

Getting started

Want to raise small amounts of money or raffle prizes for Christmas Parties, Fun Days, outings & other small projects?

This information sheet aims to help you get started with applying to local businesses for small amounts of money, raffle prizes and gifts.

Some general advice and things to think about

- Use your local connections
- Shops are more likely to give to people they know. Companies often have staff volunteering projects, and are much more likely to support a community group if it is recommended by a member of staff. Don't be shy about using any connections you have.
- If you are approaching local shops it is worth going in person, especially if they know you. Take a letter saying what you want, printed on your organisation's headed notepaper so you can give this to them to back up your request.
- Try your local businesses
- Most companies like to support groups in their immediate area. Also try your local pub and shops, and look through the yellow pages to see what other companies are operating in your area.
- Some big companies have established donation programmes. Small businesses, where the manager is on site and has the power to make decisions, are most likely to make a decision on the spot if you drop in.
- Cafes and restaurants are worth asking for 'free meal' vouchers as raffle prizes.

When you apply:

- Write on headed notepaper
- Keep your initial letter to one side of A4 if possible. Make sure you give details of what you want the money for, how much you need and who it will benefit
- Always credit any donation in publicity
- Always write and thank donors afterwards, and send a brief report of the event.



Sample letters

Sample Letter 1

Dear Sir or Madam

Family Fun Day

I am writing to ask for your support for our Family Fun Day, a great local event which has been running for many years.

Fun Day 2005 will have activities for every age and every taste, and enough going on for a whole days outing. The bouncy castle, pony rides, face painting, clowns and fairground rides always delight the kids, while the line dancing and bands are enjoyed by everyone. In the arena you can watch gymnastic displays and see birds of prey go through their paces, or you could try your luck at one of the stalls and hunt down a bargain at the car boot sale.

The event involves the whole community. Local groups can raise money, and the school dance groups and choirs put on performances in the arena.

The Fun Day would not happen without the energy and enthusiasm of the local people who organise it. Unfortunately, enthusiasm in itself is not enough, and the Fun Day costs a considerable amount to put on. Around £6,500 has to be raised to cover expenses, which include publicity, insurance, entertainers and bands.

The Fun Day could not continue without the support of the local Council and those businesses and individuals who have contributed generously over the years. I am writing to ask if you would be able to make a donation towards the 2005 Fun Day. Your contribution will be very much appreciated, and acknowledged in our publicity and the Fun Day programme.

If you would like to talk more about the Family Fun Day and how you could help, please feel free to give me a ring on (put your telephone number in here)

Yours sincerely

Sample Letter 2

Dear

Christmas Party

I am writing to ask if you would be able to make a donation towards our Christmas Party. We are expecting around 80 people to attend this event, which was hugely popular when we ran it for the first time last year. We provide a 3-course Christmas dinner, entertainment and a free raffle. We are involving our local primary school, and hope to have the school choir singing Christmas carols. A local group will do an acrobatic display and there will be a pianist to serenade the guests.

Many of the people who come to the party are Senior Citizens who live on their own and have to survive on very low incomes. Our Christmas Party gives them the chance to join in the festive season, and is an important community event.

A lot of time and effort is put into the Christmas party by members of the Residents Association, who do all the preparation, organisation and cooking. We work hard to make it a successful community event, but we can only achieve this if we are given crucial support by local businesses like yourself. The total organisation of the Party costs us £XXX. Any contribution you can make towards these costs, however small, is much appreciated. We are also looking for gifts for the raffle, decorations for the hall, contributions of food, and all sorts of other things.

Everyone who has supported the party will be credited on the day, and in any publicity. If you think you can help, either with a cash donation or a gift, please contact me at xxxxxxx, or send a cheque, made payable to xxxxxxxx to the above address.

Thank you for your support,

Yours sincerely

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The Green
Dormanstown
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