

**The London
Community
Foundation**



Regent's Place Community Fund

Round 7 - 6 month update

Registered Charity 1091263



COMMUNITY FUND

Dear Fund Partners,

I'm thrilled to share the interim update for Round 7 of the Regent's Place Community Fund with you. On this round of the Fund, your generous donations have supported 5 community organisations with grants to support their core organisational costs. These essential funds have enabled the organisations to continue their vital work, and have benefitted 3,293 service to date.

In this update, the organisation's share the progress they have made with their grants, the impact of the funding, and case studies which highlight the effect that the funding has had on the service users they work with.

This light touch update demonstrates just how critical your support is and its impact on the local community.

Thank you again for your generous donations and support. Together we truly are making a difference to London.

Sincerely,

Omari Okwulu
Grants Coordinator
The London Community Foundation



£50,868

Granted to 5 Charities



3,293

Number of people
directly impacted at
interim stage

Bengali Workers' Association (BWA)

Project summary:

£10,058 to contribute towards the CEO's salary, matrix standard accreditation in Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) and upgrading their kitchen equipment.

Number of service users supported at interim stage: 125

Activities at interim stage:

The grant was utilised to achieve the Matrix IAG (Information, Advice and Guidance) Quality mark. IAG Services are provided every Wednesday from 10am to 4pm with signposting for complex and technical cases to Citizens Advice Bureau and the Law Centre.

The grant was also used towards the salary for the CEO, recruitment costs, salary for project staff, and providing training and upskilling existing staff to deliver Information, Advice, and Guidance services.

To date, BWA has helped 125 people who have had a variety of issues related to the Cost of Living crisis; council tax, Pension Credit, Discretionary Housing payment, Disability Living Allowance, Housing Benefits, housing issues, PIP, rent arrears, state pension, Tax Credit, Universal Credit, and benefit checks and assessments. In addition to this, the grant has supported us to purchase a fridge and dishwasher as we run a weekly lunch club for elderly people.

What impact has the funding had on your organisation so far, if any?

Funding has helped us provide a valuable service to a vulnerable section of our local population. As an organisation we have been able to maintain trust and strong relationships with our community who rely on us to speak for them and support them. By maintaining a strong connection with the community we are able to understand any additional needs they have, communicate these to appropriate service providers and the council, and develop projects that help tackle these needs. As an organisation, we are also better placed to support with the prevention and early intervention of health and wellbeing issues such as social isolation and common health problems by bringing in health professionals to offer advice. Being able to use some of the funding for core costs such as the CEO's salary and equipment such as the fridge and dishwasher means we are able to maximise the value they have for the wider organisational benefit. For example, the fridge comes into use for other projects and staff contribute to the development of other projects and programmes. Our reputation and the confidence the community has in us is high because of our ability to deliver them with the kind of help they need.

Case study

Mr M is a 60 year old local resident who is a regular service user at our weekly lunch club for elderly people. He was also seen by the welfare rights worker and during their conversation he informed her that he had a longstanding damp issue caused by water leaking from the roof which affected his family and children who were distressed and suffering from illness. We took the case, contacted the relevant department of the local council, and following our intervention, the repair service visited the property and addressed the damp issue. Mr M came to us after the housing issues were resolved and said that he was very happy with the support that he received from the BWA. He went on further to state that without the support from BWA he would not have resolved the housing issues.



Camden Foodbank

Project summary:

£10,270 to contribute towards the rent of their premises in Camden which has increased by 43%.

Activities up to the interim period:

We have used the money to help pay a portion of the £40,000 p.a. rent for the premises from which Camden Foodbank operates. As we pay the rent quarterly, we are using a quarter of the grant every 3 months to help reduce the £10,000 quarterly rental payments. Since 7th March, we have used the grant twice. £2,567.50 on 22nd March 2024 and £2,567.50 on 28th June 2024.

Number of service users supported at interim stage: 2,178

What impact has the funding had on your organisation so far?

The grant has enabled Camden Foodbank to continue to support local adults and children in food crisis with emergency food and toiletries support by funding part of the rise in rental payments which had made operating out of the premises unaffordable. Since the grant was received, 2,178 adults and children have been supported with emergency food and toiletry food parcels from Camden Foodbank.

Case study

It is difficult to give an individual case as we are unable to interview people in food crisis. However, we would like to add that this grant benefits any person in food crisis who has used Camden Foodbank and that it has allowed us to continue to serve the most needy people in our local community, those without food.



C4WS Homeless Project (formerly Caris Camden)

Project summary:

£10,270 to support the salaries of their two Welfare Coordinators.

Activities at interim stage:

We have used the grant to fund the salaries of our Welfare Team, to continue helping shelter guests from previous seasons maintain their accommodation, as well as working with several guests who have been in interim accommodation make applications for more long term housing. We have also provided ad hoc support to those who needed further counselling, osteopathic treatment and immigration advice. Finally, we have started to take groups on trips as part of our Summer Programme, which has replaced our mentoring and befriending scheme. These trips are a great way for a group to come together, and visit attractions in the local area. So far we have been to the British Library for a behind the scenes tour, and next week will go again to visit their new exhibition, 'Beyond the Bassline: 500 Years of Black British Music.' We also have visits to the Aga Khan Centre, the Lightroom and the Tower of London booked. These trips foster social cohesion, as well as giving our guests the confidence to visit local cultural venues and landmarks.

Number of service users supported at interim stage: 30

What impact has the funding had on your organisation so far?

It has meant that we have been able to carry on working with our most vulnerable guests for a much longer period than just the initial 28 day shelter offer. In our original application, we wrote that the welfare work is the backbone of our small charity, and that each guest trusts their caseworker, as they see them daily at the shelter. When the season ends, so does the proximity to each guest, and so by retaining the Welfare Coordinators, it means that there is a continuation of casework, and the trust that was built during a person's time at the shelter, continues, allowing the necessary work to be completed. With this said, the summer of 2024 has seen some changes to our staff team, and we have said goodbye to Curd De Vries, who left at the end of March 2024. We have conducted a recruitment process, and a new Coordinator, Rachel Lucas, will join the team from the start of July 2024. This will allow her both to settle into the role, and participate in the project that this grant has been designated for, the ongoing welfare support to former shelter guests. We are excited for her to join our small team, as she has a strong background of working in the sector in a trauma informed environment.



Case study

When Samuel arrived for his first night, he was very distressed as he had recently been in a car accident and was still in a degree of pain from his injuries. He had needed medical treatment, including dental work. This was in addition to his overall distress of experiencing homelessness. He explained to our Welfare Team that he felt he had exhausted all avenues of finding help and felt hopeless. During his initial meetings with his caseworker, he would simply sob, expressing his desperation. He had experienced trauma, which compounded with being NRPF due his immigration status in the UK, led him to experience acute anxiety and low mood. Over time, we were pleased to see a difference in his demeanour; he began to smile more, which was such a pleasure to witness. The help provided by our Counsellor, Lindsay from BGPS, as part of our Wellbeing Tuesday service, gave him the space he needed to express himself, as well as the tools he needed to help him move past that initial point of crisis. Subsequently, he began to relax in the shelter where he engaged well with staff, volunteers, and other guests. He slowly began to find his trust restored. The team helped support him in finding suitable move on accommodation, despite his lack of status and income. Once he was settled in, Samuel returned to the office and expressed his gratitude to the C4WS staff team for the care they had shown him, and expressed his positive feelings for the future. He was also a guest of honour at our Service of Thanks held in April 2024, to mark the end of the season. His emotional speech, which he delivered from the heart.



Lifeafterhummus

Project summary:

£10,270 to cover 6 months of rent, staff salaries, the continued delivery of their food surplus service, expansion of their pre-loved clothing rail and toy bank, relaunch of their community cooking classes and building repairs.

Activities at interim stage:

The grant has helped us to pay the rent at the centre at £875.09 per month, in order to keep a vital food aid service running through our social supermarket which also serves as a passive employability project. Thanks to this grant we have now been able to set up 3 passive pre-loved clothing rails inside of 3 of Camden Council's nurseries - 2 of which are children centre's and family hubs. These are located at Hampden in Somers Town, Agar in Camden Square Ward and Harmond in Kentish Town. This has allowed families to access much needed clothing items and allowed family workers to redirect parents in need to the rails, especially expectant mothers. We have also placed nappies, incontinence and after-birth pads for mothers, pre-loved books and shoes for 0-12 year olds. At two of the nurseries we have placed drop-off points for families to recirculate clothes they no longer need. The grant has allowed us to free up time to work on the longevity and sustainability of the project. Being able to pay staff to take care of the day to day running of the centre in order to pursue the idea of creating a waste kitchen and cafe.

Number of service users supported at interim stage: 300

What impact has the funding had on your organisation so far, if any?

We do not receive core funding so this has been essential. We would not be able to carry out the essential work we are doing. Going from the Cost of Living to now it has been harder and harder to access unrestricted funding. Even being able to negotiate better insurance for the centre to include our increased activities. It has allowed us to support residents in multi-faceted ways. It is a generous grant that makes it possible for us continue our service and take on more families in need. And spend our time inducting and training new residents on how the social supermarket works and the equity that it creates. Having close contact with households makes it possible for us to refer them on for ongoing support and signpost them to activities that they would not otherwise know existed. We are grateful that Regent's Place and British Land have chosen us once more. I know how lucky we are. Simply put we would not have stayed afloat this year. But now thanks to this grant we are in the middle of creating a waste cafe and kitchen. And this cafe and kitchen will provide a new source of income, employability to young people referred and working in partnership with the youth justice department of Camden Council. The kitchen will enable us to return to community cooking classes. I would not have been able to have and start these conversations if it was not for this grant. As I would have been chasing funds to keep the service afloat.

Case study

We drop off food to Plot 10 after-school club twice a week. The Director often sends me messages and pictures of the impact on local families of St Pancras and Somers Town:

- "My children and families are so grateful for what you provide for us, they are not only having a great meal but are participating in the cooking which enhances their knowledge of the food chain and learning how to prepare and deliver quality food".
- "Tomorrow we are going to do a workshop making smashed avocados with lime juice and chilli flakes on toasted bread for the breakfast club. Not something many of my children have had for breakfast Like EVER! Brainfood to set them up for school all courtesy of Lifeafterhummus".
- "You make such a difference to our families, parents also take food for elderly neighbours or their own parents so the outreach work is amazing and far reaching".
- "Hi Farrah, Just to let you know , we gave out all the meat products and pies and 25 families had a great meal tonight. Thank you again".
- "I had a monitoring meeting with the commissioners of Camden who give us our core funding and I sung your praises! They are extremely grateful that you are supporting all the groups in Plot 10 and have told me to express their thanks to you for what you are doing for Plot 10 and now they have been on-site to see what we do for the wider community through you. They have decided that at some time you will get public recognition for what you do for us, not sure what as they move slowly but they now know the significance of what we do collaboratively, happy days".



Samuel Lithgow Youth Centre (SLYC)

Project summary:

£10,000 to part-fund the Centre Manager's salary to support the management of the centre.

Activities at interim stage:

We managed to continue to deliver all of our current projects, as follows:

1. Women's Fitness Project (WFP). In the past 6 months, over 260 women have attended. It is delivered Tuesday to Friday (term-time) from 10am to 12pm. We currently have 370 registered women, and most of them regularly attend Zumba, Aerobics, Dance and Yoga classes.
2. Senior Youth Club (13-19). In the past 6 months, over 100 young people have attended this project. Young people play football, basketball, non-contact boxing, use the gym, music room, and the games Room at the moment our PS5 has been extremely popular.
3. After School Club (8 - 11). This is a very popular project, taking place 4 times a week (4pm to 6pm). On average over 25 children attend this project and in the past 6 months over 100 children have attended the activities. The children normally take part in sports activities, use the gym, the music room, the computers, the games room, the PS5, have snacks and refreshments and do arts & craft activities.
4. The Holiday Programme. In the past 6 months we had 8 weeks of activities (40 sessions) and over 200 children attended this project.

Number of service users supported at interim stage: 660

What impact has the funding had on your organisation so far, if any?

The grant is helping SLYC to remain financially sustainable in the financial year of 2024 / 2025 as we are now saving £10,000 which was previously being spent from our unrestricted reserves towards the salary of the Centre Manager, who delivers all of SLYC Projects which benefit children, young people, and the wider community.

Case study

Feedback from Wajidha S-D who regularly attends the Women's Fitness Project (WFP) and has 2 children who regularly attend the After School Club: 'I take part in most of the activities throughout the day, and I have benefited by being guided on a healthy lifestyle by the teachers who teach the activities. I have also been meeting people from all walks of life. I usually have a coffee and a chat with everyone who attends the WFP. I have made friends which has helped me settle into the community. I feel safe, I feel supported. I also have 2 of my children which access the After School Club, which has enabled them to make friends and learn new things. They have even been on trips which I would never be able to do with them. The Youth Club is the heart of the community and give ordinary people like myself a break'.

Thank you

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Your support is so vital to sustain London's incredible network of grassroots charities and local community groups. They are the fabric of our communities and increasingly we are all dependent on their unique reach, impact and purpose.

Together we truly are making a difference to London, where it matters most.



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