

About the Community Grant Scheme

Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council (RSCTC) provides grants to local voluntary, community and not for profit organisations to support a range of projects to benefit the people of the town. The Scheme aims to support projects and activities that are of importance to local residents and ones that meet priorities set out in the RSCTC's Strategic Plan 2024-2028.

- Representing our community most effectively
- Regenerating the Town Centre
- Planning for a sustainable future
- Preserving and enhancing Sutton Park
- Delivering more services locally
- Celebrating local arts, heritage and culture
- Sustaining thriving and safe local communities

We understand that newly formed groups and organisations may need more support, as they learn about grant funding processes. The information below might feel overwhelming, and we would encourage you to contact us very early on, so that we can support and advise you on how to proceed.

What should you do first?

Pre-application: In the first instance, you should make contact with the Town Council to speak to an Officer about your organisation and project idea:

enquiries@suttoncoldfieldtowncouncil.gov.uk

The term 'project' is used to describe a range of activities, services, events.

The Officer will discuss whether or not your organisation is eligible to apply and whether the project meets one or more of RSCTC's priorities. Officers may propose seeking alternative funding or linking to other local projects. If it appears that your project is eligible, they will send you an application form with guidance notes.

Please let us know if you have any communication support needs that make completing an application form difficult for you. We are happy to discuss alternative ways for you to tell us about your idea.

How much is available?

There are two categories:

- Grants of up to £5,000 • Grants of between £5,001 - £20,000*

How long is the grant period?

- Grants will be awarded for up to 12 months only.
- *Applications for multi-year grants - over 24 or 36 months - will be considered by exception. This will only apply for applicants applying for larger grants between £5,001 - £20,000 in total, and will be awarded over the RSCTC 2023 - 2026 funding cycle.

Applicants can only hold one grant in a 12-month period. If the organisation holds a grant for a period of longer than 12 months, up to 3 years, then it cannot apply for any new project during this time.

Organisations will need to demonstrate how they will continue, or conclude, their project once the grant ends.

The grant scheme can fund up to 100% of project costs and so match funding is not always necessary. However, if the cost of your project exceeds the amount of grant you are requesting you will need to tell us how you intend to meet the shortfall.

We will require some of the same information for both large and small grant applications, relating to your organisation's activities, governance and financial management.

Who can apply?

To apply for a grant your organisation must be a voluntary and community organisation, including faith organisations and social enterprises, that is a:

- Constituted 'not for profit' group or club
- Registered charity or excepted charity
- Charitable incorporated organisation (CIO)
- Community Amateur Sports Clubs
- Community interest company (CIC), limited by guarantee with appropriate 'asset lock'
- School (as long as your project is not replacing a statutory function and benefits and involves the community around the school)

We cannot support applications from:

- Sole traders or organisations that are aimed at generating profits primarily for private distribution. Those not asset locked, or organisations that can pay profits to directors or shareholders.
- Any group that the Town Council considers to be working within a business or with profit making remit
- CICs limited by shares
- Local Authorities or other Public Sector Organisations

We won't fund projects:

- Where the aims and objectives are around party political activism
- That directly promote a particular religious belief
- That do not benefit the residents of Sutton Coldfield
- That have already been completed or items already purchased
- That cover contingency costs, loans, endowments, or interest and any VAT you can reclaim
- That are profit making or fundraising activities
- Where in-kind support is included
- That cover the cost of alcohol

What can the grant be used for?

Revenue costs such as:

- Staffing costs
- Volunteer expenses
- Training fees
- Travel costs
- Premises/rent
- Publicising your project
- Professional fees
- Event costs
- General repairs
- New projects

Capital costs such as:

- Building and land improvements
- Vehicle purchase
- Recreation facilities
- Play equipment
- IT equipment
- Sports equipment
- Facilities for people with disabilities
- Energy efficiency measures

When are the application deadlines?

There will be three deadlines in each financial year:

- o April deadline - outcome June
- o September deadline – outcome November
- o January deadline - outcome March

Please contact us for exact dates and times
enquiries@suttoncoldfieldtowncouncil.gov.uk

Applications must be received by 12 noon on the deadline day, on the application form supplied by Officers. Late or incomplete applications (for example, missing information, incorrect or incomplete supporting documents) will not progress to assessment. This is why it is important to start a conversation with Officers before you begin your application, so that you have time to collect the relevant information.

What happens after I apply?

Post-application assessment: During assessment of your application Officers may seek further clarification on an organisation's finances, to report to the Grants Panel. For example, the level of free reserves, or if your annual audited accounts are over 12 months old, we might request recent management accounts.

Decision making processes: Your application will be reviewed by The Grants Panel. The Grants Panel is made up of eight Councillors, with one representative from each ward. The Grants Panel will assess the application against criteria such as:

- Evidence of need
- Assessment of benefit the project delivers to the people you plan to reach
- Environmental impact
- Outcomes following the project
- Consideration given to those with additional needs
- Financial stability after the grant ends, such as meeting ongoing staff and premises costs

If the grant application is for an amount less than or equal to £10,000, the Grants Panel will make a recommendation to the Amenities, Leisure and Community Services Committee on whether, or not, to award funding.

If the grant application is for an amount greater than £10,000, the Grants Panel will make a recommendation to the Amenities, Leisure and Community Services Committee for the Committee to recommend to Full Council on whether, or not, to award funding.

You should expect to hear from officers regarding the outcome of your application, no later than a week following these meetings.

Notification of outcome

All applicants will receive notification regarding the outcome of the grant.

If successful, you will receive an offer letter and a Conditions of Grant Agreement (COGA). This will need to be signed and returned to the town council. The COGA contains information such as use of funds, monitoring, reporting and publicity requirements.

Depending on your project, the COGA may include certain conditions that have to be met before payment is made. For example, confirmation of planning permission.

Payment will be made to your organisation's bank account within six weeks of receipt of the signed COGA. Whole or partial payment of a grant may depend on the specified conditions.

Monitoring, reporting and publicity

Part of the COGA conditions are to provide Officers with regular feedback on the outcomes of the grant, whilst it is active. We know that things don't always go to plan and if we know early on, we can advise on any changes that we might need to agree.

Depending on the size and duration of a grant, we will expect progress reports against the information supplied in your application form.

We will also ask about the impact of the grant and to help you promote the project and your organisation's good work. This could be through social media (which RSCTC will be happy to repost), or attending and photographing your events. We will also ask you to include the RSCTC logo on your promotional activity relating to the grant.

We may also ask you to attend a committee meeting to report on the project for which you received funding.

Further detail on all of the above is contained in the application guidance notes.