

Kent County Council Combined Member Grant Scheme 2026-2027

Guidelines for Applicants

These guidelines are to help you complete the application form for a Kent County Council (KCC) Combined Member Grant; **please read them carefully** before you start to complete the form. If you have any questions about this information or the application process, please contact:

Oliver Unthank, KCC Member Hub Supervisor

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Tel: 03000 421817

We always advise you to contact your local Kent County Councillor (Member) before completing the application form as this will improve your grant application being supported. To find out who is your local Member, please visit: www.kent.gov.uk – ‘Your Councillors’.

Important points to consider before you apply

- Any grant you receive must be specifically for the project described in your application. It cannot be used for any other purpose. Any changes to the objective(s) or purpose(s) you have stated in your application must first be discussed and agreed with the Member Hub Support Officer dealing with your application.
- If you are applying to another part of KCC for a grant for the same project, or part of it, you must inform us on your application form.
When you apply, it is important that you describe the broad community benefit your project will bring. The benefit must be for local communities within your Local Member(s) area.
- If your project requires any permission for (example, planning permission or a safeguarding policy) you should obtain this before you apply for a grant and submit copies with your application.
- If for any reason your project is unable to go ahead within a 12-month period of receiving the grant, your Member Hub Support Officer must be informed as KCC reserves the right to reclaim and re-distribute the funding.
- Any items purchased or gained through the KCC Combined Member Grant scheme must remain within the organisation stated and for the purpose stated, for a minimum of two years. If these items are not being used, or if they are transferred to another party without the prior consent from KCC, the items themselves or the value of the grant may be reclaimed by KCC.
- We are unable to support a grant for items which will be purchased with the intention of selling on to raise funds including the purchase of raffle prizes.
- We will only consider your application if you have provided answers to all of the questions on the application form and have given us enough information to understand your project fully.
- By applying for a grant, you agree to support the grant monitoring process by completing a short form and provide information and evidence as and when required.
- You will also give Kent County Council full acknowledgement in any and all publicity and media communication.

Who can apply?

You can apply for a KCC Combined Members Grant if you are a:

- Voluntary or Community Organisation or Registered Charity
- Church or Faith groups (your application must clearly illustrate that the project will bring benefit to the wider community)
- School or Academies (provided any grant awarded supports wider community benefit)
- Parish or District Council
- Not for Profit Companies
- KCC service (provided any grant awarded is to support additional activities from the core offer)

All applications must come from an organisation or a group that is properly constituted and which has a current business bank account with dual authorisation (an originator and authoriser).

Exceptions:

- Individuals (or where the benefit of the grant will only benefit an individual)
- Party political groups or political activities. This includes any Parish Council (or group of), District Councils, or Kent County Council where any grant would challenge or oppose the democratic functions of that local authority. Or where such grants would be deemed to risk the reputational standing of Kent County Council.
- Church or Faith groups who are using the grant to promote religious activity.
- Schools and Academies cannot apply for funding for capital costs, teaching materials, or curriculum delivery.
- Businesses/companies which do not reinvest surpluses for community benefit.
- Voluntary and Community Organisations who have a turnover of over £100K if seeking replacement funding for a project previously funded by KCC.

What can I apply for?

A wide variety of projects can be supported. KCC Members can make recommendations from their grant allocation for both revenue and capital funding.

The award of any grant under the KCC Combined Member Grant scheme should support and endorse the corporate outcomes of Kent County Council set out within the application form. These priorities may change during the life of the grant scheme, and any amended criteria may be introduced.

All KCC Combined Member Grants are one-off funding. There is no ongoing support implied or made through awarding any organisation with a grant. In addition, repeat funding of the same project within 2 years will not be supported. However standalone community events that are run as separate projects each year can be considered for grant funding. **KCC will not be liable for any ongoing costs that the project may incur for revenue and/or capital expenditure.**

How much can I apply for?

You can apply for grants of £250 or more towards some or all of your project costs. KCC Members can also combine their funding to support a project that maximises community impact in their divisions.

Information on who received KCC Combined Member Grants and the amounts awarded for the last financial year can be found on www.kent.gov.uk

Members welcome grants where additional funding and resources are being provided from other sources or from the organisation putting forward the application.

What cannot be funded?

- Any costs incurred putting together your application
- Day to day running costs – e.g. utility bills, rent, salaries (except for pilot projects lasting no longer than twelve months for any one organisation in any financial year)
- Contingency costs
- Fundraising activities for your organisations or for others
- Items that mainly benefit a small number of individuals (less than 10) e.g. training/trips
- Loans
- Membership or registration costs
- Political or religious activities
- Items or activities which would risk the reputational standing of Kent County Council
- Purchase of alcohol
- VAT that you can recover
- ~~Used vehicles or~~ the maintenance of used vehicles.
- ~~Retrospective funding for any project that has already been completed, or any expenditure that has already been incurred~~ at the point of application.
- Projects that do not demonstrate benefit to the individual Member's division.
- ~~Costs relating to Planning Applications, Neighbourhood Plans and Highways Improvement Plans.~~
- Costs relating to the temporary closure of Public Rights of Way where this fee can be waived by the Council.

Please submit send your completed application form via MS Forms. to the Your form will be checked by a Member Hub Support Officer to confirm it meets the guidelines and will then to be checked and then be forwarded to the relevant KCC Member(s) for their support and recommendation. The Member Hub Support Officer may need to contact you (for example, if anything is unclear or more information is required), so please ensure that you provide a telephone number where you can be reached during the day. Please ensure you provide alternative contact details for the second named applicant.

You **must** keep a copy of your application for your records as you may need to refer back to it when completing the monitoring paperwork that will be sent to you within 6 months following the receipt of your grant. Failure to adhere to these terms will result in KCC requiring the grant funding be returned.



What happens after I apply?

When we receive your application, we will do the following:

1. Your application will be acknowledged within 10 working days of receipt. If you do not receive an acknowledgement within this timescale, please notify the Member Hub Support Officer.
2. The local KCC Member and the Member Hub Support Officer will discuss your application.
3. If the local KCC Member agrees to support your project, we will then forward it to the relevant senior Officer (for projects up to £5,000) or Cabinet Member (for projects over £5,001), who must agree and approve the allocation of any grant. However, if the local KCC Member is formally involved with your organisation, or with the project you plan to submit, this will delay any decision and you should consider this in the timing of your application.
4. If the local KCC Member does not support your project, or if the senior Officer or Cabinet Member does not approve your application, you will not be offered a grant.
5. Once your grant has been recommended by a local KCC Member and the senior Officer or Cabinet Member has also approved it, you will be sent a formal offer letter by email. **Please read the letter carefully; it sets out the terms of conditions of the grant and what you will need to do to help us to monitor the progress of your project.**
6. **The letter will include a link to an online acceptance form that you must complete and return.** It will also ask you to give details of the bank account into which we should pay the grant. By completing the acceptance form, you are agreeing to abide by the terms and conditions and the monitoring requirements of the KCC Combined Member Grant scheme. These include safeguarding policies where you work with children and or vulnerable adults and equality and diversity. For advice:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-safeguarding-policy
www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/corporate-policies/equality-and-diversity
7. KCC will pay the grant directly to your organisation's bank account by BACS transfer only. We aim to pay the grant to your account no more than 28 days after we receive the completed acceptance form from you.
8. Any items purchased for the project must NOT be before the date of the offer letter (except with prior permission). Any spend before that day will be deemed retrospective and not eligible under these guidelines.

Please note. The grant administrative process can take up to twelve weeks from the start of your application until payment is received into your organisation's bank account.

Monitoring

KCC will monitor the use of all grants awarded and, by accepting the grant, you are agreeing to participate fully in the monitoring process.

You will be required to complete a monitoring form and provide evidence of expenditure. Evidence must be in the form of receipts, invoices, or bank statements. Scanned copies are acceptable. All evidence must be dated on or after date of the offer letter to be valid. Excel Spreadsheets are not acceptable. All evidence has to show organisation's official details such as company address and VAT number.

In some cases (for example for larger awards) your project may also be visited by a senior Officer to see how the money has been used.

Publicity

It is a requirement of the KCC Combined Member Grant Scheme that grant recipients give recognition in any publicity to Kent County Council and the relevant local KCC Member(s) who awarded the grant. Except for within an election year (2029), when no publicity can be attributed to a KCC Member between March and the date of the election.

In addition, at the end of each financial year, all KCC Combined Member Grants awarded will be published on the KCC website, detailing the organisation, the project and the amount funded.

Good luck with your application!