

QAVS Eligibility Criteria for 2023 Round

NB: The criteria have not changed, but the text has been updated to explain them more clearly.

QAVS awards are intended for groups that are led by volunteers and provide a benefit for local communities.

The group **must**:

- be made up of three or more people
- be based in the UK, Channel Islands or the Isle of Man
- have been in operation for at least three years before nomination
- have over half its volunteers eligible to reside in the UK
- be led by volunteers, not by paid staff; over half its members should be volunteers
- provide a specific and direct benefit to the local community

The group **must not**:

- have been nominated for a QAVS award in the past 3 years
- have already received a QAVS award
- operate as a national organisation, as QAVS is aimed at local volunteer groups.
- have fundraising or grant-making as its primary focus
- be based within or in support of a public service, unless they have a separate identity from the public service organisation.
- operate solely for the benefit of animals, unless it can demonstrate that its work provides significant other benefits to the local community (for example, therapy pets).

Additional Guidance:

Specific and direct local benefit

Groups must provide direct benefits to a community through their work, for example, directly supporting disabled people. Groups will be considered ineligible where their sole purpose is to support one or more other groups that provide these direct benefits. This is why fundraising and grant-giving organisations are specifically excluded as listed above.

However, groups that raise funds might be considered if their activities have a significant beneficial impact on the wider community beyond fundraising (for example, by hosting a major event or providing a significant local service).

National organisations

A group can be nominated if it is a branch of, or affiliated to, a larger regional or national organisation. However, it will be expected to have initiated and developed a distinctive approach locally and be able to show a high degree of autonomy and self-determination (for example, a local scout group).

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Groups supporting a public service

Groups based within or in support of a public service (such as a hospital, police force or school) are eligible, but you will need to be able to demonstrate that:

- the group has a separate identity from the statutory organisation and is clearly under the leadership of volunteers, rather than simply following instructions from paid staff in the organisation
- the group is an established, long-term volunteer group with its own unique identity and a governance structure, rather than being part of a wider scheme or a school-led volunteering initiative