

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Older Londoners**Royal Docks Learning and Activity Centre****Adv: Sandra Jones****Base: Newham****Benefit: Newham****Amount requested: £37,200****{Revised request: £49,200}****Amount recommended: £49,200****The Charity**

Established in 1968 the Royal Docks Learning and Activity Centre (RDLAC) is a well-used, multi-purpose, community centre, serving the needs of residents in the North Woolwich and Silvertown areas of Newham. It is led by a Board of Trustees which includes local businesses, users, the local vicar and a representative of the Royal Docks Trust. The Centre's building is leased from St John's Church and was fully refurbished in 2003.

Located in an area of significant disadvantage, isolated by water on two sides, with few facilities to aid informal social interaction, RDLAC plays a vital role in the lives of local people. The Centre's services include: an over 50s project; an after-school and holiday club; women's support and advocacy; a food access project; an employment project, a children and parents project.

The Application

Having developed a successful project for older people to 'Stay Well', RDLAC wishes to expand its services to ensure that people over the age of 75 years can access the Stay Well activities. The project will target 150 local people over the age of 75 years, supporting them to attend events and activities offered in the Centre.

The Recommendation

RDLAC has identified that people over 75 years tend not to access the Stay Well activities and so has developed the project to address this. The budget originally submitted identified that the organisation would deploy some of its reserves towards the project. Although it does have a reasonable level of reserves, the charity has suffered from a decrease in income over the past 2 years due to the closure of a major road for Crossrail works and subsequent bus diversions, leading to fewer people accessing the Centre. Although the road has now reopened, it will take some time for the organisation to replace lost income. It is recommended, therefore, that the grant should include the sum of £4,000 per annum that the organisation would have contributed from its reserves:

A grant of £49,200 over 3 years (£15,400, £16,400, £17,400) towards the costs of a part-time (15hpw) Project Worker, plus running and management costs.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
08/09/2005	£21,000 over three years (3 x £7,000) towards the cost of running social clubs for the over 60's.

Background and detail of proposal

The Stay Well project provided at the Centre is part of a borough-wide initiative to enable older people to live independently and for longer. However, only a few people aged over 75 years currently access the project on a regular basis. In order to address this, the organisation is looking to provide a dedicated Project Worker to support these older people to, either, attend the centre on a regular basis, or have some support from the Stay Well project. This will be achieved by providing a befriending service to visit and support those over 75 years to attend the various activities offered at the Centre.

Over the three years, 40 volunteers will be recruited and trained, befriending 80 older people. Activities at the Centre will be expanded, taking on board the needs identified by the older people through consultation undertaken at the beginning of the project. Activities currently include arts and crafts, tai chi, cook and eat, garden events, dance and movement. Drop in sessions offering advice and signposting will be offered, along with information and support sessions provided by local agencies working with older people.

Financial Information

Forecast income for the current year is £209,684, of which £129,534 (61.8%) had been confirmed by the end of September 2014.

The charity has assessed that core staff spend approximately 10% of their time on fund raising activities and this is shown in the table below as the cost of generating funds.

Year end at 31 March	2013/14 Audited Accounts £	2014/15 Current Year Budget £	2015/16 Following Year Budget £
Income and Expenditure			
Income	219,756	209,684	216,800
Expenditure	243,102	210,184	216,949
Unrestricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	0	(500)	(149)
Restricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	(23,346)	0	0
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	(23,346)	(500)	(149)
Surplus / (Deficit) as a % of turnover	(10.6%)	(0.2%)	(0.07%)
Cost of Generating funds (% of income)	7,691 (3.5%)	7,339 (3.5%)	7,588 (3.5%)
Free unrestricted reserves			
Unrestricted free reserves held at Year End	115,020	114,520	114,371
How many months' worth of expenditure	5.7	6.5	6.3
Reserves Policy target	155,000	155,000	155,000
How many months' worth of expenditure	7.7	8.8	8.6
Free reserves over/(under) target	(39,980)	(40,480)	(40,629)