

Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF)

Swale Borough Council Grant Offer

Swale Skills and Employment Network

1. Overview

Swale Borough Council is inviting applications from voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations to establish and deliver a Skills and Employment Network for Swale.

This initiative aims to strengthen collaboration across the borough, improve access to skills and employment opportunities, and attract new funding into the local area.

Up to **£10,000** is available for the remainder of Year 1 (June 2026-end March 2027) to support the development and coordination of this network.

2. Purpose and Objectives

The Skills and Employment Network will:

- Create a coordinated, borough-wide approach to skills and employment support.
- Strengthen partnership working across voluntary, public, education, and business sectors.
- Identify gaps in provision and opportunities for joint delivery.
- Increase the flow of external investment and funding into Swale.
- Support residents to access skills development, training, and employment opportunities.

3. Scope of Funding

The funding is intended to support:

3.1 Network Development

- Establishment of a Swale Skills and Employment Network.
- Stakeholder mapping and engagement.
- Governance structure and terms of reference.

3.2 Strategy Development

- Creation of a Skills and Employment Strategy for Swale.
- Identification of local priorities, including:
 - Key sectors for growth
 - Barriers to employment
 - Skills gaps
- Alignment with regional and national priorities including the Get Kent & Medway Working Plan and the Health & Work Strategy.

3.3 Partnership and Collaboration Activity

- Facilitation of regular network meetings (minimum quarterly).
- Creation of opportunities for:
 - Joint working
 - Shared learning
 - Collaborative project development
- Engagement with employers, training providers, and community organisations.

3.4 Funding and Sustainability

- Identification of funding opportunities (e.g., grants, partnerships, investment programmes).
- Development of collaborative funding bids.
- Establishment of a sustainable model for the network beyond Year 1.

4. Grant Value

- **Funding period:** remainder of Year 1 – to 31st March 2027
- **Value:** up to £10,000
- **Payment structure:** Two payments (June 2026 and October 2026)

5. Expected Outputs

Successful applicants will be expected to deliver:

- A fully established Skills and Employment Network with active membership
- At least 4 network meetings held within the year
- A draft Swale Skills and Employment Strategy
- Evidence of partnership development and collaboration
- Identification and/or submission of at least 2 funding opportunities or bids- could be taken to completion in year 2.

6. Outcomes

This grant aims to achieve:

- Improved collaboration across the voluntary and statutory sectors
- Increased access to skills and employment opportunities for Swale residents
- Stronger alignment between employers and training provision
- Increased external for Swale delivery

7. Eligibility

Applicants must:

- Voluntary, community and enterprise organisation based in the Swale District
- Have a strong track record in partnership working and community engagement
- Demonstrate experience in skills, employment, or related sectors
- Be able to coordinate a multi-agency network

Collaborative applications are encouraged.

Monitoring and Reporting

Grant recipients will be required to:

- Provide monthly progress monitoring in line with CRF requirements. This includes capturing data on the following (where applicable):
 - **Access Route (Volume)**
 - Referred from Crisis Support, self-referred, proactive route, TPO referral, other
 - **Resilience building (Number of individuals accessed)**
 - Reduced experiences of material deprivation
 - Reduced need for emergency food parcels
 - Increased access to appropriate and quality advice services
 - Increased savings
 - Reduction in priority debt
 - Maximisation of individuals incomes
 - Decreased need for Crisis Payments
 - Other
 - **Individuals accessing services, demographics (Volume)**
 - Services provided to support children
 - Services provided to support pensioners
 - Services provided to support disabled persons
 - Services provided to support other individuals
 - Services provided to support employed recipients
 - Services provided to support recipients not in employment
 - Services provided to support benefit recipients
 - Services provided to support non-benefit recipients

- **Community Coordination Initiatives (Volume)**
- Contribute towards two monitoring return documents which includes all monthly data collections and the following additional resilience outcomes evidence:
 - Reduced experiences of material deprivation
 - Reduced need for emergency food parcels
 - Increased access to appropriate and quality advice services
 - Increased savings
 - Reduction in priority debt
 - Maximisation of individuals' incomes
 - Decreased need for Crisis Payments and Housing Payments
- Attend partnership and monitoring meetings as required

**Please note, not all the above will be relevant depending on the project type. A spreadsheet shared to each successful organisation/project for monthly reporting.*

9. Application Process

Applicants should submit:

- An expression of interest – refer to supporting guidance for more information

10. Assessment Criteria

Applications will be scored and assessed based on:

- Quality and clarity of proposal
- Ability to deliver against the required outcomes and within CRF guidelines
- Strength of partnership approach
- Value for money

11. Contact Information

For further information, please contact:

CrisisAndResilienceFund@swale.gov.uk

Swale Borough Council is committed to fostering collaboration, driving innovation, and creating opportunity across the borough. This grant marks an important first step towards building a stronger, more resilient future for residents.