

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Community Grants Scheme 2021-22

Explanatory Notes



Bromsgrove
District Council

www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Who can apply for a grant?
3. What are the criteria for awarding a grant?
4. The Council's Strategic Purposes.
5. Who determines grant applications?
6. How grants are paid and any conditions attached to them.
7. Monitoring Projects
8. What happens if a bid is unsuccessful?
9. The Grant Application Process Timetable.
10. Contacts and where to find more information.
11. Supporting Documentation

1. Introduction – What is the Community Grant Scheme and where does the funding come from?

In previous years the Council has allocated a percentage of the New Homes Bonus (NHB) funding it received to the NHB Community Grants Scheme. However, funding from Central Government for NHB has reduced for 2021/22 and there is no certainty around its provision in future years. Therefore, for 2021/22 the Council was left with £12,000 to distribute within the community. Due to the exceptional circumstances the District has found itself in and continues to face due to the pandemic, it was agreed that an additional £68,000 from Covid grant funding should be combined with this figure to create a community grants budget for 2021/22.

For the financial year 2021/22 the Council has allocated £80,000 for a Community Grant Scheme. This Scheme will run for 12 months and be reviewed as part of the budget process for the financial year 2022/23.

The Community Grants Scheme will replace the NHB Community Grants Scheme but will follow the principles of that original scheme. These explanatory notes provide a summary of the new Scheme and should be read in conjunction with the Frequently Asked Questions document also available, together with the application form and the timeline for applications.

All documents are available on the Council's website.

2. Who Can Apply for a Grant?

The Community Grants Scheme is intended for not-for-profit groups, such as voluntary organisations, residents' groups, community groups and associations including Parish Councils within Bromsgrove District. Organisations outside the District may also apply where they are delivering projects/activities that benefit specific areas within the District.

Grants will not be paid to individuals.

You will need to provide full details of your organisation when completing the application form. The relevant Ward Councillor will also need to sign the application form and provide a statement as to why they support your project (including highlighting how it meets the Council's strategic priorities).

3. What are the Criteria for Awarding a Grant?

Projects should be substantial and sustainable and provide a legacy for the areas in which they are located whilst also being in line with the Council's strategic purposes (detailed at section 4 of these explanatory notes). The key element of these criteria is ensuring that funded projects complement the Council's long term strategic priorities.

Each organisation may bid for up to £5,000 and there should be only one application per organisation. The Panel will not usually consider more than one application from the same organisation within the 12 month period.

Priority will be given to applications according to the following criteria:

- Meet at least one of the Council's strategic purposes (see section 4 for full details.)
- Proposals demonstrate the basis of need or demand as well as the benefits to the local area.
- A negative impact as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Projects must be sustainable.
- All applicants agree to acknowledge the Council as a funder of the project.
- All funded projects keep full records of their activities and how the grant has been spent
- The details of other organisations that have been approached for funding (where part funding is being requested).
- The total cost and timescales of the project.
- The communities that will be served by the project.
- Support (including a comprehensive written statement) from the Ward Councillor.

4. Bromsgrove District Council's Strategic Purposes



Run & grow a successful business

What does this mean to me?

Businesses choose to come to Bromsgrove & grow here, providing services & jobs.

Further development enhances the town & district centres as places that people want to visit.

Improved connectivity makes life easier, whether that's on the roads or online.

Why?

As an entrepreneurial area, supporting business is incredibly important for the District. Through North Worcestershire Economic Development & Regeneration we will continue to support new businesses. We will also work with established companies within the District to help them grow & flourish.

We are committed to making the Town & district centres places that residents & visitors can enjoy & that attract a variety of businesses.

Celebrating the rising stars of North Worcestershire



Priority: Economic development & regeneration


We will:

Consult businesses to understand current needs & growth plans, working with partners to support business growth.

How we will measure it:

- Number of businesses engaged through the consultation
- Number of existing businesses supported to grow & develop
- Number engaged through the skills audit.





Live independent, active & healthy lives

What does this mean to me?

People are supported to maintain a healthy lifestyle.


Communities & individuals feel less isolated.

There are more positive things to do through improved access to sport & cultural activities.

Why?

Whilst the health of people in Bromsgrove District is generally good, health priorities include improving mental well-being, increasing physical activity & ageing well. Increasing numbers of people living with reduced mobility, dementia & diabetes are an issue for the District. Through the Bromsgrove Partnership, Bromsgrove District Council will continue to play its part in addressing these issues.

We also want to enhance sport & cultural opportunities in the District, which will have health & social benefits.



Priority: Improving health & well-being

We will:

Support targeted activities for healthy lifestyles.

How we will measure it:

- Number of people accessing targeted activities
- Number of people with diabetes
- Number of people who have had a stroke

Affordable & sustainable homes



What does this mean to me?

More affordable & appropriate homes become available.

Private tenants have homes which are safe & tenancies which are secure & affordable.

Homes can adapt to changes in circumstances & are increasingly energy efficient.

Why?

Bromsgrove has the highest level of home ownership in Worcestershire, & the smallest private rented sector in the county; demand for housing within the district has had a significant impact on property prices.

Access to affordable housing is recognised as an issue, as is ensuring homes are sustainable into the future.



Priority: A balanced housing market

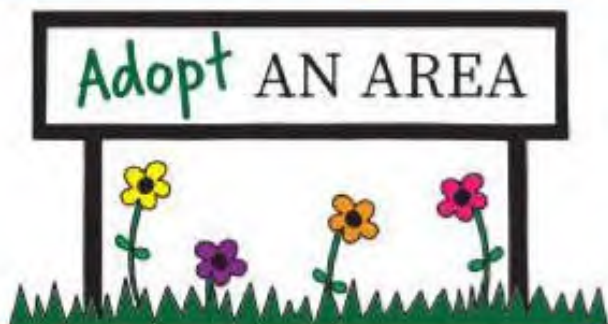
We will:

Develop & implement a District Housing Strategy.

How we will measure it:

- Number of affordable homes (commitments & completions)

Communities which are safe, well-maintained & green



What does this mean to me?

Crime & anti-social behaviour reduces even further & the fear of crime also starts to decrease.

The district is well-maintained & people feel involved in keeping it clean.

It's easier to recycle more & reduce waste going to landfill.

Why?

Bromsgrove District Council has committed to playing its part in addressing the impact of climate change; from work to increase recycling to support to reduce fuel poverty, a **green thread** runs throughout this Council Plan.

It is important to ensure that Bromsgrove remains attractive for everyone, & our Place Teams, in partnership with local communities, provide a strong service across the District.

The District is a low crime area; through the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership we continue to work hard to address the causes of crime & anti-social behaviour & to support victims.

YOU CAN'T BE THE 'IN-CROWD' FROM OUTSIDE

BANNED FROM ONE, BANNED FROM ALL

Bromsgrove will not tolerate anti-social behaviour.

As well as facing arrest, if one member venue of Bromsgrove Pubmatch bans you, you will be banned from all member venues in Bromsgrove town centre for up to 5 years. Have a safe and enjoyable night out.

Logos for Bromsgrove District Council, eCR, and other partners are at the bottom.

Priority: Reducing crime & disorder

We will:

Target the causes of crime affecting the night-time economy.

How we will measure it:

- Anti-social behaviour reports in the Town & district centres
- Crimes in the Town & district centres

Work & financial independence



What does this mean to me?

There are more opportunities for young people, with the right skills for local businesses.

Money management support will help to reduce debt & increase financial confidence.

People get the benefits they are entitled to, when they need them.

Why?

The economic picture for Bromsgrove District is positive, with consistently low unemployment. However, the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2015 (specifically income, employment & education indicators) show there were issues, particularly in parts of Charford & Sidemoor.

We will support our residents to access work opportunities in new industries, focusing on the skills agenda. We will also work with residents to help them manage their money & access the right benefits.



Priority: Skills for the future

We will:

Undertake a skills audit with partners & work together with them to address any gaps.

How we will measure it:

- Number engaged through the skills audit.

5. Who Determines Grant Applications?

Officers of the Council will assess applications to ensure they satisfy the criteria for eligibility, whether any further information is required and whether costs are realistic, relative to the proposals and the funds available.

Applications which are clearly ineligible or inappropriate may be rejected with the agreement of the Chairman of the Community Grants Panel. Otherwise officers will prepare a report for the Panel, summarising each bid and making a recommendation.

The Community Grants Panel, comprising of Councillors (the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling, the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing and Health and Wellbeing, together with a representative from each political group) will meet in August 2021. They are supported by officers and the meeting(s) will be held virtually, using Microsoft Teams and accessible to the public via the Council's You Tube channel.

Applicants will be invited (and encouraged) to attend the meeting in order to respond to questions or points of clarification from the Panel.

The Community Grants Panel will then make a recommendation to the Council's Cabinet. Any interested party can make representations in writing, which will be reported to Cabinet. The Cabinet meetings are also open to the general public.

A full timetable is detailed at section 9 of these explanatory notes and sets out the exact dates of when the invitation for applications will be open and the closing date for applications, together with details of when the Community Grants Panel recommendations will be considered by Cabinet. Following approval of those recommendations the successful applicants will be contacted and provided with details of when the monies from successful bids will be paid.

6. How Grants are Paid and any Conditions attached to them.

A funding agreement will be signed and will include standard conditions, for example:

- Timescales for the project and a schedule of funding payments
- That the contribution made by the Community Grants Scheme must be clearly identified to the local community.

Other conditions of funding may be included, depending on the nature of each project. All projects must be completed by the end of the financial year 2021/22 unless otherwise agreed by the Community Grants Panel. If part-funding is agreed proof must be given as to where the other money is coming from.

A payment schedule will be agreed as part of the Funding Agreement for each successful application. Any monitoring requirements will be agreed for each individual project as part of the conditions of the funding.

It is important to inform the Council of any delays or changes in plans as this may impact on payment or a request for the return of the grant. It cannot be transferred to another project.

7. Monitoring Projects

Evidence would be required to show that the project has been completed as agreed before any payment was made.

You will receive a reminder asking for a progress report 12 months after the decision has been made to give you a grant and every 6 months thereafter until the project has been completed. We would expect the progress report to include photographic evidence of the work being undertaken.

8. What Happens if a Bid is not successful?

If a bid is not successful you will be advised and given the reasons. In exceptional circumstances the Panel may request some more information and offer to reconsider the bid at a future meeting.

There is no appeals process, however if you are refused a grant you can still apply for future/alternative projects providing they meet the Council's criteria.

9. The Grant Application Process Timetable

Timetable

Date Applications Open	Date Applications Close
9.00 a.m. Tuesday 4 th May 2021	5.00 p.m. Friday 18 th June 2021

There will be an opportunity for applicants to have their submissions verified, giving them an opportunity to be resubmitted prior to the closing date. This will apply to applications received no later than 9 am on 28th May 2021. Any incomplete application received after that date will be automatically rejected.

Date of Community Grants Panel Meeting	Date of Cabinet Meeting
4.00 pm Tuesday 10 th August 2021 and (Wednesday 11 th August 2021 if required)	6.00 p.m. Wednesday 15 th September 2021

10. Contacts and Where to find more information

Community Grants Panel Members

The Panel is made up of a Councillor Representative from each political group together with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling and Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing and Health and Wellbeing.

Supporting Officers

Chris Forrester – Head of Finance and Customer Service
Amanda Scarce – Democratic Services Officer

11. Documentation

- Application Form
- FAQs
- Timeline