

BVSC Grassroots Development Grant

Guidance for Applicants

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Background
3. Funding Allocation
4. Phase Two: Round One
5. Training Programme
6. Grant Aim
7. Strategic Objectives
8. Priority Areas and Eligibility
9. What Can and Cannot Be Funded
10. Application and Assessment
11. Due Diligence
12. Monitoring and Evaluation
13. Programme Key Dates

1. Introduction

This guidance document outlines the delivery of Round One of Phase Two of the BVSC Grassroots Development Grant Programme.

The Grassroots Development Grant forms part of a wider investment in grassroots and "by and for" organisations across Bexley, supporting their development, sustainability, and long-term resilience.

This guidance relates specifically to Round One of Phase Two (Development Grant Delivery).

Applicants are strongly encouraged to read this guidance in full before submitting an application.

2. Background

As part of efforts to develop and strengthen the infrastructure and ecosystem required for neighbourhood health, BVSC received £100,000 in partnership funding from the South East London VCSE Alliance and the South East London Integrated Care Board (SEL ICB) in 2024/25.

The funding aims to support the development, sustainability, and resilience of grassroots and "by and for" voluntary and community sector organisations across Bexley, enabling them to strengthen their capacity, increase their impact, and better respond to the needs of local communities.

As part of BVSC's commitment to supporting Global Majority-led and focused organisations, a proportion of the funding was allocated to support the BAME Network. The remaining funding has been divided into two delivery phases:

Phase One

The BVSC Grassroots Seed Grant, launched in June 2026, supporting new and emerging organisations with core costs to establish strong foundations and begin delivering services to local communities.

Phase Two

The Grassroots Development Grant, designed to strengthen the capacity, effectiveness, and long-term sustainability of grassroots voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations.

Through a combination of grant funding and targeted capacity-building support, organisations will be supported to strengthen governance, leadership, policies, systems, and financial resilience.

This phased approach enables funding to be delivered in a manageable and timely way while ensuring organisations receive the support needed to maximise the impact of the investment.

3. Funding Allocation

Grant amounts of up to £3000 available per Organisation.

4. Phase Two: Grassroots Development Grant

A total of up to £36,000 will be distributed through the Grassroots Development Grant. Eligible organisations may apply for grants of up to £3,000 having completed the development training programme (see below), with up to 12 organisations expected to receive funding.

The programme is linked to a structured capacity-building offer developed in response to needs identified through engagement with grassroots organisations. Three key development areas were consistently highlighted which has formed the training offer as part of this development programme:

4.1 Governance: Building Strong Foundations

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Explain the purpose and importance of governance and its role in supporting organisational sustainability and accountability.
- Identify different legal structures available to community organisations and understand their key benefits and considerations.
- Describe the key components of a governing document and how they support effective governance and compliance.

- Identify essential policies, procedures, and organisational requirements needed to become funding ready.

4.2 From Idea to Concept: Developing Fundable Project

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Identify and articulate a community need using evidence, data, and lived experience.
- Design a basic project idea by clearly defining beneficiaries, activities, location, and delivery approach.
- Differentiate between activities and outcomes and describe the changes their project aims to achieve.
- Produce a draft project concept note outlining the problem, solution, beneficiaries, and expected outcomes.
- Prepare a basic concept or project budget that includes key project costs.
- Identify potential funding opportunities that align with their project objectives.
- Develop stronger funding applications by clearly demonstrating need and impact.
- Create a simple approach for measuring and evidencing project outcomes.

4.3 Volunteer Management: Building a Volunteer Team

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Understand the principles of effective volunteer management and the value volunteers bring to organisations.
- Develop inclusive approaches to recruiting and selecting volunteers.
- Implement good practice in volunteer induction, support, supervision, and safeguarding.
- Apply practical strategies to motivate, recognise, and retain volunteers.

All BVSC-supported grassroots organisations are invited to apply.

Successful applicants will be expected to participate in the training sessions and will receive tailored support from the Grassroots Development Officer to strengthen governance arrangements, policies, and funding applications where required.

This combination of financial support and organisational development is expected to strengthen organisational infrastructure, increase sustainability, and improve readiness for future funding opportunities. It is also expected that peer-to-peer learning and collaboration will be strengthened through the programme.

5. Training Programme

Training Area	Delivery Method	Duration	Attendance Requirement
Governance	One face-to-face session	Up to 3 hours	Mandatory
From Idea to Concept (Identifying Community Need and Developing a Concept)	Two face-to-face sessions	2 hours each (4 hours total)	Mandatory
Volunteer Management	One face-to-face session	2 hours	Mandatory

Please note: Completion of the training programme is a mandatory requirement for organisations wishing to access grant funding through this programme.

Interested participants who wish to apply for the grant but are unable to attend any of the training sessions are encouraged to contact Anne, the Grassroots Development Officer, for guidance and support.

6. Grant Aim

The Grassroots Development Grant aims to strengthen the capacity, resilience, and long-term sustainability of grassroots organisations.

Through funding and development support, organisations will be supported to:

- Build stronger and well-governed organisations.
- Improve sustainability and funding readiness.
- Strengthen volunteer engagement, skills, and collaboration.

7. Grassroot Development Grant Objectives

The programme seeks to:

- Strengthen governance, leadership, and organisational effectiveness.
- Increase the sustainability and resilience of grassroots organisations.
- Improve access to future funding opportunities.
- Develop skills and knowledge within voluntary and community organisations.
- Strengthen volunteer recruitment, management, and retention practices.
- Encourage peer learning, collaboration, and networking between organisations.
- Support organisations to contribute to neighbourhood health priorities across Bexley.

8. Priority Areas and Eligibility

Priority Focus Areas

Priority will be given to groups working within the three ICB neighbourhood health areas and/or supporting ICB priority groups, recognising the overlap with broader community needs

Priority Focus Areas

- Multiple long-term conditions
- Isolation and frailty
- Children and young people with complex needs

Priority Groups

- Young people
- Older people
- Global Majority and migrant communities
- People with SEND
- Residents living in North Bexley
- Equity-led "for and by" organisations
- Core20Plus5 populations

Eligibility

Whilst the grant is open to all eligible grassroots organisations in Bexley, BVSC-supported organisations and groups are strongly encouraged to apply and take advantage of the funding and development support available through the programme.

Applicants must:

- Be based in Bexley or deliver services within Bexley.
- Have an annual income below £100,000.

Eligible organisations include voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations operating within the London Borough of Bexley, including:

- Registered charities
- Community Interest Companies (CICs)
- Social enterprises
- Constituted community groups
- Informal community groups

9. What Can and Cannot Be Funded

Examples of what funding can be used for:

- Governance and leadership development
- Organisational development
- Training and skills development
- Financial systems and sustainability planning
- Monitoring, evaluation, and learning
- Digital development and equipment/software
- Policies, compliance, and quality standards
- Communications and community engagement
- Consultancy and specialist support

Please refer to Table 1 at the bottom of this document for detailed information.

Funding Cannot Be Used For

- Direct service delivery or activities
- Salaries linked to service delivery
- Capital items over £500
- Individuals
- Political or religious campaigning
- For-profit organisations
- Organisations not benefiting Bexley residents
- Organisations with income above £100,000

10. Application and Assessment

Funding Available

- Maximum grant: £3,000 per organisation

Application Process

Organisations apply to join the Grassroots Development Programme. As part of the application, applicants will confirm their eligibility, commit to attending the training programme, and outline how they propose to use a grant of up to £3,000.

Please note, the grant cannot be used for delivery costs of salaries.

Completion of the training programme is mandatory in order to receive grant funding.

Following completion of the programme, participants will have the opportunity to refine their proposal and budget before funding is approved and awarded.

Application Steps

1. Submit an application to join the Grassroots Development Programme.
2. Demonstrate eligibility and provide an indicative proposal and budget.
3. Attend and complete the training programme.
4. Refine the proposal and budget based on learning gained through the programme.
5. Receive approval and access grant funding of up to £3,000.

11. Due Diligence

Applicants will be required to provide:

- A recent bank statement
- A constitution or governing document
- A safeguarding policy (where groups do not currently have one, support will be provided to develop one)
- A simple budget

Due diligence checks will include:

- Review of governing documents (for example, constitutions, articles of association, bylaws, or other legal documents)
- Bank account verification
- Safeguarding policy review
- Confirmation of benefit to Bexley residents

Funding will only be released once all due diligence requirements have been satisfactorily completed.

12. Monitoring and Evaluation

Successful applicants will be required to submit a monitoring report detailing how the grant was spent and the outcomes achieved.

13. Programme Key Dates

Event	Dates 2026
Grant Opened	Monday 21 September
Grant Closes	Monday 19 October
Applicants receive Communication	From 23 October
Training Programme Delivery	
Governance Training	3 November
Concept Development Training	18 & 19 November
Volunteer Management	3 December
Funds Disbursed	3 rd Week of December

For further information or support with your application, please contact BVSC's Grassroots Development Team at sectorsupport@bvsc.co.uk

Annex 1 : Resources and Further Information

Table 1: Examples of what can be Funded

Category	Support Areas
Governance and Leadership	Governance reviews and policy development Strategic planning workshops Leadership coaching or mentoring for staff and volunteers Succession planning
Organisational Development	Developing a business or sustainability plan Reviewing organisational structure and processes Change management support Developing operational manuals and procedures Establishing risk management systems
Skills and Training	Staff /Volunteer training Accredited courses and qualifications Examples of training programmes/Courses Safeguarding training Project management training Fundraising and income-generation training Digital skills training
Financial Systems and Sustainability	Financial health checks Improving bookkeeping and accounting systems Purchasing accounting software Independent financial advice Developing earned-income models Diversifying funding streams
Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning	Designing monitoring and evaluation frameworks Impact measurement tools and systems External evaluations Data collection and analysis systems Learning and reflection workshops
Digital Capacity	Website development or improvement CRM systems Cloud-based collaboration tools

Category	Support Areas
	Cybersecurity improvements Digital communications tools Equipment supporting organisational development (e.g. laptops, phones, camera's, printers, projectors etc)
Policies, Compliance and Quality Standards	Developing or updating policies Legal advice relating to governance or compliance GDPR/data protection support Safeguarding system improvements Working toward recognised quality standards or accreditations
Communications and Engagement	Communications strategy development Branding and organisational identity review Volunteer recruitment systems Stakeholder engagement exercises Community consultation activities Development of fundraising and marketing materials
Consultancy and Specialist Support	Organisational development consultants (for areas not already covered by Grassroots Development Officer support). HR advice and systems development Fundraising consultants Strategic planning facilitators Digital transformation specialists Evaluation consultants
Partnership and Network Development	Building collaborations with other organisations Partnership development workshops Membership of sector networks Peer learning and knowledge exchange activities

Table 2: Information Plus 5 Clinical Focus and Delivery Areas

PLUS 5 Clinical Focus areas		Delivery Areas
Adults	Children	
Maternity: Continuity of care for ethnic	Asthma: Reducing reliever medication overuse and asthma attacks.	- Barnehurst, - Belvedere - Bexleyheath,

minorities and deprived groups. • Severe Mental Illness (SMI): Annual physical health checks. • Chronic Respiratory Disease: Focus on COPD, pneumonia, and flu vaccines. • Early Cancer Diagnosis • Hypertension Case-Finding: Optimizing blood pressure to reduce strokes and heart attacks.	• Diabetes: Increasing access to real-time glucose monitors and insulin pumps. • Epilepsy: Increasing access to specialist nurses and epilepsy care plans. • Oral Health: Improving access to dental care and prevention programs. • Mental Health: Improving access to support services.	• Blackfen & Lamorbey, • Blendon & Penhill • Crayford • Crook Log, • East Wickham • Erith • Falconwood & Welling • Longlands • Northumberland Heath • Sidcup • Slade Green & Northend • St Mary's & St James • Thamesmead East, and West Heat
Equity-led or 'by and for' communities. • Global Majority and migrant communities • Disabled people • Women and girls (in certain contexts) • LGBTQ+ communities • Refugees and migrants • Economically disadvantaged communities		North Bexley • Belvedere • Erith • Slade Green & Northend • Northumberland Heath • Thamesmead East

Definitions

1. Equity-led or 'by and for' communities.

These organisations support people who may experience inequality or face barriers due to social, economic, or systemic factors. They are typically led by, and accountable to, the communities they serve, with strong insight informed by lived experience.

2. Core20: The 20% most deprived population according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

3. PLUS: Population groups experiencing poorer-than-average health access or outcomes (e.g., ethnic minorities, inclusion health groups, people with disabilities).

Useful Links

[NHS England » Core20PLUS5 – An approach to reducing health inequalities for children and young people](#)

