

East Suffolk Field to Fork Grant scheme

Guidance

IMPORTANT: PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING GUIDANCE CAREFULLY BEFORE FILLING IN THE APPLICATION FORM.

Field to Fork is part of the East Suffolk Council Ease the Squeeze cost of living programme. The basic principle is that local people will be enabled to grow produce locally, gaining skills, increasing social interaction and providing cheap, nutritious food to offset the rising cost of living.

This will partly be delivered by offering grants for organisations to provide and farm small parcels of land, engaging local volunteers from the community to help. The produce grown in the communal gardens will be made available to volunteers on the projects, to community pantries and foodbanks and also, potentially, will be sold to generate income to expand the project.

Priorities of the grant scheme

The following three priorities have been identified by East Suffolk Council and all applicants must ensure that their application provides evidence how it meets as many of the priorities as possible:

1. To increase the number of people engaging with new or existing local allotments, community gardens, green spaces or equivalents that offer the ability to grow produce.
2. Increase the amount of locally grown food within the East Suffolk food system by producing it in your growing space and distributing it
3. Broaden peoples understanding of how to use fresh produce in their day-to-day cooking.

The type of things that can be funded include, but are not limited to:

- Establishing a new growing space
- Events that increase engagement with your new or existing allotment, garden, space, etc.
- Tools or equipment that increase capacity.
- Storage or enclosed spaces that can increase the number of people able to participate in activities.
- Cooking lessons/clubs that enable people to use healthy, local produce from your growing space and to improve their cooking skills and knowledge of healthy food

Grants of up to £2,000 per application. You don't have to have partnership/match funding for your project, however if you do, your application may be assessed more favourably (this could be cash and non-cash/volunteer contributions).

Types of project

This fund can only support a Field to Fork project and not any other kind of project. Sites may differ in description – for example an allotment, community garden, growing space, etc.

Who can apply?

The fund is available to independent, place-based groups who are located within the geographical area of East Suffolk.

This includes:

- Any constituted “not for profit” community, voluntary or business group
- Voluntary organisations or social enterprises
- Towns and Parish Councils
- Schools in East Suffolk
- Housing Associations

Individual profit-making businesses will not be eligible to apply, however, businesses are encouraged to work with respective town/parish councils and/or business groups – and if businesses are able to offer additional support that would be great.

What we cannot fund

- Applications from individuals – we cannot make grant payments to individuals
- VAT: If you are able to claim back VAT then VAT is not eligible as part of the costs of your project and should not be included.
- Staffing costs
- Projects that do not provide a clear timeline for delivery
- Activities promoting political or religious beliefs
- Payments towards endowment funds, deficit funding or loans
- Repeat funding – i.e. if East Suffolk Council has previously provided a grant for the same activity
- Items or projects which only benefit an individual
- Retrospective costs
- Projects that will displace existing provision
- Activities that are statutory obligations

Monitoring and evaluation

To help us assess the effectiveness of the Field to Fork programme, we require you to provide some data back to us. This includes:

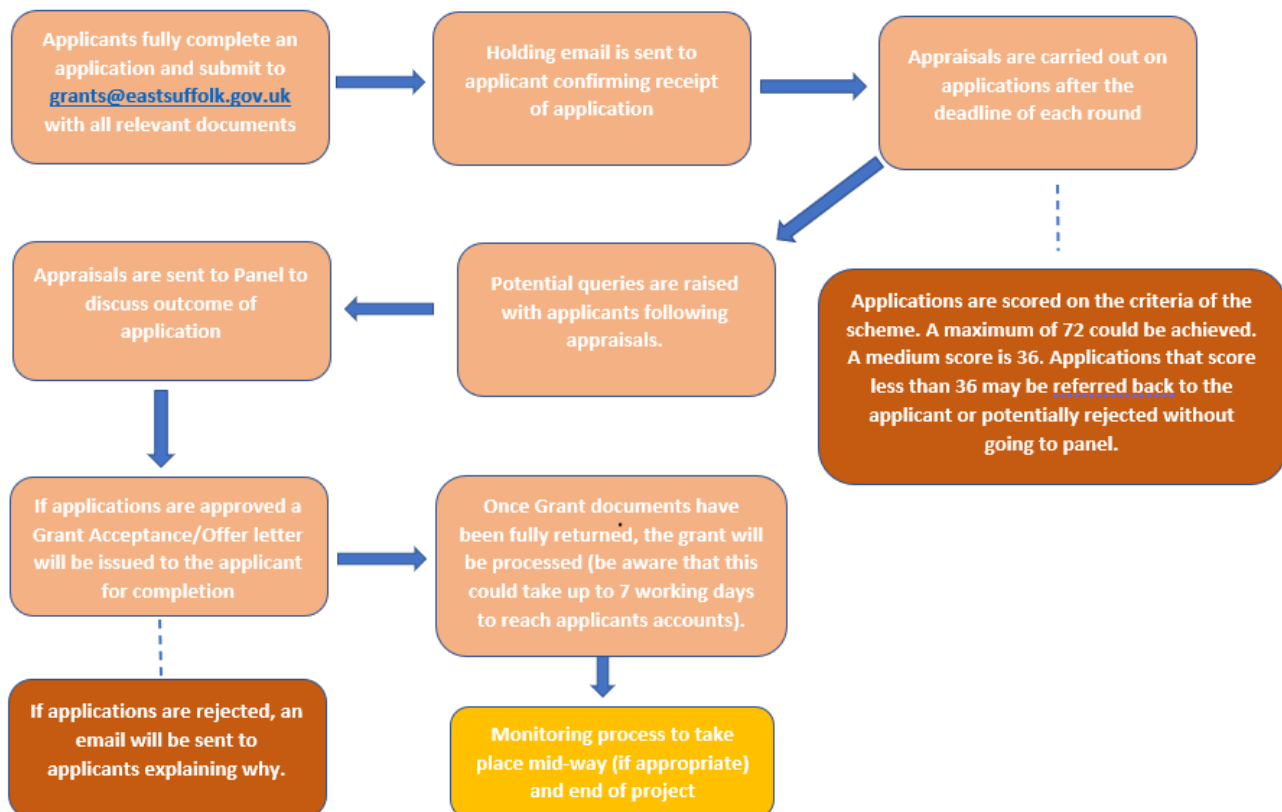
- Sending updates on your project at 3 and 6 month periods post-grant acceptance, including
 - Number of people regularly using the asset before and after the scheme launch
 - Practical impact the grant funding has had on your asset
- Administer a short survey (that we will provide) to people that engage in order to understand the personal impact the grant funding and your asset is having.
- Provide photographic evidence of use of the grant funding.
- Explaining the distribution of excess produce from your asset. These answers will differ from asset to asset so there is no right or wrong answer, however it helps us understand the situation at a District level.

How to apply

If you would like to access funding through the East Suffolk Field to Fork Grant, please complete the application form. Once completed and signed (an electronic signature is fine), please send your completed application to: grants@eastsuffolk.gov.uk

Process

If the application is fully complete (i.e. all the required information is provided) it will be considered by a Panel which will be as soon as possible after the grant deadline below. See the diagram below for more information on the application process.



Deadline for Applications

Round	Dates (applications open and close)	Dates of Appraisals	Panel Meeting
Round 3	26 th November 2025 – 16 th January 2026	w/c 19 th January 2026	w/c 23 rd March 2026

These dates set out above are subject to change if a high number of applications is received.

If your application is successful, you will be notified of the decision through a Grant Acceptance (via email) within 5 working days of the Panel.

Funds through this grant scheme **should only be spent on the items/purpose detailed in the application form and Grant Acceptance** and within the timescales set out in your application.

You must indicate on your form if you have applied for or intend to apply for match funding for this project. If the grant is not spent on the approved purposes or there is an underspend, the Council has the authority to reclaim part or all of the grant. If you are proposing to make any changes to your approved project, please inform us as soon as possible.

An evaluation and monitoring form will be sent for completion **after 6 months** to ascertain the impact that the project / activity had. Returning this form to us is one of the grant conditions.

Please keep copies of receipts and invoices related to the project / activity – we may ask to see these as part of our monitoring process as we spot check a proportion of successful applications.

Applications will be scored as per the scoring matrix below to ensure a fair and competitive process.

SCORING CRITERIA			
	Criteria	Strong projects will have...	Weak projects will have...
A	Increase the number of people engaging with local allotments or other growing spaces that provide the opportunity to grow produce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate land readily available that is suitable for growing produce. • A clear plan to engage new people with their scheme in a way that works for their circumstances • An understanding of how regular monitoring can contribute to improved outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lack of appropriate space, or a limited time remaining to use it. • Poor soil conditions without provision to improve it. • Little or no detail within plans to achieve the outcomes. • Uncertainty/lack of clarity around the aims and outcomes.
B	Increase the amount of locally grown food within East Suffolk via a range of options.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of local conditions, opportunities and barriers to achieving the criteria. • Clear process to encourage and support and retain new people within their scheme/project. • Outline how an increase in produce will be achieved. • Demonstrate awareness of local options to distribute excess produce to if required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No evidence of a plan to increase produce. • Little consideration given to retention of new volunteers and how to achieve it. • Lack of awareness relating to other local producers and distribution points if necessary.
C	Broaden people's understanding of how to use fresh produce in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear plans to signpost and provide reliable information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwillingness to encourage others to

	their day to day cooking.	<p>about cooking to those that request it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of cooking classes • An agreed method of making resources easily available for all if they require it. • Experience within the applicant group of enabling others to improve their own skills. • Willingness to share resources provided by key partners. • 	<p>consider new cooking options.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No plans in place to ensure such information is readily available if required. • Lack of understanding around healthy cooking and its principles.
D	Please describe the experience you have in delivering the kind of activity you're describing in your application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant demonstrable experience in running similar projects successfully • A number of volunteers with relevant skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No previous experience in running similar projects • No volunteers lined up to deliver the project
E	Monitoring success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear plan for monitoring the success of the programme including what data to collect, how and from whom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No clear plan for monitoring and evaluating the programme • No understanding of monitoring and evaluation
F	Sustaining the project after the funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional funding streams • Volunteers to help run the project on an ongoing basis • Clear plan for continuing with the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No additional funding streams • No clear plan to continue with the project

Scoring Matrix

0	No Evidence
1	Poorly Met
2	Satisfactory
3	Good
4	Very Good
5	Excellent

If you would like this document in large print, Braille, audiotapes, or translated into another language, please contact us: grants@eastsoffolk.gov.uk