



Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) Guidance for Applicants

In response to the impact of local and national restrictions on footfall and business demand, the Government has provided a new grant for businesses to complement the Local Restrictions Support Grant (Open) and (Closed) Addendum schemes.

Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG).

Limited funding for the ARG has been provided to Northumberland County Council as a one-off lump sum payment from the Government for the current financial year 2020/21 and 2021/22.

Although the Council has discretion in the allocation of the ARG, the total funds are limited and so criteria must be set to ensure consistency in the allocation of these finite financial resources provided to the Council by Government.

To ensure more businesses can be supported from the Local Restriction Support Grant (Open) and the Local Restriction Support Grant (Closed) Addendum, Northumberland County Council will provide financial support at this critical time to certain business that would not otherwise be eligible for financial support under the Local Restrictions Support Grant (Open) and Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) Addendum.

Unfortunately, the Council will not be able to extend support to all businesses in the County, given the financial constraints, but we are aiming to deliver this scheme as quickly as possible to those businesses within the criteria set out below.

This ARG scheme will run from 30 November 2020 to midnight 13 December 2020.

There will be a review point to determine resource levels, demand for the funds and clarity on the Government's arrangements for the period following national restrictions, currently set to be 2 December 2020.

*with the exception of registered B&Bs

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The Council reserves the right to close or vary the terms of this ARG scheme at any time, and without notice, should it be necessary to do so.

Please note there is no appeal process, but applicants whose applications are rejected may request a review. The review will be carried out by an officer who was not involved in the original decision. The decision of the review is final. Details about how to request a review will be provided to every applicant whose application is rejected.

Scope of the ARG

There are two elements to the ARG scheme:

- 1. ARG Open** – The scheme covers the period of local and national restrictions (18 September 2020 – 2 December 2020) and provides funding to the following:
 - Public-facing businesses in the hospitality, hotel, registered bed and breakfast and leisure sectors which have remained open during local restrictions (18 September 2020 – 4 November 2020) but have been severely affected, which **do not have a Rateable Value (RV,) but have non-residential* fixed property costs of over £200 per month.**
 - Businesses directly supplying businesses in the hospitality, hotel, bed and breakfast and leisure sectors which remained open but have been severely impacted during local and national restrictions (18 September 2020 – 2 December 2020).
- 2. ARG Closed** – The scheme covers the period of national restrictions (5 November 2020 – 2 December 2020) and provides funding to the following:
 - Public-facing businesses in the hospitality, hotel, bed and breakfast, non-essential retail, personal care facilities, entertainment and tourism venues, leisure and sports facilities which have been required to close due to Covid19 legislation during the national restrictions, ([please see link for full list of businesses](#)), which do not have a Rateable Value (RV,) but have non-residential* fixed property costs of over £200 per month.

1. ARG Open

Who can apply?

This element is aimed at businesses operating in the hospitality, hotel, registered bed and breakfast and leisure sectors and is designed to increase the scope of the LRSG Open scheme by ensuring support is available for eligible businesses who have remained open but have been severely impacted by local and national restrictions and

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- don't have a rateable value but still incur non-residential* fixed property costs of over £200 per month
or
- directly supply businesses in the hospitality, hotel, bed and breakfast and leisure sectors and incur non-residential* fixed property costs of over £200 per month.

Businesses must satisfy all of the following criteria:

- Be located in and operating within Northumberland;
- Not be classed as "home-based" (with the exception of registered B&Bs);
- Demonstrate a minimum of £200 per month (£2,400 per annum) non-residential* fixed property costs;
- Demonstrate they were severely impacted by local and / or national restrictions;
- Demonstrate they were trading on 18 September 2020;
- Were not legally required to close between 18 September 2020 and 4 November 2020;
- Not be eligible for a grant under the Local Restrictions Support Grant (Open) or the Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) Addendum
- For businesses in the hospitality, hotel, bed and breakfast and leisure sectors they must have been:
 - Providing services in person to customers from the premises;
 - Occupying non-residential* business premises without a Rateable Value.
 - Businesses that were in administration, are insolvent or where a striking-off notice has been made are not eligible for funding under this scheme.
 - Businesses that, were they to receive grant payments under this scheme, breach State Aid rules are not eligible for funding under this scheme.

Grant Awards

Indicative grant levels are as follows, per 28-day period:

Rateable Value (Or RV Proxy)	Grant
£15,000 and under	£934
Above £15,000 – under £51,000	£1,400
£51,000 and above	£2,100

The level of grant funding available to an eligible business will be calculated based on:

- the business' Rateable Value (RV) or, if it has no RV the RV Proxy**, and

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- the relevant Period for which the ARG application is made.

To ensure the grant can be received by as many businesses as possible, registered B&Bs will receive the grant level for RV Proxy** below £15k.

The above grant levels are indicative and subject to change. If the scheme is oversubscribed grant levels will be reduced proportionately to support all eligible applications received within the timeframe.

Application Process

This ARG funding scheme must be applied for by means of an online application form, available on Northumberland County Council's website, [which can be accessed here](#).

The online form guides businesses through the application process and prompts applicants for the information required, as well any supporting documents needed (see 'Evidence to support application' below).

All applicants will be required to demonstrate their business income has been "severely impacted" by Local Covid Alert Level (LCAL) 2 or national Covid19 restrictions as part of the application process. The applicant must make a declaration regarding this, which can be substantiated with evidence. The Council may write to ask for additional supporting documentation where necessary.

Queries regarding this scheme can be addressed to the County Council at the following dedicated email address: covidgrants@northumberland.gov.uk

Businesses can submit an application for each eligible business property that they operate from within Northumberland. Each property requires a separate application. Some businesses may, therefore, receive more than one grant payment. A successful application for one property does not guarantee the same business a successful application for any additional properties. State Aid rules will apply to single and multiple applications.

Evidence Required to Support the Application

Businesses are required to submit the following evidence to support their application:

All businesses:

- The address of the property from which they operate.
- Bank statement to prove business was operating on relevant dates.

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- Narrative of how they have been “severely impacted” by LCAL 2 and / or national restrictions due to COVID-19.

Businesses with an RV

- The business rates reference number.

Suppliers will be asked to supply evidence of supplying directly with hospitality, accommodation and leisure businesses, e.g. a current or recent contract or invoice.

Businesses without an RV

- Current legible copy of signed premises’ lease, licence or other formal rental agreement, or commercial mortgage (RV Proxy) clearly showing the rental cost.
- Current legible copy of one of the following:
 - premises insurance
 - fire certificate
 - registration with regulatory services (e.g. Northumberland County Council for all Food businesses)
- Registered B&Bs a Council tax reference number.

This will be part of the online application process.

Northumberland County Council may require additional evidence to the above.

2. ARG Closed

Who can apply?

This scheme is aimed at businesses who have been required to close under national Covid19 restrictions during the period 5 November 2020 – 2 December 2020. This includes public-facing businesses in the hospitality, hotel, bed and breakfast and leisure sectors, as well as non-essential retail, personal care facilities, entertainment and tourism venues, leisure and sports facilities, **which do not have a Rateable Value (RV,) but have non-residential* fixed property costs of over £200 per month.**

A full list of what businesses are included can be found at the following link <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-national-restrictions-from-5-november#businesses-and-venues>

Businesses must satisfy all of the following criteria:

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- Providing services in person to customers from the premises;
- In the non-essential retail, hospitality, hotel, bed and breakfast, leisure sectors, personal care facilities, entertainment and tourism venues, sports facilities, community facilities;
- Demonstrate they were trading on 4 November 2020;
- Were required to close on 5 November 2020.
- Occupying non-residential* business premises without a Rateable Value
- Be located in and operating within Northumberland
- Not be classed as "home-based" (with the exception of registered B&Bs)
- Demonstrate a minimum of £200 per month (£2,400 per annum) non-residential* fixed property costs.
- Not be eligible for a grant under the Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) Addendum.
- Businesses that were in administration, are insolvent or where a striking-off notice has been made are not eligible for funding under this scheme.
- Businesses that, were they to receive grant payments under this scheme, breach State Aid rules are not eligible for funding under this scheme.

Grant Awards

Indicative grant levels are as follows, per 28-day period:

RV Proxy**	Grant
£15,000 and under	£1,134
Above £15,000 – under £51,000	£2,000
£51,000 and above	£3,000

The level of grant funding available to an eligible business will be calculated based on:

- the business' RV Proxy**, and
- the relevant Period for which the ARG application is made

To ensure the grant can be received by as many businesses as possible, registered B&Bs will receive the grant level for RV Proxy** below £15k.

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Evidence Required to Support the Application

Businesses are required to submit the following evidence to support their application:

- The address of the property from which they operate.
- Bank statement to prove business was operating on relevant dates.
- Current legible copy of signed premises' lease, licence or other formal rental agreement, or commercial mortgage (RV Proxy) clearly showing the rental cost.
- Current legible copy of one of the following:
 - premises insurance
 - fire certificate
 - registration with regulatory services (e.g. Northumberland County Council for all Food businesses)
- Registered B&Bs a Council tax reference number.

This will be part of the online application process.

Northumberland County Council may require additional evidence to the above.

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Variation to the fund

The Council reserves the right to close or vary the terms of the schemes at any time, and without notice, should it be necessary to do so.

If the fund is oversubscribed with the applications received, the Council reserves the right to amend the grant levels.

Appeals

There is no appeal process. Applicants whose applications are rejected may request a review. The review will be carried out by an officer who was not involved in the original decision. The decision of the review is final. Details about how to request a review will be provided to every applicant whose application is rejected.

Managing the risk of fraud

Neither the Government nor Northumberland County Council will accept deliberate manipulation and fraud - and any business caught falsifying their records to gain grant money will face prosecution and any funding issued will be subject to claw back, as may any grants paid in error.

It is important that applicants ensure that they provide accurate bank details for grant payments and that these relate to the business concerned.

Definitions Guidance

Directly Supplying means providing services for which an invoice would be issued to the business being supplied.

Home based – ‘home based’ businesses are not eligible for this fund and eligibility requires the demonstration of fixed non-residential* property costs of at least £200 per month (with the exception of registered B&Bs).

Public-facing means a business that primarily interacts directly with public customers / consumers.

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Severely impacted means a negative financial impact to the net income of a business.

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