

# Thornbury Town Council Grants Policy

Thornbury Town Council is funded by the residents of Thornbury and therefore has only limited funds available to assist community organisations located and working in Thornbury for the direct benefit of the community.

Subject to funding being available, Thornbury Town Council is committed to providing assistance and support to local community groups which are set up to promote community life for Thornbury residents. The Council's financial support is provided by way of grants which are decided against criteria set by, and which can be amended from time to time by, Thornbury Town Council.

Thornbury Town Council is committed to following best practice in grant giving in order to provide sustainable funding and support to voluntary and community groups, whilst providing value for money for local taxpayers and ensuring that public money is spent in a responsible manner.

In order for this Council to be able to assess applications rationally and objectively, many of which will inevitably be totally dissimilar in content, it is both necessary and helpful to assess all applications received against a range of criteria. These are designed to be a general indication of need but are not exclusive and can be flexibly applied.

The Town Council's Policy on Community Grants is based on the principle of promoting the development of partnerships which encourage and enable local community organisations to deliver local projects to the residents of Thornbury. In general, the following principles apply:

- Assistance will be given on the basis of need, merit and contribution to the local community
- Applicants must clearly show how any assistance given will benefit the people living in Thornbury or will benefit the environment of Thornbury
- Any assistance given will be subject to monitoring and evaluation of the outcome of the grant
- Organisations should not make a presumption that funding will continue on a year to year basis

## The Aims of the Council's Grant Making Policy

Thornbury Town Council provides grant funding to support the following aims:

- To enable local people to participate in a range of community groups and activities.
- To help the Town's community groups to improve effectiveness.
- To ensure the provision of services, needed by the Town's residents, via the voluntary and community sector.
- To support organisations which meet the needs of people experiencing social and economic difficulties.

- To ensure that there is equality of access and opportunity for all Thornbury Town residents to the services it provides and funds.
- To improve or enhance the local environment
- To achieve value for money

The Town Council defines a community group as a non-profit making organisation, set up and run by a voluntary, unpaid management committee.

## **The Grants Process**

To apply for a Town Council grant you must be a small charity, community group or local voluntary organisation with a constitution and dedicated bank account, operating or providing a service to the community in Thornbury. All funding requests must use our application form and applicants should provide all information requested.

The amount of money available for small grants varies each year, depending on the overall council budget.

Thornbury Town Council supports a wide variety of grants which have been used to fund both revenue and capital projects, core costs, specific project work as well as providing 'in kind' support. Thornbury Town Council particularly welcomes applications from small or newly formed groups and those that have not applied to us before.

### **Thornbury Town Council uses the following criteria to decide on grant applications:**

- Whether the group/project has followed our grants process and meets our requirements and grant giving policy
- Level of benefit to Thornbury and the impact the grant will make
- Evidence of a well managed group including previous experience and track record
- Financial sustainability and viability of group and/or project
- Evidence of partnership working
- Evidence that funding has been sought from other sources and the level of match funding available
- Whether the group has received a grant from Thornbury Town Council in the past and evidence of compliance with previous grant award conditions

### **Thornbury Town Council will not fund the following:**

- Organisations that do not provide a service to the community in Thornbury
- Individuals or appeals supporting an individual
- General appeals
- Statutory organisations or the direct replacement of statutory funding
- Political groups or activities promoting political beliefs
- Religious groups where funding is to be used to promote religious beliefs
- Arts & sports projects with no community or charitable element
- Medical research, equipment or treatment
- Animal welfare

- Projects that take place before an application can be decided
- Organisations that have a closed or restricted membership
- Equipment or other costs that have already been purchased or incurred prior to the application being considered

## **Grant Types**

Thornbury Town Council provides three types of grant funding, so that it can provide the most sustainable support to a broad range of local voluntary and community groups.

### **Small grants**

These grants are usually for less than £1000 and are normally offered on a one off basis to support a particular project, event, activity or the purchase of equipment. They are also open to new groups wishing to start up and receive a small contribution towards their running costs. Groups wishing to receive a small grant need to complete an application form and payment is usually made within 1 month of the decision.

### **Revenue grants**

These grants are available to community organisations which provide a significant service to the community. They are given to support the groups normal running costs and can also be used to fund salaries or for match funding to other funding bodies. In principle, revenue grant funding can be awarded for upto 3 years. These grants are dependent on an annual review when the continuation of the grant will be considered in respect of any changes in circumstances of either the applicant or the Town Council.

Groups wishing to receive a revenue grant need to complete an application form and provide additional supporting information. A council representative may hold a meeting with the group to discuss its needs and the level of Town Council support requested. Groups in receipt of a revenue grant will need to complete an annual monitoring form and attend a review meeting to ensure that funding continues to meet Town Councils priorities. Groups receiving a revenue grant will be given 6 months notice of any change to their previously agreed grant funding arrangements.

Payment of these grants are usually made in the April following application.

### **Urgent grants**

In exceptional circumstances Thornbury Town Council will consider urgent grant applications. Groups wishing to apply must complete an application form which will be considered at the next available full council meeting. A covering letter should explain the reason for urgency and for applying outside the normal grant application timetable. Payment is usually made within 1 month of the decision.

## **The 2017 application process and payment timetable**

A second round of small grant applications will be considered this year and applications should be received by **1 December 2017**

All applications for revenue grant funding should be received no later than **1 December 2017**.

Urgent grants can be applied for throughout the year, subject to the budget being available.

**All applicants must complete a grant application form** which can be downloaded from the Council's website or is available from the office. The office can also provide assistance to any group having difficulties completing the application form. Grant applications will only be considered if all sections of the form are completed and appropriate supporting information/evidence is supplied where requested.

All valid grant applications will be assessed and presented to Council for consideration. Small grant recipients will be informed of the outcome and receive payment within one month of the application being approved.

Revenue grants will be considered as part of the Council's budget setting process in January and receive payment in April 2018.

Urgent grant applications will be considered at the next available council meeting with any payment being made within a month of the decision.

Grants will only be paid into the named organisations bank account by cheque or BACS.

In some circumstances the payment date(s) may differ or be staged and this will be set out in the grant confirmation letter.

## **Monitoring and reporting requirements**

It is a condition of the grant to complete the evaluation form provided. Failure to do so will affect any future grant funding applications.

Groups are expected to provide the town council with written evidence of what the money has been spent on and the benefit it has brought to the people of Thornbury.

Such evidence of how the money has been spent could include copies of invoices and receipts, attendance numbers, photos, press clippings, etc where applicable. This information should be submitted within 1 month of the event/project end or by the end of March each year, whichever is sooner, so that it can be reported at the Annual Town Meeting.

## General grant conditions

- Small grants are awarded on an annual basis and an award made this year is not an indication that funding will be continued in other years.
- The grant can only be used for the purpose stated in the application and the Council reserves the right to reclaim any grant not being used for the specified purpose of the application. However if a group wishes to change the purpose of the grant, they must seek approval by writing to the council, who will consider whether or not to approve the change.
- Applications for projects where the work has already been completed or equipment purchased will not be considered.
- We will not support grants for the repayment of loans or cost of services, equipment or provisions in anticipation of a grant.
- Small grants must be spent within 1 year of award. Any unspent monies left after this time must be returned.
- Organisations are responsible for ensuring that they are in compliance with all legal and statutory requirements with regards to the delivery of the project they receive support for.
- Should for any reason the organisation disband or the project is not completed the Council may ask for all or part of the monies to be paid back.
- Acknowledgement of the financial support received from the Council is required on documentation and any promotional material including websites.
- In order to receive payment organisations/groups must have a bank account into which grants can be paid; payments will not be made to private individuals.
- Only one application per year will be accepted from any organisation

Additional grant conditions may also be attached to any funding from Thornbury Town Council and these will be set out in the award confirmation letter.

Failure to comply with any conditions attached to a grant may result in the grant being repaid or affect future grant assistance.

## Contact Information

In case of enquiries or for further information, you can contact the town council

- Call: 01454 412103
- Email: [info@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:info@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk)
- Visit our website: [www.thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk)
- Visit our office, Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm at The Town Hall, High St, Thornbury, BS35 2AR