**Community Pantries – 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, a disabled person, and households without basic necessities like food, fuel, and wider essentials get the support they need through a range of crisis and preventative initiatives funded during the grant round.

Isle of Wight Council has received over £1.9 million to be used between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 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. For community pantries this means essential food, or hygiene items.

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

Established community pantries on the Isle of Wight are able to apply for top-up funding for the provision of essential food items or hygiene items and a contribution towards the administrative costs associated with producing the data requested to comply with DWP requirements.

**Applications will be open from 1 July 2025 until 28 February 2026.** A panel made up of

cross-directorate council departments and agencies will review the applications, within 2-weeks of submission and contact applicants within a week of their meeting to provide updates. The first payment for successful applications will be sent within a week after a fully signed grant agreement is returned.

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

Isle of Wight Council must ensure the allocation of £295,000 complies with the grant criteria set out and is seeking applications for funding that fit with that criterion.

Existing Community Pantries can apply for top-up funding to be used before the end of March 2026. If any of the funding is to be used to refund spend utilised prior to any award of funding within this grant period, it can be backdated to 1 April 2025. Specific allocations and the formula to be used for the amount of monies available for each of the individual pantries will be agreed by the Food Insecurity Focus Group, in agreement with the Isle of Wight Council.

1. **How do I apply?**

Applications should be made by completing the application form which is downloadable from the website [Funding for community pantries, HSF (iow.gov.uk)](https://www.iow.gov.uk/keep-the-island-safe/cost-of-living/household-support-fund/funding-for-community-pantries-hsf/) **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

The application form should be completed in full, with as much information as possible to help the evaluation panel assess the application appropriately. There are some new panel members so please do not assume evaluators are aware of your provision. The application should then be submitted along with a signed copy of the guidance which can be found at the end of this document. Any incomplete or alternative format forms submitted will be instantly declined and returned to the applicant to review and provide the required information before consideration can be made.

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

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

* The grant supports the eligibility criteria.
* It is clear who and how many beneficiaries there will be because of the funding and its support with the most vulnerable in communities
* We can be confident of delivery within the timescales.
* The grant offers value for money.

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. This is a new Household Support Fund grant period.

Where previous funding has been provided, and further funding is being sought, there is an expectation that new grant applications are accompanied by relevant data and an evaluation of outcomes achieved to date and the alternative funding options also being explored to sustain pantry provisions 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 documentation, we aim to evaluate the application within two-weeks and confirm whether your application has been successful within one week from that meeting. The first instalment of funding will be released to successful organisations within a week from receipt of a full signed agreement. Please note that a scanned copy of your physical signature is required to complete the grant agreement and provide confirmation of compliance of the conditions in providing the funding.

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 used to provide tangible items.
6. How much will be used to provide support via application process.
7. How much will be used to provide direct support with essential food or hygiene items.
8. How much will be used for preventative support.

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

This report must be completed and returned as part of your grant agreement, by the dates specified in the agreement. In the event that data is not supplied by the requested date or cannot be validated to satisfy the DWP return, you will not receive further instalments of your funding and may be invoiced for the repayment of the funds previously provided during this grant round.

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 provision will be required.

Any funding issued by the Partnerships & 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 hsf@iow.gov.uk

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

***About your Organisation:***

**Name of Organisation**

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

**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.**

It is a requirement set by Department for Work and Pensions that all funded provisions must be advertised. 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 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.

***About your services***

**Opening hours:**

Please detail the opening hours your provision is currently open. Please be sure to include your ‘quiet’ times. This will also allow us to check and update our records. Your quiet times will not be advertised.

**Number of visits (weekly average)**

Please specify the average number of visits per week over the last 6 months.

**Number of active Pantry Members**

Please specify the current membership that have used the Pantry provisions within the last three months

**What is your current cost of delivery based on the last 6 months?**

Please state your cost of delivery based on the last 6 months. This can be calculated by your total expenditure on the pantry (including rent, utilities, staffing etc.) for the last 6 months divided by the total number of visits in the same period.

**Please provide the current balance of your pantry bank account.**

Please state the current balance of your pantry bank account; this will assist us when evaluating your application.

***About the Grant***

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

Please let us know the full amount of funding you are applying for between 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

**Please provide a breakdown of costs.**

Please provide your anticipated breakdown of the allocation of funds for essential food / hygiene items to cover the funding period. You can include an element of funding (no more than 7.5%) towards the administration time associated with the data requirements needed by us to produce DWP returns and evaluation of initiatives and schemes.

**Please confirm how you will be exploring additional funding to assist the future funding plan of the pantry provision.**

Please detail where or how you will be looking to secure additional funding / grants when Household Support Fund is ended after 31 March 2026.

**Please outline any links and arrangements (outside of supermarket purchases) you have in place for supply of food and provisions; please specify if these will be donations, rescued or bought food.**

Do you have any links with food providers / supermarkets / restaurants / cafés etc to source waste food?

**There is a greater focus by Department for Work and Pensions around assisting residents to becoming financially independent,** **please provide an outline of the support and wraparound services that currently exist or that you have active links to working with.**

A Community Pantry offers more than just access to affordable food essentials. While the availability of low-cost groceries may initially attract individuals, the broader purpose is to provide support during times of financial difficulty. This includes helping people check their benefit entitlements, access employment support, manage energy costs, and more.

Although reducing food waste is an important aspect, the primary aim is to offer short-term assistance while individuals work toward greater stability. To support this, partnerships with services such as Citizens Advice Isle of Wight, Living Well & Early Help, Green Isle of Wight, Footprint Trust, You Trust, and Working Towards Wellbeing can play a vital role. These organisations can offer drop-in advice sessions and tailored guidance to help members build long-term resilience.

We would appreciate further details on how wraparound advice and support services are being integrated into your Community Pantry model. Specifically, how are you working with individuals to review their circumstances and support them in becoming more self-reliant?

**Beyond the provision of food, please outline any supplementary support services that you think can be offered from the Community Pantry.**

Are there any services you are looking to work with, in addition to those mentioned above, that you could work with to provide holistic support to residents.

 ***Management Information Reporting***

The DWP have been explicit with reporting requirements 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 of the first three tables, and once in either table four or five. 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 monitoring / 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 and in signing a grant funding agreement you accept this.**

**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.

*Food* – Any support provided that is linked to food or hygiene items and provided at any time between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026.

*Tangible items - Products* of a physical nature such as food or hygiene 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).*

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

Each form of support should be categorised within only one household composition; if you have a pensioner that has a disability, please choose the most appropriate category. Every resident receiving support should only be included in one category.

 *Spend*

In each of the cells associated with the spend row, please state the amount of money you anticipate allocating to this household composition. The administration costs should be split evenly across each household composition you are supporting e.g., include half of your administrative costs to households with children and households with a disabled person if these are the only two household compositions you are supporting. Your total figure should be equal to the total funding you have applied for. The total spend in each of the first three tables will be the same. The totals in tables four and five should add up to make that same figure. If there are nil awards to report, enter 0 as a number.

 *Visits*

A visit is the number of times you envisage you will provide support to each household composition i.e., the number of visits you expect to the pantry in the funding period, therefore if a household should visit the pantry seven times within the funding period, your visits would be 7 for that household. The total visits in each of the first three tables will be the same. The totals in tables four and five should add up to make that same figure. If there are nil awards to report, enter 0 as a number.

*Number of households helped.*

How many *different* households will you be helping? Whether a household attends the pantry once in the funding period, or every week, they should only be counted as a single household. The total number of households in each of the first three tables will be the same. The totals in tables four and five should add up to make that same figure. If there are nil awards to report, enter 0 as a number.

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

*Spend*

A Community Pantry provides support by way of Tangible items (physical goods). Enter the amount of funding you will be spending by way of Tangible items. The total spend in each of the first three tables will be the same. The totals in tables four and five should add up to make that same figure. If there are nil awards to report, enter 0 as a number.

*Visits*

Please enter the total number of visits you anticipate within the funding period. The total visits in each of the first three tables will be the same. The totals in tables four and five should add up to make that same figure. If there are nil awards to report, enter 0 as a number.

*Number of households helped.*

Please enter the number of different households that you anticipate will receive support from you by way of tangible items. They should only be counted once regardless of the number of times in the funding period you think they will visit. The total number of households in each of the first three tables will be the same. The totals in tables four and five should add up to make that same figure. If there are nil awards to report, enter 0 as a number.

**Completion of the breakdown by access route**

*Spend*

A Community Pantry is available to all Island residents to shop each week for essential items to top up their shopping. In terms of reporting, as the members voluntarily walk through the door and pay their membership fee they are ‘applying’ to you for help; therefore, the pantries are providing support on an application basis. Enter the amount of funding you are spending via application process. The total spend in each of the first three tables will be the same. The totals in tables four and five should add up to make that same figure. If there are nil awards to report, enter 0 as a number.

*Visits*

Please add the number of visits you anticipate within the funding period. The total visits in each of the first three tables will be the same. The totals in tables four and five should add up to make that same figure. If there are nil awards to report, enter 0 as a number.

*Number of households helped.*

Please detail the number of different households you have supported during the funding period. The total number of households in each of the first three tables will be the same. The totals in tables four and five should add up to make that same figure. If there are nil awards to report, enter 0 as a number.

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

DWP guidance shows that tables four and five should add together to show the totals shown in the first three tables; as community pantry support is all provided by food (within the crisis table), figures in table 5 should all be 0.

*Spend*

As community pantry support is all categorised as food, this falls within the crisis category. The totals in table five should therefore all be 0 as the total spend in each of the first three tables will be the same and the totals in tables four and five should add up to make that same figure.

*Visits*

The number of visits would fall within the food category on the crisis support table. As the total visits in each of the first three tables should be the same and the totals in tables four and five should add up to make that same figure, the figures in table 5 would be nil visits to report, enter 0 as a number.

*Number of households helped.*

As the spend and visits columns associated with preventative support will be show as 0, the number of households will also reflect a nil return. As there are nil awards to report, enter 0 as a number.

**Declaration**

Please read the declaration in full and sign the document, including your name and date before submitting the application, this signed form and a sustainability plan for evaluation.

**Ratification of agreement**

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

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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

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