

LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

MARCH 2026

AVAILABLE FUNDS

Market Harborough Building Society Community Fund
Opening on 2nd February 2026 with a deadline of Monday 6th April 2026.

The fund will support charitable groups in Market Harborough, Kibworth, Kettering, Desborough and Rothwell, with a focus on poverty and disadvantage, which includes:

- Food and fuel poverty
- Housing/homelessness
- Debt relief and financial resilience
- Antisocial behaviour/crime/gangs
- Rural issues/transport
- Abuse/violence/exploitation
- Ex-offenders/at risk of offending

Please note, priority will be given to proposals addressing food and fuel poverty, housing and homelessness, and debt relief and financial resilience.

£45,000 available, to support grants up to £5,000.

FIND MORE INFORMATION [HERE](#)

***NEW* Lead the Change**

Lead the Change is a new, three-year initiative launched by BBC Children in Need, in partnership with Coop Foundation, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Henry Smith Foundation, Joseph Levy Foundation, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Postcode Justice Trust, UK Community Foundation and The National Lottery Community Fund. The programme supports young people to play a leading role in strengthening relationships, fostering understanding and building belonging in their communities.

Phase One will offer one large grant (3yrs £120,000).

Expressions of interest are open 1st-22nd April.

Phase Two begins in 2027, with a series of smaller 12 or 24 month grants.

For more information, join us at our webinar on 31st March here: [Lead the Change – New Funding Webinar – Voluntary Action LeicesterShire](#)

For more details visit

<https://www.llrcommunityfoundation.org.uk/lead-the-change/>

For more information about other funds available visit

Grantee: Buzzing Roots CIC

Donor: Hanwill Fund

Grant awarded: £2,480

The funding has helped us support the Community Fridge by covering the cost of a dedicated Coordinator and improving the Hub space so it's safer and easier for everyone to use.

This grant has enabled consistent, reliable access to surplus food for local residents on low or fixed incomes, while strengthening the volunteer network and expanding partnerships with new shops and distributors. It has also transformed the Hub into a safer, fully accessible community space, reducing isolation and enabling more people of all ages to take part in activities and events.

TOP TIPS

Top tips for proving community need, Leicester & Rutland Community Foundation prioritises applications which make a difference to local communities, meeting community needs and those which proactively engage beneficiaries in designing solutions.

Following tips are designed to help you demonstrate how your organisation meets local need and is embedded in your community.

1. **Start with people's voices:** Use quotes, stories or examples from people in your community. Why this helps: Real voices show the funder that the need is genuine and understood first-hand, not guessed or assumed.
2. **Show how people with lived experience shaped the idea:** Explain how beneficiaries helped identify the problem or design the solution (for example through conversations, groups, surveys or co-design sessions). Why this helps: Funders want to support projects that are done with or owned by communities, not to them.
3. **Be clear about the problem – in plain English:** Describe the issue simply. Avoid jargon and long explanations. Why this helps: A clear problem statement shows you understand the need and can explain it to others, including the people you support. Try to answer these simple questions: What is the problem you are seeking to address? How do you know it is a problem?
4. **Use small, local evidence – not just big data:** Local insight can be just as powerful as national statistics. This might include feedback from community meetings, attendance numbers, waiting lists or observations from volunteers. Why this helps: It proves the issue exists here and now in your community. As part of the assessment the Grants Team will review indices of multi deprivation statistics.
5. **Explain who is most affected and why:** Be specific about who the need affects (for example carers, young people, older residents, people from a specific neighbourhood or background). Why this helps: Funders want to know their money will reach the people who need it most.
6. **Link the need directly to your activity:** Clearly explain how your project responds to the need you've described. Why this helps: This shows your solution makes sense and isn't a one-size-fits-all approach.
7. **Show what will change for people:** Describe what will be different for beneficiaries because of your project. Why this helps: Funders want to see that community-led solutions lead to real, positive change.

Remember, you don't need perfect wording or lots of paperwork. What matters most is honesty, clarity and community voice. When people with lived experience help shape your project, you're not just proving need, you're showing that your community already has the answers.

Q&A

Each fund managed by the Community Foundation will have tailored grant guidance documents available at <https://www.llrcommunityfoundation.org.uk/our-grants/apply-for-a-grant/>

Responses to questions below relate to the Community Foundations flagship Making Local Life Better programme.

What supporting documents are required?

All applications require the following documents:

1. Governing document, such as constitution, Articles of Association, terms of reference
2. Bank statement issued in the last 3 months which clearly shows the organisational name, sort code and account number
3. Latest annual accounts document or a financial forecast for new organisations

As part of the Community Foundation's due diligence checking we check these documents to confirm:

- Charitable purposes and community benefit
- Appropriate governance and safeguards
- Organisational bank account
- Organisational financial viability

How long should our answers be?

There are no minimum or maximum word counts. Write clearly and concisely, including all the information requested - applications are not more likely to be funded based on the length of your answers on the application.

Applications are not assessed or judged on your vocabulary or grammar. The assessors may contact you to seek clarification or ask for additional information if required. During the assessment process, the Grants Team will summarise your proposal before being shared with the grants panel or donors.

Can we submit more than one application?

No. Organisations can only submit one application at a time to any grant programme. Organisations will need to complete and report on any previous grant before submitting any new application to the same grant programme.

The Community Foundation often manages multiple grant programmes at any one time. It is possible for organisations to apply to multiple grant programmes, however some grant panels will deprioritise organisations who hold multiple Community Foundation grants – helping the Foundation's resources benefit the greatest number of groups. Please read the grant programme guidance for more details.

Share any questions you want answering with grants@llrcommunityfoundation.org.uk

OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDING OR SUPPORT

Voluntary Action LeicesterShire (VAL) offers support to individuals and organisations who are involved in local community action. VAL can support your group with the following:

- Project planning
- Read and review of funding applications before submission.
- Funding Searches
- Training
- Governance
- Volunteers

[Voluntary and Community Group Support](#) | [Resources, training and support for charities](#)

The **Sir Thomas White Loan Charity** provides personal loans for new business ideas, businesses needing investment and for the study of postgraduate education. Eligible candidates may borrow up to £20,000 for business purposes and up to £10,000 for postgraduate education purposes, to establish themselves in their chosen career.

All loans are personal loans which are interest free for 9 years, repayable by equal instalments after 3 years, and are available to people aged over 18 and under 45. Anyone wishing to find out more information can visit www.stwcharity.co.uk