

Discretionary Community Grants Policy

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Version 6: 24 September 2020 Crowdfunder criteria relaxed

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.

East Herts Council Priorities

Grant giving supports the council's wider [Corporate Priorities](#) as well as the health and wellbeing outcomes described in the new [East Herts Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2023](#). For information and health sources to help with evidencing your application bid, please see "Health and Wellbeing Resources" also on Strategy web page.

The council's annual priorities and outcomes for grant giving are listed on Appendix 1 and are in line with the corporate SEED priorities (Sustainability, Economic development, Engagement and Digital).

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, Sawbridgeworth, Buntingford, Hertford, Ware and the surrounding villages. If you are unsure if your project is in our area, please contact us. There are three types of grants which have different eligibility criteria.

Small grants between £100 and £300 (pilot scheme until 31st March 2021)

- Individuals and groups without a constitution can apply alongside constituted voluntary organisations and not for profits.
- The application has the written support of an East Herts Councillor (representing the area from which most of the residents who will benefit from the activity come), including that councillor's agreement to serve as a mentor for the project/scheme for which grant funding is being applied.
- 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

Project grants (from £301 up to £3,000 for delivery)

- 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 the 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 project is capable of being completed within a year of grant being awarded.

Project grants – building works/equipment (up to £8,000 for building works/equipment)

- Same as Project Grants – Delivery, plus:
- 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
- Note: the council will not fund projects that have already started though we may fund a later stage of a building project that is not dependent on an earlier stage.

Match funding for local Crowdfunder campaigns up to £2,000

- Same as Project Grants – both above, plus:
- If the proposal includes works to an East Herts owned asset, the body applying must have the written permission of East Herts Council to apply for Match Funding.

Eligible costs: Grants may be made for:

- 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. Maximum grant is £3,000
- Volunteer training or fees to bring in additional expertise to an area
- Start-up funding including hire costs, publicity materials, refreshments, travel, and small items of equipment

The council will have the discretion to award less than the amount bid for in such cases listed below

- 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
- The council will not provide grants that have the sole aim of promoting a particular religion
- The council will not provide grants to 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

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. Decisions will be provided eight to 10 weeks after the application deadline. All grants, with the exception of those to individuals and groups with no formal legal status, and 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 and annual theme
- Whether there is intent to become a more formalised group with a statement of intent

Applications will be judged on their own merit. Grant payments to individuals and groups with no formally constituted legal status will be made once expenditure has incurred. The council has the discretion to choose to pay a third party, which may be another charity that has agreed to serve as the “banker” or a supplier.

Assessment of applications for Project Grants (from £301 up to £3,000 for delivery or up to £8,000 for building works/equipment)

There will be two funding rounds each year. The first application deadline will be in the spring, the second in the autumn. Applications will be carefully assessed to ensure that funding is allocated for activities that will have the most impact on the council’s priorities. The process includes a:

- Application verification: this looks at whether the application is complete, whether the project can be finished within the year and safeguarding
- Priority assessment: this looks at need, delivery and impact on at least one of the council’s key priorities/outcomes identified for that year
- Financial assessment: this looks at organisational viability, the proposed budget, sustainability of the project, and evidence of activity seeking to generate income in practical ways

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 same assessment criteria (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.

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 East Herts social prescribing service (EHSPS)
- the applicant agrees to expand their activities to a nearby wards or area that is known to have a high level of income deprivation
- the applicant agrees to ensure that the activity will reach a minimum number of vulnerable residents or 'new' residents who would not be 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)

Assessment of applications for Match funding for local Crowdfunder campaigns (up to £2,000)

The purpose of this grant is to support projects that are proposed by residents in the community. Please note, a maximum of one bid for a campaign to raise funds for a playground owned by East Herts Council will be supported each year. Applicants can apply any time.

Applications will be carefully assessed to ensure that funding is allocated for activities that will have the most impact on council priorities. This process includes:

- How much has already been pledged/granted to similar projects.

- Whether the project is in line with the council's policy and practices around development of play facilities.
- Whether the project is in an area of deprivation. These are a priority and will be considered first.

Applications for funding to support a campaign on the Hertfordshire Crowdfunding platform will be scored in a fair and consistent manner against the same assessment criteria (Appendix 2). Applications will be judged on their own merit and will also be taken through the stages described above. 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.

East Herts Council can match fund a maximum of 50% of the fundraising target up to a maximum of £2,000. If a group does not reach their full target by the time the online campaign closes East Herts Council may retract its pledge.

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](#). Individuals and organisations with no legal status can obtain advice and guidance on governance issues from the Broxbourne and East Herts Council's for Voluntary Service [Community Voluntary Services Broxbourne and East Herts](#) or the [Community Development Action Hertfordshire](#). The council will run an annual advice workshop with all eligible applicants making themselves known to the council.

East Herts Lottery

All charities and other good causes are encouraged to raise funds via the East Herts Lottery. To register go to [East Herts Lottery](#). Monies raised for the East Herts Community Fund will be ring fenced for the council's community grants budget.

Member involvement in implementation

Councillors that have agreed to mentor an individual/informal group that has applied for a small grant will be expected to take an active role in the delivery of the proposed project, support the individual/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. All applicants are to invite their ward member to the activity / event being funded or to view the project that has been funded.

Appendix 1: Priorities and outcomes for 2021 to 2022

The priorities for discretionary grant funding in 2021/22 help take forward the council's corporate SEED priorities (Sustainability, Economic development, Engagement and Digital). Successful applications are those that address one or more priorities and clearly demonstrate how the changes they want to achieve will contribute to at least one of the council's outcomes. Applications focused in areas of deprivation will be considered first.

Health for all

We want to see projects that:

- Ensure digital inclusion and the use of new technology, assets and innovation
- Provide activities to support Dementia Friendly East Herts, East Herts Social Prescribing Service (non-medical community based health solutions) and people who are tackling addictions
- Enable all residents to take care of their mental health, achieve a healthy weight and stay active, but especially those affected by Covid 19
- Respond to the adverse effects of Covid and aid recovery

Community issues, including engaging and consulting

We want to see projects that:

- Support residents experiencing loneliness or who are socially isolated or who find it difficult to interact with the community
- Help residents come together to tackle an identified problem
- Create safer and resilient neighbourhoods
- Use outdoor spaces and community buildings effectively, maximising their potential

Arts and cultural activities that increase residents' wellbeing

We want to see projects that:

- Benefit people or groups that don't normally participate
- Reconnect residents to local history and enhance pride in place
- Bring different generations together
- Engage with people from different faiths and black, asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds, supporting them to develop cultural opportunities they can enjoy participating in

Environmentally sustainable and accessible community buildings and green spaces

We want to see projects that:

- Reduce the carbon footprint of an asset or organisation
- Enable a new activity or existing activity to expand

- Increase usage of community buildings and outdoor spaces, making it as convenient as possible for more people to get involved in leisure
- Create fit-for-purpose halls that are managed proactively to meet the needs and interests of local residents (community hub)

Appendix 2: Guidance – How your application 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: Budget

0 points	1 point
The application included arithmetic errors in the budget, an itemised list that included ineligible costs or was otherwise unclear. Assessors have serious reservations about the ability of applicant.	The application included a budget that is correct, 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
More than 50% of beneficiaries are located in adjacent district council areas, outside East Hertfordshire	Beneficiaries are considered to be vulnerable	Beneficiaries are residents living in the top 10 disadvantaged areas in East Herts

Key Area: Delivery

0 points	1 point	2 points
The applicant appears to be working in isolation. A realistic, detailed plan of delivery has not been included. Assessors have serious reservations about the project. Use of paid staff only.	The application has provided some details on how the project will be delivered but there are areas of weakness and the council has concerns whether the project will be completed in the time frame Paid staff plus volunteers. Assessors have some reservations about the project	The application has provided significant details to reassure the council that the delivery will be effective and completed within 1 year of the grant offer. For example Volunteer led and managed Partners identified Referrals systems set up Communications plan in place Previous experience/track record described Assessors have confidence in project.

Key Area: Sustainability of the project or scheme

0 points	1 point	2 points
The application does not demonstrate how the project will be continued or improvements cared for and maintained after the funding has been spent. Assessors have serious reservations about the project.	The application demonstrates that some elements of the project and some actions will be taken but the council is not fully convinced. An average quality response but lacks sufficient detail to warrant a higher score.	The application shows that all elements of the project will be continued beyond the grant. For example Future partners identified Match funding Upskilling of volunteers Plans showing how the group will generate income Assessors are positive and have confidence in the project

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 council is concerned that the amount still to raise is significant and will not be achieved in the one year time scale	The applicant is providing some cash and has applied for funding of 15% or more and/or in kind support from another source.	The applicant is providing cash for the project or has secured funding and/or in kind support from another source more than 15%. This must be evidenced via a grant offer letter.

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 council will also consider amount in bank account.	The applicant reports an annual income of less than £50,000. The council will also consider amount in the bank. Assessors believe the applicant to be grass roots organisation and a good local cause

Key Area: Previous support from the Council

0 points	1 point	2 points
The applicant has received a grant in the previous 12 months or has an existing grant for a project or service which it has not yet completed. Bid will be rejected	The applicant has received a grant from the council before – within 1 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	3 points
<p>The application does not clearly demonstrate how the project will contribute to a council priority and outcome. Assessors have serious reservations about the project. And whether it would be completed within the year timescale.</p>	<p>The application demonstrates that some elements of the project will contribute to a council priority and outcome but there are areas of weakness and gaps. Assessors have some reservations about whether the benefits will really be achieved within the year timescale and what will change for the community.</p>	<p>The application generally demonstrates that the project will contribute to a council priority and outcome but lacks sufficient detail to warrant a higher score. Assessors are content with project.</p>	<p>The application clearly shows how all elements of the project will contribute to more than one council priority and outcome. For example It is clear what will change in the community following the project Assessors are positive and have confidence in the project and that it will be delivered within the year timescale.</p>

Key Area: Need

0 points	1 point	2 points	3 points
<p>The project has an insignificant or tenuous link to local need for the project. Assessors have serious reservations about the rationale and need for the project. Bid will be rejected</p>	<p>The application has provided information to suggest that the project is needed within the community, but quality of answers are poor. Assessors have some reservations about the project.</p>	<p>The application generally demonstrates need with an average answer but lacks sufficient detail to warrant a higher score. Assessors are content with project</p>	<p>The application has provided high quality answers and good supporting evidence to demonstrate the project is a solution to an identified need within the community. For example: Letters of support Feedback from local consultation Research/statistical data Link to neighbourhood plan Assessors have confidence in project.</p>

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

- Name and contact details of main contacts, (including chair, treasurer and secretary if applicable), in your organisation or informal group
- Written endorsement from an East Herts Councillor
- If an informal group with no legal status or individual, written statement from an East Herts Councillor who has agreed to serve as a mentor
- Bank statement showing current balance
- If applying for £301 or above, constitution / set of rules or charity commission number
- Safeguarding policy (if your organisation works with children or vulnerable adults)
- Health and safety policy (if you are proposing an event)
- 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

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 (IMD¹), there are still certain areas within wards (known as Lower Supra Output Areas LSOAs) that fall below the average IMD² 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.

¹ 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 2019 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	5

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.

LSOA	Ward	IMD Rank within East Hertfordshire LSOAs
	Trinity)	
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