

Community Led Housing - Grants Eligibility Criteria

Before completing your application, please read these notes in full to check whether

1. Your group is eligible to apply.
2. Your project costs are eligible.
3. You have all the information and documents you need to be able to start and finish the online application form.

Any applications we receive that are not able to demonstrate all of the criteria below will not be eligible for the TDC Community Led Housing Grant Scheme.

What is the Community Led Housing Grants Scheme for?

Thanet District Council has been allocated government funding to invest in the promotion of, and enabling the delivery of, community led housing. The Community Led Housing Grants Scheme supports the project costs of community organisations that need some revenue support to deliver community led housing projects in their area. Grants may be used to help set up a group, for organisations to attend training to learn new skills, for costs associated with carrying out consultation to gauge public opinion, or as a contribution towards fees in connection with the progression of a development – site survey costs, for example. The main aim of the Government funding is to enable new affordable homes to be built through community led housing projects. Applications not directly connected with the delivery of new Affordable homes through Community Led Development are not eligible for this fund.

Who can apply?

Applications are welcomed from community organisations and groups who:

- Are based within the Thanet District
- Are seeking grant to support the delivery of Affordable Homes via a community led development project within Thanet
- The local community must be integrally involved in making key decisions throughout the project
- A community organisation must play a long term role in ownership, management or stewardship of the homes
- Benefits to the local area and / or specified community must be clearly defined and legally protected in perpetuity
- The homes to be provided will be genuinely affordable and occupied by people unable to meet their housing needs in the private market.

The following types of organisation are not eligible to apply:

- Registered or for-profit/business organisations
- Individuals (for example, for personal sponsorship)
- District, County, Town or Parish Councillors
- Organisations in receipt of a Public Precept (i.e. Town and Parish Councils)

How much can we ask for?

There is no minimum grant level. Organisations can make more than one application for grant but cannot be awarded anymore than £10,000.

Set up costs, project initiation & facilitation funding

- Setting up the organisation, getting advice on legal structures
- Attending training and workshops
- Holding community consultation events
- Producing publicity materials
- Understanding the potential cost of a project, exploring alternatives and sources of funding.
- Costs involved in developing a project plan – business planning and financial appraisal
- Legal costs related to setting up the organisation
- Engaging consultants to advise on land acquisition, planning, design, etc
- Consultation events
- Site investigation
- Financial viability advice / assessments

What kinds of activities will be funded?

The grant must be used to pay for clearly defined costs associated with projects which demonstrate a direct link to the delivery of a community led housing project. Applicants are expected to provide accurate costs/quotes for costs in the application form. TDC reserve the right to request evidence to support the accuracy of the project costs outlined in your application to ensure the project meets the eligibility criteria.

What is the Application Criteria?

Our application criteria are designed to make the application process as fair as possible. Please read and follow the criteria below to ensure that your application has the best chance of success.

1. Each organisation may make more than one application to the Community Led Housing Grant Scheme, but cannot receive more than £10,000 in total.
2. The applicant organisation must have an agreed and signed constitution
3. The applicant organisation name must match the group name on the constitution.
4. The applicant organisation must supply with their application form copies of the latest agreed accounts for their organisation and/or the latest available bank statement showing the account details and balance.
5. The bank account details provided must be the same as the organisation name in the application form and on the constitution.
6. The bank account details must be up to date and current, and the bank must be able to accept a grant paid using a BACs payment.
7. The bank account must have at least 2 signatories who are current members of the organisation and the names must match those given where required in the application form.
8. The project and its activities and volunteers must comply with all relevant legislation. TDC reserve the right to request evidence of this where necessary.

9. If the land is not in the ownership of the applicant organisation, written support from the land owner must be submitted with the application.
10. The grants cannot be used to fund projects which have already been completed or any costs you have already incurred (or will incur) before a grant is paid out by TDC.
11. The organisation is based (i.e. the address located) within Thanet
12. The community that the project will benefit is located within Thanet.
13. The project can demonstrate that it results in a clear community benefit and meets an identified local housing need.
14. All of the questions in the Community Led Housing Grants Scheme Application Form are completed clearly and fully, including the submission of any required supporting information.
15. If, for any reason, your project fails or cannot proceed after we have paid you a grant, you must tell us immediately. If this happens, we will expect you to repay the grant in full unless we have already agreed to an extension.
16. Applicants agree to comply with any monitoring requirements and/or visits by an authorised representative of Thanet District Council to check project progress and/or upon completion of the project.

Helpful Information

What type of group are we?

Registered Charity - This refers to a particular type of legal structure that can be either a Charitable Company or a Charitable Trust. A Trust would not have members but is run by a small group of people known as the Board of Trustees. If a Trust has an income of over £5,000 a year we would expect it to be registered with the Charity Commission. A Company has its own legal identity over and above its members. This allows it to own land, enter into contracts and employ people. It is usually run by a small group of Directors but can still have a wider membership. We would expect a Charitable Company to be registered with both Companies House and the Charity Commission.

Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) - This refers to a particular type of legal structure. A CIO is a type of charity that is Incorporated and is also registered with the Charity Commission but it does not have to conform to the same level of accounting and reporting of a Charitable Company. A CIO can still lease or own land, enter in contracts and employ people.

Community Interest Company (CIC) - This refers to a particular type of legal structure. A CIC is a limited company with special features to ensure that it works for the benefit of the community. However, whereas Charitable Structures have to have charitable aims, a CIC can be set up for any purpose (within reason). The level of regulation for CIC's is quite light but we would expect them to be registered with Companies House as a Limited Company and also through the Office of the Regulator of Community Interest Companies.

Co-operative/ Industrial & Provident Society (IPS) - These can have a number of different legal structures. Essentially these are organisations that are owned and democratically controlled by their members. Usually, they are a type of company and are registered with Companies House. Usually, Co-ops generate a surplus (not a profit) because this will always be ploughed back into the business

Social Enterprise - This also refers to a wide range of legal structures including most of the ones on this page! Generally they describe any business model that trades to tackle social problems. They may make their money from selling goods and services in the open market, but they reinvest their “profits” back into the business or the local community, and so when they “profit”, society “profits”.

Voluntary/Community Group - A group whose members are volunteers and/or community members who have come together to deliver activities for the benefit of a community or groups within the community. These groups do not have to have a legal structure but we would expect them to have an adequate constitution and a suitable bank account.

Church/Faith groups - Churches and other charities and groups that are wholly or mainly for public religious worship. We would expect them to have an adequate constitution and a suitable bank account.

What is an eligible cost?

Capital Costs - One-off costs that allow you to purchase outright an item of equipment or building materials. Grant cannot be used to cover this cost.

Revenue Costs - One-off costs that allow you to buy in activities or services or pay for one off costs such as a room hire; training; support for running consultation or making funding applications; consultants services – survey reports etc. Grant can be used for this.

Consumable costs - These may be capital costs but are for items that can be used up and do not offer a long term benefit to the community. For example, paper, inks, food, drinks, travel/transport costs. Grant can be used for this.

Ongoing capital costs - These are usually related to the ongoing maintenance of buildings and structures. It describes things like repairs or improvements to existing structures or interiors that should/could be planned into works of maintenance. Grant cannot be used to cover this cost.

Overhead costs - These are usually costs that result from the core overheads of running your group. For example staff time, staff costs or utility or rent/mortgage for premises. Grant cannot be used to cover this cost.

Applications must show how any costs claimed have a direct impact upon the outcome of your project. If your application does not demonstrate that the funding will support the delivery of community led housing it is unlikely to be successful.

Constitution

There are minimum requirements for a Constitution, the details below are what is considered a minimum constitution.

What is a constitution and why is it needed?

A constitution is simply the aims and rules that your group will use. It is your statement of what your group is going to do and how it is going to do it. It should be set up properly and agreed at the first formal meeting when officers/committees are elected. It needs to be signed and dated by those present at this meeting. It should only be changed in accordance with the rules it outlines

It is important because:

- It will help people understand what the group is trying to do and will prevent confusion and/or conflict and will help to ensure that your aims and activities have a clear focus (and are therefore more likely to succeed)
- It will serve as a reference, and this will help to resolve any problems that may arise regarding which activities group members should be prioritising
- Others, especially potential funders should be able to see by your constitution that your group is democratic and accountable.

Your constitution should provide everyone a clear procedure by which decisions are made.

How do we know our constitution is adequate?

You could also use this list of headings to help you improve or write a new constitution.

Group/Organisation Name - This should be the name of group. Try to keep it short and relevant to what you are trying to achieve.

Group/Organisation Aims - What is your main aim? Try and keep this focused. Aim for 2-4 bullet point sentences

Group/Organisation Membership - Who is your membership open to? What are the membership fees (free or not)? When will membership fees be agreed (Annual General Meeting?) How can someone stop being a member? What will your basic code of conduct for members be? (What kinds of behaviour will or will not be tolerated) - It is strongly recommended that this is inclusive, as you may struggle to meet the TDC Equality and Diversity requirements for grants if not.

Equal Opportunities - For example a statement that your groups will not discriminate on the grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sexuality, disability, religious or political belief, marital status or age.
- As above. Without this your group will not be eligible.

Officers and Committee - How big will your management committee be? What will the roles of the Officers be? How will they be elected? How can they stand down? How can they be removed if it is not working? - Keep it simple.

Meetings, Rules & Procedures - When will you hold your Annual General Meeting? How will members be notified of the meetings? How much notice will they be given? Where will they be held? Who will set the agenda? How can a member suggest an item for discussion? How will the voting system work? What will be the quorum? What will the main business of the AGM be (Committee elections; accounts; annual summary & review of activities) - AGMs usually occur no more than 15 months after the previous AGM. They should be held in a place accessible to the public and well-advertised.

Special General Meetings- Under what circumstances can these be called? What will be the notice period for alerting members? Where can they be held? What will be the voting system? What will be quorum? - These are in addition to any normal meetings you may have, and are not often required unless you have to deal with an emergency, but your constitution needs to show you are prepared for this eventuality.

Finances - What will your account be? How many signatories will be set up? Who will be responsible for regularly updating the members on the financial situation of the group? - A bank account in the name of the group with a minimum of 2 signatories are required for the Community Housing Grants Scheme.

Changing the Constitution - Agree what the process will be for changing the constitution as this will need to be a clear and formal process if it is to be valid. When can this be done? How many members must agree for it to be adopted? - Usually done only at the AGM and only using proposals that have been received in writing. Proposals should be circulated with any AGM notification & agenda to give your members time to consider them before the meeting.

Dissolution -How can the group agree to dissolve itself? When can this happen? Make sure this includes a declaration as to how the assets will be disposed of in a suitable way. For example, "all remaining money and other assets, once outstanding debts have been paid, will be donated to a local charitable organisation. The organisation to be agreed at the meeting which agrees the dissolution."

Declaration - This needs to be filled in by at least 2 of the elected officers, signed and dated with their positions - The constitution then needs to be reviewed and agreed at each AGM.