

## **Somerset Community Grants Fund**

### **Somerset HDRC Community Grants – Round One**

#### *Grant & Application Guidance Notes*

#### **Contents**

Overview

Eligibility

Key things to note

Application Timeline

Drop-in sessions

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

How to apply

#### **Overview**

We are excited to launch the first round of Somerset Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC) Community Grants. These grants aim to give local communities a voice in helping Somerset Council improve health and wellbeing across the area.

For this first round, there's a total of £20,000 available, split across two themed calls.

Community groups in Somerset can apply for grants up to £2500 in response to the two themed calls below:

- 1) Community-led projects
- 2) Employment/financial stability projects

Future rounds will focus on new themes and may have different funding amounts, so even if this round isn't quite right for your organisation, there'll be more opportunities coming soon.

## Eligibility

This funding is for community groups, charities and social enterprises – not academic researchers.

We want to support the people who know Somerset communities best: people who see what's happening on the ground, hear what's needed and want to do something about it.

You might use the funding to:

- **Test a new idea or activity** that could improve the health and wellbeing of local communities – this is where you would refer to the building blocks of health
- **Review something you're already doing** to learn what's working (or not)
- **Explore a local issue** that people keep raising
- **Develop or expand a project or service** to fill a local gap

We are not expecting all community organisations to carry out research themselves. However, we do ask that applications explain why the project is needed and that you share what you learn (what worked and what didn't) along with any recommendations for change to benefit Somerset communities.

## Community-led Projects

Funds available: £10,000

Apply for: Up to £2,500

This pot of funding is for community-led projects that explore or strengthen the building blocks of health in your local area.

Somerset HDRC's current priorities include education, economic inactivity, best start in life, and housing but your project **doesn't** have to align with one of these. The key thing is that it aligns to one of the building blocks of health, is community-driven, practical, and helps you learn or do something that makes life better for local people.

### **Employment / Financial Stability Building Block of Health Projects**

Funds available: £10,000

Apply for: Up to £2,500

This pot of funding focuses on the Employment and Financial Stability building block of health.

In November 2024, Somerset Council and Somerset Integrated Care Board (ICB) commissioned the Somerset HDRC to carry out research into the impact of long-term health conditions and/or disabilities on work. The findings showed the range of personal and systemic challenges faced by people with long-term health conditions and/or disabilities.

To respond to the most frequently reported challenges and recommendations, Somerset HDRC is inviting applications for projects that address one or more of the following questions:

- **How can we reach people who are not working and not accessing support services?** What innovative approaches can help connect with individuals who are not in employment or actively seeking employment and not currently engaging with employment training or support programmes?
- **How can we help people improve their CVs and job application skills?** What methods/tools can build confidence and competence in applying for jobs?
- **How can employers be better equipped to support staff with long-term health conditions or disabilities?** What training or resources would help employers create more inclusive workplaces?
- **How can carers be supported to access employment or balance work with caring responsibilities?** What tailored interventions could make employment more accessible for carers?
- **What practical transport solutions can make training and work more accessible for people with long-term health conditions or disabilities?** How can we reduce transport barriers and improve mobility for these individuals?

## Key things to note

- You can apply for one or both themed calls
- Projects must take place in Somerset and benefit local people
- Grants are up to **£2,500 per project**
- We're especially keen to fund ideas that are **community-led, realistic, and open to learning**
- This is the **first round** of a developing programme. Future rounds will bring new themes and funding opportunities

When writing your application, try to:

- Use the prompts outlined in the application questions to guide your answers
- Tell us how you've listened to your community: what have people told you and how does your idea respond to community voices?
- Explain the difference your project will make for local people
- Ask for help if you need it – come to a drop-in session or email [SomersetCommunityGrants@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:SomersetCommunityGrants@somerset.gov.uk)

## Application Timeline

Applications open: **Thursday 6 November 2025**

Submit an application to [SomersetCommunityGrants@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:SomersetCommunityGrants@somerset.gov.uk)

Applications close: **Friday 16 January 2026**

Applications will be reviewed by a Panel set up by the Funders

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application and clear feedback by  
**Friday 30 January 2026.**

### Drop-in Sessions

If you'd like to talk through your idea before applying, come along to one of our online drop-in sessions.

They're friendly, informal sessions and a chance to ask questions, check your idea fits, or get a bit of guidance on shaping your application. We are hosting these online on the following dates:

**Thursday 4 December 2025 12pm – 1pm**

Please sign up to these by emailing [SomersetCommunityGrants@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:SomersetCommunityGrants@somerset.gov.uk)

### Frequently Asked Questions

**Is there a specific topic of interest to the Somerset HDRC as the funder for the community-led call?**

Applications will be assessed on how clearly they address a building block of health and the positive difference they could make for local people.

We can share the grant assessment criteria with you before you apply.

### **Can individuals apply?**

You can apply as an individual if you're linked to a constituted community group, charity, or social enterprise. For example, if you're a volunteer or project lead applying on their behalf.

### **Can organisations based outside Somerset apply?**

Yes, organisations in other areas of the UK can apply as long as your project works directly with and benefits Somerset communities and helps to build local capacity or connections.

### **Can Local Community Network Officers apply?**

Yes, if the project is community-led and developed with local people or organisations, rather than on their behalf.

### **Is there a preference for new vs existing programs?**

We do not have a preference, only that these programs demonstrate how they address the building blocks of health.

### **How do you want us to report back?**

We are keen to learn from your project with the community. You don't need to share any personal information or raw data with us. You can share what you've found out in whatever way works best for you. This could be:

- A short report or summary
- A presentation
- Photos or videos (please ensure you have received written permission from those identifiable)
- Case studies or stories
- Any other way that captures the findings and recommendations from your project.

We will work with you to find the best way to send or share what you have found out.

**Can we reapply if not successful in this round?** Yes of course, and we will give feedback to help you develop your current application if we require further information.

**How do we learn about the building blocks of health?** Please find out more information on our website: [The Building Blocks of Health](#)

**Are you looking for small grass-roots organisations or bigger?** We do not have a preference, as long as you feel your project addresses a need, gap in knowledge or a service/initiative that will benefit your community.

**Is there potential to encourage collaboration?** Yes, if we are aware of existing projects with a similar focus we will try to connect you for possible collaboration. Likewise, we will link with specific departments within the council, in which your project is related, to inform their work.

## **How to apply**

**Applications open:** Thursday 6 November 2025

**Applications close:** Friday 16 January 2026 at 11:59 pm

You can apply using the form on Somerset HDRCs website under the Community Grants section.

If you'd like to discuss your idea before applying, come along to a drop-in session or email [SomersetCommunityGrants@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:SomersetCommunityGrants@somerset.gov.uk)

All applications will be reviewed by a small panel, and you will be given feedback and the outcome of your application by **Friday 30 January 2026**.

Projects must be completed within **12 months**. A **progress update** will be requested halfway through the project. All learning and reflections should be shared by **March 2027**.