

Old Leake Parish Council Grant Awarding Policy

1. Introduction

The Parish Council recognises the valuable contribution that voluntary and community organisations make to local life. Through its grant scheme, the Council aims to support projects that improve the wellbeing of residents, encourage community spirit, and provide services or activities not otherwise available.

This policy sets out how grant applications will be considered and what applicants should expect from the process.

2. Purpose of Grants

Grants are intended to:

- Support projects that directly benefit people living in the parish.
- Encourage inclusive, accessible, and sustainable community activity.
- Help local groups grow, develop, and deliver initiatives that enrich parish life.

3. Who Can Apply

The Council welcomes applications from:

- Local voluntary groups, clubs, and associations.
- Charities and not-for-profit organisations.
- Community initiatives in areas such as sport, culture, learning, and wellbeing.

The Council will not normally fund:

- Private individuals or businesses.
- Political or lobbying activities.
- Religious groups, unless the project clearly serves the wider community.
- Large organisations with significant reserves or access to alternative funding.

If unsure about eligibility, groups are encouraged to speak with the Parish Clerk before submitting an application.

4. How to Apply

- Applications must be made in writing using the Council's application form, available from the Parish Clerk or the Council's website.
- Applicants should explain their project clearly, showing who will benefit, how many people will be involved, and what difference it will make.
- A simple budget or breakdown of costs is required, along with details of other funding sources.
- Organisations are expected to provide a copy of their most recent accounts (or a basic income/expenditure summary if newly formed).

The Council is keen to support small groups and will take into account the capacity of volunteers when assessing applications.

5. Assessment of Applications

When considering requests, the Council will look at:

- The level of benefit to parish residents.
- How many people will be reached.
- Whether the project meets a clear local need.
- Efforts made to raise funds from other sources.
- Value for money and sustainability.
- The availability of the Council's grant budget at the time.

Applicants should be realistic in their request; smaller, well-targeted grants are often more achievable.

6. Conditions of Grant

- Grants must be used only for the purpose agreed.
- Any unspent funds must be returned to the Council.
- The Council may ask for a short report or evidence of how the money was used. This helps demonstrate the value of the grant and may support future applications.
- Where appropriate, recipients are asked to acknowledge the Council's support in any publicity.

7. Limits and Frequency

- The Council sets aside a limited budget each year for grants. Applications are therefore competitive.
- The maximum award for any one project will normally not exceed £500.00, unless budgeted for separately.
- A group may apply once in each financial year, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

8. Decision-Making

- All eligible applications will be considered by the full Council (or its delegated committee, if applicable).
- Decisions will be minuted and applicants notified in writing.
- The Council's decision is final and not subject to appeal.

9. Guidance for Applicants

The Council wants to make the process as straightforward as possible. Applicants are encouraged to:

- Keep explanations clear and focused.
- Demonstrate how local people will benefit.
- Show basic financial information, even if the group is small.
- Ask the Parish Clerk for advice before applying if unsure.

10. Review of Policy

This policy was adopted in September 2025 and will be reviewed in September 2026.