

Frequently Asked Questions

The Great Childhoods Ambition Community Fund Summer 2025

What is the Great Childhoods Ambition?

In Barnsley we want all children, young people and families to benefit from the opportunities that a great childhood brings. A range of experiences and learning opportunities can help to give children and young people the best start in life and adulthood.

The Great Childhoods Ambition is our commitment to improving the lives and futures of our children and young people. We'll support them to have a great childhood and ensure they feel they belong, and can explore, dream, grow and connect.

As a borough-wide, collaborative programme, we'd like everyone to get on board and help us grow the opportunities for young people.

<https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/children-young-people-and-families/great-childhoods-ambition/>

As part of this programme, Barnsley Council have asked Barnsley CVS to manage a grants programme so that charities and community groups are supported to help achieve this ambition.

1. Who can apply for a grant from the GCA Community Fund?

This funding is for “not for profit” organisations and there will be two sizes of grant available:

Grants can be for organisation such as (but not limited to):

- Registered charities of any size
- Community groups or voluntary organisations
- CICs (Community Interest Companies)
- Social enterprises (with an asset lock)

Applicants for large grants (more than £5k) must be a registered voluntary sector or social enterprise organisation, registered with a regulatory body such as the Charity Commission or Companies House. We would expect these organisations to have some previous experience of managing a larger grant.

Applicants for small grants (less than £5k) Any size of organisation can apply for less than £5k but if you are not a registered charity, you would need to be a group or organisation that has a bank account in the group's name, (as long as that bank account requires 2 signatures), has a charitable constitution and has three unrelated trustees or committee members.

Applicants for either grant would normally already be based in Barnsley or already be delivering activities that directly benefit people living in Barnsley. However, applicants who are not currently delivering activities in Barnsley, but plan to replicate successful activities from other places will also be considered.

2. What kind of projects will you fund?

The funding is broadly to provide enrichment for families of children aged 0-18, rather than to support their most basic needs. It can involve the whole family, rather than providing an experience just for the young person (for example, there might be a performance or event involving the children which their families would be invited to come along to, or the whole activity itself might involve families of under 18s). Please consider the voice of young people in Barnsley when making your plans. You may have your own research or you may want to look at BMBC's [Let's Hear Your Voice survey](#)

We will fund community-based projects that meet one or more of the following key objectives for the Great Childhoods Ambition for children and young people **up to the age of 18**:

1 - Belong

Children and young people feel part of their community. We support them to have resilience and engage positively in their local area

2 - Explore

All children and young people have opportunities to explore and understand the wider world. Reduce the barriers to developing cultural capital and special experiences in the arts, sports and travel.

3 - Dream

Children and young people are inspired to think boldly about their future. We provide opportunities to learn about a wide range of careers and experiences that ensure they are ready for the world of work.

4 - Grow

Children and young people thrive and succeed as they grow up in Barnsley. We ensure they have opportunities to be healthy, confident and learn new things.

5 - Connect

Children, young people and families have access to a connected and responsive system of support. We develop digital and systematic changes to the infrastructure around them to reduce barriers to access to support.

3. Which costs can be included?

This list gives examples of the most common requests we receive. If you want to spend money on something and you are not sure if you can include it, please contact us to check

- Applicants can include up to 13% of overheads in their application to cover things like the cost of heating, phone calls, IT support, insurance, accountancy support etc. We actively encourage you to build this in to your budget.
- Salary costs for people working on the project can be funded
- Project costs such as hall hire, materials needed for sessions, volunteer expenses etc can be included.
- Existing work can be funded if it is being scaled up or moved to a new geographical area or perhaps to work with a different age group. Existing work where current funding for that programme is due to end before 1st October 2025 can also be considered.

4. What will you NOT fund?

We will not fund:

- Individuals or for-profit businesses
- Organisations in the statutory sector, (for example, schools may not apply) or statutory services or activities that are already publicly funded
- Activities promoting religion or politics
- Any costs that are incurred before 1st October 2025
- Capital costs (for example, paying for new play equipment or spending money on improving a building) can NOT be included

Important note: if you are already receiving Great Childhoods Ambition (GCA) funding directly from Barnsley Council, please contact funding@barnsleycvs.org.uk **first** to discuss your request before working on an application. This does not include organisations who have only received GCA funding for summer activities, since those activities will have finished before 1st October.

5. How much funding can we apply for?

Small grants are up to £5,000. Large grants are for any amount between £5,000 - £30,000.

All grants are for up to 18 months and these totals include overheads. Please choose between applying for a large grant or a small grant and only submit one application per organisation.

Successful applicants will receive the first grant payment in October and can start spending on their projects from 1st October 2025. All activity and expenditure must be completed by 31st March 2027.

The first payment would be made in October 2025 and would be around 1/3 of the total grant awarded, for the 6 months from October 2025 to March 2026. We are aware that start-up costs may need to be included and therefore the first payment may need to be slightly more than 1/3 of the total. Tell us in your budget what split you would need. The total can be no more than £30,000. In Feb/Mar 2026, Barnsley CVS will check in with all projects about progress. As long as there are no major issues, the second payment would be made in April 2026. This would be for the balance of the total grant awarded, for the final 12 months, from April 2026 to March 2027.

Examples of major issues would be: the project hasn't yet managed to start or hasn't engaged any of their planned cohort.

6. Do we need match funding?

No, match funding is not essential, but we welcome projects that show value for money or have support from other sources (in-kind or financial).

7. How do we apply?

Applications must be submitted using our application form which is available to download from our website from Mon 14th July. If you require a paper form or help with accessibility, please contact us.

8. What information do we need to provide?

You MUST stick to the word counts given in the different sections of the application form. You can highlight the text in Word and click on "Review / Word count" to check it.

You will need to provide:

- Details of your proposed plans (see application form for specific questions)
- Project budget and timeline
- Details of your organisation and governing documents
- Bank account details in the group's name and a recent bank statement
- Information about your safeguarding policies and procedures

9. When is the deadline?

The deadline is **9am on Monday 8th September 2025**. Any applications received after this time will **not** be accepted.

10. How long will it take to get a decision?

We will notify applicants at the end of September for a project start date of 1st October. Please do not start your project until you have a funding decision.

11. If successful, what will we need to do?

Someone from your organisation will need to be available from **12pm – 4pm on Weds 22nd October** for a meeting with all the other grant holders. We will outline the requirements for monitoring at this meeting, but it will include:

- providing some basic statistics every few months and a summary of how it's going
- providing an end of project report explaining how the funds were used, how successful it was in making a difference, and any lessons learnt. We would also like at least one case study as part of this reporting.
- providing some photos which showcase what you have been doing, that you have permission to share
- using the Great Childhoods Ambition logo and the Barnsley CVS logo as requested

- being part of a group run by Barnsley CVS to engage with other grant recipients, to help promote what the others are doing and signposting people to those activities too
- welcoming funders to visit your activity at least once during the project to see how it's all going
- We will also provide successful applications with the information to sign up as a learning destination for the Children's University if appropriate.

12. What support is available during the application process?

You are welcome to email or phone to ask questions during the application process. Please email funding@barnsleycvs.org.uk or phone 01226 448796 and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

If you are looking for an organisation that can work with you on your project or bring particular skills that you might need, get in touch with us and we will try to signpost you appropriately. Barnsley Civic have also offered their help in identifying groups who might be able to work together.

13. How can I improve my chances of my application being successful?

Before you send in your application, please get someone else to check that:

- You have clearly explained what you plan to do and why you think it's needed. Perhaps you could ask someone to read it who knows very little about what you do and see what questions they have about it.
- The figures in your budget all add up correctly and it's clear what you're planning to spend the money on
- You have not written more than the word limit in any section
- You have submitted all of the documents requested with the application
- You have sent everything in before the deadline of 9am on Mon 8th September

We look forward to reading about your plans!