

# **VCS Main Grant Application Guidance Notes**

## **2024/25**

## **Grants between £500 and £2k**

**supported by**

**REDDITCH** BOROUGH COUNCIL



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a  
difference*

[www.redditchbc.gov.uk](http://www.redditchbc.gov.uk)

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](http://www.redditchbc.gov.uk) and/or use this link to get through to the grants and funding section - <http://www.redditchbc.gov.uk/business/tax,-funding,-finance/grants-and-funding.aspx>
- 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 do not 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 Team between 11.30 am and 1.30 pm on a Wednesday or Thursday on 01527 881443 or by email: [grants.team@redditchbc.gov.uk](mailto:grants.team@redditchbc.gov.uk)
- ***Please remember to send all relevant documents with your application form otherwise your application may not be considered.***
  - If you need any help, please contact the Grants Team at Redditch Borough Council between 11.30 am and 1.30 pm on a Wednesday or Thursday on 01527 881443 or by email: [grants.team@redditchbc.gov.uk](mailto:grants.team@redditchbc.gov.uk)
  - ***Please submit your completed form by Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024. We cannot accept incomplete or late applications. You can do this by:***
    - email: [grants.team@redditchbc.gov.uk](mailto:grants.team@redditchbc.gov.uk) (please remember that you will need to scan the declaration page with your signature)
    - hand-deliver: Main Reception at The Town Hall, (please ask the Reception staff to date and time stamp your envelope)
    - post: by recorded delivery in advance of the deadline to the address shown below:

Grant Application  
Community Services  
Redditch Borough Council  
Town Hall,  
Walter Stranz Square  
Redditch, B98 8AH

### **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 2024-25 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 an 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 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 Officer to see if it meets the eligibility criteria.
- The application will be assessed by the VCS Grants Officer 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 – Officer Grants Panel Assessment**

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

VCS Main Grants (Lower) Scoring Matrix						
<b>Section 1: Background and Project Planning</b>		<b>A (0)</b>	<b>B (1)</b>	<b>C (3)</b>	<b>D (5)</b>	<b>Based on Application form questions....</b>
<b>1</b>	... has clearly set out its aims and aspirations of the project					Q6
<b>2</b>	... supports the Council's strategic purposes.					Q7
<b>3</b>	... has set out the intended outcomes, need and/or demand for the project.					Q8
<b>4</b>	... is low risk to the Council's reputation.					Panel Assessment
<b>Section Score ( /20)</b>						
<b>Section 2: Financial Breakdown &amp; Policies and Procedures</b>		<b>A (0)</b>	<b>B (2)</b>	<b>C (4)</b>	<b>D (6)</b>	<b>Based on Application form questions....</b>
<b>5</b>	... robust financial outline of how the grant will be spent.					Q9
<b>6</b>	... significant unrestricted reserves.					Q11
<b>7</b>	... relevant policies and procedures in place.					Q12
<b>8</b>	... Overall project is achievable.					Panel Assessment
<b>Section Score ( /24)</b>						
<b>Matrix Scoring</b>		<b>/44</b>				
<b>Additional Comments</b>						
<b>Recommendations</b>						

**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	<p><b>What sort of group or organisation is yours?</b> 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 will 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.</p> <p><b>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?</b> 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 <a href="mailto:office@barn.org.uk">office@barn.org.uk</a> or by visiting <a href="http://www.barn.org.uk">www.barn.org.uk</a></p>
Q4	<p><b>Give a short introduction about the event/project/activity you are looking to host.</b> Please list the key aims of your project. We need to know what it is you want to achieve by delivering the project/service. Together with details of when you expect the project to commence and finish, if appropriate.</p>
Q5	<p><b>How much are you applying for?</b> You are applying for a year’s funding so please state clearly how much you would like. Please note: You are advised not to ask for more than is available as it may result in your application form being disqualified.</p>
Q6	<p><b>Aim and intended Outcomes of the Project/Group/Organisation</b> Please detail the key tasks, activities and timescales that will form your project/service (your project plan). 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 Team by email: <a href="mailto:grants.team@redditchbc.gov.uk">grants.team@redditchbc.gov.uk</a> )</p>
Q7	<p><b>Please explain how the aims of your proposed project/service will contribute to the Strategic Purposes of the Council.</b> 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 Team between 11.30 am and 1.30 pm on a Wednesday or</p>

	Thursday on 01527 881443 or by email: <a href="mailto:grants.team@redditchbc.gov.uk">grants.team@redditchbc.gov.uk</a>
Q8	<p><b>Who will benefit from the project and what difference do you hope your project will make to them? (This should include clear details on how the project will be structured, co-ordinated and promoted)</b></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><b>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.</b></p>
Q9	<p><b>Please Provide a financial breakdown of how the grant will be spent.</b></p> <p>Please be clear and specific about the financial breakdown for your project and provide as much information as you can to support your application. Please only apply for the exact amount you need. This means we can support as many projects as possible. We will require copies of invoices to show all spend, if your application is successful.</p>
Q10	<p><b>Your banking arrangements.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Does your organisation or group have its own bank or building society account?</b></li> <li>• <b>Is it in the name of your group / organisation (as shown on your governing document)?</b></li> <li>• <b>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?</b></li> </ul> <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>
Q11	<p><b>Your financial reserves.</b></p> <p>Please inform us if you have a significant amount of unrestricted reserves, if you have, 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</p>

	than the purpose for which it was given, it is restricted. Unrestricted reserves are all the other monies or savings you have accumulated.
Q12	<b>Policies and Procedures</b> If your project works with children, young people, or vulnerable adults you may need to have staff and volunteers to have been checked with the relevant DBS checks and for your organisation to have policies in place that explains how they will be safe. We may ask to see any policies if we decide to give you a grant. The NSPCC have advice about child safeguarding policies.

**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 Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024**



## 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

<http://www.redditchbc.gov.uk/council/corporate/your-access-to-information/privacy-notice.aspx>

### 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](mailto: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](mailto: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 team. To contact the DPO or the information management team email [information.management@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto: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](http://ico.org.uk) or email [casework@ico.org.uk](mailto:casework@ico.org.uk)