

BMSDC Grants - Communities

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils

Tye Lane Solar Farm Community Benefit Fund Guidance Notes

1. Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' Community Grants

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils offer Community Grants to organisations that deliver community support, projects or activities within Babergh and Mid Suffolk. [Our Plan for Babergh](#) and [The Mid Suffolk Plan](#) outline the priorities of Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils. All funding awarded by the Councils align to one or more of our priorities.

These notes are designed to help you complete an application to the Tye Lane Solar Farm Community Benefit Fund and we suggest that you read them through fully before you complete the forms.

Details on our available Grants can be found on our websites. View information on Grants in [Babergh](#) or [Mid Suffolk](#).

For larger projects, we advise applicants first submit a Grant Enquiry Form, which can be found on our website. Alternatively, the Grants Team can be contacted at BMSDCGrants@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk. Site visits and pre-application meetings with Grants Officers are available to all prospective applicants.

2. Tye Lane Solar Farm Community Benefit Fund Details

The Tye Lane Solar Farm Community Benefit Fund is generated on a yearly basis by the Tye Lane Solar Farm, Bramford, IP8 4WL. The Fund is delivered by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council in partnership with and on behalf of EDF Energy Renewables Ltd and Damsongreen Energyfarm Ltd.

The Fund is available to apply for within the parishes of Bramford, Somersham, Little Blakenham, Nettlestead, Flowton, Burstall, and Sproughton only. A total funding pot of £20,000 is available each year from 1st June 2026 for an initial 3-year period from which local organisations in the community benefit area can apply.

3. Fund Priorities

Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) organisations are able to apply towards projects or initiatives that encompass one or more of the following priorities:

- a) **Biodiversity and Habitat Creation**
- b) **Energy Conservation and Increased use of Renewables**
- c) **Community Based and Community Led Projects**

Priority shall be given to applications that demonstrate the following criteria:

- Projects comprising capital items with a tangible, lasting benefit, including improvements to Community buildings
- Projects run by local people for local people, and involving users on the project's management committee
- Projects engaging as many people as possible and ensuring that users have a say in how the project is run
- Projects meeting identified local needs or issues.

4. Community Benefit Area

Grants can be applied for from community groups or projects based in, or taking place within the following parishes:

- Bramford
- Somersham
- Little Blakenham
- Nettlestead
- Flowton
- Burstall
- Sroughton

50% of the funding pot will be ringfenced for projects taking place in Bramford.

5. Ineligible Organisations and Projects

Grants are not available for:

- Services or facilities which are ordinarily funded by Statutory bodies
- The provision of services or facilities which the Councils are under a statutory duty to provide
- The promotion of religious or party political activities
- Individuals or businesses
- Requests for sponsorship or loans
- Projects of no benefit to the Community Benefit Area (see above)
- Applications from national or regional charities with no independent office in the Community Benefit Area
- Projects relating to improvements to land that is not open to the general public
- Requests for deficit or retrospective funding for projects and activities that have already taken place

6. Fund Requirements

The Tye Lane Solar Farm Community Benefit Fund seeks to support local communities and organisations operating within the seven parishes of Babergh and Mid Suffolk as defined above.

VCFSSE organisations and Schools within the eligible area can apply for **up to £5,000.00** towards capital (building improvements, play equipment, etc..) or revenue (core running costs, new services or activities, etc..) projects, up to 100% of total project costs. The minimum grant that can be applied for is £250. Projects must complete or funding be spent within 12 months of funding being awarded. Applicants can receive funding once per financial year from the Tye Lane Solar Farm Community Benefit Fund per group of beneficiaries.

6.1. Capital Projects

Funding is available towards repairs or improvements to social infrastructure, such as village halls, play areas and playing fields, sports clubs and facilities, and youth groups.

Funding is not available towards the purchase of land, or projects where there is not community access.

6.2. Revenue Projects

Grants can be awarded towards one-off community events, the delivery and running of new or existing community groups and services, or an organisation's core running costs, such as salaries or administrative costs. Organisations applying for such costs must be place-based and provide demonstrable community benefits to the eligible funding area. Parish Councils and Meetings are ineligible to apply towards revenue costs.

Eligible organisations include charities, social enterprises (community shops and pubs), schools, community buildings, sports clubs, community events, youth groups, play areas. Community Interest Companies (CICs) limited by guarantee and with a base within the eligible funding area may also be eligible to apply.

Organisations and projects must be able to demonstrate the following:

- A constitution or governing document
- An Equal Opportunities Policy
- A Health and Safety Policy
- An Adult and Child Safeguarding Policy
- Are capable of obtaining from its own funds or other sources sufficient funding to cover the total project costs
- Are financially viable, as evidenced by audited or independently examined accounts.
- Security of tenure where applicable
- Planning permission or Building Regulations approval where applicable
- Provide services which align with the Council's priorities, do not duplicate services already being provided/grant aided, and will meet proven identified needs. In the case of 'start up' initiatives, evidence of the need for the new service needs to be supported and reflect community demand

Applicants must be able to show that they offer a wider community benefit and are fully inclusive.

Projects or activities need to clearly evidence their need for support and should be able to evidence wider community involvement. Projects need to be able to demonstrate that they contribute towards one or more of the Fund's priorities described above.

Applications will initially be assessed by Officers using a publicly available scoring matrix. Those applications which score under 50% on the Tye Lane Solar Farm Community Benefit Fund Scoring Matrix will not be considered eligible for funding.

Project sustainability must be described within the project application – how will the project be maintained going forwards.

7. Grant Allocation

There will be one application window per year, open for eight weeks and closing at the end of July each year. A second application window will only be opened if funding is not fully allocated. The first window will be opening 1st June 2026 and closing 2nd August 2026

Applications considered eligible for funding will be assessed two times a year by a Grant Panel (consisting of 1 representative from each of the 7 Parish Councils/Meetings within the Community Benefit Area, 1 Mid Suffolk District Council representative). Quorum for each Panel meeting is 4 representatives. Timetable as follows:

2026:

Round 1		Round 2 (if required)	
Applications Accepted	Between 01/06/26 and 02/08/26	Applications Accepted	Between 01/12/26 and 31/01/27
Grant Panel	11/08/26, 15:00-17:00	Grant Panel	12/01/27, 15:00-17:00

2027:

Round 1		Round 2 (if required)	
Applications Accepted	Between 01/06/27 and 01/08/27	Applications Accepted	Between 01/12/27 and 30/01/28
Grant Panel	10/08/27, 15:00-17:00	Grant Panel	11/01/28, 15:00-17:00

2028:

Round 1		Round 2 (if required)	
Applications Accepted	Between 01/06/28 and 31/07/28	Applications Accepted	Between 01/12/28 and 29/01/29
Grant Panel	09/08/28, 15:00-17:00	Grant Panel	10/01/29, 15:00-17:00

8. Application Process

Completed grant applications to be emailed to: BMSDCGrants@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk by no later than the dates specified above for each funding window.

Each completed application form is to be accompanied by a copy of latest accounts and (if a capital project) a minimum of 2 quotes for any proposed works, or a valid reason if a single quote is provided

9. Grant Offers

The grant panel reserve the right to make a partial grant award.

Successful applicants will receive an offer letter setting out any special conditions, outcomes and the period during which the service/project needs to be completed, and the grant offer claimed. Offers are valid for **4 weeks**, and after this period the offer will expire.

If any service/project fails to meet any of the conditions contained in the grant offer letter or the agreed targets/outputs, then consideration will be given to the grant offer being withdrawn and any grant monies already paid being recovered together with any interest applicable.

10. Payment

The payment process differs per Grant. For capital projects, no payments will be released until copy invoices/receipts are produced and may be calculated on a percentage basis of the invoices provided as per stated in the offer letter. Revenue projects will be paid on receipt of a signed grant offer acceptance.