

# SPARK GRANTS

## Application guidance

Heritage Spark Grants are Walsall Council's grants for new heritage partnerships to be trialled and experimented with, linking up organisations across the diversity of the Borough.

Funded by the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), Spark Grants are designed to facilitate new ideas and projects, and to enable local organisations to increase their reach and impact through collaboration.

UKSPF is a central pillar of the UK government's Levelling Up agenda and provides £2.6 billion of funding for local investment by March 2025. The Fund aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances across the UK investing in communities and place, supporting local business, and people and skills. This call contributes to the Communities and Place Investment Priority.

Walsall's heritage sector is central in shaping our sense of place, in contributing to economic growth and aiding the wellbeing of our communities. The sector is intertwined with our visitor economy, with our cultural and heritage assets resting alongside our exceptional natural environment to create a world class visitor experience. The Council Plan sets out an ambition to support confident, empowered, and resilient communities alongside sustainable, inclusive economic growth. Improving the area's heritage offer has the potential to play a key role in achieving both ambitions as well as delivering health, wellbeing and educational benefits.

Walsall Heritage Spark grants are designed to trial new partnerships between organisations and to explore new project ideas to identify potential for collaborative working at greater scale in the future.

Grants will be available for projects that increase participation and/or engagement in heritage activities through partnership work.

Projects must support delivery of the [Walsall Heritage Strategy 2021-2026](#). And the project must meet at least one of the following objectives:

1. **QUALITY OF LIFE AND WELLBEING**
2. **SENSE OF PLACE AND CELEBRATION**
3. **CLIMATE CHANGE**
4. **BUILDING RESILIENCE**

This document aims to provide the necessary guidance on the application. If you have any further questions, please contact: [heritagestrategy@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:heritagestrategy@walsall.gov.uk)

**The deadline for applications is 5pm on the 8th September 2023.**

## Heritage – Our definition

Walsall Heritage Strategy:

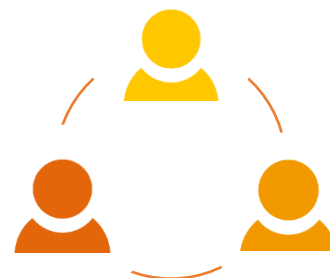
*“In the context of our Heritage Strategy, we have taken a broad definition, encompassing our history, the natural environment, architecture, archaeology and built heritage, but most importantly, who we are and our place in the world; the context of our lives and where we come from; our future hopes and aspirations; and our pride in Walsall.*

*Heritage isn't solely defined by historic buildings, archaeology, museum collections or stories of past industry. People and communities also make up our heritage; our connections with the past and with each other, our shared interests and values, and our hopes for the future. This is what our Strategy is centred on.”*

## Heritage Spark Grants

### What do we want to see?

The Heritage Sparks grant scheme is designed to provide local organisations with the funding and opportunity to explore new partnerships and project ideas which contribute to the growth of, and participation in, the Borough's heritage. Funding will support organisations to work collaboratively to explore how heritage can connect people and communities, inspire others, celebrate and build pride of place.



## Grant size:

**Revenue** grants are due to be awarded to a maximum of £4,000 with the expectation that five applications will be successful.

## What sort of projects will we fund?

Specifically, this fund is designed to trial new partnerships between organisations, to increase participation or engagement with the Borough's heritage.

Funding supports heritage activity; your proposal must be predominantly focussed on this theme and support one or more objective(s) of the Walsall Heritage Strategy.

Projects could, for example, include collaborative work to share untold stories, a programme of activities or events to connect our diverse communities with heritage, and/or activity to build capacity and engagement with heritage organisations.

All activity must be new or additional to existing work.

The scheme is focussed on short term activity, with completion by 28<sup>th</sup> February 2024, however local organisations working together to trial new initiatives should provide the experience and learning for exciting collective working in the future.

This is a **revenue** fund only and eligible costs include, for example, staff time, freelance/consultants, events, activities, training, venue hire, promotional activity, engagement / participatory programmes, performances, and volunteering.

Your project must achieve and evidence the following outputs and outcomes as a minimum:

<b>E6: Priority Outputs/Outcomes</b>			
<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Outcome (1)</b>	<b>Outcome (2)</b>	<b>Outcome (3)</b>
Number of local heritage events or activities.	1. Improved engagement numbers 10% increase in physical or digital activity.	2. Improved Perception of events, 10 % increase. The number of people who report their perception to be good or very good (compared to alternative heritage offerings in the Borough)	3. Number of community led arts, cultural, heritage and creative programmes as a result of support

Output Evidence required	Outcome Evidence required (1)	Outcome Evidence required (2)	Outcome Evidence required (3)
Evidence in form of events' documentation, reports, photographic evidence, flyers, social media use, evaluation forms.	<p>You will be asked for your current engagement numbers and evidence (potentially a zero baseline if the project is new). And you will need to be able to record your expected new engagement numbers and your delivered engagement numbers from project delivery – for up to 12 months.</p> <p>Bespoke surveys will need to be created for the general population of users or target groups affected by UKSPF interventions.</p>	<p>Bespoke surveys will need to be created for either the general population or target groups affected by UKSPF interventions. Question asked will need to determine if the users perception of this heritage event compared to other heritage events in the Borough, is GOOD or VERY GOOD (other options can also be provided)</p>	Documents used to deliver programmes. Delivery Plans, reports, events, registers etc.
<p>Please consider any other health and wellbeing outcomes that could be recorded through project delivery.</p> <p>Will your project be using volunteers – this could also be recorded as an outcome for your project.</p>			

## Key Requirements:

- Only partnership proposals will be accepted to encourage collaborative working. A lead partner who will sign the grant agreement and manage the funding should be identified.
- There should be a minimum of 2 partner organisations (including the lead).
- Projects must be able to demonstrate a clear link between the proposed activity and measurable increases in participation/engagement/ or visitor numbers.
- Applications should demonstrate appropriate mechanisms for generating increases in participation and engagement as well as robust ways to measure these.
- There are no requirements for match funding, however those projects that can demonstrate an element of match/aligned funding will be prioritised. Projects that can demonstrate that UKSPF will unlock other future funding will also be prioritised.

- UKSPF will not support 'business as usual' including routine maintenance activities.
- Applications should demonstrate clear added value.
- In line with Government requirements UKSPF monies must be fully expended, projects delivered, outcome and output evidence and evaluations submitted to the council by the **11 March 2024**. The Council does not have the facility to support projects that go beyond this deadline.
- Applications to deliver a programme of activities are eligible however applicants must demonstrate they are able to manage these projects, in line with UKSPF requirements including cashflow, reporting and subsidy control.
- This is a REVENUE fund only. Revenue costs include:
  - staff costs- salaries and contractual benefits, National Insurance and superannuation contributions
  - costs of business travel, subsistence and accommodation
  - contractors and consultants procured to deliver project activity
  - undertake evaluation work
  - undertake feasibility studies and/or market research to inform potential future projects
  - costs of materials
  - marketing and publicity costs
  - training participant costs e.g. allowances, travel expenses
  - dependant care costs of training participants
  - small items of equipment
- Capital spend is **ineligible**. Capital costs that would not be included are:
  - acquisition of land and or buildings
  - building and construction
  - professional fees associated with building and construction
  - plant and machinery
  - any larger value item of equipment, assessed in accordance with the project deliverer's capitalisation policy.
- Applicants should refer to the UKSPF guidance on outputs/outcomes which provides definitions and units of measurements – this can be found at UK Shared Prosperity Fund: [UK Shared Prosperity Fund: outputs and outcomes definitions \(2\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118122/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-outputs-and-outcomes-definitions-2.pdf)
- The Funding Call sets out priority outputs and outcomes, however applicants can identify if their project will deliver any other outputs and outcomes contained in the above guidance.
- The following **supporting documentation** must be submitted with your application: latest annual accounts:

**These documents must be submitted by all projects:**

- Constitution/and or set of rules
- Latest Management Accounts dated within the last 12 months
- Financial Accounts
- Recent Bank Statements (previous 3 months)
- Intention to form Partnership Document (only first three pages need to be completed at this stage)
- Evidence of adequate insurance
- VAT status (confirmation that VAT cannot be recovered)

**These documents will only need to be submitted by projects where relevant/ if applicable:**

- Health and Safety Policy
- Equality Policy
- Sustainable Development Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy (if applicable)

## Eligibility:

Applications are welcomed from a lead partner (working in partnership with at least one other partner organisation) involved in the following key areas:

- Heritage Sparks projects must deliver their activity within the Walsall Borough boundary, with detail found here: [Ward Profiles](#)
- Funding is for Walsall Borough. Your organisation must have a business address within this area. Preference is for non lead partners to also have a Walsall business address – but non lead partners will also be considered outside of the Borough.
- The Fund is open to constituted community and voluntary groups, charities and not for profit organisations.
- Organisations involved in delivering projects that engage communities in heritage activities.
- Beneficiaries must be Walsall residents.

## Subsidy Control Regime:

*A **subsidy** is where a public authority – for example central, devolved, or local government – provides support to an enterprise that gives them an economic advantage, meaning equivalent support could not have been obtained on commercial terms. This can take the form of a grant, a tax break, a loan, guarantee or equity investment on favourable terms, or the use of facilities below market price, amongst other kinds of support. The purpose of the subsidy control regime is to prevent public authorities from giving financial advantages to enterprises in a way that could distort competition. Preventing wasteful or harmful subsidies also means taxpayers' money can be used in better ways. To find out more information, click on the below link: [UK subsidy control regime - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk).*

Has your organisation received financial assistance in the last 3 years (the current fiscal year and the two previous ones) including the Heritage Spark Grant you will be applying for? All projects must complete the table in Section 1 of the application form. You can still apply if the financial assistance received exceeds the £315,000 limit, as you may still be eligible once the grants team have completed their assessment.

Please speak to a member of the Council if you have any queries in relation to Subsidy Control.

If your organisation has received no financial assistance over the last 3 years, please enter £0 in the table provided.

## Ineligible activity:

- Funding requests from schools.
- Request for funding AFTER the activity or project has taken place.



- Requests for funding for religious activities.
- Requests for funding for political activities or by a political organisation.
- Requests for funding for activities / projects which do not benefit individuals who live within Walsall.
- Requests for funding from private organisations or individuals.
- Where there is potential reputational risk for Walsall Council.
- Capital spend.

## Timeframe:

Projects will be advised via a grant letter if their project has been successful and there will be 14 days to sign the grant agreement.

Projects will receive 100% of the grant payment into their bank account once the grant agreement has been signed.

Projects cannot spend any of the grant money until the payment has been received into their bank account.

Programme delivery, all financial spend, output and outcome evidence, survey feedback and evaluations be completed and submitted to the council before the **11 March 2024**.

No financial spend can be made after this date.

The council cannot fund activity that has already happened.

It should be noted that the Council team will continue to stay in contact with the project to record new engagement details for 12 months from the delivery start date.

## Compliance and Monitoring:

Applicants will need to set out in their application how they will evidence the achievement of planned outputs and outcomes. For example, event documentation, reports, photographic evidence, social media use.

Monitoring requirements will include:

- Collation of engagement numbers (before, during and after delivery)
- Bespoke Surveys/questionnaires to confirm new engagements.
- A final project evaluation report.
- Evidence of expenditure e.g., invoices, receipts, bank statements, financial spend.
- Evidence of quotes obtained.
- Staff time evidenced by time sheets and/or payroll information.

The council will use the individual project milestones completed in the application form for monitoring and delivery purposes.

Applicants should note that if successful in a grant award they will be required to procure any items required in compliance with [UKSPF procurement guidelines](#).

Projects must also adhere to all UKSPF guidance including the [UKSPF Branding and Publicity guidelines](#).

The grant award will not cover or include any recoverable VAT incurred by your organisation and you should make your own enquiries of HMRC as to the recoverability of any VAT your organisation incurs.

## Assessment Criteria

Following confirmation that your project idea is eligible for funding through the Spark Grants programme, the application will be assessed for eligibility and each question scored by the grants panel using the following scoring matrix:

**One Mark = Poor** - Response does not meet some of the guidance requirements. Limited level of evidence that the guidance and funding requirements have been met. No added value or public benefit evident.

**Two Marks = Satisfactory** – Key guidance requirements have been met.

**Three Marks = Good** - Response meets the guidance and funding requirements with a good level of evidence provided. Strong alignment to Heritage Strategy. Clear evidence of public benefit and value for money.

**Four Marks = Excellent** - Significant level of evidence that the guidance and funding requirements have been met with clear public benefit and value for money. Strong alignment to Heritage Strategy. Clear outputs and objectives, focus and engagement plan. Added value evident.

### Walsall based:

- Heritage Sparks projects must deliver their activity within the Walsall Borough boundary, with detail found here: [Ward Profiles](#)
- Funding is for Walsall Borough. Your organisation must have a business address within this area.
- The Fund is open to constituted community and voluntary groups, charities and not for profit organisations.

### Themes:

Funding supports heritage activity; your proposal must be predominantly focussed on:

- Walsall Heritage Strategy 2021-2026 Objectives
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund

### Payment Schedule:

Following a successful application and the Grantee signing the Grant Agreement, the council will transfer 100% of the grant to the Grantee's bank account.

There will be intermittent reviews of the project spend by the Council, to confirm that the project spend is adhering to the project costs outlined in the application form. Any changes to any project costs need to be authorised with the council beforehand.



## Application and decision process

1. Applications open: 08 August 2023  
Support and engagement – we will host a funding webinar to ensure you have all the information necessary to submit a comprehensive and compliant application.
2. Applications submitted/deadline 08 September 2023  
Applications will be received until 08 September 2023, those accepted will be appraised and forwarded to panel.
  - a. Panel decision and grant awards – September 2023.  
The panel will convene to score and agree grant amounts, no project will be awarded greater than £4,000.
  - b. Grant Agreements – September 2023.  
The project team will issue grant agreements which must be signed and returned within 14 days
3. Project life cycle – From October 2023 to 11 March 2024
  - a. Partnership agreements
  - b. Kick off meeting
  - c. Mid-point meeting
  - d. End point meeting
4. Programme delivery paperwork, output and outcome evidence, all financial spend evidence, survey responses, evaluations and at least one case study must be submitted to the council by 11 March 2024.
5. Plaque  
Within three months of project delivery - a plaque must be placed within the delivery site, as per the UKSPF branding and marketing guidelines.
6. Supporting your next steps  
The Heritage Sparks Grants team will support you to continue to develop your partnerships and identify potential funding opportunities post March 2024.

Information about the Council's handling of your personal data can be found in its privacy policy, available online [Privacy statement | Walsall Council](#), or on request.

***This project is funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.***

***The UK Shared Prosperity Fund is a central pillar of the UK government's Levelling Up agenda and provides £2.6 billion of funding for local investment by March 2025. The Fund aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances across the UK investing in communities and place, supporting local business, and people and skills. For more information, visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus>***