

The Neighbourhood Keepers programme

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Foreword: The Church Street regeneration scheme

The Church Street Ward is a vibrant, multicultural and well-situated neighbourhood in the City of Westminster. At the heart of the area is a street market dating back to the 1830s, as well as an internationally renowned antiques quarter. The ward has a long association with the arts, and a committed and engaged network of residents and volunteers who regularly dedicate their time to local issues. However, it is also an area with complex challenges: it experiences some of the highest levels of social and economic deprivation in Westminster.

The 2018 Ward Profile estimates there are 13,203 residents in the ward. Compared with the Westminster average, Church Street has a higher proportion of people aged under 18, and a slightly greater proportion of people aged 65 or over.

Church Street is more ethnically diverse than Westminster as a whole; it has the second lowest proportion of White British residents of any ward in the borough, and a higher than borough-wide average for the number of residents born outside the UK. This diversity has helped to create a ward in which new arrivals live side-by-side with longstanding residents, some of whom have family histories going back several generations in the area. The top 5 language groups spoken are Arabic, South Asian languages, West/Central Asian languages, other European languages and East Asian languages.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015 puts 43 per cent of the ward's population in the top five per cent most deprived in England. At 55 per cent, the workless rate in Church Street is significantly higher than the borough rate. Ward residents are more likely to not have any qualifications, and secondary school pupils are performing below the Westminster City average for GCSE results.

The local public realm is very urban, with a significant lack of green space. The 2018 Ward Profile recorded 22.7 per cent of the ward's population as having a long-term limiting illness or disability, which is slightly lower than the Westminster average, and there are equal levels of obesity and mental illness. The GLA's Well-being Index ranks Church Street in the bottom 25 per cent of all London wards in terms of well-being indicators that include health, economic security, safety and accessibility.

Westminster City Council's central aspiration for the Church Street area is to facilitate estate renewal and economic growth, while making a fundamental and lasting difference to the lives of its residents, both current and future. The Council plans to build new homes, but also to deliver new and better parks and children's play spaces; to improve shops, job and business opportunities; and to ensure that all those who live and work in the area have access to good quality schools, healthcare and other services. A crucial part is the facilitation of improved health and well-being outcomes across the area. The Neighbourhood Keepers programme directly addresses this objective.

What is the Neighbourhood Keepers Programme?

The Neighbourhood Keepers programme is a community initiative, developed by the Church Street Futures Group (CSFG) and other working groups over the past five years. It specifically aims to deliver health, well-being and environmental benefits for all Church Street residents, not just those directly affected by building works. Westminster City Council will spend £2million over 5 years to improve health and well-being, and support environmental upkeep, complementing the development of the Green Spine.

Phase 1 of the Green Spine project is a key public realm improvement sitting within the Church Street Masterplan and Church Street Infrastructure and Public Realm Plan (IPRP). Phase 1 of the Green Spine will be a new linear park that provides a pedestrian-orientated route running north-south through the area linking the new Lisson Gardens, Broadley Gardens, Church Street, and to the new Luton Street development, with the view that the next phase will continue this route. The project will bring much-needed green space to the area for the benefit of local people and wildlife. The aspiration is to create an enduring legacy of an improved public realm through the Regeneration programme. Phase 1 work is scheduled to start in 2018.

Why 'Neighbourhood Keepers'?

The programme takes its name from the "Neighbourhood Keepers" - a small team of community workers that will be employed to co-ordinate a range of activities once the Green Spine is in use, including but not exclusively

- i. gardening in the community, a combination of both community and independent gardening

- ii. positive activities on and around the Green Spine.

The phase leading up to the opening of the Green Spine will consist of projects that test what activities are popular with the community. We are looking to commission projects that could be replicated and feasible on and around the Green Spine.

What do we offer?

The Neighbourhood Keepers programme offers funds totalling £2 million from 2017 until 2022, and is delivered through Westminster City Council's City for All programme. It seeks to award grants from £200 to £20,000 to organisations or individuals to deliver health and well-being activities like sports activities, healthy cooking sessions, edible planting, gardening, food waste recycling, food waste awareness campaigns or environmental projects involving bat boxes, bird houses and other wildlife hubs, for local people of all ages and backgrounds to take part in.

Funding will cover:

- professional fees and materials
- administration and staff costs for management, planning and delivery of the project
- venue hire or rehearsal space hire
- licensing, event notices and road closure costs (it will strengthen your application to have relevant permissions in place when you apply, but it isn't required)
- publicity and marketing costs
- costs for training volunteers
- costs to make the activity more accessible to participants

We do not require, but welcome any match funding.

Equipment may be purchased on condition that is used by the beneficiaries and it will reside with the beneficiary group or organisation once the project has ended, for its continued use by those groups. This must be agreed with the fund manager prior to purchase (a valid original receipt of purchase will be required). All equipment purchased through the Neighbourhood Keepers programme is wholly owned by Westminster City Council.

We offer support leading up to the application in the form of workshops, where we will deliver training on how to put together a project proposal, including making project timelines, budgets and monitoring reports. With regards to marketing, we will be able to cross-promote successful applications on our social media sites, as well as in the Regeneration Base at 99 Church Street.

What the Neighbourhood Keepers will achieve

The Neighbourhood Keepers programme has been designed to support three strategic themes: improve quality of life; improve the physical conditions and environment that people live in and support a strong community. Each theme comes with its own set of challenges and opportunities, and no theme can be considered in isolation. We encourage cross-cutting proposals that help to secure the long-term social and environmental sustainability of the Church Street community, although projects may put particular emphasis on one or two themes.

A key part of this project is to build community capacity, and to reduce the reliance on public services over the longer-term.

Improve quality of life

The primary objective of the regeneration programme is to improve the quality of life of people who visit, live and work in Church Street. This means promoting health and well-being in all activities. The Neighbourhood Keepers programme therefore will deliver:

- targeted activities promoting health and well-being for people at different life stages
- activities that promote non-medical means of improving well-being, such as exercise classes, yoga, arts and crafts, and cultural events
- activities that promote healthy eating, and making positive choices around risk behaviours (smoking, alcohol, substance misuse)

Improve the physical conditions and environment that people live in

A clean, green, well-used and well-looked after environment is an enabler of quality of life outcomes. This project will develop a range of initiatives that seek to create new places to play, exercise and socialise, and grow food and plants. The Neighbourhood Keepers programme therefore will initiate:

- independent gardening projects
- community gardening projects

Support a strong community

Underpinning the Neighbourhood Keepers is the need to support a strong and resilient community that is empowered to meet its own needs, and ensure that the new and established communities have opportunities to come together through a programme of shared activities and events that appeal to a broad range of people. The following activities will aim to increase community cohesion:

- a programme of community activity, focusing on positive activity for children and their families, on the Green Spine and within estates
- an annual programme of arts and performances on the Green Spine
- an annual Summer Festival on the Green Spine
- neighbourhood celebrations for Christmas, Eid, Hanukah and other religious or cultural festivals on the Green Spine
- play activities for young children on the streets around the Green Spine.

What we will fund

We will fund positive activities that address health, well-being and the environment. These could be, but are not limited to:

- sports activities for children and/or adults (e.g. Tai chi, Yoga, Karate, chess, dancing, walking clubs, running clubs, football etc.)
- healthy cooking sessions
- edible planting
- food waste recycling and/or food waste awareness campaign (focus on seasonal, local produce)
- gardening sessions, seed banks, seedling giveaways etc.
- women's only activities (sports, coffee mornings, etc.)
- health and well-being sessions for parents and babies/toddlers/school children
- development of a Women's Forum to create a platform for the promotion and celebration of women and cohesion among women from all cultural backgrounds
- work with minority ethnic elder groups to counter a high rate of diabetes and heart disease among older Asian and African-Caribbean people
- games for adults, young adults and children – accessible for wheelchair users
- tables and chairs for board games outside during summer – iron, rust-proof street furniture that is robust, low maintenance, easily repairable and replaceable, vandal resistant and affordable
- outdoor chess – see St. Johns Gardens, Westminster
- bat boxes, bird houses and other wildlife sites such as beehives

A key focus will be children of all ages and their families, and we encourage you to work closely with the local schools and youth organisations. If you plan to do an event / activity for children, you must have a current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate and provide us with a copy of that.

What we won't fund

The Neighbourhood Keepers programme is predominantly funding positive activities for people of all ages and backgrounds in Church Street. We will not fund:

- projects that don't have a strong health and well-being or environmental component as their primary motive or activity
- projects that take place outside the Edgware Road Housing Zone, i.e. the Church Street and Paddington Green wards and the Lisson Green estate - if your project takes place outside this area, you must show how it benefits the area and its residents, and how you'll make it accessible to Church Street ward residents with disabilities or unable to reach the area
- capital works on a premises
- purchase of equipment, unless specifically used and retained by the beneficiaries
- activities that promote political, religious or extremist views
- regular core running costs, loan repayments or VAT
- activities that have no public benefit for residents
- 'business as usual' activities (such as normal maintenance or repairs, or projects that continue existing activities)

Who can apply

The local community, organisations, individuals and Church Street residents can submit applications for funding for health and well-being or environmental projects.

Individuals and organisations based in the Church Street ward will be prioritised.

Individuals under 18, but over 16 years old can apply, but will be required to have an adult with a current DBS certificate present while delivering their project. They also need the support of a guarantor. For example, City of Westminster College students could be backed by the college.

Individuals over 18 may apply with the support of a partnership organisation, which could be the venue or a professional facilitator. The guarantor would be the recipient of the funds, rather than the individual. We cannot accept applications from departments within local authorities. Applicants working in partnership with libraries or schools, for example, should submit the application.

Projects must begin within 3 months of an award being made.

How to apply

There will be two application rounds for the Neighbourhood Keepers fund in 2018. Westminster City Council will commission projects that run between May 2018 and April 2019.

There is no maximum number of times you can apply to the fund, but please be aware that, in the interests of fairness, the panel will take the overall amount of funding awarded to individuals or organisations into consideration when assessing further bids.

Step 1

Contact Kat on krichter@westminster.gov.uk or 020 7641 4274 (Mondays and Tuesdays only) for a short informal discussion of your project idea. If encouraged to apply, fill in an Expression of Interest form, and send it to Kat by **Monday 19 March 2018, 5pm**.

Step 2

If you are invited to proceed to the application stage, attend one of the workshops designed to support your application. Then complete the online application form on www.westminster.gov.uk/neighbourhood-keepers-programme, providing detailed information on your project, by **Monday 30 April, 5pm**.

You will need to prepare the following supporting documents:

- a brief project plan and timeline
- 2 letters of reference or support from a reliable source – one of these can be your guarantor if the applicant is an individual
- for funding above £5,000, where the applicant is an organisation, a copy of your most recent audited annual accounts - these mustn't be more than 2 years old
- a financial projections template to let us know how much you're planning to spend
- enhanced DBS certificates for all staff who will be working unsupervised with children, or proof of DBS application before the start of the project
- your public liability certificate (minimum indemnity of £2 million) or your employer's liability certificate.

How the funding works

Your application will be assessed using the following weighted criteria:

- 10% local connections/added value –points will be awarded to applicants who have existing links in the Church Street area.
- 25% local impact–points will be awarded to applicants who appropriately consider the area's socio-economic dynamics and clearly address these with their project.
- 25% delivery approach – points will be awarded to applicants who have clearly demonstrated that their project is achievable, and what steps they will take to ensure its delivery.
- 40% value for money – points will be awarded to applicants whose offer is competitive, i.e. within market value range of similar activities

Decisions will be made at a meeting of the Neighbourhood Keepers assessment panel which are usually held within 3 to 4 weeks of the closing date.

Depending on the size and financial value of your project, payments will be released dependent on receipt of satisfactory monitoring reports. You will need to collect your participants' details and feedback, as well as take photos of your project in action. Westminster City Council and the successful applicant will sign a legally binding project agreement.