

MEMBER GRANTS

2025-26



GUIDANCE ON APPLYING TO THE MEMBER GRANTS SCHEME

Before completing an application form please read this document carefully.

Swale Borough Council's 47 Councillors have each been given an allocation of £1,000 for 2025/26 to support local community projects.

The fund is to support small scale, local community projects such as those which bring cultural, sporting, recreational, health, environmental, heritage, community safety, crime reduction or educational benefits to the local community. This includes voluntary and community groups which are addressing the challenges caused by cost of living and linked to increasing inequalities faced by Swale residents. For more information on the types of inequalities residents are facing please visit [Strategies and policies - Empowering You in Swale](#). Grants cannot be used to support items which should be funded by mainstream public expenditure or awarded to individuals. Councillors are able to 'pool' their allocations to support a project.

Once you have completed the application, including getting supporting evidence of councillor approval, the form should be submitted to Swale Borough Council for assessment.

Successful applicants will be notified within 3 weeks after submission, (subject to meeting all grant conditions), and payment will be made within 30 days from receipt of the completed grant acceptance form.

Who can apply for funding? (refers to Status of your organisation)

- Unincorporated associations such as community groups;
- Incorporated organisations such as registered charities;
- Companies limited by guarantee and
- Social enterprises.

What can the grant be used for? (refers to Project and Activity)

The fund is to support local, small scale community projects such as those which bring cultural, sporting, recreational, health, environmental, heritage, community safety, crime reduction or educational benefits to the local community. This includes voluntary and community groups which are addressing the challenges caused by cost of living and linked to increasing inequalities faced by Swale residents. For more information on the types of inequalities residents are facing please visit [Strategies and policies - Empowering You in Swale](#). The fund cannot be used to support items which should be funded by mainstream public expenditure such as highways or footways. Grants should also not support political or directly religious activity.

Voluntary and community groups can apply if they have:

- A governing document that has as a minimum the name, aim/purpose, objects, a dissolution clause for the organisation, a list of Trustee/committee members and Trustee/committee member signatures. This can be known as a terms of reference, please contact the office if you are unsure;
- A bank or building society account in the organisation's name;
- Up-to-date annual accounts (for groups over 12 months old), or a 12-month cash-flow forecast for new organisations

APPLYING FOR A GRANT

Developing your bid

Your application will need the support of the local councillor(s). Please contact your local councillor(s) in the first instance, discuss your proposal, and if they wish to support the application. Once you have their support you should request email confirmation of the amount they would like to allocate which can then be submitted with your application. A list of Councillors, listed alphabetically by the Wards they represent, is available via this link:

<https://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/mgFindMember.aspx>

Please note that a councillor cannot support an application where they have a personal or prejudicial interest in the grant.

Making the application

Applications are made by filling out the Member Grants Application Form. Forms can be completed on our website: swale.gov.uk/member-grants. Please contact the Community Development Team if you require assistance in completing the form at communitygrants@swale.gov.uk

Who will assess the bids?

The bids are assessed by the Community Grants and Support officer, and approved by the Community and Partnerships Manager.

Required Information

- Application form
- Evidence of Councillor(s) agreement of allocation and amount

Without these we cannot proceed with assessing your application.

Additional Information

Please be aware that before the offer of a grant, further information may be required about your project. If working with vulnerable adults or children please ensure that the relevant and current (annually reviewed), Safeguarding/Equality & Diversity policies are held and that you are able to produce current documentation.

Please also note that the grant award must and can only be spent on the project as you have outlined in your application form.

Grant Payment

Successful applicants will be notified by the Community Grants team within 3 weeks of submission, and a grant acceptance email will be sent to you to finalise payment. Once the acceptance letter has been returned, we will arrange for the payment of the grant, which takes approximately 30 days from receipt of the completed acceptance letter.

Monitoring and Grant Evaluation

A monitoring form must be completed and sent back no later than 3 months after the grant has been paid or following project completion. Swale Borough Council will also require evidence, through relevant invoices or accounts, of how the grant has been spent. If monitoring information is not provided to a sufficient standard, Swale Borough Council reserves the right to request the full repayment of the grant or will be unable to process any future applications, until the information is received.

Exceptions to funding

- Individuals (or where the benefit of the grant will only benefit an individual)
- Party political groups or political activities. This includes any Parish Council (or group of), District Councils, or the Kent County Council where any grant would challenge or oppose the democratic functions of that Local Government. Or where such grants would be deemed to risk the reputational standing of Kent County Council.
- Church or Faith groups who are using the grant to promote religious activity.
- Schools and Academies cannot apply for funds towards capital costs; teaching materials; or curriculum delivery (although they may apply for funding towards projects that support wider community benefit).
- Business/ companies which do not reinvest surpluses for community benefit.

This Council agrees to ban the use and release of sky lanterns and balloons and the misuse of drones from land owned or managed by Swale Borough Council and at all events organised, supported, funded by (fully or partially) and/or licensed by this authority. This is in the interest of public safety, protection of agricultural land and property, prevention of harm to wildlife, livestock and other animals and protection of the environment.

This Council will not fund any project or organisation that does not act responsibly, in line with the relevant laws and regulations.

Priorities for the Borough to 2020-2023

Summary of Objectives and Priorities

Building the right homes in the right places and supporting quality jobs for all

- **Develop a new economic improvement strategy** to encourage the role of a living wage and expand the range of employment opportunities in the borough, including higher-skilled employment.
- **Support residents and businesses to improve the borough's vocational skill levels**, and vigorously pursue all opportunities to enhance the provision and accessibility of further and higher education for Swale residents at all stages of their careers.
- **Implement the visitor economy framework** to increase investment, address new visitor demands and grow the value of the sector to the Swale economy.

Investing in our environment and responding positively to global challenges

- **Develop a coherent strategy to address the climate and ecological emergencies**, aiming for carbon neutrality in the council's own operations by 2025 and in the whole borough by 2030, and pursue all opportunities to enhance biodiversity across the borough.
- **Encourage active travel and reduced car use**, including through the permeability of new developments, and work with partners to address air quality issues.
- **Establish a special projects fund** to provide much-needed capital investment in the borough's public realm and open spaces.
- **Recognise and support local heritage** to give people pride in the place they live and boost the local tourism industry.
- **Ensure that the borough is kept clean**, that recycling remains a focus, and that the council acts as an exemplar environmental steward, making space for nature wherever possible.

Tackling deprivation and creating equal opportunities for everyone

- **Undertake targeted interventions** to identify our most disadvantaged families and communities, improve our understanding of the issues they face, and develop new ways of working to reduce social exclusion and enhance opportunities and quality of life.
- **Reduce health inequality** by developing more productive relationships with local health partners and making health and wellbeing a central consideration in all relevant council decision-making, recognising especially the link between housing and health.
- **Develop a communitarian approach to partnership working** based on shared objectives with like-minded agencies in the voluntary and community sectors.
- **Ensure that the council plays a proactive role in reducing crime and antisocial behaviour**, including through the modernisation of CCTV provision.
- **Promote wellbeing and enjoyment of life** by signposting and encouraging a wide range of sporting, cultural and other leisure activities appropriate and accessible to each age group.

If you would like hard copies or alternative versions [i.e.] large print, audio, different languages] we will do our best to accommodate your request, please contact Swale Borough Council or telephone the Customer Service Centre on 01795 417850