

# Agenda



Listening Learning Leading

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Date: 12 February 2025

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## A MEETING OF THE

# Community Grants Panel

**WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2025 AT 9.30 AM**

**MEETING ROOM 1, ABBEY HOUSE, ABBEY CLOSE, ABINGDON, OX14 3JE**

### Members of the Committee:

Tony Worgan (Chair)

Andrea Powell (Vice-Chair)

Ken Arlett

David Bretherton

Sue Cooper

Mike Giles

Ali Gordon-Creed

Kate Gregory

Denise Macdonald

### Substitutes

*James Barlow*

*Tim Bearder*

*Peter Dragonetti*

*Stefan Gawrysiak*

*Kellie Hinton*

*Katharine Keats-Rohan*

*Mocky Khan*

*Axel Macdonald*

*Zia Mohammed*

*Jo Robb*

*David Turner*

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## **1 Apologies for absence**

To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests and any conflicts of interest in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting.

## **2 Minutes** (Pages 3 - 9)

To adopt and sign as a correct record the Community Grants Panel minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2024.

## **3 Declarations of interest**

To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting.

## **4 Urgent business and chairman's announcements**

To receive notification of any matters which the chairman determines should be considered as urgent business and the special circumstances which have made the matters urgent, and to receive any announcements from the chairman.

## **5 Public participation**

To receive any questions or statements from members of the public that have registered to speak.

## **6 South Revenue Grant Scheme 2025-2027** (Pages 10 - 138)

1. To review and note the report and recommendations of scoring made by officers.
2. To make a recommendation to the Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing about funding grant application(s).

Nick Bennett  
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

# Minutes



Listening Learning Leading

OF A MEETING OF THE

## Community Grants Panel

HELD AT 9.30 AM ON THURSDAY 12 DECEMBER 2024

MEETING ROOM 1, ABBEY HOUSE, ABBEY CLOSE, ABINGDON, OX14 3JE

### Present:

Councillors: Tony Worgan (Chair), David Bretherton, Mike Giles and Ali Gordon-Creed  
Officers: Becky Binstead (Democratic Services), Cheryl Reeves (Community Enablement Team Leader), Jayne Bolton (Community Wellbeing Manager), Madeline Swaine (Community Enablement Officer), Samuel Wheeler (Community Enablement Officer).

### Remote attendance:

Susie Royce (Broadcasting Officer).

### 27 Chair's announcements

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, outlined the procedure to be followed and advised on emergency evacuation arrangements.

### 28 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ken Arlett, Denise Macdonald and Andrea Powell.

### 29 Minutes

**RESOLVED:** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 29 February 2024 as a correct record and agree that the Chair sign these as such.

### 30 Declarations of interest

Councillor Tony Worgan declared an interest, noting that he had previously issued a grant award to Wallingford Rowing Club as part of the 2023 Councillors Grant Scheme. However, he confirmed that this was not a conflict of interest and therefore would remain on the panel to discuss and vote on the applications.

### 31 Urgent business

There was no urgent business.

### 32 Public participation

A list showing members of the public who had registered to speak had been sent to the panel prior to the meeting.

### **33 South Oxfordshire Capital Grant Scheme 2023/24**

The panel reviewed and noted the submitted grant applications and received representations from supporters of the following applications:

#### **Lewknor Parish Council for the installation of solar panels**

Duncan Boulton, councillor from Lewknor Parish Council, spoke in support of the application.

The representative clarified that the total estimated cost of the project was £12,200. The application requested an award of £6,100, as Lewknor Parish Council was now in a position to make the additional £6,100 contribution.

The panel requested clarification from the representative regarding the comment from the Parish Council's auditors warning of low reserves. It was explained that the Parish Council operated within a tight budget and the auditors had recommended that the general reserves be increased to cover unexpected expenditure. The £6,100 contribution from the Parish Council was under a ring-fenced budget for the Jubilee Hall.

The panel agreed to note the application of Lewknor Parish Council.

#### **Thame Sports Club Limited for solar panel installation.**

Ian Rutherford, Committee member of Thame Sports Club Limited, spoke in support of the application.

The panel asked the representative about the biodiversity score. In response, it was explained that there was already a significant number of trees on-site and hedging surrounding the tennis courts. The representative expressed openness to suggestions for further biodiversity efforts but noted limited space for additional planting due to surrounding trees and the proximity to Queens Road.

Members enquired into the capacity of the proposed solar panels, specifically their ability to store excess energy. The representative confirmed that the proposal included battery storage for energy use in the evenings, particularly for lighting the clubhouse during winter months. However, it was noted that the floodlights were on a separate electrical supply and would require a second set of solar panels.

The representative noted that the National Lottery application for funding was unsuccessful, due to the high level of applicants. Moreover, the sports club funds had decreased since the initial application due to the seasonal nature of the business.

Further questions were raised about the intention to sell excess power back to the National Grid. The applicant confirmed that this was part of their plan and that they were working with Time Green Living for advice on securing a better tariff to sell excess energy.

The panel agreed to note the application of Thame Sports Club Limited.

**Wallingford Rowing Club to purchase two new pairs/doubles boats**

Geoff Brown, Katie Greves, Judy Collins, representatives from Wallingford Rowing Club, spoke in support of the application.

The panel asked the representatives how they cater to individuals with disabilities. It was explained that there were limitations on the club's facilities. Fully adaptive rowing was challenging due to space constraints at the current location. However, the club had made adaptations to accommodate children with autism and ADHD.

The representatives noted that they had submitted a pre-application to South Oxfordshire District Council for changes to their facilities to better accommodate individuals with physical disabilities.

The panel agreed to note the application of Wallingford Rowing Club.

**Tiddington with Albury Parish Council for the playground upgrade**

Luci Martin, representative of Tiddington with Albury Parish Council, spoke in support of the application.

The panel asked the representative about environmental considerations in the playground's design, such as providing shade or incorporating wildflower meadows. In response, the representative explained that there was a focus on maintaining natural elements, including bushes and an existing tree. The embankment along the railway was lined with trees, which would also provide shade along the length of the playground. Furthermore, it was noted that the Parish Council participates in "No Mow May", which would leave a section of the land unmown to promote biodiversity. In addition, the supplier for the playground equipment had green credentials and prioritised the use of eco-friendly materials.

On a question regarding the status of the National Lottery funding, the representative clarified that they were waiting on a response, as the application process takes up to 16 weeks. They were expecting a response by 4 January 2025. It was acknowledged that the project may need to be scaled back if the National Lottery funding was not secured, but any changes to the project scope would need to be discussed prior to making any decisions.

Members asked about accessibility in the playground's design. It was noted that additional benches were planned and the seating would be accessible for those with prams, pushchairs and wheelchairs.

The panel agreed to note the application of Tiddington with Albury Parish Council.

**Long Wittenham Parish Council for the Acklings playground upgrade.**

Peter Rose and Steve Brown, councillors from Long Wittenham Parish Council, spoke in support of the application.

The panel asked for clarification on the consultation process and whether children were engaged. The representative answered that parents responded to the consultation on behalf of their children. It was noted that there had been several community meetings where the village was consulted on various developments, including the playground as part of the neighbourhood plan. In these meetings, residents were presented with designs and invited to comment.

Members raised concerns about playground suppliers offering uninspiring equipment for children. The representative acknowledged this concern and assured the panel that one of the most requested features, the zip wire, had been included in the design. Consideration had been taken to incorporate community feedback.

In response to a question on the financial aspects of the project, the representative explained that part of the village's Neighbourhood Plan had outlined several potential projects, some of which had already been funded using local funds. Despite having other projects planned, they prioritised the playground project as it met a significant community need. The parish was anticipating additional Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds from a new housing development, which would help fund future initiatives.

The panel asked about accessibility in the playground's design. The representative clarified that a wheelchair access route from the cycle path into the recreation ground would be incorporated. Efforts would be made to ensure good circulation paths for those with mobility issues. The parish council also planned to buy and build accessible benches, working with a local wood charity to construct these.

The panel agreed to note the application of Long Wittenham Parish Council.

### **River & Rowing Museum Foundation for solar PV panels: A Greener Future**

Steve O'Connor, Director at the River and Rowing Museum, spoke in support of the application.

The panel asked whether an independent energy audit had been conducted as part of their sustainability efforts. The representative clarified that a full energy audit had not yet been carried out, but they had completed an electricity usage audit of the building. The next steps in their energy efficiency plan included conducting a detailed audit focused on the boilers and overall energy usage. Due to the museum's location on a floodplain, implementing air source or ground source heat pumps was not a straightforward solution. As such, they were implementing a phased approach, starting with work that will quickly reduce energy consumption.

In response to a question on the possibility of selling excess electricity back to the grid, the representative explained that the plan is to consume all electricity generated on-site.

The panel agreed to note the application of the River and Rowing Museum.

### **The Berin Centre for the community café landscaping, furnishing and decoration**

Laura Harte, representative from The Berin Centre, spoke in support of the application.

The panel asked the representative about the designs for the outdoor space. It was explained that they would provide a patio area with seating that extends into an existing garden.

Members enquired about the balance between the café's operation and its availability for community group hire. In response, it was clarified that the café would be open three days a week, with the community having input on the most suitable days and times. The remaining days and times would be reserved for other activities or community group rentals. Additionally, there would be an opportunity for local micro-enterprises, such as catering businesses, to operate pop-up events in the evenings.

In response to a question on whether there were plans to offer the space as a co-working area, the representative explained that there was concern about limiting cafe space for other customers. To address this, they were considering offering dedicated tables for co-working, while reserving other tables purely for cafe patrons.

The panel agreed to note the application of The Berin Centre.

Note 1: A break was taken from 10.43 to 11:04

**Little Milton Parish Council for the installation of solar panels on the Little Milton Shop/Post Office building**

The panel received and noted the application of Little Milton Parish Council.

The panel discussed the applications and devised recommendations to be sent to the Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing about which grant applications should be funded.

**The Berin Centre**

Officers recommended increasing the financial sustainability score to a four, based on the information given during the Panel meeting.

The panel discussed the projects criteria scores and agreed that the score should be 30 out of 30 and recommended that the requested amount be fully funded.

**Long Wittenham Parish Council**

The panel discussed the projects criteria scores and agreed that the score should be 26 out of 30 and recommended that the requested amount be fully funded.

**Little Milton Parish Council**

The panel discussed the projects criteria scores and agreed that the score should be 21 out of 30. As the panel believed that the project was valuable for the community and as the requested amount was under £10,000, the panel recommend to fully fund the requested amount.

**Thame Sports Club Limited**

Regarding community benefit, the panel agreed to increase their score by a point to a total of five, due to the detail they provided around night usage. Therefore, raising the total score to 22.

The panel discussed the projects criteria scores and agreed that the score should be 22 out of 30 and recommended that the requested amount be fully funded.

### **River & Rowing Museum Foundation**

Officers recommended increasing the financial sustainability score to a three, based on the confirmation of match-funding and a planned fundraising evening.

The panel discussed the projects criteria scores and agreed that the score should be 22 out of 30 and recommended that the requested amount be fully funded.

### **Lewknor Parish Council**

On community benefit, the panel agreed to increase their score by a point to a total of four, due to the project benefiting a significant proportion of local residents.

On financial sustainability, the panel agreed to increase their score by two points to a total of four, due to the ring-fenced funding provided by the Parish Council.

The panel discussed the projects criteria scores and agreed that the score should be 22 out of 30 and recommended that the requested amount be fully funded.

### **Tiddington with Albury Parish Council**

On action on climate change, the panel agreed to increase their score by a point to three due to the detail they provided around supplier for equipment.

The panel discussed the projects criteria scores and agreed that the score should be 19 out of 30. It was recommended that £10,000 of the requested amount be awarded.

### **Wallingford Rowing Club**

On action on climate emergency, the panel agreed to increase their score by a point to a total of three due to their consideration to climate impacts and biodiversity.

Regarding financial sustainability, the panel agreed to increase their score by two points to a total of four, due to their fundraising plans, budgeted ongoing maintenance and five percent contingency.

The panel discussed the projects criteria scores and agreed that the score should be 19 out of 30. It was recommended that that £10,000 of the requested amount be awarded.

Overall, the panel agreed with the approach and therefore recommended to the Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing:



- 1) That the following applications ranked as high priority receive full funding of their requested amount:
  - The Berin Centre for the community café landscaping, furnishing and decoration
  - Long Wittenham Parish Council for the Acklings playground upgrade
  - Thame Sports Club Limited for solar panel installation
  - River & Rowing Museum Foundation for solar PV panels: A Greener Future
  - Lewknor Parish Council for the installation of solar panels
  
- 2) That the following application ranked as medium priority receive full funding of their requested amount as they were justified as important projects for the community that were under £10,000:
  - Little Milton Parish Council for the installation of solar panels on the Little Milton Shop/Post Office building
  
- 3) That the following applications ranked as medium priority are awarded £10,000 at the discretion of the panel:
  - Tiddington with Albury Parish Council for the playground upgrade
  - Wallingford Rowing Club for the purchase of two new pairs/doubles boats.

The meeting closed at 11.38 am

Chairman

Date

# South Revenue Grant Scheme 2025-2027 - officer evaluation report

## Scoring summary

Ref no.	Organisation	Project name	Amount requested	Amount adjusted to	Reason for adjustment	Suggested score
SRev25-27/21 Page 23	<b>Oxfordshire South &amp; Vale Citizens Advice</b>	Citizens Advice in South Oxfordshire	£243,000	N/a	N/a	<b>25</b>
SRev25-27/55 Page 27	<b>Reducing the Risk of Domestic Abuse known as Reducing the Risk</b>	Reducing the risk of and from domestic abuse in South Oxfordshire	£79,455	N/a	N/a	<b>25</b>
SRev25-27/45 Page 31	<b>SOFEA</b>	Nourish and Flourish Kitchen: Community Impact	£80,000	N/a	N/a	<b>23</b>
SRev25-27/58 Page 35	<b>River Thames Conservation Trust</b>	Community Currents	£26,000	N/a	N/a	<b>22</b>
SRev25-27/50 Page 38	<b>Be Free Young Carers</b>	Future Pathways for Young Carers	£52,206	N/a	N/a	<b>22</b>
SRev25-27/26 Page 41	<b>The Abingdon Bridge (TAB)</b>	Thriving Minds - South Oxfordshire	£80,000	N/a	N/a	<b>22</b>
SRev25-27/28 Page 46	<b>The Berin Centre</b>	Growing The Berin Centre	£40,000	N/a	N/a	<b>22</b>
SRev25-27/49 Page 49	<b>Oxfordshire Youth</b>	Young Leaders and Transitions	£131,029	N/a	N/a	<b>22</b>
SRev25-27/20 Page 54	<b>Wallingford Family Centre</b>	Family Centre Staff	£32,000	N/a	N/a	<b>21</b>
SRev25-27/46 Page 59	<b>Didcot TRAIN - Inspiring Young People</b>	Core Cost	£65,166	N/a	N/a	<b>21</b>
SRev25-27/44 Page 63	<b>Wild Oxfordshire</b>	Community Ecology and Partnerships programmes	£55,790	N/a	N/a	<b>21</b>
SRev25-27/12 Page 67	<b>My Life My Choice</b>	MLMC in South Oxfordshire	£40,481	N/a	N/a	<b>20</b>

Applicant responses (what the organisation does and funding request description) have been copied directly from the application form. All names have been redacted.

SRev25-27/15 Page 71	<b>MyVision Oxfordshire</b>	Community Engagement Project	£82,203	£65,208	Funding request over 33.33% pro-rata operating costs	<b>20</b>
SRev25-27/16 Page 75	<b>Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire</b>	Home-Start - Supporting Families to Create Better Futures	£50,000	N/a	N/a	<b>20</b>
SRev25-27/22 Page 79	<b>Sue Ryder Palliative Care Hub South Oxfordshire</b>	Hospice at Home Nursing in South Oxfordshire	£110,000	N/a	N/a	<b>19</b>
SRev25-27/35 Page 82	<b>Oxfordshire Play Association</b>	OPA Play and Activity Days 2025 and 2026	£20,000	N/a	N/a	<b>19</b>
SRev25-27/17 Page 87	<b>Thomley Hall Centre Ltd</b>	Enhancing the lives and experiences of people with disabilities in South Oxfordshire, their families, and the wider South Oxfordshire community.	£107,572	N/a	N/a	<b>18</b>
SRev25-27/18 Page 93	<b>Style Acre</b>	Work Programme for Adults with Learning Disabilities : Contribution to support in South Oxfordshire	£39,655	N/a	N/a	<b>18</b>
SRev25-27/43 Page 97	<b>SeeSaw</b>	Bereavement Support for Families in South Oxfordshire	£25,830	N/a	N/a	<b>18</b>
SRev25-27/59 Page 101	<b>The Maple Tree</b>	The Maple Tree	£30,000	N/a	N/a	<b>18</b>
SRev25-27/60 Page 105	<b>Henley on Thames Churches Debt Centre</b>	Emergency Debt Counselling and Preventative Debt Support	£44,000	N/a	N/a	<b>17</b>
SRev25-27/47 Page 108	<b>Thames21</b>	South Oxfordshire's Rivers in the South Chilterns Catchment	£23,934	N/a	N/a	<b>17</b>
SRev25-27/37 Page 112	<b>The Chiltern Centre</b>	Deputy Manager salary	£97,256	N/a	N/a	<b>17</b>
SRev25-27/25 Page 116	<b>Oxfordshire Discovery College</b>	Discovery College Growing Connections in South Oxfordshire	£20,440	N/a	N/a	<b>17</b>
SRev25-27/32 Page 119	<b>Earth Trust</b>	Earth Trust Volunteer Programme	£70,000	N/a	N/a	<b>17</b>

Applicant responses (what the organisation does and funding request description) have been copied directly from the application form. All names have been redacted.

SRev25-27/30 Page 123	<b>Riverside Counselling Service (RCS)</b>	Riverside Counselling Service (RCS)	£50,000	N/a	N/a	<b>16</b>
SRev25-27/23 Page 127	<b>Benson Millstream Day Centre</b>	Helping Benson Millstream Centre grow and thrive - Expansion of the meal delivery and outreach service.	£28,295	N/a	N/a	<b>16</b>
SRev25-27/13 Page 131	<b>NOMAD Youth and Community Project</b>	NOMAD Youth and Community Project	£50,000	N/a	N/a	<b>16</b>
SRev25-27/33 Page 135	<b>Makespace Oxford</b>	Station Road Studios and The Junction	£80,239	N/a	N/a	<b>14</b>
			<b>Total Requested</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Budget remaining</b>	
			£1,854,551	£667,992	£0	

Applicant responses (what the organisation does and funding request description) have been copied directly from the application form. All names have been redacted.

## SCORING AND AWARD MATRIX

<b>PRIORITY LEVEL</b>	<b>AWARDS:</b> All awards are subject to sufficient budget. Medium priority projects will only receive funding if there is budget left after all the high priority projects are awarded. <b>In exceptional cases, high priority projects may not receive 100 per cent of their request if it will have a detrimental impact on medium projects.</b>
High priority 25-27	Award full amount requested - (capped at 33.33 per cent of the organisations total operating costs) For the high priority level - we would expect applications to perform strongly across all five of the scoring categories, as detailed below.
Medium priority 19-24	Will only receive funding if there is budget left after all the high priority projects are awarded. The percentage of funding awarded will be dependent on remaining funds.
Low priority 0-18	Will NOT receive funding

## Financial Review

Do they have?	0 - 1 points	2 - 3 points	4 - 5 points
A balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?	(0) No plan has been submitted.  (1) Has a funding plan but it is limited and doesn't cover the required two- year period.	(2) Has a funding plan covering the required two-year period. However, there is some reliance on certain income streams and/or small gaps in funding.  (3) As above however Clear movement towards more sustainable and balanced income streams, with evidence to reduce budget deficits.	(4) A detailed and realistic two-year plan relative to the organisation's size, demonstrating a balanced budget each year.  (5) As above and There is a diverse range of income streams.
Has the organisation	(0) Each financial year	(2) Every financial year's budget	(4) All financial years have balanced budgets

Applicant responses (what the organisation does and funding request description) have been copied directly from the application form. All names have been redacted.

Do they have?	0 - 1 points	2 - 3 points	4 - 5 points
<p>achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation?</p> <p>(2021/22, 2022/23, and 2023/24)</p>	<p>appears to show a budget deficit with no explanation and/or no reserves policy has been submitted.</p> <p>(1) As above however</p> <p>They have submitted a reserves policy and provided an explanation of how the budget has been negatively affected by Covid 19, Cost of Living or other factors with evidence of significant reduction in services/ activities. Officers note a concerning depletion of reserves over the three years that isn't within the reserves policy.</p>	<p>negatively affected by Covid 19, Cost of Living or other factors with a clear explanation. Some reduction in services/ activities. The reserves policy has some depletion over the last three years, but officers can see it is still within reserves parameters.</p> <p>(3) Some but not all financial year's budgets affected by Covid 19, Cost of Living or other factors with evidence to explain and overall increase in services/ activities. Has a reserves policy with no depletion of reserves over the last three years.</p>	<p>showing both an increase in services/activities and income and officers note some growth in reserves.</p>
Deductions	Officers can remove one point if the organisation's finances/reserves suggest there is not a need for the grant requested.		

## The Service(s) / Activities

	0 - 1 points	2 - 3 points	4 - 5 points
Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion	<p>(0) There does not appear to be community need, most likely due to insufficient evidence/information submitted.</p> <p>(1) Officers get a limited sense of community need and it is difficult to establish if a flexible approach to addressing community need is taken, likely due to limited evidence /information supplied and/or limited consultation has taken place with existing users.</p>	<p>(2) Evidence demonstrates some indication of community need and flexible approach to addressing community need, with some consultation limited to existing service users only.</p> <p>(3) As above however</p> <p>Officers can see evidence of regular consultation with existing service users only, including priority groups.</p>	<p>(4) Evidence demonstrates strong and clear indication of community need, and flexible approach to addressing community need. Evidence indicates consultation is regularly carried out with the existing and potential service users and other stakeholders.</p> <p>Evidence of customer satisfaction data implemented, with service users e.g., including priority groups/vulnerable people are at the heart of the improving service design and delivery.</p> <p>(5) As above and Evidence demonstrates substantial consultation is regularly carried out with the community/other stakeholders, including priority groups if the service/activities impact them.</p> <p>Evidence that the service is designed to meets the needs of all users and delivering better outcomes for vulnerable/priority groups and/or improving areas of deprivation and/or encouraging community cohesion.</p>
<p>Direct community benefit and inclusion</p> <p><u>This is not an exhaustive or definitive list yet</u> within the scope of this scoring matrix 'vulnerable' / priority groups can include, the elderly, isolated young families, homeless, economically disadvantaged,</p>	<p>(0) The service/ activities appear to offer little or no direct benefit to the community.</p>	<p>(2) More than 51 and up to 500 residents and it is clear this includes some vulnerable/ priority groups.</p>	<p>(4) More than 501 residents and includes a large proportion of 'vulnerable' residents.</p> <p>(5) As above and Providing services that complement council</p>

	0 - 1 points	2 - 3 points	4 - 5 points
educationally disadvantaged, migrant groups, individuals with disabilities, and those with impairments.	(1) Up to 50 residents, which does not appear to include vulnerable/ priority groups.	(3) As above and Providing services that complement council services or indirectly will reduce the likelihood of needing support from the council.  or (3) points if a service/activity is directly supporting up to 50 vulnerable residents and/or priority groups.	services or indirectly will reduce the likelihood of needing support from the council.
Add	Add an additional one point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district.		

### Corporate Plan Priorities

The application will be **marked against one emerging externally focussed Corporate Plan priority**. The applicant must choose which theme best matches their service/activity:

- Action on climate change and nature recovery
- Inclusion, accessibility and accountability
- Thriving and healthy communities
- Homes and infrastructure that meet local need.

**Further additional points may be awarded** if the applicant can demonstrate evidence of working with local people and organisations to deliver their service/activities.



<b>Points</b>	<b>Criteria to score</b>
<b>0-1</b>	<p>(0) Response is not relevant to the priority theme and/or does not provide the officer with confidence that the service/activity will result in better outcomes for the community under the specific theme.</p> <p>(1) Response is relevant, demonstrating that the theme has been considered in a minor way, but the information provided lacks detail.</p>
<b>2-3</b>	<p>(2) Clear and relevant response, that addresses how the service/activity will provide better outcomes to the community to a satisfactory standard under the specific theme.</p> <p>(3) Clear and relevant response that addresses how the service/activity will provide better outcomes to the community at a good standard under the specific theme.</p>
<b>4-5</b>	<p>(4) Clear and relevant response that addresses how the service/activity will provide better outcomes to the community at an excellent standard under the specific theme.</p> <p>(5) Clear, relevant, and well detailed responses that addresses how the service/activity goes above expectations and fully integrates the theme into the service delivery.</p>
<b>Additional discretionary points</b>	<p>Additional one/two discretionary points may be awarded, in addition to the above score banding, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the service/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach:</p> <p>One point if the applicant provides strong evidence of relevant partnership working with local people and organisations to deliver their relevant service/activities to a good standard.</p> <p>Two points if the applicant provides strong evidence of relevant partnership working with local people and organisations to deliver their relevant service/activities to an excellent standard.</p>

Applicant responses (what the organisation does and funding request description) have been copied directly from the application form. All names have been redacted.

**Please see below for service and/or activity examples under each priority theme.**

<b>Points</b>	<b>Action on climate change and nature recovery</b>	<b>Inclusion, accessibility and accountability</b>	<b>Thriving and healthy communities</b>	<b>Homes and/or Infrastructure that meet local need</b>
<b>0-1</b>	<p>(0) No consideration to, or negative effect on the climate and ecological emergency.</p> <p>(1) The organisation has delivered one-off or minor events or activities that contribute positively to the climate and nature emergency.</p> <p>Examples may include research into promotion of waste minimisation, replacing some lightbulbs with energy efficient ones or using recycled paper. Nature recovery projects have a very limited geographical remit or individual site, service/activities are minor, and short-term in focus.</p>	<p>(0) The application does not address inclusion, accessibility and accountability.</p> <p>(1) The organisation has delivered one-off or minor events or services/activities that contribute positively to inclusion, accessibility and accountability.</p> <p>Examples may include referring to disability or mental health considerations on your website, one-off events with an element of inclusion and accessibility, evidence that the applicant is following basic legislative requirements, e.g., providing disabled toilets.</p>	<p>(0) No consideration to thriving and healthy communities.</p> <p>(1) The organisation has delivered one-off or minor events or services/activities that contribute positively to thriving and healthy communities.</p> <p>Examples may include a very localised, one-off event/services such as a street party with few activities that have a minimal impact on health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>(0) No consideration to homes and/or infrastructure that meet local needs.</p> <p>(1) The organisation has delivered one-off or minor service/activities that contribute positively to providing homes and/or infrastructure that meet local needs.</p> <p>Examples may include the organisation managing small (single geographical area) public realm/community centres public parks/play areas and promoting environmental sustainability in them on a short/minor scale.</p> <p>Or providing a minor level of housing support and/or homelessness prevention services.</p>
<b>2-3</b>	<p>(2) The organisation has delivered multiple or regular minor events or activities that contribute positively to the climate and nature emergency.</p> <p>Example activities include replacing lightbulbs with</p>	<p>(2) The organisation has delivered multiple or regular minor events or services/activities that contribute positively to inclusion, accessibility and accountability.</p> <p>Example activities include</p>	<p>(2) The organisation has delivered multiple or regular minor events or services/activities that contribute positively to a thriving and healthy community.</p> <p>Example activities include:</p>	<p>(2) The organisation will deliver multiple or regular events or services/activities that contribute positively to providing homes and/or infrastructure that meet local needs</p> <p>Example may include the organisation managing large areas</p>

Applicant responses (what the organisation does and funding request description) have been copied directly from the application form. All names have been redacted.

Points	Action on climate change and nature recovery	Inclusion, accessibility and accountability	Thriving and healthy communities	Homes and/or Infrastructure that meet local need
	<p>energy efficient ones, providing a bike rack and/or cycle to work scheme, regularly hosting climate themed talks, moving regular supporter communications online instead of print, or planting and/or management of a minor public space to improve its biodiversity.</p> <p>(3) The organisation has implemented multiple or regular minor events, activities or services that contribute positively to the climate and nature emergency and has adopted a simple sustainability/ climate action policy/statement for the organisation or commissioned an energy audit. Evidence has been provided to restore nature over a parish-wide area, and collaborative working with relevant NGO's and partners.</p>	<p>regular events that proactively include people who would otherwise struggle to attend or access the service but could do more to fully integrate people with protected characteristics<sup>1</sup> into standard service provision.</p> <p>(3) The organisation has implemented multiple or regular minor events, activities or services that contribute positively to inclusion, accessibility and accountability and has adopted a simple equalities policy/statement or similar for the organisation. Evidence has been provided to demonstrate outcomes for these groups of people, including examples of where the organisation provides basic advocacy support, and service users have active involvement in influencing service provision. Service users may be recruited as volunteers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• regular events/services that bring the community together and engage people in sport, leisure, arts and cultural programmes or wellbeing activities, but could do more to increase long term participation or widen audience engagement.</li> <li>• regular minor events/services that offer limited information, advice, and direct intervention on issues such as the cost-of-living crisis, healthy living or community safety.</li> </ul> <p>(3) The organisation has implemented multiple or regular minor events, activities or services that contribute positively to thriving and healthy communities and can demonstrate how this helps to increase long-term participation and/or widen audience engagement. And/or evidence has been provided to demonstrate how health and</p>	<p>of public realm/community centres/parks/play areas and promoting environmental sustainability in them on a fairly short term and small level of scale.</p> <p>Or providing a medium level of housing support and/or homelessness prevention services.</p> <p>(3) The organisation has implemented multiple or regular minor events, activities or services that contribute positively to providing homes and infrastructure that meet local needs and can demonstrate and evidence how the needs have or will be improved for this group/service users.</p> <p>Examples may include the organisation managing large or multiple geographical areas of public realm/community centres public parks/play areas and promoting environmental sustainability in them on a medium term/medium level of scale.</p> <p>Or providing a high level of housing support and/or homelessness</p>

<sup>1</sup> age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation

Applicant responses (what the organisation does and funding request description) have been copied directly from the application form. All names have been redacted.

Points	Action on climate change and nature recovery	Inclusion, accessibility and accountability	Thriving and healthy communities	Homes and/or Infrastructure that meet local need
			wellbeing has or will be improved for this group/service users.	prevention services.
4-5	<p>(4) The organisation has shown an excellent understanding and commitment to the climate and nature emergency as a routine part of the organisation's business plan. They have provided organisational net zero targets, an action plan showing how they intend to deliver against those targets and evidence to demonstrate progress against these actions.</p> <p>Examples of excellent activities or services may include evidence of a commissioned energy audit of premise(s) and investment in recommendations, staff/volunteer training on climate literacy, engagement with partners on sustainability programmes in the community, or evidence of district wide engagement in restoration of the natural world.</p>	<p>(4) The organisation demonstrates an excellent commitment to inclusion, accessibility and accountability as a routine part of the organisation's business plan and culture.</p> <p>Examples of excellent activities or services may include evidence of service users sitting on the board of trustees or decision-making committees, service users involved in delivery of projects and recruited staff.</p> <p>(5) In addition to the above, the organisation provides clear evidence of advocacy efforts that have led to improve inclusion, accessibility and accountability within local external organisations (e.g., local authorities, NHS), which has resulted in tangible benefits for service users such as improved employability, and access to other services.</p>	<p>(4) The organisation demonstrates an excellent commitment to contribute to thriving and healthy communities as a routine part of the organisation's business plan and culture.</p> <p>Examples of excellent activities or services may include evidence of clearly defined, measurable outcomes, and can demonstrate the impact on participants and/or the wider community.</p> <p>(5) In addition to the above, providing evidence of how the activities/services are clearly demonstrating how the organisation takes a targeted approach to ensure maximum impact on a community's health and wellbeing. They have provided evidence to show how their service/activities are innovative in their approach to solving particular challenges, and/or are able to share their learnings/experience with others to influence change.</p>	<p>(4) The organisation has shown an excellent understanding and commitment to contribute to providing homes and infrastructure that meet local needs as a routine part of the organisation's business plan and culture.</p> <p>Examples of excellent activities or services may include evidence of clearly defined, measurable outcomes, and can demonstrate the impact on participants and/or the wider community.</p> <p>This may include the organisation managing very large or multiple geographical areas of public realm/community centres public parks/play areas and promoting environmental sustainability in them to a very high level and longer-term levels.</p> <p>Or providing a high and wide geographical level of housing support and/or homelessness prevention services.</p> <p>(5) In addition to the above, providing evidence of how the activities/services are clearly</p>

Applicant responses (what the organisation does and funding request description) have been copied directly from the application form. All names have been redacted.

Points	Action on climate change and nature recovery	Inclusion, accessibility and accountability	Thriving and healthy communities	Homes and/or Infrastructure that meet local need
	<p>(5) In addition to the above, providing evidence of how the activities/services are clearly contributing to District or County targets for net zero or demonstrating large scale, and long-term commitments to restoring the natural world.</p>			<p>demonstrating how the organisation takes a targeted approach to ensure maximum impact on meeting the communities housing and infrastructure needs. They have provided evidence to show how their service/activities are innovative in their approach to solving particular challenges, and/or are able to share their learnings/experience with others to influence change.</p>
<p><b>Additional discretionary points</b></p>	<p>Evidence of working with relevant partners and/or the community to collaborate on solutions to the climate and nature emergency. (1 point).</p> <p>The organisation has provided strong evidence that the service/activity actively supports delivery of the emerging council's Nature and Climate Action Plan and/or Oxfordshire's Local Nature Recovery strategy to an excellent standard. (2 points)</p>	<p>Evidence of working with relevant partners and/or the community/service users to design/deliver services that ensure inclusion, accessibility and accountability (1 point)</p> <p>The organisation has demonstrated that the design and/ or delivery of the service/activity is delivered in partnership with others and is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach to ensure inclusion, accessibility and accountability.</p> <p>Examples could include access/inclusion group representation on the organisations steering groups,</p>	<p>Some evidence of working with relevant partners and/or the community/service users to design and /or deliver services. (1 point)</p> <p>The organisation has demonstrated that the design and/or delivery of the service/activity is delivered in partnership with others and is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach.</p> <p>Examples could include community/organisation steering groups, joint projects to design and /or deliver co-produced services/activities or share resources and training. (2 points)</p>	<p>Evidence of working with relevant partners and/or the community/service users to design/deliver services. (1 point)</p> <p>The organisation has demonstrated that the design and/ or delivery of the service/activity is delivered in partnership with others and is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach.</p> <p>Examples could include community/organisation steering groups, joint projects to design and /or deliver co-produced services/activities particularly showing sustainable working</p>

Applicant responses (what the organisation does and funding request description) have been copied directly from the application form. All names have been redacted.

<b>Points</b>	<b>Action on climate change and nature recovery</b>	<b>Inclusion, accessibility and accountability</b>	<b>Thriving and healthy communities</b>	<b>Homes and/or Infrastructure that meet local need</b>
		joint projects to design and /or deliver co-produced services/activities. (2 points)		practices and/or sharing resources and training. (2 points)

Applicant responses (what the organisation does and funding request description) have been copied directly from the application form. All names have been redacted.

<p><b>Oxfordshire South &amp; Vale Citizens Advice</b></p>	<p><b>Ref: SRev25-27/21</b></p>
<p><b>Project name</b> Citizens Advice in South Oxfordshire</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b> We are an independent local charity providing free, confidential and impartial advice on a wide range of issues such as debt, benefits, housing and employment to over 10,000 local people each year. We serve the communities of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse. In South Oxfordshire we have three Advice Centres in Didcot, Thame and Henley and four outreaches in Berinsfield, Watlington, Wallingford, and RAF Benson.</p> <p>Our approach is to empower people. We can all face problems that seem complicated or intimidating. We believe no one should have to face these problems without good quality, independent advice. Our work gives people the knowledge and the confidence they need to find their way forward. Our service is freely available to everyone.</p> <p>People can access our services in person, on line, email, telephone and webchat. We also maintain a wealth of information on our website.</p> <p>Our local volunteers provide the backbone of our advice services. We cannot meet the many challenges of our community without volunteers, recruited from the communities that they serve. Many of our volunteers are very experienced people, they update their skills regularly and bring a huge amount of experience and wisdom to their work with clients. All our advisers work to the Advice Quality Standard and Financial Conduct Authority regulations.</p>	
<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b> We are dedicated to providing crucial information and advice services to the residents of South Oxfordshire. To fulfill this mission, we seek grant funding to support a range of essential services and activities aimed at addressing the needs and challenges faced by our community.</p> <p>First and foremost, this grant will enable us to maintain our local presence, ensuring that residents have easy access to our services. We will continue to provide expert advice on a wide range of issues, including housing, employment, welfare benefits, and debt management. These services will be tailored to meet the specific needs of vulnerable individuals who have been disproportionately affected by the cost of living crisis and other national issues.</p> <p>In addition to the core advice service, delivered across a variety of channels, we want to develop community outreach programmes, and awareness campaigns to empower residents with knowledge and skills to navigate complex challenges effectively. This grant will also support the recruitment and training of dedicated advisers, ensuring that our residents receive high-quality, up-to-date information and advice.</p> <p>Ultimately, the funding will enable us to remain a lifeline for our community, to those who need it most during these challenging times.</p>	
<p><b>District reach:</b> All areas</p>	

<b>Corporate Plan priority:</b> Thriving and healthy communities		
<b>Potential number of beneficiaries:</b> 5000		
<b>Grant sought</b>	<b>2025/2026</b>	<b>2026/2027</b>
Amount requested for service/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£120,000	£123,000
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£243,000	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£370,519	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	33%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£290,562	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£2,173	

**Previous funding awarded:**

- Partnerships (Vale) 2012 - 2021-22 £888,540
- Revenue 2014-16 £496,860
- Revenue 2017-21 £756,432
- Capital 2018-19 £3,158
- Councillor grants 2019-20 £3,606
- Partnerships (Vale) 2022-23 £88,920
- Revenue 2022-24 £238,444
- Revenue 2024-25 £119,222
- Councillor grants 2023-24 £3,122 and £3,048 and £813 and £1,250
- Partnerships (Vale) 2024-29 £460,000

<b>Scoring</b>		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>A detailed and realistic two-year funding plan relative to the organisation's size has been provided which demonstrates a balanced budget over the two-year grant period. They have clear movement towards more diverse income streams, consisting of contracts/project funding, delivering specialist programmes with key stakeholders, corporate funding and other fundraising activities. They now employ a fundraiser to focus on developing new income streams to reduce the dependence on one-off grants and short-term contract work. A large upcoming project/joint venture is also being worked on to ensure greater financial sustainability and efficiency in the future.</p>	<b>Score</b>	5/5
<b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced</b>	<b>Score</b>	3/4



<p><b>budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b></p> <p>Some but not all financial years have balanced budgets and have been affected by Covid19 and Cost of Living factors. As a result of population growth in the district, there has been an overall increase in their services. Officers note an increase in unrestricted funds and their reserves policy has no depletion in reserves over the last three years.</p>		
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b></p> <p>Evidence demonstrates strong and clear indication of community need, through their delivery of essential support and advice services to all residents, including a large proportion of priority and vulnerable groups. They conduct an annual community and client profiles which gathers feedback from existing users as part of ongoing service planning and improvement and to maintain a flexible approach to addressing community need and cohesion. Substantial evidence demonstrates that regular engagement and advocacy is carried out with the community and other stakeholders, including government agencies, local councils, local organisations and larders/foodbanks to ensure services are accessible and inclusive.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>5/5</p>
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b></p> <p>More than 501 (5000) residents benefit from the services/activities provided in the district each year, with a large proportion being from vulnerable and priority groups. They offer a wide range of information and guidance to individuals and as a result provides them with the knowledge and tools to address problems early, therefore their services/activities complement district council services.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>5/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b></p> <p>N/A - no national organisation has applied</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>0/1</p>
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b></p> <p>The project theme selected is 'Thriving and healthy communities'. Clear, relevant and well-detailed responses that addresses how the service/activities goes above expectations and fully integrates the theme into the service delivery. The services/activities provide improved mental health, financial stability and quality of life to an ever-growing population in the district. Data collection from two community and client profiles provides feedback mechanisms and enable continuous improvement to services/activities. By effectively engaging with clients and stakeholders, they demonstrate how the organisation takes a targeted approach to ensure maximum impact on the community's health and wellbeing. They have provided evidence to show how their services/activities are innovative in their approach and are able to share their learnings/experience with others to influence change.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>5/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b></p> <p>Officers have awarded two additional points for strong evidence of relevant partnership working to an excellent standard. Examples of a community steering group, working with local councils, Government agencies, NHS and other organisations have been provided to deliver co-produced services and activities.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>2/2</p>
<p><b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>		
<p>Not applicable.</p>		
	<p><b>Total score</b></p>	<p><b>25/27</b></p>
<p><b>Non scoring officer comments</b></p>		
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation’s achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b></p> <p>The organisation has implemented multiple activities or services that contribute to addressing the Climate Emergency and have adopted a simple Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan for the organisation.</p>		

## Agenda Item 6

They have provided examples of actions they have carried out such as recycling and waste reduction, increasing digital communications, replacing lightbulbs with energy efficient ones, use of ethical suppliers where possible. More information would have been useful to understand the organisation's role and experience in providing energy advice for service users, or climate/energy champion training for volunteer advisors. Perhaps this could be added as a revenue target should the organisation be successful. Officers would recommend the organisation starts to measure the carbon emissions of their operations to identify where carbon emissions and cost savings can be made, and what actions can be prioritised. This will help create a more detailed, medium-term plan with clear target to decarbonise their operations. They should also consider how climate change may impact their services and/or service users, and review options for how adaptations to their operations can be made. Visit <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction> for more ideas on actions to take or contact the council's climate and biodiversity team [climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk) for further support.

<p><b>Reducing the Risk of Domestic Abuse known as Reducing the Risk</b></p>	<p><b>Ref:</b> SRev25-27/55</p>
<p><b>Project name</b> Reducing the risk of and from domestic abuse in South Oxfordshire</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b> Reducing the Risk of Domestic Abuse is dedicated to the safety and support of people affected by domestic abuse and to empowering those who support them. Our approach combines intensive, one-on-one specialist support for victims and survivors at high risk of serious harm, including those attending criminal court, with enhanced, coordinated multi-agency support and active community engagement. Our methods are relationship-based, evidence-led, and informed by lived experience.</p> <p>We provide the High-Risk Domestic Abuse Service for South Oxfordshire, which supports individuals at risk of serious harm or death due to domestic abuse.</p> <p>We also deliver the Court-based IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advisor) service, which assists victims from South Oxfordshire who attend court in cases involving domestic abuse.</p> <p>Our therapeutic recovery services offer support for high-risk victims in South Oxfordshire to aid their healing and recovery.</p> <p>We provide training for professionals to ensure they have the knowledge and confidence to respond safely to individuals in South Oxfordshire experiencing domestic abuse.</p> <p>Our community and friends officer delivers community-based information and engagement events across South Oxfordshire, raising awareness, supporting initial disclosures, and developing a network of volunteers known as DA (Domestic Abuse) Friends.</p>	
<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b> To secure funding from South Oxfordshire District Council, we propose supporting an extensive and sustainable program to address domestic abuse and support victims' recovery across South Oxfordshire. Our initiative focuses on developing a comprehensive community and friends support network, enhancing professional and volunteer capacity, and building a sustainable funding model through business engagement. Here's a breakdown of our key components:</p> <p><b>Community and Friends Support Network</b> We aim to expand our Community and Friends volunteer network, which connects volunteers, known as DA Friends, with our services to foster community resilience and encourage disclosures of abuse. These volunteers are trained to provide initial guidance and connect individuals with necessary support services. This network will enhance our reach, ensuring support is readily available and accessible throughout South Oxfordshire.</p> <p><b>Business Friends Initiative</b> The Business Friends initiative engages local businesses in our mission by providing them with domestic abuse awareness training, enabling them to recognize and support employees experiencing abuse. This initiative not only raises community awareness but</p>	

also secures a stable income stream, with participating businesses contributing financially. This dual approach creates a safer community environment while supporting our financial sustainability.

**Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs)**

Our IDVAs will hold regular drop-in sessions across South Oxfordshire to provide immediate support to victims of abuse, offering guidance on safety planning and connecting them to recovery programs and commissioned local services. This flexible approach ensures our services remain accessible, adaptable, and tailored to victims’ needs, addressing both immediate safety and promoting long-term resilience.

**RtR (Reducing the Risk) Network Collaboration**

Working closely with the RtR professional Network, we will connect victims with a wide range of local services, creating a seamless, coordinated response to domestic abuse. This partnership strengthens our ability to support victims through every stage of their recovery, from immediate intervention to ongoing support.

**Lived Experience Advisory Group**

To ensure our services are informed by those who have experienced domestic abuse, we will establish a Lived Experience Advisory Group made up of South Oxfordshire residents who have lived through such situations. This group will guide our approach, ensuring services are empathetic, relevant, and impactful.

**Training for Primary Care Providers**

In collaboration with local GPs, pharmacies, and social prescribers, we will provide training on identifying and referring patients at risk of domestic abuse. This partnership allows early intervention, helping healthcare providers play an active role in safeguarding community wellbeing.

**Support and Partnership**

Our project is supported by the South Oxfordshire Community Safety Team and aligned with the Community Safety Plan’s goal to reduce harm and support vulnerable individuals. Together with the RtR Network and other local stakeholders, we are enhancing local capacity to respond effectively to domestic abuse.

**Long-term Vision**

Our goal is to create enduring mechanisms of support, ensuring victims of domestic abuse can recover and rebuild with resilience. Through IDVA-led drop-ins, flexible recovery programs, multi-agency collaborations, and active business and healthcare partnerships, we are building a foundation for a safer, more supportive South Oxfordshire.

**District reach:**

All areas

**Corporate Plan priority:**

Thriving and healthy communities

**Potential number of beneficiaries:**

1270

<b>Grant sought</b>	<b>2025/2026</b>	<b>2026/2027</b>
Amount requested for service/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£39,235	£40,220
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£79,455	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£111,998	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	18%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£280,000	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£217,932	

**Previous funding awarded:**

Not applicable.

<b>Scoring</b>		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>A detailed and realistic two-year plan relative to the organisation's size, demonstrating a balanced budget each year. There is a diverse range of income streams and a clear intention to increase their income from training. Officers note that they are implementing a diversified income strategy to ensure long term sustainability and resilience.</p>	<b>Score</b>	5/5
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b></p> <p>Some but not all financial years' budgets affected by Covid19, Cost of Living or other factors with evidence to explain and an overall increase in services/activities. They have some depletion of reserves over the last three years but they are within the parameters of their reserves policy.</p>	<b>Score</b>	3/4
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b></p> <p>Evidence demonstrates strong and clear indication of community need to address domestic abuse and support victims' recovery. Substantial consultation is regularly carried out via service-user feedback, community and friends' support networks, training and professional engagement and outreach to under-served groups. This flexible approach ensures that service-users including vulnerable/priority groups are at the heart of improving service design and delivery.</p>	<b>Score</b>	5/5
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b></p> <p>More than 501 (1,270) residents in the district benefit from their services. They are clear how they will identify and work with vulnerable residents at high risk of experiencing domestic abuse, including all the priority groups. They provide services</p>	<b>Score</b>	5/5

that complement the district council's Community Safety Team by offering specialised support and preventative programmes to address issues and ensure early intervention.		
<b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b> N/A - No national organisation has applied.	<b>Score</b>	0/1
<b>Corporate Plan priorities</b> The project theme selected is 'Thriving and healthy communities'. Clear, relevant and well-detailed responses that addresses how the service goes above expectations and fully integrates the theme into the service delivery. To ensure maximum impact on health and wellbeing, the organisation takes a targeted community-based approach, tracking demographic data and responding to regular feedback. They have provided evidence of clearly defined outcomes and are able to share their learnings/ experience with others to influence change.	<b>Score</b>	5/5
<b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b> Officers have awarded an additional two points as there is strong evidence of relevant partnership working with local people and organisations to deliver their service to an excellent standard. Co-production and collaboration is clearly central to their approach and this is demonstrated through their Lived Experience Advisory Group, Business Friends Initiative, Domestic Abuse Friends Network, Reduce the Risk Network for multi-agency support, and collaboration with local authorities, health services and voluntary organisations.	<b>Score</b>	2/2
<b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b>		
Not applicable.		
	<b>Total score</b>	<b>25/27</b>
<b>Non scoring officer comments</b>		
<b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation’s achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b> The organisation has given some consideration into possible actions that address the Climate Emergency. Officers would recommend the organisation starts their journey by measuring the carbon emissions of their operations to identify where carbon emissions and cost savings can be made. They should also consider how climate change may impact their services and/or service-users, and review options for how adaptations to their operations can be made. Visit <a href="https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction">https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction</a> for more ideas on how to get started or contact the council's climate and biodiversity team <a href="mailto:climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk">climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk</a> for further support.		

<b>SOFEA</b>	<b>Ref: SRev25-27/45</b>
<p><b>Project name</b> Nourish and Flourish Kitchen: Community Impact</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b> SOFEA is a transformative education, training and mental wellbeing charity enabling disadvantaged young people to (re)engage with learning, skills training and work. In 2023-24, we supported 86 learners and 392 trainees, aged 14-25 at our sites in Didcot and Milton Keynes as well as 224 older workless individuals supported in the community.</p> <p>We support young people from our two large warehouse depots redistributing 1,667 tonnes of surplus nutritious food to 143 community partners that feed over 7,100 individuals each month, as well as 36 community larders providing food and other services to over 600 families and 2,900 individuals across the Thames Valley and South Midlands.</p> <p>Our social prescribing link workers refer patients from the three Didcot GP surgeries to our Nutritional Therapist who provides diet and nutrition advice to tackle obesity and reduce risks of lifestyle diseases and associated chronic ill health.</p>	
<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b> Since the launch of SOFEA’s Nourish and Flourish programme in 2022, in partnership with the Didcot Primary Care Network (PCN), the Nourish and Flourish Programme Manager and Nutritional Therapist, XXXX, has liaised closely with medical advisor XXXX, the Didcot PCN social prescribing and health inequalities lead.</p> <p>Nourish and Flourish has evolved into three key components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nourish and Flourish School Programme.</li> <li>• One-to-one Nutritional Therapy.</li> <li>• Nourish and Flourish kitchen.</li> </ul> <p><b>Nourish and Flourish School Programme</b> Responding to increasing rates of childhood obesity and diet-related illness in our area, the innovative School Programme is designed to improve the diets and food knowledge of children by embedding nutrition into the core curriculum for maths, geography, biology and history. All lesson plans, slide decks and resources allow teachers to lead activities in class. To broaden the association of diet with overall health and wellbeing, the programme incorporates information from Replenish about composting and growing, and from YouMove about physical activity.</p> <p>Over 455 children have been engaged across eight schools in Didcot and South Oxfordshire.</p> <p><b>Nourish and Flourish Nutritional Therapy Clinic</b> In light of the 3,500 residents of Didcot who are pre-diabetic and at risk of long-term chronic ill health, GPs and Diabetic nurses from across the Didcot PCN, as well as our own Social Prescribing Link Workers, refer patients for one-to-one Nutritional Therapy support, providing individualised advice and guidance about nutrition and healthy eating.</p> <p>214 patients have been referred since June 2023.</p>	

**Nourish and Flourish kitchen**

The Nourish and Flourish Kitchen was launched in November 2023, by the King and Queen. XXXX, ex-Cookery School Director at Le Manoir au Quat’ Saisons, supported evolving a kitchen format with the programme manager and Object Place Space designer - retrofitting upcycled equipment from the John Radcliffe (JR) hospital into a kitchen which could enable learners, trainees and the community to develop essential life skills, build personal confidence and cooking experience. Working in groups of six, all of our 79 learners and 74 trainees are encouraged to get involved with the preparation, cooking and operations of the kitchen.

Up to the end of October 2024, our young people had cooked and served over 6,630 meals for their peers, staff, volunteers and guests.

**Going forward**

Many vulnerable people experience isolation, loneliness and financial pressures, often relying on cheap, processed meals or takeaways. Such “poverty” diets are high in fat, sugar and salt, leading to increased risks of obesity, type-2 diabetes and heart disease – which are exacerbated by increased anxiety and depression.

Nourish and Flourish brings communities into SOFEA. Community groups, resident and larder members are supported to develop skills to cook healthy and nutritious food.

In addition to one-to-one Nutritional Therapy, we will pilot a Nutritional Therapy Community Cooking Programme at the SOFEA kitchen. Working alongside health and social care partners, the programme tackles obesity and reduces risks of lifestyle diseases and associated chronic ill health.

Such lessons increase the interest in home cooking using different foods from SOFEA’s growing network of Larders and Voluntary Community Sector (VCS) partners.

**District reach:**

Berinsfield, Didcot North East, Didcot South, Didcot West, Thame

Other – Planned 2025 expansion will ensure further geographical roll out of the schools’ programme across key areas of deprivation across Oxfordshire – with an estimated 720 students to be engaged. Likewise, our work with partners at Didcot, Berinsfield and Thame larders will reach almost 400 members. The Therapeutic Community Cooking Programme will be open to residents from across South Oxfordshire, referred by GPs, Housing Associations and other community groups working with vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals.

**Corporate Plan priority:**

Thriving and healthy communities

**Potential number of beneficiaries:**

902



<b>Grant sought</b>	<b>2025/2026</b>	<b>2026/2027</b>
Amount requested for service/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£40,000	£40,000
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£80,000	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£2,664,872	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	2%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£225,000	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£137,066	

**Previous funding awarded:**

- New Homes Bonus (Vale) 2015-16 £8,000
- Vale Capital 2016-17 £5,000
- Councillor grants 2019-20 £5,400
- Councillor grants 2020-21 £5,215 and £4,700
- Councillor grants 2021-22 £9,620
- Capital 2021-22 £14,603
- Capital 2022-23 £14,259
- Food Network grant £2,500
- Vale Food Network grant £2,500 and £2,500 and £2,500
- Councillor grants 2022-23 R2 £2,665
- Food and Warmth grant 2023-24 £10,000
- Vale Food and Warmth grant £2,500

<b>Scoring</b>		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>A detailed and realistic two-year plan relative to the organisation's size, demonstrating a balanced budget each year. There is a diverse range of income streams including generated income from membership fees and contracts, and funding from grants, trusts and donations.</p>	<b>Score</b>	5/5
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b></p> <p>Some but not all financial years show a deficit budget. Officers note that their income and reserves were not negatively impacted as a result of the Covid19 pandemic. They remain within the parameters of their reserves policy.</p>	<b>Score</b>	3/4
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b></p> <p>Evidence demonstrates strong and clear indication of community need both locally</p>	<b>Score</b>	4/5

<p>and nationally. A flexible approach to addressing that need has been demonstrated. Informal consultation is regularly carried out via face-to-face discussions with members of Didcot Community Larder and SOFEA's Nutritional Therapy Clinic. Wider consultation with potential users and stakeholders has been through a questionnaire to Didcot Primary Care Network patients, feedback from all the Didcot primary schools and by their community engagement manager via the Didcot Wellbeing Web. SOFEA's community engagement and consultation continues to inform service design and delivery.</p>		
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b>          More than 501(902) residents benefit from the services and it is clear this includes a large proportion of 'vulnerable' residents. Many of the young people that are referred to SOFEA are at risk of becoming long-term NEET (Not in Education Employment or Training), leading to a life of worse job prospects, low earning potential, risk of substance abuse and criminality as well as poor health and mental wellbeing. The Nourish and Flourish programme complements district council services and reduces demand on the benefits system as a result of vulnerable young people gaining new skills, training and employment.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>5/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b>          N/A - No national organisation has applied.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>0/1</p>
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b>          The project theme selected is 'Thriving and healthy communities'. Clear, relevant and well-detailed responses that addresses how their Nourish and Flourish services will provide better outcomes to the community at an excellent standard under the theme. Measurable outcomes include improved knowledge of nutrition and healthy diets, reduced weight, reduced reported rate of isolation and loneliness, improved social connections, improved mental health and wellbeing (including less disordered eating, anxiety and depression) and increased number of people gaining work experience, apprenticeships and employment.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>4/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b>          Officers have added an additional two points as there is strong evidence of relevant partnership working with local people and health and social care organisations from the statutory and voluntary sector to deliver services to an excellent standard. They collaborate within key networks like Didcot Primary Care Network, Food Sustainability and Health Group and South and Vale Food Strategy Action Working Group.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>2/2</p>
<p><b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>		
<p>Not applicable.</p>		
	<p><b>Total score</b></p>	<p>23/27</p>
<p><b>Non scoring officer comments</b></p>		
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation’s achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b>          Much of the organisation's core activity has positive environmental impacts, however more could be done to consider how to reduce the organisation's carbon footprint. They have not attached a climate policy/statement or action plan to their application, with limited evidence of actions undertaken. Officers would recommend the organisation starts their journey by measuring the carbon emissions of their operations to identify where carbon emissions and cost savings can be made. Visit <a href="https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction">https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction</a> for more ideas on how to get started or contact the council's climate and biodiversity team <a href="mailto:climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk">climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk</a> for further support.</p>		

<b>River Thame Conservation Trust</b>	<b>Ref:</b> SRev25-27/58
<p><b>Project name</b> Community Currents</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b> The River Thame Conservation Trust (RTCT) has four overarching aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase our understanding of the freshwater habitats and species of the River Thame catchment and monitor changes in them.</li> <li>• Improve biodiversity by practical habitat works on the ground.</li> <li>• Improve water quality.</li> <li>• Improve knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the freshwater environment of the River Thame catchment with local people and increase its recognition in local planning frameworks.</li> </ul> <p>RTCT vision statement is ‘A healthy river catchment with healthy fresh waters and wildlife, valued and enjoyed by local people, resilient for the future.’</p> <p>We carry out a range of activities including practical wetland habitat and river restoration projects; monitoring both the health of the river and species presence/abundance across the catchment; supporting farmers, landowners and volunteers and engaging them with practical projects. We are co-host to the River Thame Catchment Partnership, bringing key stakeholders together to work more closely on joint projects across the catchment.</p>	
<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b> Community Currents utilises members of the public to undertake water quality sampling throughout the Thame Catchment. The data generated provides valuable insights regarding the scale and sources of pollution in the catchment, and in-turn provides a basis for advocacy and action through the volunteer citizen scientists, and also the River Thame Conservation Trust Directly. The Community Currents project is an evolution of the water quality project undertaken over the previous two years, in relation to which previous SODC revenue Grants were instrumental in enabling.</p> <p>The work done to date has enabled additional external funds to be attracted (Thames Water) which allowed the project to develop from a relatively straightforward citizen science monitoring project, to a wider project with enhanced levels of community engagement focussing on growing skills, knowledge and advocacy capabilities amongst our citizen scientists in what is a technically complex subject matter, which is often unhelpfully oversimplified in public discourse, to the detriment of river health. SODC revenue funding over the following two years will allow RTCT to continue and grow this environmentally and socially impactful project. Specifically, the funding will cover the portion of time (salary) of our project officer to deliver the project.</p>	
<p><b>District reach:</b> Forest Hill and Holton, Wheatley, Garsington and Horspath, Haseley Brook, Chinnor, Watlington, Chalgrove, Berinsfield, Thame</p>	
<p><b>Corporate Plan priority:</b> Action on climate change and nature recovery</p>	
<p><b>Potential number of beneficiaries:</b> 6000</p>	

Grant sought	2025/2026	2026/2027
Amount requested for services/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£13,000	£13,000
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£26,000	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£176,016	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	7%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/05/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£550,000	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£350,000	

**Previous funding awarded:**

- Councillor grants 2020-21 £2,013
- Revenue 2022-24 £14,627
- Councillor grants 2022-23 R2 £1,680
- Revenue 2024-25 £7,313

Scoring		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>A detailed and realistic two-year plan relative to the organisation's size, demonstrating a balanced budget each year. They have a diverse range of income streams, including income to provide their farm advice, biodiversity net gain support, natural flood management and catchment partnerships. Income is also received from Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), Environment Agency and Thames Water for a variety of projects.</p>	Score	5/5
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b></p> <p>Some but not all financial year's budgets negatively affected by Covid19 and Cost of Living including increased staff and overhead costs, however there has been no reduction in services/activities. They have a reserves policy which shows some depletion but officers can still see it is within reserves parameters. Improved financial performance is expected in 2024/25 due to two large, long-term projects secured in 2024.</p>	Score	3/4
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b></p> <p>Evidence demonstrates strong and clear indication of community need and flexible approach to addressing community need. Through the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) process, freshwater quality is amongst the highest environmental concerns for people. Their services/activities enable people to engage and actively participate in their programmes and projects to prioritise improving water quality, health of rivers and freshwater habits. The citizen scientists are trained and equipped</p>	Score	4/5

<p>with the knowledge to help with these issues. Evidence indicates consultation is regularly carried out with existing and potential service-users and other stakeholders. They have implemented an Equality, diversity and inclusion statement and are committed to equal opportunities.</p>		
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b>                  More than 501 residents (6,000) benefit, including direct participants of the programme (120 citizen scientists). They provide services that support an important biodiversity duty and play a key role in nature recovery which complement district council services. The organisation has stated an estimated total of 6,000, calculated from each citizen scientist conveying information to the wider community, in relation to water quality, freshwater health, sources of pollution and identifying cleaner green/blue spaces for local residents. Officers are unable to score a four due to the estimated number of beneficiaries and lack of information on how many vulnerable people would access the Thames.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>3/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b>                  Officers have awarded an additional point as this local organisation is delivering the same/similar activities as a national organisation who has also applied to this scheme (Thames21).</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>1/1</p>
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b>                  The project theme selected is 'Action of climate change and nature recovery'. The organisation has an excellent understanding and commitment to the climate and nature emergency as a core part of their work. They have a vital role to play in engaging landowners, residents and communities to monitor and help improve river health and promote water conservation.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>4/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b>                  Officers have awarded two additional points. Through the Catchment Partnerships and Oxfordshire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy, as well as other stakeholders, they actively engage with district-wide programmes to restore river health and are helping to monitor and expand our understanding of the impact of sewage contaminated watercourses and floodwater.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>2/2</p>
<p><b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>		
<p>Not applicable.</p>		
	<p><b>Total score</b></p>	<p><b>22/27</b></p>
<p><b>Non scoring officer comments</b></p>		
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation's achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b>                  Championing climate action and nature recovery is a routine part of the organisation's strategy and programmes. They have a simple environmental policy and have provided clear examples of where they have taken action towards reducing the environmental impact of their organisation, such as sustainable travel choices and in their supply chains. Renting an office space does limit the extent to which the organisation has influence over decarbonising their premises, however they may wish to review their environmental policy and begin measuring the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions of their operations to identify further opportunities to reduce the organisation's climate impact and create a medium term decarbonisation plan. There is excellent evidence of wider engagement with partners on sustainability programmes across the district and via their contributes to county-level strategies.</p>		

<b>Be Free Young Carers</b>		<b>Ref: SRev25-27/50</b>
<b>Project name</b> Future Pathways for Young Carers		
<b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b> Be Free Young Carers is the only independent charity in Oxfordshire working exclusively with young carers aged between eight to seventeen years old. Our mission is to improve the emotional and social health, resilience, and development of young carers by widening their life options and empowering them to reach their full potential. We are currently supporting young carers based in South Oxfordshire, The Vale of White Horse, West Oxfordshire and Oxford City.  Each year the number of people needing support from Be Free Young Carer's has risen, resulting in us supporting 600 children overall. It is currently estimated that there are 12,000 young carers in Oxfordshire alone. That is two young carers in each classroom. In South Oxfordshire specifically we provide support currently to 218 young carers and we are registering new young carers on a weekly basis.  Young carers face numerous challenges that can have a profound impact on their lives. Often feeling isolated, with few or no friends, they are at a higher risk of being bullied at school, experiencing depression, and even self-harming. Furthermore, young carers are more vulnerable to substance abuse, grooming, and sexual exploitation. Many struggle to balance their caring responsibilities with schoolwork, leading to academic underachievement. Unfortunately, these challenges are compounded by the current cost-of-living crisis, which disproportionately affects young carers from disadvantaged backgrounds. For these individuals, the future can seem daunting and uncertain, with no let-up from the stresses and strains of their caring responsibilities.		
<b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b> We are seeking your support to help cover Be Free Young Carers' core costs, which are essential to the smooth running of our charity and the continued delivery of our services. While project funding allows us to run key programs, core cost funding ensures we can maintain our infrastructure, keep our staff trained and supported, and continue offering vital services to young carers in need. By contributing to our core costs, you will enable us to focus on long-term sustainability and ensure that we can reach even more young carers who rely on us for practical and emotional support. Your help with this funding will make a lasting impact on the lives of young people balancing significant caregiving responsibilities.		
<b>District reach:</b> All areas		
<b>Corporate Plan priority:</b> Thriving and healthy communities		
<b>Potential number of beneficiaries:</b> 654		
<b>Grant sought</b>	<b>2025/2026</b>	<b>2026/2027</b>
Amount requested for services/ activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£26,103	£26,103
Total grant amount requested over the	£52,206	

two years		
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£78,310	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	33%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£299,303	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£96,163	

**Previous funding awarded:**

- New Homes Bonus (Vale) 2015-16 £2,414
- Revenue 2017-21 £101,983
- New Homes Bonus (Vale) 2018-19 £2,475
- Revenue 2022-24 £12,277
- Food and Warmth grant 2023-24 £2,000
- Revenue 2024-25 £6,138
- Councillor grants 2023-24 £2,700
- Everyone Active 2024-25 £600

<b>Scoring</b>		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>A balanced funding plan for the two-year period, however there is reliance on grants and donations. Clear movement towards more sustainable and balanced income streams.</p>	<b>Score</b>	4/5
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b></p> <p>All financial years have balanced budgets showing growth in services with an income growth to match and an increase in their free reserves. No issues noted in regards to Covid19 or Cost of Living.</p>	<b>Score</b>	4/4
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b></p> <p>Evidence demonstrates strong and clear indication of community need, shown in their calculated figures for young carers in the district not currently supported by them. Clear they have a number of flexible approaches to addressing community need. Evidence indicates consultation is regularly carried out with the existing (surveys of carers currently accessing their services) and potential service-users (work with schools who refer carers to them) and other stakeholders. Evidence of customer satisfaction data implemented, with service-users including priority groups/vulnerable people at the heart of the improving service design and delivery by modifying delivery to services to best support needs to young carers such as home visits and changing the way they measure their outcomes to better reflect the experiences of young people.</p>	<b>Score</b>	4/5
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b></p> <p>More than 501 residents (654) benefit from the services and includes a large</p>	<b>Score</b>	5/5

proportion of 'vulnerable' residents including those with disabilities, young isolated families and carers. Providing services that complement district council services as there are no specific support services for young carers.		
<b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b> N/A - No national organisation has applied.	<b>Score</b>	0/1
<b>Corporate Plan priorities</b> The project theme selected is 'Thriving and healthy communities'. The organisation demonstrates an excellent commitment to contribute to thriving and healthy communities as a routine part of the organisation's business plan and culture by supporting young carers and their families and to ensure that young carers are equipped with knowledge and experiences to support their mental wellbeing and social cohesion. They operate their services under an umbrella of measurable outcomes and they can demonstrate the impact on participants through the results of their feedback surveys.	<b>Score</b>	4/5
<b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b> Officers have awarded an additional point in reference to their work collaborating with other organisations, such as Oxfordshire Mind and Oxfordshire Youth as well as local yoga teachers and a counsellor, to a good standard.	<b>Score</b>	1/2
<b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b>		
Not applicable.		
	<b>Total score</b>	<b>22/27</b>
<b>Non scoring officer comments</b>		
<b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation's achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b> The organisation has implemented multiple events, activities or services that contribute to addressing the Climate Emergency and have adopted a simple sustainability/climate action policy/statement for the organisation. They have provided good examples of actions they have carried out, largely around nature and biodiversity. Officers would recommend the organisation starts to measure the carbon emissions of their operations to identify where carbon emissions and cost savings can be made. This will help create a medium-term plan with clear target to decarbonise their operations. They should also consider how climate change may impact their services and/or service-users, and review options for how adaptations to their operations can be made. Visit <a href="https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction">https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction</a> for more ideas on actions to take or contact the council's climate and biodiversity team <a href="mailto:climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk">climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk</a> for further support.		



<p><b>The Abingdon Bridge (TAB)</b></p>	<p><b>Ref:</b> SRev25-27/26</p>
<p><b>Project name</b> Thriving Minds - South Oxfordshire</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b> The Abingdon Bridge (TAB) is leading the way in championing the wellbeing and mental health of young people aged 13-25 across the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire. Our support enables young people to have the resilience to help overcome life's challenges.</p> <p>TAB is an Oxfordshire registered charity (CIO) which supports young people aged 13-25 in challenging circumstances. Our services are free for young people to access. We offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 to 1 counselling</li> <li>• Healthy lifestyles support groups</li> <li>• 1 to 1 wellbeing support</li> <li>• Educational workshops (in the community and local schools)</li> <li>• Youth ambassador programme.</li> </ul> <p>Our organisation receives referrals from GPs, mental health services, schools, and social workers from across the south. Young people can also self-refer to the service and TAB is clear that wherever the referral comes from they are led by the needs of the client. TAB has good relationships with local schools and speaks regularly to pastoral directors in the schools that they work in. This ensures that the referral processes are smooth, and services are not being duplicated. Young people accessing this service have often never accessed services before. Crucially we offer services for young people aged up to 25 – most other young people's mental health services stop when the young person turns 18.</p> <p>TAB has become a valuable community resource; we pride ourselves on supporting those most hard to reach or disadvantaged. We also provide training and education to other community groups struggling to engage with the more disengaged young people.</p> <p>Our aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support young people by enhancing life chances, at the earliest possible point - through preventative and early intervention programmes.</li> <li>• Promote good mental health and wellbeing, by harnessing 'Youth Voice' and community participation.</li> <li>• Improve and shape delivery of interventions and projects, by ensuring they hear the voices of diverse young people – a strong commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).</li> <li>• Continue to develop outstanding collaborative community projects that are informed by lessons learnt and identified future priorities.</li> <li>• To maintain and develop robust policies, governance and infrastructure, to ensure we are sustainable.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b> Any money received will be ring-fenced for the residents of South Oxfordshire only!</p> <p>Our proposed projects and services are in response to local community need observed during the last three years. Through consultation and inclusion we have identified high</p>	

priority level emerging needs, illuminated by local young people and our community partners. We adopt the following in all proposed activities:

**Listen** – Listening and learning from young people through consultation and shaping decision-making.

**Co-create** – Working alongside young people to co-create. For example strategies around the future initiatives of South Oxfordshire.

**Amplify** – Supporting young people to share their experiences and tell their stories.

**Empower** – Championing and supporting young people to take social action and drive change in their communities.

We want to prioritize the below services to demonstrate a clear commitment to enhancing mental health support for the community. Each component contributes to meeting the high priority needs.

### **Preventative 1-to-1 counselling sessions**

Impact: By providing early intervention for 50 young people through over 600 sessions, you're addressing mental health challenges before they escalate. This upstream approach helps prevent referrals to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) or NHS services, which often have long waiting lists.

Qualified Counselors: Utilizing accredited counselors ensures high-quality support. Professional supervision further enhances the effectiveness and safety of the counseling provided.

### **Psychoeducational group work/workshops**

Focus on Emerging Themes: Supporting 35 young people per year through group work and a further 300 through workshops allows for collective learning and sharing of experiences. By focusing on key themes identified in the community, these groups can address relevant issues and foster a supportive environment.

### **Youth Ambassador Programme**

Community Wellbeing Champions: Recruiting five local young people as ambassadors will promote positive mental health practices throughout the community. Their peer-led initiatives can help reduce stigma and encourage others to seek support, enhancing community engagement.

### **Parent support groups**

Addressing Parental Concerns: Given the increased outreach from desperate parents, collaborating with SOFEA to deliver workshops will provide much-needed support and resources. These groups can empower parents to better understand and support their children's mental health needs.

### **Campaign targeting men aged 18-25**

Addressing Critical Needs: With the rise in male suicide rates, launching this targeted campaign is crucial. Opening ten additional counseling places per week and establishing a weekly support group specifically for this demographic will provide vital resources and encourage open discussions about mental health among young men.

### **Overall Contribution to the Community**

These initiatives not only enhance existing services in South Oxfordshire but also focus

on prevention, empowerment, and community engagement. By prioritising mental health for young people, parents, and specific demographics, our programme aims to create a more resilient community where individuals feel supported and less likely to require secondary support.

We feel this holistic/flexible approach aligns with the council's goals of improving community well-being and reducing the need for more reactive support systems, ultimately leading to a healthier, more connected population.

**District reach:**

All areas

**Corporate Plan priority:**

Thriving and healthy communities

**Potential number of beneficiaries:**

550

Grant sought	2025/2026	2026/2027
Amount requested for services/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£40,000	£40,000
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£80,000	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£170,000	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	24%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£185,000	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£185,000	

**Previous funding awarded**

- New Homes Bonus (Vale) 2015-16 £5,000
- Councillor grants 2020-21 £1,000
- Revenue 2022-24 £34,279
- Revenue 2024-25 £17,139

Scoring		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>A funding plan covering the two-year period. Although a deficit budget is forecast for both years, they plan to secure extra income through corporate partnerships. Has a</p>	Score	3/5

diverse array of grants, donations and fundraising income, including funding from statutory organisations.		
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b></p> <p>All financial years have balanced budgets, showing both an increase in services/activities and income. Officers note some growth of reserves over the period.</p>	Score	4/4
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b></p> <p>Evidence demonstrates strong and clear indication of the need for wellbeing and mental health support for young people. The organisation's waiting list indicates the level of unmet demand in the district. Substantial consultation is regularly carried out with existing service users via their client advisory group (a youth-led committee) and their ambassador incentive. Wider consultation and collaboration with the community/other stakeholders has been with Didcot TRAIN, South Oxfordshire Food and Education Alliance (SOFEA), local schools, South Oxfordshire Housing Association (SOHA) and partners through the Communications Service Provider (CSP) and Wellbeing Web, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and the local primary care network.</p>	Score	5/5
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b></p> <p>More than 501 residents benefit from The Abingdon Bridge's services. Primarily for vulnerable young people aged 11- 25 years experiencing mental health challenges. Wider beneficiaries include parents and guardians, youth ambassadors, community members and schools. The service they provide and their preventative approach complement district council services.</p>	Score	5/5
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b></p> <p>N/A - No national organisation has applied.</p>	Score	0/1
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b></p> <p>The project theme selected is 'Thriving and healthy communities'. The organisation demonstrates an excellent commitment to contributing to the theme as a routine part of their business plan and culture. They demonstrate evidence of clearly defined, measurable outcomes such as increased resilience, better aspirations and confidence, reduced anxiety and stress and improved emotional wellbeing in the young people who will access their service.</p>	Score	4/5
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b></p> <p>Officers have awarded an additional point as there is strong evidence of working with relevant partners to design and deliver services to a good standard.</p>	Score	1/2
<b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b>		
Not applicable.		
	<b>Total score</b>	<b>22/27</b>
<b>Non scoring officer comments</b>		
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation’s achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b></p> <p>The organisation has delivered regular events or activities that contribute to addressing the Climate Emergency. For example, they have begun research into improving the energy efficiency of their building/organisation’s operations, or research into minimising waste. Officers would recommend the organisation starts to measure the carbon emissions of their operations to identify where carbon emissions and cost savings can be made. This will help create a medium-term plan to decarbonise their operations. They should also consider how climate change may impact their services and/or service users, and review options for how adaptations to their operations can be made. Visit <a href="https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction">https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction</a> for more ideas on actions to take or contact the council’s climate and</p>		

biodiversity team [climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk) for further support.

<p><b>The Berin Centre</b></p>	<p><b>Ref:</b> SRev25-27/28</p>
<p><b>Project name</b> Growing The Berin Centre</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b> The Berin Centre is a community hub serving the evolving needs of a vibrant, tight-knit locality in Berinsfield and beyond. We offer a range of services to cater for the diversity of needs in the village as it grows, and the surrounding area. This includes activities and support for the early years and families, food services such as a Community Larder and food bank, and employment, education and tailored support to adults. We also provide hireable space to a range of other vital organisations including Citizens Advice, Health Visitors, and Riverside Counselling.</p>	
<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b> We are seeking funding to support the core costs of our operations, delivering services to Berinsfield and the surrounding area.</p> <p>This would see contributions across the three key pillars of our offering: Family Services, Community Services, and Food Services.</p> <p>Our Family Services consists of three part-time staff who deliver between six and ten groups for families with children under five each week, along with a range of intensive one-to-one family support, special events, and learning opportunities for parents.</p> <p>Our Community Services are delivered by our Community Outreach Worker and our Community Garden Coordinator, who work together to deliver a range of activities, support and training opportunities for adults, young people, and the elderly. This includes adult learning from Abingdon and Witney College, a Women's Multicultural Group, and a Lawn Games Group for older people, alongside facilitating two community food growing projects.</p> <p>Lastly, our Food Services is an area of significant growth and development for us, with a new Community Cafe building expected to be constructed on our site in 2025. This will see an additional three members of staff join our team - a Cafe Manager, a Cook, and a Waiter, but this team will do more than just provide cafe provision. They will work closely with the existing teams to offer joined-up projects around food and nutrition including cooking classes and food education events, and will offer a range of other uses for this multi-purpose community space including being a venue for local micro-enterprises to operate from, and establishing other offers such as a Repair Cafe and Refill Shop.</p> <p>To enable all of these activities, the funds will therefore be used to contribute to staff salaries and on costs, and the running costs of the building (rent and utilities).</p>	
<p><b>District reach:</b> Berinsfield</p>	
<p><b>Corporate Plan priority:</b> Thriving and healthy communities</p>	
<p><b>Potential number of beneficiaries:</b> 86</p>	

<b>Grant sought</b>	<b>2025/2026</b>	<b>2026/2027</b>
Amount requested for services/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£16,273	£23,727
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£40,000	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£192,966	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	10%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£65,754	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£54,193	

**Previous funding awarded:**

- Councillor grants 2021-22 £1,000
- Revenue 2022-24 £14,541
- Berinsfield Garden Village 2022-23 £97,191
- Food Network grant £2,500
- Food and Warmth grant £10,000
- Revenue 2024-25 £7,270
- Councillor grants 2023-24 £515

<b>Scoring</b>		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>A two-year funding plan relative to the organisation's size, that demonstrates a balanced budget each year with a diverse range of income streams, including room hire income and corporate sponsorship. They are proactive with fundraising, including individual/foundation donors, expanding their network of supporters and prudent financial management to ensure financial stability in the future. A large capital project 'Community Cafe' is also being planned as part of their active service delivery during the grant period.</p>	<b>Score</b>	5/5
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b></p> <p>Some but not all financial years show balanced budgets. Due to the Cost of Living crisis, the organisation has experienced an increase in their annual expenditure but this has not resulted in a reduction in their services. In fact, they reported a rise in numbers accessing their emergency foodbank and one-to-one support to service-users. This has not negatively impacted on their reserves policy which has some</p>	<b>Score</b>	3/4

growth in 2023/24 financial year.		
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b></p> <p>Evidence demonstrates strong and clear indication of community need for families, local people and their community services, including food larder services and flexible approach to addressing community need. Substantial consultation is regularly carried out with existing/potential service-users, including an annual survey implemented and the community/other stakeholders, including other voluntary organisations, schools, higher-education providers, NHS and local councils, alongside regularly attending local community network and steering group meetings. They continually evaluate the community's evolving needs and take action to deliver additional or adjusted services to ensure their services/activities remain relevant to service-users, including priority groups.</p>	Score	5/5
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b></p> <p>More than 51 and up to 500 (86) residents benefit from their family, community and food services and it is clear includes some vulnerable/priority groups. Their services are accessed by majority of residents living in the parish whilst the remainder live in surrounding villages/towns. They provide a variety of services/activities that complement district council services. Officers note that whilst Berinsfield is the most vulnerably deprived neighbourhood, we are unable to increase the score to a four due to the number of residents benefitting.</p>	Score	3/5
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b></p> <p>N/A - no national organisation has applied.</p>	Score	0/1
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b></p> <p>The project theme selected is 'Thriving and healthy communities'. Clear and relevant response that addresses how the services/activities will provide better outcomes to the community at an excellent standard under the specific theme. Their excellent activities/services evidence reduced loneliness, isolation and enhanced community cohesion and can demonstrate how improved physical health and emotional wellbeing has impacted on their service-users.</p>	Score	4/5
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b></p> <p>Officers have awarded two additional points for strong evidence of partnership working and collaboration with local people and organisations to deliver relevant services/activities to an excellent standard. Examples of joint projects have been provided to deliver co-produced services/activities.</p>	Score	2/2
<p><b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p> <p>Financial consideration - Officers note the organisation's new 'Community Cafe' will become an active part of service delivery and although it will not generate any income initially, they will work towards it becoming financially self-sustaining over time. Since applying for this revenue grant, the council has provisionally awarded a £200,000 South Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) and awarded £75,000 South Capital 2024/25 grants towards the community cafe.</p>		
	<b>Total score</b>	<b>22/27</b>
<p><b>Non scoring officer comments</b></p> <p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation’s achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b></p> <p>There is evidence that climate action and nature is a routine part of the organisation’s workplan, for example, they have established a maternity library, community garden, and host a community larder. Through their plans for a new building in 2025, the Berin Centre will install solar panels which will help the organisation achieve net-zero carbon emissions. The organisation has attached an environmental policy, and combined with the examples evidenced within the application form, this shows a high-level commitment. They have included actions to build staff/volunteer knowledge and motivation to take climate action through increasing awareness of their roles and responsibilities, and they recognise the impact that climate breakdown will have on their operations.</p>		



<p><b>Oxfordshire Youth</b></p>	<p><b>Ref:</b> SRev25-27/49</p>
<p><b>Project name</b> Young Leaders and Transitions</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b> Oxfordshire Youth is Oxfordshire’s leading youth work charity. Our vision is of a future in which every young person has the skills, support and connections to thrive.</p> <p>We are a pioneering youth development charity dedicated to working directly with young people aged 8-25, and the grassroots leaders, volunteers, and organisations who support them. Our work helps young people at critical moments in their lives, to make positive choices and to support them to successfully transition into adulthood, prepared and motivated for further education, employment or training.</p> <p>Across Oxfordshire, we co-create and deliver youth work programmes that empower young people to develop essential life and leadership skills. We provide opportunities for marginalised young people to amplify their voices, actively participate in, and positively influence their communities.</p> <p>Our geographical focus is significant. Oxfordshire is well known for its affluence and world-class university, which contributes £132M a year to the local economy. However, the county includes seven areas falling into the ten per cent most deprived nationally and areas of Berinsfield and Didcot are among the 40 per cent most deprived nationally. (Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2021).</p> <p>Reaching over 26,000 young people every year, we champion youth work as a catalyst for individual and collective social change, and prioritise effective cross-sector partnership work in every aspect of our service design and delivery.</p> <p>Across South Oxfordshire we work with several grassroots organisations within Didcot, Berinsfield, Wallingford, Chinnor, Thame, Watlington and Cholsey. Our work here is essential, as communities, particularly in the wake of Covid19 and the cost of living crisis, require dedicated support to rebuild, access vital services and strengthen local resilience:</p> <p>In Didcot we have worked in partnership with St Birinus School and Aureus School to deliver our Transitions programme, and Didcot Train to deliver our Young Leaders programme.</p> <p>In Berinsfield we have worked with Youth Challenge Oxfordshire (YoCO) to deliver our Young Leaders programme.</p> <p>In Thame, we provide skilled support to the youth work team to expand their community offer to include street based youth work.</p> <p>In Chinnor, we have supported the parish council with a number of conversations towards the development of additional youth work provision in the context of a rapidly growing small rural village.</p> <p>In Wallingford, in collaboration with local community groups and the town and district councils, the team has supported the formation of a framework towards an expansion of</p>	

youth services and has led local public engagement to nurture a new generation of volunteers.

Our Young People's Supported Accommodation (YPSA) service in Didcot and Cholsey uses a trauma informed and youth work approach to providing 1-1 support and safe supported housing to 18-24 year olds. Over the last 12 months we have worked with seven young people in the South and Vale. These young people are at high risk of homelessness e.g. care leavers, unaccompanied young asylum seekers, young people recovering from substance misuse, family breakdown and the lasting effects of traumatic childhood experiences. Within South Oxfordshire we are currently supporting three young people in our safe supported housing, and a further four young people who have since moved into independent living. Since 2020 over 50 per cent of the young people entering our service who identified as NEET (not in employment, education or training) have since moved into employment, education or training.

**Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:**

Oxfordshire Youth is poised to launch two transformative youth development and leadership programs, collaborating with key organisations across South Oxfordshire to reach over 2,000 young people. This initiative will leverage the proven success of two impactful youth work programs, combining our expertise with local insights to equip young people with essential skills and knowledge and inspire them to actively shape healthy, thriving communities.

The Transitions and Young Leaders Programmes are specifically designed to tackle critical challenges facing young people in South Oxfordshire, including rural isolation and economical disadvantage, social isolation, rising anxiety and a shortage of leadership opportunities.

Transitions is a youth social action and school community cohesion initiative, upskilling cohorts of Year 7 and 8s in leadership and peer mentoring approaches. These cohorts go on to support schools to embed transitions activities for Year 6 students as they move into secondary school, helping them overcome the stress and isolation often felt during this period. Vulnerable groups, including students with Special Educational Needs (SEN), neurodiversity and those from diverse backgrounds, are at increased risk during this transition, and the existing school support systems are not adequately meeting their needs.

Our consultations with schools, parents and youth organisations in South Oxfordshire highlighted a lack of structured peer support systems to guide these students through the transition. Working in partnership with Didcot Train, we will deliver the Transitions programme to Didcot Girls School, St Birinus School, Aureus School and Wallingford School.

The Young Leaders Programme is a bespoke leadership programme which empowers young people aged 14-18 to become community leaders. The programme is a Level 2 Award in Leadership and Team Skills, and is accredited by The Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM). This qualification is the same level of learning as a GCSE. The programme is nationally recognised, and well regarded by employers, colleges and universities. The programme takes place over a two-day, two-night residential, where young people take part in activities while undertaking Leadership Workshops and completing a Log Book of their work. After the residential, young people return to their youth groups, communities, workplaces or schools and lead an activity or take responsibility for something new, which they then get feedback on.

Through leadership workshops and peer-mentoring roles, the programme equips young people with essential skills including time-management, presentation and public speaking, giving and receiving feedback, resolving conflict, overcoming limiting beliefs, communication, teamwork and problem-solving. This programme not only builds personal confidence but also fosters a sense of belonging and responsibility to their communities, addressing local concerns about youth disengagement. Leadership skills combined with a nationally recognised and esteemed qualification dramatically improve educational prospects and enhance career progression.

Both programmes take a flexible approach, working closely with local schools and youth clubs to adapt activities to the specific needs of each community. For example, in rural South Oxfordshire, students transitioning from small primary schools to large secondary schools require tailored support, while in more urban areas, the Young Leaders Programme may focus more on community outreach and social action.

**District reach:**

Berinsfield, Didcot North East, Didcot South, Didcot West, Cholsey, Benson and Crowmarsh, Wallingford, Thame

**Corporate Plan priority:**

Thriving and healthy communities

**Potential number of beneficiaries:**

1064

<b>Grant sought</b>	<b>2025/2026</b>	<b>2026/2027</b>
Amount requested for service/ activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£64,207	£66,822
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£131,029	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£437,069	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	15%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£44,621	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£34,621	

**Previous funding awarded:**

Not applicable.

Scoring		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>A detailed and realistic two-year plan relative to the organisation's size, demonstrating a balanced budget each year. Alongside the regular funding and fundraising activities, they also have a diverse range of income streams, including a large local authority contract to support the Young Power in Social Action (YPSA) programme and a recently launched Business Guardians Programme to foster long-term partnerships with local businesses and access corporate funding. They have enhanced their fundraising infrastructure by accessing free consultancy services which will enable them to plan and apply for longer-term, higher value grants from larger funding organisations.</p>	Score	5/5
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b></p> <p>Every financial year's budget has been negatively affected by Covid19 and Cost of Living factors with a clear explanation. They plan to improve efficiencies in core operating costs which will not impact the number of quality services/activities being provided to young people in the district. Officers note a concerning depletion of reserves over the three years that is not within the reserves policy.</p>	Score	1/4
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b></p> <p>Evidence demonstrates strong and clear indication of community need and flexible approach to addressing this. Their School Transitions and Young Leaders Programmes, residential trips and young people's supported accommodation services increase young people's health/wellbeing, upskilling and personal development potential. They regularly implement surveys, conduct focus groups and 1-1 interviews with their service users, including priority groups if the service/activities impact them and substantial consultation is regularly carried out with community organisations and other stakeholders, including local youth clubs, youth services organisations and schools, including pastoral and Special Educational Needs Coordinators.</p>	Score	5/5
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b></p> <p>Please note this is an Oxfordshire-based organisation and the number of beneficiaries has been calculated pro-rata for South Oxfordshire. More than 501 (1064) residents directly benefit from the services/activities, including a large proportion of 'vulnerable' young people. Participation in the services/activities improves health and wellbeing, skills development and reduces isolation, which will indirectly complement district council services.</p>	Score	5/5
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b></p> <p>N/A - no national organisation has applied</p>	Score	0/1
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b></p> <p>The project theme selected is 'Thriving and healthy communities'. Clear and relevant responses that addresses how their services/activities will provide better outcomes to the community at an excellent standard under the specific theme. Excellent case studies demonstrate clearly defined and positive impact on their service users and others, with peer mentoring and young leadership skills.</p>	Score	4/5
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b></p> <p>Officers have awarded two additional points as strong evidence of relevant partnership working with organisations has been provided to an excellent standard. Examples of joint projects have been provided to design and deliver co-produced</p>	Score	2/2

<p>services/activities with local secondary schools, South Oxfordshire-based youth focus/work groups and partnership working with other voluntary sector youth organisations, the Children's and Young People Forum and attending an annual mental health conference 'Youth in Mind' to support delivery of services.</p>		
<p><b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>		
<p>Financial considerations - According to their policy, Oxfordshire Youth will establish a level of reserves using the methodology outlined in the Charity Commission guidance. They state that the contribution to the charity reserves for 2022-23 was not achieved due to fundraising challenges in securing funding for their youth development programmes, as grant funder priorities shifted towards smaller charities. Oxfordshire Youth aim to increase their reserves target to £450,000 by 2026 and achieve long term financial stability. However at the end of year 2023/24, their free reserves did not meet their reserves policy.</p>		
	<p><b>Total score</b></p>	<p><b>22/27</b></p>
<p><b>Non scoring officer comments</b></p>		
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation’s achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b>                  The organisation has delivered minor activities that contribute to addressing the Climate Emergency. For example, they have an effective recycling scheme and encourage staff to use public transport where possible. They have stated their intention to produce an annual action plan. Officers would recommend the organisation starts to measure the carbon emissions of their operations to identify where carbon emissions and cost savings can be made. This will help create a medium-term plan to decarbonise their operations. They should also consider how climate change may impact their services and/or service users, and review options for how adaptations to their operations can be made. Visit <a href="https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction">https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction</a> for more ideas on actions to take or contact the council’s climate and biodiversity team <a href="mailto:climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk">climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk</a> for further support.</p>		

<b>Wallingford Family Centre</b>	<b>Ref: SRev25-27/20</b>
<p><b>Project name</b> Family Centre Staff</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b> Our organisation is dedicated to supporting families with young children in Wallingford and its surrounding areas, particularly those facing challenges such as ill health, disability, financial hardship, or other disadvantages. We offer a wide range of services and activities designed to provide relief, foster community connections, and promote well-being for both children and caregivers.</p> <p><b>Baby &amp; toddler group sessions</b> We create a safe and nurturing environment where young children can explore, learn, and develop through play, while caregivers can connect with one another and access additional support. These sessions encourage social bonds between families, offering a joyful space for children to thrive and for parents to find support.</p> <p><b>Swap shop</b> Our Swap Shop allows people to exchange gently used clothes, toys, and household items, promoting sustainability while ensuring that every household has access to the essential resources their children need. This initiative helps reduce waste and provides a cost-effective way for people to meet their needs.</p> <p><b>Food support</b> We understand that food insecurity is a significant challenge for many families, and we provide essential food support through donations and volunteer efforts. This program helps ease financial strain, ensuring that families have access to nutritious meals in times of need, all while maintaining dignity and community solidarity.</p> <p><b>Special Educational Needs (SEN) sessions</b> For children with Special Educational Needs, we offer tailored sessions that create a welcoming and inclusive environment. These sessions focus on celebrating our unique strengths and providing a space where they can participate fully, learn, and grow in a supportive community.</p> <p><b>Yoga for caregivers</b> Caregivers often face significant stress, and our yoga sessions offer them the opportunity to relax, practice mindfulness, and focus on their own well-being. This program helps promote mental and emotional health, equipping caregivers with the tools they need to support their families and preventing declining mental health.</p> <p><b>Special events and workshops</b> Throughout the year, we host special events and workshops that foster creativity, engagement, and community connection. These activities are designed to bring families together, offering quality time and fun experiences at little to - no cost, helping strengthen bonds within the community.</p> <p><b>Tuition program</b> Our tuition program is designed for children struggling academically and unable to access the support they need. This initiative offers sponsored tutoring services to children who face academic challenges due to circumstances beyond their control, such</p>	

as parents unable to provide support due to their own educational limitations. We aim to break the cycle of educational disadvantage by providing high-quality tutoring and personalised support, giving every child the opportunity to succeed.

**Christmas support**

In the run-up to Christmas, we provide gifts to families who may struggle to afford them, ensuring that every child and family can celebrate the holiday season, regardless of their financial situation. This effort is made possible through the kindness of community members and support from our sponsor, Hasbro.

**Additional Tailored Support**

We also offer tailored support to families in need, including food and clothing parcels. Our dedicated family workers and volunteers provide on-going assistance and signpost families to other local organisations when necessary, ensuring that no one in our community is left without the help they require.

Through our wide range of activities and initiatives, we provide essential resources, promote well-being, and create a strong sense of community. We aim to ensure that every family, regardless of their circumstances, feels supported, valued, and connected.

By continuously adapting and responding to the needs of our community, we strive to make a positive and lasting impact on the lives of the families we serve.

**Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:**

This grant proposal seeks funding for the administration, fundraising, and management of Wigod Way Wallingford Family Centre a crucial community resource serving over 750 families. Over the past five years, our family centre has experienced over 150 per cent increase in footfall, highlighting the growing need for the essential services we provide. Our programs include baby and toddler sessions, Special Educational Needs (SEN) support sessions, wellbeing initiatives, surplus food distribution, a community exchange and swap shop, and free holiday sessions.

We request funding to ensure the continued efficient operation of our service and upscaling when needed, helping us meet the growing demand. The grant will support staffing costs, program development, fundraising efforts, and centre management, enabling us to deliver comprehensive support to families in need.

Manager oversees daily operations, ensuring effective delivery of services and alignment with the centre's goals. Key responsibilities include:

- Program oversight: managing baby, toddler, SEN, wellbeing, and holiday sessions.
- Staff supervision: leading and supporting the staff and volunteer team.
- Operational management: handling centre needs, supplies, and schedule.
- Community engagement: building relationships with families, partners, and stakeholders.
- Monitoring and evaluation: tracking attendance and feedback to assess program success.
- Strategic planning: collaborating with leadership on long term goals.
- Budget management: managing financial resources responsibly.
- Compliance: ensuring health and safety and safeguarding standards are met.

Administrator

The Administrator ensures smooth day to day operations through administrative support. Key responsibilities include:

- Frontline support: acting as the first point of contact for families and visitors.
- Data management: maintaining accurate records for reporting and funding.
- Scheduling: managing session and event bookings.
- Communication: sending updates, newsletters, and reminders.
- Financial support: assisting with invoicing, petty cash, and expense tracking.
- Facilities coordination: organising maintenance and supplies.
- Volunteer coordination: supporting volunteer recruitment and management.

Fundraising Coordinator

The Fundraising Coordinator focuses on generating income to support the centre's programs. Key responsibilities include:

- Fundraising strategy: developing and executing fundraising campaigns.
- Grant writing: identifying funding opportunities and supporting with grant applications.
- Donor relations: Cultivating relationships with donors and supporters.
- Event Coordination: Planning and running fundraising events.
- Reporting: tracking donations and ensuring compliance with funders' requirements.

**District reach:**

Wallingford

**Corporate Plan priority:**

Thriving and healthy communities

**Potential number of beneficiaries:**

2708

Grant sought	2025/2026	2026/2027
Amount requested for services/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£16,000	£16,000
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£32,000	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£48,303	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	33%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No



<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£66,537	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£62,025	

**Previous funding awarded:**

- Councillor grants 2018-19 £758
- Volunteering Grant Scheme 2018-19 £485
- Councillor grants 2019-20 £850
- Everyone Active 2023-24 £960
- Councillor grants 2023-24 £1,408
- Everyone Active 2024-25 £960

<b>Scoring</b>		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>A funding plan relative to the organisation's size, covering the required two year period, with a budget deficit in 2026/27. However, there is some reliance on certain income streams.</p>	<b>Score</b>	2/5
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b></p> <p>All financial years have balanced budgets showing surpluses, each year shows an increase in both income and expenditure, despite the organisation struggling due to Covid19 and the Cost of Living crisis. Officers note some growth in reserves over the three years.</p>	<b>Score</b>	4/4
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b></p> <p>Evidence demonstrates a strong indication of community need as a result of cuts to early childhood provision. Flexible approach to community need in their free offerings support a high number of families and the centre serves a number of priority groups including isolated young families, economically disadvantaged and those with disabilities. Regular and substantial consultation has been carried out with existing service-users in feedback surveys following sessions and for all new families and potential service users (schools), as well as local stakeholders such as midwives and health visitors. Evidence demonstrates how this consultation has shaped the classes and activities the centre provides, with service-users participating in creating new service provision such as their 'Swap Shop' and collaboration with local stakeholders to expand the services they can provide to centre-users. They clearly demonstrate how different groups needs have been used to design their activities.</p>	<b>Score</b>	5/5
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b></p> <p>More than 501 residents supported (2,708) and a large number of these come from priority groups. The services they provide complement services provided by Oxfordshire County Council, such as support for children with special education needs. Support for families struggling financially will complement district council services, such as the work in the Community Hub.</p>	<b>Score</b>	5/5
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b></p> <p>N/A - No national organisation has applied.</p>	<b>Score</b>	0/1
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b></p> <p>The project theme selected is 'Thriving and healthy communities'. The organisation has provided a clear breakdown of defined outcomes that they intend service users to achieve through using their services and these are clearly linked back to</p>	<b>Score</b>	4/5

<p>supporting thriving and healthy communities. The centre’s focus on providing free support to struggling young families to support their mental and physical health, supports the growth of resilient and healthy families in the district. However, they have not shown this to be innovative in approach nor sharing learning, so four points has been awarded.</p>		
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b>          Officers have awarded an additional point for evidence that the organisation works in collaboration with relevant partners, such a schools, libraries and individuals to deliver activities.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>1/2</p>
<p><b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>		
<p>Not applicable.</p>		
<p><b>Total score</b></p>		<p><b>21/27</b></p>
<p><b>Non scoring officer comments</b></p>		
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation’s achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b>          The organisation has implemented multiple events, activities or services that contribute to addressing the Climate Emergency and have adopted a simple sustainability/climate action policy/statement for the organisation. They have provided good examples of actions they have carried out, such as organising swap shops and having a clothing recycle bin on site. Sessions include a focus on the importance of nature and sustainability. Officers would recommend the organisation starts to measure the carbon emissions of their operations to identify where carbon emissions and cost savings can be made. This will help create a medium-term plan with clear target to decarbonise their operations. They should also consider how climate change may impact their services and/or service-users, and review options for how adaptations to their operations can be made. Visit <a href="https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction">https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction</a> for more ideas on actions to take or contact the council’s climate and biodiversity team <a href="mailto:climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk">climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk</a> for further support.</p>		

<p><b>Didcot TRAIN - Inspiring Young People</b></p>	<p><b>Ref: SRev25-27/46</b></p>
<p><b>Project name</b> Core Cost</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b> Didcot TRAIN - Inspiring Young People provides the young people (YP) Didcot and Wallingford and their immediate surroundings with support with addressing the multiple challenges they face, which in post pandemic era is increasingly focused upon mental health and resilience, building self-esteem, providing opportunities to gainfully and positively use their time constructively, avoid being drawn into dangerous and risky undertaking's and helping them to recognise and access the full range of choices they have for how they lead their lives.</p> <p>As a consequence the wider resident community benefits through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in crime and the fear of crime at the hands of its YP.</li> <li>• Means for the whole community to recognise its YP can have a positive impact on the community's civic pride and identity and helping its disadvantaged YP to be empowered to take part in the current growth in self-confidence and civic pride of Didcot.</li> <li>• YP engagement which helps them find their voice and make their contribution towards shaping and integration into the garden town ethos and culture.</li> <li>• In terms of ambition we underpin the breadth and depth of our work by.</li> <li>• Growing by broadening out our offering to encompass Didcot's secondary and primary schools so that we can ultimately have a presence in them all. We tailor our delivery as necessary to meet the different needs of each of the schools.</li> <li>• Maintaining current and developing new sustainable sources of income to enable us to grow to meet increasing needs as Didcot develops and grows in size and complexity as a community.</li> <li>• Encouraging and inspiring our YP to aspire to increased levels of achievement and positive life pathways.</li> <li>• Do more inter-generational activities to have a bigger integration and impact on the community.</li> <li>• Develop even stronger relationships with those organisations we currently signpost young people to.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b> With this grant, we aim to continue and expand TRAIN's services that provide vital support and opportunities for young people across three levels of youth work: universal access, targeted support, and focused interventions. These services operate in Didcot and Wallingford, supporting over 500 of the most vulnerable young people in our community each year.</p> <p><b>Level 1: Universal Access</b> Our open-access Youth Club, which operates four times a week, provides a safe, welcoming environment where young people can socialise, enjoy activities, and seek informal support. We serve snacks and drinks, and youth workers are on hand for chats and guidance. Last year, we engaged over 320 young people at Youth Club, where we create opportunities for informal education and access to sexual health advice through the C-Card scheme. Additionally, our Year 5/6 Youth Club helps bridge the transition from primary to secondary school, offering tailored activities and a warm, supportive</p>	

environment. The grant would also fund weekly sports sessions, which have been instrumental in promoting physical health and team-building skills among attendees.

**Level 2: Focused Support**

Our Detached and Outreach team takes support directly to young people in their own spaces - town centres, parks, and skate parks - building trust and providing an immediate safety net when it's needed most. We have expanded our outreach to neighbouring communities, including Wallingford, where we engage with young people, offering support and guidance on their terms.

This funding would support these outreach efforts and help ensure we can continue to meet young people where they are, creating strong connections and intervening early in crises.

The grant will also support our Holiday Programmes, designed to engage young people in positive activities during school breaks, providing alternatives to boredom or negative influences. With trips to places like ice skating, Wet and Wild, and Thorpe Park, these outings help young people build confidence, try new things, and develop positive relationships with both peers and youth workers.

**Level 3: Targeted Intervention**

Our 1:1 mentoring programme, which last year reached 19 young people, offers personalised support for those experiencing significant challenges like emotional distress or antisocial behavior. The programme encourages self-reflection, resilience, and positive decision-making skills. Similarly, our Primary Group Mentoring provides structured support to younger children, addressing mental health and building self-esteem. We also recently launched Safer Streets, an impactful initiative aimed at reducing violence against women and girls by challenging harmful attitudes and promoting respect. The pilot program was a success, and we plan to expand it with this grant's help. Participation is another of our targeted programmes which supports young people in leadership development and citizenship activities.

These services build upon each other. Our universal access programmes introduce us to young people, and we might then assess them as needing further support, so we refer them to a deeper level of engagement, for example, holiday programmes or mentoring. Together these services ensure every young person in our community has a place to turn to, a supportive network to rely on, and access to the guidance and resources.

**District reach:**

Didcot North East, Didcot South, Didcot West, Wallingford, Other – we also cover the immediate surroundings of Didcot.

**Corporate Plan priority:**

Thriving and healthy communities

**Potential number of beneficiaries:**

721

Grant sought	2025/2026	2026/2027
Amount requested for service/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£32,500	£32,666
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£65,166	

Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£197,475	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	16%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£225,586	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£125,586	

**Previous funding awarded:**

- Revenue 2022-24 £25,148
- Capital 2022-23 £4,534
- Revenue 2024-25 £12,574

<b>Scoring</b>		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>A detailed two-year plan relative to the organisation's size, demonstrating a balanced budget and an increase in services each year. Officers note some reliance on grants, however this covers a diverse array of grants funding and there is clear intention towards more sustainable and balanced income streams.</p>	<b>Score</b>	4/5
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b></p> <p>Some but not all financial years have balanced budgets. Officers note they received a large legacy in 2023 which had a positive impact on their financial position and their long term sustainability. Their reserves policy has some depletion but this is still within their reserves parameters.</p>	<b>Score</b>	3/4
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b></p> <p>Evidence demonstrates a strong and clear indication of community need, shown through reports on the areas they work in, and flexible approach to addressing community need. Evidence indicates consultation is regularly carried out with the existing TRAIN users and potential service users (pupils at local schools) and other stakeholders (standing meetings with Police and Schools). Clear that priority groups/vulnerable people are at the heart of the improving service design and delivery in their Believe Achieve Support and Educate (BASE) council.</p>	<b>Score</b>	4/5
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b></p> <p>More than 501 residents (721) benefit from the services and includes a large proportion of economically disadvantaged residents. Detailed how their activities already support council services as Oxfordshire County Council have been able to reduce their youth provision in Didcot, where they focus their services on. Organisation complements district council's work on Community Safety Partnership by focusing on reducing anti-social behaviour.</p>	<b>Score</b>	5/5
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b></p> <p>N/A - No national organisation has applied.</p>	<b>Score</b>	0/1

<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b>                  The project theme selected is 'Thriving and healthy communities'. The organisation demonstrates an excellent commitment to contribute to thriving and healthy communities as a routine part of the organisation's business plan and culture, with the aim of supporting the mental health of young people whilst reducing anti-social behaviour. Clear description and evidence of measurable outcomes to monitor the organisations activities and supports a large number of young people and their families from disadvantaged backgrounds. Aims for reduction in anti-social behaviour which has a beneficial impact on wider community and increased community safety.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>4/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b>                  Officers have awarded an extra point for the organisations collaboration with other organisations, such as Abingdon Bridge and SOFEA and is part of the Didcot Wellbeing Web, to a good standard.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>1/2</p>
<p><b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>		
<p>Not applicable.</p>		
<p><b>Total score</b></p>		<p><b>21/27</b></p>
<p><b>Non scoring officer comments</b></p>		
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation's achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b>                  The organisation has given some consideration into possible actions that address the Climate Emergency. They have not attached a climate policy/statement or action plan to their application, and there is limited evidence of actions undertaken. Officers would recommend the organisation starts their journey by measuring the carbon emissions of their operations to identify where carbon emissions and cost savings can be made. They should also consider how climate change may impact their services and/or service-users, and review options for how adaptations to their operations can be made. Visit <a href="https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction">https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction</a> for more ideas on how to get started or contact the council's climate and biodiversity team <a href="mailto:climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk">climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk</a> for further support.</p>		

<p><b>Wild Oxfordshire</b></p>	<p><b>Ref: SRev25-27/44</b></p>
<p><b>Project name</b> Community Ecology and Partnerships programmes</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b> Wild Oxfordshire is a local charity which provides a co-ordinated and strategic approach to nature conservation in Oxfordshire. Through providing support and encouraging governments, individuals, communities and organisations to work together, Wild Oxfordshire is the catalyst for solutions and critical partnerships that benefit people and wildlife within our rich and vibrant county.</p> <p>Our Community Ecology Programme, one of Wild Oxfordshire’s flagship services, supports volunteer community groups, inspiring and empowering them to effectively conserve nature in their local area. We also provide advice and support to parish councils who are interested in how they can help with nature recovery in Oxfordshire. Wild Oxfordshire is the only organisation in the County providing free and onsite bespoke ecological advice on habitat management and creation, engagement with nature recovery and help to identify sources of funding to support community groups. This advice will become even more critical once the new Local Nature Recovery Strategy is in place across the County and implementation begins.</p> <p>Through the work of our Partnerships Programme, Wild Oxfordshire is well recognised for our role in convening a myriad of stakeholders – including government agencies, charities, local communities, farmers, landowners and business – to engage, inspire and take action for nature, climate and people. For more than 30 years we have helped to increase the effectiveness of how these groups and people work which has multiplying benefits for nature.</p>	
<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b> We are seeking funding to deliver our Community Ecology and Partnerships programmes in South Oxfordshire, including funding for staff time.</p> <p>Our staff will deliver the following to amplify benefits for people and nature across South Oxfordshire and build on our existing work in these areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitating and inspiring action through bespoke community ecology advice that supports communities across the County to plan for and take direct action in the local area. Wild Oxfordshire is the only organisation in the County providing free and onsite expert ecological advice to community groups.</li> <li>• Facilitating various courses and workshops for residents, including on nature positive business, hedgerow planting and management, plant identification, bat surveying, reptile identification and much more.</li> <li>• Engaging in community events, fairs, galas, walks and more throughout the year to connect and talk directly with people about Oxfordshire’s biodiversity and how they can take action.</li> <li>• Provide expert advice and support as part of the steering group and the sub-working group on data and evidence to develop the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.</li> </ul>	

- Organising the annual Local Environment Groups' Conference which supports knowledge and skills sharing across environment groups in the County – 60 people signed up to the most recent event.
- Facilitating a series of regular networking, support, and knowledge-exchange round tables with those working on nature conservation (Conservation Target Areas Leads), in policy (Biodiversity Action Group), and with communities.
- Hosting a series of tailored communication materials that will directly engage and support community groups in South Oxfordshire.
- Fundraising, accounting and Human Resources efforts to support the two programmes.

**District reach:**

All areas

**Corporate Plan priority:**

Action on climate change and nature recovery

**Potential number of beneficiaries:**

516

<b>Grant sought</b>	<b>2025/2026</b>	<b>2026/2027</b>
Amount requested for service/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£27,215	£28,575
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£55,790	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£142,486	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	20%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£218,673	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£218,673	

**Previous funding awarded:**

- Revenue 2022-24 £13,035
- Councillor grants 2021-22 £4,550
- Councillor grants 2022-23 R2 £953
- Revenue 2024-25 £6,517



Scoring		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>A detailed and realistic two-year funding plan demonstrating a balanced budget each year. Although they have some reliance on certain income streams, they are now focussing on more long-term partnership project income with others in the sector and working with businesses to support their nature recovery practices and fulfilling their 'Corporate Social Responsibilities' (CSR). A new 'tracker' software is also in place as a central funding hub to help manage their fundraising plans in the future.</p>	Score	4/5
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b></p> <p>Some but not all financial years' budgets have been negatively affected by the Covid19 pandemic, explaining that a number of reliable income streams changed their funding criteria and priorities to other health and social sectors. However this does not appear to have resulted in a reduction of their services/activities and officers note a growth in reserves.</p>	Score	3/4
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b></p> <p>Evidence demonstrates some indication of community need, by providing information and expertise to community groups and schools to deliver biodiversity projects and connecting people with nature in the local area. Their engagement tracker collates the varied forms of reactive engagement, demonstrating expert advice organisations receive through their Community Ecology Programme. Officers note the applicant considers consultation is inherent in this work, though unfortunately no evidence was provided. They have started to capture feedback through an online form and undertake storytelling evaluation for more in depth experiences of their service-users. Alongside holding two long established partnership groups.</p>	Score	2/5
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b></p> <p>More than 501 (516) residents benefit from the services/activities, including improved local green spaces and increased biodiversity/nature recovery across the district. They receive referrals from the council to support community groups with nature projects, therefore the services/activities they provide complements district council services.</p>	Score	5/5
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b></p> <p>N/A - no national organisation has applied.</p>	Score	0/1
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b></p> <p>The project theme selected is 'Action on climate change and nature recovery'. The organisation has shown an excellent commitment to the climate and nature emergency as a routine part of the organisation's business plan. They have provided outstanding examples of how they engage communities in conserving and enhancing nature, providing community groups, town and parish councils and landowners with the knowledge to manage land for nature.</p>	Score	5/5
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b></p> <p>Officers have awarded two additional points as through this service, and via partnerships with organisations such as Oxfordshire Local Natural Partnership, Community First Oxfordshire and Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT), as well as their involvement in developing the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Oxfordshire, Wild Oxfordshire promotes district and county-wide engagement in restoration of the natural world.</p>	Score	2/2

<b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b>		
Not applicable.		
	<b>Total score</b>	<b>21/27</b>
<b>Non scoring officer comments</b>		
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation’s achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b></p> <p>Climate action and nature recovery are a fundamental part of the organisation’s strategy and programmes, and have a sustainability and nature policy showing a high-level commitment by the organisation. They have not provided evidence of a forward plan for the organisation to decarbonise their operations such as an energy audit of their premises, if relevant, but have included many examples of actions to build staff/volunteer understanding, as well as increased knowledge within the community to take action for nature's recovery. There is clear evidence of wider engagement with partners on sustainability programmes in the community and contributions to county level strategies. Officers would recommend a more detailed medium term plan to measure and monitor their direct emissions and plan to decarbonise any office buildings.</p>		

<p><b>My Life My Choice</b></p>	<p><b>Ref: SRev25-27/12</b></p>
<p><b>Project name</b> MLMC in South Oxfordshire</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b> My Life My Choice (MLMC) is a charity run for and by adults with a learning disability in Oxfordshire. The charity is 100 per cent user-led with all 15 trustees, elected annually by the membership, having a learning disability.</p> <p>MLMC currently supports 827 members with a learning disability, including 114 whom are residents of South Oxfordshire, to experience fuller and more active lives by facilitating social events, training, paid employment, volunteering, campaigning, opportunities to lead (e.g. as trustees) and self-advocacy. Our South Oxfordshire membership is steadily growing (30 per cent increase since January 2022) and becoming more and more engaged. We want to continue this trend and a grant from SODC will be of significant help towards this.</p> <p>Our South Oxfordshire members, their family carers, and support organisations (e.g. Style Acre, SOFEA) can and do benefit from all of our activities. There is also specific monthly self-advocacy groups operated in Didcot.</p>	
<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b> We are applying for a contribution towards supporting 114 South Oxfordshire residents to have the opportunity to benefit from all of the charity's activities as outlined below. Our South Oxfordshire membership is steadily growing (30 per cent increase since January 2022) and becoming more and more engaged. We want to continue this trend and a grant from SODC will be of significant help towards this.</p> <p><b>Activities/services:-</b></p> <p><b>Gig buddy:</b> pairs a person with a learning disability, who may be experiencing loneliness with someone who has similar interests, so that they can get out and enjoy activities together, from day-trips, gigs, theatre trips or simply a regular chat. Alongside these pairings, MLMC runs monthly group socials and activities (user-led nightclub, walking club, phone buddy, bowling etc.) that bring people together. A recent award of £436,025 over 5 years from The National Lottery Community Fund will ensure this project thrives.</p> <p><b>Computer buddy:</b> our digital inclusion project. Free devices are provided along with in person support in the form of both workshops and one to one sessions. This project was recognised at the prestigious 2023 Charity Awards, where we won top prize in the Disability category. Judge XXXX (Director of digital development for the Royal Shakespeare Company) said that it was a “really practical and supportive digital inclusion project, straightforward in its purpose and outcomes, which could be rolled out further in the future”.</p> <p><b>Champions:</b> provides a campaigning platform to people so often left out of our national dialogue. Campaigners with a learning disability speak up and act as consultants on local and national issues which affect their community, in order to direct policy and good practice.</p> <p><b>Self-advocacy groups:</b> support 217 unique members across the county to meet friends, discuss their lives and gain new knowledge and skills. A specific monthly group with 15 attendees operates in Didcot.</p>	

**The travel buddy scheme:** operates throughout Oxfordshire and has enabled people with a learning disability to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence in travelling independently via public transport, bicycle or on foot using a peer mentoring ‘buddy’ system. A paid trainer with a learning disability teaches another member to travel on a regular route, with support from MLMC.

The Rank Foundation helped us develop a franchise product of this project as well as a marketing film which was a winner of a national Smiley Charity Film Award 2023. A three-year £245,908 grant from the Motability Foundation will see this project grow during 2024-26.

**Professional services:** paid members train their peers, inspect services, conduct research, produce films and raise awareness with professionals such as NHS England and The British Association for Social Workers. Forty-three of our members engage in paid freelance work earning £30,000+ annually. The project is financially self-sustaining.

**Monthly mailout:** a hard copy Easy Read accessible newsletter that is sent to all MLMC members which contains the latest MLMC news, opportunities, health and social care advice (including benefits), and activities.

**District reach:**

All areas

**Corporate Plan priority:**

Thriving and healthy communities

**Potential number of beneficiaries:**

114

<b>Grant sought</b>	<b>2025/2026</b>	<b>2026/2027</b>
Amount requested for services/ activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£20,040	£20,441
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£40,481	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£108,474	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	19%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£483,200	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£410,000	

<b>Scoring</b>		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>A funding plan covering the required two-year period. There is clear movement towards more sustainable and balanced income streams spread over numerous different grants, with evidence to reduce budget deficits.</p>	<b>Score</b>	3/5
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b></p> <p>Some but not all financial years' budgets affected by Covid19 and Cost of Living with evidence to explain and an overall increase in services/activities. Has a reserves policy with some depletion but still within reserves parameters.</p>	<b>Score</b>	3/4
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b></p> <p>Evidence demonstrates a strong and clear indication of community need, and flexible approach to addressing this. Clear that the organisation puts service users at the heart of what it does and is led by the experiences of those with learning difficulties. Evidence indicates that consultation is regularly carried out with both existing and potential service users and other stakeholders, in bi-annual steering groups and regular focus groups with service users and stakeholders. Evidence that MLMC is a leader in its 100 percent user-led approach and that inclusion is a strong aspect of the organisation's culture.</p>	<b>Score</b>	4/5
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b></p> <p>Please note this is an Oxfordshire based organisation and the number of beneficiaries has been calculated pro-rata for South Oxfordshire. More than 51 and up to 500 residents (114) from a priority group of those with disabilities and those with impairments. Services complement County Council support from Adult Social Care and other district council services by increasing confidence and independence of service users.</p>	<b>Score</b>	3/5
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b></p> <p>N/A - No national organisation has applied.</p>	<b>Score</b>	0/1
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b></p> <p>The project theme selected is 'Thriving and healthy communities'. The organisation demonstrates an excellent commitment to contributing to thriving and healthy communities. This supports both disabled people directly and also has positive impacts on societies perception of those with disabilities, increasing social cohesion and inclusion. They clearly plan programmes to meet a set of intended outcomes and can demonstrate the impact on participants. They have also provided evidence to show how their services/activities are innovative in their approach to solving challenges by being 100 per cent user-led and all trustees being those with disabilities. They are currently sharing their experience with other organisations to influence change.</p>	<b>Score</b>	5/5
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b></p> <p>Officers have awarded two additional points for the organisations strong partnership working, which goes beyond merely partnering with other organisations but offering professional service support to ensure those with disabilities are included and able to access other organisations.</p>	<b>Score</b>	2/2
<b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b>		
Not applicable.		

	<b>Total score</b>	<b>20/27</b>
<b>Non scoring officer comments</b>		
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation’s achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b></p> <p>The organisation has implemented multiple activities and/or services that contribute to addressing the Climate Emergency and have adopted a simple sustainability/climate action policy/statement for the organisation. They have provided good examples of actions they have carried out such as providing a cycle to work scheme and encouraging their service users to choose sustainable transport options. Officers would recommend the organisation starts to measure the carbon emissions of their operations to identify where carbon emissions and cost savings can be made. This will help create a medium-term plan with clear target to decarbonise their operations. They should also consider how climate change may impact their services and/or service users, and review options for how adaptations to their operations can be made. Visit <a href="https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction">https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction</a> for more ideas on actions to take or contact the council’s climate and biodiversity team <a href="mailto:climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk">climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk</a> for further support.</p>		

<p><b>MyVision Oxfordshire</b></p>	<p><b>Ref:</b> SRev25-27/15</p>
<p><b>Project name</b> Community Engagement Project</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b> MyVision Oxfordshire offers free information, advice, and support to blind and visually impaired adults and children across Oxfordshire. Although our services are available to anyone living across the county we do have a Community Engagement Worker based in South Oxfordshire who provides services specifically for clients living in the district.</p> <p>These services include Social Groups in Didcot, Henley, Wheatley, Wallingford, and Thame where clients from these areas and surrounding villages join us on a regular basis. We also run an award winning, Green Walks group in Didcot - this has the aim of supporting blind and visually impaired people to get out and about, enabling them to access green spaces in their local communities. This project is evidence based and created in collaboration with University of Oxford, Oxfordshire County Council, and Natural England.</p> <p>We also host Get Connected workshops in the district. The purpose of the workshops is to support visually impaired people to get online and access technology in order to improve independence and reduce isolation.</p>	
<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b> Navigating a world designed by sighted people is not easy when you have a visual impairment. MyVision Oxfordshire provides the estimated 24,000 blind and visually impaired people across the county with services, support, tools, and skills they need to make everyday life and tasks easier.</p> <p>Due to how difficult travel can be for many people with a visual impairment, not everyone is able to make the journey to our Resource Centre in Oxford to access our Information, Advice and Equipment Service in person. Transport is a major issue for many blind and visually impaired people. We try our best to provide support online and over the phone, but often it is easier to provide services, support, and training in person. To address this, we launched our Community Engagement Project in 2022 – which takes our services out into the community. As Oxfordshire is such a large county, we were unable to launch this service countywide from the offset. Initially the project was piloted in Oxford City and South Oxfordshire, before moving into Vale of White Horse the following year. We recently recruited a Community Engagement worker who is taking the project into Oxfordshire’s final two districts – Cherwell and West Oxfordshire.</p> <p>By taking MyVision’s services out into the community we can support people who are unable to come to our Resource Centre in Oxford, and therefore reach those who most need our support to increase their independence and improve their wellbeing. We want to use our Resource Centre as a hub and base for MyVision, whilst also reaching out into the community and being active where people live. Our service in South Oxfordshire is now well established and our Community Engagement Worker in the district, XXXX, has made a huge impact in the area. The service provides advice, information, and guidance specific to sight loss, within the community and individuals’ homes, and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicated information days at local libraries and community centres across each district.</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation and support of social gatherings in local coffee shops and community centres, providing peer-to-peer support.</li> <li>• Visiting clients within their home, for those who cannot attend a local information day.</li> <li>• Founding and supporting befriending partnerships with assistance from our Volunteer Coordinator.</li> <li>• Providing Visual Impairment Awareness Training to local community groups and organisations.</li> <li>• Working with other organisations to ensure joined up support is provided.</li> </ul>
<b>District reach:</b> All areas
<b>Corporate Plan priority:</b> Thriving and healthy communities
<b>Potential number of beneficiaries:</b> 1104

Grant sought	2025/2026	2026/2027
Amount requested for service/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£39,144	£43,059
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£82,203 – reduced to £65,208.	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£97,822	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	42%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? Yes
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£921,000	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£408,000	

**Previous funding awarded:**

- Revenue 2017-21 £27,500
- Revenue 2022-24 £26,228
- Councillor grants 2022-23 £2,100
- Revenue 2024-2025 £13,114

<b>Scoring</b>		
<b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b>	<b>Score</b>	2/5



<p>A funding plan covering the required two year period. Although a deficit budget is forecast for both years, they anticipate an increase in donation income as a result of the recruitment of a community fundraiser. However, there is some reliance on certain income streams and small gaps in funding.</p>		
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b> All financial years have balanced budgets showing both an increase in services/activities and income and officers note some growth in reserves.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>4/4</p>
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b> Evidence demonstrates a strong and clear indication of community need. Examples have been given showing a flexible, responsive approach to service planning and delivery with visually impaired residents at the heart of service improvements. Consultation is regularly carried out with existing and potential service users via informal discussions during groups and sessions, and a formal feedback form. The findings of a stakeholder survey have informed the organisation's five-year plan.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>4/5</p>
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b> Please note this is an Oxfordshire-based organisation and the number of beneficiaries has been calculated pro-rata for South Oxfordshire. More than 501 residents (1104) benefit from MyVision's services and this includes a large proportion of 'vulnerable' residents. Their community engagement project is for anyone with a visual impairment as well as indirectly supporting their family, friends and carers. Officers note they provide services that complement the Oxfordshire County Council Visual Impairment Team.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>4/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b> N/A - No national organisation has applied.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>0/1</p>
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b> The project theme selected is 'Thriving and healthy communities'. Clear, relevant and well-detailed responses that addresses how their community engagement project will provide better outcomes to the community. Excellent examples have been provided demonstrating how their service(s) promotes independence and less dependence on health and social care services; increases confidence, reduces loneliness and isolation, and improves mental and physical health.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>4/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b> Officers have added an additional two points as there is strong evidence of relevant partnership working with local community venues and spaces to deliver their services/activities, as well as collaborating with statutory and voluntary organisations to provide support.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>2/2</p>
<p><b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>		
<p>Not applicable.</p>		
	<p><b>Total score</b></p>	<p><b>20/27</b></p>
<p><b>Non scoring officer comments</b></p>		
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation's achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b> There is evidence that climate action and nature is a routine part of the organisation's workplan, and have a sustainability/climate policy showing a high-level commitment by the organisation to achieve net-zero. A carbon and energy assessment of their premises has been undertaken and some of the recommendations implemented, including fitting new double glazed windows and solar panels. The environmental impact policy commits to supporting clients to reduce their environmental impact. Officers would recommend that the organisation considers</p>		

how they can further clients to cope with the impacts of climate change, for example more frequent heatwaves.

<b>Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire</b>	<b>Ref:</b> SRev25-27/16
<b>Project name</b> Home-Start - Supporting Families to Create Better Futures	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b>  Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire supports vulnerable families, who have at least one child aged five years or under (though may have older children too), across the South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District areas of Oxfordshire. Families we support may be trying to cope with mental health difficulties, financial pressures, low self-esteem, language barriers, or long-term poor health or disability. Some may have experienced a major life crisis, such as bereavement or family breakdown. Many families, perhaps having been rehoused, are living in new locations and are isolated with no support network around them. We work with parents because they hold the key to giving their children the best start in life. We're there for parents when they need us most and by supporting parents to build strong, happy families we improve outcomes for children.</p> <p>We offer emotional and practical support to families via:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• our trained home-visiting volunteers who visit families in their own homes every week for 2-3 hours to support them in the ways they need</li> <li>• our two-weekly parent and baby/child support groups</li> <li>• our skilled Family Support Worker who provides tailored 1-to-1 support to families with more complex needs.</li> </ul> <p>We have a small team of paid staff, based in our office on the first floor of Didcot Library.</p>	
<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b>  We would like this grant to fund our support services, which are available to families who have at least one child aged five years or under, across the South Oxfordshire area.</p> <p><b>Home-Visiting Volunteer Support:</b> Through our established home-visiting service, we recruit and train volunteers who are matched with families who have at least one child aged five years or under. Our volunteers visit families in their own homes, weekly for 2-3 hours, to help parents and children in the ways they need. Our volunteers may be the only person these children see (outside their family) each week. This peer support aims to help improve mental wellbeing, increase the parent's confidence in parenting and connect them to other services in their area so they feel less isolated. Our volunteers are also there to support the child's early learning, emotional and physical development. This service is unique to the area, with no other organisation providing this type of service.</p> <p><b>Groups:</b> We run two weekly parent and child support groups in Didcot - our Home-Start Baby &amp; Me group, which is a drop-in session open to all who have a baby aged 15 months or under, and our Home-Start Parenting Group, which is an invite-only smaller group for parents and children who would struggle to attend a larger group. These nurturing groups help parents to meet other local parents and share experiences, get support from our Group Workers and provide safe environments for children to explore a stimulating range of toys and socialise with other children. At our drop-in group we have a monthly twins session and regular speakers. Our invite-only group has tailored support to help parents cope with the challenges they face, increase their confidence and empower them to be more involved in their child's development. Children at this group also benefit from 'rhyme time' and join in a healthy eating snack time at a table.</p>	

**1-to-1 support:** We have a paid highly-skilled Family Support Worker who provides 1-to-1 support for families with more complex needs. They are trained to deliver Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and the Family Links Nurturing programme. Over the last six years we have provided this support to armed forces families, but since July 2024 we have opened this up to any family.

This work centres on mental health, low self-esteem, isolation and parenting. We are able to provide both 'rapid response' and 'extended input' intensive support. Mental ill-health has a far-reaching impact on the way life is dealt with, what a person can cope with, and on the family as a whole. We have found poor mental health has also had an effect on parents' confidence in parenting, their bond with their children, and doubts about their ability to deal with, and teach, their children. The support offered is very varied and includes both emotional and practical support, providing lifelong strategies to enable parents to handle challenges they may be facing.

Informed, confidential and non-judgemental, we have proven track record of transforming lives for over 35 years.

**District reach:**

Haseley Brook, Chinnor, Watlington, Chalgrove, Berinsfield, Sandford and the Wittenhams, Didcot North East, Didcot South, Didcot West, Cholsey, Benson and Crowmarsh, Wallingford, Goring, Kidmore End and Whitchurch, Sonning Common, Woodcote and Rotherfield, Henley-on-Thames, Thame

**Corporate Plan priority:**

Thriving and healthy communities

**Potential number of beneficiaries:**

300

<b>Grant sought</b>	<b>2025/2026</b>	<b>2026/2027</b>
Amount requested for service/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£25,000	£25,000
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£50,000	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£119,667	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	21%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£135,661	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£94,661	

**Previous funding awarded:**

- Revenue 2017-21 £72,890
- Councillor grants 2019-20 £295
- Covid Recovery £13,975
- Revenue 2022-24 £16,454
- Councillor grants 2022-23 £1,850
- Revenue 2024-25 £8,227

<b>Scoring</b>		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>A detailed and realistic funding plan relative to the organisation's size, demonstrating a balanced budget each year. However, there is a specific reliance on income from grants, donations and fundraising.</p>	<b>Score</b>	4/5
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b></p> <p>Some but not all financial budgets affected by Covid19, Cost of Living or other factors with evidence to explain. They state that they have maintained their level of service. The reserves policy shows some depletion in the last three years but it is still within the reserves parameters.</p>	<b>Score</b>	3/4
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b></p> <p>Evidence demonstrates strong and clear indication of community need. The increasing demand for support for young families is clearly explained. Consultation is regularly carried out with existing service users via assessments, weekly diary sheets, questionnaires and supervisions. There is a flexible approach to addressing community need, in particular to engaging vulnerable families in the community who could potentially benefit from their service. Young families are clearly at the heart of improving service delivery and Home Start's support is altered accordingly.</p>	<b>Score</b>	4/5
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b></p> <p>More than 51 and up to 500 residents (300) benefit from the service and it is clear this includes some vulnerable/ priority groups. Young families who feel isolated, economically disadvantaged and refugees, as well as those with mental health issues and individuals experiencing domestic abuse benefit from Home Start's services. It provides a service that complements district council services by signposting to initiatives such as YouMove.</p>	<b>Score</b>	3/5
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b></p> <p>N/A - No national organisation has applied.</p>	<b>Score</b>	0/1
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b></p> <p>The project theme selected is 'Thriving and healthy communities'. A clear and relevant response that addresses how the services/activities will provide better outcomes to the community at an excellent standard under the specific theme. Their activities/services evidence outcomes such as reduced isolation, increased self-esteem, confidence and resilience, and the development of positive relationships between parent and child. They collect quantitative and qualitative data to demonstrate outcomes. They monitor and measure progress from the start to the end of their support, which enables progress of the family ('journey of change') to be tracked.</p>	<b>Score</b>	4/5
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-</b></p>	<b>Score</b>	2/2

<p><b>production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b></p> <p>Officers have added two additional points as there is strong evidence of relevant partnership working with local services including health visiting and social care teams, mental health services and educational professionals as well as other community organisations to an excellent standard. They work in partnership with Active Oxfordshire and the district council's Active Communities team on the YouMove project promoting free or low cost activities for eligible families.</p>			
<p><b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>			
<p>Not applicable.</p>			
		<p><b>Total score</b></p>	<p><b>20/27</b></p>
<p><b>Non scoring officer comments</b></p>			
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation’s achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b></p> <p>The organisation has given some consideration into possible actions that address the Climate Emergency, with some examples of routine actions taken. They have not attached a climate policy/statement or action plan to their application. Officers would recommend the organisation starts their journey by measuring the carbon emissions of their operations to identify where carbon emissions and cost savings can be made. They should also consider how climate change may impact their services and/or service-users, and review options for how adaptations to their operations can be made. Visit <a href="https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction">https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction</a> for more ideas on how to get started or contact the council's climate and biodiversity team <a href="mailto:climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk">climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk</a> for further support</p>			

**Sue Ryder Palliative Care Hub South Oxfordshire**

**Ref: SRev25-27/22**

**Project name**

Hospice at Home Nursing in South Oxfordshire

**What the organisation does and how it supports residents:**

Our Sue Ryder Palliative Care Hub South Oxfordshire supports people aged 18 and over who are dying from life-limiting conditions such as cancer, heart failure and lung disease. We offer a range of services including care in the home, advice, support, care and coordination to residents in the South Oxfordshire District.

Our Hospice at Home team provides palliative care for people in their own homes. This service is delivered by a dedicated team of Sue Ryder Nurses and nursing assistants delivering rapid response and planned care to patients in the community. We also provide assistance with personal care e.g. assisted washing, re-positioning and toileting. The Hospice at Home service provides care for patients in their own home in the last 12 weeks of life. The service delivers expert care and support to relieve physical symptoms and emotional distress, as well as advising the patient's family how best to help care for their loved one. The Hospice at Home service is available seven days a week, 8am to 8pm and also offers a night service, giving care through the night between the hours of 10pm to 7am.

Our other community services include services for our day patients which include symptom assessment, medication review and management, social and emotional support and carer respite. Our specialist nurses prescribe and administer medication to help manage pain and other symptoms, monitor the progress of a person's illness and advise patients and families on what to expect. Our focus is on maintaining people's quality of life as well as ensuring they receive expert medical care. Our nurses get to know the person and understand what kind of emotional or practical support they may need. Our nurses play a key role, co-ordinating a person's care with their healthcare team ensuring people have all they need to stay at home longer.

Our telephone line, 0330 053 6092, provides specialist advice, support and care co-ordination to patients, their families and carers, and healthcare professionals. The telephone line is supported by a team of specialist Sue Ryder Nurses and consultants who work with GPs, community nursing teams, and other palliative care providers to ensure our patients receive the best possible care.

**Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:**

We seek funding towards the salary of a Hospice at Home Registered Nurse.

This will enable Sue Ryder to provide personalised care to more people in their own homes when they are dying, if this is their choice, through integrated and enhanced palliative care and support. It will also reduce the length of time in hospital for patients in South Oxfordshire, so people can continue to be cared for at home with the right support in place and have a better care experience. Thanks to the Sue Ryder Hospice at Home Service, South Oxfordshire, between April 2023 and March 2024, patients received nearly 13,000 hours of expert and compassionate care at home instead of in hospital in the last year of their lives.

The Hospice at Home service provides care for patients in their own home in the last 12 weeks of life. The service delivers expert care and support to relieve physical symptoms and emotional distress, as well as advising the patient's family how best to help care for their

loved one. Assistance is provided with personal care and repositioning. This service is available seven days a week, 8am to 8pm. Thanks to funding from a local trust, Sue Ryder is also able to provide care through the night between the hours of 10pm to 7am.

The focus of the Hospice at Home Nurse will be on maintaining people's quality of life as well as ensuring they receive expert medical care. Our nurses get to know the person and understand what kind of emotional or practical support they may need. Our nurses play a key role co-ordinating a person's care with their healthcare team ensuring people have all they need to stay at home longer.

The service is supported by a single point of contact, coordination and advice telephone support line which provides specialist advice, support and care co-ordination to patients, their families and carers, and healthcare professionals. Anyone who calls can speak to specialist Sue Ryder nurses and consultants who work together with local GPs, community nursing teams, and other palliative care providers to ensure everyone receives the best possible care. Because they're always just a phone call away, our team can respond rapidly when there's an emergency and prevent people from going into hospital, if they prefer to stay at home.

All our nurses have specialist knowledge and experience in palliative care and are expert in managing complex symptoms. They also support people and their families with the practical and emotional challenges they may face. Working in partnership with the NHS, our expert nurses take time to ensure that people are listened to and supported, that their health and wider needs are met, and that they feel safe and in control.

We know every person we work with is unique, and our nurses go the extra mile to understand the outcomes that are important to people and their families, so they can give each person the individual care and support they need to live their life to the fullest.

**District reach:**

All areas

**Corporate Plan priority:**

Thriving and healthy communities

**Potential number of beneficiaries:**

500

<b>Grant sought</b>	<b>2025/2026</b>	<b>2026/2027</b>
Amount requested for service/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£54,000	£56,000
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£110,000	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£1,614,395	
Percentage of annual operational costs	3%	Has the grant amount



based on 2023/2024		adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£11,455,214	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£11,455,214	

**Previous funding awarded:**

- Councillor grants 2020-21 £2,215
- Councillor grants 2021-22 £4,027
- Revenue 2022-24 £16,677
- Councillor grants 2022-23 £1,107
- Revenue 2024-25 £8,338
- Councillor grants 2023-24 £1,750

<b>Scoring</b>		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>A detailed funding plan covering the required two-year period. Although a deficit is forecast for 2025/26 due to planned investment, there is a clear movement towards a more balanced budget in 2026/27, with evidence to reduce budget deficits. The launch of their Income Growth Strategy demonstrates their intention to grow their fundraising, retail and commercial income.</p>	<b>Score</b>	3/5
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b></p> <p>Some but not all financial years budgets affected by Covid19, Cost of Living or other factors including rising staff, IT and energy costs. Officers note that they have divested of three out of four of their neurological services during this period. They state that their reserves remain stable and within the parameters of their policy.</p>	<b>Score</b>	3/4
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b></p> <p>Evidence demonstrates a clear national need with some indication of local community need. Officers can see evidence of regular consultation with existing service users only, including priority groups. The appointment of a Community Engagement Co-ordinator based in the district is a positive step forward to addressing local need.</p>	<b>Score</b>	3/5
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b></p> <p>Please note this is a national organisation and the number of beneficiaries has been calculated pro-rata for South Oxfordshire. Based on previous data, it is likely that more than 501 residents will benefit from the Hospice at Home Nursing rather than the figure of 500 supplied. Last year they supported 603 residents and data obtained by Sue Ryder from Marie Curie Atlas shows that the estimated number of people in need of home-based palliative care in the district is approximately 1,500. As they care for people aged 18 years and over who have an end of life diagnosis, it is clear that their service supports a large proportion of vulnerable residents.</p>	<b>Score</b>	4/5
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b></p> <p>N/A - No national organisation has applied.</p>	<b>Score</b>	0/1
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b></p> <p>The project theme selected is 'Thriving and healthy communities'. A clear and relevant response that addresses how the Hospice at Home Nursing service will</p>	<b>Score</b>	4/5

<p>provide better outcomes to residents and their families at an excellent standard under the specific theme. This personalised support and care service provides improved mental wellbeing and the relief of emotional distress as well as reduced loneliness and isolation to people in their own home in the last 12 weeks of life.</p>		
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b>          Officers have added two discretionary points as there is strong evidence of relevant partnership working with local services including district nursing and community teams to an excellent standard. They deliver end of life care training to South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS NHS 111) out of hours and provide crews with a response service to SCAS NHS 999 as well as offering specialist advice to Wallingford Hospital.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>2/2</p>
<p><b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>		
<p>Not applicable.</p>		
	<p><b>Total score</b></p>	<p><b>19/27</b></p>
<p><b>Non scoring officer comments</b></p>		
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation’s achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b>          The national organisation has implemented multiple activities that contribute to addressing the Climate Emergency, including actions which address the energy efficiency, waste and supply chains of their 386 shops. They have committed to becoming net zero by 2035 for emissions they are directly responsible for, and have commissioned further work to create a sustainability strategy which has included active engagement with staff. This builds on the broad sustainability framework that is attached to the application form. Officers would expect that this policy would also address how climate change may impact their services and/or service-users, and review options for how adaptations to their operations can be made. This will be particularly relevant to their Hospice at Home service where the organisation may need to consider additional support for patients and nursing staff during heatwaves, increased instances of severe storms or flooding, and water scarcity.</p>		

<p><b>Oxfordshire Play Association</b></p>	<p><b>Ref:</b> SRev25-27/35</p>
<p><b>Project name</b> OPA Play and Activity Days 2025 and 2026</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b> The Oxfordshire Play Association is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Registered Charity Number 1160320) and has been offering a Countywide service across Oxfordshire since 1974.</p> <p>Our Vision is to ‘Improve Lives Through Play’.</p> <p>Our Mission Statement is to ‘Champion and to support the rights of all Children and Young People to have access to high quality, inclusive, Play opportunities to improve their Physical, Mental and Spiritual wellbeing’</p> <p>Our Purpose, Values and Objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• create playful communities for children and their families</li> <li>• raise awareness amongst parents and carers of the importance of play in their children’s lives</li> <li>• promote the importance of play to statutory, corporate and voluntary organisations</li> <li>• increase the number of qualified playworkers delivering high quality play as part of a qualified workforce</li> <li>• provide services and support to settings and partnerships that promote and influence play and playwork.</li> </ul> <p>We deliver three main strands of work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play projects (Playday, Street Play, Stay and Play, Saturdads, Play Rangers, Playful Woodlands, Therapeutic Playwork, Scrapstore Playpods etc.).</li> <li>• Play training.</li> <li>• Support services (advice, guidance, outreach, partnerships and networking).</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b> Each year OPA organises a series of Play and Activity days at multiple venues across Oxfordshire in line with the ethos of National Playday, the celebration of the Child’s Right to Play, (<a href="http://www.playday.org.uk">www.playday.org.uk</a>).</p> <p>From 2012 to 2024 inclusive we have delivered over 150 events across Oxfordshire which have been attended by over 160,000 children, young people and their families.</p> <p>(Our 2020 events were postponed due to Coronavirus lockdowns/restrictions).</p> <p>The key selling point of our project is that all of our events offer both <b>free</b> entrance and <b>free</b> activities to ensure an inclusion for <b>all</b>.</p> <p>These events were already becoming increasingly important with the savage cuts previously imposed on children and families services in Oxfordshire (including the closure of local Children’s Centres and Youth Services) during austerity in terms of providing activities and information on services available to local families.</p>	

These needs were further exacerbated by the issues caused by Covid19.

In addition to all this children, young people and their families now face an unprecedented Cost of Living crisis.

It is of no surprise to anyone then that we are now seeing unprecedented increases in children's mental health problems and loneliness, alongside reduced physical activity.

Child psychologists, paediatricians and educators have independently and urgently called for play to be central to children's recovery from the Covid19 pandemic and Cost of Living crisis, and many others agree.

Play is vital to children's physical and mental health and development, Play provides opportunities for social interaction and physical activity, it can reduce children's stress and promote wellbeing and is a dynamic facilitator of creativity.

We would like to deliver five **free** Community Playday events across South Oxfordshire in 2025 and a further five in 2026 giving a total of ten **free** Community Playday events across the two-year period of the grant.

These would be delivered in the following locations and for the following communities:

Benson / RAF Benson (2025 and 2026), Didcot / Vauxhall Barracks (2025 and 2026), Berinsfield (2025 and 2026), Wheatley and Holton (2026) and Wallingford, Henley and Thame (TBC).

Each of our events will have the following key aims and objectives:

**For Children & Young People**

- Promote positive behaviours & activities (reduce anti-social behaviour).
- Promote increased levels of physical activity.
- Promote a healthy lifestyle (healthy choices).
- Promote healthy weight management (obesity reduction).
- Provide information on services and activities to promote a sense of wellbeing and inclusion.

**For Parents / Carers**

- Provide an event offering both **free** entrance & **free** activities to ensure an inclusion for **all**.
- Demonstrate how play can be achieved on a zero/minimal budget using natural and recycled materials.
- Provide information on services and activities available in the local and wider area

**For Communities**

- Encourage a greater sense of belonging to promote active and engaged communities (love where you live).
- Promote local clubs, groups and societies.

**District reach:**

Forest Hill and Holton, Wheatley, Berinsfield, Didcot North East, Didcot South, Didcot West, Benson and Crowmarsh, Wallingford, Henley-on-Thames, Thame

<b>Corporate Plan priority:</b> Thriving and healthy communities
<b>Potential number of beneficiaries:</b> 5000

<b>Grant sought</b>	<b>2025/2026</b>	<b>2026/2027</b>
Amount requested for service/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£10,000	£10,000
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£20,000	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£39,094	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	26%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£61,003	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£61,003	

**Previous funding awarded:**

- Festivals 2014-15 £1,000
- Festivals 2015-16 £500
- Festivals 2016-17 £500
- Councillor grants 2017-18 £500 and £500 and £500 and £500
- Festivals 2017-18 £500, £500
- Councillor grants 2018-19 £1,500 and £1,000
- Festivals 2018-19 £450, £450
- New Homes Bonus (Vale) 2018-19 £2,288
- Councillor grants 2019-20 £1,000
- Councillor grants 2020-21 £1,000 and £1,000
- Revenue 2022-24 £12,671
- Councillor grants 2021-22 £1,000
- Berinsfield Garden Village 2022-23 £700
- Councillor grants 2022-23 R2 £925 and £1,183
- Revenue 2024-25 £6,335
- Councillor grants 2023-24 £750 and £927

<b>Scoring</b>		
<b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income</b>	<b>Score</b>	4/5

<p><b>streams?</b> A balanced two-year funding plan has been provided and although there is clear movement to diversify income streams, there is still some reliance on certain sources of funding. The applicant plans to increase unrestricted funds by increasing donations via their website, equipment hire and expand their chargeable 'outreach' work.</p>		
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b> All financial years have balanced budgets showing both an increase in services/activities and income. Officers note there is a small surplus in each financial year with some growth in reserves to above pre-Covid levels. Due to the cost of living crisis, this has led to an increase in families and children attending the free playdays and accessing their other children's services.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>4/4</p>
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b> Evidence demonstrates some indication of community need and flexible approach to addressing community need, with regular consultation limited to existing service-users only, including priority groups. Their playdays have a positive impact on physical and mental wellbeing and reduced isolation in the community. Feedback from service user questionnaires, activity providers and social media, together with working closely with partners and local groups is used to ensure continued need is met.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>3/5</p>
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b> Please note this is an Oxfordshire-based organisation and the number of beneficiaries has been calculated pro-rata for South Oxfordshire. More than 501 (5000) families with young children and young people (in particular pre and primary school age) benefit from attending the playdays, including some vulnerable/priority groups. They provide services/activities which are free and accessible to all, that positively impact on their service users' physical and mental well-being and complement district council services.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>5/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b> N/A - no national organisation has applied.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>0/1</p>
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b> The project theme selected is 'Thriving and healthy communities'. Clear and relevant responses address how the services/activities will provide better outcomes to the community at a satisfactory standard under the above theme. The organisation has implemented multiple events that contribute positively to thriving and healthy communities by bringing the community together and engaging people in wellbeing activities.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>2/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b> Officers have awarded one additional point for providing strong evidence of relevant partnership working and co-production of the services/activities to a good standard.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>1/2</p>
<p><b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>		
<p>Not applicable.</p>		
	<p><b>Total score</b></p>	<p><b>19/27</b></p>
<p><b>Non scoring officer comments</b></p>		
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation's achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b></p>		
<p>The organisation has given some consideration into possible actions that address the Climate Emergency, related to the activities they provide. The organisation expresses an interest in taking their work to address the climate</p>		

emergency further, for example, with using an electric van for business purposes. They have not attached a climate policy/statement or action plan to their application. Officers acknowledge that renting their office limits the extent in which the organisation has influence over decarbonising the premises. Recommend visiting <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction> for more ideas on how to get started, or contact the council's climate and biodiversity team [climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk) for further support.

<p><b>Thomley Hall Centre Ltd</b></p>	<p><b>Ref: SRev25-27/17</b></p>
<p><b>Project name</b>          Enhancing the lives and experiences of people with disabilities in South Oxfordshire, their families, and the wider South Oxfordshire community.</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b></p> <p><b>Vision:</b>          Thomley exists to enhance the lives and experiences of people with a disability, their families and the wider community.</p> <p>Thomley provides lifelong learning and leisure activities for people with disabilities of all ages in South Oxfordshire.</p> <p><b>Mission:</b>          To achieve our vision we provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a lifelong learning and leisure centre for people of all abilities and disabilities</li> <li>• a visitor destination</li> <li>• activities which enhance the lives of visitors, their families and the wider community</li> <li>• friendly, trained, experienced staff who understand our visitors' needs</li> <li>• a safe, secure, stimulating and non-judgemental environment.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b>          We are asking you to fund the operating and overhead costs of our core services, activities and programmes for South Oxfordshire visitors. Thomley is open to visitors Tuesday through Saturday from 10 am to 3.30 pm during term time (Monday through Saturday during school holidays).</p> <p>Thomley has five main areas of activity (<a href="https://thomley.org.uk/Thomley/#/slide-11">https://thomley.org.uk/Thomley/#/slide-11</a>):</p> <p><b>Visitor Activities</b> (<a href="https://thomley.org.uk/Thomley/#/slide-12">https://thomley.org.uk/Thomley/#/slide-12</a>)          We offer a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities that help people with disabilities build skills and abilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sports and physical activities</li> <li>• music, art and creative play</li> <li>• cooking, baking and other workshops</li> <li>• sensory garden</li> <li>• cycling track with adapted bikes and trikes</li> <li>• outdoor playground with jumping pillow</li> </ul> <p>We help parents, carers and families to better cope with their caring role by providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• short breaks</li> <li>• practical workshops and family support sessions with professional autism specialists</li> <li>• weekly disability family days with whole-family activities</li> <li>• outdoor camping and camping pod services</li> <li>• special and seasonal family events (e.g. Mother's and Father's Day roast dinners).</li> </ul>	



**Learning Activities** (<https://thomley.org.uk/Thomley/#/slide-13>)

We deliver skills-based workshops for all ages and help young people (ages 16-25) build life skills and employment skills that lead to greater independence and participation in community and family life:

- youth club
- adult social club
- adult cooking club
- Accredited Life Skills programme for 16-25 year olds with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

**Community Engagement** (<https://thomley.org.uk/Thomley/#/slide-13>)

We create opportunities at Thomley for non-disabled people to share meaningful experiences with people with disabilities.

- Weekly Open for all days.
- Regular Community Engagement Events (e.g. Fireworks Night; 'Accessival' Summer Festival).

**Commercial** (<https://thomley.org.uk/Thomley/#/slide-13>)

We provide services that local partners, clients and organisations require, and we deliver them to a quality standard:

- Serviced offices
- Carpentry workshop
- Catering services
- Facility and venue hire.

**Fundraising** (<https://thomley.org.uk/Thomley/#/slide-13>)

We secure financial support from individuals and organisations who are aligned with our Vision, Mission and Values:

- statutory trusts and foundations
- community fundraising
- corporate fundraising
- fundraising events
- individual fundraising and legacies.

Each day at Thomley is structured using themes, during which we offer specialised programming for pre-school children, teenagers, adults, families, or the wider community when any family (with or without disabilities) can join us.

Most days at Thomley consist of three structured activities (physical/sport, sensory and art), and one or two skills- or learning-based workshops (e.g. science, horticulture, cooking, baking, pizza-making, football, hockey, archery, rugby, fitness, woodworking, music-making).

All activities are planned using bimonthly themes, often chosen by our visitors. This allows us to link activities together and create a larger experience. An example of the activities delivered using a recent theme (Space):

- Physical/sport – laser tag, alien hunt, asteroid toss.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensory – ‘space’ bubble machine, galaxy sensory jars, moon dust writing.</li> <li>• Art – paper plate aliens, foil moon colouring, alphabet spaceships.</li> <li>• Skills/workshops – planet cookies, flying saucer snacks (cooking and baking), milk experiment, telescope making, spaceship building, mentos and cola experiments (science).</li> </ul>
<b>District reach:</b> Forest Hill and Holton
<b>Corporate Plan priority:</b> Thriving and healthy communities
<b>Potential number of beneficiaries:</b> 4032

Grant sought	2025/2026	2026/2027
Amount requested for service/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£53,786	£53,786
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£107,572	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£298,932	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	18%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£255,000	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£120,000	

**Previous funding awarded:**

- Revenue 2014-16 £75,000
- Capital 2014-15 £100,000
- Revenue 2017-21 £120,500
- Revenue 2022-24 £70,000
- Everyone Active 2022 £1,000
- Capital 2022-23 £51,000
- Revenue 2024-25 £35,000
- Everyone Active 2024-25 £990

Scoring		
<b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income</b>	Score	3/5

<p><b>streams?</b> A funding plan covering the required two-year period. Although a deficit budget is forecast for both years, they are planning to cover this through increasing fundraising and trading activities. Has a diverse array of income streams, with an active effort to focus on trading and corporate activities.</p>		
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b> Most financial year's budgets have been in deficit, but with an increase in services. However, they highlight their figures show a larger deficit than actual due to large annual depreciation charges against their fixed assets. Officers note a large depletion of reserves over the three years that is not within the reserves policy.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>1/4</p>
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b> Evidence demonstrates a good indication of community need and a flexible approach to addressing this. They clearly demonstrate how different groups' needs have been used to design their activities from the beginning of the organisations formation, along with their current strategy 'Survive, Adapt and Thrive - 2021-2024'. Regular consultation has been carried out in visitor feedback surveys but this is limited to existing service users only. They are committed to providing services/activities to a range of people with different disabilities and their parent/carers which are open and accessible to all. Their Equalities Policy is in place and implemented.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>4/5</p>
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b> More than 501 residents (4,032) are supported by the organisation and this includes a large proportion of vulnerable residents: individuals with disabilities, those with impairments, economically disadvantaged, as well as carers. Services provided complement County Council services, such as for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) support and support for carers, rather than district council services.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>4/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b> N/A - No national organisation has applied.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>0/1</p>
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b> The project theme selected is 'Thriving and healthy communities'. The organisation demonstrates an excellent commitment to contribute to thriving and healthy communities as a routine part of the organisation's business plan and culture. This includes increasing the skills and confidence of those with disabilities, supporting their carers and increasing those without disabilities understanding of people with disabilities, improving social cohesion and inclusion. They can demonstrate the impact on participants and the wider community and provide a number of clearly defined outcomes for each of these groups. They use different tools and annual surveys to monitor this impact.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>4/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b> Officers have awarded two additional points due to the organisation's excellent partnership working with numerous charities, corporate partners and councils. This includes collaboration on the Holidays, Activities and Food Programme and influence on policy of the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire Health Alliance as part of the Learning Disability and Autism Sub Group.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>2/2</p>
<p><b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>		
<p>Financial considerations - Thomley's reserves policy states that they hold reserves equivalent to the estimated essential running cost of the centre for the ensuing quarter. Officers calculate that in 2023/24, their free reserves had reduced to approximately 33 per cent of their running costs for the quarter and this is below their policy level. They state that the cost-of-living crisis resulted in significant increases to their operating costs, mainly through increased staffing and energy costs. They also incur large depreciation charges each year against their fixed reserves.</p>		

	<b>Total score</b>	<b>18/27</b>
<b>Non scoring officer comments</b>		
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation’s achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b></p> <p>Evidence has been provided that details how climate action and nature recovery is a routine part of the organisation’s workplan. They have an environmental policy showing commitment by the organisation, including actions to build staff/volunteer knowledge through additional climate training. It does not include a detailed plan or target to reach net-zero, however they have provided a copy of a recent energy audit and have identified funds/already invested in some of the recommendations. Thomley may also want to include plans to help them adapt to a changing climate, such as prolonged heatwaves, and how that might effect visitors to the centre.</p>		

<p><b>Style Acre</b></p>	<p><b>Ref:</b> SRev25-27/18</p>
<p><b>Project name</b>          Work Programme for Adults with Learning Disabilities : Contribution to support in South Oxfordshire</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b>          Style Acre supports 149 adults with learning disabilities and/or autism in South Oxfordshire. We support 272 people in total with the remaining 123 people living in other parts of Oxfordshire. 55 per cent of people we support live in South Oxfordshire.</p> <p>We support people through supported living and day opportunities. Our day opportunities comprise 1:1 and group support at our three community hubs. The hubs deliver sessions such as cooking, arts and social groups and act as a base for people to meet and go to their chosen activities in the local area. Our Work Programme and Garden Project are services that support people to work, or volunteer at our own social enterprises and with local companies and charities. Our Ways to Wellness Programme supports people to improve their physical and mental wellbeing.</p> <p>Style Acre supports people across the county and has a strong presence in South Oxfordshire. We have supported living households in Wallingford, Crowmarsh, Brightwell-cum-Sotwell, Cholsey, Didcot, Henley-on-Thames, Thame and Wheatley. Two of our community hubs are in South Oxfordshire - based in Crowmarsh Gifford and Didcot. Four of our social enterprises are based locally, our charity shop is in Wallingford and a new eBay shop is based at our Didcot community hub. Green Acre, our garden maintenance social enterprise mainly operates in gardens around Wallingford and Didcot. Our Tea Room is located in Blewbury which is very close to the South Oxfordshire border and as such people we support who live in South Oxfordshire work and volunteer there.</p>	
<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b>          We would like the grant to contribute towards the costs of our Work Programme in South Oxfordshire through which people with learning disabilities benefit from personalised support to find and keep work and volunteering placements.</p> <p>Our Work Programme promotes social inclusion for adults with learning disabilities; people we support often need help to access the services and opportunities that everyone else takes for granted, whether this be healthcare, leisure activities, volunteering or working. Our Work Programme gives people we support choices around working and volunteering and support to achieve work goals, improve their skills and wellbeing and be valued and included in workplaces and their local area. 118 people we support are working or volunteering - 58 of whom live in South Oxfordshire (49 per cent).</p> <p>Our Work Programme team consists of a Work Manager and Job Coach who find and support work and voluntary placements at local businesses and our social enterprises.</p> <p>Our Employment Support Workers provide direct support to teach people how to complete work tasks. This support may be occasional, at the start of a placement, or on an ongoing basis depending on individual need. Some people would not be able to participate without this support. Our Work Programme makes it possible for people we support to be included in workplaces and show what they can do.</p>	

We are requesting a contribution towards the salary costs of two key roles in our Work team, our Work Manager and Job Coach who are based at our Didcot hub. The grant request is 49 per cent of the two salaries as a contribution to their work with South Oxfordshire residents and employers.

**District reach:**

Wheatley, Chinnor, Watlington, Chalgrove, Sandford and the Wittenhams, Didcot North East, Didcot South, Didcot West, Benson and Crowmarsh, Wallingford, Henley-on-Thames, Thame

**Corporate Plan priority:**

Inclusion, accessibility and accountability

**Potential number of beneficiaries:**

67

<b>Grant sought</b>	<b>2025/2026</b>	<b>2026/2027</b>
Amount requested for service/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£19,631	£20,024
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£39,655	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£6,473,484	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	£0%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>		
	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£2,960,921	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£2,753,445	

**Previous funding awarded:**

- Revenue 2017-21 £76,000
- Revenue 2022-24 £14,477
- Everyone Active 2022 £940
- Everyone Active 2023-24 £930
- Revenue 2024-25 £7,238
- Councillor grants 2023-24 £600
- Everyone Active 2024-25 £1,000

<b>Scoring</b>		
<b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income</b>	<b>Score</b>	2/5

Applicant responses (what the organisation does and funding request description) have been copied directly from the application form. All names have been redacted.

<p><b>streams?</b> A funding plan covering the required two-year period. However, there is some reliance on certain income streams. Although a deficit is forecast in 2026/27, there is a clear intention to move towards multi-year funding.</p>		
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b> Some but not all financial years budgets affected by Cost of Living or other factors with evidence to explain and increase in some services/activities. Has a reserves policy and although there is some depletion, officers note this is within the parameters of their policy.</p>	<b>Score</b>	3/4
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b> Evidence demonstrates strong and clear indication of community need for Style Acre's Work Programme. Consultation is carried out regularly via surveys, individual work placement progress reviews, personal support plans, and feedback from employers/ partners. Through their 'Have a Say' forum and ambassadors, service users are at the heart of improving service design and delivery.</p>	<b>Score</b>	4/5
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b> Please note this is an Oxfordshire based organisation and the number of beneficiaries has been calculated pro-rata for South Oxfordshire. More than 51 and up to 500 (67) vulnerable residents benefit from Style Acre's services/activities. Adults with learning disabilities and/or autism are the primary beneficiaries of their Work Programme. This programme complements district council services by contributing significantly to the wellbeing and inclusion of people with learning disabilities.</p>	<b>Score</b>	3/5
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b> N/A - No national organisation has applied.</p>	<b>Score</b>	0/1
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b> The project theme selected is 'Inclusion, accessibility and accountability'. The applicant has provided a clear and relevant response that addresses how the service/activity will provide better outcomes to the community at an excellent standard under the specific theme. This has been demonstrated through a good standard of engagement via surveys with service users, advertising for an "expert by experience" member of the board of trustees and already including four trustees who are family of members of current serviceusers. Dedication to staff through their Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy and commitment to being part of the Disability Confident scheme (Level 1). The application has provided excellent evidence of their commitment to supporting residents who are Neurodiverse, providing them the opportunity to be involved in event and project committees, supporting them into work, and introducing a work awards event. In addition, the launch of "Pride Acre" for those at the organisation who are part of the LGBTQIA+ community highlights the consideration of multiple protected characteristics.</p>	<b>Score</b>	4/5
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b> They have provided excellent evidence that they work with local external organisations such as South Oxfordshire Housing Association, Sustainable Wantage and Wantage Community Support Service, including community fundraising, as well as a board of trustees this then qualifies for the extra two discretionary points.</p>	<b>Score</b>	2/2
<p><b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>		
<p>Not applicable.</p>		
<b>Total score</b>		<b>18/27</b>

**Non scoring officer comments**

**Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation’s achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.**

The organisation has given some consideration to nature recovery actions as part of their garden project, with examples including wildlife-friendly gardening, using peat-free compost and water saving. This is in partnership with Sustainable Wantage. Style Acre are in the process of developing an environmental policy, and to support this work, officers would recommend starting to measure the carbon emissions of their operations to identify what actions can be taken to decarbonise, as well as what cost savings can be made through improved energy efficiency. They should also consider how climate change may impact their services and/or service-users, e.g. in prolonged heatwaves, and review options for how adaptations to their operations can be made. Visit <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction> for more ideas on actions to take or contact the council’s climate and biodiversity team [climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk) for further support.



<p><b>SeeSaw</b></p>	<p><b>Ref:</b> SRev25-27/43</p>
<p><b>Project name</b> Bereavement Support for Families in South Oxfordshire</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b> SeeSaw provides support for children, young people and their families in Oxfordshire when they have been bereaved or when somebody close to them is terminally ill. SeeSaw was established in response to a lack of appropriate grief support available to children and young people, and their families, in Oxfordshire. We have 25 years of experience in providing high quality grief support to help reduce the emotional, psychological and mental health consequences of bereavement. Around 13 per cent of our work supports families residing in South Oxfordshire.</p>	
<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b> We would like this grant to help fund bereavement support for children and young people in South Oxfordshire.</p> <p>We believe that grief is universal. Each case is individual, and we aim to use our limited resources in the best way possible by normalising grief and helping to build resilience so that children and young people can work through their grief, supported by the people closest to them.</p> <p>We do this by providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• information, advice and support for parents on how to support their grieving child</li> <li>• direct support for children and young people when a parent or sibling is dying or has died</li> <li>• specialist support to families and professionals when a parent or sibling is dying</li> <li>• training and consultations on childhood bereavement for schools and professionals</li> <li>• online advice and resources for immediate access self-serve support for all.</li> </ul> <p>Our one-to-one support with children usually takes place at home, after school and much of this work is carried out by our specially trained and experienced team of 14 volunteer support workers. Our support workers have various ways of helping children explore their grief, often using arts and crafts, books and games. They help children retell the story of what has happened and who has died, finding ways of exploring the complex feelings associated with grief.</p> <p>We work closely with families, hospices and health professionals after the diagnosis of a terminal illness, helping them to share information about the illness with their children, create memories for the future and plan for what will happen after the death. By building a relationship with the child before the death, we are able to support them through the worst experience they are ever likely to face.</p> <p>We offer a specialised service to schools to help staff understand how young people might react to bereavement and what strategies can be used to support them in the classroom. This may take the form of general training to the whole school staff, direct support to an individual staff member supporting a bereaved pupil, or critical, immediate advice and support to the school community in the aftermath of a sudden death.</p>	

To support our work, and because we recognise that not everyone wishes to receive an in-person service, SeeSaw offers a 'self-serve' level of information, advice and resources all immediately available online and free for families and professionals to use. This allows us to increase our reach and enables families and their communities to actively engage in support.

In our last financial year we supported 66 children and young people and provided bereavement advice and training to ten schools in South Oxfordshire. All services are offered free of charge to our beneficiaries. There is no time limit on our support and a young person may come back to us at any time until they are 18.

**District reach:**

All areas

**Corporate Plan priority:**

Thriving and healthy communities

**Potential number of beneficiaries:**

66

<b>Grant sought</b>	<b>2025/2026</b>	<b>2026/2027</b>
Amount requested for service/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£12,810	£13,020
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£25,830	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£53,814	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	24%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>		
	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£442,000	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£392,000	

**Previous funding awarded:**

Not applicable.

<b>Scoring</b>		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>A funding plan covering the required two-year period with balanced budgets. However there is some reliance on certain income streams, including statutory</p>	<b>Score</b>	4/5

<p>grants, trusts and donations. They have secured a three-year grant from a large funder and movement towards more sustainable income streams is a priority, including improved donor engagement and strengthening digital fundraising.</p>		
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b>                  Some but not every financial year's budget has been negatively affected by Covid-19 and Cost of Living crisis with a clear explanation. They explain a vacant Fundraising Manager role for part of 2021/22 lead to a deficit in 2022/23. There has been some reduction in services over the last two financial years however this has enabled a balanced budget for 2023/24. Some depletion in their reserves has been noted but officers can see it is still within reserves parameters.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>2/4</p>
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b>                  Evidence demonstrates strong and clear indication of community need and flexible approach to addressing this. Customer satisfaction data implemented with service users and substantial consultation is regularly carried out with other stakeholders, including priority groups if the services/activities impact them, local voluntary organisations, hospices, NHS health care professionals and the Integrated Care Board (ICB). Three-year service strategy focusses on accessibility and inclusion, using data, mapping trends and adapting their service accordingly.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>5/5</p>
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b>                  Please note this is an Oxfordshire-based organisation and the number of beneficiaries has been calculated pro-rata for South Oxfordshire. More than 51 and up to 500 (66) children and young people up to age 18 benefit directly, including some vulnerable people if the service impacts them. However, this number does not include indirect beneficiaries such as parents/carers, teachers and school pupils. Officers have not been able to score a three as their services/activities support children and families which indirectly complement county council services and other providers rather than the district council.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>2/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b>                  N/A - no national organisation has applied.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>0/1</p>
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b>                  The project theme is 'Thriving and healthy communities'. They have provided clear and relevant responses that addresses how the service/activities will provide better outcomes to the community at an excellent standard under the specific theme. By accessing their services, children are better equipped to acknowledge and manage their grief, reducing the risk of longer-term poor outcomes. They gather qualitative feedback through a variety of tools to demonstrate an excellent commitment to contribute to thriving and healthy communities as a routine part of the organisation's business plan and culture, to ensure maximum impact on the health and wellbeing of their service users.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>4/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b>                  Officers have awarded one additional point for providing strong evidence of relevant partnership working with local people and organisations to deliver their services/activities to a good standard. The organisation has provided some evidence of working with relevant partners, such as schools, youth and local healthcare providers, children's social services and the NHS to deliver services.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>1/2</p>
<p><b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>		
<p>Not applicable.</p>		
	<p><b>Total score</b></p>	<p><b>18/27</b></p>

**Non scoring officer comments**

**Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation’s achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.**

The organisation has delivered regular events or activities that contribute to addressing the Climate Emergency. For example, they have begun research into improving the energy efficiency of their building/organisation’s operations. Officers would recommend the organisation starts to measure the carbon emissions of their operations to identify where carbon emissions and cost savings can be made. This will help create a medium-term plan to decarbonise their operations. They should also consider how climate change may impact their services and/or service-users, and review options for how adaptations to their operations can be made. Visit

<https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction> for more ideas on actions to take or contact the council’s climate and biodiversity team [climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk) for further support.

<p><b>The Maple Tree</b></p>	<p><b>Ref: SRev25-27/59</b></p>
<p><b>Project name</b> The Maple Tree</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b> The Maple Tree is a community charity providing play-based early learning activities for children aged 0-5 and their parents and carers. We work in partnership with families, for whom it is a place to meet, play and learn with their children. We aim to give every local child and family the best start in life and try to respond to the needs and requests of local families as they arise and resources permit.</p> <p>We run at least one session (sometimes two) on weekdays from premises in Wheatley, a weekly outreach session in Forest Hill and a monthly family fun session on Saturdays. They are based around different areas of development and also tailored to particular need. Our current sessions include sessions specifically for babies, a group for parents with twins (in response to a perceived need in the area), and sessions based on messy play, language and communication and exploring the world and socialisation. Our focus is on under fives and their families, but we run some activities for a wider age-range, e.g. holiday and weekend activities, so that older siblings are not left out. We also offer wider support through parenting workshops (e.g. First Aid), one to one advice and support and Health Visitor clinics. When needed, families can receive individual support and signposting to appropriate support services. We have also successfully run specialist sessions, such as baby massage, however, our ability to do so is subject to grant funding.</p> <p>We support young families by encouraging and supporting children's early learning and development in their first, formative years, as evidence suggests that this has a huge benefit on their subsequent development. Our services also aim to improve parents' confidence in raising their children. Young children benefit enormously from very early learning and socialisation and this prepares them better for a smooth transition to nursery and school. Parents and children are able to build relationships, learn new skills and share parenting experience, which contributes to positive mental health and wellbeing. This also leads to improved quality of life and self-esteem for whole families. Stronger, more confident families are more resilient and the community will benefit from greater social cohesion as they connect and develop support networks. Support for new parents also helps to identify and manage early signs of post-natal depression.</p> <p>A large proportion of families who use our services reside in Wheatley and the surrounding villages in South Oxfordshire, however we are open to all and we do welcome families from further afield, mainly in Oxfordshire.</p>	
<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b> We would like to continue to run sessions to promote early learning and development and offer parental support, both at our premises in Wheatley and in surrounding villages.</p> <p>We currently offer seven weekday sessions and one monthly Saturday session, focussing on different elements of the early learning curriculum and offering varied activities and learning opportunities. We run a group for babies under one year, and other sessions for under fives, including messy play (focussing on sensory play), a story and rhyme time session, "Little Explorers", which focusses on encouraging young</p>	

children to explore the world around them, including the outdoors, and a newly introduced session, called "Celebrating Sounds", which concentrates on language development and communication.

We recently introduced this session in response to a perceived need for additional speech and language learning which was communicated to us through our relationship with the local primary school and nursery in Wheatley. We also run a group, specifically for parent of twins to meet and share their parenting experience. Again, we set up this group after we discovered a significant number of families with twins in the area and it has grown to such an extent that we now have 24 families with twins registered for the group. In addition, we hold one session per week in Forest Hill, which is aimed at parents who are unable to travel into Wheatley and, particularly in the summer, we run other sessions in nearby villages within South Oxfordshire, eg. Holton, Great Milton.

From time to time, we also run workshops and other courses, such as paediatric First Aid, and we have also run online workshops for parents, covering relevant topics, such as sleep and weaning, although this is dependent on resources and capacity. We also host Health Visitor clinics at our premises and, where needed, individual families can be signposted to appropriate support services. We require funding to be able to continue to provide this service to local families in the district.

In addition, the funding would contribute towards supporting the salaries of staff who assist in income generation activities and who promote the centre, raise awareness in the locality. We run our own fundraising events as a contribution to our income generation and the funding will enable us to continue to provide admin support for our income generation activities, both in running specific Maple Tree activities (such as our annual Summer Fete or Xmas Fair stand) as well as promoting our activities in the wider community. We have a staff member who focusses on marketing and raising awareness by updating our social media platforms, updating our posters and leaflets and helping to collate, organise and run our Friends of the Maple Tree scheme (regular donation scheme for local donors) and our Maple Tree Marketplace (a buying and selling platform for good quality secondhand goods). This admin assistance with income generation is a great help in achieving our budget targets to strengthen the sustainability of the centre year on year.

**District reach:**

Forest Hill and Holton, Wheatley, Garsington and Horspath, Haseley Brook, Chinnor, Watlington, Chalgrove, Berinsfield, Sandford and the Wittenhams, Didcot North East, Benson and Crowmarsh, Wallingford, Thame, Great Milton.

**Corporate Plan priority:**

Thriving and healthy communities

**Potential number of beneficiaries:**

720

<b>Grant sought</b>	<b>2025/2026</b>	<b>2026/2027</b>
Amount requested for service/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£15,000	£15,000
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£30,000	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£84,054	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	18%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£60,000	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£50,000	

**Previous funding awarded:**

- Councillor grants 2020-21 £1,000, £1,000
- Revenue 2022-24 £12,606
- Councillor grants 2021-22 £522, £600
- Councillor grants 2022-23 R2 £1,166, £240
- Revenue 2024-2025 £6,303
- Councillor grants 2023-24 £495, £693

<b>Scoring</b>		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>A funding plan covering the required two-year period with balanced budgets each year. However, there is some reliance of certain income streams, such as grant funding, donations and general fundraising activities. Clear movement towards more sustainable income streams is evidenced through premises hire, voluntary donations from service-users, donation scheme and digital fundraising. They also run after school/holiday activities and cookery workshops for service-users.</p>	<b>Score</b>	4/5
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b></p> <p>All financial years have balanced budgets and officers note some growth in reserves. They explain that although the centre was forced to close during the Covid19 pandemic, they were able to organise sponsorship/online events and supporters' donations with access to pandemic-related grant funding to avoid reserves depletion. Due to Cost of Living factors, their operational costs have increased however there has been no reduction in services.</p>	<b>Score</b>	4/4

<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b>  Evidence demonstrates some indication of community need and flexible approach to addressing this. Evidence indicates consultation is regularly carried out with existing service users in the form of evaluation forms. They work with local nurseries/schools/after school clubs, midwifery and health professionals, the local parish council and are part of a local networking group working with similar children's centres in the area. However, they have not provided any written agency support or evidence that consultation is implemented with potential service users/other stakeholders.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>3/5</p>
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b>  More than 501 (720) parents/carers with children aged up to five years old benefit from their services and it is clear this includes some vulnerable/priority groups. They provide a vital service to local families with early-years children living in Wheatley and surrounding villages, organising a programme of physical and educational sessions to support their health and wellbeing, that indirectly complement district council services. Officers have awarded a score of three as the figure provided is an estimate of 240 families with two or three members of the family directly benefitting from their services/activities.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>3/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b>  N/A - no national organisation has applied.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>0/1</p>
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b>  The project theme selected is 'Thriving and healthy communities'. Organisation has given clear and relevant responses that addresses how their service/activities will provide better outcomes to the community at a good standard under the specific theme. They have implemented a regular programme of events that contribute to thriving and healthy communities, with service users having improved health, wellbeing and reduced isolation in rural areas.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>3/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b>  Officers have awarded one additional point for some evidence of working with relevant partners and community/service users to design and deliver services.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>1/2</p>
<p><b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>		
<p>Officers have concerns about the organisation's slow response to communications regarding monitoring of their previous 2022/25 revenue grant.</p>		
		<p><b>Total score</b></p> <p>18/27</p>
<p><b>Non scoring officer comments</b></p>		
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation's achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b>  The organisation has given some consideration into possible actions that could address the climate emergency. They have not attached a climate policy/statement or action plan to their application, but note they are looking to develop this area. Officers would recommend the organisation could start their journey by measuring the carbon emissions of their operations to identify where carbon emissions and cost savings can be made. They should also consider how climate change may impact their services and/or service-users, and review options for how adaptations to their operations can be made. Visit <a href="https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction">https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction</a> for more ideas on how to get started or contact the council's climate and biodiversity team <a href="mailto:climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk">climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk</a> for further support.</p>		



<b>Henley on Thames Churches Debt Centre</b>	<b>Ref:</b> SRev25-27/60
<p><b>Project name</b> Emergency Debt Counselling and Preventative Debt Support</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b> Henley on Thames Churches Debt Centre was set up in Henley during 2022 to meet the proven needs of local residents in severe financial hardship with unmanageable levels of debt. Both Citizens Advice and NOMAD, the local community/food bank charity have strongly encouraged our formation. We are affiliated to the national charity “Christians Against Poverty” (CAP) who provide us with professional financial advice in return for contracted monthly fees and are regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). However, we are a fully independent local charity and remain responsible for all our operation costs.</p> <p>We aim to support local residents with debt advice to resolve financial hardship. We do not pay off people’s debts but rather help them to restructure their finances in a viable way to become debt-free, giving them a sense of hope and self-respect.</p> <p>We can support any local resident in need residing in postcode area RG9 regardless of their faith or none.</p>	
<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b> We aim to support local residents with debt advice to resolve financial hardship. We do not pay off people’s debts but rather help them to restructure their finances in a viable way to become debt-free, giving them a sense of hope and self-respect. A typical client is facing severe debt often with the threat of bailiffs, eviction and looming bankruptcy. Our interventions helps them to restructure all their debts, often obtaining repayment schedules at beneficial interest rates over longer times to help restore financial stability. Our costs include a Debt Centre Manager and Debt coach.</p> <p>In addition to our work with Debt Counselling, we wish to help prevent residents falling into debt by proactively help them with budgeting, life skills and job seeking.</p> <p>Our costs include a Job Club and Life Skills Manager.</p> <p>The Life Skills course aims to improve self-organisation, budgeting and even cookery skills.</p> <p>The Job Club course aims to help with Curriculum Vitae (CV) writing, interviewing, interview/work outfits and paid/volunteer vacancies in order to support local residents obtain work.</p>	
<p><b>District reach:</b> Henley-on-Thames</p>	
<p><b>Corporate Plan priority:</b> Thriving and healthy communities</p>	
<p><b>Potential number of beneficiaries:</b> 128</p>	

<b>Grant sought</b>	<b>2025/2026</b>	<b>2026/2027</b>
Amount requested for service/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£22,000	£22,000
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£44,000	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£66,000	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	33%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£30,593	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£30,593	

**Previous funding awarded:**

- Councillor grants 2022-23 R2 £3,000
- Councillor grants 2023-24 £500

<b>Scoring</b>		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>A detailed and realistic two-year plan relative to the organisation's size, demonstrating a balanced budget each year. There is a diverse range of income streams including generated income from subscriptions and contributions as well as funding from grants/trusts and events. Officers note that they have secured long term funding support from a local charitable foundation.</p>	<b>Score</b>	5/5
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b></p> <p>All financial years have balanced budgets showing an increase in services/activities and income. They have a reserves policy and state that they have a healthy level of reserves although there is a lack of information in their accounts to support this. Officers note this is a new charity set up in July 2022.</p>	<b>Score</b>	3/4
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b></p> <p>Evidence demonstrates some indication of community need for in-depth financial advice. NOMAD and Henley Citizen's Advice initially identified the need for a local debt centre due to the increasing demand on their services. A flexible approach has been demonstrated with regular consultation limited to existing service users, including priority groups.</p>	<b>Score</b>	3/5
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b></p> <p>More than 51 and up to 500 residents (128) benefit from their services and it is clear this includes many vulnerable residents. They are open to anyone who is</p>	<b>Score</b>	3/5

<p>experiencing financial difficulties, regardless of faith. Officers note that many of their debt advice clients experience mental health issues with approximately 50 per cent having considered suicide. They provide advice and training that complement district council services by equipping residents with the skills to gain employment and restore financial stability.</p>		
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b> N/A - No national organisation has applied.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>0/1</p>
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b> The project theme selected is 'Thriving and healthy communities'. Some information has been provided via feedback/testimonials demonstrating how the service provides better outcomes for the community such as learning new skills (e.g. budgeting), relieving social isolation and loneliness, and improving health and wellbeing to a satisfactory standard under this theme. However there is a lack of evidence of clearly defined, measurable outcomes to demonstrate the impact their services have on residents.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>2/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b> Officers have awarded an additional point as there is strong evidence of relevant partnership working with local organisations to deliver their service to a good standard. Examples include Citizen's Advice, NOMAD, Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and social prescribers.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>1/2</p>
<p><b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>		
<p>Not applicable.</p>		
	<p><b>Total score</b></p>	<p><b>17/27</b></p>
<p><b>Non scoring officer comments</b></p>		
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation's achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b> The organisation has given some consideration into possible actions that address the Climate Emergency. They have not attached a climate policy/statement or action plan to their application, however the nature of the organisation does limit the environmental impact. Further consideration could be given to modes of travel. Visit <a href="https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction">https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction</a> for more ideas on how to get started or contact the council's climate and biodiversity team <a href="mailto:climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk">climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk</a> for further support.</p>		

<p><b>Thames21</b></p>	<p><b>Ref:</b> SRev25-27/47</p>
<p><b>Project name</b> South Oxfordshire’s Rivers in the South Chilterns Catchment</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b> Thames21 is an environmental charity, working across the Thames Basin to deliver high-impact nature-based solutions to the climate and biodiversity crisis through restoring rivers, whilst also connecting communities to their local green-blue spaces and inspiring long-term stewardship of them.</p> <p>Across the South Oxfordshire district, Thames21 has been supporting local residents with investigating water quality, bathing water applications and campaigning for changes in national bathing water application criteria. The impact of the organisation's work increases health and wellbeing of residents, through volunteering opportunities, access to healthy blue spaces and empowering residents to make real differences to their local rivers.</p>	
<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b> This funding will enable an additional 0.2FTE of Thames21 officer time to increase current resources to address the health and function of South Oxfordshire’s rivers within the South Chilterns Catchment. Additional resources will increase capacity to identify and further develop projects in the catchment, working to deliver high-impact nature-based solutions to the climate and biodiversity crisis, whilst connecting communities to their local blue-green spaces and inspiring long-term stewardship of them.</p> <p>This funding will build upon ongoing work in the catchment, as Thames21 are co-hosts of the South Chilterns Catchment Partnership, with a particular focus on the River Thames area, from Wallingford to Cookham. Catchment partnerships undertake a community-led catchment-based approach (CaBA) to the water environment, embedding collaborative working at river catchment scale, working holistically in partnership alongside statutory bodies, water companies, local authorities, Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs), community groups, academics, business, farmers and landowners. This fosters collaboration throughout all stages of project delivery, maximizing value from partners’ networks and data, and enabling the sharing of lessons learnt and expertise.</p> <p>The additional time and resources funded will enable the identification of new projects, further development of projects already identified within the catchment partnership and delivery of work where possible. Building a pipeline of developed and shovel-ready projects, with secured consent and permissions, will enable more strategic decisions on the work delivered and significantly increase the efficiency of additional fundraising for project delivery in South Oxfordshire.</p> <p>Thames21 have been delivering work in the district since becoming co-hosts for the South Chilterns Catchment Partnership in 2020 and have demonstrated considerable success in the partnership projects delivered. Most recently, Thames21 worked alongside various catchment partners, including South Oxfordshire District Council, and community groups to apply for bathing water status at Wallingford Beach, involving a two-year citizen science program of water quality monitoring and public consultations. The successful designation of Wallingford Beach was announced by Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) earlier in 2024. From which, Thames21 can focus on the next phase of the project post-designation, supporting South Oxfordshire District Council, Wallingford Town Council and local communities through opportunities for citizen science collecting</p>	

data on environmental DNA (eDNA) in water quality samples and replicating this program of work at other suitable locations for bathing water status to increase monitoring of bacteria more holistically along the Thames.

Other avenues of work that Thames21 would like to further investigate and develop relate to the creation of wetlands and backwaters along the Thames floodplain, barriers to fish and eel migration, modelling road runoff into rivers, invasive species control, developing a range of citizen science initiatives and increasing opportunities to work alongside the farming community.

This funding will build upon previous successes in South Oxfordshire and strive to increase the work being delivered so local communities can enjoy healthy, thriving rivers.

**District reach:**

Watlington, Chalgrove, Cholsey, Benson and Crowmarsh, Wallingford, Goring, Kidmore End and Whitchurch, Sonning Common, Woodcote and Rotherfield, Henley-on-Thames

**Corporate Plan priority:**

Action on climate change and nature recovery

**Potential number of beneficiaries:**

75,000

Grant sought	2025/2026	2026/2027
Amount requested for service/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£11,740	£12,194
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£23,934	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£80,833	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	15%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£918,886	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£125,586	

**Previous funding awarded:**

- Funding for water bathing project 2022 £39,720

Scoring		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>A two-year funding plan has been provided demonstrating a balanced budget each year, however there is limited detail of income and expenditure costs over the two-year grant period. They have an internal fundraising team who secures income from charitable trusts and foundations, public and private sources to ensure a diverse and resilient range of income. Additionally, Government and Thames Water funding is also received which currently supports the organisation to co-host the South Chiltern's Catchment Partnership.</p>	Score	4/5
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b></p> <p>Some but not all financial year's budgets have been negatively affected by Covid19 with evidence to explain and some reduction in services/activities. The reserves policy has some depletion over the last three years, but officers can see it is still within reserve parameters.</p>	Score	2/4
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b></p> <p>Evidence demonstrates strong and clear indication of community need. They have an internal Engagement and Learning Team to draw further expertise, in relation to community engagement, co-design and outreach to facilitate ongoing and flexible approach to addressing community need. Their services/activities upskill local members/volunteers and connect communities to support high-quality natural spaces. Regular engagement with catchment partners and community involvement ensure people are at the heart of improving service design and delivery.</p>	Score	4/5
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b></p> <p>Please note this is a nationwide organisation and the number of beneficiaries has been calculated pro-rata for South Oxfordshire. More than 501 (75,000) local residents and volunteers directly benefit from services/activities. By accessing healthy blue-green spaces and supporting the 'Citizen Science' programme, they provide services that complement district council services. Organisation has provided an estimated total of 75,000, calculated from people living in the South Oxfordshire catchment and bordering counties with an additional five per cent to accommodate visitors to the area. Officers are unable to score a four due to these high estimated numbers and the lack of information on how many vulnerable people would access the Thames.</p>	Score	3/5
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b></p> <p>Not applicable – it is a nationwide organisation.</p>	Score	0/1
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b></p> <p>The project theme selected is 'Action of climate change and nature recovery'. The organisation has an excellent understanding and commitment to the climate and nature emergency. They wish to expand their operations within South Oxfordshire to improve engagement with blue-green spaces and awareness of the issues effecting river health and wildlife. More detail is needed to demonstrate expected outcomes.</p>	Score	3/5
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b></p> <p>Officers have awarded one additional point. They do provide strong evidence of relevant local partnerships, such as through the catchment partnership.</p>	Score	1/2
<p><b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>		
<p>Thames21 is a charity operating in the south east of England, including Greater London and across the Thames Basin, including South Oxfordshire. Organisation confirms any funding awarded, if successful would be used to</p>		

support the health and function of the River Thames within South Oxfordshire district.		
	<b>Total score</b>	<b>17/27</b>
<b>Non scoring officer comments</b>		
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation’s achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b></p> <p>There is evidence that climate action and nature is a routine part of the organisation’s strategy and programmes, and they have a high-level environmental policy. In addition, they have undertaken an environmental audit, which sets out plans to reduce carbon emission and water footprints by 30 per cent by 2028, and net-zero at their operational office (no date specified). They have also provided some evidence on wider engagement with partners on nature recovery programmes outside of the district.</p>		

<p><b>The Chiltern Centre</b></p>	<p><b>Ref:</b> SRev25-27/37</p>
<p><b>Project name</b> Deputy Manager salary</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b> The Chiltern Centre is a disability centre in Henley-on-Thames that supports young people (aged 16 – 30) across South Oxfordshire with short break respite care. All these young people have learning disabilities with associated communication and behavioural difficulties. Many have additional complex medical needs including: sensory impairments, mobility issues, epilepsy, complex feeding needs, continence and long-term health issues such as cerebral palsy.</p>	
<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b> The Chiltern Centre in Henley-on-Thames, has been a lifeline for families for over 20 years, offering vital short-break respite care to young people with learning disabilities and complex medical needs. We support seven incredible individuals, aged 16 to 30, from South Oxfordshire. Many of these young people face additional challenges, including sensory impairments, mobility issues, epilepsy, and conditions like cerebral palsy, which makes the care we provide even more critical.</p> <p>Our mission is simple yet powerful: to give these young people the opportunity to live fulfilling, independent lives while offering their families the much-needed support and relief they deserve. We're here 24/7, 365 days a year, ensuring parents can take a break, knowing their child is in expert hands.</p> <p>What sets us apart is our personalised approach. Each young person undergoes a thorough assessment, allowing us to tailor care packages that align with their unique needs and preferences. We promote choice, independence, and self-confidence, creating an environment where they can enjoy activities they love, either individually or with their peers.</p> <p>Our services are flexible, adapting to the changing needs of both the young person and their family, especially in times of crisis. By focusing exclusively on this age group, we're able to provide a seamless transition into adulthood, offering stability and support during a time when many services become less available.</p> <p>We are applying for funding for the salary of the Chiltern Centre who is integral to the planning of the person-centred short break care that the Chiltern Centre provides.</p> <p>The Deputy Manager supports the Centre Manager to lead, inspire, support and develop the Team to deliver high quality personalised services to the highest professional standards, and provide a culture where the Team can thrive.</p> <p>They assist in the operational management of the service, ensuring continued compliance with Care Quality Commission (CQC). requirements and all relevant legislation. Working with the Centre Manager they ensure the provision of high quality, outcome focused care and support which enables individuals, and ensures organisational priorities are met in accordance with available resources.</p> <p>They ensure that the establishment meets the standards required by the CQC and participate in the development and implementation of efficient, accurate and appropriate</p>	



quality assurance, and monitoring control measures and practices.
Finally they support the development and implementation of plans to improve our operations, driving our service from 'Good' to 'Outstanding'. Gaining and acting on feedback including from staff, stakeholders, the people we support and their families.
<b>District reach:</b> Henley-on-Thames
<b>Corporate Plan priority:</b> Inclusion, accessibility and accountability
<b>Potential number of beneficiaries:</b> 7

<b>Grant sought</b>	<b>2025/2026</b>	<b>2026/2027</b>
Amount requested for service/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£48,031	£49,225
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£83,626	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£320,799	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	15%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£1,885,000	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£297,000	

**Previous funding awarded:**

- Revenue 2017-21 £122,000
- Councillor grants 2017-18 £1,224
- Capital 2018-19 £7,967
- Councillor grants 2020-21 £400
- Revenue 2022-24 £13,048
- Everyone Active 2022 £1,000
- Everyone Active 2023-24 £1,000
- Revenue 2024-25 £6,524
- Councillor grants 2023-24 £1,000

<b>Scoring</b>		
<b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b>	<b>Score</b>	3/5

<p>A funding plan covering the required two-year period. Although a deficit budget is forecast for both years, there is clear movement towards more sustainable income streams. Officers note substantial total reserves (£1.885MM estimated at 31 March 2025) although they state that this forecast allows for increasing their designated fund for their new build project. £295,000 is unrestricted funds.</p>		
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b> All financial years have balanced budgets. Officers note that they are operating within the parameters of their reserves whilst retaining finance designated for their future new build.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>4/4</p>
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b> Evidence demonstrates some indication of community need on a national basis with some reference to local data sources. Regular consultation is carried out with existing service users and their families by encouraging open dialogue, parent coffee mornings, reviews and an annual quality assurance questionnaire. The Chiltern Centre offers highly personalised respite care and a flexible, creative approach to meeting the complex needs of their service-users only.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>3/5</p>
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b> This service directly supports up to 50 (7) young disabled people aged between 16-30 years, many of whom have additional complex medical needs. This number would not include the indirect benefit felt by the families. It offers their families a break as well as practical and emotional support.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>3/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b> N/A - No national organisation has applied.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>0/1</p>
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b> The project theme selected is 'Inclusion, accessibility and accountability'. The applicant has provided a clear and relevant response that addresses how the service/activity will provide better outcomes to the community at a good standard under the specific theme. This has been demonstrated through the activities for young adults with disabilities, which also provides respite for families who provide ongoing and long-term care. Providing evidence that their service is designed to deliver support for vulnerable/priority groups. Along with an excellent and in-depth equality, diversity, and inclusion strategy framework, which demonstrates commitment and dedication to equity both internally with staff, and externally. They have demonstrated engagement with staff and service users via surveys. However, the application does not indicate how the data collected has been/will be used to make improvements to the service.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>3/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b> They have provided strong evidence that they work with a wide variety of local external organisations such as social services, education providers e.g. Henley College and Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) and Inclusion Un-Limited. Therefore, they qualify for an extra discretionary point.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>1/2</p>
<p><b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>		
<p>Officers have concerns about the organisation's slow response to communications regarding monitoring of their previous 2022/25 revenue grant.</p>		
	<p><b>Total score</b></p>	<p>17/27</p>
<p><b>Non scoring officer comments</b></p>		
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation's achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b></p>		

The organisation has delivered one-off activities that contribute to addressing the Climate Emergency. For example, they have improved the buildings insulation, and put in double glazed windows. The organisation recognises that the energy efficiency of the building could be improved further. Officers would recommend the organisation starts to measure the carbon emissions of their operations to identify where carbon emissions and cost savings can be made. This will help create a medium term plan to decarbonise their operations. They should also consider how climate change may impact their services and/or service users, and review options for how adaptations to their operations can be made. Visit <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction> for more ideas on actions to take or contact the council's climate and biodiversity team [climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk) for further support

<p><b>Oxfordshire Discovery College</b></p>	<p><b>Ref:</b> SRev25-27/25</p>
<p><b>Project name</b> Discovery College Growing Connections in South Oxfordshire</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b> Our mission is to ensure that every child has what they need to transform their mental health - we want to see a world where children and young people have the skills, support and control to create their own mental wellness, and to navigate times of mental ill health. We're a small, impactful charity that provides a powerful blend of youth work, learning and peer support. We run psychoeducation programmes on a range of mental health topics, creating a place to learn together about mental health: destigmatising, upskilling, and instilling hope. Our evidence-based programmes increase understanding, improve self-awareness, create support networks and build a toolkit of practical strategies for recovery. We do this by drawing on the expertise of Facilitators who have both personal-lived and professional-learned experience of mental health, providing both theory, and relatable, authentic role models.</p>	
<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b> Our service makes a real difference to children and young people experiencing mental health problems in Oxfordshire: improving their wellbeing and equipping them with tools to stay well or aid recovery. We would like to use this funding to support our core delivery of evidence-based psychoeducation programmes to children; young people; and adult supporters in South Oxfordshire, where the heart of our delivery is already based.</p> <p>Over the last few years we've developed a suite of impactful learning programmes; and have examined our data to ensure that we're genuinely meeting the needs of the families we work with. We've expanded our staff team and built relationships and partnerships in the communities we work in. We are now in the position that demand for our services is increasing; and the needs of the children and young people we support are becoming ever more complex.</p> <p>We aim to deliver approximately 14 programmes per year across the county, but the reality is that the majority these programmes are delivered in Didcot and the surrounding area. To enable us to maintain this core level of service provision we need to support our core staff roles - four Facilitators (two Experts-by-Training; two Experts-by-Experience); and our Operations Manager who oversees volunteer recruitment; programme scheduling; line management of Facilitators; and participant welfare. This small team has reached over 100 beneficiaries in the last year through more than 18 powerful learning experiences, with each one creating an improvement in overall wellbeing. We create opportunities for children and young people to increase their understanding of mental health, their own self awareness of their needs, triggers and strengths, and some practical tools and strategies they can use to sustain their wellbeing.</p>	
<p><b>District reach:</b> Watlington, Berinsfield, Didcot North East, Didcot South, Didcot West, Cholsey, Wallingford, Sonning Common, Henley-on-Thames, Thame</p>	
<p><b>Corporate Plan priority:</b> Inclusion, accessibility and accountability</p>	
<p><b>Potential number of beneficiaries:</b> 100</p>	

<b>Grant sought</b>	<b>2025/2026</b>	<b>2026/2027</b>
Amount requested for service/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£10,440	£10,000
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£20,440	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£39,309	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	26%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>		
	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£65,000	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£55,504	

**Previous funding awarded:**

- Councillor grants 2023-24 £5,826

<b>Scoring</b>		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>A balanced funding plan covering the required two-year period. However, there is some reliance on grants, with limited detail provided.</p>	<b>Score</b>	4/5
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b></p> <p>All financial years have balanced budgets showing an increase in services. Both years show a large surplus and officers note some growth in reserves. Officers note organisation only started in November 2022 so accounts cover November 2022/23 and 2023/24.</p>	<b>Score</b>	4/4
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b></p> <p>Evidence to demonstrate good indication of community need and a flexible approach to addressing this. They demonstrate how their recently created organisation has been designed around consultation and pilot projects. They are in the process of collecting feedback from service users and other stakeholders and use feedback to modify their programmes. Service design is created in collaboration with those with lived experience of mental health problems and those with professional expertise in the area.</p>	<b>Score</b>	3/5
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b></p> <p>More than 51 and up to 500 residents (100) benefit from the services and it is clear this includes some vulnerable/priority groups such as economically and educationally disadvantaged. Supports children and young people aged four to twenty-five with</p>	<b>Score</b>	2/5

<p>their mental health through evidence-based psychoeducation programmes. Activities reduce demand for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service referrals by teaching resilience and mental health coping skills but not district council services.</p>		
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b> N/A - No national organisation has applied.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>0/1</p>
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b> The project theme selected is 'Inclusion, accessibility and accountability'. The applicant has provided a clear and relevant response that addresses how the service/activity will provide better outcomes to the community at a good standard under the specific theme. They created their organisation from feedback from young people in the area and a pilot project, as well as considering external data such as the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Community Profiles. They have run multiple events that contribute positively to the community by working with both young people with mental health struggles, as well as considering wider socio-economic factors, the family, professionals, and carers around them. They show good dedication for staff through their Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy, as well as Wellness Action Plans, however do not show wider engagement with their staff or service-user's needs.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>3/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b> Officers have awarded an additional point as the application has shown a good level of collaboration with external organisations such as ArtScape to develop an art and wellbeing programme, in addition working with a local artist to generate activities and video tutorials that young people can access through their website.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>1/2</p>
<p><b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>		
<p>Not applicable.</p>		
	<p><b>Total score</b></p>	<p><b>17/27</b></p>
<p><b>Non scoring officer comments</b></p>		
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation’s achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b> The organisation has given some consideration into possible actions that address the Climate Emergency, with limited evidence of any actions already taken. They have not attached a climate policy/statement or action plan to their application, with limited evidence of actions undertaken. Officers would recommend the organisation starts their journey by measuring the carbon emissions of their operations to identify where carbon emissions and cost savings can be made. They should also consider how climate change may impact their services and/or service-users, and review options for how adaptations to their operations can be made. Visit <a href="https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction">https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction</a> for more ideas on how to get started or contact the council’s climate and biodiversity team <a href="mailto:climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk">climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk</a> for further support.</p>		

<b>Earth Trust</b>	<b>Ref:</b> SRev25-27/32
<p><b>Project name</b> Earth Trust Volunteer Programme</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b> Earth Trust inspires people to address climate, biodiversity and wellbeing with the power of natural green spaces. We give people free access to 500 hectares of woodland, farmland, wildflower meadows and wetlands in South Oxfordshire including community reserves in Didcot, Abingdon and Wallingford and the iconic Wittenham Clumps which alone receives over 200,000 visits a year. We host educational visits for outdoor learning in nature for over 3,500 school children/year, many of whom live in South Oxfordshire. We run events for the public about food, farming, environment, nature and archaeology, reaching c.6,400 people/year. Our volunteer programme enables local people to take part in active, cause-related volunteering in their community, to connect with others and, at the same time, support their own mental and physical health.</p>	
<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b> We are seeking funds to support our Volunteer Programme. Volunteers have been an essential part of our organisation for over 15 years and we are incredibly proud of our established programme, which launches every participant on a unique journey of learning and self-discovery, connecting them closely to their local environment.</p> <p>At our last survey (September 2024) the scale of volunteering was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 318 registered volunteers</li> <li>• 251 active volunteers (volunteered in the preceding 12 months) up from 220 in 2023</li> <li>• total in the preceding 12 months: 17,379 hours.</li> </ul> <p>Some volunteers give time once or twice/week; others once/year – but 17,379 hours is the equivalent of 69 hours or nearly 10 working days per person on average. This huge contribution valued (using a nationally-recognised metric) at £198,815, enables Earth Trust to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• care for the 500 hectare farm and seven community reserves and maintain public access resulting in over 200,000 visits/year</li> <li>• run events and festivals for the public reaching c.6,400 people/year.</li> <li>• host a full-time education programme for mainstream schools, reaching c.3,300 pupils/year</li> <li>• give 1,664 pupil visits for children and young people with SEND/year.</li> </ul> <p>There are now 13 different volunteer roles for people with different interests, abilities and time. The full list is on our website (at <a href="https://earthtrust.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer/">https://earthtrust.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer/</a>) plus a video where volunteers describe what they do and how they benefit.</p> <p>In 2016 the hard work of our volunteers was rewarded with the prestigious Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service, the Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) for volunteer groups.</p> <p>Our Volunteer Programme is managed by our part-time Volunteer Officer, XXXX. XXXX ensures volunteers have a positive experience, matching their skills and interests to a role, ensuring training and support is provided, running social events and overall management</p>	

of the volunteers. Other key staff roles, supporting the programme are the Comms Team, Education Team and our Rangers. Comm’s work is vital to recruit new volunteers and to build the community, celebrate success and inform active volunteers of the week’s sessions, tasks, meeting places and times. Our Land Management team plans and supervises the activities of all the conservation groups, including ensuring health and safety. Volunteers learn about sustainable farming and land management from the Rangers and develop skills shared by the Rangers and by skilled Volunteers. Our skilled Education Volunteers support Earth School, Earth Explorers and Earth Skills.

Our priorities in 2025-27 are to:

- Diversify our community and the opportunities we offer. We are encouraging young people's volunteering including through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and in partnership with other local youth charities. We are enabling people in full-time employment or with other week-time commitments to volunteer by running weekend volunteering.
- Improve the quality of volunteers' experience with us. This includes offering more learning and development sessions for volunteers, improving staff leadership, introducing a handbook and other ways to support volunteers and the community as a whole.
- Evolve our volunteer community to support Earth Trust as it also grows towards a more financially sustainable organisation in the future.

**District reach:**

All areas

**Corporate Plan priority:**

Action on climate change and nature recovery

**Potential number of beneficiaries:**

50,941

<b>Grant sought</b>	<b>2025/2026</b>	<b>2026/2027</b>
Amount requested for service/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£35,000	£35,000
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£70,000	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£1,817,870	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	2%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>Estimates at 31/12/2024 – 25/26 not provided</b>	



	<b>due to accounting year</b>
Total savings/reserves	£14,097,232
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£10,836,283

**Previous funding awarded:**

- Partnerships (Vale) 2014-17 £45,000
- Revenue 2022-24 £18,333
- Revenue 2024-25 £9,166
- Everyone Active 2024-25 £1,000

<b>Scoring</b>		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>A funding plan covering a two-year (calendar) period. Although a deficit is forecast in the first year, there is a robust plan to move to profit in 2026. There is clear movement to grow their commercial hire and fundraising activities with the aim of achieving more sustainable income streams.</p>	<b>Score</b>	3/5
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b></p> <p>Every financial year's budget negatively affected by Covid19, Cost of Living and other factors including a strategic investment for growth. Officers note they are in a transition period, planning to move towards a more sustainable financial position and a more diverse income base. They are operating within their reserves policy.</p>	<b>Score</b>	2/4
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b></p> <p>Evidence demonstrates some indication of community need for volunteering opportunities on a local and national level. Officers can see evidence of regular consultation limited to existing service users only, including priority groups. Consultation with volunteers is carried out through their Volunteer Forum as well as an annual survey, and feedback is clearly considered and implemented.</p>	<b>Score</b>	3/5
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b></p> <p>More than 501 (50,941) residents benefit from the Earth Trust by giving free access to the natural green spaces they manage, including community reserves in Didcot and Wallingford as well as the Wittenham Clumps. They host educational visits, public events and run a volunteer programme. They provide volunteering opportunities for all including a large proportion of older residents, and vulnerable young people.</p>	<b>Score</b>	4/5
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b></p> <p>N/A - No national organisation has applied.</p>	<b>Score</b>	0/1
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b></p> <p>The project theme selected is 'Action on climate change and nature recovery'. The organisation has shown an excellent understanding and commitment to the climate and nature emergency as a routine part of the organisation's business plan. They have provided organisational net-zero goals, commitment to an action plan showing how they intend to deliver against those targets and evidence to demonstrate progress against these actions. Examples of activities include evidence of a greenhouse gas report and investment in some of the recommendations.</p>	<b>Score</b>	4/5
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b></p>	<b>Score</b>	1/2

<p>Officers have awarded one additional point as they collaborate with relevant partners towards the restoration of the natural world with partners such as North Wessex Downs National Landscape.</p>		
<p><b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>		
<p>Financial considerations – The panel may wish to take into consideration that Earth's Trust's expenditure in 2023/24 was £1,520,727 and they have unrestricted reserves of £10,836,283 so appears they do not require funding.</p>		
	<p><b>Total score</b></p>	<p><b>17/27</b></p>
<p><b>Non scoring officer comments</b></p>		
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation’s achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b>          Taking action to tackle climate change and promote nature's recovery are a fundamental part of the organisation’s strategy and programmes. They have presented evidence of a nature-positive farming policy and greenhouse gas report which has informed their approach to net-zero. As part of this they will be developing a sustainability and ethical policy and will be monitoring and reporting on their progress. They have identified funds and invested in some of the recommendations following the Greenhouse Gases’ (GHG) report, and further work is needed to reduce their fossil fuel use. Officers would recommend a clear, costed medium-term plan to reduce their emissions if this isn't ready in the pipeline. They may also want to include a review of how climate change, such as increased incidences of extreme weather, heatwaves and water scarcity will impact their operations.</p>		

<b>Riverside Counselling Service (RCS)</b>	<b>Ref:</b> SRev25-27/30
<p><b>Project name</b> Riverside Counselling Service (RCS)</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b> Riverside Counselling Service (RCS) is a well-established and well-regarded charity which has delivered an accessible community-based counselling service across South Oxfordshire for the last 35 years. RCS originally delivered services in Henley. In 2014, we branched out into Wallingford and in 2017 an SODC revenue grant allowed us to expand our services into the more economically deprived areas of Didcot and Berinsfield. This has assisted us significantly in enabling us to offer our services to clients who would not otherwise be able to afford counselling. Our service is open to all adults and young people (from 12 years) regardless of background or circumstances. We provide 1:1 counselling, therapeutic groups and Drop-In services for those who are experiencing emotional and psychological distress and who present with a range of mental health issues. These include: depression and anxiety, low self-esteem, stress, relationship issues, self-harm, loss and bereavement, as well as other overlapping and complex mental health difficulties. Our counselling offer includes support for those who are struggling with complex issues. We offer short (12 weeks), medium (20 weeks) and long-term support (44 weeks) with the option of 18 months of support for those where we identify a clinical need that needs a longer-term approach to the work.</p> <p>In the last financial year, 2023-24, we supported 378 clients providing 5897 sessions. A particular feature of our service provision and one that we feel is central to our offer is that we are embedded in the local communities in which we operate. We have dedicated time to sourcing accessible venues in community settings in Henley, Didcot, Wallingford and Berinsfield. As a legacy from our practice during Covid, we now also offer online counselling for those clients where accessibility is an issue. We retained this approach as it helps to ensure that we can meet the diversity of needs.</p> <p>Our objective is to improve the mental wellbeing and quality of life for people in our communities through the provision of high quality, effective and accessible mental health support. We are also committed to ensuring that these services are accessible to all as we are very aware that NHS/Private mental health provision is hugely overstretched and/or prohibitively expensive for many. It can also unfortunately, still be quite stigmatised. As a trusted provider of services, we can reduce and remove some of stigmatisation that can exist around accessing mental health support.</p> <p>We provide a safe space to talk with a qualified counsellor or a counsellor in the final stages of their training. Our trainee counsellors are subject to a rigorous selection process and are all studying at reputable training institutions such as Oxford University, Warwick University, Regents University and the Metanoia Institute (the latter two are both in London). We aim to give our clients the skills and confidence they need to build emotional resilience, develop coping strategies and feel better able to manage their own mental well-being.</p> <p>RCS is accredited by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). We adhere to their strict ethical and professional standards thus ensuring that our services are robust and that what we deliver is clinically and ethically appropriate for the needs of our clients. Each year we are subject to a rigorous reaccreditation process for BACP. This ensures that we regularly review how we deliver our service and meeting</p>	

BACP requirement and their ethical guidelines on an ongoing basis.

**Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:**

This funding will contribute to the sustainability of our core service provision and will support us with our ambitions to grow and consolidate our services. RCS is an open access mental health resource for adults and young people. Due to our high profile within the communities in which we operate, we receive referrals from a wide range of sources including: GPs and other health professionals; psychiatric and health services; parents and other family members and youth and community groups. Most of our referrals are self referrals. On average, we receive 30 referrals each month. We aim to respond to requests for counselling support within 48 hours. Whilst we do operate with a waiting list for our services, we strive to ensure that clients are matched within five weeks of requesting support.

The funding will support our provision of 1:1 counselling support for adults and young people; our drop-in services in Berinsfield; our therapeutic groups in Didcot and Wallingford and the provision of continuous professional development for our staff and volunteer counsellors which is a requirement of our British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) accreditation.

Our 1:1 counselling service for adults is currently offered via 41 volunteer counsellors who are either on placement from their learning institution or have recently completed their qualification. RCS is consistently rated highly as a placement provider due to our adherence to the BACP ethical guidelines and accreditation, our qualified and experienced staff and high profile in the local community. We provide clinical supervision for counsellors as well as ongoing opportunities to learn.

Our 1:1 counselling service for young people (aged 12 to 18) is offered via seven counsellors who meet with the young person at a time and location of their choosing. We also liaise with the parents/carers of the young person and will offer to meet with them to discuss how they might support their child, if this is deemed helpful.

Our adult drop-in services are delivered by two counsellors and is offered both over the phone and in person. Appointments are usually arranged within one or two weeks of contact.

We have two therapeutic groups, one in Didcot and one in Wallingford, each facilitated by a counsellor. Clients wanting to join a group are either referred by their counsellor towards the end of their 1:1 counselling or alternatively individuals can request to join a group when referring into the service. In both cases the client/individual will have a conversation/assessment with the group facilitator to ensure their suitability for group work.

This grant will also support the costs related to ensuring clinical excellence and compliance with BACP accreditation via the work done by our Clinical Management Team. This includes the recruitment, supervision and support for our volunteer counsellors. Maintaining clinical oversight of our working practices and policies and procedures. This team are also responsible for acting as safeguarding leads and providing support and expert knowledge to counsellors as safeguarding issues arise.

**District reach:**

Berinsfield, Didcot North East, Didcot South, Didcot West, Wallingford, Henley-on-

Thames
<b>Corporate Plan priority:</b> Thriving and healthy communities
<b>Potential number of beneficiaries:</b> 400

Grant sought	2025/2026	2026/2027
Amount requested for service/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£25,000	£25,000
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£50,000	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£295,237	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	8%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£59,141	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£50,000	

**Previous funding awarded:**

- Revenue 2017-21 £78,000
- Councillor grants 2018-19 £3,800
- Councillor grants 2019-20 £3,750
- Councillor grants 2020-21 £9,645
- Revenue 2022-24 £45,568
- Berinsfield Garden Village 2022-23 £25,780
- Councillor grants 2022-23 R2 £5,896
- Revenue 2024-25 £22,784

Scoring		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>A detailed and realistic two-year plan relative to the organisation's size, demonstrating a balanced budget each year. There is a diverse range of income streams including generated income from client fees and contributions as well as grant funding, donations and general fundraising.</p>	<b>Score</b>	5/5
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of</b></p>	<b>Score</b>	1/4

<p><b>reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b>                  Some but not all of Riverside's accounts during this period show a deficit. There is a clear explanation in each case that the budgets in 2021/22 and 2023/24 were negatively affected by Covid19, Cost of Living or other factors and consequently some reduction in services/activities. Officers note a concerning depletion of reserves over the three years that isn't within the reserves policy.</p>		
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b>                  Evidence demonstrates strong and clear indication of the need for social, emotional and mental health support in young people. A flexible, responsive and collaborative approach has been taken particularly in Berinsfield. Consultation is regularly carried out with the existing service users and other stakeholders, and service provision has been adapted accordingly.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>4/5</p>
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b>                  More than 51 and up to 500 residents (400) with social, emotional and mental health needs benefit from the services. Riverside Counselling Service directly supports up to 50 vulnerable residents.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>3/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b>                  N/A - No national organisation has applied.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>0/1</p>
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b>                  The project theme selected is 'Thriving and healthy communities'. This counselling service will clearly provide better outcomes to the community by providing a responsive service that aims to improve the health and wellbeing of residents. However this is to a satisfactory standard as there is a lack of evidence demonstrating the impact their service has on their users and/or the wider community.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>2/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b>                  Officers have awarded an additional point as there is evidence of relevant partnership working and co-design of services with local people and organisations from the statutory and voluntary sector.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>1/2</p>
<p><b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>		
<p>Financial considerations - Riverside's reserves policy states that their unrestricted reserves should be between three and six months of forecast expenditure and the aim is to have a minimum of three months of reserves. Officers calculate that in 2023/24, their unrestricted reserves had reduced to approximately 36 per cent of their running costs for the quarter and this is below their policy level. They state that the turnover in the fundraising manager role had a significant impact on their ability to apply for grants. The cost-of-living crisis and the reduction in their income generation from client fees in Didcot and Berinsfield resulted in a challenging period financially.</p>		
	<p><b>Total score</b></p>	<p><b>16/27</b></p>
<p><b>Non scoring officer comments</b></p>		
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation's achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b>                  The organisation has given some consideration into possible actions that address the Climate Emergency, related to the activities they provide. RCS are in the process of developing an environmental policy, recognising that due to the nature of their work, their emissions are likely to be low. Renting rooms rather than a single office space also limits the extent to which the organisation has influence over decarbonising these premises. They do, however, provide an essential service to support residents who are potentially more likely to experience poor mental health as a result of climate change or those living in fuel poverty. Officers recommend that the organisation's environmental policy recognises these issues and the role RCS may have in supporting communities effected by extreme weather events, prolonged heatwaves and water scarcity.</p>		

<p><b>Benson Millstream Day Centre</b></p>	<p><b>Ref:</b> SRev25-27/23</p>
<p><b>Project name</b>          Helping Benson Millstream Centre grow and thrive - Expansion of the meal delivery and outreach service.</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b>          Benson Millstream Centre is a charitable organisation providing support to older residents in South Oxfordshire (namely Benson and the surrounding towns and parishes).</p> <p>The Millstream Centre's objective is to support customers to live independently for longer, reducing the burden on support services. This support is not only delivered in the Centre, but also by outreach to the community.</p> <p>The Centre delivers its objective by providing nourishing freshly prepared meals three days per week, provision of companionship and activities which are both physically and mentally stimulating. Activities are designed to keep customers fit and independent, reducing falls and providing good company, addressing loneliness and isolation.</p>	
<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b>          Benson village has recently undergone a massive transformation with an increase of an estimated 4,000+ new residents. Also nearby Wallingford and Crowmarsh Gifford have seen an expansion in new housing. In anticipation of an increase in residents and an ageing population, the Benson Millstream Centre completed a building expansion project in 2023 facilitating an increase in the number of customers who can attend sessions at the Centre, however we are now experiencing an increase in the demand for our freshly prepared food delivery and outreach services.</p> <p>The current delivery service, relies on volunteer delivery drivers to deliver meals to residents in Benson and Ewelme. We would like to expand this service to surrounding parishes including Wallingford. Despite a local advertising campaign, articles in local bulletins and newsletters, as well as local networking, we are unable to recruit sufficient volunteer drivers to guarantee delivery to meet our current demand let alone be able to expand the geographical area of the delivery service.</p> <p>Based on our experience we feel the only way to guarantee a delivery service to all customers who request this service is to employ two dedicated drivers for a total of four hours a day, on three days per week.</p> <p>In comparison to other delivery options which provide mass-produced frozen meals, we are confident that our offering of a hot freshly prepared two-course meal is unique in the area. We will ensure we have the demand for this increased delivery capacity through continued local marketing, including door-to-door leaflet delivery, and ongoing local publicity.</p> <p>What we know from our current delivery service is that increasingly our delivery drivers are often the only daily contact and interaction with a growing number of customers who live alone, meaning they also provide a welfare check on customers. Drivers then report back any concerns to the Centre, and if necessary the Centre Manager will contact next of kin / other services as required. This expansion will also include regular customer contact by the Millstream Centre Manager, who will also co-ordinate any requests / requirements for any additional services offered by the help hub and facilitated by the drivers e.g. delivering</p>	

prescriptions, etc.
<b>District reach:</b> Benson and Crowmarsh, Wallingford, Ewelme, Berrick Salome
<b>Corporate Plan priority:</b> Thriving and healthy communities
<b>Potential number of beneficiaries:</b> 150

Grant sought	2025/2026	2026/2027
Amount requested for service/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£14,055	£14,240
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£28,295	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£62,734	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	23%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>		
	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£212,535	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£17,535	

**Previous funding awarded:**

- Capital 2017-18 £17,950
- Councillor grants 2017-18 £500
- Councillor grants 2018-19 £1,000
- Councillor grants 2019-20 £1,000
- Councillor grants 2020-21 £300
- Councillor grants 2021-22 £1,000
- Revenue 2022-24 £11,517
- Capital 2021-22 £29,678
- Everyone Active 2022 £1,000
- Councillor grants 2022-23 £1,000
- Everyone Active 2023-24 £350
- Councillor grants 2022-23 R2 £528
- Food and Warmth grant 2023-24 £2,482
- Revenue 2024-25 £5,758
- Everyone Active 2024-25 £840



<b>Scoring</b>		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>A funding plan covering the required two-year period, with both years showing a balanced budget. However, there is some reliance on generated income streams from meal subscriptions.</p>	Score	4/5
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b></p> <p>Some but not all financial years' budgets affected by other factors (large building project and investment in investment portfolio) with evidence to explain and overall increase in services/activities. Has a reserves policy with a large depletion noted in 2022/23 which still remained within reserves policy (linked to large capital project) but reserves have increased for 2023/24.</p>	Score	3/4
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b></p> <p>Evidence to demonstrate some indication of community need due to increase in ageing population and flexible approach to addressing community need. Some consultation limited to existing service users only via an annual survey and collaboration with other agencies at a bi-monthly liaison meeting. Officers cannot score higher due to limited text and evidence provided.</p>	Score	2/5
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b></p> <p>More than 51 and up to 500 residents (150) could benefit and it is clear this includes vulnerable/ priority groups such as older people. The are providing services that complement district council services.</p>	Score	3/5
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b></p> <p>N/A - No national organisation has applied.</p>	Score	0/1
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b></p> <p>The project theme selected is 'Thriving and healthy communities'. The organisation has implemented multiple or regular minor events, activities or services that contribute positively to thriving and healthy communities, such as by reducing social isolation for elderly residents and supporting their mental and physical health through improving social connection and providing healthy and nutritious meals. Evidence has been provided to demonstrate how health and wellbeing will be improved for their service-users (older people) as grant is to support them being able to widen their meal delivery scheme to further areas of the district.</p>	Score	3/5
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b></p> <p>Officers have awarded an additional point as the applicant has provided evidence of relevant partnership working with local voluntary sector organisations, other councils, GP surgeries.</p>	Score	1/2
<b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b>		
Not applicable.		
	<b>Total score</b>	<b>16/27</b>
<b>Non scoring officer comments</b>		
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation’s achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b></p> <p>The organisation has considered the environmental impact of purchases and has recently used the refurbishment of their garden to introduce more insect-friendly plants. They have stated that energy costs are an issue but have not</p>		

yet implemented any changes to improve the energy efficiency of the building. Officers would recommend the organisation starts to measure the carbon emissions of their operations to identify where carbon emissions and cost savings can be made. This will help create a medium-term plan to decarbonise their operations. They should also consider how climate change may impact their services and/or service-users, and review options for how adaptations to their operations can be made. Visit <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction> for more ideas on actions to take or contact the council's climate and biodiversity team [climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk) for further support.

<b>NOMAD Youth and Community Project</b>	<b>Ref: SRev25-27/13</b>
<p><b>Project name</b>          NOMAD Youth and Community Project</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b>          Nomad is a detached youth and community project in Henley-on-Thames that provides support for children/young people and their parents/carers, particularly those who are marginalized and disadvantaged through economic and/or complex social issues.</p> <p>Our Aims are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support and assist children, young people and families in Henley and its surrounding areas, particularly those who are, marginalized through social and economic factors.</li> <li>• To help them to make good and informed choices in all aspects of their lives, specifically in the areas of education, health, training, employment, finances, independence, recreation and relationships.</li> <li>• To encourage people to be full and useful members of our local community and society by working with them and other appropriate agencies to improve the conditions of their lives including their physical, mental, and spiritual capacities.</li> <li>• To help provide a voice for people in their community enabling them to be involved and influence their community positively.</li> </ul> <p>As a project we put a high value on children, young people and families and seek to be inclusive to all.</p> <p>Nomad operates under the following four elements to achieve our aims and objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools Work – 1 to 1 mentoring with referred students in local secondary schools, delivering Life Skills programmes and attending professional meetings to support young people and parents. We also facilitate vulnerable students in partnership with Gillotts school via our d:two learning programme. Including facilitating some students sitting their GCSE examinations in our premises.</li> <li>• After School and Holiday Programme includes targeted weekly afterschool activities, holiday trips and residential opportunities.</li> <li>• Parenting Support – includes 1 to 1 and group parenting support/advice programmes, practical support re benefits, budgeting, housing issues and signposting to other agencies such as Christians Against Poverty (CAP) Debt Support. This is alongside our Family Focus Sessions which provide support for individual parents and their teenager addressing issues of anger, communication, and relationships.</li> <li>• Community Activities – includes; community fun days, coach trips to the beach, supporting the 16+ cohort, and managing the foodbank which operates on a referral basis.</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b>                  We would like to apply for core costs to enable us to continue our vital work in Henley-on-Thames and surrounding villages to support children, young people and families who are disadvantaged economically and or have complex social issues.</p>
<p><b>District reach:</b>                  Woodcote and Rotherfield, Henley-on-Thames</p>
<p><b>Corporate Plan priority:</b>                  Thriving and healthy communities</p>
<p><b>Potential number of beneficiaries:</b>                  300</p>

Grant sought	2025/2026	2026/2027
Amount requested for service/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£25,000	£25,000
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£50,000	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£239,297	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	10%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>		
	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£202,828	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£152,828	

**Previous funding awarded:**

- Revenue 2014-16 £75,000
- Revenue 2017-21 £95,00
- Councillor grants 2017-18 £2,000
- Volunteering Grant Scheme 2018-19 £474
- Councillor grants 2019-20 £1,000, £2,994
- Councillor grants 2020-21 1,300
- Councillor grants 2021-22 £1,958
- Revenue 2022-24 £15,058
- Revenue 2024-25 £7,529
- Everyone Active 2024-25 £540

Scoring		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>A funding plan covering the required two-year period. However, there is some reliance on certain income streams and there are small gaps in funding over the two-year grant period. Officers note a clear movement towards more sustainable and balanced income streams to reduce budget deficits. Their dedicated fundraising officer is working on accessing more larger, longer-term grant funding and whilst most of their services are free, they now charge for their 'school mentoring' service.</p>	Score	3/5
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b></p> <p>Some but not all financial years' budgets have been affected by the Covid19 pandemic and Cost of Living factors, however there has been an overall increase in their services/activities, such as their food distribution programme and an increased demand on the foodbank. Their reserves policy has no depletion of reserves over the last three years.</p>	Score	3/4
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b></p> <p>Evidence demonstrates some indication of community need and a flexible approach to addressing this, with regular consultation with existing service-users only. Their central recording system logs all referrals and interactions with clients to streamline and improve services, with evidence of client case examples to demonstrate sessions are adapted for young people with physical disabilities, complex and neuro-divergent needs. They regularly work with local schools, families and social services to ensure they continue to meet the needs of young people in the local area, including priority groups.</p>	Score	3/5
<p><b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b></p> <p>More than 51 and up to 500 (300) residents will benefit from the services/activities which includes some vulnerable/priority groups. The applicant has highlighted their support to young people with diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds with social issues. As a result of early intervention to help people reach their full potential, in particular educationally and becoming financially more stable, they currently and will continue to provide services/activities that complement district council services.</p>	Score	3/5
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b></p> <p>N/A - no national organisation has applied.</p>	Score	0/1
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b></p> <p>The project theme selected is 'Thriving and healthy communities'. Clear and well-detailed responses that addresses how the services/activities will provide better outcomes to the community at a good standard under the specific theme, including reduced social isolation and strengthened cohesion of families and children/young people within our communities. They have implemented regular events and activities and evidence provided in the form of case studies to demonstrate how health and wellbeing has been improved for their service users, despite having complex physical and social issues.</p>	Score	3/5
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b></p> <p>Officers have awarded one additional point for evidence of relevant partnership working with local voluntary sector organisations, other councils, schools and police, to deliver their relevant service/activities to a good standard.</p>	Score	1/2
<p><b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>		

Not applicable.		
	<b>Total score</b>	<b>16/27</b>
<b>Non scoring officer comments</b>		
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation’s achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b></p> <p>The organisation has given some consideration to the climate emergency, but with limited detail on routine actions taken. The organisation have not attached a climate policy/statement or action plan to their application. Officers would recommend that the organisation starts their journey by measuring the carbon emissions of their operations to identify where carbon emissions and cost savings can be made. They should also consider how climate change may impact their services and/or service-users, and review options for how adaptations to their operations can be made. Visit <a href="https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction">https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction</a> for more ideas on how to get started or contact the council’s climate and biodiversity team <a href="mailto:climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk">climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk</a> for further support.</p>		

<p><b>Makespace Oxford</b></p>	<p><b>Ref:</b> SRev25-27/33</p>
<p><b>Project name</b> Station Road Studios and The Junction</p>	
<p><b>What the organisation does and how it supports residents:</b> Makespace is dedicated to fostering thriving, inclusive communities by revitalising underutilised spaces. We unlock and refurbish empty and underused buildings to deliver community programmes that connect to local needs and provide affordable, safe spaces for purpose-led organisations, including social enterprises, creatives, makers, and community groups.</p> <p>Our mission is to cultivate vibrant communities by unlocking space and resources for community groups, building capacity, influencing decision-making, and inspiring change through regenerative placemaking initiatives.</p> <p>In South Oxfordshire we operate Station Road Studios and The Junction in Didcot. Over the past two years the spaces have been home to 21 resident organisations, all of whom are working to make social impact and a positive difference in the local community. Supported organisations range from a community cafe, artists and makers, an educational charity, and one working with people with learning disabilities and autism.</p>	
<p><b>Brief description of the service/activities this grant will fund:</b> Makespace is seeking a grant to contribute towards the core costs of running its two community hub spaces, known as Station Road Studios and The Junction, in central Didcot. These are formerly empty buildings brought back into use as part of our 'Meanwhile in Oxfordshire' programme, owned by SOHA Housing.</p> <p>The grant will support (i) hub space running costs; (ii) community development and capacity building activities; and (iii) relevant operational costs, described in detail below.</p> <p>Makespace Oxford is a unique non-profit community business operating across Oxfordshire, with a proven track record of delivering support to residents in South Oxfordshire.</p> <p>Our approach is to foster the conditions for thriving places: unlocking vacant and underused spaces at affordable rates, and supporting local groups tackling a broad range of social, cultural and environmental issues to test ideas, establish, develop and collaborate.</p> <p>Through our community development team we facilitate training, collaboration and capacity building activities. This includes (but is not limited to) access to the arts and creative opportunities, tackling social isolation, addressing the climate emergency, reducing inequality and educational activities. Collectively these activities help to nurture thriving communities. These activities directly support South Oxfordshire residents, whilst also facilitating connections and encouraging collaborations across Makespace's other hub spaces in neighbourhoods in Oxford City, Abingdon and Wantage.</p> <p>This grant would directly support the continued operation and development of community hubs at Station Road Studios (SRS) and the Junction in Didcot.</p> <p>SRS comprises six studio spaces and a multi-purpose room. It is currently home to</p>	

Oxford Discovery College (youth mental health charity), Eden Silver-Myer (artist), Guy Barkley Smith (artist), Sabali Pots (community pottery studio) and Didcot Escape Rooms (independent start-up business). Former residents included Didcot Community Partnership (community wealth building organisation), Sustainable Didcot (community environmental action group) and Aspire Oxfordshire (housing, homelessness and employment charity).

The Junction is an adjacent community hall, previously empty for over a decade before it was reanimated by Makespace. The building supports a range of organisations, including Style Acre (working with people with learning disabilities and autism), Didcot Quran Group (faith group), King's Church Didcot (faith group), and Oxford Health Charity (healthcare). Previous residents also include, Planted Plates, a start-up vegan community cafe.

In addition, Makespace hosts and co-host a range of community and social business events and programmes at the Junction, directly benefiting South Oxfordshire community groups and residents.

Grant funding will be used for:

- Direct building costs to support the continued function of two community and social enterprise hubs (rates, utilities, maintenance, cleaning, internet connectivity, insurance).
- Salary contribution towards the Community Development Coordinators based in Didcot (working with Makespace resident organisations and South Oxfordshire residents to provide business support, community activities and generate place-based community initiatives).
- A proportion of organisational overheads (contributing to operational/leadership team, accountancy, legal fees, communications and staff training).

**District reach:**

Didcot West

Other – Our buildings are located in Didcot West but resident organisations may be based in other South Oxfordshire wards.

**Corporate Plan priority:**

Thriving and healthy communities

**Potential number of beneficiaries:**

620



<b>Grant sought</b>	<b>2025/2026</b>	<b>2026/2027</b>
Amount requested for service/activities' costs (2025/2026, 2026/2027)	£39,624	£40,615
Total grant amount requested over the two years	£80,239	
Total operating costs over the most recent complete financial year 2023/2024 (pro-rata to South Oxfordshire where relevant)	£140,165	
Percentage of annual operational costs based on 2023/2024	29%	Has the grant amount adjusted to 33.33% of operating costs? No
<b>Organisation's Finances</b>	<b>2025/2026 (estimates at 31/03/2025)</b>	
Total savings/reserves	£40,827	
Total unrestricted savings/reserves	£36,647	

**Previous funding awarded:**

Not applicable.

<b>Scoring</b>		
<p><b>Financial Review: Do they have a balanced two-year financial forecast plan (income and expenditure) covering 2025/2026 to 2026/2027, with evidence of income from a variety of income streams?</b></p> <p>Please note the applicant has provided a budget for part of their business activity. A two-year funding plan demonstrating a balanced budget each year and diverse range of income streams, majority of which is generated from space rental and event hires with remainder from grants, donations and foundations. They are working towards increasing their fundraising capacity to support core costs and project activity over the grant period.</p>	<b>Score</b>	5/5
<p><b>Financial Review: Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND has level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)</b></p> <p>Some but not all financial years have balanced budgets. They explain how their services/activities have been affected by the Cost of Living crisis which has impacted their buildings and residents, making it more difficult to cover costs of hub spaces and keep rents affordable for their service users. Organisation reports this has resulted in a reduced ability to begin building reserves and officers note a concerning depletion of reserves over the three years that is not within the reserves policy.</p>	<b>Score</b>	1/4
<p><b>Responding to community need, consultation and inclusion</b></p> <p>Evidence demonstrates some indication of indirect community need and consultation with existing community organisations and social enterprises, including priority groups if the service/activities impact them. They were commissioned in 2021 by Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) to lead a programme to revitalise vacant urban space and an identified need was evidenced through numbers of applications or referrals received seeking space (at reduced cost as a result of receiving a large grant) or community development support. Their resident meetings, one-to-one conversations and digital feedback enables them to monitor and improve their services/activities.</p>	<b>Score</b>	2/5
<b>Direct community benefit and inclusion</b>	<b>Score</b>	3/5

<p>Please note this is an Oxfordshire-based organisation and the number of beneficiaries has been calculated pro-rata for South Oxfordshire. More than 501 (620) residents in South Oxfordshire could indirectly benefit from the hireable space. The applicant reports that 70 per cent of their spaces are utilised by organisations supporting vulnerable and priority groups. Officers note that the usage figures are an estimate based on having six rentable spaces and 25 organisations using them. The two spaces, Station Road Studios and The Junction, Didcot are available to local community groups. Currently used by three South Oxfordshire organisations, who the applicant advises would otherwise not be able to deliver their services/activities to local residents and the community. On the basis of the indirect impact and estimated figures, officers have scored this a three.</p>		
<p><b>Officers can add an additional point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation or an organisation based outside of the district</b> N/A - no national organisation has applied.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>0/1</p>
<p><b>Corporate Plan priorities</b> The project theme selected is 'Thriving and healthy communities'. Clear and relevant response that addresses how the services/activities will provide better outcomes to the community to a satisfactory standard under the specific theme. The organisation has implemented indirect regular events, enabling local community groups and social enterprises to access affordable space and enable people to engage in arts, cultural or wellbeing activities by attending the events/activities.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>2/5</p>
<p><b>Officers can award additional one/two discretionary points, for recognition that partnership working, collaboration and co-production of the services/activities is a fundamental part of the organisation's culture and approach</b> Officers have awarded one additional point in recognition of partnership working with local people and organisations to a good standard. Some evidence of working with relevant partners to design services/activities has been provided.</p>	<p><b>Score</b></p>	<p>1/2</p>
<p><b>DEDUCTIONS, CONDITIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>		
<p>Officers note that the organisation has reported in their application the plan to change its governance structure whereby Makespace Oxford CIC will be a subsidiary of a new entity, Makespace Oxford Community Benefit Society (CBS). They state it will allow the applicant to raise funds via a community share offer and reduce costs through tax efficiencies.</p> <p>Makespace's reserves policy states that they aim to maintain a level of unrestricted reserves equivalent to three month's operating costs. They state that currently Makespace Oxford holds reserves at approximately 1.5 months operating costs and this is significantly below their policy level. As well as the cost-of-living crisis having had a financial impact, they have sustained losses through the increased costs of the 'Meanwhile in Oxfordshire' project (a £1.9M programme delivered on behalf of OxLep/Oxford City Council) and this has reduced their ability to build reserves.</p>		
	<p><b>Total score</b></p>	<p><b>14/27</b></p>
<p><b>Non scoring officer comments</b></p>		
<p><b>Action on Climate change and nature recovery – organisation's achievements towards decarbonising its operations and promoting nature recovery.</b> There is evidence that climate action and nature is a routine part of the organisation's workplan, and have a sustainability/climate policy showing a high-level commitment by the organisation to addressing climate change. Their climate policy gives a clear, evidenced forward plan for the organisation covering multiple areas of work and they have already started implementing changes. Further action could be taken to set out exactly how net zero will be reached across the organisation.</p>		