

# **2025/26 Community Asset Fund Application Guidance**

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### **1. What is the Community Asset Fund?**

The Community Asset Fund is a grant scheme designed to support not-for-profit groups and organisations across Test Valley, to acquire new or improve existing community assets. The Community Asset Fund will:

- Prioritise funding for projects that can demonstrate a strong need, the greatest impact and widespread support by the community.
- Make funding accessible to a wide range of applicants who own or lease and manage assets that serve the local community.
- Provide financial support that encourages other funders from the public, private and charitable sectors to invest in projects that serve the communities of Test Valley.
- Complement the Council's other grant schemes

### **2. Who is eligible to apply?**

The Community Asset Fund is open to not-for-profit, community organisations across Test Valley. The organisations that are eligible include:

- Parish Councils
- Town Councils
- Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIO)
- Charitable Trusts
- Charitable Companies (Limited by Guarantee)
- Educational Establishments (for community spaces only and not spaces used exclusively by the school)
- Churches (for community spaces only and not spaces used exclusively as places of worship)

If your organisation type is not listed, please contact your Community Engagement Officer to discuss this. Here is where to find their contact details: [www.testvalley.gov.uk/CEOfficers](http://www.testvalley.gov.uk/CEOfficers)

### **3. What can it be used for?**

- Community assets and buildings - new assets or enhancement of existing facilities.
- Climate Change – projects which enhance community assets to reduce carbon emissions and/or address climate change.
- Environmental - projects which enhance community assets in a way that improves the environment and/or biodiversity.
- Inclusivity – community projects which improve accessibility.
- Play and recreation - new assets or enhancement of existing community facilities.
- Public art - new public art in communities.
- Sports - new assets or the enhancement of existing community facilities.
- Equipment and resources – such as items required as part of a Community Resilience Plan or similar

If you are unsure if your project is eligible, please contact your Community Engagement Officer to discuss this. Here is where to find their contact details: [www.testvalley.gov.uk/CEOfficers](http://www.testvalley.gov.uk/CEOfficers)

### **4. What cannot be applied for?**

- Revenue and running costs
- Low level repairs or maintenance including fixtures and fittings
- Redecoration
- Retrospective work
- Any project that creates a revenue pressure for the Borough Council
- Any activity which may be construed as radicalising or encouraging people into terrorism. Should any allegation be received, or if the Council has reason to suspect non-compliance, the Council will investigate and may decide to cancel, modify or withdraw any offer or grant made to ensure compliance with the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

- Organisations with a sufficient level of funds held as uncommitted, free reserves to meet one year of running costs PLUS the cost of the project may not be eligible to apply. The level of reserves held by all applicants will be taken into account when calculating the level of any award.
- Only one application per organisation may be considered in any one financial year and a second application can only be submitted if the previous award has been entirely claimed.

## 5. How much can be applied for?

- Up to 50% of the total activity or project cost
- The minimum award is £2,000 - so only projects costing £4,000 and more are eligible
- There is no maximum project cost, but maximum grant award is £25,000
- Funding is intended for one-off capital projects.

## 6. When is it open for applications?

The 2025/26 Community Asset Fund includes 3 rounds. The applications deadline, application review and application outcome dates are as follows:

**\*\*Applications must be received by 23:00 on the application deadline day (listed below) to qualify\*\***

Round	Application deadline	Application review	Application outcome
1	Mon 16 June 2025 (23:00)	Wed 16 July 2025	Fri 01 Aug 2025
2	Mon 22 Sept 2025 (23:00)	Wed 22 Oct 2025	Fri 07 Nov 2025
3	Mon 12 Jan 2026 (23:00)	Wed 11 Feb 2026	Fri 27 Feb 2026

**Please note:** Funding cannot be awarded retrospectively, so before applying you should be sure that no work will begin prior to the date you receive confirmation of your application outcome.

## 7. How can I apply?

Community Asset Fund applications must be submitted online. If you are making an application for the first time, you must 'Register' to create an account first and then you can select the option to 'Apply'.

- Visit: [www.testvalley.gov.uk/caf](http://www.testvalley.gov.uk/caf)
- Scroll to the bottom of the webpage and click on  
**'APPLY FOR A COMMUNITY ASSET FUND GRANT'**
- Select Test Valley Borough Council
- Select either 'Register' or 'Log in'
- Select 'Start' next to Community Asset Fund 2025/26

## 8. What supporting documents are required?

Amongst other supporting documents, the following key documents are required:

- Evidence of wider community support for your project. This might take the form of the results of a community consultation, a petition, social media campaign or a community plan that includes the project.
- An organisational an environmental / sustainability policy or, if you don't have one, an organisational statement on how you commit to being more sustainable as an organisation.
- An environmental / sustainability policy could cover things like how you try to use resources (such as energy, fuels and water) more efficiently, ways to reduce waste and encourage reuse and recycling, and any opportunities to support biodiversity.
- Constitution.
- A copy of the latest audited or independently checked accounts or if you are a new group a projected budget for the first year together with bank statement.
- Copies of three quotes to the same specification. Please indicate which quote your organisation has chosen for the work. The grant will normally be calculated based on the lowest quote.
- A fully completed, signed and dated application form.

## **9. What are the evaluation categories?**

Applications which meet the eligibility criteria set out above will proceed for evaluation and will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Evidence of community support
- Number of beneficiaries
- Impact of project
- Environmental sustainability of project
- Proportion of external funding
- Financial need to deliver project
- Security of tenure
- Risk (to Council reputation)
- Project Viability

## **10. What are the Terms and Conditions?**

- Applications can be submitted at any time whilst the fund is open, provided all requested supporting evidence has been supplied.
- Grants are available for up to 50% of the total cost of a project, with contributions from £2,000 up to a maximum of £25,000.
- If the applicant is a Parish or Town Council the VAT element of a project, will be excluded from any grant support.
- Consideration of an award will take into account all other accessible funding streams (eg S106).
- Applications for a phased project will be considered. Details of the entire project will need to be provided in the initial application.
- If an application cannot meet all evaluation criteria sufficiently to justify a grant of the full amount requested, consideration may be made to part fund a project.
- Work cannot proceed until you have received formal notification of the grant.
- Payment of the grant will be upon production of invoices or receipts. These must be addressed to the applicant organisation and dated after the date of approval.
- Payments will only ever be made to the applicant and never the supplier.
- Payments will be for 50% of each invoice, until the full award has been paid.
- Any grant will remain available for a period of two years from the date of approval. Extensions to this period will only be granted by the Head of Community and Leisure in exceptional circumstances upon written application by the applicant organisation.