

REPORT 25.052(3) Grant Applications

Author: Trudi Deane, Parish Clerk

Date: 10th April 2025

1. REPORT SUMMARY

A report to councillors regarding a grant applications to be considered at the end of the financial year.

2. BACKGROUND

The Parish Councils grant policy provides for applications in two categories:

Category A

Registered Charities, Community Interest Companies, and not-for-profit clubs and community groups applying for funding for a project which will benefit wholly or mainly residents of the Parish of Laverstock & Ford.

Category B

Registered Charities with significant operations within the South Wiltshire area which are accessible to the residents of the Parish of Laverstock & Ford.

Category B applications are considered at the March Parish Council meeting at the end of the financial year.

3. SUMMARY

The grant budget for 2024/25 had been fully spent and no awards to Category B applicants were made. Councillors were asked to consider if they proposed donations to any Category B applicants from the new 2025/26 budget. Cllr Vanstone proposed donations to Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust and Citizens Advice Wiltshire based on the two letters received below Annex One.

4. RECOMMENDATION

That the council considers donations to Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust and Citizens Advice Wiltshire under the powers granted by Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Annex One

The Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust

Registered Charity No: 1153790



Director: Jennie Shaw, ~~Hazeland Mill, Bramhill, Calne, Wiltshire SN11 9LJ~~ + E: jennie@wbvt.org + T: 01249 821998
www.wiltshirebobbyvan.org.uk

5th July 2024

Dear Ms Deane,

The Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust has been supporting the most vulnerable in our community for over 26 years now. The charity secures the homes of older people (over 60) and those registered disabled (over 18) who have become or are at risk of becoming victims of crime. Importantly we rebuild their confidence enabling them to stay at home, their one safe place. This remains our key objective. Last year we secured over 1500 homes and gave over 200 talks.

All the work undertaken and the devices we use are free of charge to the recipient.

We work with people suffering domestic abuse, this may range from changing locks, fitting fireproof letterboxes etc. up to building safe rooms in homes where a family can remain safe until the Police arrive. It is desperately sad to know that many people aren't safe to stay at home, the one safe place we enjoy. The impact on those living with its effects is often long lasting and devastating.

That itself is remarkable and Wiltshire is very lucky to have such a scheme.

We have now launched Stay Safe Online. Seventeen years ago, when I joined the Bobby Van Trust cyber-crime was in its infancy and discussions took place with the Trustees about whether people over 60 would actually use a computer. Well, they certainly do, the computer is now a vital tool, it aids their ability to shop, entertain themselves, talk to friends and keep in contact with family. An important aid to reduce loneliness, a key issue facing our older community.

Our role is to ensure that they are safe. As always, it's the most vulnerable who are targeted, and our scheme educates people on how to recognise fraud and what to do if they have been a victim of computer fraud. We work with 8 vetted volunteers across the county. We have just visited our 420th home. At launch it was the first initiative of this type to be on offer in the country.

It is this initiative that I am applying to you to consider supporting. The scheme now needs a part time Manager to move the scheme to the next level. And a part time person to manage the

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Her Royal Highness The Queen

Vice-Patrons: The Marchioness of Lansdowne + Mrs Annette Lynton Mason

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telephone calls to ensure we remain offering the prompt excellent service we are renowned for in the county.

Cybercrime is the fastest growing crime in the world, we simply want to make sure our older community are safe, and we believe this can be helped by education, prevention is the answer. If after a visit from a Cyber-crime volunteer, we can instil better behaviours towards computer fraud then I believe it's time well spent. We believe Wiltshire is one of the safest counties for burglary, in part due to the work we undertake, we simply want to make it the safest county for cybercrime too.

Please help us maintain this vital work, even with support in kind from Wiltshire Police this charity now needs to raise over £300,000 a year, we do this mainly without government funding but through an active event calendar relying on generous donations from the community. This letter is to ask for your help towards maintaining this vital work.

Yours sincerely,

Jennie Shaw

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Patron
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Vice-Patrons: The Marchioness of Lansdowne ♦ Mrs Annette Lynton Mason



BA14 8HE

Adviceline: 0800 144 8848

Relay UK: 13001 0800 144 8884

citizensadvicewiltshire.org.uk

citizensadvice.org.uk

26 February 2025

Dear Laverstock and Ford Parish Councillors,

I hope this letter finds you in good health and high spirits. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have supported us in the financial year 23-24. Your contributions have been invaluable. As a community-focused organisation, we are committed to making a positive impact on the lives of those in need. As you may be aware, our community has faced significant challenges recently, particularly with the rising cost of living and increased demand for our services. Citizens Advice Wiltshire has been working tirelessly to support residents by offering vital advice and assistance.

With your support, we have continued to support the people of Wiltshire over the last year:

In the past year, we provided one-to-one advice, support and information on more than 37,465 issues directly to almost 12,186 people helping them to navigate various issues such as debt management, housing and employment disputes. Thousands more viewed our online advice pages, which is a testament to our staff, volunteers and supporters.

As we moved from a global health pandemic (via a cost-of-living crisis) to an increasing level of personal debt, we continued to adapt how we deliver advice to help as many people as possible while speaking out on behalf of those most affected. We are now seeing more people with urgent and complex problems, and it's getting harder for us to find solutions for them. Because of this, we are exploring outreach ways to take advice services into the community making sure we are where advice needs to be to reach vulnerable people.

Debt is now the second largest enquiry area we are helping with, after welfare benefits, and we are consistently seeing negative budgets and falling living standards. To put this in perspective, last year, 6 out of 10 people we helped admitted to financial struggles. 8 out of 10 experienced stress and anxiety related to their financial situation, and additionally, 4 out of them were also in unstable housing situations, causing difficulties in relationships or friendships.

The staff and volunteers at Wiltshire Citizens Advice will be doing everything they can to give advice and support clients. However, to continue our vital work, we rely on the generosity of individuals, businesses, and organisations within our community. With this in mind, I am reaching out to ask for the Parish Council's kind consideration of making a donation so that we can expand our outreach efforts to reach more individuals who may be unaware of the help available to them.

Every small amount of support will make a big difference to this vital part of our work and will ensure we can maintain our level of service to your residents. Your donation will:

- ✓ £60 - 2 hours of Advice
- ✓ £160 will train a volunteer
- ✓ £530 will pay for a new laptop that a new staff member or volunteer will need

We won't ever be able to predict when difficult life situations arise, but we can make sure we are there to help when they do. One of our clients summed up just how useful our advisers can be, telling us:

"Thank you for taking the time to speak to me this morning, pulling all this information together, and also for being so understanding. It's not easy for me to ask for help, and you were really supportive"

"I have had to use the service a few times, I am very grateful all of my interactions have been excellent. No matter who I dealt with, they have always been patient, understanding and professional without being cold (which is difficult sometimes!). I appreciate the flexible communication styles to accommodate my needs, as long and complex documents are difficult for me. I would like to sincerely thank you for the help I have received."

Once again, thank you for your time and consideration. I hope you will consider supporting the work our team does in the community, and I look forward to your response and the possibility of working together to create a stronger, more resilient community.

If you would like to make a donation, you can do so either by cheque (made payable to Wiltshire Citizens Advice) or by BACS (Wiltshire Citizens Advice, Sort Code: 40-52-40, Acc No: 00016014)

If you have any questions, please email: suzannewigmore@citizensadvicewiltshire.org.uk

Yours in appreciation,



Suzanne Wigmore, Chief Executive Officer



Chief Executive: Suzanne Wigmore

Citizens Advice Wiltshire is an operating name of Wiltshire Citizens Advice. Registered address: Trinity House, Bryer Ash Business Park, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 8HE. Company limited by guarantee in England & Wales 03204218. Charity Registration Number: 1062219. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. FRN: 617798. Wiltshire Citizens Advice has a complaints handling procedure. Please write to us at the above address to request a copy of the complaints leaflet to be sent to you.