

Beethoven Community Centre Operator Funding – Prospectus 2026

NB: the information given in this document may change as the Council and the current owner have not concluded negotiations on the purchase by the Council.

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1. Introduction

Westminster is proud to have a vibrant and growing community sector (VCS) and we know that the VCS play an essential part in helping people live happy and healthy lives, and in reducing health and social inequalities.

As part of the North Paddington Programme, the Council is in the process of acquiring the Beethoven Community Centre (the Centre) in Queens Park ward, which is currently owned and managed by A2 Dominion Homes Limited (A2 Dominion). Once in Council ownership, the space will be leased to a VCS organisation to operate and manage as a community centre. This will ensure the space remains accessible for VCS organisations and for community benefit.

The Council is therefore looking for a mission-driven and collaborative organisation or partnership to operate and manage the Centre with a focus on;

- ✓ Creating a vibrant and thriving space, using the building to its full capacity and potential.
- ✓ Enabling multiple local VCS organisations who support a range of different causes to thrive in the space, through affordable booking options.
- ✓ Ensuring a wide range of activities are available for the local community
- ✓ Placing the improvement of community outcomes at the core of all activities, with a commitment to alleviating health and social inequalities.

The Centre is in the heart of Queens Park, opposite the Mozart Estate. It comprises 11 office spaces/meeting rooms, 2 kitchens and a large hall. It is currently home to 6 Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations, with 3-4 offices available for rent. See the Beethoven Community Centre (BCC) Information pack for the full overview of the space.

Applications are invited from eligible VCS organisations to manage and operate the Centre. The successful operator will use the space for its own community projects and will also manage rental arrangements and bookings for other groups. It is a requirement that the organisations already using the space are protected and retain rights to using and occupying the space for continued accessibility to multiple community organisations. Rental income should support the Centre's running and activities, with rates kept affordable throughout the term of any lease granted by the Council for community groups.

The successful applicant will be granted a lease to the building for a term of five (5) years (subject to Council decision making), with the lease commencing at the same time the Centre transfers to Council's ownership, or around that time (it may be slightly before completion) see page 4 for timeline.

While the successful applicant must be a single named organisation for legal purposes, partnership applications to operate and manage the Centre are encouraged, providing that a lead organisation is clearly identified. The lead organisation will be the potential successful applicant who will be granted the lease and awarded grant funding and will be legally

responsible for complying with the obligations of the terms under lease to be granted and grant funding agreement requirements.

An annual grant of £80-85,000 for a period of five (5) years will be awarded as a contribution towards building management costs, such as compliance and management. Three staff currently employed by A2 Dominion will TUPE transfer to the new operator.

Site visits can be arranged by contacting beethovencommunitycentre@westminster.gov.uk

For questions, or to attend an information session or additional site visit before the application deadline, email beethovencommunitycentre@westminster.gov.uk

To access the application form, guidance, and full leaseholder requirements, visit the Westminster Grants Webpage . [Grant funding opportunities | Westminster City Council](#)

2. Critical information

Minimum criteria for applicants

To be able to apply, the lead organisation must meet the following key eligibility criteria:

- The charitable objectives of the organisation(s) must align with at least one of Fairer Westminster Strategy. This can be viewed [here](#).
- Applicants must be registered charities, charitable incorporated organisations (CIOs), community interest companies (CICs) or a parish or community council.
- Organisations should be registered, physically based and/or have an established service for Westminster residents, and ideally for residents in the north of the borough.
- The lead organisation must have prior experience occupying and managing a similar space or can adequately show how they will equip themselves with the skills to do so – including adhering to compliance requirements.
- The lead organisation must have prior experience of receiving grant or external funding (either from the council or any other funder).
- The lead organisation must have expenditure of at least £150,000 per annum (in the last financial year or as an average over the past three financial years)

For the detailed list of all eligibility criteria and how they are assessed, see annex two at the end of this document.

Important note on expectations

The operation of the Centre is an exciting opportunity, but taking on the management of a Centre is not appropriate for all organisations. The Council does very occasionally acquire newly available space (such as self-contained office space) to lease to VCS organisations, that is smaller and without the requirement to manage other bookings. Notifications of any

available space will be sent via One Westminster's network and updated on the Council's website.

Lease and Grant available

The lease will be for a period of 5 years. The annual grant for building management costs will match the lease period and the total awarded per year will be £80-85,000 to contribute towards building management costs (such as management, compliance).

The successful applicant will enter into the lease and grant agreement, to deliver the requirements set out in the Appendix Two – the Beethoven Community Centre Operator Requirements.

The application window is Jan 16th 2026 – Feb 12th, 2026, during which organisations are invited to apply for the grant of lease to deliver the services for a period of 5 years and the associated award of grant funding in respect of the Centre. However, please note that the amount of this grant is subject to being reviewed after 2 years and the grant may be reduced depending on the successful operation and management of the Centre.

The purpose of the grant is to enable the operator to exercise good management of the building so that the building can be used by the community and community organisations in safe and favourable conditions and enable delivery of the following:

1. Provision of affordable community space in north Westminster:
 - ✓ affordable meeting rooms and office space accessible to support local VCS organisations pursuing WCC strategic objectives
2. Develop opportunities for community involvement at the Centre by:
 - ✓ promoting in-house and local community service offers and opportunities to service users
 - ✓ providing space for council and community services where requested and possible

Other costs associated with the building must be met by the operator. See Appendix X for the full list of costs associated.

See appendix X for the Heads of Terms and draft lease plan .

TUPE Information

3 staff are eligible for TUPE.

Key dates

The anticipated timeline for the application, assessment and award process is:

Stage 1: Application period (16th January 2026 – 12th February 2026)

- The opportunity will be advertised to VCS groups from January 2026, with the application form and accompanying application documentation being published on the January 13th, 2026
- If you would like to arrange a visit, please email beethovencommunitycentre@westminster.gov.uk
- Frequently asked questions and any other updates will also be shared with potential applicants over email.
- To register your interest for the site visit and updates, visit please email: **beethovencommunitycentre@westminster.gov.uk**
- Support for individual applications will be available from One Westminster throughout the application period on support@onewestminster.org.uk.
- Applications can be submitted from the 17th of January 2026.
- The deadline for applications is the 12th of February 2026.

Stage 2: Assessment & decision-making (14th February– 23rd February 2026)

- Applicants may be required to provide additional information in relation to their bid, including an invitation to deliver a short presentation on their vision for the Centre.
- We aim for a provisional offer to be made before the 16th of March 2026. Any provisional offer is then subject to a due diligence process and subject to the Council governance approval and decision making progress as well as the sale of the building to the Council being completed.
- A panel of multi-disciplinary council staff and local community representatives will review, assess and select the successful community centre operator **to proceed to the next stage in the process which is subject to Council decision making.**

Stage 4: Grant and Lease Award, and Operator Mobilisation and Launch

- Following the offer of the grant (**subject to Council decision making**), Westminster City Council will carry out checks to make sure that the information given in the application form is accurate **and cross check with information from the current owner of the Centre**. Applicants will be asked to produce all documents and other evidence mentioned in the application. See the Application Guidance document for what to expect in the application form and once the grant offer is made. Following confirmation that all checks are satisfactorily passed, officers will seek Council sign-off. **If this Council approval is obtained**, a final grant agreement can be put in place and funds released based on an agreed payment schedule.
- The Council will finalise the terms of the lease with the selected operator and agree the grant payment schedule, which is also subject to compliance with requirements under the Subsidy Control Act 2022 that will be executed post the sale of the building being completed to the Council.
- The successful operator will inform the Council of their launch plan, to go live on or around the same date as the Council's acquisition of the Centre.

How to apply

- Applications must be completed and submitted via email and can be submitted from 17th of January 2026.

- Visit the [Westminster Grants Funding Webpage](#) for the Application Guidance and Questions, a full list of operator requirements and BCC information pack. If, for accessibility reasons, you require the application form in an alternative format, please contact **beethovencommunitycentre@westminster.gov.uk**
- In addition to the programme prospectus, please remember to also read the Application Guidance and Requirements documents before applying. The application guidance provides information on what to expect in the application form and how best to complete it.

Need help with your application?

One Westminster are able to support applicants. Please contact them directly at support@onewestminster.org.uk.

For additional details or technical information on the Beethoven Community Centre, the leasehold requirements or application process, please contact the Council at **beethovencommunitycentre@westminster.gov.uk**

3. The Centre

The Space

Located in the heart of Queens Park, the community centre has a busy and vibrant atmosphere. It's already well used by members of the community for a range of activities (such as Zumba, Yoga and a lunch club) but isn't currently being used to its full capacity or potential.

For a full overview of the space including the organisations in situ and rental income generated, compliance requirements, see the BCC Information pack.

Purpose and Aims

Health and social inequalities in Westminster are stark, with data from the Office for Health Improvement & Disparities revealing a life expectancy gap of up to 18 years between the city's most and least advantaged residents. This is the widest disparity in the country, and those facing the greatest barriers to health often belong to minoritised communities.

We know the VCS plays a crucial role in tackling these inequalities, supporting residents to lead healthier, happier lives. However, the sector continues to face significant challenges, including rising demand for affordable space to deliver community initiatives.

Securing the Beethoven Centre for community use and leasing it to a dedicated operator aims to address this need. The vision is to maximise the Centre's potential by enabling the VCS to make full use of the space in ways that:

- Directly benefit Westminster residents, especially by addressing health and social inequalities through a diverse range of activities, projects, and community events

- Support multiple VCS organisations to flourish by providing affordable office and hall rentals
- Improve outcomes for the local community by expanding opportunities and access to vital resources
- Ensure access to people of all ages and backgrounds, having regard for Equalities legislation and the Council's Equalities Strategy
- Reduce inequalities

Operator Requirements

See Appendix Two – the Beethoven Community Centre Operator Requirements for a full list of requirements. The successful delivery of these requirements will be formalised in the Grant Funding Agreement and associated lease.

If applying as a management partnership, the lead organisation who is the named leaseholder and awarded grant funding will be primarily and legally responsible for complying with the terms of the lease and delivery of the requirements set out in the Grant Funding Agreement and accompanying documentation.

6. Applications and decisions

How to apply: via email

To apply, please refer to the Application Guidance and Questions for the Community Centre, which is available on the following webpage: <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/leisure-libraries-and-community/grant-funding-opportunities> Applications are to be submitted via email to **beethovencommunitycentre@westminster.gov.uk**

Partnership applications

We welcome partnership applications for the operation of the centre where effective collaboration is demonstrated. Your application should explain how your partnership will work, if possible, drawing on previous examples. A list of local partner organisations who have expressed an interest in this opportunity will be included in the FAQs document published on the website.

Any application, including one with multiple partners, will need to name a 'lead organisation'. The lead organisation will be primarily and legally responsible for complying with the terms of the lease (named as the leaseholder) and the successful delivery of the requirements formalised as set out in the Grant Funding Agreement and supporting documentation. A lead organisation can only submit or be included in a single application. Supporting delivery partners can be named in multiple applications. An overview of lead organisation expectations, whether applying independently or in partnership, is included in Annex 2.

Assessment and decision-making

A panel of multi-disciplinary council staff and local community representatives will review, assess and select the successful operator for the Centre.

Applications will be primarily assessed against the following key areas:

1. The understanding of the needs of the local community
2. Demonstration of the ability and experience to meet the operator requirements
3. The vision for the community centre
4. The management and partnership model
5. The financial viability, sustainability and value for money of the proposal

Following the initial assessment, a shortlisted group of applicants (including lead organisations and partners) may be invited for an interview with the panel. The purpose of the interview is;

- For the applicants to give a presentation on their vision for the centre
- For the panel to ask any clarifying question on the application

Following the interview, the panel may adjust the initial scores given to the application questions.

Due diligence and Governance

Following the offer of the grant, Westminster City Council will carry out checks to make sure that the information given in the application form is accurate. Applicants will be asked to produce all documents and other evidence mentioned in the application. See the Application Guidance document for what to expect in the application form and once the grant offer is made. Following confirmation that all checks are satisfactorily passed, officers will seek final approved decision in accordance with the Council's governance process. Once approval has been obtained, a Grant Funding Agreement will be executed for the grant funding to be awarded based on an agreed payment schedule.

The successful proposed operator should be taking its own legal, tax and professional advice on the grant agreement and the lease.

7. Ongoing Relationship

Westminster City Council wants to maintain and build high-quality relationships with the centre operator. The operator will be expected to be collaborative and co-operative, maintaining good relations with the Council, local partners and the local neighbourhood. The Council will want to ensure that critical services from the council and from the community are accessible in the Centre. The Council will want to ensure the operator acts as a good steward of the Centre as a heritage asset.

NB: Consideration needs to be given to the noise, particularly the kind of activities that take place in the Centre in the evenings, so neighbours are not disturbed. The operator will need to have a clear and published complaints procedure so residents who wish to raise a complaint can do so.

Monitoring requirements

Quarterly monitoring reports are to be provided to the Council and will be due in line with any agreed dates for face-to-face monitoring meetings.

The report will include;

- The numbers of people attending the Centre and demographical breakdowns recording various characteristics (where possible).
- The data outlined in table 1 which will measure community, resident and organisational use of the space.
- Any additional activity conducted which contributes to the core requirements.
- Brief details of the commercial performance of the office and meeting room hire .

Table 1

<p>COMMUNITY SPACE (Physical space for VCS organisations and community groups to run activities and services)</p>	<p>On site offer from advice services, housing, other community services Activity/group sessions for community members Community Champions</p>	<p>Detail and no. of organisations who provide services from the centre. Data on how many people come into the building (incl. Postcodes) No. of activity sessions running each week/month</p>
<p>RESIDENT ACCESS TO EVENT SPACE</p>	<p>Make the centre accessible to diverse communities across Westminster who want to hire space in the centre for community or family events.</p>	<p>Data on those hiring the space (numbers and postcodes) Details on types of events/activities held No. of such events held</p>
<p>ORGANISATIONAL SPACE (office space for VCS orgs)</p>	<p>Affordable office space for VCS organisations</p>	<p>Details of orgs using office space and frequency (report in Q1 and then only if changes) Details of level of discount/affordability for long-term use and one-off use</p>

In the final quarter of each financial year the quarterly monitoring report must be supplemented by a presentation of the overall delivery for the year, including the following detailed case studies. These are used to reflect contributions made by the Recipient to engaging and connecting the local community and delivering direct and indirect social value through its operations, in ways that may not be fully captured by the thematic outcome measures above. It is an opportunity to demonstrate the centre’s broader impact on community involvement in the north of Westminster:

Table 2

CASE STUDY TITLE	OUTLINE	REPORTING REQUIREMENTS
1. COMMUNITY SPACE	Details of one example of enabling community space to be used in a way that delivers social value locally in the North Paddington area.	Details of how space was used and by whom Tangible benefits Any lessons learned, or useful connections made for the future
2. RESIDENT ACCESS TO EVENT SPACE	Details of any resident event bringing people together and contributing to inclusion and cohesion within the community (immediate or wider)	Outline of the event Details of target group/attendants Results / impact
3. ORGANISATIONAL SPACE	Details of a case study/report where an organisation has benefited from being based at the Stowe Centre, particularly when it's a new 'tenant' and the impact that the space has made on their organisation's capacity.	Results, impact, comments on impact

Data sharing

The successful applicant will be expected to share outcomes data and demographic data of service users. No personal data will be shared, and it will be stored securely in line with our [privacy notice](#).

Annex 1: Full eligibility criteria

If applying in a partnership, eligibility will be assessed for the lead provider only.

Requirement	Source/Check
Charitable objects must align with at least one of Fairer Westminster Strategy	Annual Report
The lead organisation must have expenditure of at least £150,000 per annum (in the last financial year or as an average over the past three financial years)	Annual Accounts
Applicants must be registered charities, CIOs, CICs or a parish or community council	Application Form
Organisations should be registered, physically based and/or have an established service for Westminster residents, ideally in the north of the borough	Application form
Must have been fully operational (and delivering services to Westminster residents) for at least 12 months prior to applying	Application form
Must have prior experience of receiving grant or external funding (either from the council or any other funder)	Application form
Must have prior experience occupying and managing a similar space or show how they will equip themselves with the skills to do so, including adhering to compliance requirements	Application form
Must not have rent arrears owing to the Council from previous or present occupancy	Council check
Must be able to demonstrate sound organisational and financial management, including the ability to pay rent	Annual accounts, Council check
Must be constituted and have a bank account in the organisation's name	Application Form. Bank Account Details Provided after submission
Must have at least two directors or trustees that are not related, or demonstrate strong governance for management of the centre	Council check
Must not distribute any surpluses or assets through share dividends to individuals or shareholders	Annual accounts
Must not be a party political body	Annual report/council check-charities commission/companies house/references

Must not provide services or activities whose aims are religious or political in nature, except for the hall being used for prayers. (faith-based charities can apply if activities are community-oriented and open to all)	Annual report/council check-charities commission/companies house/references
Must not be under any criminal or safeguarding investigation	Council check
Must conduct activities in line with the Equality Act 2010	Application form – Q3
Must pay employees or contracted staff the London Living Wage as a minimum	Application form
Up-to-date safeguarding policy, general health and safety policy, data protection policy and equalities policy for staff and volunteers	To be provide by applicant after they have received the lease and grant offer
Confirmation of DBS checks for staff and volunteers on the basis of work being undertaken with children, young people or vulnerable adults	To be provide by applicant after they have received the lease and grant offer
Copy of your public liability insurance cover certificate and risk register (£5m required)	To be provide by applicant after they have received the lease and grant offer
Copy of your employee liability insurance where applicable (£5m required)	To be provide by applicant after they have received the lease and grant offer

Annex 2: Lead Organisation expectations

Whether the successful proposal is a single organisation providing space to other organisations through individual arrangements, or is a partnership bid with a Lead Partner, the Lead Organisation will need to have skills and experience which ensure it can operate the Centre effectively.

This annex builds on the application documents, identifying the skills and experience which local organisations have identified a Lead Organisation should possess. Please note the list below will not be formally assessed as part of the Operator Requirements.

Practical Responsibilities

- Appoint a manager for day-to-day operations, demonstrating flexibility and a proactive approach to unforeseen challenges.
- Create a welcoming, inclusive, and diverse environment.

- Ensure smooth daily operations, including opening, closing, and maintaining the space.
- Ensure the hub is warm and welcoming, with someone available to greet arrivals and manage logistics like a 'waiting room'.
- Facilitate a collaborative atmosphere where all voices are acknowledged.
- Engage residents throughout the process with step-by-step involvement.
- Host regular partner meetings and establish effective communication mechanisms to listen to all parties.
- establish an internal booking system for clarity.
- Maintain clear and regular communication with residents and partners, sharing updates on changes in resident priorities.
- Manage a communications plan to advertise partner events and maximize participation.
- Plan larger events and schedules collaboratively, considering different groups' specific needs and safeguarding concerns.
- Prioritise security and safety of staff on-site.
- Provide relevant training to all partners.
- Maintain all building and health and safety compliance.

Skills & Experience

- Ability to gather, analyse, and report data to stakeholders (e.g., council).
- Be collaborative and consider partners' perspectives without making decisions by committee.
- Develop a thorough understanding of all partners and cultivate relationships through consistency (e.g., site manager/receptionist).
- Excellent communication and feedback skills.
- Experience in organisational development and partner support.
- Knowledge of building management and legal requirements.
- Maintain an open, approachable, and transparent demeanour.
- Open-minded and empathetic approach.
- Proven experience in managing people and coordinating teams.
- Strong financial management skills.
- Strategic thinking and adaptability.

Under the Subsidy Control Act 2022, an organisation may receive subsidies as minimal financial assistance where the maximum level of subsidy that an organisation receives over the three year period (being the current and two previous financial years (1 April to 31 March)) does not exceed £315,000 and may receive subsidies as Services of Public Economic Interest where the maximum level of subsidy that an organisation receives over the three year period (being the current and two previous financial years (1 April to 31 March)) does not exceed £725,000.

If we award a subsidy as minimal financial assistance or Services of Public Economic Interest you may need to declare this to any other public authority who requests this information for a period of up to three years from the date the subsidy was given.

If the amount of a subsidy is in excess of £100,000 it will need to be published on the transparency database: <https://searchforuksubsidies.beis.gov.uk/>

DECLARATION

Subject to the successful award of a grant and the parties entering into a grant agreement, the Council intends to make a grant of up to the application amount as Minimal Financial Assistance.

1. I confirm that my organisation complies with the requirements detailed above in the subsidies that it has already received and the funding sought as part of this contract, and
2. I understand that the final award amount may be less than the application amount.

Name of organisation	
Registered Company or Charity No. (if applicable)	
Organisation Representative Name	
Signature	
Date	