

LAMBETH COMMUNITY FUND

CASE STUDIES

To accompany the 2013-15 Evaluation



Introduction

This report is a compilation of case studies of groups funded through the Lambeth Community Fund between April 2013 and December 2015. It accompanies the final evaluation report of Fund. Each case study provides background information on the funded project and focuses on the difference made to beneficiaries. It is intended to bring to life some of the projects, with quotes, pictures and testimonials.

Round 18 - Brixton St Vincent's Community Centre (Brixton Community Base)

Brixton St Vincent's Community Centre was awarded £471 to run a street party for the local community in the Effra area of Brixton.

Brixton St Vincent's Community Centre, known as Brixton Community Base, is an arts-orientated community centre providing a base for local groups, which hires space for rehearsals, workshops, evening classes, children's parties and meetings. It also manages community projects such as the Brixton Youth Theatre for local children.



A volunteer steering group organised a summer street party featuring community dancing, children's activities including face painting, street art, bat-and-ball games, and bouncy castle. A local campervan served ice cream and there were animals on show, a fire engine, as well as music from local bands. Local people were invited to bring food to share. Over 100 people attended in total.

What is the need & how was it identified?

There is an increasing need for better community cohesion. The Effra community is undergoing rapid change as house prices soar and young professionals move into an area that was previously made up of more traditional Brixton residents and housing association tenants.



How are the beneficiaries disadvantaged?

Most of the housing is Victorian terraced, either whole households or flats, but there are pockets of newer build. Households are atomised and many of the residents are transient. The street party aims to bring people together, encourage neighbours to get to know each other and help build a community of people from differing social and ethnic backgrounds.

Difference Project Made to Beneficiaries

- Better community cohesion through working and socialising together.
- Neighbours from diverse backgrounds meeting each other.
- Business connections made.
- Volunteer steering group learning how to work together to achieve results.
- Connections with other local groups made.



"I loved meeting so many people"

"Really worthwhile. Great to meet neighbours"

Round 19 - Oasis Children's Venture

Oasis Children's Venture was awarded £10,064 to run an inclusive, accessible, volunteer-led celebration of disability culture and community event. This project also had a volunteering/training focus, helping disabled young people to gain skills in event management.

Oasis Children's Venture is a local charity that runs three different and unique facilities for children and young people in Stockwell, London. Oasis is about play, freely chosen activities that are challenging and fun.

The Big Ruby Do' built on previous inclusive festivals held by Oasis. The event celebrated the diversity of the community and showcased the skills and talents of disabled Lambeth residents. The event was held in July 2013 and took inspiration for its theme from Oasis' 40th year running projects in Lambeth and was ruby themed. The event was accessible to disabled people and their families including those with high support needs. A limited transport service was available to ensure that those with mobility difficulties could attend. Just under **1,000 people** attended the event in total.

Disabled people and young people aged 15 to 25 were supported to play an active role in the decision making, planning and delivery of the event. Five disabled volunteers with complex needs were recruited to work in partnership with specialist staff to research, plan and promote elements of the event. Each volunteer was facilitated by a support worker to participate fully in the life of the festival. These disabled volunteers completed an AQA accredited certificate in Volunteering with Support.

“A great atmosphere and community spirit, love it”

What is the need & how was it identified?

At the time of application there were not any other accessible events that celebrate disability culture in Lambeth, with more events that take into consideration the diverse needs of disabled people desperately needed. It was clear from feedback from disabled users, their families and visitors at past events that there was a lack of accessible social and leisure opportunities in the borough.

How are the beneficiaries disadvantaged?

The organising team worked closely with Lambeth disability networks to ensure that this event drew on and reflected the diverse experiences, skills and talents of the borough's disabled residents. Disabled people can often suffer from social isolation as a result of their disability, and are also the subject of stereotyping. This event worked to address both these important issues, which can contribute to disadvantage.

“Just being here was amazing and the talent show was exciting”

Difference made to project beneficiaries

- Improved wellbeing of disabled and non-disabled people in Lambeth
- Increased creative opportunities for disabled people and non-disabled people
- Increased confidence and positive self-image of disabled and non-disabled people in Lambeth
- Increased knowledge and skills amongst disabled and non-disabled people in Lambeth
- Greater awareness of the achievements of disabled Lambeth residents
- Increased involvement of disabled people in activities and decision making in their local community

**“Lovely day,
reminds me of
how Brixton used
to be”**

**“It was nice to see
other people in
wheelchairs and to
bring my daughter to a
function like this. She
must see she's not the
only one in a wheelchair on the planet. My daughter has had a wonderful day.”**



Round 21 - The Skills Network Ltd

The Skills Network Ltd was awarded £3,000 for capacity building to prepare mothers to share skills and information about supporting children at school.

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This project was all about developing tools and skills to become a fully co-productive organisation and getting ready to extend and scale up community skill-sharing activities. To be truly co-productive it wanted to embed 'equal and reciprocal' relationships around decision-making, leadership, responsibility and reward for work in its governance structures and day to day practices. It included:

- Writing a constitution that consolidates and sets out co-productive/cooperative principles and practice, building on the lessons learnt during the pilot year. This included defining a 'working group' structure.

- Finalising financial policies and procedures that are in line with a move to participatory budgeting.

- Examining and improving decision-making processes, so that they are as inclusive as possible.

- Capacity building to ensure that everyone had the practical and administrative skills needed to fully participate in decision-making about the design and delivery of activities.

- Developing ways to monitor and evaluate processes as well as outcomes.

- Expanding and consolidating partnership networks, particularly with **the cooperative council**.

- 10 mothers were trained as community skill-sharers and reached 250-300 families in Lambeth.

What is the need & how was it identified?

Skills Network knew that many parents who attended its activities were struggling with a range of issues related to their children's schooling, and sometimes did not know where to turn. The Community Skill-sharing activities were an opportunities to inform them about services. It wanted this programme to be delivered by the women in its group as they already had many of the skills in place to run it..

Difference made to project beneficiaries

Cooperative working training was completed with 7 women, who have now all participated in organising at least one outreach day event.

7 women completed training in cooperative working, gaining skills in communication, group working, group decision-making and conflict.

13 women delivered 4 outreach days and 3 pop-up events over the last 5 months, gaining practical skills, with different women taking the lead on different events.

Contacts were gained with organisations who are happy to host or participate in future events.

8 women attended the participatory budgeting process, which will be used for all activities from September.

11 women participated in the group strategy process, gaining skills in organisational skills and planning.

recruited 4 volunteers

introduced participatory transparent budgeting processes

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Victoria joined Skills Network in March 2013 and attended a Core Training Programme. She completed training in Cooperative Working for You and Your Child in May 2013, which was part funded by Lambeth Cooperative Challenge Fund and has taken the lead on a pilot outreach day at Larkhall Park One O'clock Club. She is now on the decision-making working group for Skills Network's CSS programme, developing the 2014/15 project plan and taking the lead on organising activities. Victoria says:

“Before joining Skills Network I was not working, I was sitting at home doing nothing. I didn't have any qualifications and I hadn't worked apart from a bit of babysitting for friends. I didn't have a CV. The CSS project has given me the opportunity to gain work experience and share things I learn here with other parents. It changed my life - I am now working with people that trained me, and I have the opportunity to train other parents as well. When I had the opportunity to be one of the lead organisers of an outreach day I felt free – like I could do things which I never imagined I could”.

Round 22 and Round 24 - Myatt's Field Park Project

Under Round 22, Myatt's Field Park Project (MFPP) was awarded £3,000 for business planning and capacity building support to prepare the Myatts Field Park Project for cooperative working and service delivery.

Myatt's Fields Park is a beautiful listed Victorian park which has undergone a £3 million renovation, completed in 2010. It has a new playground with water play, café and wildlife area. The park's structure - benches, railings and paths - were renovated and there is a new children's building called the Mulberry Centre. But as well as offering a place to play and relax, the park can make a real difference to the lives of people who live near it.



This project was to carry out business planning and capacity building from January to April 2014, which included ensuring the group's structures, management and policies were fit for purpose in order to take over services; and to undertake planning for the park's management and sustainability of programmes including food, events and food growing.

A major part was an action planning day for Trustees, along with work by key personnel with a consultant. Consultancy looked specifically at: 1) **Vision Development:** Facilitating a session with Trustees to explore and achieve a common vision for the organisation, including service provision for the future; 2) **Action Planning:** Facilitating the development of an action plan to achieve the vision, including any action required to address points arising from a risk assessment strategy; 3) **Team Development:** Review of skills, experience, knowledge and personal qualities amongst the Trustee, staff and volunteer team and assessment of gaps/areas to strengthen to meet future needs; 4) **Coaching:** Providing coaching to the key individuals to lead commercial income generation and service provision.

The project developed MFPP into a more **robust and sustainable** community enterprise, thus safeguarding and extending the social good, employment, volunteer opportunities etc for the future. It will also helped to create an organisation that was best positioned to provide 'value for money' to the authority over the long term.

Achievements & Outcomes

The project contributed majorly to the development of the organisation's business plan, which lays down a foundation for the future of the park. The plan envisages a 'worst case scenario' which sees drastic cuts to public services, and lays out plans to protect the park, along with local people in terms of well being, social cohesion, nutrition, enterprise and job creation.

The plan gives MFPP a way to ensure:

A high standard of park maintenance is maintained which impacts heavily on the thousands of people who live around the park, enhancing community safety and well being.

That the park continues to have a cafe which is a strong community focus.

That it can offer park buildings for use by local people, including developing a nurture hub for food businesses.

That a range of events can continue to be offered from the park.

The planning day on the 26th June **brought together representatives of 35 organisations, representing thousands of people** in total. It is the beginning of a network that will plan together, publicise each other's work to the public, share resources and will implement a plan to green Vassall and Coldharbour wards. It informed local organisations about huge investment that is soon to come to the area and demonstrated how these investments and movement might align for the benefit of local people. MFPP is now in the position it aimed to be; it has a business plan and a **clear direction of travel for the future.**

“This work is really important because parks are under threat - cuts to public services mean they are in the firing line and we could lose everything we've gained in the past fifteen years”

Round 24

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“Thanks to support from Lambeth Community Fund, we have prepared a business plan detailing how we can take on management of the park, and how MFPP plans to raise income to sustain the park maintenance. This new piece of work now takes that further and involves the whole community in the process.



Myatt’s Fields Park Project submitted an expression of interest to London Borough of Lambeth to take over management of the maintenance of Myatt’s Fields Park. Off the back of this, and on the basis of the documents prepared under the Round 22 funding, 2' <<' ,, ZxZ' b jMz' YÜa' Mj MxZX' Öa\$000'ut' 1Nk' UZ{a' {n'x| I {aZ' uMI from December 2015 until March 2016 on a trial basis.

This community-led process has led to a significant increase in the number of people being elected as trustees- a record 13 people with a huge variety of experience and skills. We believe the process we went through, supported by LCF has contributed greatly to this success”.

Round 25 - The Portuguese Speakers Community Centre (case study based on interim monitoring)

The Portuguese Speakers Community Centre was awarded £32,500 towards the salary of its Centre Manager to coordinate and oversee the group's core activities.

The Portuguese Speakers Community Centre is the UK's first major community centre for Portuguese speakers and opened in December 2011. The centre, which was supported by a £500,000 endowment from Lambeth Council, provides services to the local Lusophone community, the largest single minority in the borough. The centre, which is run by a project board of community representatives and local volunteers, provides support to Portuguese speakers and others to access public services, develop educational and employment skills, tackle health and social inequalities and provide a space for culture activities. It aims to improve cohesion within the Portuguese speaking community and with the wider public.

This grant paid the salary of the Centre Manager to deliver the following programmes:

- 48 weekly senior group sessions
- 24 weekly mental health support group sessions
- 5, 12 week ESOL courses
- 48 weekly Karate classes for parents and children
- 36 weekly employability/ support back to work workshops and individual job search support
- Deliver weekly (five days a week) welfare advice and support sessions

What is the need and how was it identified?

In 2011, the Centre commissioned Stockwell Partnership to conduct an analysis into the needs of the **Portuguese Speaking Community resident in Lambeth who make up 16% of residents** in the London Borough of Lambeth. The needs analysis identified that Portuguese speakers suffer a high level of unemployment. 53% of respondents were unemployed. A significant number were long-term unemployed (33% for 1-5 years, 23% for 5 years+). Mental health was a key issue of concern for Portuguese speakers. 30% of respondents were interested in receiving support and health information relating to mental health, mainly depression.

How are beneficiaries disadvantaged?

The Centre provides services to one of the most disadvantaged groups in Lambeth. The majority of the centre's beneficiaries originally come from agrarian areas, have low qualifications or no qualifications at all and very limited English. The lack of English and years of over reliance on informal networks has led to an increase in poor mental health, high unemployment and isolation, especially when facing problems or hardship. Feedback from welfare advisors and data collection suggest that 40% of the service users suffer from depression, feel isolated and lonely.

Difference made to project beneficiaries

At six months into the project the following has been achieved:

- A total of 250 beneficiaries were engaged
- 1 large funding applications submitted (£50,000+)
- 2 small bids submitted (under £10,000)
- 10 Volunteers working for the centre
- Fundraising strategy and Sustainability strategy written
- User Forum Set up

This funding has been **crucial to the development of the Centre**. More importantly it has contributed to improving the economic circumstances, wellbeing, job outcomes and mental health of hundreds of people since last year. The Centre has **achieved amazing progress** and delivered successful services to the most vulnerable and needy of our community. This could have never been possible without the support of this grant and volunteers. As a result of this grant the Centre is now high on the agenda of the Portuguese Government. We have secured funding, resulting from the work that has been done in particular in the last year. The continued Portuguese Community Fund support, for at least another year, would help the Centre to get on a **better financial footing** as it would give us more time to build our funding and funding sources.

“Before coming to the centre I felt ill most of the time, but since I’ve come to the group I feel happier and better. Having something to do and friends to talk to is like medicine”. – Maria Simoes

Maria Simoes, is an elderly lady, who came to the centre for help. Her hearing is poor, she is forgetful, appearing confused at times. As she doesn't speak any English, she spent most of her days at home alone. Her GP referred her to the centre as she was visiting him too often out of feeling lonely. As a result of coming to the group her health and wellbeing is much improved.

Path Programme Round 20 and Round 26 – Code 7 Ltd

Code 7 Ltd was awarded £20,000 in Round 20, and a further £10,000 in Round 26 to deliver the Path Programme project, providing creative workshops, accredited training and mentoring to 10 young people at risk of gang involvement.

Established in 1996, Lambeth based charity Code 7 is a young people led charity that provides multimedia activities and mentoring services for all young people from various backgrounds and cultures. Code 7's mission is designed "to give young people who are at risk a better chance in life through creative opportunities and working together to tackle their problems and improve their life skills", by attracting young people with positive activities they love and already hold in high demand.

This project taught production techniques in music, video, drama, and live performance. This was delivered alongside mentoring, mediation and accredited training in English/Maths, and Creative Arts/Writing. The main activities were delivered during midweek for 3 hours for 48 weeks. The overall aim was to engage people at risk of or involved in gangs, with the target of **removing 3 young people from gangs altogether.**

What is the need and how was it identified?

2015 is the 3rd consecutive year Code 7 will be delivering the PATH Programme. Over the programme's duration it has been able to attract and engage over 30 young people who were identified as gang affiliates or serious youth offenders. The group's experience in working with this type of clientele, its care for the community's well-being and expertise in the sector enabled Code 7 to bring positive changes to the lives of 9 of these young people.

Five of the young people continue to engage regularly at Code 7 thus limiting the risk they face while being out on the streets. The other 4 were finally reinstated into education after 2 years of absence. However, 2 of the young people who returned to education both had lapses and are back at ground zero. The only place they feel welcomed is at Code 7, which indicates that more intricate work must be carried out with them.

Difference made to project beneficiaries

The grant has enabled Code 7 to provide beneficiaries quality engagement time in multimedia which in the young people's own words **helped them to limit their time on the streets and in the estates** where they are more than likely vulnerable to trouble. 12 direct beneficiaries gained and improved

skills in multimedia production and produced 6 productions between them that they plan to use in the near future as income generation through sales, agency work and in a publishing setting.

The 12 direct beneficiaries received intense group consultation that addressed gang life and the detrimental impact they bring to the lives of many. 4 out of the 10 direct beneficiaries continuously sought refuge at Code 7 to escape their hectic street life and eventually volunteered their services every day from the time it opened until close. They engaged in general support and peer work and are now examining genuine routes where they can sustain momentum as they **aim to completely change their lives for the better**. These 4 direct beneficiaries are mainly concentrating on developing self-employment for themselves and in the meantime have already inspired 6 of their peers to enrol at Code 7.

The mental and behavioural change in these young people has helped to pull in others who quietly seek a way out from gang life, which in turn is slowly but surely moving Code 7 towards its goal of increasing safety and well-being in the local community.

Testimonial

“Our introduction to Jazeem (name changed) was somewhat precarious, albeit in line with the work we do. He was not yet a service user but he was aware of Code 7 and our work through his peers who use our service.

It was mid-afternoon when Jazeem (a known gang member) raced into Springfield Community Centre at a pace and with an expression that said he was certainly being chased. There was no time for him to make his way upstairs to where our Training Suite is situated and so he made a straight dash for the back exit on ground floor.

It wasn't even 5 seconds before police officers came rushing into the building in pursuit of Jazeem and they too headed for the back exit right on his tail. By the time our team arrived downstairs the police already has Jazeem in handcuffs and were asking him where he threw whatever he had on him.

Jazeem noticed us and called for our assistance but all we could do was observe and enquirer about the situation. Jazeem clearly felt more comfortable knowing we were present and he told them where his drugs and Rambo knife were. As he was arrested he asked us to contact his mother through one of his peers that was engaging upstairs in our Training Suite. We made contact with his mother and informed her of the work we do.

Jazeem was charged with possession of drugs and an offensive weapon and has attended two court cases already. However, he has now enrolled at Code 7 and has amazed us, his peers and his mother with the talent he has displayed. He has engaged in music production, which included creative writing, rehearsal and vocal recording. He has engaged in the marketing of products which included ICT,

downloading and uploading of product. He helped to motivate other project users. He completed his assessments and accreditation papers.

He has not re-offended since his enrolment 4 months ago and has already completed 30 project hours which enables him to receive an accredited certificate and Code 7 award for 'Most Improved Beneficiary' at our end of year presentation and celebration”.

Lambeth and Southwark Wellbeing and Happiness Round 01 - Streatham Drop in Centre for Asylum Seekers and Refugees

Streatham Drop in Centre for Asylum Seekers and Refugees was awarded £1,990 to provide a programme of 20 wellbeing activities for asylum seeking and refugee women to improve their wellbeing.

Founded in 2002, Streatham Drop-In Centre is an independent charity that aims to provide a safe, welcoming and supportive environment for refugee and asylum seeker individuals and families living in the London Borough of Lambeth and surrounding areas.



This project provided a programme of 20 health and wellbeing activities for asylum seeking and refugee women. The nature of the social activities focussed on sharing and learning health, wellbeing, exercise and diet. For example, recipe sharing where volunteers prepare a healthy, cheap and delicious lunch, or head and neck massage sessions where participants acquire stress management techniques

through the medium of touch.

What is the need and how was it identified?

Streatham Drop-in carried out a consultation exercise which included wellbeing questionnaires, a focus group and a number of interviews. The December 2013 focus group with 16 women was run jointly with the Health Inclusion Team. Women requested exercise and social activities including yoga and further opportunities for relaxation and massage. Additional suggestions included healthy eating and weight control.

How are the beneficiaries disadvantaged?

Asylum seekers and refugees experience poverty and disadvantage. A Parliamentary Inquiry (2013) concluded that the levels of support for asylum seeking families are too low to meet essential living needs. One third of our users are living in temporary accommodation and face demoralising uncertainty. The Refugee Council research (2012) highlights that “Refugee women can have complex health needs, arising from trauma and deprivation in their countries of origin, which is then compounded by trauma and deprivation in the UK”. Our target group, refugee and asylum seeking women, is hard to reach, are learning English and have low “health literacy” levels. They have poor access to the type of health and wellbeing activities proposed.

“ Yes, I feel good! Are there going to be more of these? I wouldn’t miss this”



Difference made to project beneficiaries

The target group included many women who were learning English. For some this was their first opportunity to learn to read and write. Due to language barriers and people being less expressive in writing, we found focus group / brainstorming to be the most effective method of collecting feedback from participants of our project.

Prior to the programme the participants had not taken part or experienced either yoga or massage and were encouraged to try out a tester sessions organised by the practitioners, Amber and Clare, where possible health benefits were fully explained.

Most participants reported experiencing significant health benefits including **better sleep, feeling of being in a relaxed state, reduced stressed, reduced headaches and tension**. At least ten participants

continue to report that they regularly use their newly acquired skill, through massage and yoga to reduce stress and pain in their own home environment. Furthermore the group observed:

Reduced isolation, enjoyment and friendships.

Increased awareness of health lifestyle choices, healthier diet and exercise.

Increased ability to participate in groups activities and express views.

Better able to manage pain and long-term health conditions.

Increased resilience and confidence.

“This is great - I’m learning to cook new recipes and eating delicious food”

Miriam a refugee from East Africa.