

Raising awareness and celebrating your project



Community Assets gives grants for refurbishing local authority buildings in England whose ownership is being transferred to voluntary and community groups.

The Community Assets programme is funded by HM Government through the Office for Civil Society and delivered by BIG Fund. This is not Lottery funding.

Funded by



HM Government

Delivered by



Congratulations on your grant from the Community Assets programme.



Now that you have your community asset, we want you to promote your Community Asset so people can see where public money is being spent and recognise the benefit that your building is bringing to the community. Promoting your building will also contribute to its long-term success and showcase it to your community and other funders.

This guide covers seven key ways to promote your work. If you have any other ideas on how to promote your project, we'd like to hear from you so we can share them with other Community Assets projects.

1. Acknowledging your grant – branding and logos
2. Holding events
3. Press and media
4. Printed materials
5. Social media
6. Case studies
7. Help and support from BIG Fund

1. Acknowledging your grant – branding and logos

It is important that you give the media, the public and beneficiaries of your project clear and accurate information about where your Community Assets funding comes from. Please use this line in all your communications about your project:

Community Assets, funded by HM Government Office for Civil Society in 2008 and administered by the BIG Fund, the non-Lottery funding arm of the Big Lottery Fund.

Please refer to the BIG Fund and not Big Lottery Fund in all your communications about Community Assets. BIG Fund is the operating name under which non-Lottery funding programmes, including Community Assets, are delivered.

You must use the Government and BIG Fund



logos together on all publicity about your project.

You should use the logo on:

- websites
- printed publicity materials
- stationery
- press releases
- site signage, plaques and site hoardings.

We will ask projects to supply examples of how logos have been used so that we can check that they're complying with the terms and conditions of their grant contract. Make sure you follow the logo guidelines you were emailed when you accepted your grant. As part of the terms and conditions of the grant you must display the plaque for at least 20 years.

You can download the logo guidelines from [www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog_Community assets](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog_Community%20assets) If you need advice on how to use our logo, email the Branding team at: branding@biglotteryfund.org.uk



2. Holding events (the celebratory bit)

You may wish to hold an event to open your community asset or to generate publicity for it.

Holding an event will raise awareness among local people about your community asset, allowing you to network with key decision makers like local MPs and those who have an interest in your activities. A successful event boosts morale among your group and local community.

Good publicity for your building may also lead to other funding opportunities.

Your event can be as simple or as dynamic as you like. The key is to get the right people there and tell them about what you have achieved.

If you are hosting an event please let us know about it four to six weeks beforehand, especially if you are likely to have MPs or celebrities attending, as we may be able to offer you some support.

You should use the plaque and banner provided by the Community Assets programme to promote the programme and the funding at your event.

Make sure you think about the following things when you're planning your event.

Budget

Work out how much money you have and plan your event to suit it.

Checklist

Here are some of the other things you might want to think about when you're planning an event.

- Catering – you may wish to do your own catering or find a local community organisation that can provide catering at a low cost if you are on a tight budget
- Equipment hire
- Advertising
- Printing of invites
- Entertainment

- Photography
- Special guests - including their transport costs
- Staff volunteers
- Information materials
- Vehicle hire for equipment
- Cleaning
- Access requirements.

You need to be aware of the health and safety regulations, including for catering. And do consider potential hazards when doing a site check, such as wet or uneven surfaces. You should give information about accessibility when advertising your event, including whether disabled access is available.

Generating interest in your event

If you are having an opening event and want to encourage as many people from your community as possible to attend, then you need to plan how to let them know about it. You could do this by word of mouth, posters, social networking sites, blogs, email/written invitations, advertising, membership newsletters, notice boards at GPs' offices, libraries etc. Decide which ones will have the most impact depending on your budget for the event.

You may also wish to use the media to publicise the event. See section three for more detail on working with the press and media.

MP and VIP visits

We regularly offer MPs project visits so that they can see the difference our work is having in their constituency. Please contact us if you would like your MP to visit your project – our Head of Region could accompany them and our regional office will work with you to organise the visit. If you plan to have a launch event you may also wish to invite your local MP or VIP to attend or to officially open the project. Again, we can assist with this.

3. Press and media (the newsy bit)

Using the media - local TV and radio, local and national magazines, national, regional and local newspapers, newsletters, and websites - is a great way to promote your project (and any events you might be holding). They can reach a large audience in a short time, which is why it is important you provide them with clear and accurate information.

BIG's press office is available to support your press work. You will find contact details at the end of this document.

Plan what you want to do

Before you start, think about your objectives: What do you want to achieve? What is the audience you want to reach? What are your key messages?

Timing is important. You may want to get publicity in weekly, evening and daily papers, so be aware of the days and times they are published and their editorial deadlines.

Involve people

Share ideas for publicity with members of your group and encourage their input.

If you plan to invite journalists to visit your building, ask members of your group if they want to get involved by having their photograph taken or being interviewed.

It is important that anyone who is going to be photographed has signed a photography consent form. We have put one on our website for you to download www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/grantholders

Press releases and spokespeople

To publicise your project or event you will probably need to write a press release, organise interviews with people from your project and invite the media to your event. It is a good idea to nominate a spokesperson or spokespeople who will be available to speak to the press and are willing to do radio and TV interviews. Our press office is available to provide help and support - you will find contact details at the end of this document.

Do you need to set an embargo date for the press release? An embargo means that the information cannot be made public before the specified time and date on the press release. Using embargoes helps because it means the media get the information before the event, enabling them to plan.

Before you send a press release, ask someone to check it for spelling mistakes and factual accuracy. Especially check that relevant times, dates and locations are included.

Targeting your press release / visit invite

Check media contact details and find out who you should send your press release to, for example, the news desk, news editor or a specific reporter.

Follow up your press release with a phone call to see if the newspaper will be sending someone to your event and if they are going to send a photographer. Be there to meet the press and introduce them to key people from the project.

Make sure that you have given the journalist key messages about your project.

It's useful to monitor the coverage you receive to gauge what did and didn't work.

4. Printed materials (the promotional bit)

To publicise an event or raise awareness of your project and activities it's helpful to produce some printed materials, such as a flyer, poster, newsletter, letter or leaflet.

When designing printed materials to promote your project ask yourself who your audience is and what you want them to know/do.

Make your promotional materials interesting and informative - something your readers will relate to. You should also consider how it will be distributed. This will vary depending on the audience but you may want to ask your local supermarket, shops, library, council offices, recreation centres and health centres if they would also be prepared to display posters and leaflets for you. This is an excellent way to keep local people informed of your project and to generate interest.

Please refer to the earlier section on 'Acknowledging your grant – branding and logos' for information on how to correctly brand your materials.

5. Social media (the wider engagement bit)

Social media refers to the tools people use to publish, converse and share content online. This includes blogs, podcasts, social bookmarking, social networks and online videos. There are a huge number of social networking sites, but the most popular are: facebook, Twitter, Flickr and YouTube.

Social networking sites are places where users can create a profile of themselves or their organisation, and socialise with their network of friends and contacts using a range of tools, such as writing on each other's walls, adding friends, posting videos, writing notes/blogs, adding images, creating groups and organising events.

Joining a social networking website or using existing sites you are connected to, such as Twitter or facebook, is a good way to share information and publicise your project. And best of all it is free! Social networking websites can help you to:

- find effective methods of involving your local community in your project
- share best practice, information and ideas with other projects
- get support on issues relevant to managing projects
- promote your project to a wider audience and generate publicity
- promote events and activities at your project.

We recommend that you set up a facebook page so you can use the account to search for other groups/pages/people with similar interests and projects or possibly event local community pages. By searching on Google you can also find other groups in the area that might be interested in using your community asset.

For most social networking sites you won't need specialist IT knowledge to use and create a space for your project. However it is important

6. Case studies (the sharing best practice bit)

to keep the space up to date, informative and accurate or people will stop visiting it.

Upload relevant photographs that will engage people and help them to visualise what your project is trying to achieve, and who it is serving. If your photographs feature members of the public make sure that they have given their permission for them to be published first. You can download a photo consent form from the grant holder section of our website (www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/grantholders).

Set up your own blog to grab people's attention and capture interest in your project, or include a progress diary covering key dates etc. If you do decide to create a blog or other form of social networking remember to update it regularly and try to include open-ended questions to encourage feedback and discussion. The following website can help you create a free blog <http://wordpress.com/>

We are also very keen to hear about any good case studies you have that can help publicise the great work you are doing with Community Assets funding.

Case studies can be particularly powerful in showing the benefits that your community asset is bringing to the wider community.

It doesn't matter if these case studies haven't been written up – you can just pick up the phone and let us know. If we think you have an outstanding story to tell we may be able to work with you to promote it in the local and national media.

Regional e-bulletins

Other ways we can help you to publicise your work include regional e-bulletins, which we send out to the thousands of people who are interested in our work to let them know about our work in the regions. So we can promote your building to a wider audience in your region. If this is something you are interested in let us know.

7. Help and support from BIG Fund

We're here to help you celebrate the success and impact that your building is having in your community. Please get in touch with the Big Lottery Fund press office about any announcements, key achievements or press events you have coming up. This could be anything from your project opening, visits from VIPs, ministerial or MP visits, the launch of a new service from your community asset or a milestone marking the amount of people you've had through the door. It doesn't matter if details or dates haven't been finalised, but the more information we have the better we will be able to see what opportunities there might be for publicising your project in the press.

BIG Fund contact details:

Press office: 020 7211 1888

PressCommunityAssets@biglotteryfund.org.uk

Press office out-of-hours mobile, for media enquiries only: 07867 500 572

Branding: 020 7211 1728

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