Argyll and Bute Council
FLEXIBLE FOOD FUND –
SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES
Quick Facts

- Second largest local authority in Scotland
- 690,899 hectares – 9% of Scotland
- Population – 86,810
- Average population density 13 persons per square km Scottish average 69
- 23 inhabited islands
- 55% live in remote rural areas
Argyll and Bute – The Area
Changing Landscape
Argyll and Bute Context

- Predominance of low pay sectors like agriculture, forestry and tourism
- High level of fuel poverty compared to the rest of Scotland
- Affordable housing challenges
Driver for Innovation

Formation of Community Food Forum in February 2020

Increasing numbers of people looking for hardship related support

Provision of food parcels to vulnerable people during pandemic

Clear need for collaboration re crisis support and provision welfare advice
Initial Response - Lockdown

- Direct Delivery of Free School Meals
- Ambient food parcels
- Supported local shops
- Volunteer Group purchasing cards
- Fresh, local food parcels
- Frozen meal deliveries
- Bespoke support for individuals
Initial Response - Lockdown

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- Fresh, local food parcels
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- Bespoke support for individuals
A lady from Garelochhead has phoned in to say a “Huge thank you” for food parcel that she has received.

Her husband has recently recovered from being seriously ill from Covid-19 and only just got home. She said the yoghurt that he ate was the first proper thing she has seen him enjoy.

I sobbed for 5 minutes after this call.

I wanted to say how grateful I am for the food you left for me this afternoon.
It is perfect and makes me feel there are people who care.
Tonight I am looking forward to my new potatoes with Graham’s butter, salad of peppers and carrot and cheese with a toffee yoghurt chasers!
I am most grateful
Thank you very, very much
Best
(clapping)

We have received a second food parcel today via the Coastguards and I just wanted to say how impressed we are with the produce. I didn’t even know Flora vegan spread existed and it is impossible to obtain vegan cheese in Mull. I have created my first vegan pizza, something I have longed to try because I just couldn’t tolerate the ingredients in standard pizza.

So – I just wanted to let everyone involved in choosing the products and getting the parcels to us that all you hard work and efforts are very much appreciated.

Thank you!
Flexible Food Fund - Principles

Cross sector collaborative working, joined up approach delivering
- Financial insecurity
- Food insecurity
- Fuel poverty

Income based response, cash first principle but appropriate alternative food provision where necessary

Health and wellbeing approach

Incentivise engagement with support organisations and local community groups
# Eligibility Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Over 16 and resident in Argyll and Bute</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experiencing Financial Hardship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In receipt of qualifying benefit or be on an equivalent low income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ready reckoner guide but discretion key</td>
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## Flexible Food Fund Grant Awards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Composition</th>
<th>Monthly Payment (£)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single adult (no children)</td>
<td>£80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single parent + 1 child</td>
<td>£185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single parent + 2 children</td>
<td>£255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single parent + 3 children</td>
<td>£320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single parent + 4 children</td>
<td>£390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single parent + 5 children</td>
<td>£460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple (no children)</td>
<td>£150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple + 1 child</td>
<td>£250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple + 2 children</td>
<td>£320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple + 3 children</td>
<td>£390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple + 4 children</td>
<td>£460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple + 5 children</td>
<td>£530</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Project initiation

- Contract with Bute Advice
- Anticipated volumes
- Use of technology
- Spreadsheets
- Webforms Flexible Food Fund Application Form (argyll-bute.gov.uk)
- Communication Strategy
- Marketing and promotion
  - Press release
  - Leaflets
  - Social media
  - Local community newsletters
- Reporting on Outcomes
Key Successes

Total at July 21

- Households supported: 549
- Persons supported: 1,006
- Children in supported households: 457
- 96.5% of customers engage in support, receive 2 pays

### Household size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household size</th>
<th>No. of Claims</th>
<th>Grant Paid</th>
<th>Grant Rejected</th>
<th>Total Claims Supported</th>
<th>Claim % by Household Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single adult (no children)</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>49.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single parent + 1 child</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>14.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single parent + 2 children</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>8.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single parent + 3 children</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single parent + 4 children</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single parent + 5 children</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple (no children)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple + 1 child</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>6.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple + 2 children</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple + 3 children</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple + 4 children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple + 5 children</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>390</strong></td>
<td><strong>159</strong></td>
<td><strong>549</strong></td>
<td><strong>649</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>
Impact on Foodbanks

Level of demand for HLF reducing for certain client groups, single parents.

In the 2020/2021 financial year HLF:
- Issued 2,389 bags of food
- Supported 2,938 adults and 1,035 children with one week's supply of food

Circa 460 bags of food quarter from 1 March to 31 May 2019

Circa 600 bags of food in same quarter in 2020

Circa 510 bags of food in 2021 for same period
Stats show that the majority of success has been in Bute and Cowal:
- SIMD main areas of multiple deprivation
- Bute Advice and ALlenergy already have a good network of contacts in these areas.

Roadshows being delivered across the region:
- To increase take-up of support, activate referrals in areas where take-up is low
- Improve network of contacts in other areas, NHS, Council and other support agencies
- Promote the support on offer and encourage engagement
- Promote health and wellbeing outcomes
Initial Findings

Argyll and Bute Flexible Food Fund

- Incentivised people to get welfare advice and support even after being refused a crisis grant
- Client gain is £760,000 with debt under review of £64,000, average £1,385 per household
- Reduced reliance of foodbanks
- Help mitigate child poverty and increase health and wellbeing
- Strong relationship public sector and voluntary sector organisations
- Provide employment in area for support workers in the voluntary sector
- Client gain is £760,000 with debt under review of £64,000, average £1,385 per household

Client gain is £760,000 with debt under review of £64,000, average £1,385 per household.
“Mrs Smith was feeling extremely depressed and unable to cope. As part of a couple with a young family she had repeatedly failed to engage with support services. Although her partner was working, the family income was very low and support through benefit top ups was critical. Through the concerted efforts made by the Flexible Food Fund project in conjunction with her Health Visitor she was supported to a successful conclusion regarding her FFF claim, she was also supported to claim the Best Start grants and Scottish Child payments that she had been unaware of. Having had such a positive experience, she now feels better able to access support should she need it in the future. Her fears of being able to cope financially over the summer were removed, greatly improving her mental health. This has since led to her working towards resolving their rent arrears with ACHA housing association. The family also benefited from energy vouchers from ALIenergy”.

Case Studies
Key Successes

“Realising our potential together”

Effective engagement with our internal and external partners.
Keeping it simple
Setting clear aims and objectives, common to all organisations
Raising awareness of services available
Building and expanding working relationships, Sharing best practice, IRRV, NHS, Scottish Government, Money Advice Agencies and the Big Lottery Fund
Key Achievements

July 2021

549 households helped
£760,000 of client gain, £1,385 per household supported

Evidence that footfall is reducing in foodbanks

Evidence that Crisis grant claim numbers reducing

Excellent working relationships developed

Roadshows, get to every community

Supporting employment in our communities