

MEETING 26/03/2020

Ref: 15685

**ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: Bridging Divides - Connecting the Capital****Rushey Green Timebank (RGTB)****Adv: Geraldine Page****Base: Lewisham****Amount requested: £323,448****Benefit: Lewisham****Amount recommended: £323,500****The Applicant**

Originally set up in a busy health centre in Lewisham, Rushey Green Time Bank (RGTB) is a local charity that enables people to share time and skills to build happier, healthier communities. Time banking uses an asset-based approach and works by facilitating the exchange of skills and experience within a community. It values people and recognises that everyone has something special to offer others in the form of knowledge, skills and time. The charity improves the wellbeing of individuals by enabling the local community to provide care and services for each other through a variety of activities that involve using people's skills and talents. As people start to help and get to know their neighbours, they rebuild a sense of trust and community belonging. RGTB was one of the first examples of social prescribing and was the first timebank founded in a healthcare setting. The organisation continues to have a particular focus on reducing social isolation. Overtime RGTB has also developed several different projects from the ideas and skills of its members. These include FoodCycle Lewisham, a project offering a free community cooked meal using surplus food every Saturday; Wild Cat Wilderness (currently funded by the Trust) a community green space developed and maintained by volunteers; a pilot time banking project with Macmillan Cancer Support for people affected by cancer in Lewisham and it hosts Lewisham Local, an initiative that encourages local giving and it the subject of this application.

**The Application**

This proposal from RGTB is made on behalf of Lewisham Local (LL), a collaboration of community, voluntary, business and public sector organisations. LL is a place-based giving initiative promoting an asset-based approach that maximises participation and the long-term contribution from all communities within Lewisham. It aims to inspire local people, businesses and organisations to give more towards the needs of Lewisham's communities, encouraging a stronger sense of '*place*' for those who live, work, visit and study in the borough and to make the borough fairer and more inclusive. RGTB is a key partner of the LL Collaborative, with a strong track record of community development and spearheaded the collaborative's first initiative, the Lewisham Local Community Contributor Card. RGTB are seeking funding for the FT salary costs of a LL Director to oversee the strategic development of the giving scheme plus project costs to build on current innovative initiatives and develop more projects and activities to attract local people and businesses to give.

**The Recommendation**

RGTB is a multi-award-winning time bank and is known internationally for its pioneering work. Through time banking principles and coproduction, it provides an empowering and transformational form of volunteering that gives self-confidence to people who would not normally be involved in their local community. The charity is a founding member of Lewisham Local (LL) hosting it since June 2017 and continues

to play a pivotal role in the development of this Giving initiative, bringing together the voluntary and public sector, local businesses and communities to inspire and mobilise people to give towards good causes in Lewisham. RGTB has a very good track record of delivery in Lewisham and has an effective and strong Strategic Partnership Board for LL. This has been recognised by Lewisham Council who in 2019 awarded RGTB a contract to provide voluntary sector infrastructure support across Lewisham. It has the in-depth knowledge and confidence of local communities to continue to develop and deliver Giving in Lewisham. LL has played an active role in the London's giving network and will continue to engage and learn from other schemes and contribute its experience. Whilst your policy is usually to award one grant to each organisation this application provides an exception as RGTB is the most appropriate agency to host Lewisham Local Giving. The application fits well with your Connecting the Capital programme and funding is recommended:

***£323,500 over 5 years (5 x £64,700) towards a f/t Director of Lewisham Local plus associated running costs for the development and consolidation of Lewisham Local.***

### **Funding History**

Meeting Date	Decision
27/07/2017	£113,000 over three years (£41,000; £35,000; £37,000) for the salary of a Co-ordinator (p/t 16 hrs per week) and Assistant (p/t 8 hrs per week) and associated direct costs of the Wild Cat Wilderness project.
27/07/2017	£72,340 over two years (£36,170 x 2). The grant to be received by Rushey Green Time Bank on behalf of the Lewisham Local Collaborative, as part of the London's Giving initiative.

### **Background and detail of proposal**

Historically you have supported the Lewisham Local Collaborative via RGTB, as part of the London's Giving initiative. This funding would enable it to build on the excellent work already achieved (highlighted below) and to develop in line with its long term vision taking advantage of the growing number of businesses and individuals involved in LL and develop further opportunities. The Director will oversee the strategic development of the scheme, manage the cross-sector collaborative board, build relationships, manage staff, resources and local/regional partnerships. Plans include new infrastructure systems to attract and manage funds, administer grants to local organisations and develop communication with its growing network. A platform that facilitates a cross sector eco-system of giving and sharing time and resources, employee volunteering, gifts-in-kind, events and VSC knowledge and expertise and sharing. Project costs will build on current innovative initiatives and develop more projects and activities to attract local people to give.

To date LL projects include:

- Lewisham Local Card – given to local volunteers who give their time for free. Local businesses offer discounts and deals to thank the volunteers for what they do in the community. Over 5,000 local volunteers, 200 local charities and over 370 local businesses are part of the card.
- Lewisham Community Toilets Scheme – commissioned by Lewisham Council as an alternative to public toilets that have been closed, LL have a contract to

recruit businesses willing to offer the public free access to their toilets and there are now 61 community toilets in Lewisham.

- Refill Lewisham – following on from LL’s successful work developing a network of community minded business, the Greater London Authority (GLA) approached LL to trail a network of local businesses that would offer free water refills to help reduce single-use plastic waste. There are now 100 businesses offering free water refills.
- Lewisham Local Training and Workshops – LL has developed skills-sharing workshops where local businesses offer short practical training to local charities and other businesses as a way of giving to the community

### Financial Information

The charity is experiencing considerable growth and continues to diversify its portfolio of projects tailored to the needs and aspirations of the community. It is also adopting its new role of Voluntary Sector Infrastructure support in Lewisham. A three-year contract with the Local Authority awarded in 2019. The organisation is well managed and in a good financial position. Free reserves are below the trustee’s policy of 3-6 months of expenditure, however 75% of projected income for 2021 is already secured and RGTB will endeavour to increase unrestricted surplus.

Year end as at 31 March	2019	2020	2021
	Examined Accounts	Forecast	Budget
	£	£	£
<b>Income &amp; expenditure:</b>			
Income	265,360	350,507	449,677
- % of Income confirmed as at 20/2/20	N/A	100%	75%
Expenditure	(279,577)	(320,909)	(436,789)
Total surplus/(deficit)	<b>(14,217)</b>	<b>29,598</b>	<b>12,888</b>
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	(21,428)	27,758	0
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	7,211	1,840	12,888
	<b>(14,217)</b>	<b>29,598</b>	<b>12,888</b>
Total Expenditure	279,577	320,909	436,789
<b>Free unrestricted reserves:</b>			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	84,639	86,479	99,367
No of months of expenditure	3.6	3.2	2.7
Reserves policy target	69,894	80,227	109,197
No of months of expenditure	3.0	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	14,745	6,252	(9,830)