

Lower Thames Crossing Community Fund – FAQ

What is the Community Fund?

The Lower Thames Crossing Community Fund awards grants to local charities and community groups close to the route of the Lower Thames Crossing. It forms part of the Lower Thames Crossing's commitment to being a good neighbour and leaving a positive legacy for communities impacted during construction and beyond.

The fund supports projects that deliver lasting benefits for local communities and the environment, helping people stay active, improve wellbeing, connect with nature and heritage, and access skills and opportunities linked to the project. Eligible applicants include registered charities, voluntary organisations, parish councils, community groups and social enterprises.

How does this Community Fund relate to earlier funding?

The Lower Thames Crossing previously ran a pilot Community Fund, which awarded £250,000 to local projects split into grants of up to £10,000.

That pilot helped test how funding could best support communities and informed the operations of the larger construction-phase Community Fund.

The budget for the Community Fund pilot came from National Highways' Designated Funds, National Highways' ring-fenced allocations for projects that deliver benefits beyond the core road scheme, covering areas such as environment, communities, active travel, heritage, and more.

How much funding is available now?

During construction of the Lower Thames Crossing, £1.89 million will be made available through the Community Fund. This funding will be awarded in **seven annual tranches** over the construction period, rather than being awarded all at once.

Each funding year will run from 9 February to 8 February. For the 2025 - 26 funding year, the allocation will be £182,083.94 for communities north of the river and

£91,041.97 for communities south of the river.

How much can my organisation apply for?

Grants of up to £10,000 are available.

How and why will the £1.89 million Community Fund be split?

The Fund will be distributed across seven annual funding rounds during the construction period. The funding will be split 66.6% to communities north of the river and 33.3% to communities south of the river.

This split reflects the differing levels of residual impact from the project, with communities north of the river expected to experience a greater and more sustained impact during and beyond construction. This phased approach allows funding to:

- Respond to changing community needs over time
- Support communities throughout construction, not just at the start

The fund will run through a series of annual funding rounds during construction, so eligible organisations may be able to apply in future rounds (subject to the criteria for that round).

Each organisation may submit one application per funding round.

The assessment panel will review all projects within each application and may award full or partial funding to individual projects. Each organisation may submit one application per funding round. If you are unsure what to include in your application, your local Community Foundation can advise before you apply.

The following details will be confirmed and published ahead of future funding rounds:

- The number of remaining years the fund will run for
 - The annual funding amounts
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What type of projects will the fund support?

Organisations can apply for grants to support projects that enhance quality of life for local communities affected by the Lower Thames Crossing.

Over 50 organisations benefited from the 2023 pilot fund across Kent and Essex, supporting a wide range of local projects. These included buying tools for Chalk Village Gardener's Club, improving disabled access to local woodland, expanding the Communi-Tea initiative to reduce loneliness, maintaining community

defibrillators, and helping cover running costs for Evolve Community, a weekly activities club for children and young people.

Funded projects should align with one or more of the following themes and demonstrate clear, lasting benefits:

- **Mental health and wellbeing** - activities that improve physical and mental health and reduce isolation.
 - **Local skills and employment** - projects that build skills, improve employability, and support access to jobs or training.
 - **Connecting communities** - initiatives that bring people together and strengthen local connections
 - **Environment** - projects that protect, enhance, or improve the local environment and biodiversity.
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Who can apply?

Applications are welcome from organisations including registered charities, voluntary organisations, parish councils, community groups and social enterprises.

If you are unsure whether your organisation is eligible, your local Community Foundation can provide advice before you apply.

Where must projects be located?

Projects must benefit residents living within the eligible wards listed below, close to the Lower Thames Crossing.

Projects must be readily accessible to people living within these wards, but the projects themselves do not need to be sited within them.

Eligible wards

North of the River Thames

Thurrock Council

Belhus
Chadwell St Mary
Chafford and North Stifford
Corringham and Fobbing
East Tilbury
Little Thurrock Blackshots
Little Thurrock Rectory
Ockendon
Orsett
Stanford East and Corringham Town

Stanford-le-Hope West
Stifford Clays
The Homesteads
Tilbury St Chads
West Thurrock and South Stifford

London Borough of Havering

Cranham
Harold Wood
Upminster

Brentwood Borough Council

Brizes, Stondon Massey & South Weald
Herongate, Ingrave & West Horndon
Warley

Eligible wards- South of the River Thames

Gravesham Borough Council
Chalk
Coldharbour & Perry Street
Higham & Shorne
Istead Rise, Cobham & Luddesdown
Northfleet & Springhead
Painters Ash
Riverview Park
Singlewell
Westcourt
Woodlands

Medway Council

Cuxton, Halling and Riverside
Strood North & Frindsbury
Strood Rural
Strood West

Why is my area not included?

The Community Fund focuses on communities closest to the proposed route, where there is the greatest potential for direct or indirect impacts.

Eligible wards were identified using evidence from the Community Impacts Report submitted as part of the Development Consent Order process.

What is the timeline for the current Community Fund round?

- 9 February 2026 - Applications open
- 9 February – 30 March 2026 - Application window (seven weeks)
- February - May 2026 - Assessment and pre-screening
- May 2026 - Awarding decisions
- From May 2026 onwards - Funding paid and projects begin

A further funding round may take place during the year if the annual allocation is not fully committed or if insufficient applications are received. Any additional funding rounds will be announced in advance

How do I apply?

Applications are managed independently by the Community Foundations:

- Essex Community Foundation
www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk/ltc-community-fund
- Kent Community Foundation
<https://kentcf.org.uk/funding#the-lower-thames-crossing-community-fund>

If you have questions about eligibility or readiness to apply, your local Community Foundation can provide guidance before you submit your application.

Who decides which projects receive funding?

Applications will be assessed by awarding panels made up of representatives from local authorities, local communities, National Highways and the relevant Community Foundation (with separate panels for north and south).

Panel members will receive specialist support throughout the process from the relevant Community Foundation and will assess projects against the published fund objectives.

I don't support the Lower Thames Crossing. Can I still apply?

Yes. Decisions about funding do not consider or take into account views you may have about the project.

Can I apply again in the future?

Can I speak to someone for help with my application?

Yes. We recommend getting in touch early if you have questions about eligibility or what to include in your application.

- Essex Community Foundation
www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk/ltc-community-fund
- Kent Community Foundation
<https://kentcf.org.uk/funding#the-lower-thames-crossing-community-fund>