

Breathe Easy Slough: Community Stop Smoking Grant Scheme Specification

1. Introduction and Overview

Smoking remains the most preventable cause of illnesses and deaths in the UK. While rates in Slough have declined, significant inequalities remain among certain groups. These include people with long-term mental illnesses, and those residing in areas of low income and high levels of deprivation. Other vulnerable groups such as people with substance misuse issues, routine and manual workers also have higher smoking rates and worse health outcomes as a result ([Action on Smoking and Health, 2019](#)).

In 2019, the government set an objective for England to be Smokefree by 2030, that is, it is expected that only 5% of the population would smoke by then. This supports the government manifesto commitment to extend health life expectancy by five years by 2035.

As part of this objective, in 2023 the government published '*Stopping the start: our new plan to create a smokefree generation*', which set out proposed actions the government will take to tackle smoking and youth vaping alongside the [Tobacco and Vapes Bill](#). To further support this ambition, the government has allocated £70 million in 2025 to 2026 to support local authority led stop smoking services.

Slough Borough Council delivers the stop smoking service through [Healthier Slough](#) as a part of its integrated wellness service. The service currently supports up to 1500 people to quit annually hence reducing the prevalence of smoking significantly. Groups with higher smoking prevalence often experience health inequalities that create significant barriers to effective engagement.

This grant aims to empower voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations to support smoking cessation, reduce relapse risk, and strengthen referral pathways to local stop smoking services. VCSEs are uniquely positioned to reach communities most affected by smoking and health inequalities with direct access to these populations and established, trusted relationships that can be leveraged to deliver culturally relevant, impactful interventions. By engaging these organisations, the grant will help reduce disparities and improve health outcomes across Slough.

2. Smoking Services and Support Grant Fund Overview and Purpose

The Slough Smokefree Communities Fund offers funding from £500 up to £5,000 to VCSEs, not-for-profit organisations and faith groups to develop initiatives that increase engagement with, and awareness of, local stop smoking services. Grants of up to £10,000 may be awarded in exceptional cases, particularly where applications demonstrate strong potential impact or innovative approaches to smoking cessation and community engagement.

Funding opportunities are accessible for the current budget year ending on 31 March 2026. The duration of individual projects may extend up to 12 months, depending on the specific nature and scope of each project undertaken.

2.1. Objectives of the Grant

This grant seeks to reduce smoking prevalence through targeted, community-led initiatives that address health inequalities and strengthen local support systems. Funded projects can focus on but not limited to:

- **Improving Access and Engagement:** Increase awareness and achieve uptake of Healthier Slough's stop smoking services through outreach and tailored communication.
- **Peer Support:** Recruit and train Health Champions in Make Every Contact Count or Very Brief Advice to provide motivational, informal support to individuals attempting to quit.
- **Community Navigation:** Assisting residents in accessing services, attending appointments, and understanding treatment options to remove barriers to quitting.
- **Community Engagement:** Deliver culturally relevant events, campaigns, and outreach activities to raise awareness, promote cessation, and reduce stigma.
- **Reducing Health Inequalities:** Create a community space for groups with higher smoking prevalence, ensuring equitable health outcomes.
- **Referral Pathways:** Develop a new referral pathway to local stop smoking services, ensuring continuity of care.

2.2. Proposed Projects Should:

- Deliver a structured programme of smoking cessation activities within community spaces, led by trusted local organisations.
- Build strong, collaborative relationships with local communities.

- Incorporate peer-to-peer support to encourage engagement and sustained quit attempts.
- Integrate links to complementary wellbeing activities such as nutrition, yoga, mindfulness, and breathwork.
- Create a safe, non-judgmental environment that fosters trust and openness.
- Offer flexibility to work at everyone's pace, reinforcing progress through positive encouragement.

2.3. Funding Restrictions:

The funding **cannot** be used for:

- The general running costs of an organisation (i.e. broadband, office space, costs towards regular sessions already being delivered)
- Replacement of equipment (Please note financial provisions should be in place to replace damaged / obsolete equipment)
- Uniforms
- Refreshments
- Travel/Transport
- CPD courses (*Safeguarding and First Aid courses*) DBS checks
- Costs towards Capital assets (fixed/permanent structure)
- Retrospective costs
- Activities not related to smoking cessation

3. Eligible Applicants

All applying organisations should:

- Be a VCSE organisations, community groups, faith-based organisations, social enterprises.
- Operate within the Slough Borough Council area.
- Be able to demonstrate links to communities disproportionately affected by smoking.
- Be a small or medium-sized organisation with an annual income under £500,000.

4. Priority Groups

Applications are welcome from organisations that support priority groups that are more likely to smoke or are at greatest risk of harm from smoking. These include, but are not limited to:

- People with mental health conditions.
- Routine and manual workers.

- Individuals experiencing homelessness or substance misuse.
- Minority ethnic communities.
- Areas with high smoking prevalence or deprivation.
- Individuals experiencing poverty or financial hardship, including unemployed.
- Individuals with long term medical conditions
- Those in contact with the criminal justice system
- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities
- LGBTQ+
- Individuals with learning disabilities
- Individuals identified as Black, Asian and or other Minority Ethnic Communities

5. Grant Conditions

Successful applicants must:

- Link projects with the local stop smoking service and referral pathways.
- Monitor and report of outcome (e.g., number of referrals).
- Show delivery timeline of within 12 months of grant award.
- Comply with safeguarding and data protection standards.
- Attend a Project initiation Meeting and Very Brief Advice (VBA)/Make Every Contact Count (MECC) Training prior to commencing any projects.
- Attend the quarterly Slough Tobacco Control Network meetings to share learning with their peers, collate findings, and receive support with monitoring and evaluation.

6. Application Process

To apply you must:

- Complete the online application form and return via email to Kerry-Ann.Bryan@slough.gov.uk
- Deadline for applications: **30th of January**.
- Decisions communicated by **6th of February**.

The application process may end earlier than stated if the funding limit is reached, to guarantee equitable allocation.

7. Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be assessed based on:

- Alignment with scheme objectives.
- Reach and impact on priority groups.
- Evidence of community need and engagement.
- Sustainability and value for money.
- Capacity to deliver and report outcomes.
- Willingness to actively participate in the Slough Tobacco Network quarterly meetings.

8. Performance Metrics and Reporting

Successful applicants will be required to monitor and report on the impact of their funded activities. The following performance metrics should be tracked and submitted as part of quarterly and final reports:

Core Metrics

- Number of individuals engaged at events, conversations, and leaflets.
- Number of referrals made to the local stop smoking service.
- Demographic breakdown of participants (age, gender, ethnicity, postcode).
- Number of current smokers engaged from priority populations.
- Number of people given very brief advice (VBA)
- Number of referrals made and/or the number of people signposted to local stop smoking services.
- Feedback from individuals to capture changes in awareness.
- Digital engagement - views/shares/comments
- Number of Health Champions trained.

Qualitative Reporting

- Case studies or testimonials demonstrating impact.
- Feedback from participants and staff/volunteers.
- Lessons learned and recommendations for future delivery.

Reporting Schedule

- Quarterly progress reports detailing activities, outputs, and challenges.
- Final report summarising outcomes, impact, and sustainability plans.
- Templates and guidance will be provided upon grant award.

Support Available

- Access to [NCSCT training resources](#)

- Access to [Very Brief Advice](#) and [Make Every Contact Count Training](#)
- Guidance from local public health leads and [Healthier Slough](#)
- Optional additional training and mentoring for Health Champions

Grant recipients are not expected to supply or administer nicotine replacement therapy as part of their projects; however, they may deliver information about what is available to help people, and what they can access.

Useful Information

[**Smoking Statistics - ASH**](#)

[**Smoking and Other Health Conditions - ASH**](#)

[**Smoking Profile - Data | Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care**](#)