



Many Voices, One Neighbourhood Annual Report 2018/2019



Butterfly crafted in a Manor Park Art Project, 2019

‘Many Voices, one Neighbourhood’

Welcome to our Lee Green Lives Community Report

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Many Voices, One Neighbourhood



Our Community 2018–19 Jim Mallory, Chair

“A strong community is an engaged community”

“A strong community is an engaged community” are the words with which we began our bid for funding from Lewisham Council’s Main Grant programme, “confident in its sense of worth, one that believes in democracy, justice and fairness, and cares for its vulnerable and disadvantaged people. It keeps its neighbourhoods safe and healthy and its environment protected, with a well-developed social network that celebrates its cultural diversity and strong neighbourhoods which protect the health of all.”

They underpin everything we do at Lee Green Lives. Our activities provide stimulation, learning and friendship while advice and support services offer help to those who are struggling to cope with poverty, mental health or loneliness. Our community centre and the volunteers and workers who sustain it have become an ever more invaluable local resource.

We were successful in that bid, increasing our “core” fund, the money to pay staff and pay bills at the centre. The increase in our workload has meant we are often overstretched at a time of diminishing public resources with the result that a greater burden is placed on volunteers. As we didn’t get all we asked for, there has been increased pressure on us to assess the strengths and weaknesses of our programme as part of any business plan that identifies our priorities in fund-raising.

We were fortunate, however, in securing money from the largest local housing provider, Clarion Housing, to strengthen our financial and administrative capacity

while extending our outreach among their residents, many of them among the disadvantaged to whom we are committed. We have also begun working with the Council's housing provider, Lewisham Homes, and hope to have more to report in the coming year about the beginnings of our outreach with them.

A key component of our immediate work programme is a survey called "What do you think?" in which we're asking local residents what they like – and dislike – about the area, what more in the way of services and activities they think Lee Green needs, both from their own point of view and what others might need. The results will help us to decide whether we have the right activities, whether they need to change and what other things we need to do. In the process, we expect to reach new people and recruit volunteers to match new and existing challenges.

Our focus is therefore shifting to an increasing one of community engagement and development, one that recognises that we cannot provide everything that people want, and a big part of our role should be one of facilitating... whether it's referring people on to other services – as our Advice & Advocacy service already does – and/or enabling others to provide services from the centre, as the new Digital Inclusion sessions will do through other funding from Clarion. They support people who don't have online access or sufficient computer skills to grapple with bureaucracies that expect people to use the internet when seeking help, whether it's a job, housing or benefit requirement.

A strong community is also about ensuring all residents are engaged, a job in part fulfilled by Lee Green Assembly. It has played a major role in helping Lee Green Lives in its community development, particularly in our work with other local organisations. That work has continued to grow with the help of all the other groups that make up Lee Green Consortium (see separate report). The volunteers who give so much to their community through those groups make such a major contribution to our residents.

My thanks go to all those who have helped Lee Green Lives – within the organisation and beyond – go some way towards making our area a better place.

Lee Green Consortium – working together

Sixteen local organisations work together under Lee Green Assembly's banner of "Our community, our say" to create a safer, healthier and better environment while providing activities and services for local people. Founded in 2016 by Friends of Manor House Gardens, Lee Manor Society and Lee Green Lives, the Consortium has looked for ways of supporting the dozens of volunteers who give their time freely to support local activities that enable people to enjoy healthier lives while having fun, and others to overcome loneliness and isolation, or advice and information for people in need.

The groups organise the annual Showcase event at Manor House Gardens Festival, with funding from Lee Green Assembly. The Gardens Festival, held annually, regularly attracts more than a thousand visitors, many of whom pass through the marquee.

Facilitated by Lee Green Lives, the Consortium has hosted events including one in September 2018 at Manor House Library, featuring a visit from Janet Daby, Member of Parliament for Lewisham East. The Consortium also supports the Assembly's website (www.leegreen.london).

A key achievement for the Consortium was finding a place for Lee Green Youth Club to host its activities. Previously, the club operated out of our community centre in Leegate, but this proved too small for their needs. Fortunately, Lochaber Hall – one of the Consortium's more recent members – were able to offer a much bigger hall in which the youth club is able to run many more of its activities in term time while continuing to use it as a meeting place for youngsters visits to other venues as part of their holiday schemes.

This year, members of the Consortium supported Lee Green Lives' successful bid for funding from Lewisham Council, as a means of continuing its work in community development. A key element of this was a survey, asking local people what they think of the area and ways it can be made better. The work, begun in March 2019, included an online questionnaire and face-to-face interviews. The results, it's hoped, will create an information base to help respond to local people's needs and aspirations.

Members of the Consortium

Friends of Manor House Gardens; Lee Green Lives (LGL); Lee Manor Society; Users and Friends of Manor House Library; Friends and Users of Staplehurst Shops (FUSS); Lee Fair Share Time Bank; Lee Forum; Lee Green Open Studios; Lee Green Women's Institute; Lee Manor Community Garden; Lee Oasis; Lochaber Hall Association; Manor House Library; Manor Park Friends; Newstead Tenants and Residents Association; Soul Refresh Cafe.



Pond dipping, Friends of Manor Park



Ready for the FUSS Christmas Fair



Friends and Users of Staplehurst Shops (FUSS) making a difference to the area

Co-ordinator, Community Development and Outreach

Shirley Kirkland

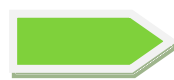
My work programme has changed in the last year, particularly in the last few months, since we changed focus as a result of our successful grant applications to Clarion Housing and Lewisham Council. Our focus is increasingly towards community engagement and development as we recognise we cannot provide everything that people want, and my job since November has changed to reflect that. A big part of our role will be to facilitate activities that meet the needs of people, many in desperate need, or access them to services they require... whether it's referring people on to other services – as our successful Advice & Advocacy service already does – or enabling others to provide services from the centre, as the new Digital Inclusion sessions do through other Clarion funding.

Key to that engagement is a survey I am overseeing called “What do you think?” In it, we're asking local residents – particularly those living on the estates run by Clarion Housing, what they like – and dislike – about the area, and what other services and activities are needed. The results will help the trustees to decide whether we have the right activities, whether they need to change and what other things we need to do.

As part of that, we are trying to reach new people and recruit volunteers. I would like to thank Helen Nicholas who has been a valuable and enjoyable part of this work with the community. I would also like to acknowledge Helen's successes in fundraising for the groups.



The knitted nativity, including portraits of some group members, and Albert Einstein of course!



Activities

Our existing programme continued to attract numbers but in some cases, we have been unable to maintain funding, so a big part of my co-worker's job will be to seek funding to support those activities.

The Get-together Club had a regular attendance of 15 users and carers. The afternoon Knitting Club created a nativity scene, a work that drew people from the community into the centre. We were happy to welcome back Clementsia to the sewing class after her long illness and the students have made quilts, bags and adult and children's clothing. The ESOL conversation and Reading & Writing class continued with some new students coming in and others referred from other activities. We also produced a newsletter, and are hopeful we can develop a group to take it forward.

Meanwhile, we had to expand our Seniors Exercise Group, run by Jean Lee, to two weekly sessions, so successful was it proving, and the Computer Group, run by Pat Coyne, continued to provide help and support for those who either don't have access to a computer or are learning how to access services online. It also caters for people who want to publish their own work in the form of printed books.

In September, we were granted funding from Lewisham Neighbourhood Community Development Partnership (NCDP) to introduce another Exercise for the Elderly and to do a cookery club. I attended cookery club training run by Greenwich Co Operative Development Agency (GCDA) where I learnt a lot about healthy eating on a budget.

Our most long-standing partners, Lee Fair Share time bank and their coordinator, Lorraine Spenceley, continue to host Coffee, Cake and Company, a group that helps local people – many of whom experience loneliness or isolation – make new friends while taking part in a range of activities. These include talks, trips and reminiscence sessions.

Last and by no means least, I would like to thank all our session leaders, tutors and volunteers, without whom we could never have offer such a wide range of activities and services... providing inspiration, motivation, support and friendship to service users, by highly qualified and experienced freelance workers.

Healthy Exercise: Jean Lee

Lee Green lives is a vital part of the community and several activities are available on various days per week, the workers are very helpful and welcoming to each and everyone that attends.

The senior exercise groups are very popular; our regulars are very friendly and encourage their friends and neighbours to come along and join them in as well. The class is very diverse in culture, ability and ages from, from 60–95.

Many groups throughout the borough unfortunately have had their funding discontinued therefore had to close some of their classes,

So on behalf of Lee Green exercise group we are very grateful for our management team to keep this class going although very stretched financially. However it has been a very worrying time for all. Seniors have expressed their hope the class will continue as it made a huge difference to their health and well being.

Val Miller: Accounts

I have worked at Lee Green Lives for approximately two years. As an experienced bookkeeper, I offered myself as a volunteer to support Shirley with the accounts at Lee Green Lives. Shirley said she would welcome some support to produce the monthly accounts required by the management committee.

Soon after arriving Shirley and I took the opportunity of attending training through Voluntary Action Lewisham and were introduced to the Bean Counter programme, which has assisted a lot us over the last financial year.

I also attend and support the Exercise class held every Tuesday morning and enjoy my time at the centre. We are now confident our bookkeeping is up to date and financial information can be made available at all times to the committee.

I believe my role for Lee Green Lives is vital and important to the smooth running of the organisation and I am glad I can help.

Get Together Club	Claire Russell
Reading and Writing	Alex Peach
ESOL	Megan Jamison, Helen Nicholas
Seniors' Exercise Group	Jean Lee
Sewing Class	Karen Huggins/Clementsia Paquet
Leigate Knitters	Amanda Allen
Computer Group	Pat Coyne



Roz Hardie, Co-ordinator Business Development

I started work in November, charged with strengthening the financial, communications and administrative capacity of Lee Green Lives. This has involved reviewing policies, overhauling procedures and a great deal of dejunking. While LGL is very good at providing activities and services for many vulnerable people, like so many in the voluntary sector, it recognised that it needed to improve its administration so the front end of the organisation could function more effectively.

A high early priority was ensuring our core funding from Lewisham Council. Without our current grant of £15,600 annually, due to end in July 2019, the centre would have difficulty continuing to operate. We were one of the few historically-funded organisations to receive an increase to £25,000 a year.

Much of that time has involved just finding out how LGL works, making sure filing was being done properly for easier access and confidentiality, cash procedures were in order, and consolidating health and safety standards. We have to make sure the organisation has the safe infrastructure to support its community work – particularly with many users at crisis point – with everybody properly authorised and scheduled to use the centre.

At the same time, I took over the work begun by Voluntary Action Lewisham to support the trustees to develop LGL's approach to safeguarding and business planning. We now have a business plan and safeguarding procedures in line with

Council's best practice. Moving forward, I am using the national Trusted Quality Mark as a benchmark to help drive further improvements.

A big challenge in the coming months will be reviewing our provision with the help of the survey to make sure we support activities in a targeted way through future fund-raising. An early bid to Clarion Housing Digital Inclusion – to support people who lacked online skills in finding work or housing, or claiming vital benefits – was unsuccessful, but I was able to set up sessions at the centre with the successful applicants, CAS Solutions.

Trustee Pat Coyne revitalised the Lee Green Lives website, and I have upped our social media presence. Our future bids should include more funding for communications beyond ad hoc leaflets and posters.

A key part of our future work will be partnering with members of the Consortium, and I have been supporting our Chair in developing that work beyond meetings and occasional events to providing some support to individual Consortium members on issues where coordination or advice is required.



Roz worked with Abbey Manor College students to commission a mural 'London in Lee' at the Community Centre



Advocacy and Advice

Support & Advocacy Service: Stephanie Bennett Fraser

**“...support through very bad / dark times.
Long live Lee Green Lives!”**

Summary

Our Support and Advocacy Service has now been running for 4 years and we are working at full capacity, supporting an average of 7.27 people per week over the year.

The service offers pre-booked appointments to local residents on Tuesdays, from 11.30am to 4.30 pm. If anyone attends the centre in immediate need of support, we will always try to offer support as soon as we can. We have also been regularly supporting people attending LGL activities, as well as recommending LGL activities to the people we support.

The service remit is to support any resident experiencing a crisis that is affecting their wellbeing and our aim is to address social isolation, to ensure that people's problems do not become acute and unmanageable.

Addressing issues, such as debt, health or food poverty, early on or as soon as they occur can mean the difference between someone remaining in their home and not becoming homeless; finding support instead of making an attempt to take your life; or identifying ways of using a very restricted income more efficiently.

The service is run by one sessional worker, who manages cases and an outreach worker, who assesses cases or directly signposts residents to appropriate services.

Funding

Last year, we were awarded funding by Comic Relief to run the service, as well as Awards For All and Lewisham Council's Small Faiths Fund.

Without this generous support, we would not be able to run this much needed community-based project.

Feedback



Service overview

- Total number of individual support sessions at LGL from 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019: **320**
- Average of people supported per week: **7.27** per week

These sessions ranged from multiple visits due to complex or additional issues (9) to one-off sessions (28) where we resolved the matter or the person was signposted to a specialist service.

The average number of visits per person is **4**

We also see some people regularly (**9**), as they use the centre to address social isolation and we will always try to ensure that we check in weekly with these residents to see how they are faring and whether they have any issues we might need to tackle together.

We are also seeing an increase in vulnerable adults who have been left without support and have had real success in accessing ongoing and appropriate support for them.

Demographics

We offered 94% of residents listening support to help them make sense of the crisis they were experiencing.

83% of the people we supported were experiencing social isolation and we have seen an increase in people who have been experiencing a close bereavement that has affected their wellbeing.

We have also supported an increasing number of people who have sought support around relationship and divorce issues, to help them work out the options they have and generally discuss how they are feeling.

We have supported a large number of people to appeal ESA and PIP benefit decisions and have been successful with 95 % of cases, a better average than the national figure of 72%.

Signposting and referrals

We signposted residents to over 30 different local, pan-London and national organisations for ongoing support.

We most often refer people to Meridian Money Advice for debt counselling and Civil Legal Advice for support in finding a solicitor; Greenwich Housing Rights for advice about housing; and we have also reached out to local MPs for support around issues that have been problematical, such as housing repairs not being addressed by social housing providers, residents experiencing destitution and benefits appeals that seem to have been inappropriately assessed.

In the last year, we have also begun to receive referrals from local GPs, who we have liaised with previously, in support of residents. We seem to be making some solid working relationships with surgeries, as well as with Community Mental Health Assessment and Liaison, as service that is based near the centre.

Donations

People supported by the service have very generously donated over £570. This money will go towards our **Hardship Fund** and a generous donation of £500, to support volunteers.

The Lee Green Lives **Hardship Fund** helps us give small one-off payments to people experiencing extreme financial problems; such as a bus fare to the Foodbank, Job Centre or attending an assessment for PIP; sending Recorded Delivery letters for benefit appeals, or emergency electricity top-ups.

Our Trustees

Trustees during the year 2018–19:

Laura Cheek – from September 2018

Pat Coyne

David French

Simon Higgs

Simon Hooks

Jim Mallory (Chair)

Naomi Marley – from September 2018 (Secretary)

Caroline Mayow (Vice Chair)

Frances Mignuolo

Derek Padgett – until February 2019

Sheila Peck

Mary Petty – until February 2019

James Rathbone (Treasurer)

Maureen Russell

Linda Wanbon – until September 2018 (Secretary)

Ralph White

On behalf of Lee Green Lives we would like to express our heartfelt thanks to Linda Wanbon for the invaluable work, expertise and insight she gave to us during the years she served as Secretary, and also for the support she has given to the Lee Green Ward Assembly in drafting and updating its Local Plan.



Members of Lee Fair Share, at the Community Centre

Lee Green Lives Mission Statement

Our 'Mission Statement' was drawn up in activities and discussions by users, volunteers, workers and trustees to put into words the values we all feel the Community Centre should be about.

Our vision

Our vision is for a safer, stronger and more cohesive community with opportunities for self-development and growth accessible to all.

Our mission

We aim to offer opportunities, advice and support for local people to work, play, think and learn together, and to address economic and social disadvantage for mutual benefit, health and well-being.

Our goals

- To provide activities for the benefit of local people, especially the elderly, young people and people experiencing social or economic disadvantage with a focus on wellbeing, health, mental health, learning and opportunities to socialise
- To help local people to overcome difficulties with housing, health or lack of income
- To sustain a community centre at Leegate with the active participation of local volunteers
- To support the work of other local groups and organisations and to work in partnership through the Lee Green Consortium
- To contribute to the cohesion of the local community
- To advocate for the needs of local people and assist them to influence decisions that affect their lives or community

Our values

Our values are at the heart of everything we do. We aim to work in ways that are:

- Welcoming – we want everyone who comes to the centre to feel welcome and valued
- Inclusive – our activities are for everyone from the local community
- User-led – we encourage our volunteers and people using our services to help us design, develop and improve what we do
- Collaborative – wherever possible we work in partnership to improve outcomes for local people

Lee Green Lives 2018-19 Financial Accounts (unaudited)

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
Income				
Clarion Futures (Housing Group)	-	30,310	30,310	2,000
LBL Main Grant	-	11,845	11,845	15,600
LB Lewisham & Small Faith Grant	-	5,500	5,500	-
Hub (LG Assembly)	-	5,395	5,395	4,918
Contributions	2,547	-	2,547	2,126
Room hire charges	1,321	-	1,321	863
Donations & Fundraising	249	-	249	437
NCDP grant	-	136	136	6,600
Awards for all	-	-	-	5,000
Consortium (LG Assembly)	-	-	-	1,358
Co-op	-	-	-	3,638
ESOL	-	-	-	1,000
Foyle grant	-	-	-	5,000
Total Income	4,117	53,187	57,303	48,540
Expenditure				
Salary costs	(4,310)	26,746	22,436	14,108
Tutors & advocacy staff	580	17,633	18,213	2,047
Freelance staff	-	5,040	5,040	14,178
Maintenance & cleaning	360	2,021	2,381	1,820
Service charges	-	2,330	2,330	598
Water & Electricity	-	1,668	1,668	1,203
Consultancy	-	1,614	1,614	1,300
Insurance	-	1,432	1,432	1,327
Events & activity costs	90	1,312	1,402	1,197
Telephone & Internet	-	1,335	1,335	1,162
Volunteer expenses	104	881	985	740
Equipment & furniture	-	946	946	-
Printing, stationery & office costs	56	618	673	308
Accountancy & payroll services	-	580	580	417
Refreshments & catering	196	40	236	0
Welfare & hardship fund	52	112	164	144
Marketing & publicity	-	90	90	-
Subscriptions & membership fees	-	17	17	153
Other	1,000	(550)	450	-
Total expenditure	(1,873)	63,865	61,992	40,701
Summary				
Surplus/(Deficit)	5,989	(10,678)	(4,689)	7,839
Cash funds last year end	2,553	30,534	33,087	26,669
Cash funds this year end	8,543	19,856	28,398	34,508

During the 2018–19 financial year income was £57,303 and expenditure £61,922; these are increases of 18% and 52% from 17–18, largely relate to increased salary costs from our new staffing model and increased spending on freelance activity tutors. As a result of this we had a deficit of £4,689.

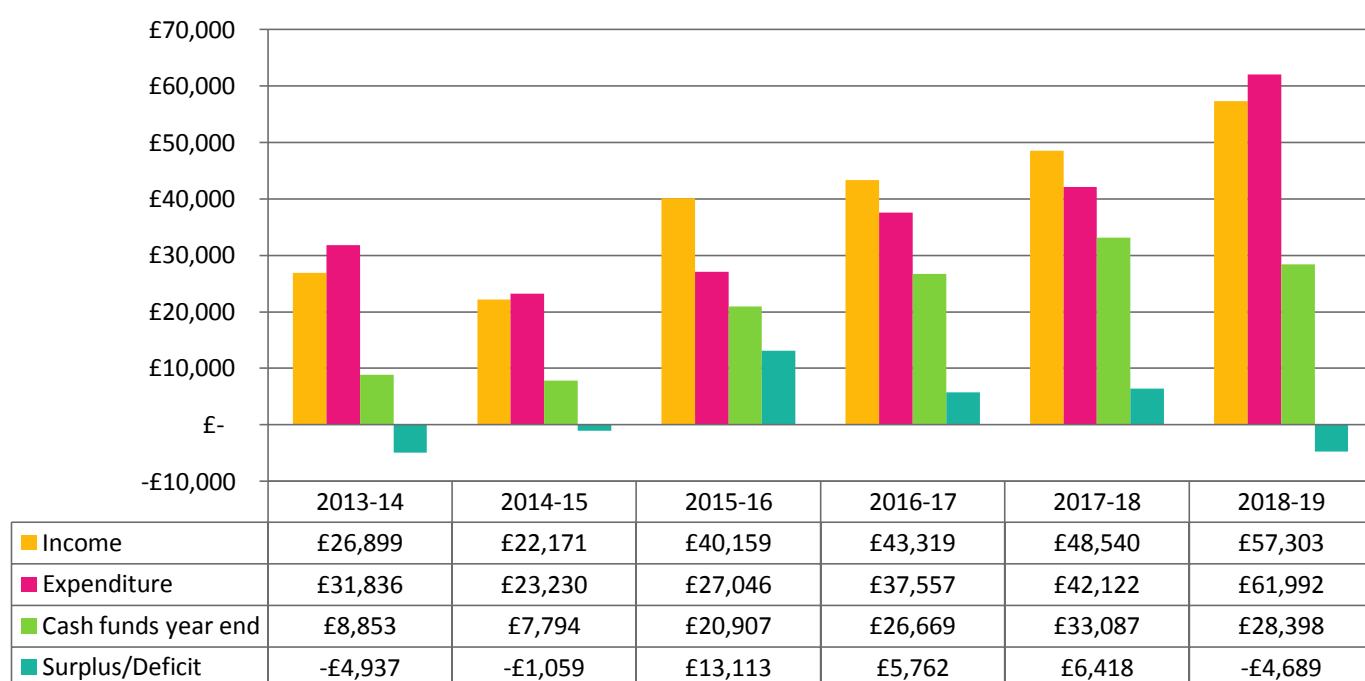
Our largest funder was Clarion Futures, which provided £30,310; (57% of restricted grants and 53% of all income). London Borough of Lewisham (LBL) provided £22,740 in three grants; 43% of restricted grants and 40% of all income. We received grants from no other organisations this year, and Clarion and LBL collectively accounted for 93% of all of Lee Green Lives (LGL) income in 2018–19.

We negotiated a new three-year Main Grant with LBL of £25,000 per annum, which came into effect in the second quarter of 19–20. When combined with our existing eighteen-month grant of £45,000 from Clarion this provides a core budget of £55,000 for 19–20. Our primary fundraising objective is now to secure a continuation of the grant from Clarion beyond 19–20. Should we not secure this beyond 19–20 we would need to significantly scale back LGL's operations.

With anticipated expenditure in 2019–20 of approximately £65,000, we need to raise roughly £10,000 in year; this shortfall primarily relates to provision of the activities and advocacy programme at the community centre. An active fund-raising programme is planned from a range of trusts, agencies and other funding sources, however, in the event that we are unable to raise the additional funds needed, we can use reserves, though this would mean LGL running a deficit for two years in a row.

In previous years we noted the low level of income in the form of unrestricted funds as one of LGL's vulnerabilities, and in 18–19 this level fell from 13% to 7%; as anticipated, and reflects the overall increase due to the new Clarion grant.

We were able to make internal recharges from restricted grants to unrestricted funds when LGL staff worked on grant funded projects, with £4,310 recharged towards salary costs. This contributed towards a surplus of £5,989 in unrestricted funds. This was over fourteen times our surplus in unrestricted funds in 17–18, and allowed us to end the year with £8,543 in unrestricted funds. This represents 14% of total expenditure, against our target of the equivalent of six-months expenditure held as unrestricted reserves. When combined with restricted funds we ended the year with £28,398 in funds, 46% of total expenditure and enough for roughly six-months of continued operations without any new income.



With anticipated expenditure of £65,000 for 19–20 and secured funding and existing reserves totalling just under £68,000 LGL will be able to meet all its financial obligations until the end of the financial year.

Consortium partners 'Friends of Manor House Gardens' organise the annual Festival



LEE GREEN *Lives* 
Creating a vibrant, well-used space for the benefit of the community



Lee Green Lives Community Centre, Unit 3 Leegate Centre, Lee Green SE12 8SS

Registered Charity Number: 1141238

Landline: **020 7998 1004.**

Centre Coordinator. Shirley Kirkland info@lgl.org.uk Administrator: Roz Hardie development@lgl.org.uk

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