

Appendix 3

Main Grants Programme 2022-25

Impact Report Year 1 (April 2022 – March 2023)

1. Purpose of the Report

This report provides data and insight from the voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations funded through the Main Grants Programme 2022-25.

The report will provide background on the programme, the monitoring and evaluation framework developed specifically for the programme and summarise some of the data obtained through ongoing monitoring of the programme. The report will also summarise the key challenges for organisation in the first year of the programme and show what value has been provided by the funded VCS to residents in Lewisham.

2. Background to the Main Grants Programme

Lewisham Council has funded the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) through a Main Grants programme for over 20 years, in 3-year funding cycles.

Due to the impact of COVID and wider financial pressures the Council had to make significant cuts of at least £40m from its budget in the next three years (to April 2024) with up to £24m being cut in 2021/22 alone. In this context the budget for the Main Grants was to be reduced by £800,000 from 1st April 2022.

However, support for voluntary and community sector groups remains a core priority for Lewisham Council which would, in partnership with the NHS, continue to invest £2,459,308 per annum in the sector.

In order to set the priorities for this spend the Council undertook a thorough review of all of the available evidence on the impact of COVID and the needs of the borough during the recovery phase. The review was followed by a consultation with the sector in early summer 2021.

The review resulted in three new proposed priorities namely:

- **An economically sound future** (specifically Advice Services and Enabling Digital Access for All). This follows analysis that the pandemic has had a significant financial impact on individuals and families, with a consequent requirement for high quality advice and information. The digital access element recognises that a lack of digital engagement has a significant adverse effect on people's ability to access services and education, training and employment
- **A healthy and well future.** This addresses findings that loneliness and isolation are significant local needs which can be addressed through initiatives such as social prescribing and activities that support people's health including volunteering, helping people to connect back into their local communities.
- **A future we all have a part in.** This focuses on the resilience of the local Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in continuing to be able to support vulnerable local residents.

The priorities were consistent with the Council's corporate priorities and overall approach to pandemic recovery

The priorities are also in keeping with a shift to setting an enabling framework for the VCS, with less emphasis on direct project funding. While the programme will continue to fund front-door services in advice and social prescribing, it will more generally focus on building the capacity of the sector, aiming to make it more sustainable and less reliant on council grant funding. There is additionally emphasis on reducing inequality – protected characteristics; and small “partnership grants” to support organisations willing to work with the Council over the next three years.

The proposals included:

- Funding under the three broad criteria outlined above
- Significant grants to partners delivering advice and social prescribing services
- Four Community Fundraisers hosted by the VCS, with specific focus areas covering equalities, culture and sports, and ‘cold spots’ - areas of high need and low services coverage in the borough
- Small partnership grants of £10,000 for organisations willing to work with the Council in the coming years
- A specific funding pot for the Arts & Culture Fund, administered through the Culture Team as part of the wider legacy for the London Borough of Culture programme
- An approach to equality and equity that prioritised funding proposals on the basis of those most impacted by Covid, an equalities-focused Community Fundraiser, and a commitment to funding BAME infrastructure support.

The programme was launched in September, and the final agreement on successful applicants was made at Mayor and Cabinet in early February 2022. The grant programme began on schedule in April 2022

Community Fundraiser: To host the community fundraiser focusing on Cold Spots	Age UK Lewisham & Southwark	£60,000
Community Fundraiser: To host the community fundraiser focusing on Equalities	Lewisham Local	£59,998
Community Fundraiser: To host the Community Fundraiser focusing on Arts and Leisure	Lewisham Education Arts Network	£30,000
Community Fundraiser: To host the community fundraiser focusing on sport	Platform Cricket	£30,000
An Economically Sound Future: A Borough Wide Advice Service	Citizens Advice Lewisham	£650,000
An Economically Sound Future: Digital Inclusion for All	Catbytes CIC/Lewisham Local	£60,000
An Economically Sound Future: Digital Inclusion for All	Lewisham African Initiative Development	£4,500
A Healthy and Well Future: A Coordinated Social Prescribing Service	Age UK Lewisham & Southwark	£440,000
A Healthy and Well Future: Connecting People to the Local Community/Communities of Interest	Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network	£50,000
A Healthy and Well Future: Connecting People to the Local	Platform Cricket	£20,000

Community/Communities of Interest		
A Healthy and Well Future: Connecting People to the Local Community/Communities of Interest	Voluntary Services Lewisham – Community Transport	£40,000
A Healthy and Well Future: Connecting People to the Local Community/Communities of Interest	Age UK Lewisham & Southwark – Core Activity	£50,000
A Healthy and Well Future: Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing Activities	St Lukes Downham	£15,000
A Healthy and Well Future: Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing Activities	Lewisham Speaking Up	£45,000
A Healthy and Well Future: Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing Activities	Sydenham Garden	£30,000
A Healthy and Well Future: Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing Activities	Lewisham Mencap	£25,000
A Healthy and Well Future: Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing Activities	Wheels for Wellbeing	£25,000
A Healthy and Well Future: Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing Activities	Goodgym	£20,000
A Healthy and Well Future: Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing Activities	Metro Charity	£45,000
A Healthy and Well Future: Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing Activities	Bellingham Community Project	£25,000
A Healthy and Well Future: Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing Activities	Age Exchange	£20,000
A Healthy and Well Future: Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing Activities	Stanstead Lodge	£25,000
A Healthy and Well Future: Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing Activities	London Thunder	£20,000
A Healthy and Well Future: Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing Activities	Ackroyd Community Association	£20,000
A Future We All Have a Part In: Building Strong Communities	Kinaara/Lewisham Local	£60,000
A Future We All Have a Part In: Volunteer Brokerage	Lewisham Local	£30,000
A Future We All Have a Part In: Community Directory	Lewisham Local	£40,000
Partnership Grants	Lewisham Churches Care	£10,000
Partnership Grants	South East London Lawn Tennis	£10,000

Partnership Grants	Blind Aid	£10,000
Partnership Grants	Buddies for All	£10,000
Partnership Grants	Lewisham Irish Community Centre	£10,000
Partnership Grants	Lee Green Lives	£10,000
Partnership Grants	Goldsmiths Community Centre	£10,000
Partnership Grants	Therapy 4 Healing	£10,000
Partnership Grants	Deptford Methodist Mission	£10,000
Partnership Grants	Coco Collective	£10,000
Partnership Grants	The Grove Centre	£10,000
Partnership Grants	AFC CIC	£10,000
Partnership Grants	Saxon Crown	£10,000

3. Monitoring and Evaluation of the programme

Regular monitoring of each grant funded organisation has been a normal part of the grant - making process throughout the history of the Main Grants programme. However, there was a recognition that an overall assessment of the impact of the programme was missing.

An overview of the programme would allow us to:

- Incentivise delivery in the priority areas of the programme. By linking this as much as possible to outcomes, the framework should help the VCS focus on delivering the most impactful interventions and building its capacity.
- Provide evidence to stimulate meaningful discussion about how best to support the VCS in addressing the outcomes the grant programme is aiming to promote.
- Contribute to a shared narrative between partners and the funded organisations about impact. The framework should help to provide evidence for the future about where to focus funding so that precious resource is directed where it can have the most impact. This is especially important for the prevention agenda.
- Raise the profile and awareness of the contribution of the VCS to the vulnerable residents of Lewisham and their impact on prevention

However, there was also a recognition that any framework needs to be fit for purpose for a sector that is diverse in the communities that it serves, but also in its own size and scale. Some of the funded VCS organisations are very small with limited capacity - they need to see the information they provide as fitting into a value adding process, not adding burden.

In order to undertake the development of a monitoring framework, we commissioned a specialist organisation, *Shared Intelligence*, to develop a framework based on the range of services who receive funding through the programme.

Shared Intelligence initially worked with the Council and health partners to identify the key short, medium and long-term outcomes we want from the main grants programme, taking into account the different themes and sub-themes in the programme.

Based on this, they developed an overarching Theory of Change, capturing draft outputs, outcomes and impact against the key themes and sub-themes in one overarching Theory of Change framework

4. Theory of Change

At the heart of the theory of change is a logic model. This sets out a logical chain that runs from inputs to impacts, organised under several headings:

Inputs: these are the core grant money, the partnership grants and the funded community fundraiser posts.

Activities: these are the actions supported by the grant money – for example provision of a social prescribing service or development of a community directory.

Outputs: these describe what is expected to be delivered directly from the grant funded activities, for example signposting people to services, or an increase in access to services by people with protected characteristics. Some outputs will have measurable targets (for example an amount of fundraising).

Outcomes: these are consequential changes expected as a result of the activities and outputs. They are expected in the short or medium term. Examples include: a growth in clients' confidence in using digital tools, or a growth in clients' ability to advocate for themselves.

Impacts: these are longer term consequential changes, likely only to be measurable over a longer period well beyond the three-year grant programme and to which the grants programme will be one of several contributory factors. We have identified six impact areas for the programme:

- Health conditions are prevented through early intervention enabling people to live independently for longer.
- Inequalities, particularly those for specific protected characteristics and in areas with socioeconomic deprivation, are reduced.
- More cohesive strengthened communities.
- An increased sense of place, belonging and engagement amongst community members.
- VCS has access to more funding, independent of the local authority.
- A revitalised economy of organisations that are genuinely led by and reflect Lewisham communities.

The logic model helps to present a picture of the scale of the programme; what it plans to enable and the difference it expects to make. However, it is inherently challenging to create a single logic model that covers all the types of intervention that the programme will support. The approach taken aims to describe enough detail so that the model can enable the Council and grantees to convey the essence of the programme and what its projects should help to achieve. Activities and their outputs and outcomes have been grouped under the three priorities. Some outcomes are supported by more than one of the priority areas, so arrows have been used to indicate this. Most of the impacts are also driven by more than one priority area

INPUTS
The expected inputs needed to make it happen

ACTIVITIES
The input-derived actions, processes and mechanisms needed to support expected delivery

OUTPUTS
What will be achieved from the activities? May include targets that have been set up.

OUTCOMES
Shorter term 'consequential changes' expected from activities and outputs

IMPACTS
Longer term 'consequential changes' expected beyond the grants programme

Council funding of £1,836,308

Better Care Fund £525,000

3 x FTE Community fundraisers hosted by the VCS focusing on:

- Equity
- Geographical cold spots
- Arts
- Sports

Funded up to £60,000 per FTE posts

Grants c. £50,000 focused on the three priorities:

- An economically sound future
- A healthy and well future
- A future we all have a part in

Partnership grants of £10,000

An economically sound future

Provision of information, advice and advocacy to the borough, including:

- Provision of legal advice
- Responsive and flexible services
- Services providing choice in the way clients access them
- Carrying out services across the borough
- Delivery of services in a joined up way

Ensuring Digital Access for all through:

- Projects offering training on digital skills and support those most in need
- Innovative projects and schemes

Greater knowledge of entitlements in relation to benefits, employment, housing

More people signposted to appropriate services

People better financially supported— into work or claiming benefits they are entitled to

Users feel heard and listened to

An increase in access to services by those with protected characteristics

Users have access to technology which benefits them

Users feel better informed and equipped with tools to manage practical issues

Fewer users defined as homeless

Users are more financially resilient

Users feel more confident in using digital and online tools

Users feel more able to advocate for themselves

Poverty, or risk of poverty, reduced

Users feel more connected to other people/services

Health conditions are prevented through early intervention enabling people to live independently for longer.

A healthy and well future

A coordinated social prescribing service acting as the 'front door', ensuring people have access to the right information and services

Activities that connect people to their local community and improves physical and mental wellbeing

Activities that encourage volunteering and creates a sense of giving back to communities

Users are referred to the most appropriate services

Greater engagement with physical activity and the outdoors

Users report improved social relationships and connectedness

Users report being more involved in the community

Joined up working between VCS and statutory services

X number of volunteer hours linked with members of the community

Users receive the right support for them

Fewer users feel lonely or isolated

Users are better able to manage their own health, finance, and housing issues

Greater understanding of the opportunities that are available in the community to support their needs

VCS undertakes continuous learning so it can recognise and respond to new needs

Health and wellbeing amongst users is improved

Inequalities, particularly those for specific protected characteristics and in areas with socioeconomic deprivation, are reduced.

More cohesive strengthened communities

An increased sense of place, belonging and engagement amongst community members.

A future we all have a part in

Employment of community fundraisers for:

- Equality and equity
- Sports
- Arts and culture
- Geographical cold spots

Funding BAME infrastructure support and capacity building

Developing a community directory

Volunteer brokerage

Other activities that bring communities together and strengthen community cohesion

External funding leveraged through community fundraisers for x number of organisations

X amount fundraised for equalities groups

A community directory that is managed and reviewed

Business/charity meet ups undertaken which focus on key areas of need

Community networks/events which focus on key areas of need

X number of BAME led services supported

More opportunities to access external funding

Improved partnership working between organisations, health and the council

Greater opportunities for organisations that work differently to meet the needs of the community

Better co-production between the statutory sector and VCS, which harnesses existing community activity

Organisations better equipped to identify and articulate community need

An empowered VCS that better represents the community of Lewisham

VCS has access to more funding, independent of the local authority

A revitalised economy of organisations that are genuinely led by and reflect Lewisham communities.

5. Stakeholder engagement:

For the ToC to underpin the monitoring and evaluation framework, we felt it was important that the grant funded organisations recognise the work of their own organisation in it. This was the purpose of the online workshop held in December 2021 with the then existing grant-funded organisations. A draft ToC and logic model was presented by Shared Intelligence and they were tested with a mix of plenary and break out discussions.

Attendees emphasised that some suggested outcomes are aspirational and what the programme can actually influence locally may be inhibited by other factors including overarching national policies. Nevertheless, attendees were supportive of using the ToC concept to shape the monitoring and evaluation framework.

A wide range of comments were received to improve the logic model and its applicability to the whole sector. An amended ToC was further tested in a workshop with 2022 – 25 Main Grants Programme core recipients in January 2022.

Themes raised by the VCS included:

- The importance of including “soft” outcomes, such as whether the programme helps people to be heard and listened to.
- The importance of considering how vulnerable residents feel after an intervention and how they experience support.
- The importance of interventions improving people’s sense of self-empowerment and self-advocacy.
- The need to focus on gains from partnership working and co-production between voluntary and statutory sectors as better pathways for vulnerable people requiring more joined up working, and linking of referral routes.

The workshop in January 2022 was also an opportunity for future grantees to identify data and monitoring tools that they consider would provide an achievable picture of their activity. Working from the ToC, attendees identified potential indicators that would measure progress towards expected outputs/outcomes. A second part of the discussion focused on how to capture the evidence and how to incorporate lived experience and qualitative methods.

Findings from the discussion included:

- A desire to be consistent with other forms of measurement such as the emerging NHS social prescribing work. To limit burden, attendees wanted to be able to re-use information collected for other purposes in their returns for Main Grants Programme monitoring.
- There was widespread acceptance of need for some hard measures (for example participation and activity data; turnover of sector; emergence / strength of newer organisations).
- While there was acceptance of the benefit of capturing demographic and client protected characteristic information, there was some concern about the burden of doing so.
- An emphasis on capturing the appropriateness of interventions – whether they were right for particular users.
- A strong interest in capturing the voice of the user:
 - Did they feel heard?
 - What behaviour change has this led to post intervention?
 - Whether services develop with user feedback?

- There was support for the use of case studies to bring the monitoring picture to life. Participants emphasised a need for a guideline to support consistency and commonality in how these would be supplied.
- There was also an interest in inaugurating a concept of peer review between organisations as an additional component of the framework.
- There was a general concern about making the framework (and ToC) relevant to their organisation – as a one-page document, it is inevitably quite broad brush.

A separate session was held in early February with the identified recipients of the new partnership grants. These are £10,000 per annum grants over three years for 13 organisations who can demonstrate commitment to working in partnership with the Council. The grants are intended to enable them to attract additional funding but can also be used to support the organisation's core activities. The intention was that partnership with the Council should help the organisation's service to develop beyond what is already in place.

Discussion was designed to allow the organisations to describe:

- The outcomes that the organisations and the Council hoped the new grants would help to achieve.
- Types of data that could practically be collected to show progress against this.

Key findings from the discussion included:

- Monitoring must be proportionate. This group of organisations includes some run entirely by volunteers.
- Strong emphasis on the importance of inclusivity to their work. How to reflect this?
- It is key that the grants can support core business.
- Important that the monitoring does not incentivise organisations away from their core strengths.
- Organisations do not want to be moved away from established management and monitoring methods that work for them.

6. The Monitoring Framework

Shared Intelligence identified five principles underpinning the development of the monitoring framework which reflect both the programme objectives and engagement with the grantees:

1. Proportionate monitoring – different levels of detail depending on scale and nature of activity and level of funding provided.
2. Flexible consistency. Data provided must be consistent in nature, though not in level of details, so that it can be aggregated. There will be a 1:1 discussion with each grantee to ensure monitoring form is suitable for their work.
3. Quantitative and qualitative information is needed.
4. Data collected should link to the logic model from the programme's theory of change.
5. The process must promote honesty and open dialogue.

Based on the above, detailed work was undertaken to look at the levels of data required from larger funded organisations, those receiving medium-sized grants, and those receiving small grants.

Monitoring templates were then developed for the following types of grants taking on board the issues about proportional levels of data:

- Advice services

- Digital Inclusion
- Social prescribing
- Community fundraisers
- Black Infrastructure
- Volunteer brokerage
- All other HWB projects
- Partnership grants

Templates were also provided for user surveys for clients and volunteers, although these were to be worked on further with the bigger providers such as Age UK to integrate them with existing outcomes frameworks already used by advice and health social prescribing services.

The framework had a soft launch in January and February 2022 with the engagement activities with the sector and was discussed with individual grantees as part of their mobilisation meeting throughout March and April 2022.

6. Highlights and summary from data

We have worked with the Community Services Data Scientist to collate the data returned throughout the year, to regularise the data as far as possible, and identify what comparable data can be provided across all organisations, by theme, by size and by type of grant.

This is the first attempt to provide data across all funded organisations and several challenges have emerged as part of this exercise, which will form the basis for our learning and improvement for the next two years.

Despite fairly straightforward data questions, organisations have responded in various ways, making the regularisation of data complex and requiring time-consuming follow-ups with individual organisations.

This in turn has created issues with presenting the data in the thematic groupings that would fit across the Theory of Change logic model.

In some cases, the last quarter's data for 2022/23 is yet to be verified and therefore in most cases has not been included in the dashboards.

Two of our Main Grants funded projects – Befriending and Transport transferred from VSL to Age UK in September 2022, therefore only 2 quarters data available is available for the financial year.

Community fundraisers – recruitment to posts has been challenging as this field is highly competitive. As a result, the Fundraiser for Equalities came into post in June, the Cold Spots fundraiser at end of July, and both Sports and Arts fundraisers not till September. The data from these and outcomes for the work is therefore reflective of this timescale, as well as the specific capacity building need in each of the sectors and readiness of the specific sectors to undertake fundraising.

The data that has been collated is presented across several types of grant including:

- Advice Services
- Social Prescribing
- Community Fundraisers
- Black Infrastructure
- Partnership grants

Main Grant Awards Summary

Total Number

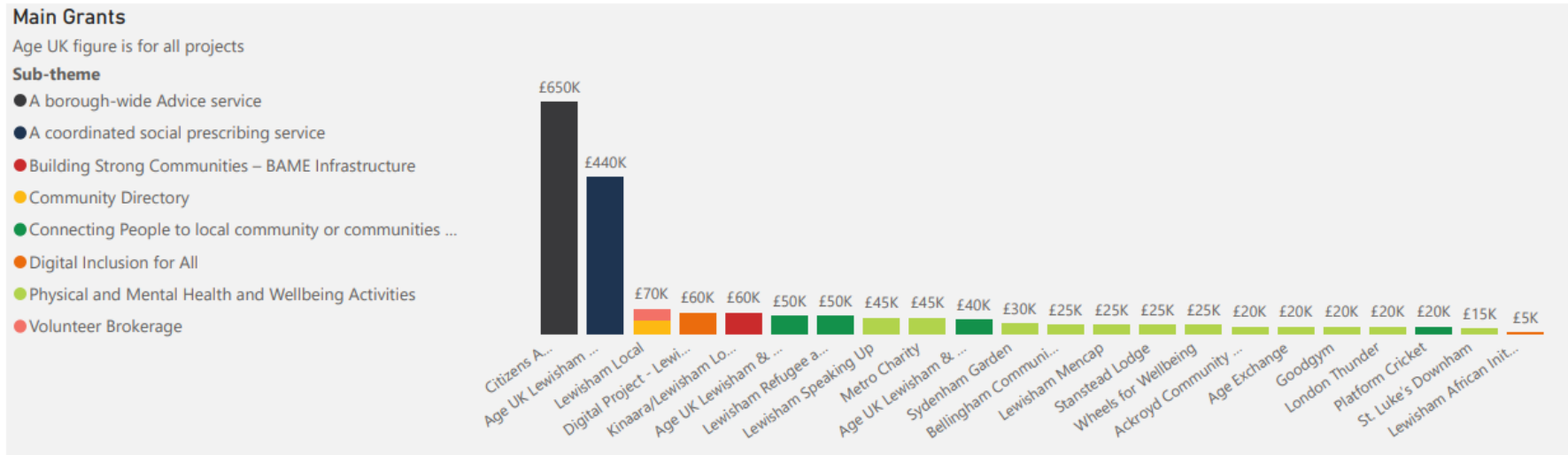
£1,889,500

Partnership Grants

£130,000

Main Grants

£1,759,500

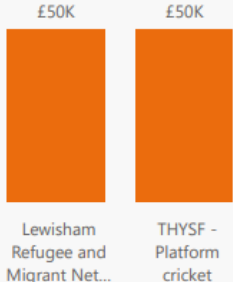


This summarises the amount of funding given to each organisation. The largest grants have been given to Citizens Advice Lewisham and Age UK for front-door advice and social prescribing services. Lewisham Local were the third highest funded group, with a total of £250k for 5 projects, all infrastructure related.

Grant Summary by Theme

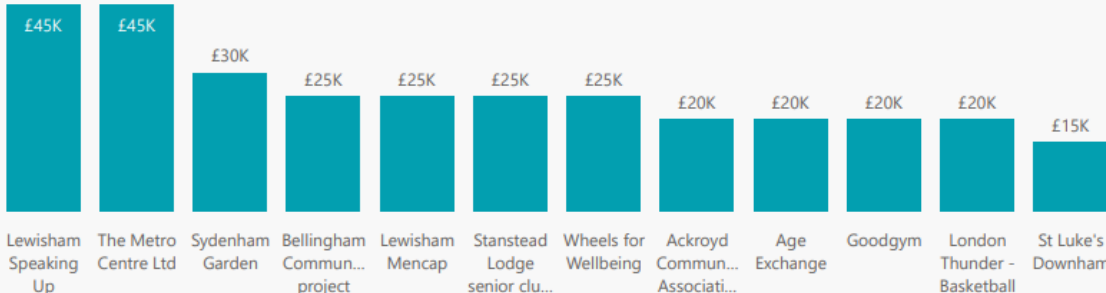
A Healthy and Well Future

Connecting People to local community or communities of interest



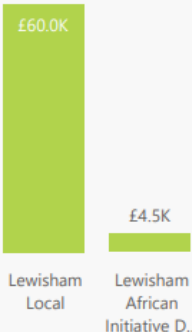
A Healthy and Well Future

Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing Activities

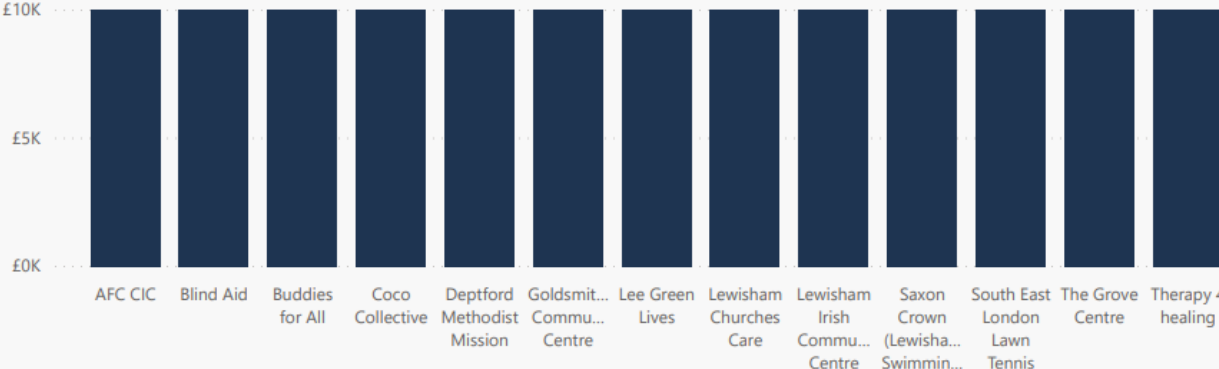


An Economically Sound Future

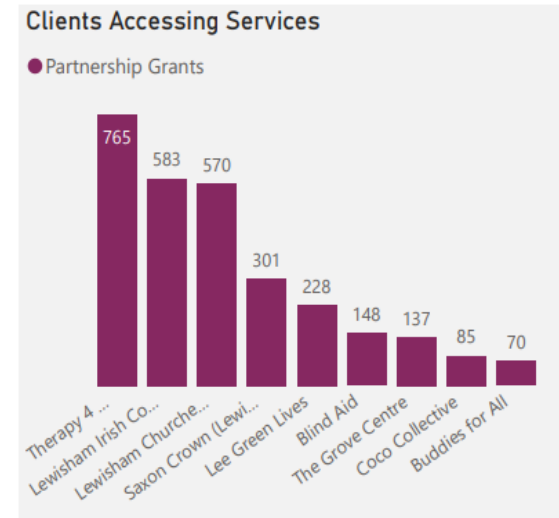
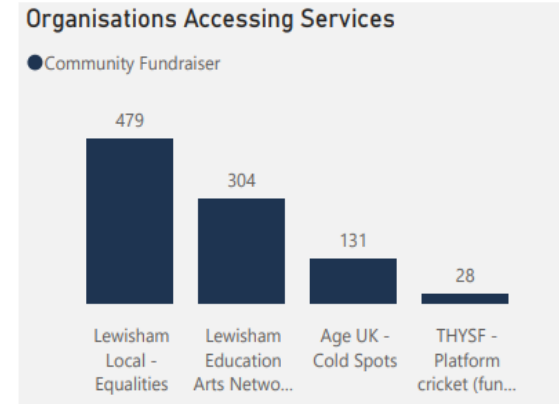
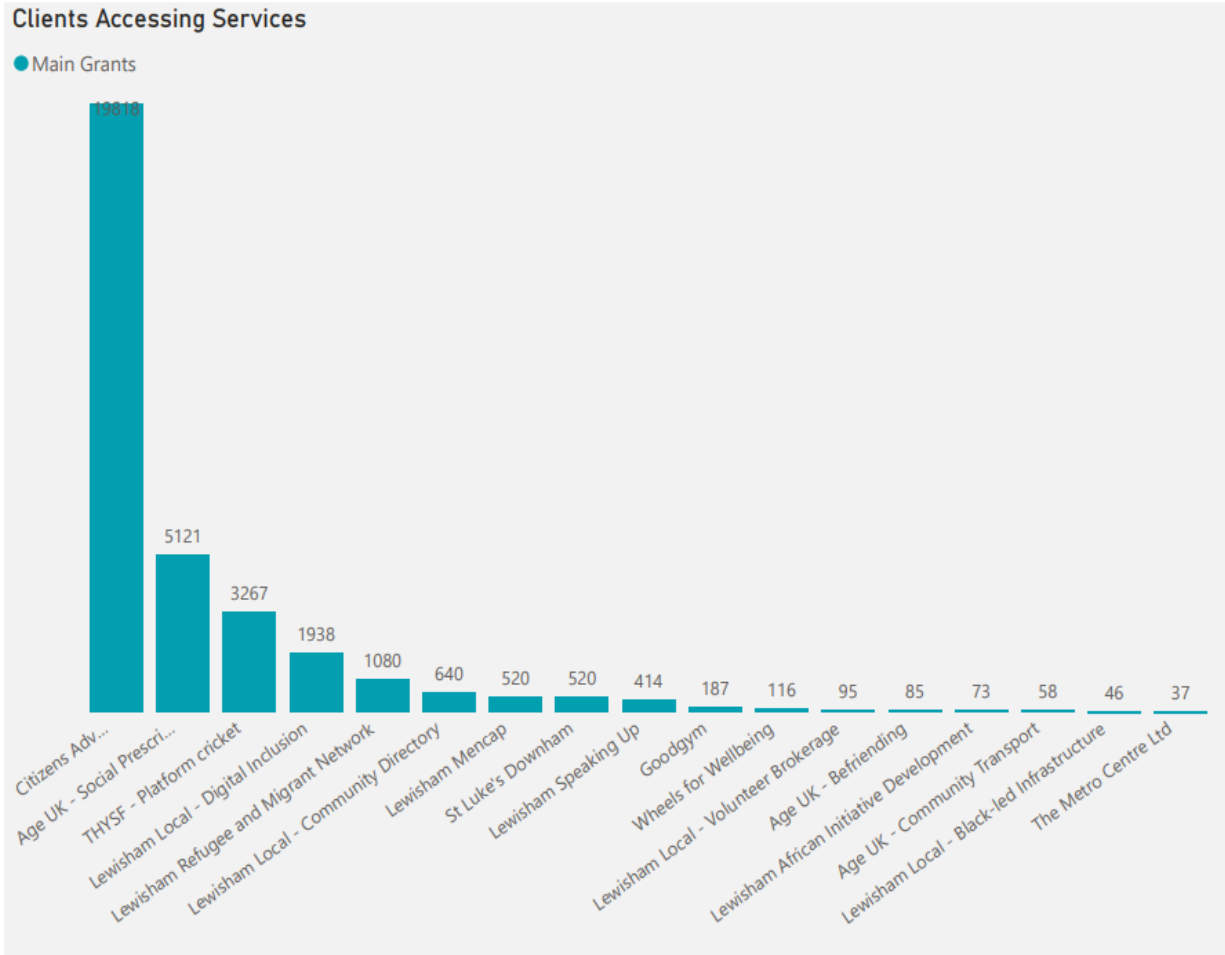
Digital Inclusion For All



Partnership Grants

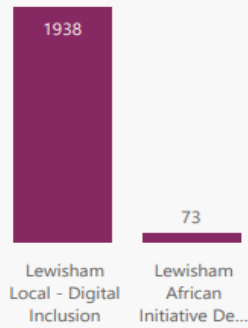


Clients accessing Services



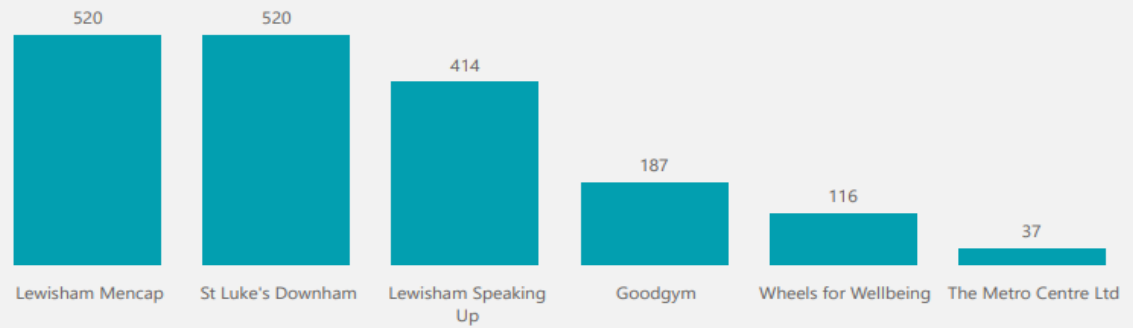
An Economically Sound Future

Digital Inclusion for All



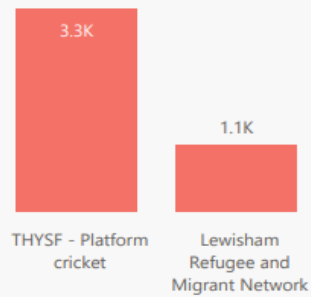
A Healthy and Well Future

Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing Activities

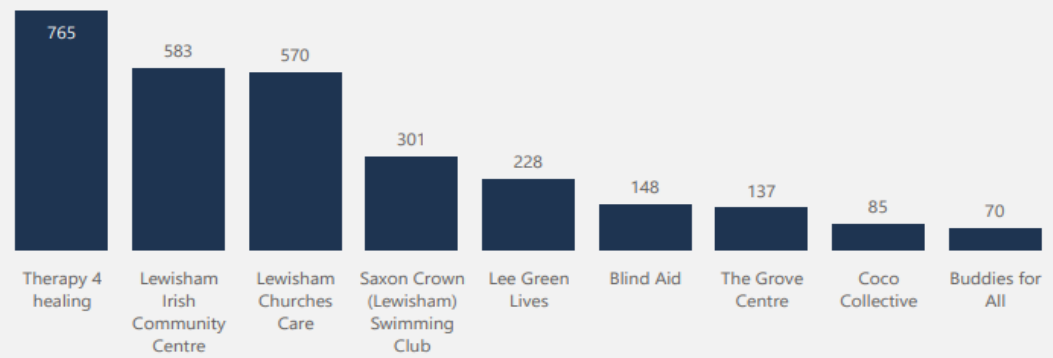


A Healthy and Well Future

Connecting People to local community or communities of interest



Partnership Grant



The largest numbers of clients are seen by our front door services for advice and social prescribing.

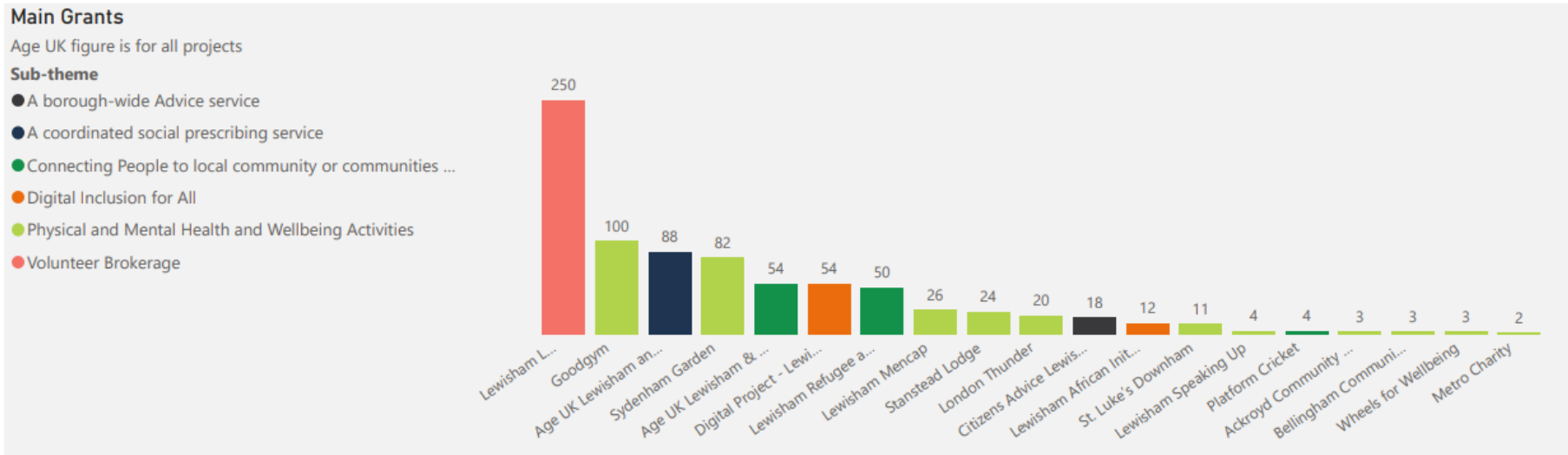
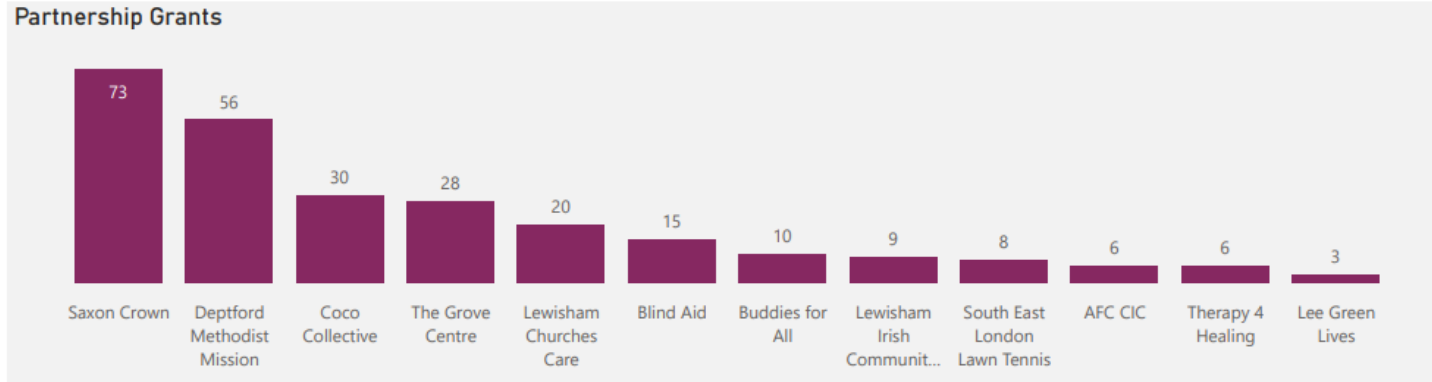
Volunteers

Total Number of Volunteers

Total Number
1,072

Partnership Grants
264

Main Grants
808



Total Number of Volunteer Hours

Total Number

88,238

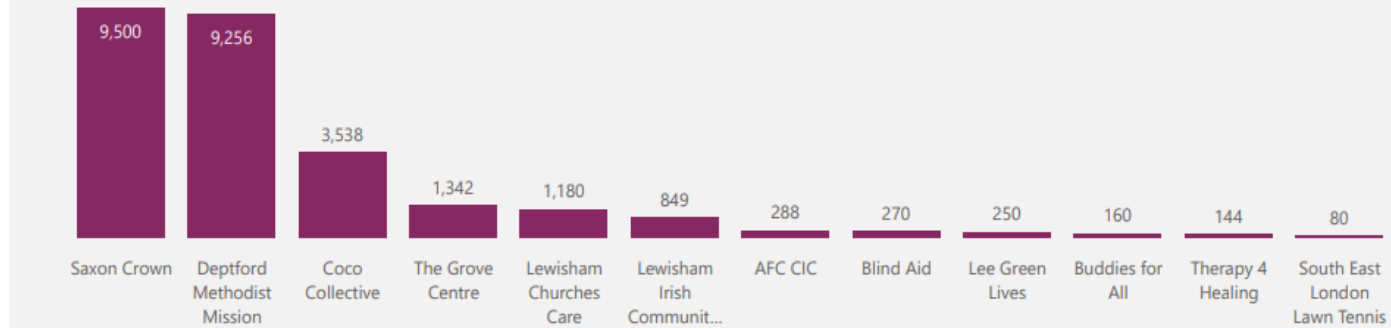
Partnership Grants

26,857

Main Grants

61,381

Partnership Grants

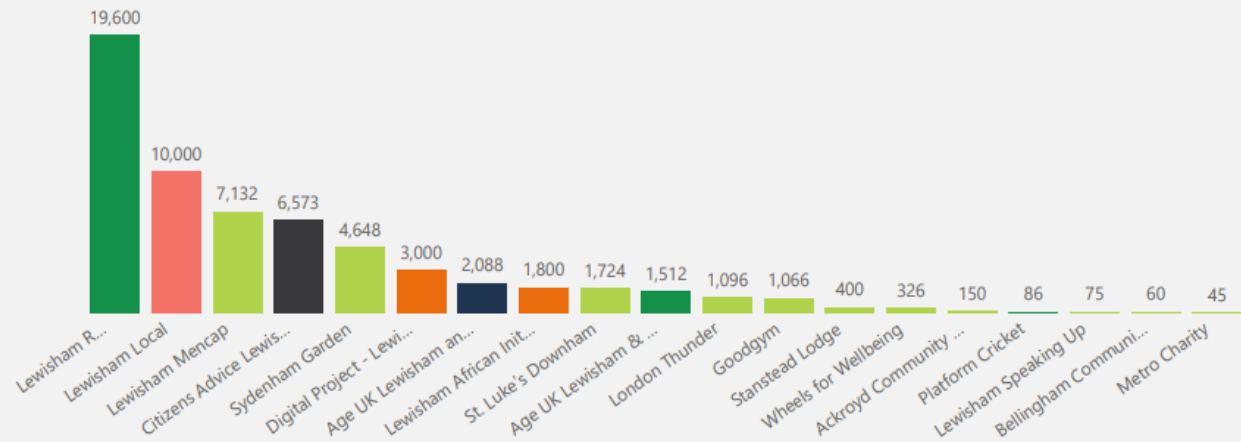


Main Grants

Age UK figure is for all projects

Sub-theme

- A borough-wide Advice service
- A coordinated social prescribing service
- Connecting People to local community or communities ...
- Digital Inclusion for All
- Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing Activities
- Volunteer Brokerage



In total 1072 volunteers have supported main grant funded organisations, offering 88,238 volunteer hours. The salary cost of volunteers if calculated using the London living wage of £11.95 would be £1,054,444 not including on costs.

Good Gym has the largest number of volunteers outside of the volunteer brokerage service as the model is entirely delivered through volunteering and the model also allows flexible, one-off volunteering. However, organisations with smaller number of volunteers also deliver excellent value in number of volunteer hours.

Fundraising by the Sector

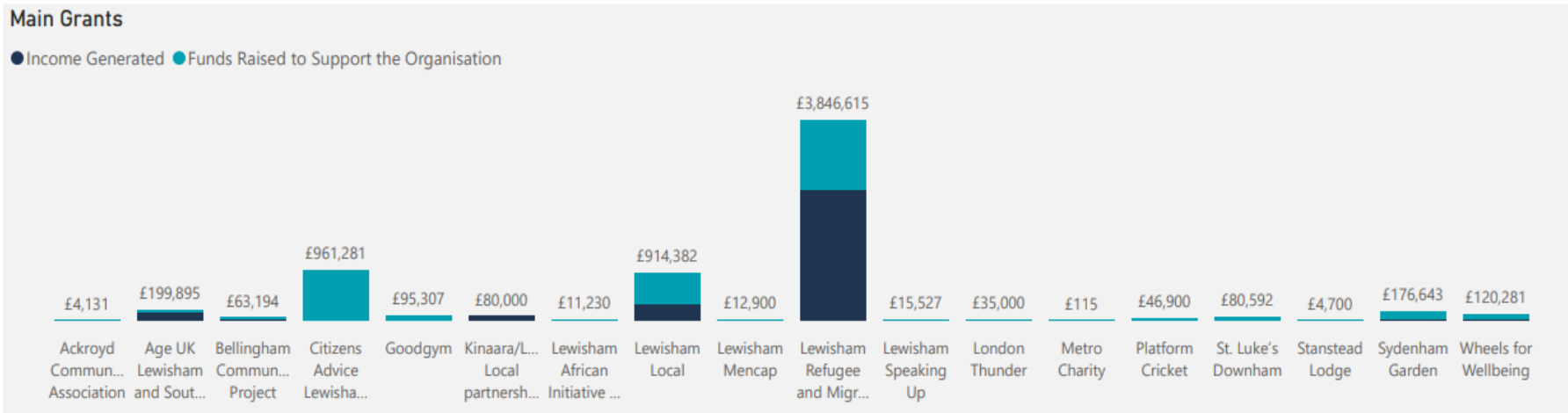
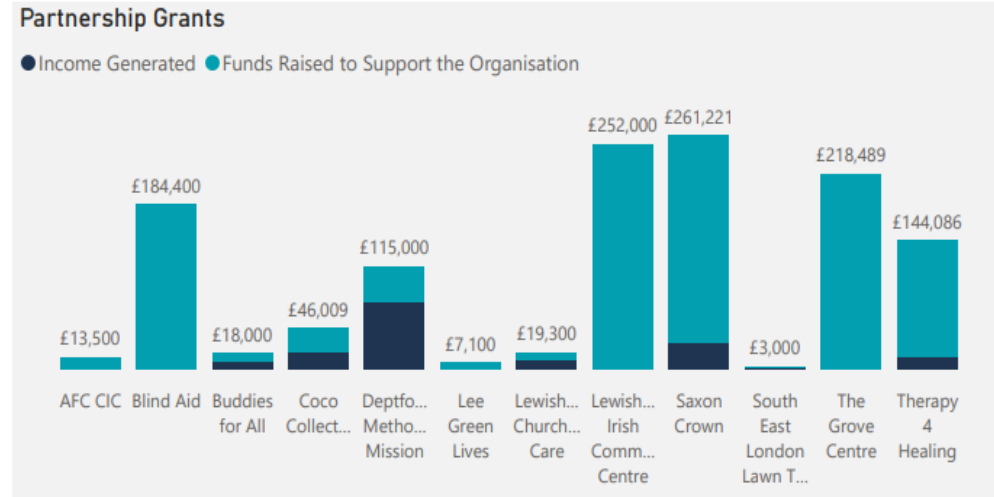
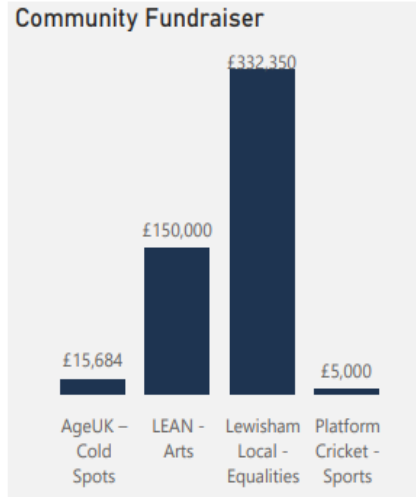
Income Generated Overall

Total Generated
£8,453,832

Community Fundraisers
£503,034

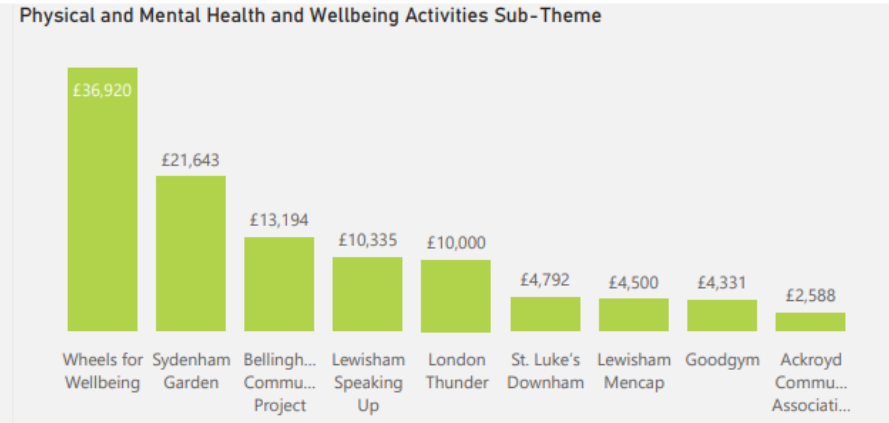
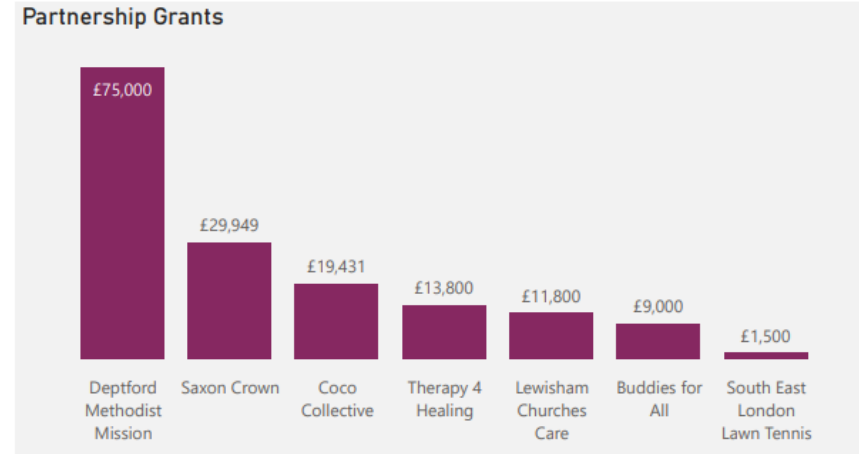
Partnership Grants
£1,282,105

Main Grants
£6,668,693



Income Generated to Support the Main Grants Funded Project

Total Generated	£3,874,258
Community Fundraisers	£503,034
Partnership Grants	£160,480
Main Grants	£3,210,744



Income Generated to Support Core Costs & Delivery

Total Generated

£4,579,574

Partnership Grants

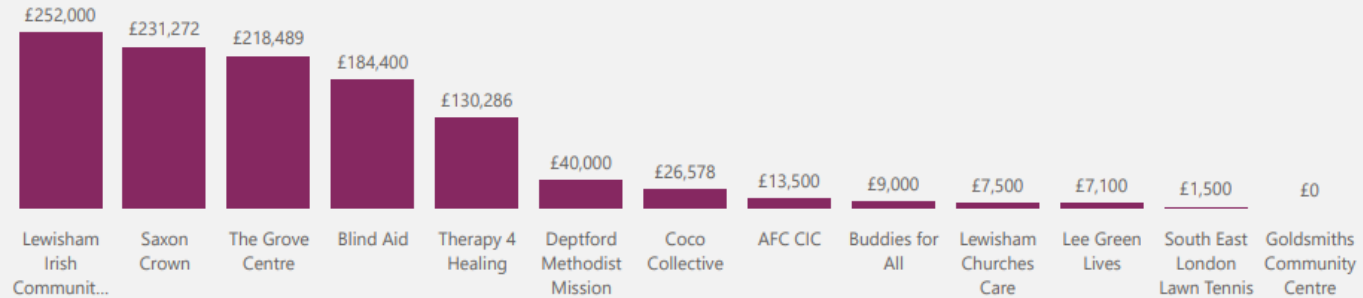
£1,121,625

Main Grants

£3,457,949

Partnership Grants

Saxon Crown includes £174,253 of members fees

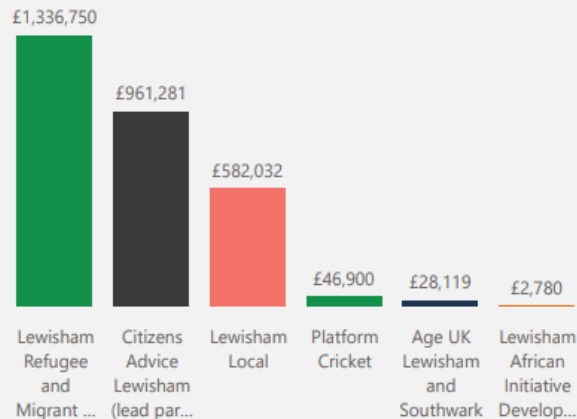


Main Grants

Income generated by Organisations under the 'Wellbeing Activities' theme shown to the right. Age UK - Community Transport (Theme: Connecting People) is included in the overall Age UK figure

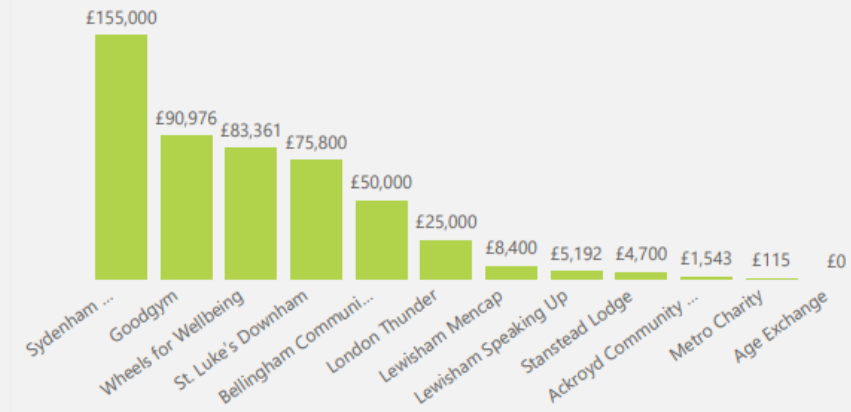
Sub-theme

- A borough-wide Advice s...
- A coordinated social presc...
- Connecting People to loca...
- Digital Inclusion for All
- Volunteer Brokerage



Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing Activities Sub-Theme

St Luke's total has been calculated per annum from a 5 year funding total of £379k



£8,453,832 additional funding was raised by our Main Grants funded organisations in 2022-2023. Of this amount, £3,386,907.92 supported the delivery of their council funded project and £4,443,074 was raised to support the core costs of the organisation and their other programmes and services.

Community Fundraisers:

Recruitment to posts has been challenging and required two rounds of recruitment. as this field is highly competitive. As a result, the Fundraiser for Equalities came into post in June 2023, the Cold Spots fundraiser at end of July 2023, and both Sports and Arts fundraisers not till September 2023. The data from these and outcomes for the work is therefore reflective of this timescale (6-9 months), as well as the specific capacity building need in each of the sectors and readiness of the specific sectors to undertake fundraising, i.e. the sports sector is very small and under-developed and made up of a large number of clubs that usually exist through membership fees.

Year 1 has focused on the framework for the overall programme, how the fundraisers work together and agreement over the joint delivery of the newsletters, events, and workshops, building relationships within the sector and delivering support and assistance to organisations. A joint newsletter is circulated providing information on support & assistance, funding, events, and funding opportunities. Two sector-wide events have been delivered: launch, grant-finder and outreach. The programme has supported 942 individuals and organisations and through workshops, 1-

1 support, assessment, and application guidance. Year 2 will focus on the continuation of the support & assistance programme, a borough-wide funding event in September 2023 and increasing the income generated for the sector and VCS organisation, review & relaunch of the community's online portal and framework for tracking grant applications and funding decision.

When reflecting on the amount brought in by fundraisers vs. the sector, it is important to note that those organisations accessing the fundraisers are by definition smaller, with less capacity and fundraising expertise than the larger organisations who are experienced in fundraising and can generate income by themselves. The overall cost for the Community Fundraiser programme is £180,000 p.y. compared to £503,034 brought in by the programme in the first year.

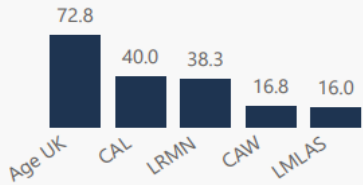
Citizens Advice Lewisham

Citizen's Advice Bureau

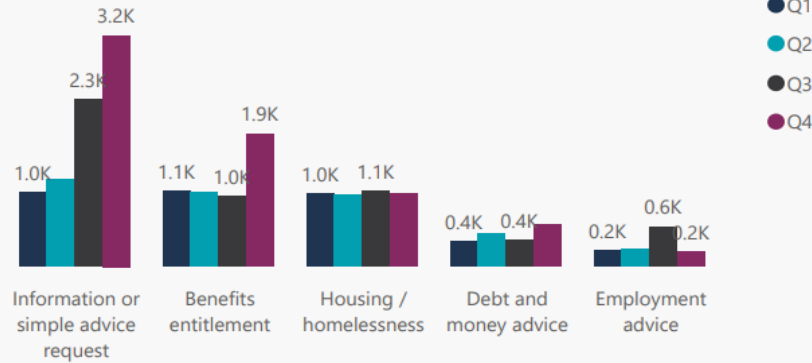
Total Grant

£650K

Grant as proportion of overall spending (quarterly average %)



Number of Unique Individuals per 5 Most Common Presenting Issues

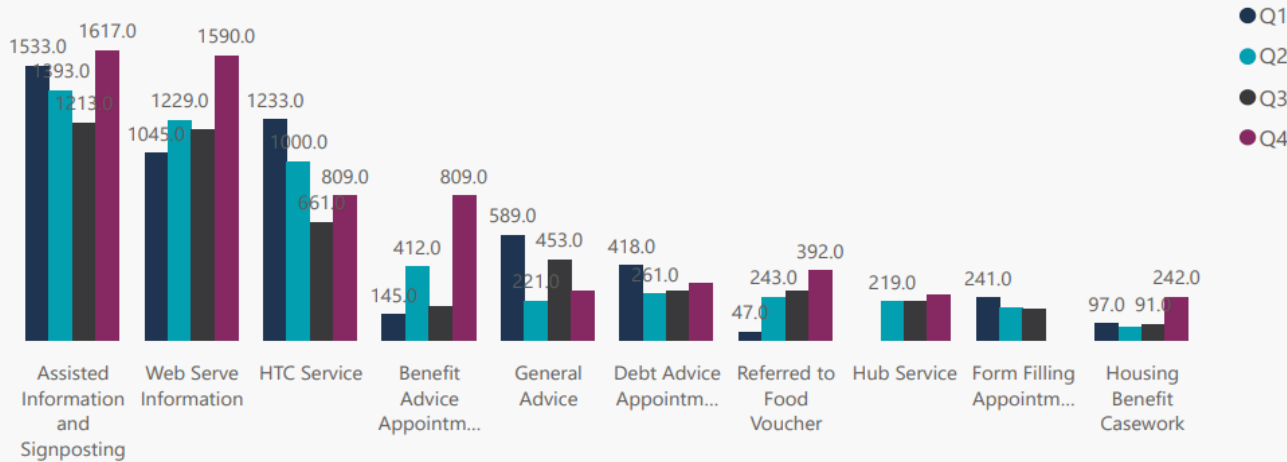


Income Generated (£)

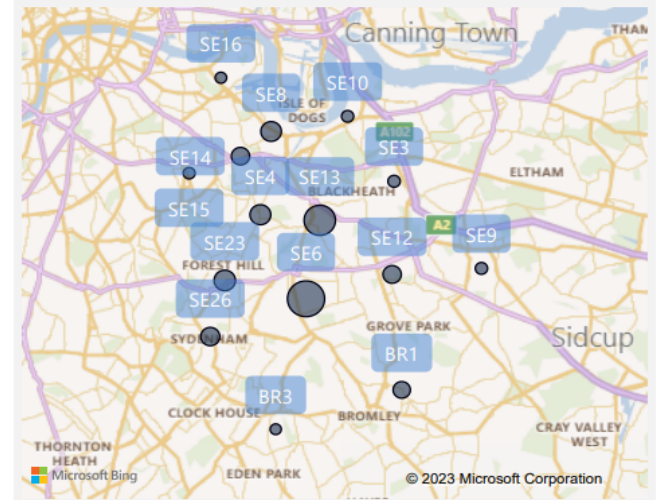
Income generated for clients: Universal Credit, rent, council tax, disability benefit, PIP etc.

13,512,873

Number of Unique Individuals per 10 Most Common Services Received

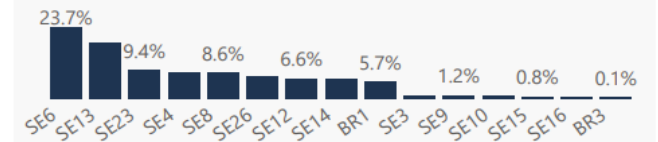


Location of Clients



Approximate Distribution by Postcode

Based on Q1 return



Citizens Advice Lewisham has delivered an excellent performance against their annual targets, this is impressive as it has been within the climate of the cost-of-living crisis which has impacted and increased the number of those in need of information and advice.

The service has seen 19,818 clients against a target of 20,000 clients per annum and undertaken 1,520 personal appointments. Cases have become ever more complex with advisors spending 20 per cent more time per client than the previous year.

The type of client approaching CAL has also seen some changes with more people who are in work requiring advice and support which includes help with accessing foodbank provision to claiming universal credit, in work benefits or housing issues.

The financial gain for clients is £13,512,872.92, which is similar to the previous year but for 10 per cent less clients.

This year, has been challenging in several ways with a new Chief Executive starting in March 2022, responding to the cost-of-living crisis, dealing with increasing needs, managing recruitment difficulties due to a UK wide lack of advisors & competition of increased salaries from other organisations competing in a small market.

To alleviate some of the pressure, the council agreed that CAL could revise their working model to offer more flexible conditions to staff to be able to recruit new and retain current staff. This model allows for a four-day week working compressed hours providing an attractive package for staff, allowing flexibility to be able to provide services across a longer day. CAL has recently undertaken a restructure of its staffing model to be more affective at managing the changing needs of the organisations and its clients.

CAL is currently working with the council to provide inhouse training to their own volunteers and those from partner organisations to become fully accredited advisors which aims to mitigate some of the recruitment difficulties.

CAL is working with the council and delivering extra support due to the cost of living and Winter Needs Fund which focuses on placed based triage and advice in areas that have been identified as being most in need in the borough.

The Advice Lewisham Partnership Forum has resumed meeting in-person with a forum meeting every 3 months. This has proved popular as there is a lot of need for advice giving organisations to meet up and exchange experiences, information and highlight where extra support is required.

In July CAL held a full day cost of living forum for the sector to provide information, discuss in depth the impact on clients and organisations and identify short and longer term solutions

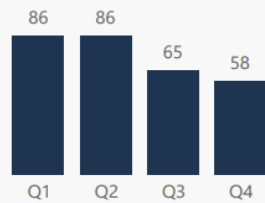
Age UK

Age UK - Social Prescribing

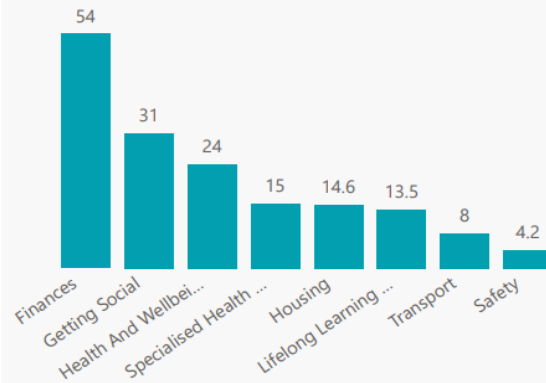
Grant Amount

£440K

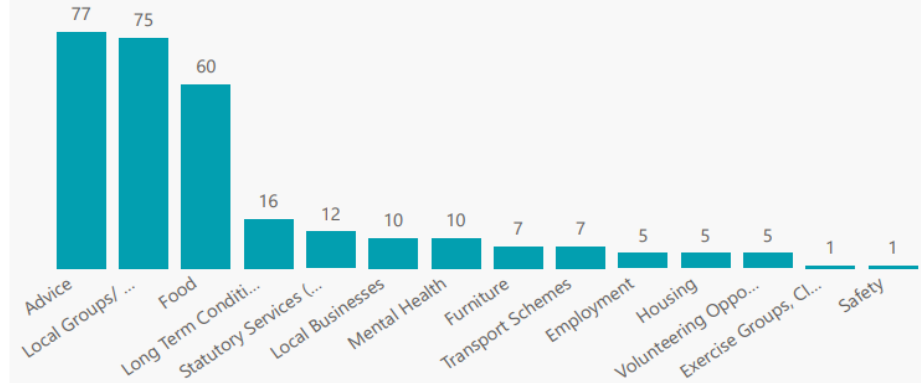
Grant as proportion of overall spending (%)



Presenting Issue (% of Clients)

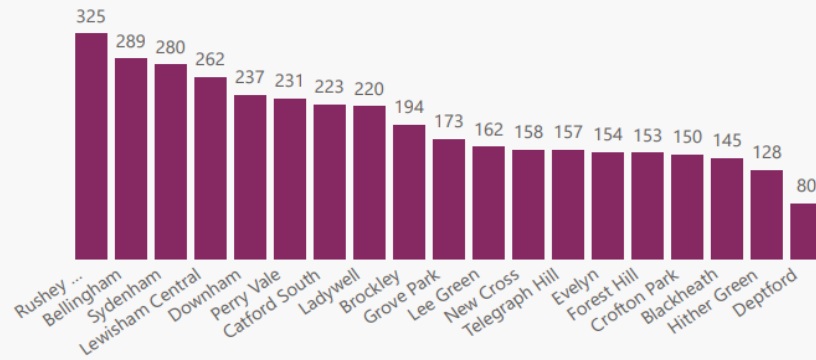


Support Offer (% of Clients)

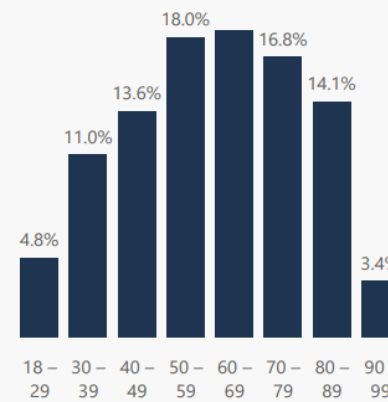


Ward

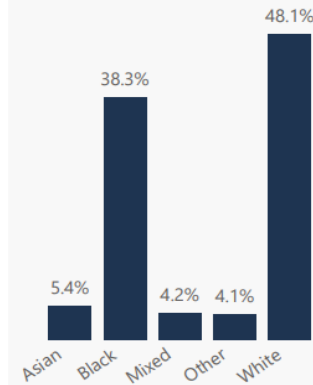
Numbers may have been affected by introduction of new wards



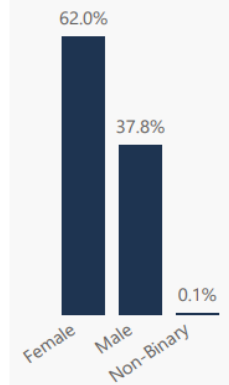
Age



Ethnicity



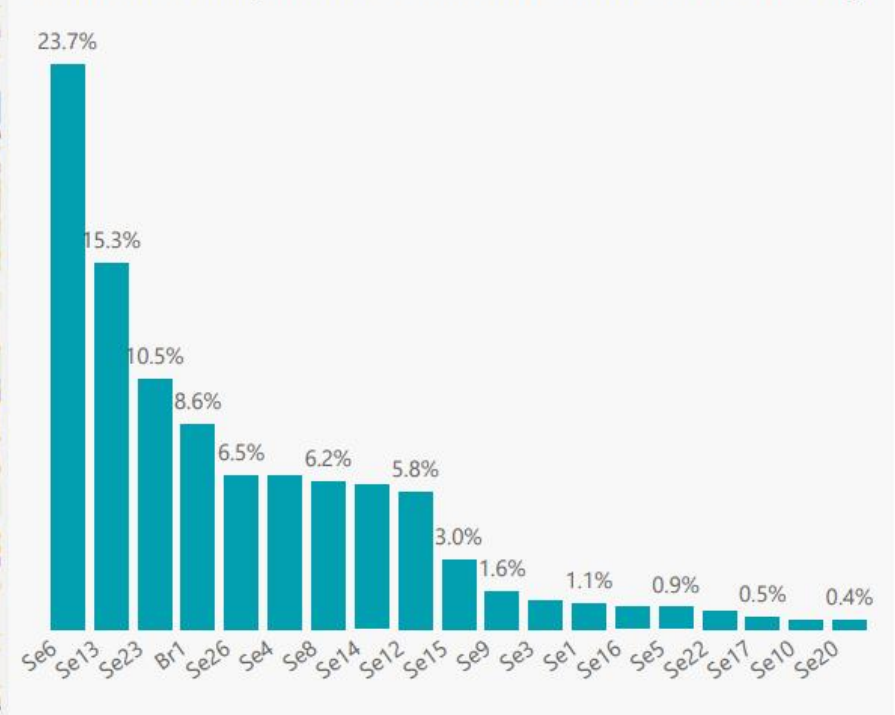
Gender



Distribution of Clients (Q1 only)



% Distribution of postcodes with more than 2 clients (Q1 only)



Age UK deliver Community Connections Lewisham, a social prescribing service, connecting residents with activities and services across a wide range of need. Providing a tiered range of support via phonenumber, home visits and outreach placed based service in venues across the borough.

'Community Connections Lewisham' started as a pilot project launched during covid in response to the needs of residents. Due to its popularity a full service was funded and launched in April 2022. The first full year of provision has been excellent results with 5,274 clients against a target of 5,000.

The cost-of-living crisis has been challenging for Age UK not just the increased need of and by clients, but recruitment has been difficult due to salary constraints, competitive market, and a lack of quality staff.

In response, Age UK has restructured its service delivery model to provide a more- in depth level of telephone service to clients, home visits have restarted, f outreach and placed based provision is being conducted.

In September 2022, Age UK undertook the transfer of the community transport and befriending services from the now defunct Voluntary Services Lewisham. The task in the first two quarters[September 2022 – March 2023] was to continue the delivery at existing service levels and to conduct a review to identify the future direction, needs and cost of a future provision.

The Befriending service has supported 85 clients assisted by 82 volunteers, community transport has assisted 58 clients, supported by 34 volunteers.

An application had been submitted to Motability for £1million to fund a community transport service for 3 years, a decision is due imminently. The grant would provide a project coordinator & assistant, 3 vehicles and additional funding to subsidise clients on low incomes.

Age UK has set up a collaboration of six organisations to refer clients requesting befriending whilst acting as an infrastructure organisation. The partnership has submitted a bid to the Mercer's Company to support a Befriending programme responding to the diversity of client need.

Age UK host the Cold spots community fundraiser with the fundraising development manager starting in August 2022. Initially the work comprised of developing relationships and identifying where the delivery would be focused, which was based on data collected from the gaps report and their own service. Year one has focused on building relationships and capacity – 131 organisations have been supported.

In May 2023, Age UK led on the Downham door knocking project partnering with local organisations. 60 volunteers knocked on 1500 doors and spoke to 154 households to listen to their view of Downham, future needs and priorities. The findings will form the basis for local organisations to develop future consultations and plans for services.

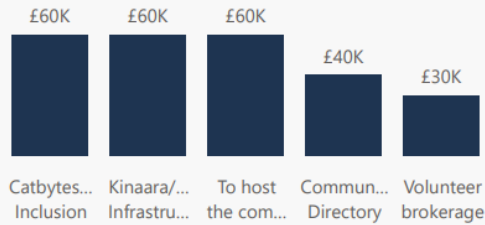
Age UK has supported the Positive Ageing Council in coordinating Silver Sunday 2023 and is currently a member of a collaborative comprising; the NHS, Public Health, Council and POSAC to deliver an ageing well and falls prevention event in September 2023.

Lewisham Local

Total Grant

£250K

Grant Per Project

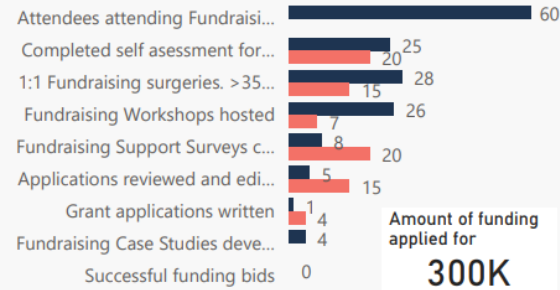


Lewisham Local

Fundraising

● Actual ● Target

Actual data only available for Q1, 2 & 3



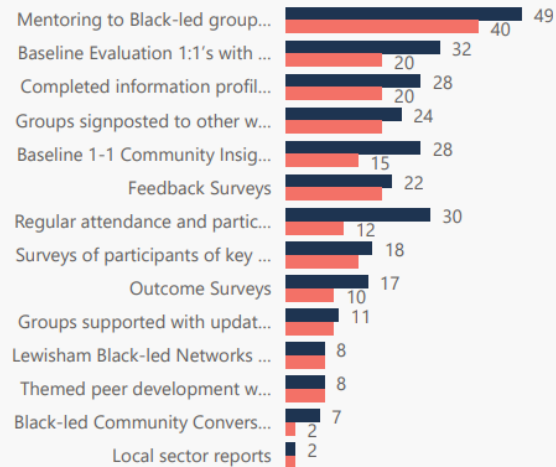
Community Directory

● Actual ● Target

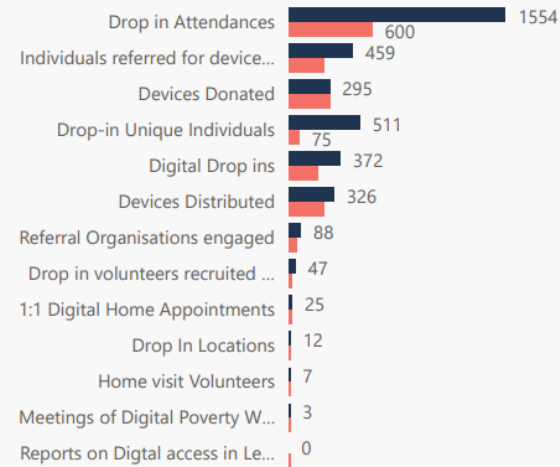
Actual data only available for Q1, 2 & 3



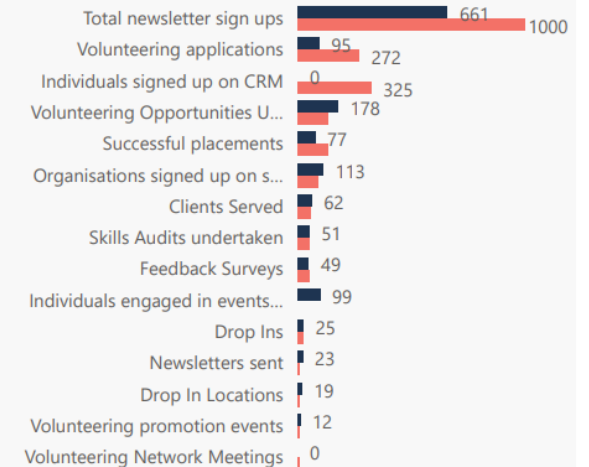
Kinaara Black-Led Infrastructure



Digital Inclusion



Volunteer Brokerage



Lewisham Local is responsible for delivering a broad base of projects; community directory, Digital inclusion with Catbytes, Black-led infrastructure programme, Community Fundraiser [Equalities] and volunteer brokerage.

These are new infrastructure programmes for Lewisham Local and Year one has focused on setting up the programmes, building the framework, foundation, assessing needs, building partnerships, and developing networks.

Overall year 1 has been successful as programmes have all been set up, most are meeting or exceeding target. This has led to reflection about the programmes, targets and the resource required for delivery.

The community directory had its soft launch in January 2023, approximately 600 organisations are listed, and it has had over 5000 visitors since the launch.

Promotion and show & tells have included fundraising workshops, network meetings and attendance at partner organisations. Lewisham Local is currently a member of a collaborative reviewing the different directories within and external to the council – identifying where they intersect and whether there is the possibility of merging the different directories

The Lewisham Local newsletter is circulated to over 5000 individuals and organisations and this supports the services delivered, promoting widely across Lewisham.

The digital programme as previously stated a partnership with Catbytes, a well-known and trusted organisation. It has Supported 511 individuals at a digital drop-in, distributed 326 devices and had 295 devices donated with 54 volunteers supporting the project both at the drop-ins and providing home visits.

The Black-led infrastructure programme has mentored 49 organisations, completed 32 baseline evaluations, representative attendance at panels and network meetings and set up the Black VCS network.

Following infrastructure support, two black-led projects have successfully been awarded £80,000 to deliver their programmes.

Volunteer brokerage has had some challenges as the cohort of people being supported required additional support to be able to participate in the programme. It is a people-based project and the success is in improving confidence and being able to assist and place an individual who is: not economically active, new to the UK or English is not the first language, have a mental health condition and assessments and/or completing application forms and programmes are a barrier.

The cohort supported by the programme is individuals that have not previously volunteered and not in economically active for a variety of reasons, more time is required to for the 1-1 assessment / skills audit – there are challenges to overcome such as lacking computer skills, no email, requiring an interpreter.

The volunteer brokerage has received 178 volunteering opportunities, placed 77 individuals and undertook 12 promotion events.

The targets for this programme were over-optimistic and year one provided the real-life experience of the resource required to enable participation in the programme and support to prior to placement. Year 2 & 3 is undergoing a review of the programme and targets to ensure that the volunteer brokerage offer provides the most support to the sector and those wishing to volunteer. This will include targeted and thematic campaigns for volunteering to support take-up of volunteering across the board.

7. Case studies:

Case Study 1 – Citizens Advice Lewisham



H. was diagnosed with a rare neurodegenerative disease in her early 50s. H's condition means that she has severe difficulty controlling/managing her body and this affects her mobility, her dexterity and her ability to produce speech and swallow.

The rapid degeneration of H's condition means that she requires full time care for all personal care tasks and her partner had to leave his full time work to care for her.

H. applied for PIP with support from her partner and despite an abundance of medical evidence outlining H's extensive care needs she was awarded only the lowest rate for daily care component and she was refused the mobility component. H's partner had applied for Mandatory Reconsiderations, but the application was unsuccessful and he approached us for help to appeal the decision.

As H. is housebound, we arranged for an advice appointment where H's partner arrived in our office with the documents and H. was present over the phone. H. spoke briefly and with great effort about her condition which she described as being imprisoned within her body, the adviser consulted the medical evidence which suggested that H's case had substantial merit and offered to assist with the preparation of the appeal paperwork. The adviser also recommended that in addition to the appeal to the tribunal, a further request for mandatory reconsiderations is made to DWP by the adviser as in some cases this can be a quicker way to overturn a decision.

Our request for further mandatory reconsiderations was successful and the client was awarded the highest rate on both components of PIP. The award was set for 10 years, freeing the client from the onus of frequent reassessments.

The total financial benefit for the client for the next 10 years is £81,588 (based on current PIP rates).

Further to this, as PIP is a passport benefit client's partner was advised to apply for Carers Allowance and the Carer's Element of Universal Credit, thus the household income has benefited from a further £36,244 (Carer's Allowance for 10 years based on current Carer's Allowance rates) and a further £20,257.2 (Carer's Element of Universal Credit for 10 years based on current Carer's Element rate).

Total benefit per year: £13,808.92, total benefit estimate for 10 years: 138,089.2. Further to the above financial benefit we advised H. and her partner about getting a housing transfer as she has disclosed to our benefits caseworker that she is housebound because her council flat is on the higher floor without a lift

Case Study 2 – Age UK



Queenie is a 66-year-old Caribbean woman living in Lewisham. She was referred to Community Connections by Adult Social Care as she has various health conditions which are making life difficult for her.

A Partnership Coordinator spoke with Queenie who disclosed that she has breast cancer, type 2 diabetes, kidney problems and disabilities. Queenie said she would like to attend some exercise classes, and although she was able to get on and off public transport, she did not feel confident doing this on her own. She also expressed a desire to get some help with healthy eating and malnourishment.

The Partnership Coordinator gave Queenie information about suitable gentle exercise classes and social groups in her community and referred her to Community Connections Transport for support to attend these activities safely. The Partnership Coordinator made a referral to the Dietetics service, which offers home visits and advice about ways to increase calories in food and explore social and practical issues which may contribute to diabetes. The Partnership Coordinator also referred Queenie to the Foodbank to get a food parcel delivered to her home, as she disclosed she did not have enough money to buy food and pay for her energy bills that month. Queenie was also put in touch with Advice Lewisham to check she was getting all the benefits she is entitled to, and South East London Community Energy to provide advice and support around managing her energy bills.

Queenie now has a lot more support in place to help her manage her financial instability, explore social opportunities within her local community, and support her to eat more healthily, all of which will have a positive impact on her physical and mental health.

Case Study 3 – Catbytes



Christine came to Lewisham from Ireland as a child during the 2nd World War. Her dad was seriously wounded and the family came over to see him in Lewisham Hospital. The family decided to stay in the UK and although Christine has moved around London during her life, she always comes back to Lewisham. Christine was given an iPad 3 years ago when one of her grandchildren was born. She has some photos on it but other than that she doesn't know what to do with it. She'd like to get an e-mail to keep in touch with her family. Although she has a mobile phone it is 20 years old and she only has it for emergency calls. Christine visits St.Luke's in Downham every Friday and is delighted to be able to meet the Catbytes volunteers who are helping her with her iPad so that she can finally connect with family and make use of other applications

8. Added value brought in by the sector

The last three years have shown Voluntary and Community Sector organisations add value by virtue of their existence by continuing to deliver core services and flexing to respond to the needs of communities during the worst health and cost of living crisis' seen in decades. VCS organisations deliver at lower cost than statutory organisations and are supported by local volunteers to enable their organisation to run.

The sector is trusted, flexible, knowledgeable, and reactive to the needs of its client base. Providing specialist support either hyper locally, locally or across the borough, they are often the link between individuals and statutory services, becoming the trusted 'go to' when people face difficulties or are in need of support.

The VCS in Lewisham income generate funds to deliver a myriad of services across the borough; everything from providing support with loneliness, managing mental health and well-being, developing new or increased digital skills to providing assistance to claim benefits. In 2022-23, main grant funded organisations generated additional income of over £8.4 million. 1,072 volunteers have supported main grant funded organisations, offering 88,238 volunteer hours.

The community fundraisers are working in a very focused way with a wide variety of organisations in their sectors, supporting collaboration between organisations and the development of partnership bids.

Our three larger main grant funded organisations have also taken a leadership role in setting up thematic networks to work in partnership to apply for funding and deliver programmes and services.

Age UK has set up a collaboration of six organisations to deliver more joined up befriending services across the borough and Citizens Advice Lewisham runs an Advice Forum to engage all advice giving organisations in gathering intelligence, peer learning and support.

In delivering Digital Inclusion projects, Catbytes and LAID have received and donated 373 digital devices to clients accessing their projects across Lewisham.

The representation role has been voluntarily taken on by our three biggest funded organisations; Citizens Advice Lewisham, Age UK and Lewisham Local represent the VCS on a number of strategic boards and working groups including the LSP, ICB, Health and Wellbeing Board, and the Cost of Living Working Group.

9. Challenges

The last few years have seen a perfect storm of a worldwide pandemic and a worsening economic landscape. As a result, the VCS has faced significant challenges impacting on every aspect of their operations from finances to recruitment of staff and volunteers.

Funded organisations and the wider sector have discussed with us and fed back some of these challenges. They include:

- increasing demand
- Increased complexity of need – Citizens Advice report that their advice calls take an average of 20% longer to resolve than in the previous year

- financial pressures to meet increasing core costs particularly utilities, rent, and staffing costs
- Less core cost funding available as many funders are moving towards project based funding
- A more focused and targeted funding landscape, making it difficult for place-based and more generally focused services to raise funds
- recruitment & identifying quality skilled staff – particularly in some sectors like advice
- being able to identify and provide a place-based services in areas of greatest need – there is less capacity for delivering services flexibly across a range of settings

Charities are still focused on survival rather than looking forward – reacting to the latest challenge rather than proactive planning.

Several reports have been published in the last year with findings that show the impact of the current climate on the VCS, echoing the challenges voiced by our Main Grants funded organisation.

'The Cost of Living Crisis: How are the Funders Responding?' [*London Funders September 2022*], found that funders highlighted the financial precarity of some community groups, with concerns that some will be unable to cope with any further increases to their costs. The report poses the question: "The VCSE sector always steps up to serve, but what if *they* can't keep the lights on?" It is inevitable that some VCS organisations will not be able to and there will be casualties with organisations either having to merge or close.

Many funders are aware of the lack of capacity to match the scale of demand with available funding. Funders are also having to manage a decline in their actual funds due to the downturn in the market as the real value of grants is reduced.

The recent report 'Running hot, burning out' [Pro Bono Economics & Nottingham Trent University – March 2023] reveal the extent of the recruitment and retention challenges across the sector.

The report found that over 8 in 10 [82%] of charity employers have tried to recruit staff in the past year, with over 71% stating that recruitment has been difficult. More than half [54%] reported that they currently have vacancies with over 83% saying that those vacancies are hard to fill.

This confirms discussions with our Main Grants funded organisations and the feedback we have received. The market is currently highly competitive; the relatively small number of highly skilled and trained staff in sectors like advice are attracted to larger salaries and better conditions than those that our organisations are able to offer. Organisations are reviewing their terms & conditions for staff to increase recruitment and retention, this includes offering a 4-day working week, compacted hours, training and promotion of current staff or volunteers.

Adding to the challenges of staff recruitment and retention is the long-term decline in the numbers of people volunteering. Numbers have fallen to record lows and this decline has sharpened since the pandemic. Organisations that rely on high number of volunteers compared to employed staff are finding it increasingly difficult to manage service delivery.

10. What next

Key data from the Main Grants Impact Report will be shared with stakeholders and our Main Grants funded organisations further to the completion of the report.

The collection and analysis of this data has identified a number of areas for improvement.

These include:

- Refining of existing monitoring forms to further regularise the kind of data returned
- Develop further data dashboards that link more directly to our Theory of Change model, i.e. thematically
- Work with the sector to improve our shared understanding of the importance and use of data

We plan to hold a VCS impact event in November 2023, to bring our Main Grants funded organisations together, along with key partners across the Council and health. The event will highlight the range of activities provided by the funded sector and highlight the achievements of the sector. It will also provide an opportunity to engage with the Main Grants funded organisations on the range of issues highlighted by the data and plan ahead for the next year.

The next phase of data collection will involve mobilisation of user and volunteer surveys across the sector to assess impact from the service user perspective.

We also propose to work with our data scientist to develop an online data collection tool for ease of data return and analysis.