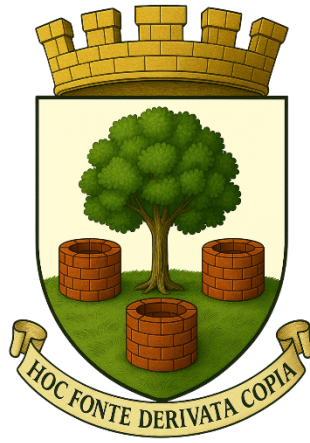




# Wells City Council

## Community Grant Policy

|                          |                                                  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Purpose</b>           | Terms and criteria to be met by grant applicants |
| <b>Additional Papers</b> | Grant Application form                           |
| <b>Reviewed By</b>       | Wells City Council members                       |
| <b>Adopted</b>           | July 2026                                        |
| <b>Review Date</b>       | July 2027                                        |

Wells City Council has adopted the General Power of Competence (Localism Act 2011); under this power, the Council can choose to award grants in much the same way as an individual might give funds to a good cause. However, the Council must consider its responsibilities and duties to its electorate and has therefore laid down the procedures set out here, to guide equitable and transparent use of public funds. The Council's power to give grants is delegated to the Finance Committee.

### **Equality**

In putting this policy into practice, no aspect of the procedure will discriminate on the grounds of race, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, religion, politics, marital status, disability, politics, union membership or any other grounds.

### **Grants & Application Criteria**

The maximum amount that can be applied for per application is **£500**.

Grants will be considered at September or March meetings of the Finance Committee. Dates of the meetings, application deadlines, and application forms are available on the City Council's website or Town Hall reception.

Applications must be received no later than the deadline advised on the City Council website. Extensions to the application deadline will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and must be approved by the Town Clerk.

Only one application to each grant scheme from any organisation will be considered each financial year from the **1<sup>st</sup> of April to 31<sup>st</sup> March**.

Applicants should complete the application form and return it using the contact details at the end of the document along with a copy of the organisation's accounts for the previous financial year. If the organisation does not produce a full set of accounts, the applicant must provide the organisation's latest bank statement, and a comprehensive budget and business plan may also be required.

The City Council may also request a copy of the following from the organisation:

- **Committee structure.**
- **Constitution or set of rules.**
- **Equal opportunities statement.**
- **Insurance policy.**
- **Photographs, plans and project costs.**
- **Bank account details and latest bank statement.**

All applicants are asked to send a representative to the meeting of the Committee, to present background information relating to their application and answer questions from Councillors. If you are unable to attend this may result in your application being delayed or refused.

### **The Selection Process**

In awarding funding, the Committee members will be mindful at all times that the grants are given from public money raised from the council tax payers of the City of Wells.

The applicant must satisfy the Committee that the grant will be used for the benefit of those living, working or studying in the City.

The applicant must satisfy the Committee that there is financial need for the grant to be given, and provide evidence of financial status including accounts and good management.

The financial contribution that can be awarded is taken from an annual budget based on the financial year April to March and the total amount of grants awarded are restricted within this budget.

Applications must have objectives that support one or more of the following aims for the relevant scheme:

- **Have community benefits in Wells.**
- **Support the City Council's Corporate Priority on Climate Change and accessibility**
- **Support the voluntary and community sector.**
- **Work on improving the quality of life for residents of Wells**

### **Application Guidelines**

Applications are accepted from the following:

- **Charitable Organisations.**
- **Community Interest Groups.**
- **Sports Clubs and Arts Groups.**
- **Advice Organisations.**
- **Supporter or 'friends of' groups.**
- **Groups seeking seed-funding who will become one of the above.**
- **Resident's Associations.**

### **Rejected Applications**

The Council is unable to support:

- **General appeals.**
- **Individual appeals or sponsorship.**
- **Commercial enterprises which aim to generate a profit.**
- **Projects with party political links.**
- **Retrospective applications for events or projects which have already happened.**
- **Ordinary or regular staff salary costs (although hiring in an external specialist is acceptable if the benefit to residents can be demonstrated).**
- **Applications submitted by members of staff or Councillors of Wells City Council. (Wells City Council staff and Councillors may be involved in or members of applicant organisations. However, to ensure transparency and neutrality, applications must not be submitted directly by Council staff or Councillors).**

In these instances, the RFO will contact the applicant to explain the reason(s) why their application will not progress.

Organisations receiving statutory funding are not eligible to apply for a community grant unless they can prove that their application fits outside of their statutory funding requirements. Where possible, these organisations are encouraged to apply via any supporting group e.g. schools a 'friends of' or their respective PTA.

Should an application be received by an organisation which or whose representatives have made public comment(s) about the City Council within the last 12 months which may or potentially amount(s) to being defamatory in nature, generally or with reference to Community Grants schemes, the Finance Committee will be informed and can decide to defer the application on these grounds.

The Finance Committee will consider the following as part of their decision-making process:

- **Whether the budget is flawed or unsustainable.**
- **Does the project offer value for money.**
- **The quality of application.**
- **Whether the project could be considered high risk.**
- **The number of recipients and the impact of the project.**
- **If a grant has recently been awarded to the same group for similar project from Wells City Council.**
- **Whether feedback has been received if previously awarded a grant by Wells City Council.**
- **Whether a clear breakdown of costs has been provided.**
- **Whether or not they support each of the items contained within the breakdown of costs on the application form. They may remove any item(s) on a grant application if they don't agree with how the money will be used and it will not impact the overall project. This may result in a partial grant being awarded.**

Where a Councillor is involved in either a voluntary or paid capacity with the organisation applying, they must be clear in their declaration of interest and whether they are abstaining from the vote or leave the meeting room for that item if required.

The Finance Committee will seek to fund projects in full. Where this is not possible, it may remove specific elements of an application to ensure transparency in decision making and that projects are realistically funded and deliverable.

Minutes of the meeting will be circulated and all applicants, whether successful or not, will be informed of the decision within two weeks of the meeting. The decision of the Finance Committee is final.

Successful applicants will be invited to the Town Hall to take a photograph with the Mayor of Wells for promotional purposes. The photos will be shared on the City Council's website and may appear in social media and printed media.

### **Grant Payment**

Funds will be transferred to the organisation via BACS within three weeks of the meeting. Funds will not be paid to an individual. If an organisation does not have a bank account, they can arrange for another community organisation to receive and hold the funds.

Occasionally conditions may be applied, which the applicant will need to address as part of the approval before payment can be made. Where a grant is awarded for a project that is relying on match funding from other organisations, the funds will not be released until the organisation has reached the target set by the Finance Committee.

If the organisation is relying on a grant from the City Council, it should not commence the activity until the award of a grant has been confirmed. The grant must only be used for the purpose for which the application was made.

### **Monitoring**

Successful applicants will be subject to monitoring to ensure good use of funding. This may include requests for annual reports detailing expenditure or other results.

Proof of purchase is required to confirm that the grant funding was spent on items applied for. Failure to do this may jeopardise future grant applications or the City Council may request the return of the awarded grant.

All recipients are required to complete the feedback form stating the purpose of the grant, what has been delivered, the effect the project, activity or event has had on those taking part or

receiving it and provide evidence of positive recognition given to the City Council. Recipients will be contacted for this purpose.

Recipients are required to give positive recognition to the City Council through publicity and promotions and where possible are expected to invite the Mayor to attend events relating to the project, activity or event after the grant has been awarded.

### **Withholding, Suspending and Repayment of Grant**

The City Council's intention is that the grant will be paid to the recipient in full.

However, without prejudice to the Council's other rights and remedies, the Council may at its discretion withhold or suspend payment of the grant (and/or require repayment of all or part of the grant) if:

- The recipient uses the grant for purposes other than those for which they have been awarded.
- The Council considers that the recipient has not made satisfactory progress with the delivery of the project.
- The recipient is unable to use the grant for the purpose it was awarded and within the stated timescale.
- The recipient is, in the reasonable opinion of the Council, delivering the project in a negligent manner.
- The recipient obtains duplicate funding from a third party for the same (or part of the) project, activity or event.
- The recipient provides the Council with any materially misleading or inaccurate information.
- Returned funds will be added to the relevant grants budget for that municipal year and split evenly across all remaining meetings.

### **Scheme Governance**

This policy is issued by the Finance Committee of Wells City Council, which is comprised of nine Councillors, who will meet two times per year to consider applications based on the criteria outlined in this policy. All applications received by the City Council will be considered on their own merits.

The scheme is managed by the Town Clerk, and the day-to-day administration of the process is delegated to the RFO / Customer Service and Governance Manager, within a GDPR framework which protects the confidentiality of individuals and any sensitive or personal data.

### **Contact Details**

Completed application forms and supplementary information can be returned either by post to:

**Council Grants, Wells City Council, Wells Town Hall, Market Place, Wells BA5 2RB**

Or by email [rfo@wells.gov.uk](mailto:rfo@wells.gov.uk)

If you would like help completing the application form, or for any further information on the scheme, please call 01749 673091.