

Deptford Emergency Relief Fund

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Introduction

Written on behalf of Deptford First and The Deptford Challenge Trust (DCT), this report is designed to set out how trustees could work effectively with local third sector organisations to support residents who have no current recourse to public funds, are in immediate crisis and/or are at high risk of entering a downward spiral of destitution and dependency.

The research undertaken provides an overview of the levels of need in Deptford and the key factors causing its residents to experience acute financial hardship. It seeks to highlight how small grant funding could be best directed to stabilise residents' circumstances and how a funding programme should be managed to provide timely support.

The report also identifies opportunities for funding; specifically the funders that may be most receptive to supporting this work, and how approaches to these organisations should be made.

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Methodology

This report presents findings gathered from the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data coupled with existing knowledge of effective grant making and funder requirements.

For section 1, the effects of destitution and levels of need in Deptford have been identified through online data, case studies and telephone interviews with the following local support charities:

- **Bench Outreach** - helps homeless people in Deptford and the surrounding areas find and sustain accommodation and supports people with drug, alcohol and mental health problems.
- **Deptford Reach** - provides a drop-in centre and advice services for people in Deptford and the surrounding areas who are vulnerable through homelessness, mental ill-health, loneliness, social exclusion and severe poverty.
- **999 Club** - provides advice, advocacy, shelter, health checks & activities for homeless people in Deptford and the surrounding areas.
- **Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network (LRMN)** - offers free, independent advice to refugees, migrants and asylum seekers in Lewisham and neighbouring boroughs.
- **Project 17** - assists migrant families, including families in Lewisham, with no access to mainstream welfare support ('no recourse to public funds') to access statutory support to meet basic needs.

In section 2, the grant making guidance draws upon the operations of a number of place-based and UK-wide grant makers providing financial assistance to individuals on low incomes such as The Walcot Charity and Family Action. The Head of Grants and Deputy Services at Family Action, Fiona MacGillivray, provided key information via telephone.

For section 3, funding opportunities were, in the main, identified using web-based research of Deptford property developers, the Charity Commission database and the DCT Area Funding Directory <http://www.deptfordchallengetrust.org.uk/grants/resources.aspx> (produced through self-conducted research for DCT in 2016).

The research was carried out during September and October 2018.

Section 1. Background

1.1 Defining the geographical funding area

Trustees seek to assist “**residents living in the area that is within the ambit of both the parliamentary constituency of Lewisham Deptford and the area served by Deptford Challenge Trust**”.

The Deptford Challenge Trust (DCT) area was defined in the 1990s by the City Challenge regeneration programme. Geographically, the area covers Deptford and parts of the New Cross, Evelyn and Lewisham Central wards.

Outlined on the maps below, the parliamentary constituency of Lewisham Deptford and the DCT area both cover Lewisham’s northern tip – a short stretch alongside the Thames – along with the Deptford and New Cross districts, and the centre of Lewisham itself. These areas are rich in history and ethnic diversity but are also some of the poorest in UK. In the 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation, the London Borough of Lewisham was ranked as the 48th most deprived of all 326 local authorities, placing it in the 20% most deprived areas in England. Pockets of deprivation are spread throughout the borough, however deprivation is particularly prevalent in New Cross where nine out of the ten Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are now in the 20% most deprived in England¹. Relative deprivation has increased in this ward as only half of the LSOAs were in the most 10% deprived in band in 2010. Counter to this, more upmarket housing developments are springing up as former industrial sites are cleared away as part of an ongoing rejuvenation process.

For the purposes of this report I have consulted organisations operating in Deptford and the wider Lewisham area and for simplicity I will refer to the area as ‘Deptford’.

¹<https://www.valewisham.org.uk/lewisham-facts-and-figures>

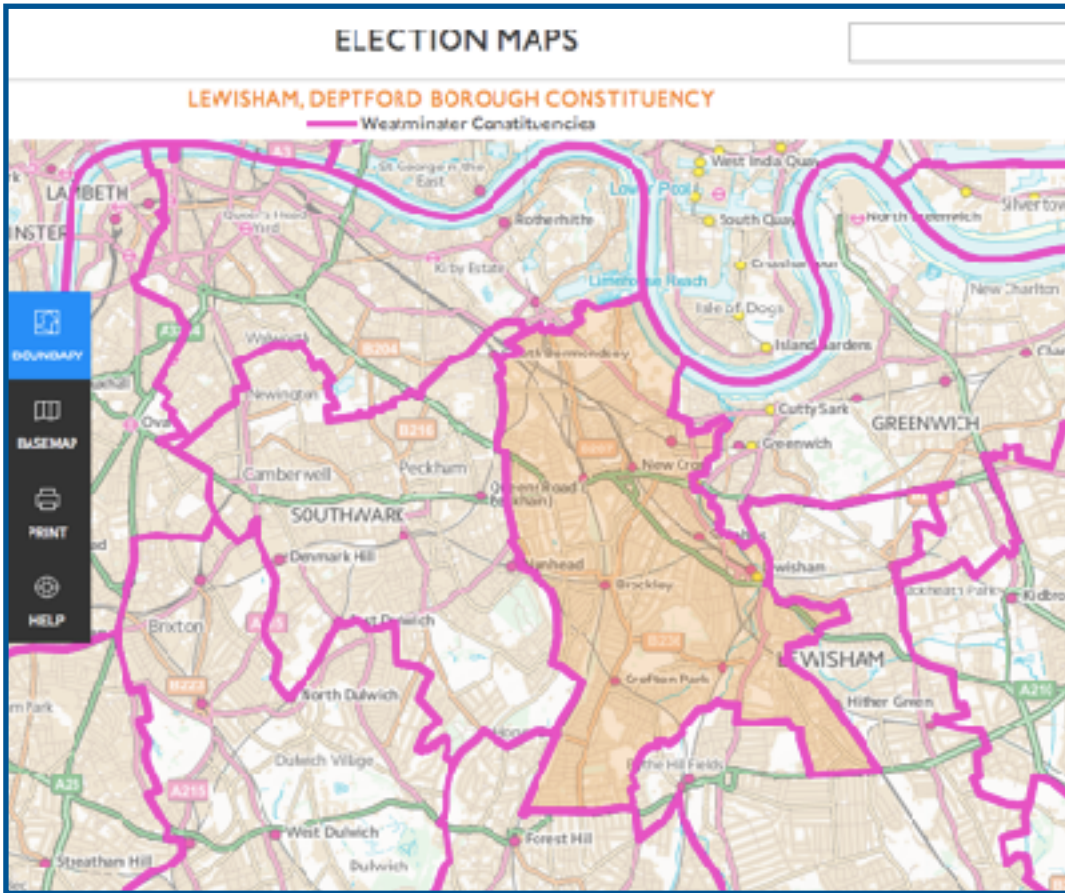


Figure 1. Parliamentary Constituency Lewisham, Deptford.

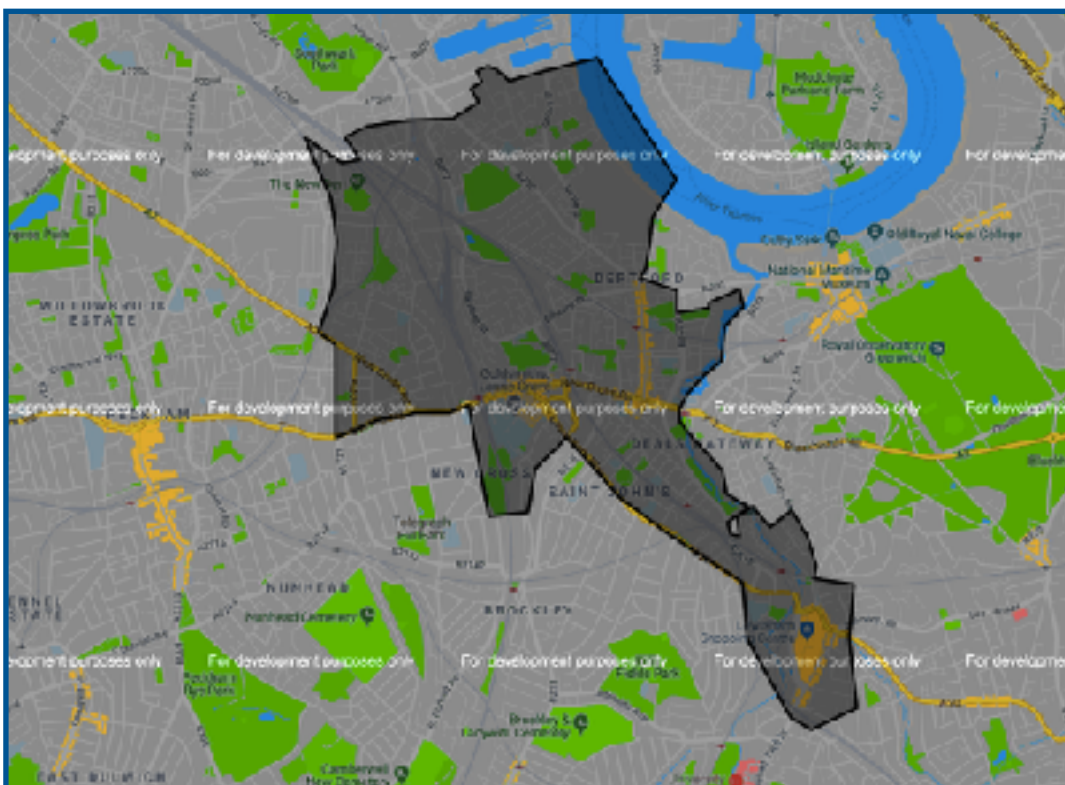


Figure 2. Deptford Challenge Trust catchment area.

1.2 Hardship in Deptford/Categories of Situation

Destitution is defined as being without the bare essentials. In a recent study by Joseph Rowntree Foundation, people were defined as destitute if they were regularly going without food, toiletries, adequate clothing or shelter because they could not afford them².

The analysis below seeks to evidence the key causes of destitution for Deptford residents. It must be noted that these 'categories of situation' are often complex and the result of multiple social and individual factors.

1.2.1 Homelessness

Homelessness, including rough sleeping, is one of the most obvious expressions of destitution and Deptford has significant levels of both visible and hidden homelessness.

The 999 Club works with 40 to 50 people sleeping on the Lewisham's streets daily and its night shelter is often at maximum capacity. A report by the national charity, Shelter, found that during 2017 there were over 6,000 people in Lewisham living in temporary accommodation (approximately 1 in every 49 people in the borough)³. Lewisham Council recorded 1,800 homeless households in temporary accommodation during 2017, a 96% increase since 2011. It also highlighted there has been a 44% reduction in available lets over the same period⁴.

A number of different factors can contribute towards people becoming homeless. Shelter highlight the following reasons as the most prevalent: lack of social support, debt (particularly rent arrears and rising housing costs), poor mental health, disputes between families, parents with drug and alcohol problems and coming from an institutional background including having been in care or prison.⁵ A 2017 report by Lewisham's Poverty Commission highlights that homelessness in Lewisham is largely driven by evictions from the private rented sector. The council uses a 'Discretionary Housing Payments' (DHP) scheme to support Lewisham residents who need extra help when housing benefit/universal credit doesn't cover their full rent. Payments are entirely discretionary and not intended to cover long term costs.

²<https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/destitution-uk-2018>

³http://media.shelter.org.uk/press_releases/articles/more_than_300,000_people_in_britain_homeless_today

⁴<https://www.lewisham.gov.uk/inmyarea/Documents/LPCHousingReport.pdf>

⁵http://england.shelter.org.uk/campaigns/why_we_campaign/tackling_homelessness/What_causes_homelessness

The 999 Club currently signposts many people towards food banks and highlighted there is significant evidence that local people are turning to different ways to supplement their income because they are on the brink of homelessness.

1.2.2 No recourse to public funds (NRPF)

Under the Immigration and Asylum Act (1999) a person is not able to access public funds such as benefits or housing if they are subject to immigration controls. Furthermore, NRPF may be a condition attached to a visa or it may apply to an individual whose visa has expired (see Mrs O's story in appendices).

Broadly speaking, people with NRPF will fall into one of the following groups:

- People who have leave to remain in the UK with NRPF conditions attached to their leave.
- Refused asylum seekers, who have had their appeal rights exhausted.
- People unlawfully present in the UK (e.g. who have overstayed on their visa).
- EEA nationals who have stayed in the UK over three months but are not exercising their treaty rights by being employed, self-employed, self-sufficient or a student.

The numbers of people with NRPF presenting to Lewisham local authority has risen significantly in recent years. This is particularly the case for families. In 2011/12 Lewisham was supporting 23 families, which rose to 178 by November 2013 and 286 by June 2014. The number of active cases being supported by Lewisham in January 2016 was 185.⁶ Lewisham Council's NRPF team was contacted for data on NRPF cases it is now actively supporting however no response was supplied.

“Many people with NRPF rely on the support of family, friends, or charities such as LRMN to help them pay for basic needs such as food and shelter”.

Rosario Guimba-Stewart, CEO, Lewisham Refugee Migrant Network (LRMN)

In 2017/18 the Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network (LRMN) worked with over 200 people with NRPF. These people are highly vulnerable and often share stories of abuse, exploitation and homelessness. People with NRPF are at high risk of homelessness, 65% of clients working with Project 17 are homeless when they approach them for help (see Jane's story in appendices).

⁶<http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s42067/04%20No%20recourse%20update%20160316.pdf>

“Project 17 receive a large number of enquiries from destitute migrant families in the Lewisham area, who are in need of support. Even once families have managed to access the 'safety net' of section 17 support, it is usually very basic and often inadequate. Financial support rates are extremely low, just enough to pay for the most basic of essentials. Children are still living in poverty, missing out on things that their peers enjoy - such as school meals and uniform, school trips, and extra curricular activities, clothing, toys, books and other educational resources -because their parents simply cannot afford them. We routinely struggle to find sources of funding to help people who are falling into debt with their utilities and council tax bills, and also to help with costs associated with regularising immigration status, such as immigration fees, and passports.”

Amy Murtagh, Interim Director, Project 17

Case studies supplied by Project 17 and the office of Vicky Foxcroft (Labour MP for Lewisham Deptford) in the appendices to this report highlight the complexity of NRPF cases. They almost universally underline how quickly people with NRPF can spiral into extreme poverty whilst waiting for, or appealing, home office and local authority decisions (see Mrs K's story in appendices).

Where children are involved, charities can refer a family to Lewisham's NRPF team, requesting support with accommodation and subsistence under section 17 Children Act 1989. However, both Project 17 and LRMN describe this support as being extremely difficult to access resulting in lengthy periods where families struggle to buy food and essential clothing for their children whilst waiting for the outcome of their case (see Sharon's story in appendices).

“We support families to access accommodation and a basic level of financial support from social services under the section 17 Children Act 1989. However this is extremely difficult to access and there are often periods where families are left unsupported whilst we try to help them build their case.”

Amy Murtagh, Interim Director, Project 17

1.2.3 Affected by the 'Benefits Trap'

“Social security policies can, in many cases, directly lead to destitution ‘by design’, leaving people without support when they most need it” Joseph Rowntree Foundation⁷

In 2012 Welfare Reform Bill brought about the largest overhaul of the UK benefit system in recent history and changes introduced have been widely recognised as having a detrimental effect on many benefit claimants.

These changes have included:

- the introduction of a 'universal credit'
- 'under occupancy' penalties – (dubbed the 'bedroom tax') reducing the level of support for families in social rented housing if they are deemed to have an extra bedroom
- increased conditionality and 'sanctions' for failure to comply with certain benefit conditions
- changes to Disability Living Allowance and Employment Support Allowance
- imposing strict limits on the payment of housing benefit
- abolishing the discretionary social fund, with some of the finance transferred to local authorities, who are now entitled, but not obliged, to run similar local schemes.

Universal Credit is a new benefit which replaces six legacy benefits and merges them into one payment. It includes income support, jobseeker's allowance, employment and support allowance, housing benefit, child tax credits and working tax credits.

Universal Credit was designed to simplify the benefits system, however problems with its introduction have reportedly forced benefit claimants into hardship. Universal Credit is paid monthly (instead of weekly or fortnightly) in arrears, meaning it takes, on average, six weeks for claimants to receive their first payment. In April 2017, the Trussell Trust (a charity which provides a UK-wide network of food banks) published a report highlighting some of the negative impacts of the transition to Universal Credit. The report found that in areas of early Universal Credit rollout staff working in food banks were reporting that

⁷<https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/destitution-uk-2018>

those referred to them were falling into debt and experiencing mental health issues as a result of the six-week wait for the first payments⁸.

In 2014 Lewisham Council predicted that, due to a higher than average claimant rate, the Welfare Reform Act would have a greater impact on Lewisham residents than at a national level⁹. The full Universal Credit system was launched in Lewisham in July 2018, meaning that any Lewisham resident making a new application for benefits now must do so via the digital Universal Credit system. It is still too early to fully evidence the impact of these changes however local support organisations have described receiving high number of requests for support and advice from individuals struggling with debt due to benefit delays or sanctions.

“Universal credit is generally recognised to be nightmarish and not fit for purpose, it causes a huge amount of unnecessary hardship”.

Declan Flynn, CEO, Bench Outreach

People receiving working-age benefits can have their income reduced or stopped for failure to comply with the certain conditions. Sanctions therefore lead to a sudden drop in income, which can leave people unable to meet their basic needs

Deptford Reach reported that the vast majority of their advice requests relate to tenancy support and debt management. There is little financial support currently available to help local people affected by the ‘benefits trap’. As mentioned previously, Lewisham Council operates its ‘Discretionary Housing Payments’ scheme to support residents who need short-term help covering housing costs however, local support charities reported a low success rate for applications to this fund. A data request was made to the council department managing this scheme however no reply has been received to date.

1.2.4 Domestic Abuse

In 2017 a report by the Trussell Trust highlighted that 1.5% of people surveyed cited domestic violence as the primary reason for food poverty. Despite this low percentage it is important to remember that those citing other reasons may still be victims of domestic abuse and there is increasing evidence linking domestic abuse and destitution. The Home Affairs Select Committee underlines that new universal credit rules are making it

⁸<https://www.trusselltrust.org/what-we-do/research-advocacy/universal-credit-and-foodbank-use>

⁹<https://www.slideshare.net/LocalDigitalGov/dclg-presentation>

harder for victims of domestic violence to leave abusive relationships and avoid economic abuse and control¹⁰. Furthermore, a 2017 report by the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) described how the UK benefits system is currently failing women fleeing a violent partner with their children at a time when they most need support and stability. It underlines that due to a long and inflexible Child Benefit claims system, women can be left with no money for up to 16 weeks if their former partner is the Child Benefit recipient.¹¹

During 2016, the London Borough of Lewisham had the fourth highest rate of recorded domestic abuse in London with 1 in every 31 women affected (representing a 20% increase since 2014)¹². Given the comparatively high level of domestic abuse in the borough it is recommended that being affected by domestic abuse is recognised as a driver of destitution in the area and included in the eligibility criteria for this funding initiative.

¹⁰ <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/home-affairs-committee/news-parliament-2017/domestic-abuse-report-publication-17-19/>

¹¹ <http://www.cpag.org.uk/content/new-report-domestic-violence-and-financial-support>

¹² <https://www.lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/aboutthecouncil/strategies/Documents/VAWGFinal.pdf>

Section 2. Choosing a Funding Mechanism

There are over 3,500 UK grant making trusts and foundations awarding grants to individuals for hardship or educational purposes. The Directory of Social Change 2017/18 'Guide to grants for individuals' details more than 1,700 grant-making charities which provide social welfare grants to individuals in need. Assistance given by charities ranges from food vouchers to grants for domestic items or home adaptations. This support rarely helps to combat long-term financial hardship, but it can be extremely valuable in helping to meet immediate needs which the state does not currently cover.

2.1 Potential Funding Models

Before looking at the specifics of operating a fund it is important to consider how involved the trust (and by extension, the trustees) wish to be in its the day to day running. At one end of the spectrum, trustees may decide to support local charities through unrestricted grant funding - in effect allowing organisations the freedom to use the funds to strengthen their provision how they see best. In contrast, trustees may choose to employ staff and run aspects of the fund internally whilst working in partnership with local charities. Between these two positions is 'delegated authority' whereby trustees would provide restricted funding to enable local charities to make grants to individuals based on clearly stipulated criteria.

These models are revisited in section 2.3 as it is important to consider all aspects of delivering a funding programme before deciding how involved the trust should be in its operation.

2.2 Setting up a Fund

In this section I have outlined six key considerations for setting up a funding programme. These are:

- eligibility criteria
- items to fund
- funding exclusions
- application and assessment process
- monitoring outcomes
- securing funding

The following guidelines take into account the way other UK funders providing assistance to individuals operate, the immediate needs of residents at risk of destitution in Lewisham and the current role of local support charities.

2.2.1 Eligibility Criteria

The programme's eligibility criteria should encapsulate the 'categories of situations' described in section 1.1. A top-line description of the fund's primary aim followed by examples of situation should be used to make this as clear as possible. For example,

“The fund is set up to provide emergency relief funding to residents in Lewisham in immediate crisis. In addition to living on a low income and residing in Lewisham, grant applicants must fall into one or more of the following “priority areas” listed below to be eligible to apply:

- *People who are homeless or vulnerably housed*
- *People with no recourse to public funds due to their immigration status*
- *People affected by domestic abuse*
- *People affected by benefit sanctions and/or benefit delays*

Trustees should stipulate that the fund has been established to assist Lewisham residents only and that applicants must have applied for all benefits they are currently able to access.

2.2.2 Items to Fund

It is widely accepted across the funding sector that relief grants should help to stabilise an individual's circumstances in a time of crisis rather than create dependency. Local support charities consulted universally cited that financial support was needed by their clients for the following:

- **ID** - without proof of identity, such as a citizen card, it can be difficult for individuals (particularly those who are homeless) to begin the application process for benefits. Families seeking to regularise their immigration status must own a passport in order to submit a valid immigration application.
- **Travel costs** - prepaid travel cards for essential travel e.g. to advice and support meetings, legal appointments, job interviews.
- **Essential clothing** e.g. suitable clothing for interviews or a particular job, school uniform for children.
- **Basic furniture, white goods** and other **essential household items** (kitchen utensils, bedding, portable heaters). It was highlighted that when homeless people are offered accommodation it is often unfurnished.
- **Baby items** e.g. clothing and essential equipment.

“Most charitable trusts will not consider paying for the cost of passports, because it is not considered an ‘essential item’. In addition, we have also had refusals of grant applications from charities who state that they will not award funds to individuals with insecure immigration status”.

Amy Murtagh, Interim Director, Project 17

A common theme that emerged from the consultation was that the items most often needed cost a relatively small amount of money (e.g. £30 towards travel costs) yet make a significant difference to an individual’s onward journey and, despite the small cost, can help to prevent a downward spiral. As outlined, items required are wide ranging dependant on residents’ personal circumstances (from identification to white goods for empty accommodation) and as such, it is recommended that grants of up to £500 are made available through the fund.

Whilst the fund should support individuals through a crisis period rather than pay for ongoing living expenses, charities such as LRNM and Project 17 highlighted the need for ‘hardship funding’ in exceptional cases. This may be where residents with NRPF require urgent temporary accommodation or face eviction due to rent arrears or are struggling to pay fuel/water bills (see Mrs S’s story in the appendices). Applications for funding to pay for, or reduce, such costs should be considered on a case by case basis and only granted as a last resort where assistance for this cannot be obtained from elsewhere. An application of this nature should tie-in with a longer term, support plan determined together by the referring support agency and individual.

2.2.3 Funding Exclusions

To prevent fruitless applications, trustees should stipulate any funding exclusions from the outset such as payments towards trips/holidays, gifts, visa applications, general appeals, ICT equipment and items that have already been purchased. To ensure support is distributed as fairly as possible, multiple awards to the same individuals within a small timeframe should be discouraged. A simple way to do this is to outline that the fund has a limit of one award per recipient either in any six-month or twelve-month period (timed from the date of the first award). It is recommended that support towards multiple items can be requested together in one application to prevent unfairly disadvantaging people who might require financial assistance for a number of low cost items i.e travel costs and clothing.

2.2.4 Application and Assessment Processes

In the majority of cases, UK grants for individuals are applied for by referring support agencies rather than by the beneficiary directly. This helps to minimise the risk of funding being misused and reduces some administration for the funder whilst ensuring an audit trail for all grants is maintained. The following guidelines are designed to illustrate how trustees should administer the fund where using 'host' organisations.

- **Ensure referring agencies have knowledge of the individual or family** and a good understanding of their current needs.
- Ensure referring agencies have a bank account in their own name and are able to bank and administer the funds on the Trust's behalf.
- Draw up a **simple application form**, capturing essential information only, to keep administration for referring agencies to an absolute minimum. Key information should include:
 - ▶ *Name of the referring professional*
 - ▶ *Agency they work for*
 - ▶ *Valid professional email address and contact number*
 - ▶ *Organisation's payee name (bank account name)*
 - ▶ *Organisation's address*
 - ▶ *Relationship with the client*
 - ▶ *Client's name*
 - ▶ *Client's gender*
 - ▶ *Client's address*
 - ▶ *Client's date of birth and current age*
 - ▶ *Confirmation the client lives in Lewisham*
 - ▶ *Confirmation that consent to share the client's personal data with the fund been sought*
 - ▶ *Accommodation status (e.g. homeless, refuge, temporary accommodation, hostel, private rented, council tenant, other - please specify)*
 - ▶ *Relationship status (e.g. couple, couple with children, lone parent, single, widower)*
 - ▶ *Residency status (e.g. UK national, EU national, asylum seeker, full refugee status, appealing home office decision, other - please specify)*
 - ▶ *Is the client in receipt of any means-tested benefits? If so please stipulate which.*
 - ▶ *Amount requested*
 - ▶ *Describe the client's current circumstances, why they need a small grant, what it will be pay for and what difference it will make to them?*

- Some grant makers request to see evidence of an applicant's financial position (supported by personal bank statements) to assess if they meet a fund's eligibility criteria. Whilst this can provide an extra level of assurance it increases administration on both sides. In this context, trustees may decide that the referring organisation's knowledge of the applicant's circumstances should provide sufficient assurance that they meet this aspect of the eligibility criteria.
- **Accept applications via email** or through a secure online system. Accepting applications this way both reduces costs in printing for referring organisations and allows applications to be easily acknowledged through an automatic reply system.
- **Consider inviting applications from a 'closed group'** of identified support charities. As Family Action's Grenfell Tower Fund exemplifies, this approach can help to ensure funds are directed to the right people who are being supported in the right way. It is also a good way of testing local demand for emergency relief funding in the first instance.
- **Operate a 'rolling' funding programme which can be closed once the annual budget has been distributed.** This enables referring support organisations to seek assistance for their client when it is needed the most and reduces the number of funding application deadlines they must note and remember.
- **Appoint a qualified Administrator/Grants Executive** to assess applications against the advertised eligibility criteria; be wary of establishing a large grants committee as this can hinder timely decision making and prompt distribution of funds.
- **Create a standardised assessment system** to ensure the process remains objective and nondiscriminatory. This should not be complex but instead a simple checklist of questions to ensure all applications are assessed against the eligibility criteria. These may include:
 - ▶ *Has the application been completed by a legitimate referring support agency?*
 - ▶ *Is the application for funds to assist a Lewisham resident?*
 - ▶ *Has consent to share the client's personal data been sought?*
 - ▶ *Have funds to assist this individual already been granted by the trust in the last X months?*
 - ▶ *Is the amount requested clear?*

- ▶ *Will the item(s) purchased, or hardship grant requested, help to stabilise the individual or family's current situation to help prevent, or provide relief from, an immediate crisis?*
 - ▶ *If the application is for short-term living costs (e.g emergency accommodation) have all other options available to individual been exhausted? Does the request tie-in with a longer term support plan for the individual?*
 - ▶ *If the amount required exceeds the maximum grant available has the applicant clearly explained how the balance will be raised?*
- **Aim to make decisions promptly** (ideally within 2 weeks) to ensure the fund fulfils its overarching goal to assist residents in immediate crisis.
 - **Set up a quality assurance system** whereby recommended grants are 'signed off' by two trustees before funding is released.
 - **Award grants with clear terms and conditions.** This should stipulate any monitoring requirements (see 2.2.5 below) as well as the trust's privacy policy in line with current General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) legislation.

2.2.5 Monitoring

Whilst monitoring and evaluation should be considered from the outset, it is important that reporting requirements are kept proportionate. Trustees should consider asking referral organisations to supply basic data (as illustrated below) and retain receipts for all items purchased. This will help to maintain a financial audit for funding and track who the funding is benefiting and how (albeit at a 'top-line' rather than in an depth level). It will also help trustees; identify certain trends, look for situations where the funding initiative could be improved and share its impact stakeholders.

Example of reporting data:

- Has the grant now been spent on the item(s) originally applied for? *If not, please specify why.*
- Please specify the difference the grant has made (if any) to the individual.
- Tick any of following statements which apply. The grant helped the individual to:

Move towards employment

Secure appropriate, adequately furnished accommodation

Stabilise their financial position

2.3 Funding Models Revisited

The following section revisits the grant making models proposed in section 2.1 and assess the benefits and disadvantages of each.

Unrestricted Funding

Unrestricted funding is providing grants for 'unrestricted' use without conditions attached. It is widely recognised that unrestricted grant funding is incredibly valuable to charities as it can facilitate growth, independence and sustainability. Awarding unrestricted funding in this context may enable Deptford organisations directly supporting residents to be more responsive to their needs and it would require little work in terms of administration. However a potential pitfall of this model is that trustees would have no control over how funds are used once granted. Perhaps a greater risk is that this model is likely to cause a barrier to securing financial support from others - funders could raise the valid question; 'why would we not fund the charities directly?'

Funding in Partnership

Funding in partnership would, in this context, involve the trust managing most aspects of the fund internally yet working in partnership with local support organisations to direct funds. As mentioned previously, in the majority of cases, UK grants for individuals are applied for by referring support agencies rather than by the beneficiary directly. This allows trustees direct control over the selection of recipients but passes the grant to a charity to disburse to the individual. It facilitates a clear audit trail enabling trustees, and therefore funders, access to information about who the funds are assisting and how. The main pitfall of this model is that it involves administration (and therefore cost implications) for both parties and, as such, less funds will reach the target beneficiaries. Furthermore there is a risk that it duplicates existing work as a number of support organisations consulted described already assisting their most needy clients with small, essential costs (such as travel costs to housing appointments) but in an ad hoc way.

Delegated Authority

Delegated authority is awarding restricted grants to organisations for the sole purposes stipulated by the trustees, in this case , assisting individuals experiencing, or at risk of, destitution. The grants would need to be made with clear guidelines stipulating the eligibility criteria and any funding exclusions (as outlined in sections 2.2.1, 2.2.2 and 2.2.3).

The most obvious strength of this approach is that it helps to minimise administration for both the funder and support organisation. It helps to avoid duplication and enables

professionals working with residents access to a defined funding pot to provide greater immediate financial support.

One local support organisation observed that a strength of Deptford First could be attracting new funders to the area and distributing these to local charities to assist individuals directly. It cautioned against trustees setting up their own grants programme due to the bureaucracy and duplication it could create.

Declan Flynn, CEO of Bench Outreach, echoed the call to keep bureaucracy to a minimum so that funds raised could be directed as far as possible to those in need: "In our 'housing first' project, for a few years we have applied for grants to a funder on behalf of people moving into flats, we found this process to be nightmarish. It was costing more to apply for administer the award than the award itself".

The main risk of delegated authority is that it relies on support organisations to have sufficient resources to distribute funds in line with agreed eligibility criteria and retain a clear audit trail. There is also a risk that funders approached for support towards this initiative may, as with the unrestricted funding model, feel too far removed from the beneficiaries.

3. Securing Funds

There are estimated to be around 800 community and voluntary sector organisations in Lewisham.¹³ The borough's third sector is growing and plays a key role in bridging gaps between stretched statutory services. Lewisham's *Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee* 2017 report highlights that, alongside this growth, there is increased competition for funding locally¹⁴. Grant makers are seeing rises in applications and charities are increasingly required to seek out alternative (and multiple) income streams to sustain their work.

The guidance below is intended to illustrate how trustees should approach securing financial support towards this work. It also outlines viable funding avenues for exploration.

3.1 Strategy and Case for Support

Key to any successful fundraising is having a clear strategy. This needn't be complex but it should be aspirational and address the following, 'where are we now?', 'where do we want to get to?', 'how are we going to get there'. Trustees, to some extent, can already answer these questions using local knowledge and research to date. For example:

- **Where are we now?** An increasing number of residents in Deptford are in immediate crisis and at risk of destitution. They have no recourse to public funds, are homeless and/or are negatively affected by the welfare reforms.
- **Where do we want to get to?** All residents in Deptford are prevented from a downward spiral of destitution and able to live, fulfilling independent lives.
- **How are we going to get there?** Working in partnership with local support agencies, and using funds raised locally, Deptford First will operate an 'emergency relief fund', distributing small grants to help stabilise residents' circumstances.

The answers to these questions are crucial as they will form the basis of the fund's 'Case for Support'. A 'Case for Support' is a vital fundraising tool that sets the tone of what a project wants to achieve and should be used as a touchstone for all communications to funders. It should include the following:

¹³ <https://www.lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/overview-scrutiny/Overview-and-Scrutiny-Reports/Documents/Communityandvoluntarysectorreview.pdf>

¹⁴ <https://www.lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/overview-scrutiny/Overview-and-Scrutiny-Reports/Documents/Capacity%20in%20the%20voluntary%20sector%20review.pdf>

- Why the programme is needed
- Who it will benefit
- How it will operate
- What the annual fundraising target is
- Why donors should give

Trustees should ensure the information is succinct and factual, and engages potential funders using powerful statistics and case studies which galvanise them to take action. An example of an 'attention-grabbing' statistic is that *'in 2017, 1 in 49 people in Lewisham were vulnerably housed, living in temporary accommodation'*.

Trustees should agree on an achievable, first year fundraising target which, if reached, would fund a significant number of small grants to individuals as well as all necessary administration costs. This target can be increased year on year as the fund gains recognition for its impact locally.

Once written, the Case for Support can be easily adapted for different fundraising methods - e.g. a presentation at a meeting with a potential corporate donor, to populate an application to a grant-making trust, to include in a personalised letter to a local high-net worth individual.

It is advised that a small committee is established to coordinate 'funding approaches'. This will ensure that efforts are not duplicated and trustees' existing networks can be tapped into to effectively. Where possible, trustees should bring on board professionals working directly with residents at risk of destitution, i.e. 'local champions' who could communicate the Case for Support strongly at meetings with potential funders.

3.2 Who to approach?

Knowing the best funding prospects is crucial as it will enable trustees to target efforts effectively. The following list is not intended to be exhaustive but instead provide a solid starting point for fundraising.

3.2.1 Developers

Over the years, Deptford has experienced frequent regeneration. At present, dozens of development projects are underway and residents are now beginning to feel the full impact of soaring house prices and the arrival of investors. It is therefore advised that trustees seek to tap into developers' 'community conscience' to secure financial and high profile support towards this initiative.

Lendlease:

International property and infrastructure group, Lendlease is currently redeveloping over 11.6 acres of land in central Deptford. With the first phase scheduled for completion later this year, 'The Timberyard Deptford' will comprise of 1,000 new homes and new retail spaces. The 'regeneration' project has been accused locally of 'social cleansing' and will no doubt contribute to the continued rise of unaffordable housing in Deptford. Lendlease therefore represents a key funding prospect potentially open to supporting local initiatives which help to build trust from Deptford's community. The project's community team can be contacted via TheTimberyardCommunity@lendlease.com (020 3430 9000).

Keltbray:

Keltbray, a specialist contractor that has contributed to a number of high profile construction projects including The Shard, is providing asbestos management and demolition services for The Timberyard Development until 2019. It has previously supported charity work in Deptford (a number of its employees helped to transform the 2000 Community Action Centre in 2016) and may be receptive to supporting this work. Enquiries should be emailed to charity@keltbray.com in the first instance.

Anthology:

Residential developer, Anthology, is currently building 276 new homes on the site of a former metal foundry and trading estate in Deptford. The company supports the *Deptford X* arts festival and may be receptive to supporting further charitable initiatives in the area. The Project Director for 'Anthology Deptford Foundry' is Ben Allen ben.allen@anthology.london

Bellway Homes Ltd (Thames Gateway Division)

Over by Deptford Creek, property developer Bellway Homes has constructed 'Kent Wharf' offering a number of mixed-size apartments. The company's website states that each of its local divisions has an annual budget used to support charities, community groups and other initiatives locally.

Pocket Living

Pocket Living, specialising in compact homes, has recently redeveloped a 1920s brick industrial building on Arklow Road a short walk from Deptford High Street. Nick Raynsford, former Labour MP for Greenwich and Woolwich, is a board member at Pocket Living and therefore may be a good first point of contact within this company.

3.2.2 Businesses

The 'power of place' should not be underestimated when identifying funders. Local businesses almost universally prefer to support activities in their immediate area that will benefit the communities they serve.

Islington Giving (<http://www.islingtongiving.org.uk>) is an excellent example of the 'power of place'. It is a unique funding model that brings together funders, businesses, residents and local community organisations to address inequalities in Islington. Businesses supporting this venture include Currell (a family-owned estate agent), Frederick's (a family-run restaurant), Doubletree Hotel (by Hilton) and Gelbergs (a local solicitors firm).

With its rich maritime history, Deptford also has a strong identity. Trustees should aim to demonstrate to local businesses in Deptford how they can play a key role in strengthening their immediate community by lending their support to this work. In the first instance, trustees should identify and capitalise on any existing business links they have. Approaches to local businesses, such as the following, should be considered:

- Deptford Yard Market - a collection of new independent shops and restaurants <http://www.deptfordmarketyard.com/>
- Deptford Housing Coop <https://www.coophomes.coop/client-co-ops/deptford-housing-co-op/>
- AC Gilead Solicitors <http://www.acgilead.com/>
- Pearsons Solicitors www.pearsons-socilitors.co.uk
- Castor Projects - art space off Deptford High Street <http://castorprojects.co.uk/exhibitions/>
- London Velo - local coffee and bike repair shop <http://www.ldnvelo.co.uk/>

3.2.3 Trusts and Foundations

Whilst efforts should be made to solicit support from trusts and foundations, this should not be the sole area of focus. Trustees are advised to use their existing networks to initiate discussions with trusts that may be receptive to working collaboratively as applying for funds through prescriptive grant programmes is unlikely to yield results. The Funder Network (www.fundernetwork.org.uk), a knowledge sharing website for funders,

should also provide a good platform from which trustees can 'reach out' to other grant makers to support this work.

The following trusts have been identified as having clear links to this funding initiative both in terms of target beneficiaries and over-arching aims:

Jessica Mathers Trust - a Deptford-based trust that makes grants to charities supporting homeless people, premature bereavement or the challenges of adolescence <http://www.thejmt.co.uk/>

The New Cross Gate Trust - offers a small number of grants annually to partners addressing a clear gap in local services <http://www.nxgtrust.org.uk/services/grants-for-local-organisations/>

A B Charitable Trust (ABCT) - supports UK charities working with marginalised and excluded people in society. ABCT also undertakes Special Initiatives that take forward work in its priority areas, usually in collaboration with other funders <http://abcharitabletrust.org.uk/funding.htm>

The City Bridge Trust - supports work that enables Londoners experiencing inequality and disadvantage to make important transitions in their lives <https://www.citybridgetrust.org.uk/what-we-do/grant-making/what-we-fund/positive-transitions/>

Trust for London - funds work which tackles poverty and inequality in London <https://www.trustforlondon.org.uk/funding>

Garfield Weston - UK grant maker supporting people in need. The Foundation is especially keen to see support organisations working in the Welfare, Youth and Community sectors <http://garfieldweston.org/apply-to-us>

Inner London Magistrates - makes grants to individuals and/or organisations for the prevention or relief of poverty
ilmcpbf@btinternet.com

Section 3. Recommendations

The following recommendations are drawn from key findings presented throughout this report (the corresponding sections are highlighted). These recommendations are designed to ensure that Deptford First's work strengthens rather than duplicates existing support for residents and that funding which can be brought into this area is channelled towards those most in need.

1. Small grants (e.g. £30 for essential travel costs) can often make a significant difference to someone living in destitution. Items required are wide ranging dependant on residents' personal circumstances (from ID to white goods) and, as such, it is recommended that grants of up to £500 are made available through this fund (section 2.2.2).
2. Local people with NRPF have access to very limited financial support and can spiral into extreme poverty whilst waiting for, or appealing, home office decisions. Whilst funding ongoing living costs is discouraged, 'tangible' items will not always be of benefit to an applicant. Trustees should therefore consider awarding grants to help with costs such as emergency accommodation in exceptional cases (e.g. where all other financial support avenues for the individual have been exhausted) (section 2.2.2).
3. Trustees are advised to adopt a 'delegated authority' grant making model for the purposes of this initiative. As highlighted, this will allow trustees to retain control over the fund's primary aims and keep administration to a minimum. It will help to avoid duplication and will ultimately result in a greater level of funding reaching beneficiaries (section 2.3)
4. It is essential that grants to assist individuals in times of crisis are distributed quickly, with as little administration for referring agencies as possible. If operating the fund internally, the application form must be kept brief and decisions should ideally be made within two weeks from the date of the request (2.2.4).
5. If operating the fund internally, trustees are advised to consider inviting applications from a 'closed' group of local support organisations in the first instance in order to manage demand and direct funds effectively (2.2.4).

6. All grants should be made with clear terms and conditions which detail the trust's privacy policy and monitoring requirements (2.2.4).
7. Trustees should seek to track key grant-making data in order to evidence the impact of the fund (particularly to potential and existing funders) yet keep reporting requirements for referring agencies to a minimum. It is important that monitoring is considered from the outset regardless of the grant making model adopted and that all monitoring requirements are clearly outlined with the grant's terms and conditions (2.2.5).
8. It is essential that trustees draw up a clear, concise and compelling 'Case for Support' to use as a touchstone for all communications with potential funders. This should include a fundraising target, which if achieved, would fund a significant number of grants to residents in the first year of operation (3.1).
9. The 'power of place' is a key fundraising tool. Trustees should attempt to rally support from individuals and local businesses within their existing networks that have strong, personal connections to Deptford. Property developers in Deptford are also identified as potentially lucrative funding prospects for this work (3.2).

Appendix 1 - Case Studies from the Office of Vicky Foxcroft

The office of Vicky Foxcroft (Labour MP for Lewisham, Deptford) receives regular requests for help from constituents with NRPF. The case studies below provide a snapshot of the barriers and acute challenges constituents with NRPF face.

Ms O.

Ms O. approached our office in late 2017. She had submitted an application to renew her visa and biometric card in late 2016 and had recently had to stop working because of her uncertain immigration status. She was struggling to manage her living costs and was paying her rent from her overdraft. She regularly approached us for food bank vouchers. Our caseworkers contacted UK Visas and Immigration about her case and were told that as her case was deemed to be “complex” it fell outside the organisation’s normal service standards, i.e. did not have to be completed within a specific timeframe. When we made further contact with UKVI stating that Ms O. was in a vulnerable situation, they suggested that she contact the local authority for assistance. We subsequently referred her to the local authority’s NRPF team, but they were unable to assist as they assessed that she was not the primary carer for her daughter. When our caseworkers made further enquiries with the council, they confirmed that the only other circumstances under which she would be eligible for assistance would be if she was suffering from a physical or mental impairment sufficient to trigger an obligation under the Care Act 2014. We have not had any further contact from Ms O. since June, but as far as we are aware her Home Office case is still ongoing.

Mr S.

Mr S. was granted Leave to Remain for 5 years in 2009. The Home Office revoked his residence card in 2013 on the grounds that his marriage was suspected to be a proxy marriage. Mr S. appealed and his case was pending until May 2018. The appeal was partially allowed and the judge ruled that his residence card had been unlawfully revoked. Mr S. contacted our office in August 2018 to say that his documents had not been returned. He has been unable to get a job or to access benefits without his residence card. He is dependent on unsecured loans and is in more than £30,000 of debt. His partner’s wages are not enough to cover rent so the couple and their two children have been homeless and sleeping in various different places, including their car. As well as contacting the Home Office regarding the outstanding documents, our caseworkers supported Mr S. in accessing help from the local authority’s NRPF team. This help is ongoing. The Home Office confirmed in September 2018 that it is still processing the application and that Mr S.’s documents cannot be returned until this is

concluded. Our office has issued several food bank vouchers to Mr S. to provide some short term assistance.

Ms. K

Ms K. was originally granted a residence card as a family member of an EEA national from 2010-2015. She submitted a new application in early 2016 but this was refused in July 2016 with a right of appeal. Ms K lodged an appeal later that month which was due to be heard in April 2018. The hearing was adjourned as the judge requested more information and was rescheduled for September 2018. She approached our office in July 2018 as she is now struggling to pay her rent and has arrears of more than £2000.

Appendix 2 - Case Studies from Project 17

Project 17 receive a large number of enquiries from destitute migrant families in the Lewisham area who are in need of support. The charity supplied the following case studies to again highlight the acute need for emergency support.

Sharon

Sharon has no recourse to public funds. She came to the UK 10 years ago from Ghana and has a 7 year old son who was born in the UK. Due to her immigration status, Sharon can not work or claim any benefits. When she first approached us for advice, Sharon and her son were living with and supported by Sharon's mother in Lewisham. Due to overcrowding at the property, Sharon's mother asked Sharon to leave, but allowed the child to sleep on the floor in the living room. Sharon was made street homeless. Relations with her mother had become very strained. Sharon slept in parks and on buses, wandering the streets until the early hours of the morning until she could come back to her mother's house to get her son ready for school. During this period, Sharon and her son ate very little. Sharon would often skip meals, and her son ate mostly breakfast cereal. Sharon's son began performing poorly at school.

Sharon could not afford essential items. Project 17 were able to provide some emergency support for Sharon. We used money from our 'destitution fund' to pay for a hotel for the family for a few nights. We also gave Sharon a food voucher. We also applied for a small grant so that she could buy her child school uniform and winter clothes.

Project 17 referred the family to Lewisham NRPF team, requesting support with accommodation and subsistence under section 17 Children Act 1989. This was initially refused and Project 17 helped Sharon to access legal advice to look at challenging this decision.

Sharon is now accessing support from the Home Office, however during the time the family were left destitute, they had an acute need for emergency support such as money for food and clothing, and emergency accommodation.

Jane

Jane is from Nigeria. She came to the UK in 2013 on a student visa. Jane completed a Masters' qualification in London. Her father supported her financially during her studies, but when he found out she was pregnant outside of marriage, he stopped supporting her. Jane gave birth to her son, Luke in the UK (now 4 years old). Jane has not been able to contact Luke's father for a number of years after he left the family. Jane has a grounds to make an application for leave to remain in the UK, and was in the process of trying to regularise her status.

Jane and Luke became homeless, however due to her immigration status she was not able to access housing assistance from the local housing department. The family were staying on a friend's floor. Luke was been negatively affected by the families' unstable living situation. Luke suffers from autism and has been unsettled and disturbed by the fact that Jane could not provide a stable place to live, and had to continually move from friend's house to friend's house.

Jane's first application to the Home Office was refused because her own passport had recently expired, and this was a requirement to submit a valid immigration application. Jane had no money to pay to renew her passport. Without this, she had no way of submitting her application for leave to remain, which would pave the way to her being granted the right to work and access support for herself and Luke.

Due to her lack of income, Jane also struggled to provide basic necessities to Luke, such as food and clothing. She also could not afford to buy him the specialist sensory toys which would have helped his development.

Project 17 routine struggle to find sources of funding for such items. Many charitable trusts receive a large number of applications and cannot assist in all the applications we make. We also often have to wait a long time for grant applications to be decided. Most charitable trusts will not consider paying for the cost of passports, because it is not considered an essential item. In addition, we have also had refusals of grant applications from charities who state that they will not award funds to individuals with insecure immigration status.