

Food and Warmth Grant Scheme - Guidance

How much can groups apply for?

Projects funded must help residents to overcome financial pressures and their ability to access food and warm their homes.

Awards available are:

- Up to £2,000 for un-constituted not-for-profit groups/organisations
- £2,000 to £5,000 for individual constituted not-for-profit groups/organisations
- Up to £10,000 for collaborations between three or more not-for-profit groups/organisations with the lead organisation being a constituted organisation

Who is eligible?

Constituted and un-constituted not for profit community and voluntary organisations, community interest companies or non-profit organisations who hold a bank account in the organisation's name. Organisations must be based in or directly delivering food and energy support or local initiatives/projects to help reduce cost-of-living pressure and build household resilience within the Vale district.

- Local 'not for profit' organisations e.g. VCS organisations. This can include a company limited by guarantee, whose primary purpose is to benefit the residents of the Vale of White Horse.
- Not for profit preschools and PTAs for local authority run schools or Academies, can apply for items that meet the criteria of this scheme and are not considered business as usual (non-statutory elements of the education programme)
- Town and Parish Councils.
- Food banks, community fridges and food larders.
- Food organisations who redistribute surplus food across the Vale of White Horse.

Eligible organisations can only receive funding once per opening round, unless given exceptional permission in advance is granted by the Head of Communities.

To receive permission to make more than one application the Head of Communities must be satisfied the different projects will offer significant impact to a large percentage of the district and cannot practicably be combined into a single application.

Who is not eligible?

- Other local authorities/public sector bodies (for example Oxfordshire County Council, NHS trusts and schools).
- Individuals.

- Profit-based businesses (private businesses).
- Political parties and lobbying groups.
- Religious bodies where the monies will be used for religious purposes or religious buildings.
- Groups who are not based in or predominantly supporting residents in The Vale of the White Horse.
- Nationwide organisations (except where they have a local constitution and/or local bank account. We may also make exceptions if a project clearly relates to a local hub/branch of the organisation).

These lists are not exhaustive, and the council's decision is final.

What can the scheme fund?

Categories this grant can fund include, but are not limited to:

- Purchase of food supplies and essential supplies such as household cleaning products, toiletries including period products, consumables either for distribution to residents or for use by the organisation to ensure the safe provision of goods to residents.
- Purchase of equipment to be distributed to residents to help keep them warm e.g. hot water bottles and blankets, and (energy efficient) cooking equipment to distribute to residents.
- Purchase of general equipment required to deliver specific food and/or warmth projects e.g. gardening/cooking equipment, stock storage etc.
- Contributions towards future energy bills at the premises the VCS organisation or food larder/bank that are or will be registered as Warm Welcome Spaces.
- Additional staff, venue and fuel costs specifically associated with delivery of the funded food and/or warmth projects, such as additional staff costs to start/increase skills workshops or fuel costs of increasing delivery of food/warmth supplies to the community.
- Short-term additional staffing costs and expenses required to deliver the projects being funded (not core salary costs).
- New marketing, printing and distribution costs to promote food and/or warmth projects.
- Projects that might include cooking clubs/gardening clubs and educational activities that promote healthy and economical food plans, saving energy and keeping warm, budget planning etc.

Activities not listed above or covered in the 'what we will not fund' section should be discussed with officers **before** a submission is made to ensure they are eligible.

What can't the scheme fund?

- Retrospective expenditure incurred before an award decision has been made.
- Statutory activities/requirements that either the council or another public-sector organisation is responsible for delivering.
- Core revenue costs such as lease of property, ongoing and pre-existing salary costs, travel and subsistence costs for staff/volunteers, vehicle or building repairs or maintenance, insurance and utilities for properties not providing Warm Welcome Spaces.
- Projects that specifically benefit private businesses.
- Political activities, lobbying or campaigning.
- Loan payments.

What is the application process?

Organisations must apply using the council's online grants management system ('the system'), accessible from our www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/grants during the opening window.

This grant scheme closes for applications at midday on 28 November 2025 or will close when funds are fully allocated, whichever happens soonest. No applications will be accepted after the scheme has closed.

Opening and closing dates will be published online and through engagement channels once confirmed. Each application period will open for at least four weeks.

As part of the application, groups will have to provide the following information/documents:

- The name of the group/organisation(s) applying
- A formal constitution or similar governing document (if available)
- A copy of the most recent accounts and/or a detailed working budget or financial plan for new organisations (if available)
- Details of how the project spend will be monitored and due diligence carried out
- The latest bank statement in the organisations name who is applying – no more than 2 months old
- A description of the support or activity the group/organisation will provide with the funding
- The geographical area where they are representing/delivering support
- Confirmation that if awarded the funds will be spent by 31 March 2026
- Confirmation that if awarded, the successful organisation will submit a final project monitoring return in April 2026 to enable the council to submit its own final data return to Oxfordshire County Council by late April.

Applications will be reviewed and eligibility assessed by officers in the Community Hub team, before they are determined by the Head of Communities.

Officers will check the eligibility of the application (including undertaking additional checks if required) and liaise with the applicant, if necessary, to establish eligibility.

If an application is not eligible officers will contact the applicant to discuss the issues and offer advice to improve the application for resubmission. If the issues cannot be overcome, they will reject the application and notify the applicant accordingly.

The council aims to reach a decision within four weeks of the grant scheme closing.

Officers will record the outcome of all applications on the grants system and notify applicants of the decision, either;

- a. Send a grant offer letter to successful applicants including details all grant conditions attached to the grant.
- b. Inform the applicant that they were unsuccessful.

Successful applicants must sign and return an online acceptance form confirming they will meet our conditions and give the bank details for their organisation.

On receipt of the online acceptance form the grant payment will be made. All payments **must** be made by BACs to an account in the name of the organisation making the grant application.

Where a collaborative grant application is successful, the applicants must nominate which group will receive the funds and submit the end of project monitoring form.

What monitoring information will be required from grant recipients?

- All funded groups must complete an end of project monitoring form provided by the council. This is a mandatory condition for all recipients of this scheme.
- Ensure timely return of any ad hoc request for information to the district council during the grant period.
- Failure to provide these details by the deadlines requested may result in funding being clawed back.

What are the standard grant conditions?

- Grant recipients must only use the funding for the initiatives, work or items covered outlined in their application.
- To submit a monitoring form on our grants system when the project is finished to update us on the project.
- To mention the council in any publicity of the project. Please contact us at communications@southandvale.gov.uk for quotes, logos, press release feedback.

- Monies must be spent by the end of the grant scheme (31 March 2026).
- The grant recipient shall keep a financial record of the spending of the grant and retain a copy of any appropriate invoices and receipts and submit these to the district council if requested.
- Organisations/groups are responsible for considering where their initiatives need to take account of safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, and subsequently complying with the relevant legislation.
- Organisations/groups acknowledge that the council accepts no responsibility or liability for the services/activities the groups deliver with the funding, now or in the future.
- Organisations must confirm if they have received Minimal Financial Assistance from public authorities (inclusive of their application to this scheme) in excess of £315,000 in the elapsed part of the current and previous two financial years, providing relevant evidence if so.
- We will only pay the grant upon receipt of a completed/signed online acceptance form.