



Westhive. Scheme outline and criteria.

Westhive is a movement on Spacehive, set up to support community projects in West Oxfordshire. Westhive was launched in October 2023. The Civic Crowdfunding platform provides a new and accessible way that West Oxfordshire residents can be at the heart of civic change and provides a springboard for locally led ideas to attract funding more easily.

The online platform presents an opportunity for projects to raise funding from a wide range of support, including local people, local groups, charities and businesses. This aligns directly with the key aims of the Council, which has a drive to be aspirational, innovative and bold; and sits well with the Council priorities of 'Putting residents first' and 'Working together for West Oxfordshire'.

Westhive will support both capital and revenue funded projects, vastly increasing its scope and reach. The Council is committed to pledge and support innovative and impactful projects, allowing residents to influence and shape their communities. To attract projects to the movement, West Oxfordshire District Council will use it to distribute its Crowdfunding Pledges budget.

Exclusions:

We will not fund:

- Private companies.
- Statutory service providers.
- Groups proposing for-profit projects.
- Groups proposing for projects with a political affiliation.
- Schools or religious organisations may apply only if the project will have a demonstrable benefit to the wider community & not just the school's students or congregation.

Outcomes

Through the Westhive Fund the Council would like to see the following outcomes delivered within West Oxfordshire.

1. Improving our natural environment and the access to it, so that we enable physical and mental wellbeing and cohesive, connected communities.
2. Taking action towards the climate and ecological emergencies, so that we reduce carbon footprints and encourage nature recovery.
3. Increasing community resilience and amplifying the voice of the seldom heard, so that we take action on issues most important to our residents and their needs, such as access to food, supporting young people and cultural provision.

Eligible Applicants

Eligibility will principally be determined by the aims of the project. The following are able to apply:

- Registered charities.
- Charitable Incorporated Organisations.
- Community Interest Companies.
- Social Enterprises.
- Unincorporated community groups.
- Individuals leading community projects – but not individuals for individual endeavour or benefit. Under 18's can create projects, but the project will need a project delivery manager, who takes responsibility for delivering the project. The project delivery manager must be at least 18 years old.

Phased projects, annual events and repeat applications.

Our funding is designed to support projects, not on-going costs. Projects may be broken down into different phases, where each individual phase can be delivered independently of the other. Annually occurring activities, such as annual events, are eligible, where each year is dependent upon securing funding.

Projects contributing significantly to the Council's priorities will be looked upon favourably.

Creators are welcome to propose multiple projects, although such projects should be clearly discreet activities (Spacehive do not recommend project creators propose more than one project per funding round, to focus backers towards one funding goal). Where projects, are part of a larger scheme, the Council reserves the right to view such activity in the round, and pledge accordingly.

Typically, projects can expect a pledge of up to £10,000, max 40% of the target, but the Council will consider applying a premium to projects which are seeking to directly address climate change, the ecological emergency or providing direct support to vulnerable groups, up to a total of 50%.



Community Infrastructure Fund to support Capital projects.

Eligible Projects can expect a pledge towards capital costs of up to £30,000 or a maximum of up to 90% of the project total, whichever is less.

Projects that restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where these have been lost are invited. In line with the Council Plan, the Council particularly encourages projects that support the most vulnerable in our communities and which address exclusion for whatever reason (e.g., mental health, financial or disability) as well as those that meet the needs of young people and indeed projects run by young people.

Outcomes

Capital Projects that emphasise these outcomes and have a lasting legacy will be prioritised:

- Are community led.
- Support the retention of existing and development of new services and facilities that contribute to the local economy, community wellbeing and cohesion.
- Support voluntary and community groups to undertake activity which helps to address specific needs such as access to food, youth support and cultural provision.
- Increase numbers of volunteers
- Make a dedicated effort to further understand and meet the needs of young people, from children to those entering the world of work and/or seeking to set up home in the District, including supporting their mental health.
- Provide a long term sustainable benefit to the local community or area.
- Enhance community spaces (including green spaces) so they could be:
 - More flexible
 - Able to host extra services
 - More resilient
 - More useable by the wider community as a whole
- Address climate change and nature recovery
- Encourage the rural circular economy (repair, re-use, local food etc)

Decision- making

All projects seeking support will be expected to complete a set of questions to determine the eligibility of their projects. Projects will also need to demonstrate that they have local support for the project proposed. Typically, this will be through pledges on the Spacehive website, but projects are also able to upload off line and pre-existing funding offers to evidence the support already offered. Projects will need to evidence both eligibility and local support to be offered, a pledge by West Oxfordshire District Council. Projects can apply to both funding opportunities and pledges can be received for one or both platforms.

The Council retains its discretion to choose not to pledge against a project, or to pledge a higher or lower sum.