

Blofield Parish Council - Grant Policy

1. Introduction to Policy

A grant is a payment made by Blofield Parish Council (“the Parish Council”) to be used by an organisation for a specific purpose that will benefit the residents of the Parish. The Parish Council awards grants, at its discretion, to organisations that can demonstrate a clear need for financial support in order to benefit the Parish of Blofield by:

- Providing a service to residents.
- Enhancing the quality of life.
- Improving recreation and/or sports facilities.
- Improving the environment.
- Promoting the Parish of Blofield in a positive way.

Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 empowers local councils to make such grants to voluntary bodies and charities, where no specific grant making power exists in other legislation and where, in the Parish Council’s opinion, the grant will benefit any part of the Parish or any of its inhabitants.

The Parish Council has a **small grants budget** which can be applied for during each financial year. Those applying are encouraged to do so earlier in the financial year.

- The budget is limited to £1,500 per year from which small grants of around £250 to £300 can be considered.

The Parish Council has also approved a **budget for larger grants** when a community organisation needs some matched funding to support, for example, repairs to infrastructure or new equipment.

- The budget is limited to £5,000 per year from which a grant of up to £5,000 can be considered, or several smaller grants of over £301 can be considered.
- Applications for larger grants should be submitted between 1st April and 31st May each year but the Parish Council has the discretion to consider applications outside this period if the budget has not been fully allocated.

Once submitted, the Parish Clerk and Finance Officer will review any application and following due diligence / checks to ensure all the required information has been submitted, present it to the full Parish Council for consideration.

The Parish Council reserves the right not to allocate larger grants in any one year if the Parish Council does not consider the application/s received demonstrate a clear benefit to the Parish of Blofield. The Grant Policy is subject to Parish Council funds, and there can be no legitimate expectation that it will always be available in the future; Parish Council funds come from precept taxes from the parishioners of Blofield and it may not always be possible to provide grant opportunities.

2. Grant Application Process

Applicants are required to complete a grant application form, available from the Parish Clerk or from the Parish Council website: www.blofield-pc.gov.uk/policies-procedures

All questions on the application form should be answered as fully as possible. *In addition* to the application form, applicants need to provide the following supporting information:

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1. A copy of their written constitution or details of their aims and purpose.
2. Full details of the project or activity which the grant is for.
3. Full financial break down of the project and funding sources with evidence of all secured funding.
4. In relation to larger grant applications, three directly comparable quotations for the work / equipment.
5. A copy of the previous year's examined accounts or for new initiatives, a detailed budget and business plan. (*Previous year's examined accounts' is required for larger grant applications.*)
6. Where applicable, confirmation that a maintenance plan, necessary inspections and insurance are in place for when the work is completed.

The Parish Council reserves the right to ask for any further documentation, financial records, quotations or plans to support the application.

If an application is successful, the grant will be paid by the Parish Council on confirmation of payment of relevant invoices, or the Parish Council may place the order for the item and pay the invoice directly. Any payment will be made to the applicant organisation when the Parish Clerk considers it to be appropriate.

Any grant application received after the initial submission period (1st April to 31st May) will only be reviewed at the discretion of the Parish Council and its decision as to whether to do so shall be final.

Funds available are limited and guidance can be given to applicants by the Parish Clerk where required, although this would be for guidance purposes only and would not be an indication of support nor of the actual funds available.

3. Conditions of Funding

1. The applicant organisation must be either a charitable organisation, voluntary or community organisation or a non-profit-oriented business. (*Residents seeking grants for initiatives / events that benefit the local community should state they are applying for a small grant.*)
2. Grants cannot be made to projects that discriminate on any grounds.
3. Grants cannot be made to individuals.
4. Grants cannot be made retrospectively.
5. Grants cannot be made to projects that require planning permission without planning permission having been granted.
6. An organisation should have a bank account in its own name, but this may be waived for small grant applications. Payment will be made to the named organisation.
7. The administration of and accounting for any grant is the responsibility of the applicant.
8. All grant awards must be properly accounted for by the applicant and evidence of such expenditure should be supplied to the Parish Council where requested within six months of the date of payment of the grant. This may take the form of an annual report or set of accounts and receipts, together with bank statements, which clearly identify the manner of spending. The written report must be emailed to the Parish Clerk. The Parish Clerk may request further detail as required. Applicants should be aware that this report becomes a document that members of the public have the right to inspect under the provisions of section 228 of the Local Government Act 1972.
9. Applicants of *all grant* awards must supply the Parish Council with written confirmation of how the grant was spent and its value to the community - within six months of the grant being paid to them.

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10. An applicant organisation should make a public acknowledgement of any grant awarded to it by the Parish Council.
11. The Parish Council may publicise locally the initiative that it has supported.
12. Only one application for a small grant will be considered from an applicant in any one financial year of the Parish Council.
13. Only one application for a larger grant of £301 or over will be considered from an applicant in any three-year period.
14. An ongoing commitment to award any grant in future years will not be made. A fresh application will be required each year.
15. Each grant application will be assessed on its own merits. The Parish Council reserves the right to refuse any application, or to approve an application with a grant amount that is different from the amount that was requested.
16. The Parish Council may make the award of any grant subject to such additional conditions and requirements as it considers appropriate. *[Such as evidence of quotations / use of the facility by parishioners.]*
17. Any grant awarded by the Parish Council must only be used for the purpose for which it was awarded. Any unspent portion of the grant must be returned to the Parish Council by the end of the Parish Council's financial year in respect of which the grant was made, except where the Parish Council has agreed otherwise in writing.
18. Without prejudice to the process outlined in this policy, the Parish Council may make the award of a grant at any time that it considers to be appropriate in the event of any unforeseen circumstances.
19. Nothing contained herein shall prevent the Parish Council from exercising, at any time, its existing duty or power in respect of providing financial assistance under the provisions of section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Please note, Blofield Parish Council has formally adopted 'The Civility & Respect Pledge' and anticipates that partner organisations and those who have been awarded a grant, will follow the principles of the pledge.

**For further information or advice on completing the application form
please contact the Parish Clerks by email or phone:
Sarah - Finance@blofield-pc.gov.uk / 01603 270819
Eleanor - Clerk@blofield-pc.gov.uk / 07703 124544**