

Case Study

Richmond – Surprising snapshots of residents ‘On the Edge’



Hampton Fuel Allotment Charity (HFAC) and Richmond Parish Lands Charity (RPLC) invest in organisations and people in Richmond through grants and the provision of charitable housing.

Applications to the two charities are increasing year on year and demand is rapidly outpacing supply of funds.

The two organisations jointly commissioned a piece of research into the unmet needs in Richmond. Entitled ‘On the Edge’, this has

become a call to action to other stakeholders in Richmond to be catalysts for change in the borough. Interviews with over 100 individuals working with people in need across the borough and representatives of over 80 local organisations and charities contributed to the research findings, as well as residents already in, or on the edge of, crisis.

The research found that the perception of Richmond as a wealthy borough masks the level of poverty and need across the borough. People whose lives are in fragile balance owing to issues such as disability, poor mental health and isolation are being tipped into crisis by ineffective,



Being able to demonstrate clear evidence of local need is essential to the credibility of a PBGS and has multiple benefits, including better targeted funds and engaging funders and partners.

disjointed or unavailable services following changes in national and local government funding and cuts in benefits. The cost of living in Richmond is very high, especially for people on low incomes, and carers are increasingly hard to come by because they can't afford to live there. One severely physically disabled respondent with a mental health diagnosis explained that she is allotted 23 hours of care a week but receives only six because of the difficulty of finding sufficient carers.

Among its many assets, Richmond enjoys a thriving voluntary sector and the highest volunteering rate across London (50% versus a London average of 26%). However, trusted local organisations are also at risk as a consequence of changes in commissioning and cuts in funding.

'On the Edge' recommends the development of a PBGS in the borough as a way to harness and coordinate the support of other funders, businesses and residents. A scoping exercise for a PBGS is now underway.

Jonathan Monckton, Director of RPLC, says: "We commissioned the 'On the Edge' report to make clearer some of the needs, concerns and priorities in the coming months and years. Many of the case studies in the 'On the Edge' report highlight just how desperate many people are finding life. The money the local funding charities have available for distribution to local good causes can only go so far. RPLC and HFAC trustees believe that across the London Borough of Richmond there is considerable interest in, and capacity for, stronger local community, commercial and individual input into supporting

the vulnerable and needy. With greater collaboration the support offered by the local grant making charities can be complemented through other organisations and individuals pulling together by sharing resources – capital and financial, time and skills – offering hope of a fresh start in the face of uncertain economic times."

► www.rplc.org.uk

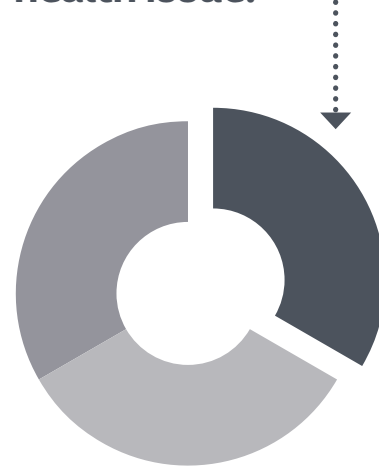
► www.hfac.co.uk

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Richmond has the highest proportion of people over 75 in Greater London, and there is predicted to be a significant rise in the number of people with dementia and older people with mobility problems.

Almost a third of 16–19 year olds in Richmond have some sort of mental health issue.



Richmond is ranked 6th lowest out of 32 London boroughs for low GCSE attainment among pupils on Free School Meals.