

Buckden Parish Council

GRANTSⁱ AND DONATIONSⁱⁱ POLICY

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PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document is designed to support applicants and help Parish Councillors ensure equitable treatment of applications. It has been prepared to provide transparency and support for potential applicants, Council taxpayers and Parish Councillors. This Policy has been developed by reference to grant and donations policies and procedures from many other Parish Councils.

The Parish Council regularly receives requests for grants and donations. The cost of any grants or donations awarded by the Parish Council is drawn from the Precept i.e. funds collected from the Buckden and Diddington residents' council tax bills. Whilst most of the funding available is for grants for specific purposes, the Council may also include a sum in its Budget to provide a fund for smaller donations that may be applied for during the year.

The total sum available for all grants and donations varies year upon year. Information on budgets for grants/donations is available from the Parish Clerk at clerk@buckdenpc.org.uk. The total donation fund will be set by the Parish Council as part of its annual Budget-setting process. Donations will not normally exceed £500. Details of how to apply for such donations are set out later in this document.

PRINCIPLES THE PARISH COUNCIL FOLLOWS WHEN IT AWARDS GRANTS OR DONATIONS

Our awards are open to established voluntary or community groups, as well as new or informal groups which do not need to be formally constituted but should be able to demonstrate that they are acting in the interests of village residents.

Anyone wishing to make an application for a donation or grant, whatever size, should read this document carefully. If they are eligible to apply for assistance, they should complete the application form and return it to the Clerk to the Parish Council.

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The Parish Council's aim is to ensure that all its award-making activity is fair, legally compliant and supports organisations which benefit the residents of the Parish.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

Grants and donations will be limited to those organisations which demonstrate a need for assistance, who provide equality of access and opportunity, and who provide adequate information to enable the Parish Council to make an informed decision.

Organisations which have previously received grants are not guaranteed continuing financial support but are not excluded from applying again. A fresh application will be required each time.

Each application for a grant will be determined on its merits.

To be eligible for the award of a grant from the Parish Council an organisation must:

- be established for charitable, benevolent, social, cultural, recreational or philanthropic purposes
- have a constitution, or set of rules, which define its aims, objectives and operational procedures
- be able to provide a copy of its latest annual accounts and/or most recent bank statement. Accounts are to be checked and signed by a person independent of the group
- have a bank account operated by at least two joint signatories
- demonstrate that they are acting in the interests of village residents.

WHAT CAN BE FUNDED?

Only activities where the purpose of the funding is within the powers of a Parish Council

- the project should be something that makes the local community a better place in which to live, work or visit
- it should substantially benefit a significant number of people who live in the Parish
- there must be clear evidence that local people support the project and are involved in carrying it out
- each group may normally only make one application per financial year
- applications will be considered for day-to-day running costs and individual projects.

THE FOLLOWING ARE NOT ELIGIBLE

- support for individuals or private business projects
- projects that are the statutory responsibility of other government bodies
- projects that improve or benefit privately owned land or property (other than that owned by registered charities), or organisations not registered as charities or not considered not-for-profit (not profit-taking)
- projects that have already been completed or will have been by the time the grant or donation is made

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- religious or political groups or activities
- national organisations, except where it can be demonstrated that the donation or grant will substantially benefit residents of the Parish

CONDITIONS OF MAKING A GRANT OR DONATION

These will be at the discretion of the Parish Council and shall take into account each organisation's individual circumstances.

- To fully understand any project or activity, the Parish Councillors may visit the applicant's project or activity, prior to the project or activity commencing. They may also conduct a site visit once the project is underway.
- Applications from individuals cannot normally be considered, however, a donation which would benefit an individual resident of Buckden may, under exceptional circumstances, be entertained. For example, where a charity has been formed to raise funds for specialist equipment or treatment. Any such charity must apply for the donation and must satisfy the Council that it has already sought and received funding from other sources.
- Payment of a grant or donation will be made by bank transfer to the applicant's bank account (or in the case of a donation, a registered charity able to receive money on behalf of the applicant). The applicant must confirm receipt of the grant or donation payment by email or letter.
- A grant or donation must only be used for the purposes agreed with the Parish Council. If the monies are not spent on the purposes agreed, the balance must be returned, unless the Parish Council's prior written consent has been given for the balance to be used for another purpose.
- The Parish Council may monitor the applicant's use of the grant or donation. Evidence may be requested in the form of invoices, or receipts, to demonstrate that the grant or donation was used for the purposes it was applied for.
- The Parish Council is entitled to recover the grant and/or moveable equipment purchased with grant monies if the grant is not used for the purposes specified, or if the conditions of the grant are not complied with.
- A representative may be asked to give a report at the Annual Parish Meeting (held on an evening between 1st March and 31st May each year) on how the award/grant was used and, if appropriate, the outcome of the applicant's project.
- Funding must be spent within the financial year in which it is awarded and cannot be added wholly or partly to the applicant's reserves.
- The applicant should show the funding awarded separately in its published financial accounts and the Parish Council must, on request, be given access to the applicant's financial records
- If the project costs are more than anticipated on the application, any shortfall must be met by the applicant. The Parish Council will not make up any shortfall.

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- The need to provide evidence of expenditure (receipted invoices) to the Clerk to the Parish Council on completion of the project will be at the discretion of the Council. This evidence of expenditure should be equal to, or more than, the total of the amount of the grant detailed on the application.
- Any unused funds at the end of the (applicant's) financial year in which any grant is paid must be declared to Buckden Parish Council, which may ask for its return.
- The applicant must acknowledge Buckden Parish Council's support in all publications, publicity and annual reports.
- Unless the applicant can demonstrate that other attempts at funding have been made, year-on-year applications for grants, for the same purpose, from the same organisation, may not exceed three consecutive years.

WHEN TO APPLY

Applications for grants and donations should normally be made no later than 30th September each year, for consideration as part of setting the Council's budget Precept. Ad-hoc applications can be made at any time but will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and provided that the Parish Council has sufficient funds remaining.

The Parish yearly budgeting process is completed in November/December and offers of grants or donations for the following financial year cannot be made until the Parish Council approves the budget plan.

Agreed grants and donations cannot normally be paid before 1st April in the following financial year. If the sum agreed depends upon the receipt by the Parish of the second instalment of the Precept, the award may be split into two payments.

HOW WILL DECISIONS ON GRANT APPLICATIONS BE MADE?

Applications (except ad-hoc applications) will be considered after the September 30th closing date, providing all the required information has been supplied.

- The Parish Council shall determine the size of any grant or donation, up to, but not exceeding the figure requested by the applicant.
- The Council will normally only consider one grant or donation application per organisation per financial year.
- Consideration will be given to the extent to which funding has been sought or secured from other sources or own fund-raising activities.

Decisions will be made by the Parish Council. The Council's decision is in its absolute discretion, is final and there is no right of appeal. The Council reserves the right to decline any application without giving reasons for its decision. The Council will not commit to any ongoing expenditure.

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GRANT SPEND

A recipient of a grant over £500 must provide evidence of how the grant was spent, in the form of a written report, supported by financial evidence e.g. invoices, where available.

The written report must be received by the Clerk within 12 months of receipt of the grant.

The report will become a document available to public inspection under the provisions of Section 228 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

Failure to comply with this requirement may affect future consideration of grant applications.

DONATION APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

The Clerk, as Responsible Financial Officer for the Parish Council, may exercise discretion as to the level of detail required to be presented to support each application for a donation to be considered by Council. Organisations applying for donations may be asked to complete such parts of the application form as are relevant.

The Council will only consider a single donation to an organisation. If an organisation seeks funding for a similar project in the future it must apply for a grant by completing an application form in full.

Payment for an approved donation application will be authorised as soon as is possible within the Council's procedures for approval of payments.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications must be made in writing to the Parish Clerk using the application form attached to this Policy.

GRANTS POLICY DISTRIBUTION AND MAINTENANCE

The Clerk will retain the master copy of the policy.

The Policy will be available on the website

A copy of this policy will be made available to all grant/donation applicants

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APPLICATION FOR GRANT/DONATION

This Application form is available as a Word document to be used if you wish to prepare the submission on a computer. Contact clerk@buckdenpc.org.uk

The boxes on the Word version of this form will expand as you type.

Name of organisation	
Name of person making application and Position in the organisation	
Is your organisation a registered charity? If yes, please provide charity registration number	
Contact Address	
Contact telephone no.	
Email address	
Describe the overall aim of your organisation and the activities or services it provides	
Explain the direct benefit to Buckden of your organisation's activities, including, if available, the number of Buckden residents who have benefitted in the past or may benefit in the future	
Details of the project or activities, including anticipated commencement date and total expected duration (please use a separate sheet if needed)	
Overall cost of the project or activities, including VAT Detail the cost of each item covered by your funding request (please use a separate sheet if needed)	If your organisation is VAT registered please provide VAT number
Amount sought from Buckden PC	
Details of any other own or external funding. Information on efforts to	

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generate income from other sources must be submitted.	
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Demonstrate clearly how the grant/donation will provide direct benefit	
Detail how many people of Buckden will benefit	
Have you applied to Buckden Parish Council for a grant/donation in the last 5 years? If so give brief details.	
Any additional information that supports the application	

To support your application, if it is for a sum over £500 please supply the following:

- A copy of your constitution and, if appropriate, membership rules.
- A copy of your organisation's audited accounts or accounts that have been examined by a suitably qualified person (or in the case of a newly formed organisation, a detailed budget and business plan). *These will be reviewed to ensure there is a genuine need for a grant/donation and that appropriate arrangements are in place to manage and account for expenditure against any grant awarded by BPC.*
- Copies of written estimates or catalogue pages if grant for equipment or capital costs
- A copy of your Safeguarding Policy (if your organisation has contact with Children or Vulnerable Adults).

[See attached sheet for signatures of the submitting organisation.](#)

When completed, please make a copy of this application and send the signed original, with all supporting papers, to the Buckden Parish Council office (address overleaf)

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Signature by or on behalf of the applicant(s)

We confirm the information given in this application is accurate and that the organisation undertakes to inform Buckden Parish Council of any changes in the organisation's circumstances that would affect this application.

We confirm that any grant or donation awarded by the Parish Council will be spent only on the purpose for which it was given.

Signed.....

Dated

Position in Organisation.....

Signed.....

Dated

Position in Organisation.....

Please return the completed form to:

Ms Ramune Mimiene (Clerk)

Buckden Parish Council, Buckden Village Hall, Burberry Road, Buckden, St Neots, PE19 5UY

Please address any queries on this policy, procedure or applications to

clerk@buckdenpc.org.uk

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For Council use only

Record of Decision and actions - to be completed by Parish Clerk

Organisation/Group:

Does this application clearly come within the Powers and Duties of Parish Councils? If so, which?	
Grant or Donation?	
Date application discussed at full Parish Council and Minute number	
Council Decision – Approve/Reject	
Amount of Grant or Donation agreed by Council	
Date organisation/group notified of decision	
Date payment made to organisation/group	
Date receipt for payment returned to the Buckden Parish Clerk	
Date Report Due (if a grant)	
Date of reminder set by Clerk to prompt timely delivery of report	
Date Report Received (if a grant)	
Any balance to be repaid (if grant)?	
Any issues arising to be brought to Council?	

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REVIEW The policy will be reviewed no later than June every other year or when relevant legislation is enacted if sooner and, if changes are proposed, they shall be taken to full Council for discussion and adoption before implementation.

VERSION CONTROL Date amended	Reason for version change	Amended by
30 April 2019	Draft 1.0 new policy and application form circulated to Compliance Advisory Group members for comment	Cllr Ashwell, Chairman Finance Advisory Group Cllr Underwood, Chairman Compliance Advisory Group
11 June 2019	DRAFT 1.1 presented to Council for discussion of principles, procedure and indicative financial limits.	Cllr Ashwell
30 June 2019	Final version 1.0 Updated after the Parish Council meeting to reflect discussion.	Cllr Ashwell & Cllr Underwood
September 2020	Final version 1.1 Parish Clerk's email address amended	Cllr Ashwell
April 2022	Reviewed to ensure requirements clear re need to remain within Powers of BPC and highlight obligations of recipients; no change	Cllr Ashwell & Finance AG
May 2023	Version 2.0 Review of information included e.g. relating to the legislative basis for BPC provision of funds to other organisations	Cllr Clark, Cllr Ashwell & Finance AG and BPC
October & November 24	Revision to make the policy clearer.	Cllrs Thelwall, Fraser and Underwood

References:

- NALC The Good Councillors Guide
- Local Government Act 1972 Section 133
- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provision) Act 1976 Section 19
- Grant and donation policies, procedures and application forms accessed from other Parish Councils, locally and nationally

WORKING DEFINITIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF THIS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

ⁱ A GRANT is money which may be given by the Parish Council to an organisation for a pre-specified purpose. Larger sums of money (over the specified donations threshold in the policy) would normally be given as a grant, to secure its application for a defined purpose with the safeguards for the receiving organisation and council tax payers which are set out in this document.

BPC may require any grant money not spent on the specified purpose(s) to be returned by the receiving organisation at the end of the financial year (31st March).

ⁱⁱ A DONATION is money which may be given by the Parish Council for use at the discretion of the receiving organisation, not necessarily for a pre-specified purpose.

Donations are limited as set out in this document. As they are lower value they should and generally will be managed with fewer requirements for reporting and without a requirement to repay any balance at year-end.