**Food Security Fund - Guidance Notes**

**About the Fund**

Economic equalities for the residents of Suffolk are widening, as a result of a variety of global and national factors putting economic strain on personal and household budgets. Millions of people in Britain live in households that struggle to put enough food on the table and over half of these regularly go a whole day without eating, according to United Nations (UN) estimates.

When incomes are tight and reducing, food is often the only part of a household budget which can be cut. Families on extremely low budgets tend to focus on cheap and filling foods, rather than foods which have optimum health benefits.

During the pandemic, we saw communities come together and offer support to each other where needed, often leading to the creation of food projects, ranging from informal ‘porch pantries’ to Community Pop up Shops and Larders. Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are looking to support community food projects with capital funding, with a particular focus on community pantries, community fridges and food pop ups. The intention is to:

* Create or support sustainable, community led initiatives
* Improve access to affordable, quality food
* Ensure the re-distribution of food waste or food surplus, thereby reducing the environmental impact of food production.
* Create quality opportunities for community members of all ages to learn new skills and build confidence
* Enable community food projects to be opportunities for ‘warm handovers’ and the sharing of support around prevalent issues such as social isolation, diet and nutrition, money management and employment issues.

**Fund Details**

£50,000 of funding is available across Babergh and Mid Suffolk, with £25,000 available in each District.

Between £250 - £5,000 can be applied for. This is a **capital only fund** and **cannot be used for revenue or running costs**. Match funding is not required, and up to 100% of project costs can be supported.

Applications will be assessed on a first come, first serve basis, throughout the 2024-25 financial year. The deadline for applications is 31st March 2025.

Funding must be spent within 8 months of funding being awarded. Proof of expenditure e.g. invoices and receipts must be submitted to the Grants Team.

**Eligible Projects**

Eligible projects include, but are not limited to:

* Purchase of equipment which will help with the preparation, storage and preservation of food e.g. white goods, food storage equipment, kitchen equipment
* Purchase of equipment to assist with community food growing schemes
* Purchase of equipment to assist with project administration/volunteer management e.g. laptop, scanner

**Ineligible Projects**

Ineligible projects include:

* Running costs e.g. subscriptions, energy bills, venue hire
* Perishables e.g. purchase of food, refreshments

**Funding Priorities**

Applicants should be seeking for their project to enable one, some or all of the following themes:

**Impactful Volunteering and/or Social Action Projects**

Can be demonstrated through:

- an improvement in community engagement with Groups and Facilities

- Groups that are well organised and can be sustainable

**Community Measures to Reduce the Cost of Living**

Can be demonstrated through:

* Communities/participants reporting improved household budget
* Improved community access to and awareness of support and services within the community

**Community Measures to Enable Carbon Reduction**

Can be demonstrated through:

* Community groups being supported to help local redistribution of food waste or food surplus, thereby reducing the environmental impact of food production.
* A reported improved understanding from households in how to limit food waste

**Skills Improvement in Communities (relating to basic, life and career skills)**

Can be demonstrated through:

* Increased participation in skill sharing workshops such as cooking groups

**Community Enrichment and Volunteering Activities**

Can be demonstrated through:

* Improved perception of community groups and facilities through quality equipment and services offered
* Reported increase in volunteer numbers and volunteer wellbeing, through quality volunteering experience offered
* Improved community cohesion by bringing people together around food

**Who can Apply?**

Constituted VCFSE organisations can apply, such as Parish Councils, Uniformed Groups, Sports Clubs, Pre Schools, Village Halls, Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and Faith settings where the wider community is able to attend. Organisations must be place-based and already be providing a service to residents of Babergh or Mid Suffolk.

Groups must be constituted and have a bank account with 3 independent signatories.

We require that all groups have 3 key policies in place:

* Safeguarding
* Health and Safety
* Equal Opportunities

If not, the development of these through Community Action Suffolk would be a condition of any offer: [Governance and Organisation Development - Community Action Suffolk](https://www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk/organisation-support/governance-and-organisation-development/)

**How do groups apply?**

Application forms can be found on each District Councils’ Community Grants webpage: [Babergh](https://www.babergh.gov.uk/web/babergh/w/babergh-district-council-funding-1) or [Mid Suffolk](https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/web/mid-suffolk/w/mid-suffolk-district-council-funding-1)

All application forms must be submitted to the Grants Team at [BMSDCGrants@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:BMSDCGrants@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk).