

RURAL AND URBAN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME (RUCIS) 2026/27

Warwick District Council operates a Rural and Urban Capital Improvement Scheme which gives grants towards capital projects to not-for-profit organisations within Warwick District which make use of volunteer labour.

What is Capital?

Capital can be defined as 'funds used by an organisation to purchase or upgrade physical assets such as property or equipment'.

This type of outlay is made by organisations to maintain or increase the service and / or facilities available.

Examples of capital expenditure that we can fund include:

- Energy efficiency and renewable energy technology, for example:
 - Solar panels
 - Heat pumps
 - Heat recovery and thermal stores
 - Loft, cavity wall or external wall insulation
 - LED lighting including controls & sensors
 - Electric charging infrastructure for public use
- Building repairs and construction, for example: roof replacement / repairs, extensions.
- Disabled access / facilities.
- Resurfacing, for example: carparks, driveways, sports courts, play areas.
- New facilities / refurbishments, for example: kitchens, toilets.
- New equipment (must be of a type and value that is classed as a 'capital asset'), for example: playgrounds, machinery.

Please note that we expect you:

- In your designs, to make every effort to minimise impact on existing biodiversity / trees.
- To make every effort to ensure appropriate safe access for pedestrians and cyclists.
- To investigate and consider the most environmentally friendly option available (see the 'Grants cannot be awarded if' section below).

If the above bullet points aren't being met / pursued without good reason, it is likely we may not be able to contribute to your project.

Types of organisations that we have helped....

- Community centres and groups
- Sports clubs
- Village halls
- Parish / Town Councils

Who can apply?

Before you read on, please check if your organisation is eligible....

- Must be a not-for-profit organisation **within Warwick District** which makes use of volunteer labour.
- Have an organised / formal structure.
- Can provide the last 3 years annual accounts, a bank statement of not more than 3 months old for all accounts held and evidence of any savings / investment accounts.
- Must be run for and by local people within Warwick District.

Please note that the following are ineligible for a grant:

- Schools, nurseries, etc: facilities are primarily school-day and term time usage for the facility attendees within that location rather than available to and benefit of the wider community (Warwick District) across a wide range of hours, all year-round.
- Organisations who lease their premises from other Council's and where the grant is contributing towards project works on the other Council's assets (buildings).
- Churches, mosques or other religious places where the project works are on or for the benefit of the building / facility where the primary / main function is religious activity.

Grants cannot be awarded if....

- The project impacts on climate change and it isn't environmentally sensitive, for example:
 - Gas boilers (including 'A' rated)
 - Incandescent lighting
 - 3G turf
- It isn't capital expenditure as defined above.
- The project has already taken place or started before a grant is awarded.

- The applicant isn't a 'not-for-profit' organisation located **within Warwick District**.
- The organisation has reserves to fund the project themselves; unrestricted cash reserves / savings that total more than 12 months operating expenditure costs (i.e., basic fixed costs to ensure the organisation can exist for a further 12-month period should there be no income).
- The applicant is an organisation which supports or opposes a political party or party-political aims.
- The organisation and / or project are not deemed sustainable for a minimum 5-year period, for example:
 - Income streams with a set period of less than 5 years that are relied upon to meet annual expenditure costs without which there is potential risk of the organisation or the project being unable to continue to operate.
 - Annual expenditure is higher than income resulting in operational losses.
 - Leasehold premises with less than 5 years lease remaining.
 - Risks of leasehold premises / land being sold.
 - Lack of demand; low usage of facilities with no evidence that usage will increase.
 - Non-payment or continual late payment of Warwick District Council invoices / debts
- There is no insurance cover, or there is an insufficient level of cover, for the capital asset that the project is connected to.
- It is a project which should normally be funded by statutory agencies.
- It is a scheme for the advancement of religion.
- It is a scheme that requires the Council to assist with future running costs.

Please note:

- Individual organisations (e.g., Community Centre and Groups, Parish Councils, Sports Clubs, Village Halls, Voluntary Organisations); grants will only be awarded once in a 2-year period.
- Multi-sport organisations that are legally one entity but with separate sports activities that are operated and managed independently on a day-to-day basis with separate memberships, committees, volunteers, constitutions, and bank accounts:

- Each individual sport organisation can apply for a grant in their own right for a project that is connected to their sport / facilities only. Grants will only be awarded once in a 2-year period.
- If the project is for a shared facility, for example, a clubhouse used by each organisation; providing one of the individual sports organisations has not had a grant within the last 2 years and are prepared to be the applicant, a grant may be awarded. Grants will only be awarded once in a 2-year period.

In all the above, if an organisation is successful with a grant application in 2024, they will not be able to apply again until 2026 after the 2-year anniversary of the previous award.

- Additionally, a grant can only be considered if the applying organisation has no outstanding projects that have previously received funding from the RUCIS scheme.

Criteria

Grant applications must meet the following criteria:

- The amount requested must be within the range of a minimum of £1,000 up to a maximum of £20,000 (applications for amounts outside this range cannot be considered):
 - 'Small Grant Scheme' – projects with a total cost of up to £10,000 with a maximum contribution of up to 90% (providing the 'environmentally sensitive' aim noted below is met) of the overall project costs (maximum of £9,000)
 - 'Main Grant Scheme' – projects with total costs of more than £10,000 with a maximum contribution of 60% (providing the 'environmentally sensitive' aim noted below is met) of the overall project costs (capped at a maximum of £20,000)
 - Please note that if the project doesn't meet the 'environmentally sensitive' aim noted below the maximum contribution will be reduced to:
 - 'Small Grant Scheme' – 80% (maximum £8,000)
 - 'Main Grant Scheme' – 50% (maximum £20,000)
- The project must contribute to the Council's 'Corporate Strategy Warwick District 2030', specifically:

Priority 3: Creating vibrant, safe, and healthy communities of the future.

- 3.2. Promote vibrant communities, a welcoming atmosphere and good mental and physical health and wellbeing within all our towns and villages.
- 3.3. Enhance the biodiversity of the district.
- 3.4. Champion new and innovative ways of working together to improve health, safety, wellbeing, and tackle inequalities – focusing on prevention and building resilience in communities.

Your project will need to contribute to some of the ways the 'Corporate Strategy Warwick District 2030' will benefit the residents, communities, and businesses of Warwick District, for example:

Residents

- Improved leisure and sport facilities that improve sport and wellbeing opportunities.
- Safe, clean, and green environment.

Communities

- Reduction in carbon emissions and air pollution.
- Community hubs that provide community support facilities.
- Council investments in the district will enhance social value, community support and improvements.
- More opportunities to participate in sport and leisure.
- Improved community wellbeing.

By meeting a minimum of two of the following aims:

- Environmentally sensitive ('clean, green and safe'); project includes energy efficiency and renewable energy technology for example, loft, cavity wall or external wall insulation, LED lighting including controls & sensors, solar panels, heat pumps, replacement 'A' rated boilers or burners including zone control, heat recovery and thermal stores, electric charging infrastructure for public use.
 - Reduce anti-social behaviour.
 - Reduce obesity, particularly in children.
 - Increase opportunities for everyone to enjoy and participate in sports, arts, and cultural activities.
 - Engage and strengthen communities.
 - Target disadvantage in rural / urban areas
- The project must provide or enhance facilities within Warwick District
 - Must provide evidence that the project fulfils a clearly defined need, and they show a degree of community support or clear benefit, for example:

- Evidence of Health & Safety issues
 - Letters of support or complaint
 - Parish plan
 - Questionnaire or survey results
 - Requests from the community
- The organisation must provide part-funding of the scheme and provide evidence of all other funding sources.
 - 'In-kind' contributions cannot be considered as part of the funding for the total project costs.
 - Future 'local fundraising' cannot be considered as part of the funding for the total project costs; only funds currently held by the organisation can be considered.
 - The project must be formally supported by the Parish / Town Council; this should normally include a financial contribution to the project.
 - The project must not require the Council to assist with any future running costs.
 - Projects that involve leasehold premises must have a minimum of 5 years lease remaining.

Grant Conditions

The following conditions apply to all grant applications and awards made:

- Three separate written quotations must be supplied for all aspects of work.
- In considering the amount to grant award, regard shall be had to the applicant's level of financial reserves and to what extent the organisation is able to provide funding to the scheme.
- Proposals must be open to examination by the council's officers and advisors, including the right to monitor works; the Council reserves the right to make site visits at the application stage pre-award, during works and once the project has been completed.
- If funding is being sought from other District Council sources, the total funding from the District Council, whatever source, will not normally exceed the maximum amounts noted in the 'criteria' section above.

- All prices / amounts given in the grant application must be the expected level of costs. No allowance for inflation will be made once the grant has been awarded.
- Grants must be used within 12 months of the offer being made unless there are exceptional circumstances; awards not used within the 12-month period may be withdrawn.
- Payment of grants will be made directly to the organisation undertaking the project and not to a contractor or supplier.
- Where the full amount of expenditure as detailed on the application form has not been met the amount of the grant will be reduced by a proportional amount
- The offer of a grant from the Council does not convey approval of technical, legal, financial, or other matters relating to the project, which will remain the responsibility of the applicant. The council cannot accept liability for any misjudgements by applicants regarding the budgeting, design, technical standards, or any other aspects.
- The award of a grant remains at the discretion of the Council regardless of whether an application meets the grants rules and conditions or not.
- Loss in revenue from lettings or any additional costs incurred, for example, the cost of using alternative premises while grant aided works are being carried out, are not eligible for compensation from the Council. Applicants should plan their projects accordingly to minimise such problems.
- Where grants are offered for premises projects, in return the Council reserves the right to use the premises for election purposes at an appropriate charge providing adequate notice is given.
- The Council may require repayment of all or part of the grant if the asset created is disposed of or undergoes a significant change of use within 5 years of the project.

Areas – Parish/Town Councils

- Schemes do not need to be in the name of the Parish / Town Council but as noted within the criteria above they must support the scheme.
- Parish / Town Councils will be required to put a priority order on schemes when more than one is submitted for an individual parish/town.
- The local Parish / Town Council should normally contribute towards the cost of the project and may specifically need to allow for this within its budget and precept.

It should be noted that Parish / Town Councils will not be able to claim via the District Council's Concurrent Services scheme for any contributions made towards a schemes annual running costs following completion of the works for which a Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Scheme grant has been awarded.

How to apply?

Any queries or for a pre-application discussion to check if the applying organisation and/or project will meet the scheme criteria, please telephone 01926 456204 or email jon.dawson@warwickdc.gov.uk

A Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Scheme Application form must be completed. This will need to be supplemented with additional information as appropriate; please refer to the checklist at the end of the application form to ensure that you have included everything.

Completed applications and additional information should be emailed to:

jon.dawson@warwickdc.gov.uk

Applications can be considered throughout the year, however, please note that there is a limited budget therefore applications will be considered on a first come first served basis until the budget has been spent.

Once an application is received...

Your application will be acknowledged within 5 working days; we will contact you if any further information is required.

If your application does not meet the eligibility criteria or cannot be recommended for approval, we will formally advise you of the decision and the reasons why.

If your application is recommended for approval by the Grants Manager, it will then be considered by the Head of Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder, and a final decision made.

Important - no expenditure can be incurred on the project before the formal confirmation of the approved award.

Payment of the grant is normally on production of receipted invoices at the end of the project. If this causes cash flow problems, we may be able to make stage payments of the agreed % contribution to the overall project costs, again on production of receipted invoices.