

VCS Main Grant Application Guidance Notes

2025/26

Grants between £2k and £10k

Welcome to Redditch Borough Council's Grant Programme. These Guidance Notes are to help you complete the Grant Application Form. Here are some general points first:

- You are advised to read through the guidance notes and the application form before you start.
- In the form, the word 'you' usually refers to your group or organisation and 'we' refers to Redditch Borough Council.
- You can either download the application form onto your computer and complete it from there or complete the form by hand using **black ink**. To download the form, please go to Redditch Borough Council Website: www.redditchbc.gov.uk and/or use this link to get through to the grants and funding section -
- Please note, maximum word counts have been provided for the text questions. Please adhere to these and use them as a guide for the amount of content you need to provide for each question.
- Please feel free to expand the boxes or add extra sheets, just remember to label them with your group's name and the question number the additional information is referring to. However, please don't send us any information or documents we have not asked for as we cannot consider them.
- If you do not have an answer to a specific question, then please do not leave the box blank, just explain **why** you cannot answer the question.
- If you would like the form in a different format or would like help filling it in, please contact the Grants Manager, Ali Osborne on 01527 587002 or by email: grants.team@redditchbc.gov.uk
- Document Checklist:

Please ensure that you send copies (or provide electronic links) of the following documents with your form:

- Your latest signed annual accounts or management accounts.
- A copy of your organisation's formal constitution if you are an unregistered charity or a copy of your governing document if you are a registered charity or Community Interest Company. Letters of commitment from all partners involved in the project, *if you are applying as the lead body for a consortium or partnership.*
- Certificates or policies that are required to support your application if relevant to your proposed service/project e.g. Safeguarding policy, Health and Safety policy etc.

Please remember to send all the relevant requested documents with your application form otherwise your application cannot be considered.

- If you need any help, please contact the Grants Manager at Redditch Borough Council on 01527 587002 or by email: grants.team@redditchbc.gov.uk
- **Please submit your completed form by 4pm on 28th February We cannot accept incomplete or late applications. You can do this by:**
 - email: grants.team@redditchbc.gov.uk (please remember that you will need to scan the declaration page with your signature)
 - post: by recorded delivery in advance of the deadline to the address shown below:

Grant Application
Ali Osborne
Dial A Ride office
Crossgates Depot
Crossgates Road
Redditch, B98 7SN

Groups we will consider funding through a grant

Applications will only be considered from groups and organisations meeting all of the following requirements:

- Groups that are non-statutory organisations;
- Groups that are formally constituted;
- Groups that operate in the not-for-profit sector;
- Groups that are clearly able to demonstrate their ability, through a grant award, to deliver benefit to the community within the period of the grant, and to sustain their activities;
- Groups whose activities benefit residents of Redditch; and
- Groups whose activities clearly contribute to or support Redditch Borough Council funding priorities.

Groups/activities we will NOT consider funding.

The following will NOT be considered for funding:

- Groups which do not provide services to the community, but use funds to campaign;
- Activities or projects that promote religion or a political party (this does not exclude applications from faith-based groups to deliver community based projects);
- Groups that have uncommitted/unrestricted funds that could be used to fund the activity;
- The programme will not fund structural purchases, i.e. buildings or building works;
- Groups without their own bank or building society account and/or groups that do not require cheques and other withdrawals to be signed for by at least two people who are not related to each other and that do not live in the same household.

About the Council's Main Grant Programme

The amount available for the 2025-26 Main Grant Programme is approximately £100k. The Council will welcome applications from VCS organisations for projects, programmes, events, initiatives and core costs for the value of £500 to £10k (there is a separate application form for grants between £500 and £2k and a more detailed application for larger grants from £2k to £10k). The Council's grant programme is based around the Strategic Purposes of Redditch Borough Council. These are:

- Run and grow a successful business.
- Finding somewhere to live.

- Aspiration, work and financial independence.
- Living independent, active and healthy lives.
- Communities which are safe, well maintained and green.

You will be asked to demonstrate how your project / service aligns to one or more of these Strategic Purposes.

VCS groups may only submit one application to the main pot of the VCS Main Grant Programme. A further application may be made if it is in partnership with another VCS organisation(s).

VCS organisations can bid for funding for core costs, project, salary, events, and equipment costs.

What can you use Redditch Borough Council grant funding for?

We prefer to give funding to support your revenue (running) costs rather than capital costs. This is because we believe revenue funding is harder to obtain from other sources and that you may be more likely to raise money elsewhere for one-off capital costs.

We give grants because we want to support voluntary sector organisations to deliver independent, sustainable services for the residents of Redditch. The Worcestershire Compact states that a grant is a “financial contribution to an activity delivered by a voluntary and community sector organisation... either to contribute towards organisational costs or to wholly or partly fund a specific piece of work.”

You can apply for funding to contribute to the running costs of your organisation *or* a project.

You might want to consider the following when assessing the full costs of your services, in addition to the direct costs:

- compliance (regulatory, appropriate permissions, and insurance requirements);
- income generation;
- support services (otherwise known as ‘overheads’ eg premises, equipment, utilities, management salaries etc.);
- responding to consultation;
- governance, user engagement & representation;
- innovation and quality (including research, monitoring & evaluation).

Please Note: we will NOT fund the whole of any organisation’s costs. This is because it is not advisable for you to be totally reliant on Redditch Borough Council for your funding.

The Assessment Process

Stage 1 – Initial Eligibility Screening

- The application will be assessed by the VCS Grants Manager to see if it meets the eligibility criteria.
- The application will be assessed by the VCS Grants Manager to see how well it meets our strategic purposes.
- The application form will be checked to make sure it has been completed in full and that any information we asked for has also been submitted.

- Answers you give to questions around governance and finance of your organisations will also be used to assess your application and to determine if your application proceeds to the next stages.

Failure to pass this initial screening will result in the application being unsuccessful.

Stage 2 – RBC Officers Grants Panel Assessment

All applications that have passed the initial screening stage will go forward to the Officers Grants Panel. Panel members make their judgement based on the scoring matrix – which is detailed below.

VCS Main Grants Scoring Matrix						
Section 1: Background to the project		A (0)	B (1)	C (3)	D (5)	Based on Application form questions....
1	... has clearly set out its aims and aspirations of the project					Q7
2	... has evidenced the need and/or demand for the project.					Q8
3	... supports the Council's strategic purposes.					Q9
4	... is low risk to the Council's reputation.					Panel assessment
Section Score (/20)						
Section 2: Project Planning		A (0)	B (2)	C (4)	D (6)	Based on Application form questions....
5	... addresses the needs of people who are socially and/ or economically disadvantaged within the Redditch borough					Q10
6	... gives clear details on how the project will be structured, co-ordinated and promoted.					Q11
7	... has a clear robust financial outline.					Q12
Section Score (/18)						

Section 3: Strength and sustainability of the Project		A (0)	B (3)	C (5)	D (7)	Based on Application form questions....
8	... provides realistic outcomes and can demonstrate the impact of the project.					Q13
9	... provides a robust and realistic plan for sustaining the project after the period of grant aid.					Q14
Section Score						(/14)
Matrix Scoring			/52			
Additional Comments						
Recommendations						

The questions - The following information is a ‘step-by-step’ guide to further help you complete your application form:

Q1	We need your organisation’s name and full contact details.
Q2	We need you to put forward a lead contact from your organisation that can help us if we have a query about your application.
Q3	What sort of group or organisation is yours? Your constitution or governing document will provide this information. We cannot give grants to individuals or private organisations only to ‘not-for-profit’ voluntary and/or community groups and organisations. You may be a registered charity, so we’ll need you to add your Charity number or we may not have listed your type of organisation so please explain what it is - e.g. a Community Interest Company.
Q4	If your group is not a formally registered charity or CIC we will require a copy of your constitution. Is your group or organisation formally constituted? If your group or organisation is not formally constituted and is not either a registered charity or a

	Community Interest Company then you are unfortunately ineligible for a grant from us at this time. You can get support and information on how to develop a constitution from Bromsgrove and Redditch Network (BARN) by calling 01527 60282, emailing office@barn.org.uk or by visiting www.barn.org.uk
Q5	How much are you applying for? You are applying for a year's funding so please state clearly how much you would like and again set out the name of your project. Please note: You are advised not to ask for more than is available as it may result in your application form being disqualified.
Q6	Are you applying for funding for your own individual organisation, or for a partnership/consortium activity? Partnership and collaborative working is encouraged when applying for funding. If you are making a partnership/consortium based application please: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make it clear in all your answers when you are referring to the lead body and when you are referring to the whole partnership/consortium; • tell us who your partner organisations are; • only submit one application from each partnership/consortium and clearly demonstrate which one organisation has been chosen as the lead body to make the application. The lead body will be responsible for the use of the grant and will be expected to sign a grant agreement with Redditch Borough Council. Please note: If you have submitted a bid in a partnership/consortium this does not preclude you from submitting a further application in your own right; • tell us what you are doing to help reduce running costs by working in partnership with other groups where possible to cut costs - i.e. what financial savings can be made by sharing some back-office services in the future, if you don't do this already.
Q7	What is the aim(s) of your proposed project/service? Please list the key aims of your project. We need to know what it is you want to achieve by delivering the project/service.
Q8	What evidence do you have to show there is the need or demand for your proposed project/service? This is your chance to demonstrate that your project/service is needed by the community and/or fills a gap in current service provision. You can use a variety of mechanisms to demonstrate need - this could be shown through statistics, reports, local datasets, survey data, consultation with local people, evaluations of previous projects, and service user feedback.
Q9	Please explain how the aims of your proposed project/service will contribute to the Strategic Purposes of the Council. We cannot fund applications from organisations whose work does not help us to meet our Strategic Purposes. If you need further information and advice on this section, please contact the Grants Manager, Ali Osborne on 01527 587002 or by email: grants.team@redditchbc.gov.uk
Q9a	Please provide a brief statement which sets out how your organisation is considering and acting on the impact of Climate Change moving forwards. The Council has recently agreed its Climate Change and Carbon Reduction Strategy and Implementation Plan. It is keen to ensure that all organisations throughout the Borough consider the impact of Climate Change in their work and is keen to understand

	<p>what steps are being taken by other organisations. (Please note your statement will not be considered as part of the Scoring Matrix.)</p>
Q10	<p>Who is your targeted audience and how do you ensure that your proposed project/service reaches them and will be open and accessible to all?</p> <p>We encourage any proposed services/projects to reach out to a wide range of service users. However, projects/services which are aimed at addressing the needs of people experiencing social and economic disadvantage will be favoured above those aimed at people from other backgrounds.</p> <p>We also would like to know how you will ensure that the benefits of your service/project will reach its intended beneficiaries. Please lists the actions you will put in place to do so and to remove any barriers people may experience to access this opportunity.</p> <p>Please note: grant funding will only be awarded to groups or organisation whose projects and/or services are undertaken in the Borough of Redditch, and/or will be wholly or principally for the direct benefit of residents in the Borough of Redditch.</p>
Q11	<p>Please detail the key tasks, activities and timescales that will form your project/service (your project plan).</p> <p>This section gives you the opportunity to clearly set out the finer details of your project – what exactly you will be delivering. You should either use the space available within the box to set out your plan for your project or append a project plan to the application form (If you would like a template to help you create your project plan please contact the Grants Manager by email: grants.team@redditchbc.gov.uk The information you provide will need to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear description of exactly what’s going to be delivered; • Where it will take place e.g. the specific area of Redditch such as Churchill or Woodrow; • Also remember to list the venue and address; • When and for how long each element of the project or service will take to deliver – include all start and finish dates; • Which partners you are working with and what their input will be.
Q12	<p>Please complete a financial breakdown of the proposed project/service</p> <p>This section asks you to provide a specific breakdown of how you intend spending the grant for your project / service.</p>
Q13	<p>Please list the outputs and outcomes of your proposed project/service.</p> <p>Please set out the key outputs and outcomes you intend to achieve through your service/project. Outputs in this case, are the direct and measurable products of a service/project’s activities, often expressed in terms of units (hours, number of people or completed actions).</p> <p>You also need to explain the longer term impact of your project and the outcomes you aim to deliver. Outcomes are the benefits or other long-term changes that are sought from undertaking the project often expressed in terms of an improvement in the issues identified as a need for the project/service.</p>
Q14	<p>Sustainability – If your project is intended to continue, how will you ensure it is sustainable after the funding has ended? If it is a one off project, what legacy will it leave?</p> <p>We want to be sure that this investment will be used effectively and that the organisations we invest in are growing and thriving. Outline how your project/service will be sustained and please be specific about where you can apply for funding in the coming year - actual amounts, funders etc. to ensure your project/service continues as</p>

	<p>we need to make sure we are investing in a sustainable organisation that is not over-reliant on Redditch Borough Council grant but has a broad and expanding funding base.</p> <p>If this funding is intended for a one-off project and you do not intend it to continue, please explain what legacy it will leave.</p>
Q15	<p>Please list all income / possible income you have applied for to deliver the project/service listed in this application form.</p> <p>Please list the amount of grant funding you are requesting from the Council plus any other sources of income you have applied for or have already received to fund the proposed service/project.</p>
Q16	<p>Your banking arrangements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does your organisation or group have its own bank or building society account? • Is it in the name of your group / organisation (as shown on your governing document)? • Do all cheques and other withdrawals have to be signed by a minimum of 2 people who are not related to each other and who do not live in the same household? <p>To be able to receive a grant (usually paid by BACS transfer), your organisation must have its own bank or building society account. This must be in the name of the organisation as shown in your governing document e.g. your constitution.</p> <p>We will only fund groups or organisations which have two or more signatories for cheques or other withdrawals, as this is standard good practice to help avoid fraud. The signatories should not be related to each other or live in the same household and at least one should be a senior management committee member/trustee such as Chair or Treasurer (i.e. not two paid staff).</p>
Q17	<p>Your Accounts – If your most recent approved accounts are not available online (either via your own website, Charities Commission or Company’s House website) please include a copy (or electronic link) of them with the application - we cannot assess this application without them.</p> <p>Your accounts must be signed by your chair, secretary or treasurer and by your auditor or independent examiner where appropriate. The accounts you send (or that are provided online) should not be more than 12 months old. If your organisation’s financial year-end coincides with the period in which you are sending us your application then send us your previous accounts and a copy of your most recent management accounts.</p> <p>We have repeated these explanatory notes on the form itself but again, if you need further assistance, please contact the Grants Manager on 01527 587002 or by email: grants.team@redditchbc.gov.uk</p>
Q18	<p>Your financial reserves.</p> <p>Should you have a significant amount of unrestricted reserves, we may decide you do not need a grant as much as a group having fewer reserves. However, we do understand that healthy reserves can indicate a well-managed, sustainable organisation, so this box gives you the opportunity to explain your financial situation if it looks as if you have enough money in the bank to support your proposed project or activity without a Redditch Borough Council grant.</p>

	<p>Restricted reserves are those which have been restricted by the <i>funder</i> - for example, if you did not spend your entire Big Lottery grant last year because of delayed recruitment, and the Lottery will not allow you to spend the left-over grant funding on anything other than the purpose for which it was given, it is restricted. Unrestricted reserves are all the other monies or savings you have accumulated.</p>
<p>Q19</p>	<p>Does your project involve working with children and young people under the age of 18 or vulnerable adults?</p> <p>If so you should have at a minimum the policies listed. You should also work in accordance with:</p> <p>i) The Council's Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy, which can be accessed via the Council's website at:</p> <p>http://moderngovwebpublic.redditch.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=7367&PlanId=197</p> <p>ii) Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Boards (WSCB) Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures for Safeguarding Children and Worcestershire Council for Voluntary Youth Services Guidance for workers, volunteers, management committee members and trustees in voluntary and community sector organisations working with children and young people, both of which can be accessed via the WSCB website at www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk/</p> <p>iii) The requirements of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Independent Safeguarding Authority.</p> <p>http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents</p> <p>For further information on the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and/or to find out which staff members and volunteers in your organisation may need to have DBS check's, please use the following links:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disclosure and Barring Service: https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service • BARN: https://barn.org.uk/what-we-offer/back-office-services/disclosure-and-barring-service-dbs-checks/#roles <p>You should supply us with evidence that you have the correct policies and procedures in place if your proposed project/service will involve working with young people under-18 and/or vulnerable adults.</p>
<p>Q20</p>	<p>Which of these policies and procedures do you have in place?</p> <p>We may ask for copies of these documents at some point during our grant funding and monitoring process and especially if they are relevant to your proposed project/service.</p> <p>We appreciate that you may not have developed all of these policies or procedures yet, or that some of them will not be relevant to the service you provide, but we do ask you to state a date by which you will develop those that are applicable to you. As part of the monitoring of any funding we give you, we will monitor your progress against the dates you have set for developing new policies and procedures.</p> <p>If a policy/procedure is not applicable to you, then please put N/A in the NO column. Do</p>

tell us about any others relevant policies or procedures you may have that are not listed on the application form.

Signing the form:

It is the responsibility of the person signing the form to check that all the information submitted is accurate and correct to the best of their knowledge. Note: If you are emailing the application, please remember to scan the declaration page with your signature.

The closing date is 4 pm on 28th February 2025

Privacy Notice

Redditch Borough Council is committed to protecting your privacy when you use council services. The Privacy Notice below explains how the Council uses information about you and the ways in which we protect your privacy.

What is Personal Data?

Personal data means data which relates to a living individual who can be identified from that data, or from that data and other information, which is in the possession of, or is likely to come into the possession of Redditch Borough Council.

What are your rights?

You have the right to request the following (the council will consider any request in line with the current regulations):

- The right to be informed
- The right of access
- The right to rectification
- The right to erasure
- The right to restrict processing
- The right to data portability
- The right to object

Why do we need your personal data?

The purpose for collecting this personal data is to allocate grants to organisations working in the public interest. The legal basis for this processing is to perform a task in the public interest - we need the data you provide so that we can allocate grants fairly and properly. The data collected may include:

- Name
- Address
- Contact Details

If this data is not provided, grants cannot be awarded.

This information will be accessible by those staff working on grants and other staff members selected to be Officer Grant Panel representatives. Headline data will also be published on the council website. This information will not be shared/sold to any other service/organisation unless we have a duty to do so under law. This data will not be transferred outside of the EEA.

The data will be kept for 6 years after the decision is made whether to award a grant. No decisions around this data are made by automated means. General data protection information relating to the council can be found at

<https://www.redditchbc.gov.uk/council/corporate/your-access-to-information/data-protection-and-information-management/privacy-notice/privacy-notice-information-and-your-rights/>

How can you access the information we hold about you?

You have the right to ask for all the information we have about you and your services. To make a request for your information email foi@redditchbc.gov.uk

How can you request for your information to be erased?

If you want Redditch Borough Council to stop processing an initial application and erase your information, you are entitled to request this under specific circumstances. To make a request please email foi@redditchbc.gov.uk

How do we keep information secure?

We will take appropriate steps to make sure we hold records about you (on paper and electronically) in a secure way, and we will only make them available to those who have a right to see them. Our security includes:

- Encryption
- Access controls on systems
- Security training for all staff

Data protection Officer (DPO)

The data controller is Redditch Borough Council and the Data Protection Officer is Deborah Poole who oversees the Information Management manager . To contact the DPO or the information management manager email information.management@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

Where can I get advice, or lodge an official complaint?

For independent advice about data protection, privacy and data sharing issues, or to lodge a complaint if you think your data has been mishandled, you can contact the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) at:

Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF - Tel: 0303 123 1113 (local rate) or 01625 545 745 if you prefer to use a national rate number. Alternatively, visit ico.org.uk or email casework@ico.org.uk