

CRITERIA

THE LUTON CITIZENS' FUND – ROUND 6

A PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING FUND
FROM LUTON COUNCIL AND LUTON RISING

MANAGED BY

BEDFORDSHIRE AND LUTON COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION



Introduction

The Luton Citizens' Fund is administered by the Bedfordshire & Luton Community Foundation (BLCF), on behalf of Luton Council (LBC) and Luton Rising. There is a total of £105,000 available, which will be allocated across the five areas outlined below.

The fund follows the principles of Participatory Budgeting (PB), which gives local residents a direct say in how public money is spent. Community involvement is at the heart of the process.

Each of the 20 wards in Luton will be split into 1 of 5 Areas, as outlined below:

- Central: Beech Hill, Biscot, Dallow, and Saints.
- North: Banfield, Bramingham Northwell, and Sundon Park.
- East: Round Green, Stopsley, Wigmore and Vauxhall.
- South: Central, Farley, High Town, and South.
- West: Challney, Legrave, Lewsey and Poets.

Decision Day

Shortlisted organisations will be invited to attend a public Decision Day in the area where their project will be delivered. Local residents will hear presentations from shortlisted groups and vote on which projects should receive funding. This will take place on the morning of **Saturday 6th Feb 2026**.

At least 1 representative of each group must be able to attend on the public decision-making day events.

How much can groups apply for?

Grants of up to £3,500 can be considered for organisations working to address themes linked to the Luton 2040 plan. Projects can only apply to one area and one themed funding area.

Up to 15% of the grant can be used for **core costs** (essential running expenses like rent, utilities and staff costs, needed for an organisation to operate, not for specific projects or activities). If you have any queries, please contact us at grants@blcf.org.uk

Objectives

Luton 2020-2040 is a town-wide vision built around a shared ambition that by 2040, **Luton will be a healthy, fair, and sustainable town, where everyone can thrive, and no-one has to live in poverty.**

The council has broad priorities around Jobs, Homes and Safety, and responding to communities' needs by 'Getting it Done'. But creating cleaner, safer and more welcoming neighbourhoods isn't something the council can do alone, which is why we need the support of community groups through this fund.

We will prioritise projects focused on the following areas:

- 1) **Jobs** – helping people into employment, education or training, mentoring and life skills.
- 2) **Safety and civic pride** – helping people feel safer by countering anti-social behaviour, building a sense of pride and belonging, and contributing positively to the wider community. This could also include projects that improve neighbourhoods and local environments through community action and education.

However, if you have a project that doesn't fit neatly within the above themes but could contribute to wider Luton 2040 priorities, we'd encourage you to get in touch to discuss your idea before applying. You can speak to a member

of BLCF at one of the forthcoming information sessions taking place on **16 or 22 September 2026**, where we would be happy to discuss whether your project is a good fit for the fund. Further information can be found [here](#).

We Fund

Registered charities and other not-for-profit groups making a positive difference to people in the community (i.e. community groups, sports groups, PTA's, etc). Before starting an application, organisations must meet all of the following minimum eligibility requirements:

A constitution or other governing document in the name of the organisation applying.	Y/N
A committee of at least 3 unrelated Trustees / Directors (no-one with 'significant control').	Y/N
A bank account in the name of the organisation (we will ask for a copy of your most recent statement- no older than 3mths)	Y/N
Not received funds from all 3 of the previous rounds of Luton Citizens' Fund, unless annual turnover is less than £50,000. (If you have only received funding from 1 or 2 of the previous rounds, you are still eligible).	Y/N

Important: If you answer "No" to any of the questions above, your organisation is not eligible to apply for this funding round. If you are unsure about any of the requirements, please contact grants@blcf.org.uk before starting an application.

You must also be able to demonstrate that you have:

- Sound financial management and no significant unrestricted reserves that could reasonably be used to fund the proposed activity.
- An annual organisational income of less than £250,000 per year (excluding educational establishments).
- A proposed project which has not already been funded by BLCF, Luton Rising or Luton Council (or separately applied for BLCF funding).
- A clear plan to support residents in at least one of the ward areas you are bidding for.
- Relevant, up to date policies in place, specifically safeguarding policy (for work with children / adults at risk) & equality, diversity & inclusion / equal opportunities policy.
- Have considered how the activity will continue or end once the grant funding has been spent.

If your organisation is a social enterprise (including CICs) there is specific guidance available [here](#).

We Do Not Fund

- Individuals.
- Organisations based outside of Luton.
- Community Interest Companies (CICs) limited by shares.
- Profit-making organisations.
- Organisations or activities that promote political parties or religion. (We do fund activities that demonstrate wider public benefit).
- Professional marketing / advertising and fundraising.
- Costs incurred prior to grant approval.
- General appeals or sponsorship.

- Animal welfare, unless the project directly benefits people.
- Trips and / or fundraising events.

Key Dates

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| • 10/09/2026 | Launch of fund. |
| • 16/09/2026 & 22/09/2026 | Meet the Funder sessions (BLCF/LBC). |
| • 23/10/2026 | Application deadline (12 p.m. midday). |
| • 14/01/2026 | Shortlisting panel. |
| • 06/02/2027 | Decision Days* (9 a.m. – 12.30 p.m.). |
| • 31/12/2027 | Deadline for funds to be spent. |
| • 14/01/2027 | Final monitoring report due date. |

* 1 representative from invited shortlisted organisations **must** be able to attend this element. If you have concerns regarding attendance or presenting at the decision days (which are public events) or require more information please contact BLCF at grants@blcf.org.uk or Sanjeev Kumar, Social Inclusion Manager, Luton Borough Council on sanjeev.kumar@luton.gov.uk, or visit BLCF's website www.blcf.org.uk.

Organisations will be notified of the final outcome of decisions within 2 weeks of the decision day dates and awards will be subject to terms and conditions, which will be outlined in formal offer letters from BLCF. All funded work must start before the end of March 2027.

Supporting Documents

We require a full budget breakdown for the project or activity. You must also upload the following supporting documents with your application:

- Annual accounts.
- Governing document.
- Bank statement (within the last 2 months).
- Equal opportunity policy.
- Safeguarding policy.
- Trustees and directors (names, roles, confirmation of any related trustees / directors and any other potential conflicts of interest).
- 2 quotes for any items or works over £200.

Monitoring & Evaluation

Monitoring the success of your project helps to show the impact of the work being funded.

All successful applicants will be asked to complete an end-of-grant report. We will ask how you spent the grant, including providing receipts. You will need to tell us about the project outcomes, impact, important issues, and lessons learned. Further details and reporting dates will be provided to successful applicants.

Need Support?

If you need support or have any questions about your project, please get in touch with LBC's Social Inclusion Team who can assist and offer advice:

- Central: Beech Hill, Biscot, Dallow, and Saints -

Laurie.Kirby@luton.gov.uk

- East: Round Green, Stopsley, Wigmore and Vauxhall -
Ian.Johnsen@luton.gov.uk
- North: Banfield, Bramingham Northwell, and Sundon Park -
Antoinette.Carty@luton.gov.uk
- South: Central, Farley, High Town, and South -
Sammy.Frostick@Luton.gov.uk
- West: Challney, Leagrave, Lewsey and Poets -
Riffat.Mahmood@Luton.gov.uk
Jess.baird@luton.gov.uk

Please note, the team above cannot write your application for you.

If you need assistance with governance documents (safeguarding, etc), please contact the relevant team member above or CVS Bedfordshire:

danita@cvsbeds.org.uk or david@cvsbeds.org.uk

For all other enquiries, please contact grants@blcf.org.uk