



Councillors' Community Grants

# Scheme Guidance



**Braintree**  
District Council

# Introduction

Braintree District's Councillors' Community Grants are available to support a range of projects to benefit the people of the Braintree District. This guide provides full details about the scheme and details of what the Council can fund, who is eligible to apply, any restrictions and what you need to provide in your application form.

Braintree District Council has created the Councillors' Community Grants Scheme to support the ideas and projects that local people want and need.

The grants awarded come from public money and decisions will be made by the councillors based on the information provided during contact with the applicant, the information provided on the application form and the local knowledge of the councillors of how the project fits within the wider community.

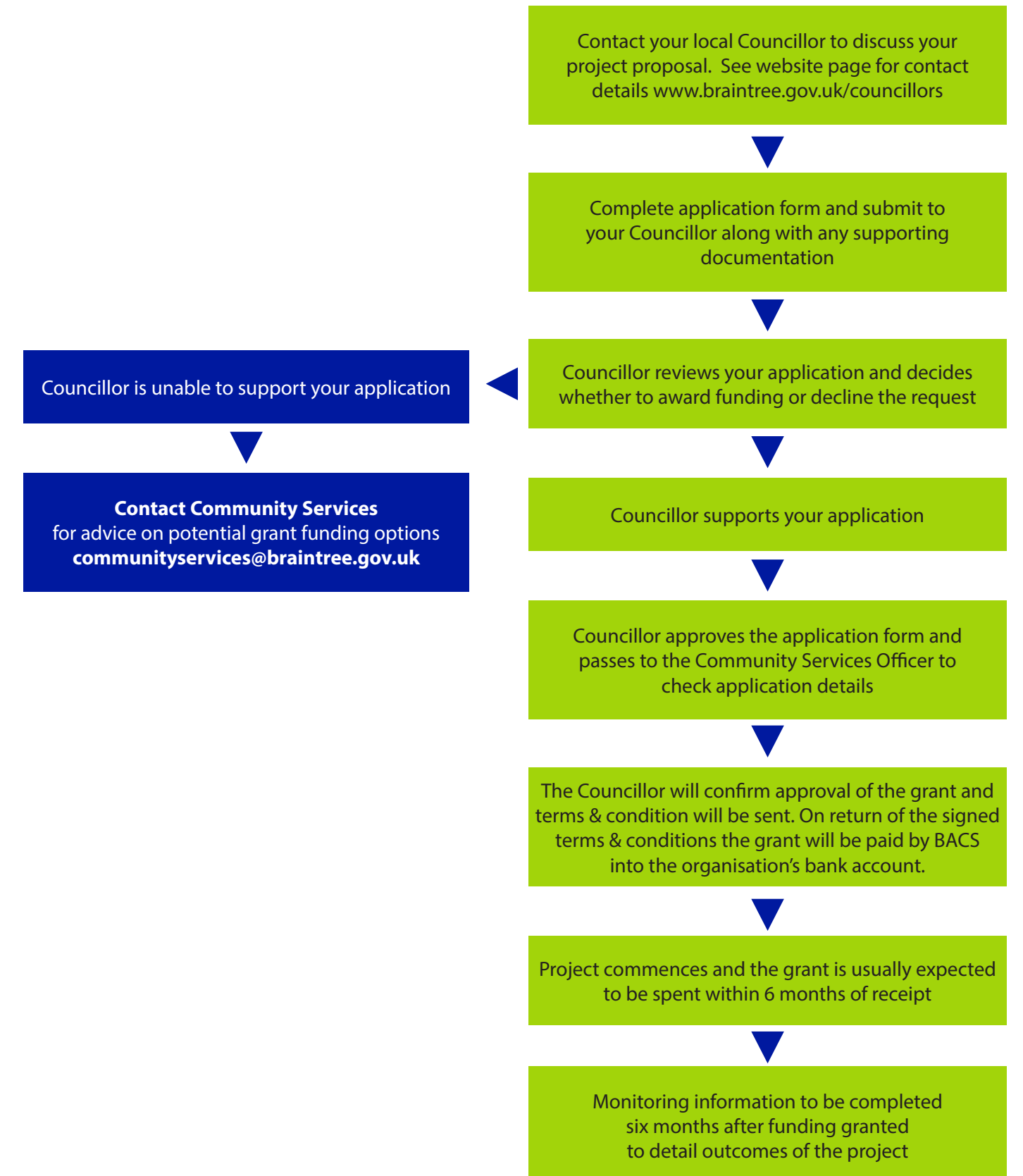
If your local Councillor supports your idea we will want to continue to keep in touch with you to see how you are progressing so we can provide help and advice along the way.

Please answer each question as fully as possible and if you have any queries please contact the Community Services Officer at Braintree District Council.

More information about your Ward Councillor can be found here:  
[www.braintree.gov.uk/council/local-councillor](http://www.braintree.gov.uk/council/local-councillor)



# The Process



# Summary of the scheme

**Councillors' Community Grants are designed to be supportive and responsive for organisations and groups delivering community projects. Grants are intended to support smaller projects that are easy to deliver.**

**Each Councillor will be allocated £1250 per annum to spend on projects that benefit residents of their ward.**

- Grants range from £100 - £1,250 per ward member for each grant period.
  - If more than one Councillor is contributing it must benefit residents of the ward where the project is being delivered.
  - 100% funding available, no match funding required.
  - Applications can usually be submitted at any time.
  - Your local District Councillor(s) will decide whether to support or decline your request for funding. Contact details for your Ward Councillor can be found at [www.braintree.gov.uk/councillors](http://www.braintree.gov.uk/councillors)
  - Multiple Councillors can contribute to your project, so potentially 3 Councillors could contribute £300 each to award a grant of £900 or £1000 each making a grant award of £3000.
  - Councillors can fund a project that is not taking place in their ward, but they must be able to clearly demonstrate that the people living in their ward will be able to take part in the project or scheme and will be able to benefit from the funding.
  - Both revenue & capital costs can be supported.
  - There is no limit to the number of Councillor Grants an organisation/group can receive – however each 'project' can only receive 1 grant.
- Project funding must normally be spent within 6 months of the grant approval. In some circumstances a period of up to 12 months may be agreed.
  - Any 'not for profit' organisation can apply for a grant. These may include:
    - Registered Charities
    - Constituted 'not for profit' Community or Voluntary Groups
    - Parochial Church Councils (anything that benefits the wider community)
    - Social Enterprises e.g. Community Interest Company, Co-operative
    - Village Hall and Recreation Ground Committees
    - Town & Parish Councils (anything that is not an ordinary or existing activity/function or a statutory obligation or duty and benefits the wider community)
    - Schools (anything that is not statutory/curriculum based and benefits the wider community)

# Who can and cannot apply for a Councillors' Community Grant

To apply for a Braintree District Council Councillors' Community Grant your organisation must be some type of formally governed 'not for profit' organisation with a written governing document (e.g. Constitution, Trust Deed, Articles of Association etc). The organisation must possess a UK bank account registered in the name of the organisation. Payment of a grant is on the condition that payments can only be made by authorised signatories in accordance with the organisation's constitution and that of the relevant bank. Ideally where one person can transact it be done on the basis of receiving confirmation from another person involved e.g. confirmatory email.

## Eligible Groups

- **Registered Charities**
- **Constituted 'not for profit' Community or Voluntary Groups**
- **Parochial Church Councils**
- **Social Enterprises**
- **Village Hall and Recreation Ground Committees**
- **Town & Parish Councils (anything that is not an ordinary or existing activity/function or a statutory obligation or duty)**
- **Schools (anything that is not statutory and benefits the wider community)**

## Ineligible Groups

- **Informal Groups**
- **Individuals**
- **Private Businesses**
- **Organisations that can distribute surpluses/profits amongst its members**
- **Profit making organisations**

# Funding

The Councillors' Community Grant Scheme is open and flexible to what it could potentially fund. However the grants are funded from public money and so there are some restrictions what the grants can and cannot be used for. Listed below are some examples of eligible and ineligible expenditure.

## What we can fund;

Capital costs such as:

- ✓ Building improvements
- ✓ Playground equipment
- ✓ Vehicle purchases
- ✓ Recreation facilities
- ✓ IT equipment
- ✓ Sports equipment
- ✓ Disabled facilities
- ✓ Energy efficiency measures

Revenue costs such as:

- ✓ Salaries
- ✓ Rent
- ✓ Training fees
- ✓ Professional fees such as architect fees
- ✓ Event costs - where funding is not the primary objective
- ✓ General repairs
- ✓ New or existing projects, although new projects are preferred
- ✓ Volunteer expenses

## What we cannot fund;

- ✗ Recoverable VAT – if your organisation is VAT registered and able to reclaim VAT we cannot fund the VAT element of your project costs
- ✗ Depreciation – as this is not a real cash cost
- ✗ Bank, finance or audit charges
- ✗ Repayment of loans or interest costs
- ✗ Retrospective costs – we cannot fund any expenditure that has already been incurred or you are committed to incurring before the grant is approved
- ✗ CCTV projects
- ✗ General appeals for funds
- ✗ Endowments (to provide a source of income)
- ✗ Fundraising activities
- ✗ Statutory obligations
- ✗ Ordinary activities of a statutory body
- ✗ Contingency costs
- ✗ Purchase of alcohol
- ✗ Projects that mainly benefit an individual (i.e. equipment that is not shared)
- ✗ Land or building projects where the ownership of the land or a minimum 5 year lease is not yet in place
- ✗ Projects occurring outside the Braintree District
- ✗ Projects that do not benefit Braintree District residents
- ✗ Projects that promote or support a particular political view
- ✗ Projects that directly promote a religious belief
- ✗ Projects that will be entirely reliant on continued grant support

# Match funding requirements

Councillors' Community Grants can fund up to 100% of project costs and so match funding is not always necessary.

However, if the cost of your project exceeds the amount of grant you are requesting you will need to tell us where the remaining funding is proposed to come from. Remember that you must have all funding required to complete the project in place within 6 months of approval of your Councillors' Community Grant application.



# Parish and Town Councils

We welcome applications from Town and Parish Councils but because Town and Parish Councils are unique in possessing the ability to raise funds locally through precept funding, we will not pay for activities or services that are classified as either a:

- **Statutory obligation or duty** (e.g. maintenance of closed cemeteries)
- Project that is deemed an **ordinary or existing activity/function** to the Council.

As each Town and Parish Council has a unique set of activities and responsibilities the above restriction will be applied on a case by case basis, however the following questions may help you to identify if the project will be classified as an ongoing or ordinary activity.

1. Is the project a 'one-off' or new activity that has not previously been undertaken by the Council? Examples may include the installation of additional playground equipment or the provision of additional public seating areas. If 'yes' then the project will likely be eligible.
2. Has the activity/project been undertaken within the previous 24 months? Examples may include the ongoing maintenance of unadopted verges hedge rows, provision of grit bins for residents etc. If the answer is 'yes' then the application may be rejected.

# Schools

**We welcome applications from schools as we recognise that schools play an important role within their communities, however we will not pay for activities or services that:**

- Is a statutory provision of schools to provide. For example, curriculum based activities, or any activity taking place during curriculum time.
- mainly benefit the pupils of the school and have limited benefit to the wider community (e.g. provision of playground equipment where the equipment is not accessible outside of school hours).

We expect projects being undertaken by schools to take place/be accessible before or after school and/or in the holidays unless you can provide us with a good reason in your application why this is not possible.

## Examples of eligible projects in schools

A wildlife garden within the school grounds is developed which is open to the community outside of school hours.

A local sports club provides an opportunity to participate through an after school club. Parents are encouraged to join in and possibly become members of the club which has regular tournaments, training sessions and coaching facilities.

# Branches of larger organisations

Many charities, societies and other types of 'not for profit' organisations are branches or subsidiaries of much larger and wealthier regional, national or even international 'parent' organisations. An example might be a local branch of Oxfam.

For the local branch to be eligible to apply to the Councillors' Community Grant Scheme they must be able to satisfy the following additional criteria:

1. Possess their own local bank account, free from control of the parent organisation.
2. Have a local management board/committee that is able to make operational and financial decisions independently.

# Other information

## Transparency

Details of all awards will be published on Braintree District Council's website in accordance with The National Transparency Code. No personal information will be published.

Applicants should be aware that Councillors have legal obligations and restrictions as set out in the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors which they must adhere to. This may mean that they are unable to provide a grant to an organisation in which they have significant involvement or have a financial interest. In certain circumstances the involvement of their spouse or civil partner may prohibit the awarding of a grant. In Wards with more than one Councillor where one has involvement with an organisation seeking a grant it may be possible for another Councillor without the connection to support a grant application.

## Publicity

We will also supply a list of grants awarded to the local media who may want to contact you about your project. Applicants must acknowledge Braintree District Council's financial support in any publicity, printed or website material and use the Council's approved logo.

We would really like to hear about the success of the projects and would request that you take appropriate photographs of the project and where possible invite the Councillor who approved the grant to be included. If these are provided to the Council the photographs may be published and used for publicity purposes for the project, the Councillors' Community Grant Scheme and other relevant Council publications. It is your responsibility to make sure that there is appropriate consent from individuals featured in photographs before sending these to the Council.

## Monitoring

All successful applicants will be required to complete a monitoring form detailing the outcomes of the project. (A form will be sent out for completion 6 months after the award of any funding).

## Receipts

Copies of all receipts relating to the grant awarded must be provided to the Council as part of the monitoring process. Because this is public money evidence of the spend of the full amount of the grant will be required.

## Application

By signing the application, applicants are confirming that all particulars given in the form are correct and that any grant money received from Braintree District Council will be used only for the purposes stated in the form.

Applicants are also confirming that any grant applied for will be spent within 6 months of the grant being awarded, and that any grant provided will not be provided on an ongoing basis in future years.

## Insurance

It is good practice to insure valuable items that you buy with our grant. Remember to include the insurance costs in your project costs if you cannot pay for them from your own funds.

## Legal compliance

In addition to the standard conditions for grants, organisations in receipt of a Councillors' Community Grant must meet with all applicable legal, health and safety, ethical and regulatory requirements. It is expected that funded activities will be accessible to all sectors of the community to avoid discrimination and delivered in a manner & environment that protects the safety of participants. If in doubt organisations should seek appropriate advice.



## Data Protection

The Council will use the information you provide to us in your application and during the life of any grant awarded to enable the Council to analyse your application and administer your grant.

The Council may also

- share this information across council departments and with other local authorities and government organisations and professional experts (like accountants) as may be necessary to analyse your application and to monitor the grant project for audit purposes.
- check information provided as part of the application with other information it holds and such third parties that are referenced in your application or are involved in your project.

Further information about how the Council processes personal information can be found on the website [www.braintree.gov.uk/privacy](http://www.braintree.gov.uk/privacy)

## Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives members of the public the right to request information that we hold. This includes information received from third parties, such as (but not limited to) grant applications, grant holders, contractors and people making a complaint. If the FOIA applies we will release information, unless exemptions apply. However, we may choose to consult with you first.

## Elections

No Councillors' Community Grants will be paid or processed during a scheduled General, County, District, Town and Parish elections in the District, following publication of the notice of election, until the conclusion of the election;

In a by-election of any Braintree District Councillor serving a multi-member ward, no Councillors' Community Grants from other Members in that Ward will be paid or processed, following the publication of the notice of election, until the conclusion of the election; and

In the event of a Parish By-Election, no Councillors' Community Grants will be processed from Councillors' Community Grants within the Ward for the benefit of the Parish which has the election, following the publication of the notice of election, until the conclusion of the election.

## Supporting Documents

As a minimum requirement for funding from the Councillors' Community Grants Scheme groups are expected to have an adopted constitution or set of rules.

Any group that works with children, young people or vulnerable adults, who are applying for a Braintree District Councillors' Community Grant will be expected to have appropriate safeguarding policies in place and work to them. Policies must comply with guidance set out by Essex Safeguarding Adults Board (ESAB) and Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB).

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**For more information please contact:**

Community Services Officer  
Community Services  
Braintree District Council  
Causeway House  
Braintree  
Essex CM7 9HB

 [communityservices@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:communityservices@braintree.gov.uk)  
 01376 552525

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