**Community Grants – How to Apply**

1. **What is Household Support Fund?**

The Household Support Fund, funded by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), helps ensure that vulnerable families, pensioners, disabled people and households without basic necessities like food and fuel get the support they need.

The Isle of Wight Council has received over £1.9 million to be used by March 31, 2026. We are working in partnership with community and voluntary groups to provide direct financial support, focussing on food, fuel and other essentials for vulnerable households during this time.

1. **What is direct support?**

Direct support means giving physical items to people who need help. This can include things like a food hamper, bedding, clothing or a voucher to pay for utilities.

1. **Who is eligible to apply?**

We invite any organisation that meets the grant criteria and can deliver on time to apply. This includes community and voluntary groups, charities, town, parish and community councils, schools, colleagues, early years providers and wraparound care providers.

Private sector organisations can also apply, but they cannot make a profit from projects funded by the Household Support Fund.

**Applications will be open from June 9 – July 2, and September 1 – 30 and January 5 to 30, 2026.** A panel made up of different departments and agencies will review the applications and contact applicants within a week of their meeting to provide updates. There will be a panel meeting after each application period. The first payment for successful applications will be sent within a week after a fully signed agreement is returned.

Grant applications must follow the DWP grant criteria; which means the funds should be used to help households in need with food, reducing energy costs, and water bills.

1. **What can be funded with this grant?**

The Isle of Wight Council must ensure the allocation of £500,000 is spent according to the grant criteria set out and is looking for applications that fit with that criterion. We hope that the grant funding can provide a flexible and responsive way to support local needs and whilst the support provided may meet the immediate need, exploration with the individual is also needed as to how ongoing support can be accessed to review their circumstances.

Funding for direct financial support with utilities must be provided by recognised services and cannot be used for advice not related to food, warmth or hygiene. It also cannot cover housing costs or used for cash awards or bank transfers.

Examples of what the Household Support Fund Community Grant can support include, but are not limited to:

* Funding to enable an existing support group (either in an area of deprivation and/or targeting a vulnerable group) to provide meals or create food parcels/hampers.
* Funding to enable an existing support group (either in an area of deprivation and/or targeting a vulnerable group) to provide weather appropriate clothes, shoes, and other essentials to households with children, households with pensioners and other households in need.
* Funding to enable an existing support group provide essentials such as soap, blankets, draught excluders, boiler service/repair, purchase of energy-efficient white goods equipment including fridges, freezers, ovens, etc.
* A contribution towards additional activities/staffing to support an organisation to deliver cookery classes where families take the meal and / or ingredients home with them.

Organisations may request funding to cover reasonable administration costs, capped at a maximum of 7.5%. These costs can include staff costs, advertising, and other publicity to raise awareness of the scheme, printing application forms, small IT changes, for example, to facilitate management information production requested by the Partnerships & Support Services team .

1. **Where will programmes be funded?**

We would like to reach as many vulnerable households on the Island as possible with this funding and therefore, applications from all areas across the Isle of Wight will be considered. We expect to award more grants in areas that have higher numbers of vulnerable children, pensioners, or disabled persons.

1. **How do I apply?**

Applications should be made by completing the application form on the website [Apply for community grant, HSF (iow.gov.uk)](https://www.iow.gov.uk/keep-the-island-safe/cost-of-living/household-support-fund/apply-for-community-grant-hsf/) and sending it along with supporting documentation to hsf@iow.gov.uk. **Please do not change the original Word format of the application form**. If you require a different format or have difficulties completing the Word document, please contact the Partnerships & Support Services team at hsf@iow.gov.uk

This publication is available on request as an audiotape, in large print, in Braille, and in other languages. For further details, please contact the Partnerships & Support Services team on 01983 823644

Detailed guidance for completion of the application form can be found at the end of this document; after reading the document it must be signed and returned along with the application form. **Any incomplete forms will be instantly declined.**

The existing inequalities that have become more pronounced due to the cost-of-living crisis will continue to persist after the government discontinues the Household Support Fund. Therefore, we are asking organisations to think about how they will continue to support the community once HSF initial funding has ceased and what funding alternatives could be explored that can continue the activities that aim to address these issues. Details of the type of activity that could be developed should be set out in applications for funds during June 2025 and March 2026. These should be considered in line with activities detailed in the Island’s Poverty Reduction Strategy.

1. **How will the grant be evaluated?**

Each grant application will be evaluated by a cross-directorate panel and a decision made based on the extent that.

* The grant supports the eligibility criteria.
* It is clear who and how many beneficiaries there will be because of the funding.
* The funding will be used to subsidise or support existing services.
* We can be confident of delivery within the timescales.
* The grant offers value for money.

Based on this evaluation, the panel may decide to award the total grant in more than 2 instalments, or a partial amount of the total grant requested.

Please be aware that each application is assessed on its own merit and even if you have been successful with an application submitted in an earlier grant round, that it is not a guarantee that your new application will be accepted.

Where previous funding has been provided, and further funding is being sought, there is an expectation that new applications are accompanied by relevant data, alternative funding options being explored to sustain provisions beyond HSF and an evaluation of outcomes achieved to date to assist panel with their consideration.

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

Following submission of a completed grant application, we aim to evaluate and confirm whether your application has been successful within one week. Funding will be released to successful organisations within a week from receipt of a full signed agreement. Please note that a physical or electronic signature (a scanned copy of your physical signature) is required.

1. **What reporting and management information will you need from me if I am successful?**

Successful applicants will be asked to submit an interim and final overview of their project which will need to detail information such as:

1. How much will be used to provide direct support to households with children.
2. How much will be used to provide direct support to households with pensioners.
3. How much will be used to provide direct support to households with a Disabled Person
4. How much will be used to provide direct support to other types of households including individuals.
5. How much will be spent via vouchers, or tangible items.
6. How much will be spent via an application-process, or proactive support.
7. How much funding you have shared with Third Party Organisations to deliver on our behalf \*
8. How much will be used directly to fund crisis provision such as food and energy support, along with wider essentials.
9. How much will be used to fund other expenses.
10. How much will be used to fund preventative support such as advice, skills etc. linked to the scheme.

\* Deliverable through town, parish, and community councils only

The tables must be completed as figures, and not percentages.

This report must be completed and returned in the original Excel format as part of your grant agreement, by the dates specified in the agreement.

At 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 and a brief evaluation of the scheme may be requested.

Any funding issued by the Partnerships and Support Services team to organisations will include a grant agreement, which sets out our expectations of organisations in accepting grant funding.

If Isle of Wight Council has any grounds for suspecting financial irregularity in the use of any grant paid under this 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.

1. **I have questions or need some advice. Who do I ask?**

Please contact Laura Hales, Commissioning & Projects Lead Officer via email at hsf@iow.gov.uk

**How to complete the Household Support Fund Grant Application**

***About your Organisation:***

**Name and address of organisation**

Please enter the name of your community organisation, charity, Town, Parish, or Community Council in full, along with your registered address.

**Address of where your project will be delivered.**

Please show the address(es) of the premises you will be delivering your project.

**Person completing the Application.**

Please enter your name

**Role within Organisation**

Please complete your job title

**Contact information.**

Please provide as much contact information as possible.

**Contact details to be used for advertising purposes.**

Please let us know the details you would like included on websites, leaflets, press releases etc. that members of the public can use to contact your organisation.

**Type of organisation**

Please circle / highlight the relevant organisation type appropriate for your business. If it is different to those listed, please specify the type of organisation you are applying from.

**Registration number**

Please state your Charity Commission number, if appropriate.

***About your current services***

**Number of people supported (weekly average)**

Please specify the number of different people your organisation currently supports, on average, each week.

**Number of hours support delivered weekly.**

Please specify the number of hours you deliver support each week.

**What types of support are currently provided by your organisation.**

Please detail the type of support your organisation currently delivers.

***About the Grant***

**How much funding are you asking for in total (£)**

Please let us know the full amount of funding you are applying for, inclusive of the amount you wish to use towards administrative costs.

**Expected admin costs (£)**

Please tell us how much of the funding being applied for will be used for admin purposes. This includes staffing costs, printing, marketing etc. as detailed in the guidance above.

**What are you going to use the grant funding for? Please provide as much information as possible and a breakdown of costs.**

Please provide full details of the support scheme you wish to deliver. The more information you can provide, the better. Please be sure to include a breakdown of costs e.g., for a grant of £5000.00.

Thermal curtains - £2680

Draught excluders - £1500

Heated blankets - £570

Admin costs - £250

**Please give details of the wraparound support you will be providing residents to help them become financially independent.**

We are unsure whether this will be the final round of funding available through the Household Support Fund. With that in mind, whilst the primary purpose of the fund is to assist residents in crisis, there is also an expectation that they are also supported to becoming financially independent. Please provide details of the support you will be providing alongside your project to help achieve this.

**Which area(s) of the Island does your support cover?**

Is your support only for residents living in the local area or can residents from across the Island apply? Which area(s) of the Island will support be provided.

**How have you identified eligibility?**

Residents need to be confirmed as eligible for support; you cannot just deliver your scheme to all those you work with. Eligible residents must live on the Isle of Wight and be experiencing financial difficulties. Please explain how you have set your eligibility criteria, and how this will be confirmed by the resident.

**What will you do if funding is not provided?**

Please explain how you will support residents in the community if your application is declined.

**What other funding have you applied for towards this project?**

Please detail other grants / sources of funding you have applied for to deliver this project.

**How will you obtain feedback on this project from residents?**

Please show how you will request feedback from residents that benefit from this scheme.

**How will you determine the success of this project, so these can be reported back during the grant period?**

We would like to see the effectiveness that this funding has provided. Please show how this will be captured.

**What outcomes do you expect to achieve from this project?**

What are you hoping to achieve with this funding and how will you measure this?

***Management Information Reporting***

The DWP have been explicit with reporting criteria for monies spent from the Household Support Fund. When allocating spend across the eligibility criteria please ensure each award is allocated four times – one allocation for each table. If you are applying for funding from the Household Support Fund and don’t currently capture the requested information, you will need to collect this for delivery of your scheme. This will be checked during audit visits. **In the event that data is not supplied by the requested dates or is unable to be validated to satisfy the DWP return, you may be invoiced for the repayment of funds provided.**

**Definitions**

*Household with Children –* A household containing any person who will be under the age of 19 at the time of the award or, a person aged 19 or over in respect of whom a child-related benefit is paid or free school meals are provided.

*Household with Pensioners –* Any household containing any person who has reached State Pension age at the time of the award.

*Household with a Disabled Person – A* disability or disabled person aligns with the definition in the Equality Act 2010. Therefore, a disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities. *Substantial* is more than minor or trivia, for example it takes much longer than it normally would to complete a daily task like getting dressed; *long-term* means 12 months or more, for example a breathing condition that develops as a result of a lung infection.

*Other Households –* Any household where the support will be provided to a household that does not fall into any of the above categories.

*Tangible items - Products* of a physical nature such as clothing or household items.

*Application-based support – Those who approach you for support e.g., are aware you have food hampers on offer and request one, or those visiting a community pantry (you have the food on offer, and they are attending to receive that support).*

*Proactive Support –* Residents you have identified as needing support and is issued automatically e.g. A packof bedding is sent to all children living in temporary accommodation.

*Energy & water –* Financial assistance withpre-payment fuel meters or payment direct to residents’ utility account for debt relief purposes. This form of support is deliverable by recognised commissioned partners such as Citizens Advice and Living Well. **Residents cannot be provided with cash or bank transfers into their own bank accounts.**

*Wider Essentials –* Support such as essential furniture, bedding, weather appropriate clothing, essential transport costs, etc.

*Housing Costs –* There is strict criteria around support with housing costs. Those applying for support with Housing Costs are therefore advised to be referred to the Homeless Prevention Team at the Isle of Wight Council.

*Food* – Any support provided that is linked to food. This would include supermarket vouchers, food items including hampers, pantry shops, fresh ingredients for cooking sessions etc.

*Advice –* The Fund may be used to provide supplementary advice services to award recipients, including debt, benefit and/or employment advice, where the Isle of Wight Council consider this appropriate. Third Party Organisations are reminded that the primary intention of The Fund is to provide support for those households most in need, and we would expect any advice services to complement this. We would not expect a large portion of funding to be spent on advice services but would expect to see a connection between the funding provided for advice services and the practical support provided through The Fund. Please only categorise your spend as Advice if we have specifically funded you to do so.

*Skills* – Costs and data associated with cooking skills, Employment skills to enable residents to be confident in applying for job vacancies,

*Community Infrastructure* – community kitchens or events to promote the scheme. Please be aware that the Household Support Fund cannot be used for capital expenditure.

*Energy Efficiency –* this would relate to items such as small energy-efficient kitchen appliances, draught excluders, thermal curtains, energy-efficient lightbulbs, water butts etc.

**Completion of the breakdown of support by household composition**

Each volume of support provided should be categorised within only one household composition; for example, a pensioner who also has a disability — choose the category that best represents their main situation. This helps avoid double-counting and keeps the data consistent.

*Spend*

In the spend row, please enter the amount of money you expect to allocate to each household type. Make sure to divide your administration costs equally between the household types you are supporting. For example, if you are only supporting households with children and households with a disabled person, then half of your admin costs should be assigned to each. The total amount you enter should match the full amount of funding you applied for. The total spend shown in Tables 1 to 3 should be the same, and the totals in Tables 4 and 5 should add up to match that same overall figure. **If there is nothing to report in a cell, enter 0 as a number.**

*Volumes*

A volume refers to the number of times support has been provided to each household type. For example, if you are giving out food hampers, you should record the number of hampers given to each household type. The total number of volumes recorded in Tables 1 to 3 should be the same. The totals in Tables 4 and 5 should then add up to match that same overall figure. **If there are no volumes to report for a particular category, please enter 0 as a number.**

*Number of households helped.*

Please enter the number of different households you will be helping. For example, if you are giving two hampers to the same household, the volume would be 2, but the number of households helped would be 1. Similarly, if Jack and Jill live in the same household and each receives a hamper, the volume would still be 2, but the number of households helped would be 1. The total number of households helped in Tables 1 to 3 should be the same. The totals in Tables 4 and 5 should then add up to match that same overall figure. **If there are no households to report, please enter 0 as a number.**

**Completion of the breakdown by type of support**

*Spend*

Please enter the amount of money you have spent through vouchers, payments made to Third Party Organisations (for TPCC only), or on tangible items. Administrative costs should be divided equally across the different types of support you have funded. The total amount recorded in Tables 1 to 3 should be the same. The totals in Tables 4 and 5 should then add up to match that same overall figure. **If there is nothing to report in a cell, enter 0 as a number.**

*Volumes*

Please enter the number of times support has been provided through vouchers, Third Party Organisations, or tangible items. The total number of volumes recorded in Tables 1 to 3 should be the same. The totals in Tables 4 and 5 should then add up to match that same overall figure. **If there are no volumes to report, please enter 0 as a number.**

*Number of households helped.*

Please enter the number of different households that have received support from you. If a household has received both tangible items and a voucher, count them only once in the column that best represents the main type of support they received. The total number of households helped in Tables 1 to 3 should be the same. The totals in Tables 4 and 5 should then add up to match that same overall figure. **If there are no households to report, please enter 0 as a number.**

**Completion of the breakdown by access route**

*Spend*

Please enter the amount of money that has been spent on people you have proactively supported, as well as those who applied for support, using the definitions provided earlier. If you have used both access routes, administrative costs should be split evenly between them. If you have only provided support through one route, then the full administrative cost should be included under that route. The total amount recorded in Tables 1 to 3 should be the same. The totals in Tables 4 and 5 should then add up to match that same overall figure. **If there is nothing to report in a cell, enter 0 as a number.**

*Volumes*

Please enter the number of times support has been provided through both application-based and proactive support. The total number of volumes recorded in Tables 1 to 3 should be the same. The totals in Tables 4 and 5 should then add up to match that same overall figure. **If there are no volumes to report, please enter 0 as a number.**

*Number of households helped.*

Please enter the number of different households you have supported through both application-based and proactive support, using the definitions provided earlier. The total number of households helped in Tables 1 to 3 should be the same. The totals in Tables 4 and 5 should then add up to match that same overall figure. **If there are no households to report, please enter 0 as a number.**

**Completion of the breakdown of support by crisis category**

Each form of support should be placed into only one category. For example, if you are providing both food and a warm blanket, as a package, to each person, you should choose the single category that best represents the overall support. Each volume should only be counted once and included in one category. The related information for that category should then be entered in the spend, volumes, and number of households helped columns.

*Spend*

In each cell of the spend row, enter the amount of money you expect to allocate to each category, based on the definitions provided above. If you are supporting more than one category, divide your administration costs equally between them. For example, if you are supporting food, energy and water, and wider essentials, then one third of your administration costs should be assigned to each. The total amount you enter should match the full amount of funding you have applied for. The total volumes recorded in Tables 1 to 3 should be the same. The totals in Tables 4 and 5 should then add up to match that same overall figure. **If there is no spend to report in a cell, please enter 0 as a number.**

*Volumes*

If, for example, you are providing support in the form of food hampers, the number of hampers given to each household type should be recorded under the food category. If you are also providing heated blankets separately, the number of blankets should be recorded under the category for essentials linked to energy and water. However, if you are offering both a food hamper and a heated blanket together as one package of support, this should be counted as a single volume and placed in the category that best represents the overall support. The total number of volumes recorded in Tables 1 to 3 should be the same. The totals in Tables 4 and 5 should then add up to match that same overall figure. **If there are no volumes to report, please enter 0 as a number.**

*Number of households helped.*

Please enter the number of different households you think you will be supporting. If you are providing a package of support that includes both food and essentials linked to energy and water, the household should only be recorded in one category that best represents the overall support. The total number of households helped in Tables 1 to 3 should be the same. The totals in Tables 4 and 5 should then add up to match that same overall figure. **If there are no households to report, please enter 0 as a number.**

**Completion of the breakdown of support by crisis category**

Each form of support should be recorded under only one category. For example, if you are providing both food and a warm blanket to each person, you should choose the single category that best represents the overall support being given. Each volume should only be counted once and placed in one category. The related information for that category should then be entered in the columns for spend, volumes, and number of households helped.

*Spend*

In each cell of the spend row, enter the amount of money you expect to allocate to each category, based on the definitions provided above. If you are supporting more than one category, divide your administration costs equally between them. For example, if you are supporting with cookery sessions and energy efficiency, then half of your administration costs should be assigned to each. The total amount you enter should match the full amount of funding you have applied for. The total volumes recorded in Tables 1 to 3 should be the same. The totals in Tables 4 and 5 should then add up to match that same overall figure. **If there is no spend to report in a cell, please enter 0 as a number.**

*Volumes*

If you are providing support in the form of advice, the number of people you give advice to should be recorded under the advice category. If you are also providing cooking skills separately, the number of people attending each session should be recorded under the category for skills. However, if you are offering both advice cooking skills together as one package of support, this should be counted as a single award and placed in the category that best represents the overall support. The total number of volumes recorded in Tables 1 to 3 should be the same. The totals in Tables 4 and 5 should then add up to match that same overall figure. **If there are no volumes to report, please enter 0 as a number.**

*Number of households helped.*

Please enter the number of different households you anticipate you will be supporting. If you are providing a package that includes both advice and skills, the household should only be recorded in one category that best represents the overall support. The total number of households helped in Tables 1 to 3 should be the same. The totals in Tables 4 and 5 should then add up to match that same overall figure. **If there are no households to report, please enter 0 as a number.**

A spreadsheet to capture your data will be issued to you if your application is approved, this will be used for audit purposes.

**Declaration**

Please read the declaration in full and sign the document, including your name and date before submitting the application for evaluation.

**Ratification of agreement**

Please confirm you have read these instructions in full and understood this guidance document.

Insert signature:

Name: \_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_