



North Herts Council

North Herts Prosperity Fund

In March 2024, Cabinet agreed to allocate £210,000 from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) for Parish and Community projects, named the North Herts Prosperity Fund (the fund). The allocation was split into £130,000 for capital and £80,000 for revenue. This was part of the final year funding of the three-year investment plan agreed in July 2022.

Officers developed criteria for the fund, targeting volunteer-led groups and not-for-profit organisations for activities aligning with UKSPF interventions, outputs, and outcomes. The criteria followed the Community Grants policy and the 13 interventions stated in the UKSPF guidance. Applications had to pertain to at least one intervention under the 'Communities and Place' Investment priority. A scoring matrix was created for consistent and transparent assessment aligning with the criteria.

Grant values ranged from £5,000 to £20,000, with applicants required to state their expected capital and revenue spend. All awarded funds had to be spent by 31st March 2025, meaning officers needed to work quickly to deliver the funding in a timely manner.

The officers administering the North Herts Prosperity Fund exhibited significant insights gained from prior funding rounds, particularly the Community Investment Fund. Best practice was taken from management of the previous fund and applied to development of the improved scoring matrix to assess applications. This was possible due to effective cross-team working and collaboration, great time management and communication between the Community Partnership and Policy & Strategy officers. Officers used lessons learnt and

previous knowledge of processes, demonstrating exceptional organisational skills and effective use of IT systems to deliver the funding.



Royston Museum Art Store Before



Royston Museum Art Store After



People-centred councils
driving social innovation
putting people first

E: comms@councils.coop | T: [@CoopInnovation](https://www.coopinnovation.co.uk) | W: [councils.coop](https://www.councils.coop)

The fund was launched on 8th July 2024, with a deadline for applications on 1st September 2024. The Community Partnerships team engaged with potential applicants during this window to ensure understanding of the criteria, resulting in higher quality applications. The fund attracted 50 applications, nearly 2.5 times oversubscribed. Of these, 23 were awarded.

Applications were assessed using the scoring matrix, divided among four officers, with peer reviews to ensure fairness and transparency. Additional officers verified the results to create a shortlist, this list, approved by a senior officer, was then presented to the Grants Panel, made up of Councillors, for further consideration and approval.

Each application met at least one of the Council's priorities: People first, Sustainability, and A brighter future together.

Three Grant Panels were held due to the large number of applicants. Projects included sports clubs, creative and cultural activities, gardening, allotment, environmental, and community development initiatives. The panel recommended grants for approval by the Executive Member for Community and Partnerships and the Service Director for Legal and Community. The grants were subsequently approved, and the successful applicants informed in late October 2024. Payments began to be sent from November. Some additional funding from the overall North Herts SPF 'pot' was also made available for local projects and approved during 2025.

The Executive Member for Community and Partnerships highlighted the fund's benefit in supporting the community sector to provide important local services and positively impact the community and environment.

The list of successful applicants and the projects funded are below. Note some groups applied for more than one project, and additional grants provided:

Beee Creative: Dance programme delivery.

Creative Chefs: Website development for fun food sessions for children.

FC Comets: Mower for youth football club grounds.

Green Care at Norton: Low-emissions van.

Groundwork East: Green Aiders service waiting list management.

Herts Musical Memories: Weekly singing sessions for older people with dementia.

Hitchin Youth Allotment: Expansion for schools and community group activities.

Khalsa Youth Football Academy: Costs for futsal sessions and mini festivals.

Letchworth Garden City Community Group: Replacement of main hall floor.

Letchworth Eagles Football Club: Pop-up refreshment area and storage solutions.

Letchworth Garden Shed: Tech recycling project.

North Herts & Stevenage Centre for Voluntary Service (CVS): Upskilling and online help.

North Herts Minority Ethnic Forum: Community projects and base revitalization.

North Herts Pride: Hosting a charity gala.

Reed Parish Council: Playground equipment.

Royston Museum: Storage upgrade and expansion.

Royston Swimming Club: Swim meet costs and equipment upgrade.

Stand By Me: Technology for bereavement support group sessions.

Triangle Community Garden: Accessibility improvements, kitchen area, and biodiversity enhancement.

Walk the Walk: Volunteer capacity building for family support service.
Zeo Church: Helping Hands project for home improvements.



Royston Museum Collections Store Before



Royston Museum Collections Store After

The fund highlights CCIN's values of **self-help** and **self-responsibility**, by encouraging groups to explore projects that improve pride in place and increase life chances.



People-centred councils
driving social innovation
putting people first

E: comms@councils.coop | T: [@CoopInnovation](https://www.coopinnovation.co.uk) | W: [councils.coop](https://www.councils.coop)

The principle of **Social Partnership** is fundamental, enabling community groups to collaboratively contribute to residents' wellbeing and life prospects.

The existing Community Grants Programme continued alongside the North Herts Prosperity Fund; the fund providing larger amounts for community groups to invest in initiatives benefiting North Herts. This **maximizes social value**, providing better social and economic outcomes for North Herts residents.

Officers demonstrated effective **learning** and **innovative** values by adapting and improving the criteria and scoring matrix from previous funding rounds. This allowed them to meet tight deadlines and align with UKSPF guidelines, enabling the distribution of over 20 grant awards.



Royston Museum Collections Store After

For further information contact:

Reuben Ayavoo

Policy & Community Manager - North Herts Council

Reuben.ayavoo@north-herts.gov.uk | 01462 474212 | www.north-herts.gov.uk



People-centred councils
driving social innovation
putting people first

E: comms@councils.coop | T: [@CoopInnovation](https://www.coopinnovation.co.uk) | W: councils.coop