

Community Grant Scheme Guidelines 2025/26

Please read the following guidelines carefully before completing the application form. If you have any queries regarding the application process, please contact Kathryn Bone or Abbi Caine at:

Sevenoaks District Council, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1HG.

Tel: 01732 227000 Email: grants@sevenoaks.gov.uk

Included below are some explanations and tips for the questions in the application form. Please use these when completing the application form online.

Purpose of scheme

Our Community Grant scheme exists to help voluntary organisations and groups which provide projects, services or activities that benefit people living, working or volunteering in the Sevenoaks District, focusing on those in greatest need.

In particular, we want to support projects, services or activities that are delivered with the help of volunteers and that support the priorities of “Our Communities” within the Sevenoaks District Community Plan.

What are the scheme's priorities?

- Address and reduce anti-social behaviour within the community, focusing particularly on the most vulnerable.
- Projects, services and activities that encourage participation and empower young people in local community.
- Promote, support and improve access to volunteering opportunities as part of a project, service or activity.
- Encourage participation and improve opportunities for excluded or vulnerable groups.
- Improve the wellbeing of residents.
- Projects, services and activities that support and empower carers.
- Help address and deliver digital inclusion.
- Support communities to live happily together and provide information, advice, advocacy or counselling to those in need.
- Projects, services and activities that work in partnership to achieve the priorities listed above.

Who can apply?

You can apply if you deliver services to those that live, work or volunteer in the Sevenoaks District.

Applications for grants **over £1,000** must provide services or benefit residents in **two or more parishes** and applicants must be one of the following:

- “Not for profit” registered charity
- Youth organisation
- Voluntary organisation
- Community Interest Company.

Applications for **grants £1,000 or under** must provide services or benefit residents in **at least one parish** and applicants must be either one of the organisations listed above or a community group with a constitution or set of rules.

How much and what can I apply for?

The minimum you can apply for is **£100**.

You can apply either for a grant of up to and including £1,000 OR up to and including £5,000. There are two different application forms. Please make sure you use the correct one.

The grant can be spent on project, service or activity costs such as support for volunteers, equipment or premises hire. In addition, you can apply for core running costs that are commensurate with the project, service or activity applied for.

What we will not fund

We will not fund:

- Projects, services, activities that are not completed between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026.
- For grants over £1,000, projects, services or activities that serve only one parish
- Projects, services or activities that are primarily the responsibility of another agency or funder, such as the Sevenoaks District Sports Council (email Edward Oatley at janandedward@btinternet.com for further information) and [Sevenoaks District Arts Council](#).
- Costs for projects, services or activities that your organisation or group is already delivering in the District as part of an existing contract or service level agreement with another funder.
- Costs for projects, services or activities that have already started or been delivered
- Projects, services or activities where the beneficiaries are not those living, working or volunteering in the Sevenoaks District

- Private concerns operated as a business
- Organisations seeking to add capital to their reserves including those whose free reserves are higher than their annual expenditure
- Local organisations seeking funding for a central HQ
- Religious or political organisations
- Individuals
- Work that should be provided by statutory, educational, health organisations or social services
- Schools or parent/teacher organisations
- Large capital projects.

When can I apply?

There is one round of grant funding each financial year. This round is for projects, services and activities that will be completed between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026.

The deadline for applications is **midday Wednesday 9th October**.

You will be advised of the outcome of your application by the end of March

Please bear these timescales in mind when requesting funding for your activity.

What are the terms and conditions?

By applying, you are confirming that you comply with the terms and conditions. The main conditions include:

- The project, service or activity being funded must be completed between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026.
- Your organisation or group has a constitution or set of rules.
- Your organisation or group has (or for newly formed organisations or groups, confirm that you will have at the point of receiving this grant) a bank account with at least two authorised signatories.
- Your organisation or group has an equality policy in place (or for a newly formed organisation or group, agrees to implement one) and is prepared to sign our Equality Statement.
- All appropriate legal agreements, insurances and permissions needed to deliver the project are in place. Your organisation will comply with all relevant statutory requirements.
- Your organisation has all appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place. For newly formed organisations or groups, the award of a grant will be conditional upon the implementation of suitable safeguarding arrangements for children and vulnerable adults (including the completion of enhanced level Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks and appropriate training for all staff and volunteers).

- Any grant you are awarded will be used only for the project, services or activities set out in your application and will be ring-fenced for those living, working or volunteering in the Sevenoaks District. It must not be used for any other purpose. The Council will require the grant funding back should the project, services or activities not go ahead and/or the funding not be used strictly in accordance with the application and grant offer.
- The project, service or activity outlined in this application is not already the subject of a service level agreement or other agreement with another authority.
- You will be required to submit monitoring for your project, services or activities with supporting evidence including as a minimum one case study.
- All publicity materials and annual reports must acknowledge our support using the branding and logo provided.
- Your organisation or group can only submit one application in any financial year.

How will we assess your project?

The appraisal process will look at:

- Your eligibility to apply
- The extent to which your project meets the Scheme's priorities
- How many people will benefit from your project and the value for money
- The level of benefit and the outcomes to those living, working or volunteering in the Sevenoaks District
- The level of need for the project, service or activity
- The level of funding already received from the Council over the previous two years and the outcome from any monitoring from these grants
- The sustainability of the project, service or activity beyond the length of the funding.

Explanations and tips for completing the online application form

Can more than one person work on the application form?

No, only one person can access the online application form. However, we have provided a template application form for you to share with colleagues so that you can capture everyone's comments and draft your answers before entering them into the online form.

Do I have to complete the form in one go or can I save it and come back to it later?

You will need to complete the form in one go. There is no option to save it and come back later.

Questions 2.7 to 2.10: Safeguarding

If you are a newly formed organisation or group and do not yet have in place a Safeguarding Policy please tick "no". Please then email grants@sevenoaks.gov.uk and

state who your Safeguarding Lead is/will be; how your process works/will work; and what training has been completed/is outstanding to be undertaken. Also state what assistance you might need from the Council to implement the necessary Safeguarding Policy or Policies. The Council can offer a range of advice and support to new and existing groups in the development of their policies, however, please note that it is likely that any grants offered will be conditional upon a safeguarding policy being developed.

Section 4: Number of Volunteers (Q4.2) & Volunteer Hours (Q4.3)

Please state the number of volunteers and the total number of volunteer hours that will be used to deliver your project, service or activity through the funding you are requesting in this application only. Please note that this differs to the volunteer information captured in question 2.2 which is regarding your organisation as a whole rather than the specific project or activity for which you are applying for funding.

Section 4: Performance indicators

Applicants are required to provide outcomes of the grant, which will form the basis of their performance monitoring.

These specified outcomes will be used to assess the application and should therefore reflect how the application will meet the scheme's priorities.

To do this you will need to select key performance indicator(s) from a drop down menu. A list of those available in the drop down menu is provided at the end of this document. If you have any questions regarding this, please do not hesitate to get in touch with Abbi Caine or Kathryn Bone at grants@sevenoaks.gov.uk. Please ensure your indicator reflects the key outcome(s) of your project, service or activity and is measurable.

Section 4: Measuring performance indicators

Examples of how to measure Key Performance Indicators include (but is not limited to): ask questions before and after; use a survey; and produce a case study including quotations from beneficiaries.

Questions 4.7 to 4.9: Impact on beneficiaries due to a reduced grant

Sometimes the Council is unable to award the full funding that applicants have requested. In this section please provide the number of beneficiaries of your project should you not receive the full grant and let us know how you would adapt your project to achieve this.

Section 7: Equality Policy – newly formed organisations and groups

Please note that for newly formed organisations and groups the Council can provide assistance with the implementation of a suitable Equality Policy. If you are in this position you can confirm it by answering 'yes' to the second part of question 7.1.

Error Messages & Character Count:

If you find you cannot move onto the next page or submit your application please look out for any error messages next to the questions and follow the instruction. A common

error message is "Please insert a valid integer", if you see this message please ensure you have only input numbers in this box.

Please also be aware that text boxes have a limit to the number of characters that can be included. These will clearly be shown in the online form and will be counted down as you type.

Any other queries

For any queries that you cannot find the answer to here, please contact Abbi Caine or Kathryn Bone via email at grants@sevenoaks.gov.uk or call 01732 227000.

When will you know if your application is successful?

You will be advised of the outcome of your application by the end of March 2025 with successful projects receiving funding in early April 2025. Please bear these timescales in mind when requesting funding for your activity.

List of performance indicators available:

In Section 4 of the application, you will be asked to select a performance indicator(s). For ease, we have provided the list of options available to you here. If you have any questions about this please do not hesitate to contact Abbi Caine or Kathryn Bone on grants@sevenoaks.gov.uk.

The number of organisations reporting improved volunteer support structure.
The number of people attending a library visit.
The number of people signposted by a food bank to other relevant services.
The number of assisted travel miles.
The number of people reporting emotional and physical cost of stalking / domestic abuse.
The number of people reporting an improved feeling of safety.
The number of people with improved confidence in using the internet.
The number of people getting online for the first time.
The number of people reporting making savings from accessing the internet.
The number of people reporting improved wellbeing as a result of engagement in crafts
Number of people receiving support to have their say / advocacy.
The number of people participating at a one off event.
The number of people reporting feeling like they belong in their community / neighbourhood.
The number of people reporting reduced social isolation.
The number of older people benefitting from befriending
The number of people reporting improved wellbeing as a result of a reduction in loneliness
The number of people reporting the value of financial comfort

The number of people reporting relief from debt.
The number of volunteers or staff receiving budget or debt advice training.
The number of people regularly attending a local organisation.
The number of volunteers.
The number of volunteers reporting the value of frequent volunteering.
The number of people feeling satisfied from attending a course.
The number of people with improved wellbeing as a result of a training course.
The number of people attending a course that later supports progression into work.
The number of young people receiving mentor training/support.
The number of people attending a family learning course to support young people to do well in education.
The number of people receiving training for front line response to domestic abuse.
The number of employees recruited who are special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
The number of people attending equality or disability training
The number of people reporting a reduced grocery bill as a result of being given or growing fresh vegetables.
The number of people that value living near green space.
The number of people attending a course and reporting more confidence as a result.
The number of clients with learning disabilities receiving day care support.
Number of people being supported by a food bank.
Number of older people signposted to relevant services.
Number of people attending a sensory space session.
The number of people reporting improved mental health.

The number of people reporting relief from depression and anxiety.
The number of people reporting reduced levels of anxiety and stress.
The number of people reporting improved health and wellbeing as a result of self esteem and confidence.
The number of children reporting improved confidence and aptitude.
The number of people receiving a therapy session
The number of people reporting improved governance & staff relationships within their organisation.