

Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF) 2026–2029

Barking & Dagenham Community Grants Programme 2026

Supporting residents, strengthening communities and building financial resilience across Barking and Dagenham

The purpose of this document is to set out the governance and arrangements for the Barking & Dagenham Community Grants Programme 2026

What is the Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF)?

The Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF) supports activities that help residents experiencing financial hardship, improve financial resilience, and strengthen local support networks across Barking and Dagenham. The fund aims to help residents manage financial shocks, reduce the risk of future crisis, and access joined-up support within their communities.

Within the CRF, Authorities are encouraged to invest in 'Resilience Services' that contribute towards improving the financial resilience of individuals. Financial resilience refers to the ability of individuals to withstand and recover from financial shocks – such as sudden income loss or unexpected expenses. The purpose of building financial resilience is to enable individuals to better manage future financial shocks and reduce the need for crisis support.

What is the Community Grants Programme?

The Community Grants Programme will invite successful organisations to bid for grant funding for organisations delivering activities that support CRF objectives locally in Barking & Dagenham.

We welcome innovative, collaborative and community-led proposals that can demonstrate clear benefits for residents and contribute to reducing poverty and financial hardship across the borough.

The CRF runs for the period 01 April 2026 to 31 March 2029.

- EOI Applications open Friday 18th September 2026
- EOI Applications close Friday 27th November 2026

If successful applicants will be asked to submit a formal application



A further Community Grants Programme will be available after April 2027.

Application Process

To applying, please:

1. Read the guidance note
2. Complete the Expression of interest
3. Keep the form in its original format
4. Email your application to James.Johnston@lbbd.gov.uk
5. Use the subject line: Application for CRF Grant Fund [Your Organisation]

You do not have to speak to the team first but we recommend it. Talking early helps make sure your bid is clear and fits the fund.

Expressions of interest

We are looking for organisations to apply with an expression of interest in the community grants programme for an opportunity to bid for funding through the **Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF): Barking & Dagenham Community Grants Programme**.

Organisations with successful expressions of interest will be invited to make a full application for CRF grant funding for the proposal.

This application will be subject to a formal application process where further detail of the proposal will be required.

The application process will be discussed with organisations prior to any formal bid with guidance and further information provided.

Eligibility - Who Can Apply?

Expressions of interest are welcome from:

- Registered charities
- Community and voluntary organisations
- Community Interest Companies (CICs)
- Social enterprises
- Faith organisations
- Tenant and resident groups
- Partnerships or consortiums of organisations
- Consortiums*

Organisations/applicants must demonstrate:



- Deliver services benefiting residents of Barking and Dagenham
- Good governance and finance: You can manage public money, keep clear records, and prevent fraud
- Safeguarding: You have the right policies and know how to report concerns
- Data protection: You handle personal data safely and follow GDPR
- Have a bank account in the organisation's name
- Equality and access: Your service is accessible and inclusive (including for disabled people and people without digital access)
- Working with others: You can take referrals, make warm referrals, and join local coordination meetings when needed

Organisations must be able to provide and evidence (on request):

- **Constitution and governance documents**
 - Constitution
 - Articles of association & memorandum
 - Trust of deed
 - Proof of registration
- **Financial documents**
 - Recent bank statement
 - Annual accounts
- **Operational policies and compliance**
 - Safeguarding policies
 - Equality & Diversity Policy
 - Public liability insurance

Does my organisation need to be based in Barking and Dagenham?

Not necessarily. However, your proposal must clearly demonstrate how it will benefit residents of Barking and Dagenham. Priority will be given to organisations that currently are based and operate in Barking & Dagenham.

Can organisations work together on an application?

Yes. Partnership and consortium* applications are encouraged where they can deliver better outcomes, reach more residents, or strengthen local support networks.

Organisations must form consortiums under a designated Lead Provider to deliver coordinated services.

Consortium funding is designed to:

- Bring together organisations under a Lead Provider
- Combine prevention expertise, local knowledge and lived experience



- Deliver coordinated support in areas of the highest deprivation

Successful consortiums will demonstrate:

- Strong understanding of local need and inequality
- Innovative approaches to preventing financial hardship
- Effective governance and delivery capability
- Proven track record in managing funding and partnerships

What We Want to Fund

We are seeking proposals that help residents move beyond crisis and towards greater financial security and wellbeing in Barking & Dagenham.

We are interested in projects and services that help residents build financial resilience and reduce the risk of future crisis.

What types of activities can be funded?

Examples of eligible activities include, but are not limited to:

Financial Resilience Services*

- Welfare benefits advice
- Income maximisation support including benefits take-up and enrolment support
- Debt advice and debt reduction initiatives
- Budgeting and money management support
- Financial capability programmes
- Programmes that help residents move from crisis support into longer-term stability
- Reducing repeat reliance on emergency support

Reducing the Cost of Essentials*

- Advice on energy efficiency and household costs
- Access to affordable food and essential, addressing food insecurity and reliance on food aid
- Crisis support as a gateway to longer-term help

Employment, Skills and In-work Poverty*

- Employment preparation and skills support
- Skills development.
- Mentoring and confidence building.
- Access to employment support and careers advice.



Community Coordination*

- Partnership development
- Community referral networks
- Co-location of services
- Neighbourhood-based support hubs
- Outreach programmes
- Community engagement activities
- Activities that improve access to services and opportunities
- Resident-led activity.
- Peer support.
- Opportunities for people with lived experience to shape local services.

Support for Vulnerable Residents*

- Mental health and wellbeing interventions
- Projects reducing social isolation
- Advocacy and practical support services
- It is not a requirement to target key populations; however, we would recommend activities to reach these groups and encourage them to connect and participate where possible, as they have been identified as most vulnerable.
- Key target groups include.
 - Older people, or those who are potentially isolated/lonely
 - Lone parents
 - Large Families (3+ Children)
 - Families with Young Children (0-5)
 - People with Disabilities/Long-Term Ill Health
 - Care Leavers
 - Young People with Mental Ill Health and NEET
 - Residents experiencing financial hardship

Inclusion and Access*

- Activities that improve access to services
- Community transport initiatives
- Access to learning and skills opportunities
- Programmes addressing barriers faced by disadvantaged households, priority and vulnerable groups
- Digital inclusion activities

***These lists are not exhaustive**

Principles and Ways of Working



Successful bids will demonstrate our principles and ways of working that shape our approach to anti-poverty

Working together with Communities

- We work with residents, not for them and design solutions together
- We listen to people's experiences and treat them as experts
- We share ownership of outcomes
- We are clear about decisions and follow-through ("you said – we did")

Share power and build trust

- The right voices are in the room (and not tokenistic)
- Lived experience influences decisions
- We challenge systems that exclude people

Make it local and easy to access

- Neighbourhoods are different – one size doesn't fit all
- We build on local strengths and knowledge
- Remove barriers like cost, transport, digital and language
- Reduce stigma so people feel able to ask for help

Focus on what works using data and lived experience

- Stories and lived experience matter alongside data
- Success means real improvements in people's lives not just activity
- Learn and adapt based on what we see

Expected Outcomes

Successful expressions of interest should demonstrate clear outcomes in one or more of the following outcomes, and any outcomes relevant to your project proposal*:

Residents

- Increased financial resilience
- Increased household income
- Reduced debt
- Increased benefit take-up
- Improved access to services
- Reduced need for emergency support
- Improved wellbeing, confidence and resilience
- Reduced financial hardship
- Reduced reliance on crisis support

Communities

- Stronger local support networks
- Improved referral pathways
- Better partnership working



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- Increased community participation
- More resilient neighbourhoods

Systems*

- Improved coordination between organisations
- Increased accessibility of support services
- Better understanding of local need
- Improved evidence of what works

*This list is not exhaustive

Monitoring and Reporting

What monitoring information would be required?

Successful organisations may be required to report on:

- Number of residents supported
- Demographic information
- Referral routes
- Activities delivered
- Outcomes achieved
- Case studies
- Customer feedback
- Expenditure against budget

Reporting requirements will be proportionate to the size and nature of the grant award and may vary for organisations/applicants.

Will organisations need to collect outcome data?

Yes. Organisations will be expected to collect information that demonstrates the impact of their project and how it contributes to CRF outcomes. This helps the Council evaluate the effectiveness of the fund and meet reporting requirements.

What we will not Fund

The fund is intended to create lasting impact and improve resilience.

Expressions of interest are unlikely to be supported where funding is primarily requested for:



- Ongoing food purchasing with no resilience-building activity
- Activities that duplicate existing fully funded statutory services
- Activities that do not clearly support crisis prevention or financial resilience
- Capital works or major building projects
- Large asset purchases
- Projects delivered outside Barking and Dagenham
- Activities that do not demonstrate a clear benefit for local residents
- Retrospective funding for expenditure already incurred

Funding Available

Expressions of interest may be submitted for either:

Small Grants

Up to £10,000

Suitable for targeted projects, pilot activity and local neighbourhood initiatives.

Medium Grants

£10,000 - £100,000

Suitable for most organisations delivering support. The length of the project and number of people supported should be increased. A clear evidence backed business case is required with concrete outcomes.

Large Grants

£100,000+

Only suitable for organisations with significant service delivery proposals and capacity for borough-wide services, strategic partnerships, community coordination activity and programmes delivering significant outcomes. May require contracts and procurement.

Funding levels should be proportionate to the scale of activity proposed and demonstrate value for money.

Will there be more funding rounds?

Funding periods can run for up to 3 years (2026/27 is Year 1) and organisations can express interest in funding periods over this period of time.



Grants that exceed 1 year will be subject to evaluation prior to awards into future years. Agreements in principal for funding can be agreed subject to successful evaluation.

Is matched funding required?

No. Matched funding is not required. However, applications should identify any funding or in-kind support already secured as this may strengthen the value-for-money case.

Combining CRF funding with other sources of grant funding such as public health grants is encouraged where there is a clear reason why combining grants will deliver better outcomes for residents.

Applying

How do I apply?

Expressions of interest must be completed using an expression of interest (EOI) and be submitted by the published deadline.

What information will I need to provide?

You will be asked to explain:

- Your proposal summary

This should provide a clear summary of the project/proposal and what CRF funding will deliver.

This should consider what you will do, your target cohort, what your key activities will be, how you intend to deliver and what your outcomes will be.

This should be provided in enough detail that your proposal is clear and understandable.

- How you will deliver the proposal

This should give an overview of the operational delivery of your proposal.

This should consider how our residents would access the service, how the service is staffed and any other detail that will explain your delivery of the proposed service.

- Your budget and value for money



This should tell us how much grant funding you would like to bid for to support your proposal and what you would spend it on.

Can I apply for more than one project?

Yes, provided each proposal demonstrates a distinct need and delivers clearly identified outcomes. The Council may consider the overall level of funding requested across multiple applications.

Will application support be available?

Yes. Guidance materials and opportunities to ask questions will be available during the application period to help organisations develop their proposals. An online workshop will be publicised with the date to be confirmed.

What happens next?

Expressions of interest will be scored against a set criteria.

We may ask further questions of organisations or seek to clarify proposals made. In some cases we may ask for a meeting with prospective organisations to discuss their proposals but this will be on a applicant by applicant approach depending on the type of proposal made.

Successful applications will then be invited to formally make an application for CRF grant funding.

Assessment and Decisions

How will expressions of interest be assessed?

Expressions of interest will be assessed by a panel and determined against criteria including*:

- Understanding of local need
- Alignment with CRF objectives
- Expected outcomes and impact
- Partnership working
- Monitoring arrangements
- Value for money

*This list is not exhaustive

A majority panel decision taking account of the specifics of any expression of interest against CRF policy and Council anti-poverty objectives is required to progress to the full application stage.



This decision making is final and there is no further appeals process for unsuccessful applications.

When will I find out if I have been successful?

Decisions will be communicated by email following completion of the assessment process.

Can I receive feedback if my application is unsuccessful?

Where possible, feedback will be provided to help organisations strengthen future applications.

Support for Applicants and further information

Expressions of interest must be completed using the expression of interest Application Form and submitted by the published deadline.

To ensure fair access to funding, the Council will provide:

- Applicant guidance notes
- Opportunities to ask questions during the application period

Who should I contact if I have a question?

Please contact the CRF team using the details provided in the application guidance if you require further information before submitting an application.

Email: James.Johnston@lbbd.gov.uk

Where can I find the application documents?

Application documents and guidance notes are available on the CRF Community Grants webpage