



Organisation Name	Oasis
Project Name	Food 'n Fun on Fridays
Funding Stream	Community Area Priorities / Health & Wellbeing
Total Cost of project	£5000
Amount of Match Funding	£0
Amount being applied for	£5000
Amount suggested	£5000

### Project Summary

Our new project is aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of disadvantaged families in Chesham. Providing healthy and nutritious food to these families is necessary in current times to ensure children are able to grow and develop in line with their peers. Food banks and free school meals are essential to help disadvantaged families thrive and survive. However, providing food is not enough, families need to know how to cook healthy and nutritious food working within the budgets they have and from the food share parcels they receive. With our training kitchen, activity and arts studios at the Bagnall we plan to engage families in this new project so that they can learn to do things differently and make the most of their situation.

To do this we plan to run a pilot project every Friday throughout 2021. We are calling these sessions "Fun 'n' family Fridays", where we plan to promote a health and wellbeing agenda. Fun n family Fridays will take place afterschool as a healthy cooking session for parents/carers, running concurrently with activity sessions, for the dependents of those parents/carers accessing the project.

The project aims to deliver substantial, tangible benefits to both parents/carers and children, granting parents the ability to focus entirely on their direct involvement in the healthy cooking club whilst their children access fun activity opportunities at the end of the school week. The healthy meals, cooked with donated food from the community fridge or from local food share schemes will be prepared by participants each week with the support of our resident qualified chef Ani (bank worker). The idea is for the parents or carers to plan and cook menus together using basic ingredients on a budget. The outcome of the session will be that participants learn how to cook on a budget and how to cook a balanced meal with limited ingredients. Food cooked and any surplus food share can be taken home by participants.

By example cooking sessions will focus on: one pot suppers and bakes, creating a meal from tinned food, seasonal themed meals, (harvest-time), healthy fake-away meals, cooking for the school holidays, healthy snacks & picnics, vegetarian, vegan, gluten free, allotment produce meals, creative ways with left-overs, the overarching theme being the promotion of healthy eating and cooking, food economy, minimising food waste and cooking on a budget.

Oasis intends to provide this activity at our new Bagnall Project in Chesham, alongside our other social and psychological support services, all of which are designed to enhance an individual's health and

wellbeing. The Bagnall Project is an ideal location which includes a spacious training kitchen that can accommodate up to 6 individuals (8-10 post covid-19), a sports hall, an IT suite and an arts and craft workshop all of which can be accessed safely in line with a covid-19 related risk assessment in a socially distanced context, (complying with Public Health England and Government Covid19 guidelines).

#### How does the project address local priorities?

The aims of our pilot project align fully with Chesham Community Board's health and wellbeing priorities (but equally fit the Community Area Priorities fund) and seeks to reduce social isolation and promote wellness by providing regular healthy cooking sessions and fun activity opportunities. The project also aims to reduce food waste, using our established links with the Food Share charity initiative.

We aim to support families to eat a healthier diet, whilst providing opportunities for children and adults to socially interact with others that they would not normally interact with. This is particularly important given some of the health inequalities identified during the current and recent lockdowns and the Covid-19 pandemic.

Engaging the children of participants in activities will encourage healthy growth and personal development, particularly important given recent issues associated with the lockdown period. Our activities are designed to engage and support young people, with a view that sharing and talking about their concerns can lead to getting peer support and subsequently improved mental health outcomes.

Preventative programmes and projects such as this will promote healthier lifestyle choices, moreover "tackling obesity is one of the greatest long-term health challenges this country faces. Today, around two-thirds, (63% of adults are above a healthy weight, and of these, half are living with obesity. We have 1 in 3 children leaving primary school who are already over-weight, , 1 in 5 living with obesity", (Department of Health & Social Care, 27th July 2020).

We understand that Chesham and Villages have 4,602 residents that are living in households at higher risk of food poverty – 5.8% of the County total, and higher than the average in the County overall. We also know that Chesham has a higher proportion of children living in income deprived households or poverty (15.4%) compared with the county average (12.1%).

This project reaches out to the local community, connecting and engaging with parents and children, offering an accessible service. The Bagnall Project, delivered by Oasis is revitalising the local area, as an inclusive and accessible community space, offering important engagement and health and wellbeing services within a value for money framework, which is important to how positive a community feels about its area", (Local Insight, Chesham & Villages, p.68, 5th September, 2019).

Supporting quantitative evidence, sourced from the Community Needs Index, featuring in the OCSI produced, Local Insight Report for Chesham & Villages, reveals an active and engaged community score of only 15 against the average score in England being 25. This project will promote community participation and engagement and we will look forward to measuring and sharing the successful outcomes and results.

#### How does the project align with the values, objectives and corporate priorities of Buckinghamshire Council?

Strengthening our communities: This project will help to strengthen the Chesham community, providing a consistent and regular health and wellbeing programme, focusing on two generations. The family unit will benefit as a whole, enjoying a healthy meal together each Friday evening. In addition, it will enhance the choice of social support services available to Chesham and localities. Reducing isolation, loneliness and

hardship, improving skills and levels of physical and emotional health and wellbeing. We will consult with our service users to meet their needs, develop the project as it takes shape. In the wake of the Coronavirus pandemic, this project will help local society recover, promote healthy lifestyles, encouraging people to be more physically active, eat more healthily, bring people together and improve community engagement.

Improving our environment: We will be reducing food waste by our involvement with FoodShare, our Training Kitchen Manager devising dishes, any surplus meals can be donated to local families in need. We have an environmental policy at The Bagnall Project ensuring we operate within a climate emergency framework, recycling, reusing and repurposing where and when possible and where we secure facilities and resource contracts with ethical companies.

Protecting the vulnerable: This innovative project, combines activity sessions with healthy cooking guidance and inspiration for families seeking support and nourishment for body and mind. Seeking to improve community engagement with disadvantaged and hard to reach groups.

Increasing prosperity: The project will provide access to information and advice surrounding cooking on a budget will aim to help to stretch each families' food £ pound, improving health and well-being outcomes.

#### How does the project achieve value for money?

Both the cooking & activity sessions will be delivered in blocks of 8 weeks, equating to 48 sessions in total throughout the year. To ensure equality of opportunity we will discharge families on completion of the 8-week sessions to enable others to benefit from participation, although we will aim to engage as many families as possible, we will ensure that those in need don't go without. We will refer participants into other engagement activities, and if appropriate can offer a further 8-week session. The sessions will continue to run during each of the half term holidays as food and healthy eating is still important.

This regular, weekly service will be available, free of charge to all attendees and will operate each Friday afternoon from 3.30pm to 6.30pm with up to 6 parents and fifteen children being able to access the project within a risk assessed Covid-19 space, with a further 4 parents and up to 20 children being able to participate post Covid-19. During the Easter and Christmas breaks we will be hosting specific holiday related activities, engaging disadvantaged families, these seasonal related fun activities are funded separately.

We have recently connected with Chesham Hills Academy School, a local school. Some children attending this school will be classified as being from disadvantaged families. We plan to target referral routes to ensure we engage with those families most in need. We are able to promote our Food 'n' fun on Friday's project in their school newsletter which will also serve as the mechanism to promote the cooking and activity project alongside other opportunities provided within the Bagnall Project. As the project evolves, we can expand the opportunity across other days and nights, including weekends.

The funding will provide 48 weekly healthy cooking sessions throughout 2021. The delivery of 48 three-hour sessions costed at £90, (£30 per hour) = £4320 and the remainder being for the purchase of cookware, utensils, aprons, Covid safe visors & PBA free re-usable storage containers for families to take their meals home and reuse each week = £680

This project offers value for money as the activity session delivery/management costs are already funded, having secured funds via the Heart of Bucks/LEAP Coronavirus Fund supporting health and wellbeing initiatives. The Oasis Partnership is a charity member of In-kind Direct, which distributes consumer goods donated by companies to UK charities, their range of catalogue items priced at on average 80% lower than retail cost price.

Total Match Funding: A quotient of the funds granted via the Heart of Bucks/LEAP Health and Wellbeing fund will be purposed to fund the children's' activity sessions.

## Community Board Coordinator comments

Oasis have recently secured the Bagnall Centre for the health and wellbeing benefit of the community. They have extensively researched the demographics in the Chesham and Villages area. The direct beneficiaries will be parents and children accessing the sessions (ie, cross generational), though other members of the family unit will also benefit as a healthy family meal will have been prepared at each session and taken home for the family Friday evening meal.

They have established links with Chesham Hill Academy School, the children and parent/carers at this school will form the core of the beneficiaries for the Fun 'n' food on Fridays project. Lewis Baker from the Phoenix Lifestyle Foundation Charity will design and deliver the weekly activity sessions for the children, which is a different project funded from a Heart of Bucks donation aimed at providing physical activities for children. They are working collaboratively with local groups and agencies including Bucks Mind, the Job Centre and Citizen's Advice and comprehensively sourced funding elsewhere for their many projects.

**The applicant will be required to agree to terms and conditions, which include a monitoring agreement, as discussed with the Community Board Coordinator before the fund will be formally awarded.**