

Appendix 2 Main Grant Programme Case Studies

Lewisham Local / Catbytes Digital Access for All

Preserving a Voice and Memories:

Background: S, facing a life-limiting illness, was losing his ability to speak. A speech and language therapist recommended voice banking, a process that records his voice and phrases for future use when communication becomes challenging. However he lacked a laptop and the technical skills to set up the necessary software.

Intervention: A carer connected with the "Digital Access for All" project on his behalf. The project promptly provided a refurbished laptop and arranged a home visit to ensure the device was set up for easy access, considering his mobility issues. The volunteer also created shortcuts to essential applications, making the laptop user-friendly for him.

Outcome: With the laptop and personalised support, he successfully recorded his voice and cherished phrases, preserving his unique communication style and creating a lasting legacy for his loved ones. The "Digital Access for All" project enabled him to maintain his connection with the world and leave a precious gift for his family, even as his illness progressed.

Lewisham African Initiative Development Over 50's ICT Project

J, one of the participants, when asked what benefit he got from attending the program, said: "I am a novice computer. During the programme, I've tried to learn alot and make People like my stuff. Mum likes it. It's a better place than other places I've been in the past. Now I am thinking to follow the path of ICT course in old age." The notion of developing a career in administration and being supported to be a working in secretary small firm was echoed by both volunteers on here as well family members. Thanks to LAIDs; J.

Wheels for Wellbeing Cycling for All Lewisham

Cycling at Ladywell is very important to me. I spend 90% of my time as a carer for my partner who has mobility issues and 2 of my Grandson's who are neuro diverse. Cycling gives me time to be me, not someone's Nan or "other half". I can forget about everything else and just enjoy the sense of freedom it brings. It's wonderful to have an incentive to be outside getting some exercise and meeting other people. It helps keeps me fit and sane. I think at the age of 79, that if I had not had the opportunity to cycle on a regular basis my physical and mental health would have deteriorated considerably by now.

Age Exchange

Through engaging in activity designed to support participants to interact socially within a group and communicate their story to others through, song, art or photography - there will be measurable improvement in their well-being, and enhanced feelings of self worth, underpinned by the creation of new friendships and creativity. As the programme develops participants will be supported to choose the direction and content of the programme and to be empowered to make choices about their own personal development ensuring they are able to live their best lives possible.

St Lukes Downham The Front Room Club

M was recently given notice that his private tenancy was being terminated after 17 years and had to find a new flat. This was a great cause of anxiety for him and he had no idea what to do. Our Community and Advice team supported him in applying for housing support and identifying options available for him. He has commented that he has never felt so cared for in his life and he would not have known what to do without our help

Sydenham Garden

“I was really depressed when I was referred to Sydenham Garden, really low. I hadn't moved for two years. I'd been sectioned. I was feeling isolated. I hadn't spoken to anyone for years. I wanted to join so I could socialise and talk to people again. I wanted to do some physical activity and learn about gardening.

I have enjoyed the people, nature, and the peace and quiet. There's something about coming through the gate at the front that levels my head, it's like a peace pipe.

I'm doing a lot more group work since starting. I do dance and movement on Fridays and wildlife club on Mondays. I've gained confidence to leave the house, to get out and actually speak to people. I've gained knowledge of nature and gardening skills. I've gained some strength in my physical being.

I've got activities every day now. I'm starting at Growing Lives (at Sydenham Garden) on Wednesday, and I also volunteer at the church garden and Forest Hill library garden.”

Age UK Lewisham & Southwark Community Connections Befriending

During our recent campaign '*Lewisham Against Loneliness*' campaign we had the pleasure of chatting with P, a former Community Connections service user and now one of our most longstanding volunteer Befrienders.

His life changed dramatically after losing his sight completely in 2004. With his career at an end and a sudden reliance on community transport schemes, he fell into what he calls '*a dark place*'; a long spell of loneliness in which he became increasingly isolated from friends and local activities.

Things began to improve after he was referred to our service in 2013, providing a springboard for his amazing journey out of loneliness. He discovered and joined new social groups, building his confidence, and even going on to launch his own group for visually impaired men.

It was whilst using our transport service that he was encouraged to volunteer as a Befriender. *'I'll give it a try, why not!?' he said, and he's never looked back since.* He's now been volunteering with our service for the past six years and currently phones seven residents a week who are experiencing loneliness! No wonder then that he won our 'Outstanding Volunteer Award' last year!

The Ackroyd Centre Elder Peoples Support Project

Having been a bit lonely since my retirement and my husband's unfortunate passing, my daughter thought it would be a good idea for me to join EPSP at the Ackroyd Community Centre. I decided to join the social club first and, because everybody was so lovely and welcoming, I then started the seated exercise classes to keep fit and active. Each occasion that comes around, I always try to visit the centre for the fund-raising parties they throw which include raffles and quizzes as well as a chance for me to catch up with my friends over a tea and some cake. I recently went on their latest trip to Eastbourne which was delightful and thoroughly enjoyed by everyone who attended - having some time by the sea with my friends was something I thought I wouldn't be able to do in my old age, but EPSP made it possible!

Lewisham Churches Care Ageing Well in Lewisham

Following The One Show on BBC1 which featured Lesley Allen being awarded a 'Big Thank You' for the work she does in support of the elderly in the Catford area [with Bring Me Sunshine], I decided to write to you about my own experience of the support that Bring Me Sunshine offers.

My mum came over from Northern Ireland to visit me for a holiday just before the COVID pandemic hit. She was unable to return home due to the lockdowns and restrictions on travel. Nearly four years later with no friends and a limited social life, I contacted Lesley who came round to meet my mum and subsequently invited her to attend Bring Me Sunshine events. This has had such a major impact on mum's life and has totally transformed her social life and had such a positive effect on her well-being. She has made so many new friends and had great days out with groups. It has been so transformative for both of us -- also giving me reassurance that my mum is being supported whilst I am at work. My mum has a new lease on life. She now looks forward to visiting the group, and particularly enjoys the days out that are arranged.

I can't thank Lesley enough for inviting my mum to join the club and for all the hard work that she puts into making the events such enjoyable experiences. I have even begun volunteering for Bring Me Sunshine, and it is proving to be a new and fantastic experience for me!