



emailing [connect4communities@hants.gov.uk](mailto:connect4communities@hants.gov.uk). Examples of previous projects can be found [here](#).

#### 4. Applications

Applications for Household Support Fund food support provisions are available during the following periods:

##### **Round 1: Purchase of additional food** **02 December 2024 to 15 December 2024**

- For existing food banks and community pantries up to a maximum of £5,000.

##### **Round 2: Infrastructure costs or startup costs** **06 January 2025 to 19 January 2025**

- Food banks and community pantries, existing and new
- Other food support sustainable projects, such as surplus food redistribution.

##### **Round 3: Purchase of additional food** **13 January 2025 to 26 January 2025**

- For food banks and community pantries that did not apply in Round 1 December 2024 Food Purchasing grant.
- For existing food banks and community pantries up to a maximum of £5,000.

All applications for Household Support Fund grants, need to be submitted via an application form, which will be available during the above periods.

**Round 1** application form will be via an online forms link. [Funding for Food Support Schemes | Children and Families | Hampshire County Council](#). This round will be to apply for funding towards food costs only.

The information required will be to ascertain the authenticity of the organisation applying. Organisational details such as location, organisation type; registered charity, community group etc will be requested.

The application will undergo a verification process to confirm the authenticity of the organisation. Following a positive verification, approval will be sought from the Officer and Executive Lead member. Upon approval and conditional upon receipt of your signed grant agreement, payments can be expected within one week of notification.

**Round 2** application form will be via a word document. [Funding for Food Support Schemes | Children and Families | Hampshire County Council](#). This round will be to apply for infrastructure costs for the project or start up costs for new community pantries or food banks only.

Organisations may request funding to cover **administration costs**. It is expected that these are minimal and should cover reasonable costs incurred in administering the scheme and **not exceed 5% of the grant value**. These may include staff costs,



advertising, and other publicity to raise awareness of the scheme, printing application forms, and small IT changes to facilitate management information production. Any staffing costs that form part of your application must not extend beyond 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. A grant evaluation panel will consider applications for funding and will aim to let applicants know the outcome within two weeks from when the application was considered. Payments can be expected within one week of notification following Officer and Executive Lead Member approvals and conditional upon receipt of your signed grant agreement.

The grant panels will be held after the grant round window closes.

**Round 3** application form will be via an online forms link. [Funding for Food Support Schemes | Children and Families | Hampshire County Council](#). This round will be to apply for funding towards food costs only.

This grant round is open to community pantries and food banks that did not apply to Round 1 December 2024 Food Purchasing grant.

The information required will be to ascertain the authenticity of the organisation applying. Organisational details such as location, organisation type; registered charity, community group etc will be requested.

The application will undergo a verification process to confirm the authenticity of the organisation. Following a positive verification, approval will be sought from the Officer and Executive Lead member. Upon approval and conditional upon receipt of your signed grant agreement, payments can be expected within one week of notification.

All grant applications must comply with the [DWP criteria](#), which states that assistance under the scheme is primarily used to support vulnerable households with energy, food and water costs, and wider essentials. Applicants should be aware that the DWP terms of the grant mean that funding is intended to cover a wide range of low-income households in need including families with children of all ages, pensioners, unpaid carers, care leavers and disabled people.

## 5. What can be funded with this grant?

The verification process and grant evaluation panel will ensure that the allocation of the grants complies with the grant criteria and is seeking applications for grant funding that fit within the criteria. We hope that the grant funding can provide a flexible and responsive way to support local needs.

Examples of eligible spend include:

- Energy and water: Support with energy and water bills
- Food: including vouchers and free school meals
- Essentials linked to energy and water (including sanitary products, warm clothing, soap, blankets, boiler service/repair, purchase of equipment)



including fridges, freezers, ovens, etc.), in recognition that a range of costs may arise which directly affect a household's ability to afford or access energy, food and water.

- Wider essentials to support with wider essential needs not linked to energy and water. These may include, but are not limited to, support with other bills including broadband or phone bills, clothing, and essential transport-related costs such as repairing a car, buying a bicycle, or paying for fuel.
- Whilst immediate needs should be prioritised, organisations are also encouraged to consider how the fund could be used to provide support that has a long-term sustainable impact, for example household items which would reduce bills in the long-term.

Grant funding cannot be used to cover debt and general financial hardship support not linked to food, warmth and/or hygiene. Community grants should also not be used for mortgage support or rent arrears.

**Community Pantry** means a facility that stocks and makes food (fresh, frozen, general foods which can change on a weekly basis) available to households (either at the Community Pantry or delivered from the Community Pantry to households if needed) who in return pay a membership fee per weekly visit which entitles the member to products in excess of the membership fee.

Local community groups are invited to apply for funding that will help provide vulnerable households with food via Community Pantries, with their projects being implemented prior to the end of the grant period. Funding can be applied for by existing community pantries for a discretionary grant to support households of pantry members with home, family and cooking essentials (not including white goods).

Organisations bidding for funding must ensure that their intended project does not duplicate existing pantries opened through the connect4communities programme. A list of established pantries can be found on our webpage: [Community pantries - Hampshire | Children and Families | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/children-and-families/community-pantries)

**Food bank** means a facility that stocks and makes food available free to households who are deemed in crisis, as they are unable to afford to buy enough food for their household.

**Local Food Partnerships** are cross-sector bodies that drive forward agendas on their local food systems. They are a partnership who cover a specific geographical area, such as a district, that are an organised collaboration of community and voluntary organisations, councils, other public bodies and businesses. They work as one to inform, support and initiate schemes which allow residents to have access to affordable, nutritious food.

## 6. Where will programmes be funded?

With this round of the fund there will be no geographical restrictions other than the proposed support must be for residents in the Hampshire County Council



administrative area. All applications will be considered whether for small communities, single districts or those that span the whole of the county.

## 7. How do I apply?

Applications should be made via the application form on the website which will be available when the relevant round is open.

**Round 1 and Round 3** application will require organisation and contact details, online or other community presence information and community pantries to submit an average of their monthly visits.

**Round 2** application will require details about the structure and set up of the project.

- Details about your organisation including your organisation name, social media or website links, type of organisation and a short description of what your organisation delivers. Detailed information about the project you are wishing to fund with the grant will help us to understand how much funding you are requesting, who the intended beneficiaries are and how you ensure that the eligibility criteria will be met as well as whether the grant will be used as short term or support to deliver longer term sustainable change to households.
- It is vital in this section that you provide as much detail as possible to ensure that the panel has as much information to be able to accurately assess your application. This includes:
  - Exactly what you are intending to deliver with the funding,
  - How you have ensured it links with the DWP criteria
  - How you have identified the intended beneficiaries
  - How you are working with partner organisations or how you ensured that you have considered any similar known projects to reduce duplication of projects that are already being funded with HSF funding or other sources.
  - A full breakdown of financial spend including administrative costs.

## 8. How will the grant be evaluated?

**Round 1 and Round 3** applications will undergo a verification process to confirm the authenticity of the organisation. Following a positive verification, approval will be sought from the Director of Children's Services and Executive Lead Member for Children's Services.

**Round 2** applications will be evaluated by a panel and their recommendations will be based on the information that you provide against the following criteria:

- The grant supports the grant criteria as detailed in paragraphs 4 and eligible spend in paragraph 5 of this guidance document.



- It is clear who the beneficiaries are and how many there are envisaged to be, including estimated numbers of households. This information is requested in the application form.
- The panel is confident of delivery within the timescales.
- The grant offers value for money.
- The level of sustainability of the project and ability to change the circumstances of the recipients of the support.
- The admin costs, if requested, are reasonable and realistic and do not exceed 5% of the overall funding.

Based on this evaluation, the panel may recommend awarding the full grant or a partial amount of the total grant requested.

### 9. How long will it take to find out if I have been successful with my application?

**Round 1 and Round 3:** Following the close of the grant round, upon approval and conditional upon receipt of your signed grant agreement, payments can be expected within one week of notification.

**Round 2:** Following the grant panel there may be a short period where clarification questions need to be addressed. We will aim to let applicants know the outcome within two weeks after the panel meeting that the application was considered at, as long as any subsequent clarification questions have been resolved and a complete signed grant agreement and data information have been received.

### 10. What reporting and management information is needed as part of the funding?

Grants awarded by connect4communities will be subject to a grant agreement which sets out the Council's expectations of organisations in accepting grant funding.

Applicants will need to provide complete management information as part of the grant agreement, detailing how much funding is being sought, the volume and number of households to be supported, the category (e.g support with utilities) and the type of funding (e.g. vouchers). These details are requirements set by the DWP and will be requested in the Grant Agreement as per the tables below. This will be in line with the information provided in your application form.

The Grant Agreement will be sent out for completion, without prejudice, once the panel has recommended the application for approval, and during the time that the Officer and Executive Lead Member are making their final decision. Grants cannot be paid until a fully completed and signed grant agreement has been received:

**Table A – Breakdown of funding requested by household type:**



Organisations should make every effort to gather information to establish the household type, for example, whether the household contains children, a person with a disability, or someone of pensionable age to be able to complete the information return required as fully as possible.

By 'Other households' we mean those that do not fit into one of the other household types, for example, carers.

Volumes relate to the number of individual/separate payments made to vulnerable households within the eligibility criteria. If multiple awards are made to the same household through the grant each award should be counted separately.

<b>Table 1: Total Value of Support by Household</b>						
	a) Households with <b>children</b>	b) House holds with <b>Pensio</b> <b>ners</b>	c) House holds with a <b>Disabl</b> <b>ed</b> Person	d) <b>Other</b> House holds	e) Admi n costs (no more than 5% of overal l reque sted funds )	Total amount (a+b+c +d+e)
<b>Spend (£)</b>						
<b>Volumes</b>						
<b>Number of Households Helped</b>						

**Table B – Total value of funding requested per category**



**Table 2: Total value of funding requested per category**

	a) Food excluding free school meal support in the holidays	b) Free school meal support in the holidays	c) Energy & water	d) Essentials linked to energy & water	e) Wider essentials (please see guidance for definition of wider essentials)	f) Advice	Total amount provided to vulnerable Households (a+b+c+d+e+f)
<b>Spend (£)</b>							
<b>Volumes</b>							
<b>Number of Households Helped</b>							

**Table C – Total value of funding requested by the type of support offered (per grant application)**

By 'tangible items' we mean products that are of a physical nature such as clothing or household items.

By 'other' we mean types of support that do not fall into another category.

**Table 3: Total Value of funding requested by type of support**







<b>Number of Households Helped</b>				
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Towards the end of the grant period, you will be asked to confirm that you have used the funding as set out in your grant application. Any unspent grant funding must be returned to the County Council.

Organisations must maintain reliable, accessible and up to date accounting records with an adequate audit trail in case HCC, the Secretary of State or an appropriately qualified auditor require access to or copies of the accounting records.

If Hampshire County Council has any grounds for suspecting financial irregularity in the use of any grant paid under the Grant Agreement, an investigation will take place. For these purposes 'financial irregularity' includes fraud or other impropriety, mismanagement, and the use of grant for purposes other than those for which it was provided.

#### 11. I have questions or need some advice. Who do I ask?

Please email [connect4communities@hants.gov.uk](mailto:connect4communities@hants.gov.uk)

