



Oliver's Battery Parish Council Community Grants Application Form Amounts over £250

Please note that only one project per application is permitted. Completed applications are to be returned with the supporting information to the Clerk by email, either as a Word document or as a pdf document, to clerkoliversbattery@gmail.com, or by post to Oliver's Battery Parish Council, 252 Calmore Road, Calmore SO40 2RB.

YOUR GROUP

Name of group and contact details

Name of group: Citizens Advice Winchester District

Contact name: Dr Sue Campbell

Position in group: Chief Executive

Address for correspondence: City Offices, Colebrook Street, Winchester SO23 9LJ

Tel No: 01962 848008

Email address: sue.campbell@cawinchesterdistrict.org.uk

General details of group

Please give brief description of your aims and objectives:

We deliver free, high-quality advice to local people to help them overcome their problems, uphold their rights and create a fairer society. Our advice helps people out of, and avoid crisis.

We rely on a large team of trained advice volunteers and specialist advisers to provide advice on almost any subject, helping people of all ages and from all backgrounds who are facing challenging times.

Our service is open to everyone but it's often the most disadvantaged in our community who we support most, helping resolve issues around debt and benefits, human rights, employment and housing problems as well as family issues. Whatever problem an individual is facing, our friendly advice team is there to support them.

How long has it been in existence? Citizens Advice has been supporting people in Winchester for over 70 years.

Is it a registered charity? Yes If yes, what is the Registration No? 1144965

How many members do you have? We are not a membership organisation.

Does your group exist SOLELY for the benefit of Oliver's Battery residents? No, our service is available to everyone within Winchester District

If no, what percentage of members (if applicable) live in Oliver's Battery or benefit from your charity or organisation?

If not, how many Oliver's Battery residents benefit on an annual basis from the activities of the group?

In the twelve months to April 2023, thirty-two households from Oliver's Battery contacted Citizens Advice for help with over ninety different issues. This is an increase from the twelve months prior to this when twenty-four households from Oliver's Battery contacted Citizens Advice for support – an increase of over 30%. Support with financial capability and benefits were the most common issues that people from Oliver's Battery needed help with, as well as advice about legal rights, housing, immigration and energy.

Activities/services/facilities of group

Please give a summary of activities/services/facilities during the last year (or if new confirm the activities you are planning to undertake) and how specifically Oliver's Battery residents benefit:

The past year has been incredibly tough for many local people. The cost-of-living crisis has pushed huge numbers of households to financial breaking point. Those that were just about managing before are being forced into debt and those who were already struggling have spiralled further into crisis.

We regularly support people who are at rock bottom, but the cost-of-living emergency has highlighted just how crucial our service is in supporting people in or near the point of crisis — as well as preventing crisis.

Our advisers have worked tirelessly to support local people who have needed support. They've been on the frontline of the crisis helping people access emergency food and fuel and avoid homelessness. But they've also supported each of these individuals in more depth – helping them to better understand their financial situation, making savings on their outgoings when they can, and maximising their income by accessing available benefits and grants.

Like other residents across the district, people from Oliver's Battery benefit enormously from our service. Our advice can mean people no longer having to choose between eating or heating their home, it can mean people getting the help they need to manage their debt, or the advice they need to challenge an unfair decision.

Whatever the circumstances, our advice can help change someone's life for the better. As an organisation we're trying to do all that we can to make our service as accessible as possible and make sure those who need us most can reach out to us.

Which sections of the community will benefit from this grant, (give age group if relevant):

While our advice is open to anyone, people from certain groups access our support more than others. For instance, over 50% of our service users have a long-term health condition or are disabled. We also help a large proportion of households who are on low incomes (particularly social housing tenants), people who are single, and parents with dependent children.

YOUR APPLICATION

What is the purpose for which a grant is being applied?:

Please give details of what you would use any grant awarded for:

We'd like to ask Oliver's Battery Parish Council for a grant to help us to deliver specialist benefits advice to our service-users.

The cost-of-living crisis has had a significant impact on people living in Winchester District, and we've seen a growing number of people who are struggling financially. Our trained advisers can help improve an individual's financial security by finding ways to make savings on their outgoing costs, and exploring options to maximise their income.

One of the most common ways to help people maximise their income is to make sure they're getting all the benefits and tax credits that they're entitled to. As a result, benefits advice is the most common advice issues that we currently support people with. In fact, over a third of all service-users that we helped in 2023 needed advice or support with benefits. More importantly, because of this advice we helped to generate over £1.7 million in income gain for these people.

Benefits are designed to support people who are on low incomes, out of work or need extra support because of an illness, disability or caring responsibilities. But understanding and navigating the benefits system can be extremely complex, especially when you're already coping with other ongoing challenges and issues.

Our skilled volunteer advisers can help people to unravel the complexities of the benefits system, making sure people who desperately need this support are accessing what's available to them and challenging unfair decisions.

For our volunteers to be able to deliver accurate, high-quality benefits advice to people, they need:

- regular refresher training (rules and regulations within benefits change frequently)
- access to high-quality, comprehensive benefits calculation software
- online reference materials and benefit guidelines
- support from an experienced internal supervisor and an external specialist agency
- Good quality, functioning IT equipment, software and phone system

Each of these elements comes at a price and we'd like to raise £16,000 from our local Parish Councils in 2024/25 to enable us to deliver a comprehensive, high-quality benefits advice service.

What is the time scale within which the funds are to be spent? **Before April 2025.**

How much is being applied for? **£ 325**

Funding details of group

Please give details of funding you receive from other sources and details of any other fund-raising activities. Please note that the Council is not permitted to provide grants to any taxpayer-funded organisations eg schools, hospitals, emergency services:

As an independent, local charity, we must generate all our own funding to run our free advice service. Our biggest funder is WCC, but we need the regular support of other local funders to meet our annual running costs and to develop and adapt our service.

We therefore regularly approach all the Parish Councils in Winchester District, and apply for local and national grants, as well as running fundraising events and asking for individual donations.

Please give details of all previous grant payments from the Council:

- When **March 2023**
- Amount received **£300**
- For what purpose **Support with the cost-of-living crisis**

Declaration on behalf of group

I declare that the information given is correct and agree to adhere to the conditions laid out in the Council's Community Grants Policy. I am duly authorised by the group to make this application on its behalf and that I am over 18.

Signed Olivia Thomlinson Date 19/12/2023

Name Olivia Thomlinson

Position in group: Development Officer

Please note completion of this form does not mean that a grant application will be successful in whole or part

Supporting Information that must be provided

- A copy of the latest published annual accounts (or a copy of the business plan if your group has been in existence for less than a year). If your group does not prepare annual accounts, copies of the last six months bank statements must be provided
- Bank statements for the last three months
- A constitution or set of rules which govern your operation
- The most recent annual report (or treasurer's report to the annual general meeting)
- Details of other awards and applications in connection with the project/activity
- Details of other information that will support your application, eg a safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults policy, equality and diversity policy etc
- The Council reserves the right to request further information prior to a decision being made