



Coordinated Community Support Programme

Oldham is one of four CCS programme pilot areas in England and Wales¹. Principal aims of the programme are to:

- Address the gaps that exist in emergency support provision through better networking of local agencies providing emergency assistance for individuals and families facing financial crisis
- Reduce repeat instances of financial crisis by addressing underlying causes of crises, as well as the immediate emergency

Background

Centrally funded UK Government Crisis Loans and Community Care Grants were devolved to Local Authorities in 2013. Some Council schemes ceased with the end of ring-fenced Government funding but Oldham Council's Local Welfare Provision scheme remains open to applications from residents in need of emergency financial support. Research by The Children's Society in 2018 found that availability and knowledge of provision varied dramatically across England and Wales, and that navigating systems of support in a locality can be difficult for those in need as well as for agencies seeking to support them. There has been a notable increase in the role of the voluntary sector in the provision of emergency financial support in recent years and the CCS programme was devised to strengthen partnerships between Local Authorities and VCS organisations.

The CCS programme team are working to improve access to emergency financial support, including Local Welfare Assistance schemes in all pilot sites. We are liaising with partners in Oldham to clarify eligibility criteria and simplify referral processes to sources of support.

Oldham Year 1 pilot site funding overview

No funding had been distributed in Oldham prior to Covid-19. Since March, the programme has:

- Provided funding for SAWN to resume safe delivery of items and supply furniture packs to vulnerable clients, including those with No Recourse to Public Funds.
- Created a 6-month hardship fund for clients of the Ancora project. The fund covers emergency expenses which are not offered by the Council's Local Welfare Provision.
- Funding Ancora leaflets to be placed in food parcels distributed from Oldham foodbank. The flyer sets out details of the advice and support services offered by Ancora.
- Committed to provide interim funding to REEL's *Clothes Rack*, enabling the offer to be sustained and expanded beyond Fitton Hill.

The CCS Oldham pilot site has £45,000 funding per year available for the remaining two years of the programme. Whilst the Local Authority is a key partner, only the VCS can be in receipt of funds.

¹ CCS programme summary: <https://coordinatedcommunitysupport.org.uk/content/coordinated-crisis-support-programme-proposal>



What Next?

Organisations represented at the CCS programme partnership meeting will all be invited to sign the programme [local partnership charter](#) on behalf of their organisation.

The meeting on 10th September will be an opportunity to consider priorities for the second phase of the programme. Questions to consider include:

- What are the barriers to providing aftercare in your organisation?
- What are the barriers to addressing underlying needs?
- What are the barriers your organisation face to improve access to crisis support?
- What needs to happen to make application process for the LWP and other support simpler and more supported?
- What are the barriers to coordinating emergency financial support provision in Oldham?