**Guidance Notes**

**About the Fund**

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are looking to support community food projects with capital and revenue 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
* Address food insecurity

**Fund Details**

£140,000 of funding is available across Babergh and Mid Suffolk, with £70,000 available in each District.

Between £250 and £5,000 can be applied for. 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. The deadline for applications is 31st March 2026, though the Fund may close for applications prior to that point should funding be fully allocated.

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

Due to the origin of this funding, there are differing priorities depending on whether your project is constituted of capital or revenue costs.

**Eligible Projects**

Eligible projects include, but are not limited to:

* Purchase of tools or 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
* Tools for allotment project to supply local after school food club
* Cooking equipment to transform near-end-of-life food supplies into other products to reduce food waste
* Credit/debit card payment machine to allow card payment (including acceptance of Healthy Start vouchers)
* Course materials (cooking equipment, lunch boxes)
* Costs associated with delivering upskilling sessions/course to clients, staff or volunteers (venue hire costs, course application costs, training materials, refreshments for specific activities and events)
* Web hosting costs to allow project to promote its work, increase visibility, accept online donations etc
* Items to support income generation
* Advertising/marketing costs to recruit new volunteers

**Ineligible Projects**

Direct purchase of food supplies and other perishables for ongoing food provision projects. If you need guidance on where to access food supplies for your organisation please contact the [Community Action Suffolk Food Officer Team](https://www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk/community-food-partnership/) who will be able to support you.

**Funding Priorities**

Applicants should be seeking for their project to enable one, some or all of the following themes. Please note that these themes differ depending on the nature of the project.

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| The following themes, which are the priorities of Shared Prosperity Funding, apply for projects seeking support for **capital** costs, such as the purchase of equipment, tools or one-off purchases |
| * **Impactful volunteering and/or social action projects**

This could be demonstrated through an improvement in community engagement with groups, or groups that are well organised and sustainable * **Community Measures to reduce the Cost of Living**

This could be demonstrated through communities or participants reporting improved household budgets, or improved community access to and awareness of support and services within the community * **Community Measures to Enable Carbon Reduction**

This could be demonstrated through community groups being supported to help local redistribution of food waste or food surplus, or a reported improvement in understanding from households in how to limit food waste* **Skills Improvement in Communities (relating to basic, life and career skills)**

This could be demonstrated through increased participation in skill sharing workshops such as cooking groups* **Community Enrichment and Volunteering Opportunities**

This could be demonstrated through increased volunteer numbers and volunteer wellbeing, or improved community cohesion by bringing people together around food |

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| The following themes apply for projects seeking support for **capital and revenue** costs, such as the running of activities/workshops, or general running costs. |
| * Supporting organisations to become more self-sufficient, sustainable and resilient for the future
* Streamlining processes and ways of working to become more efficient
* Supporting clients out of hardship
* Improving skills and knowledge in the community to support themselves
* Creating local solutions to improve food supply and logistics
* Increasing opportunities to offer a broader range of local, nutritious and culturally and dietary appropriate food
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Should your application be successful, you will be required to evidence how your project has aligned to the priorities selected in your application.

**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/)

There is also a portion of funding available to micro and small food-related businesses. Businesses will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and must demonstrate as part of their application, evidence that their project will be community based and demonstrate social value.

Businesses will be considered if the grant is being accessed to support them with increasing their community outreach with a focus on a ['good food movement'](https://www.sustainablefoodplaces.org/resources/local_good_food_movement/) or ['healthy food for all'.](https://www.sustainablefoodplaces.org/resources/healthy_food_for_all/) For example, a small food business such as a market garden wanting to expand to do community workshops.

All applicants must consult with Food Officers from Community Action Suffolk prior to applying for the funding - CAS food officers are integral to the development of bids coming forward and no bids will be considered which have not had prior involvement with the relevant food officer.

Applicants must include all project costs and, if project costs exceed the amount applied for, details of the total funding package must be included.

**How do Organisations 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.

As this funding has been provided by the UK Government, acknowledgment of such is expected in any promotion or publicity of the project, in line with UK Government branding guidelines.

**Monitoring**

The application form asks applicants to create one outcome for their project and two indicators to show how the outcome will be met. Successful applicants will be sent a monitoring form alongside their offer asking for reporting on the outcome up to 6 months after being awarded funding. Capital projects will need to submit receipts or invoices relating to capital purchases to the Grants Team.

**Additional Information**

All grant applicants, successful or unsuccessful, will be offered free access to:

* Money Guiders training
* HENRY (Health, Exercise and Nutrition for the Really Young) training

**Community Action Suffolk Contacts**

**W:** [Suffolk Community Food Team - Community Action Suffolk](https://www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk/community-food-partnership/)

**E:** Maisie Dyvig/Ruby Farrell

