

1. REPORT SUMMARY

A report to Councillors regarding grant applications received in May 2026.

2. BACKGROUND

The Parish Councils grant policy invites applications from charities, clubs and community groups to benefit the residents of the parish.

3. SUMMARY

One application received, attached Annex One Laverstock Village Hall Baby & Toddler Group, were circulated to Councillors at the start of June to consider if further information was required.

The following questions were posed by Councillors and the applicant responded:

(a) At what rate do you pay your volunteers' expenses?

We have had trouble recruiting volunteers and hoped covering travel expenses would help to incentivise people to support our group (we don't currently provide expenses). We would aim to cover bus fare or the going rate for petrol which HMRC state should be £0.55p a mile for the first 10,000 miles. Most volunteers are local and therefore it is hoped that these expenses shouldn't be too high each week.

We would equally be open to suggestions and could alternatively offer a nominal fee to cover travel expenses if it is felt this would be better.

*(b) Please can you provide a more detailed breakdown of how the money will be spent?
Itemising things such as 'volunteers' expenses'*

The grant would be used to support the running of our community baby/toddler group and ensure sessions remain affordable and accessible to local families. Some of the items we would purchase would include:

Children's craft materials and tuff tray supplies each week

Snacks and refreshments for attending children and coffee/tea, biscuits for parents.

Potential soft play equipment (as we have a lot more babies attending these days)

Toys, and replacement toys as some have become fairly used and tatty through the years.

Currently we need a minimum of 7 attending families per session to break even (to cover hall hire and snack). Some weeks we don't achieve this, as attendance can vary.

(c) Please can you provide copies of your safeguarding and volunteers policies.

We don't currently have a safeguarding or volunteer policy in place, being a small community group. Volunteers are parents of the young people attending and therefore no volunteer is ever left alone with children without a supervising parent present. The volunteers from the local church help with teas and coffees and again are not left alone with children. One of the volunteers did check to see if DBS checks were needed and were informed, they were not as parents and guardians are in attendance. We do have risk assessments in place for hot drinks etc and have insurance for the group.

4. RECOMMENDATION

That the Council considers a grant of £950 to Laverstock Village Hall Baby & Toddler Group towards replenishing toys and equipment; funds to buy craft, and messy play materials and

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Author: Jon Sloan, Parish Clerk

Date: 2nd June 2026


to provide travel expenses to volunteers each week under the powers granted by Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Annex One

Application for Grant for Voluntary Organisations Local Government Act 1972, Section 137

Please be advised that all applicants are invited to attend and address the Laverstock and Ford Parish Council Meeting deciding your application. Although this is not compulsory it is seen to be beneficial especially for grant applications over £500.

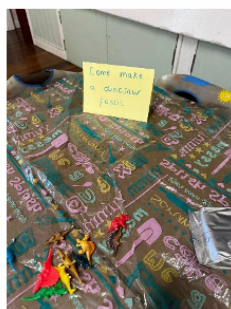
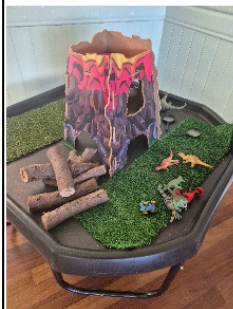
1	Name of Organisation and date (the name of your club, charity etc. plus date of application)
	St Andrews Laverstock Baby & Toddler Group Date of application 19/5/26
2	Amount of Grant aid being requested (how much money are you asking for?)
	£950. We would be grateful for any funds provided, even if a lower amount was thought more appropriate by the committee.
3	Tell us about the project or activity you are applying for financial support for (this space is for a <u>summary</u> , you can also include further detail and supporting documents with this application).
	<p>We would like to request the grant to allow us to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Replenish our toddler group toys and equipment which are very tired and need renewing. - Have funds to buy craft, and messy play materials each week (when needed or supplies have run out). - Provide travel expenses to our volunteers each week starting from September 2026. <p>The money that the group earns each week currently covers the cost of the hall hire, insurance and weekly snack but leaves little, if there are any, funds for anything else. To keep attendance levels healthy, it is important that we have the right equipment and can offer interesting and engaging activities each week to continue to attract young families to our group and compete with the other groups that are running in nearby Salisbury.</p>
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4	Please explain how your project or activity supports the Laverstock and Ford Parish Council's Parish Plan (available to view at www.laverstockford-pc.gov.uk)
	<p>The group supports families with young children five and under, and is a safe place where mums, dads, carers and grandparents can come together each week. We often have families that attend each week for many years (until their children reach school age) and many of the parents and carers who attend develop long-lasting friendships through this group. Under the <u>Neighbourhood plan</u>, this group supports the provision of community services and facilities which benefit the Parish, including health and well-being aspects, especially for new parents. This group can help to prevent isolation and loneliness in new parents and support mental health by providing a valuable support network for all families. Supporting this group would come Under Community Resilience section of the Laverstock & Ford Parish Council Strategic Plan section by ensuring the parish is a place where everyone feels part of a safe and supportive local community. Additionally, with the group being within walking distance of Laverstock, many families can access the group by walking to it.</p> <p>The activities and play opportunities on offer provide young children with an environment in which to learn, play and develop their social and friendship skills. These skills support young people to become school ready in the future. Supporting this group would come Under the Public Amenity section of the Laverstock & Ford Parish Council Strategic Plan by providing access to quality spaces to play, provide recreation and community activity.</p> <p>Please see some examples below of the type of activities we plan each week (consent was given for photographs)</p> <p>Frog themed week</p> 



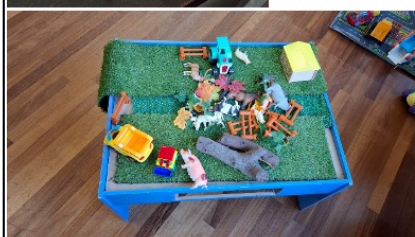
For this week's activity there was water play available which the children really enjoyed and the opportunity to paint, cut and make their own frog to take home. We were able to utilise some of the craft resources we already had (paint, paper plates, glue and pens) and the volunteers provided the peas and frog set from their own resources/supplies.

Dinosaur week



For this week's activity we put out some dinosaur themed play, some dinosaur scratch cards and wooden dinosaurs to colour and take home and all children had the opportunity to make a dinosaur fossil using air drying clay. I supplied most of the resources this week, as my little boy had a dinosaur themed birthday party the week before (including the scratch cards, wooden dinosaurs, the clay and plastic play dinosaurs).

Earth themed week (to mark World Earth Day)



For this week's theme the children had the opportunity to create their own earth and plant and take home a sunflower, alongside other earth themed play such as the farm and animals. Volunteers provided the soil, cups and sunflower seeds from their own resources. The rest were taken from the group's own craft and toy resources.

It is quite common currently for the few volunteers running the group to bring and provide snack and/or some of the craft and messy play resources, as there are not always the appropriate ones available. They are currently not compensated for these purchases, as there are not enough funds currently available after the costs that the group incurs.

5	Please tell us how your project or activity meets the criteria set out in the Laverstock and Ford Parish Council's grant policy (available to view at www.laverstockford-pc.gov.uk)
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We have applied under Category A, as a community group, applying for funding which will benefit wholly or mainly residents of the Parish of Laverstock & Ford. The group is held each week at Laverstock and Ford Village Hall and many of the attendees being local residents.

Assessment Criteria

- The extent to which the project will provide a measurable improvement to the community and achieve the aims of the Parish Council Grant Scheme.
Please see above
- No grants will be awarded for commercial ventures or private gain
Our group is not for profit, and all proceeds go directly back into running the group. Any equipment belongs to the group and is stored at the village hall in a locked store cupboard.
- Grants will not be awarded for political or religious campaigns or activities.
We have no affiliation with any political or religious campaigns, and all our activities are inclusive of all.
- Grants will not normally be made retrospectively.
This is a request for future funding.
- Financial assistance will not be awarded to individuals (section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972).
The request for funding is to provide equipment and materials and to provide travel expenses to our volunteers to cover the costs of travelling to help run the group. The group could not run without the aid of volunteers, and we are running low currently on people who can help. Compensating travel expenses may encourage more volunteers to offer their help.
- How effectively will the grant be used e.g. has the best deal been sought for the purchase of the equipment.
We aim to find and source toys and equipment at the best possible price and will consider the purchase of good quality second-hand items where appropriate.
- The anticipated costs and outcomes of the project are appropriate, realistic and an effective use of Parish Council financial resources.
We feel this would be a good use of parish council funds as it directly benefits local residents both young and of the older generation. The group has been running for over 40 years and is clearly a well-loved part of the community. We want to continue to support the running of this group for many years to come and this grant will support that.
- Full disclosure of all other grants applied for, with respect to the project proposal.
We have not applied for any other grants.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that the funds could not be raised from another more appropriate source for the project (including the applicant’s own reserves). <i>The fee we charge each week (£2.50 per family) per week only covers the cost of hall hire, insurance and sometimes the cost of the snack we provide for the children. Sometimes volunteers pay for or bring the snack themselves, self-funding this, which is not sustainable in the longer term. There is very little left in the budget to replenish toys and buy the craft and materials needed each week. We did consider putting up the cost of the group, but given that we want attendance to remain good, we did not want to risk putting families off from attending. We also wanted the group to remain affordable for low-income families and those with multiple children.</i> • The grant contribution will be considered in the context of related facilities provided by the applicant, other organisations and the parish council (see figure 1) • All applicant organisations that request a grant of £1,000 or above must disclose their financial reserves in their application. N/A
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5	Approximately how many people who will benefit from your project or activity are residents of Laverstock and Ford Parish?
	This varies weekly. When attendance is high, we can attract 10 – 15 families a week. Other weeks can be quieter, often dependent on the weather.
7	What will be the TOTAL cost of your project/activity (not just the money you are applying for in this application but the overall cost of the project)
	N/A
8	Have you applied for grant/s for this project or activity from any other source? (Please give details and tell us the dates of when these monies will be awarded)
	No
9	If the TOTAL cost of your project/activity is more than the grant being applied for how will you fund the remaining costs?



	N/A
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10	Name and Address of your Organisation/Charity/Club etc. (as detailed on the bank account that any funds awarded will be paid to. Please include your Charity Registration number if you are applying as a Charity)
11	Name and contact details of primary contact (the person who has responsibility for making this application within your group/organisation)

	<i>Phone/Mobile, email and address</i> [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
12	What is your role within the organisation? (group/club/charity etc.)
	Volunteer
13	Does your Organisation/Charity/Club etc. have a bank account?
	Yes [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]