



PERTH &
KINROSS
COUNCIL

Cost of Living Fund Information

A Perth and Kinross where everyone can live life well, free from poverty and inequalities

Tackling
poverty

Cost of Living Fund

The fund opened in October 2022 and closed in January 2023 when all funds had been allocated.

Initially there was £320,000 available for community groups and organisations to apply for. This was extended in December 2022 and a further £100,000 was added. In total there was £420,000 available for the purposes of creating warm spaces, food and warm home packs.

The project was delivered by the Communities team who met weekly to assess applications and gather information from organisations about their proposals.

£170,000 for the costs of warm spaces was distributed to 95 successful applicants.

£250,000 for the costs of food support and/or warm home packs was distributed to 85 successful applicants.

In total there were 120 different organisations receiving funding for warm spaces and/or warm home packs/food support.

Information regarding availability of warm spaces was promoted through our website, social media and existing networks.

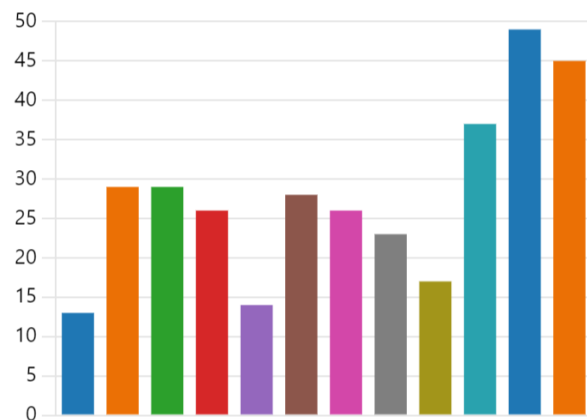


Evaluation

- There were 78 evaluation returns from the 120 organisations = 65% returns
- Based on these returns alone, here are the stats:
- 16,575 people benefitted from the fund (roughly 11% of the population of Perth & Kinross)
- 1049 volunteers were involved in delivering warm spaces, warm home packs, food and activities.
- 28 organisations had spent all of their funding at the time of evaluation.
- 32 organisations had NOT spent all of their funding at the time of evaluation.
- 18 organisations spent more than allocated and topped up from their other funds.

Geographical spread of applications by ward area

● Carse of Gowrie	13
● Strathmore	29
● Blairgowrie & The Glens	29
● Highland	26
● Strathtay	14
● Strathearn	28
● Strathallan	26
● Kinross-shire	23
● Almond & Earn	17
● Perth City South	37
● Perth City North	49
● Perth City Centre	45



Changes made to initially planned projects (a sample of responses)

- We made some adjustments due to unanticipated utilities costs (Perthshire Women's Aid)
- Introduced support services coming to our warm spaces (Letham 4 All)
- Electricity costs increased so part of the grant was used to cover this (KYTHE)
- Lunch and Kitchen component was greater than anticipated due to the high take up of the warm space (Strathmore Community Hub)
- 24 respondents cited that they made changes from their original plans including: 8 respondents noted that increased utilities and food costs impacted on their planned activities.

How did the funding benefit the community?

Theme	No of respondents
Helped to tackle social isolation	28
Provided residents with safe, warm spaces	49
Provided residents with resources to stay warm at home	15
Provided residents with food	35
Created more opportunities within the community which will continue	15

Quotes:

“We provided the only warm space in the Tulloch area including evening open times, food and activities”

(Tulloch Net)

“5 of our volunteers achieved their Food Hygiene Certificates”

(Burrelton Community Hub)

“Numbers of people attending has increased due to increased awareness. New social relationships have been formed”

(Orwell and Portmoak Church)

“Funding helped with heating costs and allowed us to continue community activities instead of having to cancel through the winter”

(Clunie Hall Association)

“Since starting the warm packs, we have had 20 new men through the door”

(Man Talk)

“A group of individuals formed a new group as a result of the warm space”

(Dunning Community Council)

“2 people found employment through engaging in the warm space. We have been able to provide stimulation and increased activities throughout the winter months. People were able to come together and found friendship and support”

(Rannoch Community Trust)

“Someone said that for the first time in 15 years they have friends and feel welcomed, valued and accepted. Another said it was their first conversation in a week”

(The Grub Hub)

“All libraries in Perth & Kinross were able to distribute 574 warm packs to adults and children”

(Culture P&K)

“15 community groups were involved in 9 venues, over 1000 hours of ‘cosy space opportunities’ and 127 cosy packs provided”

(Community Action Plan Auchterarder)

How did the funding help tackle inequalities?

Theme	No of respondents
Positive impact on Mental and Physical Health	16
Supported those experiencing fuel and food poverty	32
Increased inclusion and sense of community	38
Reduced financial embarrassment	11
Provided support in rural areas	9

Quotes:

“By providing warm packs we could ensure that people could remain warm at home and the provision of meals meant that people didn’t have to choose between heat or eat”

(Letham Community Sports Club)

“Providing financial support to purchase food has taken away some of the financial stress on unpaid carers who have increased energy costs to keep loved ones warm or visit them in hospital”

(PKAVS carers)

“We have been able to provide blankets to older people, those with disabilities, those facing homelessness or struggling with their tenancies”

(Scottish Fire and Rescue Service)

“There was a real benefit to people knowing that lunch would be provided and their heating didn’t need to be on until the evening – saved money and worry”

(St. Columba’s Episcopal Church)

“Our free activities enabled older people to get out and socialise which also improved their physical and mental health”

(Dunbarney and Forgandenny Parish Church)

“Even though our objective is to look after the ethnic minorities in the community, we supported anyone who needed help”

(Perth Minorities Association)

What have we learned?

- We need to improve cohesive partnership working in localities to avoid duplication of services.
- We need to ensure that funding is distributed fairly across the whole of Perth & Kinross, particularly in relation to needs in rural communities.
- We need to support groups and organisations to ensure they are adopting best value approaches.
- We need to change the language to ensure we reduce the stigma attached to 'Cost of living'.

Feedback from staff involved in delivering the fund:

“I took satisfaction in being part of a team which is helping people in the community, helping bring people together to prevent isolation, and realising the importance of the human need for contact and communication between each other”

“Throughout the delivery of the Cost-of-Living Fund, I have learned the importance of community engagement, partnership and collaborative working and I have a better understanding of the needs of our diverse communities more clearly”.

“The fund has allowed us to increase our understanding of the needs prevalent in our communities and provide resources for them to tackle these inequalities at a local level. To have over 1000 volunteers involved is phenomenal and demonstrates the sense of community across all areas of Perth & Kinross”.