

Change into Action Walsall Funding Guidelines

1. Background

Change into Action (CiA) has been created by a consortium of local and regional government, public and voluntary sector organisations, operating as part of the West Midlands Combined Authority's (WMCA) Homelessness Taskforce.

Change into Action has three objectives:

- Providing to the public information about homelessness
- Providing to the public a way in which to give money to support people who are or have been sleeping rough
- Enabling the public to identify and locate rough sleepers so that they can be connected to local support services

The Homelessness Taskforce through the WMCA will support Local Authorities (LA's) to set up local processes and adapt the CiA website for their area. The WMCA will provide and manage the CiA framework. The responsibility and oversight of the process for managing, prioritising, distributing and reporting on use of the funds raised sits with the individual LA who will report to the WMCA Homelessness Taskforce on progress.

It is vital that in raising funds there is a clear and transparent process for managing, prioritising, distributing and reporting on use of the donations received.

This document sets out how this process will operate in Walsall.

Walsall's Homelessness Steering Group and Walsall Council's Money Home Job (MHJ) service in partnership with OneWalsall will oversee access to the funds.

OneWalsall will act as the fund holder.

Walsall's Homelessness Steering Group will be responsible for the approval of funds and will monitor use of the funding raised. Walsall Council's MHJ service will work in partnership with OneWalsall to promote the scheme, deliver the administration of the CiA funding including receiving funds, distribution of funds and monitoring spend.

2. Conditions of Use

Applications will only be considered from approved CiA delivery partners that are working in Walsall with rough sleepers, individuals who have rough slept recently or individuals who are at risk of becoming homeless.

Applications must show how the funding requested will support rough sleepers and those at risk of sleeping rough to move off the streets, away from homelessness and re-build their lives.

Decisions on funding will be at the sole discretion of Walsall's Homelessness Steering Group. Where necessary, Walsall's Homelessness Steering Group and Walsall Council's MHJ service may request further information from the organisation applying for funding in order to progress and process a funding application.

The following conditions apply to the use of CiA Walsall funding:

- No service user will be asked to repay any amount of the CiA Walsall fund.
- The fund must never be used as a loan fund.
- Repeat applications may be considered, on a case by case basis, where it can be evidenced that further funding will continue to prevent homelessness or rough sleeping from occurring or will ensure ongoing support for rough sleepers.
- Applications which propose provision of services / support already in place will not be funded.

3. Thresholds and Guide to Funding Available

All applications for funding will be referred to Walsall's Homelessness Steering Group for a decision. The maximum amount of funding that can be requested through a single application is £1,000.

Applications for amounts above £1,000 will only be considered in exceptional circumstances by Walsall's Homelessness Steering Group. The exceptional circumstances will need to be evidenced as part of the application process.

4. Change into Action Key Definitions

Rough Sleeper/Rough Sleeping

For the purposes of clarity, CiA Walsall seeks to define the term 'rough sleeper/rough sleeping' below using the Government's 2010 definition:

People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments). People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or "bashes").

For applications to support those who have been recently rough sleeping or are at risk of rough sleeping; we ask for applications to provide information on the nature of the rough sleeping risk or details about the date and duration of recent periods of

rough sleeping where an application relates to a specific individual. We have placed no set limit upon a period or set of circumstances that this may include.

The decision to award funding will be solely at the discretion of Walsall's Homelessness Steering Group after thoroughly assessing the application.

5. Change into Action Walsall Funding Principles

- a) All means of alternative funding should where possible be explored first, providing evidence where appropriate when making an application for CiA Walsall funding.
- b) The fund must not be used to replace statutory benefits, government awarded grants or any other payments to which the service users have entitlement.
- c) CiA Walsall funding will only be granted if there will be a demonstrable positive impact upon the life of rough sleepers or those at risk of rough sleeping, helping them to transition into independent living and improve their health and well-being.
- d) The expenditure of CiA Walsall funding must be reasonable and necessary.
- e) CiA Walsall funding applications and grants will bear public scrutiny, creating an ethos where involvement, accountability and transparency are welcomed and where challenge is viewed as a crucial and constructive measure of improving outcomes.

6. What can the Change into Action Walsall Fund be used for?

Applications to CiA Walsall can be made to support a named individual or to fund a small project.

Applications for individuals

This will be dependent on each service user's needs and around their individual case. Examples of uses that may be considered appropriate are listed below. Please note, this list is not exhaustive:

- Bedding, furniture, white goods for new accommodation
- Basic kitchen items if an individual is moving into independent accommodation
- New clothes that are bought to fit an individual
- The first £10 on the electricity/gas meter
- A travel card for a month to get to appointments
- Rent deposit for a private flat
- The fee to join a course or an art or exercise class to build confidence and move away from the street

CiA Walsall would strongly encourage a conversation with the individual about what would make a difference in their lives.

Applications for small projects

Applications should focus on the delivery of small-scale projects or interventions that will support rough sleepers to move off the streets or initiatives that aim to prevent rough sleeping in Walsall.

Applications requesting funding to prevent rough sleeping should focus on the set-up and delivery of services and / or support to assist those at risk of rough sleeping or with a history of rough sleeping to move towards accessing and sustaining settled accommodation.

Applications could also focus on the delivery of wider support services and interventions that aim to improve the health and wellbeing and / or rebuild the confidence of rough sleepers or those at risk of sleeping rough which will in turn help with the journey towards obtaining and sustaining settled accommodation.

We welcome consortium or partnership bids where community groups may wish to work together with members of the public in order to help rough sleepers. We also encourage applications using match-funding.

Examples of the type of activities or interventions that could be funded are listed below. Please note, this list is not exhaustive:

- Increased provision to meet spikes in demand or respond to severe weather / other events that will reduce harm for those sleeping rough in the Borough
- Piloting new ways of working or innovative approaches to offering support to rough sleepers
- Trialling responses to meeting identified gaps in existing service provision
- Additional provision to meet the immediate welfare and support needs of those sleeping rough
- Delivering or commissioning organised activities that support confidence, self-esteem and health and well-being and tackle loneliness and isolation
- Interventions that provide support to help individuals to volunteer and prepare to be 'work ready'

CiA Walsall would strongly encourage a conversation with service users and those with lived experience about what would make a difference in their lives and this should be evidenced in applications to the fund.

7. Fund Administration

OneWalsall will act as the fund holder and will administer payments to successful organisations.

Walsall's Homelessness Steering Group has responsibility for overseeing the fund and its allocation. The Steering Group will meet on a quarterly basis to review and make a decision on applications received and monitor the progress of those projects that have received funding through previous allocations.

Walsall's Homelessness Steering Group members include representatives from Walsall Council's MHJ service, Adult Social Care, Children's Services, OneWalsall, whg, Accord Housing Group, Public Health, Voluntary Sector organisations, Police, Probation and an elected member Homelessness Champion.

Walsall's Homelessness Steering Group will require up to 4 core members in attendance. The Steering Group will fully assess each funding application according to the guidelines set out in this document. Steering Group members cannot be involved in the decision making if they have a vested or pecuniary interest in the application. If they have an interest, they must declare it before the decision is made and withdraw from the decision-making process in relation to that application.

A decision by a minimum of 3 Steering Group members will be required to make an award for payment. The decision will be made by a simple majority.

In exceptional circumstances Walsall's Homelessness Steering Group chair may agree to make a decision on an urgent application outside of the quarterly meeting schedule. Applications must clearly state the reason for why an urgent decision is required.

CiA Walsall welcomes applications throughout the year. Walsall's Homelessness Steering Group may close applications if donations to the scheme have been exhausted.

8. Application Process

Registering to become a Change into Action Walsall Delivery Partner

Before any funding applications can be made to CiA Walsall, your organisation must register as a delivery partner. You can do this by completing the delivery partner application web form which can be found on the CiA Walsall website. If this document is required in an alternative format or reasonable adjustment required, organisations should contact WalsallCIA@walsall.gov.uk

Walsall's Homelessness Steering Group will review your application and notify you once you have been registered as a delivery partner. We will aim to process these applications within 5 working days. The Steering Group may request additional information from organisations in order to verify the application.

The delivery partner application form will only need to be completed once to allow us to register your organisation as a delivery partner. Support to complete the delivery partner application form can be provided by contacting WalsallCIA@walsall.gov.uk

Submission of Funding Applications

Once an organisation is registered as a delivery partner, they can apply for funding by completing and submitting the CiA Walsall funding application form which is available to download from the Walsall CiA website. This form should be fully completed and submitted by email to WalsallCIA@walsall.gov.uk

If the funding application form is required in an alternative format or reasonable adjustment required, or you require support to complete the funding application form please contact WalsallCIA@walsall.gov.uk

Funding Application Decisions

All applications for funding will be reviewed at Walsall's Homelessness Steering Group quarterly meetings. The Steering Group will aim to inform applicants of a decision within 5 working days of the group meeting.

In exceptional circumstances the Homelessness Steering Group chair may agree to make a decision on an application outside of the quarterly meeting schedule. There must be a clearly stated reason for why an urgent decision is required.

A representative from Walsall Council's MHJ service or OneWalsall will contact the lead contact for each application once the Homelessness Steering Group has made a decision on their funding application.

Once communication has been received that the application has been successful, the organisation should begin delivery within the budget agreed by Walsall's Homelessness Steering Group. The successful organisation should ensure that they retain all receipts and evidence for any purchases made.

Cash should not be given directly to individuals.

If an organisation receives a negative decision, there is no right of appeal. However, the organisation can reapply and seek feedback on their application.

Payment to Organisations

Payments for approved applications will be made to organisations by OneWalsall. The successful organisation will be contacted to confirm bank account details and relevant references.

All successful applications will receive payment prior to delivery under the condition that they will provide all of the following monitoring information to Walsall's Homelessness Steering Group.

The successful organisation should keep reasonable evidence detailing costs incurred and activity delivered, this will include:

- Receipts and evidence of goods/items/services purchased

- Confirmation of payments made by the organisation
- Confirmation that the service user(s) have received the goods, items or services

If an organisation that has received funding from CiA Walsall does not submit the requested monitoring information or provide proof of delivery Walsall's Homelessness Steering Group may request a reimbursement of funding and this may affect the organisations ability to make further applications to the fund.

If the cost of a service or product which has been approved changes, contact in writing should be made to WalsallCIA@walsall.gov.uk stating the reason for the change in cost and the new expected cost. The revised costs and reasons for these will be considered and the applicant will be informed if these can be approved.

9. Record Keeping and Monitoring

Successful applicants must record how any monies obtained from the fund have been utilised and should provide this information as part of the quarterly monitoring information to be provided to Walsall's Homelessness Steering Group.

OneWalsall in partnership with Walsall Council's MHJ service will monitor activity undertaken by organisations that have received funding. Successful applicants will be asked to provide progress and performance updates in line with the targets and outcomes set out in the original application and to submit a short exit summary report when the activity is completed.

Receipts must be obtained by the successful organisation for all purchases made / costs incurred through the delivery of a project or initiative through the CiA Walsall programme and the original proof of expenditure should be retained by the organisation. Financial monitoring information should be provided as part of the quarterly project update.

10. Impact of Change into Action Walsall Funding

CiA Walsall and its partners are keen to hear stories of how the support funded through CiA has made a difference. Good news stories can be provided in all sorts of different ways, including case studies, interviews with support staff and through the use of performance monitoring information.

As part of receiving a CiA Walsall grant, we would like to work with organisations to support the CiA communications campaign and show the positive outcomes that are being achieved throughout Walsall.

We would welcome the opportunity to engage with organisations that have received funding about how the public might get to hear about what has been done with their donations. Please contact WalsallCIA@walsall.gov.uk for further information.