



Community Chest

in Barking and Dagenham



Impact Report 2024

Barking & Dagenham



01 Report Scope



This report provides an overview of the Community Chest (CC) funding opportunity in Barking and Dagenham and what the impacts were. It covers:

- the process for year two
- the activity that was funded through the grants
- the outcomes that were achieved both through the running of the grant programme and as a result of the funded activities
- learnings and next steps

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02 Approach

WHO WAS INVOLVED IN SETTING UP THE COMMUNITY CHEST AT PLACE-LEVEL?

- This was the second year of community chest funding. Leads from the council were Jacqueline Hutchinson (Service Manager) who leads on the social prescribing programme on behalf of the primary care networks.
- Two Social Prescribing Relationship Managers (who directly support the social prescribing link-workers) were also engaged, Emma Gillan and Adele Famurewa.
- Local Authority (LA) representation was also from Public Health who were managing the Health Inequalities Fund across the Borough. Mike Brannan (Public Health Consultant) and Sophie Keenleyside (Public Health Strategist) offered leadership and direction.
- There was a strong commitment from the Local Authority to match fund.
- Public Health also offered additional funds from the Borough Partnership's Health Inequalities Programme to support Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise organisations (VCFSE) remuneration as they recognised the importance of meeting this need in the context of setting up a participatory fund where a steering group of VCFSE colleagues were involved in the direction and delivery of the fund.

- The majority of the VCSE steering group members that had been part of the pilot decided to stay on to be part of the process again, and were joined by Lucy Lee from Thames Life.
- The opportunity to join a VCFSE sector steering group was promoted by email to previous successful grantees.
- **Members of the VCSE steering group were:**

Org Name	Attendee Name
Radiant Ambitions	Wunmi Oyewole
Tots N Tunes	Dana Benes
Barking & Dagenham Youth Dance	Georgina Alexiou
Green Shoes Arts	Sam Miller
Thames Life	Lucy Lee

- There was a strong commitment to devolve the fund again to the VCFSE sector.
- The steering group led the process delivery including production support for the participatory budgeting day and were provided with admin support from the council.
- Wunmi Oyewole from Radiant Ambitions led on the use of the existing BD Collective 'Open Collective' online portal for holding and distributing funds to the successful organisations.



The Steering Group

02 Approach

WHAT DID WE DO?.....

Devolving the Community Chest to the VCFSE sector

In Barking & Dagenham the fund was devolved to the VCFSE sector in order to:

- Empower VCFSEs to have a say in how the fund was going to be distributed
- Lower competition between VCFSEs
- Enable ways for VCFSEs to work in partnership with each other (to foster connections and support joint application)
- Shift the relationship between VCFSEs and LA to support more collaboration and equality.

The agreement was to continue with the Participatory Funding model for the CC which was based on the Participatory Budgeting method, pioneered in Brazil. Differently to this method, which tends to engage residents, only organisations that attended the participatory budgeting event to pitch were able to vote on the applications. This was limited to one vote per organisation.



Community Chest Fund
Community groups play a vital role in addressing health inequalities in Barking and Dagenham. Join us on December 7, 2023, at the Barking Learning Centre for a Festival event where you can:

- ✓ Shape the fair and accessible process for B&D Social Prescribing Community Chest.
- ✓ Build partnerships with other community organizations.
- ✓ Understand the application process for this funding.

B&D Community chest

THURSDAY
7TH DECEMBER, 2023

SOCIAL PRESCRIBING COMMUNITY CHEST FESTIVAL
Calling All Active Voluntary and Community Groups in Barking & Dagenham!

Barking Learning Centre
2 Town Square
Barking IG11 7NB

1:30 pm to 5:00 pm

REGISTER NOW



For more information email communitychest@lbbd.gov.uk

www.lbbd.gov.uk

- Consortium Festival took place on 7 December 2023
- 33 small organisations attended
- Process links to Social Prescribing explained
- Tips given in preparation to prepare proposals for pitch in February



Invite to Community Chest Festival

Festival photos - Lucy Lee presenting & Group planning sessions

02 Approach

- **Joy Marketplace** - All VCSFE organisations were mandated to be visible on Joy Marketplace. The benefits to organisations being 'onboarded' to the marketplace were explained, including increased referrals and also access to an outcomes dashboard.
- All organisations signed up to receive direct referrals through the marketplace.
- From evaluation only 2 successful applicants had referrals sent through through 'Joy', lots of other referrals were received.

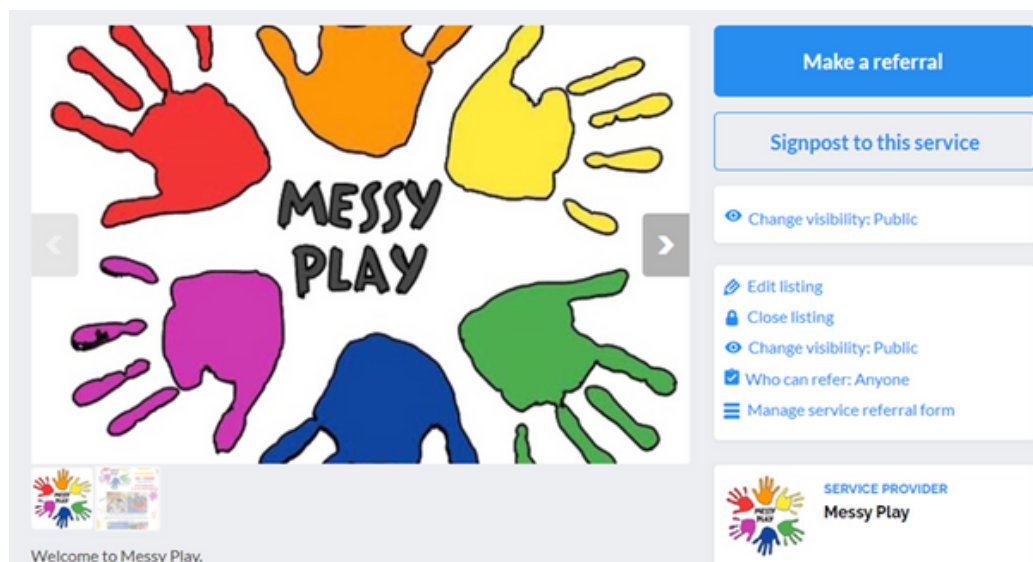
WHAT PRIORITY AREAS WERE SET FOR THE CC (IF ANY)?

Core Criteria were devised by the Steering Group to be answered by the applicants:

1. Equality, diversity and inclusion – supporting those who are left behind or not well provided for by the current offer
2. Capacity building – strengthening your organisation's capability to deliver projects.
3. Existing Health Priorities – your proposal should support and compliment local health priorities in Barking & Dagenham.
4. Evidence – you would be required to show the impact of your work and share this with other organisations

Proposals were sought from groups who:

- May have struggled to access funding in the past.
- Were interested in building relationships between each other to foster local and collegiate support structures.
- Were interested in offering services in relation to social prescribing.



MESSY PLAY ON 'JOY'

02 Approach

REFLECTIONS AND LEARNINGS

Learning from the first year facilitated the smoother running of the CC fund in Barking & Dagenham during year two. A new member was welcomed to the VCFSE Steering Group and was guided by the existing members in what was expected and supported during each stage of the process.

WHAT WORKED WELL?

- 38 EOI applications submitted, a 65% increase on the numbers received in year one.
- Funds were successfully disseminated to 17 organisations.
- There was significant collaboration with LBBB officers and the VCFSE steering group members with increased positive relationships formed as a consequence.
- Whats app group set up between Steering Group members made communications a lot quicker and smoother for quick discussions and decisions.
- LBBB matched the initial funding for the second year.
- The VCFSE Steering Group effectively distributed awarded funds.
- Decision making within the steering group was open and democratic, with all sides listened too and decisions made in the best interests of the fund

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED?

- The Open Collective platform worked smoothly but was quite time consuming for the Steering group members overseeing the payments. Also high payment needed to be made to host the funds which took away from the overall fund for groups, and we could look at possible other options going forward
- Referrals from Social Prescribing to projects still quite low, mainly due to high numbers of projects being for young people, and that referrals received in SP are forwarded directly to Family Hubs. More communication and marketing of activities to be provided for successful organisations in the future.

Dr Jagan John
Community Chest Festival
Keynote speaker

03 Outputs

HOW MANY APPLICATIONS WERE RECEIVED?

38 EOI applications were received. This took the format of an initial application form requesting project information, intended outcomes, and provisional budget.

The Steering Group met to confirm all information and agreed for 37 applicants to be invited to pitch at the Participatory Budgeting event in February.

Applicants presented a 5-minute pitch to a consortium of other applicants, with all applicants taking part in voting on the quality of the project presented to determine which projects met the desired outcomes most effectively.

Scoring was more vital this year than the first year due to the number of projects asking for funding and the available funds.

Information was provided on the background of proposed activity to all organisations. Scoring out of 10 was requested against the 4 core criteria.

HOW WAS THE GRANT MONEY SPENT?

£81,056 was used to fund projects. Applicants were paid £179.40 each for participating in the participatory budget events which took place on 7 December 2023 and 7 February 2024.

Members of the Steering Group were paid a fee of up to £2,000 each to remunerate them to follow up with awardees for next steps which included carrying out due diligence checks on their assigned organisations and supporting them to be compliant with the eligibility requirements of the fund prior to receiving the Community Chest grant. They also created the Barking & Dagenham Community Chest Logo and social media Instagram account, to support and promote the activities of successful groups and the fund itself.

Members of the Steering Group also carried the administration requirements of the disbursement process and supported grant awardees with learning how to receive their grant through the Open Collective platform. The Steering Group also attended post participatory budget meetings and check-in meetings with the Local Authority, and supported funded organisations through the monitoring and evaluation process.



The Village's Children's Event



The Village event publicity

03 Outputs

WHAT DID WE DO?.....

PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING EVENT

- 38 Expression of Interest applications received
- 37 organisations invited to pitch
- 31 organisations attended
- Facilitators: Green Shoes Arts & Thames Life
 - Groups 5 minute pitch of funding proposal
 - Groups voting on funding proposals

Budget

- LBBD £45,000 Grant
- ICB £45,000 Grant & Management costs
- £6,474 Remaining from 2023

Total 2024 fund - £96,474

£82,000 available for organisations



03 Outputs

Successful organisations

Organisation	Money	Score
KYK Project	£5,000	9.15
Wander Wild Forest School	£5,000	8.55
Thames Life	£5,000	8.52
BMoneywize CIC	£4,999	8.39
Soul & Sound CIC	£4,670	8.39
The Village UK	£5,000	8.35
Triangoals	£5,000	8.34
Tots N Tunes CIC	£5,000	8.32
True Cadence	£4,998	8.13
Dynamic Bridges CIC	£5,000	8.00
Humourisk CIC / Shed Life	£3,900	7.95
Early Years Cocoon	£4,245	7.94
Roding Rubbish	£5,000	7.90
England Netball	£4,244	7.90
Messy Play CIC	£5,000	7.81
Green Shoes Arts	£5,000	7.76
Precious Angels	£4,000	7.76
Total	£81,056	

03

Outputs

WHAT TYPES OF PROJECTS WERE FUNDED?

The projects covered a wide range of activities. These included rubbish collection, drama and music projects for young people, film production, positive physical and sporting activities for young children and families, positive social activity for the elderly, community gardening, cooking activities, creative craft skills such as t-shirt design, sports and physical activity for children, and shared community and family activities. Each project had a number of points in common:

Had a focus on wellbeing.
Engaged community members in positive learning experiences.
Had a focus on combating social isolation through positive shared activities.
Aimed to improve community and social cohesion.
Aimed to increase happiness amongst participants.
Allowed participants to improve connections to similar activities.

WHAT TYPES OF GROUPS WERE FUNDED?

The groups ranged from small charitable organisations and community interest companies to extremely small community groups that deliver activity on a part-time basis.

Every funded group was a grassroots organisation with strong community connections. Some of these groups were previously unaware of social prescribing and had never received funding.



Fielders Crescent, Barking, IG11 0FU (Near LEYF Barking Riverside nursery)



BOOK YOUR SPACE NOW



Wander Wild Forest School

03

Outputs

FEEDBACK FROM APPLICANTS/GRANTEES ON THE PROCESS

We asked the recipient organisations for some feedback about the process of application, knowledge on social prescribing and what they learnt from the process and from delivering their activities. Eight organisations responded.

FEEDBACK THEMES

1. Did you know about the Social Prescribing service before Community Chest was introduced?

Yes	6	No	2
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2. The Community Chest endeavours to be a participatory process, as it gives participating VCSFE groups the opportunity to make decisions about who should benefit from the funding.

Please state if you agree or disagree with these statements about applying for the funding and the participatory budgeting event.

Criteria	Agree	Neither agree of disagree
The process of applying for funding and eligibility to receive funding was clear	8	0
At the Community Chest Festival, the types of activities that would add value to the borough's social prescribing offer was communicated clearly	6	2
There was a positive atmosphere at the participatory budgeting event	8	0
The scoring process used at the participatory budgeting event was easy to understand	6	2
We all had an equal say in who received funding	7	1
Who received funding corresponded with the needs of residents	6	2
Participating in this process had made me more confident to apply for other funding	6	2

03

Outputs

3. Did your organisation receive any referrals from Social Prescribers?

Yes

2

No

6

- From the 2 organisations that said yes, 21 referrals were received
- Over 150 participants took part in the other activities from the organisations that completed the questionnaire

GREATEST ACHIEVEMENTS

- Being able to actually showcase what we do as we feel face to face helps showcase our passion
- Engaging with so many local families while covering parenting topics that we often find challenging and bringing specialists to support us as an organisation too.
- Developing a group of 10 participants who were vulnerable and unsure about joining, with low confidence. We took time to engage with them outside the workshops ringing them and texting to keep them engaged and build their trust.
- The greatest achievement has been observing families grow a love for playing in the outdoors and becoming inspired by the variety of experience that can be had through, exploring and learning in nature, cooking, using tools and music.
- Our greatest achievement was being able to get our elderly people to complete their online digital courses; and then volunteering to help others
- We now have a netball session on a Wednesday evening that is growing and gives the opportunity to expand.
- All participants self-reported improvements in self-esteem and confidence, and a reduction in anxiety in taking part in shared social activities

Roding Rubbish: Litter Picking



**FOOTPATH 47
Clean-up**

Help us to clean up the Footpath 47 a green path enjoyed by many locals and other

Litter picks, gloves etc. provided

BRD Community chest

Saturday 13th July 2024,

12pm - 2pm

**Meeting point
The Wilds at Barking Riverside
Northgate Rd,
Barking IG11 0SQ**



@rodingrubbish   



03

Outputs

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

We asked the participants for some feedback about the activities that they have taken part in over the last 5 months. 133 participants completed the feedback questionnaire.

We asked for general demographic information, as well as wellbeing questions and overall comments about the sessions they took part in.

NAME OF ORGANISATION ATTENDED

Organisation	Number	Organisation	Number
BMoneyWize	9	Roding Rubbish	21
Early Years Cocoon	10	The Village	4
Green Shoes Arts	5	Wander Wilds	4
Humourisk	10	Tots N Tunes	12
Messy Play	14	Triangoals	10
SoulNSound	7	YouthSpotBar	24
Gentle Yoga with Lea	3		

Age	No.	Age	No.	Gender	No.
0 - 5	8	35 - 44	35	Female	99
5 - 11	18	45 - 54	9	Male	30
12 - 17	16	55 - 64	14	Female gender at birth	2
18 - 24	3	65+	10	Male gender at birth	1
25 - 34	20			Prefer not to say	1

03

Outputs

Ethnicity	Number	Ethnicity	Number
Any other Black	6	Any other White	3
Arab	2	Asian Bangladeshi	3
Asian Indian	13	Asian Pakistani	9
Black African	26	Black Caribbean	9
Mixed other	5	Mixed White & Black	3
White	35	White European	14
Prefer not to say	3	Any other Asian	2

Disability	No.
Yes	18
No	112
Prefer not to say	3

Has your health improved since taking part in the activity	No.
Yes	96
No	17
N/A	20

03 Outputs

Criteria	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Happiness - How happy do you normally feel?	0	0	3	1	5	22	22	17	20	43
How happy have these sessions made you feel?	0	0	0	0	2	9	7	8	31	76
Connection - How connected to other people do you normally feel?	0	1	1	5	14	17	19	28	16	33
How connected to other people have these sessions made you feel?	0	0	0	0	2	9	12	16	37	56
Self Esteem - How good do you feel about yourself?	1	0	3	5	10	16	14	27	17	39
How good have these sessions made you feel about yourself?	0	0	0	0	1	10	13	23	24	62
Health - How Healthy do you normally feel?	1	1	2	6	12	17	21	24	18	31

04 Outcomes

This section shares how the grants impacted capacity and skills of VCFSEs as well as the residents they served, what were the gaps filled, and how this related to their ability to tackle health inequalities; and on the individual person level, what was the impact of activities on the recipients, in terms of health, wellbeing and more.

SOME QUOTES FROM GRANTEES:

We asked the organisations to tell us about key learnings from participating and delivering a Community Chest programme

- We have been able to reach out and bring more families to our sessions and being able to offer events that people couldn't afford or attend has been amazing
- To be successful with an initiative requires that the needs of the community are the core inspiration of the project. And this is what we have done with this project.
- Building community is about trust, connections and relationships.
- Working with families is rewarding
- There is always more work done than what it was expected and running 10 online workshops took time and effort, especially when looking for those to deliver well.
- Lack of information in terms of reporting and this should be clear during the application process so organisations decide or not to accept those terms or suggest other ways that are more community friendly
- That new projects grow and develop. Engagement is organic and takes time. Joining a group or activity is very challenging for those with complex health needs and life changing conditions
- It's honestly great to feel supported by like-minded people. The participatory process made me feel I had a network of local residents that I could be inspired by and turn to when necessary. Business in general, and running a social business can feel lonely, applying for grants can feel tasking and competitive but I felt genuine awe for each and every business/project presented.
- Delivering the programme has been exciting and it's been great to offer families something special.
- Collaboration to deliver an initiative is a worthwhile endeavour.
- Adapting - we thought with some free sessions we would have greater numbers so we've had to adapt and change expectations.
- In order to attract referrals, a significant amount of outreach to suitable partners is required when working with children and young people.

04

Outcomes

OUTCOMES FOR RESIDENTS - SOME EXAMPLES FROM THE RESIDENTS AND THE BENEFITS THEY HAVE FOUND

CHANGES IN HEALTH

1. It has changed positively because sharing your situation with people of like minds makes one feel a lot better.
2. Less hospital visits.
3. Mentally, emotionally and morally it has helped a lot. Positives of course.
4. I keep trying to do my exercises so I can stand and get into my wheel chair, Susie and the group motivate me and I hope I will be able to get out to the shed INC exhibition otherwise I will join online.
5. It allows me to meet new people.
6. It's allowed me to engage more with my child and see her interacting with other children.
7. Made me slightly more mobile and aches and pains disappear faster.
8. It turns out that litter-picking can be great exercise! Although I walk a great deal, my job is largely sedentary, so it's great to be outside doing something physical. Seeing your efforts make a difference, and having passers-by give thanks and encouragement, is a great mental-health boost as well.
9. I feel more confident in myself as I have met some people who were really sweet and seemed to show genuine interest in me. I also had to move around a lot to set up and doing outdoor activities with the kids.
10. I am much more aware of the benefits of introducing more plants to my meals daily after speaking with the teacher.
11. It's a positive environment which improves my mental health.

OTHER WAYS THE PROJECT HAS HELPED

1. It helps to know more about digital world. Also learnt sign language skill which is highly useful in my line of career.
2. Getting to meet other mums with toddlers my sons age and ethnicity. It's good going to a group where you are not the only person of colour.
3. I have a newborn as well as a toddler, so coming to the session being outdoors got me out of the house and kept my son occupied. I felt that my mental health had improved.
4. To focus and look forward to meeting my new friends. It helped me to understand other people's culture.
5. I am able to speak more at school without feeling too shy. I have learnt to make friends with other children I don't know. I have learnt lots of new skills through drama, dance, musical theatre, art workshops. It is amazing attending and I never want to leave.
6. Connecting with people - friendship.
7. It made my children accustomed to places different than home, enjoyed activities where they used every day things, met new people and connected.

04 Outcomes

CASE STUDIES DIRECTLY FROM THE FUNDED ORGANISATIONS

Messy Play

Aww, it was really the cutest ceremony + a fun messy day for all. Well done for all the hard work this year to the team, you're amazing and our little ones love every session. 🥳🎉🎉 Here's to the first graduation of their life 🍷🍷 (glasses filled with fruit shoot of course) 😊😊💙💙🙏

Humourisk CIC

X was referred to us by JOY, is a woman in her 40's, she recently had a second stroke, she lives with her husband and teenage son. From conversations on the phone and emails I managed to strike up a rapport through regular telephone calls, she was very nervous about joining a group, her voice was very quiet and she did not want to commit immediately to joining the group. Eventually she came to the Shed INC workshop on the third week, she was very unconfident and managing new life changing symptoms that often resulted in falls, so she was unconfident about going out. X gradually began to talk more and through drawing she grew in confidence. When she realised how friendly and relaxed the group was. X enjoyed the socialising. She said that she has found new friends and from being very lonely and isolated at home she had somewhere to go where she felt she was part of something. She enjoys trying new arts and activities and liked the story telling aspect of the workshop where she could draw as she listened. X is now joining Shed Life so she can continue to see her new friends and take up different arts and crafts

Case Study of Mum R attending with two children - **1. A resident's experience of your service:** Attending the Wander Wild special summer series with my two children has been great. Tickets go live at 5pm on a Monday with plenty of communication beforehand. Getting tickets is easy and very simple to do via Eventbrite.

I really like that the day before the session Wander Wild send out a courtesy email reminding attendees about the session and providing information on weather and appropriate dressing. The session itself is very well organised with several stations for my children to enjoy, and then the main focused activity. The Wander Wild coordinators are very knowledgeable and I also love the circle time at the end of the session with songs and sometimes stories. The hour goes by so quickly and I'm always looking forward to the following session.

2. How they were supported: When I attended the cooking workshop with my kids, I didn't realise how easy it was to make garlic bread at home. Such a fun activity to get the kids involved. Since the session, I've been motivated to do more home cooking, whilst getting them involved in every step. It's encouraged my son to try new foods too!

3. Impact/outcome on the resident/child? The Wander Wild sessions have positively impacted both our physical and mental health as a family. Getting outdoors and my children being able to run around and exert their energy has been so helpful. Mentally it's also given us the opportunity to socialise and meet/make new friends.

I don't know what I would do without these sessions every week. I really look forward to and depend on them!



04 Outcomes

CASE STUDIES DIRECTLY FROM THE FUNDED ORGANISATIONS

Child H arrived new to our project via one of our outreach workshops. His parent was very open and clear that he lived with high functioning autism. They were not sure to what level child H would be able to participate as he avoids new experiences as he finds them very uncomfortable.

Green Shoes Arts were happy to support child H. We invited him in to watch a session whilst his parent sat in the room next door. The following week we challenged him to join in for 5 minutes and then introduced some mindful art in a quiet room next door with his parent for the remainder of the session.

Slowly we built up joining in for the whole session with his parent next door. As his parent looked through the window at child H joining in they said 'I literally can't believe this. I feel quite emotional as I never thought he would be able to join in with something like this. This is honestly huge for him'.

We then encouraged him to be dropped off and left at the session. His parent was worried and reassured us that they would just be outside in the car park if we needed to call them - however this wasn't needed as child H happily joined in. It has been an ongoing journey, back and forth, there has been a time in which he has run away down the street due to his anxiety, there have been times he has walked in with no problem. His parent also added 'I am a single parent, I can't afford to pay for things in advance that he then won't join. I can't believe this is free, it takes the pressure off that he must join in and be OK immediately, because it does take time'.

There has been a clear change in his expression, sometimes he will arrive and say 'I can't do this today, but I will be back next week' which is a marked improvement. His parent said 'you have all been so patient with him. I get it, not every place has the time or resources to give this much attention to one child. But I do think that is what has made the difference to him'.

We then noticed he was only co-operating with a particular member of staff, so the team then switched it up so that he was working with a different adult, and he slowly has become used to working with various members of the team. The parent reports back that child H will put on performances at home to show what he's learnt, and that other extended family members have also noticed that he is more outgoing. Child H said that coming to Green Shoes Arts 'has made me feel less awkward. I used to feel very shy'.

We are really pleased with the progress child H has made and the positive effect that this had for him and his family.

05

What happened when a project didn't run?

Of the 17 funded groups, 15 fully ran their projects to the proposed groups and in the timescales planned. However, 2 projects were not completed. This represented a significant learning point for the Steering Group.

NON-COMPLETED PROJECT ONE

In July the Steering Group were informed that one of the projects had had some difficulty in running their activity due to some personal and external circumstances and an extension was requested. The Steering group came together in an additional meeting to work out options that could be put in place for the project to run in a reduced timescale. These options were put forward to the group but unfortunately no communication came back, and the Steering Group again met to discuss the most effective option.

As the funding hadn't yet been drawn down from Open Collective, the decision was made to contact the next 5 projects on the list and offer them £1,000 each, to run a smaller Summer project for the residents in their area.

All five organisations came back immediately to say they would be able to successfully deliver in the time frame.

- Nice Bunch CIC - An intergenerational gathering of alternative education families
- Harmony House - Summer hampers to 54 participants of their sessions
- Conscious Lea - Yoga Sessions
- Joe's Fight Club - Brazilian Ju Jitsu sessions
- Youth Spot Bar - Skating sessions

The newly funded organisations responded quickly and effectively, delivering their agreed activities in the timescale. It was worth noting that some of the organisations had planned to deliver their activities regardless of available funding, and that the added funds gave them the means to pay themselves for their time.

Youth Spot Bar
Youth Livez Matters

Skate Club
Youth Spot Bar

The Skate club presents 3 days Free of Roller Disco

28 August 2024

20 Tickets For Free

Time: 1 PM - 2 PM

SCAN TO BOOK

Venue
Ripple Road
Barking
IG11 7FN

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/skateclubcic>

Barking & Dagenham

Barking Sports 4 Change

BID Community Chest

05

What happened when a project didn't run

NON-COMPLETED PROJECT TWO

At the beginning of August, the Steering Group were informed that another group had been unable to deliver their agreed activity due to challenging personal circumstances. In discussion with a Steering Group representative, the funded organisation suggested that their activity be postponed until October.

Given that the current funding round would be complete by that time, the Steering Group decided in this instance to ask for return of the funds, which would be added to the next year's total budget. This was agreed and the funds were returned.

While it was recognised that it was unfortunate that the initially agreed activity could not be completed, this represents a significant learning point both for the Steering Group and for funded organisations. The salient points to be considered are as follows.



Summer Hamper recipient



Summer Hamper recipient

A clear plan of action needs to be in place in the event of projects not being delivered. The first indication of this potential challenge is if funds are not drawn down in a timely manner. In this instance, a member of the Steering Group should contact the group to ascertain if the project will indeed be delivered.

If the project will not be delivered as agreed, sufficient time needs to be available for the funds to be reallocated to another group that did not receive funding, provided their projects meets the required criteria.

Many small groups are unable to function when key staff are unavailable, as they are often comprised of one or two individuals. In the event of exceptional circumstances delaying delivery, funded groups should have a plan in place to respond to this eventuality. Potentially, this could be incorporated into the application process.

06

Relationships and Social Prescribing



WHAT WERE THE OUTCOMES OF THE CC PROCESS FOR PARTNERSHIP WORKING BETWEEN VCFSE AND STATUTORY PARTNERS?

There were a number of conversations amongst the Steering Group regarding the role of social prescribing in the Borough, and the following points were identified:

- The majority of organisations signed up to Joy and were tagged as Community Chest to make it more visible to link-workers.
- The link-workers were able to visit funded organisations to gain a greater understanding of their activities.
- There was a recognition that the Council was very positive and collaborative in terms of managing the Community Chest in conjunction with VCFSE organisations.
- A helpful step would be a mini-conference for VCFSE organisations and Council colleagues to celebrate the successes of this project with a view to sharing learning gained over the process and delivery.

07

Next steps



Wonder Wild Forest School

CHANGES TO BE IMPLEMENTED FOR THE NEXT FUNDING ROUNDS

- Clear and reasonable deadlines should be set for funded organisations to draw down awarded funds, and for project delivery to begin.
- If these deadlines are not met, the Steering Group should meet to discuss if the project can be delivered within the timescale.
- If a project proves to be undeliverable for any reason, the funds should be reallocated to projects that scored highly but did not receive funding.
- Steering Group members should communicate on a monthly basis with funded organisations to ensure that each project is delivering as planned and in accordance with the timeline and budget.

KEY LEARNINGS / TAKEAWAYS FROM THIS YEAR

- Communication is key between the Steering Group and funded organisations.
- Pathways for clear communication need to be built into the process from inception, effectively communicated to funded organisations, and rigorously adhered to.
- Going forward, the Steering Group should be comprised both of groups that have received funding and those who have previously been part of the Steering Group in order to ensure that a) essential knowledge is transferred; and b) the Steering Group remains representative of the community as a whole.
- Strong efforts need to be made to ensure that Steering Group recruitment is made available and accessible to all sectors of the community.
- Steering Group recruitment should include a process of upskilling and training to ensure that all members are effectively able to participate and advise. While this was achieved in the current year, a formal process of induction would be a key step in continuing the success of the fund and its outcomes.

08

Glossary



Barking Food Forest



Wonder Wilds



Glossary

A number of acronyms are used across this report. For ease of understanding, these are detailed below.

- VCFSE - Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise sector
- LBBD - London Borough of Barking & Dagenham
- SG - Steering Group
- SP - Social Prescribing
- CC - Community Chest
- LA - Local Authority



Triangoals Youth FC