



**ILMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL
Grant Policy and Procedures
Approved May 2026
To be reviewed May 2028**

Policy and Procedure

Community Fund

1. Purpose

The community fund provides grants to organisations of up to £750 for projects that help and support the community of Ilminster. These grants may be used for either capital or revenue purposes.

2. Funding

- 2.1 The council has an agreed budget to support local organisations with Community Fund Grants. This may be supplemented by additional funds authorised by the council from the previous year's VAT refunds.
- 2.2 Applications can be made for up to £750, although in exceptional circumstances grants to organisations may be made for greater amounts.
- 2.3 Where organisations are applying for longer than one year's support or more than £750, then it may be more suitable for an agreement to be set up to assist them. This may be dealt with separately from this "Community Fund Grant Process".

3. Application and selection criteria

- 3.1 The council will consider grant applications from community groups and organisations that serve Ilminster even though that organisation may not be based in Ilminster. Priority will be given to applications that help and support the community.
- 3.2 Applications will only be considered from community groups and organisations that are a properly constituted body. This may include a group or organisation with charitable purposes, a charity or a not-for-profit company.
- 3.3 Groups that are part of a larger organisation can apply for funding through that organisation, provided this is clearly stated on the application form.
- 3.4 Applications will not normally be considered from grant-gifting organisations, i.e., those who allocate grants to others, profit-making organisations and companies, or individuals.

4. What can the grant be used for?

- 4.1 Grants may be requested for either Capital or Revenue funding. Examples of which are contained at the end of this policy.
- 4.2 The grant should be used in order to make Ilminster a better place to live, work and play.

5. What can't the grant be used for?

- 5.1 Any costs not directly associated with the project.
- 5.2 Retrospective funding, i.e. money already spent.
- 5.3 Paying off debts already incurred.
- 5.4 Costs that have already been funded elsewhere, i.e. no 'double funding'.

6. Other

- 6.1 Groups and organisations applying for a community fund grant must:
 - 6.1.1 Comply with this policy and procedure.
 - 6.1.2 Complete an 'end of project' report that will be part of the Annual Town Meeting.
 - 6.1.3 Spend their grant money within the financial year (unless written agreement from Ilminster Town Council has been given).
- 6.2 Groups and organisations applying to the community fund must provide details of any funding from other sources, including fundraising or applications to other grant-awarding bodies.
- 6.3 The council will look favourably on organisations that show evidence of self-help, either by fundraising or obtaining funds from other sources. Priority will be given to applications that demonstrate how they help and support the community of Ilminster.
- 6.4 Applications to the community fund can be made in consecutive years. In such instances, the council will be mindful of the benefits obtained from previous grant applications.
- 6.5 Applicants must ensure that they adhere to the Equalities Act 2010 and declare that the project does not discriminate against potential users who fall within the definition of 'protected characteristics' as defined by the UK Government¹

7. Application Process

- 7.1 The application must:
 - 7.1.1 State the main activities of the organisation.
 - 7.1.2 Provide details of the project.
 - 7.1.3 Explain who will benefit from the grant and how.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights>

- 7.1.4 Provide details of other grant applications and/or fundraising activities in relation to this project.
- 7.1.5 Confirm appropriate, policies and procedures are in place, e.g. insurance, health and safety, safeguarding.
- 7.1.6 Demonstrate how the organisation intends to inform others that it has received funding from the council.

8. Supporting evidence

- 8.1 Applicants must provide:
 - 8.1.1 Full project costs, e.g. quotes, invoices, other grants.
 - 8.1.2 Copies of their governing document or constitution, if available.
 - 8.1.3 An application signed by two of the organisation's officers.
- 8.2 Applications for grants must be supported by details of the organisation's current financial status, e.g. copies of most recent bank statements/passbook.
- 8.3 Where grant applications exceed £2,500 then the last Full Audited Accounts will be required. However, para 2.3 above may apply.
- 8.4 Payments will not be made to individuals or private bank accounts.
- 8.5 The application must be completed in full.
- 8.6 Applications can be submitted at any time throughout the year and will be advertised on Ilminster Town Council social media sites and the website.

9. Selection process

- 9.1 Officers may contact organisations to clarify information or to access missing information. If an organisation cannot clarify or obtain information, its application will not normally go through to the next stage.
- 9.2 Officers will sift applications and collate those which meet the council's requirements. This process includes:
 - 9.2.1 A report that highlights issues Members need to be aware of.
 - 9.2.2 Rejected applications.
 - 9.2.3 Details of applicants from the previous year who did not claim their grant or report back on their 'end of project' form.
 - 9.2.4 Grants will be considered monthly by the Estates Committee.

- 9.2.5 Grants will be paid in approximately two weeks following the decision at the Committee.
- 9.3 The Town Clerk is authorised to agree the early release of grants, if necessary.
- 10. Reporting process**
- 10.1 At the end of the project, organisations are asked to provide a report which will:
 - 10.1.1 Explain how successful the project was.
 - 10.1.2 Explain who benefited from the community fund grant and how many people it helped.
- 10.2 The council will publicise how the various grants to organisations have been distributed in the annual report.
- 11. Timeline**
- 11.1 Application form submitted and supporting documents received by officers.
- 11.2 Information gathered and collated for a report at the next available Estates Committee meeting held monthly.
- 11.3 Estates committee considers the grant.
- 11.4 Successful applicants awarded funding within approximately 2 weeks of decision.
- 11.5 If the application is unsuccessful or requires more details, the applicant will be contacted within 2 weeks of the meeting.
- 11.6 End of March – deadline for receiving ‘End of Project’ reports.

Differences between Capital vs. Revenue funding.

CAPITAL

Capital funding can be used to purchase assets, either new or the significant refurbishment of existing assets. These are expected to have “wider community benefit” and to have an expected lifespan of at least 5 years. Specific examples of uses for capital funding are shown below, grouped into themes:

New buildings and repairs/refurbishment to existing buildings:

Building of new village halls, community halls, sports pavilions, Scout / Guide huts, etc. including purchase of land.	Capital
Significant repairs to the structure / fabric of any permanent building, including items such as drains, roofing, windows, floors, rewiring, insulation, solar panels, heat-pumps and associated professional/planning/installation costs. Especially where this improves the energy efficiency of the building.	Capital
Full or substantial replacement of the roof covering, (not simple repairs including touch-up painting and guttering repairs.)	Capital
Re-tarmacking a community building car park or creating new / additional car parking, that will benefit the building users.	Capital
New/replacement fencing around community building / land (not simple repairs)	Capital
Refurbishment of toilets and changing rooms, especially to improve accessibility for all.	Capital
Replacing / installing new kitchen facilities to a venue, especially where this is to provide a community service such as lunch clubs, day centres, etc.	Capital
Fire alarms, sprinklers, emergency lights, fire extinguishers, fire blankets, stair lifts, hoists, etc. - but not safety inspections	Capital

Land, outside space, playgrounds, sports grounds, sports equipment.

New gardens, allotments, orchards, community farms, etc.	Capital
Wildlife and wildflower meadows	Capital
Community growing: water systems, storage sheds, rotavators, tractors, water butts, composters, mowers and other gardening equipment (not consumables such as plants, seeds, sharpening,	Capital

repairs, etc.) Should have an expected lifespan of at least 5 years	
New/replacement play equipment - swings, roundabouts, skate ramps, climbing walls, slides, climbing frames, outdoor gym, MUGA, etc. (but not simple repairs to existing equipment)	Capital
New or replacement safety surfacing e.g. under play equipment	Capital
Substantial items of outdoor leisure equipment such as scoreboards, floodlights, goal posts, gym equipment, artificial wickets, line markers, tennis nets – should have an expected lifespan of at least 5 years. Not consumables such as balls, playing kit, whistles, etc.	Capital
Purchase of a lawn mower, grounds maintenance equipment, roller, etc. (must demonstrate wider community benefit)	Capital
Acquisition of land, buildings, monuments and heritage assets for public use / enjoyment.	Capital
Trees, woodlands, trails, paths, fences, gates, improving access, riverbank enhancements, cycle lanes, picnic tables, built BBQs and BBQ areas for public use / enjoyment.	Capital
Permanent finger posts, styles, gates, information boards, Blue plaques, way markers, benches, litter bins, dog bins, recycle bins, etc. (but not emptying on such bins)	Capital

Indoor space, village / community halls, offices, equipment.

PA and audio/visual systems – new projectors, screens, TV screens, sound systems and their installation.	Capital
New hearing loop systems	Capital
New seating and/or tables for halls	Capital
Desks, chairs and physical items of office equipment (laptops, printers, other IT, one-off purchase of software, etc.) that supports or enhances the running of your organisation - but not stationery or consumables such as printer ink, paper, envelopes, etc.	Capital
Broadband routers, cabling and installation - but not ongoing costs	Capital
Creation of new websites (to further promote your organisation or benefit wider community)	Capital
Substantial items of indoor leisure equipment such as bowls mats, gym equipment, tennis/badminton nets, snooker tables, TV screens – should have an expected lifespan of at least 5 years.	Capital
Purchase of pianos, musical instruments, lighting rigs, fire curtains, etc. to enhance public performances	Capital

Other significant purchases:

New or replacement vehicle (e.g. for transport to day centre or other wider community benefit)	Capital
CCTV/safety cameras, where having a system helps to protect an asset or provide greater community safety.	Capital

Museum acquisitions and permanent artworks such as paintings, murals, sculpture, tapestry and the production of such items for public display / enjoyment.	Capital
Purchase of marquees, caravans, market stalls, staging, outdoor PA systems, projection/cinema equipment, generators, lighting rigs, portaloos, tents and camping equipment, etc. (not hire of these items). Should have an expected lifespan of at least 5 years.	Capital
Professional fees for creation of documents, e.g. feasibility studies, business plans, architect's drawing/plans, etc. that will be used by and benefit an organisation's development and improve the service they give.	Capital

REVENUE

Revenue funding can be used where there is no lasting asset. Revenue funding can be used to put on events, performances and activities, pay for the running costs of an organisation or pay for trips and excursions. All of these examples can either be for education, leisure or to support health and wellbeing. There must be community benefit shown amongst the target group (young people or older / vulnerable adults). Please see the document "Area Board Funding and Grants Criteria" for further details of what area boards look for in revenue applications.

Positive activities and events:

Costs towards putting on events, fun days, coaching sessions, fetes, carnivals, fayres and festivals for the target group.	Revenue
Costs towards putting on performances, plays, concerts that either involve or benefit the target group.	Revenue
Running costs for a group that puts on positive activities, e.g. venue hire, office/printing costs, transport, staff costs. (We expect groups to become self-supporting and will not fund year after year).	Revenue
Helping to fund access to positive activities where a person's circumstances make it hard for them to afford. Such as low income, physical disability, rural isolation, etc.	Revenue

Therapeutic activities / sessions

Funding professionals to support people with specific needs, e.g. mental health issues, physical disabilities, dementia	Revenue
Putting on sessions that deliver therapeutic activities e.g. running "music for the mind" events, mindfulness, support groups, counselling, etc.	Revenue
Funding of training for a group, so members have those skills. E.g. safeguarding, 1 st aid, mental health awareness, becoming a mentor, etc.	Revenue
Creating social opportunities that help to prevent isolation and loneliness e.g. a lunch club or day centre.	Revenue

Sport and physical activities:

Putting on coaching sessions, taster days, fun days, etc.	Revenue
Prizes, certificates, etc. at such events.	Revenue
Training for leaders to improve skills, e.g. coaching, mentoring, safeguarding, etc.	Revenue
Purchase of items that don't qualify as Capital e.g. balls, sports kit, etc. with lifespan less than 5 years.	Revenue
Transport to a specific venue to carry out an activity, e.g. sailing lake, climbing wall, artificial ski slope.	Revenue

Community organisations

Activities that support and encourage volunteering	Revenue
Salaries for paid workers within community organisations e.g. youth workers, support staff, counsellors, administrators, etc.	Revenue
Running costs for a community group that supports the target group of people, e.g. venue hire, office/printing costs, staff costs, social media presence / website operation. (we expect groups to become self-supporting and will not fund year after year).	Revenue