

Essentials Grants Round 4 Funding Guideline

The Lewisham Local Essentials Grants Round 4 Fund is a programme developed and run by Lewisham Local in partnership with local organisations to provide small grants to purchase essential items for local residents. It is funded by [Lewisham Council](#). This fund has been launched to help groups support their members/clients in financial hardship to purchase essential items or services that support the individual to make a real difference in their lives, which they do not have the means to fund themselves.

There is a maximum of £117,300 across the programme available to purchase essential items up to the value of £500 for each individual. Funds will need to be spent by 1st March 2026.

You can read the impact report for the pilot Lewisham Local Essentials Grant here: [The Lewisham Local Essentials Grant Impact Report 2023 – Lewisham Local](#)

Application Timeline

Thursday, 14 August 2025 – Applications Live

Thursday, 18 September 2025 – Deadline for Applications

Monday, 6th October 2025 – Applicants Notified

Aims

The aim of this fund is to support charities and registered community groups to purchase essential items that the individual would otherwise not be able to buy that have the potential to make a real difference in the person's life.

We also aim to learn more from the groups we fund to develop a Lewisham perspective relating to essentials needed, the communities that are most affected, emerging issues and other indirect impacts of the cost-of-living crisis experienced by beneficiaries. This could include for example mental health, physical health, debt, housing issues to inform our future grant making.

Who we aim to support

We continually strive to be a fair, equitable and accessible funder. We will support charities and registered community groups to provide small one-off grants to members and services for essential items who work with communities already experiencing inequity and are most affected by the cost-of-living crisis, according to research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation which are:

- **Children and young people**
- **Communities facing racial inequity**
- **Disabled people**
(including people whose physical, mental or cognitive impairments have a long term impact on their quality of life)
- **People who are economically or educationally disadvantaged**
(including people who define themselves from working class backgrounds, with long-term impact on their life outcomes; people currently experiencing financial hardship; children who are in receipt of free school meals and people in receipt of Universal Credit)
- **Women and girls** (including lone parent households and households with children)
- **Migrants**
- **Carers**

Preference will be given to organisations that:

- Work with multiple groups that already experiencing inequity and are most affected by the cost-of-living crisis
- Provide services in geographical areas of need with a good geographical spread around the borough
- Can demonstrate that they have established processes identifying clients and administering purchases or can set up and deliver quickly.

What grants are available?

There is a total pot of £117,300

Funding Stream – £3000 to organisations who are already providing cost of living related support to communities most affected by the cost-of-living crisis.

The essentials grant for organisations can include Project/Administration Costs of up to 18% I.e. this grant would be up to £540 for overheads and administration and £2460 to purchase items. Receipts and evidence of spend will need to be provided.

The essentials purchase of no more than £500 per individual can be spent on any of the following:

- Essential clothing
- Basic toiletries like soap, shampoo, toothbrushes, or sanitary items
- Support for medical costs
- Support with essential travel costs, such as visits to hospitals for essential care

- Support to access showers or washing facilities
- White goods including the cost of repair of installation and disposal
- Beds and mattresses
- Small essential refurbishments
- ID documentation
- Transport- a bike
- IT equipment
- School uniforms
- Energy saving devices
- Items essential for work, study or personal development

For items such as beds and whitegoods the project needs to check initially with the landlord or housing association to establish who is responsible for these items. Housing providers such as Phoenix Community Housing and Lewisham Homes also have a fund for white goods and furniture so it would be expected that the individual apply to this fund should they be eligible in the first instance, depending on the urgency of the request. [South East London Community Energy \(SELCE\)](#) are able to provide grants for some white goods to support individuals to reduce their energy costs. Whirlpool also provide small grants for some essential items [Essential Living Fund – Glasspool](#) (SELCE apply to Whirlpool on behalf of their clients) or IT equipment, community projects such as [Catbytes CIC](#) should be approached in the first instance.

We encourage groups to use local suppliers.

Costs must include installation and removal costs, so this needs to be considered when deciding the budget and purchases. Match funding can be used on items that may cost more than £500. It's advised the client finds the item and sends a link to the organisation to purchase on their behalf.

The grants must be awarded to:

- Lewisham residents only over the age of 18
- For people who can demonstrate they are on low incomes who are missing at least one essential and/or have visited a food bank within the last 30 days
- Eligible items must fall within the list above

All three criteria must be met.

What won't the grant pay for?

Unfortunately, we are unable to fund the following:

- Items that are the responsibility of the landlord (i.e. cookers)
- Items for people who don't live in Lewisham or who are under the age of 18

- Food
- Debts and arrears

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, projects must meet the following criteria:

- Be a registered charity or constituted group based in Lewisham who have a focus alleviating poverty and are working with individuals who are on low incomes and going without at least one essential or have visited a food bank within the last 30 days. This can include a registered charity, or a community group that has a constitution, a committee of 3 or more people unrelated and a bank account in the name of the organisation with at least two unrelated signatories, for example a CIC or CIO that meets the above requirements.
- Projects previously funded by Lewisham Local must be up-to-date on their Project monitoring form, if Project monitoring form, if you are unsure please contact funding@lewishamlocal.com before applying
- Provide community activities or services within the London Borough of Lewisham
- Organisations must have an organisational bank account requiring at least two unrelated signatories
- Complete an online application form before the application deadline
- All funds must be spent by 1st March 2026
- Organisations must keep financial records of transactions made using the grant award and keep copies of any purchase receipts to provide as evidence if requested at the end of the programme
- Adhere to monitoring requirements which includes reporting on what items have been purchased on an ongoing basis and a final impact report which details the evidence of impact on the individuals supported, case studies, data relating to essentials needed, anonymised demographic data (to understand who is affected), emerging issues and other indirect impacts of the cost of living crisis experienced by beneficiaries, for example mental health, debt, housing issues
- Successful organisations will also be asked to provide publicly accessible examples of their work (e.g. case studies, photographs-where appropriate-blog posts) to promote the work of Lewisham Local giving and must be willing to engage to share learning and reflections from the project in order to inform future ways of working.

Organisations must have the following policies and procedures in place in order to be eligible and able to submit them on application:

- Children's & Adults Safeguarding
- Health & Safety

- Public Liability Insurance

If you require help with any or all of these, or do not yet have these policies and procedures in place, please contact us before submitting your application to funding@lewishamlocal.com.