

DRAFT East Herts Community Grants Policy

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1. Introduction

East Herts Council (EHC) issues grants to voluntary and community groups, not-for-profit organisations, faith groups and town and parish councils for activities that build stronger, more connected, self-reliant communities, leading to improved health and wellbeing outcomes for residents in East Herts.

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](#).

In 2023/24, individual community grants of between £300 and £3,000 will be made.

2. Eligibility

For a community grant application to be considered for funding, the eligibility criteria in this section must be fulfilled. The different eligibility criteria are listed in below.

Requirements of the body applying

To be eligible for consideration for a grant, the body applying must:

- be proposing a project that will operate within East Hertfordshire, for the benefit of residents of the district
- be (a) a constituted voluntary organisation, (b) a not-for-profit organisation, (c) an individual or informal group (with no legal status) with an agreed East Herts Council councillor acting as a mentor or (d) a town or parish council
- be 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. In the case of individuals or informal groups (with no legal status), the council and East Herts Council councillor mentor must be satisfied of the probity of the individual's or informal group's financial arrangements
- have good governance in place including a committee or board of directors that includes at least three unrelated individuals. In the case of individuals or informal groups (with no legal status), the council and East Herts Council councillor mentor must be satisfied of the proposed governance of the management of the grant and the grant-funded project itself

- if applicable, own the freehold, or lease that cannot be ended within five years of completion of works, of the land or building subject to the proposed works/equipment and, if applicable, demonstrate that the relevant permissions are in place, including planning if applicable, to complete the works.

Requirements of the project for which a grant is being sought

To be eligible for consideration for a grant, the project for which the grant is being sought must:

- be in keeping with the council's commitment to celebrating equality and diversity and the council's Equalities Duty under the Equality Act 2010
- have the written endorsement of an East Herts Council councillor representing the area from which most of the residents who would benefit from the activity come. In cases where an East Herts Council councillor is a member of the applying organisation and there is no other ward member, then the East Herts Council Executive Member for Communities may endorse the application. Note: the Executive Member for Communities cannot endorse an application from an organisation which they are a member of; another councillor from the same ward may endorse the application in these circumstances or, if there isn't another ward member, a councillor for a nearby ward may endorse the application
- be capable of being completed within a year of the grant being awarded
- commit to ensuring a legacy beyond the lifetime of the council's funding so that the benefits to the community can continue. This legacy could, for example, take the form of:
 - continuation of the activity without council support
 - a community social media group or newsletter being set up
 - a fundraising element which helps a group to give back to the community
 - an environmental activity that continues after the initial project outreach.

Eligible costs which can be applied for

The following items will be eligible for grant funding:

- hire costs, publicity materials, travel and small items of equipment

- building works and improvements to community assets that result in high quality, accessible sports or community facilities or accessible outdoor spaces
- large items of equipment, including digital assistive technologies
- delivery costs of an activity/service including staff costs. If the grant sought is for an existing service, the applicant must show how the grant would develop and extend the provision and enhance what is being offered
- volunteer training
- fees to bring in additional expertise.

Ineligible applicants, projects or items

East Herts Council will not provide grants for:

- organisations with the primary purpose of and/or beliefs that are challenging of East Herts Council's decisions or are contradictory to the council's core values*
- organisations whose sole aim is to promote a political belief*
- projects that have the sole aim of promoting a particular religion
- general fundraising campaigns
- a service that the state is obligated to provide
- works to land or buildings where ownership (freehold or eligible lease) is not held by the applicant
- 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
- maintenance or minor repair work on buildings or spaces
- purchase of items on behalf of another
- hardship where an organisation is in a crisis which requires a rapid response
- commercial ventures
- purchase of specialist medical equipment
- VAT that can be recovered.

* If the applicant proposes to work with another organisation to deliver the project and the council believes the other organisation would be ineligible on these grounds, the application will be ineligible.

3. Priorities for Community Grants 2023/24

The council's annual priorities for grant giving are listed in Table 1. Applications meet the eligibility criteria will then be assessed on how well they address the council's priorities.

Table 1 – East Herts Council Community Grant Priorities 2023/24

Applications should address one or more of the following priorities:

- widen access to arts and culture through using health and wellbeing especially among those who haven't participated in the past
- involve residents in delivering community health and wellbeing projects including food banks and similar projects which benefit those most in need
- encourage communities to identify a local physical and/or mental health and wellbeing issue and address it together
- promote environmental sustainability activities which encourage individual and community changes of attitude and behaviour
- help community buildings and venues to become more environmentally sustainable
- bring different generations together
- enable young people and families to take care of their mental health, achieve a healthy weight and stay active
- support residents experiencing loneliness, isolation, domestic abuse, cost-of-living or employability challenges, or those who find it difficult to interact with the community
- support those that the council doesn't typically engage with very well or those who prefer face-to-face contact
- use outdoor spaces and community buildings more effectively, maximising their potential
- provide activities to support Dementia Friendly East Herts
- create safer and resilient neighbourhoods which promote community belonging.

Applications will receive additional weighting through the assessment process if they address one or more of the additional factors in Table 2.

Table 2 – East Herts Council Community Grant Additional Weighting Factors 2023/24

Additional weighting will be awarded to applications which:

- include evidence that the application has been developed with the involvement of the community / anticipated beneficiaries
- focus on reaching residents in the pockets of relative health inequalities across East Herts. Please see Section 8 **Wards and areas in East Herts that experience health inequalities** below
- are from organisations that have not received a grant from the council in the last two years.

4. Assessment of applications

Part One assessment – validation and eligibility

Application validation – This determines whether the application has been fully completed, with all the necessary supporting documents attached.

Application eligibility – The application is assessed to make sure it meets the eligibility criteria listed in this policy. This includes a financial assessment in two parts:

- a) a check of whether the applicant organisation is financially sound and its finances are subject to the necessary governance as listed in the eligible requirements in this policy
- b) a check on whether the level of grant being sought is realistic given the project's aims and activities.

Only those applications passing the Part One assessment will proceed to the Part Two assessment.

Part Two assessment – project assessment

All valid and eligible applications will be assessed on the basis of how well the project meets the council's priorities and additional weighting factors.

Points will be awarded using the following scoring scheme.

A) Type of applicant organisation

0 points	1 point	2 points	3 points
the applicant is not eligible for 1, 2 or 3 points	the applicant is a town/parish council in East Herts or another group/ organisation not based in East Herts	the applicant is a charity/ social enterprise based in East Herts	the applicant is a constituted community group in East Herts, primarily run by volunteers

B) Size of organisation

0 points	1 point	2 points
the applicant reports an annual income of £200,000 or more	the applicant reports an annual income of between £50,000 and £199,000	the applicant reports an annual income of less than £50,000

C) Anticipated beneficiaries

0 points	1 point	2 points	3 points
fewer than 50% of anticipated beneficiaries live within East Herts	main anticipated beneficiaries will be the general public of East Herts	main anticipated beneficiaries will be residents of East Herts considered to be vulnerable and/or have protected characteristics	main anticipated beneficiaries will be residents living in one of more of the top eight pockets of relative health inequalities areas in East Herts

D) Previous support from the council

0 points	1 point	2 points
the applicant has received a grant from East Herts Council in the previous 2 years for the same/very similar project in terms of meeting priorities, location and target group	the applicant has received a grant from the council within the last two years for a different project	the applicant has not received a grant from the council in the last two years

E) Impact and benefits to participants

0 points	1 point	2 points	3 points
does not clearly demonstrate how the project will contribute to the council's priorities	demonstrates that the project will contribute in a limited way to the council's priorities	demonstrates that the project will meet one or more of the council's grant priorities	demonstrates that the project will meet one or more of the council's grant priorities and includes evidence that the application has been developed with the involvement of the community / anticipated beneficiaries

F) Match funding

Match funding scoring for all applications *EXCEPT those made by a town or parish council*

0 points	1 point	2 points	3 points
the applicant has not secured funding from another source nor is it contributing cash or in-kind support itself	the applicant is providing in-kind support OR has applied to another grant fund and is awaiting a decision	the applicant has secured matched funding from East Herts Council	the applicant is providing its OWN cash for the project or has secured funding from a source other than East Herts Council

Match funding scoring for all application *made by a town or parish council*

0 points	1 point
the town or parish council has <i>not</i> provided matched funding in cash (not in-kind support) of at least the same amount being applied for from the council	the town or parish council has provided match funding of an amount greater than that being applied for from the council

5. Award of grants

The applications will be ranked as follows.

- a) **first tier** – all applications that scored at least one point on each assessment criterion *and* have scored at least 50% of the total available score of 16 points will be ranked according to their total score
- b) **second tier** – all applications that scored at least one point on each assessment criterion *and* have scored below 50% of the total available score of 16 points will be ranked according to their total score
- c) **third tier** – all applications that score zero points on at least one assessment criterion will be ranked according to their total score.

The council will fund applications in the first tier from the highest scoring applications downwards until all monies have been allocated.

In the event of unallocated funding remaining once all the first tier applications have received a grant, applications in the second tier bids will be considered, starting with the highest scoring application in that tier. The council may fund an application as submitted or, given that the application did not merit placement in the first tier, may decide to negotiate with the applicant to amend their application to improve the way in which it can meet the council's grant priorities. Potential amendments could include, among other things, that the applicant agrees to:

- deliver activities to support the council's Healthy Hub East Herts
- expand their activities to an area that is known to be disadvantaged
- ensure that the project will reach a minimum number of vulnerable residents or additional residents who were not listed in the application as likely to benefit.

The applicant shall be under no obligation to agree to these amendments in which case no grant will be made.

Should there still be funds available following allocation to the first and second tier applications, the council will consider the third tier applications, starting with the highest scoring one. The council may fund an application as submitted or, given that the application scored zero points on at least one assessment criterion, may decide to negotiate with the applicant to amend their application

to improve the way in which it can meet the council's grant priorities, focusing on the criterion or criteria on which the application was awarded zero points.

It may be the case that there are two or more applications with the same assessed score within the same tier described above but there are insufficient monies available to fund them all. In such an instance, the council will:

- count up the number of priorities (in Table 1 above) and additional weighting factors (in Table 2 above) that it is satisfied each application would address
- rank the applications accordingly – highest number of priorities and additional weighting factors first
- award grants from the top of ranked list downwards until all the available funding has been allocated.

The council will have the discretion to award a particular application, regardless of how well it scored, less than the amount bid for if the total fund is oversubscribed. The applicant shall be under no obligation to accept the reduced funding in which case no grant will be made to that organisation.

Grant conditions

The council reserves the right to attach any reasonable conditions to an offer of grant. The applicant will be required to agree to the grant conditions to receive the grant. It is anticipated that as a minimum, each grant recipient will be required to:

- provide evidence of suitable safeguarding and/or health and safety policies and arrangements depending on the nature of the project
- provide suitable monitoring statistics to the council
- clearly display and make known that the project is proceeding due to the financial support of the council
- allow the council to make any periodic checks or audits to ensure its grant is being / has been appropriate used in line with the application.

6. Additional information

Advice and information

Organisations are strongly urged to discuss their proposed project with the council officer overseeing the administration of the grants prior to submitting an

application. It is expected that organisations will have investigated other funding sources, see [other grant making trusts](#). Individuals and organisations with no legal status can obtain advice and guidance on governance issues from [Broxbourne and East Herts Community Alliance](#) or [Community Development Action Hertfordshire](#).

East Herts Council also reserves the right to sample a selection of East Herts Community Grant supported projects to carry out simple financial, auditing, process and evaluation checks to ensure public funding is spent accountably and outcomes can be reasonably demonstrated. The officer of the council overseeing the administration of grants may use phone, email or other means to speak with grant recipients and request information items as needed.

East Herts Community Benefit Lottery

All charities and other local good causes are encouraged to raise funds via the [East Herts Lottery](#). 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 have applied for a small grant will be expected to complete a **Mentor Statement 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.

Submitting an application

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 will be paid up front subject to grant conditions.

Documents to be attached to the application

- the group or organisation's 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, then written endorsement or an email will be needed 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.

7. Wards and areas in East Herts that experience health inequalities

Whilst East Hertfordshire as a whole ranks above the national average on the scale of Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), there are still certain wards and areas which indicate there are pockets of relative inequality within East Herts.

The Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2019 provide a set of relative measures of deprivation for small 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%)

Please note the wards have been updated as result of some electoral boundary changes made during 2023. Nationally, new work is being undertaken to develop an improved IMD due for release in 2025.

East Herts wards and connected areas with pockets of relative inequalities

- Bishop's Stortford Central
- Buntingford – Throcking, Cottered and Westmill
- Great Amwell and Stansteads
- Hertford Rural – Hertford Hornsmill
- Hertford Sele
- Hunsdon
- Sawbridgeworth
- Ware Rural – Wadesmill, High Cross and Thundridge
- Ware Trinity

Note: Much Hadham is officially listed as having an area within it as the highest IMD however research has shown that this data reflects the residents of St Margaret's and St Elizabeth's Centre for those with learning disabilities as opposed to the wider residential population.