

2025/26 Waltham Forest Community Ward Funding Guidance

For this round of Community Ward Funding, every ward in the borough has an allocation of funding available to spend on local projects.

The theme for this year will be [Mission Waltham Forest](#). We are inviting applications for funding that will contribute to our goal of creating **a more equal borough where everyone can thrive**.

At a time of complexity and challenge resulting in increasing inequality and pressure on services and budgets, the council has an important part to play. We also recognise the need to unlock the potential and resilience of residents, communities, and neighbourhoods. We want there to be a network of support within neighbourhoods so that residents are getting the right things, in the right place, at the right time.

Communities know what is best for their local area. The people who live there can connect with a huge range of people. Through CWF we want to support *you* - the people and community groups - to set up initiatives and events that look to strengthen community ties, empower fellow residents, and realise potential within your neighbourhoods.

This could be done in ways that bring people together, or offer support to those who need it or are at risk of needing it soon. Your application for funding should demonstrate how you intend to tackle inequalities within your ward.

Our Borough Missions:

- **Ensure every family and every child are given every opportunity**
- **Build an economy that works for everyone**
- **Make Waltham Forest a great place to live and age well**
- **Tackle the housing crisis head on**
- **Lead the way to a net-zero borough**
- **Safe, green neighbourhoods where everyone can thrive**

Projects may overlap Missions; however, example projects are grouped under each Mission below:

Ensure every family and every child are given every opportunity

- Free dance classes
- Training Youth Mental Health First Aiders
- Local exhibition of SEND artists' work
- Summer social event for families that foster

Build an economy that works for everyone

- Access and Inclusion training for local businesses
- Income Maximisation classes
- Language and Digital skills training
- Local producers fair

Make Waltham Forest a great place to live and age well

- Group exercise classes
- Providing training for volunteers to befriend older/isolated people in the community
- Outdoor Film Festival
- 'Coping with grief' meet ups

Tackle the housing crisis head on

- Home repairs skills sessions
- Running support sessions for residents to complete housing related forms/paperwork
- Swap-shop events for household items
- Craft club to provide items such as blankets and draft excluders to vulnerable residents

Lead the way to a net-zero borough

- Zero-waste street party
- Free technology repairs service
- Baby clothes bank
- Cycle Safety Classes

Safe, green neighbourhoods where everyone can thrive

- Community gardening project
- All ages litter-picking trail
- Advocacy workshop
- After-school basketball club

If you are looking to host an event in a public space, please ensure you include hire costs as part of your Community Ward Funding application. Information on venues and parks available for hire can be found [here](#).

If your application does involve a **permanent structure** your funding may be subject to review by other services such as highways and planning. If appropriate you will be required to submit the respective applications for other processes, such as planning permission.

Please note that this funding cannot be used for personal needs, on an individual basis or to pay staffing costs or wages. Click the below for further details of support available for:

- [Local businesses](#)
- [Residents](#)

You are encouraged to speak to your local ward councillor before submitting your application, especially if your project is time sensitive. You can find contact details for your local councillors [here](#).

Please read application guidance in full before starting your application. If you require further information, please contact cwfsupport@walthamforest.gov.uk.

If your application is successful, you will be required to complete three requirements within the given deadlines:

- An acceptance of your grant offer
- A final evaluation report
- A completed proof of spend table

Failure to provide correct documentation and project updates via these requirements may result in the cancellation of your grant offer or debt recovery action being taken against you.

All projects must be completed by the declared project completion date. Projects are to be completed no later than 31st March 2026. On completion of your project, your final evaluation report and proof of spend must be submitted to us within 3 months.

If you have outstanding requirements (e.g. final evaluations, proof of spend) on Community Ward Funded projects from previous years, you will not receive payments for 25/26 approved projects until the outstanding requirements have been received and approved by the Community Ward Funding team.

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Completing your application form

1) Hints and tips for completing your application

- Tell us how your project will directly contribute to delivering Waltham Forest's Missions
- Projects should help residents enjoy a good quality of life so consider how your project will help the residents living in the ward you are applying to.
- Provide a detailed breakdown of costs; this will help councillors understand how you plan to spend the money and ensure it meets the requirements.
- When looking for a quote, consider value for money, impact on the environment and supporting local businesses and providers.
- You can make the text on the screen bigger by adjusting your browser settings.
- Ensure all required documents are sent to cwfsupport@walthamforest.gov.uk
- Please bear in mind the amount allocated to each ward and whether the amount your project requires is viable.
- Applications will be submitted via Microsoft Forms which can be accessed via laptop, tablet or mobile phone.

We will be holding in-person support sessions. If you require additional help to complete your application, please contact us at cwfsupport@walthamforest.gov.uk to enquire about booking on to a session.

2) Who can apply and how much can be applied for?

Wards are allocated an amount based on geographical size. Wards with two councillors are allocated £6,600; wards with three councillors are allocated £10,000.

Individuals and Organisations of any size can apply for any amount of funding. Councillors have the flexibility to make local arrangements for their ward to set limits on how much funding can be allocated to each application.

To apply on behalf of an Organisation, you must be either the Treasurer or a Lead Member. You may be required to evidence this before the respective ward councillors decide whether to fund your project.

3) What type of documentation do constituted groups need to provide?

If your application is successful, you will need to provide us with records of the following:

All Applicants (Required)

- Confirmation you are accepting the awarded amount.
- A copy of your bank statement, which must:

- Be dated within the last 3 months.
- Be in the name of the organisation applying (for constituted groups) or the applying resident's name.
- Display the sort code and account number that your payments are to be paid into.

For Constituted Groups (Required):

- A copy of your organisation's constitution.
- A copy of your Public Liability Insurance.
- If your constituted group has been established for 15 months or more, please also provide a copy of your previous years' accounts.

Depending on your project, you will also need to provide the following additional documentation:

- If you employ staff, you must provide a copy of your Employer's Liability Insurance.
- If your project will be delivered in a school, provide a document confirming approval from the appropriate Head Teacher(s).
- If your organisation is working with children or young people up to the age of 18, you must provide both;
 - A copy of your **Safeguarding Policy**. Please ensure it is in line with [Waltham Forest's Safeguarding Children Board](#)
 - The name and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) vetting number of any adults who will be working with children and evidence that safer recruitment checks have been completed. If you are purchasing DBS checks as part of your application, please upload written agreement that this will be in place before you begin your project.
- If your organisation is working with vulnerable adults, you must provide both:
 - A copy of your **Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedure** which also outlines the training of staff and volunteers and how you will ensure staff are trained as part of their induction and where this will be recorded and monitored.
 - The name and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) vetting number of any adults who will be working with the vulnerable adults. If you are purchasing DBS checks as part of your application, ensure these are listed in your cost breakdown and please provide written agreement that this will be in place before you begin your project. Please also advise on the action you will take if there are any records on the DBS certificate.

See '[What is safeguarding and how can I get help?](#)' for more information.

All of the documentation listed above will need to be provided to cwfsupport@walthamforest.gov.uk

4) Which ward do I apply to?

You should apply to the ward where the **project is taking place** or **where residents of that ward will see a direct benefit**. For each project, you can apply to a maximum of **two different wards**.

If you are applying to two wards with the intention of them both part-funding the same project, you will be asked to declare the total amount of requested funding on the application form.

If you are applying for funding for multiple, different projects, you will need to submit separate application forms for each project.

Funding decisions are made by the Ward Councillors. **You are therefore encouraged to speak to your local ward councillor before submitting your application.** You can find contact details for your local councillors [here](#).

5) What type of projects can be funded?

We encourage projects that will help strengthen sense of community and belonging. Alternatively, your project could be to bring people and communities together digitally, create opportunities for residents to learn something new or reduce social isolation in your neighbourhood. Projects may range from a one-off, inclusive social event to a series of workshops or programme of activities aimed at a specific audience, such as young people. Funding could enable you to hire a space, provide training equipment, publicise a community network, teach new skills or encourage use of a public space.

Projects must be delivered and take place within the borough of Waltham Forest.

6) What type of projects or costs cannot be funded?

Community Ward Funding unfortunately cannot support individuals, families or businesses facing hardships. Please check our [cost of living support pages](#) to see if you, or residents you support, are missing out on any help to which you're entitled. [Practical cost of living information and resources](#) are also available for community groups.

- Community Ward Funding cannot be used to fund political or religious events or distribute material or resources of a political or religious nature and must be inclusive to all.
- Projects funded by Community Ward Funding must be delivered within Waltham Forest.
- The funds cannot be used to cover the cost of items such as alcohol, cigarettes or used towards profit-making activities and gambling such as raffles. The funds also cannot be used to cover the cost of single-use plastic items such as plastic cups. You will be sent a list of acceptable proof of spend if you are awarded funding.
- Community Ward Funding is to be used for specific, project-based activities and is not to support ongoing running costs or overheads for organisations. For example, if a project does not have a clear start and end date and a definitive cost breakdown, the project is not suitable for funding.

- Funding cannot be used to pay yourself or your organisation's payroll staff to deliver the project. You are able to fund additional support to help facilitate your project who must be paid via an invoice that clearly states the services they have provided, and the hours worked. Examples of acceptable forms of additional support are:
 - A musician hired to perform at your event.
 - A chef hired to run a cookery class.
 - An artist hired to run a creative workshop.
 - A face painter hired to work at your event.
- You cannot apply for funds to cover projects that have already happened or for items that have already been bought. Only costs outlined in your application will be reimbursed, providing receipts or invoices have been submitted.

If you need further information on any of the above terms, please contact the team: cwfsupport@walthamforest.gov.uk.

7) What do you mean by outcomes and how your project will be evaluated?

When councillors are reviewing applications, they will be considering the impact the project will have on the community and how it aims to meet the theme of Mission Waltham Forest.

Councillors will be looking to fund projects that:

- Strengthen the sense of community and belonging
- Support charitable activities focused on reducing isolation or supporting mental health and wellbeing initiatives
- Improve the sustainability, cleanliness and liveability of our neighbourhoods
- Inject life into local high streets and make use of the borough's heritage and community spaces
- Enable local charities to provide supplies and support to their local communities or support the recruitment and training of volunteers
- Equip residents with new skills, experiences and connections to help them contribute to their local communities through work and volunteering

Applicants are encouraged to highlight the outcomes of their project within the application process. An outcome is a result you expect your project to achieve. Your project is likely to have more than one outcome, here are some examples:

- An outcome of a technology repairs service may be that 'fewer items go to waste and landfill'. This would address Mission Waltham Forest by contributing to net-zero goals while also being cost effective to vulnerable residents.
- An outcome of a language class may be that 'participants feel more confident speaking to others.' This would address Mission Waltham Forest by decreasing isolation and helping participants to access opportunities such as employment.

You can also include any specific targets for your project in your application. For example, when setting up a sports club your target may be 'to engage 30 local young people between the ages 14-20.'

Having clear outcomes will also help you plan your project. When you have finished your project, consider if you met your outcomes. For example, what was the feedback from participants? Did you reach the number of people you hoped to reach? Have you seen any lasting change in your area?

Following completion of your project you will be asked to submit a final evaluation. Applicants are encouraged to submit photos of their project and any additional commentary around the success of the project or measuring its impact, including feedback from attendees. These submissions will be considered if similar or repeat projects are requested in the future.

8) Can I reapply for funding for the same or similar project?

As councillors have limited funds it is likely that they will look to fund different projects each year. Community Ward Funding is not intended to be a regular source of funding for community projects. If you wish to repeat your project, you should consider how you can make your project sustainable and explore alternative sources of funding. We have suggested some alternative below:

- [My Funding Central](#) is an online database for charities and community groups. It is free to use if your group's annual income is less than £30,000 a year.
- [SpaceHive](#) is a crowdfunding platform which supports local initiatives.
- [Make It Happen](#) is a grants programme for arts and culture projects in Waltham Forest, celebrating the diversity of local communities and shining a light on creative talent across the Borough in the process.
- [The National Lottery Community Fund](#) is welcoming applications for organisations across England to bid for grants to host community events, activities and exhibitions to help tell the stories of the Second World War at a local level, ensuring the legacy of the war and its impact on individuals and communities across the country is not forgotten.

When reviewing applications for similar or the same projects, councillors will be able to consult your final evaluations to consider whether the outcomes of your previous project were met.

9) Digital support for applications

If you don't have access to complete your application online or would like further support to make your application, please contact us:

Email:

CWFSupport@walthamforest.gov.uk

Post:
Community Ward Funding Team – Cllr Services
Fellowship Square
Waltham Forest Town Hall
Forest Road
Walthamstow
E17 JF

The CWF Team are available for in-person support sessions if you would benefit from additional help and support to complete your application. Please contact us at cwfsupport@walthamforest.gov.uk to enquire about booking on to a session.

10) What is safeguarding and how can I get help?

If you are working directly with people, all individuals within your organisation should be able to recognise the different types of abuse, identify the signs and where to go for help. Even if you are not part of a formal organisation, it is your responsibility to ensure you have undertaken relevant safeguarding training.

If you are concerned that an adult with care and support needs is being abused or neglected or is self-neglecting, please contact the London Borough of Waltham Forest immediately on **020 8496 3000** or follow this link to complete [an online referral form](#)

For further guidance regarding Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and DBS checks, visit [the Community Waltham Forest safeguarding](#) webpage.

For further guidance on Safeguarding Adults, visit the London Borough of Waltham Forest [Safeguarding Adults](#) webpage.

What happens next?

11) How are funding decisions made?

As applications are received, ward councillors will be able to make funding decisions on a rolling basis if they choose to, in addition to a four-week decision period once the application deadline closes to decide which projects are to receive funding and the amount to award.

Councillors are responsible for making funding decisions based on the needs of their ward for the benefit of local residents. Councillors have the flexibility to make local arrangements for their ward to set limits on how much funding can be allocated to each application.

12) What happens if my application is successful?

You will need to reply to your offer letter to accept the grant and agree to the terms and conditions as per the date on your offer letter. When accepting your offer, you will also be required to provide a recent bank statement to confirm the details of the account the grant will be paid into. This will be stored securely in line with our GDPR and auditing processes. By accepting the offer, you are agreeing to submit all proof of project spend.

If you do not accept the offer by the deadline stated on your offer letter your grant will be withdrawn.

Please note that you may not be awarded the full amount that you requested. If you are unable to deliver the project with the awarded amount, you can decline the offer. See [returning funding](#) for more information.

You will only be reimbursed up to the value your project was awarded.

A list of the successful project names and amounts awarded will be uploaded to the community ward funding page - [Community ward funding | London Borough of Waltham Forest](#).

13) What is the payment plan?

Your Payment Plan

After receiving your grant acceptance and proof of bank details, we will make an initial payment of 75% of the awarded grant for projects under £500 and 50% of the awarded grant for projects over £501.

You will receive the outstanding balance on your grant once your project is complete and you have provided full evidence of your project in the final evaluation. Project evidence in this instance includes all your receipts and invoices and, where appropriate, photos of your project. A final evaluation form and proof of spend template will be provided to you for completion. Project evidence will not be processed without a completed proof of spend table.

14) Acceptable Proofs of Spend

Invoices must have the following:

- a unique identification number
- the company name, address and contact information
- the company name and address of the customer you're invoicing
- a clear description of what is being charged for
- the date the goods or service were provided (supply date)
- the date of the invoice

- the amount(s) being charged
- VAT amount if applicable
- the total amount owed
- must be on a template

Receipts must have the following:

- the shop/business name and business address
- a clear, itemised list of what has been paid for with a cost against each item
- the date and time of purchase/payment
- the total amount charged
- card machine receipts will only be accepted if accompanied by a corresponding till receipt. The till receipt will contain the itemised detail we need as proof of spend
- receipts for items purchased before the approval date of your project application will not be reimbursed
- receipts for items purchased after the completion date of your project will not be reimbursed
- handwritten receipts will only be considered for payment if written on sales stationary specific to a shop or business
- we wish to support the purchase of items from independent and local shops and businesses, if they are not able to supply an itemised receipt showing the business name and date of purchase, we may not be able to accept these as proof of purchase. Supplementary evidence such as photographs from inside the shop showing items and price labels may be required

A more detailed guide on acceptable proof of spend with examples will be sent to successful applicants when their grant offer is made.

15) What are not acceptable costs to claim as part of your project?

- Receipts for cash prizes or vouchers offered at your event/project
- Receipts for single-use plastic items such as plastic cups
- Receipts for travel costs including taxis, petrol, travel to/from venues for yourself and additional staff, and ULEZ, Congestion, and Toll Charges
- Invoices to pay yourself or payroll staff for work undertaken, including delivery, facilitation, and invoices addressed to the Community Ward Funding Team
- Invoices for administration costs such as office space hire, time taken to complete applications, flyer design and distribution, social media promotion
- Receipts for expenses paid to staff in lieu of actual payment, such as meals, gift cards, or travel. If additional/freelance staff are to be paid for their work on your project this will

need to be done via invoice. We will only pay the net amount on any acceptable staff costs

- We will not reimburse for alcohol purchased
- Anything not declared on the application form. If you need to make a change to your proposed cost breakdown you must write to the funding team who will seek councillor approval **before** purchases are made
- Existing/ongoing rental costs/overheads
- Bank charges

16) What happens if my application is not successful?

We anticipate a high volume of applications, unfortunately not all applications will be successful, and some successful applications may be allocated less money than they are applying for. Unsuccessful applicants can reapply in future rounds. If your application is unsuccessful, you can contact your ward councillors to request written feedback.

Please email cwfsupport@walthamforest.gov.uk if you would like us to add you to our mailing list to receive updates on future funding rounds.

17) Promoting your project and sharing its success

If your project is successful and you will be using publicity or communication materials to promote it, **you must contact the CWF team to receive a copy of our logo**. Please ensure that the logo is visible on all printed, web and any other media material, together with enough text acknowledging the support of LBWF's Community Ward Funding. A draft of your publicity or communication material **must be sent to the community ward funding mailbox** CWFSupport@walthamforest.gov.uk for review and should not be circulated until approval is provided.

We want to hear how your project went and share its success. Take photos of your project in action and let us know what participants said. If you are taking photos of people, please ensure you have their permission to take their photo and let them know it could be used by the Council to promote future community ward funding.

You are required to invite and/or welcome ward Councillors to any official opening or event.

18) Will there be a second funding round?

It is up to ward councillors to decide how much of their funds to allocate in each funding round. We do not anticipate there will be a second funding round in 2025, but councillors will be able to support ad hoc project requests, should they have remaining funding available following the first round. We advise you to contact your ward councillors to find out more.

The list of successful projects and an overview of remaining funding will be published on the community ward funding page annually - [Community ward funding | London Borough of Waltham Forest](#).

19) Returning funding

If your project cannot go ahead, you will need to return any funding paid to you. Please email cwfsupport@walthamforest.gov.uk where the team will provide further details for you to make the payment. You will also be asked to return funding if you cannot prove that the event took place by providing the required final evaluation and proof of spend.