



HM Government

# South Derbyshire Community Grant Fund 2025/26

## Guide to the Criteria, Application Process & Conditions of Funding

Version 1.0, May 2025	<i>This guidance document may have to be updated as additional Government guidance becomes available/is published.</i>
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If you require this document in an alternative format or language, please contact Sally Hemsley, Community Partnership Officer

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Please read these guidance notes carefully and refer to them when completing the application form.

### 1. Introduction

- The grant scheme is funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund(UKSPF). The Fund aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances across the UK investing in communities and place, supporting local business, and people and skills.
- The government's Autumn Budget 2024 announced further funding for local investment between April 2025 and March 2026. All areas of the UK are receiving a further allocation of UKSPF.For more information visit:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus>
- The District Council will operate the South Derbyshire Community Grant Fund from part of its UKSPF allocation under the Communities and Place priority.
- The South Derbyshire Community Grant Fund is a capital fund and has been established to support and develop eligible community facilities, projects and initiatives, within South Derbyshire. There is a total amount of £88,000 in the fund.
- The South Derbyshire Community Grant Fund scheme runs from June 2025 to March 2026 or until all funding has been allocated

## **2. Who and what can be funded?**

- Grants are available for community & voluntary groups and not for profit organisations who are involved in community projects that benefit the residents of South Derbyshire. Groups and organisations must demonstrate how their project, facility or initiative will deliver the objectives identified. Organisations can be based outside South Derbyshire providing the grant is only for the benefit of South Derbyshire residents.
- Not for profit groups/organisations that are eligible to apply include Charities, Trusts, Associations, Clubs, community & voluntary groups, Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIOs), Parish Councils & Parish Meetings.
- Applications from Community Interest Companies (CICs) will be considered if all activities, as well as distribution of surplus, can be shown to be for community benefit.
- The minimum grant is £2,000 and the maximum grant is £25,000. The minimum total project cost is £2,500.
- Up to 80% of total costs can be applied for. The minimum contribution (match funding) required from applicants is 20%. This can be made up of the group's own cash contribution, donations, other grants and sponsorship and a maximum of 10% in-kind volunteer time and/or in-kind materials.
- The value of volunteer in-kind time is calculated at £12.21 per hour which is based on the current National Living Wage for Adults. Volunteer time excludes time spent completing the application form and attendance at meetings in connection with the project.
- Only one grant award is permitted per organisation/group/venue during the life of the scheme to March 2026 and organisations/groups/venues who were awarded a grant through the South Derbyshire Community Grant Fund between 2023-25 cannot apply for the 2025/6 scheme.

## **3. What will not be funded?**

The South Derbyshire Community Grant Fund will not support:

- Community facilities, projects or initiatives located outside of the boundary of South Derbyshire District.
- Organisations/groups/venues who were awarded a grant through the South Derbyshire Community Grant Fund between 2023-25
- Applications from individuals or sole traders.
- Projects or initiatives which are for private gain.
- Projects or initiatives primarily intended to pass on surplus income to other organisations or individuals.
- Events.
- General appeals or sponsorship.
- Activities of a mainly political or religious nature, including improvements to the fabric of church buildings (non-religious community activities held within a place of worship may be eligible).

- Core school activities & improvements to school buildings (projects based at schools which can demonstrate wide community benefit and meet the scheme criteria may be considered).
- Contingency funds, income deficits, bridging loans or security against a loan.
- Applications from organisations applying on behalf of other organisations.
- Routine repairs and maintenance.
- Parish Council core operational costs and equipment that would normally be funded through the precept.
- Any VAT that is re-claimable from HMRC.

#### 4. Criteria for funding

- Applications should support one or more of the following Shared Prosperity Fund outputs/outcomes:
  - Creating or improving facilities/amenities
  - Creating or improving blue or green space (*Green or blue space means any vegetated land, or water, within an urban area or public space. This includes: parks, public gardens, playing fields, children's play areas, woods and other natural areas, grassed areas, cemeteries, allotments, as well as green corridors like paths*)
  - Installing low or zero carbon energy infrastructure
  - Creating or improving tourism, culture or heritage assets/starting community-led arts, cultural, heritage and creative programmes
  - Supporting volunteering opportunities
- Projects must be located in the South Derbyshire District and benefit the residents of South Derbyshire. Organisations can be based outside South Derbyshire providing the grant is only for the benefit of South Derbyshire residents.
- The scoring assessment process for applications will recognise areas of deprivation as well as communities that have not previously secured funding from South Derbyshire District Council targeted at voluntary / non-profit organisations.
- Projects **must** be deliverable within the scheme timescales. Projects funded in 2025/6 must be complete by the end of March 2026.
- All match funding should be in place at the time of submitting an application to the South Derbyshire Community Grant Fund. Applicants must contact the District Council if awaiting a decision on match funding. If match funding is not secured within an agreed period (normally up to 3 months from submitting the application to this Fund and allowing for completion of projects in the scheme's timescales) any grant award may be withdrawn.

Applications will be assessed on their ability to:

- deliver wide community benefit, contributing to the sustainability, vitality and well-being of South Derbyshire's communities, such as encouraging volunteering and participation;
- demonstrate how it relates to the priorities in South Derbyshire District Council's Corporate Plan;
- demonstrate how it relates to the Shared Prosperity Fund's Communities & Place theme outputs & outcomes (see above);
- contribute to locally identified and clearly demonstrated community needs and priorities (such as in Community Led Plans etc);
- demonstrate that the community itself is committed to and is involved in the project;
- demonstrate that the organisation has the capacity to deliver the project;
- be deliverable in the scheme's timescales;
- have all match funding in place;
- demonstrate value for money (through obtaining written quotes and estimates);
- demonstrate how the success of the project/initiative will be measured;
- demonstrate equality of opportunity; and,
- demonstrate ways in which steps are being taken towards environmental sustainability (see below).

Your Project & Environmental Sustainability (Section 3h of the application form)

Area to consider	Examples
Energy	eg Energy efficiency measures, renewable energy, carbon reduction, insulation
Nature	eg wildlife areas, nesting boxes, wildflower meadows, providing spaces for people to enjoy nature, improving biodiversity, avoiding use of chemicals, planting trees, re-connecting people to nature
Resources & Materials	eg using FSC certified timber, construction materials should ideally be locally sourced or recycled, reduce plastic usage, avoid single use plastics, order in bulk to reduce packaging, use recyclable plastic if necessary
Soils & Peat	eg protect soil and use peat free compost
Tree Planting	Source biosecure planting stock, preferably grown in the UK

Transport	How will people get to your project? Can you encourage them to use public transport, car share, walk or cycle? Local provision will help reduce the need to travel for services/facilities. Have virtual project meetings.
Waste	waste might come from construction, old electrical and electronic goods, green waste, food, paper, timber, plastics etc. Reduction, reuse, recycling or recovery.
Water	consider how you use water and aim to reduce or minimise water usage. Use water saving measures and/or look at options for re-using water eg rainwater

To apply to the South Derbyshire Community Grant Fund your group or organisation must have all of the following in place (and submit copies of documents with your application):

- a written governing document or constitution;
  - a bank or building society account in the name of your group or organisation with at least two unrelated signatories. (Please do not use any personal bank or credit card accounts to make purchases.); and,
  - Recently approved and signed accounts or for newly formed organisations, a business plan incorporating at least a 12-month financial forecast.
- You are required to provide all necessary documentation to support your application with your completed application form, including copies of three written quotes/ estimates for **all** items of expenditure. The written quotes and estimates must display the relevant company names and addresses and be less than six months old. Internet prices will suffice for items below £100 but screenshots must be provided and show the date.
  - Expenditure with any one supplier cannot exceed £149,999 including VAT, regardless of whether it is to purchase one or multiple items for the project. Please note that this relates to the total eligible project expenditure, not just the grant expenditure.
  - Grants will not be awarded retrospectively (eg for work already started/committed or equipment already purchased).
  - The South Derbyshire Community Grant Fund may not be able to provide grants for all potentially eligible applications. Therefore, we reserve the right to prioritise applications in line with the Grant Fund's priorities. We also reserve the right to decline applications which, in our view, do not meet the stated criteria.
  - If your project is based in a building or on land that is leased from someone else, you need to demonstrate that you have a reasonable amount of time left on your lease.

Your current lease should have at least 10 years remaining. If the building or land is leased, we may request written approval from the owner of the building/land for the project to go ahead before any grant is awarded.

## **5. How your application is dealt with**

- On receipt of your application, we will make an initial assessment. This will check that your group or organisation and project are eligible and that all required supporting documentation has been provided. We may contact you to obtain missing information, documentation or for clarification. (An application is not accepted until a complete application form and all supporting information has been received).
- We aim to acknowledge receipt of your application within five working days. This will usually be by email.
- You may be contacted by an officer for further details and clarification if you have a large cash reserve that is not being used towards the project. This will not necessarily affect your application.
- Eligible applications which are accompanied by the required supporting documentation will be forwarded to the South Derbyshire Community Grant Fund Panel for consideration. The Panel is made up of five Councillors from South Derbyshire District Council (or their substitutes) including the Chair of Housing and Community Services Committee, the Chair of Environment and Development Services Committee, the Chair of Finance and Management Committee and two Opposition Members, together with a representative from South Derbyshire CVS and a representative from Rural Action Derbyshire.
- The Panel will assess applications using an agreed scoring assessment process based on the Fund Criteria detailed in Section 4 above.
- The Panel may approve the requested grant amount in full or part, refuse it or defer it pending further information being supplied. The Panel may also suggest the imposition of conditions on grant approvals.
- Applicants will be informed (usually by email) as to whether the Panel has awarded their project a grant (with a Grant Offer letter and Terms & Conditions of funding) or if it has been unsuccessful (with feedback) within five working days of the meeting taking place.
- The Panel's decision is final and cannot be changed (no appeals or discussions will be entered into).
- Payment of the grant will be made on receipt of invoices or as agreed with the District Council.
- Payments will be made directly to a bank or specific project account in the name of the organisation.
- If the application is made by an organisation registered for VAT purposes, the grant will be paid only on amounts after deduction of VAT.

## **6. Conditions of funding**

- Successful applicants must accept the offer of a grant and the Terms & Conditions of Funding in writing before a grant can be released.
- The grant offer will be valid for a period as agreed with the District Council and will be specified in the Grant Offer Letter.
- Grants must be spent by the end of March 2026 for projects funded in 2025/26.
- Grants awarded must be spent on the purpose stated in the application. If for any reason your circumstances change or you wish to vary the way in which you spend your grant, you are required to contact us to request written permission to do so. If your final costs are less than originally estimated, the grant will be based on up to 80% of the actual final evidenced costs. If the activities are not delivered as agreed in the Grant Offer Letter, the District Council reserves the right to request full repayment of the grant or any unspent/unused grant monies to be returned.
- In the event of a group or organisation ceasing to operate or failing to undertake or complete the project for which the grant was offered, the District Council reserves the right to withhold payment, to reduce an award or seek its recovery.
- In the event of a project for which the grant was awarded failing to achieve the agreed Shared Prosperity Fund outputs and outcomes, the District Council reserves the right to request full repayment of the grant.
- It is a condition of any grant towards the purchase (or development) of recreational facilities, village halls, community centres etc that in the event of the land or buildings ceasing to be so used, or sold, or appropriated for another purpose, the District Council reserves the right to claim a share of the proceeds or value as appropriate, based on the proportion of the District Council grant to the value of the land or building, subject to the overriding supervision of the Charity Commission where applicable. This condition will expire 10 years from the date of the grant being awarded.
- Financial support provided by South Derbyshire District Council through the Shared Prosperity Fund must be acknowledged on all relevant printed publicity, on websites and in information given to the press. Relevant guidance/logos etc. will be provided to applicants.
- Your group or organisation must ensure that its project operates within the requirements of all legislation.
- Your group or organisation should ensure equality of opportunity and the elimination of discrimination in the delivery of its project.
- You will be required to inform the District Council when your project has been completed and to submit a Project Completion Form (provided by the Council) to demonstrate that you have met the stated outcomes. You will also need to provide relevant invoice(s) and bank statement(s) showing payments made. Groups or organisations who do not complete and return a satisfactory Project Completion Form may be required to return their grant.

## 7. Application timetable

Applications are welcome to be submitted at any time **up to the 31 December 2025** (to allow for completion of projects) or until all funding has been allocated. Applications funded in 2025/26 must be complete, evidence of costs provided and grants paid out by the end of March 2026.

**Contact us: Help and support to guide groups through the application process is available.**

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