



Bolton's Fund: Household Support Fund 6 October 2024 – March 2025

Large Grants – up to £25,000

Allocation: £250,000.00

Period: Finishing 31st March 2025

Closing date: Sunday 17th November 2024

Programme Guidelines

Background to the Fund

Bolton's Fund, via the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has committed a further £250,000 from the Household Support Fund (HSF) to the Bolton's Fund grants programme to enable Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations to support vulnerable low-income households in need, with the cost of living.

Large grants (up to £25,000) are to be used to help vulnerable households meet their immediate needs and help those who are struggling to afford household essentials including energy and water bills, food, and wider essentials. Funds can also be used for housing costs, signposting, advice and preventative support.

Priority households for funding include vulnerable low-income households in need including:

- Households with disabled people,
- Households with children of all ages,
- Households with pensioners,
- Households with unpaid carers,
- Households with care leavers,
- Larger families,
- Single-person households,
- Those struggling with one-off financial shocks or unforeseen events.

In exceptional cases of genuine emergency, it can additionally be used to support housing costs where existing housing support schemes do not meet this exceptional need. (This may include households not currently in receipt of DWP welfare benefits).

This funding covers the period up to 31st March 2025. All funds must be spent or committed by this date. Grants will be paid in one instalment at the start of the delivery period.

Funding Priorities

Projects must achieve at **least one** of the following outputs to receive HSF funding:

- Supporting vulnerable households in most need with rising energy costs.
- Supporting vulnerable households in most need with the cost of food.
- Supporting vulnerable households in most need with wider essential costs – including water costs.
- To support costs related to housing where existing housing support schemes do not meet this need (this is in exceptional cases of genuine emergency).
- To support costs relating to the provision of supplementary advice services, including debt and benefit advice.
- Preventative Support - including specific support to individual households or wider support within the broader community.

Please see below for further guidance about what a Household Support Fund Grant can be spent on.

How much money can you apply for?

| Level of grant | Maximum size of grant | Total amount available in this funding round |
|----------------|-----------------------|--|
| Large Grants | £25,000* | £250,000 |

*Please apply for the appropriate amount your organisation has the capacity and resources to effectively distribute within the timeframe of the grant (by the end of March 2025).

What are the time scales?

| | |
|---|---|
| Fund Open | Monday 21st October 2024 |
| Deadline for applications: | Sunday 17 th November 2024 |
| Applications are made online: | Bolton CVS Funding |
| All Projects must be completed by: | 31 st March 2025 All funds must be committed or allocated by this date. |

What can you spend the Household Support Fund grant on?

This funding may be used to support vulnerable low-income households in need of additional support who are struggling with essential cost of living costs. Some examples of what the funding can be spent on include:

- **Running costs of your HSF project:** A maximum of 20% of the grant awarded can be allocated to cover the running costs of your organisation for your Household Support Fund project. This includes administration costs associated with distributing Household Support Fund support to beneficiaries, rent or hire of your premises, heating costs, lighting costs, project management costs, transport costs, volunteer out-of-pocket expenses or staff costs. Please give details of all the running costs you will be claiming in your application. Please note that at least 80% of the grant must be used to support vulnerable low-income households in at least one of the ways listed below.
- **Energy and water costs:** The grant can be used to support vulnerable households in most need with energy bills for any form of fuel that is used for the purpose of domestic heating, cooking, or lighting, including oil or portable gas cylinders. It can also be used to support water bills including for drinking, washing, cooking, as well as for sanitary purposes and sewerage.
- **Food:** The grant can be used to provide food. This can be in-kind or through vouchers or cash to purchase food.
- **Essentials linked to energy and water:** The grant can be used to support essentials linked to increasing energy efficiency and water (for example warm clothing, blankets, the purchase, delivery and installation of energy efficient white goods and appliances such as fridges, freezers, ovens, slow cookers). It can be used to fund items such as insulating a hot water tank, fitting draft excluders to a front door and replacing inefficient lightbulbs. The HSF recognises that there are a range of costs which directly affect a households' ability to afford or access energy, food or water.

- **Wider essentials:** The grant can be used to support wider essential needs not linked to energy, water or food. These may include, but are not limited to, support with other bills including broadband or phone bills, clothing, period and hygiene products, essential transport-related costs such as repairing a car, buying a bicycle, or paying for fuel. This list is not exhaustive. It can also include one-off payments to prevent a crisis.
- **Preventative support in the wider community:** grants can be used to help prevent poverty locally and activity which prevents vulnerable residents from falling into – or falling further into – crisis. This could include specific support to individual households or wider support within the broader community, such as enabling access to benefits advice (including Pension Credit), energy efficiency programmes, mental health support, helping to strengthen community relationships by tackling loneliness, isolation and stigma, providing localised advice and service provision, promoting the re-use and repair of goods.
- **Supplementary advice services:** The grant may be used to provide supplementary advice services including debt, benefit and/or employment advice, The primary focus of the Household Support Fund is on providing practical, financial support rather than advice.
- **Emergency circumstances relating to housing costs:** Individuals in receipt of some other form of housing support could still qualify for the other elements of the Household Support Fund, such as food, energy, water, essentials linked to energy and water and wider essentials. The grant can exceptionally, and in genuine emergency, be used to provide support for historic rent arrears built up prior to an existing benefit claim for households already in receipt of Universal Credit or Housing Benefit.

What can't you spend the grant on?

This funding round will not fund:

- The fund cannot be used to provide mortgage support, though homeowners could still qualify for the other elements of the fund.
- Ongoing housing support or support of unsustainable tenancies.

Usual exceptions apply:

- We will not usually fund the purchase of equipment for a one-off activity or event or equipment for distribution to community members (unless it is directly related to the delivery and distribution of your Household Support Fund grant to vulnerable low-income households).
- Trips, outings, meals, parties or any other one-off activity that does not demonstrate significant community benefit.
- The purchase of alcohol.
- Activities of a political or specific religious nature.
- Projects that will be primarily of benefit to people living outside the Bolton Local Authority Area.
- Work that statutory bodies (such as schools or local authorities) have a duty to fund.
- Local government or NHS bodies.
- Wages of sports coaches and instructors (paid or volunteers) who are not listed on Bolton Council's Sport Coaches and Instructors Register, where the grant is for work with people aged under 18 years' old.
- Individuals or organisations on behalf of individuals.
- Costs to be passed on to other organisations, for example, Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) applying on behalf of schools.
- Project and delivery costs incurred or those that are paid for, before a grant is confirmed.
- Projects taking place outside of the UK.
- Deficit funding or repayment of loans, interest or fines.
- Fundraising for another organisation.

Important - Data Collection Requirements

- **Successful applicants must state in their application how they will identify vulnerable households in their community who are in most need of support.**
- To satisfy the requirements of DWP, organisations receiving a grant will need to have procedures in place to collect and produce information in relation to household composition and the category of support that is given.
- There are two important data collection deadlines for the HSF 6 grants:
 - Interim set of monitoring data and brief update – by Friday 17th January 2025.

- Final set of monitoring data, outcomes report and case studies – by Friday 11th April 2025.
- Data collection excel spreadsheets will be sent to all successful applicants. Organisations will be required to gather and report data on spend, volumes and number of households supported in the following categories:
 - Composition of the households they have supported (households with children, households with pensioners. Households with disabled person, other households).
 - Type of support given (relation to food (excluding Free School Meals (FSM) in the holidays), FSM support in the holidays, energy and water bills, essentials linked to energy and water bills, wider essentials, housing costs and advice services).
 - Total volume of awards split by household composition (households with children, households with pensioners, households with a disabled person, other households).
- You will also need to submit impact information in line with Bolton's Fund requirements, such as the number of volunteers involved in your HSF project and details of the expenditure of your project.

In your application, please outline how you will collect this information.

All successful applicants will be invited to a briefing session in regards to the collection and return of the data spreadsheets.

Who is eligible to apply?

To be eligible to apply for a Household Support Fund Grant, your group or organisation must be:

- A constituted voluntary or community group
- A registered charity
- Another type of constituted not for profit organisation.

Other eligibility factors include:

- Your group or organisation must be based and/or provide benefit to people living in the Metropolitan Borough of Bolton (Bolton Council's local authority area).

- You must have a bank account in the name of the group (not an individual) with at least two signatories.
- Organisations must be up to date with the monitoring returns for any previous grants managed through Bolton CVS
- Eligible groups and organisations can apply for a Bolton's Fund: Household Support Fund 6 grant even if you have been awarded a Bolton's Fund grant at a different level in the last 12 months (e.g. a Bolton's Fund Micro, Small, Medium, Large or HAF grant). See the Bolton's Fund page on the Bolton CVS website for details.
- There is no minimum income eligibility for Bolton's Fund: Household Support Fund 6 grants. Your application will be strengthened if you can demonstrate you have the resources and capacity needed to effectively distribute the HSF grant.

Applications to the fund: if you are applying for a grant of over £5,000 you must be registered as a Community Interest Company, a Registered Charity or other incorporated organisation. If you are not sure, please contact us before applying.

There are minimum standards you must meet to be eligible to apply for funding – please read our “*Minimum requirements for applicants and what we can fund*” document before submitting an application - click [here](#) to access them.

Risk Management

- Successful applicants will need to have procedures in place to ensure their work complies with official guidance.
- Successful applicants will need to comply with all food safety regulations. Where necessary (where handling higher risk foods or cooking for the community) successful applicants will need to be registered with the local authority. Please see Bolton Council [food business registration](#) for more information.

How to Apply

Log on to the Bolton CVS website and go to: [Login for Funding Applications](#)

Assistance: If you have difficulties accessing an online format or would like help with your application, please contact Bolton CVS for support. We are here to help.

About Bolton's Fund

Bolton's Fund is a community grants pot that plays a crucial role in providing investment into Bolton's VCSE sector. Since 2019 it has played a vital role in driving innovation and fostering projects aimed at benefiting people and communities across the borough.

Bolton's Fund is principally funded by Bolton Council with additional contributions from other organisations including Bolton's GP Federation, Bolton at Home and Bolton's NHS Foundation Trust and the Sir James and Lady Scott Trust.

The overall goal of the Bolton 2030 Vision is to reach the destination goal of becoming:

Active, Connected and Prosperous. A great place to live, work, visit or study

Resources on the Bolton CVS Website

The following guidance documents are available on the Bolton CVS Bolton's Fund webpage [here](#).

We recommend that you read the guidance documents before applying for a Bolton's Fund grant.

Support and Further Information from Bolton CVS

If you would like to chat about a potential application or you need help with the application form, please contact us on:

01204 546 010 or email funding@boltoncvs.org.uk.

You can also refer to the funding information pages on the Bolton CVS website: <https://www.boltoncvs.org.uk/funding>

Bolton Community and Voluntary Services (CVS)

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