

City of Durham Parish Council Grants Policy

City of Durham Parish Council is funded by the residents of City of Durham and has limited funds available to assist community organisations located and working in our Parish for the benefit of the community.

Subject to funding being available, the City of Durham Parish Council is committed to providing assistance and support to local community organisations which are set up to promote community life for our residents. The Council's financial support is provided by way of grants, which are decided against criteria set by the Parish Council.

In order for the Council to be able to assess each application objectively, it is necessary to assess all applications received against a range of criteria.

- The project to be funded meets the aims and objectives of the Parish Council.
- Assistance will be given on the basis of need, merit and contribution to the local community.
- Applicants must clearly show how any assistance given will benefit the people living in the Parish or will benefit the environment of our Parish.
- Any assistance given will be subject to on-going monitoring and subsequent evaluation of the outcome of the grant.
- Organisations should not make a presumption that funding will continue on a year-to-year basis.

The Aims of the Council's Grant Policy

City of Durham Parish Council provides grant funding to support the following aims:

- To enable local people to participate in voluntary groups and activities.
- To help the parishes' voluntary groups to improve their effectiveness.
- To ensure the provision of services, needed by the residents, via the voluntary sector.
- To support organisations which meet the needs of people experiencing social and economic difficulties.
- To ensure that there is equality of access and opportunity for all parishioners of City of Durham to the services it provides and funds.
- To improve or enhance the local environment.
- To give local people a role in spending Parish funds and achieving value for money.

The Council defines a voluntary group as a non-profit making organisation, set up and run by a voluntary management committee.

The Grants Process

To apply for a Council grant you must be a charity, community group or local voluntary organisation with a constitution and dedicated bank account, operating or providing a service to the community. All funding requests must use our application form and applicants should provide all information requested.

The amount of money available for grants varies each year, depending on the overall council budget.

The Parish Council particularly welcomes applications from small or newly formed groups and those that have not applied to us before.

The Parish Council is able to consider small grant applications throughout the year.

City of Durham Parish Council uses the following criteria to decide on grant applications:

- The organisation (even if it is a national organisation) is based or has a branch locally and benefits local residents.
- Can demonstrate a record of, or potential, benefit to the Parish.
- The organisation can demonstrate how the money will be used, including confirmation of the prior engagement of any third party which may be involved in the delivery or implementation of the grant.
- A group bank account must be held. Cheques WILL NOT be made payable to individuals.
- A copy of the last audited accounts to be included.

City of Durham Parish Council will not fund the following:

Organisations that do not provide a service to the Parish of City of Durham.

- Individuals or appeals supporting an individual.
- General appeals.
- Statutory organisations or the direct replacement of statutory funding.
- Political groups or activities promoting political beliefs.
- Religious groups where funding is to be used to promote religious beliefs.
- Arts & sports projects with no community or charitable element.
- Any organisations with a restricted membership which has not been lawfully agreed.
- Medical research, equipment or treatment.
- Projects that may take place before an application can be decided.
- Equipment or other costs that have already been purchased or incurred prior to the application being considered.

City of Durham Grants - Grants are usually offered on a one-off basis to support a particular project, event, activity or the purchase of equipment. They are also open to new groups wishing to start up and receive a small contribution towards their running costs.

The application process

Groups must apply for funding using the appropriate application form.

Grant application forms can be downloaded from the Council's website or are available from the Clerk. The Clerk can also provide assistance to any group having difficulties completing the application form.

Grant applications will only be considered if all sections of the form are completed and appropriate supporting information/evidence is supplied where requested.

All valid grant applications will be assessed and presented to the Council for consideration.

All applicants will be notified of the Council's decisions.

Only grant applications made within the funding window of April – June in any given year may be considered. A decision on any grant application will be made no earlier than at the end of this funding window. Where there is a surplus on the grants account after allocations agreed by the Council under the funding window of April – June in any one year, the Council may approve, within an agreed period in the same financial year, a further funding window under the same requirements of this policy for the normal funding window.

Payments

Grants will only be paid to the named organisation.

Monitoring and reporting requirements

As a condition of receiving a grant from City of Durham Parish Council, groups are expected to provide the Council with written evidence of what the money has been spent on and the benefit it has brought to the people of the Parish.

Such evidence of how the money has been spent should include copies of invoices and receipts, plus attendance numbers, photos, press clippings, etc. where applicable. This information should be submitted within 1 month of the event/project end or by the end of June each year whichever is sooner.

All grant recipients must provide a written report (a pro forma for which is provided in May each year by the Clerk) so that the Parish Council can assess the impact of this grant award. Failure to return this report by mid-July (one year following receipt of the grant), without a pre-arranged extension to spend the funds, will result in the Parish Council requesting a return of all funds provided.

General grant conditions

- The grant can only be used for the purpose stated in the application and the Council reserves the right to reclaim any grant not being used for the specified purpose of the application. However, if a group wishes to change the purpose of the grant, they must seek approval by writing to the Council who will consider whether or not to approve the change.
- Applications for projects where the work has already been completed will not be considered.

- The Council will not support grants for the repayment of loans or cost of services, equipment or provisions in anticipation of a grant.
- Grants must be spent within 1 year of award. Any unspent monies left after this time must be returned, unless an extension is specifically agreed by the Parish Council's Finance Committee.
- Organisations are responsible for ensuring that they comply with all applicable legal and statutory requirements (including those relating to health and safety and equalities) and securing confirmation of the prior engagement of any third party which may be involved in the delivery or implementation of the grant.
- Should for any reason the organisation disband or the project is not completed the Council may ask for all or part of the monies to be paid back.
- Acknowledgement of the financial support received from the Council is required on documentation and any promotional material, including websites.
- In order to receive payment organisations/groups must have a bank account into which grants can be paid; payments will not be made to private individuals.
- The Council will not normally consider applications for the same project from the same organisation for a third consecutive year.
- Additional grant conditions may also be attached to any funding from City of Durham Parish Council and these will be set out in the award confirmation letter. Failure to comply with any conditions attached to a grant may result in the grant being repaid or impact on future grant assistance.

Date adopted: July 2025

Date to be reviewed: May 2026