**City of Lincoln Council and Investors in Lincoln – UKSPF Community Grants Scheme 2025/26**

This document will explain how the Community Grant Scheme works, what it can fund, how much you can apply for, whether you can apply, and how to request funding.

**Details about the programme & the aim of the programme**

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) was a central pillar of the Conservative government’s Levelling Up agenda. It provided three years funding between 2022/23 and 2024/25 for investment in local areas. The primary goal of the UKSPF was to build pride in place and increase life chances across the UK.

In the Autumn Budget, 2024, the UK Government announced the continuation of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) at a reduced level for a further year in 2025/26.

As such, over £110,000 is now available through our Community Grants Scheme to fund community projects within the City of Lincoln, funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Investors in Lincoln. The fund is focused on helping organisations to deliver projects which contribute to the theme of:

***Healthy, Safe and Inclusive Communities; Inclusive: Bringing communities together, tackling homelessness***

The programme will help communities come together to identify their strengths and local priorities in order to plan for their future and become more resilient. It will fund both new and existing community projects.

The Grants Scheme is an initiative that provides local communities with the means to address their own priorities and people will be encouraged to give time, expertise and resources towards the projects they identify in their areas.

**What sort of projects will this grant scheme fund?**

We are looking for projects that align with the UKSPF theme of ‘Healthy, Safe and Inclusive Communities; Inclusive: bringing communities together, tackling homelessness’.

We would also encourage projects which contribute to some of the key priorities within City of Lincoln Council’s Vision 2030. These are:

**Let’s drive inclusive, sustainable, economic growth**

* Let’s build a strong, inclusive and sustainable future for Lincoln
* Let’s continue to help businesses & communities prosper
* Let’s support a culture of innovation & collaboration
* Let’s support opportunities for skills, education and employment
* Let’s attract investment

**Let’s reduce all kinds of inequality**

* Let’s work with partners and our communities to address the impacts and causes of poverty
* Let’s support our neighbourhoods and communities to thrive
* Let’s improve the health and quality of life for people living in Lincoln
* Let’s help people feel safe and welcome in their communities
* Let’s help people succeed ​and support the most vulnerable in our city

**Let’s deliver quality housing**

* Let’s provide housing which meets the varied needs of our residents
* Let’s work together to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping in Lincoln
* Let’s improve housing conditions for all
* Let's provide trusted, tenant-led landlord services
* Let’s build thriving communities

**Let’s enhance our remarkable place**

* Let’s show the world what Lincoln has to offer
* Let’s cherish and enhance our natural environment and green spaces
* Let’s preserve the unique character of our city
* Let’s deliver a rich and varied cultural experience
* Let’s provide interesting, exciting and vibrant places to enjoy

**Let’s address the challenge of climate change**

* Let’s maximise opportunities for achieving net zero carbon
* Let's reduce our carbon footprint
* Let's make our properties more energy efficient
* Let’s work with others to make our infrastructure adaptable and resilient to climate change
* Let’s encourage more walking, cycling, and public transport use in the city
* Let’s ensure that our new developments set the standards for sustainability

Projects must also be able to deliver some of the following outputs and outcomes.

**Outputs**

Number of local events or activities supported

Number of people reached

Number of households receiving support

**Outcomes**

Increased users of facilities/amenities

Improved engagement numbers

Increased visitor numbers

Further details on these outputs and outcomes, their definition and evidence requirements are provided later in this guidance.

Examples of what can be funded include:

* the purchase of equipment, like a computer, oven, furniture
* the costs of putting on a local event or workshop
* training for volunteers
* additional activities to expand an existing funded project
* activities that support community activity
* activities that meet an identified need in the local community
* funding to support an organisation to achieve a quality or other standard relevant to their activities.

**Who can apply?**

To receive funding any group or organisation must:

* be a not-for-profit, third sector voluntary or community group. Businesses may also apply as long as the activity benefits the community.
* Schools may also apply as long as the activity is open to the whole community or can demonstrate that it’s an opportunity that pupils would not usually be available.
* be connected with and/or meeting the needs of the local community
* provide evidence of significant community participation in their application through the group’s matched element to the project

**The Community Grants Scheme cannot fund the following:**

* Individuals
* Statutory organisations, such as Local Authorities and the Police Force
* Any party political activity
* Commercial ventures.
* Activity that has already taken place
* Religious activities
* Political activities
* Activities that pose a potential reputational risk for City of Lincoln Council or Investors in Lincoln

**How much can you apply for?**

The minimum grant award is £2,500

The maximum grant is £10,000 but this is in exceptional circumstances - we expect most grants to be below this level.

**What match funding is required?**

There is no minimum requirement for the level of match funding expected but groups are encouraged to provide some level of match funding.

Match funding can either be a cash contribution to the project costs or ‘in kind’ / free contributions?

If match funding is being provided as in kind / for free, you will be asked to estimate a value of these contributions.

**How and when can you apply?**

A copy of the application form alongside these guidance notes can be downloaded from the City of Lincoln Council website. Applications should be submitted electronically to major.developments@lincoln.gov.uk.

**What is the deadline for applications?**

This funding is only available for 2025/26. The deadline for applications is **Friday 22nd August at 5pm.** We plan to have only one application round. However, if funding remains available, a further application round may be launched.

**What happens after sending in your application form?**

Once your application has been submitted, you will receive an acknowledgement via email.

Your application will initially be assessed by City of Lincoln Council to ensure it meets the grant eligibility criteria. Please note if an application is incomplete or does not provide sufficient information, it will generally be considered as NOT meeting the eligibility criteria. However, you may be contacted to request any additional information or clarification if this is deemed appropriate in the circumstances.

**How will your application be assessed and who will decide whether your application is successful?**

If your application is deemed eligible for the fund, applications will initially be scored against the assessment framework which is set out at the end of the application form. Applications will be scored by representatives of City of Lincoln Council. The scoring and recommendations for funding will be presented to a Grants Panel, made up of representatives of City of Lincoln Council staff, City of Lincoln Council Elected Members and Investors in Lincoln. Only projects which score a minimum threshold will be put to the panel. The Joint Panel will make the final decision.

If you have previously received funding via City of Lincoln Council and have failed to meet the required monitoring requirements, this may impact on the scoring of your project.

**If your application is successful, what will happen next?**

If you are awarded a grant, it will be paid directly to the bank account listed in your application. The grant must be kept and accounted for separately as restricted grant funds to be used only for the purposes agreed. Payments are usually made in arrears. However, where an applicant does not have the financial resource to cover project costs, payments may be made in advance or in staged payments. Please note, some funding will be retained until an acceptable progress report has been provided.

You must provide a progress report in November 2025 and upon conclusion of your project. We’ll tell you more about this and the dates information must be provided if you are successful with your application.

You MUST complete all of your project activity by the end of February 2026.

All of the grant funding provided will need to have been spent and left your bank account by the end of March 2026. You will need to provide copies of bank statements to show that the money has left your account by this date.

**Purchasing Goods and Services**

If you are purchasing any items with your grant that costs £2,500 or more, you will be required to get 3 written quotes or prices from relevant suppliers of goods, works and / or services. You will be asked to provide copies of these quotes.

**Output Definitions**

The table below provides a list of the outputs and outcome projects are expected to contribute to, a definition of the output and the type of evidence you will need to collect. Your project might not be able to deliver against every output and outcome. Please be realistic in your estimates.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Output** | **Definition** | **Evidence required** |
| Number of local events or activities supported | Number of local events or activities supported. An event refers to planned activities. These should fall into the below categories:Those related to: Film, TV, Music, Radio, Heritage, Arts, Museums and Libraries. Other activities and events, for example but not limited to, sports, volunteering, tourism and social action. | List of activities / events deliveredDate of activity / eventPhotos from eventRelevant press material where applicable. |
| Number of people reached | Number of people directly impacted by the intervention. The definition of direct impact will vary across interventions e.g.:Energy efficiency improvements - those living or working within the treated premise.Engagement schemes - those directly engaging (e.g. reading, viewing, attending).Direct impact should only be recorded where it can be done so robustly. | Attendance list Record or tickets issuedCount of attendees |
| Number of households receiving support | Number of households receiving support to reduce the cost of living.A ‘household’, as defined in the 2011 Census is: ‘one person living alone; or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address who share cooking facilities and share a living room or sitting room or dining area’, includes houses, bungalows, flats, and maisonettes. Support is provision that helps reduce the burden of the cost of living. | Anonymised list of households supported, and nature of support received. |
| **Outcome** | **Definition** | **Evidence required** |
| Increased users of facilities / amenities | The increase in number of users of facilities/amenities.Users are the people using facilities/amenities. Amenity/facility means any service contained within a physical structure, including, but not limited to, magistrates courts, police stations, town halls, cultural institutions, hospitals and public toilets. | Attendance list Record or tickets issuedCount of attendees |
| Improved engagement numbers | The increase in number of individuals engaged in the local area / activity during the last 12 months. Engagement can include physical and digital engagements.  | Count of people engaged and nature of engagement e.g. attended an event, took part in an activity etc. |
| Increased visitor numbers | The increase in number of visitor admissions to the local area, including markets, town centre, tourist attractions, green and blue spaces and cultural and heritage venues. The count of attendance should be based on tickets / entry figures, where applicable.  | Record of tickets issuedCount of attendees |

**For further information or advice, please contact major.developments@lincoln.gov.uk**