Basingstoke and Deane

Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF) 2026/2027 - Guidance for applicants

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1. What is the Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF)

The **Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF)** supports **physical improvements** to **community facilities** in **Basingstoke and Deane**. Grants range **from £5,000 to £50,000** (or **up to £75,000** for projects offering additional facilities and/or functionality, which should be discussed with the Community Funding Officer before submitting an Expression of Interest). To be considered, projects must:

- evidence clear community need
- showcase how the work will **enable organisations to better meet the needs of their communities now and in the future**

2. How CIF works

CIF uses a two-stage application process:

Stage 1 – Expression of Interest (EoI): a short initial application to check eligibility and alignment with the fund

Stage 2 – Application (Invitation Only): a detailed application for invited organisations

You will need to complete Stage 1 before being invited to Stage 2.

Although detailed information is only required at Stage 2, you are strongly encouraged to consider the full requirements from the beginning, as you will have limited time to complete Stage 2, if invited.

3. CIF priorities

Applicants should demonstrate how your organisation aligns with the council's priorities and wider policy commitments.

Your organisation's core values and application should show how your project aligns with, and contributes to, the priorities set out in our council plan 2023 to 2027 (https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/councilplan):

- a place where people can have pride in their communities and the borough
- a borough where we protect, restore, reconnect and enhance our natural environment
- a council that delivers high-quality services for our residents

Projects must demonstrate alignment with at least one of the following scheme priorities:

- enhancing the experience of users or visitors
- increasing the organisation's income
- reducing operating costs or improving cost-efficiency

Organisations must:

- Demonstrate how you support our Climate Emergency Action Plan (https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/climate-change-and-air-quality-strategy) and contribute towards our carbon neutral target
- Show how Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are considered within your organisational practices and service delivery, in line with our Corporate Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan 2024-2028 (/content/doclib/3311.pdf)

4. Who can apply

The following **not-for-profit formally constituted** organisations, groups and clubs **located or delivering services within Basingstoke and Deane** can apply:

- unincorporated organisations, groups and clubs
- registered charities and charitable companies
- charitable incorporated organisations (CIO’s)
- community interest companies (CIC’s)
- community amateur sports clubs (CASC's)
- Town and Parish Councils

Note: The organisations must have a bank account in the organisation’s name, managed by at least two unrelated individuals

Under specific circumstances

- Schools and colleges (only to improve community facilities that are distinct from their statutory education provision, and which are open and accessible to the public during school hours).
- Churches and other places of worship (only to improve a facility that is primarily used for community activities rather than for the advancement of religion or for use by the usual congregation).
- Organisations/facilities who have received capital funding from the council in the past (priority might be given to those with less recent funding).

5. Who cannot apply

We cannot fund:

- individuals, sole traders or companies that can pay profits to directors, shareholders or members (including Companies Limited by Shares)
- organisations that promote political or religious activities exclusively
- groups that have uncommitted/unrestricted funds that could be used to fund the project

If you would like to confirm whether your organisation is eligible, please contact us **at least two weeks before applying** and the Community Funding Officer will be happy to advise.

6. What we can fund

This scheme is designed to enable existing community facilities to better meet the needs of their communities now and in the future through:

- Reconfiguring or modernising facilities
- Improving sustainability and accessibility
- Increasing usage and community reach
- Lowering energy bills and reducing carbon emissions

We do not have a minimum match funding requirement. If the scheme is oversubscribed, priority might be given to applicants that have received limited or no Basingstoke and Deane funding in the past, where applications meet the criteria. We may also make a partial funding offer if some costs are not eligible or if we believe you could reasonably contribute to the project.

Note: This fund is not for large new builds, and larger projects must have additional funding already secured.

7. What we cannot fund

Cost types

- **Revenue funding** (such as staff, general running costs)
- **Equipment and non-fixed fittings**
- **Routine repairs or maintenance**
- **Feasibility studies**

Project type and purpose

- Projects relating to facilities that **exclusively promote political or religious activities**
- Projects with an **alternative primary source of funding, including other grants**

Ownership and public access

- Works on **private property** where **public access is not secured**, or that mainly benefit an **individual or for-profit organisation**

Timing and location

- Projects that have already started before a funding decision is made and you have not been told yet that your project can begin
- Projects **based outside of the borough**, or where Basingstoke and Deane residents are not the majority beneficiaries

Responsibility and statutory duties

- Projects that are the **responsibility of another organisation** (such as borough/county council, landlord or government agency)

If you would like to confirm whether we can fund your project, please contact us **at least two weeks before applying** and the Community Funding Officer will be happy to advise.

8. Conditions of funding

Eligibility and access

- Deliver benefits to Basingstoke and Deane residents for **at least 5 years**

- Remain **publicly accessible** if privately owned
- Be **open to a broad range of people**, free from discrimination and reasonably priced to broaden access and support lower-income residents
- Provide **proof of ownership/tenancy** and all necessary permissions

Project delivery standards

- Demonstrate **infrastructure need** (e.g. surveys) **and community need** (e.g. consultation, feedback)
- Include success indicators/Key Performance Indicators for **post-completion monitoring**
- Be **evidently supported** by users/potential users, ward councillor(s) and Parish/Town Council
- Use funding **within 12 months of offer** (unless agreed otherwise)

Financial requirements

- Follow **Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council (BDBC) procurement rules**: in Stage 2, if invited, you will be required to submit minimum of **3 quotes** for projects between £5,000 to £75,000 (if your project total cost is above £75,000, please include 4 quotes and details of the tendering process). When seeking quotes, please include installation costs. If you are unable to submit 3 quotes, please explain why in Assessment Criteria 4 questions
- You should only include VAT in your project costs if your organisation cannot recover it. The Council will not fund VAT that can be reclaimed. If you do not include irrecoverable VAT in your budget, the Council will not provide additional funding to cover it later
- Have **secured additional funding** if the grant does not cover the full cost
- Organisations with **reserves** must explain why they cannot contribute/fund the project from their own reserves
- Ensure **financial sustainability**: a clear plan or reserves for ongoing running and maintenance costs

9. Landlord’s approval, planning permission and building regulations

Projects funded through CIF may require landlord’s approval, planning permission, structural surveys, inspections and/or building regulations certificates. Requirements will vary depending on the nature of your project.

You are responsible for identifying what permissions are needed and factoring in costs and timelines. Speak to the Community Funding Officer throughout developing your project, particularly where permissions, costs or timelines are unclear.

Stage 1 - Expression of Interest (EoI) (#)

At Stage 1, the key requirement is to check what may be needed and provide a summary of what you have been told.

Landlord's Approval

- If the property is leased, you should first review your lease to understand what permissions may be required before contacting your landlord
- When you contact the landlord, check that they are supportive, the costs involved and the expected timeframes
- If Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council (BDBC) is the landlord:
  - Email PropertyServices@basingstoke.gov.uk (mailto:PropertyServices@basingstoke.gov.uk)
  - Include the address of the property, a brief description of your proposal, any indicative plans (if available), whether the works relate to improving **energy efficiency or sustainability**
- **In your EoI, include a short summary of the advice you received via email or a verbal discussion including the date and time of the call and who you spoke to**

Planning Permission

- Contact the Planning Team via the Duty Planning service, on **01256 844844** and book a free 15-minute call
- Please provide a clear description of your proposed works
- As part of the pre-application enquiry, the location of the application site and status of the property would be confirmed (e.g. if in a conservation area or if it's a listed building). If the property is a listed building, then listed building consent is likely to also be required.
- **In your EoI, include a short summary of the advice you received on the call including the date and time of the call and who you spoke to**

Building Regulations

- Contact Building Control by emailing building.control@basingstoke.gov.uk (mailto:building.control@basingstoke.gov.uk)
- Please provide a clear description of your proposed works
- As part of the pre-application enquiry, the nature of the works taking place would be confirmed (e.g. if they would result in structural changes). Depending on the type of works, a structural survey or an asbestos certificate may also be required.
- **In your EoI, include a short summary of the advice you received via email or a verbal discussion including the date and time and who you spoke to**

Important

- You only need to show that you have:

- asked the question
- understood what may be required

- **Do not incur any costs at this stage,** if you intend to apply for CIF funding to cover them.

Stage 2 - Application (Invitation only) (#)

At Stage 2, your application must clearly show:

- What permissions are required
- What they will cost
- How long they will take

Costs and applications

If permissions (such as licence to alter, planning permission, building regulations) are required:

- Include these **costs in your project budget**

If permissions are not required:

- Provide written confirmation where available

If a written confirmation or application require a fee:

- Include these **costs in your project budget**

If you want CIF to fund these costs:

- You must not **incur them yet**
- You should plan to carry them out **after a funding agreement is in place**

Even if one of the permissions is not required (i.e. planning), please ensure to check and include relevant evidence for the other categories of approvals mentioned in the guidance (i.e. landlord's approval to carry out the works).

If you choose to cover these costs from your own funds, you do so at your own risk, as works cannot begin and CIF funds cannot be released until a funding agreement is in place. Any costs incurred by your organisation prior to any funding being formally agreed, will not be eligible for reimbursement.

Timing

If permissions are required, these will need to be in place before we can release any funds:

- You will need to allow additional time before your project can start

- This may extend your project timeline (by several weeks or months depending on the requirement)

Important

- Permissions cannot be guaranteed
- Do not start works or pay fees until a funding agreement is completed
- Make sure your project and budget plans reflect additional time and costs
- Please ensure that you and your contractors fully understand the areas you are working in and consider if any further surveys are required such as for Wildlife (i.e. birds, bats) or for trees/ roots (i.e. foundations, drainage trench, resurfacing works). See section 14 for useful links

10. Submissions and Application process

The Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF) uses a **two-stage, competitive application process**:

- **Stage 1 - Expression of Interest (EoI)**: a short initial application to check eligibility and alignment with the scheme's priorities
- **Stage 2 - Application (Invitation Only)**: a detailed application for invited organisations only

General Application Guidance

- Use the provided application form and complete it digitally
- Submit the application as a **Word document**
- Supporting documents may be Word or PDF files (not file-sharing links or embedded icons)
- Please ensure all files are clearly named in line with the guidance before submitting
- Responses should be **proportionate to project size and funding requested**
- Please use **bullet points** and avoid long blocks of text
- Late or incomplete submissions will not be considered

The summary below outlines what is required at each stage of the application process.

Stage 1 - Expression of Interest (EoI) (#)

At this stage, you must provide the following:

- Organisation and contact details
- Premises details
- Project details
- Project management and budget details

Supporting documents (Stage 1)

You must submit the following with your Expression of Interest:

- a link to an online copy of your organisation's governing document. If the document is not available online, please submit it and name it ' **Governing Doc + your organisation's name'**
- a link to an online copy of your organisation's most recent audited annual accounts. If the document is not available online, please submit it and name it ' **Accounts + your organisation's name'**
- a copy of your organisation's reserves policy and name it ' **Reserves Policy + your organisation's name'**
- evidence of any CIL/S106/other grant funding (OGF) offer or any decision email/confirmation that you can't apply and name it ' **CIL/S106/OGF + your organisation's name'**

Deadline and submission (Stage 1)

- **Submit the completed EoI form and supporting documents by email (mailto:cif@basingstoke.gov.uk) by midday on Tuesday 30 June 2026**
- Stage 1 applications should be submitted as a single email wherever possible
- We will review Expressions of Interest after the deadline and may request further information between **Wednesday 1 July and Friday 3 July 2026**

Stage 2 - Application (Invitation only) (#)

Only **invited organisations** may apply to Stage 2. Being invited to submit a Stage 2 application **does not guarantee funding** .

You are strongly encouraged to begin gathering evidence during Stage 1, as you will have limited time to complete Stage 2, if invited.

At this stage, you must provide detailed information and supporting documents on:

- Updated project details (if changes have taken place)
- Evidence of project need
- Evidence of community support
- Expected impact
- Value for money
- Organisational sustainability
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Environmental sustainability

- Landlord’s approval, planning permission and building regulations
- Project Plan
- Budget Plan

Supporting documents (Stage 2)

In addition to documents previously provided, you must submit the following with your Stage 2 application:

- evidence of need documents and name them ‘ **AC1. + number’**
- evidence of support documents and named them ‘ **AC2. + number’**
- evidence of costs (quotes/estimates) for each part of your project and name them **‘Cost + number’**
- evidence of Landlord's approval and name it ‘ **Landlord’s Approval + organisation's name’**
- evidence of planning permission and name it **‘Planning Permission + organisation's name’**
- evidence of Building Regulations decision and name it **‘Building Regulations Decision + organisation's name’**
- a copy of a bank statement in your organisation’s name and dated within the last 3 months and named it ‘ **Bank Statement + your organisation’s name’**
- a copy of your organisation’s Deeds and named it ‘ **Deeds + organisation’s name** ’
- a copy of your organisation’s Lease and named it ‘ **Lease + organisation's names** ’

Deadline and submission (Stage 2)

- Due to the volume of supporting documents required at this stage, applications must be submitted using the Council’s drop-off service. Please follow the separate drop-off guidance to ensure your application is submitted correctly.
- If you experience any technical difficulties or are unable to use the drop-off system, please contact the Grants team at cif@basingstoke.gov.uk (mailto:cif@basingstoke.gov.uk) as soon as possible to discuss alternative arrangements
- Submitting multiple emails with separate documents should be avoided unless agreed in advance
- **Submit the completed Stage 2 application form and supporting documents using the drop-off service by midday on Monday 14 September 2026**
- We will review applications after the deadline and may request further information between **Tuesday 15 September and Friday 18 September 2026**

Support

If you have any questions or require any support to discuss and/or apply, please [contact our Community Funding Officer (mailto:cif@basingstoke.gov.uk)](mailto:cif@basingstoke.gov.uk).

If you need an alternative or accessible format (such as a printed copy of the form), or help accessing the application form, please contact the Grants team at [cif@basingstoke.gov.uk (mailto:cif@basingstoke.gov.uk)](mailto:cif@basingstoke.gov.uk) **at least two weeks** before the relevant deadline.

11. Key dates

Please ensure you allow sufficient time to prepare your application, particularly if invited to Stage 2 where detailed evidence is required.

Stages	Dates
Meet the funder online sessions	Wednesday 3 June 2026, 12.30pm to 1.30pm Thursday 4 June 2026, 6pm to 7pm
Stage 1 – Expression of Interest deadline	Midday, Tuesday 30 June 2026
Stage 1 clarification window (if required)	1 to 3 July 2026
Stage 1 outcomes (invitations issued)	By the end of July 2026
Stage 2 opens (invited applicants only)	Monday 3 August 2026
Stage 2 – Application deadline	Midday, Monday 14 September 2026
Stage 2 clarification window (if required)	15 to 18 September 2026
Outcome notification	26 October 2026
Project Delivery	January 2027 to December 2027

12. Assessment

The Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF) uses a two-stage assessment process. Applicants should consider the full assessment criteria from the outset, as expectations increase between Stage 1 and Stage 2.

Stage 1 - Expression of Interest (EoI) (#)

At Stage 1, applications are **not scored** . Instead, officers assess:

- eligibility
- alignment with the scheme's priorities
- overall fit and readiness to progress

Only applications that clearly demonstrate alignment and potential to deliver will be invited to proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2 - Application (Invitation only) (#)

At Stage 2, applications are **fully assessed and scored** against the published criteria. This includes detailed review of:

- evidence of need
- evidence of community support
- expected impact
- value for money
- organisational sustainability
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- environmental sustainability

Preparing your application

Although detailed information is only required at Stage 2, applicants are **strongly encouraged to consider the full criteria from the beginning**.

You should begin gathering evidence, data and supporting documents at an early stage, including:

- surveys, feedback and consultation results
- cost estimates and quotes
- permissions and approvals (where relevant)

This will help ensure you are ready to submit a strong Stage 2 application if invited.

Please note that invited applicants will have **approximately 6 weeks** to complete and submit a full Stage 2 application, including all required supporting evidence. Early preparation is therefore essential.

How applications are assessed

- Applications are acknowledged upon receipt
- Officers check for completeness and eligibility
- Stage 2 applications are independently scored by two officers and reviewed by a moderation panel
- Final decisions are made by the Cabinet Member for Communities, Partnerships and Inclusion and the Chief Finance Officer

Criteria	Max	Weighting	Total
1. Project Need	4	5	20
2. Community Support	4	5	20
3. Expected Impact	4	4	16
4. Value for Money	4	3	12
5. Organisational Sustainability	4	3	12
6. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)	4	3	12
7. Environmental Sustainability	4	2	8
Total possible score			100

Criteria	Things to consider
1. Evidence of Need	Is there a need to be addressed? What is the need? Is there evidence to support this need such as reports, building surveys, energy/maintenance bills, photographs?
2. Evidence of Community Support	Does this project have user and stakeholder support? Is there evidence to prove this such as user feedback, consultations, surveys, Councillors and/or Parish Council's support?
3. Expected Impact	What will the project benefits be? And how will you measure the impact? Do you have data to showcase current position and clear aims to improve such as usage figures and how you plan to increase and/ or maintain them?
4. Value for Money	Is your proposed solution the most effective way to address the issue and why? What alternatives have been considered? How will the project improve your organisation's financial stability?
5. Organisational Sustainability	How will the project support your organisation for the next 5+ years? How is the project going to be maintained in the long term?
6. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)	How will the project ensure widening reach and removing barriers? How will the project address deprivation and tackle inequalities?
7. Environmental Sustainability	Which of the six areas of focus in our Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy will your project support?

For each of the above criteria, applications will be given a score in line with the table below:

Description	Score
Deficient – Response to the question significantly deficient or no response received.	0
Limited – Limited information provided, or a response that is inadequate or only partially addresses the question.	1
Acceptable – An acceptable response submitted in terms of the level of detail, accuracy and relevance.	2
Comprehensive – A comprehensive response submitted in terms of detail and relevance.	3
Outstanding – As comprehensive, but to a significantly better degree, or likely to result in increased quality, including improvement through innovation and strong likelihood of achieving great outcomes.	4

Applications scoring **0 on any criteria** or **1 on more than one criterion** will not be recommended for funding.

Minimum score to be considered: **50 out of 100**

Recommendations for funding will be made based on the scores given and the budget available.

If your proposal is not approved, feedback will be offered and alternative funding sources may be suggested.

13. Outcomes

Stage 1 – Expression of Interest (EoI)

Following Stage 1, applicants will be informed whether they have been:

- invited to proceed to Stage 2 or
- unsuccessful at the stage

Applicants who are not invited to Stage 2 may receive feedback where possible and may be encouraged to consider future funding opportunities.

Applicants invited to Stage 2 will receive:

- confirmation of their invitation
- the Stage 2 application form
- further guidance on completing an application

Applicants will be invited to apply to Stage 2 **by the end of July 2026**, ahead of the application window opening on **3 August 2026**.

Due to the competitive nature of the fund, not all applicants will be invited to proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2 – Full Application

Applicants will be informed of the final outcome by email **no later than 26 October 2026**.

If your application is successful:

- We will outline our grant offer, including:
  - the funding amount
  - instructions on how to agree a payment plan
  - any conditions (e.g. monitoring requirements or KPIs)
- Once agreed, a formal funding agreement will be issued and must be signed before:
  - your project can begin
  - any funding is released

If your application is unsuccessful:

- We will offer feedback
- We may signpost you to alternative funding opportunities or support

14. Further help and advice

There are lots of resources available online to help you develop a strong application and the websites listed below provide some useful advice and tips:

- Information on writing a funding application (resourcecentre.org.uk) (https://www.resourcecentre.org.uk/information/writing-a-funding-application/)
- A guide to writing a great grant application (cafonline.org) (https://www.cafonline.org/services-for-charities/funding-for-charities/prepare-a-grant-application)
- Grant fundraising top bid writing tips (charity-fundraising.org.uk) (https://www.charity-fundraising.org.uk/grant-fundraising-top-bid-writing-tips)
- All about grants getting ready to apply (ncvo.org.uk) (https://beta.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/funding-income/all-about-grants/getting-ready-apply/)
- Advice on using AI from the National Lottery Fund (https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/funding-support/getting-ready-to-apply/preparing-your-application/using-artificial-intelligence-tools-in-funding-applications/)

You can find further information about planning processes, listed buildings, conservations areas, trees and wildlife considerations below:

- Planning application process - step by step (https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/plan-app-process?chapter=81321#chapter81321).
- Planning applications, advice and appeals (https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/planning).
- Listed buildings (https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/listed-buildings)
- Conservation Areas (https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/conservation-areas)
- Trees (https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2021/04/root-protection-areas/)
- Protected trees (https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/protectedtrees)
- Wildlife (https://www.hiwwt.org.uk/wildlife-information-and-advice)

You can find further information about building regulations processes and relevant surveys and regulations below:

- Building Regulations Approval (https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/building-regs-approval)
- Asbestos (https://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/duty/index.htm)
- Construction and Management Regulations 2015 (https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/cdm/2015/commercial-clients.htm)

If you need support with setting up a bank account, finding and applying for other sources of funding, advice on your organisation's governance and policies, Basingstoke Voluntary Action (BVA) can help. Contact them by emailing contact@bvaction.org.uk (mailto:contact@bvaction.org.uk).

15. Documents

The following document is available in Word and PDF format:

CIF Stage 1 Expression of Interest Form (DOCX) [99 kb] (/content/page/94367/CIF%20Stage%201%20Expression%20of%20Interest%20Form.docx)

The Stage 2 Application form and guidance to submit via drop-off will only be provided to organisations that are invited to apply.

Applicants are encouraged to review the assessment criteria and speak to the Community Funding Officer in advance if they would like further guidance on what will be required at any stage.

16.Submitting your application

Stage 1 – Expression of Interest (EoI)

Please submit the completed EoI form and supporting documents by **emailing** cif@basingstoke.gov.uk (mailto:cif@basingstoke.gov.uk)

Deadline: Midday, Tuesday 30 June 2026

Applications submitted after this will not be considered.

Stage 2 – Application (Invitation only)

Please submit the completed Application form and supporting documents **by using the drop-off service**.

If you are unable to use the drop-off service, please contact the Grants team at cif@basingstoke.gov.uk (mailto:cif@basingstoke.gov.uk) to discuss alternative arrangements.

Deadline: Midday, Monday 14 September 2026

Applications submitted after this will not be considered.

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