LEWISHAM
LOCAL

COMMUNITY FOOD JUSTICE GRANTS PROGRAMME

Final Impact Report

February 2023 - March 2025



Volunteers at St Peter's Foodbank Brockley

Funded by:

Lewisham

Published August 2025



“Food Justice means reliable and fair access to food that is sufficiently nutritious, sustainable, culturally appropriate and affordable.”

Lewisham’s Food Justice Action Plan

Volunteers at Feed The Hill, community foodbank and social supermarket

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KEY FINDINGS

Below you can find a summary of the key statistics and information that provide an at-a-glance overview of how the funding was used to strengthen local food networks and support Lewisham residents.

About the Programme

18 months duration

£144,000 in funding available thanks to funding from Lewisham Council and Lewisham Cost-of-Living Appeal donors

The total amount of funding awarded was £135,009

19 projects were funded

How the Money was Spent by Groups

1 project was funded to deliver cookery classes

5 projects provided meals

2 projects incorporated cash-first offers

12 projects purchased culturally appropriate food

12 project provided fresh food

13 projects purchased ambient food

1 project provided cooking appliances

21,659 People Supported

74% of grant recipients rated 5/5 for improving the health and wellbeing of the people accessing the services

74% reported that the grant help to alleviate poverty

63% reported the increase of sense of place in the community

74% reported that it helped the organisation become resourceful and resilient

56% reported that it generated connections between stakeholders in the VCS Community

Key Learning

Greater understanding of needs, identities and preferences

Greater variety and quality of food provided

Many projects improved referral pathways to support as a result of this greater understanding

Fostering dignity and inclusion

Improved and diversified procurement

Boosting project capacity and team morale

CONTEXT

In February 2023, Lewisham Local in partnership with Public Heath Lewisham launched the Community Food Justice Grants Programme. The fund was aimed at voluntary, community and faith organisations based in Lewisham that were delivering projects that tackle food insecurity and are experiencing increased demand and/or reduced capacity due to the cost-of-living crisis.

The food justice community grants programme ran from April 2023-March 2025. The total amount of funding awarded was £135,009.

This report builds on the end of project monitoring report written in May 2024 and includes impact monitoring and learning from the additional two extension programmes alongside the original impact reporting.

FOOD INSECURITY IN LEWISHAM

According to The Greater Londn Authority survey for Londoners (21/22) having food security means having access at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life. Being food-insecure means that, at times, a person's food intake was reduced, and their eating patterns were disrupted because of a lack of money and other resources for obtaining food.

54,000

Adults with very low food security in Lewisham

The survey also found that 15% of adults experienced very low food security in Lewisham and Greenwich (approximately 54,000 adults in Lewisham) which is a 9% reduction since the last survey in 2018/19. 16% of households with children experience low or very low food security in Lewisham and Greenwich, which equates to approximately 2700 children under 14 years old.

2,700

Children under 14 years old experience low or very low food security in Lewisham and Greenwich

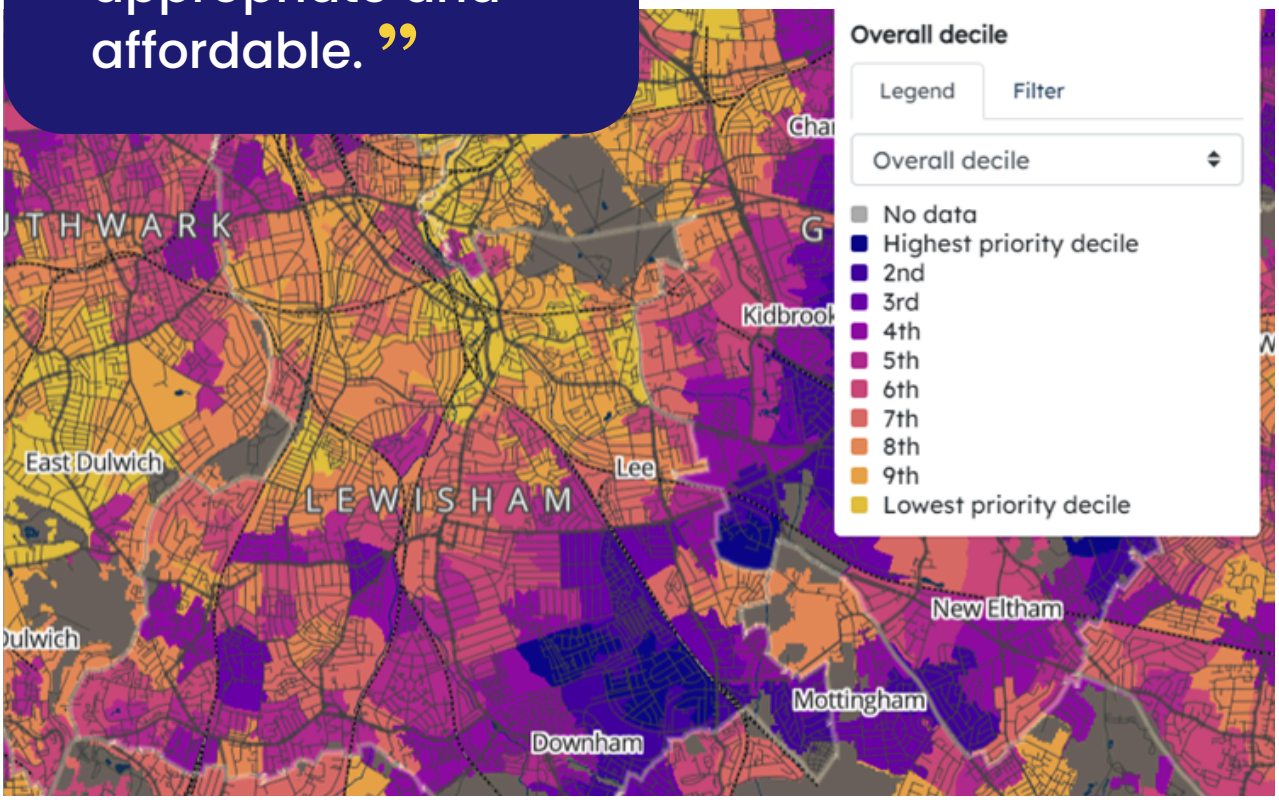
Public Health England data from 2021 which uses data from Department of Work and Pensions from the Family Resources Survey shows that 9.6% of Lewisham's population (or 28,752 residents) were living in areas at highest risk of food insecurity. This is the most up-to-date data available when this report was published.

In Lewisham, we look at food insecurity through a justice lens. The definition of food justice, which was co-produced as part of Lewisham's Food Justice Action Plan development is:

> "Reliable and fair access to food that is sufficiently nutritious, sustainable, culturally appropriate and affordable."

The Priority Places for Food Index (2024) identifies neighbourhoods that are most vulnerable to increases in the cost of living, and which have a lack of accessibility to cheap, healthy, and sustainable sources of food. Indices include supermarket proximity and accessibility, access to online deliveries, socio-economic barriers, non-supermarket food proximity, family food support and fuel poverty.

This is a screen shot of the borough of Lewisham. The colour code shows that the highest priority decile, i.e. those with least access, are in the south of the borough.



A wide number of local partners from the voluntary and community sector interested in food injustice came together to find collaborative solutions to tackle food insecurity. As a result, Lewisham's Food Justice Action Plan was launched in April 2023 to work strategically to address food injustice in the borough. Stakeholders involved in the plan worked to develop a collective vision and Priority Focus Areas.

FOOD JUSTICE VISION & ACTION PLAN

All organisations applying for grants were asked to demonstrate how their project contributes to the achievement of the vision for food justice in Lewisham:

All Lewisham residents can enjoy reliable and fair access to food that is sufficiently nutritious, sustainable, culturally appropriate and affordable.

All Lewisham residents have the knowledge, skills, resources and opportunity to grow, prepare, cook, eat and share food with their families and communities.

All Lewisham stakeholders support collective action to end chronic hunger, promote food resilience and reduce the need for emergency food aid.

All Members of the Lewisham Food Justice Alliance and other key stakeholders have access to data to monitor the scale of the issue of food injustice and to determine whether the actions taken are having a positive impact on lived experience, health and wellbeing.

Organisations applying for the £10,000 grants were asked to demonstrate how their project will include action within one or more of the priority areas identified within Lewisham's Food Justice Action Plan:



Take preventative action to reduce the risk of Lewisham residents experiencing food injustice



Ensure babies, children and young people have access to nutritious, sustainable and culturally appropriate sources of food throughout the year



Co-ordinate resources, capacity and expertise to maximise the support available to those in crisis



Promote and develop "Money First" approaches to crisis prevention and support

OVERVIEW OF FOOD JUSTICE GRANTS

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Community Food Justice Grants programme (or "the fund") was intended to provide resources to address the multiple challenges facing food giving projects in Lewisham such as increasing demand from residents experiencing food insecurity, decreasing donations, and increasing food prices.

> The Fund was intended to provide resources to address the multiple challenges facing food giving projects in Lewisham

The cost-of-living crisis, following closely on the heels of the COVID-19 pandemic escalated levels of poverty and food insecurity. As a result, there was a sharp rise in demand for local emergency food provision services, placing increasing strain on already stretched resources.

This fund was established to support local community groups in Lewisham to meet the growing demand for emergency food aid caused by the cost-of-living crisis. The fund acknowledged that local community groups, with their long-standing connections to their respective communities, are most capable of reaching and assisting individuals who are adversely affected by this crisis. These groups are also facing additional costs due to the impact of the crisis.

The fund was also intended to support the aims and vision of Lewisham's Food Justice Action Plan.

> "Local community groups, with their long-standing connections to their respective communities, are most capable of reaching and assisting individuals."



Volunteers at Rehoboth Community Outreach Club

CRITERIA

There was a total of £113,000 available in the original funding pot. Grants of up to £3,000 were available to support existing community food giving projects already in operation (including foodbanks, social supermarkets, community pantries and delivery services) to provide additional resources to address the multiple challenges facing food giving projects in Lewisham.

Five additional grants of up to £10,000 were offered to food giving organisations to help organisations meet the needs of their clients and to develop additional capacity to support the vision and priorities of Lewisham's Food Justice Action Plan.

Due to an underspend of £23,983 from the initial grant programme and an additional £31,000 of funding secured from Lewisham Council's Household Support Fund Round 4 we were able to extend the original food justice programme twice taking the programme to run until 31st March 2025.

£113,000

Initial Funding Pot Available

From original food justice grant programme

5 x £10,000

Large Grants Available

To expand capacity & align with Food Justice Action Plan

Up to £3,000

Small Grants

For existing food giving projects

£23,983

Underspend from Round 1

£31,000

New Funding

Extended to March 2025

THINGS THE GRANT COULD BE SPENT ON:

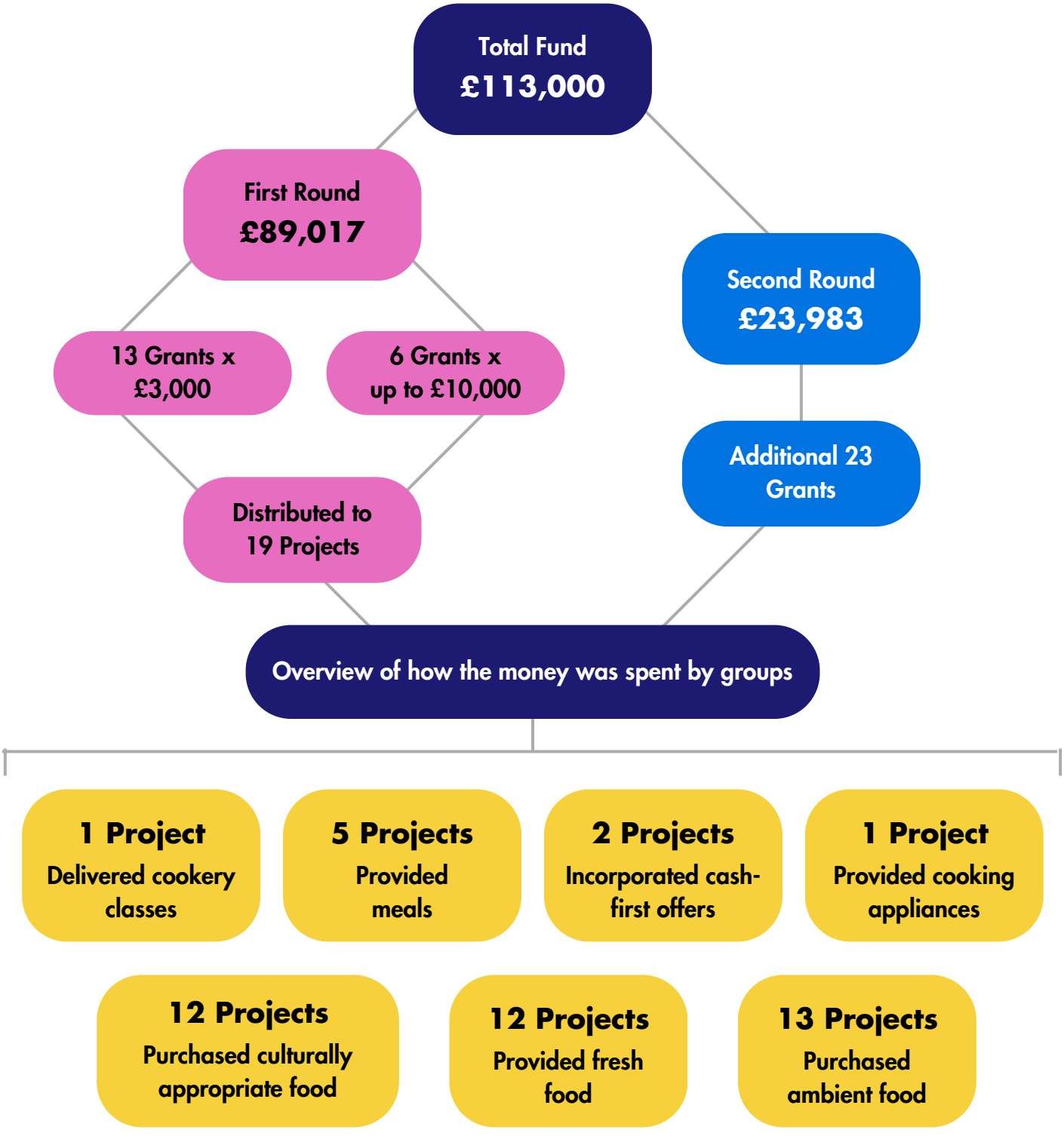
- Purchasing fresh or ambient foods
- Supplies, including cultural foods reflecting the diverse ethnic make-up of the borough to support community food banks, social pantries or other projects providing food or meals
- Provision of supermarket vouchers for families in crisis
- Purchasing fridges & freezers increasing storage capacity or other equipment required to increase the volume and type of food that can be provided
- Transportation costs to collect and transport food
- Administrative costs e.g. publicity
- Training and capacity building directly related to delivering the grant
- Venue hire/premises costs
- Volunteer expenses
- Projects and activities that build resilience, improve access to support, or address the root causes of food insecurity for the end user
- Organisational staff costs

WE ALSO ASKED THAT PROJECTS COMMITTED TO:

- Engaging in the Good Food Lewisham network and Food Justice Action Plan development to work collaboratively and strategically to tackle food justice in Lewisham
- Adopting recommendations from 'the Appreciative Inquiry into Food Provision at its best' report (co-produced in 2021) with local community projects to identify what food support at its best looks like in Lewisham
- A commitment to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion and including incorporating the opportunities for action as identified in the Birmingham and Lewisham African Caribbean Health Inequalities Review (BLACHIR) into their work
- Providing provision at regular times and a minimum of once a week
- Capacity and willingness to host additional wrap-around services. Examples may include staff coordinators providing advice, social prescribing signposting and digital skills
- Support Lewisham's most vulnerable residents and those most negatively impacted by the cost-of-living crisis

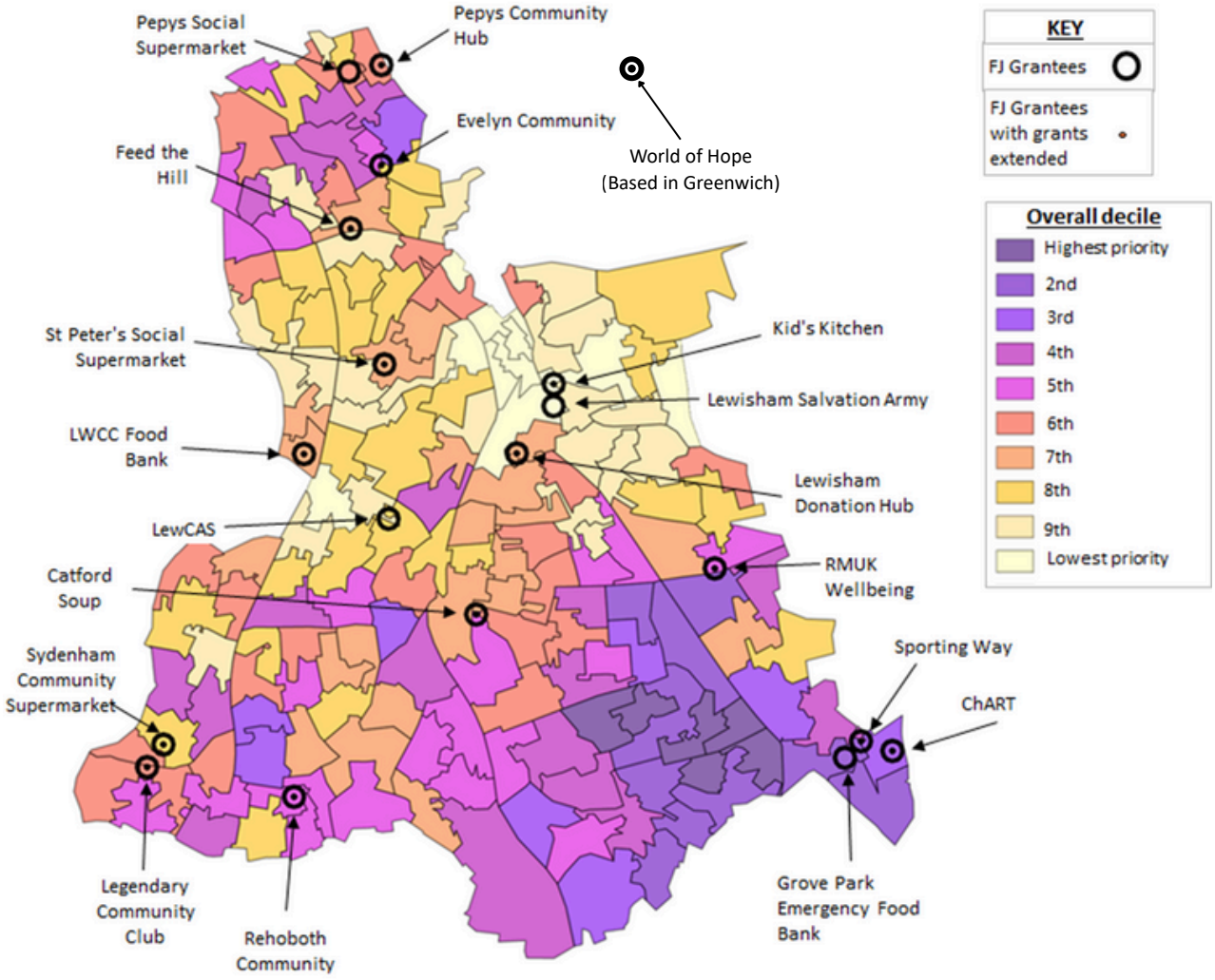
WHO WE FUNDED

In the first round of funding £89,017 of the £113,000 was distributed to 19 projects by August 2023. 13 x £3,000 were distributed and six larger grants of up to £10,000. An additional 18 grants were provided after August 2023 as extension funding over two rounds.



The map below provides a visual image of the geographical spread of projects that are based across the borough in relation to the Priority Food Places Index. It indicates that there were projects funded to cover the most areas of the borough, particularly in areas of highest need with some gaps in the Hither Green/ Bellingham.

Priority Places for Food Index by LSOA overall priority decile: geographical distribution of Food Justice grantees: including those that have had their grants extended.



* Full list of projects funded can be found in the appendix (page 44)

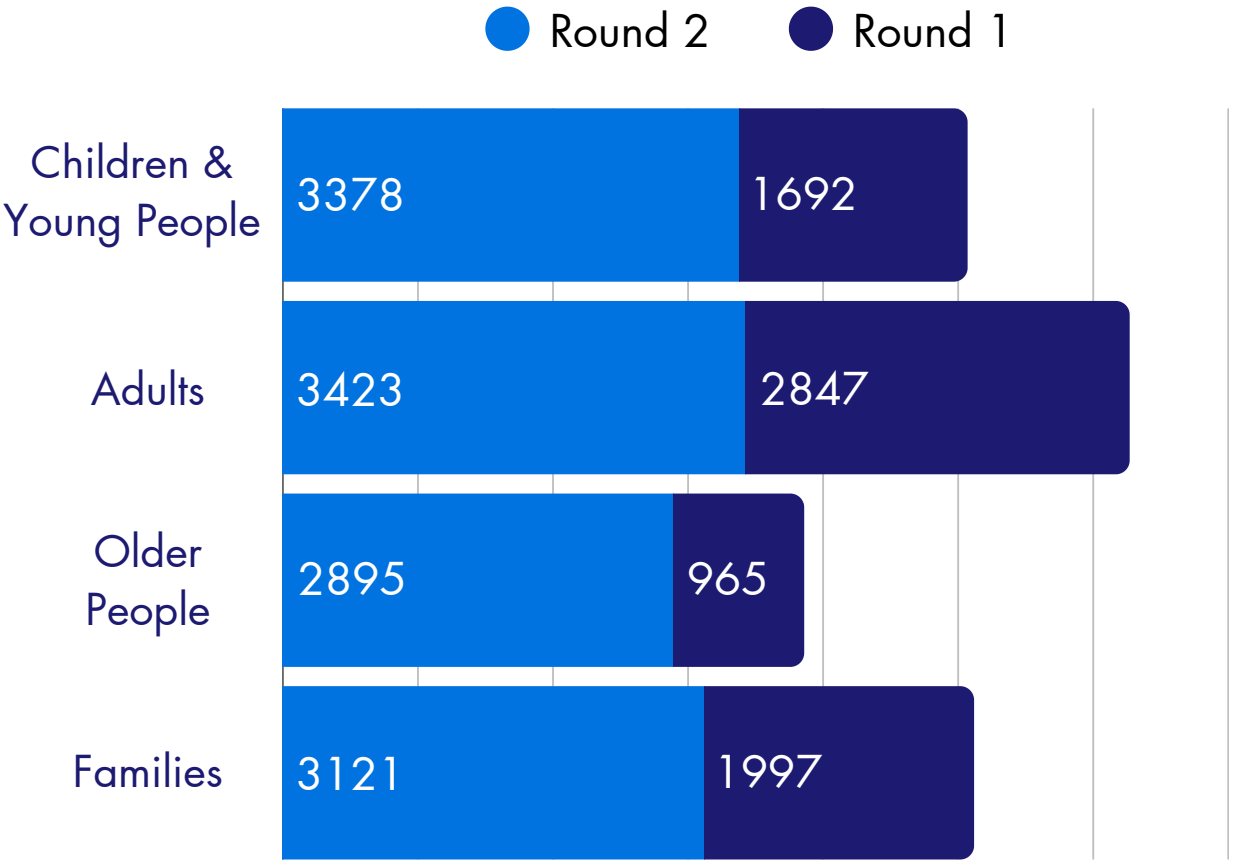
21,659

People were supported through the programme

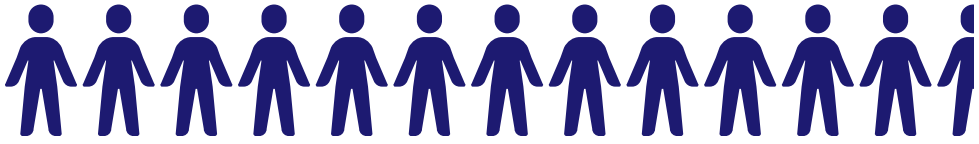


Volunteers at Catford Soup Kitchen

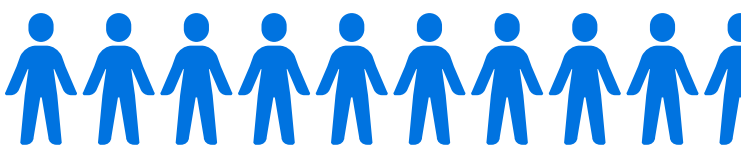
NUMBER OF RESIDENTS SUPPORTED FROM PROJECTS WHO HAVE SUBMITTED REPORTING:



12,242
Individuals in Round 1



9417
Individuals in Round 2



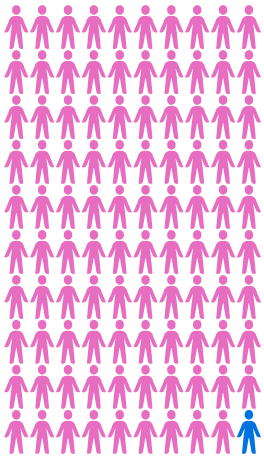
WHAT WAS ACHIEVED THROUGH THE PROGRAMME AND WHAT DIFFERENCE DID THIS MAKE

Below are the key themes from project reports showing the difference the grants made organised around the Food Justice Action Plan's vision and priority focus areas.

The grants primarily supported point one of the vision:



Of Beneficiaries at World of Hope Felt Catered For



PRIORITY FOCUS 1

ALL LEWISHAM RESIDENTS CAN ENJOY RELIABLE AND FAIR ACCESS TO FOOD THAT IS SUFFICIENTLY NUTRITIOUS, SUSTAINABLE, CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE AND AFFORDABLE

Grantees reported that the grant improved the variety of food available, particularly healthier, fresh food and food that was culturally appropriate which many projects and families may otherwise struggle to afford.

The funding helped projects cater better for clients' dietary requirements, for example halal meat, vegan options, fresh foods such as yams, plantains, chillies. This provided dignity and choice to members/service users.

The funding improved the nutritional content of food provided and, in some cases, improved people's eating habits by being able to purchase more fresh fruit and vegetables.



"This project was able to allow the clients to feed their children and themselves, balance their diet, and keep their heritage with cultural food that they cannot afford due to the cost-of-living crisis."

“ The grant has allowed us to offer a wider range of food items, and to offer food which is nutritionally rich, nourishing and health-giving - ie, a good quantity of fruits, vegetables and fresh produce. It has met the needs of the people who access this service and made a marked difference to their health and therefore their quality of life. It has provided a crucial safety net at a time when people's finances do not stretch to enough good food for themselves and their families ”

- Feed the Hill







“We need continuous funding to provide our customers with nutritional food parcels to feed families for at least 3 days”

- Living Water Christian Centre

Photo above features volunteer at Feed the Hill. Photos below feature volunteers and users at LWCC.

PEPYS COMMUNITY HUB

CASE STUDY

Pepys Community Hub delivered a partnership project which served four different groups working out of the Community Centre and included a series of Cook and Eat sessions. Their partnership project reported an increase in cultural awareness and understanding, collaborations across partners and wider community engagement.

> “The healing effects and social interaction of mixed communities has developed out of the past year’s voluntary activities.”





WHAT IS PEPYS COMMUNITY HUB SAYING:

COLLABORATORS We have worked with the Food Justice Grant Round 2 Extension programme and Caribbean/Islamic communities in Deptford North Lewisham.

PROJECT Co-develop the cooking and Eating Together Project.

AIM Providing Food Parcels or E-Vouchers that was applicable to our service users.

CULTURAL INCLUSION Furthermore, we had to monitor and review the cultural and religious differences of all our participants and collaborators and gave them the voice to engage their own members.

ACTION We coordinated food related resources as well as electronic food vouchers and other related items led a capacity for expertise to maximise our support for those who were in a crisis. We also provided a wraparound service where individuals who did not have access to cooking facilities would come in to have a warm meal.

IMPACT With this level of support and collective commitment we were all able to individually as a community take Preventive Action to reduce the risk of further health inequalities to North Lewisham residents.



Zanzibar Cooking Meet Up Nov 2023 another one of the partners working with Pepys Community Hub

All Lewisham stakeholders support collective action to end chronic hunger, promote food resilience and reduce the need for emergency food aid.

The grants improved awareness of needs of clients, signposting and procedures to wider support and some reporting developing new projects a result.

Feedback from service users showed an increase in their ability to manage budgets and reduce some of their debts, as well as feeling more confident and hopeful for their future, which they say has been as a direct result of our low cost food and wellbeing service.

> “We have taken the opportunity to survey service users monthly and ask for their most wanted/needed items, to gain a dynamic understanding of need and prioritise items that are most useful to the cohort we support. This has changed our buying practices and seen us spending a greater proportion of funds on specialty/ethnic/cultural foods”
>
> - Feed the Hill, Bold Vision

DEVELOP PROJECTS' VOLUNTEERING CAPACITY

The grants broadened support to reach a wider range of people facing food insecurity. This includes tailored assistance for specific groups, such as those with No Recourse to Public Funds, older people, youth or those who are isolated, provides assistance in school holidays and reaching housebound individuals and those with specific dietary requirements.

> “The funding provided the space and place for us to develop our pool of volunteers as well as really putting the Pepys Community Hub Centre firmly back on the local and Lewisham map and wider”

> “We have observed a significant increase in the demand for our services, particularly among older Londoners and those with no recourse to public funds. The rising cost of living and food prices have disproportionately impacted these groups, making it more challenging for them to afford necessities.”
>
> - Catford Soup Kitchen

LIVING WATER CHRISTIAN CENTRE: LWCC FOOD SERVICE

“ We recognise that Black and Ethnic Minority communities face significant health inequalities, with high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes being particularly common. Unhealthy weight is often a key factor in these conditions. That’s why it’s crucial to ensure access to nutritious grocery items. Our goal is to provide those in need of emergency food support with healthy, balanced options ”



THE GRANTS HELPED FOSTER COMMUNITY AND INCLUSION



All Lewisham residents have the knowledge, skills, resources and opportunity to grow, prepare, cook, eat and share food with their families and communities.

Feed The Hill surveyed their members and 90% of responded agreed strongly with "my eating habits are better" "I feel I am eating food that is good for me" and "The items are a good fit for what I want to eat and feed by family"

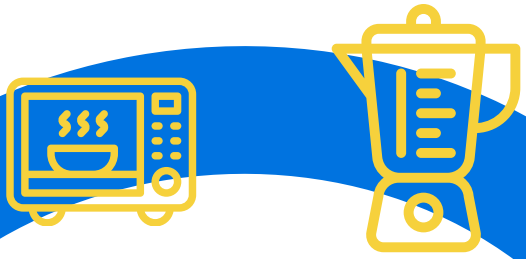


Of Members' Agree Their Eating Habits Are Better

"Over the duration of the project, the grant helped us create a supportive community environment where families not only learned new skills but also formed lasting connections with one another. These outcomes reflect the priorities of addressing social isolation, improving nutritional knowledge, and fostering stronger community ties."

- Kids Kitchen

LEWISHAM DONATION HUB WHO WAS ONE OF THE LARGER GRANTS WAS ABLE TO PURCHASE LOW ENERGY COOKING DEVICES SUCH AS:



Blenders
These have been directed to families with young children, or those with health issues where blended foods are more suitable.

Microwaves
Providing these has enabled people to cook in a very cost-effective way and make use of the nutritious ready meals provided by the Felix project.



Kettles
One of the most requested items.

Rice Cookers
A cost-effective way to cook rice that avoids using a main cooker. A very high request item, especially amongst Arabic and Farsi speakers.





Items that support the sharing of food
Including the purchase of paper bags, printable labels that we put on decanted food items and reams of paper to print the food support leaflets.

The main impact of providing kitchen equipment was improving service users' diets by enhancing their ability to store and prepare food. For example, providing a fridge or freezer allowed beneficiaries to take and store a wider variety of items from the social supermarket, while a microwave expanded their cooking options and versatility.



> “Given that we are one of the few providers of essential food preparation items of this kind, being able to offer more of these things more quickly has helped us to tackle immediate barriers to food access/justice.”
>
> Lewisham Donation Hub

> “Microwaves are undoubtedly one of the most important items we share. Thanks to the Food Justice Grant we have been able to help provide these microwaves costing us £35 each from George/Asda. By intervening in this way, we have been able to enable an enormous amount of single portion food provision from The Felix Project. Ensuring many more lovely people get to eat healthy, nutritious food throughout these difficult months.”
>
> Lewisham Donation Hub

KIDS KITCHEN
CASE STUDY

Kids Kitchen provided cookery classes focussing on using low cost, nutritious store cupboard ingredients to make a simple meal and involved both children and adults in the cooking. Sessions also shared tips on batch cooking, buying in bulk and using ingredients for more than one recipe.



Photo of meal at Rehoboth Community Outreach Club

“

Over the grant period, we ran a series of interactive cooking sessions for children and families aimed at fostering a love for nutritious, affordable meals while building essential life skills. The activities included hands-on cooking classes, recipe-sharing workshops, and collaborative meal preparation sessions where participants learned about healthy eating, budgeting, and sustainability. The project was designed to encourage family bonding, develop practical skills, and promote community cohesion.

Attendance was consistently high, with families from diverse backgrounds participating actively. Feedback from parents and children highlighted increased confidence in preparing meals, a better understanding of nutrition, and the joy of cooking together.

The project was highly successful. Success is demonstrated through qualitative feedback, such as testimonials from families who now incorporate our recipes into their daily lives. Quantitatively, 80% of participants reported improved cooking skills and greater awareness of healthy eating habits in our end-of-project survey. Additionally, many families expressed interest in continuing similar activities, indicating sustained engagement and impact.

”

“Feedback from parents and children highlighted increased confidence in preparing meals, a better understanding of nutrition, and the joy of cooking together.”



Of participants reported improved cooking skills and greater awareness of healthy eating habits

PROVIDING SERVICES TO PEOPLE FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS HAS BEEN ESSENTIAL



“The grant has played a crucial role in supporting our soup kitchen in Catford, allowing us to strengthen our commitment to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in tangible ways. As a community-led initiative, we serve a diverse population, including individuals from African Caribbean and other ethnic minority backgrounds who often face significant health and social inequalities.” - **Catford Soup Kitchen**

“This funding has enabled us to reach out to the people we have identified as suffering from isolation and food poverty, as cultural food is too expensive and unaffordable. The people suffering isolation or not just individuals but also vulnerable families with young children who have been isolated from the community due to their self-esteem.” - **World of Hope**





Rehoboth has also observed an increasing number of Muslim women using the warm spaces, often seeking a safe and comfortable environment rather than social interaction. “We have learned about various cultures and traditions of the people who access our food bank and soup kitchen, which is key in serving the communities.”

ST PETER'S BROCKLEY
FOOD BANK AND SOCIAL SUPERMARKET CASE STUDY



> "By participating in a supportive and inclusive environment, service users feel more valued and capable, reinforcing their ability to contribute and connect within the community."

"Our food bank and social supermarket create a unique space where both service users and volunteers from different income groups naturally interact. Volunteers actively encourage service users to engage with others, fostering a sense of community and connection. This interaction not only helps to bridge social and economic divides but also empowers service users, increasing their confidence and sense of self-efficacy."



PRIORITY FOCUS 2 IMPACT

ENSURE BABIES, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE ACCESS TO NUTRITIOUS, SUSTAINABLE AND CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE SOURCES OF FOOD THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

Many of the projects reported how they were able to support families and children through the funding provided.

The funding enabled the purchase of fresh food, which often runs out quickly, especially during the summer when more families seek support, including for school supplies.

> "We have been able to provide staple food supplies to families over the summer period, to cover the extra food needed during school holidays. We have also been able to provide back to school supplies to families in need, including families who have fled due to domestic violence."
>
> Evelyn Community Store

> "*Hunger is a major driver of crime, with estimates suggesting that 90% of crime stems from it. By ensuring young people have access to food and are not going hungry*"
>
> Rehoboth Community Outreach Club

Kids Kitchen Collective described it as transformative, helping them achieve key priorities such as encouraging healthy eating, strengthening family bonds, and equipping children with essential life skills. With this funding, they were able to provide high-quality, hands-on cooking sessions, reaching families who might not have otherwise had access to these opportunity.

SYDENHAM COMMUNITY SUPERMARKET

PRIORITY FOCUS 2 CASE STUDY

Sydenham Community Supermarket was set up a children's centre. The project listened to the needs of their members and purchased food which reflected their members' backgrounds.

The supermarket engages the local community, fostering social connections and a sense of togetherness. With a shared sense of ownership, members are more inclined to support and shop with them. Lewisham residents can access the supermarket with dignity and privacy, without the need for means testing or proving their level of need, ensuring that everyone feels welcome and respected.

> "Being able to offer a previous member a job opportunity has been invaluable and a huge support need for us, especially as the staff in the children's centre have specific jobs/tasks which did not always enable the time to devote to the supermarket"





"Sydenham Community Supermarket Service users were encouraged to become volunteers and even transition into paid staff roles, creating valuable employment opportunities within the community"

PRIORITY FOCUS 3 IMPACT

CO-ORDINATE RESOURCES, CAPACITY AND EXPERTISE TO MAXIMISE THE SUPPORT AVAILABLE TO THOSE IN CRISIS

Some of the projects were able to expand the services they provide:

> *"We were only a soup kitchen initially and we have expanded to meet the demands of people." "This funding has also extended our service to Advocacy and advise on homelessness, health issues, loneliness, immigration and children challenges. This has been a huge Success."*
>
> Catford Soup Kitchen

Others reported being able to bulk purchase popular items and provide consistency as well as being able to plan ahead and make more cost-effective or time effective choices thanks to having an additional budget.

Projects reported being able to continue to meet increasing demand and extend the reach in their communities to provide an important safety net for individuals.

> "Without this 'gateway' of Food Justice it would not have opened opportunities of the everyday realities of local Deptfordian People's lives to be interactively engaged"



Photo of Evelyn Community Store

RMUK WELLBEING CIC

PRIORITY FOCUS 3 CASE STUDY

RMUK Wellbeing CIC received a larger grant to support their Food and Wellbeing Project. This included delivering fresh, healthy, nutritious, and culturally relevant foods / meals to the doorsteps of members alongside doorstep-befriending and telephone wellbeing check-ins.

The grant also enabled them to offer additional training, development and guidance to volunteers including a "Whole" organisation workshop on understanding the root causes of food injustice and food poverty and exploring the strategic potential of RMUK addressing these as well as food hygiene training and Dignity Training to better serve clients struggling with food insecurity. As a result, they reported becoming more focused, in all areas and empowered to develop strategic and collaborative work with new partnerships and reported stronger relationships with existing partners. They reported secured additional funding to continue their work during this grant programme and secured a community growing space for their project.

The organisation now has a new venue, so can now store supplies and operate a weekly social supermarket. Beyond food deliveries, the project provides doorstep visits, phone check-ins, and signposting to additional support when needed. The funding also allowed for volunteer training, covering food injustice, poverty, food hygiene, and dignity, ensuring more effective support for those facing food insecurity.

- **Food Deliveries**
- **Additional Training, Development and Guidance to Volunteers**
- **More Focused**
- **Strengthening of Existing Partnerships and Pursuit of New Ones**
- **Secured Additional Funding**
- **Secured a Community Growing Space**
- **New Venue to Store Supplies and Operate a Weekly Social Supermarket**
- **Doorstep Visits, Phone Check-Ins, and Signposting**



Kelly featured above, is a dedicated RMUK volunteer, committed her Mondays to managing the food supply—whether frozen or dry—despite balancing a full-time job. Her efforts ensured that everything was well-organised and properly taken care of.

> “I feel deeply grateful for dedicated volunteers whose support plays a vital role in their work. I especially value their commitment in this new location, where extra help is needed to coordinate efforts and ensure everything runs smoothly”
>
> Stella from RMUK



PRIORITY FOCUS 4 IMPACT

PROMOTE AND DEVELOP "MONEY FIRST" APPROACHES TO CRISIS PREVENTION AND SUPPORT

The grants gave some projects the opportunity to test money-first solutions in the form of supermarket vouchers and the possible benefits of using this system, including filling gaps such as in holidays or when the project couldn't provide the items requested.

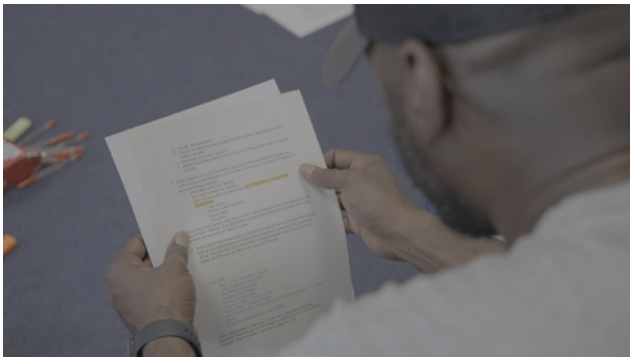
Vouchers enabled projects to offer support to individuals once the project had ran out of fresh food and veg and during holiday closure, support housebound individuals and those with specific dietary requirements. They also provided dignity and choice to users.

> "One family said they had to have specific items due to food allergies/ intolerances of their son - and whilst they do get some items on prescription they are extremely limited with what they can get - the voucher meant they were able to access a much greater range that met their needs"
>
> - CHaRT

"The dignity of choice is so important - the vouchers were incredibly well received with many people commenting on how they enjoyed being able to go and choose exactly what they like." - CHaRT







Photos of Legendary Community Club

LEGENDARY COMMUNITY CLUB

PRIORITY FOCUS 4 CASE STUDY

Legendary Community Club is a food justice group supporting young people and families in Lewisham. They focus on campaigning locally and nationally to tackle the root causes of food insecurity, food bank reliance, and systemic inequality. By working closely with communities, they aim to build collective power and drive meaningful change.

'Cash First' approach was piloted, providing food bank users with cash instead of food packages. Now, with additional funding, they expanded this research in Lewisham.

”

Over four weeks, participants will receive cash support, and we will measure the impact.

The goal of project is to measure the impact of cash benefits on individuals and communities. Although organising the research partners and coordinating the co-researchers group has taken longer than expected, the extra time has been worthwhile. It has led to a stronger, more collaborative foundation for the project, enriching the research process. Participants have shown genuine interest in the project, extending beyond the trial itself. Many have expressed a desire to stay involved through campaigning, further research, and advocacy, demonstrating the lasting impact of this work.”

“



INEQUALITIES REVIEW
IMPACT ON EQUALITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI) AND BLACHIR

Part of the criteria for receiving the food justice grant was to support the learning and Opportunities for Action from the Birmingham and Lewisham African Caribbean Health Inequalities Review (BLACHIR).

Organisations were asked as part of the final project reporting, how the grants supported organisations to do this. The key themes from the responses that projects gave were:

- Addressing inequalities through provision of cultural foods which can often been more expensive and thus unaffordable for people living on low-incomes.
- Increased awareness of the diets and health needs of the Black African and Black Caribbean communities and the ability to purchase foods that meet these needs.

> “This funding has enabled us to reach out to the people we have identified as suffering from isolation and food poverty, as cultural food is too expensive and unaffordable.”
>
> - World of Hope

Evelyn Community Store were able to support members from a diverse background with health concerns, especially around food sugar levels and the impact that this will have on their health. These questions link to the work under the BLACHIR. They provided members with information on why it is important to get regular blood pressure checks and take on the advice offered.

LWCC tackles health inequality affecting the Black and Ethnic Minority community by providing those that need emergency food support with healthy food options. Unhealthy weight is often contributor, and high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes is quite prominent, so LWCC aims to provide nutritious foods that is not high in sugar or salt.

Catford Soup Kitchen has strengthened their community engagement efforts by regularly consulting with African Caribbean communities to understand their specific health and dietary needs. This ongoing dialogue ensures services remain relevant and culturally sensitive.

The grant has allowed them to tailor their services more effectively, offering food options that align with the cultural practices and preferences of African Caribbean communities. **This approach not only improves the nutritional quality of the food provided but also enhances the cultural appropriateness of offerings.**

BASED ON THESE POINTS, THE GRANT PROGRAMME OVERALL SUPPORTED THE FOLLOWING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION:

34 Use of faith and workplace settings to increase awareness and understanding of health issues to support informed decisions about health.

36 Consider cultural and religious influences when developing interventions to address the wider determinants of health inequalities for Black African, Black Caribbean and Black-Mixed ethnic minority groups.

36 Conduct more research to understand the impacts of the food environment and food poverty on health and wellbeing of Black African and Black Caribbean communities, and devise strategies to address the structural issues at a community level.

Projects also reported how the grants had improved their wider response to Equality Diversity and Inclusion:

The grant enabled Kids Kitchen to deliver subsidised cooking sessions, which ensured that families from economically disadvantaged backgrounds could participate without financial barriers. This allowed them to reach individuals who are often underrepresented in community programs, such as single-parent households, migrant families, and those living in social housing. They tailored sessions to celebrate cultural diversity by incorporating recipes and ingredients from a variety of global cuisines. This approach not only encouraged cultural exchange but also fostered a sense of belonging among participants from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds

In addition, Kids Kitchen's sessions were designed to be accessible for participants with different needs, including offering sensory-friendly adaptations for children with neurodiverse conditions and physical accommodations for individuals with mobility challenges. By promoting an inclusive environment and addressing barriers to participation, the grant has reinforced their commitment to EDI, and allowed them to model the values of equality and diversity in practice; ensuring that everyone felt welcomed, valued, and empowered throughout the project.

> "The grant has significantly supported our organisations commitment to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)"
>
> - Kids Kitchen

VOLUNTEERING

Promoting diversity among volunteers and service users involves creating an inclusive environment that welcomes people from different backgrounds, fostering cultural awareness, and ensuring equal opportunities for participation and engagement.

- Many volunteers are asylum seekers who, unable to work, enjoy volunteering to use their skills, improve their English and feel part of a caring community.
- Through volunteering, people gain confidence and build up self-esteem. Once asylum seekers gain refugee status, having volunteered which enables them to find paid employment.
- Some volunteers may be in between jobs or have issues with their mental health.
- People who come to donate items often return as volunteers, facilitating community integration with people from all backgrounds and experiences.
- Enhanced community engagement reduced social isolation by creating a welcoming space for connection and support, particularly for older African Caribbean residents.

These examples demonstrate how projects respond to feedback from service users; actively listening to their concerns, understanding their specific needs, and making meaningful improvements to services based on their input alongside a greater awareness of needs of their communities.

QUALITATIVE REPORTING & IMPACT

As part of the monitoring feedback report, we ask grant recipients to say to what extent the grants had an impact in a variety of areas. Below is the average rating.



No Improvement



Significant Improvement

IMPROVED HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF THE PEOPLE ACCESSING THE SERVICES



GENERATING VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT WITH PROJECTS



GRANT HELP TO ALLEVIATE POVERTY



INCREASE OF SENSE OF PLACE IN THE COMMUNITY

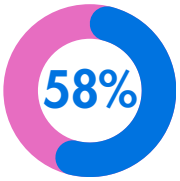


HELPED THE ORGANISATION BECOME RESOURCEFUL AND RESILIENT

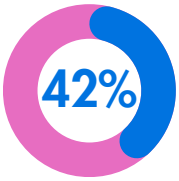


GENERATED CONNECTIONS BETWEEN STAKEHOLDERS IN THE VCS COMMUNITY





Of grant recipients offer wrap around support to clients



Of grant recipients signpost their clients

KEY LEARNING FROM THE PROGRAMME:

We asked grantees to reflect on what they had learned from delivering the grants. Here are some of the key learning points reported by projects:



Greater understanding of the needs, identities and preferences

Projects learned more about the individuals they supported, their identities, needs and preferences through delivering the grants which supported the food justice element and wider.



Many projects improved referral pathways to support as a result of this greater understanding

Projects provided examples of having a greater awareness of how to signpost to other support agencies and developing stronger referral pathways through which to support their clients.



Fostering dignity and inclusion

Providing a more diverse and consistent source of food helped to ensure that projects could better meet the needs of their community members.



Improved and diversified procurement

It enabled projects to learn alternatives ways to purchase food and in some cases a budget to agree a weekly spend.



Boosting capacity and team morale

Some projects were able to increase their volunteer pool, training and support for volunteers. Improved provision not only benefited the service users but also boosted the morale of the team and volunteers who were able to provide a better experience for their visitors, quality of service and see what a difference this made to the people they supported. Improved project management skills including Effective budgeting and strategic planning to ensure that projects stayed on track and met its intended outcomes.

LEARNING REFLECTIONS ABOUT THE GRANT PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT:

Overall projects welcomed support they received, and how this enabled them to continue their service and support the communities they service.



"Over 660 people accessing our services weekly are not struggling with food insecurity anymore"

"We were very grateful to participate in this programme. Thank you to the organisers and funders. Please continue to support charities and organisations making a difference in the communities in anyway possible. Thank you."



"Lewisham Local remembered the client group that no one remembered"

"Lewisham Local had been generous and kind as they remembered the client group that no one remembered to give cultural food to. Our clients and their families look forwards to see us each week and really appreciate it"



"Gave us the vision and mission to further contextualise our Pan African led Project Proposal"

"When we initially applied for the fund, we were not successful and we had to submit the form twice. Looking back this was a great opportunity as this gave us the vision and mission to further contextualise our Pan African led Project Proposal in greater detail.

FEEDBACK FROM GRANTS

As part of the monitoring report, Lewisham Local asks grants what we could do differently as a funder in order to improve and review our grant making processes. Here are the points raised:

- It would be helpful for monitoring forms to be provided before the project begins. This way, projects can be better prepared to gather the necessary data and ensure they are tracking the right information from the outset.

- Organisations suggested for the monitoring report questions to be prepared in a separated document so responses could be prepared before accessing the form.

- Funders need to be aware of school term time, bank holidays etc for running of the projects and deadlines for reporting.

- There are still limited food delivery services available in Lewisham for housebound residents. This particularly impacts disabled and housebound residents and funders could provide more support on this.

- Grantees need ongoing support with recruiting and training additional volunteers, including volunteers confident in offering signposting to advice / support services.
  Lewisham Local will use these points to review and improve future grant making programmes.

Lewisham Local will use these points to review and improve future grant making programmes.

LEWISHAM LOCAL'S INTENTIONS AS A FUNDER

1 Organising for the collection of final project reports was a lengthy process and often required giving several reminders. Many projects face huge pressures on their time. Where there were issues, we found that ringing the grantees and conducting project visits, enabled the Grants Coordinator to successfully capture the necessary data.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Lewisham Local will look at how to adapt and streamline our approaches to reporting for future grant programmes.

2 We saw that where projects actively listened and responded to feedback through open dialogue with service users they were able to shape and improve services to meet service user needs. Learning and good practice in this area should be shared across groups, particularly through Lewisham Local's Food Justice programme.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Lewisham Local to offer templates, workshops and best practice on involving and co-producing services with grantees including regular surveys, community meetings and focus groups and the learning and application of the Appreciative Inquiry into food projects at their best recommendations to help ensure that the services we provide are relevant and meet the evolving needs of the community.

3 Based on visits to projects and the needs shared, there are opportunities for closer working and referrals to local health services while providing resources, recipes and links to support for people accessing these services.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Lewisham Local to approach the Integrated Care Boards and Public Health Lewisham around improving signposting and referrals into local health services including healthy weight and exercise programmes, particularly for groups who are disproportionally impacted by health inequalities.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Link with Good Food Lewisham and Public Health to look at what resources are available or could be developed to distribute to individuals accessing community food projects to highlight practical ways individuals can take control of their health, such as nutritious recipes, exercise tips, and mental health resources to improve mental health and wellbeing.

4 Many projects were in need for additional volunteer capacity. Since February 2024 thanks to Greater London Authority Food Roots 2 funding, Lewisham Local's Volunteer Coordinator has been able to provide support around volunteer recruitment, development and management alongside capacity building projects to host and manage volunteers. This additional support is likely to end in July 2025.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

The Grants Coordinator to feedback individual project needs around volunteering to the Volunteer Coordinator, and work with them to offer bespoke workshops to address emerging needs of the network where possible.

5 The Grants Coordinator identified several areas that would be beneficial to provide training for grantees and their volunteers to enhance their skills and benefit the overall project. These include monitoring and impact as well as practical workshops about completing the forms, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, leadership and communication. Investing in volunteers not only makes them feel valued but also gain the knowledge and skills needed to effectively serve the community.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Grants Coordinator to liaise with Fundraising Development Manager and Volunteering Coordinator to look at opportunities to develop capacity building to address these as needed

6 Reinforcing support for community-led, sustainable food justice solutions. It's essential to continue investing in community-led initiatives that create long-lasting, sustainable solutions to food insecurity. This could involve supporting local food cooperatives, urban growing projects, and community kitchens.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Funders including Lewisham Local and Lewisham Public Health to consider these elements when developing future food justice grant programmes.

7 Regular check-ins with grantees, whether online or in person, would be valuable to help ensure they stay on track with their objectives. These check-ins provide an opportunity to address any challenges, offer support, and make sure the project is progressing toward its intended outcomes.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Set up check in timeline as part of the grant mobilisation process.

8 Some projects benefited from additional support workshops that were organised to strengthen their original applications by the Fundraising Development Manager where the project wasn't fundable in the current format.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Lewisham Local will offer a session to outline the funding opportunity , what the criteria is and Q&A. Where appropriate and possible 1:1 sessions will be offered for those needing further support.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Plan at 6 weeks opening application window for future grant programmes where possible

RECOMMENDED ACTION

LL Grants Coordinator will create a comprehensive checklist for grantees who have applied for the grant, helping them ensure they've completed all necessary steps and have the correct documentation in place to assist with guiding them through the process and ensuring they are aware of all the requirements involved.

A longer timeline for application submission would allow grantees sufficient time for proper planning and execution. This extended period would ensure that the goals and objectives outlined in the application can be effectively worked on, giving the grantees a better chance to meet their targets and achieve more successful outcomes.

9 Timescales were delayed in many cases due to delays in funding decisions, delays in returning paperwork or other logistical challenges that groups have had. Therefore, Lewisham Local had to work flexibly with projects on timescale to ensure both needs were met. This has ensured projects were delivered, despite this taking in some cases more time

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Allow for flexible timelines and build into the start of the process.

10 Planning ahead helped projects succeed. Budgeting and strategic planning were all helpful for the project delivery stage

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Set up goals and objectives and specific timeframes- detailing what is needed for each project.

During the majority of the grant programme cycle, from March 2024 until October 2024, Lewisham Local did not have a Grants Coordinator in post, this resulted in less capacity than usual to provide support. Now that there is a Grants Coordinator and Giving Programme Manager overseeing the grants programme, we hope to be able to implement the learning and reflections from this programme into future grant programme works.

WE ASKED GRANTEES TO SAY WHAT SUPPORT THEY MIGHT NEED MOVING FORWARD. HERE IS A SUMMARY OF RESPONSES:

- Grantees need support in filling out applications.
- Request for regular meetings with other food initiatives help maintain ongoing collaboration within the food sector. These gatherings provide opportunities to exchange ideas, share knowledge, and learn from best practices, fostering a stronger and more innovative community.
- Idea re-centralised food hub provision and future opportunities for funding as a cohort/sector-Feed The Hill.
- More funding request to continue in providing ambient foods and culturally specific foods and meat and fish products.
- Lewisham Donation Hub have worked with SELCE to draw up a list of energy saving cooking appliances and would like to apply for funding for these items.
- LWCC requested for printed recipes that included items regularly donated to food banks, that do not necessarily present as a complete meal but still have nutritious value.
- Sporting Way CIC had the idea of developing a community garden limited funding resulted to logistical obstacles.

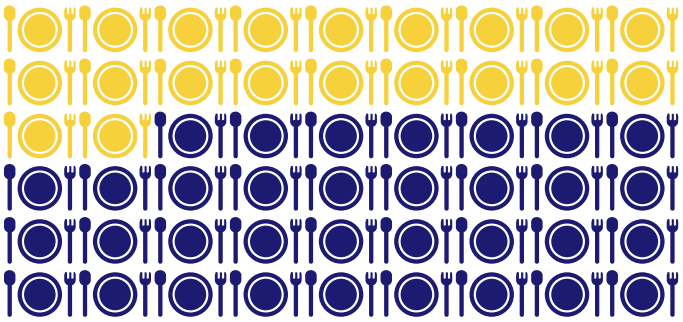
Lewisham Local is responding to these areas of support and looking at how to tie these areas of development into existing and future programmes.

CONCLUSION

At least

20,000

people in crisis were provided with a safety net out of the 54,000 with very low food security in Lewisham.



Given the information provided by projects, the grant scheme has been successful in achieving its original aims. The 19 projects have provided a safety net to at least 20,000 people in crisis who may otherwise be without support. Looking at the geographical spread of the funded projects, the funding supported a good spread across the borough.

The Food Insecurity Index suggests funding did go to priority areas but we should consider focusing more in the south of the borough in the future.

Improved food provision has supported the dignity and autonomy of residents by offering them more choice in their meals.

This funding has supported people experiencing food insecurity but also enhanced the variety and quality of food provided. Projects are now able to offer a broader selection of ambient and fresh foods, with a stronger focus on nutrition and cultural appropriateness, addressing the diverse dietary needs of their members. Additionally, it enables the provision of food during festive seasons and in response to emergency food demands.

It should be noted that this funding programme, while extended twice, was designed to be short-time funding to support community food projects to meet the increasing and urgent demand for food aid due to the cost-of-living crisis. While there have been many benefits, evidenced within this report, the funding hasn't provided longer-term sustainability or a step change in approach – this was outside of the remit of this original grant aims, but should be considered if funding becomes available in the future.



Of Grantees Would Apply for Additional Funding

We asked projects whether they would apply for additional funding should the funds be available 98% of grantees said yes, indicating they were happy with the process and working with us to deliver the grants.

The evidence provided, demonstrates how the grant programme has supported the aims and vision of the Food Justice Action Plan.



RMUK Wellbeing Store

CURRENT ACTIVITIES
AND NEXT STEPS

Lewisham Local is currently working with the grantees who are finalising their projects or working on submitting their final monitoring reports.

Due to 5 projects not applying for additional extension funding, there is a total of £8991 funding pot leftover for Food Justice Grant. This funding will be ring fenced to add to a new Food Justice Grants programme that is due to be delivered over the coming months, thanks to additional Household Support Funding from Lewisham Council. Learning from this grant programme will inform the focus and process of this new programme.

£8,991
Funding Pot Leftover



8%

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Lewisham Local would like to thank all the funded partner projects who have participated and worked hard to deliver this programme and provided feedback to us. They continue to work tirelessly to provide vital food and support to Lewisham's communities.

Lewisham Local would like to thank Lewisham Council alongside donors to the Lewisham Cost-of-Living Appeal for providing the funding which enabled us to deliver this programme.

Report written by Aidilah Sarhak, Grants Coordinator and Simone Riddle Food Justice Programme Manager, Lewisham Local

APPENDIX 1

COMMUNITY FOOD JUSTICE GRANTEES ROUND 1 2023

1. Lewisham Donation Hub (£10,000) for purchasing cooking devices like microwaves, kettles, toasters and food.
2. Lewisham Salvation Army (£3,000) for ambient food provision, supermarket vouchers, overheads and volunteer expenses.
3. LewCAS (£3,000) for cultural fresh and ambient foods.
4. Feed the Hill (£3,000) for ambient and fresh food costs.
5. Pepys Community Hub (£10,000) for supporting 4 groups that work with different communities from the centre.
6. Sporting Way (£2,954) for fresh fruit and vegetables, sandwiches for youth club.
7. Catford Soup (£3,000) for ambient food supply and takeaway containers.
8. St Peter's Social Supermarket (£3,000) for food for supermarket.
9. Legendary Community Club (£10,000) to deliver a Cash First support programme to vulnerable people or groups whilst also conducting research on the impact of providing cash as an alternative to emergency food aid. Costs include research, project coordination, funds for participants and art dissemination of findings
10. Sydenham Community Supermarket (£4,929) for paying for a supermarket manager, ambient foods, supermarket vouchers, and volunteer expenses /growing materials.
11. Pepys Social Supermarket (£3,000) for fresh food provision, membership costs, overheads, refreshments, transport costs.
12. ChART (£3,000) for fresh and ambient foods, supermarket vouchers.
13. Evelyn Community Store (3,000) for ambient and fresh food, volunteer expenses and overheads.
14. Grove Park Emergency Food Bank (£2925) for staple foods.
15. RMUK Wellbeing CIC (£10,000) for fresh cultural foods, provision towards supermarket project manager and coordinator, volunteer expenses.
16. Living Water Christian Centre Food Bank (£3,000) for ambient and cultural foods.
17. Kids Kitchen (£5,218) to run 16 cooking sessions for under 5's.
18. World of Hope (£3,000) for cultural fresh foods.
19. Rehoboth Community Outreach (£3,000) for cultural food provision.

APPENDIX 2

ORGANISATIONS WHO RECEIVED AN EXTENSION GRANT

The first extension provided £17,955 of funding to nine of the small grant holders who had completed the project monitoring from round one, and 14 grants totalling £26,997.

Extension 1:

- Living Waters Christian Centre: LWCC Food Service £1995
- Bold Vision: Feed The Hill £2000
- World of Hope: African Caribbean Cultural Food Aid £2000
- Sporting Way CIC: Grove Park Youth Club £2000
- Rehobooth Community Outreach Club: The Lunch Club £2000
- UCKH Help Centre: Catford Soup Kitchen £2000
- Community Advice Works: Evelyn Community Store £2000
- Chinbrook Action Residents: Food Bank £2000
- St Peter's Brockley: Food Bank and Social Supermarket £2000

Extension 2:

- Sydenham Community Supermarket £2000
- Pepys Community Hub: Cooking and Eating Together £2000
- Kids Kitchen Collective: Kids Kitchen £2000
- Lewisham Donation hub £2000
- RMUK Well-Being £2000
- Universal Church: Catford Soup Kitchen £2000
- Living Water Christian Centre: LWCC Food Service £1997
- Sporting Way CIC: Grove Park Youth Club £2000
- Rehoboth Community Outreach Club: Soup Kitchen and Warm Welcome £2000
- Bold Vision: Feed The Hill £2000
- St Peter's Brockley: Food Bank and Social Supermarket £2000
- World of Hope: African Caribbean Cultural Food Aid £2000
- Community Advice Works: Evelyn Community Store £2000
- Legendary Community Club £2000[AS1] [AS1]amount changed

All projects have completed their monitoring when this report was completed.

APPENDIX 3

CASE STUDIES: BUILDING COMMUNITY UNITY AND INCLUSION IN LEWISHAM THROUGH COMMUNITY FOOD JUSTICE GRANTS

Rehoboth Community Outreach

"Our project has been progressing successfully, with many aspects exceeding expectations. Thanks to the grant we received, we have been able to sustain and expand our community activities, sports programs, and well-being sessions. These initiatives have provided essential support to local residents and strengthened social connections within the community. Without this funding, we would have faced the difficult decision of either closing our doors or reducing our opening hours to just one day per week."

As part of their ongoing efforts to better serve the community, Rehoboth Community Club have made important adjustments to their service model. They observed that some of the mothers attending the sessions were Muslim and felt uncomfortable sitting with men. To address this, Rehoboth Community Club implemented a two-door serving system, where women and children wait and are served at the main entrance, while men use a separate entrance at the back.

Catford Soup Kitchen

"Catford Soup Kitchen have been able to foster a strong sense of community unity and inclusion within the London Borough of Lewisham. Our initiatives have brought people together, creating lasting connections and promoting social cohesion."

The Kitchen successfully tackled food inequality by offering culturally appropriate and affordable food to African Caribbean communities in London. Beyond meeting nutritional needs, the project provided comfort and connection especially during festive periods, when feelings of loneliness and isolation can be most acute. By creating a welcoming space and offering familiar, culturally resonant meals, we brought people together, fostering a sense of belonging and dignity. Early challenges with sourcing a reliable food supplier were quickly overcome, allowing the project to flourish. Regular engagement with the community ensured our services remained relevant and respectful, and the grant funding made it possible to deliver food with both meaning and care. The project not only met its original goals but became a source of celebration, warmth, and hope for many who might otherwise have spent the season alone.

This change was also informed by a survey that highlighted concerns regarding safeguarding. The findings revealed that some men accessing our services had experienced substance misuse issues or had recently been released from prison. “In response, we introduced this system to create a safer, more inclusive environment that prioritizes the well-being of vulnerable individuals, women, and children, while also respecting religious and cultural considerations.”

Through these measures, Rehoboth Community Club continue to uphold their commitment to equality, dignity, and respect for all. By adapting to the needs of the community, they ensure that everyone feelssafe, valued, and welcomed, reinforcing our mission of creating a stronger, more inclusive communityfor all.

World of Hope: African Caribbean Cultural Food Aid

“Thanks to the funding we received, the World of Hope visitation programme has significantly improved our safeguarding awareness and strengthened our partnership with Lewisham Social Services. One of the most profound cases we encountered was that of a 72-year-old man whom we visit weekly as part of our cultural food distribution. With no family to support him, he entrusted us with his room key.

Recently, we became concerned when we hadn’t seen or heard from him. Acting quickly, we checked on him and found him unconscious on the floor. We immediately called an ambulance, and he was taken to Queen Elizabeth Hospital on Monday, 19/08/24. Thankfully, he is now receiving medical care. We continue to visit him daily in the hospital and have also informed Social Services to ensure he gets the necessary long-term support.

Beyond this case, we have noticed an increasing number of Africans, particularly Nigerians, arriving with children and facing hardships due to unemployment. We are also providing support to Afghan refugee families who are in urgent need of assistance. Through our outreach efforts, we remain dedicated to helping vulnerable individuals overcome their challenges and find the resources they need to rebuild their lives.”

RMUK Wellbeing

Two service users shared how RMUK played a crucial role in saving their lives. Both were struggling with extreme isolation, having no family support and suffering from illness, which led them to experience suicidal thoughts.

However, thanks to RMUK's dedicated and professionally trained volunteers, their lives took a positive turn. Regular visits and food parcel deliveries not only provided them with essential supplies but also opened doors to meaningful interactions. These engagements gradually boosted their self-confidence, reassuring them that there were people who genuinely cared.

Over time, they began to step out of their homes, breathe in the fresh air, and even collect food on their own from the distribution centre. They now actively engage with volunteers, knowing they have a safe space to seek comfort whenever needed. RMUK's unwavering support has given them a new lease on life, restoring their sense of belonging and hope.

Lewisham Donation Hub

This is an example of an individual helped through the programme which was shared on social media:



A big thank you to Lewisham Council and Lewisham Local for the £10,000 'Lewisham Food Justice' grant which has enabled us to support SO MANY over the last few months with essential foods and the appliances that our visitors need in order to eat well.

The final microwave from that grant was shared with a wonderful woman called Sanida. She came to us seeking food support, but was unable to take frozen meals due to having no means to warm her meals. Thanks to our trustee, Magda, we were able to recognise the problem and intervene. Sanida's tears and her embrace were a demonstration of the power we all have to fundamentally improve the lives of the most lovely people. In this instance, for just £40.

Sanida, if you are reading this, we extend every good wish to you in your fight against cancer. You have done more than you know to inspire us to find the funding to make moments like this possible again."

Feed The Hill

Here is a testimony shared by a member of Feed The Hill:

"I have visited Feed the Hill for about six months now, nearly every week. It has helped me in numerous ways. As well as filling hungry mouths for only £2 a week, it enables me to direct my budget to items that I otherwise have to put off buying, and to keep a stock of essentials. Sometimes there are treats and luxury items we couldn't otherwise afford, which really lift our spirits. There are usually bulk goods or fresh ones that need to be used urgently, so that I can invite friends and family to share the bounty, and feel generous, spontaneous, and a little less poor. Unusual ingredients have led me to try new recipes, and shoppers and volunteers often share tips on how to use them. Since I've been shopping at Feed the Hill, we feel less stress over confronting our finances and I feel more part of the local community. The friendly welcome I receive from the volunteers has become an important part of my week."







Volunteers at Rehoboth Community Outreach

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Charity Registration number - 1101616