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Guidance notes for Community Chest

What is the Community Chest?

The Community Chest is grant funding available to voluntary and community sector groups, charities and public sector bodies wishing to further improve quality of life in South Cambridgeshire.

Who can apply?

Applicants must:

- Either be a non-profit group or organisation (including Community Interest Companies, CIC) based in South Cambridgeshire or benefiting South Cambridgeshire residents, OR be a public sector body with a demonstrable community focus (individuals and businesses are not eligible)
- Be a Parish Council or Parish Meeting with fewer than 200 registered electors*
Exemptions:
 1. Parish Councils of any size can apply for funding for costs involved in the undertaking, creation or refreshing of a [Community-Led Plan](#) (Parish Plan). This does not cover the costs of delivering projects emerging from a Community-led Plan (further details below)
 2. Parish Councils of any size can apply for biodiversity grants through this fund provided that they are not already in receipt of a grant from the Council's Zero Carbon Communities grant fund
 3. Parish Councils of any size can apply for grants that provide a benefit to those affected by the cost-of-living crisis.
- Have a written constitution or mission statement
- Have an elected committee or representative steering group
- Be able to provide an up to date copy of their accounts and any relevant protection policies

If you have questions about these criteria, please contact us using the details below.

If your organisation does not have a written constitution, mission statement and/or relevant protection policies please contact Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service for advice in meeting these requirements. Please call 01223 464696 or email enquiries@cambridgecvs.org.uk

*Please note:

The Committee reserves the right to supersede this clause should the Parish Council or Parish Meeting show good cause, for example:

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- a) The Parish Council or Parish Meeting have multiple settlements and the application pertains to any one of these which satisfies the 200-elector threshold or
- b) Registered electors are within 10% of the threshold.

What must the funded project deliver?

The community activity or project must:

- Meet local need and leave a legacy for the community
- Ensure equality of access
- Help us deliver one or more of the following aims:
 - Promote healthy and active communities
 - Enable inclusive communities
 - Develop skills
 - Enhance the natural environment / a sustainable increase in local biodiversity
 - Deliver community engagement through the undertaking, creation or refreshing of a Community-led Plan
 - Provide a benefit to those affected by the cost-of-living crisis

What can be funded?

The activity or project should be one of the following:

- Improvements to community buildings and spaces (i.e. village halls/pavilions/play areas etc)
- Repairs to Historic Buildings/Monuments/Memorials
- Equipment/Capital Purchase
- Materials
- 'Start-up' costs (may include training of staff/volunteers, hall hire and other revenue costs)
- Costs involved with undertaking and creating or refreshing a [Community-Led Plan](#) (resulting projects will only receive funding where they would have been eligible for the Community Chest anyway).
- Regarding cost-of-living projects, examples could include repair cafes where the local community can help in getting household items fixed for free; Timebanking projects (an exchange-based work trading system in which hours are the currency instead of money); lunch clubs (excludes the cost of food); Community support initiatives that provide food/ activities/ support services/ educate individuals on reducing food waste and cooking low-cost meals; setting up/running a group or charity where people can obtain free furniture, clothing, food, toys (Free, impartial legal guidance can be found on the [Business Companion website](#)); establishing or building the capacity of food hubs, food banks or community fridges; Capital costs needed to set up a warm hub

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(excluding warm hubs run by Cambridgeshire ACRE and any ongoing revenue costs, for example, heating costs)

- Regarding biodiversity projects: the purchase and planting of native trees, hedgerows, wildflower meadows or other vegetation in appropriate and suitable locations and their ongoing maintenance; the construction and erection of bird and bat boxes in suitable locations; the creation or improvement of wildlife habitats (terrestrial or aquatic); the improvement of existing habitat.

What cannot be funded?

- On-going revenue costs or overheads (e.g. salaries, rent, advertising, promotional materials). There are 2 exceptions to this. Exception 1 - The creation of Community-led Plans (revenue costs associated with the resulting projects will not be funded). Exception 2 - Cost-of-living projects (revenue costs cannot be used to cover the cost of food or the ongoing costs needed to run a warm hub, such as heating costs)
- Projects that replace funding by other public sector bodies, including parish councils (e.g. youth services, highways)
- Projects that have not received the support of all [local District Councillor\(s\)](#) for the ward/s concerned. Please ensure when contacting your local District Councillor(s) that they are all provided with full details of your project or a copy of your application form.
- Costs associated with Neighbourhood Watch schemes
- Costs associated with Community Speedwatch schemes or other traffic initiatives
- Items that would only benefit 'individuals' and not the group (e.g. sports kits)
- Non-native flower tubs

How much can be applied for?

The maximum award is £2,000 in any single financial year (April-March) and can be for 100% of project costs unless the initiative is on parish council land, in which case a 50% financial contribution from the parish council is expected.

If a group is awarded funding of less than £2,000 in any single financial year, an application can be made again within the same year for extra funding, providing the total allocation for that year does not exceed £2,000.

If a group is awarded funding (up to and including £2,000) for any of the Community Chest themes in the explanatory table below in any single financial year, an application can be made again within the same year for (up to and including £2,000) for funding of other Community Chest themes.

If a group is awarded funding (up to and including £2,000) for any of the Community Chest themes in the explanatory table below in any single financial year, applications

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can be made to any other Council funded grants within the same financial year, and vice versa.

If there is high demand for funding, it may mean that the District Council is only able to make a contribution to your project. The Council reserves the right to prioritise based on funding available, size of electorate, parish precept, indices of deprivation, number and type of applications received at any given time, priorities for the financial year and value for money. Eligibility does not guarantee grant funding.

When can groups apply?

Subject to availability of funds, successful applicants will be funded after each Grant's Advisory Committee meeting. Applications will need to be received by the 7th day of any given month to be considered at the Grant's Advisory Committee meeting within the same month. This also applies at the end of each financial year - applications received after 7 March will be held over and considered within the new financial year (at April GAC), along with any held over from the March meeting itself.

Additional funding has been allocated until March 2025 for the creation of Community-led Plans, and until the end of March 2025 for cost-of-living crisis and biodiversity projects

Preferred green options

We will always ask applicants to seek a green option when purchasing items for their projects and this must be evidenced within the application.

For example, a group may be looking to purchase a new minibus for their community. We would expect the group to evidence and include market research with their application demonstrating that a similar electrically powered vehicle has been considered. However, if the electric alternative is not within price range, or would not be fit for purpose this must be explained before we would consider contributing towards an alternative

Regarding biodiversity projects: planting of trees, hedgerows, wildflower meadows or other vegetation must be native. The construction and erection of bird and bat boxes must be in suitable location

Natural Cambridgeshire have produced a useful [Local Nature Recovery Toolkit](#) which provides guidance, advice and support for Communities wanting to create nature recovery plans.

What supporting documentation is required?

- A copy of your organisation's constitution or mission statement
- A copy of your latest accounts (audited if available)
- A quote for the community activity or project
- A copy of your safeguarding policy

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- A copy of any correspondence from your [local District Councillor\(s\)](#) showing they are supportive of your project
- A bank statement for the account you wish the funds to be paid into. Statement must be dated within the last month.
- Applications for funding towards the creation of Community-led Plans that are not made by the Parish Council itself should demonstrate that the Parish Council is supportive of the application.
- For biodiversity projects please include:
 - A plan of the proposed work, including a project map and project outcomes
 - A timeline of the proposed work indicating mileposts and delivery dates
 - A brief management plan which describes how the project will be sustainable
- For Community-led Plan applications, details should be supplied of any funding being allocated by the Parish Council to the creation of the Plan.

In addition, the following will be required if relevant to the project:

- Appropriate protection policies: children, young people, vulnerable adults
- Public Rights of Way consent from landowner
- Any other relevant material that would support your application

How will the grant be paid?

If successful, the applicant will receive the grant payment once we have received acknowledgement of the grant offer and acceptance of the terms and conditions.

What are the conditions of funding?

Groups that are awarded a grant will be expected to comply with the following conditions as a minimum:

- Funding must only be used for the agreed purpose and spent within 12-months of the award being made (unless otherwise agreed in writing)
- Any publicity must acknowledge the award provided
- Unused grant must be returned to South Cambridgeshire District Council
- An end of project evaluation must be submitted to South Cambridgeshire District Council within 3-months of project completion. Details about this are available on the South Cambridgeshire District Council website
- For biodiversity projects: the project must deliver a sustainable increase in local biodiversity, known as Biodiversity Net Gain. An increase means that you should be able to demonstrate positive change in biodiversity from pre-project conditions (for example, number of trees, number of square metres of land either created or improved). Sustainability means that it should persist over time and not be a temporary change.

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- Defibrillators: only the cost of defibrillators is funded through the Community Chest Grant scheme and the associated accessories and ongoing maintenance/training (the provision of which the Committee will want assurance) will be funded by the applicant. Defibrillators must be located where they can be accessed by the public at all times. [Defib Finder](#) provides up to date information on defibrillator locations across the UK, using data from The Circuit, the national defibrillator network.
- Where infrastructure improvements are funded through the Scheme, applicants will be expected to demonstrate that the same organisation will be purchasing, owning and maintaining the equipment/items.

Any award will not be means tested but applicants will be expected to have sought other means of local funding, especially from the parish council who may have funds available through planning developments (S106) or through its precept (S137).

For further information please go to:

- [South Cambridgeshire District Council Community Chest webpage.](#)
- [Community-Led Plan toolkit - South Cambs District Council \(scams.gov.uk\)](#)
- Contact Details: community.chest@scams.gov.uk

Explanatory table

The Community Chest is made up of 4 streams of funding, below:

Community Chest funding	Community Group (including CIC)	Parish Council or Parish Meeting with fewer than 200 registered electors	Parish Council of any size
Community Chest £59,160	✓	✓	x
Biodiversity Grants £10,200	✓	✓	✓
Community-Led Plans £43,249	✓	✓	✓
Cost-Of-Living (£10,000)	✓	✓	✓