

Love Your Bus Grant Fund Application

Overview

Buses contribute to all the Everyone's Essex commitments ([Everyone's Essex | Essex County Council](https://www.essex.gov.uk/about-council/plans-and-strategies/our-vision-essex/everyones-essex) <<https://www.essex.gov.uk/about-council/plans-and-strategies/our-vision-essex/everyones-essex>>). They support everyone including younger and older people; people with disabilities, the local economy, positive environmental outcomes and they enable diverse places to flourish.

A strong public transport network is a key enabler for all these strategic aims. It helps people access education, jobs, health services and shops - supporting our schools, colleges, high streets, and local employment. It gives people an alternative to car travel, helping to reduce congestion and carbon emissions, and so contributing to our net zero carbon goals. It enables people to live independently and to access friends and family, supporting their health and wellbeing.

Background

The **Love Your Bus** grant funding initiative would enable Parish and Town Councils in Essex to bid for funding to support and grow your local bus routes. This initiative is part of the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), a plan that Essex County Council (ECC) is committed to delivering. The fund would be designed to support community-led action to enable the growth of key local bus services throughout 2025/2026.

The proposal is to create a £500,000 grant fund from the BSIP+ funding allocated to ECC by the Department for Transport (DfT). The maximum award would be £50,000 per project.

The objective of the fund would be to enable Parish and Town Councils to invest in measures which would increase patronage on the bus service or services which serve their communities. The funding is revenue funding only.

Any suitable measures would be considered, including but not limited to:

- **Attract new passengers:** Improve information through marketing, leaflets, timetables and maps, and/or community-led engagement events.
- **Service enhancements:** Increase bus service frequency during peak hours, introduce late-night or early-morning services, and/or create new route extensions to connect underserved areas to key destinations.
- **Community engagement and promotions:** Targeted marketing campaigns, community-led engagement events, and/or school and community group partnerships.
- **Passenger experience improvements:** Improved passenger information (provide information on bus routes and schedules using maps, leaflets, posters, and/or other accessible formats).

Love Your Bus Application Form

[Please enable cookies before starting this application](#) </cookie_policy/>

Introduction

The Love Your Bus Grant Fund supports Parish and Town Council projects aimed at increasing bus service patronage and aligning with Essex County Council's (ECC) goals of fostering:

A strong, inclusive, and sustainable economy.

A high-quality environment.

Health, wellbeing, and independence for all ages.

A good place for children and families to grow.

Grants of up to £50,000 are available for revenue-only projects in the 2025/2026 period, supported by the Department for Transport's BSIP+ funding. Total funding available: £500,000.

Eligibility Criteria

Who can apply: Parish and Town Councils only.

Bus service requirement: Services must operate at least 80% of their mileage within ECC's administrative area (excluding Southend and Thurrock).

Number of bids: Each council can submit up to three bids.

Collaborative applications with neighbouring Councils are encouraged.

Transport Provider support: Letter to provide support from bus company operating the service and their commitment to meet the data-sharing requirements as outlined in application guidelines.

Support from County Councillor – Written or email confirmation from the local County Councillor endorsing the project.

For full details on application/bid criteria, intended grant agreement, project requirements, collaboration guidance, evaluation criteria, funding and financial requirements, project monitoring and reporting and any other information required to complete this application, please read all documents below.

Please note: Online application must be completed and submitted in one sitting.

Shortcode: factbank

Factbank Title: Important: Please Read Before Completing the Application Form

Factbank Content:

[Love your bus Application Guidance Notes](#) <user_uploads/love-your-bus-guidance-notes-6.pdf>

[Bid Criteria for Parish and Town Councils](#) <user_uploads/appendix-a---bid-criteria-for-parish-and-town-councils--4.pdf>

[Intended Grant Agreement](#) <user_uploads/grant-agreement---love-your-bus.pdf>

1 Please indicate you read Love Your Bus Guideline and Application Criteria for Parish and Town councils before starting this application

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

2 Please confirm which Local Authority you represent

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Parish Council
- Town Council

Enter full name of your Parish/Town Council *(Required)*

3 Name and job title of the person who can answer questions about the application and is submitting this form

(Required)

4 Organisation contact email address

Please use a business email where possible. (Where a personal email address must be used this will be used for business purposes only) *(Required)*

5 Contact telephone number

(Required)

6 What is your organisation's address

(Required)

7 Is this a joint application

Please select from the list below *(Required)*

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

If Yes, list all Parish/Town Councils involved in this application.

Please Note: Only the lead Parish/Town Council can submit the application.

8 Bus service details

Please provide the service number *(Required)*

Please provide name of transport provider who operates this service *(Required)*

Bus Service Start and Destination *(Required)*

9 Operator Support Confirmation

Please confirm that the operator of the chosen service supports this application *(Required)*

Please attach a copy of any documents you wish to include to this printout.

Attach a letter from them confirming this and that they will meet the data sharing requirements set out in Love Your Bus Guidance Notes (project monitoring section)

10 Full Project Description

What are your project's objectives and how will you achieve them *(Required)*

What you are investing in i.e. how you will spend the money *(Required)*

Summarise how your project will help increase passenger numbers on this service *(Required)*

Specify any specific groups who will benefit *(Required)*

Sustainability – please provide how you expect passenger numbers to be sustained once grant funding ends *(Required)*

11 County Councillor Support

Name of Supporting County Councillor *(Required)*

Please attach a copy of any documents you wish to include to this printout.

Please upload written or email evidence of support from your County Councillor, with this application.

12 Do you have any partners supporting your project, who will also help you to deliver it

<i>(Required)</i>	Yes	No
Bus User Group <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local Community Group <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13 Anticipated project start and end date

Expected project start date *(Required)*

Confirm that grant-funded spending on the project will be completed by 31 March 2026. *(Required)*

14 Evaluation of impact: If successful, do you agree to measure the impact of your project and send ECC information quarterly including a brief end of project report

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes
 No

15 VAT Reclamation

Can you reclaim VAT? *(Required)*

Please select only one item

- Yes
 No

If you answered 'yes' to the above question, please show all costings **exclusive** of VAT. If you cannot reclaim VAT, please include it in your costings.

16 What is the total cost of the project

Amount (£) *(Required)*

17 How much funding are you requesting for your Love Your bus project

Amount (£) *(Required)*

18 Additional Contributions

How much is your organisation contributing to this project, either itself or with partners. List each contribution separately. Leave blank if no other contribution

19 How much does your organisation have in unrestricted reserves

Amount (£) *(Required)*

20 Grant spending breakdown: Specify the main areas the grant will be spent on and the estimated amount (e.g. staff costs, resources, equipment, evaluation)

Areas of spend: Amount (£) *(Required)*

21 Declaration: Please tick the box to confirm that you have read the intended grant agreement.

We understand that if the project or any information in this application changes in any way before the award panels, we must inform Essex County Council immediately. We are authorised to make this application on behalf of the applicant organisation and confirm that we have read, understood, and accept the [intended grant agreement](#). If your application is successful, you will be asked to agree to our terms and conditions. Please read [Intended Grant Agreement](#) <user_uploads/grant-agreement---love-your-bus-1.pdf>

By signing below, you confirm that you have read the intended grant agreement and are authorised to complete this declaration.

Signature: Please add your initials *(Required)*

Today's Date *(Required)*

22 Before submitting this application

Please ensure you have uploaded:

- Operator Support Confirmation Letter
- County Councillor Support Letter

If you experienced any issues uploading these documents, please send them to the email address IPTU.applications@essex.gov.uk and ensure you **quote the response ID** (please take note of your response ID after submitting this application).

Please note: Your application will not be accepted without these documents.