

How to apply for a Cambridge Street Aid grant

Introduction to this guide

This guide explains how to apply for a grant from Cambridge Street Aid. We want this guide to support people to submit strong applications and to understand what happens once they have applied. This includes the criteria that must be met for grants to be awarded and the timeframe for responses.

This guide has been created with input from several organisations that have supported people to apply for Street Aid grants, including Wintercomfort, Change Grow Live and Cambridge Churches Homeless Project, as well as grant recipients. We would like to thank them all for their suggestions.

What Street Aid does

Street Aid provides financial help to people who are or have been street homeless, to support them to turn a corner in their lives. The things that people need to move off the streets vary from person to person, so Street Aid enables someone to think about what will practically help them, and to apply for a grant to pay for it.

The fund is there to be used by the agency working with the person who is, or was recently, street homeless, to help deliver their plan to get them off the street or prevent them from returning.

Street Aid also gives people who want to help an alternative to handing money directly to people on the streets.

How the money is raised

The Street Aid fund comes entirely from voluntary donations. People donate online through [justgiving.com](https://www.justgiving.com), at contactless giving points at local businesses and organisations across Cambridge, and at events. Many people also set up standing orders to donate regularly to Street Aid.

Individual donations of just a few pounds are combined with hundreds of others, to make a meaningful sum that will make a real difference to someone's life.

In just over two years, over £50,000 has been raised by generous Street Aid donors. Every single penny of this goes to grants for individuals – none of it goes to staff salaries or any other running costs.

Most of the money raised each month is awarded in grants the following month. If there is ever insufficient money in the fund to award grants at a particular time, referring organisations will be notified by Street Aid and the payments of grants might be delayed for a short time. We hope this will not happen in the future as we broaden our fundraising activities.

Street Aid grant criteria

There are three criteria that people must meet in order to be eligible for a Street Aid grant:

- 1. The person must be, or have been in the past, street homeless.** It is not enough to be *at risk* of street homelessness, as the fund is specifically for people who are currently living on the streets or who have lived on the streets before.
- 2. The grant must be for something that would help the person get off, or stay off, the streets.** We encourage people to be creative as to what that ‘something’ could be – we don’t restrict what people apply for, as long as it will practically help the person to get off, or stay off, the streets. The grant cannot be used for things that will help the person live on the streets, such as a sleeping bag.
- 3. The person must be a resident of, or have links to, Cambridge City.**

The Street Aid fund will not normally be used for crisis support. It is there to offer planned, strategic help that will bring about change for the person. Referring organisations are encouraged to consider the medium to long-term needs of their clients as identified in their support plans, and to make applications based on these needs.

Application process

How do I apply?

The Street Aid grant application form can be found online:

<https://ukcf.secure.force.com/forms/cambridgestreetaid>.

Applicants must be referred by an organisation that has assessed their circumstances and can confirm that they are in need of the funding, and that this cannot be found elsewhere.

If you are an applicant or a support worker and you have questions about an application at any point in the process, please don’t hesitate to contact us (contact details at the end of this guide) so we can discuss with you.

There is a step-by-step guide to filling out the form below.

How much can I apply for?

Grants of **up to £750** will be paid to the referring organisation to spend the money as agreed. Receipts will be requested to prove how the money has been used.

There is a limit of **one grant** per person in any **six-month** period and **two grants** in any **18-month** period (from the date of the first award). It might be possible to award more grants for someone in exceptional circumstances.

Who makes the decision?

Applications first go to Cambridgeshire Community Foundation, which administers the Street Aid fund. Applications are then sent onto Cambridge City Council where they are checked to ensure they meet the application criteria.

If an applicant meets the Street Aid criteria set out above, they will be awarded a Street Aid grant. The amount of money applied for might need to be discussed with both the applicant and their support worker, if a cheaper alternative can provide the same help.

Since Street Aid started in November 2016, over 150 grants have been given out to people.

How long will it take?

We aim to respond to an application within two weeks of receiving it. Assuming the criteria are met and once the amount of the grant has been agreed, the money will be transferred to the referring organisation two weeks after the grant has been approved.

This means that most successful applicants will receive their Street Aid grant **within four weeks of applying**.

Street Aid grants are not normally used to provide crisis support. However, if an application is flagged to us as **urgent**, we will aim to award the grant within **one week**.

Application form – step by step

This part of the guide is for referring agents, usually support workers who work for the referring organisation and are applying for a Street Aid grant on behalf of their client. Look out for our **top tips** in each section!

Registration

The first thing you need to do is register an email account.

The registration page explains how the application process works and that you should apply on behalf of a person who has been assessed by your organisation.

You will need to tick to confirm you have read and understood the information on the page and then enter your email address.

Once you have done this, a link to the online application form will be sent to the email address you provided.

Top tip: Get all the information you will need in place before starting the application form.

This includes details of the person's history of street homelessness, what a grant will be used for and how much money will be needed (including quotes for specific items).

Section 1: Referring Organisation

Here we ask you to provide the name, postal address, web address and telephone number of the referring organisation.

We also ask for your contact details, including your name, job title, email address and telephone number.

Top tip: Save your application as you go through by clicking the 'Save Application' button on the right hand side of the screen.

Section 2: Grant Application

Here we ask for details of the proposed grant beneficiary, including their name and their circumstances.

We also ask you to state what the grant will be used for.

Top tip: Give as many details as you can to show how the person meets the Street Aid criteria. In particular, you must state whether the person is or has been street homeless (and, if so, when).

Section 3: Details on the impact of a Cambridge Street Aid grant

Here we ask for details of how a grant would help the recipient to get off or stay off the streets.

We also ask for the proposed beneficiary's ethnicity, age and gender. This is optional if the applicant would rather not say.

Top tip: Give as many details as you can to show how the grant will practically help the person to move away from, or stay away from, the streets. In particular, if the grant is part of a larger plan for the person, explain what this is.

Section 4 - Request and Consent

Here we ask for the amount of money that is requested and the bank details of the referring organisation, including a bank paying in slip.

We ask you to state any alternative sources of help you may have tried before applying for a Street Aid grant. If you are applying for a grant to buy a new item, we also ask you to explain why a second-hand item will not meet the person's need. This is so we can be sure the Street Aid fund is being used to maximum benefit.

Top tip: Provide two or three quotes for any physical items that will be bought using the grant. This might involve some additional research, for example measuring up flooring for carpets or seeing what items are available from organisations such as Cambridge Re-Use.

We also ask you to complete the 'Declaration' to confirm that you have no private or family relationship with the person you are recommending for a Street Aid grant and that you give your consent for Cambridgeshire Community Foundation to share the information you have provided with Cambridge City Council.

What makes a good application?

To have the best chance of receiving a Street Aid grant, and to make the best use of it, we recommend you follow the **3 'Be's'**:

1. Be clear about the criteria.

If you show clearly how the person meets each of the three criteria, they will receive a Street Aid grant.

If you fail to show this, it will delay your application as we will have to come back to you for more information. If the person doesn't meet any one of the criteria, they will not be eligible for a Street Aid grant.

2. Be thorough in the information you give.

The more information you provide in the application form, the more likely it is a grant will be awarded speedily.

This includes:

- A detailed description of the circumstances the person is in, linked to the application criteria.
- Details on how the grant will be used, including how this ties in with current and longer-term support, and how it will help the person get off, or stay off, the streets.
- Quotes and other research on the items the grant will fund, to show that you are making the best use of the fund and that this help cannot be found elsewhere.

3. Be creative in what you apply for.

A Street Aid grant can be completely personalised: it can be used to fund whatever an individual needs to help them get off, and stay off, the streets.

There are obvious things that Street Aid grants have been used to fund, including: paying for training courses, travel or equipment to help someone find work; and paying towards a deposit, to clear rent arrears or buying white goods, carpets or furniture for a new home. However, there are really no restrictions on what a Street Aid grant can be used for, as long as it will help the person turn a corner in their life.

We encourage potential beneficiaries and their support workers to have a good conversation about their long-term goals and to think about what would make a practical difference to them.

Here are some imaginative uses of Street Aid grants:

- Buying materials and a peddler's licence to enable the beneficiary to make and sell jewellery
- Funding towards a laptop to enable the beneficiary to complete a higher education course and then apply for jobs
- Paying for several sessions of counselling, cognitive behavioural therapy or alternative therapies to enable the beneficiary to start addressing mental health issues that are holding them back
- Funding towards a computer to enable the beneficiary to access and process photographs to sell and exhibit
- Paying for the use of an allotment, including a shed and tools, which would bring the beneficiary many mental and physical health benefits
- Funding to help with health and fitness goals – including gym clothing, trainers, classes or membership
- Buying a bike, plus helmet, lights and reflective clothing to get to work.

We have also received some creative group applications, where several people were in need of low-cost items, including replacement identification documents and travel cards. This means only one application from the support worker is needed, rather than separate applications for each individual.

Street Aid packages and guideline amounts

If you are looking for some of the more common items, we recommend you look at the following as a guide. We can deviate from these guideline prices if there is a good reason to do so, but you should explain why this is necessary in your application.

Household items

Cambridge Re-Use sells low cost good quality furniture and household goods (<http://www.cambridgereuse.org.uk/>). They offer a package price – one for single people and one for two people. This doesn't have to be spent in one visit so the client has the opportunity to take a bit of time choosing what they want for their new home.

- **Single person package £205-£335** (includes free delivery)
 - Sofa £30-45
 - Coffee table £10-25
 - Wardrobe £30-40
 - Chest drawers £25-45
 - Single bed £50-70
 - Bedside cabinet £5-15
 - Dining table plus 2 chairs £35-65
 - Home decoration: Curtains, paintings, linen, lamp, crockery £20-30

- **Two people package £305-£515** (includes free delivery)
 - Sofa £45-65
 - Coffee table £10-25
 - Wardrobe x 2 £60-80
 - Chest drawers x 2 £50-90
 - Double bed £65-120
 - Bedside cabinet x 2 £10-30
 - Dining table plus 2 chairs £35-65
 - Home decoration: Curtains, paintings, linen, lamp, crockery £30-40

White goods

White goods such as fridge-freezers, washing machines and cookers should be sourced second-hand, unless there is a good reason why new items are needed. They should cost between **£50** and **£200**.

Linking in with Cambridge Re-Use or another organisation providing second-hand goods as soon as someone knows they are likely to be housed should allow time to find the items that they need.

Mobile phones and laptops

A standard mobile phone should be no more than **£35**. A Street Aid grant cannot be used to buy a smart phone unless there is a good reason why this is needed.

A refurbished laptop should be sought, which should be no more than **£100**.

Bikes

A standard, second-hand bicycle to travel to and from work and appointments should be no more than **£100**.

Street Aid success stories*

Tom had been on the streets, moved into hostels and then progressed to living in his own home. He was very keen to complete training as an MOT tester, but the cost of the training was £1500. Tom was supported to apply for a Street Aid grant to cover half of the course and he was then able to borrow the other half from a friend. Tom attended the training and broke the MOT training academy's record with a pass of 95%. One week after completing the training Tom was working full-time as an MOT tester.

Helen had been evicted from two properties in the past and found herself living on the streets. Helen was supported to apply for a Street Aid grant to pay off the final part of past rent arrears. After paying off the arrears Helen and her partner moved into a council flat and they are both doing well.

Frank had long-term alcohol abuse issues and mental health issues, and he had lived on and off the streets after losing his tenancy. Frank made big changes to his lifestyle, including stopping drinking. As a result he was given another council tenancy, but due to feeling lonely in the first few months in his flat Frank started drinking again. Frank was supported to apply for a Street Aid grant to buy carpets and curtains for his new flat. Frank worked hard to get sober again and is managing his property very well. Frank said his new carpets made his flat feel more like his forever home and he has made great plans for his future.

Stephen became homeless after a relationship breakdown. Stephen secured a place to live and then found work as a cleaner, but his hours were unpredictable and after rent he did not have enough money to fund his travel. Stephen was supported to apply for a Street Aid grant for a bike to get to work. After getting his grant, Stephen was offered a new role and the bike greatly helped him get there early in the morning. He has rebuilt a relationship with his children and continues to see them regularly.

Further information

You can find out more about Street Aid on the Cambridgeshire Community Foundation website: <http://cambscf.org.uk/cambridge-street-aid.html>.

If you have any questions about applying for a Street Aid grant or suggestions for how we can improve this guide, please contact Street Aid by email on streetaid@cambridge.gov.uk or by phone on **01223 457959**.

You can also contact Cambridgeshire Community Foundation by email on info@cambscf.org.uk or by phone on **01223 410535**.

* All names have been changed to protect people's identities.