**1. Aims and objectives of the Community Asset Fund**

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1. **Aims and objectives of the Community Asset Fund**

The Community Asset Fund is intended to support projects which provide new or enhance existing community assets and facilities.

The Community Asset Fund will:

1. Prioritise funding for projects that can demonstrate the greatest need and widespread support the community.
2. Make funding accessible to a wide range of applicants who own and manage assets that serve the local community.
3. Provide financial support that encourages other funders from the public, private and charitable sectors to invest in projects that serve the communities of Test Valley.
4. Complement the Council’s other grant schemes.
5. **Getting started**

When seeking to apply for a grant from the Community Asset Fund, please read these guidance notes carefully and contact your Community Engagement Officer for your ward to discuss your project and confirm whether it is eligible. You can find details of your Community Engagement Officer here: [Community Engagement Officers](https://www.testvalley.gov.uk/communityandleisure/workingwithcommunities/community-engagement-officers)

1. **Eligibility**

The Community Asset Fund is available to not-for-profit, charitable community groups and organisations, towards projects which provide new or enhance existing community assets.

Applications can be for up to 50% of the project cost, up to a maximum of £25,000.

The minimum award is £2,000, so only projects over £4,000 are eligible.

**Who can apply?**

* Parish or Town Councils
* Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
* Charitable Trust
* Charitable Company (Limited by Guarantee)
* Unincorporated Association
* Educational Establishments (only for facilities with formal community access)

If your organisation is not listed above, please do get in touch to check if you are eligible.

 **What is an eligible community project?**

* Community assets and buildings - new assets or enhancement of existing facilities.
* Climate Change – projects which enhance community assets to reduce carbon emissions and/or address climate change.
* Environmental - projects which enhance community assets in a way that improves the environment and/or biodiversity.
* Inclusivity – community projects which improve accessibility.
* Play and recreation - new assets or enhancement of existing community facilities.
* Public art - new public art in communities.
* Sports - new assets or the enhancement of existing community facilities.

If your project is not listed above, please do get in touch to check if it is eligible.

**What can be applied for?**

* Up to 50% of the total project cost.
* The minimum award is £2,000 - so only projects costing £4,000 and more are eligible.
* There is no maximum project cost, but maximum grant award is £25,000.
* Funding is intended for one-off capital projects.

**What cannot be applied for?**

* Base revenue and running costs.
* Low level maintenance and repairs or projects including fixtures and fittings.
* Retrospective work.
* Any project that creates a revenue pressure for the Borough Council.
* Any activity which may be construed as radicalising or encouraging people into terrorism. Should any allegation be received, or if the Council has reason to suspect non-compliance, the Council will investigate and may decide to cancel, modify or withdraw any offer or grant made to ensure compliance with the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.
* Organisations with a sufficient level of funds held as uncommitted, free reserves to meet one year of running costs PLUS the cost of the project may not be eligible to apply. The level of reserves held by all applicants will be taken into account when calculating the level of any award.
* Only one application per organisation may be considered in any one financial year.

**What supporting documents are required?**

* Evidence of wider community support for your project. This might take the form of the results of a community consultation, a petition, social media campaign or a community plan that includes the project.
* An organisational an environmental / sustainability policy or, if you don’t have one, an organisational statement on how you commit to being more sustainable as an organisation.

An environmental / sustainability policy could cover things like how you try to use resources (such as energy, fuels and water) more efficiently, ways to reduce waste and encourage reuse and recycling, and any opportunities to support biodiversity.

* Constitution.
* A copy of the latest audited or independently checked accounts or if you are a new group a projected budget for the first year together with bank statement.
* Copies of three quotes to the same specification. Please indicate which quote your organisation has chosen for the work. The grant will normally be calculated based on the lowest quote.
* A fully completed, signed and dated application form.
1. **Evaluation Criteria**

Applications which meet the eligibility criteria set out above will proceed for evaluation and will be assessed against the following criteria:

* Evidence of community support (maximum score 100)
* Number of beneficiaries (max 50)
* Impact of services / project (max 50)
* Environmental sustainability of project (max 30)
* Proportion of external funding (max 30)
* Financial need to deliver project (max 30)
* Security of tenure (where applicable - max 20)
* Risk to Council reputation (max 20)
1. **Terms and Conditions**
2. Applications can be submitted at any time whilst the fund is open, provided all requested supporting evidence has been supplied.
3. Grants are available for up to 50% of the total cost of a project, with contributions from £2,000 up to a maximum of £25,000.
4. If the applicant is a Parish/Town Council the VAT element of a project, will be excluded from any grant support.
5. Consideration of an award will take into account all other accessible funding streams (eg S106). Further advice is available on request.
6. Applications for a phased project will be considered. Details of the entire project will need to be provided in the initial application.
7. If an application cannot meet all evaluation criteria sufficiently to justify a grant of the full amount requested, consideration may be made to part fund a project.
8. Work cannot proceed until you have received formal notification of the grant.
9. Payment of the grant will be upon production of invoices or receipts. These must be addressed to the applicant organisation and dated after the date of approval.
10. Any grant will remain available for a period of two years from the date of approval. Extensions to this period will only be granted by the Head of Community and Leisure in exceptional circumstances upon written application by the applicant organisation.