



Mayor's Small Grants Fund April 2025 – March 2026 Guidance Notes

What is the Mayor's Small Grants Fund?

This fund aims to provide 'not for profit' voluntary and community organisations the opportunity to apply for a grant to help towards:

- A one-off community event.
- A green/sustainable initiative that supports our commitment to reduce the carbon footprint of the borough.
- The purchase of items of equipment.

We are particularly keen to see applications that encourage and embrace community cohesion and unity from organisations that support and work with the many diverse communities residing in Watford.

All funding awarded must be able to demonstrate the benefit to Watford residents.

Who can apply for funding?

- Informal groups (e.g. a group of neighbours, a local playgroup, a women's or men's group, a pensioner's group etc.)
- 'Not for Profit' voluntary & community organisations
- Registered charities
- Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIO)
- Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC)
- Community Interest Companies (CIC)
- Social Enterprises

Applications from organisations that are limited by guarantee will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Informal Groups

We welcome and accept applications from informal groups. An informal group or non-constituted group is a group of people who have a similar interest and want to work together for the benefit of the local community. The groups' aims must be charitable. Examples of groups include:

- A group of neighbours
- A playgroup
- A pensioners group

You must provide a letter of endorsement when you submit your application. This can be from a constituted organisation, a local Councillor*, your local Police Community Support Officer or other similar representative. The endorsement must be provided on the organisation's headed paper.

* We cannot accept a letter of endorsement from the Mayor.

We can only pay grant awards into an organisation bank account. Therefore, informal groups who are successful with their application will have their award paid to the intermediary organisation Watford & Three Rivers Trust (W3RT) and must sign up to their Volunteer Partnership Agreement. This agreement will provide a legal framework within which W3RT can support the informal group to deliver their activities. There are 2 criteria that must be met:

- Activities provided by the informal group must be entirely charitable. Please click on the link below for further information and guidance.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charitable-purposes/charitable-purposes#descriptions-of-purposes>
- Funding cannot be used to pay group members a salary.

If your group cannot sign up to W3RT's Volunteer Partnership Agreement, we will not be able to assess your application. Therefore, the agreement must be signed before any funding is approved.

For further information on W3RT including the services they provide, please visit their website at www.w3rt.org

Constituted Groups

We can accept applications from any voluntary and community organisation who can comply with the following conditions:

- Hold a bank account in the name of the organisation
- Have a management committee of at least 3 unrelated/non-cohabiting committee members
- Be non-profit making, or a social enterprise where profits are reinvested for community benefit

We welcome partnership applications from two or more organisations. Your application must provide details of each organisation you will be working in partnership with and what their role will be. We will also need to know if any of the partnership organisations are providing any funding towards the project.

We have a duty to ensure that public money is distributed to organisations that meet our criteria. We may contact the references you specify in your application to give assurance of your competency.

Council Plan 2022 – 2026 (Watford Together, United by Possibility.)

Our Council Plan 2022-26 and Delivery Plan 2024-26 sets out our aspirations for both Watford Borough Council and the town it serves. It is forward-looking, high level and outward facing, with an emphasis on outcome focused commitments. The plan demonstrates our role as leader of place and how we will continue to build on our strategic and operational excellence.

Our Council Plan themes are:

- A council working for our community and serving our residents
- A greener, brighter future
- An inspiring, thriving and creative town
- A diverse, happy and healthy town

You can find a copy of our Council Plan and Delivery Plan here: <https://www.watford.gov.uk/council-13/council-strategies-plans-1>

What are the criteria for funding?

Applications to the Mayor's Small Grants Fund must:

- Meet at least one of the Council Plan themes, numbers 2, 3 or 4
- Provide evidence to demonstrate the event, initiative or equipment is needed
- Provide evidence to demonstrate that there are future benefits for Watford residents
- *Applications must provide at least 10% match funding on their Mayor's Small Grants Fund request (£300 on an application requesting the maximum amount of £3,000).

*Applications from informal groups will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and we may choose to support an application where 10% match funding has not been provided.

How much can we apply for?

- A maximum of £ 3,000 per organisation per year

When can we apply?

- This programme operates one round of funding. The fund is open from 9am on Monday 3rd February 2025 to 5.00pm on Friday 28th March 2025.
- Applications are considered on a first come, first served basis up to the closing date and subject to budget availability.
- Late applications are not considered.

How do we apply?

- Applications must be made online by visiting www.watford.gov.uk/mayors-smallgrants
- **You must** complete **ALL** sections of the application form and provide **ALL** associated documents (see below).
- Incomplete applications will not be accepted, and organisations will be responsible for resubmitting a completed version of the application.

What documents do we need to submit with our application?

- Constitution, governing document or equivalent (signed and dated)
- Equality & Diversity Policy (constituted organisations)
- Safeguarding Policy (constituted organisations) – if applicable
- Latest set of organisation accounts (constituted organisations)
- Letter of Endorsement (informal group)
- Public Liability Insurance - if applicable (Minimum cover of £5m)
- 3 x quotes for equipment purchases* - if applicable

*There may be occasions when organisations find it difficult to obtain 3 quotes for equipment purchases, especially if the item of equipment to be purchased is custom made or bespoke. If this is the case, please explain the reasons in your application or contact the Partnerships & Funding Manager for advice.

When will we know if we have been successful?

- Applications will be considered at a delegated decision meeting, scheduled to take place on 8th May 2025 but this is subject to change.
- Organisations are informed of the decision by email.
- Successful applicants will be required to complete and sign a Declaration of Funding and agree any individual conditions of funding before your funding award is paid.
- Once we have received your signed declaration, your grant will be paid within two weeks.
- Award payments are made by BACS into the organisation's UK bank account.
- There may be occasions when we decide to pay an award to Watford & Three Rivers Trust (W3RT) or another organisation approved by Watford Borough Council and in these instances, we will follow the procedure for informal groups as detailed above.
- Successful applicants must ensure the award is in the organisation's bank account before making payments against it.

Who cannot apply for funding?

- Individuals
- Sole traders
- Statutory organisations (councils, schools, NHS, police etc.)
- Private businesses/companies

Examples of what we can fund:

- Event publicity including leaflets, flyers, banners etc.
- Catering and/or refreshments
- Hall hire (related to the event only)
- Costs of hiring instructors, trainers, facilitators, counsellors (related to the event only)
- Project management costs and expenses
- Insurance (public liability insurance specific to an event)
- Project materials (stationary, printer, tablet etc.)
- Sports equipment

- Green/sustainable initiatives/environmental events, e.g. neighbourhood clean-ups/litter picking, community repair events, community vegetable growing, changing to energy efficient lightbulbs, purchasing bicycle racks, water butts etc.
- Cultural/community events

What items will not be funded?

- Core funding including but not limited to an organisation's baseline service delivery and/or activities, on-going hall hire costs, salaries, utilities, rates, rent, insurance etc.
- Sports coaching qualifications, first aid and equality workshops.
- Any initiative, project and/or piece of equipment that in the opinion of WBC would be perceived as being for a singular religious aim or political purpose.
- The purchase of land, buildings and vehicles.
- Medium/large scale improvements to buildings/premises (i.e. refurbishments/replacements etc.) including but not limited to structural work that requires planning permission.
- The costs incurred in applying for external funding.
- Loans of any description.
- Projects/initiatives or events that have already taken place.
- Item(s) of equipment that have already been purchased.
- Special Circumstances - White goods (fridge, freezer, dishwasher etc.). Funding for these items will be considered on a case-by-case basis if you can demonstrate considerable community benefit and/or they are an energy efficient appliance.

What are the conditions of funding?

- Constituted organisations must provide a signed and dated copy of their constitution or governing document, their Equality and Diversity Policy and their latest set of accounts at the time of application.
- Informal groups must provide a letter of endorsement (e.g. from a local constituted organisation or charity, funder, Councillor, local Police Community Support Officer or other similar body/representative) on the organisation's letter headed stationery at the time of application. This is required to verify and reduce fraudulent applications.
- We cannot accept applications where the main contact person is a Watford Councillor. Watford Councillors can support an organisation in their application but cannot be named as the main contact.
- Constituted organisations must provide the contact details of 2 references and these must be from a statutory organisation, constituted organisation or charity. If you have not applied to the Mayor's Small Grants Fund before, or if you are an organisation or group we do not know, we may contact your references to confirm your status and suitability for funding.
- It is the responsibility of the organisation to arrange and pay for public liability insurance with a minimum cover of £5m. If your event requires this insurance, a copy of the insurance certificate must be provided at the time of application. The council will not accept responsibility for the consequences, financial or otherwise, should the organisation fail to uphold their responsibilities to obtain adequate public liability insurance.
- Requests for equipment must be supported by 3 quotes, for each item, at the time of application.
- Any equipment purchased through this fund must remain within the organisation and must not be loaned out to external parties without the prior permission of WBC.
- Please keep all receipts for equipment purchases as these will be required as part of the monitoring process.
- Where services or equipment are purchased from persons that are known to the organisation, this must be declared to the council in your application.
- Be aware that if your organisation provides services to residents outside of Watford, we may only fund the proportion that relates to the number of Watford residents benefiting from your event, initiative or equipment request.
- If you will be working with children and/or vulnerable adults we will ask for a copy of your organisation's Safeguarding Policy and related documents (i.e. evidence of enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service – DBS checks). We may not be able to proceed with your application if these documents cannot be provided when requested. You may also be asked to tell us who your Designated Safeguarding Lead is.
- The funding will be used wholly and exclusively for the purpose agreed with WBC.
- Unspent funds or those not used for the described purpose must be repaid to the council.

- Permission must be approved by WBC for any changes your organisation wishes to make to the purpose for which the funding has been awarded. Any changes made without WBC's prior approval may result in the organisation having to return all or part of the funding award.
- The organisation must acknowledge the council's support in any publicity material by using the council's logo. Should the council's support be withdrawn from the organisation, the council's logo must be removed from all publicity material immediately.
- Be aware that if your application for funding is successful (for any amount up to £3000) you may be unable to reapply for funding for a period of at least 1 year following a successful application (e.g. if you receive £500 funding in 2025-26, you will be unable to reapply until 2027-28).

What are the monitoring requirements?

All successful applicants should take photographs if appropriate. You will be required to:

- Provide receipts against spend. Following consideration of these by WBC, please note that unspent awards or those not used for the described purpose must be repaid to the council within one month of WBC's notification to avoid any further action.
- Provide an Outcomes & Achievements Report and Equalities Monitoring Report within 12 months of receiving the grant payment or as advised otherwise by WBC.
- Meet all/any conditions of funding that have been set.

General Data Protection Regulations

Watford Borough Council takes the security of your personal information seriously. We are required to collect certain personal information from you in order to deal with your application for grant aid.

You can view a detailed privacy notice to see how we intend to deal with your personal data by going to <https://www.watford.gov.uk/downloads/file/479/privacy-notice-for-mayor-s-small-grants-fund>

The council will use the information you have provided for the stated purpose only. No personal information you have given us will be passed on to third parties for commercial purposes. The council's policy is that information may be shared among officers across departments and other agencies, where the legal framework allows, if this will help to improve the service you receive and to develop other services.

This council is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers, and to this end may use the information you have provided for the prevention and detection of fraud. We may also share this information with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds for these purposes.

Partnerships & Funding Manager Contact Details:

Kim Bloomfield
 Tel: 01923 278319
 Email: kim.bloomfield@watford.gov.uk

Decision Dates 2025-26

Please be aware that your application must be submitted by the application deadline for it to be considered at the delegated decision meeting. The meeting date and application deadline are subject to change.

Meeting No:	Date of Meeting:	Application Deadline:
1	8 th May 2025	28 th March 2025
The Mayor's Small Grants Fund 2025-26 closes for applications at 5.00pm on Friday 28 th March 2025		
LATE APPLICATIONS ARE NOT CONSIDERED		