



Buckingham Town Council

Grants Policy

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Aim

The aim of this policy is to set down the procedure under which Buckingham Town Council will undertake to give out Grants. In addition, it will explain in more detail what information is required to make a valid application. Grants are only given to organisations, not to individuals.

Two types of grants

There are two types of grants available. **One year grants** and **four year grants**.

One year grants	Four year grants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One off annual grants - Typically, smaller amounts are awarded between £200 - £2,000 pounds, but there is no minimum or maximum amount. - Your organisation does not have to be registered as a charity, but it must be a not-for-profit organisation. - A simple grant monitoring form must be completed at the end of the grant year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long term four year grants - Typical larger amounts are awarded each year between £2,000 and £5,500 pounds, but there is no minimum or maximum amount. - Detailed grant monitoring reports will be requested at the end of each grant year. - Four year grants can cover running costs, however there must be a clear justification for funding the organisation long term. - In order to qualify for a four year grant your organisation must enter into a grant award agreement with the Council. The agreement will be centred around the benefits your organisation brings to the residents of Buckingham.
<p>Example one year grant: <i>A not-for-profit toddler playgroup applies for £400 to buy new toys for children. In the end of grant monitoring report the playgroup organisers complete a simple form about how they spent the money, the impact the new toys made and provide photographs for public use.</i></p>	<p>Example four year grant: <i>A registered charity applies for four years of funding to cover room hire and staffing costs for a free money advice service. In the monitoring report the charity gives details about how the money was spent, how many people accessed the service and the impact that was made.</i></p>

Each type of grant has its own application form and procedures.

Grant Criteria

1. Grants will only be considered for projects and activities beneficial to the people of the civil parish of Buckingham.
2. Grant recipients must be based in the civil parish of Buckingham or provide evidence of the percentage of the work that directly benefits Buckingham residents.
3. Only not-for-profit bodies will be considered for a grant.

How to apply:

The application form for grants is available as a word document from the [Buckingham Town Council website](#). To apply, complete the form digitally, answering all the questions.

The application form should be returned with **either** the [previous year's accounts](#) **or** for new organisations, a business plan.

If you are not able to access the website or to complete or submit a digital copy of the form, please contact the office in sufficient time to make alternative arrangements.

If all of the information requested is not received before the closure of the grant application period then the grant application will be rejected.

Application Forms

The Town Council grant application forms are designed to be simple and easy to fill in. You do not need any experience of writing grant applications previously to apply. For a full guide to all of the questions on the application form, please see [Appendix B: Guidance on completing the application form](#) at the end of this document.

Further information

1. Buckingham Town Council does not guarantee to award any grants, and any amount is allocated at the Council's discretion
2. Where there is more demand for one year grants than funding available, new applicants will be given priority over those who have received funding in the last four years.
3. Grants will be awarded once a year at a meeting of the Resources Committee, following the annual Precept (budget) meeting.
4. Not all projects are eligible for grant funding. If you are unsure if your project is eligible please contact the Town Council office¹.
5. All requests for four-year funding must explain why a long term commitment is justified.
6. Successful four year grant applicants must enter into a Grant Award Agreement with the Council. Any such agreement will be at the Council's discretion. Any Grant Award Agreement must be agreed prior to the precept meeting and will commence at the start of the next financial year.
7. Successful grant applicants must clearly acknowledge their grant from the Council on publicity related to their funded project using the Town Council logo and the words 'supported by Buckingham Town Council' in any publications, digital or physical. They may be asked to meet with the Mayor in order to receive a charity cheque and will be asked to provide quotes for publicity purposes.
8. All successful grant applicants will be required to complete a Grant Monitoring Form. For one year grants this will be at the end of their grant period. For four year grants this will be annually.
9. Failure to complete and return a Grant Monitoring Form **will** affect an organisations eligibility for future grants.

¹ For example, the following projects would not be eligible:

- i. Other public bodies, or projects to fund items that should be paid for by another public body, for example a different local council
- ii. Applications from businesses or individuals
- iii. Projects that promote a particular religion over others
- iv. Projects that support a particular political party

10. All successful grant applicants must provide photographs that show how grants were spent. These photographs must be authorised for use by the Town Council in the press, website and social media.

Receiving, crediting and spending the Grant

If successful, the grant will be paid to your organisation by bank transfer in May.

The Council asks all grant recipients to use the Buckingham Town Council logo and phrase 'supported by Buckingham Town Council' on any publications produced by grant recipients during the grant award period, whether these are physical publications or online.

The grant applied for must be spent on the items listed in the grant application. Clear and precise records must be kept of how the money is spent, including invoices where appropriate. The Council may request to see these records at any time. If evidence of the money being spent as set out in the grant application cannot be supplied then the grant may need to be returned to the Town Council, it may also impact on future grants from the Council.

Grant monitoring forms

One year grants

One year grant applicants will be asked to complete an end of year grant monitoring form. This is a simple form that asks:

- How the grant was spent
- What difference the grant funding make to Buckingham and its residents
- To provide photographs that show how the grant was spent.

Four year grants

Four year grant applicants will be asked to complete grant monitoring form annually. These are more detailed forms that ask:

- How the grant was spent
- What difference the grant funding make to Buckingham and its residents
- How successful the organisation has been at achieving the purposes set out in the grant award agreement with the Council.
- What percentage of beneficiaries of the funding provided by the Council were resident in Buckingham.
- Any particular benefits there have been to, and any measures taken to enhance access and use by those with protected characteristics. *Age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.*
- What actions the organisation has taken to reduce the impact of the climate emergency.
- To provide photographs that show how the grant was spent.
- If the organisation would like to make any changes to their project.

Emergency Grants

At the discretion of the Resources Committee of Buckingham Town Council, small grants may be awarded to local not-for-profit organisations from an earmarked reserve held for emergency funding for VCSE groups. Decisions over this funding would be made by the Resources Committee which meets six times a year. Contact the Town Clerk for more information.

Appendix A: Annual grants procedure timetable

October	Grants applications open, this will be advertised in the Buckingham Town Matters newsletter, on the Town Council website and social media.
November	Grant applications close by 12 noon on the specified day. A completed grant application form and a copy of the accounts must be received by the Council by the deadline to be considered a valid application.
November to January	Four year grant applicants will be asked to create a grant award agreement with the Council.
January	The budget for grants will be set at the Precept meeting of Full Council.
January	Members of the Resources Committee will decide which grants applications should be awarded funding.
February	Applicants are notified if their grant application has been successful or not.
May	Successful grant applicants will receive their funding by bank transfer. Four year grant holders will be asked to provide statements for a joint press release with the Town Council
Next March	One year grant holders will be asked to complete an end of grant monitoring form. Four year grant holders will be asked to complete an annual monitoring form.
May	Four year grant holders will receive their next payment.

Appendix B: Guidance on completing the grant application form

Section 1: Tell us about your organisation

This section asks for basic information about your project.

Name of organisation – Please enter the name of the organisation which is applying for the grant.

Address – If the organisation does not have a headquarters please give the postal address where normal correspondence would be sent.

Website address – if your organisation uses a website please provide the address here

Social media handles – if your organisation uses social media please tell us about it here, for example the Town Council uses Facebook, Twitter and Instagram with the handle @BuckinghamTC

Where relevant: Charity number – Please enter your organisation's charity number here.

Total project cost – Please enter the total cost of the project for which funding is requested.

Grant amount applied for – Please enter the amount which the organisation is requesting that the Town Council provide.

The following two questions are relevant if there are more applicants than funding available in any given year.

Has your organisation applied for a grant from the Town Council previously? – please answer yes or no.

Would your organisation be able to complete the planned project if a reduced amount of funding was offered by the Council? – please answer yes or no.

Section 2: Reason for grant

Please tell us about the project you are applying for funding for.

The word limit on this section is longer for four year grants than one year grants. These short summaries will help explain to the Council what you would like to do with the funding, and will be used in reports to Councillors.

Four year applications only: please tell us why your grant needs four year funding.

It's important to give details about why four year funding is more suitable for your project than a one year grant. It could be that your project is an annual event, has long term costs that can't be paid for in other ways, or is a new group that needs more than one year to establish alternative sources of funding. If successful, the information in this section will be used to help develop your Grant Award Agreement.

Section 3: Who will benefit from the grant

Roughly how many people do you think will benefit from the grant? – Please give an idea, or how many people will benefit.

Who do you think will benefit most? – Please tell us who you intend to benefit from the funding. If you have a run a similar project before, tell us who attended or benefited in the past. If you are running a new project, consider if it is mainly aimed at a particular group of people, including those with protected characteristics (age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex or sexual orientation.)

What benefits will the grant bring to Buckingham and/or its residents? – In what ways will those who take part in your project benefit?

Are more than 50% of your predicted project beneficiaries residents of Buckingham? – please answer yes or no.

How is your organisation working to reduce the environmental impact of your project? – Please consider how your organisation could respond to the climate emergency. For example does the project encourage the use of public transport or use reusable drinking cups instead of disposable options.

Section 4: How will the grant be spent

Before you complete this section, check how much the materials you will need for your project will cost. Please provide a detailed breakdown of what you would like the Town Council to fund, writing what you would buy in the **item** column and the price in pounds in the **total cost** column. Staff time can be included as an item.

Please bear in mind, that while annual running costs can be included, one year grant applications should not be repeat requests for the same items on an annual basis. Applications of this kind are better suited to four year grants.

Section 5: Contact and financial information

Contact details – Please provide contact information in case we need to clarify anything in the grant forms. This will also be the person we will contact regarding whether the grant application has been successful or not.

Financial information – Using your knowledge of your organisation's finances please tell us how much money the organisation spent and how much the organisation held in the bank at the end of the last financial year.

Is any of the money in your bank held for a specific future project or purpose (a different project to the one you are applying for grant funding for)? You might refer to this as allocated reserves, or have a specific reserves policy if so, please attach a copy with your application. If not, use this section of the form to tell us about the project you are saving for and how much you think it will cost.

Bank account information – please provide details of your organisations bank account. This allows grants to be paid by bank transfer.

Section 6: Declaration

Please check each of the boxes in this section to confirm that you have read and understood the grants policy documents and your legal obligations as a grant applicant.

Provide a copy of your latest accounts:

Accounts - All requests must be accompanied with a copy of the last signed and audited accounts. These accounts should show last year's **income**, **outgoings** and **reserve** levels. If your organisation has a large amount of reserves (usually equivalent to more than six months of expenditure) please also provide a copy of your reserves policy, or an explanation of why the reserves can't be used to fund your project.

If no set of accounts is available due to the organisation seeking grants within its first year then a business plan should accompany the grant request. A good business plan should cover the following six areas:

1. Summary of your new organisation's aims
2. The product or service your organisation will provide, and how it will achieve your aims.
3. Organisational structure
4. Marketing strategy
5. How will the organisation be funded, both initially and in the long term
6. Any supporting information