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| **Winter 2025/26 - Warm Spaces Small Grant**  **Expressions of Interest: Guidance** |

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# **Information**

**A1 Background**

Torbay Council has a strong commitment to supporting Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector groups to ensure local people are at the heart of our approach. The Council recognises the value of the work that community partners do in supporting the health and wellbeing of our local community, and that the sector is often able to respond more flexibly and creatively to need than statutory services can. The Council is therefore keen to support our partners to maintain and build upon what they do well.

We recognise that continued pressures around the cost-of-living are impacting our most vulnerable residents disproportionately, as well as pushing more of our community into poverty. While we acknowledge that this is a national issue and therefore not something we can solve, the Council is keen to help cushion the blow for as many people as we can.

We have therefore committed funding to enable VCSE partners to provide Warm Spaces across the community during Winter 2025/26.

# **Application Process**

* 1. : **Who Can Apply for Funding?**

Constituted and not-for-profit Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector groups and organisations within Torbay, working individually or a combination of groups working together, which are representative of their local area. This includes, but is not limited to:

1. constituted neighbourhood committees, residents’ associations, community groups and voluntary organisations.
2. social enterprises
3. community interest companies
4. community benefit societies and
5. charities and trusts.
   1. **What Can and Cannot Be Funded?**
      1. The maximum amount of funding that can be requested is £2,500.
      2. Funding can be provided for new initiatives, or existing initiatives, where the funding will be used to enhance or improve an existing initiative.
      3. To be considered for funding, a Warm Space project must support and enable local communities to keep themselves healthy, independent and connected with their local neighbourhood.
      4. We recognise that VCSE partners offer a wide range of support and activities, and if your Warm Space project is running alongside existing initiatives, it may offer Added Value. For example, you may offer activities, advice and information, or peer support within the setting already, which Warm Space users can then benefit from.

Therefore, you should also consider how your Warm Space will support one or more of the following overarching Torbay Council Strategic priorities:

1. helping to turn the tide on poverty.
2. having high aspirations for all Torbay residents.
3. building safer communities.
4. helping to create an environment in which businesses and jobs can grow. and where we have a local economy which is successful and sustainable.
5. helping to tackle climate change.
6. supporting the Council to meet its responsibilities as a corporate parent.
7. supporting the creation of a culture of partnership working between the Council and communities.
   * 1. We will not provide a detailed service specification around what or how you should deliver, but you should refer to Part C Commissioner Requirements and ensure that your responses in the Expression of Interest demonstrate that your project will meet these requirements.
     2. Funding may be used to pay for, in part or in whole, costs directly related to the provision of a Warm Space, including (but not limited to):
8. Equipment
9. Additional staff or volunteer expenses
10. Food and other essentials
11. Costs of running activities
12. Additional utility costs
    * 1. We cannot fund:
13. Alcohol or tobacco.
14. loans or interest payments.
15. religious or political activities.
16. VAT you can reclaim.
17. profit-making or fundraising activities.
18. statutory activities.
19. items or activities for individual benefit.
20. costs that are already committed to, funded or paid for before you submitted your application.
    1. **How Does the Application Process Work?**
       1. For us to fund you, you will need to complete the following document:

**Expression of Interest (EOI)**

The EOI form is straightforward and asks a series of questions to help us gather specific information about your initiative. This will help us to decide whether it meets the stated requirements and criteria for funding. The EOI is evaluated on a pass/fail and scored basis.

* + 1. The Council’s decision as to whether your application will progress to the next stage is final.
    2. Information supplied by the Council as part of the Application process is supplied in good faith and you must satisfy yourself as to the accuracy of such information. The Council does not accept responsibility for any loss or damage arising from your use of such information. All information issued to you must be treated as confidential.
    3. The Council may, at its sole discretion, terminate the Application process at any time. If such action is taken you will be notified by email.
  1. **Form Completion, Submission, Acceptance and Rejection**
     1. Please ensure you follow this guidance when completing your responses in relation to each stage of the process. You should only complete and submit forms in respect of specific stages when asked to do so.
     2. Documents must be completed in full; you must respond to every question within each of the documents and provide any additional information requested. Where meeting a particular requirement is optional you must select N/A to indicate that it does not apply to your project.
     3. Some of the questions within the EOI have word limits. Please ensure you keep your response within any stated word limit as we only assess your response up to the permitted word limit.
     4. Your project costs must be within any financial envelope set by the Council.
     5. Your fully completed documents must be submitted in Word format, electronically by email, together with any appendices or additional information requested and within any stipulated timescales, to **commissioning@torbay.gov.uk**

**Please write WARM SPACES 2025/26 in the subject line.**

* + 1. The Council may, at its absolute discretion, reject your proposal at any stage of the process if one or more of the following occur:

1. your submission was not made in the specified manner.
2. your response was submitted after any stated deadline for submission.
3. the amount of funding you are requesting exceeds maximum award limit stated in B2.1
4. you do not accept the Terms and Conditions set out in the Service Level Agreement.
5. you have qualified your application in any way.
6. your application is incomplete or vague, where this is the case, the Council may contact you to provide further information where it considers this will not be unfair to other applicants.
7. you act in any way improperly, including but not limited to canvassing, price fixing or inducements (which relate to offences under the Bribery Act 2010, Section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972 or any future legislation); or
8. the Council has become aware at any point that you have been afforded a competitive advantage or have a conflict of interest that cannot be rectified.
9. any of the information you have provided is found to be inaccurate or misleading.
10. your submission is in breach of any condition contained within it.
    * 1. If you seriously misrepresent any factual information, there may be significant consequences. You may be excluded from making an application. If an Agreement has been entered into you may be sued for damages and the Agreement may be rescinded. If fraud, or fraudulent intent, can be proved, you or your responsible officers may be prosecuted and convicted of the offence of fraud by false representation, and you must be excluded from further procurements for five years.
    1. **Assessment and Scoring**
       1. The assessment process will be overseen by the Council’s Commissioning Team. Evaluation of applications will be undertaken will be undertaken by a panel consisting of council officers, elected members, and VCSE representatives from organisations which are not making an application for funding.
       2. **Evaluation Methodology**

Questions within the EOI Questionnaire are identified as being for Information Only, Pass / Fail, or Scored and will be assessed as follows:

**Information Only**

These questions will not be scored, but if you fail to provide the information requested this may affect the outcome of your application.

**Pass / Fail**

Questions assessed on a Pass / Fail basis are those where meeting the requirement is essential to your ability to access this funding. They will usually relate to questions where a Yes / No response can be provided or where you are required to pick from a specific list of options.

If you are able to meet the requirement (i.e. you answer Yes or are able to select an option from those available) you will achieve a Pass, if you are unable to meet the requirement you will achieve a Fail.

If you fail one or more of the Pass / Fail questions you will be deselected from participating further in the process and will be notified accordingly.

Where the requirements for any question are optional and your project is not going to meet the requirement, you must select N/A to achieve a Pass for that question.

**Scored**

These questions are assessed on a scoring basis using the zero to five scoring system in the table below:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Score 5** | **Excellent** | Response is completely relevant and excellent overall. The response is comprehensive, unambiguous and demonstrates a broad depth of relevant experience and excellent level of expertise with all areas covered to a very high standard. |
| **Score 4** | **Very Good** | Response is very relevant and very good. The response is precisely detailed to demonstrate a very good amount of experience and expertise covering all aspects. |
| **Score 3** | **Good** | Response is relevant and good. The response is sufficiently detailed to demonstrate a good amount of experience and expertise covering all aspects. |
| **Score 2** | **Satisfactory** | Response is relevant and acceptable. Demonstrates a reasonable amount of experience and adequate level of expertise but lacks detail in certain areas or with some aspects missing. |
| **Score 1** | **Poor Response** | Response is partially relevant and poor. Provides little or limited evidence of experience and competence in the required field. |
| **Score 0** | **Unacceptable** | An unacceptable or irrelevant response, or no response provided. |

**How each question in the EOI is evaluated:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Question** | **Method** | **Question** | **Method** | **Question** | **Method** |
| **1** | Info only | **7** | Pass/Fail | 13 | Scored |
| **2** | Pass/Fail | **8** | Info only | 14 | Pass/Fail |
| **3** | Info only | **9** | Scored | 15 | Scored |
| **4** | Info only | **10** | Scored | Section 3 | Info only |
| **5** | Pass/Fail | **11** | Info only |  |  |
| **6** | Pass/Fail | **12** | Scored |  |  |

* + 1. **Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality**

Any Members, Officers or VCSE Representatives involved in evaluating applications will be subject to the conflict of interest and confidentiality process.

# **Commissioner Requirements**

* 1. **The Warm Space Offer and Outcomes**

## To be eligible for funding, partners must commit to providing a Warm Space offer in accordance with the following:

## Partners will provide a welcoming, Warm Space to people within the community, particularly those who may be struggling to afford to heat their homes.

## There will be no specific eligibility criteria to access a Warm Space.

## A Warm Space should be somewhere Torbay residents can attend, to support their health and wellbeing, mitigate energy costs, make social connections, and feel safe.

* 1. Partners will provide hot drinks for people attending the warm space and may also choose to offer food or activities should they wish.
  2. Partners will signpost people attending the Warm Space to other community assets, and services, which may support their health and wellbeing.
  3. Partners may, where a need has been identified, purchase items for local residents which would help them to stay warm or save on their energy costs, where the person cannot afford to purchase themselves. This includes items such as coats, blankets, duvets, gloves, hats, flasks, slow cookers, hot water bottles, draught excluders, etc. Up to 20% of the total funding value may be used for this purpose.
  4. The Partner will ensure that the Warm Space is provided according to the principles described in the Torbay Warm Spaces Charter, as follows:

**Torbay Warm Spaces Charter**

What residents can expect when visiting a Warm Space:

***You will be welcome and warm.***

Warm Spaces will offer you a place to feel warm and welcomed, regardless of the reason for your visit. Everyone is welcome and treated equally, with dignity and respect, by staff and volunteers.

***Warm Spaces are safe places.***

You should feel safe in a Warm Space. Venues will have safeguarding processes and policies in place for your protection, and they will follow them. If they are serving food and drinks, they will follow Food Hygiene rules as well.

***It doesn’t matter why you visit a Warm Space***

You won’t be asked why you need a Warm Space. Whatever the reason for your visit, you will be treated equally and never judged.

***We won’t tell anyone you visited a Warm Space***

If you want to share the reasons for your visit, that’s ok. Someone will listen, but they won’t tell anyone else without your permission, unless they must because of their safeguarding policy.

**Quality Requirements**

1. Partners will ensure compliance with the appropriate Food Safety regulations. Where appropriate, Partners should be registered with Torbay Council as a Food Business – this normally applies where food is being prepared/processed by Partners. More information can be found by calling the Food Safety team on 01803 208025, or by visiting the website here:

<https://www.torbay.gov.uk/business/food-safety/food-business-registration/>

1. As the warm space is likely to be attended by vulnerable residents, Partners must ensure that they have the appropriate Safeguarding policies in place for both Adults and Children, and that all staff and volunteers working in the Warm Space are aware of their Safeguarding responsibilities.
2. Partners are responsible for the safety of residents visiting their setting and will ensure that all relevant Health and Safety regulations are complied with.
3. Where risk of immediate harm is identified to any individual attending the Warm Space, Partners will ensure that the appropriate emergency Services are contacted to assist.
4. Partners will ensure that they have an appropriate level of Public Liability insurance.

**Accountability and Monitoring**

1. We recognise that reporting data on users of warm spaces is going to be difficult, and we do not wish to create an additional burden on our partners. However, it is important for us to understand how Warm Spaces are being used and the impact they have on people.
2. By submitting an Expression of Interest, partners are agreeing to provide the Council with activity and impact data, using the Reporting template attached at **Appendix 1.** We will send this to you as a separate Word document if you are awarded funding.

Please review the template thoroughly and ensure your organisation will be able to complete it at the end of the project, before applying for funding.

1. If the Supplier wishes to cease or pause delivery of the Warm Space within the term of the agreement, they must inform the Council immediately by e-mailing [commissioning@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:commissioning@torbay.gov.uk).

# **Appendix 1 Warm Spaces Reporting Template**

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Warm Spaces Report - Winter 2025-26

Thank you for hosting a Warm Space. Your feedback will help us understand the impact of the initiative and improve future support. Please complete and email to commissioning@torbay.gov.uk at the completion of the project.

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| **About your Warm Space** | |
| Organisation Name |  |
| Days & opening times of your Warm Space sessions |  |
| Total number of sessions provided |  |
| **Visitor Information** | |
| Total number of visits to your Warm Space |  |
| Did you notice any trends in visitor numbers over time? ☐ Yes ☐ No  If yes, please describe: | |
| **Visitor Demographics (tick all that apply)**  ☐ Older adults (65+)  ☐ Families with children  ☐ People with disabilities  ☐ People experiencing homelessness  ☐ People with mental health needs  ☐ Refugees or asylum seekers  ☐ Other (please specify): | |
| **Services Offered (tick all that apply)**  ☐ Hot drinks/snacks  ☐ Meals  ☐ Internet access  ☐ Charging points  ☐ Warm clothing or blankets  ☐ Advice and support (e.g. financial, housing, energy)  ☐ Social activities  ☐ Other (please specify): | |
| **Benefits Observed (tick all that apply)**  ☐ Reduced isolation/loneliness  ☐ Improved wellbeing  ☐ Access to essential items  ☐ Connection to other services  ☐ Increased community engagement  ☐ Other (please specify):  Please share any stories or examples that highlight the impact of your Warm Space: | |
| **Challenges Faced**  What challenges did you encounter in running the Warm Space? | |
| **Improvements and Future Planning**  What could be improved in future Warm Space initiatives?  Would you be interested in hosting a Warm Space again? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe  What support would help you do so?  Please share any additional feedback or reflections | |

**Should you have any questions regarding this Guidance or the Expression of Interest Application form, please contact commissioning@torbay.gov.uk**