**Grant Application 2024-25**

Aldbury Parish Council invite applications from community groups within the Parish who are looking for moderate financial support. The Parish Council will support grants from organisations which can prove their sustainability and the benefit they provide to residents of the Parish.

**Please read our Grant and Donation Policy to see whether your organisation would be eligible. You will find the Policy on our website.**

**The closing date for applications is 31st October 2024**. Applications will be considered at the Council meeting on Monday 4th November and final decisions will be made at the meeting on Monday 2nd December 2024. The Clerk will inform you in writing of the Council’s decision following the December meeting. The Council may invite a member of your organisation to attend the meeting to answer any questions.

Please return your application to the Clerk at [parishclerk@aldburyparish.org.uk](mailto:parishclerk@aldburyparish.org.uk) or by post to the address above. As per our Grant and Donation Policy, please include a copy of the last two years’ audited accounts with your application.

Should you have any questions about completing the application, please contact the Clerk. Please make sure you complete every section.

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| **Name of Organisation:** | Aldbury District Church Council (St John the Baptist Church) |
| **Name of Organisation Contact:** | Rev Michelle Grace |
| **Address:** | The Vicarage  Station Road  Aldbury  HP23 5RW |
| **Email:** | [michelle@tringteamparish.org](mailto:michelle@tringteamparish.org) |
| **Telephone:** | 01442851200 |
| **Amount of grant sought:** | **£1300** |
| **Nature of Organisation:** | Church within the Tring Team Parish of the Church of England |
| **Who is the Organisation owned/managed by?** | Aldbury DCC is a part of the Tring Team Parish within the Diocese of St Albans. Ownership of the land and asset rests with the Diocese but the upkeep of the estate, and in particular the Churchyard is under the day to day management of the Team Vicar, the Church Warden and the members of the District Church Council. |
| **What is the approximate number of members/ annual users? And what percentage of these are residents of the Parish?** | There are no detailed figures for the number of people using the Churchyard or a split of the users between residents and visitors.  On an historical basis there were between 20 and 35 people attending the church services regularly, with attendances of up to 200 for major festivals, weddings, funerals and Remembrance Sunday. Over the year this is over 3,000 visits, but it is not possible to say how many individuals this represents.  There is no record of the number of visitors to the Church but the building is open from 9.00 till 17.00 every day of the week. Personal observation shows a regular flow of people into the Church every day and there has been a high level of use of the churchyard throughout the year.  The Churchyard is used by a variety of people including:   * Parents and children accessing Aldbury school in a safe environment at the beginning and end of the school day * People out walking who divert through the Churchyard to avoid traffic * Visitors to the village who take a refreshment break, * People, especially local residents, visiting the graves of friends or family members |
| **Please explain how the organisation benefits the residents of the Parish?** | The Church provides a spiritual, pastoral and community centre for those within Aldbury and Tring Station, including baptisms, weddings and funerals. The Church and the Churchyard are also a very visible part of the village and are regularly visited by tourists and others from outside the area. The Church and Churchyard are used for community events, such as the May Fair. The Church is also used for the weekly Coffee morning, Toddler Group, occasional Concerts, and the Bell Ringing.  Additionally it is most regularly used as a safe access route by parents to drop off / collect children from the School.  The Churchyard is also an open space where people can meet with others or just sit and refresh their spirits. |
| **Please describe the purpose of the grant and how it would benefit residents of the Parish:** | Employment of a contractor to carry out a one-off clearance of the graves area to the Southwest and West of the churchyard of St John the Baptist.  The maintenance of the churchyard falls into two distinct areas. To the Southeast of the church it is laid mainly to grass and is regularly maintained by an external contractor paid for by the Aldbury DCC with financial support through an annual grant from Aldbury Parish Council. This area is often commented on with visitors saying the churchyard enhances both the Church itself and the whole aspect of the centre of the village.  However the area to the South West and West of the church are mainly graves, with a significant number of bulky grave stones. The maintenance here is carried out by a very small group of volunteer residents of the village, both church goers and non-church goers, who struggle to cope with the whole area. There have been a number of comments made to the Church Council that this area looks untidy and uncared for and contrasts unfavourably with the grounds on the opposite side of the lych-gate footpath. Moreover the kerbstones around the older graves become a trip hazard when obscured by long grass and brambles, making it dangerous to walk amongst them.  We believe that a substantial one off clearance of the graves and the area between them would provide a sound basis for the existing volunteer group to carry on their maintenance, but with enhanced results.  We consider that this work will enhance the churchyard and, by default, the centre of Aldbury of which the churchyard is an integral part. The churchyard is not only an access to the church but is also used by people to access the school. The churchyard is also used by residents of Aldbury as a place to visit family graves or to take a few moments’ quiet contemplation. There are also frequent visitors who are in the village and spend some time looking at both the church and the churchyard.  When the proceeds from July’s filming were first announced on Everything Aldbury Facebook, there were several requests from residents of the community that the proceeds be used to maintain this churchyard area. |
| **How would the organisation fund the project/ address the issue if a grant isn’t received from Aldbury PC?** | Unfortunately there is a limit to the work that we can rely on volunteers to provide and we consider that we have now reached that limit. |
| **Please describe other sources of income the organisation receives (including any fundraising undertaken):** | Other income specifically to maintain the Churchyard comes from the Commonwealth Graves Trust (£20 in 2023) and the Aldbury Graves Trust (£122 in 2023).  The Church raises funds through a variety of events throughout the year, though much of this is to raise funds for the work of other bodies, e.g. Christian Aid, the Red Cross, St Francis Hospice, DENS, Aldbury Lunch Club, Alzheimer’s Society.  Other general income for the running of the Church comes from the collections at services and donations from parishioners. This money is used to maintain the fabric of the building and pay the associated running costs. The upkeep of the building is also supported by the Friends of Aldbury Church, though their constitution does not permit funding the running costs of the Churchyard. |
| **The Council is committed to making grants to sustainable organisations. Please describe how you intend to maintain the financial viability of the organisation:** | It is expected that the Church will continue in a financially stable condition as part of the Tring Team Parish, by regular payments from the members of the church and by the support of the Friends of Aldbury Church. |
| **If there is any further information that you think would help the Parish Council to make its decision, please include it here:** | Aldbury DCC does not produce audited accounts but the financial activity is consolidated into the accounts of the Tring Team Parish. I can provide the accounts for the whole of the Team Parish if this was considered to be helpful. However it is not possible to identify the Aldbury costs from these figures. |

**Please return a copy of the completed application to the Clerk by 31st October 2024.**

**Please include a copy of the last two years’ audited accounts with your application. If these are not available, the application will still be considered but an explanation for their absence should be provided.**

**General Data Protection Regulations 2018**

Under the above legislation, the Parish Council are required to advise you that the information contained in this application form will be held and used solely for the purpose of processing your application and in accordance with the Council’s Document Retention schedule. Please tick the box below to give your consent for the information to be held and used by the Parish Council.

I give my consent for the information in this form to be used and held by the Parish Council