

**ASSESSMENT CATEGORY – Reducing Poverty****Age UK Lewisham & Southwark****Adv: Jenny Field****Amount requested: £137,991****Base: Southwark****Benefit: Southwark & Lewisham****Amount recommended: £138,000****The Charity**

Age UK Lewisham & Southwark (AUKLS) is the product of the merger of two, previously independent, Age UK's that took place in 2007. It has resulted in the establishment of a stronger organisation that is a significant provider of services for older people in these two boroughs.

**The Application**

AUKLS has been providing information and advice services to older people in the boroughs for over 30 years and it deals with some 9,500 advice and information enquiries every year. It currently has a five-week waiting list of people waiting for a home visit. Excess demand means the charity has to turn away over 1,000 people from its drop-in advice and information service annually.

The majority of AUKLS' clients face poverty, poor physical health, isolation, and mental distress. Most lack knowledge about their entitlements. There is an acute need to help older people navigate the complex benefit system and access their entitlements in order to reduce poverty. You are asked to support the full-time salary and associated running costs of an Advice Manager who will recruit, train and support a team of volunteers to provide advice sessions at AUKLS's three bases in Lewisham and Southwark.

**The Recommendation**

This application was originally made under the Older Londoners strand of your Investing in Londoners programmes which targets those who are aged 75+. However, whilst a high proportion of AUKLS's clients are aged over 75 years, its advice sessions are not specifically targeted at this age group. Since the focus of this advice work is on reducing poverty amongst older people, the application is also a good fit with your Reducing Poverty programme. AUKLS holds the Advice Quality Standard which is a requirement of your Reducing Poverty programme.

***£138,000 over three years (£45,000; £46,000; £47,000) towards the salary and associated running costs of a full-time Advice Manager***

**Funding History**

Meeting Date	Decision
18/03/2010	£100,000 over three years (£33,000; £33,000; £34,000) for a healthy living programme for those aged 65+.
10/07/2007	£20,000 for a third and final year towards a volunteering programme. (NB this grant was awarded to Age UK Lewisham prior to the merger).
03/05/2007	£10,600 towards transport and activities for older people at the North Southwark Healthy Ageing Centre for one year. (NB this grant was awarded to Age UK Southwark prior to the merger).

## Background and detail of proposal

AUKLS provides a range of services for older people, including a Day Centre, a Healthy Living Centre, Independent Living Services, Help at Home services and a Handyperson Service.

Access to good quality advice and information plays a vital role in older people's health and well-being, and with recent changes in benefits and entitlements, is needed now more than ever. Your funding will enable AUKLS to expand the availability of its drop-in advice service and provide an advice and information helpline three days per week. It will continue to make home visits to those unable to visit its offices and to provide appointments for those with more complex cases.

## Financial Information

The last two financial years have been difficult for AUKLS due to a reduction in its income as a result of local authority spending cuts. It has re-structured during this time and in 2014/15 a modest surplus on unrestricted funds is forecast.

Forecast income for the current year is £1,699,135, of which £1,554,524 (91%) has been confirmed as at November 2014.

Year end at 31 March	2013/14 Audited Accounts	2014/15 Current Year Forecast
<b>Income and Expenditure</b>	£	£
Income	1,820,918	1,699,135
Expenditure	1,846,493	1,618,883
Unrestricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	(32,704)	45,252
Restricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	7,129	35,000
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	(25,575)	80,252
Surplus / (Deficit) as a % of turnover	(1.4%)	4.7%
Cost of Generating funds (% of income)	92,038 (5.1%)	95,000 (5.6%)
<b>Free unrestricted reserves</b>		
Unrestricted free reserves held at Year End	333,220	378,472
How many months' worth of expenditure	2.2	2.8
Reserves Policy target	3	3
How many months' worth of expenditure	461,623	404,721
Free reserves over/(under) target	(128,403)	(26,249)