



2026-28 Guidance

1. Introduction

Thank you for your interest in applying for a Community Grant from Penrith Town Council.

This guidance explains:

- What the Council funds.
- Who can apply.
- How applications are assessed.
- What conditions apply if a grant is awarded.

Please read this document carefully before submitting an application. Applications that do not meet the requirements set out in this guidance will not be considered.

2. About the Community Grants Scheme

The Community Grants Scheme supports projects and activities that deliver clear, measurable benefits for the people of Penrith.

Grants are intended to help local organisations:

- Start new activities or services
- Sustain or develop existing projects
- Respond to local needs and challenges
- Improve community spaces, facilities, and opportunities

3. Funding Priorities

We fund projects that are based in, delivered in Penrith or for the benefit of Penrith residents that meet at least one of the following priorities:

Projects that:

- a) Support community led activity and deliver clear benefits for Penrith residents.
- b) Enable local organisations to start, sustain, or improve projects, events, or services.
- c) Improve or develop local resources, places, spaces, or facilities valued by the community.
- d) Support voluntary and community organisations responding to increased demand or local challenges.
- e) Align with the Council's Business Plan 2025–2028, including environmental sustainability, partnership working, and town enhancement.

Projects that do not clearly link to at least one priority are unlikely to be funded.

4. Who Can Apply

Applications are welcome from the following types of organisations:

- a) Voluntary and community organisations.
- b) Constituted groups or clubs.
- c) Registered charities.
- d) Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIOs).
- e) Not for profit companies.
- f) Community Interest Companies (CICs).
- g) Community Benefit Societies.
- h) Schools only where there is clear and primary benefit to the wider community.

5. Who Cannot Apply

We cannot accept applications from:

- a) Individuals.
- b) Anyone under 18 years of age.
- c) Sole traders.
- d) Organisations applying on behalf of another organisation.
- e) Organisations applying more than once in the same financial year.
- f) Organisations based outside Penrith unless the project is delivered in Penrith.
- g) Companies that distribute profits to directors, shareholders, or members.
- h) Political or religious organisations.

6. Safeguarding, Insurance, and Compliance

If your project involves children, young people, or vulnerable adults, you must have appropriate safeguarding policies in place. We may ask to see these before awarding funding.

Depending on the nature of your project, you may also be required to have:

- Public liability insurance.
- Appropriately qualified leaders or instructors.
- Affiliation to a relevant governing body.

If these are required for your activity and you do not have them in place, you should not apply. If you are unsure, please contact the Council for advice.

7. How Much You Can Apply For

- Grants of up to £5,000.
- Funding is available for up to one year.
- Applications are accepted on a rolling basis, subject to available budget.

We strongly recommend applying at least 12 weeks before you plan to start your project. Funding cannot be awarded retrospectively.

For grants over £1,000, applicants are normally expected to seek match funding from other sources. If this is not possible, applicants must clearly explain why in their application. Applications without match funding may still be considered where there is strong justification.

8. What We Will Not Fund

We cannot fund:

- Salaries or core staffing costs.

For clarity, the Council may, however, consider reasonable sessional, freelance, or short-term staffing costs where these are directly required to deliver the funded activity (for example, facilitators, coaches, or workshop leaders).

- Alcohol.
- Contingency costs, loans, endowments, or interest.
- Profit-making or fundraising activities.
- VAT that can be reclaimed.
- Statutory activities.
- Activities that improve educational attainment (e.g. curriculum-based PHSE, STEM, English, or Maths).
- Overseas travel or projects outside the UK.
- Activities that result in private gain.
- Cash payments made directly to individuals.

Applicants should ensure that all costs included in their application are eligible under this section. Applications including ineligible costs are unlikely to be funded.

School-Based Projects

We do not normally fund:

- Improvements to school facilities or equipment.
- Staff training.
- Curriculum-based activities.
- Activities that take place during teaching hours.

Support for school-related projects will be exceptional and only where there is strong evidence of wider community involvement and benefit.

9. What You Need to Provide

Your application must be complete and accurate. You will need to provide:

- Up-to-date governing documents (e.g. constitution).
- Details of your management committee or board (minimum of three unrelated people).
- Two named contacts with different email addresses.
- A UK-based bank, building society, or online account in the organisation's legal name.
- A bank statement or equivalent dated within the last three months.

If you are newly constituted or need support with documentation, the Council may be able to provide advice.

10. How Applications Are Assessed

All applications are assessed by an officer-led grants panel.

Applications are considered in the order they are received and are assessed against a scoring framework which considers, among other things:

- Governance and organisational readiness.
- Community benefit and local impact.
- Alignment with funding priorities.
- Value for money.
- Community involvement.

The Council has a limited budget. Meeting the criteria does not guarantee funding.

11. Decisions and Timescales

- Applications are acknowledged within two weeks.
- A decision is normally made within six weeks.
- Successful applicants are notified in writing or by email.
- Unsuccessful applicants receive feedback.

Applicants who are unsuccessful must wait 12 months before reapplying for the same project. Alternative projects may be discussed and submitted during this period.

12. Grant Conditions

If your application is successful, funding will be subject to conditions, which may include:

- Funds must be used only for the approved project.
- The grant must be spent within the agreed timeframe.
- Funds must be held in a UK-regulated account in the organisation's legal name.
- Records of expenditure must be retained and provided on request.
- Any significant changes to the project must be agreed in advance.
- The Council reserves the right to withhold, reclaim, or suspend funding if conditions are breached.

Payment of grants

Grant payments may be made as a single payment or in staged instalments, depending on the nature of the project and the level of risk involved.

As a general guide:

- For equipment purchases or improvements to facilities, payment is normally made upon receipt of confirmation of an order or invoice.
- For projects involving activities, sessions, or workshops, payment may be made in stages, for example an initial payment upon confirmation of a start date, with the balance released following receipt of a satisfactory progress or mid-point monitoring report.
- The Council reserves the right to vary payment arrangements and to withhold payment until required evidence or monitoring information has been provided.

Grant Agreements

Grants over £1,000 will be subject to a formal agreement setting out these conditions in more detail.

13. Monitoring and Reporting

All successful applicants are required to complete a Project Monitoring Report.

This helps the Council understand:

- How the funding was used.
- What difference the project made.
- How the project met the funding priorities.

Monitoring is proportionate to the size of the grant and must be completed within the agreed timeframe.

14. Publicity and Acknowledgement

Organisations receiving a grant must:

- Acknowledge Penrith Town Council's support in publicity and promotional material.
- Provide photographs or case studies if requested (with appropriate consent).

15. Further Information and Support

If you are unsure whether your project is eligible or need help with your application, please contact the Council before applying.