



ANNUAL REVIEW

2024 - 2025



BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER





FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Friends and Partners,

As we look back on 2024–2025, I am incredibly proud of how Lewisham Local has continued to strengthen its role as a trusted partner at the heart of our borough.



This has been a year of renewed focus and steady growth under the leadership of our new Chief Executive, Gülen Petty, whose energy and community-first vision have guided us confidently into the next chapter of our work.

Together, our Board of Trustees and dedicated staff team have navigated a complex funding landscape while continuing to deliver meaningful support for Lewisham's communities. We have deepened partnerships, secured vital new investment, and celebrated the success of flagship programmes such as Food Justice, Lewisham Giving, and the Black Infrastructure Support Project.

Each initiative reflects our shared belief that when people and organisations come together, Lewisham becomes stronger, fairer, and more connected. Every thread adds strength and colour to Lewisham's fabric.

Our achievements this year are a direct result of the commitment and collaboration of everyone involved - our treasured staff, volunteers, community partners, funders, and, of course, the residents who inspire all that we do. On behalf of the Board, I extend heartfelt thanks for your unwavering support, generosity, and belief in our mission.

The year has also reminded us of the importance of sustainability and adaptability. The cost-of-living crisis continues to test local services and residents alike, but it has also shown the resilience of our community.

As Trustees, we remain focused on ensuring Lewisham Local's long-term stability through diversified funding, strong governance, and ongoing investment in our people and systems.

Looking ahead, we will continue to champion partnership, inclusion, and innovation. With a capable and passionate team in place, and the trust of our community behind us, I am confident that Lewisham Local will keep growing its impact and helping Lewisham thrive.

Thank you for your support - your commitment is what makes our shared success possible.

Sincerely,

Roy Witter | Chair of Trustees

FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE



Dear friends and partners,

As I reflect on my first full year as Chief Executive of Lewisham Local, I am immensely proud of what our charity has achieved, hand in hand with our community.

The past year has been one of growth, collaboration, and renewed purpose. Despite ongoing challenges for many Lewisham residents, our collective energy and collaborative spirit has continued to shine through.

Every project highlighted in this report stands as a testament to what is possible when people and organisations come together to contribute, give, and share – whether it be their time, skills, or resources. Through our Food Justice work, volunteering programmes, local giving initiatives, and community networks, we've seen first-hand the power of connection to create lasting change.

Lewisham Local is more than a charity - it's a partnership of people who care deeply about this borough and its future. From our staff team and volunteers to our funders, trustees, and community partners, everyone plays a vital role in building a fairer, greener, and more connected Lewisham.

Looking ahead, our focus is on deepening that collaboration: strengthening the voluntary sector, expanding our reach to underrepresented communities, and ensuring our internal systems and digital tools help us work even more effectively.

Thank you to everyone who has supported and championed our work this year. Together, we are showing what it means to be in Lewisham - generous, inclusive, and resilient.

Warm regards,

Dr Gülen Petty, CEO

OUR VISION

A connected Lewisham community that gives, shares and works together to build happier, healthier and more resilient communities.

OUR MISSION

To serve the local community as Lewisham's leading infrastructure and capacity building organisation, whilst also delivering a suite of trusted direct services where our expertise matches a community need and a gap in provision.

OUR VALUES

- Everyone in the community is an asset and able to contribute, give and share
- We are inclusive, welcoming and open to all, working in an equal and equitable way
- We are collaborative and committed to working together initiating neighbourhood level resident forums for community engagement and co-designing services
- We are dynamic and responsive to Lewisham's communities' needs and willing to innovate
- We value the diversity of Lewisham's communities and are committed to proactively representing Lewisham's diversity in our Staff, Trustees and projects

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE YEAR



£236,647

Distributed in Grants
to projects



5,799

Community Meals
Served



3,652

Volunteer Hours
Provided at
FoodCycle



700+

Organisations in the
Lewisham Community
Directory



2,000

Residents Supported
through Digital
Access for All



2,000+

Visits to Community
Events at Wildcat
Wilderness



500+

Businesses Engaged
with Lewisham Local
Discount Card
Scheme



385

Young People Received
Essentials from Bank of
Things Project



93

People Placed into
Volunteering



300+

Individuals Received
Fundraising
Development Support



Time Bank Members Performance

At the Old Vic as part of the 12 Choirs of Christmas project,
celebrating intergenerational creativity

FOOD JUSTICE PROGRAMME

Lewisham Local's Food Justice Programme continues to play a vital role in creating a fairer, healthier, and more sustainable local food system. Over the past year, we have worked closely with community partners, the Council, and local residents to tackle food inequality, strengthen collaboration, and celebrate Lewisham's growing reputation as a leader in food justice.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

5,308

Guests Served Through
FoodCycle Lewisham

3,652

Volunteer Hours
Contributed

9,888

Kilograms of Surplus
Food Rescued

£135,009

Invested in 19
Community Food
Projects

5,799

Community Meals
Provided

2,000+

People Supported by
the 19 projects



Awarded the
Silver
Sustainable
Food Places
Award in July
2024

These achievements demonstrate the strength of Lewisham's community response and our collective commitment to ensuring that every resident has access to nutritious, culturally appropriate food.



GOOD FOOD



Now in its third year, Good Food Lewisham – the borough’s food partnership – brings together passionate residents, local organisations, and businesses working to improve Lewisham’s food landscape. Funded by Lewisham Council, with a two-year extension confirmed, the partnership continues to champion better access to good food, sustainable local supply chains, and community-led solutions.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2024/25



This year we launched a three-year action plan co-designed with residents and members of the network, setting clear priorities for sustainable food development. The partnership also coordinated the successful application for the Silver Sustainable Food Places Award, recognising Lewisham’s leadership on issues such as food poverty, diet-related health inequalities, and local economic resilience.

82 Good Food Businesses Supported

13 Good Food Business Charter Signed

72 Good Food Pledges Made

18 Community Groups Supported to Reduce Food Waste

142 Gardeners Connected through the Food Growing Network

62 Food Giving Groups listed in the Lewisham Community Directory

15 Food Hubs Supported Across the Borough

NETWORK DEVELOPMENT

Throughout the year, our focus has been on:

- Expanding food growing opportunities across the borough
- Strengthening the Good Food Business Network
- Encouraging uptake of the Healthy Start scheme to support families on low incomes
- Coordinating collective action on food waste and redistribution

The partnership hosted a celebration event at The Albany in September 2024, honouring the dedication of community groups and partners improving Lewisham's food system.

"It is great to be part of such a proactive, enthusiastic team and Borough. People are always looking at new opportunities and ways to work better."

– Good Food
Lewisham Network
Member



LOOKING AHEAD

Over the coming year, we will:

- Support the growth of Lewisham's Food Growing Network and the new Food Growing Officer role at the Council
- Help community groups secure sustainable food supply chains
- Strengthen links with schools through the Schools Climate Network
- Continue to tackle food waste by connecting growers and food-giving groups

LEWISHAM FOOD JUSTICE ALLIANCE

Funded by Lewisham Council, Lewisham Local hosts a Food Justice Programme Manager to coordinate delivery of the borough's Food Justice Action Plan (launched April 2023). The programme, extended until April 2027, drives collaboration across sectors to reduce food insecurity and ensure access to healthy, affordable food for all.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Established the Lewisham Food Justice Alliance and five task-and-finish groups, engaging 51 representatives from community and statutory partners

Most actions now rated green (22 green, 18 amber, 17 ongoing, 1 red as of March 2025)

Distributed £110,026 in Food Justice Community Grants, supporting 19 projects and more than 20,000 residents

Achieved measurable improvements in:

- Partnership connections and collaboration

- Awareness of food insecurity and available support

- Access to local food data

Contributed significantly to Lewisham's Silver Sustainable Food Places Award

PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

The programme has supported a strong alliance of organisations, including Action Against Hunger, AFRIL, Citizens Advice Lewisham, Coco Collective, Clarion Housing, the Legendary Community Club, Lewisham Foodbank, and many others.

Together, we are creating long-term solutions to food injustice through shared learning and collective action.



LOOKING AHEAD

In the next phase, the Alliance will:

- Set new priority areas to ensure lasting impact beyond current funding
- Commission an independent evaluation of the programme and new research into the local food environment for Black African and Black Caribbean residents (aligned with the BLACHIR report)
- Launch a new Food Justice Community Grants round, funded by Lewisham Council's Household Support Fund

"We all have limited resources and time, but this group and wider alliance has allowed us to combine resources and share information to make the best of what we have."

– Task & Finish
Group Participant

FOOD ROOTS

The Food Roots 2 programme, led by the Greater London Authority, has been instrumental in supporting local food partnerships to develop sustainable and resilient solutions to food insecurity. In October 2023, Lewisham Local was awarded a Level 2 grant, enabling us to strengthen coordination within our Good Food Lewisham partnership and expand collaboration across the borough.

This funding allowed us to increase team capacity by employing a Community Development Worker and a part-time Volunteering Coordinator, helping us to almost double the reach of our Food Justice work.

IMPACT AND LEARNING

The Food Roots 2 programme deepened collaboration across Lewisham's food networks and helped equip community organisations with new tools to address the root causes of food poverty. Our targeted campaigns significantly raised awareness of the Healthy Start scheme in the most disadvantaged areas of the borough, contributing to higher uptake.

LOOKING AHEAD

Although the GLA confirmed the closure of the Food Roots 2 programme in July 2025 due to funding constraints, Lewisham Local is using remaining underspend to continue core activities through winter 2025. Work will focus on maintaining the Early Years Network, strengthening volunteer coordination, and sustaining our money-first approach to food support.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Produced and distributed a "Free and Low-Cost Food in Lewisham" leaflet to reach residents offline

Partnered with Advice Lewisham to train 20 representatives from food aid organisations in "advice first aid" skills

Delivered monthly peer-led workshops promoting "money-first" approaches and local financial wellbeing support

Developed and shared a Healthy Start training presentation, used in borough-wide sessions and at Hexagon Housing's Training Day

Ran a borough-wide campaign featuring Healthy Start posters on billboards near markets

Established a new Early Years Network to connect midwives, family hubs, and practitioners promoting Healthy Start

Supported food projects to recruit and manage volunteers, promoting 27 roles and filling 10 new volunteer placements

FOODCYCLE LEWISHAM

FoodCycle Lewisham remains one of Lewisham Local's most visible and loved frontline projects. Delivered in partnership with the national charity FoodCycle and hosted weekly at the Lewisham Irish Community Centre, it offers free, nutritious, three-course vegetarian meals made entirely from surplus food that would otherwise go to waste.

The project not only tackles food insecurity but also provides a safe, welcoming space where residents can share meals, make connections, and feel part of the community.



HIGHLIGHTS 2024/25

5,308

Guests
Served



"FoodCycle is a place where as a single person living alone I can meet and socialise in a safe environment. The volunteers manage conflict/aggression and calm the situation. I feel safe."

– Guest Feedback

9,888kg

Of Food
Rescued



50%

Increase on
Last Year

5,799

Community
Meals Provided



30%

Increase on
Last Year

3,652

Volunteer Hours
Contributed



40%

Increase on
Last Year





KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Embedded the successful Wednesday meal in partnership with the Lewisham Irish Community Centre, complementing the long-running Saturday session.
- Attracted new volunteers, including employee groups from large local businesses, boosting visibility and fundraising opportunities.
- Strengthened social impact:



100%

Of volunteers said they would recommend FoodCycle Lewisham to others.

LOOKING AHEAD

From July 2025, we will launch a new two-year “Food, Advice and Wellbeing” project with Lewisham Irish Community Centre, funded by Lewisham Council’s NCIL fund. The project will expand wraparound support for guests through on-site advice and wellbeing sessions and pilot a third weekly meal in partnership with All Saints Hatcham Community Centre in New Cross – an area with high levels of food insecurity.



PROMOTING LOCAL GIVING

Through our 'Lewisham Giving' programme, we aim to support people by activating places and spaces to increase a sense of belonging, connection and community ownership over decisions across the borough. We do that by mobilising residents, businesses and other sectors to harness their time, skills, expertise or resources for the benefit of the wider community.

Supported by the City Bridge Foundation and the London Funders network, Lewisham Giving continues to grow as a model of place-based collaborative philanthropy.

KEY GIVING ACHIEVEMENTS

500+

Businesses
Engaged in
Giving Activity

£236,647

In Grants
Distributed to
Local Projects

5 Year

Partnership with Peabody
Community Foundation
and Parkside Estate

£125,000

In Warm Welcome
Grants Distributed to
43 Organisations

92

Organisations
Funded

£19,968

Raised Through the
Lewisham Community
Lottery

£2,200

Raised Through
Funding
Appeals

"Our boiler had completely broken down, and the grant enabled us to afford to stay open during winter – this grant has literally kept this warm space operational."

– V22 Sydenham
Library



BUILDING A CULTURE OF LOCAL GIVING

Lewisham Local's knowledge of community needs and our unique connections with community groups have enabled us to further develop this work and channel resources towards community needs in a responsive way.

We distributed £236,647 in grants to local community groups and projects, in partnership with Lewisham Council. These include the Warm Welcomes, Essentials and Food Justice grant programmes. Key themes included food insecurity, fuel poverty, social isolation and cost of living support to residents.

Our ability to support groups at a local level who are often excluded from accessing funds from large traditional grantmakers acts as critical infrastructure within the borough, helping to strengthen the overall ecosystem.

Our deep community knowledge enables us to channel funds effectively to local groups addressing food insecurity, fuel poverty, and social isolation. Across our grantmaking this year:

73%

Of supported groups reported increased access to funding

79%

Strengthened their resources and resilience

"Warm Welcomes makes our space accessible to unwaged people or those experiencing homelessness. It allows more people to connect with the Albany and our values."

– The Albany

"Our strong relationships help us to identify those in most need and also that families will approach us for support. They are so grateful to receive vital funding."

– Friends of St Mary,
Lewisham



PARTICIPATORY AND INCLUSIVE GIVING

We are particularly proud of our Participatory Grant-Making Fund with the Peabody Community Foundation, worth £425,000 over five years. Residents on the Parkside Estate lead decision-making, ensuring funding is rooted in lived experience and genuine community need.

"Being a panellist has empowered me to co-design fair funding criteria, and embrace new digital tools like CRM systems to assess applications more efficiently and collaboratively."

– Sylvester, Parkside Fund Steering Group Member

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Community outreach events such as the Iftar celebration and a series of business-engagement events have solidified relationships with businesses and the community and built awareness of giving across the borough.

LEWISHAM LOCAL CARD

A key success for the Lewisham Local card this year has been the sale of £12,000 worth of cards to Lewisham Council, purchased for their staff. Subsequently, five other local companies and charities followed with similar bulk-purchases of the card.

Partnering with the council and other large employers has injected scale into the Lewisham Local Card, which, together with the income from wider card sales and donations from local business and individuals, puts us in position to launch the Community Fund for the first time in late 2025.

We have also made progress on digitisation of the Lewisham Local card, undertaking significant research into options that will enable us to modernise the card and reach new audiences.



LEWISHAM COMMUNITY LOTTERY

92 community organisations are now actively fundraising using the platform. 207 local people bought tickets to fundraise for the groups and this has raised over £19,968 for Lewisham's good causes in one year. We look forward to building on this progress over the next year.

LEWISHAM WARM WELCOMES

The Warm Welcomes programme continued to provide much-needed spaces for connection and comfort during the cost-of-living crisis. Working with 50 community organisations - including libraries, churches, community centres, and even The Den (Millwall Football Stadium) - we helped ensure that residents could find warmth, food, and community.



£125,000

In grants distributed to 43 organisations

31,000+

Recorded visits across the network, up from 18,000 the previous year

Activities

Offered activities from sewing to singing to exercise and dementia-friendly sessions

Over 55s

Reached particularly high participation among residents aged 55–74

Reasons

“Talking to other people” remained the most common reason for visiting



The programme shows how small grants and co-ordinated support can transform local wellbeing, proving that community connection is as vital as warmth itself. Social connection remained the primary reason for visits to the centres, highlighting the value of this programme to the community in the face of economic and social challenges in Lewisham.

LOOKING AHEAD

Our new Giving Committee is shaping a borough-wide Giving Strategy, designed to align with Lewisham’s priorities and encourage sustained participation from individuals, institutions, and businesses. The Lewisham Local Card continues to grow in reach, with major bulk purchases by Lewisham Council and other local employers injecting scale and sustainability into the scheme. Work is underway to digitise the card and launch the first Lewisham Community Fund in late 2025.

STRENGTHENING LEWISHAM'S VOLUNTARY SECTOR

Lewisham Local continues to play a central role in strengthening the borough's voluntary and community sector. Through capacity-building, mentoring, digital inclusion, and grant support, we help local organisations become more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



Fundraising development support for 300+ individuals



2,000 residents supported through Digital Access for All



Mentoring and training for 80 individuals and 35 Black Community-Based Organisations (BCBOs)



700+ organisations listed in the Lewisham Community Directory



BLACK INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT PROJECT (BISP)

The BISP has been pivotal in empowering Black-led and Black-serving community organisations in Lewisham.



Through collaboration with the FDM Equalities Project and local partners, BISP continues to nurture a thriving ecosystem of support for Black-led organisations, improving access to mentoring, digital skills, and fundraising tools.

LEWISHAM COMMUNITY DIRECTORY

Our Community Directory continues to serve as a vital information hub, connecting residents to services, community groups, and public sector organisations. By December 2024, it included 613 community groups and 99 public sector services. Hundreds of people use the directory each month to connect and access information.

User feedback highlights its clarity and accessibility, with engagement time increasing steadily across the year. The directory remains a cornerstone of collaboration, allowing individuals and organisations to find help, connect, and share resources.

THIS YEAR, THE PROJECT:

- Helped establish the Lewisham Black Voluntary Sector Network, a powerful collective voice for BCBOs.

35 Groups were provided mentoring

80 Individuals were provided training

200+ People were delivered rapid advice through a 24/7 WhatsApp helpdesk.

75% Of participating BCBOs were supported to secure more funding than ever before

25 Community champions with professional legal and financial advice connected

- It has recently come to our attention that an error has been made in our 23/24 and 24/25 annual reviews, suggesting that the Black VCS Expo 2023 was organised by Lewisham Local. This is not the case, Mabadaliko CIC created and delivered the Expo. At Lewisham Local, we take great care to recognise and celebrate the achievements of our partners. On this occasion, it is clear that a mistake was made. On behalf of Lewisham Local, I would like to offer my sincere apologies to the directors and staff of Mabadiliko for this error.
- Gülen Petty, CEO, Lewisham Local

FUNDRAISING DEVELOPMENT: EMPOWERING LEWISHAM'S COMMUNITIES

Our Fundraising Development (Equalities) project strengthens groups led by and serving people with protected characteristics. In 2024/25, it:

Increased Capacity

291 individuals received training, leading to a **15%** increase in funding applications and **10%** rise in successful awards

New Funding

Helped groups secure over **£150,000** in new funding.

Stronger Networks

Facilitated connections with funders, resulting in **5** new partnerships and **3** joint funding applications

Events

Hosted **12** Friday Fundraising Club sessions and supported **15** groups with the in-depth Fundraising Plus Programme, with **70%** securing new grants and **90%** increasing confidence

Fundraising Conference

Organised a borough-wide Fundraising Conference with 50 groups and funders.

These initiatives have boosted confidence, skills, and long-term sustainability across Lewisham's diverse voluntary sector.



DIGITAL ACCESS FOR ALL

The Digital Access for All (DAFA) project continues to close the digital divide by equipping residents with the skills and tools needed to access online services. Over 2,000 people have been supported through drop-in centres, training, and device provision, focusing on older adults, people with disabilities, and low-income households.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Launching new digital drop-in centres in Orchard Gardens, Newstead, and Downham

Expanded Support Network

Delivering tailored programmes, such as Microsoft Office and Excel training for Lewisham Parent Carers

Targeted Training

Providing laptops and home support for residents with accessibility needs

Improved Access

Promoting digital inclusion through partnerships with Catbytes, Lewisham Council, and the Good Things Foundation

Increased Awareness

Digital Access For All has empowered individuals and community organisations to improve their digital skills, access online services and participate more fully in the digital world. The project has enhanced confidence and independence among participants and strengthened digital capacity within community organisations.

VOLUNTEERING HEALTH & WELLBEING

Volunteering is at the heart of Lewisham Local's mission to build a connected, compassionate community. Our volunteering projects support residents to find meaningful opportunities, strengthen wellbeing, and enhance local organisations' capacity to deliver services.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

121

Volunteer Roles
Advertised

93

Individuals Placed
Into Volunteering

805

New Subscribers to
Volunteering Newsletter

SUPPORT INTO VOLUNTEERING (VOLUNTEERING BROKERAGE)

This project connects individuals with volunteering opportunities and supports organisations to recruit, manage, and retain volunteers effectively. Personalised support is given to help Lewisham residents to find suitable roles, as well as support to community groups to help promote their roles, and advice and guidance on how to manage volunteers. The project also facilitates quarterly volunteer coordinators networking meeting where community groups are offered workshops and training.

In 2024/25, we focused on supporting people ready to volunteer with targeted community groups - particularly those led by Black communities, mental health and wellbeing organisations, youth initiatives, and food groups.

We also worked with Lewisham Council to co-develop an employee volunteering programme, enabling staff to use up to 14 hours of paid volunteering leave each year. The initiative was launched in April 2025 and provided invaluable support to community groups across the borough.

Originally funded for three years through the Council's Main Grants, this project has now received additional funding and been extended to March 2026, ensuring continued delivery and growth.

We also continue to provide training on topics such as How to Write a Volunteer Handbook, Corporate Volunteering, and Volunteer Recruitment and Retention.

TIMEBANK



The Time Bank project allows residents - particularly older people - to share skills, connect, and support one another through group activities and one-to-one exchanges.

Our membership is around 100 people. This year, the project is in its second year of a three-year funding cycle from the National Lottery.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Relocating sessions into the community during office refurbishments, which broadened participation.

BRING & FIX

Hosting three Bring & Fix events with partners, where volunteers repaired items from jeans to lampshades.

CHOIR

Performing at the Old Vic as part of the 12 Choirs of Christmas project, celebrating intergenerational creativity.

COMMUNITY-LED EVENTS

Marking Windrush and Black History Month with community-led events.

THE TIME BANK'S GROUPS

Tea & Chat, Coffee Club, Choir, and Friday Art continue to provide friendship, purpose, and joy for members.

"I joined four months ago, to socialise and make new friends. I feel happier after each session. I attend the Coffee Club, water all the indoor plants, and it feels good to have this responsibility and to be helpful while at the same time making connections with new people."

– Time Bank Member



WILD CAT WILDERNESS

Celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, Wild Cat Wilderness continues to thrive as a community green space, connecting people with nature and one another. The site offers volunteering, outdoor learning, and wellbeing activities that promote environmental stewardship and social connection.



HIGHLIGHTS 2024/25

- 10** Wild Workshops for adults hosted
- 500+** Attendees at a 10th Birthday Festival
- 2000+** Visits to community events throughout the year
- Delivered twice-weekly volunteering sessions, plus corporate and community days
- Installed a new fence and gate at the Bellingham entrance, enabling woodland restoration work
- Built a new compost toilet in the orchard area to support volunteers and visitors
- Partnered with organisations including Rose Tree, Signal, and Portage Group, supporting women recovering from abuse, children with autism, and families with SEND children
- Continued strong partnerships with local schools, offering weekly forest school sessions for over 300 children per week



"It's a refreshing space where children come to life and it positively nurtures their social, emotional and mental health."

– Forest School Teacher



IMPACT

96%

Reported
improved mental
health

86%

Learned new
or improved
skills

86%

Felt better
physical
health

2,000+

Visits at our
community
events alone

SUSTAINABILITY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We had a full programme of free activities and events for families during the school holidays and a summer programme called Wild Explorers with 15 events. Our spring/Easter time events were fully booked with about 100 people attending each and the two Halloween related events attracted over 120 people.

Income generation through plant sales, workshops, site hire, and handmade goods supports the site's maintenance. Seasonal events such as Wassail, Wild Pancakes, and Pumpkin Fun continue to bring local families together and celebrate nature in Lewisham.

Adult workshops included fruit tree pruning plus the ten we put on as part of our anniversary celebrations. Across the year we had more than 2000 visits at our community events alone, engaging local people in nature.

***"Forest School is a space
where I feel one with
nature, enjoying the
smell, sight, sounds of
the beauty of nature
around me."***

– Forest School Attendee

BANK OF THINGS



Now in its third year, Bank of Things provides essential items such as toiletries and school supplies to young people aged 11–25. Operating from Lewisham Shopping Centre, the project ensures that no young person has to go without the basics needed for education, confidence, and wellbeing.

HIGHLIGHTS 2024/25

- Supported 385 young people with essential items
- Expanded outreach through new pop-up sessions at Orchard Gardens Community Centre and Family Fun Days
- Partnered with Fresh Kits for Kids to deliver a uniform giveaway for over 100 families (worth £5,000 in items)
- Placed collection bins at Better Leisure Centres and other local sites, increasing donations borough-wide
- Organised an overnight fundraising bike ride with 50 riders, raising over £2,300
- Distributed 303 Christmas gift bags (worth £50 each) in partnership with Youth First, Young Women's Hub, and the Salvation Army's Giving Tree appeal

385

Young People
Supported with
Essential Items

100

Families Benefitted
from Uniform
Giveaway

303

Christmas Gift
Bags Distributed



PARTNERSHIPS AND GROWTH

We continue to receive generous support from Lewisham Hygiene Bank, The Beauty Banks, local schools, churches, and businesses. Special thanks go to Amro and Mullally, local construction firms that contributed gifts and volunteer support, and to St Andrew's Catford, which has backed the project for three consecutive years.

We recognised that we were only serving a small portion of the borough through operating in a fixed location and started to look into expanding our reach. We received funding from The Elizabeth Legacy Fund and Clarion Futures to do so.

In the first quarter we focused on delivering this new outreach program, notably recruiting our Youth Outreach worker and delivering weekly pop-ups at Orchard Garden's Community Centre and hosting the first Family Fun Day. The Fun Day was open to all, completely free of charge, and included crafts, food, music, games, a bouncy castle and a pop-up Bank of things.



LOOKING AHEAD

In early 2025, we secured two years of NCIL funding (beginning July 2025), enabling us to expand our outreach and strengthen the Bank of Things' long-term sustainability. Future plans include deepening collaboration with Family Hubs and Youth Partners, and exploring new ways to reach young people across the borough.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Our trading figures for 2024/25 show an income of £1,113,484 and an expenditure of £1,084,884. Net assets at 31/03/25 were £757,554 made up of £356,897 restricted funds and £400,657 unrestricted funds. Full accounts are included in our Annual Report, submitted to Companies House and the Charity Commission. They are also posted on our website and copies are available on request.

OUR FUNDERS

The charity is grateful for the financial support funders have kindly provided, without whom the charity would not be as successful. The principal funders were The London Borough of Lewisham, The City Bridge Foundation and National Lottery. Lewisham Local is grateful to all of its funders, as well as members of the community that also gave generously to the organisation and its causes through community fundraising appeals and projects.







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