

Kensworth Parish Council

Grant Awarding Policy

Kensworth Parish Council recognises the value of supporting local community organisations that enhance the quality of life for residents. Through its grant scheme, the Council aims to encourage, strengthen, and sustain local initiatives that provide social, cultural, environmental, or recreational benefits to the community.

This policy explains how the grant scheme works, including the Council's objectives, priorities, eligibility criteria, application process, and the manner in which grants are awarded.

1. Aims and Objectives

The Parish Council Grant Scheme seeks to:

- Support voluntary and community organisations delivering activities that benefit Kensworth residents.
- Promote social inclusion, community cohesion, and wellbeing.
- Encourage projects that enhance the environment, cultural life, or recreational opportunities in the parish.
- Assist voluntary and community organisations in sustainability through funding support.
- Ensure transparent, fair, and accountable use of public funds.

2. Priorities for Awarding Grants

Grants will be considered for projects that align with one or more of the Council's priorities:

- Community Engagement & Social Wellbeing: Projects that bring residents together, foster volunteering, or address social isolation.
- Environmental & Heritage Enhancement: Initiatives that improve the local environment, conserve heritage, or promote sustainable practices.
- Health & Recreation: Activities promoting physical or mental health, sports, or recreational facilities.
- Education & Learning: Workshops, training, or learning opportunities benefiting parish residents.

3. Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must:

1. Be a voluntary or community organisation, registered charity, not-for-profit group.
2. Operate within Kensworth parish or deliver clear benefit to Kensworth residents.
3. Demonstrate that the grant will be used for specific projects or activities aligned with Council priorities.
4. Commit to reporting back to the Council on project outcomes.

4. Ineligible applications include:

- Private benefit to individuals.
- Political parties or projects promoting political agendas.
- Religious organisations unless the project benefits the wider community.
- Retrospective funding for activities already undertaken.
- Statutory education provision.

5. Grant Awards:

- The Council will consider individual grants of £50 to £500, depending on the size, scope, and impact of the project.
- Larger grants may be considered in exceptional cases, subject to full Council approval.

- Grants are usually one-off awards, though multi-year funding may be considered for ongoing community initiatives.

6. Pre-Application Support:

- The Clerk is available to discuss applications prior to submission.
- Draft applications can be reviewed informally for guidance.

7. Application Process:

- Applications are open in February and where funding allows, again in September annually.
- Applicants must complete the Kensworth Parish Council Grant Application Form available from the Parish Council website or from the Parish Council Clerk.
- Supporting information is required with the application:
 - Evidence of community benefit.
 - Most recent annual accounts, showing unrestricted reserves.
 - Other funding sources.

8. Assessment and Awarding Process:

- The Parish Council Clerk reviews each application for eligibility and completeness.
- At its March and October meetings, the Parish Council evaluates applications against alignment with its priorities, the level of expected benefit to the Kensworth community, and determines the successful applications.
- Payments are made in April and where funding allows, during the second round of funding in November, annually.
- Representatives from the applying organisations are encouraged to attend the Annual Parish Meeting of electors held in April.

9. Conditions:

- Awarded funds must be used for the sole purpose in which the agreement was made, or duly returned to the Council.
- Payments cannot be made retrospectively.
- All grant payments must be made to a bank account held in the name of the recipient organisation. Personal or private bank accounts are not eligible to receive grant funds.
- Kensworth Parish Council should be recognised as a funding contributor in the successful applicants publicity material and annual reports.

Grants will be awarded in accordance with the legal powers available to the Council at the time, including but not limited to The General Power of Competence established under the Localism Act 2011, Section 137 and Section 145 of the Local Government Act 1972, Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. Awards must comply and be in accordance with the Council's adopted Financial Regulations and Standing Orders, the Annual governance and accountability return (AGAR), Proper practices under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Councillors must declare interests, and Councillors with a disclosable pecuniary interest must withdraw from discussion and voting.

This policy was adopted by Kensworth Parish Council and shall be reviewed annually.

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