



Community Fund Application

September 2026 Round

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

These are example frequently asked questions (FAQs) aimed at providing additional support with the application process. There is separate guidance detailing the Community Fund eligibility criteria and details for completing the application form. Please make sure you have accessed the online copy within the application form, as these FAQs are for reference and not a substitute for that guidance document.

I need to know if my organisation can apply to this fund.

Q: What is the Community Fund, and can my organisation apply?

A: The Community Fund is a bi-annual grant scheme operated jointly by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley and the Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police. The money for each round of the fund comes from the proceeds of the sale of items seized from criminals that cannot be returned to their rightful owners.

The Fund is **ONLY** available for not-for-profit voluntary and community sector organisations, including town and parish councils, social enterprises and those limited by guarantee and registered charities. There are many types of organisations that fall into this category, but the general rule is that your organisation must be **not for profit**. That is a requirement of the Police Property Act Regulations (1997). **Your application will be rejected if your organisation does not meet this status.**

Examples of not-for-profit organisations would be social enterprises, community interest companies, charities, and town and parish councils. If there are services provided by an organisation that are exclusively operated outside of the profit-making elements of the business, an application for a project can be considered but it must be made clear within the application that the project is being delivered by the non-profit making part of that organisation.

Q: We are a not for profit voluntary and community organisation, but we're not based in the Thames Valley. Can we still apply if we have a project that is to be delivered in the Thames Valley?

A: We can only fund the elements of a project that are taking place or being delivered within the Thames Valley. It may be that your offices, or your main base is outside of the Thames Valley policing area; however, if your project is to take place within the Thames Valley, and meets all the criteria then it can be considered. It is important you clarify this in your application.

Q: What criteria does my project need to meet?

- A. As referred to above, your organisation must be a constituted community or voluntary group and not be a profit-making organisation. Alongside this your project must clearly demonstrate that it supports the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan 2024-29 priorities. You will be asked to give details in your application so please take some time to have a read of the plan, which can be found at:

<https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/police-and-crime-plan/>

You will also be asked to set out details in your application about how your project will be delivered, and the outputs and achievements expected from it. This information helps us to evaluate the projects and shortlist successful awards.

Q: How much can I apply for?

- A. The scheme is set up to provide amounts of funding typically from £100 up to the maximum amount of ten thousand pounds (£10K). However, it should be kept in mind that the scheme is very popular, and each round is heavily oversubscribed. You might want to consider applying to the Community Fund for a proportion of the funding your project requires, and or indicate on the application form that you'd consider accepting a reduced funding amount.

Q: We received funding for a project in a previous round of the fund. Can we apply again?

- A. A condition of the scheme is that if, as an organisation, you have received funding from the Community Fund within the last 12-month period, you **cannot** apply for further funding until the full 12-month period has passed since the launch of the fund, and that is both for a project previously funded or a new initiative or project. This helps with the distribution of the funding across the wider Thames Valley. For example, if you were successful in receiving funding during the last round which launched in September 2025, you would be eligible to apply for a further round in September 2026.

Q: We've applied to the Community Fund before and weren't successful. Can we apply again?

- A. Yes, as long as your organisation and your project meet the criteria set out above. It is a very popular scheme, and each round is always oversubscribed. We can only make a limited number of grant awards. Applications to each round are considered on their eligibility for the scheme, their community safety value and their merits against the criteria. The judging panel must rigorously evaluate each project's overall ability to deliver against the priorities of the Police and Crime Plan.

Q: We want to apply for some of the funding needed for our project, but we are waiting to hear if our local council will grant us planning permission for the project overall. The planning committee meets after the Community Fund application deadline. What should we do?

- A. Your project sounds like it involves building and construction works, listed building consent or work in a conservation area? And you may be applying to several funds for support for different elements if it's a large project overall. We would advise that you await the decision of your local council on planning consent, or any other consents. The Community Fund is generally run with two rounds per year so it would be worthwhile to keep this in mind until you have all your consents and permissions in place. With the fund being very popular, consideration would have to be given to whether a particular project might be delayed because of planning consent or other permissions not yet secured.

Q. Our organisation receives funding from the Thames Valley Police & Crime Commissioner for some of our services. Does that stop us from applying to the Community Fund?

A. If your organisation has received funding, or currently receives funding from wider PCC funding streams, this would need to be considered on a case-by-case basis, so we request information regarding any additional funding received as part of the application process. We wouldn't be able to provide duplicate funding for a specific project that is already being funded by the PCC, however if your project relates to wider work being delivered by your organisation then this is something we would be able to consider.

My query is about the application process
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Q: Do we have to complete an application form?

A: Yes, you do. Although the application form is designed to be as light touch as possible, it is public money that would be supporting your project if it is awarded a grant. As such, we must see specific details that tell us who you are, what your project is about, how it will support the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan priorities, and how you will account for the funding.

Q: The application is an online process; can we fill a paper copy in instead?

A: The online application process allows us to evaluate projects much quicker and manage the documents more effectively. For that reason, we will **only accept** an application via our online system.

The application process is designed to be straightforward with question-and-answer boxes. You can also upload documents where you feel they will help your application. Please do remember to note in your answers if you've referred to any uploaded documents including references to page numbers, section headings etc.

Q: We're going to have problems meeting the application closing date, can we have an extension to the deadline?

A. Unfortunately, we won't be able to consider any applications that we receive after the closing date. Our timeframe for evaluating projects and confirming successful awards is extremely tight, so we must be strict on that.

We would strongly recommend sufficient time is allowed if decisions by a committee or panel, or an officer of your organisation are required to be in place prior to you submitting the application.

In terms of timings, there are normally two rounds of the fund in each financial year, depending on funding being available.

Q. We've been completing an application online over the last few days and we've saved it for the final time. We haven't had any notification that it has been received by you – what should we do?

A. The system allows you to save the application and return to it later to complete. However, once it is completed and saved for the final time you need to **submit** it. Press the submit button and you should receive an automated e-mail with the link to your completed application. We will then have received it in our system.

Q. Can we meet with you first and discuss our project before we make an application?

- A. The OPCC won't be available for meetings, including site visits, to consider potential projects. We can only consider potential projects through an application made on the online system and received by us by the deadline.

Q. Can I get a copy of my application form?

- A. Yes, on submission of your form you will receive an e-mail acknowledgement with a link to the application form. We recommend that you use the 'print function' to save a PDF copy and save it your own system for future reference.

My query is about bank details and payments
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Q: My organisation has just established, and we are awaiting our bank account to be set up. Can we still apply even though we don't have our bank account details?

- A. Your organisation **must** have its own bank account, in its name and the details are required on the application form. This is mandatory information required on the online form and you won't be able to submit it without that detail being included.

Please also note that the OPCC **cannot** pay funds into a private account of an individual, even if they are somebody who has been involved in the start-up of that organisation or will be involved in running it. Equally, the OPCC cannot pay a grant to a third-party organisation on behalf of the organisation being awarded funding. It must be the organisation applying that receives the funds and accounts for that money.

Q: Why are we being asked to provide our bank account details on the application form when we don't yet know if we're being awarded a grant? I'm worried our bank account could be accessed by somebody if they get hold of that information.

- A. We ask for bank details at application stage so we can set payment arrangements up promptly if you are successful in a grant award. However, those bank details you provide will **only** allow us to **make a payment** into that account and not actually access the account itself.

Furthermore, your details are kept secure, and we do not pass those details on to third parties.

Q. We'd really prefer to be paid by cheque rather than bank transfer, is this possible?

- A. No, unfortunately our system of payment is by bank transfer only and applicants must provide the required and correct bank account details on their application forms.

Q. If our application is successful, and we're awarded a grant, when do we get paid?

- A. Arrangements are set up to pay the grants as soon as we have confirmed the awards with the organisations and we have access to the bank details required for payment. Following notification that you have been successful in being awarded funding, you will be required to confirm by return email that you accept the funding offer, and the grant will only be paid into the account with the details provided on the application form.

We would advise that you agree any contract start, supply and delivery dates with contractors and suppliers with the above in mind.

My query is about examples of what the Community Fund has supported before

Q. We want to put up an activated speed warning sign in our village because we've seen them when driving through other villages. Is this something we could apply for?

A. Yes. The Community Fund has supported activated speed warning signs. You are advised to consult with your local highway authority for necessary permissions and bear in mind that there might be costs associated with that consent process.

You can see examples of projects that have been funded in previous rounds on the OPCC website - <https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/get-involved/community-fund/>

Q. We've had so many break-ins and vandalism attacks on our village community hall. Could we apply for funding for CCTV and or security improvements?

A. Yes. The security and target hardening of a community facility with things like CCTV, improved lighting, better locks etc. helps create safer places for local people to come together for events and social gatherings. You are reminded though that we can only fund voluntary and community groups, charities and town and parish councils. If the facility is owned and run by a profit-making organisation that would be excluded. This funding is also only provided for a 12-month period and there are likely to be ongoing running and maintenance costs associated with CCTV which should be considered.

Q. We run an allotment site. The perimeter fencing is falling to pieces allowing young people to climb through the gaps and damage the crops etc. We need the fencing repaired so is this something we could look to the Community Fund for support?

A. Providing you are a voluntary or community and not for profit organisation then yes. Do keep in mind that the grants are only up to £10K and if whole replacement fencing is required it can be very expensive.

Office of the Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner