

Household Support Fund

Step Up Grants

Guidance and Eligibility
Information for Partners

Step Up Grants:

The aim of this grants scheme is to create sustainable positive change for residents, by covering expenses that other schemes do not, and or that exceed the value that can be awarded through the Household Support / Energy Grants. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Furniture
- Carpets
- Whitegoods
- Deep cleans
- Arrears (housing support costs*)

Applications

Due to limited funding being available, only one application can be made per household in any one round of Household Support. Applications for support may only be made directly through referral by partner agencies.

Awards to residents are not likely to exceed £5,000 (unless exceptional circumstances that can be demonstrated).

It must be demonstrated that the support will provide sustainable positive change.

Closing date for applications is the 31 March 2024, however there is limited funding available therefore if all funds are spent, the scheme will close early. The scheme operates on a first come first served basis.

How to apply:

A referral must be made via the online form by a partner agency using the prescribed online form. Referrals will come through to the Social Prescribing team where they will be assessed and relevant validation checks made.

All partner agencies are required to obtain and record on their systems, consent from the resident and that their details will be shared with South Ribble Borough Council, to both make the application on their behalf, and for a meeting to be scheduled with one of the Council's Social Prescribing Link Workers to discuss further support and undertake the assessment.

We suggest that partners make the referral via our online submission form, whilst with the individual for whom the referral is being made where possible.

[Submit your referral here](#)

Eligibility Criteria	Validation Checks	Responsible
Resident of South Ribble & over 16 Years of Age	<p>Address and Identification Checks</p> <p>Document with address, not older than 3 months</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Tax bill • Utility Bill • Credit card statement or similar • Bank statement • DWP / Benefits statement / letter <p><i>If homeless confirmation that they are currently homeless in South Ribble (from the Housing Options team)</i></p>	SRBC Case Assessor
Not have in excess of £5,000 in household savings	<p>Document with address, not older than 3 months – all the following required where available and for all members of the household:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bank statements • Savings account statements <p>(if the applicant does not disclose other bank or savings accounts that make them ineligible, this will be investigated as fraud).</p>	SRBC Case Assessor
Family/household with or without children who are experiencing financial hardship	<p>Assessment from case assessor that family is experiencing financial hardship, which means that they are struggling to feed their family, to heat their home, or with other household/utility costs etc</p> <p>Evidence of financial hardship could include but is not limited to; difficulties and/or arrears due to inflationary energy costs, those who have been made redundant and have not yet received universal credit, or other loss of household income.</p> <p>It must be demonstrated that the support will provide sustainable positive change.</p> <p>Please see further information on assessing housing costs.</p>	SRBC Case Assessor
Have not previously made an application into this scheme	<p>Address and name check against existing / previous cases within the specific round of Household support Fund</p> <p><i>Applicants remain eligible if they have received funding through step up grants in previous rounds of Househ9old Support fund.</i></p>	SRBC Case Assessor

Further Information on Assessing Housing Costs

*Housing Costs - Exceptional circumstances

In exceptional cases of genuine emergency where existing housing support schemes do not meet this exceptional need, the Fund can be used to support housing costs.

Where eligible, ongoing housing support for rent must be provided through the housing cost element of Universal Credit (UC) and Housing Benefit (HB) rather than the Household Support Fund.

In addition, eligibility for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) must first be considered before emergency housing support is offered through the Household Support Fund. The Authority must also first consider whether the claimant is at statutory risk of homelessness and therefore owed a duty of support through the Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG).

In exceptional cases of genuine emergency, households in receipt of Housing Benefit, Universal Credit, or Discretionary Housing Payments can still receive housing cost support through the Household Support Fund if it is deemed necessary by their Authority. However, the Fund should not be used to provide housing support on an ongoing basis or to support unsustainable tenancies.

Individuals in receipt of some other form of housing support could still qualify for the other elements of the Household Support Fund, such as food, energy, water, essentials linked to energy and water and wider essentials.

The Fund cannot be used to provide mortgage support, though homeowners could still qualify for the other elements of the Fund (such as food, energy, water, essentials linked to energy and water and wider essentials). Where a homeowner is having difficulty with their mortgage payments, they should contact their lender as soon as possible to discuss their circumstances as lenders will have a set procedure to assist.

The Fund can exceptionally and in genuine emergency be used to provide support for historic rent arrears built up prior to an existing benefit claim for households already in receipt of Universal Credit and Housing Benefit. This is because these arrears are excluded from the criteria for Discretionary Housing Payments. However, support with rent arrears is not the primary intent of the fund and should not be the focus of spend. It is expected that the focus of support should be on food and bills and that support for housing costs should only be given in exceptional cases of genuine emergency.

If a resident is applying for housing costs, the Housing Options team will feedback to the assessor to consider if the applicant would be eligible for alternative housing support schemes funding before using the Household Support Fund, in addition to carrying out checks to ensure that the applicant has not claimed from multiple funds for the same costs (without declaring this at point of application).

In no circumstances are costs towards mortgages able to awarded.

This Page is Blank