Lewisham Community Fund

The Lewisham Community Fund is a borough-wide, resident-led initiative that supports grassroots projects to strengthen communities, activate local spaces and improve the wellbeing of residents across Lewisham.

The fund is delivered by Lewisham Giving, Lewisham's place-based giving scheme, and sits within Lewisham Local, a local charity dedicated to strengthening community power and resilience through infrastructure support, giving and capacity building. It brings together residents, businesses and community organisations to invest in local ideas, encourage collaboration and create lasting positive change.

The fund recognises that local people are best placed to understand the needs, challenges and opportunities within their communities. It therefore seeks to empower residents and grassroots organisations to develop and deliver initiatives that promote community participation, strengthen relationships, foster a sense of belonging and improve access to opportunities that support individual and collective wellbeing.

Through collaboration and resident-led action, the Lewisham Community Fund aims to contribute to a happier, healthier and more resilient borough, where residents have opportunities to shape the future of their neighbourhoods and contribute to positive local change.

Purpose of the fund

The Lewisham Community Fund aims to improve the wellbeing and quality of life of residents across Lewisham by supporting community-led initiatives that respond to local needs, challenges and opportunities.

The fund has been raised through income generated by the **Lewisham Local Card Scheme and Lewisham Community Lottery.** We are grateful to the Lewisham Council, residents, local businesses such as Regular Cleaning and community organisations that have supported these initiatives. The funding generated has also been **supplemented** by generous contributions from **L&Q Group and Axis.**

The fund recognises that residents are best placed to understand the needs and opportunities within their communities. It therefore encourages resident-led action and collaboration between local people, community groups and organisations to strengthen community connections and achieve positive, sustainable change.

The fund aims to support projects that:

- Promote resident-led action and community participation by empowering local people to shape and deliver initiatives that respond to community needs.
- Activate community spaces to foster belonging and inclusion by creating welcoming, accessible environments where residents can connect, participate and engage in community activities.

- Create skills development and employment pathways by providing opportunities for residents to develop skills, gain experience and improve their access to education, training and employment

The fund will prioritise projects which focus on the following:

Young People: Projects that support residents aged 16–25, with a focus on improving their wellbeing, participation, skills development and access to opportunities.

Intergenerational Activities: Projects that create, develop or activate community spaces and activities that encourage interaction, collaboration and relationship-building between people of different generations.

Who can apply?

This funding programme is aimed at Lewisham-based organisations within the voluntary, community and faith sector.

Criteria for organisations to apply are as follows:

- A constituted group with a volunteer management committee with a minimum of three unrelated members that meets regularly (at least three times per year)
- Registered charity with a board of trustees
- Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
- Community Benefit Society
- Company Limited by Guarantee
- Community Interest Company (CIC) with minimum of three unrelated directors and with no one director with more than 50% control
- Organisations with an annual turnover of less than £100,000 in the last financial year

Note: If you are part of an unconstituted community group, or a group of three or more residents with a project idea, you are welcome to apply for funding, provided you work in partnership with an eligible organisation that can support your project and act as the lead applicant.

Available Funding Amount and Funding Period

- **Grant Amount:** The fund plans to award up to 8 grants, each valued up to £5,000
- **Funding Period:** Projects must be delivered within a 9- month period (between March-November 2027).

Note: The project can be either a one-off event or part of a larger, ongoing project or series of activities lasting **up to** nine months

Application Timeline

- Applications Live- 12th November 2026

- Applications Close- 8th January 2027, 5pm
- Applicants informed by 2nd week of February 2027
- Projects to be delivered and completed between March 2027-November 2027

Things the grant could be spent on:

- Equipment and appliances
- Training, events and workshops and resources needed for projects
- Venue hire/premises costs for a set period
- Volunteer costs
- Projects and activities in line with the project aims and fundable projects stated above
- Promotion and communication
- Organisational staff costs-Salaries or wages paid to staff for project administration, coordination, planning, communication, monitoring and reporting
- Administration expenses: Non-staff costs such as stationery, printing, project related software and other essential administrative supplies related to the project

Note: Staff costs and administrative expenses must be reasonable, proportionate and directly related to the delivery of the project. Applicants are encouraged to pay staff at least the London Living Wage. Facilitator and sessional staff rates must be clearly justified and proportionate to the roles, responsibilities, experience and time required for project delivery.

Things the grant can't be spent on:

- Activities that have already happened
- General overheads not related to the delivery of your project
- Activities that don't serve Lewisham residents
- Profit-making activities or projects
- Fundraising activities or challenges (like costs for a skydive, an expedition etc.)
- Statutory activities
- Activities occurring outside the London Borough of Lewisham
- Religious activities (we can fund religious organisations if their project benefits the wider community and does not include religious content)
- Projects where political activities are the main purpose, or that support or oppose a specific political party
- Lobbying activities
- Loan repayments
- The topping up of organisation reserves

Funding can be used to expand or improve an existing project that already has funding. It should add value and make the project stronger but not pay for the same costs that are already covered.

Who can't apply?

- Organisations that are aimed at generating profit
- Individual applicants
- Local offices of larger regional or national organisations/charities
- Organisations organising trips abroad
- Public bodies to carry out their statutory obligations
- Profit-distributing companies

Process and Timeline

- Complete the application form by 8th January 2027, 5pm
- All applicants to provide a copy of the organisation's safeguarding and health and safety policy, a copy of the organisation's public liability insurance, bank details of 2 unrelated signatories document and DBS (if applicable) upon submission of application
- CICs will be asked to provide copied of their Community Interest Statement, details of the Asset Lock included in the Memorandum and Articles of Association and a copy of the latest annual community interest report upon submission of application
- Constituted groups will be asked to provide a list of the volunteer management committee members and evidence that the committee meets on a regular basis upon submission of their application form.
- Lewisham Local will get back to applicants no later than 2nd week of February 2027, to confirm if their application was successful.
- Successful applicants will be asked to read, sign and return a Terms and Conditions (T&C's) form along with bank details
- Upon receipt of the signed T&Cs Lewisham Local will endeavour to transfer funds no later than 30 working days upon receiving your T&C agreement.
- Lewisham Local will transfer 100% of the awarded funding for grants below £5,000, unless otherwise agreed or deemed necessary

Requirements for funded organisations

- Organisations must keep financial records of transactions made using the grant award and keep copies of any purchase receipts to provide as evidence if requested at the end of the programme
- Organisations must be willing to have their programme details featured on Lewisham Local's website and social media channels.
- Organisations must be willing to attend a networking and introduction event in March/April 2027 to meet other funded organisations and stakeholders.
- Successful applicants will be required to adhere to the fund's monitoring and reporting requirements. This will include submitting quarterly interim reporting, and a final impact report.
- Applicants should ensure they have appropriate systems in place to collect monitoring information throughout the project delivery period, while maintaining confidentiality and complying with relevant data protection requirements.

- A commitment to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
- A group of residents/community organisations can deliver the programme by applying through an eligible organisation, provided that they meet all the funding eligibility criteria and the residents have an established track record of working together.
- Organisation to ensure that all photographs are taken and shared with appropriate consent and that permission has been obtained for their use in reports, on social media and in other publicity materials.

How your application will be assessed

Applications will be assessed against the fund's aims, priorities and eligibility criteria, with consideration given to local needs, community participation, inclusion, project impact and value for money.

The fund adopts a participatory grant making approach, involving local residents in identifying community priorities and assessing applications. Local residents can apply to be part of the assessment panel via this link.

Final assessment arrangements will be agreed by the residents panel to ensure that decisions reflect local knowledge, lived experience and community priorities.

Marking

The following marking scheme will be used to assess each section of the application form

1 = Failed to provide confidence that the proposal will meet the requirements.
2 = A poor response with reservations. The application lacks convincing detail with risks that the proposal will not be successful in meeting all the requirements.
3 = Meets the requirements. The application generally meets the requirements but lacks sufficient detail to warrant a higher mark.
4 = A good response that meets the requirements with good supporting evidence. Demonstrates good understanding.
5 = An excellent, comprehensive response that exceeds the requirements.

Alongside the scoring criteria, the key question asked of each application will include the following. Each response should be structured to fit within a 250-word limit

Question 1: What is your project and what local need or opportunity will your project address?

Please describe the needs or opportunities you have identified in your community and explain why your project is needed. How have residents helped identify these needs or shape your project?

Question 2: What activities will you deliver and who will benefit?

Please describe the main activities you will deliver, where they will take place, how often they will run and who will benefit.

Please explain how your project supports one or more of the fund's priorities:

Fund Objectives

- Resident-led action
- Activating community spaces
- Skills and employment pathways

Priority Target Groups

- Empowering young people aged 16–25 to thrive and reach their potential
- Activities that bring people of different generations together to build connections, share experiences and promote mutual understanding

Question 3: How will local residents have a meaningful voice in your project?

Please explain how residents will have a meaningful say in project decisions, including shaping activities, influencing how the funding is used and providing feedback. How will you ensure that the voices of residents who may face barriers to participation are heard?

Question 4: What do you hope to achieve with the funding?

Please describe the outcomes you expect for residents and the wider community. How will your project deliver positive change in line with the funding objectives? How will you measure and demonstrate the difference your project makes?

Question 5: How will you deliver and manage the project?

Please explain how your organisation will manage and deliver the project, including the roles of staff, volunteers and partners. How will you ensure activities are accessible, inclusive and responsive to local needs?

Question 6: Risks Assessments

What potential risks has been identified and how will it be mitigated? (e.g. safeguarding, health and safety, financial)?

Question 7: How will you spend the grant?

Please provide a breakdown of your proposed project costs and explain how each cost supports project delivery. Why do you consider these costs reasonable and proportionate?

Support with Your Application

A Questions & Answers session for the Lewisham Community Fund will be held online on **25th November 2026 at 11am.** Please register to attend here.

Support is available through the Lewisham Neighbourhood Network. For advice and support, please refer to the attached brochure, which includes a map and contact details for your local Neighbourhood Fundraising Manager or Capacity-Building Officer, to identify the relevant contact for your neighbourhood.

Monitoring

Successful projects will be required to undertake monitoring as part of the grant agreement.

Statistical and monitoring information will be collected and submitted every three months (quarterly) to track project progress.

The final monitoring report consists of the following:

- **Financial Expenditure:** Breakdown of how the funding was spent against the agreed budget.
- **Participant Feedback and Impact:** Testimonials, case studies and examples demonstrating the project's impact.
- **Organisational Capacity and Resilience:** Evidence of improvements in capacity-building, fundraising, governance or organisational development.
- **Partnership and Social Value:** Additional social value generated through partnerships and collaboration.
- **Outcomes and Evidence:** Beneficiary feedback, anonymised case studies and supporting evidence of the outcomes achieved.
- **Reflection and Learning:** Key lessons learned, challenges encountered and recommendations for future projects.

Final Monitoring report should be submitted one month after the end of your funded project.

Expression of Interest for Lewisham Community Fund Steering Group Panel Recruitment

Lewisham Local is recruiting Lewisham residents to join the Lewisham Community Fund Panel. Panel members will help to assess funding applications and ensure that funding decisions reflect local needs, lived experience and community priorities.

We welcome applications from people with a wide range of background, experiences and perspectives. Previous experience of funding assessments is not required.

Who can apply?

To apply, you must:

- Be aged 18 or over

- Live in Lewisham
- Have an understanding of local community needs and challenges
- Have connections with Lewisham's diverse communities
- Be committed to equality, inclusion and fair decision-making
- Be willing to listen, share your views and work collaboratively with others

If you are interested in becoming part of the panel, please register your interest by completing the Expression of Interest Form.