

Community Cost of Living Support - Food 2023 – 24 Guidance Notes

This is a one off fund for not for profit voluntary and community groups – both constituted and non-constituted (a minimum of three people), to help communities initiate projects and support pilot schemes responding to the Cost of Living Crisis with warm spaces including community lunch or supper clubs through an asset based and sustainable approach*(*please see appendix A*)

Projects and initiatives that would like to be part of this programme are being asked to recognise the significant stigma that many people may feel when well-meaning support initiatives are targeted at those ‘most in need’ or ‘the poor’. The language you use to describe your project or activity, and the way in which you present the initiatives you host or plan, are vital to reducing these feelings.

This programme is about improving the resilience of the community as a whole, promoting equality and diversity instead of highlighting inequalities, and people caring for each other no matter their background and the sharing of resources.

Note: Lunch clubs could be any food related project that will support a warm space or restarts a lunch club. We will particularly encourage non stigmatizing and intergenerational ideas.

We would also like to hear from individuals or small un-constituted groups with a great idea. Private businesses, sole traders or statutory organisations are not eligible.

The funding is managed by the Forest of Dean District Council on behalf of the Forest of Dean integrated locality partnership.

Examples for projects include:

- Lunch clubs
- Community Hubs and/or warm spaces
- Friendship/Talking Cafés
- Intergenerational projects
- Community activities aiming to connect people via lunch clubs or food hubs
- Community transport for food clubs

Applicants need to identify:

- Who is taking part in the project
- Clear evidence that the project or activity does not duplicate other local projects (or how it supports those projects i.e., different days or times)
- Whether they are connecting to other groups in the area & who they are – partnership working
- Evidence of need – is this what the community wants and needs?
- How the project aims to be sustainable after the funding has been spent.

Note: funds may also be used for pilot projects to test the sustainability or legacy of the idea.

This is a one off pot of £20,000 available during winter 2023-24

Applications are now welcome and will be considered on a first come basis and funds will be available until depleted.

One off, revenue* grants up to £500 are available. Allocations will be decided on a case by case basis depending on how they meet the funding priorities and criteria.

Funding Priorities and Criteria

The grant will support:

- Activities which reduce isolation
- Activities which support intergenerational food activities.
- Activities which encourage community eating – preparation together and eating together
- Activities/projects which help to improve people's mental health through providing a warm space
- Support for pilot projects which support, strengthen and empower communities against the cost of living.
- Support for activities to become more inclusive

All projects need to address one of the above priorities *as well* as meet the criteria as set out below and will be scored accordingly on the matrix. It is therefore very important that you demonstrate this in **Section 3 of your application form.**

- Volunteering – how the project engages and supports volunteering locally
- Partnership working - working with other community groups *OR*
- Activities that are purposeful and non-stigmatising

Who may apply

All applicants must:

- 1a) Be a not for profit voluntary or registered charitable organisation with a Constitution or set of rules which lay out the aims of the organisation and how it operates and be able to demonstrate how they develop relationships and support networks with the people they are involved with *OR*
- 1b) Be a Community Interest Company *OR*
- 1c) Be a group of people (minimum of three people) who have come together for a specific project/activity and have a plan of action which clearly identifies what they intend to do, how the award would be spent and what difference their project/activity will make to their community and must align to the funding priorities and criteria
- 2) Be committed to building interdependence, connections, self-reliance and resourcefulness in those communities in which they live/work
- 3) Be active in helping all citizens – irrespective of age, gender, ability, sexual orientation, race or creed – to be contributing members of society and to be fully inclusive

- 4a) Have a bank account in the name of the organisation and have at least two unrelated signatories to that account *OR*
- 4b) Have the support of a constituted organisation who has agreed to be the banker of your project
- 5) Be able to demonstrate the extent to which there is a need/demand for their proposed project
- 6) Demonstrate that the initiative does not duplicate any other existing effective arrangements or projects

If the applicant is a **constituted** organisation, demonstrate why District Council funding is needed. An organisation may have high levels of free reserves which are not adequately explained, or have sufficient funding from other sources from which to deliver the work applied for. If you have free reserves of more than twelve months income we need to know the reason for this.

What are Reserves?

Reserves describe that part of a charity's income that is freely available for its general purposes and can be spent for any or all of the charity's purpose once it has met its commitments and covered its other planned expenditure.

What will we fund?

- Set up costs associated with warm spaces and/or food activity, this may include the purchase of food, heating, lighting, hall hire and transport for local people to get to the venue. To be eligible clubs need to cover a minimum of 6 sessions.

Who may not apply

- Previous applicants of a FODDC Community Grant who have *not* returned a satisfactory monitoring and evaluation form
- One off events e.g Christmas Lunches
- Village Halls and Community Centres looking for capital funding for building improvements
- Projects for the advancement of religion or political activities
- Individuals (*non-constituted group must be 3 or more active participants through the entire length of the project*)
- Organisations requiring deficit funding
- Organisations requiring 'core' funding unless there is clear explanation and evidence to show that future funding is secured for continued delivery - sustainable projects which meet the criteria, will take priority
- Organisations which could reasonably be expected to fund their activities or needs from members' subscriptions
- National organisations with no specific **local** brief or organisations whose principle activity is outside the district and whose aims and objectives are not specifically directed at the residents of the Forest of Dean

- Organisations with substantial free reserves, the annual turnover of the organisations will be material to the level of the free reserves
- Lead Applicants under the age of 18 years old – unless supported by an adult or constituted group who can oversee the project spend

What we will not fund

- Retrospective requests. We cannot support applications for activities or purchases that have taken place before a formal grant offer has been made
- On-going maintenance costs
- Loan payments or endowments
- Activities that are part of statutory obligations
- Capital costs – such as large items of equipment, building costs etc. (*The scheme will fund essential 'start up' materials for community projects*)
- 'One off' services including Christmas lunches - please state how many sessions you plan to use the funding for.

Please ensure that you get an *acknowledgement of receipt* of your application once submitted. This will be *your* responsibility to do so.

What happens after applications have been completed?

- Applications made will be assessed by the Community Team at their weekly team meeting.
- All applications will be assessed and scored against the same set of criteria, as identified in these guidance notes. Those applications with the highest points will be put forward for a successful award.
- Following assessment of the application, a decision will be made whether to contact the applicants for further information, invite applicants to conduct a presentation or whether to award none, some or all of the funds requested - the panel's decision is final.
- Feedback will be given by a nominated Community Wellbeing Team member to applicants who wish to request it.

Other Information

- Every project is expected to complete a follow up/evaluation report. This could be either in the form of a video clip/link or by completing an agreed evaluation template. **It is important that you capture the number of attendees each week, measures of success (such as return visitors), approximate ages and gender of visitors where possible.**
- A visit to your project may be made in later years by the Council to follow up on the progress of your project
- Copies of invoices will be required as evidence of how the grant was spent appropriately and this **MUST** be as agreed in the award and as requested through the application form.

Please contact the Community Wellbeing Team for any questions you have regarding this process on 01594 810000 or email community.builder@fdean.gov.uk

Appendix A: Core Aims of the programme

The intention of this programme is that the work and funding will promote the values and principles of the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach which builds on the assets that are found in the community and mobilises individuals, associations, and institutions to come together to realise and develop their strengths.

Projects have to be community-led, self-sustaining by the communities themselves and reflect a true partnership approach.

ABCD is a set of values and principles which:

- Identifies and makes visible the assets in a community such as people, buildings, parks etc.
- Sees citizens and communities as the co-producers, rather than the recipients of services
- Promotes community networks, relationships and friendships that can provide caring, mutual help and empowerment
- Identifies what has the potential to improve health and wellbeing
- Supports individuals' wellbeing through self- esteem, coping strategies, resilience skills, relationships, friendships, knowledge and personal resources
- Empower communities to control their futures and create tangible resources such as services, funds and buildings

The exact approach required will vary from place to place, with some communities having a good understanding of assets and needs, whereas other areas may need to develop this work. In all cases, the Council's Community Wellbeing Team offers to work with the 'project creators' and those with connections in local communities to develop a comprehensive understanding of existing assets and **identify potential opportunities that could increase capacity in those communities.**