

ASHINGTON TOWN COUNCIL SMALL GRANT FUNDING 2026-27 GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

This document provides guidance for community groups and organisations applying for Ashington Town Council's 2026-27 Small Grant Fund. It sets out the purpose of the fund, eligibility criteria, application process, and expectations for use and reporting of grant funding.

1. Purpose

The Small Grants Scheme supports local voluntary, community, and not-for-profit organisations delivering projects or services that benefit Ashington residents. It is designed to provide modest, quick-access support where a smaller award can make a real difference.

2. Total Budget & Grant Rounds

- **Grant Rounds:** 4 per year (May, July, October and January)
- **Maximum Award per Application:** £1,000
- **One application per organisation per financial year**

You **cannot** apply for a small grant if your organisation has received a **large grant** in the same financial year.

3. Eligibility

You must:

- Be a voluntary or non-profit organisation based in Ashington
- Serve Ashington residents directly
- Provide a governing document and up-to-date accounts
- Hold a bank account in the organisation's name
- Have the following policies:
 - Health & Safety
 - Equality and Diversity
 - Safeguarding (if applicable)
 - Data Protection and GDPR
 - Risk Management
 - Complaints Procedure

You must not:

- Be an individual or business
- Be based outside Ashington
- Apply for costs already incurred

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- Have received a large grant from the Council this financial year
- Be a national charity
- Be a school (though PTAs may apply for non-core items)
- Be a religious organisation where the funded activity is primarily promoting religious beliefs. However, faith-based groups may apply for funding for community activities that are inclusive and non-religious in nature
- Be a political organisation
- Be seeking funding for a project that is the statutory responsibility of other public bodies

4. Financial Reserves

As with large grants, the Council will not normally fund organisations holding more than 30% of their average annual running costs in unrestricted reserves unless justification is provided.

5. Application and Decision Process

- Applications must be submitted using the official form
- Decisions are delegated to Officers and made within 10 days of the submission deadline (see Appendix A)
- Applications will be checked against eligibility criteria using the matrix in Appendix A
- If demand exceeds available funding, priority will be given based on community benefit and funding need

6. Grant Monitoring Form

- Following the Council's decision to raise the maximum application amount to £1,000, all successful applicants will now be required to complete a Grant Monitoring Form.
- All successful applicants will receive a grant monitoring form; this form allows the Council to keep up to date on your progress and serves as an evaluation for your group as a result of Town Council funding

7. Publicity Requirements

We place strong emphasis on recognising Council support. Successful applicants must:

- Use the Council logo on publicity materials
- Acknowledge the grant on websites and social media
- Share photos, quotes, or updates for Council communications
- Agree to participate in any Council publicity (e.g. photo opportunities, case studies)

8. Contact

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For any further information or advice please contact us.

 admin@ashingtontowncouncil.gov.uk

 (01670) 624521

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APPENDIX A

Part 1: Eligibility Checklist

All boxes must be marked YES for the application to proceed.

Eligibility Criteria	Yes ☐ / No ☐	Notes (if “No” or unclear)
Organisation is based in Ashington		
Activity/project benefits Ashington residents		
Only one application submitted this financial year		
Organisation has not received a large grant from the Council in the same financial year		
Organisation is non-profit, voluntary, or community-based		
Organisation is not an individual, business, national charity, political group, or a religious group promoting belief		
Funding is not for a statutory responsibility of another public body		
Funding is not retrospective (costs not already incurred)		
Governing document or constitution provided		
Latest financial accounts and bank statement(s) provided		
Bank account is in the organisation's name		
Required policies held or support requested to develop them		
Unrestricted reserves below 30% of average running costs OR justified		

 If all boxes are marked “Yes”, the application is eligible.

 If any box is “No”, the application is not eligible and should not proceed.
Officers should inform the applicant with appropriate feedback.

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Part 2: Prioritisation Criteria (for use when applications exceed available funds in the round)

Only complete this section if more eligible applications are received than funding allows. Use scores to rank applications.

Prioritisation Criteria	Score (1–5)	Notes
Clear and specific benefit to Ashington residents		Who benefits? How many? How local?
Support for underrepresented or vulnerable groups		Youth, elderly, low-income, disabled, etc.
Evidence of working with other community or voluntary groups		Joint projects, shared delivery, partnerships
Demonstrated financial need		Limited reserves, no recent Council support
No Council funding (large or small) in the past 24 months		Encouraging spread of support
Fundraising or matched funding efforts		Funders approached, pending or secured
Publicity potential and willingness to credit the Council		Use of logo, media, photos, acknowledgements

Maximum score: 35

Applications should be ranked by total score. Officers may recommend partial funding, deferment, or hold eligible lower-ranked bids for a future round (with consent of applicant).