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Walsall Council



WALSALL COUNCIL

COMMUNITY CAPITAL

PROGRAMME

2022-2026

Handbook



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Introduction

Walsall Council has successfully allocated £2,79m for the 2022 – 2026 Community Capital Programme. £2,050,101 for Bloxwich Town Deal area and £741,910 for Walsall Town deal area.

The Community Capital Programme aims to provide grants to Voluntary and Community sector organisations (VCS) to deliver capital improvements to premises in the Bloxwich and Walsall Town Deal areas.

Grants are available to eligible organisations to refurbish and upgrade buildings to provide enhanced learning & support environments and to provide individuals with skills needed for work activity. The Community Capital Programme Team will be happy to discuss your proposals to give you an early indication as to the suitability or otherwise of your project.

Applying for a Community Capital grant is a rigorous process, but this very rigour is an intrinsically valuable part of the grants scheme. Whilst the process requires work on your part, support and guidance is available, on-line, by telephone or email and, when necessary, face to face. The Community Capital Programme Team are here to help good projects succeed with their applications.

Section 1: About Community Capital

The Community Capital programme is a community-led scheme that provides capital funding for projects in the Bloxwich and Walsall Town deal areas, which aims to help communities to grow and develop. This handbook is about the Community Capital grants programme, it explains what the grants are for, who is eligible, how to apply and how applications are assessed.

The Community Capital Programme aims to provide grants to Voluntary and Community sector organisations (VCS) to deliver capital improvements to premises in the Bloxwich and Walsall Town Deal areas. The aim of the programme is to increase the capacity for learning and engagement activities for the local people of the area, improving skills, work and job opportunities and improving health and well-being. Grants will be available to refurbish and upgrade buildings or new premises to provide fit-for-purpose learning and support environments for skills and preparation for work activity.

All projects approved through the Community Capital process must be completed and all expenditure incurred by 31 March 2026.



Section 2: Who can apply?

The Programme is designed to assist not-for-profit community and voluntary organisation and charities based in and providing services in the Walsall and Bloxwich Town deal areas. We particularly welcome applications from organisations who have not received a grant before.

Eligible applicants must:

- Be established, based locally, and provide services in the Walsall or Bloxwich Town deal areas.
- Have a written Constitution/Memorandum of Association, or set of rules, which has been formally adopted and confirms your eligibility to apply.
- Have a bank account in the organisation name with a minimum of 2 signatories.***
- Have a Health and Safety policy in place.
- Have an Equality policy in place.
- Have a Sustainable Development policy in place.
- Have employers and public liability insurance in place (where legally required).
- Have a Safeguarding/Vulnerable Adults policy in place (where legally required for your project).

Organisations who cannot apply include:

- Individuals (not representing a group).
- Groups that consist of one family.
- Statutory bodies.
- Profit making organisations.
- Grant making bodies applying for funding to redistribute to individuals or groups.
- Political groups.

*** All applicants must prepare and maintain accounting records. Based on simplified Charity Commission guidelines, accounts appropriate to the size and nature of the organisation are required as detailed. Newly constituted organisations are required to provide a set of forecasted accounts.

Companies Limited by Guarantee with social aims may apply, however, to mitigate risk to the fund you must be able demonstrate the following.

- An up-to-date Memorandum and Articles of Association with a clear asset dissolution statement.
- Vision and Mission Objectives.

- Proven track record of engaging with communities through social media/website.

You will not automatically receive or be awarded a grant upon submitting your application. A Grant Assessment Panel (GAP) and Town Deal Subgroup (TDSG) will assess applications to see how well they align with the priorities for funding and which projects provide best value for taxpayers' money.

Community Capital funding is area specific and only applications from within the defined geographical boundary of each area can be supported by grant. To check if you are within the boundary, please see the below link:

[About the Town Deal | Walsall Council](#)

Section 3 - Funding and Costs

We encourage you to contact the Community Capital Project Manager to discuss your project idea and proposed costs at an early opportunity as some costs may not be eligible.

How much funding is available?

Although there are currently no minimum and maximum grant limits, there are limits of overall funding available during each financial year for the whole programme.

Grants available

The grants are for projects that support the growth of the local economy by improving opportunities for communities, particularly in terms of access to services and training.

Who can apply?

Not-for-profit organisations can apply for grants:

- small community and voluntary groups
- charities

How can the funding be used?

The programme aims to provide grants to Voluntary and Community sector organisations (VCS) to deliver capital improvements to premises in the Bloxwich and Walsall Town Deal areas. The aim of the project is to increase the capacity for learning and engagement activities for the local people of the area, improving skills, work and job opportunities and improving health and well-being. Grants will be available to refurbish and upgrade buildings to provide fit-for-purpose learning and support environments for skills and preparation for work activity.

Examples of costs could include:

- Constructing and/or renovating buildings.
- Buying equipment.

The following costs are also eligible, provided they form part of a larger project being funded and have not been instructed prior to application approval and contracting:



- Architect, engineer, planning, or consultant fees related to the project.

It is recommended that Planning Consultants are used for any project that requires planning permission, in which can be funded as part of your project. Please note, all eligible cost must be approved, included within your contract and be within the project start and end dates, costs outside of these cannot be claimed.

Ineligible Costs

Grant funding cannot be used for any of the following elements. Note: this list is not exhaustive.

General costs ineligible:

- any costs incurred before the project start date shown in the grant funding agreement.
- contingency costs
- any items which you have already had public funding for (or intend to get other public funding for)
- costs associated with the provision of housing.
- projects that are carried out only to meet a domestic legal requirement.

Business running costs ineligible:

- salaries and running costs for commercial projects.
- long term salaries and running costs for community or not for profit projects.
- in-kind contributions (this means the value of donated work or services) such as the cost of using your own labour, vehicle, and office space.
- recurring licence fees, subscriptions, and service charges
- computers, software, and printers used in the general running of the business, like processing orders or accounts.
- mobile phones
- the delivery of training activities
- consumables
- standard, non-specialised domestic vehicles, such as cars, motorbikes

Financial costs ineligible:

- bad debts
- advance payments
- insurance policy costs
- financial charges, such as bank charges, fines, and interest
- costs connected with a leasing contract, such as a lessor's margin, interest refinancing costs, overheads, and insurance charges.
- reclaimable VAT

Has your organisation already had some public funding?

When you apply, we'll ask you to tell us if your organisation has received funding from the EU & UK and/ or other public sources in the last 3 fiscal years (the current fiscal year and the 2 previous ones). If so, and the financial assistance received exceeds £315,000 cumulative, we might need to limit the amount of the funding you can get, to comply with UK Subsidy Control Act Minimal Financial Assistance exemption (formerly

known as EU State Aid de Minimis) or to undertake further subsidy control principles assessment to ensure award compliance with UK subsidies regime. Failure to disclose any financial assistance received within the requested timeframe could result in full clawback of any future grant amounts paid.

Paying for the project

Grants are generally paid in instalment, in arrears. However, if this option is not possible, outline your requirements within your application.

Within your application you will be asked to submit a proposed claim schedule that links to activities outlined within your project milestones. If your application is successful, your proposed claim schedule will be agreed within your grant offer letter and outlined within the contract. Therefore, please take careful consideration to the claims you are proposing.

Hire-purchase or leased items must be paid off before you claim. If you buy an item for the project using lease purchase or hire-purchase, you must own this outright before you can claim any grant money towards it.

This means that, before you claim the grant, you must:

- pay all the instalments.
- show that the title has passed to you.

Otherwise, you will not be able to include these costs in your claim. Lease purchase or hire purchase may not be an option for projects starting near the end of the programme, since it may not be possible to pay all instalments before the final date for claims.

Do not start work, incur costs, or place an order before your grant agreement has been signed. This will potentially make your whole project ineligible; therefore, you will be liable for the costs.

Project delivery

The project must be completed within the project dates and budgets as outlined with the contract agreement, any changes must be formally requested and approved via the change request process prior to the change taking place.

You will be required to submit a monthly claim and progress report to the Community Capital Team to enable us to monitor your progress.

Outcomes

As part of your project, you are contractually required to complete learning assisted outcomes. Outcomes can be delivered either by your organisation or a third party and can be accredited or non-accredited.

The required outcomes are as follows:

- Number of learners/trainees/students enrolled at improved education and training facilities.
- Number of learners/students/trainees gaining certificates, graduating, or completing courses at new or improved training or education facilities, or attending new courses

You will need to provide evidence of these outcome within 3 months of your project ending. Evidence required will consist of:

- Enrolment documentation
- Timesheets
- Exit documentation / training completion form.
- Copy of certificates
- Evaluation forms
- Monitoring form

Section 4: Application Process

This is a rolling grant with round deadlines, we aim to publish round dates on the Walsall Council website: [Town Deal Board | Walsall Council](#), and social media pages, so applicants are aware when the application will be considered. Before applying, please contact the Community Capital team on: communitycapital@walsall.gov.uk for an informal conversation about your application.

We are looking for projects that best meets the local and national priorities for funding, and that are good value for taxpayers' money. If you can show this clearly in your application, you are more likely to be successful in your grant application.

The application process is in 2 stages. First, you must submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) form. If your EOI is approved, we will invite you to submit a Full Application

Applications will be initially assessed to ensure the application has been fully completed, all supporting documents have been included and eligibility checked against the essential eligibility Gateway Criteria which includes the following.

- Activities that are based in, and serves residents in the Bloxwich and Walsall Town deal areas;
- Applicant is a third sector/not for profit entity; and
- Applicant confirms understanding of and can meet, regulatory compliance in the Crosscutting Themes, Publicity and Procurement (purchasing).

4.1 Expression of Interest (EOI)

We use the information provided on the EOI form to check that both your organisation and your project are eligible. Then we assess how well your project proposal meets the local and national priorities for grant funding.

It will help your application if you explain your project clearly. You should tell us exactly what you are doing, why it is good for your organisation, how and where you are delivering the project and who will benefit from it.

4.2 Full Application

If you are invited to submit a full application, we will ask for more information to further assess your project and your organisation. This table will give you an overview of what we assess.

Strategic fit	How well the project meets the national and local priorities for funding.
Value for money	How the project costs represent value for money. The amount of grant required to deliver the outcomes and outputs, including jobs. What difference grant funding will make compared to what would happen without grant funding.
Need for the project	Why grant funding is required for the project. There is a clearly identified market need for the project. The impact the project has on other businesses, both positive and negative.
Financial health and projections	The current financial viability of your organisation. How the project may impact on your existing operations. How you will fund the project until the grant is claimed. How the organisation will benefit from the project financially.
Cross-cutting themes	How the project will impact the environment. How the project impacts on people who might be at greater risk of discrimination due to race, disability, age and gender.
Delivery and sustainability	Whether the project will be delivered in budget and on time. That the right skills and resource are in place to deliver the project successfully. How project outputs and other benefits will be monitored and recorded. That risks to project delivery have been identified and mitigation plans provided. Also consider the long-term sustainability to the organisation and community post project delivery and what running costs you may incur.

How we assess applications

Applications that pass the Gateway Criteria, will be then evaluated by a Grants Assessment Panel (GAP) based on responses to the Full Application form's selection questions against the following set of quality selection criteria.

- **Criteria 1:** Quality of proposed progression and evidencing of outcomes from the project (Question 23).
- **Criteria 2:** Quality of innovation of the project (Question 24).
- **Criteria 3:** Quality of knowledge of the specific need / requirement that the project will meet (Question 25).
- **Criteria 4:** Quality of proposed project to not displace other facilities / enterprises / activities (Question 26).
- **Criteria 5:** Quality of financial systems and monitoring (Question 31).
- **Criteria 6:** Previous performance, if applicable.

Each of the 5 criteria will have a maximum of 5 points awarded based on the quality of responses graded: Excellent (5); Good (4); Satisfactory (3); Fair (2); Weak (1); Poor (0). **A total of 30 marks is therefore available. Applications that meet the quality threshold of 60% and above, i.e. 18 out of 30, will be recommended for support to the Town Deal Subgroup (TDSG), for formal approval of grant.**

The Town Deal Subgroup (TDSG) will consider the following in making their decision:

- Quality and relevance of the application as reflected in the final GAP recommendation.
- Value of contribution to the Community Capital Programme's outcomes.
- Funding available and the need to achieve an equitable distribution across the sub-region.
- Long-term sustainability to the organisation and community post project delivery.
- Benefits to both the project and local economy, whilst ensuring to adhere to required procurement procedures.

The Council will assess on a case-by-case basis if security is required to underwrite the grant but will take a reasonable and proportionate approach.

Applicants will be sent an official letter informing them of their application outcome following the Town Deal Subgroup (TDSG) meeting. Applicants who are successful will be asked to confirm that they wish to accept the offer. A formal contract will be put in place between the application organisation and Walsall MBC.

Unsuccessful applicants will be provided with feedback upon request. The Town Deal Subgroup (TDSG) decision is final and not open to appeal. Complaints relating to the grant application and approval process are covered in the Walsall Community Capital Programme's Complaints and Feedback Policy v1 2022-2025.

Section 5: How to apply

The application process is divided into two stages. First, you must submit an 'Expression of Interest' (EOI) form. If we endorse your EOI, we will invite you to submit a full application.

5.1 The Expression of Interest (EOI) form

You will need to download the EOI from Walsall Council Website: [Town Deal Walsall | Walsall Council](#). On the EOI, you will need to give us some information about your organisation and project, including:

- Status of organisation
- Details of any previous public funding your business has had
- Description of the project and planned learner assisted outcome
- An overview of the costs
- Project dates and milestones
- Brief information relating to lease/ownership, planning and consents.

How to submit your form

Email your EOI to communitycapital@walsall.gov.uk, placing 'EOI – (organisation name)' within the subject title.

Email your EOI from the email address you specify in section 1 of the EOI form. Provide an email address that you monitor regularly as we will use this email address to contact you.

What happens after you submit your EOI

After you submit the form, you will get an email to say we have received it. We will then assess your EOI and let you know whether or not you will be invited to submit a full application.

If an application is unsuccessful

If your application is unsuccessful at EOI or full application stage, we will notify you, providing a letter with the reasons.

5.2 Full Application

If you are invited to submit a full application, we will send you the relevant form and advice about how to fill this in. We will also give you a date by which you should return

The form and supporting information. The form asks for full details about you, your organisation, and your project, including:



- Final project costs
- Project milestones and payment schedules
- Proposed project outputs

You will need to send us:

- Three-year financial accounts
- Latest bank statements (up to 3 months)
- Latest management accounts for current financial year
- Relevant permissions and consents
- Proof of tenancy or ownership
- Photos of the area where the project is due to take place and drawings / plans (if relevant)

(Please see the document checklist attached to the application form for full list of documents required).

The Town Deal Subgroup (TDSG) will decide if a full application is successful and if a grant offer can be made during the panel meetings. Once the Town Deal Subgroup (TDSG) decision meeting has taken place, you will be informed on the outcome of your application within two working days.

For an application to be considered at a panel meeting, the completed full application will need to be received by round deadline. Both GAP and TDSG have the right to ask for further information to support a successful application where applicable.

Approved grant

If you are offered a grant, we will send you a grant funding agreement for you to sign.

This will stipulate the legal terms and conditions of the grant, including:

- the value of the grant
- the outputs we have agreed for your project

If you need to change anything in the grant funding agreement over the course of the project, you will need to obtain a written agreement from the Community Capital Team at Walsall Council. Failure to do so, could terminate your agreement and result in a clawback of any grant we have already paid. You will receive more information and help with this if you are offered a grant.

Section 6: Funding Requirements

All successful applicants will be required to:

- Attend mandatory training workshop, which will cover contract/project management; financial claims and progress reporting; and project closure.
- Receive on-site visits to the location(s) where your project will be delivered.
- Read fully the commitments placed on your organisation through the contract's terms and conditions of receipt of grant; sign and return the contract to Walsall Council before commencing delivery.

- Complete necessary documentation using Community Capital Programme forms relating to recruitment, the individual learning plan, end of course evaluation and outcomes on exit.
- Provide updates to the Community Capital team, explaining how your project is progressing, including any issues you have identified, and actions taken to remain on target.
- End of project case studies.
- Provide timely project claims for expenditure supported with required evidence. Retain copies for your records and audit purposes. Grant will be paid only where expenditure can be proven.
- Ensure that all marketing and publicity related to the project is compliant with the Community Capital guidance.
- Comply with the Cross-Cutting Themes and integrate equality and sustainable development principles into project delivery.
- Provide photos of the project area before and after completion.

Section 7: Application Form Submission and Contact

Email your Full Application to communitycapital@walsall.gov.uk, placing 'Full Application and your 'organisation name' within the subject title.

Email your Full Application from the email address you specify in section 1 of the Full Application form. Provide an email address that you monitor regularly as we will use this email address as our main way of contacting you.

The application form itself contains notes about completing each section and further guidance has been outlined with the Application Guidance document. Ensure you read these carefully before you complete the application form.

You should ensure that:

- Your application is fully completed.
- You submit the supporting documentation.
- The form is signed and dated.
- You retain a copy for your records.
- All requested documentation is received by the round deadline.

If your application is incomplete or you fail to submit all required documentation by the round deadline, your application will not be assessed.

Organisations requiring further support or guidance to assist in the preparation of the Community Capital Programme application, should contact:

Helen Kirk, Programme Management Officer, Walsall Council.

Tel: 07341 868092 Email: communitycapital@walsall.gov.uk