

VCFS GRANTS 2027–2031

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES



FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY,
AND FAITH ORGANISATIONS OF ALL SIZES,
FROM GRASSROOTS GROUPS TO ESTABLISHED ORGANISATIONS.

BUILDING HEALTHIER, FAIRER AND MORE CONNECTED
COMMUNITIES ACROSS GREENWICH.

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[ROYALGREENWICH.GOV.UK/VCFS-GRANTS](https://royalgreenwich.gov.uk/vcfs-grants)**



VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR STRENGTH IN PEOPLE THEMED GRANTS FUNDING 2027–31

Guidance Notes

Read alongside the VCFS Funding Prospectus 2027–2031.

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Welcome to the Strength in People Funding Application Guidance document

These guidelines are to help you complete your Funding Application for the 2027–31 VCFS Grants Process on the Plinth system [here](#). Before you begin, please:

- Familiarise yourself with this guidance
- Ensure that you are eligible to apply for funding by referring to the Eligibility Criteria, which are set out below.
- Read through the details of the relevant funding priority in the Prospectus that you wish to apply for.

We advise you to complete this application on a larger device than a phone, but please contact VCS-Grants@royalgreenwich.gov.uk if you have any access issues. You can also download the application, complete it offline, and then upload it to the Plinth system.

Only the lead applicant of a consortium or partnership needs to submit an application. Additional information about partner organisations may be required at a later stage.

The deadline for submitting your application is 5pm on Monday 26 October 2026. Applications received after this date and time will not be accepted.

The timetable is as follows:

Activity	Timeline
Training and support sessions	Ongoing
Strength in People themed grants – applications open	14 September 2026 (open for 6 weeks)
Strength in People themed grants – applications close	26 October 2026
Strength in People themed grants assessment period	27 October – 8 December 2026
Strength in People – Funding decisions	December 2026
Strength in People – Grant awards	January 2027
Strength in People – Service delivery plan development and mobilisation	January to March 2027
Strength in People themed grants – delivery starts	April 2027

WHO CAN APPLY?

This programme is open to voluntary, community and faith sector organisations delivering activities in the Royal Borough of Greenwich.

As a group, you can apply for funding if you are a:

- Registered Charity
- Company Limited by Guarantee
- Community Interest Company (CIC)
- Educational Establishment
- Religious Organisation
- Social Enterprise
- Constituted Community Organisation
- Friends of Group
- Tenants and Residents Association

Additionally, we will need to ensure that your organisation:

- Is a non-statutory organisation
- Is formally constituted
- Operates in the not-for-profit sector
- Has a properly elected management committee
- Operates in the Royal Borough of Greenwich

The following **will not** be considered for funding:

- Private groups or companies
- Profit-making or trading arms of organisations
- Groups seeking funding for the purposes of fundraising or to redistribute
- Political parties
- Organisations using funds to engage in political activity or political campaigns
- Churches or religious organisations if the activity is intended to promote the religion itself, or if people must take part in religious services in order to benefit.
- Organisations where 'campaigning' is the main purpose or activity, except local groups addressing specific health and social inequalities
- Organisations currently under investigation by the Charity Commission. However, if the Charity Commission has investigated the organisation within the last two years and the investigation has concluded, provide details of the outcome for consideration.

Please note, applications will be subject to a higher level of scrutiny if they are from:

- Organisations with outstanding undisputed debts to the Council and no agreed repayment arrangement
- Organisations with a poor track record of delivering and monitoring KPIs in previous Council grant rounds with no agreed transformation plan

WHAT THE FUNDING CAN SUPPORT

Funding can be used for costs directly associated with delivering activities/programmes, or support for beneficiaries, where these contribute to achieving the priority outcomes. No more than 15% can be allocated to overhead costs.

This grant does not fund:

- Capital expenditure
- Retrospective costs
- Unrelated organisation costs
- Activities outside the scope of the Themed Priorities

Examples of Capital expenditure not eligible include:

- Buildings and Facilities: Acquiring a new office, community centre, or charity shop.
- Significant Refurbishment: Major structural improvements such as replacing a roof or rewiring.
- Vehicles: Purchasing a minibus for transporting clients or a van for collecting donated goods.
- IT Infrastructure: Upgrading major network systems, servers, or acquiring hardware that exceeds standard capitalisation thresholds

Organisations are advised not to apply for more than 50% of their total yearly expenditure.

Please contact vcs-grants@royalgreenwich.gov.uk if you need to discuss individual circumstances.

USE OF AI

We appreciate that AI is a handy tool that might be able to save time, but be careful about ‘overusing’ it. Please always check its accuracy and relevance. It is much better to use AI to refine what you have already written. AI tools don’t necessarily capture your work or what makes your application stand out.

When applications are assessed, it is important to see and hear the knowledge and skills of those who will be delivering. AI cannot replace or replicate an organisation’s passion and knowledge of the work they undertake.

THE APPLICATION QUESTIONS

About your Organisation

Please select which Priority you are applying for.

Please write your Project Title.

1 Organisation and Contact Details

Please note that the contact details given should be business contact details, not personal.

2 Legal Status

Please outline your organisation's legal status, including any registration numbers. If you are a 'new' charitable/not-for-profit organisation, e.g. Social Enterprise, CIC or CIO, please provide details. Please note you will be asked for your governing document at the end of your application.

3 Partnership / Consortia

We actively promote funding proposals from partnerships/consortia (organisations that may already be working together or that want to work together) and want to jointly seek funding from the Council.

Please note that one organisation must be nominated as the lead organisation.

The lead organisation must list all organisations in the partnership/consortium (Name, Address, Status).

We are aware that not all planned partnerships / consortia will have developed a formal partnership agreement or Memorandum of Understanding for their proposed work. Where a written agreement exists, please upload it here.

With or without a formal agreement or MoU, please provide the following information in this section:

- A summary of each partner's track record in delivering comparable services
- A summary of the roles and responsibilities of the different partners, and what management, decision-making and communication processes will be arranged to ensure effective delivery
- A summary of how the funding and monitoring will be managed

Please note, we will expect to see a formal agreement from confirmed partners before commencement of any delivery and before any funding is released.

4 Staffing

Please tell us how many permanent members of staff you have and how many volunteers your organisation has.

5 London Living Wage

You will not be penalised if you are not a London Living Wage employer, but you will be expected to state what steps you are taking to become a London Living Wage Employer.

6 Information Sharing and Security

Please explain how you ensure information held by your organisation is shared and stored appropriately. If you are not yet fully compliant with GDPR, please provide details of when you intend to be.

7 Equal Opportunities

This section requires you to confirm that you have an Equal Opportunity and Diversity Policy and procedures around how it is implemented in your organisation.

Specifically, your policy should address your organisation's practice covering, but not limited to, all nine protected characteristics:

- age
- disability
- ethnicity or race
- sex
- gender re-assignment
- marital or civil partnership status
- pregnancy or maternity
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation

In addition, the policy should:

- Show that your organisation communicates the policy to all staff
- Be reflected in the organisation's recruitment processes
- Show that discrimination, harassment and victimisation, on the basis of any of the nine protected characteristics, are disciplinary offences
- Confirm that the organisation has a designated officer with responsibilities for the effective implementation and monitoring of the policy, and that these arrangements ☐ have been reviewed in the last two years

8 Your Trustees

You will need to tell us about:

- Any legal or financial issues that your organisation, the Trustees and/or partners have had.
- Any close relationships between individuals closely involved with the organisation.

Please note that any instances of previous convictions by Trustees may disqualify the application but each will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

QUALITY ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Assessment Framework

Applications will be assessed on the quality of the proposed activity, the organisation's ability to deliver it successfully, the anticipated outcomes and wider social value.

Expected Criteria

All organisations should be able to demonstrate:

- **Experience** – experience of delivering relevant services
- **Outcomes-based delivery** – outcomes approach, monitoring, evaluation and continuous improvement.
- **Equity and inclusion** – an approach that ensures services are accessible, relevant and trusted, particularly by residents who may face barriers to participation.
- **Partnership working** – effective collaboration with statutory services, community organisations and other partners to provide appropriate referrals and respond to residents' needs.
- **Safeguarding** – robust arrangements to prevent, identify and respond to abuse, neglect, exploitation and self-neglect.
- **Co-design and lived experience** – a clear approach to involving people with lived experience in the design, delivery and ongoing development of interventions.

The evaluation and weighting we will use to assess your application is detailed below.

Each scored question will be assessed on a scale of 0–5 using the assessment criteria. Scores will then be weighted to produce an overall quality assessment score.

Question	Weighting
Activity Details	25%
Staffing and Project Management	25%
Outcomes, Monitoring and Social Impact	30%
Budget	20%

Score	Descriptor
5	Excellent – The response fully addresses all aspects of the question. It is clear, comprehensive and well evidenced, giving a high level of confidence that the applicant can successfully deliver the proposed activity and achieve the intended outcomes.
4	Good – The response addresses all key aspects of the question and provides sufficient evidence. There may be minor omissions or areas where more detail could have been provided, but overall it gives good confidence in delivery.
3	Satisfactory – The response addresses most aspects of the question but lacks detail or supporting evidence in some areas.
2	Limited – The response only partially addresses the question. Important information is missing or unclear.
1	Poor – Very limited response that provides little confidence.
0	No evidence – Question not answered or insufficient information to assess.

Assessment Criteria

Question	What we will be looking for
Project Proposal 25% Tell us in detail about the activity/programme you are applying for.	The organisation demonstrates relevant experience of delivering the proposed activity/programme or similar services. The organisation explains whether the activity is new or an existing delivery and provides relevant context, including evidence of demand or previous success. Why the activity/programme is needed and how it responds to an identified local need. A clear and comprehensive explanation of what will be delivered, including the main activities, how they will be delivered and what users will experience. Clear information on where activities will take place and how often they will be delivered. Delivery arrangements are realistic and appropriate.

Question	What we will be looking for
	A clear approach to co-design and involving people with lived experience in the design, delivery and ongoing development of interventions. An approach that ensures the activity/programme is accessible, relevant, responsive and trusted, particularly by residents who may face barriers to participation. The intended beneficiaries are clearly identified, including who the activity is for, why they have been chosen and the number of people expected to be reached, with a proposed reach that is realistic and proportionate to the funding requested.
Staffing and Project Management 25% Describe how you intend to staff, manage and deliver the activity/programme.	Appropriate staffing and recruitment arrangements are in place, with clearly defined roles, responsibilities and adaptability to manage demand. Staff and volunteers have the relevant skills, qualifications and experience to deliver the proposed activity/programme. Clear management arrangements that demonstrate effective oversight, accountability and decision-making. Robust safeguarding arrangements are in place to prevent, identify and respond to abuse, neglect, exploitation and self-neglect, including clear policies, appropriate staff and volunteer checks, training and defined routes for reporting and escalation. Robust processes are in place to monitor performance, maintain quality and drive continuous improvement. The organisation demonstrates effective collaboration with statutory services, community organisations and other partners to provide appropriate referrals and respond to residents' needs. A realistic and achievable mobilisation plan is in place, showing readiness to commence delivery by April 2027. Appropriate contingency arrangements are in place to minimise the impact of programme disruption or failure.

Question	What we will be looking for
Outcomes, Monitoring and Social Impact 30% Explain how you will achieve and monitor the expected outcomes set out in the prospectus.	The proposal clearly demonstrates how the activity/programme will contribute to the chosen priority outcomes set out in the prospectus. Clear and realistic outcomes are identified for residents, with a logical link between the proposed activities and the expected benefits. The organisation has a proportionate approach to monitoring progress, measuring outcomes and evaluating the effectiveness of the activity/programme. Appropriate methods are in place to collect, manage and report data, with suitable evidence to demonstrate outcomes. The proposal demonstrates the wider social, economic or environmental benefits the activity/programme will generate for the local community beyond the direct project outputs. The applicant demonstrates how monitoring, feedback and learning will be used to improve delivery and maximise impact throughout the funding period.
Financing your Proposal 20% Please outline how you intend to finance this activity/programme and what you plan to spend the money on.	We will be assessing: • Are the costs eligible? • Are they reasonable and proportionate? • Do they represent good value for money? • Does the budget align with the proposed activity?

100%

FINANCIAL AND ORGANISATIONAL DUE DILIGENCE

This section will assess the organisation's governance, financial management, financial resilience and overall suitability to receive grant funding. A RAG rating will be given accordingly, which will contribute to the final outcome. Where necessary, officers may seek clarification or additional information before making a funding recommendation.

Assessment Area	What will be considered
Financial Stability	Review of recent accounts, credit check, reserves, financial performance and overall financial health.
Financial Management	Evidence of appropriate financial controls and governance arrangements.
Sustainability	An organisation's ability to remain financially viable during and beyond the grant period.
Income Generation	Evidence of securing external funding and plans to diversify income over the coming years.
Financial Projections	Whether financial forecasts appear realistic and achievable.

I Governance and Financial Management

In your response, please include details of the following:

- Your organisation's aims and objectives.
- How decisions are made within your organisation, including the respective roles of the Board of Trustees (or Management Committee) and senior staff.
- The frequency of Board or Management Committee meetings and how they provide strategic oversight of the organisation and the delivery of funded activities.
- The composition of your Board or Management Committee, including the range of skills, knowledge and experience represented. This may include expertise in areas such as finance, management, HR, fundraising, marketing, legal, safeguarding or lived experience, where relevant to the size and nature of your organisation.
- Whether there has been any significant leadership turnover. If so, please provide details.

- How your Board or Management Committee will oversee the proposed project and ensure appropriate governance and accountability for the funding.
- Who is responsible for overseeing the organisation's finances.
- How financial decisions are authorised and monitored.
- The financial controls your organisation has in place to ensure appropriate management of public funds (for example, delegated authority, dual authorisation of payments and regular financial reporting to the Board).
- Any independent examination or audit arrangements, where applicable.

2 Funding and Service Delivery Performance

Applicants that have had agreements ended for reasons of performance or court action will not necessarily be discounted from this process. Each applicant will be considered on a case-by-case basis. They must, however, clearly demonstrate what they have taken from this experience and have evidence of improvements.

3 Audited Accounts

Please attach your last two years' Audited or Independently Examined Accounts. If your organisation was set up less than three years ago, please provide all the audited or independently Examined Accounts you have to date.

We need to be assured that the organisation funded will be financially sustainable throughout the term of the funding period and that the activity represents appropriate value for money.

Accounts will be verified by an external credit rating agency, as well as by officers from the Council's finance department.

4 Amount Requested

Please be as specific as possible here.

We expect budgets to include the true cost of providing that service, including an appropriate proportion of core costs.

We need to know whether the amount sought will be your main source of income and whether it is contributing to or fully covering the cost of the activity/programme. This will not impact your application.

Please also give details of any other Royal Borough of Greenwich grant application you are currently applying to or have previously applied to in the last 12 months.

5 Financial Sustainability over the next four years

We need to be assured that the funded service will be financially sustainable throughout the term of the funding period and that it represents good value for money.

We know that circumstances can change, so please be as realistic as possible. You should have clear business plans to evidence how you would back up your income and expenditure projections.

6 Reserves

This is very important to assist us to understand your financial sustainability.

Be clear as to the uses of your Reserves, especially how this will contribute to maintaining your financial stability, if needed.

7 Safeguarding

This section requires you to show that your organisation has a robust Safeguarding Policy and effective procedures in place around how it is implemented in your organisation.

Organisations must have robust arrangements to prevent, identify and respond to abuse, neglect, exploitation and self-neglect.

Your safeguarding policy should include, as a minimum:

- 1) A commitment to safeguard vulnerable adults, children and young people and to comply with the London Child Protection Procedures safeguarding policy
- 2) The principles that underpin the practice and behaviour of staff and volunteers
- 3) Information tailored to the type of services you provide and the profile of your service users.
- 4) Clear guidance to managers, staff, and volunteers on what to do when there are concerns about a vulnerable adult's or child's welfare or safety.
- 5) Clear guidance to managers, staff, and volunteers on how to share information appropriately to keep vulnerable adults and children safe from harm.
- 6) A named person identified within the organisation who has a clearly defined role and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding, whom staff and volunteers can go to for advice.
- 7) Commitment that enhanced Criminal Records Bureau/Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are completed on all staff and volunteers who have contact with vulnerable adults, children and young people (where applicable, according to DBS guidance) before they take up post
- 8) A procedure for raising concerns about members of staff within your organisation.
- 9) A process for ensuring managers, staff and volunteers are familiar with the policy through induction, training and supervision.

- 10) A process for collecting and managing complaints.
- 11) Details of how staff and service users should make a complaint to your organisation.

If your activity/programme directly works with children and young people, your safeguarding policy should also, as a minimum:

- 1) Reference that there is at least one manager and member of staff who have completed Safeguarding training. (RBG Safeguarding Training will also be given as part of the onboarding process for successful grantees)
- 2) State that staff and volunteers are offered the opportunity to learn about how to recognise and respond to concerns about child abuse.
- 3) State that staff and volunteers with specific responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children receive training to enable them to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to fulfil these responsibilities.
- 4) State that contact details of Children's Services, the Police, emergency medical help, NSPCC and other key agencies are available to all staff.
- 5) State that the manager responsible for recruitment to this organisation has completed Safer Recruitment training.
- 6) Include a clear policy about bullying, and there is a process to communicate the policy to staff, volunteers, parents and carers.

Further safeguarding resources are below:

<https://greenwichsafeguardingchildren.org.uk/>

<https://greenwichsafeguardingadults.org.uk/>

<https://metroqavs.org.uk/services/children-and-young-people/safeguarding>

For organisations applying for funding related to Children, families and vulnerable adults:

Please refer to **Appendix A** for the details of the Council's Safer Recruitment Advice for Children's Services Commissioned Providers.

Please refer to **Appendix B** for further requirements from Children's Services Commissioning for all providers of children's services.

Please refer to **Appendix C** for further Adult Safeguarding information

Please refer to **Appendix D** for information about food safety standards

8 Referees

Please provide the contact details below for two referees to whom you have delivered provision for at least 12 months.

Officers from the Royal Borough of Greenwich should only be used as a reference in exceptional circumstances, for example, if a significant proportion of your funding comes from the borough.

Where the Royal Borough of Greenwich is aware of other areas of work delivered by your organisation, we reserve the right to contact further referees and information will be taken into account as part of the assessment process.

You are responsible for contacting referees beforehand to confirm their contact details are correct and that they are available and willing to provide a reference.

If you are unable to provide two references, please explain why.

DECLARATION

All applicants must sign the Declaration.

The Declaration must be signed by someone with authorisation to sign on behalf of the organisation, confirming that the information provided in the Application Form is accurate.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

We require you to attach the requested documents, policies and procedures. Please confirm that these are current and have been approved by the board within the last three years.

No:	Policy, Process or Procedure	Attached
1	Organisation's Governing Document	
2	Safeguarding Policy and Safeguarding Children Policy (if your organisation directly delivers a service for children and/or young people)	
3	Public Liability Insurance Certificate	
4	A Statement of Intent for consortia bids signed by all partners (if applicable)	
5	Financial Procedures Policy	
6	Equal Opportunity and Diversity Policy	
7	Whistleblowing Policy (if separate from the safeguarding policy above)	

OUR PARTNERSHIP COMMITMENTS

Grant awardees will be expected to sign up to the following commitments and undertake specific training as part of their formal grant agreements. You can sign up to specific offers through the links here

- [Greenwich Safeguarding Children Training](#) and [Safeguarding Adults Training](#)
- [Equality and Equity Charter](#) (if not already signed up)
- [Borough of Sanctuary Pledge of Support](#) (if not already signed up)
- Complete [Make Every Opportunity Count](#) (MEOC) in Greenwich training
- Sign up to the [Greenwich Community Directory](#)
- Sign up to the [VCFS Bulletin](#) and the [Community Champions Bulletin](#)
- Sign up to be a member of the quarterly Children's Provider Forum (for those activities/programmes working with Children)
- Where applications relate to food, please note Appendix D

VCFS organisations can also access ongoing support and training from the Council and/or [GAVS – hosted by Bexley Voluntary Service Council \(BVSC\)](#).

Any support outlined in the prospectus is also available for free and is equally available to both successful and unsuccessful applicants. The Community Development Team will be available to signpost to further funding opportunities if bids are not successful through this process.

APPLICATION SUPPORT

Community Development Team

If anything in this application guidance is unclear, please submit a question to VCS-Grants@royalgreenwich.gov.uk. We will endeavour to publish all questions and all responses in a timely manner, so that all applicants can benefit fairly from any points of clarification.

Please note that we can only clarify issues, not assist you with writing your application.

Greenwich Action for the Voluntary Sector (GAVS) – Bexley Voluntary Service Council (BVSC)

If you are considering a partnership or collaborative bid, GAVS, delivered by BVSC, can help you build connections with other organisations, provide advice on collaborative working, and identify organisations that may be well placed to work with you.

Find out more on their [website](#) or contact: sectorsupport@bvsc.co.uk

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In addition to the offer from GAVS, the Royal Borough of Greenwich offers a range of support for the VCFS including:

- Information that can help organisations understand the local data and equity picture at [Greenwich Data Observatory](#) and [Fairer, Healthier Greenwich](#).
- [Greenwich Community Directory](#): Our online directory for information about groups/activities in the borough, including onboarding support to promote your organisation
- A range of training to help organisations support their service users. One example of this is [Make Every Opportunity Count](#). Further information about other training is available [here](#).
- Our [Community Champions](#) bulletin, sharing information about health and wellbeing plus training opportunities.
- VCS-Grants@royalgreenwich.gov.uk: to receive a sector funding bulletin, information about bid-writing courses or any queries about the above

GLOSSARY

We have provided a brief explanation of a few terms we have used in our documentation.

Consortia / Partnerships	Two or more organisations working collaboratively to plan and/or deliver an activity/programme, combining their skills, resources and expertise to achieve shared outcomes and better meet the needs of the communities they support. We are not expecting organisations to have established/developed legally binding/constituted consortia in the timescale available. However, we will expect organisations to be prepared to collaborate and develop partnerships and to make joint bids. Consortia and partnerships will need to nominate a lead organisation and be able to provide a description of the roles and responsibilities of each partner, and how you will manage both the funding and monitoring. For help or information to find relevant partners, please contact BVSC on email: sectorsupport@bvsc.co.uk
Co-design	Working collaboratively with the people and communities who will benefit from the activity/programme to shape its development and delivery, ensuring it reflects their needs, experiences and priorities.
Co-production	Working in partnership with the people and communities who will benefit from an activity/programme to develop, deliver and evaluate it, recognising and valuing their knowledge, experience and contribution.
Equity and inclusion	Ensuring that beneficiaries have fair access to activities and opportunities, recognising and addressing barriers that may prevent some people from participating or benefiting. This includes considering different needs, circumstances and experiences, and ensuring activities are accessible, welcoming and responsive to the communities they aim to support.

Exit Strategy	Grant funding is for a four-year period only and should not be assumed beyond the grant funding period (2027–31). Organisations should be able to outline how they plan to continue the project / programme through additional fundraising, or wind down any project in an orderly fashion, including treatment and impact on service users and staff. This detail may be included in your Business Plan / Sustainability Strategy or any Funding/Fundraising Strategy.
Life Course Approach	Several themes use a life course approach, which means it covers both young people and adult-focused activities. As a result, we welcome applications that focus on a specific age group, multiple age groups, or key transition points throughout life. You do not need, however, to work across all age groups to bid for this strand. Funding will be awarded across the life course to ensure a balanced range of provision for residents of all ages.
Outcomes-based delivery	Focusing on the positive changes and benefits an activity or programme aims to achieve and using these outcomes to guide delivery and measure its impact.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Children’s Services: Safeguarding Requirements

- Providers are to ensure that they have guidance in place to identify less obvious potential abuses e.g. potential abuse of the internet, or data about children
- Organisations are to ensure that all enhanced DBSs are up to date for staff and Volunteers
- There is a requirement that all Volunteers will follow the same Safeguarding principles and procedures
- There is a requirement that recruits from overseas will be DBS checked or, where this is not possible, be subject to additional checks
- There is a requirement for providers to provide evidence of checks conducted or auditing to ensure adherence to policies and procedures on safer recruitment
- Providers are to ensure that all safeguarding concerns received are immediately followed up with the Social Worker or duty team and to ensure Safeguarding alerts are raised with RBG in relation to staffing
- Organisations are required to complete an Enhanced DBS check on all applicants as part of the recruitment process, as well as two reference checks covering at least two years
- Providers are to conduct the necessary checks to make sure that staff have the professional registration and qualifications necessary for their posts or role
- Organisations are to ensure that staff have undertaken appropriate training in relation to safeguarding, information sharing and information security.
- Providers are to confirm that their staff have undertaken the appropriate training required for their professional role
- Providers are to have a procedure in place for recording and reporting health & safety incidents and serious health & safety incidents to Health & Safety Executive.
- Safeguarding requirements must be included in all relevant job descriptions, person specifications and adverts

Appendix B – Safer Recruitment Advice for Children’s Services Commissioned Providers

This guidance is intended to support providers in understanding the expectations of the Royal Borough of Greenwich (RBG) Children’s Services in regard to staff and volunteers working with children and young people in Greenwich and any information arising from Disclosure and Barring Checks (DBS). Please note, references below to ‘employee’ should be read as being also applicable to volunteers.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with existing contractual agreements with RBG, current legislation and any regional or national guidance in relation to safer recruitment.

I. Information that will lead to an individual automatically being unsuitable

I.1 Enhanced Disclosures provide details of whether the individual is included on a list of people named as barred from working with children or adults considered vulnerable.

- Children’s Barred list (Formerly List 99 and POCA — Protection of Children’s Act list)
- Adults Barred List (Formerly POVA – Protection of Vulnerable Adults)

I.2 Candidates/employees who are named on the lists are considered unsuitable to work with children/adults and must not be employed in Regulated Activity. There is no discretion. It is a criminal offence to allow someone to engage in Regulated Activity when barred.

I.3 It is a criminal offence for a person on either list to apply to work with children or adults considered vulnerable. If a Disclosure reveals that a job applicant on these lists has applied to work with children, or a Disclosure reveals that an existing employee or volunteer is registered on one of the lists, you have a legal duty to inform the police.

I.4 In addition to these, RBG would consider the following as barriers to working with Greenwich families:

- Assault or any conviction involving harm to a child such as physical, sexual, emotional
- Grievous Bodily Harm/assault against an adult both recent and historical
- Domestic violence

- Fraud and dishonesty – while this can be dependent upon the case/situation – we have to trust staff who work with RBG families and in our view this would compromise the ability to do this and is a risk when working with vulnerable people.

2. Senior Management Accountability

- 2.1 As part of the decision-making on whether an employee or volunteer can work, each provider should have a designated senior manager who will take accountability for signing off decisions on whether to employ an individual based on information coming to light through a DBS or otherwise. Within this guidance this role will be referred to as 'senior accountable manager'.

3. Making Decisions Using Disclosure Information

- 3.1 The fact that someone has a conviction or a caution would not necessarily prevent them from taking up or continuing to work with RBG families, although serious consideration must be given to the information that has been received before a decision is made.
- 3.2 If an individual denies that the convictions relate to them, a further check must take place. This can be done by the individual contacting the DBS and advising that there is a dispute on the evidence submitted. The DBS should then undertake an investigation.
- 3.3 If a disclosure reveals information of convictions, reprimands or cautions, the provider should first check whether the individual has previously disclosed details of any convictions or cautions. The recruiting manager should discuss the case with their senior accountable manager, meet with the applicant (or employee) where necessary and seek advice from an HR professional for a final decision as to whether to proceed with the appointment (or future employment).
- 3.4 If the individual has not disclosed the convictions, either on an application form (or to their manager if already employed) when the offence took place, they should be asked why they had not done so. Non-disclosure of relevant information or the disclosure of false information by candidates/employees will normally lead to a withdrawal of an offer of employment, or the instigation of the provider's disciplinary procedures respectively.
- 3.5 When an offence has been disclosed and is subsequently detailed on a DBS the manager will be required, if appropriate, to undertake an investigation. The manager should explore with the applicant/employee the circumstances surrounding the

convictions/cautions and when they took place. The manager may also contact the relevant police disclosure unit (detailed on the DBS certificate) to verify or obtain further information. The Manager should inform and seek consent from the individual before making contact with the police disclosure unit. Prior to any final decision being made by the senior accountable manager regarding the outcome of the investigation the manager should seek advice from an HR professional and the RBG Child Protection Officer (LADO).

- 3.6 In the case of a new appointment, the decision as to whether to confirm or withdraw the offer of employment will be documented. Attached to this pdf is an example of how the Borough documents this information. Providers should have an equivalent form of a similar or higher standard. If the decision is made to appoint, the form needs to be kept on the employee's personal file. If the decision is not to appoint a record will be retained on the recruitment file.
- 3.7 When an existing employee discloses an offence the manager will, in the first instance, need to make a decision, regarding deployment of the individual, pending further investigation. Dependent on the disclosure and the position held by the employee the manager will need to consider if the following are necessary in the interest of the provider:
- Closer supervision of the employee in their job
 - Temporarily transfer the employee to other duties
 - Suspension on full pay, subject to disciplinary investigation
- 3.8 On receipt of a DBS which details the disclosed offence the manager will be required to undertake an internal investigation. At the outcome of the investigation the manager will determine if a formal disciplinary investigation is required or if the employee may remain in post. When the decision is to take no further action, details of the offence, the investigation and the outcome should be detailed on a document (see paragraph 3.6) and retained on the employee's personnel file.
- 3.9 It is expected that if a decision is taken that the employee may remain in employment the matter will not need to be reconsidered each time a DBS is processed which details the offence. The only exception would be if the employee has changed position within the organisation and has different responsibilities or if the manager has concerns regarding the conduct of the employee.
- 4. Factors to consider when making a decision**

- 4.1 An applicant's/employee's criminal record should be assessed in relation to the tasks they will be required to perform and the circumstances in which the work is to be carried out. Factors to consider include:
- An examination of the circumstances leading up to the offence, e.g. the influence of financial or domestic circumstances.
 - The seriousness of the offence.
 - Whether the individual's circumstances have changed since the offence was committed, making re-offending less likely.
 - The degree of intent on behalf of the offender.
 - Any relevant information offered by the applicant about the circumstances which led to the offence being committed.
 - The nature of the job, i.e. does the nature of the job present any opportunity for the post-holder to re-offend in the course of their work?
 - The degree of risk that the offence suggests that the individual represents.
 - The length of time since the offence took place.
 - The extent of job supervision i.e. does the job involve one-to-one contact with children or other vulnerable groups and what level of supervision will the postholder receive.
- 4.2 RBG would recommend the application of the HCPC standards of professional conduct in regard to Social Workers or relevant professional standards for the service commissioned when making a decision.
- 4.3 In addition, consideration **must be given to the reputational risk** both to the provider and RBG. It must be considered how the person being supported may feel should they be made aware or how it may be viewed externally were this person to be working with children, parents and families.

Appendix C – Adult Safeguarding Information

Adult Safeguarding information

Safeguarding Principles

Safeguarding is a core responsibility of all providers commissioned by RBG. Providers must ensure that people are protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm, and that safeguarding is embedded in every aspect of service delivery. Safeguarding in Greenwich is underpinned by the London Multi-Agency Adult Safeguarding Policy, Practice Guidance and Procedures.

Safeguarding Culture and Accountability

Providers must foster a culture of vigilance, openness and accountability. This includes:

- Clear safeguarding policies and procedures that reflect local and national guidance.
- A designated Safeguarding Lead within the organisation who is responsible for oversight and escalation.
- A commitment to zero tolerance of abuse and neglect.
- Systems for reporting, recording and responding to safeguarding concerns.

Safeguarding must be seen as everyone's responsibility, and staff must be empowered to act when concerns arise.

Staff Training and Competence

All staff must receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role, including:

- Level 1 and Level 2 safeguarding adults training as a minimum.
- Training on Making Safeguarding Personal, the Care Act 2014 and the Mental Capacity Act 2005.
- Awareness of types of abuse, including financial, psychological, discriminatory and institutional abuse.
- Understanding of whistleblowing procedures and how to escalate concerns.

Training must be refreshed regularly, and staff competence must be monitored through supervision and appraisal.

Identifying and Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

Providers must have clear procedures for:

- Recognising signs of abuse or neglect.
- Reporting concerns internally and to the RBG Safeguarding Adults Team or Community Learning Disability Team (CLDT) duty social worker.
- Cooperating with safeguarding investigations and enquiries.

- Supporting service users through safeguarding processes, including advocacy and trauma-informed approaches.

All safeguarding concerns must be recorded accurately and securely, with outcomes and actions documented.

Partnership Working

Providers must work in partnership with:

- The Royal Borough of Greenwich Safeguarding Adults Board.
- Health and social care professionals.
- Advocacy services.
- Families and carers (where appropriate).
- London Fire Brigade.
- Police.
- Local housing teams.
- Oxleas mental health services.

This includes attending safeguarding meetings, contributing to protection plans and sharing relevant information in line with GDPR and safeguarding legislation.

Prevent Duty and Exploitation Awareness

Providers must ensure staff are trained in the Prevent Duty, which aims to safeguard vulnerable individuals from radicalisation and extremism. This includes:

- Recognising signs of grooming and exploitation.
- Understanding referral pathways.
- Promoting resilience and inclusion among people who use services.

Providers must also be aware of risks related to county lines, modern slavery and mate crime, and take proactive steps to protect service users.

Safeguarding in the Environment

Providers must ensure that the physical environment supports safeguarding, including:

- Secure premises with appropriate access controls based on residents' needs.
 - Safe storage of medication and personal belongings.
 - Privacy and dignity in personal care and support.
 - Systems to prevent bullying, harassment and peer-on-peer abuse.
 - Signing in and out methods for all staff, residents and visitors to ensure that people are aware of who is in the building at all times, especially if an emergency arises.
- Records must be kept and should be available to the Council upon request.

Environmental safeguarding must be considered in all new property developments and service expansions.

Providers must comply with the Care Act 2014 safeguarding duties and the London Multi-Agency Adult Safeguarding Policy, Practice Guidance and Procedures. [London-Multi-Agency-Adult-Safeguarding-Policy-Practice-Guidance-and-Procedures-November-2025.pdf](#)

The Provider must notify the Council of all safeguarding incidents and work cooperatively in investigations and reviews. The Provider must have clear reporting routes, any safeguarding concerns must be logged immediately and reported to the appropriate authority (e.g. Adult Social Care and HIDE within agreed timescales).

Appendix D – Food Safety Requirements

For organisations applying that will be working with food:

- Food safety training is required, including a minimum Food Hygiene Rating of 4, allergen training and food hygiene.
- If subcontracting food, organisations need to comply with all legislative requirements
- This includes due diligence with food providers, making sure food safety management tools are up to date.

All providers, whether they prepare their own food or source it from elsewhere, must:

- Register with the Royal Borough of Greenwich as a food business by completing the Food Business Registration form (if not already registered) and have achieved a Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) score of 4 or 5. If you feel you do not need to register as a food business, you will need to agree this with the Commercial Environmental Health team.
- Have a completed food safety management system in place such as Safer food, better business for caterers | Food Standards Agency. This system must be on site, available and up to date at all times. This system must also cover suppliers and checks that have been made on their suitability including arrangements for food transport and storage where ready-made meals or similar items are being delivered.
- Have a minimum of two staff with at least Level 2 food hygiene training within the organisation. A list of accredited food safety courses can be provided.
- Have a minimum of two staff with completed Food Standards Agency allergen training
- Have at least one dedicated supervisor on site at all times with respect to food safety. This member of staff must be fully trained to at least Level 2 in food hygiene and must have completed allergen training.
- Ensure that all other staff and volunteers are trained and/or supervised and instructed in food hygiene matters appropriate to the activity they are carrying out.
- Organisations that only serve food that has been prepared elsewhere are still required to have suitable facilities for hand washing for serving staff and children (with hot and cold water, soap and towels), sanitising materials, hot or cold food storage (if food is not being served immediately) and appropriate arrangements for refuse disposal.
- Where an organisation is operating out of premises that are not their own (such as a school or community venue), the organisation will need to ensure that adequate pest control arrangements are in place. Responsibility for the provision of sanitiser, cloths, soap and hand drying materials must be clarified.
- Ensure information on allergens and ingredients is available, for every meal served. Food items which are pre-packed for direct sale must be labelled with the name of the food and an ingredients listing with allergens highlighted in bold/different font. Where food is to be taken away, pre-packed for direct sale requirements will apply (Natasha's Law). For more information, see <https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/introduction-to-allergen-labelling-changes-ppds>

- Ensure that cultural food is handled correctly.