

Communities Mental Health & Wellbeing Fund (CMHWF) – Years 5 & 6 (2025–27)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Administered locally by Voluntary Action Angus (VAA)

ANGUS Allocation – £320,838.10

1) What is the Communities Mental Health & Wellbeing Fund (CMHWF)?

The CMHWF is a **Scottish Government funded programme** to support community-based activity that promotes **mental health and wellbeing**, with a focus on **prevention and early intervention**. It aims to strengthen community support, reduce inequality, and build wellbeing across local communities.

2) Who manages the Fund locally in Angus?

In Angus, the Fund is managed by Voluntary Action Angus (VAA) in partnership with Angus Health and Social Care Partnership. Supported by a multi-agency Local Partnership Panel who also score the bids etc.

3) What's new in Years 5 and 6?

Years 5 & 6 are part of a Fairer Funding Pilot, meaning:

- For the **first time**, organisations can apply for **two-year grants** (in Year 5)
- **60–80% of funds** in Year 5 should be allocated to **2-year projects** to support stability and planning
- **Local Partnership Panel** agreed to dedicate 80% of the funding to 2-year projects
- **Specific amount** of the fund has been **ringfenced** for **grassroot** organisations
- Year 6 focuses on **one-year grants** as all two-year funding will have already been committed
- VAA will run a separate application process each year, so **new groups always have a chance to apply**
- All funding must be distributed by **March 2026 (Year 5)** and **March 2027 (Year 6)**

4) What are the national and local priorities of the Fund?

The Fund aligns with Scottish Government priorities to:

1. Tackle **social isolation and loneliness**
2. Support **suicide prevention**
3. Address **poverty and inequality**

National guidance for CMHWF Years 5 & 6 places an increased emphasis on responding to the cost-of-living crisis and supporting the six priority family groups identified in the Scottish Government's Best Start, Bright Futures: Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan. Local delivery in Angus reflects these national priorities while continuing to support a wide range of preventative, community-based mental health and wellbeing activity.

5) What are the local priorities in Angus?

Applications are welcomed from a wide range of community-led mental health and wellbeing projects. However, we particularly encourage proposals that align with local priorities set out in the Angus Health & Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan (2023–26), including:

- **Prevention and early intervention**
- **Care closer to home and within communities**
- **Mental health, learning disability and substance use recovery**

We are especially keen to receive applications that support:

- **Neurodiversity** – practical advice, peer support, independent living skills, and support for families
- **Suicide prevention** – community and peer support, resources, and bereavement support
- **Cost-of-living support** – initiatives that help people cope with financial pressures while boosting wellbeing

Projects do not need to meet all priorities to be considered, but should clearly explain how they support local need in Angus.

6) What outcomes does the Fund aim to achieve?

Funded projects should contribute to:

- Developing a culture of mental wellbeing and prevention at a community level
- Supporting people to connect, build relationships and access supportive activities
- Tackling determinants of poor mental health, like inequality, isolation and socio-economic disadvantage
- Strengthening the capacity and resilience of communities to develop their own solutions

7) Who can apply?

The Fund is open to **voluntary and not-for-profit organisations** working locally in Angus, including:

- **Charities (SCIO, CLG)**
- **Unincorporated associations**
- **Community interest companies & not-for-profit companies**
- **Trusts, cooperative & community benefit societies**
- **Community councils & parent councils** (where activity benefits adults aged 16+)

8) What kinds of activities can be funded?

The Fund supports community activities that **improve mental health and wellbeing**, for example:

- Befriending / peer support
- Community cafés and social spaces
- Arts, creativity and culture activities
- Physical activity, walking groups, gardening
- Volunteer-led support
- Financial wellbeing and cost-of-living support
- Awareness raising and training events

The Fund will support applications for the maintenance or expansion of existing activity; however, emphasis is placed on innovative new activity that provides additionality.

9) What can't be funded?

Not supported:

- Ongoing statutory services
- Profit-making or fundraising activities
- Political campaigning or faith-based groups that only serve specific faith communities
- Alcohol related activities
- Large capital projects
- Therapeutic treatments like counselling
- Clinical interventions

10) How much funding can organisations apply for over Years 5 and 6?

The maximum amount an organisation can receive across Years 5 and 6 depends on how you apply:

- **Collaborative applications:**

Partnership bids can apply for up to £100,000 per year. If funded for both Year 5 and Year 6, this would total £200,000 over two years (shared across the partnership).

- **Single-organisation applications:**

Individual organisations can apply for up to £50,000 per year. If funded in both Year 5 and Year 6, this would total £100,000 over two years.

- **Mixed collaborative and individual applications:**

Where organisations apply together for a collaborative bid of £75,000 (for example, £37,500 per organisation), each organisation may also apply individually for up to £12,500, provided the overall £50,000 per-organisation cap per year is not exceeded.

Applicants should ensure budgets are clear, proportionate and within the relevant caps.

12) What supporting documents are required?

Applications must include:

- Application form
- Project plan (length depends on amount requested)
- Budget sheet
- Supporting organisation documents (constitution, accounts, policies)

13) How are applications assessed?

All applications are reviewed through a local partnership assessment process coordinated by Voluntary Action Angus.

Applications are considered by a multi-agency assessment panel, which includes representatives from the third sector and statutory partners. Panel members bring a mix of strategic, operational and lived-experience perspectives to ensure decisions are fair, balanced and grounded in local need.

To support a consistent and transparent assessment process, applications are reviewed using a scoring matrix.

The scoring matrix is not a competitive or heavily weighted procurement-style tool like those used in Local Authority or NHS commissioning exercises. Instead, it is a practical framework that helps panel members assess applications against the Fund's key criteria in a clear, structured and proportionate way.

The matrix:

- Provides a shared reference point for all panel members
- Supports consistency across assessments
- Helps ensure decisions are evidence-based and transparent
- Enables constructive discussion and moderation across the panel

Is this a pass/fail or ranking system?

No. The scoring matrix is not used to rank applications in a strict order or to automatically exclude projects based on a numerical threshold.

Panel members use the matrix to:

- Understand how well an application meets the Fund's aims and priorities
- Identify strengths, risks and areas needing clarification
- Support balanced decision-making across the full portfolio of applications

Final decisions are informed by scoring alongside:

- Available budget
- Strategic balance across Angus
- Coverage of different communities and priority groups
- Learning from previous funding rounds

What does this mean for applicants?

For applicants, the scoring matrix:

- Helps make expectations clear and accessible
- Ensures applications are assessed fairly and consistently
- Provides reassurance that decisions are not arbitrary
- Supports transparency in how funding decisions are reached

The scoring matrix is publicly available and can be viewed on the Voluntary Action Angus website, allowing organisations to understand how their application will be considered before applying.

Will feedback be available?

Where possible, The Local Partnership Panel will provide brief, constructive feedback to applicants, particularly where an application is not successful or where clarification is needed for future rounds.

14) What monitoring is required?

Successful applicants will need to provide:

- Interim reports (for 2-year grants)
- End-of-year reports
- Information on activities, reach and outcomes
- Case studies or learning
- Online Forms are sent on behalf Scottish Government sporadically throughout duration of fund
- Register projects on **ALISS** and **Angus Community Connector** platforms so people can find support locally

15) When can we apply?

- **Year 5 applications open:** 19 September 2025
- **Deadline:** 5 January 2026
- **Funding distributed by:** 31 March 2026
- **Year 6:** Similar timeline in 2026/27

16) Where can I get help with my application?

VAA staff are available for guidance – including application support, clarification on eligibility, signposting within the sector to support collaboration, project design, budgets and monitoring expectations.

Email: MHWBapplications@voluntaryactionangus.org.uk

Phone: 01307 466113

If you would like to know more about the ND Pathway and talk through any ideas, please contact:

Erin Gerrard, Neurodevelopmental Nurse Co-ordinator

Email: erin.gerrard@nhs.scot

If you would like to know more about the 3-year Suicide Prevention Action Plan and talk through any ideas, please contact:

Linette Cromar, Development Officer, Suicide Prevention

Email: cromarl@angus.gov.uk



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