

Housing Related Grants Scheme

To the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS)

Application and Delivery Criteria & Guidance Notes for the scheme

April 2026-March 2029

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1.Summary of Housing Related Grants Scheme

South Cambridgeshire District Council is committed to providing high quality housing advice and preventing and relieving homelessness across the district.

The Housing Related Grants scheme has been designed by the Council as a contribution to meeting this commitment. The scheme offers a three-year funding agreement to voluntary organisations for the delivery of housing advice and homeless prevention services across South Cambridgeshire.

This document provides specific guidance to assist organisations applying for a grant to deliver these services. Applications will be accepted from voluntary, community and charitable organisations.

South Cambridgeshire District Council will allocate £16,550 per annum to the Housing Related Grants scheme for the period April 2026-March 2029.

Budgets for the financial year 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29 will not be finalised until February 2026, 2027 and 2028 respectively and are subject to on-going review, particularly in the light of the current situation regarding public sector finances. In applying to this scheme, you are doing so in the knowledge of this.

2. Timescales and Deadlines

The following table outlines the various stages of the application process.

Launch of Grant	8 th September 2025
Grant Closes	31 st October 2025
Applications assessed	November 2025
Grants Advisory Committee	December 2025
Organisations notified of decisions	December 2025/ January 2026
Grant schedules signed	March 2026
First payment	April 2026

3. Eligibility Criteria for Applicants

Applications received will be determined on the following criteria:

Criteria relating to the Organisation

- a) Applicants must be from voluntary organisations and should normally be locally based. The organisation must be properly constituted as a registered charity or managed as a publicly accountable organisation. In appropriate circumstances, support could be given on a limited pump-priming basis to enable new organisations to become established.

- b) Normally, organisations should be well established and have an active membership.
- c) Organisations must be able to demonstrate that they are financially sound and well managed. Audited accounts will normally be required. Financial assistance will not usually be given to organisations with substantial reserves, which are not earmarked for specific purposes central to the aims and activities of the organisation.
- d) If required by the Council, the organisation should be willing to include a representative of South Cambridgeshire District Council as an observer on its management committee.

Criteria relating to the funding proposal

- e) The proposal must contribute to the following service aims which are set out in the Council's 2023-2028 Homelessness Strategy
 - **To provide homeless prevention, early intervention and support,**
 - **To provide suitable housing options.**
- f) In addition, applications which can contribute to any of the following three key priority areas of work for the Housing Advice and Options team will be considered favourably:
 - Supporting people experiencing domestic abuse
 - Extending housing options and support for people experiencing complex mental health needs
 - Support for households on low incomes to sustain a home
- g) The proposal must show the extent to which the organisation benefits people living or with a connection to South Cambridgeshire.
- h) Other sources of funding should have been explored and applied for.

4. How to Apply – the process

All applications must be made on the attached application form which should be received by **31st October 2025**

Applications should be submitted electronically and returned to Heather.Wood@scambs.gov.uk

The Service Lead for Housing Advice and Options, in conjunction with the Housing Advice and Homelessness Manager, will consider all applications. Final approval will be given by the Lead Cabinet Member for Housing. You will be notified of the outcome during December 2026.

If at any time you have any queries or problems with the process, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Heather Wood
 Service Lead - Housing Advice and Options (job-share)
 Affordable Homes
 South Cambridgeshire District Council
 Cambourne Business Park
 Cambourne
 CAMBRIDGE CB23 6EA

Email: Heather.Wood@scambs.gov.uk

5. Framework for Assessing Project Proposals

	Proposal Assessment Headings	Maximum Score
1.	Extent proposals support the core aims of preventing homelessness and/or improving housing options. Applications which do not support these aims will not be eligible for funding and therefore will not be assessed against the remaining criteria.	5
2	Extent proposals support one or more of the three supplementary aims of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting Domestic Abuse services • Support for people with complex mental health needs • Support for families on low income 	5
3.	Value for money Extent that proposals will benefit South Cambridgeshire residents and communities	5
4.	Service Need The demand for the service proposed. This will include consideration of other similar services operating in the area and also the impact if your service was not provided.	5
5.	Extent to which organisational capacities, resources and timescales for delivery of the proposals are considered realistic. Please note that, even if the above criteria are fulfilled, if an organisation is deemed to have sufficient reserves available it is unlikely that grant	5

	funding will be provided.	
	Total	25

Evaluation of answers under each heading	Scoring
Proposals meet the required standard in all material respects	5
Proposals meet the required standard in most material respects, but are lacking or inconsistent in others	4
Proposals fall short of achieving expected standard in a number of identifiable respects	3
Proposals significantly fail to meet the standards required, contain significant shortcomings and/or are inconsistent with other proposals	2
Completely fail to meet required standard	1
Nil response (no answer provided)	0

Post-assessment feedback to applicants

Total assessment scores and rankings will be made available to all applicants upon request.

6. Grant Monitoring

Successful applicants will be required to submit Grant Monitoring information on a six-monthly basis. A sample report form is included for information. Forms should be sent to HousingAdvice@scambs.gov.uk and marked for the attention of Heather Wood/Sue Carter.

Housing Advice - Grant Monitoring		
	Organisation	
	Grant Amount	
		Comments
1.	How does your organisation support the service aims of providing Housing Advice and/or preventing homelessness?	
2	How does your organisation meet one or more of the supplementary aims of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting Domestic 	

	<p>Abuse services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for people with complex mental health needs • Support for families on low income 	
3.	What has the grant money been spent on?	
4.	<p>a) How many people has the service supported during the 6 month period?</p> <p>b) How many of these have been South Cambridgeshire residents or have had a connection to South Cambridgeshire?</p>	
5.	Are there any new initiatives, projects or service successes that you tell us about?	
6	<p>What specific challenges is the service currently facing?</p> <p>(This could include examples of new trends in client group, barriers to obtaining support or any other aspect you wish to highlight).</p>	
7	<p>Can you provide a case study (or studies) to illustrate the impact that the service has had for individuals?</p> <p>(Historically the case studies provided have given an interesting and informative insight into the work the organisation does and highlights the challenges that residents are experiencing).</p>	