



**ABERGAVENNY TOWN COUNCIL**  
**COMMUNITY SMALL GRANT SCHEME**  
**APPLICATION FORM 2020/21**

This application form is to be used to submit an application to Abergaenny Town Council Community Small Grant Scheme. Please read the guidance notes carefully before completing the form.

Completed forms to be returned to [Clerk@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:Clerk@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk) or by post to Town Clerk, Town Hall, Cross Street, Abergaenny, NP7 5HD.

**Section 1 – Contact information**

a. Group Name	Friends of Castle Meadows Abergaenny (The Friends)
b. Contact Name	Anthea Fairey
c. Contact Address	12 Park Crescent
	Abergaenny, Monmouthshire,
	Postcode NP7 5TH
d. Contact email	a.fairey12@gmail.com
e. Position in Group	Chairperson
f. Contact tel no	07969634596

g. Bank Account  
Details

Name of your organisation's bank account :  
Friends of Castle Meadows  
HSBC Sort Code: 40-08-04  
Acc No: 71507958  
2 Frogmore Street Abergavenny NP7 5AF  
Friends of Castle Meadows

## Section 2 – Tell Us About Your Group

a. Briefly tells us about the activities that your organisation/group undertakes

Our organisation works with Monmouthshire County Council to:

- to increase, restore and enhance the bio-diversity of the Meadows;
- to support and enable access to the green space;
- to develop the Meadows as an educational and recreational opportunity for all;
- to support and enable walking and cycling routes across the green space.

During the past six years we have:

- achieved 5 Green Flag Awards;
- taken part in a Bio-blitz;
- set up Young Friends Groups with three local primary schools
- worked with the local Rainbows, Brownies and Scouts groups,
- taken part in OPAL Citizen Science Surveys,
- restored a derelict copse,
- planted a hundred trees to commemorate 100 years since the end of WW,
- commissioned a stone memorial to recognise those who have died as a result of conflict,
- restored an ephemeral pond, creating a diverse range of habitats with the addition of pre-planted coir rolls of native marginal species,
- dredged the reens
- taken part in planting for the 'Welsh Long Forest' project sponsored by Keep Wales Tidy
- created a wet woodland area,
- helped with the control of non-native invasive species (NNIS)
- organised a series of walks and talks for the general public
- organised sessions to compliment areas within the Key Stage Programme of Study for local primary schools,
- supported High School students with Advanced Welsh Bacculaureate Community Skills tasks,
- The Friends were actively involved with the commissioning of a monument to commemorate the Welsh National Eisteddfod 2016 which took place on Castle Meadows
- We liaise closely with other volunteer groups within the area as listed on our web-site: [friendsofcastlemeadowswordpress.com](http://friendsofcastlemeadowswordpress.com)

b. Charity Details (if applicable)	Charity Number N/A
i.VAT Registered?	No

### Section 3. Tell Us About The Community Project/Activity You Want To Undertake

a. Which objective does this project mainly contribute towards (**please tick one**):

- Giving Children and Young People the best possible start in life
- Support for community wellbeing inc. volunteering and active citizenship
- Supporting an economically thriving community
- Protecting and enhancing our natural environment

b. Please give more detail on how your project will meet the objective you selected above.

'No one will protect what they don't care about; no one will care about what they have never experienced.' Sir David Attenborough

Our proposed project involves the creation of a pond dipping rail, pond dipping platform and an all-weather-path running in an East/West direction from the small wooden bridge over the reed, which approaches the edge of the restored pond, where there will be a fixed dipping rail. The path will be wide enough to accommodate mobility scooters and the dipping area will be level enabling those with limited mobility, as well as able bodied to take part in pond dipping. Currently the pond dipping areas become muddy with use which is damaging the margins of the pond. Not having an all-weather path does not make this an inclusive activity.

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 makes it incumbent on public authorities to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote the resilience of ecosystems. Our work on the pond to maintain a more constant volume of water, together with the installation of pre-planted coir rolls has already resulted in an improvement in biodiversity'. The Castle Meadows pond is now included on the National Database for British Dragonflies. The construction of the dipping area is the next phase of the reclamation project. With a purpose built dipping area it will be possible to carry out the necessary monitoring which shows that we are complying with the legislation.

Friends of Castle Meadows has applied to the following organisations for funding for this project but has been unsuccessful as it has not met the very precise criteria. For example the British Ecological Society rejected the project for not being scientific

enough. The application to the Tudor Trust was rejected for not being holistic enough.

It is our belief that all individuals should be able to take part in pond dipping and contribute to the collection of biotic and abiotic data. Exposing children and adults to aquatic life in a pond enables them to experience the diversity of living organisms first hand and begin to understand why they must be conserved. We have experienced first-hand the enthusiasm, awe and wonder of groups as they explore this environment.

c. Total Project Cost

£1,500

d. How much are you applying for from Abergavenny Town Council?

£1,000

e. Have you raised the balance of funds?  
(25% of the total project costs should come from other sources)

£500 from existing funds

f. Please specify how you will use the Town Council grant?

Materials for the construction of the path; the dipping area and the dipping rail/dipping platform. (In accordance with current Monmouthshire Health and Safety policies). This project funded by the Town Council would contribute towards the Town Council's duty to protect, enhance and promote biodiversity and resilience.

g. How will your project benefit the community of Abergavenny?

One of the aims of The Friends is: 'to develop the Meadows as an educational and recreational opportunity for all.' By encouraging participation in the walks and talks programme – which includes pond dipping – residents of Abergavenny will be able to engage with aquatic habitats. The new path will encourage more people to explore the pond margin.

The photographs below capture the interest and excitement of children engaged in pond dipping in the Meadows (see Friends website). The steep and uneven bank, which is frequently muddy, means that the area is not accessible to the less physically able. The construction of an all-weather dipping area, will open up this part of the Meadows to a greater number of individuals in the Abergavenny community. It will also offer the physically less able the opportunity to take an active part in pond dipping. An enhanced area such as this can also help the more marginalised in our community by creating activities that improve their motivation and self-esteem.



It has been shown in a University College London (UCL) report ('Nature Nurtures Children' Nov 2019) - one of the largest studies into the effects of outdoor activities on children's wellbeing and views about nature - that taking part in outdoor activity and connecting with nature 'improves well-being, motivation and confidence.'

Key findings:

After participating in supervised outdoor activities in nature: *f*

- Children showed an overall increase in their personal wellbeing and health, with the greatest improvement being in those who initially reported low levels *f*
- Children showed an overall increase in nature connection over time *f*
- Children demonstrated high enjoyment levels, and were motivated and engaged *f*
- Children showed an overall increase in pro-environmental values. These values were expressed as support for the protection of plants, animals and the environment, recycling, and reduction in energy and water use.



A further study by the University of Essex explored the beneficial effects of nature on adults. To include:

- an improvement in psychological and social well-being
- reduction in stress and anxiety
- increased positive mood, resilience and self esteem

The report concluded that: 'the benefits to well-being are demonstrated not only through contact with nature, and participation in nature based activities, but also through simply viewing natural scenes.' By encouraging residents to visit the Meadows we are creating opportunities to improve health and well-being.

A dipping area would raise the profile of the pond area in the Meadows. Ponds are a priority habitat for the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. Currently the pond is an underdeveloped resource. The Friends have recently undertaken works to improve

the pond. After creating a dipping area, our next project is the creation of a bi-lingual interpretation panel commissioned within the community of Abergavenny explaining the importance of the habitat. (Over half a million ponds in Britain have been lost in the last 100 years – 80% of the remaining ponds are considered to be of poor or very poor quality). Thanks to the reclamation project we still have our pond and it is thriving! The diversity of aquatic wildlife to be found in our pond is amazing.

We share the sentiments expressed by the UCL study: ‘that everyone should have the opportunity to experience the joy of wildlife in daily life.’ This is a unique opportunity to showcase the achievements of Abergavenny as we work together to conserve the pond in the unique flood-plain meadow habitat.

h. If your project involves working with young people does your organisation have a safeguarding policy?

Yes	No
✓	

i. When will your project start and finish?

Start date

February 2021

Completion date

March 2021

j. Are there any outstanding permissions i.e. planning permission required before this project can start? If so, please list together with expected dates when permission will be granted

Permission from Monmouthshire County Council has already been obtained.

#### Section 4

This application is to be signed by a person holding a position in the organisation applying for the grant. Before submitting the application please ensure that you have all the additional information as set out in the guidance.

Signed

*Anthony J. Fairley*

On behalf of  
(name of group)  
Date

The Friends of Castle Meadows Abergavenny

27<sup>th</sup> November 2020