Community transport grant

We encourage and support communities to set up and maintain community transport schemes tailored to their local needs.

If you are a community-led group or an organisations you can apply for a community transport grant to either:

- set up a new scheme or,
- support an existing one.

Over the last 3 years, £1.2million has been awarded to 25 community transport schemes across Kent through the Bus Service Improvement Plan Initiative programme (BSIP) and bus grant funding provided by the Department for Transport (DfT).

Find out more about our community transport schemes.

This year, as part of our BSIP delivery plan for 2026 to 2027 we are again running a community transport scheme to help community-led groups or organisations to create new or develop existing schemes.

Types of funding

The majority of funding that we have is for capital expenditure but we have also set aside a small amount of revenue funding for grants. This means that bids for one off capital funding for things like vehicles will be more likely to succeed.

There are strict rules about the sorts of things for which capital funding can be used. As a guide, capital funding is typically one off in nature and will typically be for the purchase of "assets" such as, vehicles or other equipment.

You cannot use capital funding for staffing costs or to pay transport providers to run services as this is revenue expenditure.

What the grant can be used for

The community transport funding can help you to:

- buy a vehicle or other equipment to support a community transport scheme (for example, computer equipment, ticket machines, parking facilities). Learn more about this by using the Community Transport Association (CTA) vehicle purchasing guide
- cover the initial costs involved in setting up a community transport scheme (for example, staffing costs for the first year - providing the plan shows how the costs will be covered in subsequent years). Only a small proportion of our funding is available for this purpose.

All associated publicity, including vehicle liveries, must include The Department for Transport and Kent County Council logos.

Application guidance

Who can apply

You can apply if your transport scheme operates or will operate in Kent, and you are:

- a community group
- a parish council
- a town council.

We will also consider applications from organisations or transport providers who are working in partnership with community groups, parishes, town councils or transport providers, as long as the application is community-led.

Assessment of application

We will assess your application in 2 stages.

Firstly, you will need to demonstrate that your application meets our essential criteria. If any of the essential criteria are not met, your application will not be successful.

Stage 1: Essential criteria

The scheme must:

- address an identified transport need within the local community
- not compete with or undermine an existing transport service
- be fully accessible for all users, including disabled passengers.

The application may be for capital or revenue funding or a combination of both, and include:

- a mobilisation plan which details how the scheme or enhancement can be delivered in 2027
- some form of match contribution - such as a guarantee of financial or other contribution (for example securing volunteer drivers or equipment)
- a plan that explains how the scheme will be sustainable both immediately after the financial support is provided and in the long term.

Stage 2: Additional assessment

If your application meets the criteria, we will also consider:

- the amount and type of funding you've requested (revenue or capital), taking into account the budget we have available
- what transport is already available locally and how the scheme may help to address any gaps
- what benefit the scheme will bring to the community
- who will benefit from the scheme
- whether the scheme is new or whether it improves an existing scheme
- whether the plan demonstrates how the scheme can be delivered after the first year (when the grant funding has been spent)
- how the scheme aligns with our strategic priorities
- how the scheme addresses environmental considerations.

Apply

Apply for a community transport grant

Applications close at midnight on Sunday, 20 December 2026.

Email jean.molloy@kent.gov.uk if you have any questions about your application.

After you apply

We will assess your bid against how well it meets the criteria and our strategic priorities, and how effectively it addresses the transport need in your area.

We will let you know if your bid has been successful by the last week of January 2027 and payment of your grant award will be made by the end of March 2027.

Funded by UK government

The UK Government has provided additional funding for Community Transport Grants to support our Bus Service Improvement Plan.

Funded by UK Government

A Kent Bus Enhanced Partnership Initiative