



West End Morecambe Big Local Solidarity Fund

Fund Guidance

Overview

The West End Morecambe Big Local Solidarity Fund is a small support fund established for the benefit of residents of the West End of Morecambe. Support from the fund provides life essentials for people in need, working through recognised and established community organisations.

Objective

West End Morecambe Big Local (WEM), understanding that not everybody is managing to cope with current economic pressures, have commissioned Lancaster District CVS to administer funding which will improve the wellbeing of West End residents through small financial support packages in the spirit of solidarity and mutual aid.

The WEM Partnership approved the implementation of the fund after discussions with the Lancaster District Food Poverty Alliance and community organisations in the West End.

Organisations working in the West End such as charities, faith groups, community associations or public bodies ("the sponsor organisation") can apply to the fund on behalf of an individual or family ("the beneficiary"). The sponsor organisation will receive the funds and must spend them on the agreed help, goods or services.

Voluntary, Community, Faith & Social Enterprise organisations making applications to the fund will be compensated for their time with a payment of £15 per application, regardless of whether an award is made.

Support

Types of support that can be accessed via the scheme include *but are not limited to*:

- support for housing, such as a part deposit or period of rent for someone who is already living in the area
- support for utilities arrears
- appliances, such as microwaves, air fryers, fridges, freezers, washing machine or dryers (but excluding appliances which require installation by a qualified electrician, such as ovens),
- furniture, such as bed frames, mattresses, tables, chairs or wardrobes,
- other home essentials,
- clothing, such as warm coats, school uniforms, children's clothes, or safety gear for work when not provided by the employer,
- and help with finding work, such as qualifications, certifications, or equipment tickets.

We will consider anything which a sponsor organisation believes the beneficiary urgently needs.

Please note, this fund is established as a last resort and is not intended to replace or dilute help from existing support budgets.

Who is eligible for support?

The beneficiary must live in the West End Morecambe Big Local area, which means inside the area bounded by these roads:

Craig St, Heysham Rd, Fairfield Rd, Balmoral Rd, Cleveland Ave, Osborne Cres, Osborne Rd, Ellesmere Rd, Windsor Grove, Albany Rd, edge of the former Frontierland site to the Promenade.

We have created [a map \(linked here\) to help you identify the relevant area](#).

The sponsor organisation must also ensure that the proposed beneficiary has tried and failed to secure help from other sources if relevant to the goods or services required, as this fund is established as a last resort and is not intended to replace or dilute help from existing support budgets. There is more information about other relevant sources of support in an appendix to this guidance.

How much can be applied for?

The maximum that can be applied for is £250.

If support is agreed, the payment will be made to the sponsor organisation's nominated bank account, to be spent on the agreed items.

Who can apply and how often?

Individuals cannot apply for the fund. Applications are made by a sponsor organisation on behalf of the beneficiary.

If support is approved, we send the funds to the sponsor organisation, who source the help or spend it as agreed.

The fund has a limit of one award per beneficiary in any six-month period. Unsuccessful applications are not counted towards this limit.

There is no limit to the number of beneficiaries a sponsor organisation can apply to support. However, LDCVS will aim to spread delivery across different groups.

Sponsor organisations must meet these basic criteria:

- Incorporated as a statutory body, a registered charity, charitable incorporated organisation, or CIC, or an unincorporated community organisation with a constitution or set of rules.
- Has at least three people on its board or committee, two of whom must not be related to each other.
- Has a bank account in its own name.
- Does not have any restrictions in its constitution, rules, or financial procedures which prevent it from receiving money on behalf of its clients.
- Has been running formally for 12 months

How to apply

Applications must be made by the sponsor organisation via an online portal at morecambebay.grantplatform.com. Application forms can be saved and returned to before being submitted, so can be completed over several sessions if needed.

Sponsor organisations will need to tell us:

- The beneficiary's name, address and contact details, and some demographic information such as age and ethnicity.
- What they want to apply for and the cost.
- How the award will help the beneficiary (and their family, if appropriate).

- Where they or the beneficiary have tried to source this help elsewhere before applying to this fund.
- The bank account details belonging to the sponsor organisation where funds will be paid, to be spent on the beneficiary's behalf.
- That they have received verbal or written consent from the beneficiary to make the application.

They will need to upload:

- A quote for any single item that costs over £150. Examples of an acceptable quote include:
 - web link showing the item for sale
 - pro-forma invoice
 - written quotation (including a photograph or scan of a printed or handwritten document)
 - a bill, demand for payment, or contract
- An organisation bank statement which is less than twelve weeks old confirming the sponsor organisation's bank details. A photograph or scan of a physical document, or an electronic statement are acceptable. The statement must show the sponsor organisation's name and address, sort code and account number, and the bank's logo and address. The sponsor organisation may obscure the account balance and details of any transactions.

Conditions

At the end of the application process, the supporting organisation making the application must agree that they will:

- Use the grant within one month of receipt by spending the money awarded to purchase the agreed items on the beneficiary's behalf.
- Return the grant if it cannot be spent within one month.
- Explain to the beneficiary that portable items must remain their property.
- When requested, explain to LDCVS how the fund has helped the person or family, for use in our reports to the West End Morecambe Big Local partnership. We will not identify individuals or their supporting organisations without obtaining their written consent.

Decisions

Decisions will be made jointly by a nominated representative of Lancaster District CVS and an independent panel member (not associated with LDCVS or WEM) who will provide oversight of the process to help ensure it is fair.

Applications will be considered strictly in the order in which they are received, until the funding is exhausted.

Decisions about grants will be made as quickly as practicable and usually within ten working days of receiving an application.

Voluntary, Community, Faith & Social Enterprise organisations making applications to the fund will be compensated for their time with a payment of £15 per application, regardless of whether an award is made.

Questions

If you have any questions about applying, please contact Nick Smith at Lancaster District CVS by email at nicksmith@lancastercvs.org.uk

Appendix: Other sources of support

This fund has been established as a last resort and is not intended to replace or dilute help from existing support budgets. When applying for the fund, sponsor organisations must tell us about the other places where they or the beneficiary have already tried and failed to access the required goods and services.

Other sources of support include:

- Lancaster City Council Household Support Fund - <http://www.lancaster.gov.uk/sites/cost-of-living/financial-support-for-households>
- Lancashire County Council / Selnet Under One Roof - <https://selnet-uk.com/selnet-under-one-roof/>
- Banks Lyons Memorial Trust Step Up Fund. This fund is aimed at young people aged 16-24 facing social and/or financial barriers to accessing education, training or employment. Grants of up to £250 are available for goods and services which help them progress on the route to finding a job. A number of the district's community organisations administer these grants, including Lancaster District CVS. Contact Catherine Westwell at catherinewestwell@lancastercv.org.uk for more information.
- Voluntary, Community, Faith & Social Enterprise organisations. For example, Green Rose CIC can provide support for people having difficulties with utility bills. The Lancaster District Directory is a useful source of information about these organisations and the support they can provide. See directory.lancastercv.org.uk for more information.