

Harberton Parish Community Benefit Fund Guidelines

These guidelines came into effect from 12th March 2026

Introduction

The Community Benefit Fund arises from the contributions from the two solar panel farms operating in the Parish at Hazard and at Hatchlands. The fund has received a one off payment of £20,000 from the latter development, together with an initial annual payment of £5,875 from Hazard Solar Farm and a further nine annual payments were paid up to 2023. The final payment now received, the Community Benefit Fund is finite and funds are diminishing.

The fund is not for the general use of the Parish Council, but will be administered by the Parish Council.

Purpose of the fund

The fund is to be used to support charitable, educational, environmental and/or amenity purposes within the parish of Harberton. Preference will be given to projects which provide longer term benefits to the community. The fund is not available for any purpose adverse to the operator's interest in the scheme.

Parish Councils are granted a range of powers by Parliament on how public money can be spent and must act within the law. The Parish Council can only spend, raise or use money if it has a statutory power to do so, otherwise it acts ultra vires (beyond its powers). The Parish Council will refer to these statutory powers when considering whether a Community Benefit Fund grant will be given.

Who can apply?

Community groups, charitable organisations and individuals residing or working in the Parish may make an application for any of the purposes set out above. The fund will not entertain applications from statutory bodies.

How much can be applied for?

The Parish Council will be looking to make grants of an average of £500. To exceed this, applications will need to show longevity of the benefits to the community, and where possible, some degree of match funding. This is to encourage applicants to focus on the quality of the project rather than the value of the grant. The Community Benefit Fund can be used to match fund a larger project. The Community Benefit Fund may choose to pay all, part or none of the amount applied for. Payment of the grants will normally be by bank transfer.

As the fund is finite and now diminishing, applicants should make sure that they've researched the subject of their application thoroughly and have sourced suppliers quotes that offer value for money.

When reviewing applications, the Parish Council will be paying close attention to how projects meet the purpose of the fund, as noted above.

Any award may have conditions attached which may include a presentation at the Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council. Confirmation that the award was spent on the project applied for will be required. Where the project has to be abandoned for any reason, the grant will need to be repaid to the Fund.

Application process

Application forms can be obtained from www.harbertonparishcouncil.org, the Parish Clerk by email at clerk@harbertonparishcouncil.org or by telephone at 0845 557 8469, and from public outlets in the Parish. Completed forms should be returned to the Clerk at clerk@harbertonparishcouncil.org or by post c/o The Bungalow, Old Road, Harbertonford, Totnes, TQ9 7TA

The applications will be considered by the Parish Council Finance Committee four times a year. Deadlines for submission are:

- 31st December
- 31st March
- 30th June
- 30th September.

The Finance Committee recommendations are subject to confirmation by the Parish Council.

The Parish Council will consider whether payment will be made immediately on grant acceptance, or on project completion. In either case, The Parish Council will require copies of receipts or invoices on completion as confirmation that the grant was spent as described in the application. The Parish Council will seek to recoup these funds if this evidence is not provided within a 12-month period.

Repeat Applications

Successful applicants will not normally be able to apply to the fund for another grant for a period of 12 months except for applications for charitable purposes for the direct relief of people in need by reason of financial hardship, within the Parish of Harberton. Unsuccessful applicants will be able to apply again in the following round.

If you have any questions, please contact the Parish Clerk on 0845 557 8469 or email clerk@harbertonparishcouncil.org.

The Parish Council reserve the right to amend or alter these guidelines at any time.

*The Community Benefit Fund Guidelines were first published on 14th October 2014.
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