Community/Warm Hub Grant Support Scheme 2026/27

Guidance Notes & Application Form for potential applicants for the Community/Warm Hub Grant Support Scheme 2026/27

Scheme Guidance

1. Background to Community/Warm Hub Grant Support Scheme 2026/27:

Following the closure of Warwickshire Rural Community Council and an assessment of the impact of this closure, Stratford-on-Avon District Council is seeking to support existing community/warm hubs, encourage the creation of new hubs, and ensure that they are fully prepared for the coming winter. We plan to distribute financial support to qualifying applicant organisations to enable them to achieve our aim of:

Support, prolong and enhance community wellbeing activity through community/warm hub events bringing together members of the whole community but with a focus on more vulnerable residents.

Meeting objectives 7.22/23 of the Growing Opportunities Plan 2026-29

Ref No.	Objective	Goal	Actions	Deadline
7.22 - 7.23	Improve transport/ accessibility to local services for those rurally isolated or without access to a car or public transport, reducing isolation and improving access to health, education and community life	Minimise the impact of the dissolution of WRCC and act where appropriate	Establish adverse impacts of WRCC closure, evaluate these and determine appropriate response from SDC and wider partners with action plan developed and delivered	Dec 27

2. What type of applications are we looking for?

We are looking to support community/warm hubs meeting the below objectives:

- Improving the sustainability of community/warm hubs through providing funding for venue hire or similar;
- Improving experience through enhancing activities held at the community/warm hub;
- Improving the administration of the community/warm hub through funding administrative costs, including insurance, compliance costs, DBS checks, energy bills, or similar; and
- Provision of funding to cover other costs associated with the development and delivery of community/warm hubs.

3. How much money can your organisation ask for?

The total amount of funding available is £25,000, and we intend to have a rolling grant programme opening in late summer and closing when funds are exhausted or on the 31 March 2027, whichever is soonest.

Grant applications for between £250 and £1000 are invited.

4. Time Frames:

Grant Stage	Timeframe	Activity	Responsible Party
Stage 1	1 Oct 2026 to 31 March 2027 or when funds are exhausted	Application Preparation and submission	Applicant Organisations
Stage 2	1 Oct 2026	Opening of application assessment – rolling programme follows with assessments undertaken within 4 weeks of application.	Stratford DC

Stage 3	Mid Oct 2026 onwards	Development and signing of Grant Agreements	Stratford DC & Applicant Organisations
Stage 4	Mid-Oct 2026 onwards	Award Announcement	Stratford DC & Applicant Organisations
Stage 5	Mid-Oct 2026 to end March 2027	Delivery of activity	Applicant Organisations
Stage 6	31 Mar 2027 to 30 Apr 2027	Compilation of evaluation and learning from all grants	Stratford DC

Note: Funding can only be awarded directly to the successful organisation upon receipt of a copy of your order documentation or similar, and an invoice to Stratford DC. If your organisation does not produce invoices, please make us aware of this in your application.

5. Monitoring, Reporting & Evaluation:

During the grant period you may be asked to provide a short progress report and at the end of the project you will be required to provide a short summary of what the grant funding has enabled including activities undertaken, people involved and a qualitative assessment of the activities.

6. Governance:

- If your organisation has a constitution, standing orders or other governing document, we will request this if your application is successful.
- The Council is particularly interested in who has authority to sign the grant agreement. Where your organisation has trustees, they may all need to be signatories to the agreement unless the governing document confirms otherwise. For unincorporated associations, the Council may need to seek further clarification on signatories to be satisfied that an award can be made.
- Please ensure your group has a bank account set up to receive funds. We **cannot** pay funds into a personal account.
- If your application is successful, you may be asked to provide evidence of appropriate insurances for the activity your organisation is proposing to

undertake, should you be awarded funding, i.e. public liability, employer's liability, as appropriate.
- If your application is successful, you may be asked to provide evidence of your Constitution, Health and Safety Policy, Equality and Diversity, Data Protection (GDPR), Safeguarding Policy and where appropriate food hygiene or similar documentation as appropriate.

If you do not have the policies and procedures noted above you should approach an organisation that does have these in place and discuss working with them. This may provide the opportunity to develop a formal agreement, with this third-party organisation whose policies you will be governed by and operate in accordance with. This will save you needing to develop your own, if you do not wish to.

7. Who cannot apply for the funding and what will not be funded:

- National organisations or individuals, unless working in a partnership with a local organisation already delivering activities to communities in the district.
- Party Political Groups.
- For-profit organisations.

What will not be funded:

- Community/warm hub sessions that have already taken place.
- Applications which do not pass the mandatory questions (see section 9 below).

8. Help and advice on running safe events

If you are starting up as an organisation, the importance of precautionary health and safety measures, especially when running events for more vulnerable participants, will be a consideration. You may also need to know about how to form a committee, set up a bank account for an organisation, and other factors to ensure you run a successful event.

Please remember that we are here to support you in navigating the information below, it is important, but we are prepared to help you interpret it and ensure this doesn't stand in the way of you making a strong application.

We want to make sure that accessing information and considering these types of issues is as easy as possible, you may find the following links useful:

Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action

Starting up - WCAVA

Stratford DC Website

Village Halls and Small Events | Stratford-on-Avon District Council

Food Businesses | Stratford-on-Avon District Council

Starting a Food Business | Stratford-on-Avon District Council

Register a Food Business

Gov.uk website

Starting a food business - GOV.UK

For further information and a more detailed conversation regarding the food hygiene and registering a food business, please contact Dee Keegan (Senior Environmental Health Officer) e: Dee.Keegan@stratford-dc.gov.uk t: 01789 260822.

9. Checklist of Eligibility (Mandatory Questions)

To assist applicant organisations to decide their eligibility, there is a checklist below: if you can answer YES to all the statements below, we would encourage an application from your organisation.

Your organisation will deliver a Community/ Warm Hub for residents in a community within Stratford-on-Avon district	YES	NO
Your organisation has a bank account (we **cannot** pay into an individual's account)	YES	NO
Your organisation is non-profit making, i.e. a Parish or Town Council, a registered charity, voluntary or community group, Residents' Association, or similar.	YES	NO
Your project will s*upport, prolong and enhance community wellbeing activity through community/warm hub events bringing together members of the whole community but with a focus on more vulnerable residents.*	YES	NO

Pass / Fail	All YES = Pass	Single or more NO – Fail **(please contact us to discuss as we may be able to advise on passing these mandatory questions)**

Application Process:

Complete the application form - See below

Invitations to apply sent out: October 2026

Application deadline: Rolling from October 2026

Application Process (Detail):

Applications can be submitted in typed onto a WORD format form and online as an e-form through the district council's website. Each form uses an identical format. Access to the online application form can be found here: People & Communities | Stratford-on-Avon District Council. All WORD applications must be completed in full and submitted to the email address below.

WORD applications to be sent to socialinclusion@stratford-dc.gov.uk with the subject Community/Warm Hub Grant Scheme 2026 and your organisation's name.

Contact for queries on applications, enquiries to: socialinclusion@stratford-dc.gov.uk with the subject Community/Warm Hub Grant Scheme 2026 and your organisation's name. If you would like to speak to a member of the team you can call John Wilde on 01789 260933 or Emma Gurdag on 01789 260937.

For further information and a more detailed conversation regarding the food hygiene and registering a food business, please contact Dee Keegan (Senior Environmental Health Officer) e: Dee.Keegan@stratford-dc.gov.uk t: 01789 260822.

Application guidance: can be found on the District Council micro-site dedicated to the Community/Warm Hub Grant Scheme 2026 here: People & Communities | Stratford-on-Avon District Council

Assessment of Applications
All applications will be assessed on their individual merits and will be reviewed on a rolling basis. To ensure a swift assessment process the panel will be made up of two Stratford-on-Avon District Council officers and we commit to assess and notify applicants of the success of their application within four weeks of receiving it. It is advised that applications are made as early as possible as the scheme will close when funds are exhausted.

The form that you will complete to apply for the grant will indicate scored questions, all other questions will not be scored.