

## Guidance Notes

1. The aim of the Town Council's Grants Scheme is to promote a vibrant and active community in Thame. The scheme recognises and supports the valuable contribution made by the voluntary sector to the well-being of the community. It provides financial support for community organisations working for the benefit of residents, with the intention of improving the range of services and activities in the town.
2. **These notes have been prepared to explain the main details of the Grant Scheme. Please read them carefully before you complete the application form.**
3. There is a limited budget each year for grant allocations. The amount requested usually exceeds the amount available. It is important that all the questions on the application form are answered as fully as possible to provide a detailed picture of the activities of your organisation.
4. The maximum funding an organisation can request is 20% of the available budget. For 2021-22 the maximum funding application is set at £2,400.
5. It is essential that the application includes the information and documents requested on the form. In the case of a newly formed organisation, it is necessary to provide a business plan and budget.
6. Applications will only be accepted from charitable or non-profit making organisations.
7. Only one application per organisation will be accepted.
8. Applications for revenue costs (i.e., running costs) will not normally be considered for major funding (in excess of £1,000) and will only be provided on a short-term basis i.e. maximum 1 year, unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated.

If such assistance exceeds £2,000 in any one financial year, the recipient will be required to provide a written report of how the money has been used. That report must be provided within twelve months of the date of the grant, but it may take the form of an annual report or set of accounts, which clearly identify the manner of spending.

9. Applications will be considered for grants under the following criteria:
  - a) Is the organisation in Thame or serves a significant proportion of residents within the parish?
  - b) What benefit does it provide to the town and its inhabitants?
  - c) Would there be a significant adverse effect if the applicants were unable to continue or were hampered by lack of funds?
  - d) Have other sources of funding been secured or are they being sought for the project? Grants over 50% of any project costs will not normally be awarded.
  - e) Is there a more appropriate source of funding the organisation should be directed to, thus relieving the demand on the Council's resources?
  - f) Is the application for capital or revenue costs?
  - g) If revenue has the organisation received similar funding in the previous few years? Applications will not be considered from "upward funders", i.e., local groups whose fund-raising is sent to the central headquarters for redistribution.
  - h) Funding priority will be assessed in the following order:
    - a. Capital Projects
    - b. Community Project Seed funding for the first year
    - c. Revenue support – Salaries/staff costs will not be funded.

10. Applications will not be considered from national organisations or local groups with access to funds from national “umbrella” or “parent” organisations, unless funds are not available from their national bodies, or the funds available are inadequate for a specified project.
11. Applications from religious groups will be considered where an ongoing benefit to the wider community can be demonstrated irrespective of their religious beliefs.
12. Applications from education, health or social services establishments will be considered where the organisation can demonstrate that it is working in partnership with other groups and where there are ongoing benefits to the wider community.
13. Organisations requesting funds for buildings must provide evidence of security of tenure in the relevant property for a minimum of 7 years from the date that the grant is considered.
14. Organisations requesting funds for buildings must provide proof that the property is adequately insured.
15. Where appropriate, organisations may be required to provide progress reports or to allocate a place on the management committee for a Town Council representative.
16. Grants may be claimed at any time during the financial year on provision of evidence that the money has been used for the purpose stated. In the case of an advance payment, written confirmation will be required stating that the money will be used for the purpose requested, as well as completion of a monitoring and evaluation form at the end of the project period or the financial year (i.e., 31 March), whichever is the sooner.
17. It may be required with some applications to request a site visit and meeting with the applicant to discuss the viability of the proposed project.
18. Organisations that receive a grant will be required to acknowledge the Town Council’s contribution on all publicity/printed material.
19. Capital Funding Applications (grants over £5,000) – please contact the Town Clerk to discuss your application.