Discretionary Community Grants Policy

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Version 6: 24 September 2020 Crowdfunder criteria relaxed

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# Introduction

East Herts Council will grant aid eligible voluntary and community groups, town and parish councils, faith groups, not-for-profit organisations and individuals for activities that build stronger, more connected, self-reliant communities, leading to improved health and wellbeing outcomes for residents in East Herts.

The council’s Community Wellbeing and Partnerships Team manage this funding programme.

## Corporate context

Grant giving supports the council’s wider corporate priority of Enabling Communities as well as the health and wellbeing outcomes described in the [East Herts Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-23](https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/about-east-herts-0/health-and-wellbeing-strategy-2019-23). For health sources to help with evidencing your application bid, please see “Health and Wellbeing Resources” also on Strategy web page.

## Priorities

The council’s annual priorities for grant giving are listed on Appendix 1. These will be updated each year by councillors to reflect local priorities and county-wide initiatives. Applications must evidence that the grant requested will directly or indirectly support at least one priority identified and publicised each year.

## Eligibility

All applicants must live, or be proposing a project, in the East Herts district area which includes Bishop’s Stortford, Buntingford, Hertford, Sawbridgeworth, Ware and the surrounding villages. If you are unsure if your project is in our area, please contact us.

The council has two grants programmes that from time to time it will release money. The different eligibility criteria are listed in the tables below.

| Small grants between £100 and £300 |
| --- |
| * Individuals and groups without a constitution can apply alongside constituted voluntary organisations and not for profits. * Individuals and groups without a constitution must obtain agreement from an East Herts Councillor (representing the area from which most of beneficiaries will come). This is called a Mentor Statement. * Groups with a constitution must provide written support of an East Herts Councillor (representing the area from which most of the residents who will benefit from the activity come). * Note if the group applying does not have its own bank account the council will accept the offer of a third party to serve as a banker. Individuals must also identified a “banker.” |

| Project grants including delivery and building improvement works (up to £5,000) |
| --- |
| * Only constituted voluntary organisations and not-for-profit organisations can apply. * The body applying is financially viable with its own bank account that requires two unrelated people to authorise payments and make withdrawals. The account must be in the name of the organisation applying. * The body applying has an open door membership policy and provides services that are accessible to people from all backgrounds.  However to promote positive action, this criteria allows organisations who have an occupational requirement to recruit within a protected characteristic to do so, under Schedule 9 exceptions to the Equality Act 2010. * The body applying has good governance in place including a management committee/board of directors that includes at least three unrelated individuals. * The body applying has written endorsement of an East Herts Councillor representing the area from which most of the residents who benefit from the activity come. In cases where an East Herts Councillor is a member of the applying organisation and there is no other ward member, then the East Herts Executive Member for Communities may endorse the application. * The body applying must own the freehold of the land or building, or lease that cannot be ended within five years of completion of works, subject to the proposed works/equipment. * The body applying must demonstrate that the relevant permissions are in place, including planning, if applicable, to complete the works * The project is capable of being completed within a year of grant being awarded. |

### Eligible costs: Grants may be made for:

* Start-up funding including hire costs, publicity materials, travel, and small items of equipment
* Building works and improvements to community assets that result in high quality, accessible sports and community facilities or accessible outdoor spaces
* Large items of equipment, including digital assistive technologies
* Delivery costs of an activity/service (either new or existing) including staff costs.
* Volunteer training or fees to bring in additional expertise to an area

The council will have the discretion to award less than the amount bid for in such cases listed below but not limited to:

* Budget is oversubscribed
* Partial eligibility; a number of beneficiaries outside the district
* Inflated budgets
* Untested idea

### East Herts Council will not provide grants for:

* purchase of medical equipment
* projects that have the sole aim of promoting a particular religion
* organisations with beliefs that are challenging internal departments’ decisions or are contradictory to the council’s core values or whose sole aim is to promote a political belief
* a service that the state is obligated to provide
* land or building where ownership (freehold or eligible lease) is not yet established
* purchase of items on behalf of another
* VAT that can be recovered
* maintenance or minor repair work on buildings or spaces
* general fundraising campaigns
* hardship where an organisation is in a crisis which requires a rapid response
* commercial ventures
* organisations that have received or applied for S106 funding [Section 106 Funding and Expression of Interest](https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/planning-and-building/section-106-agreements-and-funding-projects)
* groups that have received a grant in the previous 24 months or has an existing grant for a project or service which it has not yet completed
* building projects that have already started though we may fund a later stage of a building project that is not dependent on an earlier stage.

**Implementation process**

All requests for funding must be submitted on the council’s application forms and contain all the required documentation. The preferred method of application is via email to [Grants.Admin@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:Grants.Admin@eastherts.gov.uk) . Decisions will be provided eight to 10 weeks after the application deadline. All grants will be paid up front.

### Assessment of applications for Small Grants (up to £300)

The purpose of this grant is to help an individual or group get their idea off the ground. Applications can be submitted at any time whilst funding remains available and a decision provided within three to four weeks. Applications will be assessed on the following:

* Provision of a solution to an identified community, health or environmental issue
* Delivery of activities in outdoor spaces or in other community buildings or assets
* Demonstrated link to council priorities or annual theme/benefits
* Whether there is intent to become a more formalised group with a statement of intent
* Whether a lasting legacy will be achieved

Applications will be judged on their own merit. The council does not pay grants to individuals. Instead, these will be paid via a third party, which may be another charity that has agreed to serve as the “banker.”

### Assessment of applications for Project Grants

**(up to £5,000)**

There will be one funding round each year. Applications will be carefully assessed to ensure that funding is allocated for activities that will have the most impact on the council’s priorities (Appendix 2). The process includes:

* Application verification: this looks at whether the application or project is eligible. Failure to submit a complete and correct application and required documents by the deadline may result in an application being rejected or delayed.
* Priority assessment: this looks at the type of applicant, type of beneficiaries, the impact on council’s annual priorities and whether the community supports the project (need) and has been involved in planning
* Financial assessment: this looks at the breakdown of costs, sustainability of the project, whether the applicant is putting money into the project and size of the organisation

Applications for projects in areas of deprivation are a priority and will be considered first. Applications will be scored in a fair and consistent manner against the assessment criteria in Appendix 2. The assessment will take place after the application deadline over an agreed period of time. Applications will not be considered outside of the assessment window.

## Allocation of funding: Stage One

Applications will be assessed on merit. **Only those that score more than 50% of the maximum points available from the scoring criteria will be considered for funding.** These applications will be ranked in order of highest to lowest score. Funding will then be allocated to those applications receiving the highest scores.

The council may choose to award a grant subject to certain conditions such as registering on the East Herts Community Benefit Lottery.

### Allocation of funding: Stage Two

Where there are a number of lower scoring applications with similar scores and there is still funding to allocate, the council may decide to enter into a dialogue with applicants to seek mutually agreed amendments. These amendments would increase the impact of a lower scoring proposal and would become a condition of grant funding. Potential amendments include:

* the applicant agrees to deliver activities to support the council’s Healthy Hub East Herts or East Herts Social Prescribing Service (EHSPS)
* the applicant agrees to expand their activities to an area that is known to be disadvantaged
* the applicant agrees to ensure that the activity will reach a minimum number of vulnerable residents or ‘new’ residents who would not been assumed to be involved or benefit given the terms of the application as submitted.
* the applicant agrees to one or all of the following: engage with the community at least once a year, write a business plan, invest in skills development

The council reserves the right to apply these conditions to any of the grants it awards.

Each year, the council will determine what percentage of the available budget will be distributed via this competitive process. Up to 20% of the budget can be held back for events of national or local importance in accordance with agreed priorities and criteria (agreed by councillors)

## Advice and information

Organisations are expected to discuss their proposed project with the council’s grants officer prior to submitting an application. It is expected that organisations will have investigated other funding sources listed here [other grant making trusts](https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/community-wellbeing/community-grants/external-funding-grants). Individuals and organisations with no legal status can obtain advice and guidance on governance issues from [Broxbourne and East Herts CVS](http://www.cvsbeh.org.uk/) or [Community Development Action Hertfordshire](https://www.cdaherts.org.uk/?doing_wp_cron=1573465085.6107709407806396484375). The council will run an annual advice workshop with all eligible applicants making themselves known to the council.

## East Herts Community Benefit Lottery

All charities and other local good causes are encouraged to raise funds via the [East Herts Lottery](https://www.easthertslottery.co.uk/). Monies raised for the East Herts Community Fund will be ring fenced for the council’s community grants budget.

## Member involvement

Councillors that have agreed to mentor an individual or informal group (with no legal status) that has applied for a small grant will be expected to complete a [Mentor Statement Form](https://myeastherts.invotra.com/webform/mentor-statement-%E2%80%93-support-small-community-grant-application-form) and take an active role in the delivery of the proposed project, support the individual or group and monitor outcomes. It is anticipated that this support, and the support of a “banker” will enable the groups to write a Statement of Aims and become more fundable and self-reliant in the future. Applications from constituted groups require a written endorsement from the Councillor representing the area from where most of the beneficiaries will come.

Appendix 1: Community Grant Priorities 2022 - 23

The priorities for discretionary grant funding in 2022/23 help take forward the council’s corporate priority of enabling our communities in the East Herts Corporate Plan 2020-2024.

Grant giving will help improve the wellbeing and quality of life of East Herts residents as well as help address the equalities challenges and barriers to participation that some of our communities face. The results of the Hertfordshire-Covid 19 Community Impact Assessment will further inform our grant giving over the course of 2022/23.

Successful applicants will demonstrate how the changes they want to achieve will address at least one of the following priorities for community grants:

* **Recovery from Covid**
* **Diversity and inclusiveness**
* **Mental and physical wellbeing**
* **Environmental sustainability**
* **Queen’s Platinum Jubilee**

Applications that address the following will score higher:

* Deliver in a geographic area of deprivation. These applications will be considered first.
* Support and involve vulnerable and isolated people
* Are from organisations that have not applied before or applied more than five years ago
* Appendix 2: Guidance – How your application for a large grant will be scored

Only applications that score more than 50% of the maximum available points detailed below in score sheet will be considered for funding.

**Key Area: Type of applicant**

| 0 points | 1 point | 2 points | 4 points |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The application is from an organisation not based in the district but is providing outreach | The application is from a town/parish council or county wide charity | The application is from a local charity or social enterprise. | The application is from a constituted community group - run by volunteers |

**Key Area: Budget**

| 0 points | 1 point |
| --- | --- |
| The application included arithmetic errors in the budget, an itemised list that included ineligible costs or was otherwise unclear. | The application included a budget that is correct and realistic with an itemised list of eligible costs and with clarity on where/how the money will be spent |

**Key Area: Beneficiaries**

| 0 points | 1 point | 2 points | 3 points |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| More than 50% of beneficiaries live outside East Hertfordshire | General public and vulnerable people benefit alongside | Beneficiaries are considered to be vulnerable or people living with protected characteristics | Beneficiaries are residents living in the top 10 deprived areas in East Herts |

**Key Area: Sustainability of the project or scheme**

| 0 points | 1 point |
| --- | --- |
| The application does not demonstrate how the project will be continued after the grant runs out or how the building improvements will be cared for and maintained | The application demonstrates that the project will be continued beyond the grant. For example: Future partners identified  Match funding, maintenance plan, upskilling  of volunteers; Plans showing how the group will generate income |

**Key Area: Match funding**

| 0 points | 1 point | 2 points |
| --- | --- | --- |
| The applicant has not secured funding from another source nor is it contributing cash itself. | The applicant is providing in-kind support OR has applied to another grant fund and is awaiting a decision | The applicant is providing its OWN cash for the project or has secured funding from another source such as another grant making trust or business |

**Key Area: Size of organisation**

| 0 points | 1 point | 2 points |
| --- | --- | --- |
| The applicant reports annual income of more than £200,000. | The applicant reports annual income between £50,000 and £199,000. | The applicant reports an annual income of less than £50,000. |

**Key Area: Previous support from the Council**

| 0 points | 1 point | 2 points |
| --- | --- | --- |
| The applicant has received a grant in the previous 24 months or has an existing grant for a project or service which it has not yet completed. | The applicant has received a grant from the council before – 2 to 5 years ago. | The applicant has not applied to the council before or received a grant more than 5 years ago. |

**Key Area: Impact and benefits to participants**

| 0 points | 1 point | 2 points | 4 points |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The application does not clearly demonstrate how the project will contribute to the council’s grant priorities | The application demonstrates that some elements of the project will contribute to a grant priority but there are areas of weakness and gaps. | The application generally demonstrates that the project will contribute to a grant priority. Assessors are content with project. Meets requirements at basic level but lacks sufficient detail to warrant a higher score. | The application clearly shows how the project will contribute to MORE than one council grant priority and will leave a legacy or create lasting change.  Assessors are positive and have confidence that real change will occur.  Exceeds requirements in some areas |

**Key Area: Need**

| 0 points | 1 point | 2 points | 4 points |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The project has an insignificant or tenuous link to identified need in the area and does not appear to have consulted beneficiaries | The application has provided information to suggest that the project is needed but quality of answers is low and there are gaps in the information. | The application demonstrates need via desk top research and / or some consultation with beneficiaries. Meets requirement at a basic level but lacks sufficient detail to warrant a higher score. Assessors are content | The application has provided detailed answers and supporting documents to demonstrate the project is a solution to an identified need within the community and is of interest beneficiaries. For example:  Letters of support  Feedback from local consultation  Link to neighbourhood plan  Assessors have confidence in project. Exceeds requirements |

## Appendix 3: Required documents (to be attached to the application

* If applying for £301 or above, constitution / set of rules or charity commission number
* Name and contact details of main contacts, (including chair, treasurer and secretary if applicable), in your organisation or informal group
* If applicant is a constituted group, written endorsement / email from an East Herts Councillor representing the area from which most of the beneficiaries will come
* If applicant is an informal group with no legal status or individual, a Mentor Statement Form must be provided from an East Herts Councillor representing the area from which most of the beneficiaries will come
* Bank statement showing current balance
* Evidence that the owner of building or space has approved the building work
* Evidence that applicant has checked that planning permission from the council is not required (if a building improvement project)
* Two quotes for building projects or large items of equipment that cost £1,000 or more

*Note: if successful, you may be asked to provide a copy of your Safeguarding policy (if your organisation works with children or vulnerable adults) and / or Health and safety policy (if you are proposing an event)*

## Appendix 4: Most deprived Local Superoutput Areas in East Herts District

Whilst East Hertfordshire as a whole ranks above the national average on the scale on Income Deprivation (IMD[[1]](#footnote-1)), there are still certain areas within wards (known as Lower Supra Output Areas LSOAs) that fall below the average IMD[[2]](#footnote-2) ranking for both Hertfordshire and nationally.

The Indices of Deprivation 2015 provide a set of relative measures of deprivation for small areas (Lower-layer Super Output Areas) across England, based on seven domains of deprivation. The domains were combined using the following weights to produce the overall Index of Multiple Deprivation:

* Income Deprivation (22.5%)
* Employment Deprivation (22.5%)
* Education, Skills and Training Deprivation (13.5%)
* Health Deprivation and Disability (13.5%)
* Crime (9.3%)
* Barriers to Housing and Services (9.3%)
* Living Environment Deprivation (9.3%)

In addition to the Index of Multiple Deprivation and the seven domain indices, there are two supplementary indices: the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index and the Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index.

IMD data is measured according to individual Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs), however by taking the average IMD scores across the LOSA’s within each ward we have calculated an average IMD score for each of the wards in East Herts.

The most deprived areas in East Herts in 2021 are:

| LSOA | Ward | IMD Rank within East Hertfordshire LSOAs |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 007E | Bishop’s Stortford (formerly Bishop’s Stortford Central) | 1 |
| 015B | Hertford Sele Ridgeway (formerly Hertford Sele) | 2 |
| 015A | Hertford Sele Windsor Drive (formerly Hertford Sele) | 3 |
| 002B | Throcking/Cottered/Westmill | 4 |
| 012D | Ware Centre (formerly Ware Trinity) | 5 |
| 001A | Great Hormead/little Hormead/Brent Pelham | 6 |
| 017A | Hertford Hornsmill (formerly Hertford Castle) | 7 |
| 018B | Amwell South/St Margarets (formerly Great Amwell) | 8 |
| 011A | Sawbridgeworth North | 9 |
| 006B | Wadesmill/High Cross/Thundridge | 10 |

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *NB: Much Hadham is officially listed as having the LSOA with the highest IMD however research has shown that this data reflects the residents of St Margaret’s and St Elizabeth’s as opposed to the wider residential population.* [↑](#footnote-ref-2)