Community Hubs Information Pack

**Information for organisations considering submitting a proposal to lease and manage a community hub**

Table of Contents

[Introduction 3](#_Toc79572037)

[Background 3](#_Toc79572038)

[Lease Arrangements and Submitting a Proposal 5](#_Toc79572039)

[Appendices 7](#_Toc79572040)

[Community Hub Principles 8](#_Toc79572041)

[Principal Lease Terms 9](#_Toc79572042)

[Organisational Assessment Criteria 14](#_Toc79572043)

[Delivery Assessment Criteria 20](#_Toc79572044)

[Proposal Submission Process 24](#_Toc79572045)

**Pre-submission information session:** The council has arranged a session for prospective leaseholders to discuss the proposed community hubs and answer questions. There is also an FAQ page on the council’s website at [Community Hubs](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/community_and_living/Community_hubs/Community_Hubs.aspx).

**Viewing:** Interested parties can view the community hubs by prior arrangement with the council’s Facilities Management Team. Please call 020 7364 4084/2546 to arrange an appointment.

**Closing date for proposals:** Proposals must be submitted to us by 12 noon on Monday 6 September. Proposals received after this date will not be considered.

Proposals must be submitted using the council’s on line portal. Details are set out in the attached appendix ‘Proposal Submission Process’.

**Contacts:**

Asset Management Team 020 7364 2925 [asset.management@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:asset.management@towerhamlets.gov.uk) or

VCS Team 020 7364 6916 [david.freeman@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:david.freeman@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

## Introduction

Tower Hamlets Council is seeking a partner organisation or organisations to take forward an exciting new programme of community management of its community hubs to support the development of social action and community empowerment in their respective localities.

This arrangement will be through leasing each of the hubs to a partner organisation with an agreement with a user/stakeholder group to provide local input to the hub management and strategic direction. The model is explained in more detail below.

This information pack is for organisations that are considering putting forward a proposal to lease one or more of the hubs. It sets out,

* Background and the council’s vision for the development of the community hubs;
* Details of the proposed model;
* The process for submitting a proposal, and
* Information about each of the individual hubs.

You can find the Cabinet report setting out the council’s approach to developing community hubs here, [Community Hubs Report](http://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/documents/s182453/6.3%20Community%20Hubs.pdf).

# Background

The council decided in 2016 to create a network of community hubs which would,

* 1. Provide low cost, accessible and flexible space for local voluntary and community organisations, and
  2. Develop opportunities for more effective use of council assets by reducing underuse of buildings and giving VCS organisations the benefits of accommodation more fit for purpose at a lower cost, making use of economies of scale.

Five community hubs were identified and initially set up and managed, either directly by the council or via a managing agent, with the intention of passing responsibility for managing hubs to community based organisations over time. The premises identified to become community hubs are:

* + Christian Street Community Hub, 30 Challoner Walk, E1 1AZ
  + Tramshed Community Hub, Digby St, E2 0LS
  + Bow Community Hub, E3 3QE
  + Granby Hall Community Hub, 37 St. Matthew Row, E2 6DT
  + Raine’s House Community Hub, E1W 3AU

All the Hubs have undergone refurbishment to make them fit for purpose. Granby Hall and Raine’s House were major refurbishment projects.

Working with Locality, a national organisation providing specialist advice and support on developing community assets and promoting local community action, the council developed a set of core principles that underpin the development of the community hubs and inform the outcomes by which success may be measured.

These principles are:

* 1. Diversity – a proactive approach to ensuring the user base is diverse and that the hubs are perceived as open, accessible and not dominated by one group;
  2. Animation – promoting activity to ensure the buildings are well used, busy places;
  3. Local community involvement – development through the principles of co-production;
  4. Effectiveness – optimising usage and achieving value from these resources;
  5. Location – complementing other community resources and, for future hubs, location at the heart of the community, and
  6. Collaboration – networking within the council owned hubs and with those managed by other providers to develop peer learning and support.

Covid 19 regulations have prevented the hubs from being open to the public since March 2020 but most have been repurposed as resources to support Covid 19 activities such as food distribution and vaccination centres. However, we anticipate they will begin to reopen for wider community use in June/July.

Proposed Model

The model the council is proposing provides an opportunity for well-established community based organisations with experience in managing community buildings to work with local stakeholders to provide a focus for social action and community empowerment in their localities. Each of the hubs will be leased to a partner organisation. This organisation will bring premises management expertise, community development capacity and the economies of scale, with local volunteer stakeholders supported to develop activities and shape the future direction for each building through a local user committee. The lease arrangements will include an agreed set of objectives to help judge the success of the hub as it develops over time. Formal governance and an agreement will support the relationship between the lessee and the user committee.

Each Hub will develop a User Committee of residents and organisational representatives who will help set the values and principles for each specific Hub and how it might be used

Lessees managing the Hubs will be expected to support and to work with local User Committees, listening and responding to feedback and, where possible, involving Hub users and local stakeholders in the ongoing management of the Hub buildings.

**LB Tower Hamlets**

Agrees overarching principles and outcomes for community hubs

Agrees outcomes framework with lessee

**Lessee**

Agrees strategic direction, local values and outcomes with user/stakeholder

Supports development of local users

Ensures building is managed and operated safely and legally

**Community Hub**

**Wider neighbourhood and community** (including other community assets and buildings, that might be considered as part of a ‘campus approach’ to running/booking space for resident/community/commercial use).

**User/ Stakeholder Committee**

Works with lessee to provide strategic direction, local values and outcomes Support and local feedback to lessee

Some day to day premises management, booking, key holding etc

The council is offering individual leases for each of the hubs but encourages organisations that may submit proposals to consider more than one hub.

# Lease Arrangements and Submitting a Proposal

The council will initially lease the community hubs on a 3–5 year lease to allow the arrangements to develop, before considering whether to enter into a long-term commitment such as a community asset transfer. The terms of the lease will be the standard terms the council uses for leasing premises in its community portfolio to VCS organisations. These are set out in Appendix 3.

The community hubs are eligible for the council’s rent subsidy scheme, Community Benefit Rent Reduction (CBRR). The CBRR scheme provides an 80% reduction in rent due. It is also likely the lessee will be granted 100% business rate relief.

The process for selecting a tenant for community premises is set out in Section 3.6 of the council’s Property Procedures for Disposals and Lettings agreed at Cabinet on 31st July 2019 ([Property Procedures for Disposals and Lettings](http://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/documents/s152858/6.9a%20Appendix%201%20-%20Property%20Procedures%20for%20Disposals%20and%20Lettings.pdf) ). These procedures recognise that, for the disposal of community premises, the focus is on the outcomes for the community rather than the rental the council could achieve. The process for community hubs under these procedures includes appropriate criteria for assessing the potential community outcomes that may be achieved through letting the premises to a voluntary and community sector organisation. The criteria also require that organisations meet acceptable standards of governance, management and financial controls which are consistent with those applied to funding and other support from the Council to VCS organisations.

The assessment criteria for proposals are set out in detail in Appendix 4 together with guidance on how the council will assess whether or to what degree they are met. The first set focus on governance and management arrangements. There criteria must be met in full unless otherwise stated in the guidance. Organisations are strongly advised to consider carefully whether they will meet these criteria or not. The council will not consider proposals from organisations that do not meet these criteria. The governance, management and experience criteria are that the organisation must,

1. Be incorporated as a not-for-profit organisation
2. Have at least five years’ experience of running comparable community premises and spaces, including dealing with repairs, maintenance, and health and safety compliance.
3. Be financially stable.
4. Have quality accreditation
5. Be able to demonstrate a local connection
6. Have Equality and Diversity policies with monitoring of their implementation
7. Show evidence of satisfactory business planning

To show how they will meet the community outcomes criteria, organisations are required to provide a delivery plan that includes,

1. A clear commitment to the hub principles at Appendix 1;
2. An indicative plan for use of the premises that would achieve the outcomes for the community set out in the performance management template at appendix 3, and
3. A financial plan demonstrating how the hub will become financially sustainable and how any surplus generated will be applied to develop the use of the hub.

If an organisation is seeking to lease more than one community hub, a separate delivery plan must be submitted for each. However, the council will accept a single submission of the evidence to meet the governance, management and experience.

We have provided the assessment criteria and the proposal checklist as a guide to what the council expects proposals to address. Most of the organisational criteria can be met by submitting appropriate evidence. The delivery plan must be sufficiently detailed to allow the council to make a reasonable assessment of how well the proposal meets the delivery criteria. The assessment will be based on the documentation and other evidence submitted and any research the council undertakes as part of the due diligence process.

The proposal must be accompanied by the council’s Prospective Tenant Details form. This form can be found on the council’s website at Prospective Tenant Details

An information meeting about the proposed community hub development will be held on Tuesday 20 July at 11.00 am. For details, please contact [david.freeman@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:david.freeman@towerhamlets.gov.uk). Also, we may be able to provide additional information about each of the hubs if requested which will then be published on the FAQ web page.

# Appendices

Appendix 1 Community Hub Principles

Appendix 2 Principal Lease Terms

Appendix 3 Community Hubs Performance Management Framework

Appendix 4a Organisational Assessment Criteria

Appendix 4b Delivery Assessment Criteria

Appendix 5 Proposal Checklist

Appendix 6 Community Hub Details

# Community Hub Principles

The model for community hubs in Tower Hamlets is based on a set of core principles that underpin their development and inform the outcomes by which success may be measured. These principles are:

1. Diversity – a proactive approach to ensuring the user base is diverse and that the hubs are perceived as open, accessible and not dominated by one group;
2. Animation – promoting activity to ensure the buildings are well used, busy places;
3. Local community involvement – development through the principles of co-production;
4. Effectiveness – optimising usage and achieving value from these resources;
5. Location – complementing other community resources and, for future hubs, location at the heart of the community, and
6. Collaboration – networking within the council owned hubs and with those managed by other providers to develop peer learning and support.

The model also includes broad operating principles that include,

* 1. Hire charges based on actual usage;
  2. Consistent charging;
  3. Discounted rates for local community based activity;
  4. Mix of one off and regular bookings;
  5. Mixed usage of community based activity and private functions;
  6. Priority hire for VCS organisations, and
  7. Multi use so that more than one activity can take place at the same time.

# Principal Lease Terms

1. Length of lease

Where applicable, the building would be let on a standard form of lease for a period to be agreed. In most cases this would be for 3 to 5 years. By defining a term this may give occupiers sufficient security to plan services and invest in the property, in such things as furnishings or internal decoration.

For some, particularly medium or larger organisations, there is the opportunity to seek grant funding from organisations outside the Council e.g. Big Lottery Fund etc. In these circumstances, funders may insist that leases are in place for longer periods, commonly 25 years; these could be accommodated in appropriate cases. In all leases with a term in excess of 5 years there would be a landlord’s break option, on notice, if the property was required for redevelopment or as otherwise appropriate. The law provides remedies if the tenant breaches the terms but these could be specified in the lease.

Where organisations are in receipt of funding (either through grants or service contracts) solely from the Council, leases will not run beyond the period for which the grant funding or the service contract is expected to terminate.

1. Break clauses

In certain circumstances, for example where there is a possibility of the property being required for redevelopment or other purposes, or there is a link to provisions in a service contract, there may be a clause inserted giving the landlord the option of breaking the lease before the end date.

There will also be a tenant’s break clause as standard. This will allow tenants to respond to changes in the organisation’s financial circumstances and allow an organisation to return the building to the Council without premium if it loses Council funding. This will generally take the form of a rolling break after one year, on six months’ notice.

1. Rent

Rent will be based on open market value based on permitted use. Rent for general community use will be referred to as ‘community rent’. This is currently set at £14psf and will be reviewed periodically in line with market conditions.

In very limited circumstances, the Council may enter into a lease based on a peppercorn or nominal rent. However, these will be limited to Tenants and Residents Associations (TRAs) as recognised by Tower Hamlets Homes Limited (the Council’s arms-length housing management company) for the purposes of discharging their statutory functions.

1. Landlord and Tenant Act 1954

All leases will be excluded from the security of tenure provisions of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954, meaning that there is no right to renew leases. This has the effect of reducing slightly the open market rental value for the property. For some larger organisations paying full market rental and on standard commercial terms, this exclusion may be waived by negotiation.

1. Outgoings

The tenant will be responsible for all outgoings including charges for services (gas, electricity, water, rates etc.) and will be responsible for the costs of statutory testing where carried out by the Council, internal redecoration and security.

1. Repairs

The Council will carry out external repairs and recover the cost. In order to keep the cost of the recharge down, once any initial repairs have been undertaken, the Council will only be responsible for maintaining the building to the extent that it is wind and watertight plus periodic redecoration to preserve the fabric of the building. Repairs beyond this will be at the Council’s discretion following consultation with the tenant.

1. Internal repairs

The tenant will be responsible for decorations and cleaning. Responsibilities for other internal repairs and maintenance will be agreed for each tenant, based on competence and experience. In the event that the Council takes these responsibilities it will recover costs through a recharge. The Council will carry out statutory testing and recover costs through a recharge.

1. Insurance

The Council will insure the building only and recover the cost from the tenant. The tenant will be responsible for contents and all other insurance, including plate glass if fitted.

1. Sharing use of the property

Tenants will be encouraged to allow other bona fide groups to use the accommodation. This could form part of the assessment of community benefit. The lease will regulate this type of sub-user by requiring them to enter into a prescribed form of licence with the tenant, setting out the obligations of the licensee. Council officers will assist with a suitable standard form of licence.

The Council may also take steps to ensure that support is in place to help groups to publicise the availability of space within a building. This may include assistance with website design and links from the Council website, or advice and one off grant support to help with advertisements, posters and other publicity via the Communities Team.

Assignment and sub-lettings of the whole or parts is prohibited.

1. Governance

The tenant organisation will be properly constituted with named persons responsible for overseeing the tenant’s obligations. The lease will be granted to a recognised legal entity or to trustees of unincorporated organisations. Guarantors may be required in some cases.

| ***Outcome*** | ***Example Indicator*** | ***Example Measure*** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Strong links with the local community. Members of the community are able to influence its operation and decision-making processes.*** | Is there a steering group or similar with broad local representation? | Steering group terms of reference.  Notes of meetings. |
| ***Embracing diversity, working to improve community cohesion and reduce inequalities.*** | Is there a proactive programme to bring communities together | Diversity monitoring.  Documentation of Positive programme.  Local & visitor feedback |
| ***An animating presence*** | Visitors and enquirers get prompt and helpful responses.  New visitors and activities are encouraged and initiated. | Local and visitor feedback |
| ***Good governance through open and accountable processes, with adequate monitoring, evaluation and financial management systems*** | Establishment and improvement of relevant systems.  Building a local evidence base. | Accessible user figures, transparent  income and expenditure information |
| ***Sustainably, legally, and safely managing the premises and delivering services from it.*** | Suitable health and safety, licencing and customer  care measures. | Physical evidence on site, spot checks on health & safety.  Evidence of an income generation approach |
| ***Social, economic, and environmental benefits are delivered through the hub and these link to the council’s own desired outcome for the borough as expressed in the Tower Hamlets Plan or clearly demonstrated local need.*** | Activities that support at least one of:  empowering residents and building resilience,  promoting healthier lives; increasing employment; or responding to population growth. Plus activities meeting local need. | Activities board/ diary. Local and visitor  feedback  Evidence of meeting local need  Evidence of an income generation  approach. |
| ***Providing space and support to smaller local groups*** | Incentives for smaller groups | Activities board/ diary. Local and visitor  feedback |
| ***Contributes to the Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy Action Plan*** | The Hub contributes to one or more of:  ·Promoting co-production and sustainability  ·Creating a step change in volunteering  ·Bringing together businesses and the  voluntary and community sector  ·Maximising the value from resources | Evidence from other headings on  community involvement, collaboration  Volunteering records  Agreements for business involvement  Occupancy rate |
| ***Creating a culture of learning, improvement and collaboration*** | Neighbourhood level partnerships and collaboration.  Peer learning across Hubs | Notes and attendance records from  learning and partnership events |

# Organisational Assessment Criteria

Expressions of interest will only be considered from organisations that meet these criteria as set out below. Where ‘part met’ is acceptable (business planning), the council may give priority to organisations that fully meet the criteria.

The table sets out the individual criteria, the reasons for including each of the criteria, the evidence the council will require and guidance on how the council will assess the evidence, ie the details it will be looking for. We have suggested the evidence that we will require but organisations may submit other documentation if appropriate such as supplementary policy documents or plans

| **Criteria** | **Rationale** | **Evidence** | **Assessment Guidance** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Incorporation as a not-for-profit organisation  This criterion must be fully met. | Lease arrangements for premises of this size and complexity are not appropriate for unincorporated associations. | Governing document | Community Interest Company (CIC) registered with the Office of the Regulator of Community Interest Companies  Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registered with the Charity Commission  Company Limited by Guarantee registered at Companies House  Registered Provider (RP) registered with the Regulator of Social Housing  Other – check with legal |
| Organisation must have at least five years’ experience of running comparable community premises and spaces, including dealing with repairs, maintenance, and health and safety compliance.  By ‘comparable’ we mean premises that,   * Are multi-functional and have the capacity for different uses at the same time * Have significant public access; * Are hired out to other organisations, and, * Are hired out to individuals.   This criterion must be fully met. | The Covid 19 crisis has highlighted the risks of managing community premises in circumstances where use is restricted, income reduced and longer term sustainability threatened. A local user committee may develop over time and wish to formally incorporate so that, if it can demonstrate it has the skills, knowledge and capacity, it could become the leaseholder, taking responsibility for all aspects of the building management. However initially the council will only lease community hubs to well established, experienced and financially resilient organisations and exclude the option of a user committee also becoming a lessee in the immediate future. | Annual reports  Possible visits to managed premises  References from previous landlords regarding quality of premises management.  Membership of relevant professional bodies such as Institute of Workplace and Facilities Management (IWFM), Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE) or Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)  QA IS9001 or Matrix. | Documented five years’ experience  Named buildings and description of use that matches definition of ‘comparable’  Evidence of FM function being carried out effectively |
| Be financially stable.  This criterion must be fully met. | Covid 19 has highlighted the risks of managing community premises without the financial resilience to manage restricted use. | Annual accounts (draft 20/21 accounts?)  Budgets for at least one future year | Reserves policy  Level of reserves  Sustainable income  Diversity of Income |
| Quality Accreditation | It is standard practice for the council to require quality accreditation. This may be generic or an integral part of an organisation’s regulatory framework. | Current quality marks we would accept:   * Trusted Charity * Matrix * ISO9001 * ISO41001 (FM) | Certificate or confirmation of status  This criterion should be fully met. However, quality accreditation has undergone some changes in recent years. If an organisation cannot provide current QA certification, recent certification and evidence that systems remain in place to monitor and assess quality may be sufficient. |
| Local connection  This criterion must be fully met. | Local connection and understanding of the locality add value to the contribution to the hub development made by the lessee. | Documentation that demonstrates ability to reach residents and communities in Tower Hamlets and have:   1. Good knowledge of the neighbourhoods, needs and services in the vicinity of the hub; 2. Working links and connections with other organisations (from all sectors); 3. Plans to utilise and deepen local connections in relation to developing the community hub, and 4. Current or potential partnership arrangements. | Evidence of local knowledge through:   * Local presence * Track record of local delivery * Impact locally (outcomes of previous work) * User feedback * Local research of needs   Verifiable evidence of local connection through:   * Partnerships with local organisations (VCS or public) * Engagement with local structures such as appropriate forum or network membership * Links with other providers such as referrals or joint activity |
| Equality and Diversity  This criterion must be fully met | The council requires all non-commercial lessees to have an equal opportunities or equalities and diversity policy in place as part of its public sector equality duties. | An equal opportunities or equalities and diversity policy and evidence that it is monitored,   * In recruitment (to board and staff team) * In planning and provision of services * In the management of your organisation * Data collection and analysis to understand unmet needs and ambitious targets to address these | All organisations must have an equal opportunities or equalities and diversity statement or policy in place which addresses the three criteria.  Evidence of implementation of the equality policy must be provided that also shows the policy is monitored at Board level. |
| Business planning  The council will expect this criterion to be fully met. However, it may consider an organisation that only partly meets this criterion as set out in the scoring guidance if all other criteria are met. | A sound business or strategic plan is a basic requirement of an effective, resilient and well managed organisation. | Business Plan or Strategic Plan for the organisation | **MET**  Full three to five year plan which includes:   * Organisational purpose, aims & objectives; * Client need; * Strategic context, i.e policy environment, issues affecting clients, how needs may change over time (could be PEST analysis) * Assessment of organisational capacity (ie. SWOT analysis) * Plans for next 3-5 years (yr 1 in detail) * Resources required to fulfil plans including clear year 1 organisational budget * Risk assessment and contingency planning * Evidence of resources to deal with risks   **PART**  Business plan which covers   1. most but not all of the key issues, or 2. all the issues but not in detail |

# Delivery Assessment Criteria

Organisations are required to provide a delivery plan for the community hub that includes,

1. A clear commitment to the hub principles at Appendix A;
2. An indicative plan for use of the premises that would achieve the outcomes for the community set out in the performance management template at appendix B, and
3. A financial plan demonstrating how the hub will become financially sustainable and how any surplus generated will be applied to develop the use of the hub.

| **Criteria** | **Evidence** | **Scoring Guidance** | **Max Score** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Commitment to the hub principles | The council will review all of the documentation you provide for evidence that your organisation demonstrates a commitment to the principles underpinning the council’s vision of the community hubs. | 1. Diversity – a proactive approach to ensuring the user base is diverse and that the hubs are perceived as open, accessible and not dominated by one group; 2. Animation – promoting activity to ensure the buildings are well used, busy places; 3. Local community involvement – development through the principles of co-production; 4. Effectiveness – optimising usage and achieving value from these resources; 5. Location – complementing other community resources and, for future hubs, location at the heart of the community, and 6. Collaboration – networking within the council owned hubs and with those managed by other providers to develop peer learning and support. | 20 |
| Use of the premises to achieve hub outcomes | You will need to provide a description how you will operate the hub to achieve the outcomes. This must address each of the outcomes and may refer to previous experience or track record of delivering similar projects as well as indicative plans of how you would operate the community hub.  Where you refer to partners and/or partnership arrangements that will contribute towards achieving hub outcomes, please include details of the relevant partners.  If you refer to evidence set out in other documents submitted as part of your expression of interest, please include page or paragraph references.  If you refer to documentation such as DBS checks, food standards accreditation or similar regulatory requirements you do not need to include them in your submission. However, we may need to see them as part of the due diligence process if your expression of interest is successful. | 1. Strong links with the local community. Members of the community are able to influence its operation and decision-making processes. 2. Embracing diversity, working to improve community cohesion and reduce inequalities. 3. An animating presence 4. Demonstrating good governance through open and accountable processes, with adequate monitoring, evaluation and financial management systems 5. Capable of sustainably, legally, and safely managing an asset and delivering services from it. 6. Capable of demonstrating the social, economic, and environmental benefits delivered through the hub and that these link to the council’s own desired outcome for the borough as expressed in the Tower Hamlets Plan or clearly demonstrated local need. 7. Willing to offer space and support to smaller local groups 8. Demonstrate how the organisation contributes to the Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy Action Plan. 9. Demonstrates a culture of learning, improvement and collaboration | 60 |
| Financial Plan | You will need to provide a financial plan demonstrating how the hub will become financially sustainable and how any surplus generated will be applied to develop the use of the hub. | Plan should include an indicative budget.  It should also include indicative,   * Hire charges including discounted rates for new/smaller community groups; * Proportion of income generating lettings compared with subsidised lettings; * Arrangements for a sinking fund for repairs and maintenance; * Externally generated income, and * Any revenue/capital investment from the lessee. * Budget plan/understanding of available working capital – Possible evidence of reserves | 20 |

# Proposal Submission Process

## Online Portal

Proposals must be submitted using the council’s online VCS portal. You will need to register on the portal to use it to submit your proposal or proposals. We will also use the portal to communicate with organisations that are considering submitting a proposal. This portal is also used for some VCS funding programmes so your organisation may already be registered. You can create a new account for Community Hub proposals if you wish or use an existing account.

The portal helps to ensure a fair and open process and creates an audit trail. The council will communicate with all registered organisations when, for instance, the FAQs are updated, meetings are arranged for prospective lessees or there is any change in the process. You may submit proposals to the portal’s secure server at any time up to the closing date and time. The portal will automatically close at that time and further submissions cannot be made. After the portal closes the council will download all of the proposals together. The council does not have access to saved proposals until they are submitted and downloaded to our database.

## Automated emails

The system will send you automatic emails at some stages in the process such as when saving your proposal to finish later an automated email confirms this and gives a link to use to get back to your application.

Sometimes, if your organisations firewall is particularly sensitive, these emails can be held in quarantine. This can be a problem if you have clicked ‘Forgotten Password’ and you are sent an email with a limited time temporary email and you don’t find it until it has expired.

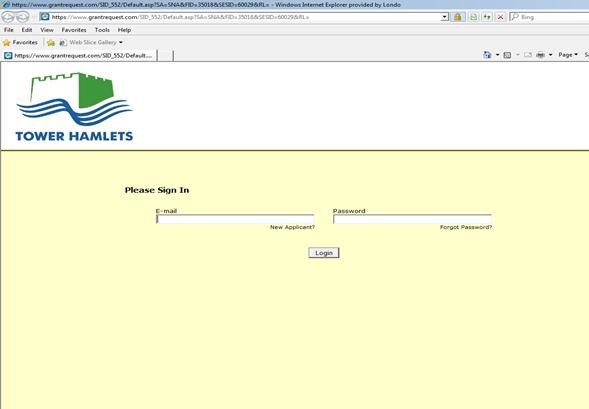
If you have had issues along these lines with your IT system, it might be worth ‘whitelisting’ the email addresses below, so they don’t get stopped from getting through.

Please email [mail@grantapplication.com](mailto:mail@grantapplication.com) or [mailuk@grantapplication.com](mailto:mailuk@grantapplication.com).

## Creating an account

Click on this link [Community Hubs Lease Proposal Submission Form](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.grantrequest.co.uk%2FSID_127%3FSA%3DSNA%26FID%3D35102&data=04%7C01%7CDavid.Freeman%40towerhamlets.gov.uk%7C516d9f64e1ee43af82a908d9317a95c2%7C3c0aec87f983418fb3dcd35db83fb5d2%7C0%7C0%7C637595224822986935%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=2gH9VET65Wk0%2F4hGLv1FO7DT4yap0unlzFMaU8qxsKY%3D&reserved=0) to create a login

Now you will see this screen, where you create your account and login.



Enter your **email address**

1. Click on ‘**I am a new online applicant**’ (*or, if you applied to the council for funding previously, click on* ***‘I am a returning online applicant’*** *in which case, your password will remain the same. There is a password reminder facility if required).*
2. Create a **password.** It must be at least five letters long – for example ‘Wales’
3. You will be asked to create an account – this allows you to access your saved forms at any time
4. Confirm email and password exactly as on the previous screen
5. Click on create an account

You should receive an email from London Borough of Tower Hamlets – email address [thirdsector@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:thirdsector@towerhamlets.gov.uk).

The Subject field will say: Welcome Grant seeker

The email message will confirm your login password and give a link which you can use to return to your account, for instance, if you want to continue an application you have started to work on.

Once you have created a login to our form, you can save your on-line application at any point and return to it later.

Once you have saved your on-line application, you can reopen it and update your information form at any time providing that you have access to the original email confirmation that was sent to you.

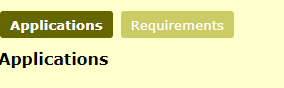
**Links to access your application**

We provide a link to first start your proposal. This is only for new proposals. Using this initial link again can cause you to accidentally start another proposal.

When you ‘save to finish later’ an automated email is sent with a link to access your partially complete proposal. You can use this link to return directly to the partially completed proposal

You can also access your started proposal from your account.

Make sure Applications is selected to the left of the screen:



Then select In Progress from the drop-down list at the right of the screen:

Screenshot of in progress applications

## Completing the online proposal form

You **must** answer all questions and submit all of the documents listed on the form that are marked with a red asterisk \*. These are ‘**mandatory**’ and if you do not answer these questions you will not be able to submit your form. You will be given a warning before submitting the final form if you have failed to complete one of these questions.

You can save what you’ve done and come back to it at any point by pressing the **save and finish later** button on the form. You do not have to complete the form in one go and can return to it as many times as you like before submitting it. Once you have saved your work you will be taken to the ‘My Account’ screen. Simply click on your proposal to carry on working.

The form has a few questions to allow us to identify your organisation and record contact details on our database. Most of the material you will submit in your proposal will be documents that have to be uploaded as attachments.

Before you can attach the required documents, you need electronic versions of them accessible from or saved to your computer. If you don’t have electronic copies, you can scan paper copies and save them on your computer. The maximum size for all attachments combined is 25 MB. If your combined file size will exceed that limit, please contact [david.freeman@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:david.freeman@towerhamlets.gov.uk). You will not be able to upload files ending in: .exe, .com, .vbs or .bat.

A tip to avoid finding part way through that the documents go above the limit is to set up a folder on your computer or network and save all the documents you want to attach to the form. You will be able to see the size of the documents and be able to calculate the total size.

## To upload a document

1. Go to the bottom of the page to the section titled ‘Upload’. You will see two boxes.
2. In the first drop down box you need to select from the list the type of document you wish to attach. This will list the mandatory documents and optional documents.
3. Using the second box, you upload the document in much the same way as attaching a document to an email
4. Click on the browse button and find document on your computer and click ‘open’
5. Click the ‘Upload’ button below the filename

We will then automatically confirm whether the document has been uploaded and tell you the size of the document

## Submitting your proposal

Now the form is complete and you have attached the relevant information you are ready to **submit** your form.

## Review

Click **Review My Application** to be taken to your review page.

Red text will appear if any mandatory fields have not been filled in or have been filled in incorrectly. You will need to go back into the application and complete the relevant question.

## Print

Click on Printer Friendly Version and then the print button. To return to your form close the page.

## Submit

Check that you are happy with your application and when you are ready to send it to the council, go to the bottom of the page and click **submit**.

**IMPORTANT**

You must click **‘submit’** to send each proposal. We will automatically send a confirmation email. **If you do not receive a confirmation email**, this means that the application **has not** submitted correctly; in which case, please check and submit again.

If you continue to have difficulties, please contact [david.freeman@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:david.freeman@towerhamlets.gov.uk).

## Document Checklist

Have you included in your proposal,

* Completed [Prospective Tenant Information](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Council-property/Prospective-tenant-information-form.docx) form
* Copy of your certificate of incorporation or registration number
* Evidence of at least five years building management experience. This may include, if available,
  + Annual reports
  + References from previous landlords regarding quality of premises management.
  + Membership of relevant professional bodies such as Institute of Workplace and Facilities Management (IWFM), Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE) or Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)
  + QA IS9001 or Matrix.
* Annual accounts
* Quality accreditation where available which may be,
* Trusted Charity
* Matrix
* ISO9001
* ISO41001 (FM)
* Documentation that demonstrates ability to reach residents and communities in Tower Hamlets
* An equal opportunities or equalities and diversity policy and evidence that it is monitored
* Business Plan or Strategic Plan for the organisation (or link if they are available on line)

You only need to submit this documentation once, regardless of the number of community hubs you are submitting proposals for.

You should also provide a delivery plan for each of the community hubs you are submitting proposals for that includes,

1. Evidence of your organisation’s commitment to the hub principles;
2. An indicative plan for use of the premises that would achieve the outcomes for the community set out in the performance management template, and
3. A financial plan demonstrating how the hub will become financially sustainable and how any surplus generated will be applied to develop the use of the hub.

The delivery plan may be more than one document. The portal will allow you to submit up to five separate documents as part of your delivery plan.

## Final Submission

The deadline for submission is 12 noon on Monday 6 September 2021. Don’t wait to the last minute to submit in case there are any technical issues that arise.

If you do experience technical issues send an email to [David.Freeman@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:David.Freeman@towerhamlets.gov.uk) prior to the 12 noon deadline with details of the problem including screen prints of any error messages. This can be followed up with a phone call and hopefully any issues can be resolved quickly. Having the email confirming that the issue was raised before the 12-noon deadline ensures that if it takes beyond the deadline to resolve the proposal can still be considered.

Additional technical support contact details:

Robert Mee – [robert.mee@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:robert.mee@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

Natasha Singer-Johnson – [natasha.singer-johnson@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:natasha.singer-johnson@towerhamlets.gov.uk)