New fund empowering the people of Barrow

Tuesday 11 August, 2026

An exciting new fund created by local people, for local people in Barrow to support community projects and help those in need is now open for applications.

Throughout July, more than 20 local residents who volunteered to join a community panel have been taking part in workshops to decide how they would like £85,000 of grant funding to be spent. They have created a fund which aims to bring people together, strengthen communities, create opportunities for local residents, and support community-led ideas that deliver lasting benefits.

This is the second year where residents have had the chance to drive the participatory element of the Barrow Social Impact Fund, provided by Team Barrow and managed by Cumbria Community Foundation.

This year's community panel has named the fund the **Barrow Helping Barrow Fund**, and decided that it will support projects in the town that do one of the following:

- **Bring people together** by reducing isolation and creating opportunities for people of different ages and backgrounds to connect.
- **Make better use of community spaces** by increasing access to local venues, facilities and green spaces, and encouraging activities that strengthen community participation.
- **Create opportunities for young people aged 14 to 18** through activities designed with young people that build skills, confidence, aspirations and connections.
- **Build stronger communities through volunteering** by creating opportunities for local people to contribute, develop new skills and support community life.
- **Encourage new ideas and community-led solutions** that respond to local needs, support emerging groups, and deliver sustainable, long-term benefits.
- **Support older people** through practical assistance, social opportunities and meaningful activities that complement existing services.

Members of the community panel have also helped design the application process, with an emphasis on making it as accessible as possible.

Application forms are in easy-read format, and there will be several 'meet the fund' sessions in Barrow and online for anyone thinking of applying.

Annalee Holliday, Head of Grants Practice and Programmes at Cumbria Community Foundation, said: "It has been fantastic working with the community panel in Barrow, who have brought real-life experience and local insight to the table. Their involvement has ensured that funding decisions are shaped by the people who know the community best, helping to target support where it will have the greatest impact.

"Thank you so much to all of the volunteers who gave up their time to create the Barrow Helping Barrow Fund, and of course to Team Barrow's Barrow Social Impact Fund for providing the funding.

"I encourage anyone thinking of applying to come along to one of the 'meet the fund' events where panel members – local residents who helped shaped the fund – will be available to answer questions and support with applications."

Nat Wealleans-Turner, Community and Social Impact Lead for Team Barrow said: "We're delighted to be supporting the Barrow Helping Barrow Fund for a second consecutive year and to continue putting local people at the heart of decisions about how this funding is used.

"I'd like to thank all of the residents who generously volunteered their time, ideas and local knowledge to shape the fund and help decide where support is most needed. Their commitment has created a fund that reflects the priorities of the community and will help support a wide range of worthwhile local causes, strengthening communities, creating opportunities and delivering lasting benefits for people across Barrow."

Members of the community panel said how much they had enjoyed and valued the opportunity to help create the new fund and make decisions about where funding should go locally.

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One said: “I’m taking away the thought that there's so much more I can do to help improve Barrow’s community.”

Another member added: “I have more to contribute than I thought. There are brilliant people in Barrow.”

The ‘meet the fund’ events will take place on:

- Monday 17 August 2026, 10am to 12noon, The Bridge, Barrow
- Friday, 4 September 2026, 1pm to 3pm, The Bridge, Barrow
- Tuesday 15 September 2026, 6pm to 7pm, online

Attendance is optional but encouraged for those seeking help with their application. For further information, email Siona Hartley, Cumbria Community Foundation Grants and Programmes Officer at siona@cumbriafoundation.org.

The fund is open to charitable, not-for-profit organisations based within 10 miles of Barrow with an annual income of less than £200,000 in their most recent financial year.

Grants will normally be for up to £10,000 over one year. Funding may be used for project running costs and equipment. Projects may be one-off events or ongoing but must show a lasting impact. They should be delivered within the Barrow boundary and have involved local people in the design of the project.

More details and the online application portal can be found at:
https://www.cumbriafoundation.org/fund/barrow-helping-barrow-fund/

The deadline for applications is midday on Monday 21 September 2026.

The community panel will meet in October to decide which projects will be awarded funding. Grants will be expected to be spent by May 2027.

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