



Community Grants Funding Policy

Bridgwater Town Council

January 2026

Community Grant Funding Policy

Each year, Bridgwater Town Council allocates funds to support organisations, clubs, societies, and groups that help to build a sustainable community and economy for Bridgwater residents.

The Council recognises the significant contributions of local non-profit organisations, which provide essential services to the Bridgwater community. These organisations often address unmet needs and enhance the cultural, social, and environmental fabric of the area. This community grant scheme has been established to recognise and support these organisations and enable them to continue delivering their valuable services. In awarding grants, the Town Council ensures that public funds are managed responsibly.

There are three types of Community Grants awarded by the Bridgwater Town Council;

1. **Venue Grants** – the Council gives grants to specific community venues of up to £20,000.
2. **Project Grants** – one-off grants of up to £2,500 available for community groups to support specific projects.
3. **Youth Led Grants:** one-off grants of up to £500 available for initiatives led by young people to benefit young people.

Venue Grants are awarded selectively to organisations permanently based in Bridgwater. The Bridgwater Town Council offers financial assistance to established charities and non-profit Community Interest Companies (CICs) located within the town to support their operational costs.

To qualify, organisations must demonstrate how they address local needs and provide valuable, non-statutory services and activities that would otherwise be unavailable. Recipients of Venue Grants will enter into a Service Level Agreement (SLA), which outlines their commitment to a co-operative relationship with the Council. The SLA will be valid for three years; however, applicants will be required to reapply annually to maintain their funding.

For more information on Venue Grants or to submit an Expression of Interest, please contact Fundraising Officer, Helen Astill at helen.astill@bridgwater-tc.gov.uk.

Sponsorship

In special circumstances, the Town Council can choose to sponsor individuals or support events that fall outside of the usual grant criteria. The objective of this sponsorship is to contribute to the benefit of the community and residents of Bridgwater and the surrounding area by supporting free-entry events. Additionally, the Town Council champions local talent and welcomes applications for sponsorship from individuals (aged 11 – 24), such as talented young athletes, who can demonstrate exceptional achievement in their sport.

Furthermore, the council actively supports local groups and associations through their sponsorship fund.

How to apply

All grant or sponsorship applications must be made **online** using the appropriate form (found here). If it is not possible for applicants to complete the online form a printable version is available (here). Printed forms must be submitted by post to the Fundraising Officer with the requisite supporting documents. Incomplete applications will be returned for completion. Please bear in mind that applications will be reviewed shortly before issuing the meeting agenda, so any delay caused by incomplete forms may mean that the application will not be considered until the following meeting.

Grant and sponsorship applications are reviewed twice a year at the Grants sub-Committee meeting (dates in table below). Applicants must be available to attend and present, or answer questions about their grant application during the scheduled Grants sub-Committee meeting.

Project Grants have a budget of £16,000 per year, £8,000 each round. The application window for Youth Led Grants, Venue Grants and Sponsorship will close once their yearly budget has been awarded.

If you prefer to answer any of the grant application questions with a short video instead of a written response, or if you wish to include images or a film to support any of your answers, please send them (labelled and with their corresponding question number) to the Fundraising Officer – Helen Astill, helen.astill@bridgwater-tc.gov.uk.

Timetable for Community Grant Scheme 2025 – 2026.

Application Deadline	Grants Sub-Committee Date	Budget
20 May 2026	17 June 2026	Project Grants - £8,000 (16k Total) Youth Led Grants - £5,000 (yearly) Venue Grants - £73,800 (Re-opens April 2028) Sponsorship - £13,600 (yearly)
11 November 2026	9 December 2026	Project Grants - £8,000 (16k Total) Youth Led Grants - £5,000 (yearly) Venue Grants - £73,800 (Re-opens April 2028) Sponsorship - £13,600 (yearly)

Basic requirements

All grants are restricted to voluntary or non-profit making organisations that can demonstrate that the funding will:

1. deliver a viable project or service
2. mainly benefit residents of the Parish of Bridgwater
3. meet at least one of the following **identified priorities**:

1. Economic Growth	2. Cultural Enrichment	3. Community Wellbeing	4. Sustainable Future	5. Embracing Diversity
Foster collaboration with partners, stakeholders, and the community to drive economic growth and development.	Highlight Bridgwater as a vibrant, culturally rich town and celebrate its history and heritage.	Enhance Bridgwater's green spaces or establish new wellness initiatives. Help cultivate a healthier and happier community.	Implement ambitious green initiatives to improve the town's quality of life and safeguard its future.	Create inclusive environments that nurture a strong sense of community, ensuring Bridgwater remains a lively and diverse place to live and work.
<i>E.g. Monthly markets, craft shows and festivals.</i>	<i>E.g. Exhibitions, theatre groups and pop-up activities.</i>	<i>E.g. Sports clubs, Mother and Baby groups and healthy eating clubs.</i>	<i>E.g. A solar panel scheme for your village hall or community building.</i>	<i>E.g. Hosting an event that brings together various communities to celebrate and share their unique cultures.</i>

Successful applicants will be required to:

- acknowledge receipt of the grant;
- acknowledge Bridgwater Town Council's support in any publicity material;
- complete a Grant Monitoring Form within 12 months of the award date to demonstrate how the grant was spent; and
- make an oral report to the next available Bridgwater Town Assembly Meeting.

The town council will look favourably upon applicants who are actively seeking funding for their projects from other grant providers, in addition to the Bridgwater Town Council.

Eligibility criteria

Project Grants

Applications for one-off project grants of no more than £2,500 per annum are welcome from organisations, clubs, societies or groups that can provide:

- Details of your organisation's bank account;
- A copy of your constitution;
- A copy of your certified audited accounts for the last two years. In the case of smaller organisations, income and expenditure statements for the last two years certified by a qualified accountant may be submitted instead. Where such statements have not been certified, they must be signed by two persons from within the organisation who have been appointed to act as auditors;

- Providers must have in place appropriate Health and Safety, Safeguarding or Child protection policies;
- A business plan that sets out what activities you have planned over the next three years and how they will be funded; and
- Applicants must provide 10% match funding for their project. Contributions can include volunteer hours or in-kind support.

In special circumstances a larger Project Grant, of up to £8,000, may be considered for significant or exceptional projects.

Successful applicants will be required to acknowledge the Town Council in publicity and attend the Annual Town Meeting.

Youth Led Grants

The aim of the Youth Led Grants is to support youth provision in the town of Bridgwater. These grants are aimed to assist new initiatives led by young people for their peers, or support existing youth for youth providers looking to add value or encourage new and additional projects.

- The target age range is agreed at 11-18;
- The amount of grant per applicant will not normally exceed £500. The Council will except applications of a higher amount for exceptional projects, these will be considered for their individual merit;
- Funding could be available for general running expenses, specific projects, staff, resources, equipment, programmes, residential;
- Providers must have in place appropriate Health and Safety, Safeguarding or Child protection policies;
- Applications promoting religious or party-political beliefs will not be considered;
- Applications must be developed with the involvement of the young people who will benefit from the award;
- Applicants must spend the allocated money within the financial year; and
- An end of funding evaluation report must be submitted within 12 months of the project end date.

Venue Grants

Applications for financial assistance for community venues of no more than £20,000 per annum that can provide:

- Details of your organisation's bank account;
- A copy of your governing document for example, a constitution or memorandum;
- A copy of your certified audited accounts for the last two years;
- Providers must have in place appropriate Health and Safety, Safeguarding or Child protection policies; and
- A business plan that sets out what activities you have planned over the next three years and how they will be funded.

Recipients of Venue Grants will enter into a Service Level Agreement (SLA), which outlines their commitment to a co-operative relationship with Bridgwater Town Council. The SLA will be valid for three years; however, applicants will be required to reapply annually to maintain their funding.

Sponsorship

In special circumstances, the Town Council can choose to sponsor a young person or fund special events that fall outside of the usual grant criteria.

Event Sponsorship

- To be eligible for sponsorship, applicants must provide a detailed description of their event. The event **must be free** to attend, although certain activities during the event can be charged.
- Recipients of event sponsorship will be required to complete a Sponsorship Monitoring Form within 12 months of the award date.
- Sponsorship recipients must acknowledge the Town Council's support in all publications, websites, social media, and advertisements for the event from the moment the sponsorship is awarded.

Sponsorship for Young People

- Be **aged between 11 - 24 years**.
- Applicants must be able to demonstrate exceptional achievement, special talent or significant potential within their area of expertise.
- Successful applicants are required to complete a Sponsorship Monitoring Form to record their progress and successes in the 12 months following the award date, including demonstrating how they have inspired and engaged other young people in their area of expertise.

Sponsorship monies will only be payable to individuals (parent or guardian if under 18) or organisations who can supply details of a recognised bank account.

The Town Council's various grant schemes are unable to support:

- Routine running costs, including salary or administration costs (Venue and Youth Led Grants exempt from this condition);
- Charities operating overseas or established to help persons outside the UK;
- Organisations with a closed or restricted membership;
- Organisations with party political links;
- Projects which discriminate on the grounds of race or religion;
- Applications to cover costs that have already been incurred; and
- Services which should be provided by statutory funding.

Applicants should be aware that:

- All grant aid is subject to Council Officers being satisfied with the accounts and/or financial status of the applicant;
- The Council may attach special conditions to a grant which must be fulfilled before any payment can be made. Grants may be paid in stages over a period of time as a project progresses and evaluation and monitoring procedures take place;
- Applications from organisations with substantial unallocated resources will not be considered a priority for funding;
- Grants must be restricted to the purpose for which they were given;
- Organisations are generally restricted to one application for grant aid during each financial year (1 April to 31 March). However, the Council may consider additional applications during the same financial year if surplus grant funding is available;
- Applications from schools, religious groups etc. will be considered where a clear benefit to the wider community can be demonstrated;
- Applications for grants will be considered by the Community Service Grants Sub-Committee which meets twice a year (dates can be found in the table above). For the application to be considered at the next available meeting all relevant paperwork will need to be submitted to the Fundraising Officer a minimum of 3 weeks prior to that meeting;

- The Council reserves the right to request a copy of quotations and other documentation as evidence of the expenditure that will be incurred. It would therefore be beneficial if quotations could be included as part of your supporting documentation;
- For our own publicity material, the Council may require photos with agreement from participants and may use the name of the organisation and project;
- Recipients of Project or Youth Led Grants will be required to complete a Grants Monitoring Form within 12 months of the award date; and
- Recipients of event or individual sponsorship will be required to complete a Sponsorship Monitoring Form within 12 months of the award date.

For further information regarding any aspect of this policy please contact the Town Council Office:
The Town Hall, High Street, Bridgwater TA6 3AS or Tel: 01278 427692 or email: Fundraising
Officer, Helen Astill - helen.astill@bridgwater-tc.gov.uk