational/diversionary activities;
- Only festivals associated with established bonfires and established constituted groups previously supported through the Council's Good Relations Programme (including Ards and North Down Councils Good Relations Programmes dating back to 2011) will be considered. New festivals with associated bonfires will not be considered,
- Where an established bonfire site is lost e.g. due to local redevelopment, officers from the Council and/or Northern Ireland Housing Executive will assist local groups to identify a suitable alternative site, where possible.
- Council will provide suitable signage for installation at the bonfire sites stating the site is being monitored for fly tipping / illegal dumping/commercial dumping;
- The Council will regularly monitor community associated bonfires sites for tidiness in line with the conditions of this agreement and attend cultural festivals. **It is the responsibility of the festival organiser to advise the Good Relations Officers if there is a change to the date of the festival.**
- Local agreement that materials will not be collected any earlier than 8 weeks (Sunday 9th May 2021) prior to the lighting of bonfires;
- Local agreement that toxic and unsuitable material will not be collected and burned on bonfires;
- Local agreement that bonfires will not be constructed or burnt in a way that negatively impacts on community use of these facilities in order to ensure the continuous use of leisure facilities by the community;
- Local agreement that the use of any type of construction machinery e.g. Tractors/Cherry Pickers etc. is used minimally. Due to the cost of reinstating the land, assistance to minimise any damage to the site can be sought from landowners prior to bringing machinery on site.
- Local agreement that the Council or Northern Ireland Housing Executive contractors have access to bonfire sites to remove unsuitable material with support from local community based management committees;

- Local agreement that huts will not be created within the body of the bonfires or within an unsafe distance from bonfires, thus ensuring the safety of young people within the community;
- Local agreement that bonfires should be a minimum distance of five times its height from property, i.e. if the bonfire is 10 metres tall it should be at least 50 metres from the nearest building. Flammable liquids such as petrol or paraffin, should never be used as these can produce explosive vapours. Advice should be taken from the Northern Ireland Fire Service.
- The Council will provide advice and support for local community based bonfire management committees/groups:

Failure to comply with the above principles will result in the balance of the grant being withheld and could result in some funding being clawed back.

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

Council is committed to providing on the ground support to groups who sign up to the core conditions detailed above. Good Relations Officers and Community Development Officers will be available to provide advice and support on all elements of the programme including the implementation process detailed below.

Council will invite Expressions of Interest for funding for cultural festivals from established groups and sites in April 2021.

Awards will only be made to constituted groups who agree and sign up to the core principles detailed above. The maximum amount available for any cultural festival, supported under this programme is £2,300. This maximum award is dependent on the level of funding received from the Executive Office and the number of successful expressions of interest received. Therefore, if the Executive Offices' funding to Council is reduced or the number of successful expressions of interest is greater than the budget available, the maximum award to each successful applicant will be reduced equally across all successful applicants. This grant applies only to the period 1 April 2021– 31 March 2022 and will be subject to review.

Table 1; Maximum Grant Award (subject to availability of funding)

Events with associated community bonfire	
Community festival, with associated standard bonfire.	Community festival, with associated bonfire, with reduced environmental impact; i.e. those which use: cages/fences to outline the size of the bonfire and/or sand bases, willow burners and gas beacons;



**Ards and
North Down
Borough Council**

	Bonfire builders should seek to ensure cage/ fences remain in place for the period of collection
£1,200 ⁱ	£2,300 ⁱⁱ

For advice and support please contact:

Donna Mackey, Good Relations Officer: donna.mackey@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

Telephone 0300 013 3333 Ext 40245

ACCEPTANCE

I/We _____ accept the core principles on behalf of _____ and will work in partnership with the Council, NIHE, NIFRS, PSNI and bonfire builders to reach the local agreements detailed in this document.

Location of site/s to which this agreement relates:

ⁱ This funding can also be used for educational programmes

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