

Cost of Living Alliance Update May 2024

In this newsletter you will find information about:

- Alliance highlights and news about partner activities
- Digital Signposting Platform for H&F
- Survey on the local Voluntary and Community Sector
- Extension of the Household Support Fund
- Alliance Summer Conference – 11 July 2024

Alliance highlights and news about partner activities

The **Alliance Steering Group** met in April and heard about the great work delivered by Alliance partner, H&F Giving, through LBH&Fs **Winter Support Fund 2023/4**.

This initiative was open to all voluntary and community sector organisations and provided funding to deliver targeted support to low-income households and residents with additional support needs. Priority groups included families with children, pensioners, carers and Disabled residents, who were given help with food, shopping, and other essentials.

Our thanks to Louise and Sophie, [@H&F Giving](#), for their amazing efforts working jointly with the council in delivering this. Key highlights are below and to find out more, head to [Winter Support Fund - An Update - H&F Giving \(hfgiving.org.uk\)](#):

- Winter Support Fund provided **£340k** to **35** local organisations
- Projects supported **8,940** individuals and **3,950** households
- Targeted help for those that needed it most (food, fuel, clothing):



- ❑ **77%** of those supported had socio-economic disadvantages
- ❑ **50%** of those helped were families with children
- ❑ **43%** were from multi-ethnic communities

Digital Signposting Platform for H&F



At our Cost-of-Living Alliance Conferences in 2023, you said a key priority was to have a digital signposting platform to help guide residents to the right local services. We are happy to report that [Ayup](#) has been appointed to develop one.

This will be a coproduced Alliance project to improve how people engage with third sector and council services. Residents will be able to find information about advice and support services for free via a resident-facing online portal.

Digitally signposting reliable information can help voluntary and community organisations small and large to provide early support to residents. The platform will give easy access to information about services and offer greater visibility to the work you do to help residents.

Work to implement this much needed community resource has already started and is expected to be in place by August 2024. For an example of what the H&F platform could look like, please take a look at [Hounslowconnect.com](https://www.hounslowconnect.com).

To find out more about this work or how to get involved, please contact Bathsheba.mall@lbhf.gov.uk.

Time to speak up - we want to hear your views...

The third sector includes charities, community groups and social enterprises that are not for profit, many of whom are part of the Alliance.


We are determined to help maintain a strong and capable third sector that can support our changing communities. We want to build stronger, active, and more connected communities. To do this, we need your help.


We have launched a survey to ask residents for their views on how we can achieve this. We want to know about residents' experiences of the third sector and how we can best support the sector. Please use this link to [share your feedback!](#)


This survey will close on **16 June 2024**. For all enquiries, please contact policy@lbhf.gov.uk.




H&F's cost-of-living 2023/24 support Did you know that throughout 2023/24:

 The Cost-of-Living Advice Team, other Council services and the Foodbank issued 2,342 fuel vouchers across the year which were redeemed by residents

 Our Cost-of-Living Advice Team: helped 5,700 residents, 91% receiving benefits

 In the past year, 1,676 awards were made to looked after and other children in need, and in addition, with targeted support for 645 care experienced persons and young people with additional support needs.

 We made 1500 payments to low income / disabled households, to help towards the cost of utilities and higher energy needs.



Extension of the Household Support Fund

The March Spring Budget announced another extension of the Household Support Fund to provide a 5th round of funding. This national scheme, while being funded in short-term tranches, has nevertheless allowed us to help target support for low income and vulnerable households who need essential, or crisis help. The council have also contributed funding to help with the cost-of-living crisis to maximise the support we can give to residents.

With your help, we will be continuing to provide this much needed and important safety net.

Save the date: Alliance Summer Conference – 11 July 2024



Please come and join us at the next **Summer Alliance Conference** It's a great opportunity to share ideas, build on the work we have been doing to help our residents, community, charity, voluntary groups and to network. We will review and be setting priorities for shaping our continued work responding to the high Cost-of-Living. You can sign up using this link:

[H&F Cost of Living - Summer Alliance Conference, 11 July 2024 - sign up for eventbrite tickets](#)

It will be really great to see you there and I hope you can join us.

Best wishes,

Bathsheba Mall

Programme Lead

Bathsheba.mall@lbhf.gov.uk

Hammersmith & Fulham Council

For information and advice about Cost-of-Living support please go to

<https://www.lbhf.gov.uk/cost-living-support>

You can reach the Cost-of-Living Advice Team by:

- An online message using our [cost-of-living enquiry form](#)
- Using our free phone number [0800 917 6994](tel:08009176994). The line is open 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday
- Visit in person at 145 King Street in Hammersmith, between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.